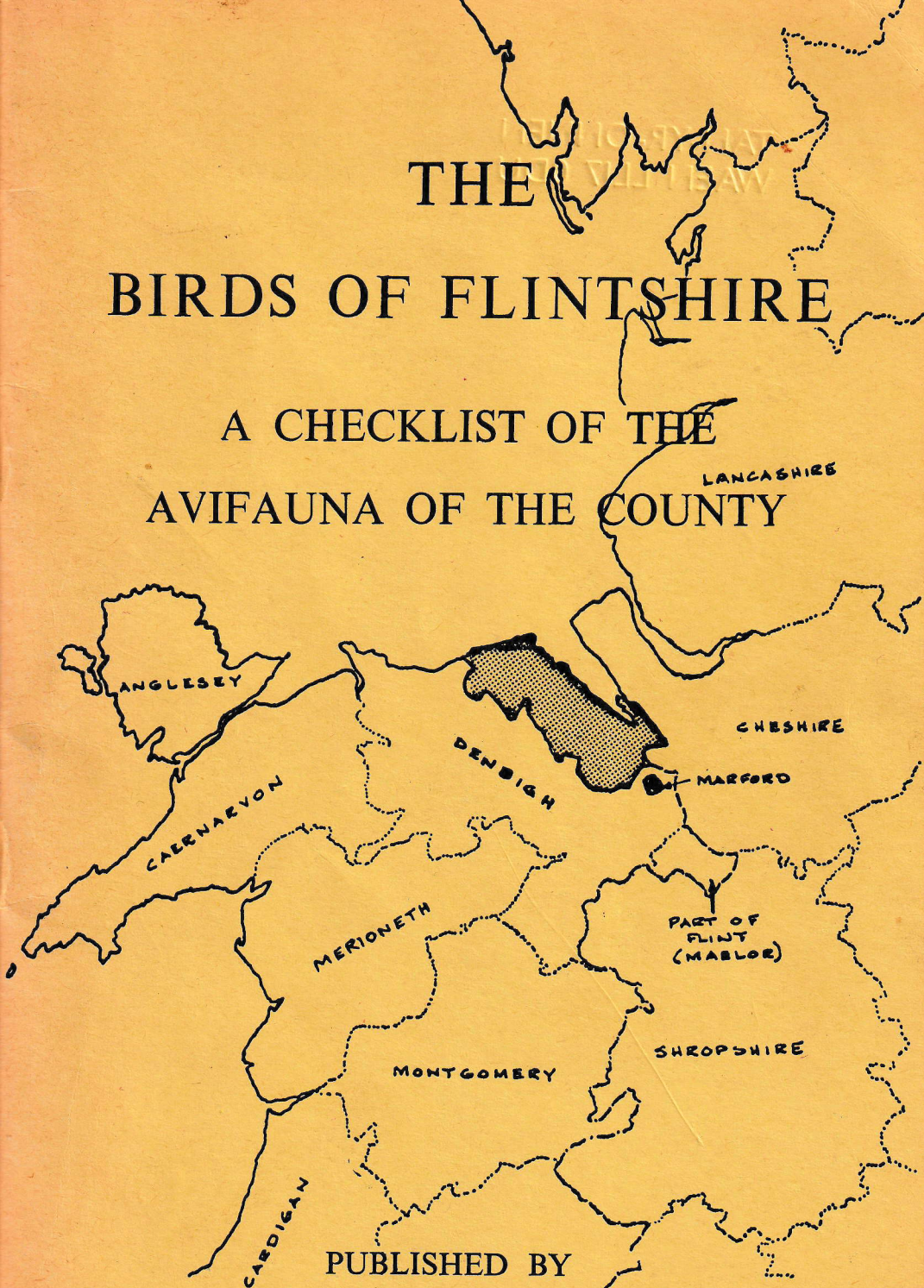


# THE BIRDS OF FLINTSHIRE

A CHECKLIST OF THE  
AVIFAUNA OF THE COUNTY



PUBLISHED BY  
THE FLINTSHIRE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

1968



### **TONY ANGELL**

During the preparation of this Check List the editors were saddened to learn of the untimely death of Tony Angell who, before leaving to take up an appointment in another part of the country, had been a member of the editorial panel and had been primarily responsible for the section on Ecology.

A capable observer, and a former Secretary of the Society, Tony had worked on the early draft of the Check List with characteristic enthusiasm.

He is missed by his many friends in the Society.

*This Checklist has been prepared by an editorial panel consisting of the following members of the Flintshire Ornithological Society : —*

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#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The editors, having decided against individual acknowledgements, would nevertheless like to take this opportunity of expressing their sincere thanks to all who have contributed to this checklist.

Our special thanks are expressed to Mr. E. Hardy, Mr. P. Hope-Jones and Doctor R. J. Raines for their help in reviewing this report.

We would also like to thank the Merseyside Ringing Group who have supplied the greater part of the information on ringing recoveries.

Finally we are grateful to the editors of British Birds for publicising our request for information.



## INTRODUCTION

No previous checklist of the Birds of Flintshire has been produced and in publishing this report the Flintshire Ornithological Society have realised a long cherished ambition.

Earlier production of the checklist was prevented by a shortage of observers and a lack of adequate organisation. It is intended that in the future annual reports will be produced. These reports will include any additions to the checklist and record any changes in the status of those species already listed.

Very little has been written specifically on the avifauna of the County, although it was of course included in Forrest's Vertebrate Fauna of North Wales (1907). Since then only a supplement on the avifauna of the County in the Dyserth Field Club's Annual Report (1944/45), an Annual County Report (1960) produced on a personal basis, and localised reports on Point of Air (1939), and Shotton Marsh (1964/65) have appeared. A list of publications containing reference to birds in Flintshire appears in the appendix and the editors have drawn freely on these publications where necessary.

The County is unique in that it has two detached areas one of which is extremely small and this has been included. The larger, Maelor, has not been included in this report due to the difficulties arising from its geographical location. It has, however, been included in the Shropshire county report (A Handlist of the Birds of Shropshire 1964) and we agree that this is the most sensible and appropriate arrangement to ensure complete and continuous cover of this detached part. It is less easy to agree with the action of the author of the Birds of Cheshire, who on his own admission has included 13 square miles of Flintshire. Perhaps the fact that the 13 square miles in question is particularly rich and varied in bird life had no little influence on the author's decision to include it.



A particular part of the county regularly visited by local and distant ornithologists is that known as "Shotton Marsh". For the purpose of accuracy we would mention that the marsh together with that part of the steelworks that holds any interest for bird-watchers is in fact in Connah's Quay; however, to avoid any confusion the authors have adhered to the common if inaccurate name.

Prior to, and during the compiling of this report it was fully realised that there were considerable gaps in our knowledge of status, distribution and numbers of several species. It is hoped that the publication of this Report will stimulate interest and produce the necessary information to fill these gaps. The Flintshire Ornithological Society will be pleased to receive any records past or future that will lead to this end.

Finally, a number of records submitted were not included in this report. This is in no way a reflection on the observers concerned but was due to lack of supporting detail or evidence.

## GENERAL ECOLOGY OF FLINTSHIRE

The County is fortunate from the ornithological point of view in possessing a great variety of natural habitats for bird life. It is true that species have been forced to run the gauntlet of industrialisation in the east of the county but it seems that they have done so successfully in many cases.

The population of the county lies between 150 and 160,000 living within 134,000 acres. With this relatively high density for North Wales of 1.15 persons per acre it is notable that many species of birds and man can live harmoniously, even in the areas of highest density such as Rhyl and Deeside.

Apart from these areas the remainder of the county is rural country which provides a great deal of relatively undisturbed territory for birds.

It is debatable how a county should be divided for the purpose of an ornithological survey. In the case of Flintshire, it has been thought advisable to use part of the classification scheme adopted in local geographical surveys. There are six main regions and each of these will now be described with continual reference to their suitability as bird habitats.

### VALE OF CLWYD

Flintshire contains only the broad, northern part of this fertile vale as it approaches the sea, and its limits are taken as including land up to 500ft. high.

The River Clwyd rises near Clocaenog Forest, Denbighshire, and flows through that county before running along the Flintshire county boundary at Bodfari, where it is joined by the River Wheeler. After St. Asaph it is joined by the River Elwy before widening into its estuary below Rhuddlan. Down to the point where it becomes tidal opposite Rhuddlan Castle it is a fast-flowing river bordered mainly by Willow and Alder trees which provide an ideal habitat for many of the birds characteristic of this type of woodland. Below Rhuddlan extensive mud flats and salt marshes



develop and this pattern is continued until the river enters the sea at Rhyl 2½ miles away. This habitat provides an ideal haunt for waders as well as other species.

When looking down on the Vale from the surrounding hills, the extent of tree cover is very noticeable. This is the remnant of the oak forest which covered Flintshire in mediaeval times leaving the county well endowed with private parkland which supports a considerable variety of bird life. In the Vale of Clwyd such areas include Kinmel, Lowther and Bodrhyddan estates. At the first named locality is one of several Forestry Commission areas in the county. The triassic rocks underlying the Vale are overlain by various types of glacial drift deposits, mainly alluvian and boulder clay.

#### CLWYDIAN HILLS

Actually only the northern end of this range is entirely in Flintshire. For the purpose of this survey this is taken to include the carboniferous limestone hills at Prestatyn, Dyserth and Meliden. From Bodfari the range continues in a south easterly direction, the county boundary between Denbighshire and Flintshire running approximately along the top of the hills. This high ridge of silurian shale forms a distinct region of Flintshire. The flora is typical of acidic hill grassland in which the degree of leaching is considerable. Characteristic plants are bracken, bilberry, heather and tormentil. The few haunts for woodland birds are confined mainly to an area of parkland at Tremeirchion, a few scattered groups of pine trees and Forestry Commission areas at Cwm and on the slopes of Moel Fammau.

The most notable area of fresh water within the range are the reservoirs near Cilcain.

#### COASTAL AND ESTUARINE STRIP

This includes a large stretch of Flintshire from Rhyl to Connah's Quay. The county is devoid of the extensive rocky shores found further west in parts of Denbighshire and Caernarvonshire. Instead, its shores consist of sand or mud and it is the predominance of

one or the other which forms the distinction between the coastal and estuarine regions as described below.

(a) *Coastal Strip*

This stretches from Rhyl to the Point of Air and consists of extensive sandy shores backed by dunes. At Rhyl these dunes have disappeared with the development of the town.

Typical invertebrates living in the sand and forming the food of waders are cockles, lugworms and small tube-dwelling worms. But they are found deeper than the invertebrates in mud, and as a result, sandy shores often support a lower wader population than mud flats.

The sand dunes from Prestatyn to the Point of Air with its characteristic bushes of bramble and low thick cover or burnet rose support a small bird population. The sea off this coast is shallow, less than 5 fathoms, and it serves as an important wintering station for many diving birds.

(b) *Estuarine Strip*

This stretches from the Point of Air to the River Dee at Connah's Quay, and forms an area of great ornithological interest. Its main features are the extensive mud-flats exposed at low tide which form the feeding ground of vast numbers of wading birds particularly in the passage seasons and winter months. The soft mud has a rich variety of invertebrate life living near the surface such as ragworms, periwinkles and various types of crustaceans. These form food for the wader flocks.

Ecological attractions of two areas in particular viz. Point of Air and Shotton Marshes, are such that they are favoured haunts of large numbers of birds, and a high proportion of the county's rarities have been recorded there. The mud flats of the estuary are associated with salt marshes, in some cases very extensive as at Shotton. Amongst the characteristic plants of these marshes are Sea Purslane, Sea Rush and Salt Marsh Grass.

At Shotton and Point of Air there are extensive areas of Sea Purslane intersected by gullies which are flooded at



high tide. These form feeding grounds for roaming flocks of mixed finches during the winter. Recently at Shotton, some of the old pools have been overgrown with Reed Mace, and this has proved attractive to various species.

## LIMESTONE PLATEAU

This is an area of upland in which the underlying rocks consist of carboniferous limestone. It stretches away to the east of the Clwydian Range from Gronant in the north and Leete Valley in the south, and includes Halkyn Mountain on its eastern fringe.

Within this region there are several areas of mixed or deciduous woodland, such as Whitford, which support the usual variety of woodland birds. At Ysceifiog, woodland is associated with an interesting stretch of fresh water used by various waterfowl.

Within this limestone plateau is Llyn Helyg, a very important stretch of fresh water from the ornithological point of view. It is surrounded by deciduous woodland except on the side adjacent to the Trelawnyd-Lloc road where there is a small plantation of conifers. As a result of this woodland cover the lake margins support a rich variety of bird life. The lake itself is an important wintering station for waterfowl, and the reed beds support a number of breeding species.

## SOUTH EAST PLATEAU

This runs from the Cheshire Plain south-west to the Denbighshire border. Much of the Triassic rock of this region is overlain by coal measures, but it is only in scattered areas that the coal actually outcrops near the surface. The remainder of the measures are covered by glacial deposits. An interesting stretch of fresh water within this region is Padeswood Pool; whilst the main river is the Alun, which cuts through the plateau to join the Dee south of the county.

There are areas of parkland with deciduous woodland at Gwysaney, Hawarden and Northop, and a considerable area of coniferous woodland at Nercwys owned by the Forestry Commission.

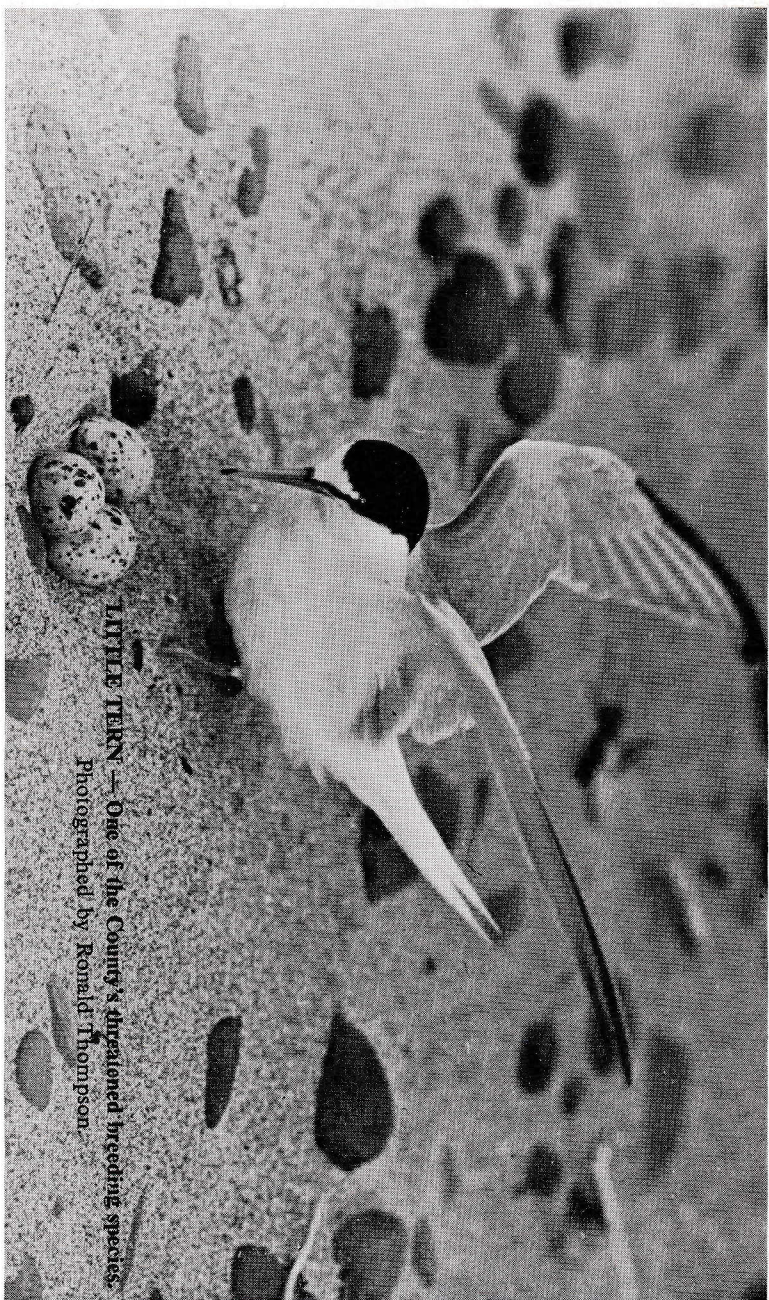
## CHESHIRE PLAIN

This is an extensive area of lowland country in the valley of the River Dee. There are considerable alluvial deposits with their associated marshlands continuous with the estuarine strip already mentioned. Marsh and riverside birds are therefore well represented.

The area in question is in fact the northern part of the geographical feature generally known as the Cheshire Plain; the River Dee rises to the south in Merionethshire and flows northwards, to enter the south-east corner of Flintshire. The underlying rock in this part of the Cheshire Plain is Triassic sandstone, but this is overlain in most parts by deposits of alluvium and various types of glacial drift.

This concludes a general account of the ecology of Flintshire in which an attempt has been made to divide the county into well-defined areas, and show how each area is suitable as a habitat for a variety of birds.





LITTLE TERN — One of the County's threatened breeding species.  
Photographed by Ronald Thompson.



## DEFINITION OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

In order to save space, avoid repetition and to enable the reader to assess readily the status of each species a symbolic definition has been used. It should be appreciated that not all species can be strictly classified in this manner. However, it was felt that the advantages of such a system far outweigh the disadvantages.

The following categories have been used throughout the text : —

*Resident* — *R*.

Indicates presence in the county at all times of the year but does not necessarily imply breeding.

*Winter Visitor* — *WV*.

Indicates birds present during what are loosely termed 'winter months'.

*Summer Visitor* — *SV*.

Primarily indicates migrant species breeding in the County.

*Passage Migrant* — *PM*.

This covers species known to be, either from observation or from ringing, present on passage between breeding grounds and winter quarters.

*Breeding* — *B*.

Indicates species which breed or have been known to breed in recent years.

*Non-Breeding* — *NB*.

Species not known to breed in the county.

*Vagrant* — *V*.

This category has been used to define the status of birds whose occurrences in the county are extremely rare or erratic.

**BLACK-THROATED DIVER — *Gavia arctica*. WV. NB.**

Scarce.

**GREAT NORTHERN DIVER — *Gavia immer*. WV. NB.**

Scarce, but regular in the Dee mouth.

**RED-THROATED DIVER — *Gavia stellata*. WV. NB.**

A regular visitor most frequently seen at Point of Air. On December 20th, 1964, eight birds were recorded at this locality.



**GREAT CRESTED GREBE — *Podiceps cristatus*. R. WV. B.** *(Llyn Aled April 69)*

Only known to have bred at Llyn Helyg, usually about two/three pairs rearing young. Common off-shore in late summer and in winter when flocks of up to 100 have been observed.

**RED-NECKED GREBE — *Podiceps grisegena*. V.**

Only recorded once in the county on the River Dee at Queensferry from February 19th to March 1st, 1956.

**SLAVONIAN GREBE — *Podiceps auritus*. V.**

Only twice recorded in the county at Point of Air, 30th December, 1944, and at Padeswood Pool, 19th and 22nd August, 1945.

**BLACK-NECKED GREBE — *Podiceps nigricollis*. V.**

Rare. Single Birds reported at Point of Air, 4th November, 1944, and at Shotton on August 20th to September, 1961. A specimen is also reported to have been taken at Bagillt on 27th September, 1856.

**LITTLE GREBE — *Podiceps ruficollis*. R. WV. B.** *Llyn Helyg Dec 68*

Breeds in small numbers on most of the suitable waters in the county.

**LEACH'S PETREL — *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*. V.**

Only occurs after prolonged N. or NW. gales. Most recent severe 'wrecks' have occurred in 1952, 1957 and 1963.

**STORM PETREL — *Hydrobates pelagicus*. V.**

Status similar to that of Leach's Petrel but numbers involved are usually much smaller.

**MANX SHEARWATER — *Puffinus puffinus*. PM. NB.**

Regular offshore during summer and autumn, usually in rough weather.

*Ringling Recovery*: A nestling ringed on Skokholm 14.9.65 was found injured at Hope, Flintshire, 21st September, 1965.

**FULMAR — *Fulmarus glacialis*. SV. PM.**

Occasionally recorded off-shore in small numbers. It is anticipated that the Fulmar may shortly be added to the list of breeding species since a number of birds have recently been observed attempting to colonise a disused quarry near Prestatyn.

**GANNET — *Sula bassana*. SV. WV. NB.**

Regular off-shore usually between March and September although has been recorded during winter. An unusual record exists of an adult bird found dead 6 miles inland in June 1967.

**CORMORANT — *Phalacrocorax carbo*. R. NB.**

*Rhul Sept '68*

Common. Regularly seen in the Dee mouth and less frequently on inland waters.

**SHAG — *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*. WV. NB.**

Scarce.

**HERON — *Ardea cinerea*. R. NB.**

Formerly bred in the county but there are no recent records of nesting. The species is present throughout the year however, especially at Shotton Marsh.

**PURPLE HERON — *Ardea purpurea*. V.**

An immature bird was identified at Shotton on 30th September, 1961, amongst common Herons. It remained until October 12th and reappeared on November 19th for three days.

**NIGHT HERON — *Nycticorax nycticorax*. V.**

Forrest quotes two records of specimens taken in the county. There are no records since that time.

**LITTLE BITTERN — *Ixobrychus minutus*. V.**

A specimen in the collection of Sir Pyers Mostyn is reported to have been shot at Talacre about 1836.

**BITTERN — *Botaurus stellaris*. WV. NB.**

Rare. Recorded twice in the last five years single birds being present at Whitford in January 1962 and Shotton in February 1965.

**SPOONBILL — *Platalea leucorodia*. V.**

Only three records for the county, the most recent being at Shotton where a bird remained from 27th June to 15th August 1959.

**GLOSSY IBIS — *Plegadis falcinellus*. V.**

A juvenile bird was present at Shotton Marsh during October 1959.

**MALLARD — *Anas platyrhynchos*. R. WV. B.**

*Wagon (overhead) April '69*

Common, breeding in suitable areas throughout the county.



**TEAL — *Anas crecca*. R. WV. B.**

*Llyn Helyg Dec 68*

Probably breeding spasmodically in the county but only one definite record when a pair bred at Cilcain in 1955.

**GARGANEY — *Anas querquelula*. PM.**

Scarce, passage migrant most frequently recorded at Shotton. At Shotton a female behaved as if breeding when disturbed on 25th May 1960. In July the same year six birds which were immature or in eclipse were seen in the area.

**GADWALL — *Anas strepera*. SV. WV. NB.**

Scarce. An irregular visitor mainly to the Dee Estuary.

**WIGEON — *Anas penelope*. WV. NB.**

*Llyn Helyg Dec 68*

Common in the Dee estuary and frequently seen on inland waters such as Llyn Helyg. The highest count in recent years was 1,400 on 22nd November 1959.

**PINTAIL — *Anas acuta*. WV. NB.**

Abundant winter visitor to the Dee Estuary, but in recent years has declined in number. Up to 3,000 birds were recorded in 1957.

**SHOVELER — *Anas clypeata*. R. B.**

Breeds irregularly on coast from Point of Air to Ffynnongroew, Llyn Helyg and Shotton. At the last mentioned locality two pairs were reported to have bred in 1959.

**SCAUP — *Aythya marila*. WV. NB.**

Common offshore and occasionally met with in small numbers on inland waters.

**TUFTED DUCK — *Aythya fuligula*. R. WV. B.**

*Llyn Helyg Dec 68*

Common on inland waters such as Llyn Helyg and Ysceifiog. Breeding site found at Shotton in 1959.

**POCHARD — *Aythya ferina*. SV. WV. NB.**

Regular visitor in winter to inland lakes like Llyn Helyg and Padeswood. Occasionally recorded during summer months.

**GOLDENEYE — *Bucephala clangula*. WV. NB.**

*Llyn Helyg Dec 68*

Regular visitor in small numbers to both coastal and inland waters.

**LONG-TAILED DUCK — *Clangula hyemalis*. WV. NB.**

Rare. Irregularly reported at various localities on the Dee Estuary and recently at Llyn Helyg.

**VELVET SCOTER — *Melanitta fusca*. WV. NB.**

Uncommon, usually reported offshore between Point of Air and Rhyl. In April 1944 a male was reported some miles inland at Nannerch.

**COMMON SCOTER — *Melanitta nigra*. WV. NB.**

Common offshore and occasionally reported inland.

**EIDER DUCK — *Somateria mollissima*. WV. NB.**

Rare. Only two records in the last ten years. Both reports were at Point of Air and one involved five birds.

**RED-BREASTED MERGANSER — *Mergus serrator*. WV. NB.**

Regular in Dee Estuary.

(Gomney Estuary Easter 69) 2  
Loxne " 70) 2

**GOOSANDER — *Mergus merganser*. WV. NB.**

Rare. Forrest quotes several instances of birds shot in the county. Only three recent records exist, two of which may well relate to the same bird : — Immature male Ysceifiog, 15th February 1947; Ad male Ysceifiog, 11th March 1947; Queensferry, 31st January 1954.

**SMEW — *Mergus albellus*. WV. NB.**

Scarce. Irregular visitor to the Dee Estuary in small numbers.

**SHELDUCK — *Tadorna tadorna*. R. PM. B.**

Pt of Air June 69

Present in the Dee Estuary throughout the year. Numbers fluctuate during the moult migration when counts of up to 3,000 have been recorded.

*Ringling Recovery* : An adult in moult was ringed on the estuary of the River Weser, Germany 16.7.54 and recovered at Shotton 13.2.55.

**GREY LAG GOOSE — *Anser anser*. WV. NB.**

Scarce.

**WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE — *Anser albifrons*. WV. NB.**

Scarce. Recorded on the Clwyd Estuary during most winters.

*Ringling Recovery* : A White-Fronted Goose ringed at Slimbridge 29.2.52 was recovered at Kinnerton 10.12.52.

**BEAN GOOSE — *Anser fabalis*. WV. NB.**

Rare. Most recent record at Shotton, 22nd November 1961, when nine birds were present.

**PINK-FOOTED GOOSE — *Anser brachyrhynchus*. WV. NB.**

Formerly common in the Dee Valley but has declined in recent years to an irregular visitor in small numbers.



**BRENT GOOSE — *Branta bernicla*. WV. NB.**

Rare. Only reported twice in the last five years, on both occasions at Point of Air.

**BARNACLE GOOSE — *Branta leucopsis*. WV. NB.**

Rare. No records in recent years although formerly reported regularly.

**CANADA GOOSE — *Branta canadensis*. R. WV. NB.**

Present on some inland waters.

**MUTE SWAN — *Cygnus olor*. R. WV. B.**

Breeds at several localities and occasionally large flocks are observed on the Dee Estuary during winter. *Rhuddlan Sept 68*

**WHOOPEE SWAN — *Cygnus cygnus*. WV. NB.**

Regular visitor in small numbers to Llyn Helyg, Point of Air, Padeswood and Shotton. *Llyn Helyg Dec 68*

**BEWICK'S SWAN — *Cygnus bewicki*. WV. NB.**

Status similar to that of Whooper Swan. *Llyn Helyg Nov 68*

**BUZZARD — *Buteo buteo*. R. B.**

Frequently seen in Clwydian range and breeds regularly at at least one known site in the county.

*Ringed Recovery*: A Buzzard ringed at Capel Curig 16.6.56 as a nestling was recovered at St. Asaph 5.11.56.

**ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD — *Buteo lagopus*. WV. NB.**

Reported to have been shot in the county in the past but there are no records in recent years.

**SPARROW HAWK — *Accipiter nisus*. R. B.**

Thinly distributed, breeding in small numbers. Possibly increasing during the last two/three years if sight records are indicative.

**KITE — *Milvus milvus*. V.**

One seen near Clwyd Estuary, 24th August 1966.

**MARSH HARRIER — *Circus aeruginosus*. V.**

Forrest quotes two specimens reported to have been taken in the county.

**HEN HARRIER — *Circus cyaneus*. V.**

Infrequently recorded in the county. Only definite record excluding ring-tailed harriers is of a bird at Point of Air on 5th October 1952.

**OSPREY — *Pandion haliaetus*. V.**

An immature male present at Yaceifog, 1st to 11th November 1959.

**HOBBY — *Falco subbuteo*. V.**

Several instances of specimens taken for collections are quoted by Forrest.

**PEREGRINE — *Falco peregrinus*. WV. PM. NB.**

Scarce. Most frequently reported from the Dee Estuary during the winter months. As expected the species has declined in recent years.

**MERLIN — *Falco columbarius*. R. B.**

As a breeding species confined to the Clwydian range, but regular on the Dee Estuary outside the breeding season.

*Ringed Recovery*: A nestling ringed at Cilcain 29.6.46 was recovered at Bickerstaffe, Lancashire, in April 1947.

**KESTREL — *Falco tinnunculus*. R. B.**

Most common raptor and apparently increasing.

**RED GROUSE — *Lagopus lagopus scoticus*. R. B.**

As expected confined to the Clwydian range where the bird is not uncommon.

**BLACK GROUSE — *Lyrurus tetrix*. V.**

Formerly common in Flintshire but is now rarely recorded. Single birds were reported on Moel Famau in 1952 and 1962 but it is not known if these were within the county boundary.

**RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE — *Alectoris rufa*. V.**

Scarce. A Red-Legged Partridge was found dead at Rhyl on 5th May 1967. The bird was marked with a wing tag but unfortunately enquiries have so far failed to establish its origin.

**PARTRIDGE — *Perdix perdix*. R. B.**

Well distributed throughout the county though nowhere common. Breeding success would appear to vary considerably from year to year.

**QUAIL — *Coturnix coturnix*. SV. NB.**

Scarce. Reported on several occasions in the last five years.

**PHEASANT — *Phasianus colchicus*. R. B.**

Common breeding species even in unkept areas.



**WATER RAIL — *Rallus aquaticus*. R. B.**

This secretive species is most frequently observed in the winter but seen at suitable localities throughout the year.

**SPOTTED CRAKE — *Porzana porzana*. PM. NB.**

Scarce. Recorded three times at Shotton in recent years.

**CORNCRAKE — *Crex crex*. SV. B.**

Scarce, but several records in recent years. Last definite breeding record was at Halkyn in 1959.

**MOORHEN — *Gallinula chloropus*. R. B.**

Common.

**COOT — *Fulica atra*. R. WV. B.**

Present on most of the large lakes in the county. Numbers increase in winter when flocks of up to 300 have been recorded.

**OYSTERCATCHER — *Haematopus ostralegus*. R. WV. B.**

Breeding population is small but wintering flocks frequently exceed 10,000.

*Ringing recoveries :*

- (i) A pullus ringed Anglesey 30.6.63 was recovered at Gronant 22.10.64.
- (ii) An adult ringed Shotton 18.2.62 recovered 180 miles S. at Poole, Dorset 12.12.63.
- (iii) An adult ringed Point of Air 20.12.65 recovered 510 miles N. at North Roe, Shetland 15.6.66.

**LAPWING — *Vanellus vanellus*. R. WV. B.**

Common, but declining as a breeding species in a number of areas.

**RINGED PLOVER — *Charadrius hiaticula*. R. PM. B.**

Numbers breeding are small but the bird is common as a passage migrant especially during May and September.

*Ringing recovery :* A juvenile ringed at Spurn Point, Yorks., 24.7.54 was recovered at Rhyl 4.2.55.

**LITTLE RINGED PLOVER — *Charadrius dubius*. PM. NB.**

Uncommon, but regular during the autumn migration.

**KENTISH PLOVER — *Charadrius alexandrinus*. V.**

Only once recorded in the county at Point of Air on the 4th November, 1951.

**GREY PLOVER — *Pluvialis squatarola*. WV. PM. NB.**

Regular but usually only small numbers are observed.

**GOLDEN PLOVER — *Pluvialis apricaria*. WV. PM. NB.**

Often numerous during autumn migration.

**TURNSTONE — *Arenaria interpres*. WV. PM. NB.**

Fairly common but never numerous.

**SNIFE — *Gallinago gallinago*. R. WV. PM. B.**

Breeds in small numbers over a wide area. Common in autumn and winter increasing significantly during autumn passage.

*Ringing recovery*: An adult ringed at Shotton, 28.7.62 was killed at Finistere, France, 12.1.63.

**JACK SNIFE — *Lymnocyrtas minimus*. WV. NB.**

Small numbers present on coastal and inland marshes during autumn and winter.

**WOODCOCK — *Scolopax rusticola*. R. B.**

Thinly distributed but not uncommon even outside hilly districts.

**CURLEW — *Numenius arquata*. R. WV. PM. B.**

Well distributed as a breeding species over much of the county. Numerous during autumn and winter in the estuaries when flocks of up to 2,000 have been recorded.

*Ringing recovery*: A Curlew ringed in Westmorland, 7.6.56 was shot on the Clwyd estuary, 19.1.59.

**WHIMBREL — *Numenius phaeopus*. PM. NB.**

Uncommon but small flocks are regularly reported in autumn usually on the Dee Estuary.

**BLACK-TAILED GODWIT — *Limosa limosa*. WV. PM. NB.**

Recorded annually in small numbers but flocks of up to 100 have been observed.

**BAR-TAILED GODWIT — *Limosa lapponica*. WV. PM. NB.**

Fairly common. Maximum count of circa. 250 recorded at Point of Air.

**GREEN SANDPIPER — *Tringa ochropus*. PM. NB.**

Regular during autumn passage. Occasionally recorded during winter.



**WOOD SANDPIPER — *Tringa glareola*. PM. NB.**

Regular during autumn passage, but less common than previous species.

**COMMON SANDPIPER — *Tringa hypoleucos*. SV. PM. B.**

Breeds in small numbers. Has been reported on Clwyd estuary during December on three occasions.

**REDSHANK — *Tringa totanus*. R. WV. PM. B. *Rhy 1 3/12/70***

Breeding population is small, but flocks of several hundred are not unusual at Point of Air in autumn.

*Ringling recoveries :*

- (i) A bird ringed at Shotton on 25th September 1960 was killed by a Sparrowhawk at Haltwhistle, Northumberland, on the 15th May 1961.
- (ii) A juvenile ringed at Shotton, 4th August 1962 was recovered at Colin Traive, Argyllshire, 25.6.64.
- (iii) A bird ringed at Point of Air, 10th April 1964 was recovered at Coleraine, Londonderry, N. Ireland, 26th April 1966.

**SPOTTED REDSHANK — *Tringa erythropus*. PM. NB.**

Regular in small numbers on both the Dee and the Clwyd estuaries. Occasionally reported during the winter.

**GREATER YELLOWLEGS — *Tringa melanoleuca*. V.**

A single bird was present at Shotton Pools, July 23rd 1961, and an immature bird was observed at close range on 3rd September 1962.

**GREENSHANK — *Tringa nebularia*. PM. NB.**

Regular autumn visitor in small numbers. Less frequently recorded in winter.

**DOWITCHER — *Limnodromus* sp. V.**

A bird of this species was identified at Shotton on 21st June, 1964, where it was seen on numerous occasions until 10th January, 1965. A Dowitcher was also reported at Shotton on 19th November, 1961, but only remained for that day.

**KNOT — *Calidris canutus*. WV. PM. NB.**

Abundant. Recent estimates of the number wintering on the Flintshire side of the Dee are in the region of 30,000. Much larger flocks are encountered on the Cheshire side of the estuary. A vastly different state of affairs apparently existed at the turn of the century when flocks of 200 birds were described by Forrest as "extremely large".

**PURPLE SANDPIPER — *Calidris maritima*. WV. PM. NB.**

Scarce. Irregular on the coast between Point of Air and Rhyl during winter.

**LITTLE STINT — *Calidris minuta*. PM. NB.**

Scarce, but has occurred in good numbers during autumn. In 1960 approximately 350 birds were present at Shotton during September.

*Ring recovery* : During the above mentioned incursion a number of birds were ringed at Shotton, two of which have subsequently been recovered. The first ringed on 25th September, 1960, was recovered at Anglet, France, on 16th October the same year. The second bird ringed on the same day was recovered at El Jadida, Morocco in early February, 1967.

**TEMMINCK'S STINT — *Calidris temminckii*. V.**

Most recent records are 8th April, 1961, and 13th August, 1964, when single birds were reported at Shotton. The former record is unusual since this species most frequently occurs during autumn.

**PECTORAL SANDPIPER — *Calidris melanotos*. V.**

Single birds have been reported at Shotton on the following dates : — July 31st—August 13th 1960; September 22nd 1960; September 4th 1961; September 11th—12th 1961; July 12th 1964.

**DUNLIN — *Calidris alpina*. WV. PM. NB. Rhyl Jan 69**

Although the Dunlin formerly bred in the county it is now only known as an abundant winter visitor and passage migrant. Birds are present throughout the year but in June the numbers are relatively small.



*Ringling recoveries* : During the last eight years over 2,000 Dunlin have been ringed in the county and 29 foreign controls and recoveries have been made as a result of this work. The distribution of these recoveries is as follows : France 15, Sweden 8, Denmark 2, Norway 1, Germany 1, Netherlands 1, and Iceland 1. Analysis of the recoveries gives some indication of the status, origin and movements undertaken by the birds visiting the county at various times of the year. The existence of two quite definite groups of birds is apparent, each having a different place of origin and a different status in Flintshire.

The most likely breeding grounds for birds in the first group is Scotland and Iceland and these birds visit the county during their southerly migration in late summer and again on the return journey in spring. The French (15) and Icelandic (1) recoveries are representative of birds of this group and all sixteen birds were present in Flintshire in either April/May or July/August. In view of this it is not surprising that the considerable numbers of Dunlin ringed during winter have so far failed to produce a single French recovery. The evidence therefore suggests that these birds are passage migrants with regard to Flintshire, few, if any, remaining throughout the winter. It is also unlikely that this group ends its migration in France since there have been no recoveries from that area during the months December, January or February.

The second group of birds is of Scandanavian origin and are winter visitors to the county. The main arrival and departure is in September and April respectively but birds of Scandinavian origin have been recorded in Flintshire in every month of the year except for June and July.

Local recoveries show that movement between the Flintshire and Cheshire sides of the estuary are not uncommon and are probably influenced by such factors as weather, tide and availability of food.

#### **CURLEW SANDPIPER — *Calidris ferruginea*. PM. NB.**

Not uncommon, though small numbers regularly occur during autumn passage. In 1959 and 1960 the numbers present were unusually large.

**SANDERLING — *Calidris alba*. WV. PM. NB.** *Ryl 31/12/70*

Considerable numbers occur during both spring and autumn migrations although present in smaller numbers at all times.

**BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER — *Limicola falcinellus*. V.**

Reported twice from Shotton, on 22nd September, 1961, when two birds were present and on 21st April, 1962, when a single bird was reported.

**RUFF — *Philomachus pugnax*. PM. NB.**

Scarce. Formerly regular at Shotton but in recent years numbers have fallen considerably. The Ruff is still, however, a regular visitor to the Clwyd estuary.

*Ringed recovery*: The first British-ringed Ruff recovered on the continent of Africa was of a bird ringed at Shotton on 31st August, 1962, and recovered at Berrechid, Morocco 23 days later.

**AVOCET — *Recurvirostra avosetta*. V.**

A single bird was present at Shotton 20th March, 1960, and five birds were reported at the same locality 27th March and 5th April the same year.

**GREY PHALAROPE — *Phalaropus fulicarius*. V.**

One reported at Point of Air on 4th October, 1956.

**WILSON'S PHALAROPE — *Phalaropus tricolor*. V.**

One present Shotton Pools August 30th—September 4th, 1959.

**ARCTIC SKUA — *Stercorarius parasiticus*. PM. NB.**

Usually seen in small numbers offshore.

**GREAT SKUA — *Stercorarius skua*. PM. NB.**

Scarce.

**POMARINE SKUA — *Stercorarius pomarinus*. V.**

Only one record on 28th August, 1945, at Point of Air.

**LONG-TAILED SKUA — *Stercorarius longicaudatus*. V.**

An immature bird was shot at Foryd, near Rhyl, in 1869 by Mr. R. H. Venables Kyrke and presented to the Grosvenor Museum, Chester.

**GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL — *Larus marinus*. R. NB.**

Fairly common both on the coast and inland.

*Ryl Oct 68*



**LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL — *Larus fuscus*. SV. WV. PM. NB.**

Fairly common. Formerly bred in the county but no records in recent years although a pair may have bred at Shotton 1955-56.

**HERRING GULL — *Larus argentatus*. R. NB.**

Common.

*Rhyt Aug '68*

**COMMON GULL — *Larus canus*. R. WV. NB.**

Common during winter especially between Mostyn and Point of Air, where up to 3,000 birds have been observed roosting at low water. Small numbers occur in the county throughout the year.

*Ringling recovery*: A bird ringed at Mecklenburgh, Germany, 17.6.37 was recovered in Flint 24.7.38.

**GLAUCOUS GULL — *Larus hyperboreus*. V.**

An immature bird was present at Shotton Pools in August 1959 and an adult bird at Point of Air 21st September 1963.

**ICELAND GULL — *Larus glaucoides*. V.**

Several records in 1959/1960 at Shotton Pools.

**LITTLE GULL — *Larus minutus*. PM. NB.**

Irregular in small numbers.

**BLACK-HEADED GULL — *Larus ridibundus*. R. WV. B.**

Common; breeds at several sites in the county.

*Rhyt Aug '68*

**KITTIWAKE — *Rissa tridactyla*. PM. NB.**

*(Come into 70)*

Regular off shore in small numbers. Occasional inland records exist.

**BLACK TERN — *Chlidonias niger*. PM. NB.**

Regular in varying numbers, maximum count of 80 recorded at Shotton.

**GULL-BILLED TERN — *Gelochelidon nilotica*. V.**

A single bird was present at Shotton on 1st August, 1959.

**COMMON TERN — *Sterna hirundo*. SV. B.**

*(Liquor Bay, June 69)*

Breeds in small numbers at sites which are not really suitable, nests usually being washed out by high tides or subject to severe predation.

**ARCTIC TERN — *Sterna paradisaea*. SV. PM. B.**

One or two pair have attempted to breed with Common Terns at Shotton on a number of occasions but the degree of success is unknown.

**ROSEATE TERN — *Sterna dougallii*. SV. NB.**

Regular visitor, usually to Point of Air.

**LITTLE TERN — *Sterna albifrons*. SV. PM. B.**

Breeds at two sites in the county, one of which was first recorded in 1866. The colonies are diminishing however, due to excessive disturbance by holiday-makers. Numbers increase during the autumn migration and up to 300 birds have been observed during this period.

**SANDWICH TERN — *Sterna sandvicensis*. SV. PM. NB.**

Regular, especially during July and August.

**RAZORBILL — *Alca torda*. SV. WV. NB. *Rhyt May 1969. Oiled.***

Uncommon. Most records are of oiled or injured birds.

**LITTLE AUK — *Plautus alle*. V.**

Gale-driven wanderer to coast.

**GUILLEMOT — *Uria aalge*. SV. WV. NB. *Rhyt May 1969. Oiled.***

Occasionally reported off-shore during post breeding dispersal.

**PUFFIN — *Fratercula arctica*. SV. NB.**

Forrest wrote of this species as being "occasionally blown inland during rough weather", and this adequately describes the status today.

**STOCK DOVE — *Columba oenas*. R. B.**

Breeds in small numbers.

**ROCK DOVE — *Columba livia*.**

Although reported to have occurred in the past, the status of this species is now completely obscured by the presence of feral birds.

**WOOD PIGEON — *Columba palumbus*. R.B. *Hlyn Helyg Dec 68***

Common throughout the county.

**TURTLE DOVE — *Streptopelia turtur*. SV. B.**

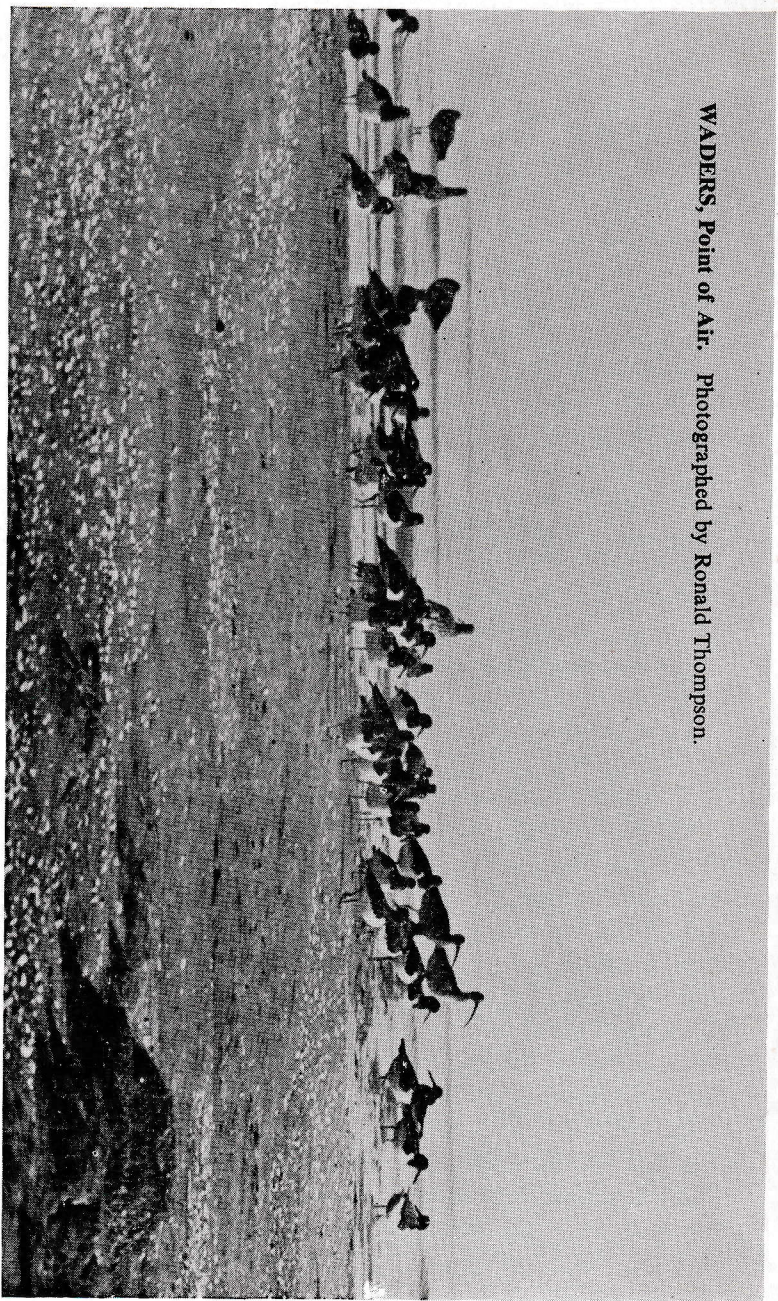
Breeds regularly in small numbers at a limited number of sites.

**COLLARED DOVE — *Streptopelia decaocto*. R. B.**

First recorded as a breeding species in 1963. Now breeds regularly in several areas and is increasing in numbers.



WADEERS, Point of Air. Photographed by Ronald Thompson.





**CUCKOO — *Cuculus canorus*. SV. B.**

Fairly common.

**BARN OWL — *Tyto alba*. R. B.**

Apparently decreasing but more information is required.

**LITTLE OWL — *Athene noctua*. R. B.**

Breeds in small numbers.

**TAWNY OWL — *Strix aluco*. R. B.**

Well distributed in the county.

**LONG-EARED OWL — *Asio otus*.**

Forrest recorded the Long-Eared Owl as being resident in Flintshire but there are no recent records of the bird occurring in the county.

**SHORT-EARED OWL — *Asio flammeus*. WV. NB.**

Reported near coast in small numbers usually during winter.

**NIGHTJAR — *Caprimulgus europaeus*. SV. B.**

Regular in small numbers but suitable habitats are decreasing.

**SWIFT — *Apus apus*. SV. B.** *Phyl Aug 68*

Very common, large numbers feeding at Shotton Pools during the early summer. One unusually late bird was reported on 12th October, 1950, at Prestatyn.

**KINGFISHER — *Alcedo atthis*. R. S.**

Present but only in small numbers. Slowly recovering from the severe winter of 1963.

**ROLLER — *Coracias garrulus*. V.**

Two records of this species having been shot in the county are quoted by Forrest.

**HOOPOE — *Upupa epops*. V.**

Recent records refer to a bird seen at Pennyfford in September, 1957. During the same month a female was also seen at Marford and subsequently found dead. In 1959 a bird was present at Northop from 6th—9th of April.

**GREEN WOODPECKER — *Picus viridis*. R. B.**

Widely distributed. Regular in suitable habitats.

**GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER — *Dendrocopus major*. R. B.**

Most common Woodpecker, and widely distributed.

*Heard near St George  
Feb 69*



**LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER — *Dendrocopus minor*.  
R. B.**

Scarce. Least common of the three resident woodpeckers.

**WRYNECK — *Jynx torquilla*. V.**

No record of this species since 1861.

**WOODLARK — *Lullula arborea*.**

Several records of this species occurred in 1945-46. However, no further reports have been made since that time. It has been claimed that this bird is a breeding resident in the county. Prior to the publication of this report, a number of suitable areas where the bird had allegedly bred were carefully checked with negative results.

**SKYLARK — *Alauda arvensis*. R. PM. B.**

Common throughout the county.

*Aug. Sept 68*

**SHORELARK — *Eramophila alpestris*. WV. NB.**

Has become a regular visitor in the last few years, usually wintering on the shore between Gronant and Point of Air. In 1966/67 up to seventy birds were reported present in the county.

**SWALLOW — *Hirundo rustica*. SV. PM. B.**

*Rhyl June 69*

A very common breeding species and abundant passage migrant.

*Ringling recoveries*: During the late summer Swallows roost gregariously in reed and osier beds, and such a roost exists at Shotton Pools. Each year several thousand birds are ringed and a considerable amount of information about the migratory behaviour of the Swallows roosting at Shotton has been obtained.

It is immediately apparent that the bulk of the birds using the roost in autumn are in their first year and a substantial number of adults only appear in September when the second broods have fledged.

As might be expected, birds ringed as nestlings in Flintshire, Cheshire, Lancashire and Shropshire have been found using the roost but, in addition to these, birds originating in Yorkshire, Leicestershire and Ireland have been recorded at Shotton. Although some pre-migratory wandering is indicated, the time-lapse between the nestling being ringed and re-

trapped at Shotton shows that, as a general rule, the birds remain fairly close to home for some weeks after fledging. Several other roosts exist within 30-40 miles radius of Shotton and a frequent interchange of birds using these roosts has been discovered. One bird ringed at Shotton was re-trapped the next day at Sandbach 28 miles away.

The migration route through Britain is in a south easterly direction over a broad front, and the absence of any recoveries from south or even mid-Wales is noticeable. The foreign recoveries so far received show a progressive southerly movement during autumn, birds being reported from Spain, Algeria and West Cameroons in October, Nigeria in November and South Africa in December. The controls from South Africa are usually in the period December to March, although an exceptionally late bird was controlled on 11th April, 1965, at Johannesburg, Transvaal.

**HOUSE MARTIN — *Delichon urbica*. SV. B.** *Phyl June 64*  
Common.

**SAND MARTIN — *Riparia riparia*. SV. PM. B.**

Several large colonies exist, mainly in sand quarries.

*Ringed recoveries* : Birds ringed at colonies in the county have been controlled on a number of occasions roosting with the Swallows at Shotton, and less frequently at roosts in Sussex. A juvenile ringed at Shotton 24.7.66 was controlled at Bonin Vendée, France, 27.8.66.

**RAVEN — *Corvus corax*. R. B.**

Regularly seen, and only in occasional years not reported to have bred in the county.

**CARRION CROW — *Corvus corone*. R. B.** *Phyl Feb 64*  
Common throughout the county.

**ROOK — *Corvus frugilegus*. R. B.** *Phyl Hellyg Dec 68*  
Common.

**JACKDAW — *Corvus monedula*. R. B.**

Somewhat unevenly distributed, being very common in some areas.

**MAGPIE — *Pica pica*. R. B.** *Phyl Hellyg Dec 68*  
Common in all areas having apparently increased in recent years.



**NUTCRACKER — *Nucifraga caryocatactes*. V.**

A bird of this species was shot in Mostyn in 1753, the record being a "first" for the British Isles.

**JAY — *Garrulus glandarius*. R. B. *Comm Sept 69***

Relatively common.

**CHOUGH — *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*. V.**

Pennant stated about 1790 that the Chough occurred in Flintshire. Forrest, however, suggests that these were birds that wandered into Flintshire from the neighbourhood of Conway, where the Chough, at that time, was numerous. However, there have been no records in recent years.

**GREAT TIT — *Parus major*. R. B.**

Common throughout the county.

**BLUE TIT — *Parus caeruleus*. R. B. *Rhyl Dec 68***

Common throughout the county.

**COAL TIT — *Parus ater*. R. B.**

Well distributed but far less common than the two previous species.

**MARSH TIT — *Parus palustris*. R. B.**

Fairly common; most frequently met with on higher ground.

**WILLOW TIT — *Parus montanus*. R. B.**

Fairly common.

**LONG-TAILED TIT — *Aegithalos caudatus*. R. B. *Alyn-Helg Dec 68***

Fairly common throughout the county and have obviously benefited from the recent mild winters.

**BEARDED TIT — *Panurus biarmicus*. V.**

During the autumn of 1965 an extensive eruption of this species occurred and on 31st October a small party of Bearded Tits was discovered at Shotton Pools. Estimates of the number present varied, but sixteen birds were ringed, two of which had been ringed in the Netherlands earlier in the year.

*Ringed recoveries*: A male and a female, both juveniles and re-trapped at Shotton on 31st October, 1965, had been ringed at Zwarte Meer, Overijssel, Netherlands, on 6th August, 1965.

**NUTHATCH — *Sitta europaea*. R. B.**

Common woodland species throughout the county.

**TREE CREEPER** — *Gerthia familiaris*. R. B. *Llyn Helig Dec '68*  
Common in all areas of deciduous woodland.

**WREN** — *Troglodytes troglodytes*. R. B. *Rhyl April '69*  
Common, having made a rapid recovery since the severe winter of 1963.

**DIPPER** — *Cinclus cinclus*. R. B. *Cefn April 1969*  
Local, but present on most suitable streams in the county.

**MISTLE THRUSH** — *Turdus viscivorus*. R. B. *Munabot Jun '69*  
Well distributed in all areas apart from the coastal strip.

**FIELDFARE** — *Turdus pilaris*. WV. PM. NB.  
Often abundant and common even on high ground in milder winters. Late birds have occasionally been recorded in May.

**SONG THRUSH** — *Turdus philomelus*. R. B.  
Fairly common but apparently still recovering from the severe winter of 1963.

**REDWING** — *Turdus iliacus*. WV. PM. NB.  
Common most winters, but numbers present fluctuate markedly.

**RING OUZEL** — *Turdus torquatus*. SV. B.  
Local, but well established in the Clwydian range.

**BLACKBIRD** — *Turdus merula*. R. B. *Rhyl Dec '68*  
Common throughout the county; its range on high ground over-lapping that of the Ring Ouzel.

**WHEATEAR** — *Oenanthe oenanthe*. SV. PM. B.  
Common as a breeding species in the Clwydian range, but thinly distributed elsewhere.

**STONCHAT** — *Saxicola torquata*. R. B.  
Very thinly distributed, though a slight increase in recent years has been noted.

**WHINCHAT** — *Saxicola rubetra*. SV. B.  
Fairly common in open country especially in the hills and in coastal areas.

**REDSTART** — *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*. SV. B. *Rhyl April '69*  
Well distributed and fairly common. In some areas in the Clwydian range the species is numerous.

**BLACK REDSTART** — *Phoenicurus ochrurus*. PM. NB.  
Scarce. An adult male was recorded at Shotton in early March. 1965.



**NIGHTINGALE — *Luscinia megarhynchos*. V.**

North Wales lies outside the normal range of the Nightingale; however, the bird does occur at irregular intervals in the county.

**ROBIN — *Erithacus rubecula*. R. B.**

Common throughout the county.

*Ringed recoveries :*

- (i) A pullus ringed at Loggerheads on the 9.6.65 was recovered at Market Drayton, Shropshire, 17.9.65.
- (ii) A juvenile ringed at Padeswood Pool 21.7.63 was recovered at Tarnos, France, 27.9.63.

**GRASSHOPPER WARBLER — *Locustella naevia*. SV. B.**

Relatively common in many parts of the county, favouring scrubland and young conifer plantations.

**REED WARBLER — *Aeracephalus scirpaceus*. SV. B.**

Local and only present in small numbers. Most suitable habitats are too small to support a large population.

**SEDGE WARBLER — *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*. SV. B.**

Common in most areas especially in the Dee Valley, becoming scarce on higher ground.

*Ringed recoveries :*

- (i) A bird ringed at Avoch, Ross-shire 30.6.55 was found dead near Rhyl 14.5.56.
- (ii) A juvenile ringed at Shotton 23.7.64 was recovered at Frampton Cotterell, Nr. Bristol, 27.8.64.

**BLACKCAP — *Sylvia atricapilla*. SV. B.**

Fairly common, occasionally recorded during winter. In most areas more abundant than the Garden Warbler.

**GARDEN WARBLER — *Sylvia borin*. SV. B.**

Fairly common. In contrast to the habitat suggested by the name, this species is most abundant in areas of dense, rough vegetation. In such areas, on high ground, it outnumbers the Blackcap.

**WHITETHROAT — *Sylvia communis*. SV. B.**

Common throughout the county.

**LESSER WHITETHROAT — *Sylvia curruca*. SV. B.**

Relatively uncommon compared with the Whitethroat, but possibly overlooked because of more aboreal behaviour.

**WILLOW WARBLER — *Phylloscopus trochilus*. SV. B.**

*Waven April 69*

Abundant, especially in the hills.

**CHIFFCHAFF — *Phylloscopus collybita*. SV. B.**

Common, though not nearly so abundant as the Willow Warbler.

**WOOD WARBLER — *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*. SV. B.**

Local, though fairly widespread, especially in the wooded valleys of the Clwydian range. It is the least common of the breeding phylloscopus warblers.

**GOLDCREST — *Regulus regulus*. R. B.**

Only occasionally recorded breeding, but is fairly common and almost certainly overlooked in spring and summer.

**SPOTTED FLYCATCHER — *Muscicapa striata*. SV. B.**

Well distributed and fairly common.

**PIED FLYCATCHER — *Ficedula hypoleuca*. SV. B.**

Although local the species is fairly common in the county. In a number of areas where suitable nesting sites have been provided a density of 1-2 pair per acre has been quickly established. The presence of running water in the area, although not a necessary feature, apparently provides an added attraction.

*Ringed recovery*: A pullus ringed in a nest box at Cilcain, 18th June, 1967, was recovered at Puente del Porto, Coruna, Spain, on 24th August 1967.

**DUNNOCK — *Prunella modularis*. R. B.**

*Waven April 69*

Common throughout the county.

**MEADOW PIPIT — *Anthus pratensis*. R. SV. PM. B.**

Abundant as a breeding species on high ground, where it replaces the Tree Pipit. Higher ground is generally abandoned during the winter months.

**TREE PIPIT — *Anthus trivialis*. SV. B.**

Fairly common breeding visitor to the tree clad slopes of the Clwydian range.



**WATER PIPIT — *Anthus spinoletta spinoletta*. WV. NB.**

Fairly regular at Shotton Pools in small numbers, up to six having been recorded at one time

**ROCK PIPIT — *Anthus spinoletta petrosus*. WV. NB.**

Regular visitor to the saltings of the Dee estuary, between October and March.

**PIED WAGTAIL — *Motacilla alba yarrellii*. R. PM. B. *Ringd April '69***

Breeds from the lowlands in the Dee Valley to the higher slopes of the Clwydian range. Substantial numbers roost during winter in the reed beds at Shotton.

*Ringing recoveries :*

- (i) A juvenile female ringed at Shotton 12.9.63 was controlled at Chew Valley Lake, Somerset, 16.4.66.
- (ii) A juvenile ringed at Shotton 29.8.63 was recovered at Beira Alta, Portugal, 29.12.63.
- (iii) A juvenile ringed at Shotton 4.8.63 was recovered at Galdácono, near Bilbao, Spain, 12.10.63.

**WHITE WAGTAIL — *Motacilla alba alba*. PM. NB.**

Generally reported only during spring passage; juveniles and adult birds in moult making identification difficult in autumn.

**GREY WAGTAIL — *Motacilla cinerea*. R. B.**

A well established breeding species in the valleys of the Clwydian range, and to a lesser extent on suitable streams down to 100ft. above sea level.

**YELLOW WAGTAIL — *Motacilla flava*. SV. PM. B.**

Fairly common breeding species, particularly in the lowlands in the eastern part of the county.

*Ringing recoveries :*

- (i) A pullus ringed at Shotton 9.6.62 was recovered at Jesus-Tortosa, Tarragona, Spain, 11.4.65.
- (ii) A bird ringed at Shotton 5.8.67 was recovered at St. Brienc, Côtes du Nord, France, 15.9.67.
- (iii) A juvenile ringed at Iles d'Ouessant, Finistère, France, 4.9.64 was controlled at Shotton 26.7.65.

**WAXWING — *Bombycilla garrulus*. WV. NB.**

Occurs in small numbers most years. The winters of 1959/60 and 1965/66, when irruptions occurred, were particularly notable, when large flocks were seen in several areas.

**GREAT GREY SHRIKE — *Lanius excubitor*. V.**

In former years was reported as being "not infrequently met with", but no recent records exist.

**LESSER GREY SHRIKE — *Lanius minor*. V.**

A single bird was present at Shotton on 2nd and 22nd September, 1961.

**RED-BACKED SHRIKE — *Lanius collurio*. V.**

Formerly nested in North Wales, and was regarded by Rogers as "not uncommon" at St. Asaph; Not recorded in recent years.

**STARLING — *Sturnus vulgaris*. R. WV. B. Rhyl Dec '68**

Common. A roost reported at St. Asaph in 1959 was estimated to contain some 20,000 birds.

**ROSE-COLOURED STARLING — *Sturnus roseus*. V.**

One reported to have been shot at Point of Air in December, 1862.

**HAWFINCH — *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*. R. B.**

Although nesting has not been proven young birds have been seen on several occasions.

**GREENFINCH — *Carduelis chloris*. R. WV. B. Rhyl Sept '68**

Abundant. Although large numbers have been ringed a link with the continent has only recently been established when a French ringed bird was trapped at Connah's Quay.

**GOLDFINCH — *Carduelis carduelis*. R. B.**

Well distributed throughout the county, but nowhere numerous.

**SISKIN — *Carduelis spinus*. WV. NB.**

Regular in varying numbers; flocks of up to 100 birds having been reported.

**LINNET — *Acanthis cannabina*. R. WV. B.**

Abundant as a breeding species, and large flocks winter in coastal areas.

**TWITE — *Acanthis flavirostris*. R. WV. B.**

Regular visitor to the coast in small numbers and almost certainly overlooked.

On May 13th, 1967, at Shotton, a pair of Twite were located and a nest found with an incomplete clutch of eggs.



The nest contained five eggs (female incubating) on May 20th, but was empty on May 27th, possibly flooded by a high tide. The nest was about 6" above the ground in a clump of Sea Purslane, on the salt-marsh. Despite a further search on May 27th and on subsequent dates the birds could not be re-located.

This appears to be the only Welsh record apart from the doubtful one in Merioneth in 1905.

**REDPOLL — *Acanthis flammea*. R. WV. B.**

Thinly distributed, but breeds in all areas from coastal strip to slopes of Clwydian range.

**BULLFINCH — *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*. R. B. *Agell March 70***

Fairly common and well distributed except for higher ground and coastal strip, where the bird is only occasionally recorded.

**CROSSBILL — *Loxia curvirostra*. SV. WV. NB.**

Regular in varying numbers. The presence of juvenile birds in early summer has not been considered to be sufficient evidence of breeding, in view of the exceptionally early breeding season of this species on the continent.

**CHAFFINCH — *Fringilla coelebs*. R. WV. B. *Rhyf Dec 68***

Abundant. Ringing indicates that winter visitors are of continental origin.

*Ringing recoveries :*

- (i) A first year bird ringed at Shotton 31.1.65 was recovered at Kongsvinger, Hedmark, Norway, 22.9.65.
- (ii) A first year bird ringed at Shotton 30.1.65 was recovered at St. Kathelena-Waver, Antwerpen, Belgium, 16.10.66.
- (iii) A first year bird ringed at Shotton 30.1.65 was recovered at Järvsö, Gävleborg, Sweden, 3.4.65.

**BRAMBLING — *Fringilla montifringilla*. WV. NB.**

Regular visitor arriving usually October and departing during April. Numbers present are variable; in some years the bird being abundant during mid-winter.

*Ringing recoveries :*

- (i) A bird ringed at Kapellan, Antwerpen, Belgium, 27.10.64 was controlled at Shotton 31.12.64.

- (ii) A bird ringed at Wassenaar, Zuid Holland, Netherlands, 12.10.64 was controlled at Shotton 31.1.65.
- (iii) A bird ringed at Wassenaar, Zuid Holland, Netherlands, was controlled at Shotton 21.2.65.
- (iv) A bird ringed at Shotton 21.2.65 was controlled on a ship in the Baltic Sea, near Gdansk, Poland, 24.4.66.

**YELLOW HAMMER — *Emberiza citrinella*. R. B.**

Well distributed throughout the county.

**CORN BUNTING — *Emberiza calandra*. R. B.**

Very localised but fairly common where present.

**CIRL BUNTING — *Emberiza cirius*. V.**

Formerly reported as not uncommon, but it has not been reported in recent years.

**REED BUNTING — *Emberiza schoeniclus*. R. WV. B.**

Common in all suitable localities.

**LAPLAND BUNTING — *Calcarius lapponicus*. WV. NB.**

Irregular visitor to the coastal strip in small numbers.

**SNOW BUNTING — *Plectrophenax nivalis*. WV. NB.**

In recent years has become a regular visitor to the coast, usually between Point of Air and Gronant, where flocks of up to 50 birds have been recorded.

**HOUSE SPARROW — *Passer domesticus*. R. B.**

Common in all suitable areas of the county.

*Rhye Dec 68*

**TREE SPARROW — *Passer montanus*. R. WV. B.**

As a breeding species appears to be only thinly distributed, but often present in large flocks in winter.



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