

THE

FLINTSHIRE

BIRD REPORT

1972 - 1973



The production of an annual bird report has now become so expensive that it is completely out of the question for a small society like ours. However a number of interesting records have been received and are so far unpublished in any form. To avoid losing these records it has been decided to bring them together in a series of reports of a rather lower standard than we would have liked but more in keeping with the amount of money at our disposal.

The list of birds is not exhaustive and those species abundant in the county at various times of the year have been omitted unless some special comment seemed warranted e.g., maximum count, earliest or latest date recorded etc.

There are also a number of species not included which we are sure occurred in the county at some time during the period covered by this report. We are equally certain that many of these birds were seen by competent observers but regretfully no permanent record was made.

The problem can only be solved by you. Please make a special effort to make regular notes when bird watching and submit them to the County recorder or the Society Secretary at the end of each year.

Finally we would like to thank all those observers who have sent in records and hope that they continue to do so.

Without their assistance no report of any kind would be possible.

RED THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*

Three records only, all at Point of Ayr:--

1 on 2nd October, 1972: 2 on 22nd October, 1972: 2 on 8th December, 1972

BLACK THROATED DIVER *Gavia arctica*

A single bird at Point of Ayr on 20th March, 1973.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*

A single record of a bird at Gronant on 29th January, 1972.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Six at Gronant on 29th December, 1972 and a single bird at Rhuddlan 6th January, 1972 and at Rhyl on 4th January, 1972. Regular at Shotton Pools and Llyn Helyg throughout the year.

BLACK NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis*

A bird partially in Summer plumage was seen at Shotton on 16th March, 1972.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Occasionally reported from Shotton and Llyn Helyg and small numbers off shore at Point of Ayr and Gronant.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*

Four pair at Prestatyn Quarry 18th January, 1972

MANY SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus*

Three birds seen off Prestatyn 17th June, 1972

LEACH'S PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

A single bird at Rhyl 29th December, 1973.

GANNET *Sula Bassana*

Observed in small numbers at Point of Ayr, usually September/October.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocoracidae*

Regular in the Dee Estuary. Maximum counts:- 120 at Gronant 1st December, 1972 and 60 at Gronant 1st October, 1973.

BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris*

A single bird at Shotton on 11th November, 1973



GREY HERON *Ardea Cinerea*

Reported in small numbers from all suitable localities but most frequently at Shotton.

MUTE SWAN. *Cygnus olor*

Small numbers at Shotton. Llyn Helyg and the coast. A pair bred at Shotton in 1972.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

Two birds at Llyn Helyg on 22nd January, 1972 and two adults and a juvenile at the same locality from 9th to 31st December, 1972. Three birds on the River Clwyd at Rhuddlan 28th January, 1972.

BEWICK'S SWAN. *Cygnus bewickii*

During the Winter of 1972/73 regular at Llyn Helyg with a maximum count of 17 birds. Occasionally reported on coast with a maximum of 26 birds moving west at Point of Ayr on 9th November, 1972. At Shotton 8 birds on 5th March, 1972 and 6 on 26th February, 1973.

SHELDUCK. *Tadorna tadorna*

Regular in estuary from Shotton to Point of Ayr. Maximum counts:-  
86 including young birds at Rhyl 26th July, 1973 and 300+ birds at Shotton on 15th July, 1972, 9th June, 1973 and 1st July, 1973.

MALLARD *Anas Platyrhynchos*

Maximum counts:-	Shotton 16th January, 1972	300
	20th May 1973	280
	Llyn Helyg 6th Nov. 1972	300+
	Point of Ayr 22nd Sept. 1972	300+
	10th Nov 1972	300+

TEAL *Anas crecca*

Breeding records from Shotton in 1972 and 1973. Maximum counts:-  
150 at Llyn Helyg on 6th November, 1972. 200 at Shotton on the same date  
100+ at Shotton on 30th December, 1973.

GADWALL *Anas Strepera*

A single bird at Shotton on 12th August, 1973.

WIGEON *Anas penelope*

Regular winter visitor to Dee Estuary and inland waters  
Maximum counts:- 125 Llyn Helyg on 1st January, 1973 100 at Point of Ayr on 26th November, 1972. 150 at Shotton on 10th January, 1973. 130 Shotton on 2nd September, 1973.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

Regular on Dee Estuary during Winter. Maximum counts:-  
800 at Shotton on 6th November, 1972. 1500 at Shotton on 28th October, 1973

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

Regular passage migrant most records are of single birds at Shotton Pools during the Autumn. Other Shotton records include a single bird on 6th May, 1973. A pair on 26th June, 1973. Three males and a female on 27th August, 1973.

SHOVELER *Anas Clypeata*

Recorded in small numbers off shore or on inland waters throughout the year.  
Maximum counts:- 12 at Shotton on 30th July, 1972 17 at Llyn Helyg on  
1st December, 1972. 23 at Point of Ayr on 15th September, 1972. 8 at Shotton  
on 27th August, 1973.

POCHARD *Aythya ferina*.

Regular winter visitor late July to late February. Maximum counts:-  
54 at Shotton on 5th February, 1972. 52 at Llyn Helyg on 8th December, 1972.  
130 at Shotton on 9th December, 1973.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Regular during Winter months and occasional summer records but breeding not recorded.  
Maximum counts:- 40 at Llyn Helyg on 10th November, 1972 14 at Shotton on  
26th December, 1972. 35 at Shotton on 16th December, 1973.

SCAUP *Aythya marila*

The only records are from Shotton pools. 2 at Shotton on 14th December, 1973  
and a female on 19th October, 1973.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*

Regular off shore. Maximum counts:- 38 at Point of Ayr on 2nd October, 1972.

LONG TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*

A single bird at Rhyl Marine Lake on 14th November, 1972. A single bird at Shotton  
from 28th October to 17th November, 1973. Two birds present at Shotton on  
18th November, 1973.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

Occasionally reported off shore but more frequently inland  
Maximum counts:- 5 at Llyn Helyg on 6th November to 31st December, 1972  
6 at Shotton on 20th November, 1972. 5 at Shotton on 18th November, 1973.

RED BREASTED MERGANSER. *Mergus Serrator*

Regular off shore. Maximum counts:- 9 at Point of Ayr on 20th October, 1972  
4 at Shotton 2nd December, 1972. 1 male and 2 females at Shotton on 4th November, 1973

GOOSANDER *Mergus Merganser*

Irregular 2 males and 1 female at Llyn Helyg on 26th January, 1972  
1 female at Shotton on 14th May, 1972. female at Shotton on 4th February, 1973.

SPARROW HAWK. *Accipiter nisus*

Regularly reported from suitable localities



BUZZARD Buteo Buteo

Most records from Clwydian Range. 4 birds at Shotton on 15th September, 1972.

HEN HARRIER. Circus cyaneus

A single bird at Shotton on 5th March, 1972. 2 at Shotton on 15th October, 1972  
1 Female at Shotton on 16th November, 1972

MARSH HARRIER Circus aeruginosus

1 Female at Shotton on 27th August, 1973

PEREGRINE Falco peregrinus

Single birds reported at Point of Ayr as follows:-

1 immature male on 2nd September, 1973. 1 female on 3rd October, 1972  
1 female on 6th October, 1972. A single bird at Shotton on 27th August, 1973.

MERLIN Falco Columbarius

All records of single birds in coastal areas from August to March.

RED FOOTED FALCON. Falco cesoertinus

Immature bird at Shotton on 28th October, 1973

This is the first record of the Red Footed Falcon for the county.

KESTREL Falco tinnunculus

Frequently reported from all localities. After prolonged south easterly winds at least 17 birds were present at Shotton on 26th August, 1973.

RED GROUSE Lagopus lagopus

Regular records all confined to Clwydian Range

PARTRIDGE Perdix Perdix

Numerous records well distributed throughout the county

PHEASANT Phasianus colchicus

Common in all suitable localities

WATER RAIL Rallus aquaticus

Records exist for all months except April, May and June at Shotton, Point of Ayr and Llyn Helyg.

MOORHEN Gallinula chloropus

Common. Large numbers present at Shotton during Winter.

COOT Fulica atra

Common. Maximum count. 60 at Shotton on 14th October, 1973

OYSTERCATCHER. *Haematopus ostralegus*

Bred on Shotton Marshes in 1972 and 1973. Common on coast during Winter.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

A few pair bred in both years on coast, Point of Ayr to Gronant. Maximum counts:-  
Occur during Spring and Autumn passages  
150 at Shotton on 29th May, 1972. 226 at Shotton on 19th August, 1973.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

No records of breeding for 1972 and 1973. One to three birds present at Shotton on 22nd April - 11th June, 1972. Three birds at Shotton on 11th May, 1973

DOTTEREL. *Eudromias morinellus*

Following several days of south-easterly winds a single bird was recorded at Shotton on 27th August, 1973

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Regular reports on passage during Spring and Autumn from Flint, Sandycroft, Shotton and Point of Ayr. Maximum counts:- 320 at Shotton on 26th August, 1972. 130 at Point of Ayr on 26th November, 1972 and 350 at Shotton on 15th December, 1973.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

Regular during Winter at Gronant - Point of Ayr in small numbers in both years.

LAPWING *Vanellus*

Continues to decline as a breeding species. Maximum counts:-  
700 at Shotton on 27th August, 1972. 6,000 at Rhuddlan on 28th January, 1973  
950 at Shotton on 17th February, 1973

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*

Reported in small numbers from suitable coastal localities.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

Scattered records during Autumn in both years. Up to 4 birds at Gronant in October, 1972. At Shotton on 18th October, 1973 18 birds. Only one Spring record - single bird at Prestatyn on 17th June, 1972.

TEMMINCK'S STINT *Calidris temminckii*

Single bird at Shotton on 29th May, 1972

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

Common on coast. Winter counts frequently exceed 5,000.



CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris Ferruginea*

All records are during Autumn migration. Reported on eight occasions in 1972 mainly at Point of Ayr with a maximum count of 8 on 15th September, 1972. In 1973 regular at Shotton during Autumn with a maximum count of 20 birds in October.

KNOT *Calidris canutus*

Wintering flocks of up to 10,000 birds reported at Point of Ayr.

Sanderling. *Calidris alba*

Good numbers reported during Spring migration in late May in both years.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

The species were reported regularly at Shotton as a passage migrant and winter visitor. Maximum counts:- 18 at Shotton on 9th June, 1972. 22 at Shotton on 12th February, 1972 and 11 at Shotton on 12th October, 1973.

BUFF BREASTED SANDPIPER *Tryngites subruficollis*

A single bird at Sealandon 18th - 25th October, 1973. This is the first record for the county.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*

Small numbers reported during Autumn passage at Rhyl, Point of Ayr, and Shotton with maximum counts of 14 at Shotton on 10th September, 1972 and 4 at Shotton on 19th August, 1973. In both years single birds were reported during Winter.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

Breeding records at Shotton in both years. Considerable numbers reported at Shotton and Point of Ayr during Autumn. Maximum counts:- 400 at Point of Ayr, on 3rd September, 1972 and 1250 at Shotton on 19th August, 1973.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

Regular records during Spring and Autumn from Shotton, Point of Ayr and Rhyl. 3 at Point of Ayr on 22nd September, 1972. 3 at Rhyl on 4th September, 1972 and 16th September, 1972. 3 at Shotton on 20th May, 1973. 3 at Shotton on 27th August, 1973. 4 at Rhyl on 5th September, 1973.



GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

Regular in small numbers particularly August to December. In 1973 a single bird at Shotton 11th March and several sightings in June and July of that year.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

All records at Shotton with single birds on 4th May 1972 and 22nd April, 27th August and 16th October, 1973.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos*

Frequent records of small numbers of birds at Shotton and Point of Ayr from April to October.

BLACK TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

In both years birds first appeared during July and wintered on the estuary. Maximum counts recorded at Shotton were: 980 on 30th July 1972 and 1,200 on 7th January, 1973.

BAR TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*

All reports in the period May to September. Maximum counts: 60 on 17th September, 1972, 300 on 20th May, 1973 and 258 on 9th June, 1973. recorded at Shotton

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

Large flocks wintered on the estuary in both years. Maximum count at Shotton was 3,200 on 19th August, 1973.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

Regular in small numbers from July to September. At Shotton 5 birds present on 30th September, 1972 and 8 on 19th August, 1973.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

Reports of birds roding at several sites

SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*

Up to 200 birds regularly reported at Shotton during winter months. During December, 1972 counts of 500 on 2nd and 1,200 on 10th.

JACK SNIPE *Limnocryptes minimus*

Small numbers of less than 10 birds recorded at Shotton during the winter, months

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Several reports of single birds at Point of Ayr August/September.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

A single bird at Shotton 15th May, 1973

LITTLE GULL, *Larus minutus*

An immature bird at Shotton 4th June, 1972 and on 9th September, 1973.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

A pair bred at Prestatyn Quarry, 1972.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

All reports from Shotton 1 23rd July, 1972; 4 20th May, 1973; 3 27th August, 1973

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*

Regular passage migrant from June to September. Maximum counts: 150+ at Point of Ayr 29th July, 1972 and 300 on 30th July, 1973.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

The colony at Shotton continues to thrive with about 100 pair nesting in 1972 and 1973. Maximum count of 300 birds at the colony on 14th July, 1973.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna Paradisaea*

Suprisingly few records only a single report of a bird at Shotton on 23rd July, 1972, 2 birds at Point of Ayr 16th May, 1972 and 3 Gronant 1st October, 1973

ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii*

A single bird at Shotton 1st and 2nd July, 1972

LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons*

Bred in small numbers

GUILLEMOT *Uriaaalgae*

Small numbers reported off Point of Ayr. Maximum 15 birds 2nd October, 1972

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

Several reports of birds in the Shotton area in July, 1972 with a maximum of 10 on 30th.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

No specific reports but now breeds over most of the county

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*

One at Shotton 29th July, 1972 and 19th August, 1972

CUCKOO *Cuculus Canorus*

Earliest reported date 28th April, 1972.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

One Shotton 30th July, 1972 and on 11th March, 8th April and 18th October, 1973.

SHORT EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

Several reports of two birds at Shotton October/November, 1972 and up to three owls there in March, 1973.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

One Rhuddlan 28th January, 1973.

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

Reports of single birds from Rhyl, Shotton and Point of Ayr in 1972 and from River Alyn, Mold, Rhyl and Shotton in 1973



GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*

Apart from usual sightings in woodland areas single birds at Point of Ayr on 29th January, '72 and at Shotton on 5th March, 1972.

SHORE LARK *Eremophila alpestris*

Three birds at Point of Ayr 9th November, 1972 and six larks there on the 10th. A single bird at Shotton 1st to 15th October, 1972 and two present at Shotton during the winter of 1973.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica*

In both years martins still present in October.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Maximum counts; 40 birds at Shotton 5th March, 1972 and 200+ birds there on 16th September, 1973.

WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*

Present at Shotton during both winters up to 5 individuals in 1972 and up to 7 in 1973.

BLUE HEADED WAGTAIL *Motacilla flavanflava*

A male of this sub species recorded at Shotton on 4th June, 1972.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

Flocks of 50 at Shotton 21st July, 1972 and 200+ there on 28th April, 1973.  
A late bird reported at Shotton 11th November, 1973.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*

A Shotton maximum counts at Shotton of 80 on 2nd July, 1972 and 250 on 5th November, 1972.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*

A single bird at Shotton on 11th November, 1973.

CEITI'S WARBLER *Cettia cetti*

One heard at Shotton 6th May, 1973.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Birds having the characteristics of the Greenland race *O.o.leucorrhoa* were reported at Point of Ayr 16th May, 1972 (2), at Shotton 19th May, 1972 (2), and again on 21st May, 1972(1).

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A female present at Shotton on 3rd and 10th December, 1972.

BEARDED TIT *Panurus biamicus*

Up to 6 birds at Shotton from 28th October, 1972 to 8th April, 1973 and up to 15 present October to December, 1973.

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra*

A large flock wintered at Shotton in both years, maximum counts. 150 16th March, 1972 and 100 2nd December, 1973.

ORTOLAN BUNTING *Emberiza hortulana*

A bird believed to be of this species was heard at Shotton on 3rd September, 1972

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Reported at Point of Ayr and Shotton during the winter of both 1972 and 1973.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Small flocks reported at Shotton and Point of Ayr in both winters.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*

Reported from several localities in 1972 (winter) with maximum counts of 40 at Downing 14th January and 45 at Point of Ayr 15th December.

TWITE *Acanthis flavirostris*

A pair present at Shotton on 4th May, 1972. Several reports of wintering birds at Shotton, Point of Ayr and Gronant with a maximum of 6 birds at Shotton 3rd December, 1972 and 25 birds there on 28th April, 1973.

RAVEN *Corvus corax*

A pair at Prestatyn Quarry 18th January, 1972.

Additions

SNOW GOOSE *Anser caerulescens*

One at Shotton 10th September, 1972

RED FOOTED FALCON *Falco vespertinus*

An immature bird at Shotton 28th October, 1973.

SHARP TAILED SANDPIPER *calidris acuminata*

A single bird present at Shotton 15th to 25th October, 1973.