

CLEY BIRD CLUB



C/o Driftwood Cottage
Longhouse Yard
Cley-next-the-sea
Holt, Norfolk
NR25 7RU

0263-740-095

NEWS-LETTER NUMBER 6.

JULY 1987.

Dear Members,

What a spring that was, first we had a Red-rumped Swallow for a few days, then closely followed by a number of lesser rarities, Two Cranes, Firecrest, Mediterranean Gull and a Stone Curlew. Then in early May we had the real big ones, a pair of adult Slender-billed Gulls in full breeding plumage, these closely followed a female Wilson's Phalarope which was present for a few days. May also produce a host of other rarities, all of which go to make Cley the centre of the British birders world. June was quiet in comparison, except for a drake American Wigeon, Tawny Pipit, Red-necked Phalarope and four Mediterranean Gulls. We all hope that it will continue through to the years end, this is how I dreamt Norfolk would be like, 'Mecca strikes back'.



SLENDER-BILLED GULLS AT CLEY.

A pair of adult Slender-billed Gulls in full breeding plumage were found at Cley on Tuesday the 12th of May 1987, at 4.30 pm on Pat's Pool in front of Teal Hide. They were found by Martin Gilbert, who was at Cley to look for the Wilson's Phalarope, and Pat's Pool was one of the two pools it spent most of its time. This is Martin's story in his own words:

Wilson's Phalarope at Cley provided the inspiration to hitch from Cheshire to North Norfolk for a week of intensive birding. My lift into Cley was with Norwich birder Barrie Cooper, and it was with him I entered Teal Hide on the Norfolk Naturalists Trust of Cley Marshes at about 4.30 pm on the 12th of May 1987. A brief scan located the elegant wader which warranted a thorough grilling.

I then decided to systematically search Pat's Pool, casually focusing my scope on the first two white blurs I came across. It took me about 15 seconds before I realized that I was looking at two unfamiliar gulls. A process of elimination ensued but nothing plausible fitted the bill; the name Slender-billed Gull skulked patiently in my mind. Excitement began to grip me and it became an effort to concentrate. An adult Black-headed Gull joined the two preening birds and excellent comparisons were made. The birds were obviously adults due to the pure white tail and clean, pearly grey wing coverts which were a shade lighter than the accompanying Black-headed Gull. They had long, sleek, almost tern-like blood-red bills, unblemished white heads, with small beady, apparently dark eyes giving them bland expressions. Their white underparts were suffused with a most apparent light pink.

After about five minutes, I turned towards Barrie and put him onto the birds, tentatively suggesting Slender-billed Gull but still finding it very hard to believe, particularly as two individuals were involved. Barrie was very confident, but I still didn't have the conviction to alert everyone. I informed the elderly couple seated to the right of me, and after a quick glance they continued to search for Curlew Sandpipers. At this point I began to 'buzz' with pleasure and made the decision to race around the two nearby hides with the news. Only two people were present, however they were not particularly interested so I returned to Teal Hide to the comforting 'click' of Barrie's camera. Suggesting to Barrie that Nancy's must be informed but not wanting to leave, I tossed a fl coin (the occasion warranted no less) and cruelly lost. Still wishing to remain, I looked pleadingly at the elderly couple on my right; they cracked and left immediately to take the news to Bernard Bishop, the Warden.

Whilst waiting for the crowds to arrive and whiling the birds to stay, Barrie and I settle down to enjoy these elegant, long-necked southern wanderers as they fed ankle deep in water, pecking food delicately from the surface. The difference between the two birds was astounding, the smaller of the two being the size of a Black-headed Gull whilst the other was about 15% larger.

Typically, before anyone came the birds took flight revealing their long pale wings and noticeable contrast between sharp red bill and clean white head. The first people now began to arrive and carefully quiz me. After a brief search from the Avocet Hide, where a single person had a seconds glimpse of one bird in flight, we raced to the cars and around to the North Hide. Here we seated ourselves just in time to see the two birds fly towards us and land immediately in front of the hide. As the crowd swelled and admiring comments were flung around I was filled with relief. Fortunately this superb pair of adult summer plumaged Slender-billed Gulls remained in the area for the next three days giving many people much pleasure.

Martin Gilbert.

Many thanks to Martin Elliott for his superb drawing of the Slender-billed Gulls on the previous page, this now hangs on my wall alongside the Red-rumped Swallow drawing which appears below.



Red-rumped Swallow, by Martin Elliott.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW AT CLEY.

At 8.05am on Wednesday the 8th of April 1987 as I was scanning through the Gulls and Waders on Pat's Pool on the nature reserve at Cley, a Hirundine with a white rump flew across my field of view and having only seen one House Martin this year I decided to have a good look at it with my binoculars. To my amazement I found the bird to be a Red-rumped Swallow and not what I had first thought, it was over the far side of the pool and hawking for insects and it looked like staying for more than the usual few minutes that most Hirundines do at this time of year. So I was off and running to phone out the news, I phoned up Steve Gantlett and Richard Millington so as to get some one on the scene as soon as possible and to get the news out on the National grapevine so everyone had the chance to see it if it stayed.

Steve Gantlett made it to the Observation hide at the car park over looking the reserve in less than five minutes, just after I had relocated the bird, so with some one to keep an eye on the bird I then went to phone around the local birders with the good news. After ringing round at least 20 of the locals I then rushed back to find the bird still present and being watched by at least 20 people, within the hour at least 40 birders were present and the first long distance twitchers arrived within 2 hours of the bird being found. The bird flew off west over the West Bank at 9.30am and was thought to have gone, but it was soon relocated flying around the Watchers Cottage and showing extremely well. It perched up for a few minutes on telephone wires on one of the houses along the front, after a mass panic to fetch scopes out of the cars and Steve Gantlett nearly falling down into the roadside dyke, we all obtained excellent views in strong sunshine.

The main features were the pinkish washed white rump and the pinkish washed face, neck and underparts and the flight was more like a House Martin than a Swallow. Overhead you could see the wings were blunt tipped and rather broad based, which made it appear short winged. The tail streamers were much thicker than in the Swallow and were blunt tipped, with the streamers appearing to curve inwards. When the bird was perched on the wires more detail was observed, on the breast you could make out fine streaking as if they were shaft streaks. The head was mostly a rufous-buff colour with the face and throat whiter, the cap was a metallic dark blue and it looked like a small beret! The upperparts and the wings were the same blue colour as the cap, and there were whitish makings on the Mantle. The inner tertials were tipped buffy-white, as for the Humerals, Humeral coverts and the Sub-scapulars I couldn't find them they must be bloody small on this species.

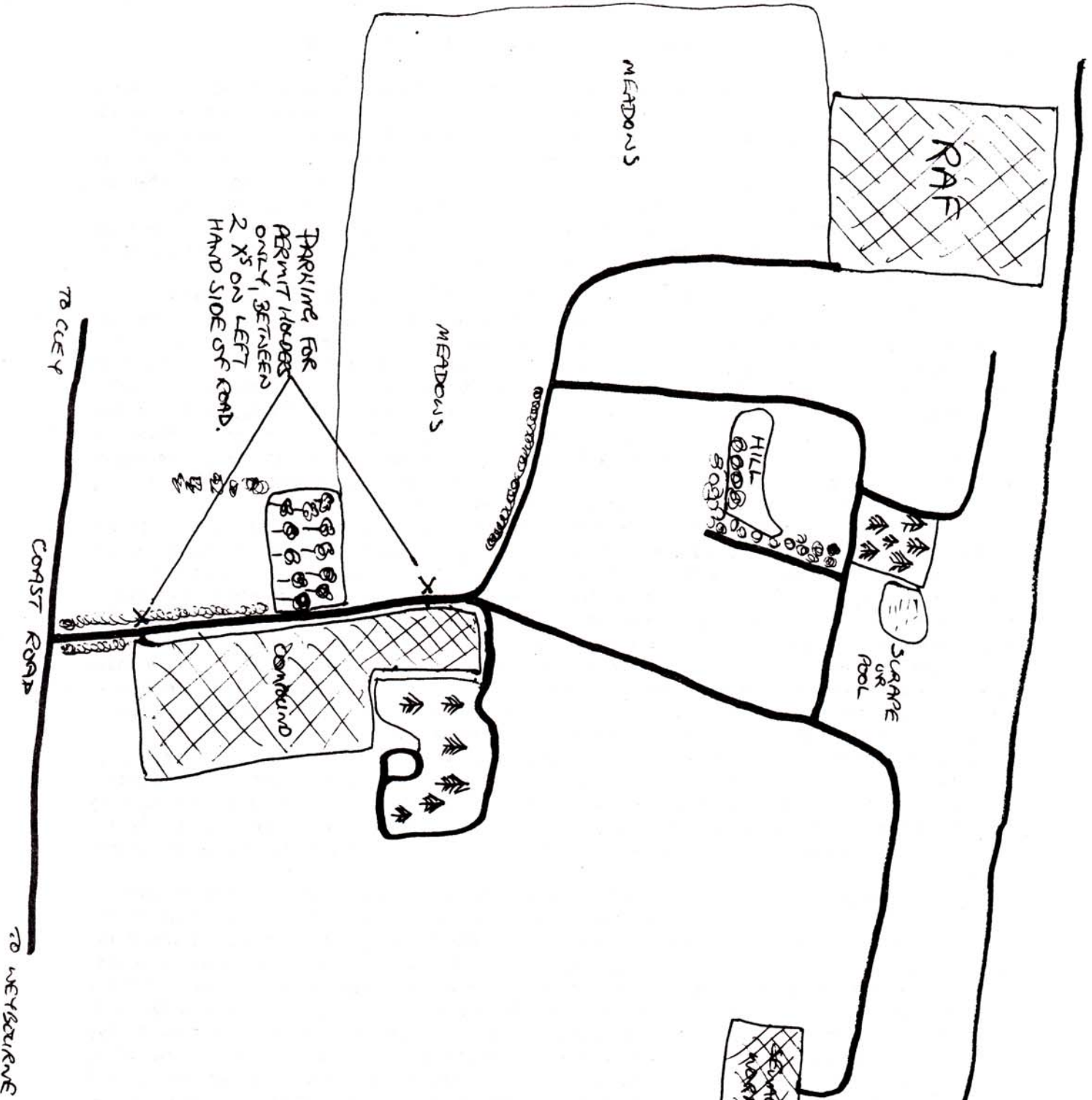
The bird disappeared from late morning to early evening, when it was relocated over Cley village near the George and Dragon Hotel. It caused a good traffic jam, and some amusement and curiosity amongst the locals. The bird was seen up to dusk when it flew off towards the marshes presumably to roost, and the next day it was performing around the Warden's house from 6.20am. This is the 4th record for Cley, the 6th record for Norfolk. (There are currently 94 *British Birds* accepted records for Britain).

The bird was present each day up to 9am on Sunday the 12th of April, and it could be seen for most of the time each day hawking for insects over the Glaven marshes on the west side of the village. On each morning of the first three days of its stay it was to be found feeding around the Watcher's Cottage with other hirundines. Each morning it perched up on the telephone wires outside the house to preen where excellent views were obtained, it was also heard to sing on each of these occasions. On the Saturday, the fourth day of its stay, the masses arrived to view this super bird. It was not to be found in its usual dawn site and panic set in amongst the possible dippers, but fortunately the bird was relocated feeding with a few Swallows along the River Glaven near the Stone Bridge at Wiveton. Here it performed really well to the appreciative crowds as it fed low over the water and fields, coming quite close making the birders forget about the terrible weather. In the late afternoon of Saturday the 11th of April after a rather heavy shower of rain the bird was seen to fly into the porch of Cley church, it stayed there until the next morning at 6.30am and afforded everyone with excellent views down to a few feet. The bird was seen up to 9am on Sunday the 12th of April feeding over the River Glaven, the weather was again cold and wet and this was probably too much for the bird and it possibly moved on in search of better feeding?

Many thanks to Martin Elliot for the line drawing of the bird which is now framed and takes pride of place on my living room wall, and thanks to all the birders who helped me to see the bird much better than I could have done so by myself.

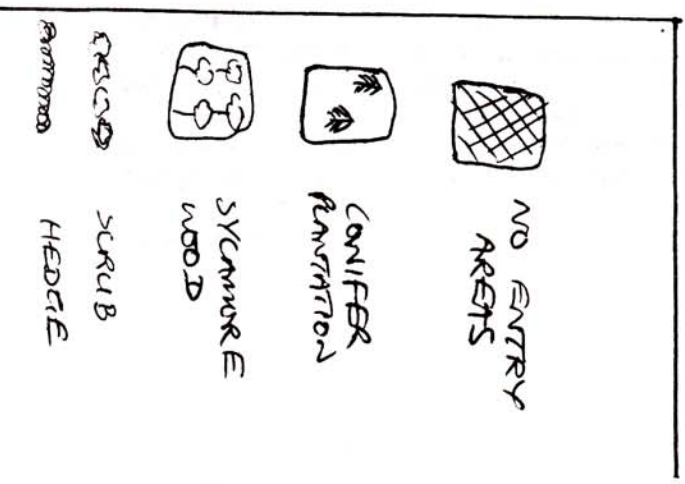
Eddie Myers.

MAP OF WEYBOURNE CAMP.



PARKING FOR PERMIT HOLDERS ONLY, BETWEEN 2 X'S ON LEFT HAND SIDE OF ROAD.

PARKING FOR NON-PERMIT BIRDBERS IN CAR PARK ON WEYBOURNE BEACH.



SUPPRESSION AT CLEY.

A Hoopoe which was found on Blakeney Point on the 18th of April 1987 was suppressed, the Warden said the reason for keeping it quiet was that they had earlier in the day birdwatchers walking around in the Tern colony even though it was fenced off, Sandwich terns are notorious for deserting a site when they have been disturbed early in the nesting season, so it was stupid to walk about there even if there were no terns to be seen, if the fences are up please keep out. This thoughtless act has cost the local birders the chance of seeing a Hoopoe on their local patch which is very annoying, if there's one thing I hate it is being blamed for something that some one else has done. If Cley is to become the same as everywhere else, keeping quiet certain rare birds for local birders only then you've only your selves to blame. If you see birders misbehaving then tell them, other wise more and more suppression will take place. It'll be a sad day when you can't go birding on a nature reserve because birders can't be trusted, and all the best places for birds in Norfolk are nature reserves.

WEYBOURNE CAMP.

For many years Weybourne Camp has been known by birders as a site worth visiting in spring and autumn. Access has always been difficult and many will remember the games of hide and seek with the caretaker who used to patrol the area in an orange estate car! Fortunately times have changed, and the present owner has offered to develop part of the site as a reserve

Last autumn I was asked if I would like to act as warden for the reserve and to produce a management plan. As a result, a small scrape was made and nearly four hundred saplings were planted, the majority, varieties of willow. Recently an area of about one acre has been planted with mixed maize, wheat and mustard, which will be allowed to seed in the autumn thus producing an area attractive to finches and buntings. I am also hoping to undertake some management work in the sycamore wood, with a view to extending the variety of trees present and possibly recoppicing some of the overgrown sycamore stools.

Whilst the owner is perfectly happy to allow birders to visit the camp, we both agree that some restriction needs to be placed on the number of people wandering around. From my point of view this is necessary, as I am using the camp as a ringing site, and I therefore need to be certain about the safety of the birds in the nets as well as the ringing equipment.

It has therefore been decided to issue permits to local birders, arbitrarily defined as those who live within seven miles of Weybourne. If it transpires that the number applying is excessive then the definition of 'local birder' may have to be modified. The permits will not be transferrable but one additional visitor may accompany the permit holder. Access will be on foot and will be restricted to the hard roads only, to avoid any possible damage to crops, habitat or ringing equipment. The owner is particularly concerned that nobody should enter the compounds near the entrance to the camp nor the RAF radar station. Cars should be parked only on the left-hand side of the road, as indicated on the map, in order to avoid obstructing the road to the RAF station, which on occasions is used by heavy goods vehicles.

How does this leave visiting birders from further afield? Firstly, it must be stressed that the reserve is private and is being developed for the benefit of migrant birds and local birders. However, if a national or county rarity is found, it will almost certainly be put onto Birdline and other birders will be invited to visit the appropriate part of the camp. But this does not give open access to the whole of the camp, nor does it imply permission to visit there at any other times. Any visiting birder must also ensure that they abide by the parking arrangements and remain on the hard roads, unless given specific permission to do otherwise. I hope that this does not sound too authoritarian but with the number of people now turning up to view rarities firm guidelines need to be issued.

As an indication of the potential of Weybourne Camp, regular watching and ringing this spring has produced Marsh and Hen Harriers, Buzzard, Osprey, Hobby, 2 Dotterel, Mediterranean gull, Bluethroat, 6+ Black Redstart, 20+ Ring Ouzels, Firecrest and a male Ortolan, as well as a dark female Wheatear(?Pied/Black-eared/Northern). The autumn is awaited with keen anticipation!

At the moment the permits are being printed and should be available in the next few weeks (June). Any local birder, as defined above, who would like to apply for one should write to me, at 4 Heath Road, Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8JH, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, and I will reply as soon as possible.

Finally, mention must be made of the owner of Weybourne Camp, Mr Berry Savory. It is through his generosity that the camp is being developed as a reserve. He has personally financed all the habitat improvements and it is absolutely vital that no birders should abuse his invitation to enjoy watching in the area.

Moss Taylor.

SPRING MIGRANTS.

1987 ARRIVAL DATES FOR SUMMER VISITORS INTO THE CLEY SQUARE, WITH COMPARISON TO 1986.

SPECIES,	1987,	1986,
GARGANEY,	4th April	8th March,
MONTAGU'S HARRIER,	26th April	20th May
OSPREY,	26th April	6th May,
HOBBY,	26th April	24th May
LITTLE RINGED PLOVER,	31st March	22nd April,
KENTISH PLOVER,	23rd May	9th April,
DOTTEREL,	28th April	
COMMON SANDPIPER	4th April	21st April
WOOD SANDPIPER,	29th April	14th May.
TEMMINCK'S STINT,	13th May	2nd May,
RED-NECKED PHALAROPE,		16th June,
BLACK TERN,	17th April	2nd May
COMMON TERN,		24th April,
ARCTIC TERN,		16th April,
LITTLE TERN,	14th April	28th April,
SANDWICH TERN,	25th March	10th April,
TURTLE DOVE,	19th April	24th April,
CUCKOO,	21st April	3rd May,
NIGHTJAR,	15th May	17th May.
SWIFT,	4th May	4th May,
WRYNECK,	24th May	5th May,
SWALLOW,	15th March	16th April,
HOUSE MARTIN,	6th April	24th April,
SAND MARTIN,	26th March	24th April,
RING OUZEL,	13th April	19th April,
WHEATEAR,	22nd March	2nd April,
WHINCHAT,	18th April	26th April,
REDSTART,		17th May,
NIGHTINGALE,	14th April	25th April,
BLUETHROAT,	23rd May	
GRASSHOPPER WARBLER,	18th April	26th April,
REED WARBLER,		30th April,
SEDGE WARBLER,	9th April	21st April,
GARDEN WARBLER,	11th May	6th May,
WHITETHROAT,		24th April,
LESSER WHITETHROAT,		25th April,
WILLOW WARBLER,	5th April	21st April,
WOOD WARBLER,	27th April	5th May,
SPOTTED FLYCATCHER,	18th May	15th May,
PIED FLYCATCHER,	20th April	6th May,
TREE PIPIT,	18th April	30th May,
YELLOW WAGTAIL,	7th April	16th April

Any gaps in the the dates of both years that can be filled by you would be welcomed, please send any dates you have earlier than those shown to me at the usual address.

ANSAFONE SERVICE.

The Cley Bird Club Ansafone service should be in operation by the 1st of June of this year, a little late for the spring but not too late for a few goodies. The month of June has in the past produced some very good birds, and it can be much better than mid-May for the National rarities. Last year the rarities that were seen in the Cley 10km square were impressive enough on their own, they were as follows: Great-white Egret, drake Green-winged Teal, male Montagu's Harrier, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper and a female Red-necked Phalarope. The annual membership fee for the Ansafone service will be £2.50 and it will only be open to members of the Cley Bird Club, this will hopefully keep the service a little exclusive and in turn keep the line reasonably clear for instant usage. Any members wishing to join the Ansafone service, send in the Tear-off form at the end of the news-letter, with £2.50 to the usual address.

NORFOLK NEWS.

APRIL BIRD NEWS.

This is a new feature to let you know whats being seen in the rest of the county of Norfolk, even though the Cley 10km square is the centre of the universe the rest of the county does get some nice birds. Here is a run down for April. A male Penduline Tit was found at Hickling on the 4th, this bird was present up to the 10th and gave excellent views each day to those patient enough to wait for it to be refound each day. This was a new bird for the county list, and only the twelfth British record.

On the 5th at Strumpshaw Marsh near Norwich there was present the following birds; Great Grey Shrike, Red-necked Grebe, Firecrest, Garganey and two Water Pipits. Two Firecrests were seen in the trees along the landward side of the sand dunes at Waxham, on the 5th. A Spoonbill was seen at Hickling on the 7th, it came into roost at dusk and was seen by birders waiting for the Penduline Tit. Up to 4 Shore larks could be seen at Winterton, along the beach from the 9th to the 12th.

A Black Kite was seen over Hickling Broad for over 20 minutes by dozens of birders waiting for the Penduline Tit, on the 11th. Another or the same was seen over Blofield the next day. A Great Grey Shrike was seen at Heacham, on the 16th. The male Serin returned to the Field Study Centre in Wells-next-the-sea on the 18th, it has also been seen in the pines in front of the Tinklers pub nearer the Quay. This is the fourth successive year this bird has returned to Wells, lets hope it finds a mate soon.

On the 22nd two Spoonbills were at Horsey Mere, but not present the next day. A Tawny Pipit was seen at Waxham, on the 23rd and 24th. A Golden Oriole was seen at Sheringham on the 25th. Two Shore Lark were at Thornham Point up to the 26th. An adult Night Heron was found at Blackborough End gravel pits near Kings Lynn on the 26th, they showed well the following day and remained until the 28th.

A Honey Buzzard flew over Norwich on the 29th, a good sighting. An Alpine Swift was seen on three occasions over Holme and Hunstanton on the 30th, but remained rather elusive to the majority of the birders looking for it.

MAY BIRD NEWS.

On the 1st a pair of Spoonbills were at Breydon water near GT Yarmouth, and a Temminck's Stint was at Hickling Broad.

A drake Ring-necked Duck arrived at Hardley Flood near Norwich on the 2nd, the bird was present to the end of the month, and gave most of the Norfolk birders a Norfolk tick. Seven Dotterel were found on a ploughed field at Eccles Beach Road near Happisburgh, also on the 2nd. A Temminck's Stint and a summer plumaged Black-necked Grebe were on Martham Broad, the same day. The Serin returned to Wells for its fourth year, frequenting the area around the Field Study Centre as it has done for the last 3 years. Three Common Buzzards moved south over Winterton, and a Montagu's Harrier was seen at Breydon Water

Dotterel increased from 4 on the 2nd to 17 on the 3rd, at Ten Mile Bank. The first Curlew Sandpiper of the year was seen at Cley. A Black Kite was reported from Castle Acre, the first of many?

A Golden Oriole was heard singing from a copse at Hardley Flood, on the 4th, a bonus for the duck watchers. A number of Arctic Terns passed through here on the 5th.

A male Montagu's Harrier passed through Titchwell, on the 8th. A scarcer bird this year in Norfolk than it was last year!

JUNE BIRD NEWS.

There were 2 Spoonbills at Breydon Water, at Gt. Yarmouth on the 1st. A female Woodchat Shrike arrived at Holme NNT Reserve on the 8th, and stayed to the 10th, the first Norfolk record for 10 years. A Spoonbill was at Holme on the 10th. There was a singing male Red-backed Shrike near Stiffkey on the 10th, but it was not present the following day.

The Caspian Tern put in an appearance at Breydon Water on the 12th, almost certainly the Minsmere and Hickling bird of May. It returned to Hickling on the 14th, and it was still present in the area at the end of the month. An adult Rose-coloured Starling turned up in Stalham on the 14th, staying through to the 25th, not an easy bird to see as it spent most of its time in gardens around the village.

On the 16th, the Black-winged Stilts at Holme hatched off their eggs, the first successful breeding in the U.K. since the Nottingham birds in 1945. Two Red-crested Pochards were at Narborough on the 19th, they turned up with Pochard and Tufted Duck. An Osprey frequented the Ranworth and Cockshoot Broads up to the 21st. The Spoonbill was at Hickling and Horsey Broads on the 19th also. A Purple Heron was found at the Welney Wildfowl Refuge on the 24th, and it was still present into July.

The Caspian Tern returned to Hickling on the 26th to the 28th, then to Breydon on the 28th. A Whiskered Tern was seen at the river mouth at Gt Yarmouth on the 27th, but it only stayed for fifteen minutes from 6.20pm, it then flew off northwards. At the river mouth in Gt Yarmouth the next evening the 28th, there was a adult Mediterranean Gull. Whilst there was a first summer bird at Breydon Water on the same evening, along with a summering drake Goosander.

A Bee Eater was seen briefly over Martham Broad, on the 28th, and a Roller flew west over Wroxham in the evening of the 29th, two missed chances. A Whiskered Tern arrived at Pentney gravel pits near King's Lynn on the 30th, and showed well to all on the 1st of July.

CLEY BIRD CLUB 10KM SQUARE BIRD REPORT 1986

We are in the final stages of producing the Cley Bird Club, 10km square Bird Report for 1986, the report will be some 40 pages long and it will also have a number of original line drawings. The cost will be £1.50 post and packing, to all Cley Bird Club members. We will only be producing 250 copies of the first report, so if you want one please send the money to the usual address, and mark your envelope Cley Square Bird Report. We will have the 1987 Cley square Bird Report out for the 1st of May next year, the reason this one is so late is because I never had a word processor until the beginning of 1987.

APRIL BIRD NEWS.

Well April lived up to the year so far, with a number of BB rarities and local and Norfolk rare birds. The list is huge but includes the following; Red-rumped Swallow, 2 Cranes, Firecrest, Garganey, Wood Warbler, Mediterranean Gull and Stone Curlew.

A few Red-throated Divers were noted off the Coastguards in the first half of the month, with some in full summer plumage.

Brent Geese numbers fell sharply towards the end of the month, but small numbers could still be found within the 10km square into early May.

A pair of Garganey arrived hot foot back from the winter in Africa on the 4th, but they weren't on general view until a few days later when they spent the afternoon on the South Pool. They were seen daily from then until the end of the month, spending most of their time on Pat's Pool and in full view. They disappeared at the end of the month, so hopefully they are now breeding in the area? Another male joined these birds on about the 27th, when it was seen on the Richardson Scrape and possibly another pair? A flock of 20 Common Scoters flew east on the 9th off the Coastguards, another 12 were seen on the sea close inshore.

Marsh Harriers were seen on a number of dates through the month, and involved up to four birds? A female was seen over Weybourne Camp on the following dates, 14th, 18th and the 28th, each time the bird was seen flying east. A male over the marshes in the morning of the 10th and another on the 13th, the latter was seen to fly off west. One over the Marshes on the 18th. Another or the same on the 19th, was chased off over the sea by a Carrion Crow and headed off north-eastwards. Another male was seen over the fields off the far end of Marsh Lane, on the 23rd. The female was seen on a number of occasions over the reedbeds on Cley Marshes, sightings are as follows; In the morning of the 1st. Over the reed beds on the 25th, 26th and the 27th. A pair flew west in the morning of the 19th. A couple of Common Buzzard sightings during the month, they were; One west over Cley village at 11.40am on the 10th, seen by Kerry Harrison. One west over Muckleburgh Hill on the 17th at 8.30am, this was seen by a number of birders including Mick Fiszer. The only Osprey of the month was seen over Muckleburgh Hill by Chris Kelsey, on the 25th. A female Merlin was seen a number of times over Cley Marshes on the 25th, zooming low over the marshes and putting up all the birds on the scrapes in the process. A Hobby was seen over the marshes on the 22nd, hunting the Hirundines at dusk. The only sighting. There was a record of a male Peregrine over Cley Marshes on the 17th, if any one knows of or saw this bird please let me know, a Cley rarity.

A pair of Cranes were seen to fly west over the marshes in the early afternoon of the 25th by Steve Votier and A J Last, these were relocated on the Blakeney Eye field in the late afternoon were they showed well and could be viewed from the Blakeney Bank opposite Cley windmill. They stayed in the area for a couple of days, and were last seen flying off south-eastwards over Cley village on the 27th.

Not an exceptional month for waders, there have been much better, but some were in larger numbers than in past years at this time. A Stone Curlew was found off the East Bank on Pope's Marsh on the 30th, and then in front of Daukes Hide on the 1st and 2nd of May. A pair of Little Ringed Plovers frequented the Whitwell scrape in the earlier part of the month, they seemed to be paired up and towards the end of the month one could be seen to fly inland on numerous occasions as if they are breeding inland again this year. One was seen flying west off Weybourne Camp on the 11th. A pair of Dotterel were found on a ploughed field on Weybourne Camp on the 28th by Dr Moss Taylor, they only stayed for eight hours or so and they were not seen after 5pm on the same day. A male and a female as to plumage, the female was a very nice looking bird. Little Stints were seen on the following dates and at the following sites; One on the North Scrape on the 25th and another there on the 29th, one on Simmond's Scrape on the 26th and another there on the 30th. A large flock of c120 Ruff came in onto Pat's Pool in the morning of the 16th, they were feeding in a tight flock up to dusk on Pat's Pool but were split up the following day. The numbers fell towards the end of the month, and only a couple of dozen could be found in early May. Peak count for Black-tailed Godwits was of 21 on Simmond's Scrape on the 2nd, smaller numbers were seen throughout the month. The numbers of Spotted

Redshank went up from 2 or 3 to c20 on the 18th, and this number could be seen up to the end of the month. By mid-month they were mostly in full breeding plumage, a fine sight, and the bubbling display calls could frequently be heard. Four Spotted Redshank were seen to fly east off Weybourne Camp on the 25th, and another was seen flying in the same direction the following day. 2 Greenshank on Pat's Pool on the 20th. Two Green Sandpipers were on the Whitwell Scrape on the 5th. Two west over Weybourne Camp on the 15th. One on the North Scrape on the 25th, and another on the North Drain on the 27th. A Wood Sandpiper on Pat's Pool on the 29th. Common Sandpiper passed through the square during the month from the first on the 4th at Walsey Hill.

The Terns started to return back to the square from the 25th of March, when a Sandwich Tern was seen off Salthouse Beach. Numbers soon built up and many dozens were to be seen roosting on Arnold's Marsh by the end of the month, and even more off the Coastguards. Earliest dates for the other Terns are as follows: Common Tern, two over Pat's Pool on the 19th. Arctic Tern, one on the North scrape on the 22nd. Little Tern, 1 off the Coastguards on the 14th. The first Black Tern was seen over Pat's Pool on the 17th. There were four birds over Pat's Pool on the 21st, all in summer plumage. There were four birds again over Pat's Pool, on the 24th. Another was over Pat's Pool on the 27th.

A first winter Mediterranean Gull was seen close inshore off Weybourne Camp on the 12th, the same bird that has been present in the area for a few months. It was seen at Cley on the following dates: On the 2nd and 3rd, the 9th, the 19th and the 23rd on Pat's Pool. Two Little Gulls were over Pat's Pool on the 21st, an adult in full summer plumage and a third summer bird showing some black in the wing tips and the under wing coverts were paler than the rest of the under wing. Another adult was seen on the North Scrape on the 23rd. A Yellow-legged Herring Gull was found on Pat's Pool on the 25th by Chris Kelsey, it was a second summer bird and was easily picked out from the other Herring gulls by its yellow legs. A rather pale or 'Leucistic' bird was seen on number of dates, and on occasions it was thought to be an Iceland Gull but no such luck.

The Turtle Doves seem to be a little late this year with very few seen in the square before the beginning of May, the first reported was seen flying west over Cley village on the 19th.

The first Cuckoo was on the 18th, much later than last year. Though by the end of the month they were every where.

One pair of the local Barn Owls were hard at it from mid-month, taking prey to one of the traditional nesting sites. A Little Owl was at Weybourne Camp on the 2nd and the 3rd, sitting in the hedges along the entrance road to the camp. A Long-eared Owl was heard up on Salthouse Heath on a number of dates during the month, lets hope there is no repetition of last years owlett thrash. If the owlets are heard please keep this information to your selves, if you need Long-eared Owl bad enough to starve them to death, then the Cley Bird Club doesn't want you in the 10km square. A Short-eared Owl was seen over the reed-beds at dusk, on the 11th and the 14th.

The first Swift was seen over the marshes in the evening of the 25th, there were still very few seen in our area by the end of the month. An Alpine Swift was seen over Wiveton on the 20th, by Peter Gooden, but it just flew through and it was not seen again. This was the 15th record for the Cley 10km square.

A Hoopoe on Blakeney Point on the 18th, was suppressed from the masses because of the behaviour of a few.

The Shore Larks were still present on Blakeney Point up to mid-month, with 18 on the 3rd and 8 on the 19th. A Shore Lark was seen at Salthouse on the 19th, feeding along the edge of the shingle beach near Lodge Hill.

Sand Martins seem to be a little commoner than last year with many dozens seen over the marshes in the evenings, the first report was of 5 over Pat's Pool on the 8th. Swallows were not in any great numbers untill the end of the month, the first record was of two east on the 6th over Cley Marshes. The first House Martin was seen flying west past Walsey Hill, on the 6th, but again they were not in good numbers untill the end of the month. The bird of the month was a Red-rumped Swallow found by Eddie Myers over Pat's Pool on the 8th, a full story appeared earlier in this news-letter. This bird

stayed through until the 12th, when it was seen up to 9.30am, but it stayed long enough to be seen by every one, infact hundreds on the week-end.

The first Tree Pipit was seen at Weybourne Camp, on 17th with 7-8 on the 18th.

We again, as last year, had a fair influx of Yellow Wagtails along the coastal strip of the 10km square, the first bird was reported over Cley Marshes on the 7th but the large numbers were not until the third week of the month. The largest counts I've received, are of c320 on the Eye Field on the 22nd and c150 on the following two dates. A number of Blue-headed birds were noted, and a couple of Grey-headed birds were claimed but by persons unknown. Also a number of White Wagtails passed through the Cley square and were seen on every pool on the reserve, with large numbers on the Eye Field on the 22nd and a roost of c40 on Augusta's Marsh off the Beach Road at Cley.

The first Nightingale was heard singing on Muckleburgh Hill on the 15th, and numbers built up quickly and at the end of the month they were everywhere.

Black Redstarts were seen on a number of dates during the month most of the records were from Weybourne Camp, the records are as follows; 2 females by the Huts on the 3rd, female in the Compound on the 10th, female along the Hedge on the 11th, single females by the Huts and the Gun Emplacements on the 14th. Also females seen at The Hood and at the Point on Blakeney Point on the 3rd. A female was seen in the area of Gorse bushes on the saltings on the Glaven near the Coastguards, on the 4th. The first Redstart was reported on the 23rd, from Marsh Lane. There were single males at Weybourne Camp on the following dates; 23rd, 25th and the 28th. The first Whinchat was seen on the 18th, on Weybourne Camp. A male Stonchat was seen in front of Dauke's Hide on the 1st, a local rarity. It was seen on a number of dates following, but disappeared in mid-month.

A good spring for Ring Ouzels with far more than for a number of years, with 17 birds seen on Weybourne Camp during the month. Three males and a female were seen along the edge of the small wood on Weybourne Camp, and they gave excellent views for a number of days around the 16th. There 5 together off Marsh Lane on the 22nd.

A number of Grasshopper Warblers were noted during the month, the first reported was of one singing on the 17th at Weybourne Camp. Other singing birds included the following list; One at Walsey Hill on the 18th. One at the Cley Sluice reed-bed on the 22nd to the months end. The first Sedge Warbler was reported to be singing from the back of the R.A.R. Hide on the 9th. Willows. The first Reed Warbler was seen in the reedbed at the back of Dauke's Hide on the 30th. The first Whitethroat was noted on the 18th, from Weybourne Camp. Lesser Whitethroats are again in very good numbers and are to be heard singing in a number of places about the 10km square, the first was seen on the 25th. The first Garden Warbler was heard from the wood at Weybourne Camp, on the 25th. The first Willow Warblers were seen on Salthouse Heath on the 6th.

A large number of Firecrest passed through the south-east during the early part of the month and Norfolk saw a number. The Cley square records are as follows; A male was ringed at Weybourne Camp on the 3rd, by Dr Moss Taylor. One was found singing in the wood along side the road to Wiveton opposite Marsh Lane, this bird was seen by Martin Elliot. One was found in the gorse bushes on the Glaven saltings over the West Bank at the Coastguards by Steve Gantlett, on the 6th.

Only one record of Pied Flycatcher, a single female down Marsh Lane on the 23rd.

A Great-grey Shrike was found on Kelling Heath on the 17th, and another was found on a roadside hedge at Salthouse Heath by Robin Abel as he returned from seeing the Kelling Bird. A rare occurrence to see two birds in a day in Norfolk, both birds were present for a number of days and were last seen on the following dates; The Kelling bird, 20th. The Salthouse Bird, 18th.

A number of Hooded Crows passed through the square during the month, they were as follows; One over Muckleburgh Hill on the 15th, 2 at Weybourne Camp on the 18th and another on the 29th. One over Salthouse Heath on the 18th, and another west over the reserve on the 19th.

A single male Brambling was seen at Walsey Hill on the 7th, and another was at the Coastguards on the 8th. A flock of Brambling fed in the ploughed field alongside the entrance road to the camp from

the Coast road, the numbers varied from day to day and here are the records; 11 on the 14th, 20 on the 15th to the 17th, c50 on the 18th (19 were caught and ringed), 12 on the 19th. The only records of Siskin were 2 seen on the roadside hedges between Wiveton and Glandford, on the 4th, 3 over Limekiln Close in Cley village on the 10th, 2 over calling at Weybourne Camp, on the 28th.

A male Ortolan Bunting was seen briefly by two birders in the marshes opposite the Dun Cow pub at Salthouse, on the 26th. It was seen on the 28th by Steve Fairburn along Meadow Lane, the dirt track leading to the Quag area.

MAY BIRD NEWS.

The big news of the month was the arrival of two adult Slender-billed Gulls on Tuesday evening the 12th, a male and a female. They stayed around the area until Friday evening the 15th, ample time for all who wanted to see them could do so. A superb pair of birds, Cley's birds of the year! Other goodies during the month were; Adult female Wilson's Phalarope, Mediterranean gull, Kentish Plover, Crane, Great Northern diver, 2 Spoonbills, Purple Heron, Black Kite, Osprey, Rustic Bunting, Savi's Warbler, Ortolan Bunting, Bluethroats and Temminck's Stints.

A Great Northern Diver flew east off Weybourne Camp on the 21st, the only diver noted during the month.

A Red-necked Grebe was claimed flying west off the beach at Salthouse on the 1st, I've no details on this bird can any one enlighten me?

The Bitterns opposite the Wardens house started to show signs of breeding success in mid-month, when they could be seen flying back and forth towards Blakeney Fresh marsh and the Glaven behind the village. There were at least another two males within the Cley square, with one booming from the reed-bed near the Bittern Pool. This bird was seen on numerous occasions to boom out in the open, a curious sight a booming Bittern. A Purple heron was seen on the 29th by a number of people, flying from the reserve over the East Bank and alighting in a Dyke on Salthouse Marsh, it was seen soon afterwards flying off east over the Quag and gaining height. Two immature Spoonbill flew east over Cley reserve in the evening of the 27th, they looked as if they would settle but they carried on eastwards. They have been seen at a number of other sites in Norfolk.

A large number of Brent Geese were still present up at Blakeney Point up to the end of the month, with counts of 174 on the 18th and 230 on the 22nd. At least 3 drake Garganey were to be found on the reserve towards the end of the month, one of which had all but moulted out of its breeding plumage. No sign of a female with young as yet, but there must be a pair breeding on the reserve this year.

A single Crane was seen flying east over the reserve on the 17th by a number of birders, it flew through quite high and rather early so it wasn't seen by the masses.

A Black Kite was seen flying inland over Muckleburgh Hill near Weybourne on the 9th, by Paul Lee who has had vast experience with the species overseas, so at least one of the several dozen Norfolk sightings is a real one. A number of Marsh Harriers passed through the Cley square during the month, one was an immature female showing little buff on the head and none on the fore wings. This was claimed on a number of occasions as a Black Kite, but there must have been one in the area because of the number of claimed sightings. A female Hen Harrier over Weybourne Camp on the 7th, and a small ringtail Hen Harrier roosted in the reedbed near the Bittern pool on the 14th, not a Montagu's Harrier as was first thought. A Common Buzzard was seen in flight over Kelling Heath on the 24th. Only a single Osprey passed through the 10km square this last month, it was seen over the reserve in the early morning of the 13th flying towards the Glaven. It was seen over the river opposite the Three Swallows pub a little later, it moved inland to Bayfield where it was seen sitting in a tree between the estate and Glandford. It was last seen around mid-day flying off over the woods towards the coast. A male Merlin was seen flying west over Weybourne Camp on the 15th. A number of Hobby sightings during the month, they were as follows; One over the North Foreland on the 13th. Another west over Weybourne Camp on the 24th, and one over Cley Marshes on the same day possibly the same bird.

The Stone Curlew stayed into May and it was seen from Dauke's Hide on the 1st and the 2nd, an unusual bird at Cley but we have had one each spring three years running. A Little Ringed plover was on Pat's Pool on the 7th, the first of many. An excellent month for Temminck's Stints, with a flock of 8 birds being seen on Pat's Pool on the 17th. The other records are as follows; 1 on the 11th, 1 on the 13th and 14th, 2 on the 15th, 3 on the 16th, 1 on the North scrape on the 18th and the 20th, 2 on the 19th and the 25th, 1 on the 29th and the 31st. No great numbers of Curlew Sandpipers during the month, infact the largest count was of three on the 11th. Records are as follows; 1 on the north scrape on the 3rd in winter plumage, 1 on the North Scrape on the 5th, 6th, 7th, 16th and 20th. Three birds on the reserve on the 1th, 12th and the 17th. A couple of Purple Sandpiper records for the North scrape, 1 on the 20th and another there on the 21st. The Spotted Redshank numbers dropped down towards the end of the month, from 8 birds on the 9th and 5 on the 13th, other records were; 1 on the 23rd. Greenshank numbers were not exceptional and numbers never reached double figures for any one day during the month, though it was present throughout the month in small numbers. Not many Green Sandpipers reported either, with a few early in the month, records are as follows; 2 on Simmond's Scrape on the 5th, 1 on Pat's Pool on the 13th, 1 briefly in the evening of the 13th on Simmond's Scrape. A fairly good passage of Wood Sandpipers though with far more than in a normal year, records are as follows; 1 on Pat's Pool on the 7th, 5 flew in onto Pat's Pool in the evening of the 10th, before flying off westwards soon afterwards, 3 on Simmond's Scrape on the 12th, again briefly in the evening only, 2 on Richardson's Scrape on the 18th, 1 on the North Scrape on the 20th, 1 on Pat's Pool on the 24th, and another on Pat's Pool on the 29th. A superb full summer plumaged female Wilson's Phalarope was found on Simmond's Scrape by Bernard Bishop the Warden of the NNT reserve on the 9th of May, it later flew onto Pat's Pool were it stayed for most of it's visit. The bird was present up to dusk on the 12th of May, it made way for the next pair of rarities, the Slender-billed Gulls.

The first year Mediterranean Gull was still in the area, and it was seen on the following dates; On Salthouse Scrape on the 13th and on Arnold's Marsh on the 29th. A number of Little Gulls passed through Cley during the month, with the records as follows; A 1st year bird at Salthouse on the 2nd, on Pat's Pool on the 3rd and on the North scrape on the 5th. The birds of the month were of course the pair of summer plumaged Slender-billed Gulls, some say the birds of the decade but I disagree with that for obvious reasons! The full story of the gulls appeared earlier in the news-letter, so I won't dwell on them. A 2nd year Glaucous Gull was seen in Blakeney Harbour on the 4th, by Martin Elliot.

An Arctic Tern was seen on the North Scrape on the 5th, and the only other record I could find was of 5 or more on blakeney point on the 18th. A small number of Black Terns flew through the area during the month, in singles or small groups up to four birds. Records are as follows; 4 over Salthouse scrape on the 25th, same 4 birds over Pat's Pool the next day the 26th.

A Bee Eater was claimed to have been heard over Walsey Hill on the 26th, another three well known birders independently though that they too had heard a rather distant call, but these were at differing times so unless it was hanging about at great height over Cley it's rather stringy?

A nice pair of Grey Wagtail were seen near Pat's Pool on the 9th, a fairly scarce bird in the Cley square, one usually winters on the Glandford Sewage Works.

Another good Bluethroat spring again this year, with over a dozen birds in the Cley square most of which were seen on Blakeney Point. The records were as follows; A male and a female on the 22nd and 4 males and 5 females on Blakeney Point on the 23rd. A male off the East Bank near Arnold's Marsh on the 23rd. A male on Weybourne Camp on the 23rd and the 24th and, possibly the same or another male at Gramborough Hill at Salthouse on the 25th and 26th. A female Black redstart was seen on weybourne Camp on the 24th and the 25th, the only record for the month. A female redstart was seen in the morning of the 28th, in the trees along the lane to Wiveton opposite Marsh Lane.

The Ring Ouzel were still passing through the area during the first half of the month, records were as follows; 2 on the 7th, 1 on the 8th and 1 on the 11th, all records are for Weybourne Camp.

A number of singing Grasshopper warblers have been heard around the Cley square, a few more than in the past two or three years. There's even a pair or at least a male 'reeling', from the small reed-bed opposite the George Hotel. A Savi's Warbler turned up on the 16th, singing from the reed-bed off

the East Bank about mid-way towards Arnold's Marsh. The bird was present for a number of days and it was seen rather well and at reasonably close range, as it sang from a small group of Reedmace alongside the bank. It was present up to the 27th, quite a long stay and the first at Cley since the 16th of April to the 9th of May 1980. The Wood Warblers are back at Kelling Triangle, after an absence of two or three years two birds are back in the woodland surrounding the triangle. They were still singing loudly at the end of the month, and a nest was found by some local birders. A Northern willow Warbler was seen by Mick Fiszer, on the fence skirting Arnold's Marsh on the 9th.

A Golden Oriole was heard from the Sycamore wood on Weybourne Camp on the 11th, but not seen.

Two pairs of Hawfinch bred in the Cley square and were successful, both bringing off young to the fledging stage. These birds seem to be well known amongst the general birding public, and it could have been to the detriment of the birds. The birds seemed to be rather tame and didn't seem to mind the 50 or 60 birdwatchers peering up at them from across the road, which lucky enough was a good thing for the birds sake. Please keep nesting sites of any birds you happen to find or know about a secret, there are plenty of occasions during the year to see all the local breeding birds and not have to resort to disturbance at the nest.

A male Ortolan Bunting was found on Weybourne Camp on the 10th, but it was rather elusive and it was only seen by a few people. A male Rustic bunting was found at the back of Nancy's Cafe in Cley Village on the 23rd, at 8.45am, quite a few people saw it even though it only stayed for a few minutes. It was feeding on the edge of the Glaven near the Windmill, before flying up into nearby trees and started to sing, its the shortest Twitch I've ever been on and I still dipped.

JUNE BIRD NEWS.

Another good month in the Cley 10km square, with some good birds which included the following; American Wigeon, Red-necked Phalarope, Tawny Pipit and Mediterranean Gulls.

The Bitterns were still booming throughout the month, with two males on the reserve. The pair in the small reed bed in front of the Wardens house showed signs of successful breeding, by the numerous flights in and out of the nest site?

The bird of the month was a drake American Wigeon found in the late afternoon of the 22nd, on Pat's Pool along with 5 Wigeon. The bird plus the Wigeon were gone at dawn the following day, so they must have been migrants just passing through. A pair of Pintail were present on Pat's Pool on the 16th, and may well have been present throughout the month. The 2 drake and a duck Garganey were present on Pat's Pool to the end of the month, the drakes had moulted out into eclipse plumage by mid-month and were rather drab and difficult to pick out from amongst the duck flotilla. A female Goldeneye was an unusual sighting on the 18th, flying east over Pat's Pool.

A Hobby was seen over Cley Marshes on the following dates; 1 east on the 1st and 1 over the marshes at dusk the same day, and another west on the 7th.

June is a quiet month for waders usually, with the odd goody turning up on light easterly winds off the continent. There were 2 Golden Plover on Simmond's Scrape, on the 2nd. The Lapwings were starting to move through the 10km square in a westerly direction from early in the month, in flocks of 30 or more. Other wader numbers were rather small and were; Curlew Sandpiper; 2 on the North Scrape on the 12th, and another there on the 17th. Ruff; 1 on the North Scrape on the 24th and 2 on the same scrape on the 27th and the 30th. Black-tailed Godwit; 3 on the North Scrape on the 24th. 5 on Pat's Pool on the 27th and 28th. Whimbrel; 1 west on the 2nd. Curlew; a noticeable westerly movement on the 23rd to the 25th. Spotted Redshank; 1 on Pat's Pool on the 14th and 1 on Carter's Scrape on the 18th, 10 on Carter's Scrape on the 21st and 14 on the North Scrape on the 30th. A few Greenshank were noted during the month, records were as follows; 1 on the North Scrape on the 12th and another on Pat's Pool on the 30th. Green Sandpiper; 1 on Pat's Pool on the 23rd, and 2 on the Whitwell Scrape on the 30th. A nice female Red-necked Phalarope was found by Steve Gantlett on the North Scrape on the 8th, it stayed through until the 10th frequenting the North Scrape and Pat's Pool.

