

beautifully illustrate the species, but presumably in many cases also the individual birds concerned.

A single sentence usually provides the only information on the world distribution of each species, and the four or five-line species descriptions seem redundant in this work: it is not an identification guide and, in any case, many readers of this book will already own and have pored over the wealth of detail in books such as *Shorebirds* (Hayman, P., Marchant, J. & Prater, A.J. 1986. Croom Helm, London & Sydney).

The information on occurrence largely covers the period 1958-1985 and is presented in three formats. Distribution is mapped on a county by county basis with separate maps given for each season of occurrence, usually spring and autumn. I would, however, have preferred this information to have been presented instead in the now standard 10 km square mapping format. I assume that the authors retained the older county approach to enable ready comparison with the now out-of-print Poyser volumes *Scarce Migrant Birds in Britain and Ireland* (Sharrock, J.T.R. 1974) and *Rare Birds in Britain and Ireland* (Sharrock, J.T.R. & Sharrock, E.M. 1976). Total numbers of occurrences are shown by year in histogram form, enabling easy recognition of long-term trends in records. Similarly, seasonal changes in records are graphically illustrated as histograms of weekly occurrences. All records are given in full for those species which have visited Britain's shores on 12 of fewer occasions. In addition, extreme rarities which have occurred outside the period 1958-85 are also covered. Examples include such up to date gems as the Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum* in Kent and the Blackburnian Warbler *Dendroica fusca* on Fair Isle, both in autumn 1988.

Forty-one species of waders are covered, varying in rarity from the single occurrences of Semi-palmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus* on the Scilly Isles, Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* on the Humber Estuary and Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* at Teesmouth to

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*, White-rumped Sandpiper *C. fuscicollis* and Temminck's Stint *C. temminckii*, with 1,404, 262 and 1,714 occurrences respectively.

With few occurrences of many of the species covered long-term trends in occurrence are difficult to detect. In addition there has been a massive growth in the number of observers during the period, probably confounding what might otherwise be clear trends. This can be illustrated by the occurrence of the American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*. For this species there were only eight records prior to 1966, but the total had soared to 108 by 1985. Has there been a real increase in occurrence, or is it because birders now study golden plover flocks more intensively in the hope of finding such a vagrant? Were these birds overlooked in the past, and does it really matter anyway?

This brings me to my main criticism of the book: a lack of synthesis. After a long browse through the book I looked forward to an overview containing some account of the causes of vagrancy, dispersal, irruption, a generalised geography of rare bird occurrences, the major sources and sinks - what becomes of these vagrants - and some indication of the value of this data for the conservation of habitats regularly supporting vagrants or rare migrants. There is, however, no coverage of these general points. Were the data insufficient, or were the questions not asked? Perhaps the authors have reserved all for a companion volume. Surely a use must exist for this database of some 45,000 bird records?

Although this is a major gripe the book as it stands is a delight to browse through. It will no doubt help to while away the long dark winter nights in armchair twitching, until the spring arrives with its plethora of new records needing cataloguing ready for inclusion in the second (and hopefully revised) edition. I look forward to it.

Andy Brown

LIST OF MEMBERS - CHANGES SINCE BULLETIN 56

NEW MEMBERS

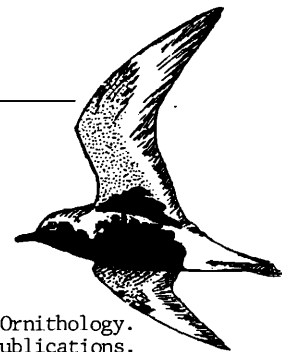
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RECENT RECOVERIES OF WADERS

compiled by Phil Holland



Data has been provided by Kim Lowe (Australia) and Nicola Baccetti (Italy) and the British Trust for Ornithology. Permission should be sought from the appropriate National Ringing Scheme before using these data in publications.

If you are able to provide data for this section please send it to Phil Holland, 2 Rennie Court, Lancaster, LA1 5XE, U.K.

Symbols. Age is coded according to EURING code, v = caught and released (i.e. controlled), vv = ring number and colour marks (dye or rings) read in the field, + = shot or killed by man, x = found dead or dying, ? = manner of recovery unknown. Co-ordinates are generally only given when the locality is first mentioned.

Data used. British Isles. Recoveries since last bulletin which are over 100 km (Oystercatcher 600 km) or 6000 days (Oystercatcher 7300 days).
 Italy. Recoveries since Bulletin 53; 100 km; 3000 days.
 Australia. Selected by source.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

FV08118	6	10.08.75	Point of Air, Clwyd 53 21'N 3 19'W	x	Giske, Norway 62 31'N 6 3'E	01.01.80
FV31359	5	04.06.77	Terrington, Norfolk 52 48'N 0 18'E	x	Brandal, Norway	21.06.87
FR38620	8	06.03.82	Rhos-on-Sea, Clwyd 53 19'N 3 44'W	+	Oye-Plage, Pas-de-Calais, France 50 59'N 2 3'E	24.08.87
FV89004	5	15.08.81	Camel Estuary, Cornwall 50 32'N 4 51'W	+	Vrasville, France 49 42'N 1 22'W	25.07.88
SS62791	2	11.12.68	Llanfairfechan, Gwynedd 53 15'N 4 0'W	v	Llanfairfechan, Gwynedd	11.02.89
FA06143	1	26.06.84	Sumburgh, Shetland 59 51'N 1 16'W	v	Llanfairfechan, Gwynedd	03.06.89
AT96427	6	05.09.63	Burry Inlet, Glamorgan 51 38'N 4 15'W	x	Dornoch, Highlands 57 52'N 4 1'W	21.07.89
FV63512	8	06.11.82	Dawlish Warren, Devon 50 37'N 3 26'W	x	Vagur, Suderoy, Faeroes 61 29'N 6 49'W	08.08.89
FS29279	8	24.09.72	Gibraltar Point, Wash 53 6'N 0 20'E	x	Haroy, Norway 62 47'N 6 28'E	15.08.89
FA09463	8	12.04.86	Forres, Grampian 57 37'N 3 40'W	v	Dawlish Warren, Devon	29.09.89
FC12897	1	25.05.88	May Island, Highlands 57 34'N 4 32'W	v	Dawlish Warren, Devon	29.09.89
SS89949	5	03.11.82	Piel Island, Cumbria 54 4'N 3 10'W	v	Morfa Conwyn, Gwynedd 53 17'N 3 52'W	01.10.89
FA15020	8	30.07.88	Friskney, Wash 53 2'N 0 12'E	v	Bouin, Vendee, France 46 58'N 2 0'W	03.10.89
FR25099	3	12.09.81	Bangor, Gwynedd 53 14'N 4 3'W	x	Fair Isle, Scotland 59 32'N 1 37'W	17.10.89
FV61737	4	11.07.83	Seal Sands, Teesmouth 54 37'N 1 10'W	vv	Den Helder, Netherlands 52 57'N 4 43'E	01.11.89
FV59730	8	27.03.79	Arbroath, Tayside 56 37'N 2 37'W	+	Baie de St Brieu, France 48 31'N 2 47'W	17.11.89
FS70983	1	15.07.76	Seal Isle, Scotland	x	Llanbedrog, Gwynedd 52 51'N 4 29'W	06.12.89
FV61737	4	11.07.83	Seal Sands, Teesmouth	vv	Dij by Huisduinen, Netherlands 52 57'N 4 43'E	08.12.89
SS60563	2	17.08.66	Whiteford Burrows, Glamorgan 51 38'N 4 14'W	v	Dyfed 51 40'N 4 9'W	01.01.90
FV82664	1	15.06.87	Finzean, Grampian 57 1'N 2 40'W	v	Dawlish Warren, Devon	03.01.90