

CLEY BIRD CLUB



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NEWS-LETTER NUMBER THREE.

OCTOBER 1986.

Hello again,

Another news-letter our third and they seem to be getting better or at least I think so, we could do with a few more ideas of things to fill up the pages if any one would like to write something for the news-letters, please do. Any thing sent to me will be included without being edited or change in any way, if you think its suitable then it is this is our club not mine. I love the autumn its the best time of the bird-watching year as far as most birders are concerned, and this autumn has been quite good with some of the best sea-watching in Norfolk ever. One or two of the passerines have been quite nice too, full details of these in the monthly bird news sheets. The Car stickers are in the process of being made and I hope they will be ready before this news-letter is posted, so I can include an order form on one of the pages with the design. We also have a bino and scope set of stickers in the pipeline, we hope to have these ready as soon as possible and should we hope cost 50p for the set. More volunteers are needed for the Cley Bird Club slide shows we have none lined up in the spring, if you have a set of slides we would like to see them. Please give me a ring to organise a date to suit, please.

Thanks, ETM.

WINTER DIVERS.

British Birds have just published in the August 1986 issue a paper on the 'Identification of divers in immature and winter plumages', this is an excellent paper with superb plates and photographs. I hope this paper goes a long way to clearing up the problems with diver identification off the North Norfolk coast this winter, especially amongst Red and Black throats. This paper shows the marked difference between Red-throated adults in winter plumage and the juveniles, from where I think most of the confusion stems from. Not every one seems to realise there is a difference between the adults and juveniles, they should do now though. The thigh patch on the Black-throated is a good ID feature, but is rather difficult to see on a bird far out on a choppy sea. The overall darkness of the plumage is a good feature, and the large head and thick neck are good points to look for. I found that when I saw three species in Cornwall in the spring, the Black-throats were quite easy to tell apart

from the others. Lets hope it puts a stop to the stringy Black-throated divers off Cley this winter, I'm for real ones myself.

WHITE-BILLED DIVER AT CLEY

The only Norfolk record of White-billed Diver is the sighting off Half-way House ('The Watch House'), Blakeney Point by Jeff Hazel *et al.* on 29th September 1985 and recently accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee. The bird was variously reported and rumoured to have been seen from the point on and off throughout October 1985, but lucky observers were very few and far between!

Then, quite remarkably, a White-billed Diver was found very long dead on the upper tide-line on Blakeney Point this summer. It was first noticed by the National Trust tern wardens (it was found on the edge of the ternery) about 28th July 1986, but the full significance of the smelly corpse was not realised until it was refound (I believe by Brian Gregory) on 23rd August and bravely carried back to Coastguards'.

It was very long dead! The huge creamy-white bill, with classic *retroussé* shape (straight culmen and very distinct gonydeal angle) was self evident, and maxillary feathering extending over the nostril confirmed the identification. A further feature of white-billed was the extensive gonys fusion. The extreme 2mm or so of the bill tip seemed to be broken off but, allowing for this, the culmen length was 94mm, and the nostril to tip 76mm. Both of these figures exceed those of Great Northern Diver, and indeed are at the large end of the variation in white-billed.

The remiges (primaries and secondaries) were completely missing and this, together with the state of moult of the rest of the upperparts, provided an important clue as to time of death. White-billed Divers have a complete early spring moult and normally lose all their remiges during February to March with the replacements usually grown by early April. This also ties in with this bird being in active and quite well-advanced wing covert moult into summer plumage. Given that sick birds may moult out of normal timing, it still thus seems highly likely that the bird died in February 1986. Many tide-line corpses last for months (becoming preserved by salt-encrustation).

The second Norfolk record of White-billed Diver just four months after the first and at the same site does really seem too much to credit. So surely it must have been the same bird? When seen on 29th September 1985 it flew off so it must have had remiges then! Why wasn't it reported between November and when it presumably died in February? - Perhaps it was keeping well offshore whilst it moulted. Cause of death is impossible to say but the corpse was not extensively oiled. It may be noted, however, that very bad oil pollution occurred along Blakeney Point/Cley on 5th February 1986 - at just about the time the bird seems to have died (the very same oil pollution that nearly killed "Boy George" the Glaucous Gull too).

The remains of the diver are to be left at the Castle Museum, Norwich.

SJMG

SLIDE SHOWS.

OCTOBER - no slide show due to the Scilly season.

NOVEMBER - The birds of Sri Lanka, by Steve Norman.

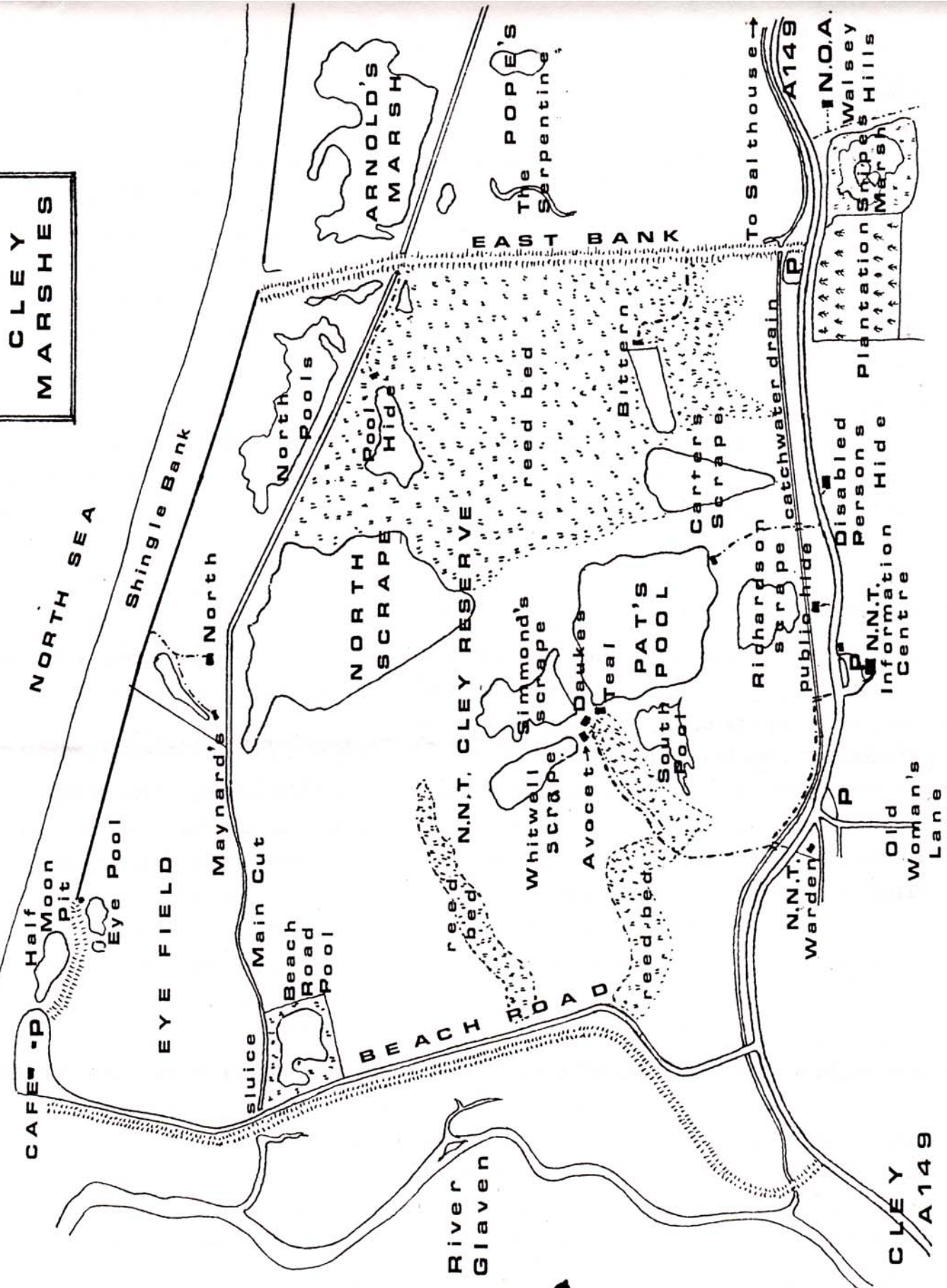
DECEMBER - The birds of Florida, by Herbie and Mabel Ellis.

These slide shows will be shown on the first saturday of the month, in the Wiveton village hall. The slide shows start at 8pm, doors open from 7.30pm. Only 30p admission to the Cley Bird Club membership, non-members 50p and free tea or coffee and biscuits. Volunteers are still needed to show us their slides, we have no shows in the spring so let us see yours. Our slide shows are and have been rather informal and relaxed meetings, and to a knowledgeable and appreciative audience. Cley Bird Club slide shows need you, please.

**CLEY
MARSHES**



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YEAR LISTING.

Up to the 9th of September there has been a total of ^c253 species recorded in Norfolk during 1986, of these 10 were BB rarities and 27 have been Norfolk local or county rarities. The Norfolk year listing competition has been a two horse race since the start of the year, between Richard Millington and Tommy Corcoran. Richard has 236 and Tommy has 237, you can tell who has the time to chase the year ticks. We could do with a few more contenders to make it more of a race, lets hope a few more go for it next year. You could get your name in print on the sheets of this revered publication.

BIRD LINE.

Roy Robinson has started up a new National rare bird information service, all the latest available birding news 24 hours a day on a modern answer-phone service. For more information write to, Birdline, Mr R Robinson, Flat 5, Wavecrest, 5 Beach Road, Cromer Norfolk, NR279AL.

NEW MEMBERS.

We have had quite a few people join the club since the last news-letters, and with our new car sticker we should attract a good few more. The membership now stands at 97 members, we're nearly up to our first 100. The new members are as follows, Ted Abraham of Cheshire, Dave Bradshaw of Walthamstow, A.R.Dakin of Nottingham, Graham Etherington from Norwich, Maurice Eccleshall of Staffordshire, Steve Fairburn of Norwich, Arthur Jenkins of Wells, Ron Johns of Slough, Paul Lathbury of Nuneaton, John Miller of Essex, Paul Oldfield of Sandy, L.E.Parr of Hemel Hempstead, Mrs Beryl Ratcliffe from Crowthorne, Rick Simpson of Watford, Vaughan Southam of Bristol, Julian White from Norwich, Peter Wolstenholme of Cley and finally last but not least Mark Wickins of Rayleigh. Plus new (late) members, Nigel Driver of East Grinstead and V.C.Park of Holt.

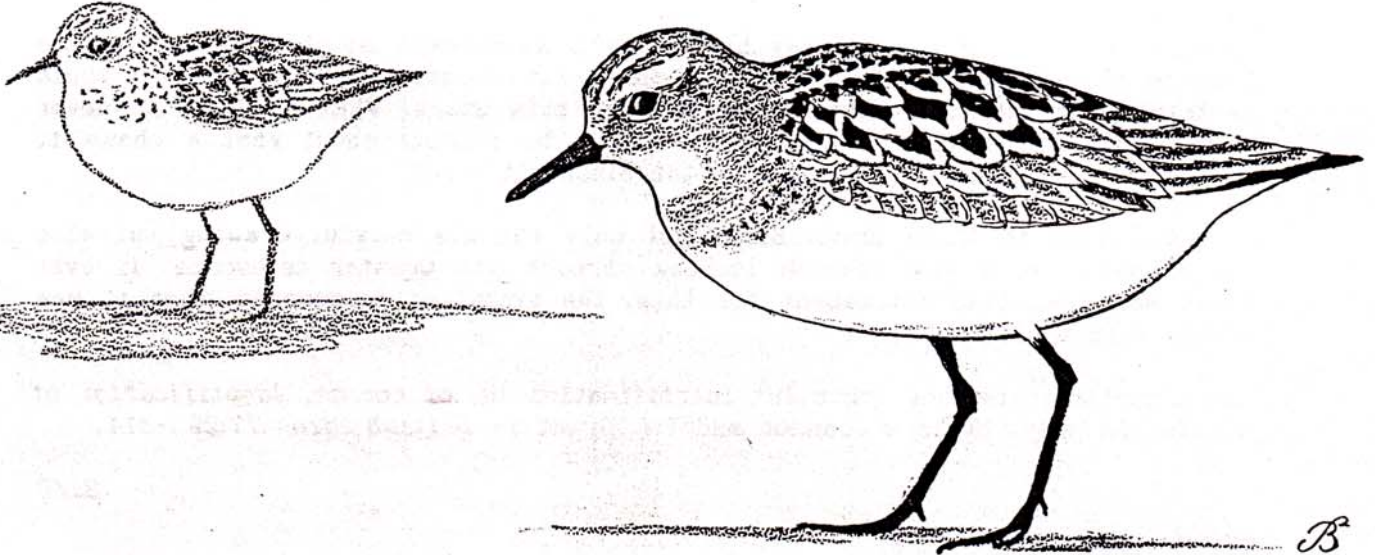
MAP OF CLEY MARSHES.

We have included a detailed map of the NNT reserve of Cley marshes to show the lay-out of the pools and reed-beds, also to show the names of each pool, scrape, hide or other feature of the reserve. I have been asked many times where Simmond's scrape is, they seem to know the hides but not the scrapes. Also a few of the surrounding features are not that well known, such as the Serpentine off the East bank or the Half moon pit in the Coastguards car park. Many thanks to Joe Johnson who drew the map, a lot of work went in to that. Now there should be no excuses, we now know where all the names and pools and scrapes are supposed to be easy isn't it.

AN INTERESTING STINT AT CLEY 27TH-29TH JULY 1986

An interesting stint appeared at Cley on the very same day that news broke onto the grape-vine of the stunningly beautiful Red-necked Stint at Blacktoft (South Humberside).

There had already been quite a good summer passage of adult Little Stints at Cley when, on 27th July, a stint showing many of the same characteristics as the Blacktoft Red-necked arrived on Simmond's Scrape.



DESCRIPTION

Generally the upperpart pattern was very like the Blacktoft bird but was slightly more worn: The mantle and scapular feathers were dark centred with narrow rufous-buff edges and there was an indistinct buff mantle 'V'. The innerwing-coverts were distinctly grey (winter plumage like) and contrasted sharply with the scapulars¹. One or two odd greater coverts were dark and edged with pale buff, and thus contrasted distinctly with the rest of the grey coverts. The tertials were grey-brown with pale buff edges. A slight primary projection beyond the tertials appeared to be much the same as in the nearby little stints. The crown was brownish, streaked darker. The narrow dark eye-stripe was stronger in front of the eye (lores) and very indistinct behind the eye. A distinct pale supercilium was present, and this noticeably split into two above and behind the eye.

The underparts were white with a complete quite dark buff-brown breast band pervaded, especially along its lower edge, with fine darker brown streaks. This faded gradually upwards to a pale buff unstreaked throat².

The bird was noticeably slimmer and 'longer' (the latter presumably a function of the former; the longer appearance did not seem to be due to primary length) than two nearby little stints. In direct comparison the bill was slightly thicker and blunter than the littles³. No webbing could be seen between the toes, but the bird was never 'scoped' closer than about 70 yards.

DISCUSSION

Points ¹ and ³ are both features supporting identification as Red-necked Stint. Little Stints can have summer type mantle and scapulars at the same time as largely winter type innerwing-coverts (e.g. some birds at Cley this early August) but this is rarely, if ever, as striking a contrast as on this bird. The contrast present in this bird closely matched that in the Blacktoft Red-necked (given that the latter was less worn), but note that the plumages of these stints in their first summer rather than adult summer is even less well

understood, and perhaps a first summer Little Stint could show this pattern. The bill shape also closely matched that of the Blacktoft bird but, with variation in Little Stint, this can hardly be taken as diagnostic for Red-necked.

The only feature which seemingly supports identification as Little Stint is the marked split supercilium not (normally?) present in Red-necked. At first I also thought that the breast pattern (as described in ²) was against Red-necked, but I have since found a good photograph of a Red-necked (published in *The Reader's Digest Complete Book of New Zealand Birds*) with a virtually identical breast pattern.

Personally, I now think it *may* have been a Red-necked Stint. However, in the absence of views closer than about 70 yards (and mostly at 150+ yards) I would certainly not like to claim it as such at this stage. What a shame it never came really close! What a shame it couldn't be photographed! What a shame it didn't have a bright red throat like the Blacktoft bird!

I should like to thank Brian Bland not only for his careful drawing but also for allowing me a few minutes looking through his Questar telescope. If ever there was a good advertisement for this, the finest of telescopes, then it was surely this bird.

The essential reference for stint identification is, of course, *Identification of stints and peeps* by Lars Jonsson and P.J. Grant in *British Birds* 77:293-314.

SJMG

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN.

An adult White-winged black tern in summer plumage was seen over Cley marshes on the 19th of August, unfortunately it stayed only a few minutes around 9.30 am. It was found and identified by Steve Gantlett with Peter Gooden and Eddie Myers, as it flew off eastwards it flew low over the heads of three other fortunate observers. It hawked briefly over Pat's pool and Carter's scrape before it made off over the East bank and Salthouse marshes. A thorough search was made of the pools and dykes between the East bank and the Kelling Quag, but the bird was not relocated and was thought to have flown out to sea. This was the 11th record for the Cley square. In the late after-noon of the same day it was relocated by Arnold Illingworth on the lake at Felbrigg hall near Cromer, about 10 miles to the east of Cley and two miles inland. It was seen here by a number of birders, as it hawked for insects over the lake. The lake was sheltered by a belt of tall trees from the rather stiff westerly wind, the wind is probably the reason it moved straight through Cley marshes. The trees probably concentrated the insects more to the terns likeing, more trees at Cley is what we need. Here the bird was seen quite close as it hawked back and forth, it showed quite a bit of moult at this range mostly on the body and the underwings which we could'nt see at Cley. The bird was unmistakable at this range, and the black wing linings were very obvious. It was seen to fly off and gain height at 8.30pm and dissapeared into the low cloud. It was not seen the next day, a very nice bird whilst it lasted.

JULY BIRD NEWS.

July is usually a quiet month except for waders, which are beginning their autumnal migration in mid or late July. Last year the waders in July stole the show and this year is no exception, though not a patch on last with only one BB rarity and this stayed over from June.

Three Manx shearwaters flew east off the Coastguards on the 29th, these were the only sea birds of any note.

The Bittern was heard to 'boom' on the 5th, and towards the end of the month they became easier to see as they flew back and forth presumably with food for the young?

Three Garganey were present on Pats pool from the 27th into August, a male in eclipse and two females or juveniles. Usually quite easy to see, as they spent most of their time in front of Teal and Irene hides. Dr Derek Kelsey informed me of a Long-tailed duck on the North scrape on the 11th, an early migrant or maybe one that forgot to go back north in the spring? Common scoter started to show up off the Coastguards during sea-watches from mid-month, with 2 on the 14th, 5 on the 20th and about 40 on the 24th all of which were flying west.

Two Marsh harriers were seen over Cley marshes, a juvenile on the 26th and a female on the 31st. The juv had so much stick off the Avocets it will probably steer clear of Cley marshes in the future, or at least Avocets. The Hobby that has been hanging about or even nesting in the area, put on a fine display over Cley marshes on the 13th. It chased Swifts and Swallows on two occasions both unsuccessful, it then flew off over Walsey hill towards Salthouse. It or another was seen later over the Glaven sand pits near Glandford, and one was seen displaying over a wood near Holt a possible breeding site.

After a good breeding season the Avocets began to leave early as usual, with only a hand full left on the reserve at the end of the month. Little-ringed plovers bred in the square for only the second time and, attempted to on Cley marshes but with -out success. They nested on an island in front of Irene hide and laid eggs, but these were taken by a predator soon before they hatched. Two other pairs nested nearby and were more successful, raising three young each to fledging. Most of these could be seen on the reserve in front Dauke's hide, with a peak of nine birds on the 16th and 20th. A few Golden plovers were seen during the month with one on the Eye field on the 23rd, and two there on the 31st. And ten on the 23rd and eight on the 25th, out on the mud banks at high tide in Blakeney harbour. A steady passage of Lapwings started on the 16th, with hundred or so flying west each day. Little stints were seen daily from the 21st, with a peak of eight on the 29th. The two Temminck's stints were seen daily up to the 17th, one was seen to display on an evening of one of the later dates. It flew around in circles singing loudly, but they never stayed to breed, shame. Curlew sandpipers were noted through-out the month with a peak of seven on the 31st, most of the early ones were in good summer plumage but the later ones were in heavy moult. The Broad-billed sandpiper

stayed over from June and was present on the North scrape on the 1st and 2nd, a bird of the 'Siberica' race. The bird of the month arrived on the 12th and stayed through into August, this being an adult Buff-breasted sandpiper. For the first fortnight of its stay it frequented Simmond's scrape and was quite close when on show, frequently disappearing behind the islands for hours on end. After that it moved to the North scrape, where it is still present (9-8-86) and putting on a good show. This is by far the longest staying individual for Norfolk or, possibly Britain? Peak count of Ruff was 92 on the North scrape on the 31st, this species has been present in fair numbers on the reserve all month. Peak count of Black-tailed godwit was of 25 on the North scrape on the 30th, the first juvenile was seen on the 5th from the North hide. Whimbrel were seen on most days with peak counts 18 on the 13th and 20 on the 25th, both these counts were on the Eye field. Spotted redshank were also noted throughout the month, with some real cracking full summer plumage jobs to be seen earlier in the month. Peak counts were, 12 on the 8th, 25 on the 13th, 14 on the 17th, 17 on the 26th and 15 on the 31st. Quite a number of Greenshank passed through Cley, mostly turning up late in the evening and disappearing early in the morning so not being seen by the vast majority of birders. Peak count was of 17 on the 26th by JJJ, these were on Pats pool in the evening. Green sandpipers were seen daily on the reserve with three on most dates, peak number was of 8 on the 30th. Only two Wood sandpipers seen in the month, one on the 1st and the other on the North scrape on the 31st for the day.

Three

Arctic skuas were seen during the month all off or over the Coast-guards, one each on the following dates- 8th, 18th and the 24th.

An adult Mediterranean gull in full summer plumage put in a brief appearance on Pats pool on the 20th so it was only seen by a few birders, which included RA and SV. A very poor month for Little gulls, with only one record of an adult on the North scrape on the 8th.

A good breeding season for the Common terns on the Cley marshes, with far more pairs than previous years. The work done on Pats pool in the winter was the main reason, and most of the Avocets stayed on the north scrape was another. SJMG saw two 'Portlandica' Common terns on the North scrape on the 14th, these first summer plumaged birds usually stay in the winter quarters until their second year so they're quite rare. Arctic terns again bred on the Point with 5 or 6 pairs, and a pair with two juveniles were seen off the Coast-guards fishing on the 21st. There were 150 to 160 pairs of Little terns on Blakeney point this year, but breeding success is not as yet known.

Barn owls continued to do well in the 10km square, with plenty of daylight sightings now they have young. One sighting of Short-eared owl in the month, there was a single bird over Cley reserve at dusk on the 27th.

After the hard winter Kingfishers were hard to see with none being reported after early January, until CK saw one on Pats pool on the 23rd. A come back I hope.

It seems this year that Sand martins have staged a bit of a comeback, most birders I've met from other areas have remarked how numerous they are this year in their local patches. A count of 250 over the North scrape on the 31st, and some good numbers on other dates seem to back this theory up.

A single Rock pipit was at the Iron road on the 13th. A male White wagtail was seen feeding young in front of Daukes hide on a number of dates in mid-month. A pair of Wheatears bred successfully at the back of the North hide raising 2 or 3 young, which were still in the area of the hide into early august.

A Grasshopper warbler was heard singing in the old reed-bed between the Bittern hide and the road on a number of dates, presumably bred in that area. Tony Aberdein had a Firecrest in some bramble bushes on the East bank early in the morning of the 7th, searched for later on but not seen again. Early birder see's the bird.

Jim Butty tells me he saw 11 Common Crossbills over the Glaven sand pits near Glandford on the 13th, he do's see quite a few birds. Martin Elliot saw two Siskin in the scrub at Muckleburgh hill, maybe another uncommon local breeding bird ?

AUGUST BIRD NEWS.

The autumn is with us at last or at least the start of it anyway, august is usually a month for migrant passerines and the odd good wader. We had two BB rarities one of which was dead, and a number of local rare and unusual birds.

A dead White-billed diver was found on Blakeney point by Joe Reed and one of his assistants in late july, as they took down the rope fences around the ternery. The bird was well decomposed but looked to be in moult from winter plumage into summer plumage, so it probably died in late winter or early spring. It was probably the same bird as seen in late september of last year off Blakeney point, and was in the area up to its death possibly far offshore and easily missed.

A single Slavonian grebe was seen off Salthouse on the 27th, flying west. Two Red-necked grebes were seen, one off the Coastguards on the 25th and the other off Gramborough hill at Salyhouse on the 31st of the month.

A few Sooty shearwaters were seen off the Coastguards, with two west on the 30th, no sorry SJMG saw 7 flying west on the same day. Not many Manxies but seen on four dates, 1 west on the 4th, 2 east on the 24th, 2 east on the 27th and 1 west on the 30th.

A single Shag was seen flying west off Salt house on the 31st, a fairly uncommon bird in the 10km square.

At least three Garganey were present on Pats pool all month, and a female was seen on the pools off the Blakeney bank on the 31st. A couple of female or immature Scaup flew east off the Coastguards on

the 23rd. Two Eider were seen off the Coastguards, a female on the sea on the 27th and one flying west on the 31st. Quite a number of Common scoter were seen during seawatches with 150 flying west on the 4th, 3 males and 6 females or juvs on the sea off the North scrape on the 13th before they flew off west and 20 west on the 31st. Peter Gooden saw a single Velvet scoter off the Coastguards on the 31st, an unusual record for this time of year. Two Red-breasted mergansers flew west off the Coastguards on the 4th.

A female

Marsh harrier flew east over the marshes on the 13th, and a female was seen to fly in off the sea and make off inland over Arnolds marsh on the 26th. A juvenile Merlin was seen by Peter Gooden sitting on a gate at the Quag, Kelling on the 19th. Jim Butty had a Hobby over the Glaven pits again on the 7th, they must be breeding in the area on the number of sightings this year.

A single Spotted crake put in an appearance in the pools along the bank from Blakeney quay on the 30th and again on the 31st, in the same site as the last two years.

A pair of adult Common Cranes were found on the Blakeney Eye by Bruce Forrester on the 6th and were present on the 7th, they were probably two of the Broads birds on their now annual or bi-annual visits to the Cley area.

Avocets had another good breeding season this year, but you would'nt think so at the end of the month when it was difficult to find more than one or two on the reserve at any one time. After a good year for Little-ringed plovers, a number of juveniles were present on the reserve through-out the month with peaks of 7 on the 9th and 5 on the 25th. Again this year a single juvenile Dotterel spent a couple of days on Blakeney point, from the 18th to the 29th and spent most of its time on the dry stoney area around the second 'Dog' sign at the east end of the Long Hills. Little stints were present on most if not all of the month, with peak numbers of 11 on the 16th and 8 on the 20th most spent their time on the North scrape or Pats pool. Curlew sandpipers were also present through-out the month with a peak of 6 on the 3rd, the juveniles did'nt start to appear untill the 20th when there was one on the Big pool. A Purple sandpiper was found on the Big pool on the 21st and then on the Half moon pit and the Eye field pool on the 22nd and the 23rd, an annual but rare visitor to Cley because of the lack of preferred habitat. Small numbers can be found below the chalk cliffs at West Runton near Cromer, and also on the groyne on the shore at Heacham near Hunstanton the only regular Norfolk wintering sites. The Buff-breasted sandpiper was present on the reserve up to the 9th, a stay of 29 days at Cley and at least 33 days in Norfolk this must be a record of some sort the longest stayer I would have thought. Peak count of Black-tailed godwits was of 18 on the 2nd, but at the same time Titchwell had over a hundred mind you we had more waders overall. Whimbrel passed through in small numbers each day, with a peak count of 33 on Arnolds marsh and 49 west in a single flock on the 5th. Spotted redshanks were in good numbers allmonth with at least 30 in the area most days, the first juvenile was seen on the 14th with a dozen or more present at the end of the month. Small numbers of Greenshank passed through each day on the reserve, with a peak

count of 4 on the 13th. Green sandpipers were in good numbers all month, with peak counts of 10 on the 2nd and 11 on the 14th. A good month for Wood sandpipers with 3 or 4 on Pats pool each day, one spent a few days in mid-month on the exposed mud in front of the Mill at Glandford with a couple of Green and a number of Common sandpipers. Peak number of Common sandpipers was a count of 10 on the 15th. A juvenile Red-necked phalarope was on Arnolds marsh all day on the 28th, the guy who found it said to Roy Robinson 'there's a Red-necked phalarope on Arnolds if your interested' as if it was an every day occurrence it could'nt have been because over a hundred birders saw it that morning.

The Skua season is on us again with most visitors to Cley seeing all four species off the Coast-guards or at the point, one day we'll get claims of a South polar or Antarctic skua. I've tried to sort out the gen from the masses of gibberish in the log book in Nancy's cafe, if I have omitted any genuine sightings I'm sorry. Quite a few Pomarine skuas were seen off the coast mostly singles but claims of, 3 off the Coast-guards on the 22nd and 2 off Salthouse on the 27th were the only 'flocks'. All 'Stercorarius' skuas especially juvs are not as easy to ID as the field guides lead us to believe, experience counts every time and forget about the ones on the horizon. The only big counts of Arctic skuas were of 75+ off the Coast-guards on the 27th and 20+ west on the 30th, we never really had good enough storms to drive them in-shore. After one of the Norfolk Rat pack suppressed an adult Long-tailed skua on Blakeney point, a juvenile was seen there the following day the 10th by Bruce Forrester and Alan Vittery. A few more were claimed during the rest of the month, two juveniles were seen off the coast-guards on the 27th by Richard Millington one of which spent 20 minutes on the beach. This was a pale or light morph bird with a very pale head and blue legs and feet both diagnostic features, the bird was watched by a dozen or so birders from the top of the beach about 30 yards off. The bird flew off eastwards to join up with the other bird which came up off the sea, that bird was a dark morph bird. Very few Bonxies or Great skuas were seen off the coast, with 5 off the Coast-guards on the 23rd and 6 on the 27th were the peak numbers.

An adult Mediterranean gull was seen on the scrape at Salthouse on the 20th, 23rd and the 26th and on the 28th in the Watch House creek, an adult in winter plumage we could with some more of this species. A number of Little gulls were seen during the month starting with 3 juvs on the North scrape on the 9th. Adult on the 13th off Coast-guards, and juveniles on the following dates 1 on the 22nd, 1 west on the 23rd, 3 off on the 25th, 1 west on the 27th, 28th and the 30th. Boy George our regular wintering Glaucous gull returned to the beach at the Coast-guards on the 30th, it was first seen in the late afternoon flying by eastwards by Kerry Harrison.

A few Arctic terns were noted off the Coast-guards, with juveniles noted on the 4th when two flew west and two east on the 25th. A juvenile Roseate tern was claimed off the Coast-guards on the 25th, if any one saw this bird please let me know so we have a name or two instead of a set of initials of unknown observers. Numerous Black terns were seen off the Coast-guards during the month, with 5 on the 2nd being the

peak count. The adult White-winged black tern in summer plumage was seen briefly at Cley on the morning of the 19th, feeding over Pats pool and Carters scrape before flying off eastwards at 9.30 am. The bird was found by Steve Gantlett and IDed by him with a little help from Peter Gooden and Eddie Myers, it was relocated later the same day by Arnold Illingworth at Fellbrig hall lake where it stayed up to 20.30hrs giving dozens of local birders excellent views down to a few yards.

Two fledged Barn owl young were seen on the 14th at Barn drift, and a dead bird was found in the garden of the Post office in Cley in the latter part of the month. Two Short-eared owls were seen over the marshes, one on the 5th and the other on the 28th the latter bird was seen sitting on a post near the North hide.

A family party of Kingfishers were seen at the Glandford mill early in the month, and one was seen there on the 15th.

A good month for Wrynecks or at least the last week of it anyway, 1 at the Watch house on Blakeney point on the 23rd and 24th, 1 on Weybourne camp on the 24th, 1 in Church lane, Cley on the 25th in the garden of the Bramlings cottage. Three on Blakeney point on the 30th, 1 at the Watch house and the other two on the Hood. Plus two other birds at Weybourne camp on the 31st.

A nice adult Tawny pipit was found on Weybourne camp by Graham Etherington on the 28th, it stayed up to the 30th and gave every one excellent views as long as you were patient and waited for it to show its self.

Two or three Icterine warblers were seen in the Cley square during the month, one on the Hood, Blakeney point on the 19th a difficult bird to get a decent view of as it fed amongst the Sueada bushes. One found by Steve Gantlett on Walsey hill on the 31st whilst he searched for the long staying Barred warbler, turned into a couple of birds soon after its amazing when one bird is found what else is turned up by birders searching an area intensively. After last years total blank, Barred warblers were back in force this year with 12 birds seen during the month. The records are as follows, 1 in the NNT car park below the Visitors centre on the 17th, 1 at Gramborough hill from the 25th to the end of the month which was joined by a second bird on the 30th. 1 at Blakeney point on the 26th, 1 in the Marrams on Blakeney point on the 28th another in the Lupins on the 30th and, 1 near Morston on the 31st.

Very few Pied flycatchers seen during the month only one reported from the Point on the 12th and 13th, and ^c10 on the Point on the 11th.

SEPTEMBER BIRD NEWS.

September has all ways been a good month for both Passerines and Sea-watching, and this September has been the same infact for the Sea-watching its been one of the best years ever. Record numbers of Sooty shearwaters were seen off the Coastguards in the early part of the month, all four Skuas and good numbers of Leache's petrels. The

month started off well, with a number of usual autumn migrants turning up on the first.

A few

Red-throated divers have been seen off the Coast-guards, and numbers have not yet built up to any number in fact its not recorded off the beach on most days. Three Great-northern divers have been seen off the Coast-guards, an adult in summer plumage flew west on the 15th an early non-breeder perhaps? Singles seen also on the 23rd and the 26th, probably the same bird.

An adult Red-necked grebe in summer plumage has been seen off the Coast-guards on the following dates, 10th, 19th, 29th and the 30th.

A record number of Sooty shearwaters were seen off the Coast-guards during a northerly gale on the 3rd, all were flying west and some quite close inshore. This total of at least 150 easily beat the Cley square record of ^c70 on the 15th of September 1968, and also sets a new Norfolk record. The same day at least 120 Manx shearwaters were also seen off the Coast-guards, and 4 on the 8th, 1 west on the 9th and another on the 22nd.

An excellent month for Leach's petrels with 10 birds recorded, 2 were seen during the big sea-watch on the 3rd, 1 on the 7th, 5 on the 8th, 1 on the 9th and 1 on the 23rd. Most were seen during stiff northerly winds, but not really Petrel weather and most close inshore one or two along the tide-line.

One or two Shag were recorded off the square this month a scarce local wintering species, one flew west with a Cormorant for good comparison showing smaller size, shorter more rounded wings with faster beats.

Brent geese were seen off the Coast-guards on the 16th when two flew west, numbers soon built up in Blakeney harbour with a couple of hundred by the end of the month.

Garganey were present in good numbers early in the month, with 6 on the North scrape on the 5th. I have no records after the 7th, any later records will be included in the Cley Bird Report. The only other duck of any note were 2 Velvet scoter west off the Coast-guards on the 9th.

The

Banet again claimed the only Cley square Spotted crakes, with one present from the 31st of August to the 25th of September. This was joined by a second bird on the 13th and possibly for a few days before hand. This pool has now been renamed the Blakeney Crake pool, the third year in a row its held this species.

Little stints were present throughout the month, with 8 on Pat's pool on the 2nd. The last being seen on the Eye field pool on the 30th, a juvenile. A Temminck's stint turned up on the Blakeney Crake pool on the 25th, and it was still present at the end of the month. An adult in winter plumage, rather dull and boring. A Pectoral sandpiper was found by ETM on the 4th out on the North scrape, this stayed on the scrape to the 10th frequenting the reed clump to the right near side giving some nice views. Curlew sandpipers were present through-out

the month, but wader numbers and species were poor from mid-month. Five Purple sandpipers were seen during the month a good number, 2 on Arnold's marsh on the 5th, 2 flew west off the Coast-guards on the 22nd and one was seen on the beach opposite the Hood on Blakeney point on the 25th. Peak numbers of Spotted redshank was ^c25 on Pat's pool on the 2nd, with at least 10 still present on the reserve at the end of the month. A single Wood sandpiper was on Pat's pool on the 2nd, not a very good month for waders.

A very good month for Long-tailed skuas with four birds seen including an adult, a juvenile was seen off the Coast-guards by BB on the 2nd. The adult was seen off the Watch house on the 16th, a juvenile was seen off Weybourne camp, Kelling Quag and Coast-guards on the 21st and another juvenile off the Watch house on Blakeney point on the 28th. Peak numbers of Bonxie or Great skua was of ^c40 off the Coast-guards during the big sea-watch on the 3rd. A few stringy Pomerine skuas were claimed, but one pointed out to me off the Coast-guards was obviously an adult Arctic with pointed tail projections.

The adult Mediterranean gull seen in August in summer plumage, was seen on Pat's pool on the 5th in moult into winter plumage. It turned up again on Pat's pool from the 20th to the end of the month, feeding with the Black-headed gulls on the ploughed fields at the back of the village and inland of Wiveton. Now in full winter plumage, a very nice bird. A few Little gulls were noted during the month. Now Boy George the regular wintering Glaucous gull is back, it can often be seen from the Coast-guards sitting on the beach or flying back and forth.

A number of Arctic terns, nearly if not all juveniles have been seen off the beach during the month. Once a scarce passage migrant off the Cley square, we seem to have the identification of juveniles down to a fine art now so more records will follow. Two adult Roseate terns were seen off the Coast-guards during the first half of the month, there has'nt been two in a year since 1983 and the last record was one on the 26th of August 1984. One west on the 8th seen by Tony Aberdein and John Kemp and the other was also flying west on the 14th and seen by RGM and RJR plus many others.

Another scarce bird off the Cley square the Puffin was seen on a few dates in the month, 3 off the Coast-guards and 5 off Blakeney point on the 14th and 2 off the Coast-guards on the 15th. There was also quite a number of other Auks present, with more Razorbill than usual.

A Kingfisher was seen on the Catchwater drain opposite Snipes marsh on the ~~15th and~~, sorry the 22nd and on the Sluice on the Beach road on the 23rd.

Wrynecks were seen on Weybourne camp on the 1st and the 4th, 1 at the Watch house on the 2nd and on Blakeney point on the 5th.

The bird of the Month was found on the Blakeney crake pool on the 29th, when John Guest, ETM and KKH found a juvenile Citrine wagtail feeding alongside the Temminck's stint. The bird stayed through the week-end

giving excellent views to all from 35 yards or so as we watched it from the bank.

Only a single Icterine warbler was seen during the month, one was found by SJMG on Walsey hill on the 1st. The Barred warbler on Walsey hill from August stayed through until the 13th, and one of the two on Gramborough hill stayed up to the 4th. Only one Yellow-browed warbler made it to the Cley square in the month, it was found down the East bank near Arnold's marsh on the 25th. It moved to the Plantation the same day, and was present there to at least the 28th.

A juvenile Red-breasted flycatcher was found by Dick Filby in the sueada at the Watch house on the 14th, in the late afternoon a real skulker. A number of Pied flycatchers were seen during the month, but no numbers.

A juvenile Red-backed shrike was on Blakeney point on the 13th, again in the late afternoon and right at the point in the Plantation.

A few Bramblings were seen during the month, 7 flew south over the village on the 24th, 2 or 3 were at the back of Snipes marsh on the 25th and 2 on the Hangs and 2 west at the Coast-guards on the 30th. A few Siskin were also noted, with a male and a juvenile was at the Watch house on the 14th. The first Snow bunting of the autumn was seen on Blakeney point on the 10th, numbers have only built up slowly since then and are still hard to find.

Thanks

ETM