

AVON BIRD REPORT

2016

AVON ORNITHOLOGICAL GROUP

October 2017

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Typeset in Word 2007 (and later) and printed by Oxuniprint Ltd, Oxford

ISSN Number – 0956-5744

Front cover – Black-tailed Godwits at Northwick Warth by Alex Carlisle

Back cover – Avon area map drawn by Simon Goggins, University of Bristol

Editorial – 2016

Over the past few years this Report has grown considerably, one result of which has been an increased word count per page -- some readers felt by too much, it was becoming difficult to read. So for this edition we have increased the print size and the line spacing by about 15%. This has resulted in pushing the page count nearly 200; to partially compensate for this we have reduced the paper thickness slightly and so some "print-thru" may be evident. Generally, we hope that readers will find the new text easier to read, any comments on this should be directed to me as editor.

We have also received comments from readers concerning the apparently annual changes that the British Ornithological Union (BOU) has been making to the taxonomic species order recently; one which we usually follow. From 2018 the BOU has decided to make major changes which are discussed by John Martin in his Recorders Report below. Hence we have decided to make no changes until then – the taxonomic order we use for this Report, and the next one for 2017, will be identical to that used in the 2015 Report.

Apart from the systematic list and the usual annual ringing and BBS reports, we have three papers. The first is by David Warden on the decline of the Little Owl around CVL. The second is by Brian Edge, it discusses the birds of Batheaston Meadows – a site under considerable pressure at the moment. The third, by Nigel Milbourne, gives an account of the first sighting of a Blyth's Pipit in our region seen by many birders at BL in December.

We are pleased to have recruited three new section editors for this edition – Ken Carruthers, Robert Hargreaves and Trevor Riddle. So for 2016 the editors and their sections are as follows:

- Ken Carruthers – migrant passerines except warblers and hirundines;
- Chris Craig – near passerines, doves to woodpeckers, also liaison with local ringing groups;
- Ken Hall – warblers and finches;
- Robert Hargreaves – non-breeding falcons, migrant thrushes and wagtails;
- Rupert Higgins – divers to grebes, rails, and the excellent review of the year;
- John Martin – skuas to gulls;
- Nigel Milbourne – ducks, and photographic editor;
- Richard Mielcarek – breeding falcons, escapes, hybrids and some description species;
- Trevor Riddle – hirundines and pipits;
- Tony Scott – swans, geese, game birds, hawks, and Red/Amber status;
- Dave Stoddard – most resident passerines and BBS coordinator.

As editor I am most grateful to all of the above, they have spent many hours in front of their computer screens to produce the excellent entries presented in this Report. As usual I did the wader section, I also took on the job of 'technical editor' which cannot be sustained in the long run, partly because I have never received any training in the finer points of 'Word', the package we are forced to use; Readers will notice the less than acceptable results in the pages ahead. In my editorial in last year's Report I listed a number of unfilled vacancies some are still unfilled. So if you are able and willing to help in any of these I would very much like to hear from you.

Thanks are also due to Nick Hawkrige for managing the BOC electronic files, Andy Davis and Keith Vinicombe for checking and proof-reading, Richard Bland for the weather report, Mike Bailey and Ed Drewitt for the ringing report, Dave Stoddard for the BBS report, the members of the AOG executive committee (Jane Cumming, Richard Mielcarek, Giles Morris and Jason Williams) for general support, and Richard Mielcarek for overseeing the whole enterprise as well as a number of other important jobs. Finally, and most importantly, thanks are due to all those observers who submitted records.

Harvey Rose [E-mail h.e.rose@bris.ac.uk] August 2017.

From the Recorder, 2016

John Martin

The year will be long remembered nationally for the extraordinary number of top class rarities that turned up, especially in an autumn dominated by easterly winds. Needless to say our west 'coast' (or are we inland?) location meant that, a record autumn for Yellow-browed Warblers (nine) and our second ever Pallas's Warbler aside, we seemed to have largely missed out. This was until the discovery of the Blyth's Pipit at Blagdon Lake (BL) – a top class eastern vagrant that was a high quality addition to the area's list staying from Dec.14th to 30th. We did have a number of other remarkable sightings during the year including our first White-tailed Eagle (also at BL) since one was 'obtained' at Dodington Park in December 1871 (the third ever); our second Pallid Harrier (at Marshfield); and our second and third Caspian Terns (together at PWD).

Changes to the list of description species

We are adding two more species to the list of those for which we require supporting evidence before we publish details in this Report, namely Nightingale and Tree Sparrow. Both are rare enough now to warrant this treatment and sadly both seem to be lost as regular breeders. Tree Sparrows present no great identification challenge if seen well, it is worth familiarising yourself with their calls if you do not already know them. A number of recent reports have involved spring and autumn migrants passing through on the coast. We expect a fairly high proportion of Nightingales will be heard but not seen and while the song is diagnostic we are aware that inexperienced observers and especially non-birders often mistake the songs of other species for this one – Blackcap and nocturnal Robins are favourites. In addition BBRC will no longer be considering records of either Black-winged Stilt or, amazing though it seems, Red-flanked Bluetail as they are both now consistently averaging over ten records per year in the UK; consequently they will be added to our local list. Conversely, Ferruginous Duck is being reinstated as a species considered by BBRC. These changes took effect on Jan.1st, 2017.

Heard-only records

This brings us to the vexed subject of scarce birds that were heard but not seen. Most of us routinely record heard only birds – it's important we do so for surveys such as the BBS, for example -- so there is no reason, in principle, why 'heard only' records of rarities cannot be accepted. Some observers do not find it easy to document rarities they have seen, so trying to describe songs or calls, even familiar ones, is definitely more challenging. As with visual records it is important to outline your experience of the call and similar calls you recognise made by other species that might cause confusion. If you compared the sound with recordings either at the time or soon afterwards, then do mention it. Above all try to describe what you heard in your own words (or better still make a sound recording if you can – most smart phones or cameras can record sound). Making comparison with vocalisations of commoner species you are especially familiar with often helps. There are particular pitfalls with heard only records that need to be avoided – make sure you were not listening to someone else playing a recording nearby but out of your sight. Also be aware of mimicry – some species, such as Starling and Sedge Warbler, are excellent mimics, while others such as Blackcap seem quite frequently to have unusual songs that can sometimes recall rarer species.

Cranes

With our recording area in a direct line of flight between Slimbridge and the Somerset Levels, both favoured areas for Great Crane Project (GCP) Cranes, it is not surprising that we receive a number records of birds passing through. Genuinely wild Cranes also occur and will no doubt continue to do so. While most GCP Cranes are decked out with colour rings (although note these can be surprisingly difficult to detect, especially in flight) an increasing number are not.

Last year there were at least six unringed young in the south-west, as these gain adult plumage, it will become effectively impossible to distinguish wild birds from hopefully an increasing number of unringed GCP birds. Once the young have themselves bred and produced a third generation, then the population would meet the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) criteria for a self-sustaining population. When this occurs it would be reasonable for us to treat them as a wild population. Until then we will have a rather murky grey area, all that we can do is continue to record all Crane sightings, try to age the birds and note whether they are ringed (in which case details should be sent to GCP too) or unringed.

Reviews

From time to time we review records of a certain taxon. Reviewing old records is difficult – birding was very different in the 1960s, for example, than it is today - hardly anyone had a camera that could take meaningful bird photos; optics were far inferior to modern equipment (and most birders did not use telescopes anyway); field guides were far less sophisticated (and in some cases downright misleading); and most observers were far less well-travelled and consequently had less experience of county rarities. We cannot judge the records of that time by the standards of today and we have to trust that the authorities of the day generally made good decisions about what constituted acceptable records. We will therefore only remove records where there is good reason to think a mistake might have been made. This year the two Roseate Terns seen at Northwick Warth in August prompted questions about some of our earlier records of this species. The early pattern of occurrences was not what we now expect with a high proportion of inland records, mainly at CVL. These factors prompted a review of these records that we are publishing under the species entry in the systematic list.

We also had a claim of a female Blue-headed Wagtail (the nominate race *flava* of Yellow Wagtail) that made us rethink our treatment of this form. The definitive recent book on this matter, Alström and Mild [2003], suggests that an adult female *flavissima* (Yellow) 'is usually indistinguishable from female *flava*...', but some individuals differ in having a yellowish supercilium (note however that in most ssp. a few birds show a pale yellowish tinged supercilium), and some have a rather distinct creamy tinge to the supercilium and throat, which is only rarely shown by nominate *flava*'. This year's bird associated with a male *flava* and was described as 'a much washed out version of the male with blue head/crown, prominent white eye stripe, ...'. We think there is every chance that this individual was as claimed, but note that it is apparently impossible to rule out either variant *flavissima* or (especially?) the hybrid form 'Channel Wagtail' (*flava* x *flavissima*). Therefore we are unable to accept any records of female *flava* until solid identification criteria are established.

A new taxonomic authority

One of the predictable things about this Report recently has been the unpredictability of the species order and nomenclature compared with previous Reports. Bird taxonomy is in a state of considerable flux at the moment while increasingly sophisticated use of DNA analyses teases out more accurately the phylogeny of birds. The authority we follow has always been the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU), whose work appeared thorough and reliable, if sometimes a little erratic (in terms of the species covered or not covered by their reviews) and arguably unduly slow.

It came as a shock however, not least to members of the sub-committee itself, when the BOU announced in November 2015 the disbanding of its Taxonomic Sub-committee. It subsequently reviewed the available global bird taxonomies and has opted to use the International Ornithological Congress (IOC) World Bird List from Jan.1st, 2018. The IOC list is updated quarterly, so expect further changes. The updates include changes of recommended names or classification, additions of newly described species, corrections of nomenclature, and updates of species taxonomy. Note however that as this is a world list, most of the changes do not affect British species. We shall keep with the current BOU list for this Report and the next, for 2017.

This decision will mean changes for the British list most of which do not yet affect our recording area. Those that will are as follows: Bean Goose becomes Taiga Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis*) and Tundra Bean Goose (*A. rossicus*), both with currently accepted records but possibly requiring review. The redpolls, however, are reduced from three species to two: Common (*Acanthis flammea*) and Arctic (*A. hornemanni*), the latter with no accepted local records. Common Redpoll in this sense includes the current 'Lesser Redpoll', which will now be reduced to a subspecies, *A. cabaret*, of Common Redpoll. We will wish to receive document records of the scarce winter visitor and passage migrant form 'Mealy Redpoll' but it will now be treated as the nominate subspecies of Common Redpoll.

Acknowledgements

As ever, thanks are due to the people who have made my job a lot easier over the past year. In particular Rich Mielcarek continued to manage efficiently the collation and circulation of the vast majority of the rarity records as well as chasing up 'missing' ones, and also drafting some rarity accounts. Thanks are also due to the members of the recorder's committee, namely Rich Andrews, Andy Davis, Rupert Higgins, Rich Mielcarek and Harvey Rose. Dave Stoddart organised the BBS locally and provided the local statistics on breeding populations. Tony Scott kept the status information up to date. Harvey Rose's keen eye for accuracy and detail as ever significantly improved the whole Report. Thanks also of course to all those who sent in records – especially those who submitted notes and/or photos in support of the county rarities listed elsewhere in this Report without having to be 'chased up'. If the supporting information comprises images alone do please include at least some basic notes on where and when the photograph was taken, what the bird(s) was doing and so on. We continue to assess records as they come in so, as mentioned last year, although some observers still wait until the end of the year to submit them – just a reminder, there is no need to do this (and it always creates a big surge of work in late winter). By using Bird Track you should usually be prompted for descriptions of the relevant local rarities and a useful form that pops up, then emailing this to us is very easy (but note that this is not always the case with subspecies, so if in doubt do check the list).

References

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Review of the Year

Rupert Higgins

The weather in 2016 generally lacked extremes, beginning and ending with two largely mild winters and including a summer that was chiefly notable for a lack of either sunshine or rain, although temperatures during a brief hot spell were high. Populations of many common species enjoyed a third year of recovery following some significant declines earlier in the decade, but there was worrying evidence of poor breeding success in 2016. Numbers of several wader species were exceptional on and around Severnside, and BL produced some impressive wildfowl counts. It was a much better year than 2015 for rarities, with exceptional sightings including Caspian Tern, White-tailed Eagle, Blyth's Pipit and *abietinus* Chiffchaff. It also appears that 2016 was the year we had to say farewell to two very long-standing winter visitors: the Sea Mills Greenshank and the CVL Red-breasted Merganser.

First Winter Period

The first winter period was dominated by mild, wet weather broken by cooler spells from Jan.10th to 21st and Feb. 8th to 18th. Winds were largely from the west and strong between Feb.5th and 8th.

As would be expected, given a combination of mild conditions and high water levels at the reservoirs, wildfowl numbers were unexceptional. However, the Pochard count at CVL in January was higher than usual and there was a good sequence of Scaup records here. Teal was reasonably numerous on the coast and Wigeon numbers were average. The lack of prolonged cold weather was no doubt responsible for low counts of Goldeneye and Goosander at the reservoirs, although a long sequence of the latter at Newton Park, Bath, reaching a maximum of 22, was noteworthy. Compared to the corresponding period of 2015 Dark-bellied Brent Goose was fairly numerous and there was a record of Bewick's Swan, at CVL and BL on Jan.12th during the year's first cold spell. Species such as White-fronted Goose, Long-tailed Duck and Smew were once again absent, however.

For the second year running Red-throated Diver failed to appear in numbers in the Weston-s-Mare area and it appears that the parties seen here earlier in the decade were a temporary phenomenon, perhaps related to unusual fish movements. Small numbers of seabirds visited the Estuary, there was an Arctic Skua at CI-Y on Jan. 30th and a total of eight Great Skuas over the period. Kittiwake appeared in some quantity between Jan. 29th and Feb. 8th.

There were no large influxes of raptors, but Merlin was fairly numerous and numbers of Short-eared Owl were average. One Long-eared Owl was located and Barn Owl records were widespread, reflecting a good breeding season in 2015.

Populations of those wader species for which the Estuary is particularly important continued at a reasonably high level. Curlew numbers were stable, there were some increases in Dunlin counts and Redshank was exceptionally numerous. Oystercatcher and Turnstone were plentiful in the upper Estuary but the latter was scarce in the south-western part of the area. Black-tailed Godwit and Knot were largely absent. Away from the Estuary, numbers of Golden Plover, Lapwing and Snipe were all low in the mild weather, but Jack Snipe seemed to be reasonably numerous. Common Sandpiper has become increasingly frequent during recent mild winters and a minimum of ten was present, but other less common waders were scarce with, for example, only one record of Spotted Redshank.

The populations of several common passerine species, notably Long-tailed Tit, were high following the recent run of mild winters, which also allowed Stonechat to continue its recovery. Despite the weather Fieldfare and Redwing were both reasonably frequent, although a sharp decline in numbers of the latter species was evident from early February.

Siskin was fairly numerous following a good showing in late 2015, but Brambling and Redpoll were both scarce. Notable counts included 650 Chaffinch, a site record by some margin, at Weston STW in January, and 800 Linnet, 300 Yellowhammer and 150 Corn Bunting at Marshfield. A good winter for Firecrest and Black Redstart, but no Water Pipits were seen and Blackcap numbers were low.

Rarities remaining from 2015 were a Lesser Scaup, which was last seen at CVL on Jan. 7th; three Great White Egrets; and Siberian Chiffchaffs at CVL, Chew Stoke STW and Saltford. The last species had a good winter, with another four being found over the course of the season. Dartford Warblers were seen regularly at Sand Bay, with a maximum count of three and a Whimbrel was seen here on several days in January. South-westerly winds early in the year produced a Little Auk at Weston-s-Mare on Jan. 4th. There was a small flurry of arrivals as temperatures fell between 10th and 13th including a Garganey at Weston STW; a Glossy Ibis which visited CVL briefly; the only diver of the year, a Great Northern, flew over Portbury; a Slavonian Grebe was at Severnside; and a Ring-billed Gull was found at CVL. There then followed further sightings of Slavonian Grebe, at BG on 20th; and a Ring-billed Gull, at CVL on 21st. The population of Chough in south-western Britain is gradually increasing and one was at Uphill on 27th but Tree Sparrow has rapidly declined from being a locally numerous breeding species as recently as the early 1990s to a rarity, and the year's only record of this species was at Chew Magna on Feb. 26th.

Spring

March began with ten days of northerly airflows, but for the rest of the month winds were either light or south-westerly, with heavy rain on 22nd. Most of April was very warm with light winds, but northerlies returned near the end. Warmth returned on May 14th with winds from the east, but a series of fresh southerlies and then north-easterlies brought cooler conditions at the month's end.

The most notable wildfowl record of the spring, certainly in the context of recent years, was of a Smew at Chipping Sodbury Common on March 12th and 28th. South-westerly winds then produced a good movement of Common Scoter between 19th and 30th. The first Garganey of the year, the start of a good sequence of records, was on April 4th and winter visitors lingered later than usual with Scaup on May 3rd, Goosander on 11th, and Pintail, on 21st.

The first Osprey was seen on March 24th and the first Hobby on April 6th, both early dates. There were several sightings of Marsh Harrier in late March, heralding a good spring for this species. Red Kite has become a familiar sight in spring and this year's peak was in May, a month earlier than in 2015.

Wader passage became apparent from mid-March, with the first Avocet on 11th and Ruff on 13th, and it picked up between April 6th and 8th when Whimbrel, Common Sandpiper and Greenshank started to appear. The start of a warm spell, on 19th, saw a large movement of Bar-tailed Godwit, Grey Plover and Whimbrel. Green Sandpiper was, as in most recent years, scarce but the largest passage of Common Sandpiper in at least thirty years was recorded, peaking at 31 at BG on 29th. As ever, early to mid-May was an exciting time for wader watchers. Counts of Grey Plover, Ringed Plover and Dunlin all peaked between 10th and 13th. Some of the less common species, notably Knot, Ruff and Greenshank, were scarce but a reasonable passage of Little Stint lasted from 10th to 15th, reaching its maximum on the last date. Other scarcer species seen included Wood Sandpiper, on 5th and 28th; Spotted Redshank, on 15th; and Curlew Sandpiper, from 13th to 16th.

Seabird numbers were lower than in recent years with, notably, very few Kittiwake and no Pomarine Skua sightings. Arctic Skua was also scarce, perhaps a reflection of its decline as a breeding species in the UK, and Great Skua was seen on only two dates, April 29th and 30th. Some tern species fared better, with a reasonable passage of Black Tern, from May 1st to 21st, and of Little Tern, peaking from 11th to 13th. Maximum numbers of both Common and Arctic Tern were noted during the same three days, although the former was frequent at CVL neither was numerous on the coast. The Little Gull passage, which started on March 11th, was reasonably good.

Northerly winds at the start of March held up arrivals of early migrants, resulting in later than usual first dates of Sand Martin, on 13th, and Wheatear, on 20th, and no evidence of migrant Blackcap until 31st. However, the arrival of settled conditions from 11th produced notable movements of Meadow Pipit, Chaffinch, Greenfinch and Siskin on 14th, the day that also saw the first House Martin of the year. There was then a significant arrival on April 2nd and 3rd, when the first Grasshopper, Sedge and Reed warblers, Ring Ouzel, Redstart and Tree Pipit were seen, and Blackcap and Willow Warbler were present in good numbers. The days from 12th to 14th were exceptionally warm, and migrants responded with peaks of Whitethroat, Grasshopper, Sedge and Reed warblers, Redstart, Pied and White wagtails, and Tree Pipit, as well as the first Garden Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat and Whinchat and last Brambling of the season. Another wave of migration coincided with a second heat wave from 19th to 23rd. The first Wood Warbler and Spotted Flycatcher, and last Fieldfare, Redwing and Siskin, were seen during this period together with large numbers of Swallow, House Martin, Garden Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Whinchat, Wheatear, Linnets and Goldfinch. Overall, there were high numbers of Sand Martin; Wood, Willow and Grasshopper warblers; Pied Flycatcher; Redstart; Whinchat; and Yellow and White wagtails whilst those of Wheatear and Tree Pipit were low.

The spring got off to a slow start as far as rarities were concerned but, as would be expected given prolonged periods of southerly and easterly winds, there were some notable sightings, particularly in May. The best birds in March were all in the last ten days and scarce, rather than rare: a Scandinavian Rock Pipit at OPS on 22nd, four Bearded Tits at CVL on 25th and a Slavonian Grebe here on 29th and 30th. April, despite producing good passages of commoner waders and passerines, was also quiet but a Hoopoe at Sand Point on 12th and a Blue-headed Wagtail at Severnside on 17th both coincided with increased migration spells. Passage of the commoner wader and tern species was noted during the period May 8th to 11th, and these were accompanied by a Temminck's Stint, at Severnside from 8th to 10th; a Hoopoe, at Hanham on 9th; a Whiskered Tern, at OPS on 10th; and two Caspian Terns at PWD on 11th. These last, which were found in very murky conditions, comprised our second record, following one at CVL in 1988 that no local observer managed to see. Golden Oriole is a species recorded much less frequently than previously so a male at New Passage on 26th was particularly welcome. There were also records of two species whose status as rarities, as with Tree Sparrow, would have been unthinkable in the recent past: a Nightingale at Kingston Seymour on May 1st and a Turtle Dove at New Passage from 11th to 13th.

Breeding

The most striking feature of the year's wildfowl breeding season was the continued decline in productivity at CVL, presumably a combination of habitat changes and increased predation from Great Black-backed Gull and Pike. Although there were indications that a brood of Shoveler was raised here, it was a poor year for Mallard, no broods at all of Gadwall, Pochard and Great Crested Grebe were seen, and the single Tufted Duck brood almost certainly failed. Elsewhere the picture was better. Shelduck had a good year on the Estuary, particularly at PWD and CI-Y, and Gadwall bred at Pilning Wetlands for the first time. Both Mute Swan and Little Grebe had reasonable seasons.

Trends in raptor numbers were very similar to those observed in 2015. There was another apparent increase in Sparrowhawk pairs whilst Buzzard numbers remained very high, but with rather poor productivity; perhaps this is a sign that the peak in this species' population is being reached in our area. Kestrel continued its ongoing decline and there was also a fall in Hobby numbers but Peregrine had a reasonable year. Barn Owl was found at a good number of sites but breeding success was only average, whilst the slight improvement shown by Little Owl continued.

Following a terrible year for waders in 2015, this one was slightly better for some species. Lapwing activity was noted as seven sites and breeding took place at three. There have been fewer records of breeding by both Little Ringed and Ringed Plover at the docks in the last three years compared to the recent past, possibly due to changes in vegetation, but there are indications that the former species bred at some unknown site in the Severnside area. There were perhaps six breeding attempts by Oystercatcher and one by Redshank.

The dominant trend amongst breeding passerines and related taxa, of high population levels but low productivity, was shown by species as varied as Blue Tit, Great Tit, Wren, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Robin and Dunnock. Kingfisher, Long-tailed Tit, Treecreeper, Cetti's Warbler and Goldcrest all showed continued improvement following a series of mild winters, without any apparent decline in breeding success. The fortunes of the finch species were varied. There was a further sharp fall in Greenfinch numbers and Chaffinch also continued to decline, particularly within Bristol. Bullfinch, in contrast, showed some signs of an increase but the marked increase shown by Linnet in 2015 was reversed this year. Species continuing their upwards trend included Green Woodpecker, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Nuthatch and Raven, and there were encouraging signs of some recovery by Cuckoo, Swift and Willow Warbler. Other migrants enjoying a good season included Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Whitethroat and Sedge Warbler, but Lesser Whitethroat declined. Unfortunately, one of the most consistent trends of recent years, the sharp decline in Starling numbers, continued in 2016.

There were few records of rarer species breeding, with perhaps the most interesting which involved possible success by Crossbill at Walton Common. Stonechat may have bred at as many as five sites and there were four singing Quail at Marshfield, with another briefly at Chipping Sodbury Common. Tree Pipit and Nightjar seem to maintain toehold on the Mendips. Water Rail bred for the first time at Pilning Wetlands, as well as having a good season at CVL.

Summer

June and July were both notably dry and although northerly winds through most of the period kept temperatures on the low side there was a brief hot spell, with south-easterly winds, around July 19th.

Summer is not a season normally associated with waterfowl, but some Common Scoter passage was evident both from June 21st to 25th and at the end of July, and the presence of three Goldeneye at CVL was noteworthy. Wigeon were also seen here on and off throughout the period. Three Teal at Marshfield on June 6th was an extremely unusual record.

As has been the pattern for several years now, summer gales were absent and sightings of seabirds were consequently sparse. The best day was June 14th, when there were small numbers of Fulmar, Storm Petrel and Manx Shearwater, preceded the day before by a Great Skua. A post-breeding influx of Mediterranean Gull was evident, with a total of 24 recorded during the two months.

Two spring records of Hoopoe was a good showing by recent standards, and they were followed by two further records, at Weston-s-Mare on June 24th and Langford on July 3rd. A singing Wood Lark on 13th was an extremely unusual record, but like a Bee-eater at Aust on 31st it did not linger.

Autumn

The season began with one night of exceptional rainfall, but was largely dry and sunny thereafter. Winds were largely south-westerly, but there was a spell of northerlies around Sept. 19th and a more prolonged period of easterlies during the first two weeks of October.

Water levels fell far more markedly at BL than at CVL and as a consequence, although numbers were reasonable at the latter, BL saw some exceptional counts of Wigeon, Gadwall, Teal, Pintail and Shoveler. Tufted Duck, however, was more numerous at CVL, where there was also a gradual build-up of Scaup. Great Crested Grebe also had a good season here, as did both Moorhen and Coot, and Black-necked Grebe was more common than in recent years. Little Egret counts were the highest on record at both lakes.

Although winds were mostly light they were generally south-westerly in August. This produced some reasonable records of Storm Petrel, on 4th and 21st, and an exceptional series of Shag sightings, which included 23 at Severnside on 22nd, and smaller numbers at Walton Bay on 26th and again at Severnside on 29th.

Great Skua was uncommon and there were no records at all of Arctic Skua or Kittiwake. The best tern passage was at CVL, where there were several Little on 11th and a large movement of Common on 19th. However, the autumn was only average for Black Tern and poor for Little Gull.

Despite low water levels inland, particularly at BL, Pilning Wetlands was the major site for many migrant waders. There was no clear trend with some species, such as Ruff, Green Sandpiper and Greenshank, having a poor season and others, including Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint and Wood Sandpiper, appearing in reasonable numbers. Late August to early September was the most productive period, with peaks of Curlew Sandpiper on Aug. 24th, Ringed Plover on 27th and Spotted Redshank on Sept. 1st and 2nd. Interestingly, although Little Stint was first seen on July 19th it was virtually absent during this period and maximum numbers were seen at the end of September. Most of these species were either entirely or virtually absent inland, but in September sizeable parties of Knot, on 9th, and Turnstone, on 12th and 13th, passed through CVL. Later in the autumn exceptional flocks of Grey Plover and Black-tailed Godwit built up at Severnside.

Passage totals of several passerines, including Grasshopper Warbler, Redstart, Whinchat and Yellow Wagtail, were high although higher levels of observer coverage were at least partly responsible. The fact that an excellent Wheatear passage followed a very poor spring for this species shows that there is probably little relationship between the numbers recorded in our area and overall populations of these species. The first sign of large scale passage was around Aug. 9th, when Willow Warbler numbers peaked and there were two records of Wood Warbler. Tree Pipit was most numerous on 16th, with the last Cuckoo seen the following day, and at the end of the month there were sighting maxima of Yellow Wagtail on 26th, Grasshopper Warbler on 27th, and Redstart on 29th. September was more lively with the switch to northerly winds seeing last records of Garden Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Whitethroat, Grasshopper Warbler and Tree Pipit between 14th and 22nd, together with peaks in numbers of House Martin and Linnet. The start of the prolonged easterly airflow in early October saw the first records, mostly slightly later than usual, of Redwing, Fieldfare and Brambling, accompanied by movements of Mistle Thrush and Song Thrush, and last sightings of Sand Martin, Sedge Warbler, Whinchat and Yellow Wagtail. The three days around 22nd saw peaks in the passages of Starling, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Chaffinch and Redpoll. Late lingering summer migrants included Willow Warbler, to Oct. 3rd; Whinchat to 7th; Sedge Warbler, the latest on record, to 10th; Wheatear to Nov. 8th; and Swallow to 11th.

The autumn was an improvement on the previous year for rarities. A Caspian Gull was at CVL on Aug. 9th, the same day also saw the start of the season's influx of Great White Egret that culminated with an exceptional 24 moving between CVL and BL in late October. The rest of the month was quiet, as would be expected in the settled weather, but two Roseate Terns were at New Passage on 28th and a Wryneck was at Hinton Blewitt on 30th, followed by two of the latter at Yatton on Sept. 2nd. Severnside then produced a Sabine's Gull on 8th and a Pectoral Sandpiper on 11th, with Spoonbills at CI-Y on 10th and at BL on 19th. A Spotted Crake at CVL on 26th was followed by another from Oct. 9th and there was a Pectoral Sandpiper at BL from 6th, two unringed Cranes at Severnside on 7th and two Spoonbill at PWD on 19th. Lesser Scaup, which has become almost routine in recent years, was not recorded but the large Tufted Duck flock at CVL pulled in a Ring-necked Duck from 15th and a Ferruginous Duck from 17th. A good year for Hoopoe concluded with single birds at Tortworth on 10th and Burrington on 28th. The easterly airflows saw an exceptional influx of scarce and rare birds to the east coast of Britain; our share of this bounty was not huge, but included a total of seven Yellow-browed Warblers between 7th and 28th and a Pallas's Warbler on 23rd. A Swift at Severnside on 25th coincided with sightings of Pallid Swift elsewhere in south-western England, but the views were too poor for the observer to confirm the identification. A Great Grey Shrike was at Sand Point on 25th. The season's best bird, also appearing from the north-east, was our first definite White-tailed Eagle since 1871, which astonished and delighted observers at BL on 28th before drifting into Somerset.

Second Winter Period

The beginning of November provided a marked contrast with the preceding months, with frost on the relatively early date of 5th. Following a period of strong south-westerlies between 16th and 22nd cool conditions and easterly or northerly winds returned until Dec. 7th. Temperatures then rose but fell again for the last three days of the year.

Dabbling duck numbers remained high at BL during the start of the winter, whilst at CVL there were good counts of Pochard and Tufted Duck, and Coot numbers rose throughout the period, probably because largely settled weather allowed continued growth of water plants. Scaup was unusually numerous here, with arrivals on Nov.14th and Dec.10th and a peak of 11 on 31st. Ruddy Duck was absent, a consequence of the Defra culls, and there were also no records of Smew or Red-breasted Merganser. Bewick's Swan was present in reasonable numbers at the reservoirs and there were two Whooper Swans at CVL on Nov. 7th and another at BL on 9th, but Dark-bellied Brent Goose was uncommon.

The strong south-westerlies in mid-November failed to produce any notable seabird influx, but there were several flocks of Kittiwake in the Estuary between Dec. 23rd and 25th.

Counts of the common wader species in the Estuary revealed a now familiar pattern, with numbers of Curlew and Dunlin reasonable and those of Redshank high. Although there was an exceptional Redshank count of 660 at CI-Y on Oct. 31st numbers of several species were low here. In contrast the upper Estuary was very good for several species, notably Oystercatcher, Grey Plover, Black-tailed Godwit and Knot. Snipe was again uncommon but there appeared to be a small influx of Lapwing and Golden Plover in the last few days of the year; a flock of the latter in the Dyrham area was notably large. Common Sandpiper wintered in good numbers but the Sea Mills Greenshank failed to reappear.

Brambling, Lesser Redpoll and Siskin were all very uncommon throughout the period, and although Redwing was fairly numerous Fieldfare was less abundant than in the previous winter. There was some evidence of a movement of Blackbird to coastal areas in the last few days of the year. Stonechat and Black Redstart were fairly widespread but Water Pipit was scarce. The highest count of Corn Bunting at Marshfield was 200, and 74 Reed Bunting were noted at Weston STW in December.

As with the autumn, the winter was reasonably good for scarce and rare birds, with some evidence of a small proportion of the earlier east coast influx filtering its way to our region. Great White Egret numbers at the reservoirs reached 26 on Nov. 11th and although they then gradually departed there were still ten at the year's end. Two Long-tailed Duck visited BL on Nov. 9th. There were influxes of Waxwing and Cattle Egret to the country, and small numbers of the former started to appear on 14th followed by three separate sightings of the latter on the 19th. A late Reed Warbler was at CVL on 26th and a party of four Velvet Scoter visited the lake on 28th. *Phylloscopus* warblers were in evidence, with a total of five Siberian Chiffchaff located; Yellow-browed Warblers at Bath on Dec. 2nd and Eastville Park from 18th; and, thanks to DNA analysis, our first confirmed Chiffchaff of the Scandinavian race *abietinus*, was recorded at the CVL ringing station on 3rd. A Lapland Bunting was at Sand Point on the same day. The year's last major rarity was also our only new species for the year, a Blyth's Pipit seen and photographed by many observers at BL from 14th to 30th.

Weather Report for 2016

Richard Bland

The Bristol Naturalists Society (BNS) began publishing weather data in 1872 with G. F. Burder's paper [Burder 1872] on rainfall in Clifton since 1853, and this has led to a search for temperature data back to that date. From 1920 until its closure in 2002 the Long Ashton Research Station published weather data. During this period the BNS, and later this Report, made use of this information. From 2003 use has also been made of the temperature data given on the website www.afour.demon.co.uk which is based in Totterdown (Bristol) and records from some other sources back to 1853 which have been used to fill in historical gaps. In 2014 it was discovered that the official Met. Office Bristol Temperature Data is taken at Lulsgate, and overall on average this is two degrees colder than that recorded at the Totterdown site. This suggests that the figures after 2002 cannot be compared directly with the earlier ones. Since 2002 a rain gauge situated in the Clifton/Stoke Bishop area has been used as Burder measured rainfall in Clifton. Rainfall figures vary considerably with location and time, and so a long series is crucial to any understanding of the continuous processes of climate change. In this report the term 'long-term average' is used for the average back to 1853. Most meteorologists use the mean daily temperature as the basic unit, but many sources only quote daily maxima and so these figures have been used throughout.

Summary for 2016

The year had an average maximum temperature of 15.0°C and, unprecedentedly, was the third year in succession to have an average of over 15.0°C. Since 1853 the average is 13.7°C, and apart from the last three years, the annual average was over 15.0°C in 1921, 1949, 1959, 2002 and 2011. There were no monthly or seasonal extreme records for either temperature or rainfall in 2016.

Year	2007	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Av. Max. °C	14.5	13.7	14.6	13.7	15.5	14.7	14.8	16.1	15.4	15.0
Ten year av. °C	14.4	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.4	14.5	14.5	14.6	14.8	14.8
Rainfall <i>mm</i>	1107	1150	986	747	847	1420	799	1143	870	855
Ten year av. <i>mm</i>	997	1005	993	943	945	981	983	975	992	984

Table 1 -- Average mean maximum temperature and rainfall. The second and fourth rows give the average for the ten years up to and including the year referred to

Seasons

Winter (December 2015 to February 2016) Average maximum temperature was 10.0°C, the third highest since 1853, just below that for 1920 and 1989, and 2.5°C above the long-term average. This was the result of the fact that December 2015 had the highest temperature yet recorded at 13.3°C. Rainfall averaged at 108*mm* per month, a third above the average, as both December and January were wet months. There were 20 frost nights (October to April), compared with an average 36 in the past decade. No snow fell, but there were six days when ponds were frozen.

Spring (March to May) Average temperature was 14.1°C, one degree above the long-term average. The 30-year average is now 13.6°C, just higher than the previous peak in 1960. April was four degrees cooler than the same month last year, but to make up May was 2.5°C warmer and was the warmest May since 1922. Rainfall was average.

Summer (June to August) Average temperature was 21.4°C, one degree above the long-term figure. The thirty-year average, 20.5°C, was exactly the same as in 1880. Rainfall was a third below average because of a very dry July. June had half the normal hours of sunshine.

Autumn (September to November) Average temperature was 15.2°C, two degrees above the long-term average, helped by a warm September. October was notably dry and November notably wet, but rainfall overall was average at 85mm per month.

Seasonal Comparisons

To put the 2016 seasonal average temperatures into perspective, Table 2 shows the seasonal temperature extremes, with their year, the average since 1853, and the differences between 2016 and the long-term average, and in Table 3 the same figures are given for rainfall.

	2016	Minimum	Maximum	Av. since 1853	Diff.
Winter	10.0	1917 - 2.5	1920 - 10.6	7.5°C	2.5
Spring	14.1	1887 - 10.4	1893 - 16.6	13.0°C	1.1
Summer	21.4	1883 - 18.0	1976 - 23.9	20.3°C	1.1
Autumn	15.2	1915 - 10.6	1959 - 16.8	14.0°C	1.2
Annual	15.0	1892 - 12.1	2014 - 16.1	13.7°C	1.4

Table 2 -- 2016 average temperature compared with minimum, maximum and the difference between 2015 and the average since 1853

	2016	Min.	Max.	Av. since 1853	Diff.
Winter	108mm	1964 – 21mm	1995 – 154mm	79mm	29mm
Spring	67mm	1893 – 17mm	1981 – 107mm	60mm	7mm
Summer	54mm	1995 – 11mm	2012 – 149mm	74mm	-20mm
Autumn	85mm	1978 – 26mm	1935 – 173mm	87mm	-20mm
Annual	71mm	1864 – 49mm	2012 – 118mm	75mm	-2 mm

Table 3 -- 2016 average rainfall per month compared with the maximum, minimum and average figures.

Summary January, February, May and December were significantly warmer than average, and July, October and December were significantly drier than normal, while March and November were significantly wetter.

	Temp.	Rain		Temp.	Rain	
January	31	26		July	4	-74
February	21	39		August	8	-25
March	5	52		September	13	6
April	5	-40		October	9	-63
May	15	21		November	1	53
June	4	8		December	34	-61
				Annual	10	-7

Table 4 -- Monthly percentage deviation in 2016 and average since 1853

Monthly summaries for 2016

The monthly average maximum temperature, and the range of this figure over the past decade for each month is given below. This helps to put the 2016 figures into perspective, and emphasizes the very large range of temperatures that wildlife has to cope with annually, a range that is many times the size of any climate change. This issue is dealt with at the end of this report.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Av.
Temp. °C	9.3	9.1	10.3	13.4	18.7	20.2	21.8	22.2	20.3	15.3	10.0	9.8	15.0
Rain mm	106	86	93	34	75	67	19	65	84	35	135	35	70

Table 5 -- 2016 monthly average temperatures and total rainfall. The last column gives the average for the year

January (Average 9.3°C, decadal range 4.1°C to 9.8°C) Following the warmest December since 1853 the first week remained warm, at around 10°C, and wet with low pressure systems moving through. On the 10th temperatures fell fast under the influence of northerly winds around a high-pressure system over Greenland with a frost, the second of the winter, on 13th, clear skies, and ice on ponds from 16th to 21st. Temperatures then rose to 14°C by 24th as southerly and then westerly winds took over.

February (Average 9.1°C, decadal range 6.7°C to 10.1°C) The westerly wind pattern continued for the first ten days, including a storm between 5th and 8th that brought 68mm of rain. It was cooler from 8th to 18th, with three frost nights and some very bright days. Temperatures rose briefly to 13°C on 21st. From 22nd a high pressure over Greenland and low pressure over the Baltic brought northerly winds, cooler temperatures, three very bright days and three frosty nights.

March (Average 10.3°C, decadal range 7.6°C to 14.9°C) The first ten days were dominated by northerly winds, temperatures fell to 6°C on 6th, and there were four frost nights. On 8th, 29mm of rain fell, the second wettest day of the year. High pressure over the UK controlled the weather from 11th to 22nd, with very light winds, a maximum of 13°C on 12th and over nine hours of sunshine on 17th. South west winds took over on 22nd, and storm *Katie* produced 43mm of rain after an almost dry month. On 25th the temperature reached 15°C for the first time in the year.

April (Average 13.4°C, decadal range 12.3°C to 18.7°C) High pressure brought dry variable winds for the first ten days, a mini heat wave from 12th to 14th with a high of 18°C on 15th, and a second warm spell from 19th to 21st with over ten hours of sunshine on 20th and 23rd. It then became much cooler for the rest of the month under northerly winds. It was an unusually dry month.

May (Average 18.7°C, decadal range 16.2°C to 18.7°C) This was the warmest May since 1922. For the first week high pressure over the Baltic fed warm easterly winds over the country, with a temperature that rose to 27°C on 8th. From 14th to 21st southerly winds brought rain and cooler conditions to the region. On 23rd north-easterly winds resumed and the month finished with a temperature of 21°C.

June (Average 20.2°C, decadal range 18.6°C to 22.6°C) At the start a high-pressure system over Iceland dominated the weather, with light northerly winds and bright sunshine, and the temperature reached 27°C on 6th. South westerly winds from 11th lowered temperatures, and the rest of the month saw only a little sunshine, cloudy skies produced only a little rain. Sunshine hours were half normal.

July (Average 21.8°C, decadal range 18.7°C to 26.2°C) Light westerly winds dominated the month, but brought virtually no rain, and kept temperatures down to 20°C. There was a brief hot spell when high pressure brought south-east winds up from the Mediterranean and the temperature reached 34°C on 19th, this was the hottest day since 2006. The temperature fell back to around 20°C from 24th.

August (Average 22.2°C, decadal range 19.2°C to 22.5°C) An exceptional rainfall of 30mm on the night of Aug. 1st ensured that the month's rainfall was close to average, but 21 days were entirely dry, and there was more sunshine than in July. Light south-west winds dominated much of the month, with pressure high to the south. For the first two weeks temperatures only once reached 24°C, but reached 28°C on 16th and 17th and 30°C on 23rd. As a result it was one of the three warmest Augusts since 2000.

September (Average 20.3°C, decadal range 17.2°C to 22.1°C) South winds kept temperatures up for the first two weeks, but north winds pushed it down to 16°C on 19th, although it recovered to around 20°C for the last ten days. There were no gales, and even though it was the wettest month since March, there was no rain at all on half of the days.

October (Average 15.3°C, decadal range 13.7°C to 17.3°C) An unusually dry month which was dominated for the first two weeks by high pressure over the Baltic, and light easterly winds. These produced a spectacular migration on the east coast, but the Avon area saw nothing of it. There were some remarkably bright days and sunshine totals were greater than in any year back to 2008. No rain was reported until 15th, and 'autumn colour' was notable, despite the lack of frost. Temperatures remained high for the first two weeks before falling to around 14°C by the end of the month.

November (Average 10.0°C, decadal range 8.7°C to 15.5°C) North winds on 5th brought the first frost of the winter, earlier than the previous three years, and the temperature fell to 8°C on 8th before recovering to 14°C on 15th. Low pressure brought a week of rain between 16th and 22nd, producing 110mm, and the temperature fell to 7°C for three days. Two very windy days on 21st and 22nd swept most of the remaining leaves off the trees. East winds and sunless days dominated the last third of the month and there were three frost nights at the end.

December (Average 9.8°C, decadal range 3.4°C to 13.2°C) The month began with ice on ponds and a temperature of 5°C, but warmed up to 15°C (for the last time) by the 7th under the influence of southerly winds. It was another dry month, almost all of its rain falling on 10th. Two storms over Christmas, *Barbara* and *Conor*, had little impact in our area. The month ended with three frost nights and ice again on ponds.

Weather Extremes

The table below gives figures for the extreme annual events over the past decade, enabling the events of 2016 to be put into perspective. It is often claimed that extreme weather events are becoming more common, but without a clear definition of an 'extreme' event this is very hard to demonstrate. Flooding is often caused by human factors, such as house building on former flood meadows, or draining of upland moors for sheep rearing. None of the figures below show any significant trend over the past 15 years. I have included at the right hand side columns for the maximum 'extreme' and the average 'extreme' since 2000 to put 2016 into perspective. "Storms" are particularly hard to define even though they are now being named, a named storm may well have almost no impact on the Avon area. The number of days when a wind speed of more than 35mph has been recorded in south-west of the UK is given. This roughly coincides with the rare occasions when a low-pressure system is centred over the country.

As noted above the table below gives little evidence of trends. 2016 had fewer cold days, fewer sunny days and fewer storms than average. It is notable that 60% of days have no rain at all.

		2007	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016	Max	Av.
Hottest day	°C	27	28	28	26	29	30	32	31	32	34	34	30
Coldest day	°C	2	2	-1	-5	1	1	0	4	5	5	5	1
Wettest day	mm	40	35	36	36	40	72	33	42	28	30	72	39
Sunniest	Hrs	14.1	14.9	14.7	15.6	14.7	15.0	15.0	13.3	13.7	12.8	15.6	14
Longest dry	Days	24	16	20	24	23	17	20	17	14	15	24	19
Longest wet	Days	8	8	8	7	5	15	9	7	6	7	15	8
Frost nights	Days	25	44	42	76	22	41	67	15	12	34	76	37
Snow	Days	2	1	19	33	0	1	8	0	0	0	33	6
Storms	Days	22	16	17	9	24	22	25	28	30	13	30	21
Over 25°C	Days	1	7	5	3	14	19	32	27	5	13	32	13
Under 5°C	Days	18	14	37	60	13	16	29	2	5	5	60	20
10+hr sun	Days	45	29	49	46	44	38	44	39	25	16	49	38
No sun	Days	99	95	95	106	104	93	95	82	84	74	106	93
No Rain	Days	238	228	265	269	253	205	238	203	227	236	269	236

Table 6 -- Summary of weather extremes for the past decade

References

Burder, G. F. [1872] -- *Twenty years of rainfall at Clifton*. Proc. of the Bristol Naturalists Society, 1872.

Guide to the Systematic List

The County of Avon, as an administrative unit, ceased to exist on April 1st, 1996. It was replaced by four 'unitary authorities' - South Gloucestershire (SG), Bristol (BR), Bath and North-east Somerset -- BANES (BA), and North Somerset (NS). The area covered by these four administrative units corresponds almost exactly to the old County of Avon, and the area covered by this Report is also unaltered -- the term 'Avon area' is used to describe this region. To aid comparisons with older Reports 'North Avon, NA' corresponds to SG and BR north of the R. Avon, and 'South Avon, SA' corresponds to BA, NS and BR south of the river.

The systematic list given below this guide follows the species order first proposed by Prof. H K Voous in 1971, with several major adjustments made by the British Ornithological Union, the latest in December 2016. The nomenclature follows that given by the BOU on their website at www.bou.org.uk using the 'British (English) Vernacular Name' and 'Scientific Name' lists.

Each species heading includes, in italics, a brief description of its local status using the following definitions.

Status	Level of abundance	Population Counts
Very rare	Five or fewer records in the Avon area	As per level of abundance
Rare	Less than annual; several years may pass between sightings	
Very Scarce	Less than annual; typically recorded every two or three years	
Scarce	Very small numbers noted virtually every year	1 - 9
Uncommon	Low numbers every year	10 - 99
Fairly common	Occurs in reasonable numbers in suitable habitat	100 - 999
Common	Regularly occurs in good numbers in most suitable habitats	1000 - 9999
Abundant	Large numbers occur in all suitable habitats	10000 +

For locally very scarce species the heading also shows two figures. The first gives the number of individuals recorded between 1983, the first year that AOG was responsible for producing this Report, and 2015, and the second gives the number of new individuals recorded in 2016. If descriptions were first required for the species in question subsequent to 1983, the first figure will be the number of accepted individuals since this later date. Where the Report has stated an individual is likely to have been the same as that seen in a previous year, it has not been counted for a second time. For description species we normally give the first one or two names of the observer(s) who reported the record, or who submitted descriptions and/or photographs.

Definitions:

Resident – This applies to a population which is largely sedentary and occurs throughout the year. It may be augmented by passage migrants and/or winter or summer visitors.

Summer visitor – This applies to a species that occurs during the late spring and/or summer after migrating from its wintering areas.

Winter visitor – This applies to a species that occurs during the winter months after migrating from its breeding areas. These include species that do not occur during the summer (e.g. Fieldfare), or that already have a separate resident population (e.g. Starling).

Passage migrant – This applies to a species that appears on spring and/or autumn migration to or from its breeding/wintering ranges. Some have protracted spring and autumn passage periods that can appear to 'overlap' in mid-summer (this is likely to involve immatures or failed breeders).

Introduced – This applies to a species with a self-supporting population derived from escapes from captivity or deliberately released individuals (BOU Group C).

Vagrant – This applies to a species well away from its normal range.

Storm/Wind-blown visitor – This is used mainly for seabirds that typically occur after having been blown up the Bristol Channel (and often from much further away) as a result of strong winds.

Irruptive – This applies to a species that occurs only irregularly, mainly Waxwing.

Average maximum count – This is used to monitor wildfowl. It is the average of the three highest monthly counts; for a short season (e.g. moult) the average of the two highest counts is used.

Average count – This is used for waders and is the average of the monthly maxima for the season.

Bird survey data used

The data from a number of regular bird surveys, both local and national, have been used in compiling the species accounts in this Report. These surveys use different techniques, operate at different times of the year, and vary in the information recorded, but they all provide information on population change, especially for the common species. The details are as follows

BBS – Breeding Bird Survey

The BTO Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) has been conducted since 1994 and is the main scheme for monitoring the population changes of the UK's common breeding birds. It is a line-transect survey and surveyors walk two one-*km* transects across randomly selected National Grid squares twice between early April and the end of June. Further squares are self-selected by surveyors in order to increase local coverage and are surveyed on a similar basis.

Changes from year to year (e.g. 2015-16) are calculated by comparing the best of the two counts in each year in those squares that were surveyed in consecutive years by the same observer, and the result is expressed as a percentage change figure. These changes may be combined together to determine the change over longer periods (e.g. 2006-16). **Data presented here relates to the former county of Avon and excludes records from those BTO Avon Region squares which lie in Somerset.**

BBS does not monitor nocturnal species at all, also both waterbirds (see below) and colonial species are not monitored particularly well. However, it does give a reliable measure of the changes of many of the common species of the town and the general countryside, including many of the farmland species which have fared so poorly over the past twenty years. Results should be used with caution - differences of a few per cent are not likely to reflect any really significant change, while differences of 10% or more, if sustained, almost certainly are significant. Likewise longer periods are more prone to distortion than shorter ones but should still provide evidence of significant increases or decreases.

In 2016 a total of 190 (173 in 2015) squares was surveyed in Avon, excluding records from those BTO Avon Region squares which lie in Somerset. Of these, 161 (159 in 2015) were 'repeat squares' and were used in the calculation of percentage change figures as described above. A total of 60934 (52880 in 2015) birds of 110 (103 in 2015) species was recorded. Annual percentage change figures over the past ten years are also provided for the most frequently recorded species together with summary change figures for the period 1994 to 2016.

WBBS -- Waterways Breeding Bird Survey

This survey works in a similar way to BBS except that the transects are along a river instead across a square. There are only two of these sites in Avon. Records are denoted by the acronym 'WBBS'.

AWBS -- Avon Winter Bird Survey

The new survey follows the BBS methodology except that it runs from November to February. Very few records were available for this Report but it is likely to become more important in the future.

CABS -- Clifton Area Bird Survey

This is a weekly survey of ST 5673 which began in 1994 and uses the BBS method. It shows the seasonal patterns of change in the square, and enables this to be measured on an annual basis. In 2016 there were 51 (47) walks totalling 60 (55) hours and 6568 (6100) birds of 42 (41) species were counted at an overall rate of 108 (112) per hour (2015 figures in brackets). The percentage change from previous years may be quoted as part of individual species accounts.

WGS -- Winter Garden Survey

This survey began in the 1973/74 winter and involves counts in gardens between October and March. In 2015/16 a total of 31 (30) gardens participated, there were 740 (718) weeks of observation and 28600 (26600) birds of 46 (40) species were counted. (2014/15 figures in brackets). Percentage changes in WGS numbers present may be used in individual species accounts. The organisers of this survey would welcome more participants.

WeBS -- Wetland Bird Survey

This is a national project, run jointly by the BTO, JNCC, RSPB and WWT, which monitors all waterbirds in the UK, it provides the principal data on which the conservation of these species and their wetland habitats is based. Locally it covers the whole of the Severn shore, the lower reaches of the main rivers flowing into the Severn, the major reservoirs and many of the minor local waters. The species accounts incorporate all available WeBS data and, for those waterbirds whose Avon area populations are of International or National Importance, their WeBS status. It publishes a trend survey showing how the English (and other) non-breeding waterbird populations have fared recently. Using this data we give a figure for the change during the decade 2006/07 to 2015/16 with the label 'English ten-year trend'. These data are only provided if the species site is in the top 30 in the UK.

Red and Amber List species

It was felt desirable to include some indication of the national conservation status of the species that occurred in the Avon area in 2016. Hence, for all species listed in this Report except for those that are locally or nationally rare (that is require a description), the species header gives a classification of its *national* conservation concern - **Red** for serious concern, and **Amber** for less serious concern, with a figure defined below indicating the reason for this concern. The lack of a Red or Amber entry in the species header implies that the species is of **Green** conservation concern, that is its current status is stable with no major anxiety. Further details and evidence about this classification can be found in the December 2015 edition of *British Birds*.

Species are Red Listed for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Species that are Globally Threatened (Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable, but not Near Threatened) under IUCN guidelines, as assessed by BirdLife International, the IUCN Red List Authority for birds, in 2015.
2. Historical decline in breeding populations -- Species judged to have declined severely between 1800 and 1995, from an assessment conducted by Gibbons *et al.* (1996), and which have not recovered subsequently.
3. Breeding population decline -- Severe decline in the UK breeding population size (more than 50%) over 25 years or the longer term, defined as the entire period used for assessments since the first BoCC review, starting in 1969. Also non-breeding population decline -- Severe decline in the UK non-breeding population size (more than 50%) over 25 years or the longer-term as defined above.
4. Breeding range decline. -- Severe decline in UK range (more than 50%) between the breeding bird atlases in 1988–91 and 2007–11 or 1968–71 and 2007–11 as measured by the calculated change in the number of occupied 10-km squares.
5. Non-breeding range decline -- Severe decline in UK range (more than 50%) between the wintering bird atlases in 1981–84 and 2007–11 as measured by the change in the number of occupied 10-km squares.

Species are Amber Listed for one or more of the following reasons:

1. European Red List status -- Any species on the European Red List (Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable).
2. Historical decline recovery. -- As described above, previously Red-listed for historical decline, followed by an increase of at least 100% over 25 years or the longer-term period.
3. Breeding population decline -- As for Red-list criterion but with moderate decline (more than 25% but less than 50%) over 25 years or the longer-term period. Also non-breeding population decline -- As for Red-list criterion but with moderate decline (more than 25% but less than 50%) over 25 years or the longer-term period.
4. Breeding range decline -- As for Red-list criterion but with moderate decline (more than 25% but less than 50%) between 1988-91 and 2007-11 or 1968-71 and 2007-11. Also non-breeding range decline -- As for Red-list criterion but with moderate decline (more than 25% but less than 50%) between 1981-84 and 2007-11.
5. Breeding and non-breeding rarity -- Species qualify as rare breeders if the UK breeding population is less than 300 pairs, and as rare non-breeders if the UK non-breeding population is less than 900 individuals.
6. Breeding and non-breeding localisation -- Species are considered localised if more than 50% of the UK population is found at ten or fewer sites in either the breeding or the non-breeding season.
7. Breeding and non-breeding international importance -- Species are considered of international importance if the UK holds at least 20% of the European population in either the breeding or the non-breeding season.

Reference

Gibbons, D.W., Avery, M.I., Baillie, S.R., Gregory, R.D., Kirby, J., Porter, R.F., Tucker, G.M. & Williams, G. (1996) Bird species of conservation concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man: revising the Red Data List. *RSPB Conservation Review* **10**: 7– 18.

Frequently Used Abbreviations

The following definitions and abbreviations are used throughout this Report.

BA	Bath and North-east Somerset
BBRC	British Birds Rarities Committee. This is used to imply that the committee has accepted the record or records mentioned
BG	Barrow Gurney Reservoirs
Bird-days	This gives the cumulative daily total for a given period; so for example 25 on day 1, followed by 100 on day 3 and 30 on day 7 gives 155 bird-days for the seven day period
BL	Blagdon Lake
CI-Y	Severn shore and its environs between the western outskirts of Clevedon and the mouth of the R. Yeo (sometimes called Clevedon Bay), it including Blake's and other pools and the tidal part of the R. Yeo
CVL	Chew Valley Lake
NS	North Somerset
OPS	Oldbury-on-Severn Nuclear Power Station lagoons and their surrounding areas
PWD	Portbury Wharf and Dock, including Portbury Wharf NR, St George's Wharf with Chapel Pill, the Royal Portbury Dock area and the bank of the R. Avon north of the Avon Bridge
RBBP, SM	Rare Birds Breeding Panel and Scarce Migrant panel. These are used when details of a breeding or migrant record has been passed to one of these panels, they collect data on the rarer UK breeders/migrants
Severnside	Severn shore and its environs including Pilning Wetlands between Aust and Chittingen Warths inclusive
SG	South Gloucestershire
Weston STW	Weston-s-Mare Sewage Treatment Works and its surrounding areas

In the monthly maxima tables a blank indicates that no records were received for that month.

The Systematic List

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor*

[Amber 7]

Fairly common resident; most winter just inland from the coast in N. Somerset or in Bristol City Docks. Summer moulting flocks occur principally at CVL.

WeBS: English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked 23rd of National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -12%.

This species was recorded at a few more sites than in 2015. The largest single count was for the CVL moulting flock which was similar to that in 2015. As usual the wintering flocks were in the Kenn Moor / Kingston Seymour area (often close to the M5 motorway), Weston STW and at CVL. The first two tables summarise the data for the past ten years, and show another decline in the counts at Bristol City Docks after last year's brief revival.

2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
85	72	85	80	64	22	11	18	33	16

Numbers wintering in Bristol City Docks - Maximum count (ten-year average 49)

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
98	107	115	125	187	140	145	92	155	145

Numbers moulting at CVL - Average of the maximum counts for July and August (ten-year average 131)

There were non-BBS records from 69 sites which compares with 60 in 2009, 74 in 2010, 68 in 2011, 70 in 2012, 64 in 2013 and 66 in 2014 and 2015. Apart from the 14 tabulated sites only eight had counts above ten, notably Yatton/Tickenham Moors, which had 20 and 28, respectively, on Dec. 7th. The table below shows the monthly maxima at the main regularly counted sites.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Northwick/Pilning Wet.	7	8	10	4	5	12	7	7	10	8	3	
Portishead Lake	5	4	3	2		7					4	4
Portishead Marina	11	8	12	5						10	5	
PWD	5	11	11	13	12	7	11	9	15	11	7	3
CI-Y	10	5	6	47	19	4	3		4	11	50	44
Axe Estuary	31	26	26	9				1				
Weston STW	129	98	100	47	9	36	22	19	20	10	14	93
Keynsham, R. Avon		5								8	8	
Eastville Park, Bristol	5	6	4	3								
Hewish/King.Seymour	24	35	36	40								
Kenn Moor	71	65	63	40	7						53	22
Backwell Lake	20	20	16	9	14	10	10	2	10	10	10	16
BG					2	3	4	3	1	2		
CVL	66	44	43	52	97	114	150	140	135	110	125	155
BL	13	20	27	31	40	46	46	50	51	66	62	9

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Survey Data The local BBS survey recorded this species in 20 squares (same as in 2015), which represented 10.5% of those surveyed. The total counted was 91.

A North Somerset Levels breeding survey was undertaken by the RSPB Weston-s-Mare local group in seven separate areas to the east and south of Clevedon. Two visits were made, one in April or May, and another in June. The largest count was ten at Nailsea / Clevedon Moors on May 7th.

Breeding A fairly good year with 25 broods (27 in 2015). Breeding was confirmed at the following 13 sites with cygnet numbers reported: OPS – failed attempt; Batheaston – two young noted in October; Prior Park, Bath – eight; Newton Park – eight; Saltford – two; Three Brooks NR – two; Pilning Wetland – five; Hallen Moor – four; Portbury NR – five; Portishead Lake -- two; Backwell Lake -- eight; and

Mute Swan cont. Nailsea Moor – six. At CVL seven broods produced 30 cygnets, at BL three pairs raised broods of five, four and three, and at Weston STW there were four nests with broods of eight, seven, six and two.

The table below summarises the breeding data for the past two decades.

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
121	123	121	88	120	124+	44	57	106	103	117

Number of cygnets per year (ten-year average 100)

BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus columbianus*

[Amber 1, 3, 6, 7]

Uncommon and declining winter visitor and autumn passage migrant.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked fourth in National Importance (mainly due to Slimbridge) in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -462%.

Low numbers were reported. There were five at CVL/BL on Jan.12th, and for the second winter period (October to December) the details are given below.

CVL – four adults from Oct. 29th to 31st and on Nov. 4th, two adults on 28th, five including three juveniles from Dec. 9th to 31st (all assumed to be the same as those seen at BL);

BL – noted from the end of October and throughout November and December as follows: four adults from Oct. 27th to Nov. 3rd, 11 including two juveniles from Nov. 5th to 10th, 16 including five juveniles from 11th to 25th, 17 were present from. 28th to 30th after which numbers slowly reduced to three by the end of the year.

The table below shows the estimated number of individuals recorded in each winter over the last 20 years.

1997/06 Av.	2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12./13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
29	11	7	6	41	37	41	5	40	20	13

Number for each of the last ten winter periods (average 22) with previous decade average

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus* (59, 3)

Very scarce winter visitor.

Descriptions required.

There were two records, both in November, this is about average for the last decade as shown in the table below. The details are as follows:

CVL – two adults, probably a pair, on 7th (many observers, photographed);

BG – an adult on 9th (C J Stone, photographed).

2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
0	1	8	3+	3	3	3+	4	0	6

Numbers seen in the last ten winters

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

[Amber 6]

Uncommon introduced resident and former summer moult migrant. It is assumed that most if not all belong to the western race (naturalised population) A. a. anser.

Low numbers were recorded, mainly in ones and twos, the largest count was ten at OPS on July 27th. The table overleaf summarises the counts during the last decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of sites	11	7	12	10	18	20	17	15	24	20
No. of individuals	74	33	27	80	102	49	58+	69	73	56

Sites and numbers each year in the last decade

The details are as follows (all were single birds unless otherwise stated); no records of successful or attempted breeding were received:

OPS – present on various dates between Jan. 5th and April 16th. Ten flew up-river on July 27th. One on Dec. 20th;

Northwick Warth / New Passage / Pilning Wetlands – two on Jan. 16th and then one on various dates until March 4th. Two on 5th and 15th, four on 18th and 19th, and six on April 4th. The last report was of one on April 25th;

PWD – April 3rd, May 12th and 23rd;

Battery Point/Portishead Lake – many dates between Jan. 1st and Dec. 20th but six at the Point on Aug. 22nd;

Cl-Y – March 21st, May 8th and 13th;

Anchor Head/Weston STW – one on March 28th, two in April, and one in May;

Charfield – Jan. 17th;

Codrington – two on May 1st;

Batheaston/Bathampton Meadows – Jan. 1st and 20th; Feb. 19th and 27th, and April 3rd;

Saltford – March 11th and 24th, April 4th and May 5th. Two on March 15th and four on April 22nd;

Aztec West – three on Jan. 17th and three on Feb. 21st;

Eastville Park – Jan. 15th;

Dundry – three on Jan. 27th;

Backwell Lake – Jan. 1st and April 21st;

CVL – Jan 28th to April 1st, and May 13th to July 22nd on various dates but with two on March 30th, April 25th and May 7th. Four on April 1st and 12th, six on 2nd and nine on June 25th;

BL – Jan. 25th, Feb. 11th, March 12th, 14th and 19th (two), April 2nd and 17th (two), May 12th and Sept 24th.

GREATER CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis*

Fairly common introduced resident, largely at CVL and BL where numbers increase during the summer moult. Uncommon breeder.

There was a further increase in the number and spread of reports throughout the Avon area with several counts over 350 at the main reservoirs.

The regular flock at the Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands area again maintained numbers similar to the previous year, see the main table below. They are most likely to be the same as those which frequented Littleton Warth and OPS. Fairly good numbers continue to winter at CVL but numbers wintering at BL are considerably greater.

	2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
CVL	51	65	84	229	110	206	167	144	141	122
BL	192	241	315	221	348	404	355	300	257	392

Average of the three highest monthly maxima in the period (Sept. to March), ten-year average 132 (CVL), (BL) 302.

The numbers moulting at CVL were about half of those in 2015 and have dropped below the long term average, see ten-year tables below.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
415	295	385	440	500	417	318	250	547	280

CVL – Average of the two highest monthly maxima in the moult period June to August (ten-year average 385)

The monthly maxima at the main sites are set out in the table below.

Greater Canada goose cont.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS/ Littleton Warth	58	64	10	12	14	42	36	67	190	170	41	55
Severnside	95	40	32	13	14	15	150	250	250	40	58	59
PWD	2	16	4	5	26	45	44	2	60	34		
CI-Y	70	28	26	20	14	10	48	115	6	73	35	160
Backwell Lake	14	18	18	15	11	2	2					
Weston STW	54	3	29	16	3	22	23	113	17	14	18	
R. Avon, Keynsham	54	55		3	10		14	9		12	49	83
CVL	86	65	80	40	50	260	290	270	270	350	148	160
BL	387	203	58	32	149	179	232	140	325	295	352	165

.Monthly maxima at the main sites

Other sites The only counts (of adults) over 25 not included in the table were as follows:

Coalpit Heath – flyover flocks of 30 on Feb. 2nd and 65 on Aug. 1st;

Frampton Cotterell -- 30 on Aug. 3rd, and 26 on Oct.1st;

Thornbury Pill – 32 on Aug. 21st;

Batheaston, R. Avon -- 80 on April 3rd and 59 on Nov. 26th;

Aztec West – 26 on Feb. 21st and 27 on June 5th;

Pilning – 70 from the Northwick Warth flock flew over on Sept. 24th;

BG -- 148 on Sept. 8th, 105 on 10th, 180 on 14th and 173 on 24th;

Congresbury Moor – 35 on Nov. 1st;

Kenn Moor -- 29 on Jan 18th, 40 on 19th and 20th, 27 on Feb. 16th, 33 on Nov 16th, 110 on 23rd, 47 on 30th, 80 on Dec. 7th, 35 on 8th, 55 on 13th and 65 on 28th.

The number of sites where this species was recorded increased from 75 to 86 as shown below.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
28	53	48	50	48	55	51	75	75	86

Number of sites recorded from each year (ten-year average 57)

Survey Data The local BBS survey recorded this species in 31 squares which represented 16.2% of those surveyed. The total counted was 212.

Breeding A poor season with only eight confirmed breeding sites. The number of reported fledged young is shown in the table below, it was about 20% below the ten-year average.

Nests / broods were noted at the following seven sites: OPS - a pair with four goslings, two of which fledged; Batheaston - three nests all of which failed; PWD - pair with one young; Portishead Lake - pair with nine young; Yeo Estuary – brood of six, and Bullocks Farm Pond (Kingston Seymour) – pair with six young, CVL – at least four broods (27 young); and BL - two pairs, with broods of six and five.

The table below summarises the past data, observers are asked to report all breeding attempts.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Confirmed sites	3	10	12	6	7	4	6	10	13	8
Nests/broods	7	19+	18+	12	18	10	13	27	30	11+
Young	16+	72	73	52	49	40	36+	97+	85	58

Breeding details

An individual with an orange neck collar was noted at CVL on Sept. 7th. This female was ringed by Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust as age of at least one year on July 5th, 2012 at Pit 9, Cotswold Water Park, Gloucestershire. The same bird was noted at BL on 10th.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*

[Amber 6]

Uncommon introduced resident; very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. It is often difficult to establish the origin of many with certainty, although wild birds have probably occurred.

WeBS – Naturalised: English coast of Severn Estuary ranked 11th in importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend 73%.

Numbers were better than in 2015 and were recorded at CVL/BL and two further sites. The first table summarises the data from the past decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Sites	0	1	2	6	4	3	0	5	3	2
Number	0	1	2	250	4	6	0	31	6	19

Number of sites and individuals (adults) away from CVL/BL

Reports away from CVL/BL are noted below.

Sevenside -- on April 16th, 11 flew over while two more stayed in the area from that date until 23rd and were seen variously at Chittingen Warth, Northwick Warth and Pilning Wetlands. Nine wary birds were at Northwick Warth on the morning of Sept. 30th;

CI-Y -- ten on Dec. 1st, 4th, 5th, 13th 16th and 18th, they roosted in a coastal field just SW of the Kenn inlet. When they first arrived they seemed exhausted and were quite wary during the whole of their stay. As with a few sightings in the past (including seven on Sevenside in February 1996, 16 here in October 1998 and those noted this September), possibly genuinely wild, but there was no proof.

The feral flock that commutes between CVL and BL numbered 16 in the first winter period and 13 in the second, and two were present between mid March and Aug. 27th.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
11	17	19	20	23	23	17	17	17	16

Maximum count from CVL/BL

Breeding Two individuals, both apparently paired to Greylag Geese were noted on April 2nd, and three pairs had nests at Herriott's Pool, CVL. There were no young.

	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Pairs	1	1	2	1	4	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	3	1	1	3
Goslings	0	0	6	1	7	0	3	0	5	6	5	4	1	2	6	4	3	0
Fledged	0	0	6	0	7	0	3	0	0	6	1	2	1	0	4	3	?	0

Breeding at CVL since 1999

BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla*

[Amber 6, 7]

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *B. b. bernicla*.

Uncommon coastal passage migrant and winter visitor. Very scarce inland.

Numbers of bird-days for the last decade are given in the table below and show that 2015/16 was a good winter. The December 2015 count at Sevenside increased the 2015/16 total considerably.

2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
147	38	226	144	24	88	98	34	108	224

Bird-days October-March (ten-year average 113)

Counts were high in the first winter period but very much lower in the second; 55 at Severn Beach in March was the highest. The records are given below, single birds unless stated otherwise.

First winter period (130 bird days)

Northwick Warth / Pilning Wetlands -- Jan.16th, Feb. 1st, 4th, 9th, 10th, 13th and 14th, and three on March 22nd;

Severn Beach – Jan.16th and Feb. 14th (possibly the same individual noted at Northwick Warth / Pilning Wetlands), and 55 on March 22nd, a good count, the record which is 115 seen here in January 2009;

CI-Y – 12 on Jan. 6th, three on Jan. 25th.

Brent Goose -- Second winter period (10 bird days)

BG – one on Nov. 24th

Northwick Warth / Pilning Wetlands -- seven on Nov. 24th;

Severn Beach – one on Nov. 29th and 30th.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Very scarce visitor either from the UK feral population or direct escapes from captivity but with a significant increase in reports since 2013.

A small increase in numbers in 2016 was noted and the number of sites where this species was recorded increased to eight (six in 2015).

It is probable that reports of this species from the Salford / Keynsham / Bitton area since 2012 have been of badly pinioned individuals from an ornamental pond at Bitton. It is known that a pair bred on this pond in 2015 but the number of successfully fledged chicks, if any, was not recorded.

The records are given below, single birds unless stated otherwise.

Severnside – April 2nd to Dec. 8th on many dates;

PWD – Sept 17th and 30th;

Aztec West -- Sept. 14th, 15th and 18th;

Salford -- Feb. 1st, 14th and 26th, March 29th, Oct. 9th and two on Nov. 24th;

Keynsham, R. Avon -- one on Jan. 16th, two on 10th, two on Feb. 9th and 11th, three on 14th, one on Oct. 15th and 27th, two on Nov. 24th, and Dec. 20th and 22nd;

BG – April 2nd;

CVL -- three on Jan. 24th, then one or two on several dates from 26th to July 22nd, then up to three from 29th to Oct. 26th, on many dates, and one or two from 27th to Dec. 13th;

BL – two on Jan. 1st, 2nd and 11th, five on 26th and 30th. Two on Feb. 11th, 12th and 15th to 19th. One or two on many dates from 20th to the year end.

The table below gives the number of adults seen in the Avon area during the past 15 years, none were recorded prior to 2002. (The total for 2015 includes a number of possible feral or escaped birds in the Avon Valley). It has been assumed that the records for CVL and BL refer to the same individuals although this may not be wholly correct.

2002	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
1	1*	1*	0	1	1	0	0	1	5+	2	11	8	10	12

Numbers recorded each year (* treated as escapes)

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

[Amber 6, 7]

Fairly common resident; most migrate to moult. Uncommon inland (except at CVL). Uncommon breeder – has declined in the last five decades.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked 11th in International Importance for 2015/16. English ten-year trend -34%.

North of R. Avon the number wintering in 2015/16 was near the ten-year average, and to the south it was very much lower, mainly due to low numbers in the Sand Bay area in the 2015 second winter period. Numbers at CI-Y are still just above the ten-year average for this site. For the total recording area the number of young fledged was above the average for the last decade.

First winter period (January to March). There was a slight decrease in the numbers wintering north of the R. Avon with a highest count of 114 at Severnside in February. A reasonable number south of the Avon were noted for this period, the highest count being 220 at CI-Y also in February.

Breeding The local BBS survey recorded this species in 12 squares which represented 6.3% of those surveyed. The total recorded was 177.

Overall, 2016 was a good year with high numbers of young produced at Royal Portbury Dock. However, CI-Y breeding success was less than in 2015. Coastal broods were as follows:

OPS area – eight young at Shepperdine on June 3rd, nine in the Yacht Club area on 15th, and a second brood of three at Shepperdine on July 25th;

Aust/Northwick Warths – eight young were seen on June 4th. At least four broods were noted overall. A large crèche of 34 including eight juveniles and 26 chicks was seen on July 17th;

Severn Beach – a pair with 22 juveniles on Aug. 21st were probably a family / crèche from Northwick Warth;

Royal Portbury Dock -- seven broods with at least 51 young;

CI-Y coast – four broods, a total of 33 young noted on July 21st was the largest number seen;

Axe Estuary -- a group of 38 including ten well grown juveniles was seen on Aug. 21st.

Weston STW – one brood with five young.

Breeding was also reported inland at CVL with two broods producing 19 chicks, only four survived. The following table shows the number of young fledged/reported in the Avon area in the last decade.

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
116	116	181	163	186	78	163	108	107	187	156

Breeding - Total number of young at all sites (Average of last ten years is 146)

Second winter period (September to December) Low numbers were recorded north of the R. Avon with a maximum count of 22 at Northwick Warth in December. To the south 670 at Sand Bay in November was the maximum count.

The tables below summarise the winter period numbers over the past decade.

	2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
North of R. Avon	117	130	90	40	80	140	67	146	160	114
South of R Avon	415	630	500	479	862	490	540	450	930	365

Highest winter count at a single site (Oct.– Feb.). N Avon ten-year average 108. S Avon ten-year average 566

2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
147	120	90	142	262	308	278	198	253	213

Winter records at CI-Y - Average of the three highest counts (Oct. – Feb.). Ten year average 201

The monthly numbers at the main sites in 2016 are set out in the table below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	9	40	50	37	30	48	22	6	10	25	6	6
Littleton Warth	18	50	41	48	16	1			8		3	2
Severnside	42	74	114	90	111	49	48	32	14	12	22	4
CI-Y	165	220	170	145	157	58	100	120	220	364	295	360
Sand Bay/Point	104	52	58	14	8	9	6		95	220	670	600
Axe Est.	73	14	34	3		2		38	180	258	420	153
Weston STW	36	33	89	24	22	10	11	6	6			8
CVL	23		16	16	27	12	5	3		1	6	13

Monthly maxima at the main sites

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*
Uncommon introduced resident, occasional breeder.

A reduction was reported in 2016 compared with the previous year, see table below. As can be seen numbers have increased in the last two decades but they still fluctuate widely from year to year. Details of all reports are as follows:

OPS – a drake in breeding plumage on Nov. 26th;

Sand Point – two males on May 12th seen in flight and on the water near the point, see photo opposite page 40;

Tortworth Lake – eight on Feb. 7th;

Bristol Frome (Old Sodbury) – two pairs on March 18th;

R. Avon (Saltford) – a drake (presumed local escape) from April 13th to May 14th, a maximum of two from Aug. 7th to 22nd with one remaining until Dec. 2nd;

Keynsham – a drake (presumed escape) from Jan.1st to 18th, and again from Sept. 15th to year end;

Cam Brook (Dunkerton) – one (sex not recorded) on April 20th;

CVL – an adult drake on Herriott's Pool on April 4th and another seen from Stratford hide on Oct. 20th.

1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
1	1	5	13	13	2	5	3	6	22	19	20	42	39	32	45	31	15	54	23

Total number of individuals each year

WIGEON *Anas penelope*

[RBBP] [Amber 6 & 7]

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; rare in summer.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked the 21st site in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -34%.

Of the main sites, the count at BL in October was particularly noteworthy and reflects the low water conditions that proved to be especially attractive to dabbling ducks in general during the autumn period. Numbers on the coast were similar to last year, with the exception of PWD which was down slightly. Inland, BG still attracts a handful but is no longer a significant site, so has been dropped from the main status table below. Outside the winter periods a pair was present at CVL between April 21st and June 3rd with a male from July 18th and two on 28th remaining into the autumn.

Year	Sevenside	CVL	BL	Av.
2006/07 – 2015/16 Av.	821	192	141	384
2014/15	750	66	72	296
2015/16	803	63	265	377

Average of the three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (September to March)

The monthly maxima at the main well-watched sites are as follows.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug.	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	240	181	122	15					27	76	234	240
Littleton Warth	285	260	220	11					70	305	465	540
Sevenside	730	630	340	23				10	500	800	1000	800
PWD	112	180	150	4				2	60	150	130	80
CI-Y	420	355	355	4					25	310	445	570
Woodspring Bay	2	112	49						8	29	85	23
Axe Est	18	68	47						1	65	30	180
Weston STW	36	68	27	2				3	3	68	92	12
CVL	36	7	3	2	2	2	2	3	145	65	300	170
BL	52	32	15					4	392	942	440	49

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Other sites Records were received from R. Avon (Saltford and Keynsham), Backwell Lake, Bath (Newton Park), Bristol (Eastville Park. and Duchess Pond), Chipping Sodbury Common, Litton Resrs. and Sand Bay, but the highest count was just 11.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*

[Amber 7]

Fairly common resident, winter visitor and late summer/autumn moult visitor, most numerous in autumn. Uncommon as a breeding species.

WeBS: CVL was ranked the 19th site in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend 10%.

It was an above average autumn for this species at the two main inland sites, with a record count at BL in October. The moult period count was also well above average at BL and interestingly, does not appear to have impacted on the CVL average.

The main status data is as follows:

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2006/07 – 2015/16 Av.	145	61	103
2014/15	33	96	65
2015/16	242	245	244
Average of three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (October to March)			
Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2007 – 2016 Av.	288	80	184
2015	340	120	230
2016	285	309	297
Average of the two highest monthly maxima in the moult period (July to September)			

As tabulated in the main sites tables below, Severnside, mainly Pilning Wetlands, seems to have attracted more compared with last year, while the Weston STW numbers were down, and as usual very few were seen at the other coastal sites.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Severnside	36	29	17	65	30	36	15	12	33	50	17	16
Avonmouth	25	38		28	1					5	6	
PWD	27	22	20	11	4	10	6	17	32	38	20	40
Axe Estuary	9	2	2									
Weston STW	12	5	6	5				2		11	11	20
Backwell Lake	2	3		2					1		1	4
BG	2	2	4						1		5	24
CVL	8	20	11	25	74	74	25	380	190	200	205	395
BL	40	2	2	5	4	4	19	282	336	433	164	8

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Other sites

OPS – just one record of a pair on Dec. 17th;

CI-Y – two on Oct. 31st;

Woodspring Bay – 11 on Oct. 17th and two on Dec. 18th;

Tortworth Lake – four on March 6th;

Yate (Kingsgate Park) – six on Jan. 27th and two on March 13th;

Gordano Valley – six on March 14th;

R. Avon (Saltford) – two from March 16th to 20th, a drake on April 3rd, another from Dec. 25th to 27th and two (sex not recorded) at Avon Farm on Dec. 28th;

R. Avon (Keynsham) – two on Nov. 24th.

Gadwall breeding No broods were reported at CVL, this last happened in 2012; see table below.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
1	3	5	1	3	0	1	6	3	0

Number of broods at CVL each year

The first breeding record for Pilning Wetlands was noted on June 25th when a female with four ducklings was seen. These were reduced to three by July 4th, and the remainder were well-grown by the 15th. Two broods were noted at Portbury Wharf NR: one with nine ducklings on June 15th, and on 27th two broods were seen, of one and six, one of which was presumably the depleted first brood.

TEAL *Anas crecca*

[Amber 7]

Common winter visitor and autumn passage migrant to the coast and the reservoirs, present in small numbers elsewhere. A few usually over-summer at CVL.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked seventh in International Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -6%.

Along the coast, counts were higher in the first winter period than in the previous year but slightly down in the second. When conditions are right, monthly counts at CVL are well in excess of the threshold for National Importance (2100), for example 3575 were noted in November, but when the water level rises flocks move on. K E Vinicombe noted a single individual flying in to CVL very high with migrating Wigeon and a few Pintail late in the morning of Sept.18th, an unusual diurnal arrival.

The 10-year status table site averages published last year were wrong, the correct data is as follows:

Year	Severnside	CVL	BL	Av.
2005/06 - 2014/15 Av.	294	1308	457	686
2006/07 - 2015/16 Av.	306	1118	497	640
2014/15	497	720	214	477
2015/16	390	967	934	763

Average of the three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (August to March)

The next table summarises the 2016 data from the main sites.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	558	215	180	30				15	50	14	63	183
Littleton Warth	355	260	75	29				3	49	65	85	130
Severnside	250	190	215	85	6	11	9	100	350	260	200	210
PWD	320	275	135	10			10	16	50	60	60	130
CI-Y	710	120	165	45		2		14	60	160	175	335
Woodspring Bay	110	81	60	36					40	51	25	102
Axe Est.	62	35	21					2	15	97	77	30
Weston STW	127	104	46	17			1	31	7	29	96	62
Bath (Newton Park)	20	28	30	13					12	12	7	40
R. Avon (Saltford)	38	3	13	4				2	7	22	75	24
BG	19	33	25	5			2	8	44	32	37	85
CVL	185	95	85	30	6	14	66	165	815	1215	3575	675
BL	101	18	12	8	3		1	210	1129	2030	1041	456
Litton Res.	6	8	5	7						10	4	

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Other sites

Tortworth Lake – five on Feb. 7th and six on March 6th;

Marshfield (West Littleton) – three on June 16th;

Gordano Valley – six on March 8th;

Batheaston – five on March 25th, three on April 3rd, three on Oct. 22nd, two on 29th, and two on Nov. 26th;

R. Avon (Keynsham) – female on Feb. 14th, 16 on Nov. 24th, and 20 on Dec. 5th;

Compton Dando -- one on Sept. 20th;

Three Brooks NR – six in January, two in February, 15 in March, 20 in October and eight in December;

Bristol (Bishopsworth) – two on Jan. 11th, four from 16th to 25th, two on 27th, five on Feb. 15th, and one on 22nd;

Bristol (Lawrence Weston) – 12 on Feb. 11th at Campbell's Farm;

Kenn Moor - maxima of 25 in January, 47 in February, 20 in March, and 15 in December;

Congresbury Moor – 15 on Jan. 19th, eight on Feb. 10th, and one on Dec. 16th;

Redhill (Regilbury Court) – eight on March 16th;

Yatton (Wemberham Lane) – three on Nov. 30th, rising to a max. of 18 on Dec. 7th, dropping to one on 30th;

Weston-S-Mare (Airfield) – 45 on March 15th, 12 on 29th, and seven on Aug. 30th.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

[Amber 3]

Common and widespread resident, autumn passage migrant and winter visitor. Fairly common breeder (by far our commonest breeding duck).

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked eighth, and CVL 22nd, in importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -23%.

Status data indicate that last winter numbers were up on the ten-year average at both main sites, but that the moult counts were slightly down on average.

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2006/07 – 2015/16 Av.	554	190	372
2014/15	688	118	403
2015/16	588	251	420
Average of three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (November to March)			

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2007 – 2016 Av.	957	362	660
2015	1238	400	819
2016	883	354	618
Average of the two highest monthly maxima in the moult period (July to September)			

The monthly maxima at the main sites were similar to last year throughout, with the exception of Portishead Boating Lake where numbers were substantially up.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	156	80	17	20	40	74	50	109	154	115	203	94
Littleton Warth	30	17	8	9	12	46	41	61	26	17	38	23
Severnside	74	72	60	44	74	140	130	150	110	70	95	90
R. Avon (Sea Mills)	20	17	13	9	14		21	31	23	53	36	33
Portbury Wharf / PWD	204	20	10	8	9	40	48	35	44	37	11	7
Portishead		90	67		7	15	6		120		173	135
Cl-Y	130	50	45	45	55	60	70	120	110	115	95	60
Woodspring Bay		4	11	11	11		8	36	79	72	24	32
Axe Estuary	25	41	9	3	4	9		15	10	24	83	79
Weston STW	28	14	22	22	13	61	123	55	69	26	26	20
Aztec West	62	43		26	31	43				53		34
Three Brooks LNR	43	33	27		11							28

Mallard cont.

Bristol (Duchess Pnd)	3			5	3	2	18	27	6	8	100	4
Bath (Prior Park)	4		8	3	5	6	27	40	14			
Bath (Newton Park)	35	60	30	30	12	28	30	40	40	45	53	50
R. Avon (Saltford)	43	53	30	24	22			33	83	95	81	34
Keynsham	3	2	3	28	40				105	114	54	88
Eastville Park Lake	63	70	38	59	28	61		15	67	38	70	61
Backwell Lake	86	32	34	16	34	85	74		98	83	105	65
BG	36	13	25	20	25	62	58	51	54	56	14	62
Chew Magna Res.	5	12	5	4	2	22	25	49	47	45	1	8
CVL	450	365	385	170	295	395	895	870	785	505	850	660
BL	71	63	61	59	56	50	234	214	473	560	485	338
Litton Res.	23	22	57	35		21	20	7	4		11	15

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Other sites Counts of 50, or over, were received as follows:

Batheaston – 50 on Jan. 1st;

R. Avon (Bristol-Pill) – 80 on Jan. 7th;

Avonmouth – 95 on Jan. 7th, 77 on 18th, and 52 on Feb. 4th.

Breeding

The standardised BBS data is as follows:

Since 1994	2007/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-19%	-17%	7%	-2%	7%	-7%	0%	-6%	3%	-13%	10%	-14%

BBS percentage changes

Fewer breeding records were submitted than last year with 71 broods totalling 359 young many of which failed to fledge through natural losses/predation. CVL numbers were also significantly down as shown in the table below.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Broods	29	21	38	24	31	21	27	35	27	15
Young	176	130	213	115	176	130	129	174	158	51

Number of broods and young at CVL each year

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

[Amber 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7]

Uncommon autumn passage migrant and winter visitor; most occur at CVL in autumn. Winter visitors leave from mid-February to early April with autumn arrivals usually appearing in mid-September.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked the 15th site in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -128%.

Counts were fairly typical in 2016, present up to May 21st (female at Pilning Wetlands) and from Aug. 18th (CVL) as shown in the main table below and the ten-year table overleaf.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	:	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	14	2						3	6	1	
Severnside	19	3	4	1	1			20	13	11	2
CI-Y	3	1	1	4					1	15	3
CVL	5	2	2				3	19	32	45	20
BL			1					32	53	17	12

Monthly maxima at the main sites

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
60	29	70	65	57	37	110	49	50	53

Maximum single count in the Avon area each year

K E Vinicombe made the following observation at CVL: "Late in the morning of Sept.18th, ten arrived very high over the east shore with a migrating flock of 125 Wigeon. Being nocturnal migrants, these daytime arrivals are highly unusual - in fact I have never seen it before".

Other sites

Littleton Warth – a pair on Jan. 23rd, and two on Nov. 5th;

Sand Bay – a female on Oct. 14th;

Weston STW – three on Oct. 25th, and one from 31st to Nov. 7th;

BG – one on Oct. 10th.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

[Amber 5]

Scarce spring passage migrant and summer visitor, uncommon autumn passage migrant at CVL and BL, scarce elsewhere. Has bred.

WeBS: CVL was ranked the third, and the English coast of the Severn Estuary 12th, in importance in 2015/6. English ten-year trend -57%.

The developing wetlands along the coastal strip proved attractive during both passage periods, but the majority of records came from the two main reservoirs that provided ideal feeding conditions for dabbling ducks throughout the autumn. There was one winter record, wintering last occurred in 2012 when a female was seen at both CVL and BL from mid January onwards.

Winter Weston STW – a female on Jan. 10th, the first winter record for the site;

Spring and summer

Severnside - a good series of records of single drakes with the first on April 22nd, then on May 12th, 16th to 21st, and 28th to 30th;

CVL – a female on April 4th, a drake on May 12th, and one (sex not recorded) on 26th;

Autumn

Severnside – a juvenile from Aug. 25th to Sept. 11th;

Axe Est. – three in eclipse plumage on Oct. 5th;

Weston STW – a female from Oct. 31st to Nov. 4th;

CVL – an adult female on July 16th, juvenile male and female reported on Aug. 18th, with three juveniles from 19th to Sept. 1st, four on 7th, a juvenile on 8th, a drake on 12th, and a juvenile drake on Nov. 2nd;

BL – a juvenile drake from Aug. 11th, joined by a second from 28th to Sept. 14th when three were present, with four on 15th and one on 17th. One from Oct. 5th to 9th and another on Nov. 11th.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
2	2	4	5	4	3	3	6	7	4

Maximum single count at CVL each year

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

[RBBP] [Amber 7]

Fairly common, but generally local, winter visitor and autumn passage migrant; usually common at CVL and BL in autumn/early winter. Scarce in summer; has bred at CVL and BL.

WeBS: CVL was ranked the 11th, the English coast of the Severn Estuary 17th, and BL 18th, in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend 2%.

Wintering numbers at CVL were significantly down on last year, and on the ten-year average at both main sites resulting in CVL being downgraded from International to National Importance, the same as BL. However, the moult count at BL was up again, thanks to the record October count, both it and CVL provide a safe moulting and refuelling stopover mega-site for wildfowl migrants.

Shoveler cont. The main status tables are as follows:

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2006/07 – 2015/16 Av.	142	66	104
2014/15	286	23	154
2015/16	80	43	62

Average of three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (November to February)

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2007 – 16 Av.	306	203	254
2015	280	306	293
2016	130	636	383

Average of the two highest monthly maxima in the moult period (August to October)

Numbers were down at CVL and BG during the first winter period, poor feeding conditions were thought to be the main reason.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Severnside	51	64	37	17	4	4	3	19	45	50	31	26
PWD	56	45	9	5				7	15	13	20	60
CI-Y	26	24	19	4		4				8	3	12
Weston STW	11	14	1				3	2	1	25	16	14
Backwell Lake	3	5							2	8	24	28
BG	31	14	27	5					2	10	31	17
CVL	15	44	66	20	5	8	15	80	120	140	370	60
BL	31	6	12	5				44	581	690	243	40

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Other sites

OPS – small numbers between January and May, with a maximum of ten on Feb. 20th, and a drake on Oct. 20th, 25th and Nov. 11th;

Littleton Warth – a single bird on Oct. 8th;

Avonmouth STW – 15 on Jan. 6th and six on Feb. 16th;

Woodspring Bay – four in February, seven in March, four in September, ten in October and two in December (WeBS counts);

Sand Point – a female on Dec. 3rd, said to be rare here;

Axe Estuary/Weston STW – four on Jan. 1st and 8th, five on 17th, two on Feb. 10th, and 25 on Oct. 31st;

Tortworth Lake – one on Oct. 2nd;

Weston Moor – one on Dec. 18th;

Bath (Newton Park) – a pair on Sept. 4th;

R. Avon (Keynsham) – a drake on Nov. 24th;

Chelvey – two on March 31st and April 1st;

Litton Res. – one on Feb. 5th.

Breeding The only reports came from CVL as follows: two males and a female were prospecting at a traditional site on May 19th, then a male, two females and six fully-grown juveniles appeared at the same spot on July 25th, so breeding was highly likely but not proved.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of Broods	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
No. of Young	8	0	8	0	0	0	16	2	4	6

CVL data for the past ten years

RED-CRESTED POCHARD *Netta rufina*

Regular wanderer from established feral populations, and probably also a scarce or rare vagrant from the continent.

There were just four records, the ten-year average is 12 per year; see table below. Details as follows:

CVL – one (age and sex not recorded) on May 4th;

BL – an adult female on Jan. 1st, then an adult drake on Oct. 27th joined by a second on 29th until Nov 24th.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
6	5	19	23	25	3	24	7	5	4

Total number of individuals each year

POCHARD *Aythya farina*

[Red 1 & 3]

Fairly common winter visitor and autumn passage migrant. Uncommon in summer; scarce breeder at CVL, has bred at BL.

WeBS: CVL was ranked seventh, and the English coast of the Severn Estuary 16th, in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -51%

Winter counts at CVL were well above the average, while BL and BG were down; see table below:

Year	CVL	BL	BG	Av.
2006/07 – 2015/16 Av.	692	238	78	336
2014/15	345	260	23	209
2015/16	902	196	38	378

Average of the three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (September to March)

The second table summarises the counts from the main inland sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Backwell Lake	5	7	7	6								
BG	9	10	8				4	4	7	9	13	43
CVL	580	95	85	7	12	25	4	95	265	595	835	920
BL	170	88	35	7	8	21	56	47	26	34	67	93

Monthly maxima at the main sites

There were other sightings at Severnside, Avonmouth, PWD, Portishead (boating lake), and Battery Point, but no single count exceeded three.

Breeding None was reported, this species is one of a number of breeding waterfowl at CVL that appear to be suffering high levels of predation in recent years; see table below.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of broods	6	2	2	2	0	3	1	4	0	0
No. of young	35	9	4	8	0	8	2	22	0	0

Breeding success at CVL each year

RING-NECKED DUCK *Aythya collaris* (28, 1)

Scarce Nearctic vagrant.

Descriptions required.

An elusive adult male was at CVL from Oct. 15th into 2017 (K E Vinicombe *et al.*) with what was assumed to be the same individual visiting BL on Nov. 2nd (N R Milbourne).

Most records for the last two decades relate to a regular male that toured various sites between 1998 and February 2008, with a second male noted in the summers of 2001, 2002 and 2003. New arrivals have subsequently been seen in 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK *Aythya nyroca* (10, 1)

Formerly a rare vagrant but now scarce, annual between 2000 and 2013 and possibly bred in 2006. Descriptions required.

One record, an adult female at CVL on Oct.17th and 18th (K E Vinicombe *et al.*, photographed).

Individuals in 2003, 2006, 2009, 2010 (2), 2012 and 2015 are considered to relate to new arrivals. From 2017 descriptions of this species will be considered by the BBRC rarities panel due to its recent changed status nationally.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Common resident, winter visitor and double passage migrant. Now a scarce breeder.

WeBS: CVL was ranked sixth in National Importance, and BL 22nd in importance, in 2015/16. English ten-year trend 3%.

Wintering numbers were up again at both main sites, as were the moult numbers. The flocks at BL in the autumn were unusually small by recent standards, but they probably moved to CVL and contributed to the large counts here. Whether this reflects a shortage of food due to high numbers of Perch fry, or the very low water conditions is unclear. However, anglers were remarking on the virtual absence of *Corixae*, so perhaps it was a food-related issue. Numbers at all other main sites were similar to last year. The status tables are as follows:

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2006/07 – 2015/16 Av.	1092	527	810
2014/15	600	723	662
2015/16	1220	851	1036
Average of the three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (October to March)			

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2007 – 2016 Av.	1244	675	959
2015	1223	655	939
2016	1655	476	1065
Average of the two highest monthly maxima in the moult period (July to September)			

The monthly maxima at the main sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec.
OPS	5	7	5	9	6	9	18	6	4	1	1	
Sevenside	14	17	18	20	13	14	19	15	6	24	9	11
PWD	7	15	13	14	3	16	3	6	4		4	2
Portishead Lake	12	13	9	8	21	4						4
CI-Y			10	16	14	6	11	1			1	
Weston STW	2	1	4	5	2			1		1		1
Tortworth Lake		26	30		19	2			29	17		
Backwell Lake	13	14	13	7						1	3	5
BG	58	70	55	32	16	51	349	370	31	38	62	80
Chew Magna Res	3	14		4		2	1	3		1		
CVL	895	745	715	545	250	105	325	860	2450	2585	2125	1955
BL	315	260	293	252	60	60	495	456	41	214	224	255
Litton Res.	27	30	38	29	8	18	27	21		1		12

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Other sites Reports also came in from Tortworth Lake, Filton airfield, Gordano Valley NR, Ham Green, Marshfield (West Littleton), Bath (Newton Park), R. Avon (Saltford), Weston Moor, Weston STW, and Yate (Kingsgate Park) but with no count exceeding 30.

Breeding An average year, the details are as follows:

OPS – two broods of eight subsequently reduced to six and five, respectively;

Sevenside – three broods of nine, six and four, subsequently reduced to six, four and four and a fourth later brood of nine reduced to seven;

PWD – the situation was unclear here, but there were probably just two broods with two and three ducklings surviving to fledge;

CVL -- just one brood of one small duckling on July 21st; obviously predated as not seen subsequently.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of sites	4	5	4	4	5	6	7	7	5	4
No. of broods	4	8	9	7	7	22	11	20	9	9
No. of young	16	55	29	41	25+	74+	63	98	50	50

Breeding success in the Avon area

SCAUP *Aythya marila*

[Red 3]

Now a scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, but has occurred in most months. Most frequent at the reservoirs.

All sightings were from the two main reservoirs, especially CVL where there was an exceptional string of records; some appeared to move between the two sites. The table below puts the 2015/16 winter period into context. Possible sightings where both sex and age are not given have been excluded.

	2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
CVL	0	1	1	1	4	3	5	1	1	3
BL	0	6	4	2	4	0	1	0	0	1
Max. flock	1	7	6	3	5	3	9	2	2	11

Average of the three highest monthly maximum counts and the largest single count (November – February)

Full details are as follows:

First winter period

CVL – a maximum of three from Jan. 5th to 10th, then two until 14th, with one each on 15th and 18th, then four from 21st to 23rd (three first-winter males and a female), a maximum of three from 24th to Feb. 3rd, two on 4th and 5th, single birds on various dates to 19th, two from 20th to 26th, one on 29th, three from March 9th to 12th, four on 17th, five from 18th until April 2nd, and a young female from 3rd until May 3rd;

BL – two adult drakes on Jan. 9th;

Second winter period

CVL – an adult female returned on Sept. 30th and stayed until the year end, with three new individuals on Oct. 18th, leading to sightings of single birds into early November with four noted on the 4th, rising to seven on the 14th, six on 22nd, four on 23rd, a maximum of three until Dec. 9th, when a fresh influx resulted in seven on 10th, three on 11th, then one again until two were seen from 16th to 20th and 11 – the highest count -- on 31st;

BL – seven from Oct. 19th to 25th, rising to a maximum of eight from 26th to Nov. 3rd, then seven on 6th, five on 8th and 9th, four on 10th, three on 11th, a first-winter male on 13th, an adult female on 14th and 15th with two first-winter drakes on the second date, and a first-winter male on 20th and 28th.

LESSER SCAUP *Aythya affinis* (10 since first in 2000, 0)

Rare Nearctic vagrant.

Descriptions required

The adult male seen annually since 2012 remained at CVL from 2015 until Jan. 7th but did not return in the autumn.

This species was first recorded in the Avon area at BL in 2000, in both spring and autumn, and it has been almost annual since 2007.

EIDER *Somateria mollissima*

[Amber 1]

Scarce winter visitor and scarce/uncommon passage migrant, but may occur in any month. Very rare inland.

This species remains a scarce visitor, see table below. There were just two records during the year:

First winter period

Weston-s-Mare (Anchor Head) – two on March 28th.

Second winter period

Sand Point – a female on Dec. 2nd and 18th;

Weston-s-Mare (Marine Lake) – a female probably the same as above from Dec. 3rd to 11th, and from 20th into 2017.

The table shows the data for the past ten years:

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
2	0	2	0	56	7	3	2	2	3
Total number of individuals each year									

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis* (59, 2)*Scarce winter visitor; some at the reservoirs may stay for several months.*

Descriptions required.

Just one record but unusually this involved two adult males, at BL on Nov.9th (N R Milbourne *et al*, photographed, see opposite page 40).

The table below shows the records for the last ten winters.

2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
1	0	1	1	0	1	2	5	2	0
Number of individuals recorded (July – June)									

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*

[Red 3 & 4]

Uncommon spring, summer and autumn passage migrant; scarce winter visitor; normally a few inland records each year, mainly at CVL.

There was an upturn in records, with 128 seen which compares with an average of 91 over the past decade as shown in the table below.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
85	75	53	59	51	206	83	103	71	128
Total number of individuals each year									

Full details are as follows:

First winter period

Northwick Warth – a drake on April 3rd;

Severn Beach – one on Feb. 8th, seven on 21st, eight on March 28th, and four on April 6th;

CI-Y – 23 flying upriver on March 30th – see two lines below;

Sand Bay – seven up Channel on Jan. 16th;

Weston-s-Mare (Anchor Head) – 21 on March 28th and one past on April 7th;

CVL – nine on March 19th and a drake on 24th.

Summer passage

BG – a drake on June 21st and 22nd and four on July 29th;

CVL – eight drakes and a duck on June 28th.

Second winter period

Severnside – a female on Oct. 31st;

CI-Y – female or juvenile on Nov. 20th and 16 on Dec. 5th;

Sand Point – four females on Dec. 2nd and 3rd;

CVL – single drakes on July 7th, 8th and 30th, Aug. 7th, and Sept. 2nd, a juvenile from Nov. 2nd to 7th, and four on 9th.

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca* (39, 3)

Rare/ very scarce winter visitor, very rare inland.

Descriptions required.

One record: three juveniles, a male and two females, were at CVL on Nov. 28th until they departed at 15.50 (A H Davis *et al.*).

The table below summarises the Avon area records for the past 20 years.

1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	5	2	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	3

Total number of individuals each year

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

[RBBP] [Amber5]

Fairly common winter visitor and spring passage migrant; numbers peak in late March and early April. Scarce away from the main reservoirs, and scarce/very scarce in summer.

Wintering numbers continue at a low ebb at all main sites as the following status table shows:

Year	CVL	BL	BG	Av.
2006/07 – 2015/16 Av.	87	23	10	120
2014/15	62	15	2	79
2015/16	68	24	1	93

Average of the three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (October – February)

Main sites Monthly maxima at the three main sites are given in the table below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
BG	1	2	3								3	1
CVL	85	59	90	12	3	4	3	3	2	10	55	80
BL	25	32	11	5	2					3	4	8

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Present in April with a male and three females on 15th and one male and two females on 21st; one female on May 27th. Two females in June at CVL including one flying into a wood on 13th, indicating possible nesting behaviour. Up to three females in July and two in August and until Sept. 12th. First to return was an adult male on Sept. 21st starting to moult out of eclipse.

The next table puts the 2016 CVL data into context.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
162	170	105	135	155	145	160	110	90	90

Highest count at CVL in period March - May

Other sites

Severnside –one (sex not recorded) on Dec. 31st drifting down river;

PWD – three, an adult male with first-winter male and female on Oct. 31st, then just the first-winters to Nov.10th.

SMEW *Mergellus albellus**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.*

There were just two or three redheads reported during early spring as follows:

First winter period

Tortworth Lake – May 1st, a late date for this species;

Chipping Sodbury Common – March 12th and 28th to April 8th.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
5	0	1	12	1	3	3	1	0	2/3

Total number of individuals seen each year

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.*

There were just three records away from CVL during the year with details as follows:

First winter period

OPS – a female/immature flew down Estuary on April 5th;

Bath (Newton Park) – a drake on Jan. 24th;

CVL – the regular wintering drake, nicknamed 'Mervyn', was present until Jan. 18th, still displaying to female Goosanders, but not seen subsequently and is presumed to have died, at the grand old age of 35 years.

Second winter period

OPS – a female/immature on Nov.11th on the rising tide.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser**Fairly common winter visitor to CVL; now increasingly recorded from other sites, but still uncommon away from CVL. Scarce in the Estuary.*

The following table gives count details for the past decade:

2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
24	54	32	26	80	25	25	35	76	18

Average of two highest monthly maxima at CVL in the winter period (December to February)

The highest count of the year was just 26 on Dec.16th and the next table shows how this maximum has varied over the past decade.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
43	65	21	95	65	31	40	70	81	26

Maximum counts at CVL each year

The following table summarises the counts at the regular sites.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	:	Oct	Nov	Dec
CI-Y	15	8	2					
Bath (Newton Park)	22	11	4				4	9
R. Avon (Saltford)	10	4	1				1	2
Backwell Lake	5	1						1
CVL	7	6	2	1		5	18	26
BL	4	4					6	21

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Reports made away from the main sites were as follows:

First winter period

OPS – a redhead on the late date of May 11th;

Sevenside – a pair on April 30th;

PWD – one (sex not recorded) on Jan. 13th;

Sand Point – three downriver on March 29th;

R. Axe (Bleadon) – six on Jan. 1st, two on the 8th, five on 19th, and three on 24th;

BG – four on Jan. 1st;

R. Chew (Tunbridge) – one on Jan. 25th and three on Feb. 9th;

R. Yeo (Congresbury Moor) – three pairs on Feb. 22nd.

Second winter period

Sevenside – three in flight on Dec. 19th;

PWD – one on Oct. 1st;

R. Axe (Bleadon) – eight, three drakes and five ducks, on Nov. 28th;

BG – a pair on Nov. 9th and 10th;

Litton Resrs. – a redhead on Dec. 7th.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Once common introduced winter visitor at CVL and BL and scarce elsewhere, now very scarce. Continues to be regularly culled by order of Defra, the last recorded local breeding was in 2008.

WeBS: CVL was second in importance in 2015/16 (!).

There were just three records of this introduced North American duck that has been all but extirpated. These may be the last in our area:

CVL – immature drake on Jan. 7th, and a drake from Sep.11th to 15th when it was shot;

BL – adult drake on Jan. 1st and 2nd.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, it was revealed that individuals from this species were shot in B&NES twice in February 2015 resulting in one and two being culled, and once in January 2016 when one was culled.

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

[RBBP] [Amber 2]

Scarce summer visitor, and presumed breeder, to the north-east of the area. Rare passage migrant.

Descriptions required for all sight records of non-singing birds away from the Marshfield area.

There was a welcome increase in the number of reports from the Marshfield area this year, but 'singing' was only reported from one other site: Chipping Sodbury Common on just one day. No evidence of breeding was received. The details are as follows.

Marshfield area – individuals were heard calling at Rushmead Farm on May 29th and July 15th and 24th, at Downtorns Farm and Shirehill Lane on May 30th, and at Down Road on July 15th. On 31st four were reported calling in the area between Down Road and Rushmead Farm. There were no sight records;

Chipping Sodbury Common -- one heard calling on July 16th.

The table below shows the number of singing males recorded each year for the last decade.

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
10	3	5	10	10	14+	4	4	3	2	5

Number of singing males each year

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

Locally fairly common breeding resident but large numbers released for 'sporting' purposes, particularly in the Marshfield area.

The number of one-*km* squares in which this species was recorded fell to 26 (38 in 2015), including seven in the Marshfield area and nine in B&NES. Numbers outside the Marshfield area were low. The only site reporting regularly was Saltford with a maximum count of 18 in February.

First winter period (January – March) Reported from 14 sites (one-*km* squares); (*cf.* eight in 2010 and 2011, five in 2012, four in 2013, five in 2014 and nine in 2015). The details are as follows:

Marshfield area (up to a radius of approximately two *km* from the village centre) -- This area is the 'hot spot' for this species in our region, and as usual held the highest numbers. The largest count was 36 on Feb.13th. There were five other reports in double figures and a further nine of fewer than ten.

Away from the Marshfield area records were received from the following sites.

OPS, Chipping Sodbury Common, North of West Littleton, Newton Park, Saltford (Avon Farm area), Charlton Fields, Keynsham and Paulton .

Breeding season (April – June) The local BBS survey recorded this species in five squares (one-*km*), which represented 2.6% of those surveyed, the total counted was 27. Otherwise, reported from 14 one-*km* squares (including five in the Marshfield area); one juvenile at Lagoon 3, OPS on June 12th, and two at Saltford (Avon Farm area) on Aug.12th were the only breeding records.

Sites where birds were present during the breeding season were as follows.

OPS, Tormarton, West Littleton, Marshfield area, Newton St. Loe and Newton Park, Burnett, East of Peasedown St. John and Saltford.

Autumn and second winter period (July – December) Reported from seven one-*km* squares including three in the Marshfield area but no others in SG, and four in B&NES. The sites were as follows:

Marshfield area, Lansdown, CVL (Moreton), Newton Park, Saltford, and Paulton.

The table below gives the number of sites away from the Marshfield area over the last decade, it shows a small decline compared with 2015 but still better than the previous three years.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of sites - SG	1	7	3	2	3	4	7	3	14	10
No. of sites - BA	19	12	18	17	5	6	4	3	7	9
No. of sites - NS	2	2	1	4	8	0	1	0	1	0

Number of sites with reports away from ST77

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

[Red 3]

Scarce, local and declining breeding resident.

Numbers dropped after the improvement noted in 2015 with a total of only 12 seen from six sites

Details of all reports received are as follows:

Three reports from Marshfield – one at Orchid Lane on Jan.1st, two at Rushmead Lane on March 29th and one at West Littleton Down on Nov. 8th.

Away from this site the records were: Saltford – two on Jan. 31st and one on Feb.10th (known local releases); CVL (Moreton Bank) five on June 3rd, and Lansdown, one on Dec. 17th.

The table below shows the slow but continuing decline over the past decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of sites - SG	2	3	1	1	1	4	4	1	0	0
No. of sites - BA	1	1	2	0	1	2	2	0	2*	3
No. of sites - NS	1	2	3	2*	2*	2	2	0	1	0

Number of sites away from the Marshfield area with records, * implies that feral birds are excluded

Observers are encouraged to submit every record of this species, with six figure grid references where possible, so that its declining status can be monitored. Local knowledge about released and/or feral birds would also be useful. (*Eds.*)

To give some context to the 2016 records we summarise here those for 1990. In that year in SG, mainly the Marshfield area, there were breeding season reports from eight locations, and in the south of our region through the year there were reports from 11 sites. The largest coveys recorded were in November with nine on Marksbury Plain and eight at Pensford.

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

Fairly common but under recorded. Very large numbers are released for 'sporting' purposes.

Apart from an increase in numbers in the Marshfield area the overall picture is one of low numbers, with very few one-km squares having double figure counts

Survey Data The local BBS survey recorded this species in 103 squares, which represented 53.9% of those surveyed, the total counted was 664. The table below shows the BBS percentage population changes since 1994.

Since 1994	2006/16	2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	2014/15	2015/16
14%	-30%	-7%	-6%	-3%	0%	-2%	-9%	3%	3%	-3%	-9%

BBS percentage changes

Non-BBS reports were widespread with records from 95 different one-km squares, all but 16 having single figure counts. The largest count was in the Marshfield area with a maximum of 100 on Sept. 25th, and the largest count from Walton Common, a site that has seen some big numbers recently, was 45 in October.

Breeding The only breeding record was of a brood of four at OPS on July 30th.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer* (52, 1)

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant to the larger reservoirs and the Estuary, sometimes staying for a considerable length of time at the reservoirs.

Descriptions required.

A very poor year for this and the other diver species with just a single record received: a Great Northern in flight over Portbury village on Jan.13th (S Hale). The table below summarises the records for the past ten winters.

Divers in the Avon area

	2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
Red-throated		2	1	1			9	31	2	3
Black-throated							1			2
Pacific				1						
Great Northern	5	3	5	2	3	3	3+	3	2	4
Diver sp.		3	1	3	1		2	3	1	2

Numbers seen in each winter during the past decade

FULMAR *Fulmarus glarialis*

[Amber 1, 6]

Uncommon visitor, scarce in winter. Usually storm-driven, but occasionally occurs in calm conditions in mid-summer. Rare inland.

For the third successive year numbers were low in the absence of prolonged spells of westerly winds in the summer months. The winter and spring saw the usual trickle of records, followed by a very small peak in mid-summer and a handful of individuals in the early autumn. There were no inland records in 2016 and all records are given in the table below.

	Jan		Apr	May				June	July		Aug	Sept
	5	8	12	7	14	17	30	14	1	2	4	4
Sevenside		1							1			1
Sand Point	1		1		1	1						
Anchor Point				1			1	14		3	4	

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus*

[Amber 6, 7]

Uncommon summer/autumn visitor, usually storm-driven, although large feeding flocks have occurred in calm anti-cyclonic conditions in mid-summer. Seldom recorded NE of the Second Severn Crossing. Rare inland.

The total of bird-days for the year was below average and almost all were on a single day, June 14th (*cf.* Fulmar). Very few were seen east of Sand Point. See table on page 46 for past records.

As in 2015 one was picked up in an urban area, although this individual was dead when found on a pavement in Clifton on Sept. 12th. All other records are listed below:

Sevenside – two on Sept. 4th, one of which was seen moving NE past New Passage at 07.20;

Sand Point – five on May 24th and 80 on June 14th;

Anchor Head – 330 on June 14th, 40 on July 2nd, one on Aug. 20th and two on Sept. 4th.

STORM PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus*

[Amber 6]

Scarce storm-driven summer/autumn visitor to the Estuary SW of the Severn Crossings; rare in winter and very rare inland.

The showing of this species, in contrast to that of most other sea birds, was good, largely thanks to a sequence at Sevenside in August. Recorded as followed:

Severn Beach – four on Aug. 4th, one on 20th and six on 21st; see photo opposite page 41.

PWD – one on Aug. 21st.

Anchor Head – single birds on June 14th and Sept. 4th.

One of the individuals at Severn Beach on Aug. 21st was taken into care but died.

Details of records for the last two decades are given in the table on page 46.

GANNET *Morus bassanus*

[Amber 6, 7]

Uncommon storm-driven visitor, mainly in spring and summer. Rare inland.

As with Fulmar and Manx Shearwater, the number of records was poor, the lowest of the decade (see table on page 46) due to an absence of sustained storms. There were two inland records, as there were in 2015, one (a near adult) at CVL on July 23rd and a sub-adult at BL on Aug. 21st and then at CVL from 22nd to 25th.

May again produced the most records, but there was also a flurry in late August (*cf.* Storm Petrel). The table at the top of the next page shows all coastal records.

	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		June	Aug			Sept	Nov
	1	28	24	15	18	14	20	21	22	12	25
New Passage									1		
Severn Beach	1	2					6	2			
PWD							3				
Sand Point					10						
Anchor Head		4	5	7		8					1
Axe Est.										1	

The Axe Estuary individual was found dead.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Fairly common resident and winter visitor, especially to the main reservoirs; breeds in small numbers on Steep Holm. Two races occur:

P. c. carbo - previously dominated all records and probably still accounts for all breeders..

P.c. sinensis - now fairly common amongst non-breeders.

WeBS: CVL was ranked 26th in importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend 18%.

There was a further fall in numbers at CVL, associated with a decline in populations of Roach and other coarse fish, but counts here remain high by historical standards. It is thought that many of these belong to the race *sinensis* but the birds are usually too far away to prove this.

The main data are given in the following tables.

1999/09 Av	2010	11	12	13	14	15	2016
143	203	145	73	321	477	447	303

CVL January to December average maximum counts

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	5	3	3	4	2	3	3	4	12	10	9	6
Littleton	1	1	1			3						3
Severnside	5	2	4	3	5	3	3	2	4	6	4	2
Cl-Y	1	10	9	5	3	1		2	3	7	4	1
Weston STW		1	1					1	1			1
R. Avon at Keynsham	2	8										6
R. Avon at Saltford	19	15	8	10	3			4	7	9	25	6
BG	45	145	110	12	6	12	16	2	29	41	120	102
CVL	135	35	70	21	3	12	26	48	280	320	310	250
BL	7	30	20	15	6	5	4	60	11	18	135	273
Litton Resrs.	8	6	4	2		4	3	7		11		
Loxton	7	2					2					

Cormorant -- Monthly maxima at the well-watched sites

There were several high counts at BG in late 2015 and these continued into early 2016, whilst the end of the year saw good numbers at BL: in both cases dispersal away from CVL was probably the cause. There were also several noteworthy counts on the R. Avon at Saltford.

Other sites Small numbers were as usual recorded from many other sites, most involving over-flying birds. The largest totals not in the table above were: 15 at Batheaston in both April and October; nine at Kenn Moor on Jan. 8th; and eight on the R. Avon in Bath on Nov. 8th and on the Floating Harbour (Bristol) on Dec. 1st. Nesting presumably took place on Steep Holm, our only breeding colony, but unfortunately no records were received; a special boat trip is needed to count the nests accurately as they are situated on a cliff face facing out to sea.

Cormorant cont. Three ringed at inland colonies in the Netherlands, and assumed to be of the continental sub-species *sinensis* were recorded, at CVL on June 1st and Oct.31st, and at BL from Nov. 11th. Identification to sub-species level requires careful examination of the gular patch and bill.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* (80, 37)

Scarce visitor, mainly in autumn and winter (rare inland); sometimes storm-driven.
Descriptions required.

Only three records were received, all coastal and within eight days of each other, but they involved record counts.

Sevenside – a flock of 23 to NE on Aug. 22nd (P D Bowerman) were seen later on the same day at Purton (Gloucestershire), where they landed briefly on the Estuary before flying off high to north, and three first-calendar-years to NE on Aug. 29th (J P Martin);

Walton Bay, Clevedon – a flock of 11 to NE on Aug. 26th (H E Rose), this flock appeared briefly out of the mist very close inshore.

Tube-noses, Gannet and Shag in the Avon area

	97/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Fulmar	79	79	62	40	26	112	192	49	31	22	30
Manx Shear.	562	1216	1680	380	100	1015	2811	1363	69	786	461
Storm Petrel	7	27	25	1		9	108	6	10	2	14
Leach's Pet.	13	2	1	24	1	2		4		5+	
Gannet	100	195	172	57	267	240	134	271	57	137	53
Shag	3	2	5	2	3	6	3	1	3	4	37

Scarce seabird records – Annual bird-day totals

BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris*

[RBBP] [Amber 2, 5]

Scarce winter visitor; mainly to CVL. Bred in 1997, and now occasionally recorded in the summer months.

A wide scatter of records in 2014 suggested that, as this species becomes more numerous on the Somerset Levels, we could expect records from an increasing range of sites. In both 2015 and 2016, however, only the main reservoirs were visited, and in small numbers. Recorded as follows:

CVL – from 2015 to March 29th, with two seen on Jan. 20th and Feb. 23rd but probably present throughout, followed by records of booming on April 12th (two individuals) and 17th. In the second winter period seen frequently from Oct. 5th to the year end, the pattern of sightings suggesting that two were present;

BL – one on Feb. 10th.

CATTLE EGRET *Bubulcus ibis* (10, 5)

Rare vagrant.

Descriptions required.

The country as a whole experienced the largest influx on record in the 2016/17 winter, mainly to south-western England, and several reached the Avon area. There were three records on Nov. 19th; it seems likely that the Barrow Gurney and CVL sightings, at least, refer to one individual. Recorded as follows, single birds unless otherwise stated:

Barrow Gurney village -- Nov. 19th (R J Higgins), they were flying steadily west;

Weston STW -- Nov. 19th to 22nd (M S Ponsford);

CVL -- Nov. 19th (P Masters) and 30th (D Hughes);

Toghill, near Wick -- Two from Dec. 17th into 2017 (J Forey and A Roe).

The most recent record prior to this influx was of one at Northwick Warth in September 2012.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta*

[RBBP]

Uncommon resident, and scarce visitor mainly from late summer to winter. In line with the national trend, numbers have increased dramatically during the last two decades. Breeding has occurred since 2014.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked 20th in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend 38%.

Despite a marked decline at CI-Y this year was the best on record at several other sites, including both main reservoirs. Individuals disperse widely to feed and most of the highest counts are made at roosts.

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
13	31	32	24	21	23	59	68	36	60	30

Maximum count each year from CI-Y and environs

The main table gives the monthly maxima at the main sites.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS and environs	9	5	2	5	4	3	8	11	9	10	5	3
Littleton Warth	2	20	3	2	1		1	2	3	5		4
Sevenside	3	13	8	4	6	4	6	13	7	7	3	3
PWD		1		1	1	2	7	3	2			
CI-Y and environs	27	11	30	20	7	9	14	20	22	20	13	16
Sand Bay	2	1		4			5	6	16	10		
Axe Est	9	3	7	2	3	2		3	2	6	8	1
Backwell Lake	18	21	18	2	1		1	4	1	3	4	9
BG	7	1	1	1	1		1	2			2	1
CVL	28	19	8	2	6	4	5	9	7	17	38	9
BL	4	11				1	1	6	14	32	26	38

Monthly maxima at the well-watched sites

Other sites Many reports were received, mostly of small numbers scattered across the levels and moors of North Somerset. High counts from sites not in the table above included 18 at Park Mill Farm (Thornbury) on March 6th, nine at Wraxall on Feb. 7th, eight at Kenn Moor on Jan. 20th and at Weston-s-Mare on March 23rd. One flushed from the Trym at Henbury (Bristol) on March 20th was also noteworthy.

GREAT WHITE EGRET *Ardea alba* (36 since first in 2002, 41)

Rare vagrant, local records have increased in recent years, partly linked to a national increase but possibly as a result of breeding in Somerset.

Descriptions required.

This species has gone from extreme rarity to regular autumn visitor to the main lakes in the last two years and the sight of large mixed parties of this species and Little Egret will be the abiding memory of 2016 for many local observers. It remains to be seen whether this becomes an annual event. It seems highly likely that most, if not all, of these individuals are part of the breeding population on the Somerset Levels. A colour ringed individual that had been ringed in Somerset as a nestling in 2016 was present from Oct. 7th.

A flock that peaked at 26 on Nov.11th moved, often daily, between BL and CVL and considerable effort was made to carry out co-ordinated counts so that double counting was avoided; see photo opposite page 41.

Reports at the two lakes (many observers) are as follows given overleaf:

Great White Egret cont.

January Three from 2015, two at CVL until 5th with one remaining to 11th, and one at BL until 4th;

August One at BL on 18th moved to CVL on 19th where it remained until 22nd before returning to BL;

September One at CVL on 4th was then at BL from 5th to 7th before returning to CVL from 7th to 9th and again at BL from 10th to 20th. There were then three at BL and one at CVL from 21st to 30th.

October Numbers rose from three at each lake on 1st to 15 at BL on 5th and 18 here on 11th, followed by 22 at CVL on 16th and 24 at the two lakes on 25th, with all 24 together at BL on 31st.

November The flock of 24 was at CVL on 4th and increased to 25 on 9th and 26 on 11th before declining to 14 on 29th.

December There were 15 at BL on 3rd, gradually declining to 12 on 7th and then ten from 17th; BL was generally favoured but ten were at CVL on 31st.

Elsewhere a wide scatter of records, mostly of single birds, was received. Almost all coastal records involved fly by birds and none lingered at any estuarine site. Reported as follows:

January OPS on Jan. 16th (P J Hazelwood);

February Uphill on 18th (G Rabin);

April Over Cribbs Causeway on 21st (P Marshall);

August Weston-s-Mare on 9th (J Thorogood) and Weston STW on 25th (M Ponsford);

September At both New Passage (P D Bowerman) and Kenn Moor on 11th (C Higgins);

October New Passage on 8th (J P Martin) and Weston STW on 25th (M Ponsford);

November Saltford on 19th (W Duckworth), Weston STW on 23rd (M Ponsford), Bristol Airport on 27th (A Hockey), at Bleadon on 26th (P A Bowyer) and at Clevedon Moor on 29th (S Sanins);

December Two at Clevedon Moor until 5th with one remaining until 11th (many observers), BG on 10th (S Davies), and Bleadon on 17th (G Warren).

Estimation of the total seen during the year is difficult but, if it assumed that the maximum count at the lakes represents the entire total here and that there was some replication at other sites, an annual total of 41 is a reasonable estimate although possibly slightly low. This represents over half of all of the records for the Avon area ever after 17 in 2015 and 19 in the previous 13 years since the first record in 2002.

This first record was of one seen flying across Weston Bay from Flat Holm (Glamorgan) in late September, and noted in the 2006 edition of this Report.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

Fairly common resident; uncommon as a breeding species.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked 15th in importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -8%.

There was a slight drop in numbers at CVL, where water levels in the early autumn were ideal but fish populations were lower than in 2015. The maximum count at Sea Mills was approximately half the long term average. Elsewhere the October and November counts at BL were, successively, site records.

	2000/09 Av.	2010	11	12	13	14	15	2016
CVL	19	32	35	16	25	20	36	31
Sea Mills	17	12	13	8	7	20	11	8

Maximum counts at CVL and Sea Mills

The second table given on the top of the next page presents the monthly maxima at the main sites.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	5	2	4	2	6	5	6	6	6	8	8	3
Littleton Warth	3	1	1	2	1	1	3	3	4	1		3
Severnside	7	4	3	5	4	6	5	6	6	5	8	4
CI-Y	6	2	6	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	2	3
Axe Est./Weston STW	2		3			4			2	2		3
R. Avon (Sea Mills)	8	3	4	4		2		2	6	3	3	1
Saltford	4	3	3	2	4			4	4	4	4	3
BG	3	1	5	1	2	2	4	4	3	5	4	3
CVL	7	6	5	15	7	18	13	17	16	17	31	11
BL	13	8	8	7	7	8	6	12	16	43	41	29

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Reports were received from a wide scatter of other sites, often as single birds in flight. The maximum counts not in the table above were: nine at Newton Park on Feb. 21st, seven at Kenn Moor on Jan. 20th and six at Tickenham on Sept. 6th.

Breeding Overall there was a slight increase in occupied nests, suggesting a gradual recovery from a series of cold winters. Breeding was recorded at two new sites, BL and Gordano Valley NNR, and although the Pill heronry was not counted it remains active. The table shows the number of occupied nests recorded at known heronries in our region. At BL post breeding two nests were located.

	Grid Ref.	97/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Widcombe Manor	ST761633				2							
Dodington Lakes	ST753802				3	4						
Newton Park	ST692640	6	4		2			3		1		3
Eastwood Farm	ST635713	5	25	34	25	25	17	16	17	18	21	12
Gordano Valley NNR	ST438732											1
Prior Park, Bath	ST634761		1	2	1	1						
Denny Island, CVL	ST575607	32	36	51	39	30	31	32	27	23	22	39
BL	ST527590											1
Pill ¹	ST530739	3	5		7	6	7	3		11		23
Cleeve Wood	ST462662	44	48	42	45	40	42	43	37	43	41	XX
Uphill Grange Wood	ST320582	1	8	4	4		4		3	2	6	
Total		109	127	133	128	102	105	97	84	98	102	XX

Number of occupied nests over the last decade

¹The historic figure for Pill includes the heronry at nearby Paradise Bottom (Leigh Woods) which was occupied until 2001.

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus* (14 since first in 2007, 1)

Rare vagrant.

Descriptions required.

One was seen, in flight over Herriott's Pool, CVL on Jan. 11th (J. McSorley).

This species was first recorded in 2007 and it has been recorded in seven of the last ten years, see table below. The most recent records are at Weston STW from April to May 2014 and at Pilning Wetlands in November 2015.

SPOONBILL *Platalea leucorodia* (43, 6)

Scarce passage migrant.

Descriptions required.

An average year with four seen, all in the autumn. The details are overleaf, and the following table gives a summary of records for the past ten years.

Spoonbill cont.

PWD -- two on Oct.19th (C J Stone);

CI-Y -- one on Sept. 10th (A Gibb);

BL -- one on Sept.19th and two, probably in their second and third calendar years, respectively, on Oct. 2nd (all N R Milbourne *et al.*).

Scarce wetland birds in the Avon area

	97/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Bittern	4	1	3	6	11	10	9	4	8	3	5
Cattle Egret	0	1		6	1		1				5
Great White Egret	0				1	3	4	3	5	17	41
Purple Heron	0			1					1		
White Stork	0				2		5			1	
Glossy Ibis	0	1		6	1			4+	1	1	1
Spoonbill	2	1	1	4	2	10		2	2	2	6
Spotted Crake	0	1	2	1			1	4	2		2

Annual totals

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Fairly common breeding resident, which occurs widely in rhynes and small to medium-sized pools. Flocks peak in late summer at the reservoirs before dispersing. Very scarce in the Estuary.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked 13th in importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -19%.

2000/09 Av.	2010	11	12	13	14	15	2016
75	123	92	38	63	42	57	48

CVL - average of the three maximum counts

Numbers fell slightly at CVL, but were within the normal range of variation, and were also on the low side at BL. It was noted on 4% of BBS visits. The main sightings are given in the following table.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	1		1		1	1	1				1	1
Severnside	3	3	8	6	6	13	13	15	18	11	7	4
PWD	9	11	5	5	4	11	12	20	18	12	12	
CI-Y	8	10	2	2	2	2		1			4	12
Axe Est./Weston STW	2	5	4	8	7	5	2	13	10	5	3	1
Tortworth Lake		1	2		3				5	4		
Three Brooks LNR		2	2		2					3	1	3
Wick Golden Valley	2	4	4	1								
Kenn Moor	10	7	6						2	1	12	6
Saltford	1	1								1	2	4
BG	10	7	1			1	1	9	17	20	19	18
Chew Magna Res.	3	5		1	1	2	10	17	28	21	8	6
CVL	7	2	2	2	2	5	28	40	55	50	40	22
BL	15	7	7	4	3	3	4	25	22	26	29	19
Litton Resrs.	20	13	10	9	7	4	5	10		13	15	9

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Numbers continue to build at the newly created wetlands at Severnside and PWD.

Other sites Reported from a wide scatter of sites not in the table above, the highest counts being three at Prior Park on Feb. 5th and at Backwell Lake on Oct. 27th.

Breeding By recent standards a good year at CVL, where two broods raised four young, but as the table below shows this is well below past levels. Predation by pike seems the most likely explanation. Reports were received from another eleven sites, a significant improvement on the five in 2015:

Sevenside – one brood of one on a pool at Severn Beach and three broods totalling twelve young on the Pilning Wetlands, where one pair was successful on its fourth attempt, after previous broods were predated;

PWD – three broods totalling five young;

Weston STW – six broods totalling nine young (*cf.* five broods totalling seven young here in 2014);

Three Brooks LNR – a nest built, but the outcome not recorded;

Hoar Gout – two broods of two and three, respectively;

Clevedon Moor – one brood of three;

Chilcombe – a brood of one;

Northend, Batheaston – one brood of two;

Chew Magna Res. – ten young noted;

BL – three broods totalling eight young;

Litton Resrs. – one brood of three.

The tables below summarise the data for the past two decades at CVL and away from CVL.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Broods	10	6	3	3	0	0	2	0	3	1	2
Young	16	9+	4	5	0	0	0	0	4	1	4

CVL broods and young

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Sites	10	8	6	4	4	4	8	7	6	5	11
Broods	19	15	14	10	12	9	21	19	20	7	25

Sites and broods away from CVL

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Uncommon and highly localised breeding resident, but occurs commonly at the reservoirs, particularly during the autumn moult/passage. Scarce elsewhere, including the Estuary.

WeBS: CVL was ranked eighth in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -21%.

A slight decline was evident at CVL, but numbers here remain much higher than earlier in the decade.

2000/09 Av.	2010	11	12	13	14	15	2016
480	355	195	93	267	278	463	433

CVL - average of the three maximum counts

The main table below summarises the monthly maxima at the reservoirs.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
BG	14	13	20	32	31	26	27	36	39	33	9	6
CVL	35	50	60	60	55	165	360	530	410	195	110	140
BL	25	50	15	13	14	14	39	76	84	98	86	95
Litton Resrs.	1	2	4	4	2	3	2	3		2		

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Elsewhere there were records from the six sites shown below, they refer to single birds unless stated otherwise:

Sevenside – Feb. 3rd, March 29th and three, two on Pilning Wetlands and one on the Estuary, on May 5th;

PWD – Jan. 12th, 13th and 19th; CI-Y – two on July 31st; Sand Bay – March 13th; Stoke Park – from April 19th to 30th; and Floating Harbour (Bristol) – March 12th, 18th and 28th and May 22nd.

Great Crested Grebe breeding

As in 2011 and 2012 no breeding took place at CVL, despite water levels staying high for much of the summer. This may have been related to the low numbers of coarse fish present in the lake over the summer. Elsewhere reported at BL, where three pairs raised six young, and Litton Resrs. where there was a single brood of two.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Broods	16	38	20	8	1	0	0	7	27	11	0
Young	23	62+	26+	12	2	0	0	11	48	21	0

CVL broods and young

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus* (52, 3)

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Almost always at freshwater sites and rare in the Estuary.
Descriptions required.

After only one in 2015 a total of three in 2016 was a distinct improvement, although they were only seen in the first three months of the year. Reported, as singletons, as follows:

Sevenside -- Pilning Wetland from Jan. 10th to 12th and photographed (P Hitchcock *et al.*);

BG -- Jan. 20th (C J Stone);

CVL -- March 29th and 30th, moulting into summer plumage (R Mielcarik *et al.*).

Details of sightings over the past 20 years are given in the table on next page.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis*

[Amber 5]

Scarce passage migrant; wintered for the first time in 1998/99 and becoming increasingly frequent in the winter. Almost always at freshwater sites and rare in the Estuary. Has bred.

An excellent year, individuals remained for long periods in the autumn at CVL for the first time since 2013 with small numbers wintering in both periods. Single individuals, unless stated otherwise, were noted as follows:

CVL, spring – a transitional plumaged individual was present from March 22nd then three (two males and a female) in summer plumage on April 13th with a pair until 17th (sometimes displaying) and a female until 21st. Another also in summer plumage was noted on May 15th.

CVL, autumn -- present from Aug.19th to 28th (a juvenile), from Sept. 1st to 13th (an adult), with two juveniles on Sept. 19th, two adults from 21st to 28th, and one on Oct. 11th. Then three reported from Oct.12th to 15th with two from 22nd to Dec. 16th, and one remaining into 2017;

BL, spring – three remained from 2015 until March 10th, with one until 31st;

BL, autumn -- an adult from Aug. 22nd to Sept. 8th was joined by another on 9th, with one remaining until 16th.

Scarce Grebes in the Avon area

	97/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Red-necked	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Slavonian	1	2	1	0	3	1	2	3	1	1	3
Black-necked	11	9	10	8	9	11	8	6	6	16	16

Annual recorded totals

RED KITE *Milvus milvus*

Uncommon passage migrant and increasingly frequent visitor.

This year there were slightly fewer records with 241 bird-days compared with 273 in 2015.

As usual, most reports were in the period from March to July but with the peak occurring in May this year (see table below). Reports came from 121 widely distributed sites across the Avon area including 25 separate areas over the urban areas of Bristol and Bath. The distribution of sightings across the four regions was as follows: South Gloucestershire 35, B&NES 35, Bristol 13 and North Somerset 35. The vast majority of the sightings were of single birds but there were 20 of two, and three of three. The counts of three were at Northwick Warth on April 2nd, CVL on May 6th and at Chipping Sodbury on July 23rd.

The table below shows the monthly distribution of bird-days for 2015 and 2016.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2015	2	3	23	50	44	100	27	6	9	5	0	4	273
2016	5	6	31	38	86	31	15	8	5	10	4	2	241

Monthly distribution of bird-days

In contrast to 2015 this year's figures show a large increase in sightings throughout May, of which 22 were from CVL and environs, and a notable reduction in June.

The concentration of observers at CVL and its environs resulted in 38 bird-days during the year at this site, the largest from any in the Avon area. Unlike last year it was not possible to be precise about the direction of travel of the first-calendar-year individuals as the evidence that was available was inconclusive.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE *Haliaeetus albicilla* (0, 1)

Very rare vagrant.

Descriptions required.

The first modern sighting, a juvenile/first-winter, was at BL on Oct. 28th (A H Davis, N R Milbourne *et al.*), several photographs were taken, see opposite page 53. First seen at 11.10, it was watched by an increasing crowd until 13.30 when it drifted onto the top of Mendip, and into Somerset, mobbed by a large flock of corvids.

Birds from the Scottish and Irish reintroduction schemes seldom wander far whereas Scandinavian individuals are known to move southwestwards in their first winter (a Finnish-ringed individual wintered in Wiltshire some years ago). The winds in late October were predominantly from the east and the first migrants arrived in northern France on Oct. 31st.

H H Davis, in his 1947 Report, lists old records of birds 'obtained' at Weston-s-Mare in February 1861 and Dodington Park in December 1871 as well as reports of 'probables' from Steep Holm in March 1919 and Weston-s-Mare in December 1927.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*

[Amber 2, 6]

Uncommon visitor and passage migrant, has wintered at CVL.

Compared with last year, more than twice the number of sightings were reported, with a bird-days total for 2016 of 34. (*cf.* 35 in 2014 and 16 in 2015). Sixteen bird-days were noted at CVL (*cf.* seven in 2015) with the strongest showing here in April (five) and May (eight). The details are given overleaf; records refer to single female or immature individuals unless stated otherwise, and give sites and dates when present:

<i>Scarce raptors cont.</i>											
Marsh Harrier	7	6	29	52	14	28	19	26	35	16	34
Hen Harrier	3	4	14	1	17	13	2	2	2	2	1
Pallid Harrier						1					1
Montagu's Harrier	1		1			1				2	
Goshawk	3		3*	1*	0*	1	1	5	2		1
Osprey	7	12	13	14	13	13	25	59	41	36	29

Annual bird-day (* excludes records from a SG site)

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

Fairly common breeding resident, possibly also an uncommon passage migrant.

It was a record year for the number of sightings received with a total of 1108, although to put this into context 519 came from just nine sites having regular sightings submitted throughout the year. These sites, with the number of records received from each of them are listed below:

OPS (63), Northwick Warth / Pilning Wetlands (89), Banwell (19), Weston STW (28), Saltford (93), CVL area (89), BL area (26), and in the Bristol area: Eastville Park (48), and Knowle and Bishopsworth (64).

The spread across the year was reasonably even, but as usual the highest numbers were in April, the peak period for courtship and display.

The table below shows the monthly distribution of records for 2016 and the previous five years:

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2011	39	48	62	74	42	28	20	62	52	52	45	60	584
2012	61	65	62	66	64	28	61	63	72	75	75	94	786
2013	72	40	57	66	32	34	47	71	61	51	64	50	645
2014	62	79	87	87	42	57	54	92	83	76	74	80	873
2015	80	72	94	129	62	31	60	88	98	100	67	93	974
2016	110	90	121	146	88	51	46	74	96	107	107	72	1108

Monthly distribution of records

Breeding The only evidence of breeding came from OPS in June when two newly fledged young were seen, and from Woodspring Bay where a pair with two juveniles was reported on Aug. 8th. A food pass was seen at Eastville Park on Aug. 7th.

In the absence of breeding evidence other than the two reports mentioned above, an assessment of the number of breeding territories in each of the four Avon regions has been made by plotting the geographical locations of the reports received in the period from the beginning of March to the end of June is as follows:

South Gloucestershire – 14, B&NES – 21, Bristol – 12, and North Somerset – 22, Total – 69 (*cf.* 62 in 2014 and 87 in 2015).

The BBS for 2016 recorded a total of 23 in 20 squares (10.5% of all squares surveyed). In 2015, 14 were recorded in 11 squares (6.4% of all the squares surveyed).

Prey species recorded Blackbird, Feral Pigeon, Goldfinch and Knot.

Other behaviour One was observed 'sunning', an activity not often witnessed, on the top of a hedge at BL on April 12th.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

Fairly common breeding resident, possibly also an uncommon passage migrant, the population has steadily increased since the late 1980s, now widespread and regularly seen over suburban areas.

The total number of records received was 2259, the highest ever. The records were spread reasonably evenly throughout the year except for a large increase during the display period in March and April. However, breeding success was only average. The first table gives the monthly distribution for 2016 and the previous five years.

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2011	68	62	141	125	77	112	23	47	45	59	66	58	883
2012	83	120	139	112	114	65	73	78	91	116	66	112	1169
2013	111	95	146	153	80	69	70	66	88	82	63	74	1097
2014	104	122	229	150	110	95	87	109	122	105	104	119	1456
2015	169	139	192	252	166	147	112	122	149	151	89	115	1873
2016	178	194	296	300	200	130	138	202	171	174	115	161	2259

Monthly distribution of records

Breeding The BBS counted 178 in 95 squares (found in 49.7% of area surveyed). This compares with 214 in 2013 (50% of area surveyed), 184 in 2014 (44.4% of area surveyed), and 144 in 2015 (45.7% of area surveyed).

Nest building was observed at Primrose Hill, Bath on Feb. 22nd, and display noted at Abbot's Leigh on April 7th and Keynsham STW on 15th, and near Littleton Warth a pair was seen copulating on 27th.

R Prytherch's study area, which covers some 75km² of Failand and Gordano had 111 pairs holding territories, an increase of one over last year's record number (*cf.* 108 in 2014 and 110 in 2015). Of the 46 nests checked 21 were successful, and 28 young fledged; the remaining 25 nests failed. Despite this being a poor year for breeding the number of breeding pairs has risen from 13 to 111 in the 35 years of the study, a rise of 834%. The table below sets out an assessment of the number of breeding sites in this study area.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Active nest sites	79	92	97	99	103	103	105	106	108	110	111
Chicks fledged	70	80	47	73	87	43	27	31	37	34	46
Successful nests	48	52	33	47	60	27	27	20	26	26	21
Brood ratio	1.55	1.54	1.42	1.55	1.43	1.59	1.00	1.55	1.42	1.31	1.33

Breeding data in RJP's study area

Large groups/counts All counts of ten or more are listed below; in date order.

CVL -- 14 on March 17th, 15 in a thermal over Burlledge Hill on 21st, 31 on April 27th. Double figures of up to 23 on various dates between May and August;

OPS – 12 on March 25th;

Saltford -- 12 on March 25th;

RPD – ten on March 25th;

Dundry – ten on March 30th;

BG area – 29 on April 8th;

Marshfield area – 18 on April 27th and 12 on Dec. 12th;

Westbury-on-Trym – ten on May 3rd;

Maes Knoll – 23 on May 8th;

Camely – 16 on June 5th.

Other notes A strikingly pale individual was recorded at CVL throughout the year. This very white bird first seen at Heron's Green on May 24th, 2008 is now at least eight years old. Other very pale individuals were at OPS between February and April, and at Claverton Down, Bath on Aug. 29th. A second pale individual was at CVL on Sept. 21st.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

[Amber 2,5]

Scarce passage migrant; most records are from the reservoirs.

A reasonable year with a total of 29 bird-days, see table on page 55 for records from previous years. After the first record of the year on March 24th the spring passage occurred in two distinct periods, namely the first half of April and again in the first half of May. Noted in each month from March to September with the March record on 24th and the last on Sept. 20th. In 2015 the first was seen on April 2nd and last on Sept. 1st

The records given below refer to single birds unless stated otherwise.

Coastal records (in date order)

New Passage / Northwick Warth – April 12th and Sept. 5th;

OPS – May 12th;

Weston STW – Aug. 30th

Elsewhere – Inland records (in date order but with reservoir sightings last)

Dundry -- April 19th;

Marshfield -- May 7th;

Kingswood -- May 7th;

Congresbury -- May 13th;

Clevedon (N of M5 Junct. 20) -- Aug. 11th;

BG – Aug. 30th.

CVL – noted on March 24th, April 1st, 5th, 11th, 17th (three), 19th (two), May 6th, 7th and 15th; on June 5th; Aug. 24th, and Sept. 20th;

BL – April 3rd, 11th and 12th.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

[RBBP]

Uncommon winter visitor, scarce in summer, and very scarce as a breeding species.

WeBS: English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked 7th, and CVL 13th, in importance 2015/16. English ten-year trend -5%.

The number of sites was exceptionally high, as shown in the table below.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
23	23	20	18	24	27	22	21	18	29

Number of sites reported from each year

As ever the numbers in the table below, which gives the maxima at the main sites, doubtless represent a significant under-estimate of the true population.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	3	3	5	1						2	3	1
Sevenside	4	3	3	1	1	1	4	1		4	3	4
PWD	1		1	1			1			3		
CI-Y	1	1	2	1				1	1			2
Weston STW	3	1	1	1						3	2	
CVL	9	10	12	8	2	1	2	2	2	7	17	10
BL	1	1	1	1		1			1	1	1	1

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Water Rail breeding Sound-playback surveys at CVL detected the following: ten between January and March, 11 between April and June, 20 between July and September and 26 between October and December. Less effort was devoted to locating nest sites than in some previous years and only one was found. Breeding was recorded for the first time at the Pilning Wetlands, where two broods were watched on several occasions.

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
4	0	2	6	4	1	10	6	2	0	1

Number of nest sites detected at CVL each year

Other records As ever this species was under recorded but single birds were reported until April 5th and from Aug. 28th at Littleton Warth, Pill, Seamills, Kingsgate Park (Yate), Marshfield, Lawrence Weston Moor, Emersons Green, Three Brooks LNR, Saltford, Congresbury Moor, Kenn Moor, Nailsea, Backwell Lake, Newton Park, Yatton, Wick St Lawrence and Batheaston with two at Stoke Park on Nov. 30th, Three Brooks LNR on Feb. 24th and Backwell Lake on Nov. 4th and three at Yatton on Aug. 28th.

SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana* (39, 1)

Scarce passage migrant; most records come from CVL in August and September.
Descriptions required.

After a blank year in 2015 two were recorded, at CVL on Sept. 26th (D Angell *et al.*) and from Oct. 9th to 26th (A Crowe *et al.*). Both were photographed.

A summary of past records is given on page 50.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

Fairly common breeding resident. Seen in large numbers at the reservoirs in late summer/autumn.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked second, CVL 16th and BL 28th, in importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -55%.

Counts were slightly down at CVL and BL following an exceptional year for both species at the two sites in 2015, but they remained high, particularly at BL where water levels were very low.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
CVL	142	55	70	180	125	75	35	170	145	230	150
BL	79	30	21	38	33	27	20	92	98	167	160

Maximum counts at CVL and BL each year (the highest counts are often not in the same month at the two sites)

The counts from the main sites were as follows.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	3	3	3	5	3	10	5	4	3	3	5	4
Sevenside	8	8	7	8	8	6	6	12	10	14	8	7
PWD	7	10	3	12	5	7	2	8	7	5	8	2
CI-Y	16	12	10	8	5	2	2	1		3		6
Weston STW	1	2	1	1		1		1	1			
Duchess Park	4	1	3	2	2			4	4	3	5	5
Eastville Park	7	6	7	6	2	2	3	6	6	6	9	6
Backwell Lake	9	14	11	3	3	2			4		14	4
Saltford	9	10	8	6	4			8	14	18	15	16
CVL	10	8	10	6	6	10	55	150	135	140	145	65
BL	19	23	22	21	4	6	44	110	160	140	160	75
Chew Magna Res.	1	1	3	3	3	1	5	8	8	9	4	3

Moorhen -- Monthly maxima at the main sites

Recorded from a wide scatter of other sites. The largest numbers were: 20 on R. Axe at Purn on Jan. 8th, 19 on R. Avon at Keynsham on Jan.10th and 14 on Kenn Moor on Jan.17th and Dec. 23rd.

Breeding At CVL 17 nests were found, four of which are known to have failed, the outcome of the remaining 13 being unknown. At BL three broods totalling nine young were located (*cf.* one brood in 2015). Elsewhere recorded at 18 sites (*cf.* 12 in 2011, 18 in 2012, 11 in 2014, 20 in 2015 and 21 in 2016). Recording has improved in recent years, but it is doubtless more widespread than the records below suggest.

The reports are as follows:

OPS – four broods totalling 11 young;	Henleaze Swimming Lake – one brood of two;
Sevenside – three broods totalling six young at	Abbots Leigh – one brood of five;
Piling Wetlands and one brood of one on Orchard	Tickenham Moor – three broods totalling eight
Pools;	young;
PWD – two broods;	Kingston Seymour – one brood of two;
Olveston – one brood of four;	Chilcombe Bottom – a brood of one;
Three Brooks LNR – two occupied nests;	Burnett – one brood of four;
Warmley Forest Park – two broods;	Salford – two broods totalling eight young;
Stoke Park – one brood of three;	Chew Magna Res. – one young;
Eastville Park, Bristol – one brood of four;	Litton Resrs. – two broods totalling six young.

COOT *Fulica atra*

Fairly common and widespread breeding resident, abundant in the autumn at the main reservoirs.

WeBS: CVL was ranked seventh in National Importance, and BL 26th in importance, in 2015/16. English ten-year trend: -3%

Numbers at both main reservoirs were again high, due to profuse growth of water plants. The December count at CVL was the third highest on record, exceeded only by counts of 3500 in September 2000 and 3715 in October 2002. Autumnal peaks such as this were typical until the last two years, when numbers have risen into the early winter. The Avon BBS distribution was 10%.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
CVL	2719	2095	2020	3050	2880	3110	2475	3190	2770	3250	3395
BL	1825	2323	1403	970	678	1247	1070	1213	1098	1426	1615

Maximum counts at CVL and BL (the highest counts are often not in the same month at the two sites)

The main data are given in the table below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	4	2	3	3	4	3	3	1	1	1		1
Sevenside	26	34	28	27	30	31	32	33	24	23	16	15
PWD	28	17	8	8	9	8	23	18	18	19	14	20
Weston STW	1	4	1	6	3	3	4	8	8	3	2	
Tortworth		23	33		25	21			32	28		
Backwell Lake	12	14	11	9	8	3			6	12	6	5
BG	65	71	42	14	19	44	140	125	150	165	155	160
Chew Magna Resr.		1	1		4	5	1	3	5			
CVL	1135	745	570	280	185	330	1610	2605	3030	3100	3135	3395
BL	435	220	150	150	130	175	1040	1245	1460	1615	1475	850

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Other records Recorded from a wide scatter of sites. The highest counts not in the table above were 12 at Litton Resrs. in March and 13 here in April.

Coot breeding At CVL 47 nests were found, ten of which are known to have failed, the outcome of the remaining 37 being unknown. At BL eight broods were seen, totalling 22 juveniles (*cf.* three broods and 12 young in 2015). Elsewhere recorded as follows: OPS (one nest, which failed); Pilning Wetlands (nine nests with 61 eggs in April and four broods totalling 18 young); Severn Beach, Orchard Pools (one brood of six); PWD (one brood of two young); Weston STW (one brood of two); Tortworth Lake (five broods totalling 15 young); Hoar Gout (one brood of one); Filton (one brood of two); Stoke Park (one brood of one); St Georges Park, Bristol (occupied nests, outcome unknown); Saltford (one brood of three); Backwell Lake (two broods, eight young); Chew Magna Res. (one brood of one); and Litton Resrs. (two broods totalling seven young).

The breeding data at CVL over the past two decades are summarised in the following table.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of nests		91	96	67	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	100	n/c	47
No. of broods	59	41	28	27	22	11	26	40	47	20	n/c
No. of young	155	91+	61	77+	46	n/c	50	110	118	44	n/c

Nests, broods and young at CVL each year

CRANE *Grus grus* (12, 2)

[Amber 5]

Between 2010 and 2015 a total of 93 individuals from German stock were raised and released on the Somerset Levels as part of the Great Crane Project (GCP). Flocks regularly wander from the release site. Breeding occurred in 2015 and 2016 with most of the young unringed.

Descriptions are required for individuals considered to be of wild origin.

Two unringed adults were found at Northwick Warth early morning on Oct. 7th, they were photographed before flying off to E at 09.00 (P D Bowerman).

Previous Avon area records of wild birds are as follows: one over Clevedon in March 1971; two over Severn Beach in January 2000; five at Tortworth in February 2003; one over OPS in May 2008; one past Aust Warth in March 2010; one over Bishopston in April 2012, and one at New Passage in September 2014.

See also page 158 for details of individuals considered to originate from the Great Crane Project.

Wader counts For the common wader species our main method for presenting data is via tables of monthly maxima at the main well-watched sites, and this has not changed over many years. But it is worth pointing out that these tables are not 'row-additive', that is the same flock may be at one site on one day and another on the next, or even later the same day, and so will appear twice in a table. It is well-known that most flocks move freely around the Estuary during their stay; for example they may be on the English coast for a while and then cross to the Welsh coast only to return to our side later. Flocks may be mainly resident on our coast and visit others occasionally, on the other hand some flocks normally resident on the Welsh or Somerset coasts may visit the Avon coast staying sometimes only a few minutes or a few hours.

AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta*

[Amber 6]

Uncommon winter visitor/passage migrant. Rare inland.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was 17th in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend 68%.

Sightings were much improved with the best total since records began, see table below, but all sightings were coastal (as last year) and all counts were in single figures. This improvement is welcome but our counts are still much lower than those for some other parts of the Estuary, and no site holds birds for long periods. All records are listed on the next page

OPS – eight on Jan. 2nd and one on May 22nd (one in 2015);

Northwick Warth (Sevenside) – one on March 11th and 20th, three on April 4th, two on May 2nd and three again on 22nd, with one on 25th and two on 30th, then single birds on Sept. 25th, Oct. 6th, 23rd and 24th, two from 27th to 31st, and one on Nov. 5th and 7th (four in 2015);

Royal Portbury Dock (PWD) – nine on Sept. 21st, three on Oct. 22nd and one on 24th and 26th (one in 2015);

CI-Y – one on Jan. 7th, five on Feb.12th and two on 13th (five in 2015);

Sand Bay – one on March 22nd (three at Axe Estuary in 2015).

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
7	8	15	8	15	22	9	17	47	13	52

Yearly totals of individuals for the past two decades

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

[Amber 1, 6, 7]

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce breeder.

Year	Sevenside	CI-Y	Sand Bay	Axe Estuary	Total
1996/97 – 2005/06 Av.	75	22	13	72	182
2006/07 – 2013/14 Av.	82	35	26	96	239
2014/15	132	49	80	134	395
2015/16	153	61	43	97	355

August to February average counts

The status table above shows relatively small changes overall for 2015/16, but it does illustrate a feature noted for several wader species this year: increased counts in the upper Estuary counterbalancing lower counts in the outer Estuary. Numbers on Sevenside, mainly Northwick Warth, continue to improve, the best in 2016 being 220 on Oct.15th – a WeBS count day. The best at Axe Estuary/Weston beach, a site that has produced some very good counts in the past, was 140 on the unusual date of June 1st, many of these had probably been displaced from the Somerset coast.

Present throughout the year although no three figure count was received after June 1st and before Aug. 21st. The main table below summarises the counts. Otherwise noted, in date order, at Sea Mills (two in March and May, breeding activity has been noted here in the past), BG (one in March), BL (one in March and five in August.), Henleaze (one calling in flight during a June night), and Saltford (another calling in flight in a late evening in July).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	8	9	10	10	9	6	8	8	3	1	6	6
Littleton Warth	7	15	5	22	1			3	10	7	9	18
Sevenside	200	145	120	120	76	35	55	125	136	220	180	115
Avonmouth/PWD	1	47	24	15	6	8	10	8	1			
CI-Y	42	49	42	42	28	13	29	32	62	66	62	54
Sand Bay	88	67	11	1			12	15	2	19	35	100
Axe Est./WestonSTW	81	62	63	4	3	140		130	92	98	133	70
CVL		1	4				4	5				1

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Breeding Nesting activity was noted at three coastal sites as follows.

OPS – a pair was seen mating in mid April and possibly the same appeared to have an active nest in mid May but no other details were available;

PWD – two pairs nested producing five chicks by early June, later at least one pair appeared to have another nest whose outcome was unknown;

Oystercatcher breeding cont. CI-Y – three pairs were seen displaying, the only definite evidence was a nest with three eggs on a shingle spit in mid June which was washed out by the high tide. At another site in mid June a few sheep were present and one bird was seen to attack one by repeatedly diving at the sheep's nose and striking it with its bill, it is assumed that the bird was defending an active nest or chicks.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

[Amber 6, 7]

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant. Scarce inland.

Year	Sevenside	CI-Y	Total
1996/97 – 2005/06 Av.	9	24	33
2006/07 – 2013 /14 Av.	5	31	36
2014/15	4	22	26
2015/16	2	26	28

September to March average counts

For some time now the best counts of this species in the Avon area have been reported at CI-Y, and in 2016 some reasonably sized flocks were seen here. But, as with several other wader species in 2016, large numbers were recorded further up the Estuary, mainly but not exclusively in the Northwick Warth area in May and the latter half of the year. The counts of 180 at Northwick on Oct.15th, 55 at Littleton Warth on Oct. 8th and 100 at OPS on 18th are all site records. The Avon record is 190 at CI-Y in October 1993. The count of 75 at Northwick on May 10th was also high.

The table below summarises the coastal counts. There was only one sighting (one at CI-Y on Aug. 24th) after May 24th (four at Sand Bay) and before Sept.15th (two at CI-Y), and a few were noted inland with single birds as follows: at BG on Oct. 21st, at CVL on Aug. 28th, and at BL from Sept. 23rd to 26th, and on Oct. 5th and 6th.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	:	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	4	1	1	12	35			70	100		
Littleton Warth		4						32	55	1	2
Northwick Warth	1		4	11	75			93	180	140	65
PWD			1		7			23			
CI-Y	32	54	22	16	7		1	3	28	35	45
Sand Bay	12	15		4	4			2		5	20
Axe Estuary/Weston STW								4	1		

Monthly maxima at the main sites

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was 19th in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend 36%.

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
1526	3340	1790	1965	1590	3455	2720	2340	1995	2782	3068

Totals of the monthly maxima at all sites for the past two decades

We receive reports of two distinct types. First there are the regular sightings, almost always in three figures, from Marshfield and its environs, the flocks move about quite a bit but probably stay in this general area for long periods; there are peaks during the coldest months, January and December, and during migration periods in March and October. The second type involves reports from the remaining parts of our region, these tend to be fairly random with flocks of very variable size which do not stay at any site for long. We have illustrated this by giving two tables below providing either fortnightly or monthly maxima.

The last in spring was seen on May 3rd at CI-Y although the last Marshfield count was 500 on March 29th. The first in the autumn was one at Northwick Warth on Aug.17th with the first in the Marshfield area on Sept. 24th. None were seen at CVL for the second year running. The count of 800 of a flock first seen in the Dyrham area, two kms from Marshfield, on Dec. 28th was thought to be a low estimate of the vast flock (probably in four figures) which was described as the largest seen in the area since the 1970s. It moved about quite a bit and was present into 2017.

J1-15	J16-31	F1-14	F15-28	M1-15	M16-31	:	S 24-30	O1-15	O16-31	N1-15	N16-30	D1-15	D16-31
32	400	120	7	120	500		2	104	400	120	20	350	800*

Marshfield area – fortnightly maxima, * see text

	Jan	:	Mar	Apr	May	:	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS/Thornbury Pill	4										1
Sevenside	50		1				1	40	4	9	
CI-Y	1			1	1					7	3
Sand Bay	60			3							
Weston STW									1	8	
Lansdown											150
Saltford	23			11				60	7	6	1
Cold Ashton									50	38	
Redhill/Bristol Int. Airport	46		40						31	31	

Monthly maxima at sites away from the Marshfield area

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* [Red 3]

Uncommon winter visitor, and fairly common passage migrant (most numerous in autumn). Small numbers occur inland on passage. Scarce breeder.

Two races: Most belong to the race *hiaticula* breeding in Canada and N. W. Europe. A few of the race *tundra* breeding from N. Scandinavia to Siberia may also occur.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ninth in International Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -62%

Year	OPS		Sevenside		CI-Y		Totals	
1996/97 – 2005/06 Av.	16	74	14	239	17	122	47	435
2006/07 – 2013/14 Av.	5	60	15	154	16	251	36	465
2014/15	3	55	25	150	5	328	33	533
2015/16	1	170	22	165	16	51	39	386

Winter (October to February) and the following autumn passage (August and September) average counts.

The status table total above is slightly down due mainly to a poor showing at CI-Y which was evident throughout the year. Generally there was a reasonable spring passage, the best counts were at Severn Beach (Sevenside) with 120 on May 11th and 180 on 17th, most having moved on by 23rd. The main autumn passage began on July 31st with 28 at CI-Y, and it was more or less finished by early October with 80 at Severn Beach on 2nd and 53 at Royal Portbury Dock (PWD) on 4th. It is of interest to note that, unlike most other wader species in 2016, many of the best ‘Sevenside’ counts were for Severn Beach rather than the Northwick/Pilning area. The highest single count during the year was 300 at OPS on Aug. 27th, but this was quite a way from being an Avon record count. Reasonable numbers were noted on the coast in both winter periods. The table below summarises almost all counts, one at Saltford on Aug. 24th was the only non-tabulated record.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		May		Jun	Jul	Aug		Sep		Oct	Nov	Dec
				1-15	16-30	1-15	16-31			1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30			
OPS	3	3	1	10	30	50	15		5	30	300	36	40	2		
Littleton Warth		2											3		1	2
Sevenside	20	11	10	20	35	120	180	4	4	21	190	140	90	80	22	38

Ringed Plover cont.

Avonmouth/PWD	20		9	8	9	14	12	3	14	90	250	200	90	53	30	8
CI-Y	21	21	2	16	18	65	42	8	28	80	40	22	12	21	15	3
Sand Bay					17		46			8	7	(100)				
Axe Est./Weston STW	29	50							4		35	24	70	24	9	34
BG						1			2							
CVL						1				3	2	3	3			
BL										3	5	12	14	6		

Monthly or fortnightly maxima at the main sites, the Sand Bay figure in brackets is an estimate

Breeding As last year only limited nesting activity was noted at our main site Royal Portbury Dock (PWD), it was thought that increased commercial activity and fewer observer visits to the site may partly explain the current poor showing; as recently as 2012 eight pairs produced 17 young here. In 2016 a pair was 'sitting' in mid May and two juveniles was seen in early July when a nest with four eggs was also seen, outcome unknown.

Ringing recoveries Two for long-lived individuals. The first ringed as a pullus in May 2004 at PWD was intentionally controlled at Newport, Monmouthshire in December **2015**, a remarkable 4215 days later. (Details of this find have only recently come to light.) The second was provided with colour rings as a pullus in June 2010 also at PWD, and the code on these rings was read at Severn Beach on Dec.19th about 2400 days later.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

[RBBP]

Uncommon passage migrant/summer visitor. Scarce breeder.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ninth in importance in 2015/16. English 10-year trend 56%.

First reported at Northwick Warth on March 22nd, ten days later than in 2015, numbers then built up with six at Northwick/Pilning Wetlands by the beginning of April, ten on 17th and six were still present on May 18th. A pair was at PWD from March 30th to late July, and there were occasional sightings at CI-Y (mainly Dowlais Farm) including four on April 14th and three on 17th. These spring sightings are summarised in the first table; there was also one at BG on May 7th (pairs have bred here in the past).

	Mar 22-31	Apr 1-10	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-10	May 11-20
Northwick/Pilning Wlds	4	6	10	8	6	6
PWD	2	2	2		2	1
CI-Y		2	4	2	1	

Spring ten-day maxima at the main sites

Between mid May and mid June up to four were noted. Numbers then began to build up with 14 at Northwick /Pilning by June 29th. During the next fortnight record numbers for this site and the Avon area as a whole were reported, including 16 (ten of which were juveniles) on July 4th, 20 – the record – on 6th, 18 on 9th, 16 on 11th and 13 on 15th. Counts then tailed off, the last was one on the Wetlands on Aug. 23rd. As noted above a pair was at PWD until late July and there were some isolated sightings at three other sites, see the second table below. There were also two at Severn Beach on Aug. 23rd and one at CVL a month later on Sept. 17th.

	Jun 21-30	Jul 1-10	Jul 11-20	Jul 21-30	Aug 31-9	Aug 10 -19	Aug 23
Northwick/Pilning Wlds	14	20	16	9	3	2	2
PWD	2	1	1				
CI-Y						2	2
BG	1			2			
CVL		1	1	1			

Autumn ten-day maxima at the main sites

Lapwing cont.

Redhill	54										25	
N. Somerset Moors			29			6	12				40	
CVL	250	25	500	1	2	4	23	12	14	92	120	510
BL	50	14					4	5	29	290	146	13

Monthly maxima at the well-watched sites

Breeding Some activity was noted at seven sites as last year, mostly on the coast or on the N. Somerset moors. Display but no further activity was reported from Northwick Warth, PWD, the Tutshill's Ear site at CI-Y and CVL. Attempted or actual breeding occurred at the following three sites.

Weston Moor, Gordano Valley – up to three pairs were reported displaying, probably two had nests. No further details were available from this site which in the past held ten or more successful pairs in some years;

Dowlais Farm, CI-Y – at least five pairs were present in April, and three were 'sitting' late in the month. In early June two fairly well grown young was recorded just before the site dried out completely;

Nailsea Moor – three pairs bred and eight juveniles were present in early July. This site is now becoming the best in Avon for this species.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

[Red 3, 4]

Passage migrant, fairly common in spring and uncommon in autumn. Scarce in summer, has occurred in winter.

All Avon records belong to the nominative subspecies *phaeopus* breeding in Iceland and N. Europe. *Hudsonicus*, which breeds in Canada, has occurred on the Welsh side of the Estuary,

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was eighth in importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -88%.

Year	OPS	Sevenside	CI-Y	Total
1997 – 2006 Av.	33	31	78	142
2007 – 2014 Av.	21	37	73	131
2015	8	38	71	117
2016	48	54	103	205

Spring (April and May) average counts

Better than average counts were noted at all sites and the status table total above was the best since 2000 although similar to that in 2011. There was one winter record: one in the Sand Bay area on Jan. 8th, 13th and 14th (P A Bowyer). The first in spring was heard in flight over Saltford on the evening of April 8th, and the first double figure count was 80, also seen in flight, moving up the Estuary past OPS on the evening of the 12th, an early date for a flock of this size. As with the Bar-tailed Godwit sightings reported below it is of interest to note that many of the 'best' counts this year were made just before dusk. The last double figure count was 14 at CI-Y on May 22nd, and all later counts were of six or less. The last of all was noted at Chittening Warth (Sevenside) on Oct. 25th. The table below summarises the records for the main sites. Other sightings included 14 on the rocks at Walton Bay on April 23rd, and single birds at BG on May 2nd and on the golf course at Walton-in-Gordano on 15th.

	Jan	:	April		May		Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
	8-15		8-20	21-30	1-10	11-30					
OPS/Littleton Warth			80	4	16	1		1	1		
Sevenside			36	23	71	8	1	1	3	1	1
PWD			1	6	8	8		3	3		
CI-Y			16	120	85	37	6	5	5	3	1
Sand Bay	1		12	50	10	5		1	2	2	
Axe Est/Weston STW			2	9	19	19		2	1		
Saltford			2			2		1			
CVL				6	2			1	1		

Fortnightly or monthly maxima at the main sites

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

[Red 3]

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Uncommon in summer and inland. Has bred in the past

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was tenth in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend is -11%.

Year	OPS	Sevenside	CI-Y	Axe Estuary	Total
1996/97 – 2005/06 Av.	336	191	164	74	765
2006/07 – 2013/14 Av.	299	173	209	29	710
2014/15	267	211	270	43	791
2015/16	236	237	233	26	732

August to February average counts

Counts appear to be fairly stable as shown in the status table above although as with several other species those in the west have dropped a bit. A problem has arisen at the Yeo River part of the CI-Y site. Before the extensive sea defence earth work along the river was undertaken, mainly during the first half of 2015, there used to be a regular roost of between 100 and 200 on the western bank of the river about half a kilometre from its mouth. Although the work has been completed and the site now 'looks' suitable, a regular roost has not re-established so far, and flocks of very variable size seem to be roosting at different sites around the whole CI-Y area on different days, and so the counts have suffered, especially in the latter part of the year. It is to be hoped, once this 'new' site becomes more settled and the invertebrate populations in the soil recover, that the roost will reform – to human eyes this seems likely but watch this space.....

The table below summarises the main monthly maxima. In the first winter period the last three figure counts were for the end of the first week of April, and the first in the second winter period were in the first week of July. For the OPS/Littleton site, two decades ago observers used to distinguish between high tide roost counts and low tide feeding counts, particularly in late evening. As this is no longer the case, figures for this site 20 years ago are not directly comparable with those of today, the physical structure of the site has also changed, the power station itself is now being decommissioned, a process that will take centuries. Records were also received from the R. Avon at Sea Mills in January, Nailsea Moor (a possible breeding site?) in early June, in flight over both Dundry and BG in late June, at BL in September, and at Sea Mills again in November.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	415	100	360	45	1	11	300	400	300	450	425	52
Littleton Warth /Thornbury Pill	250	305	67	5				28	22	80	140	430
Sevenside	250	300	110	110	5	19	70	100	150	200	225	250
PWD	37	41	48	43	6	35	70	78	73	4	63	1
CI-Y	230	192	160	105	12	52	170	190	150	190	85*	150*
Sand Bay	100	98	70	73	3	3	31	70	65	93	14	62
Axe Estuary/ WestonSTW	40	24	6	1				5	35	36	48	30
CVL			2	1	1	1	1	1				1

Monthly maxima at the main sites, * see text

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

[Red 2]

Uncommon passage migrant and fairly common winter visitor, generally more numerous in autumn.

Two races: Most records refer to the race *L. l. islandica* breeding in Iceland and N. Scotland, a few of the race *L. l. limosa* breeding in continental western Europe have occurred in June and July.

The table below gives the monthly maxima at all sites, two features stand out. The first is the almost total lack of records before March (the first double figure count of the year was on 21st) -- surprising as about 300 were present in December 2015. This has occurred before, in 2013 for example, and it has been suggested that the big flocks are forced out of the area by very cold weather.

Black-tailed Godwit cont. The second striking feature is the remarkable counts on Severnside, mainly the Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands area, in the autumn/second winter period. The count of 556 (P D Bowerman) at Northwick on Dec. 5th is a new record for the Avon area. The first three figure count here was 100 on Sept. 9th and, unlike last year, three figure counts were reported almost daily from then until the year's end. The flocks mainly fed on the foreshore between Northwick Warth and Aust, and roosted on the Pilning Wetlands. A photograph appears on the front cover of this Report.

The remaining sightings were mainly either average or below with, unlike last year, with only poor counts from CVL, and there were weak showings during the migration periods. The best reports were from OPS in October with 140 on 14th and 130 on 19th probably displaced from Northwick/Pilning area.

	Jan	:	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS/Littleton Warth					2		8	1	15	140	2	1
Severnside	1		15	25	7	7	58	57	320	425	535	556
PWD	1				2		13	1				
CI-Y			5	2			3	17	25	6		
Sand Bay				1					3			
Axe Est./Weston STW	8			4				1		1	1	
CVL							9	2	1	7		
BL							16	14	3	2		1

Monthly maxima at all sites

The totals of the monthly maxima over the past two decades for the two godwit species are given below.

	97/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Bk-t Godwit	562	224	431	279	179	263	972	963	1136	1432	2314
Bar-t Godwit	217	1344	74	115	181	2521	781	172	150	153	1078

Godwit monthly maxima totals at all sites for the past two decades

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*

[Amber 6, 7]

Passage migrant in varying numbers; usually uncommon but can occur in large numbers on spring passage.

Scarce inland and in winter.

Generally counts of this species are fairly random and quite low, but in some years large numbers are reported moving through the Estuary on spring passage, a north-easterly wind being critical. In 2016 except for one evening passage sightings were at the normal low level. On the evening of April 19th one observer was at Severn Beach until dusk. At first only about 45 were present with some Grey Plover and Whimbrel all of which moved off NE at about 19.30. An hour later a large group of Bar-tails -- possibly as many as 750 -- appeared, circled about and settled down noisily on the Estuary mud to roost (M Hobbs). At dawn the next morning only 30 were still present. The next highest count at this site was 130 two days later. The table below summarises the coastal counts, none was reported between May 24th and Aug. 3rd. Finally one was present at BL from Nov. 11th to 17th.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		May		:	Aug	Sep	Oct	:	Dec
				1-15	16-31	1-10	11-30						
OPS/Littleton W.		2	2		14	6				5			
Severnside				20	750*	7	22		10	8	1		1
PWD						1	4		1	13	1		
CI-Y	1	1		1	160	12	17		4	21	1		
Sand Bay					14					22			

Monthly maxima at the coastal sites, * see text

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*

[Amber 3, 7]

Fairly common winter visitor/passage migrant, scarce in summer and inland.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was tenth in National Importance; in 2015/16. English ten-year trend is -33%.

Year	OPS	Severnside	CI-Y	Total
1996/97 – 2005/06 Av.	48	121	20	189
2006/07 – 2013/14 Av.	41	127	38	206
2014/15	40	96	35	171
2015/16	25	166	37	228

August to February average counts

Excellent counts at Severn Beach early in the year boosted the most recent status total shown above, otherwise counts were normal. Mainly present up to May 17th (one at Sand Point), and from July 19th (six at CI-Y), the only summering report was of one also at CI-Y on June 6th. The count of 31 on Sept. 12th at CVL was a record for the site and involved groups of 15, four and 12 passing through south-west in the late morning. During a thunder storm the following day 15 were seen, also moving through in the same direction.

The table summarises the main counts. Records were received from two other sites: BG and BL, in both cases they involved single birds in August.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	7	1	10	45			10	45	63	60	15	45
Littleton Warth	2	1									5	27
Severnside	280	150	140	43	11		17	90	100	100	110	165
PWD	10		34	30	6			28	75	60	60	21
CI-Y	47	35	52	19	4	1	6	12	18	50	35	47
Sand Bay					1		3					
CVL					1		1	1	31			

Monthly maxima at the main sites,

KNOT *Calidris canutus*

[Amber 6, 7]

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant but can occur in larger numbers at times. Scarce inland.

Two races: *islandica* (Nearctic) and *Canutus* (Siberian) occur in N. W. Europe. Research suggests that almost all UK individuals belong to the race *islandica*, hence it is assumed that this also holds for Avon populations.

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
578	595	293	462	2133	1073	876	823	653	684	1192

Totals of the monthly maxima at all sites

Apart from one important exception the records for this species were on the low side with no count over 65. As usual there was very little sign of any spring passage and the autumn passage was not much better. With several other species, Grey Plover for example, the exception was for the Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands area where good sized flocks were present almost continuously from mid September (107 on 13th was the first three-figure count) to the year's end although the highest count between Oct. 3rd and Nov. 1st was only 90. Two-thirds of the 2016 totals figure (1192) is associated with these sightings. Inland on Sept. 9th a flock of 25 was in flight at CVL, briefly touching down in front of Stratford hide; this is the second largest flock ever recorded at the lake; the largest was 35 seen on Aug. 27th, 1977.

The main table given on the next page summarises the counts, the only exception was a juvenile seen at BL on Aug. 28th.

Knot cont.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	:	Jul	Aug	Sep		Oct	Nov	Dec
									1-15	16-30			
OPS/Littleton Warth	1		2		3				2	2	40	5	
Northwick Warth	1		3	2	9			12	107	170	120	175	300
PWD							14	2	5		1		
CI-Y	45	20	12		12		5		13	1	22	65	35
Sand/Weston Bays	1	13		1					8				37
CVL									25	1			

Monthly or fortnightly maxima at the main sites

RUFF *Calidris pugnax*

[Red 3, 4]

Uncommon autumn passage migrant, scarce in winter and on spring passage.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was 22nd in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -36%.

This was another species with a fairly unspectacular showing in 2016 (see summary table on page **XX**), even the Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands site reported only modest totals, the best here being six on Sept. 7th. The spring passage was from March 13th (three at CI-Y) to June 9th (a female at CI-Y), and the autumn passage was from July 23rd (one at CVL) to Nov. 23rd (one at CI-Y). It is perhaps worth noting that the records came from just six sites as summarised in the table below, the only non-tabulated record being a male seen at Sand Point on May 8th.

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep		Oct		Nov
							1-15	16-30	1-15	16-31	
Severnside	1		5			2	6	3	4	4	1
PWD						1	1	1			
CI-Y	4	2	1	1		2					1
CVL					1	1	1		1	1	
BL								1	3	2	

Fortnightly or monthly maxima at the main sites

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*

[Amber 1]

Passage migrant, scarce in spring and uncommon in autumn. Very rare in winter.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was **third** in importance.

In 2016 the great majority of the records came from the more north-easterly part of the Estuary coast, including especially the Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands area – see Grey Plover and Knot amongst others, and there was only one inland record, a juvenile at BL on Sept. 9th. Three were recorded in spring: two at CI-Y on May 13th, and one at Northwick from 14th to 16th. The autumn passage started on Aug.19th with one at OPS and 13 at Northwick the following day, and lasted until Oct.18th with again one at OPS. The best count was 24 on Aug. 24th, a WeBS count day, although the counts of 11 at the Royal Portbury Dock (PWD) on 28th and ten on 31st were also notable. The table below summarises the weekly data and illustrates clearly the poor showing at the south-western sites.

	May	:	Aug	Sep				Oct		
	13-16		19-25	26-1	2-8	9-15	16-22	23-30	1-8	18
OPS/Littleton Warth			2	1		2	2	1	4	1
Northwick Warth	1		24	3	8	9	5	4	5	
PWD			6	11	4	4	2	1		
CI-Y	2		5							
Sand Bay						2				
Weston STW				1	1					

Weekly maxima at the coastal sites

TEMMINCK'S STINT *Calidris temminckii* (10, 1)*Rare vagrant.*

Description required.

One record: one was present in the Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands area from May 8th to 10th, a photograph of the bird feeding on a muddy pool appears opposite page 68 (P D Bowerman *et al.*). At one point it was seen with a group of Little Ringed Plovers, the observer was struck by how much smaller it looked compared with the plovers.

This is the 22nd Avon record but only the fifth in spring, the previous spring records were at CVL in 1987, Severn Beach in 2004, and Sea Mills and CVL in 2009. The most recent autumn record was at BL in October 2015.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

[Amber 6]

Uncommon passage migrant, more common in spring than in autumn. Very scarce in winter and inland.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was 21st in National Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend 3%.

In the Avon area this species used to be treated as a passage migrant, but it is now being recorded more frequently in the winter periods, and so it has been removed from the migrant tables given on page **YYY**. The majority of these winter records came from the more south-western parts of the Estuary. In 2016 the spring passage lasted throughout May; although seen at six sites, with one inland, counts were generally average or below. The autumn passage started on July 20th with one at OPS and continued into October. It was not clear if the flock of 35 (the highest count of the year) seen on 11th on Weston beach involved migrants, winter visitors or a mixture of both. The table below summarises the data from all sites.

	Jan	Feb	:	May		:	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
				1-15	16-30							
OPS				5	13		1	1	8			
Northwick Warth				16	4		1	3	15			
PWD				2	1		2			1		
CI-Y		1		3				1				
Sand Bay		1		2	10				2			
Axe E./Weston STW	13									35	4	5
CVL				1	2							
BL								1			1	

Fortnightly or monthly maxima at all sites

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

[Amber 3, 4, 6]

Common winter visitor and passage migrant, uncommon in summer. Small numbers occur inland on passage.

Three races: *C. a. alpina* which breeds from N. Scandinavia eastwards occurring mainly in winter, *C. a. schinzii* which breeds in N. W. Europe and Iceland occurring mainly on passage, and *C. a. arctica* which breeds in N. E. Greenland and is very scarce having only been recorded between mid-May and early June.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was seventh in International Importance in 2015/16. The English ten-year trend is -7%.

The main status table is given below.

Year	OPS		Sevenside		CI-Y		Totals	
1996/97 – 2005/06 Av.	799	82	2633	437	1255	123	4686	646
2006/07 – 2013/14 Av.	619	64	1889	226	2077	308	4585	598
2014/15	732	57	1440	245	2750	538	4922	821
2015/16	1492	245	1680	900	3170	95	6342	1230

Winter (October to February) and the following autumn passage (August and September) average counts

Dunlin cont. Except for one point the status table on the previous page shows a good series of counts for the 2015/16 period. But as noted with several other species, the autumn CI-Y figure was noticeably poor with the compensation of the high Severnside figure. This is also shown by the main table below. The best count in the first winter period was 4500 at CI-Y on Jan. 28th, and the best in the second period was 3500 at Northwick Warth (Severnside) on Dec.1st. These are good counts but did not break any records. In the first winter period most had left by early March, 1800 in Sand Bay on Feb. 28th was the last four figure count, and the second winter flocks began to build up in mid September with 1000 at Northwick on 20th being the first large count. As usual the passage numbers were quite a bit lower, 750 for Northwick around May 13th being a notable exception. The monthly maxima table below summarises the main counts, otherwise one was at Litton Resers. on Aug. 23rd.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug		Sep		Oct	Nov	Dec
								1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30			
OPS	2000	350	25	70	75		20	60	150	340	150	400	1200	1500
Littleton Warth	850	1200	420								65	600	800	1800
Severnside	2000	800	450	102	750	3	140	300	180	350	1500	2300	3500	3500
Sea Mills	17	15	2											10
PWD/Avonmouth	1000	380	180	8	55	6	85	200	220	250	125	400	400	500
CI-Y	4500	2800	850	85	270	16	35	110	95	80	30	1800	1700	2400
Sand Bay	600	2000		120	40			70	28	(200)	(100)		150	1000
Axe Est/WesSTW	1000	830	14	9					35		41	10	660	2100
BG			1	5	1									
CVL			2	5	4		2	1			1		3	
BL			1	5	1			7	1	7	4	5	21	1

Monthly maxima at the main sites, figures in brackets are estimates

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima*

[Amber 3, 4, 5]

Scarce extended winter visitor, very rare inland.

Descriptions required for inland records.

Good numbers were reported from the Portishead site up to early May and in November, otherwise there was a small scatter of sightings at the other regular sites. Of note were the reports from the Weston-s-Mare site after two blank years. Details of all records are given below.

Severn Beach – one on Jan.17th and 18th presumably a wanderer from the next site;

Battery Point, Portishead – up to nine (on 29th and 30th) in January, eight in February, ten (on 25th) in March, nine in April and five in May with the last on 8th, then three on Nov. 18th and four from 20th to 26th with six on Dec. 15th – the only report this month;

Sand Point – two on Jan. 5th;

Anchor Head, Weston-s-Mare – one on both Nov.15th and Dec.17th.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

Passage migrant, very scarce in spring and uncommon in autumn. Rare in winter.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was sixth in importance in 2015/16.

This species had its best showing for the last decade, see table below, but counts were still a long way below those recorded in the 1990s. In spring it was reported in the Northwick Warth/Pilnings Wetlands area with one between May 10th and 14th and four on the following day. The autumn passage was noted at five sites from July 19th (one at Northwick) to Oct. 22nd (two at the same site) but there were no records between Aug. 2nd and 21st, inclusive. Where specified those seen in July were adults and those seen from late August onwards were juveniles. The maximum count was five seen at Northwick on Sept. 29th and 30th. There was one winter record: a juvenile seen daily at BL from Dec.19th to the year's end. The table below summarises all data.

	May	:	Jul	Aug	Sep		Oct		:	Dec
					1-15	16-30	1-15	16-22		
OPS				1	3	1				
Northwick Warth	4		4	1	3	5	3	2		
PWD				1	2	3				
CI-Y				1		1				
BL						2	2	1		1

Fortnightly or monthly maxima at all sites

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos* (35, 2)

Rare vagrant.

Description required.

There were two autumn records of juveniles, one on the coast and one inland. The first was at the Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands area on Sept.11th and the early part of the 12th seen feeding on the muddy pools but was typically elusive (B Lancaster *et al.*). The second was seen at BL on Oct. 6th, first in flight then feeding on the shore with several other waders (A H Davis, R Mielcarek *et al.*), it was photographed on 7th and remained at the lake until 16th.

These two are the 55th and 56th recorded in the Avon area since the first in September 1935.

Uncommon or Scarce *Calidrid* waders in the Avon area

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Ruff	29	35	3	12	29	43	25	57	33	73	44
Curlew Sandpiper	40	19	20	9	95	64	33	56	33	22	74
Sanderling	56	72	53	61	105	129	143	72	132	145	144
Purple Sandpiper	43	64	75	64	75	61	80	70	39	26	56
Little Stint	31	17	14	15	13	18	13	27	21	21	32
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	0	2	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	2

Totals of the maximum monthly counts at all sites for the past two decades

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos*

[Amber 3]

Uncommon passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was fourth in importance in 2015/16. English 10-year trend -8%.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Spring	53	38	93	65	88	73	94	74	75	96	176
Autumn	187	141	184	186	197	205	237	162	194	170	214

Totals of the monthly maxima at all sites for spring (April and May) and autumn (July to October) for the past two decades

This species had a very good year. The spring counts were the best for at least three decades, the autumn counts were not so spectacular but still above the average for the last twenty years. As has become the norm recently, wintering birds were reported from six sites including all three main reservoirs although the best counts still came from the traditional Sea Mills area. The spring passage began around the end of the first week of April (with six at BG) and was largely over by May 15th (one at CVL); there were some remarkable counts, the best being 31 at BG on April 29th. The autumn passage began on July 25th with two at BG and four at BL, counts were not as high as in spring.

The main table below summarises the fortnightly or monthly maxima at the well-watched sites. Records, mainly of single birds, were also received from the following 15 places, for several of these the sightings were described as unusual: Backwell Lake, Bath (St John's Road), Bedminster (R. Avon), Chipping Sodbury Common, Congresbury Moor, Freshford, Keynsham (R. Avon with three in July), Newton Park, Radstock (Wellow Brook), Sand Bay, Severn Beach, Stoke Park (Duchess Pond, with two in April), Tortworth Lake, Walton Bay (two), and Weston-s-Mare airfield.

Common Sandpiper cont.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		May		Jun	Jul		Aug		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
				1-15	16-30	1-15	16-31		1-15	16-31	1-15	16-31				
OPS/Littleton				2	1	1		3	2	2	3	5	1			
Northwick area				1	3	2		1	7	4	8	12	2	1		
Sea Mills area	4	3	4	3	2	4			5	2		6	7	5	7	2
PWD				3	5	4	2	1	3	4	1	3	5			
CI-Y				1	3	3			4	8	9	5	4			1
AxeE./W.STW	2	1	1	1	5	4			1	8	1	2	5	2	2	1
Saltford					7	1				1	2	2				
BG	2	2	2	6	31	15		2	4	14	6	16	14	3	3	2
CVL	1	1	2	3	26	20		2	7	11	3	5	7	4	2	3
BL	1	1	1	3	15	7		4	6	8	10	15	2	2	1	1
Litton Res.					4	1					1					

Monthly or fortnightly maxima at the main sites

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

[Amber 5]

Uncommon autumn passage migrant, scarce in winter and spring.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was fourth in National Importance in 2015/16. English 10-year trend -12%.

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
74	51	62	94	110	121	90	141	124	117	95

Totals of the monthly maxima at all sites for the past two decades

Unlike the previous species this one has been declining in the Avon area for the past four years as shown by the status table above. Compared with last year the main difference in 2016 was the much lower counts at CVL partly due to the high water levels; see page 80. The majority of the records came from eight sites including the OPS and Yatton/Sandford (Strawberry Line) areas, and the best numbers were reported in August during WeBS counts – nine at Pilning (the best coastal count since August 1984 – 14 at CI-Y, although ASW was recording double figure counts up to 2003), and seven at CVL.

Present until April 21st (one at CVL) and from June 16th (one at Northwick Warth), the maxima are tabulated below. Single birds were also noted at Tockington, Sea Mills and Weston-s-Mare airfield in March, and at PWD in July.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	:	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS/Littleton Warth			1				1	1				
Northwick Warth area			1	1		1	5	9	3			
CI-Y							1	1	1		1	
Bleadon/Weston STW	2	1		1				1	1		1	
Saltford	1	1		1				2	1	1	1	
Yatton/Sandford area			1					1	3			2
CVL	2	2	2	3			2	7	6	3	4	5
BL								5	2		1	2

Monthly maxima at the main sites

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*

[Amber 5]

Scarce autumn passage migrant and winter visitor, very scarce in spring.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was 19th in importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -65%.

There was a slight improvement in 2016 mainly as a result of more sightings in the Northwick Warth area. Except for early September at this site all sightings were of single birds and where specified all autumn reports refer to juveniles. Only four sites were involved (five in 2015), they and the dates were as follows:

Northwick Warth – July 3rd, Aug. 31st, Sept. 1st (two), 5th (two), 12th, 14th and 30th, Oct. 5th, 11th and 17th, and Nov.15th;

CI-Y – Jan.11th, 13th and 28th, and Sept.15th;

CVL – May 15th and Oct. 7th (a fly-by sighting);

BL – Oct. 4th.

The table below shows the varying occurrences of this species over the past two decades.

	1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
First half	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2
Sec. half	10	4	11	6	2	3	4	3	24	6	3	3	2	12	36	9	3	9	6	9

Totals of the maximum counts for all sites over the past two decades, January to June and July to December

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

[Amber 6]

Uncommon passage migrant, more numerous in autumn. Scarce in winter.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
CI-Y	14	3	4	4	6	6	5	4	6	3	4
CVL	5	2	1	7	10	11	2	13	9	11	4

Maximum single count at CI-Y and CVL for the past two decades

The poor run of records for this species over the past decade shows no sign of reversing, no count was over four although it was reported from two more sites in 2016 compared with the previous year. Since 1989/90 one, or sometimes two, have wintered in the Sea Mills area, only 1996/97 was missed, but none returned for the 2016/17 winter. To partially compensate for this one was noted at OPS on Dec. 22nd but not later. The spring passage ran from April 6th (one at OPS) to May 15th (one at BG, the only non-tabulated record), and the autumn passage ran from June 30th (again one at OPS) to Oct. 17th with one at CI-Y although there were no reports from any other site after Sept.15th. The data is tabulated below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug		Sep		Oct	:	Dec
								1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30			
OPS				1	3	1	1	2	2	1				1
Northwick Warth			1		1		1	2	4	4				
Sea Mills	1	1	1	1										
PWD					4			1	1					
CI-Y				1	2			4	3	1	1			
Sand Bay				2	1									
AxeE./Weston STW				1	1		1	3	1					
CVL				1				2		4				
BL								2	1					

Fortnightly or monthly maxima at the main sites

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

[Amber 5]

Passage migrant, scarce in autumn and rare in spring; most frequent at CVL.

The records were again better than average for the past decade but only noted at three sites with the Axe Estuary area replacing OPS and BL for 2016. Again the Northwick/Pilning complex and CVL dominated, the details are as follows.

Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands – one on May 28th and Sept. 5th, then two from 14th to 17th with one remaining until 22nd (at least five were noted in 2015);

Axe Estuary/Weston STW – single birds on May 5th and July 27th (none in 2015);

CVL – a single bird was noted on Aug. 1st, 3rd to 5th and 7th to 9th. It was elusive so it is possible it was missed on 2nd and 6th, at least four were noted in 2015.

1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
7	7	8	8	4	1	7	8	8	1	2	2	9	4	7	4	4	5	12	7

Total number of individuals per year for the past two decades

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

[Amber 3, 4, 7]

Fairly common passage migrant/winter visitor, uncommon in summer and very scarce breeder. Scarce inland.

Two races: *totanus* breeding in UK and W. Europe and *robusta* breeding in Iceland. Both occur almost certainly but there is no proof, the main wintering flocks do not leave until mid April suggesting that many *robusta* occur.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was eighth in International Importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -22%.

Year	OPS	Sea Mills	CI-Y	Axe Estuary	Total
1996/97 – 2005/06 Av.	41	78	109	195	423
2006/07 – 2013/14 Av.	44	81	245	258	628
2014/15	40	50	344	262	696
2015/16	31	48	338	362	779

August to February average counts

This species continues to buck the general downward trend with another very strong showing in 2016 at most sites, the Estuary feeding conditions are likely to be favourable currently. The 2015/16 status total above is a record which will almost certainly be broken again in 2016/17. Most sites produced very good counts although those at Sea Mills and the Axe Estuary were slightly below their best. For CI-Y on Oct.31st there was an exceptional count of 660 (180 at Kenn mouth plus 480 along the Yeo banks) not included in the main table, it is likely that this included flocks displaced from other sites in the Estuary. In the first winter period most had left by mid-April, the last three figure count was on 13th at CI-Y, and the main autumn flocks began to arrive back in early July, the first in three figures was on 3rd also at CI-Y. The table below summarises the monthly maxima at most sites, otherwise one was seen in the Gordano Valley on March 8th, a possible breeding site.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	25	12	28	32			2	25	64	215	34	23
Littleton Warth	49	50	32	27				34	38	89	70	80
Sevenside	120	245	110	150	24	12	80	160	160	250	160	140
Sea Mills (Avon)	61	32	60	65		2	16	24	80	40	103	60
Avonmouth/PWD	77	45	55	29	40	35	115	290	320	50		
CI-Y	425	360	305	130	30	34	170	190	160	400*	340	375
Sand Bay	100	80	2	5				3			25	100
Axe E./W.STW	320	265	100	8			124	290	115	495	360	370
BG					2	1	2	1				
CVL			2			2	4	2	1			
BL						2	4	3		1		1

Monthly maxima at all sites, * see text

Breeding Some activity was reported from four coastal sites but at three of these, Pilning Wetlands, PWD and Tutshill's Ear (R. Yeo), no more than presence of a pair or display (at PWD) was recorded. At the fourth site, Dowlais Farm (CI-Y), two pairs were present in April and May, and by early June, just before the site dried out completely, a pair that had been present for at least a month was noted with two small chicks.

JACK SNIFE *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Uncommon or scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, probably overlooked.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was tenth in importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -4%.

As is well-known this species is notoriously difficult to survey accurately, nevertheless it seems that it is faring normally with possibly a slight increase this year; the recorded bird-month count in 2015 was 86 and in 2016 it was 101. Noted at 19 sites (18 in 2015), the last in spring was on April 12th at CI-Y and the first in autumn was on Sept. 26th at Northwick Warth.

The table below gives the monthly maxima at the main sites. Records were also received from a few others as follows: in January at Batheaston NR (two) and Yate (three), in February at Sand Bay (three), in November at BG, and in December at Congresbury Moor, between Keynsham and Compton Dando (two), and Marshfield.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	:	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	1	4	4				1		
Littleton Warth	1		1						3
Northwick Warth	1	3	1	1		1	8	7	6
PWD			2					1	
CI-Y	2	2	1	1			1	2	3
Axe Est./Weston STW	2	4					2	1	2
Lawrence Weston Res		4	1						
Saltford		1	2						
Yatton		1							1
Backwell Lake	1	1							
CVL							4	4	
BL			1						1

Maxima at the main sites

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

[Red 4]

Uncommon winter visitor, almost certainly overlooked. Has bred in the past.

Counts were similar to those last year, the bird/month count in 2016 was 35 (39 in 2015). Noted up to April 3rd and from Oct. 3rd, no count was over five although a verbal report suggested that more were present in the Walton Common/Moor area late in the year. The months and sites of the records were as follows, unless stated otherwise all records were of single birds.

January: Batheaston NR, Chittening Warth and Weston Moor;

February: Elm Farm (Burnett), Hellenge Hill (Bleaden) – five, and Lower Woods (Wickwar) - three;

March: Claverton (near Bath), Saltford two, and Walton Common also two;

April: Batheaston NR;

October: Lawrence Weston reserve, Littleton Pits reserve and Walton Common;

November: Aust STW, Duchess Pond (Stoke Park, Bristol), Folly Farm, OPS, Orchard Pools (Severnside), and Saltford;

December: Chelwood, Chittening Warth, CVL, Lower Woods and Saltford two.

SNIFE *Gallinago gallinago*

[Amber 4]

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Has bred in the past.

Two races: *G. g. gallinago* breeding in the palearctic and *G. g. fearoensis* breeding in the N. Isles and Iceland. Most occurring in Avon belong to the first race but a very small but unknown number of the second race probably also occur.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was fourth in importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend -24%.

Year	OPS	Severnside	CI-Y	Total
1996/97 – 2005/06 Av.	49	17	18	84
2006/07 – 2013/14 Av.	18	23	23	64
2014/15	32	30	46	108
2015/16	85	20	20	125

November to February average counts

Almost all counts were in single or double figures with the great majority below 50, this was at least partly due to the generally drier winter conditions compared with the previous two years. The only exception was a high count of 245 at OPS on Feb.14th, this was probably part of an early migratory movement as only 22 were present three days later. Large counts are not unknown in the Avon area, for example 350 were noted in the Gordano Valley in late January 2013. This single count bolstered the OPS figure, and so also the total figure, in the status table above.

Present up to May 10th (one at BL) and from June 30th (one at Northwick Warth). The table below summarises the main sightings. Up to three were also noted at Burrington, Chew Magna, Chew Stoke, Compton Dando, Harry Stoke, Hoar Gout, Ingst, Kenn, Keynsham, Marshfield, Redhill and Yatton. The six present in the Gordano Valley on May 3rd were described as 'possibly breeding', but no 'drumming' was heard and no further information was received; pairs have bred at this site in the past but not in the last decade.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	:	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	58	245	91						1	12	1	57
Littleton Warth	1	5							1	2	11	25
Northwick Warth	31	23	24	21			3	6	18	22	25	58
Sea Mills (R. Avon)	9	10									3	9
PWD/Gordano Valley	43	42	36	5	6			2	6	28	60	65
CI-Y	18	15	12	2					5	15	8	42
Sand Bay	15	20										
Axe Est/W.STW	41	53		1					9			
Sodbury Com./Yate	10								7	1	3	3
Saltford	11	18	14						1	1	3	6
Batheaston	11	6		1						5	13	
Stoke Park, Bristol		1								1	2	1
Lawrence Weston		50	40									
Nailsea/Kenn Moors	10								11	1	3	3
Congresbury Moor	14	25								3		2
BG	5	2	1	2					1	2	20	19
CVL	7	8	33	8				4	4	5	15	17
BL	35	17	20	34	4			4	6	8	12	2

Monthly maxima at the main sites

Autumn Wader Migration on the Coast

Between the 2015 and 2016 autumns a remarkable change occurred between our two main coastal sites, see the first table below. The total for Severnside, mainly the Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands complex, rose by a remarkable two and a half times over this period. One of the reasons for this is the work done on the Pilning Wetlands making sure that the site is relatively undisturbed and, most importantly, that the water level is kept optimal for the waders throughout the year. This site is used mainly as a roost with most feeding on the adjacent Northwick foreshore. The corresponding CI-Y total dropped by a half, and one reason for this was that the Dowlais Farm site, which at the best of times is only a pale imitation of the Pilning site, was bone dry by late June and remained so throughout the autumn. The sea defence work around the mouth of the Yeo although now completed is still having a major detrimental effect on the bird life of the area, the site will take time to recover.

There are probably other forces driving this change. The OPS/Littleton Warth site also reported some good autumn counts whilst those in the Sand and Weston Bay areas were either normal or below. It has also been suggested (via WeBS site communications) that a similar situation is occurring on the Welsh side of the Estuary: counts in the outer Estuary sites are a bit down whilst those in the upper Estuary have shown some improvement. One possible explanation for this might be the state of the mud on the upper Estuary. We have experienced fewer storms recently, so the mud has not been churned up too much recently allowing the invertebrate populations to prosper and grow in size, and so provide better feeding conditions for the birds.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016	Av.
S-side	4216	3005	1858	1828	2471	1914	3583	5261	4310	11353	3980
CI-Y	1934	1823	2983	3102	5452	4231	4364	4182	3498	1532	3310
Ratio	2.2	1.6	0.62	0.59	0.45	0.45	0.82	1.3	1.2	7.4	1.2

Autumn migrant wader totals, first row - Severnside, second row - CI-Y, third row - ratio SS/CI-Y

As in the past nine years the table below gives the maximum count for each species in each ten-day period between July 1st and Oct. 28th. Only species that are mainly migratory or have a distinct migratory population are included. As usual the migratory *schinzii* Dunlins dominate although by October an unknown proportion of *alpina* will also have been present, in the 2016 autumn this species had a very strong showing on Severnside.

		Jul			Aug			Sep			Oct		
		1-10	11-20	21-30	31-9	10-19	20-29	30-8	9-18	19-28	29-8	9-18	19-28
Grey Plover	S-S								1	72	97	180	80
	CI-Y								2	3	16	22	28
Golden Plover	S-S					1			40	2	1	4	
	CI-Y											2	
Ringed Plover	S-S	2		4	21	20	190	130	40	90	80	2	16
	CI-Y			4	80	30	40	22	21	12	21	20	8
Little Ringed Plover	S-S	20	16	9	3	2	1						
	CI-Y					2	2						1
Whimbrel	S-S		1	1		1	1	3	1	1			
	CI-Y	5	1	4	5	2	2					1	
Black-tailed Godwit	S-S	7	14	58	17	1	57	100	290	320	300	150	425
	CI-Y	3		2		10	17	24	25		6		
Bar-tailed Godwit	S-S						10	8	7	1	4		
	CI-Y						1	8	21	11		1	

Autumn coastal cont.

Knot	S-S						12	16	107	170	100	60	50
	CI-Y			5				13	3			22	
Ruff	S-S				1	2	1	6	4	3	4	4	3
	CI-Y					2	1						
Curlew Sandpiper	S-S						14	8	9	5	5		
	CI-Y						5						
Sanderling	S-S			1		3	2	4	15				
	CI-Y				1								
Dunlin	S-S	14	34	140	300	140	140	350	500	1500	1400	2300	1000
	CI-Y	3		18	110	80	95	80	30	20	90	190	240
Little Stint	S-S		4	1			1	2	3	4	5	3	
	CI-Y						1		1				
Common Sandpiper	S-S	7	5	2	2	12	4	2	1	2	1		
	CI-Y	4	1	7	9	5	4	4	1				
Green Sandpiper	S-S	2	1	5	3	9	3	3	1				
	CI-Y				1			1					
Spotted Redshank	S-S							2	1		1	1	
	CI-Y								1				
Greenshank	S-S		1	1		4	2	4	2				
	CI-Y					3	4	2		1	1	1	
Wood Sandpiper	S-S							1	2	1			

Sevenside (S-S) and CI-Y - Maximum counts in ten-day autumn periods

Autumn Wader Migration at CVL

The Bristol Waterworks Company (via Rebekah Rice) has recently provided the AOG with water level data for CVL since 1980, and we have included some of this in the first table below. BWC records the lake's water level on the 1st of every month, and the figure given in the second line of the table is the average of the values given on Aug.1st, Sept.1st and Oct.1st measured in centimetres from a fixed datum line *downwards*. It can be seen that there is some correspondence between the water level and the number of individual waders seen, but the correlation is definitely not exact. For instance the water level was low during the remarkable 2011 autumn but it was nearly as low in 2010 with less than half the numbers seen.

In 2016 the water level was close to the average (120cm) while the bird count was well below average (503 for the last decade). Compared with 2015 most counts were down with Ringed Plover and Black-tailed Godwit notably so. Also no Bar-tailed Godwit, Curlew Sandpiper or Sanderling was seen.

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
122cm	23cm	63cm	153cm	171cm	218cm	-4cm	179cm	121cm	151cm	123cm
354	134	108	569	505	1119	295	912	458	616	311
19	17	17	25	25	31	17	23	19	22	21

CVL counts: Second row – Water level, see text above.

Third row – Totals of the ten-day maxima for all waders (excluding Lapwing) between July 1st and Oct. 28th.

Fourth row – Total number of species recorded each year over the same period

The table given on the next page presents the maximum count at CVL in each ten-day period between July 1st and Oct. 28th.

	Jul			Aug			Sep			Oct		
	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-9	10-19	20-29	30-8	9-18	19-28	29-8	9-18	19-28
Oystercatcher	1	1	4	2	1	5						
Grey Plover						1						
Golden Plover										1		
Ringed Plover				3		2	3	3				
Little Ringed Plover	1	1	1					1				
Lapwing	2	23	9	4	5	12	10	14	9	15	58	92
Whimbrel		1	1	1								
Curlew		1			1							
Black-tailed Godwit		9	1	1	2	2		1			7	
Turnstone						1		31		1		
Knot								25		1		
Ruff			1			1	1				1	
Dunlin			2	1		23			1			
Common Sandpiper	7	6	11	1	5	4	7	7	7	5	4	3
Green Sandpiper	2		2	3	7	6	6	4	3	3	3	2
Spotted Redshank										1		
Greenshank					2			4				
Wood Sandpiper				1								
Redshank	4	1	2		2	5			1			
Jack Snipe										1	3	4
Snipe					4	1		4	4	2	5	2

CVL - Maximum counts in each ten-day period during the autumn

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus* (Inland 40, 1)

Uncommon spring passage migrant and storm-driven visitor (mainly spring or autumn). Rare inland, mainly at CVL.

Descriptions required for records away from the Estuary/coast, including records upstream of the old Severn Bridge.

A really poor year (see table below) with a total of only 14 including one unusual mid-winter record, just a handful in spring and none in autumn.

Winter One reported from the sea wall at Channel View Farm, CI-Y on Jan. 30th was an unusual mid-winter record (H Taffs).

Spring passage The first were four (three light and one dark morph) to E at Severn Beach on the evening of April 20th followed by a light morph at Anchor Head on 24th. In May a dark morph moved up channel at Sand Point at 07.35 on 1st; three were at CI-Y on 3rd; a pale morph at Severn Beach on 9th; one at Pilning Wetlands on 13th and finally one at Severn Beach on the early morning of 21st was perhaps the dark morph seen heading down river at Sand Point later that day.

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua* (Inland 30, 3)

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant and storm-driven visitor at almost any time of year. Rare inland.

Descriptions required for records away from the Estuary/coast, including records upstream of the old Severn Bridge.

A rather poor year (see table on the next page) with about eight in the first winter period, a feeble spring passage of just three plus one storm-driven in June and another two or three in August.

Great Skua first winter period One moved up channel at Anchor Head on Jan. 7th, another was reported at Severn Beach on 31st and four were here on Feb. 8th.

Spring passage Two were at Severn Beach on April 29th and another was moving up channel at Sand Point next day.

Autumn passage In August one flew down channel at Aust Warth on 13th, noted at PWD and Severn Beach (probably the same individual) on 20th, and it or another was at Severn Beach again on 22nd.

Inland There were three inland records: two from OPS and one from the Saltford area. The first were noted in the gales on Feb. 8th, one at OPS at 16.30 (P J Hazelwood) and a second made several low passes over fields at Keynsham before leaving to ESE over Kelston Round Hill (W Duckworth). The other moved down river at OPS on June 12th (P J Hazelwood).

SKUA Sp *Stercorarius sp*

Just one record as follows; for records from the last decade see table below.

Inland A light morph moving up river past OPS on the evening of May 11th was very likely the Arctic seen shortly afterwards at Sharpness, Glos.

Skuas in the Avon area

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Pomarine Skua,	13	3	17	2	5	17+	16+	20	25	
Arctic Skua	51	37	47	17	40+	40+	57	18	50	13
Long-tailed Skua		1							2	
Great Skua	13	4	14	3	13	12	69	21	44	15
Skua sp.	7		5		9	3	22	23	19	1

Total numbers for the last ten years

LITTLE AUK *Alle alle* (18, 1)

Very scarce storm-driven late autumn and winter visitor, usually at Severnside. Very rare inland.
Description species.

A single record, at Weston-s-Mare Marine Lake, where one was watched at close range from about 11.40 to 12.10 on Jan. 4th before it flew off towards Sand Bay (P A Bowyer, P A Gregory), it was photographed.

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*

Scarce usually storm-driven visitor throughout the year; very rare inland.

Descriptions required for records away from the Estuary/coast, including records upstream of the old Severn Bridge.

Another rather poor year, see table below, with just five records, which could have involved even fewer individuals:

Severnside – one to NE at Severn Beach on Sept. 25th was possibly the individual seen at New Passage on morning of 30th. Another was at New Passage on Oct. 19th;

Royal Portbury Dock (PWD) – one on Oct. 2nd;

Sand Point – one to W. on May 20th.

Auks in the Avon area

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Puffin								2		
Black Guillemot									1	
Razorbill					1			4	1	
Little Auk	1		1	1						1
Guillemot	4	3	37	3	11	6	4	18	3	5
Auk sp.		1				6+				

Total numbers for the past ten years

LITTLE TERN *Sternula albifrons*

[Amber 4, 6]

Scarce passage migrant; generally the scarcest of the five 'common' terns.

An average year on the coast, with the usual peak in May. Another good series was reported from CVL with a notable group in August. The details are as follows including a ten-year summary in the table below.

Sevenside – one at New Passage on May 10th, two at Severn Beach on 11th, another here on 13th. One autumn record, also at Severn Beach, on Aug. 3rd;

Sand Point – two on May 13th;

CVL – one on May 2nd, three on 11th, and another on 13th and 14th and a final spring report on June 3rd. In August there were at least six on the morning of 11th with another three, thought to be different, in the evening. An adult and a juvenile were also present on 19th.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Coastal	2	14	3	1	6	3	4	6/7	6	7
Inland	2	1	4	3	3	0	1	3	11	16+

Total numbers for the last ten years

CASPIAN TERN *Hydroprogne caspia* (1, 2)

Very rare vagrant.

Descriptions required.

Two were found at Royal Portbury Dock (PWD) on the murky morning of May 11th (C J Stone), they remained until the early evening, dividing their time between the dock, the adjacent wharf and Portbury Wharf Nature Reserve where they were widely appreciated. One was wearing a Swedish ring but it was not possible to read the data printed on it. A photograph appears opposite page 85. This record was accepted by BBRC.

There is only one previous Avon record: from CVL in August 1988.

WHISKERED TERN *Chlidonias hybrida* (5, 1)

Very rare vagrant.

Descriptions required.

An adult was seen briefly on the early morning of May 10th moving upriver at OPS amongst a mixed flock of Arctic and Black Terns (P J Hazelwood) [BBRC].

There are five previous records for the Avon area, all from CVL and involving six birds: one in June 1959, two in May 1983, one in April 2006, and two separate records in April 2013.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

Uncommon passage migrant; most frequent in the autumn when occasional influxes occur. Most records are from CVL.

A much better spring with all records in May including some good numbers on the coast and a better showing at CVL than in most recent springs. An average autumn followed, at CVL, although there were just two days with double figure counts here, and at Severnside including another long stayer; see tables below. The details are as follows:

Spring passage The first were two at CVL on May 1st with another here on 5th and three at Sand Point on 6th. On 8th there was an exceptional flock of 18 high over at OPS with seven more here on 10th. CVL had produced two on 9th building up to ten next day and 12 on 11th then falling to four on 12th. Sand Point had one on 12th with three more on 14th and one on 16th. On 15th up to 15 were reported at Ladye Bay, Clevedon, and two were off Anchor Head followed by the final two of the spring at Severn Beach on 21st.

Autumn passage Nine appeared at CVL on Aug.17th. These had gone the next day but there were up to 22 on 19th. After another blank day on 20th there were up to four daily from 21st to 25th, then nine on 27th and at least 11 next day. Elsewhere in August there was a juvenile at Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands and a moulting adult at Severn Beach on 21st, with two here next day. Another juvenile at Pilning Wetlands on 31st was present to Sept. 4th with a further one on 12th. BL produced a juvenile on Sept. 5th. All other September reports were from CVL with one on 5th, three on 8th, one from 13th to 19th with two on 16th.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Av. of 3 highest counts Apr - Jun	2	5	3	2	14	2	3	2	3	9
Av. of 3 highest counts Jul - Oct	13	10	10	43	24	3	2	13	17	14
No of days recorded (total for year)	15	14	17	24	40	15	11	18	30	23

Average counts at CVL

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*

[Amber 3, 6]

Uncommon passage migrant – most are recorded on the coast.

This species is somewhat erratic in its appearances with us as the ten year table below shows, but if there is such a thing, this was a fairly average year.

Spring passage The first were early single individuals at OPS, Anchor Head and CVL all on March 28th. Six were at Sand Point on April 2rd and another inland at CVL from 11th to 12th. In May there was one at Sand Point on 5th and another at CVL on 11th.

Autumn passage All records came in September with three adults and a juvenile at BL on 11th, two at CVL next day, three at OPS on 14th and an unusual record of three flying around calling over the Floating Harbour by the SS Great Britain in Bristol on 19th (W Blake).

Scarce and rare terns in the Avon area

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Little Tern	4	15	7	3	9	3	5	9	17	21
Whiskered Tern							2			1
White-winged Black Tern								1		
Sandwich Tern	4	35	15	23	35+	15	59	12	15	23
Caspian Tern										2

Total numbers for the past ten years

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

[Amber 6]

Regular passage migrant, a few occur throughout the summer - generally uncommon, but large flocks have occurred in some years especially on the Estuary in spring or at CVL in autumn.

A poor April was followed by a good passage at CVL in May, but once again it was a very poor spring on the coast. There were more autumn records from the Estuary than in recent years with two notable flocks and an average autumn at CVL with one isolated 'big day' in August.

Coast Another dreadful spring showing in the Estuary with all records in May as follows: three at Severn Beach on 9th; four at Anchor Head on 11th, one at Sand Point on 14th and 20 at Ladye Bay, Clevedon on 15th. Return passage started with one at Weston-s-Mare Marine Lake on July 11th. The first August record was of a massive 85 at New Passage on 19th (P D Bowerman) with four here and one at OPS next day; then one at Severn Beach on 21st, one at OPS on 24th, three at New Passage on 26th (including a second-calendar-year) and one on 29th. September started with another large flock of c.60 (of 66 Commic Terns) at New Passage at first light on 5th (J P Martin) then one downriver at OPS on 8th, one at New Passage on 13th, one at Severn Beach on 25th and one at Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands, on 29th. Finally there were two at Severn Beach on Oct. 2nd.

Inland - CVL After the first seven on April 14th (a slightly later than average first date) one was present next day and another on 27th. In May one or two were almost daily from 1st to 8th with four on 2nd increasing to eight on 9th, 18 on 10th, at least 47 on 11th, 21 on 12th, ten on 13th then just two on 19th and one on 27th. Recorded on seven dates in June, four of them up to 5th (up to three) then 12 on 11th, one on 12th and two on 30th. In July recorded on just three dates (16 last year): six on 9th, one on 12th and 22nd. August produced one on 10th with further records on nine dates from 16th of one to three, apart from an exceptional 67 on 19th (R J Higgins *et al.*). September then produced only two on 13th to 14th, one on 19th, one (a second-calendar-year) on 21st and one on 29th. The table below summarises this data.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
No. of days recorded	3	14	7	3	10	5
Maximum count over the month	7	47	12	6	67	2

CVL summary with monthly days recorded and maximum counts

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Av. of 3 highest counts Apr - Jun	5	17	5	23	14	55	40	3	6	29
Av. of 3 highest counts Jul - Nov	6	38	38	80	20	20	29	38	38	25
No. days recorded (total for year)	53	61	44	61	47	35	47	42	63	42

Average counts at CVL over the past decade

Most other inland records were from BL, with one on April 25th, two on May 11th, two on June 30th, three on July 22nd, three on Aug. 21st, one on 25th, two on Sept 1st, one on 5th and one on 29th. BG produced more records than usual with four on May 11th, one on Aug.10th and a late first-winter from Oct. 7th to 10th.

ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii* (4, 2)

Rare passage migrant.

Descriptions required.

One record: two, an adult and a juvenile moulting to first-winter, were found on the mud amongst Black-headed Gulls at Northwick Warth at 07.05 on Aug. 28th (J P Martin), see photograph opposite page 85. They remained until 07.25 and were also seen by P D Bowerman before they flew off together. Two distant *Sterna* terns seen by M Collar off Severn Beach shortly afterwards were probably the same and they were reported again at Northwick Warth briefly at 08.55 by B Lancaster.

This record prompted a review of all Avon records of this species: some of the early records were thought possibly to be unsafe as the identification of this species was poorly understood at the time and a surprisingly high proportion of them were inland.

The following records remain accepted following the review:

1897 – One ‘obtained’ at Clevedon in April was subsequently examined by F L Blathwayt, a notable ornithologist of the day, it is listed in ‘*The Birds of Somerset*’ (Palmer and Balance, 1968). As usual with old records, full details are not available but it is included for completeness.

1962 -- One in breeding plumage found dead, Clutton on May 10th by A Wilcox was sent to City Museum, Bristol (BMAG) *per.* P F Bird (Curator of birds at the time). The specimen is still in BMAG (Ac No. 43/1962) and JPM examined the specimen in January 2017.

1990 -- One in breeding plumage seen for a few minutes off New Passage, May 1st (P D Bowerman).

1997 -- A first-winter at Severn Beach on Oct. 7th (P D Bowerman, R F Reader), was seen again on 8th (B Lancaster) and 9th. Previously only published for 8th.

2001 – An adult at Sand Point on May 20th (P A Gregory *et al.*).

The following records are no longer considered acceptable following the review:

1963 one, Weston Bay on June 29th;

1964 one at CVL, July 18th, flying west;

1967 adult, CVL on Sept. 5th;

1971 three, CVL on April 24th;

1973 one CVL, May 6th;

1982 one, a second-calendar-year, Blackstone Rocks, CI-Y, May 23rd.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

[Amber 3, 4]

Usually an uncommon passage migrant, but can occasionally occur in large flocks in the Estuary under favourable conditions in spring; otherwise generally occurs in smaller numbers than Common Tern. Often appears after westerly gales.

A generally poor year but with some isolated records of larger flocks on the coast in mid-May (when there were also several double-figure flocks of Commics, see below). The autumn passage was also rather thin. The table below summarises the records for the last decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Max count for year	45	43	13	25	150	25	130	35	10	100
Av. of three highest counts	33	42	9	16	135	20	115	24	7	68
No. days recorded during year	32+	26	25	19	40	22	31	18	40	24

Annual details for the Avon area

Spring passage The first was one at CVL on April 12th, then five up river past OPS on 23rd and two at Severn Beach on 29th completed a very poor month. In early May up to seven were at CVL on 2nd; one at Sand Point on 5th; one at CI-Y and 40 upriver off New Passage on 8th; and another at CI-Y on 9th. Murky conditions on 10th produced 100 at Severn Beach and there were one to five daily at CVL until 14th with another on 21st. Four were at BL on 11th then Sand Point produced 65 on 13th and 40 next day. Five at Anchor Head on 15th, two at Sand Point and two at PWD on 16th and five at Sand Point on 17th rounded off the month with one at CVL on June 1st.

Autumn passage All autumn records were of juveniles with one at CVL on Aug.15th, two on 19th and one from 21st to 24th, at least three photographed amongst a flock of c.60 Common Terns at New Passage early on Sept. 5th, and finally three at CVL on 8th.

COMMON/ARCTIC TERN *Sterna hirundo/paradisaea*

There were a number of reports of unidentified *Sterna* terns that were either Common or Arctic (Commic) as follows:

OPS – one on April 14th, 42 on May 10th, one on Aug. 24th and three late individuals on Oct. 24th;

Littleton Warth – 13 on April 20th;

Severnside – two at New Passage on May 6th with 20 at Severn Beach on 10th;

Sand Point – 20 on April 30th, 30 on May 12th, 60 on 14th and seven on 16th;

Anchor Head – two on April 24th and one on Sept. 4th;

CVL – one on May 7th, 30 on 11th (most probably Common), and one on Aug. 9th.

Tern Passage Three tables are given below summarising the tern passages. The first two detail the main passages in 2016, both on the coast and inland, and the third shows how the main spring coastal passages have varied over the past decade.

Spring Tern Passage

	April			May			Jun		
	1-10	11-20	21-30	1-10	11-20	21-31	1-10	11-20	21-30
Black Tern (coast)				28	20	2			
Black Tern (inland)				15	16				
Common Tern (coast)				3	21				
Common Tern (inland)		8	2	38	84	1	8	13	4
Arctic Tern (coast)			6	148	119				
Arctic Tern (inland)		1		16	12	1	1		
Common/Arctic Tern (coast)		1	35	64	97				

Spring – summated maxima of daily counts for each ten-day period at coastal and inland sites

Autumn Tern Passage

	Jul			Aug			Sep		
	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-9	10-19	20-29	30-8	9-18	19-28
Black Tern (coast)						4	4	1	
Black Tern (inland)					29	32	4	6	1
Common Tern (coast)		1			85	11	61	1	1
Common Tern (inland)	6	1	4		72	15	3	4	2
Arctic Tern (coast)							3		
Arctic Tern (inland)					3	4		3	

Autumn – summated maxima of daily counts in each ten-day period at coastal and inland sites

Spring Tern Passage on the Coast

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Common	291	561	3	2	593	103	61	20	4	28
Arctic	131	201	21	14	524	41	461	100	12	265
Common/Arctic	485	606	138	240	2410	352	629	351	14	177
Total	907	1368	162	256	3527	496	1151	471	30	470

Totals of the highest recorded counts from any one coastal site for each day in April and May

SABINE'S GULL *Xema sabini* (38, 1)

Very scarce autumn passage migrant, most occur during or after westerly gales but has occurred in calm weather. Very rare as a spring passage migrant.

Descriptions required.

One record: Severn Beach, an adult in summer plumage just after midday on Sept. 8th was chased by a Herring Gull and flew off down channel (P D Bowerman). This is the first record since 2012 and it is as long ago as 2007 since the last records (two at CVL) away from this site.

A summary of the sightings for the past decade is given on page 96.

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*

[Red 3]

Usually a storm-driven visitor; uncommon, but large flocks regularly occur in the Estuary. Also occurs in anticyclonic conditions in early spring as a presumed migrant. Scarce inland, usually only at CVL.

A good series was reported from the Estuary from late January to early March, but there was little in the way of spring passage this year and just two records in the second winter period. Recorded on 21 dates, the least since 2010, as the following list shows: 23 in 2008, 33 in 2009, 11 in 2010, 26 in 2011, 33 in 2012, 40 in 2013, and 38 in both 2014 and 2015.

January/February The first were seen on Jan.7th, when there were 16 at Severn Beach and four at Anchor Head, after which there was one at Walton Bay on 27th, 120 at Severn Beach on 29th and 40 here on 31st. A blustery February produced three days with double figure counts at Severn Beach; in the murk on 1st there were also 40 at Aust Warth and at least ten at OPS, as detailed in the table below.

	January				February					March						April	May		
	7	27	29	31	1	2	8	10	21	2	4	10	12	28	29	30	28	13	21
OPS					10		2												
Aust Warth					40	6		1											
Northwick W.																1			
Severn Beach	16		120	40	54		60		50	200	190	70		15	2		9		
Battery Point					2														
Walton Bay		1																	
Sand Point																		2	1
Anchor Head	4																		
CVL													1						

Coastal counts in the first winter and spring period

Spring passage Recorded on seven dates in March, with the three largest counts all in the first ten days at Severn Beach including 200 here on 2nd. Elsewhere there was one at CVL on 12th and one at Northwick Warth on 30th. In April the only record was of nine at Severn Beach on 28th. Both May records were at Sand Point with two on 13th and one on 21st.

Autumn and second winter period The only records later in the year were at Severn Beach in late December when 'Storm Barbara' produced 60 on 23rd and 14 on 25th.

The table below summarises the Severnside records for the past decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Av. of 3 highest counts	88	170	233	92	200	83	108	80	207	170
No. of dates recorded	27	23	19	5	15	14	19	21	27	17

Severnside – Data over the last ten years

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

[Amber 3, 7]

Abundant winter visitor and passage migrant; small numbers of non-breeders remain throughout the summer. Huge winter roost at CVL.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was the 19th in importance in 2015/16, and the English ten-year trend was -6%.

Our commonest wintering gull. WGS recorded this species in only 6% (13% in 2015) of participating gardens, a low figure probably linked to the mild winter weather.

Overall high winter numbers held up better than in March last year with a few reports of three figure flocks throughout the month, the last being 100 at CVL on 30th. As usual there were several records of small flocks moving purposefully up the Estuary from 14th. Movement in a similar direction on two dates over Bath might also have involved migrants, or could have been roost flights. In April there was more migration up the Estuary on at least six dates and numbers were generally lower with one to 20 apart from 100 at OPS on 2nd. These movements increased in May with c.77 up river past OPS on 14th and regular small numbers at Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands with up to 30 at the end of the month.

With more lingering through the spring and summer this year it was difficult to distinguish the first returners although four (two adult and two first-summer) at CVL on May 27th almost certainly fell into this category, and the first juvenile was at Northwick Warth on June 17th. Numbers increased from mid-month with the three figure counts all in the last week (see table).

The only counts exceeding 250 away from the tabulated sites were as follows (in date order): 300 at Congresbury Moor on Jan.1st; 1000 at Wemberham Lane, Yatton on 3rd; 500 along the tidal R. Avon (suspension bridge to Avonmouth) at low tide on 8th; 800 at BG on March 2nd; and 325 at Litton Resrs on Aug. 7th. Once again regular counts were available for a good selection of sites (see table below). On the Estuary, casual counts at mid or low tide tend to be higher than high tide WeBS counts on at least some sectors but note that there were WeBS low tide counts in November and December this year.

An albino was reported from PWD on Feb. 9th and 15th, and on July 5th, and a pure white individual with black wing-tips was on Herriott's Pool (CVL) on Nov.14th.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	500	500	80	100	77	100	585	600	500	700	800	40
Littleton Warth	180	175	200		1		300	325	200	45	11	340
New Passage	450	220	150	20	30	110	600	685	400	400	140	190
Severn Beach	110	150	30	14	10	15		400	150	90		11
PWD/RPD	365	386	41		9	190	250	900	85	33	21	
CI-Y	3500	550	550	15	23	60	350	400	400	425	400	475
Sand Bay	110	320	50			50	535	600	950	150	5	65
Axe Estuary		700*						261	490	185	51	112
Weston STW	412	132	10	21	2	27	576	393	223	208	208	355
R Avon, Sea Mills	350	45	55				55	89	20	120	426	154
Eastville Park	150	83	90				30	40	50	69	300	150
Saltford	450	1050	327	3			20	90	175	386	940	390
Backwell Lake	135	185	160	8		5	40		130		170	215
BL	800	525	160	15	10	5	137	120				70

Monthly counts at the regularly counted sites

LITTLE GULL *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Uncommon passage migrant usually with more in spring; scarce in winter.

Three records in the first winter period were followed by an erratic spring passage with the highest count being 11 at CVL. The autumn passage was rather thin and numbers remained low.

First winter period One at Northwick Warth on Jan. 3rd, a first-winter at OPS on 30th, and two at Severn Beach on Feb. 8th were the only records.

Spring passage The first was an adult at Northwick Warth on March 13th with four more here on 15th and an adult at CVL on 28th. April produced the best count of the year with at least 11 (possibly as many as 14) at CVL on 4th followed by four here on 11th. An unusual record was of three flying to NE over Pegwell Wood, near Over, ST5982, on 14th (S D Emery). Two were at Severn Beach on April 28th, there was an adult at CVL on May 1st and four at Northwick Warth on 5th which completed the passage.

Autumn passage A first-calendar-year was at CVL on Aug. 19th with perhaps the same here on 21st and 22nd, it was joined by a second on the last date, and one was at nearby BL on 23rd. In September the only record was of one at CVL on 29th, which may have been the adult seen here on Oct.1st. Finally there was a first-calendar-year at Sand Point on 17th.

A summary of the year's records, and a 'snapshot' of the CVL sightings for the last decade, are given below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	Aug	Sept	Oct
Days recorded at CVL	0	0	1	2	1	3	1	1
Maximum CVL count	0	0	1	11	1	2	1	1
Days recorded elsewhere	2	1	2	2	1	1	0	1
Max. Count elsewhere	1	2	4	3	4	1	0	1

Summary of all records

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Av. of 3 highest counts Jan - Jun	3	6	3	19	6	15	3	11	6	5
Av. of 3 highest counts Jul - Dec	5	1	3	5	2	1	3	2	1	1

CVL – average counts for the past decade

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

[Amber 6]

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant, stable after a period of increase.

After last year's resurgence there was a return to a more average year with eight in the CVL roost in late February, the largest count of the year. This was followed by an average return movement by recent standards from June to August and small numbers, mainly at PWD and CVL into the winter.

Recorded on nine days in January at CVL with one to three apart from five on 21st and seven on 23rd, perhaps representing the start of a return movement. Elsewhere in January, one or two were recorded at six other sites. CVL then produced records on seven days in February, one or two plus four on 3rd and 13th, six on 14th and eight (six adults and two second-winter) on 19th. Otherwise there were one or two at five other sites in the month with one at Eastville Park, Bristol on 4th being unusual for the site. March then produced just two records with three displaying at CVL on 19th and one at Saltford next day. In April there were single first-summer at CVL on 8th and Severn Beach on 12th. The only May record was of an adult and a second-summer at CVL on 9th.

After one at Northwick Warth on June 7th there was another here on 11th and three on 13th, then one at PWD on 15th. All but one of the 18 July records were for the 9th onwards with a second-summer in the Cumberland Basin on 3rd the exception. Thereafter Northwick Warth was the most regular site with one or two on seven dates but CVL had the highest count of three adults on 13th and the first juvenile was at PWD on 20th. Records were widespread in August with one or two at 12 sites, six at Northwick Warth, and 11 of the 21 that were aged were reported as juveniles.

Numbers dropped off considerably in September with one or two at five sites, three of them at PWD. They remained rather scarce in October with eight records of one or two from only three sites, seven of them from either CVL or PWD. They were also infrequent in November with four of the ten records from PWD, two from each of CVL and BL, and single individuals at Sea Mills and Saltford. PWD remained the most regular site in December with four on 18th and one to three on four other dates. Otherwise, a first-winter at Marshfield on 17th and an adult in the CVL roost on 23rd and 28th.

The monthly maxima at the main sites are tabulated below, with records from the following seven sites contributing to the summated monthly maxima in the bottom row: Aust Warth, Battery Point (Portishead), Codrington, Cumberland Basin and Eastville Park both in Bristol, Littleton Warth and Marshfield.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS						1	1	1				
New Passage	1					3	2	2	1	1		
Severn Beach				1								
PDW including Nature Reserve	1	2				1	1	2	2	2	2	4
CI-Y	1											
Sand Point and Bay								2				
Weston STW								1				
Sea Mills	2										1	
Saltford			1					1			1	
CVL	6	8	4		2		3	2	1	2	1	1
BL	2	1						1			1	
Totals, seven other sites	1	3					1	2				1

Monthly maxima at the main sites

The second table gives an overview of the fairly uniform series of records for the past decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of sites	23	23	20	21	18	19	23	17	22	17
Max count	8	7	6	4	8	6	5	6	14	8

Sites and maximum single counts in last 10 years

Observers are encouraged to continue to report all sightings of this species, giving ages of all individuals where possible. (*Eds.*)

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

[Amber 7]

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; scarce in summer. Largest flocks usually on upland or flooded fields and are often thinly spread elsewhere. Huge (c.18000) but rarely counted winter roost at CVL and significant one on the Estuary that is even more difficult to count.

The Cotswolds are an important feeding area for this species, as reflected in the occasional high counts from Marshfield including 3000 on Jan.16th. The best regularly counted sites were Saltford, with 1420 on Feb. 26th and OPS where the higher counts tend to be either going to roost or at low tide. The tabulated sites were the only ones where sizeable flocks occur and regular counts are made. This species tends to be scarce in the more westerly parts of our region, especially on the Estuary except in very cold weather.

Common Gull cont.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	:	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	83	500	50	10	1		1	1	5	25	100	100
Littleton Warth	80	60	65	3				1		2	3	8
New Passage	115	6	7	7	1				1	14	60	11
Severn Beach	15			80	3					1		
Marshfield	3000								1	1000		200
Saltford	200	1420	128					1	1	240	470	700
Backwell Lake	11	3	22									
BL	50	50	200					1		2	1+	15

Monthly maxima at the regularly counted sites

Most reports from elsewhere were of 100 or less with the larger counts as follows:

BL – 200 on March 4th;

North Wick – 107 on Dec. 7th.

Newton Park – 150 on Dec.13th.

April records were fairly sparse with 80 at Severn Beach on 6th much the highest count (good seawatching conditions often produce flocks on Common Gulls here in spring but this year was poor with no other double figure count). May records comprised three at Severn Beach on 2nd, one at OPS on 6th, and one at Northwick Warth on 31st. The only June record was of one at OPS on 19th. In July there was one at CVL on 16th (2nd cal. year), one at OPS on 19th followed by a smattering of returning individuals from the coast as well as Saltford and BL up to the end of August including a juvenile at CVL on 9th. Numbers remained low throughout September with up to three at CVL; early October seeing the start of the main arrival with 85 at CVL on 6th and 240 at Saltford on 7th.

RING-BILLED GULL *Larus delawarensis* (72, 2)

Scarce Nearctic vagrant. Most records are from CVL; occasionally in winter, but nowadays one or two are expected to appear in the gull roost during spring passage in February or March. Very rare on the coast or in summer.

Descriptions required.

Two individuals were reported at CVL in January, details as follows:

An adult from 13.00 to 13.45 on 12th (A H Davis *et al.*) was photographed; two, an adult (considered to be the same as that on 12th) and a second-winter, were in the roost at Nunnery Point on 21st (K E Vinicombe)..

A summary of the Avon area sightings for the past decade is given on page 96.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

[Amber 6, 7]

Western subspecies *L. f. graellsii*.

Common winter visitor, passage migrant and breeding resident. In addition to the colony on Steep Holm, there are large urban colonies in Bristol and Bath and smaller ones in other towns.

The table below again shows counts from the rather few regularly counted sites, many of which hold only modest numbers but do show a seasonal pattern of passage and summer peaks, some like BL receiving fewer full counts plus a number of unrepresentative casual counts. The somewhat different pattern of May to July peaks at CI-Y (mainly seen on the new scrapes/ponds near the mouth of the Yeo) might reflect the breeding colony on nearby Steep Holm, from which no data were received this year. The CVL roost is rarely counted for practical reasons, but 405, almost all immatures, were on Herriott's Pool on June 3rd. WGS produced records from 16% (15% in 2015) of participating gardens with their presence again considered to be strongly influenced by the type of food provided.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS		2	2	3	22	2	1	5	50	2		5
Littleton Warth	10	1	5	15	28	5	1	2		1	1	3
New Passage	8	12	17	12	22	6	7	14	11	10	2	2
CI-Y	2	14	4	35	60	65	80	25	5		3	
Weston STW	3	1	10	42	39	52	20	29	18	8	1	7
BL*	3	2	83	250	30	28	62	1			1	1
Saltford	20	32	16	10	12			28	36	16	17	10

Monthly maxima at the regularly counted sites, * counts for BL are incomplete

Other high counts included 150 at Marshfield on Jan.16th, 150 roosting on the beach at Weston-s-Mare on Feb. 27th, and 110 at Rownham, R. Avon on July 24th. Movements up the Estuary in spring were regularly noted, mainly at Northwick Warth, between Feb.13th and May 12th with 26 in two hours at Severnside on April 26th and 22 at Northwick Warth on May 12th.

Nesting was reported again at Portbury Wharf NR but with no further details. Also there was very little information from the breeding colonies in the cities and none from the large colony on Steep Holm. Breeding season counts around Castle Park to Temple Quay in Bristol City Centre included 45 on May 5th and up to 30 in April and 35 in June, where it was slightly outnumbered by Herring Gull.

L. f. intermedius

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; almost annual at CVL. Probably overlooked, particularly in non-adult plumage.

There were no definite records of this subspecies in 2016 but again a small dark dainty short-legged adult at Herriott's Pool, CVL from 12.25 to 12.45 on Aug. 8th was reported as showing characteristics of nominate *fuscus*, ('Baltic Gull', breeding around the White Sea, the Baltic and in northern Norway) by the observer (A H Davis), raising the possibility that it is a returning individual (see the comment in last year's Report). Again we note that small dark female *intermedius* are believed to overlap in appearance with this form, which is currently a national rarity considered by BBRC and will only be accepted as either a ringing recovery from the breeding range or as a second-calendar-year individual in spring and early summer showing the diagnostic *fuscus* moult strategy. We have yet to have such a record so *fuscus* is at the moment not on the Avon list.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

[Red 3]

Western subspecies *L. a. argenteus*

Common winter visitor, passage migrant and breeding resident; largest numbers occur near the coast, around Bristol and Bath and at the CVL roost. Apart from the Steep Holm colony, there are large urban colonies in Bristol and Bath, and smaller ones in other towns.

The table below shows the maximum numbers from the regularly counted sites. Counts from the reservoirs are either very incomplete or partial in the case of pre-roost gatherings – roost counts at CVL are rarely attempted. See note on summer gatherings at CI-Y in the previous entry. WGS produced records from 26% (40% in 2015) of participating gardens with their presence again considered to be strongly influenced by the type of food provided.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS			5	50	20	1		50	9	5	6	
Littleton Warth	12	9	7	55	32			2	1	7	1	3
New Passage	90	17	21	25	35	9	10	18	14	15	11	7
CI-Y	20	30	12	20	70	70	30	70	10	6	6	
Weston STW	114	8	132	127	46	114	73	221	54	82	22	81
Marshfield	250		250	20					50	20		60
Saltford	6	27	22	50	13			9	41	25	30	60

Monthly maxima at the regularly counted sites

Herring Gull cont. The only counts in three figures from other sites were as follows: 150 (with an equal number of Lesser Black-backed Gulls) roosting on the beach at Weston-s-Mare on Feb. 27th, 140 at Severn Beach on April 12th, and 200 at CVL on Sept 12th.

A pair nested at CVL for only the third time, at Herriott's Pool, but were unsuccessful. Otherwise little information was received about breeding although a nest with a juvenile was noted at Portishead Marina on July 4th, while two other nests here failed. Breeding season counts around Castle Park to Temple Quay in Bristol City Centre included 70 on March 23rd and up to 65 in both May and June. As with the previous species it is assumed that good number still breed on Steep Holm but no data were available.

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis*

[Amber 5]

Uncommon passage migrant, summer visitor and winter visitor; most occur in the late summer and autumn at CVL, but now increasingly recorded elsewhere.

A poor year at the main site, CVL, but still with the typical pattern of a late summer peak and records in every month apart again from February. The first juvenile was a Swiss (Sempech) ringed individual at CVL from July 21st, staying until at least Sept. 9th. The numbers of individuals each month at CVL is hard to work out and no doubt underestimate the true numbers as not all are aged. At BL it was also a poor year with all records referring to single adults. The first table below summarises the records for the past decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of sites	11	11	9	10	10	8	6	11	10	12
Max count	4	5	6	9	10	3+	10	7	6	4

Number of sites and maximum count at any one site

The second table gives the monthly breakdown.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CVL – min. no. of Individuals	2	0	1	1	2	2	5	7	5	2	2	2
CVL -- daily maximum count	1	0	1	1	2	1	4	4	3	1	2	1
BL – estimate of individuals	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
Summated maxima elsewhere	1	0	1	1	4	0	1	5	1	1	0	0

Monthly breakdown

Away from CVL and BL recorded at ten sites as follows (single birds unless stated): BG on Jan. 21st; PWD on March 7th; Avonmouth (Philblack Works site) on April 3rd (immature); OPS also on 3rd (adult); PWD on May 7th and 14th; Severn Beach on 13th and OPS on 13th (two adults) and 19th (adult), July 16th (adult) and Aug. 1st; BG also on Aug 1st (adult); Weston-s-Mare on three dates from Aug. 3rd to 13th (juvenile); Northwick Warth on 14th (juv./first-winter); Marshfield on 23rd (adult); New Passage on Sept.12th (juv.) and Cumberland Basin, Bristol on Oct.1st (first-winter).

The pattern of records generally fits the established national picture of a late summer peak with numbers gradually declining through the autumn into winter with some return passage in spring – most marked this year in mid-May.

Again observers are urged to report the ages of all individuals and carefully consider hybrids between Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gull, which are relatively frequent in the mixed colonies in Bristol, when reporting this species, especially away from the main reservoirs. (*Eds.*)

CASPIAN GULL *Larus cachinnans* (9, 1)

Rare/very scarce passage migrant/winter visitor since first in 2002.

Descriptions required

One record: a third-calendar-year individual was watched for 30 minutes at Herriott's Pool, CVL on Aug. 9th (K E Vinicombe), it was photographed; see opposite page 96.

A summary of the sightings for the past decade is given on page 96.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

[Amber 3]

Uncommon breeding resident - nests in small numbers on Steep Holm and has breed at CVL. Generally uncommon elsewhere but recorded in increasing numbers at the reservoirs throughout the year.

Once again widespread with many inland records. Numbers remained high at CVL and, for a briefer period, at BL. In the upper Estuary the high counts early in the year were noted during Low Tide counts.

The first table summarises the data for the past decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of sites	20	17	15	18	24	27	24	22	24	21
Max. count	10	9	21	19	36	26	35	28	24	23
Steep Holm pairs	11	n/c	13	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c

Number of sites, maximum count and pairs breeding on Steep Holm

The second table summarises the sightings at the main sites.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	7	4	4	5	4	2	1	4	5	4	4	4
Littleton Warth	13	8						3		4		
New Passage/Northwick	4	2	4	2	3	2	2	1	4	1	1	3
PWD	4	2	2				3	3	9			
CI-Y		2	2			1	2	3	2		1	
R. Avon, Sea Mills	6								2	1	1	
Bristol (city centre area)	1	1	2	2								2
BG		5	3	1							2	
CVL	4	4	10	9	5	14	10	14	23	11	4	6
BL	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	13	8		8
Ten other sites (total)	5	11	2	7	5	3				2		3

Monthly maxima at the regular sites

Occasional records came from a further ten sites, nine of which were inland, and all related to between one and three individuals (summated in the final line of the table).

Breeding No reports of breeding numbers have been received from Steep Holm since 2009, but it is assumed breeding still takes place here. Again breeding did not take place at CVL this year, but the occasional (and until recently unusual) presence of individuals in the city centre during the breeding season suggests that there might be a pair amongst the roof-nesting Lesser Black-backed and Herring Gulls here.

The table at the top of the next page summarises the data for the past decade for the scarce and rare gulls, note that none were recorded in 2015.

Rare Gulls in the Avon area

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	:	2016
Sabine's	2				1+	1				1
Bonaparte's							1			
Franklin's		1								
Ring-billed	2+	3+	3+	2	4+	2	1	3		2
Caspian	1	1					1			1
Iceland	1	2				1	1	3+		
Kumlien's					1			1		
Glaucous		1				2		1		

Total numbers for the past ten years

FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia* var.

Introduced, common resident, mostly found in urban areas.

A rather mixed picture in 2016 with some data indicating an increase whilst other data indicate a decrease.

Survey data This species was recorded by the BBS from 68 squares, which represented 35.6% of those surveyed, an increase from 33% in 2015. The total counted over two BBS visits was 1187. Avon BBS data is as follows:

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-19%	-20%	-6%	-23%	2%	27%	-14%	-4%	5%	-22%	23%	2%

BBS percentage changes

WGS data gave an increase to 23% of gardens surveyed compared to 20% from the previous winter.

CABS counts recorded a new low of nine per hour, in 1997 it was 99 per hour. The large flocks based around the Zoo and the Clifton Suspension Bridge area have almost vanished.

There were only three reports of counts greater than 100, all in Bristol: a flock of 233 on March 7th, one of 127 on 8th and another of 106 on Sept.10th.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

[Amber 7]

Fairly common and increasing breeding resident.

After an increase in the population over the previous three years, data for 2016 seemed to indicate mixed fortunes. BBS results showed a significant decline but the overall number of sites recorded continued to grow.

Survey data This species was recorded by the BBS in 51 tetrads, which represented 26% of those surveyed. The total counted over two BBS visits was 176. Avon BBS data can be summarised as follows:

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-18%	13%	-13%	15%	-9%	4%	-12%	-12%	10%	37%	34%	-24%

BBS percentage changes

The number of sites where this species was recorded was the highest in ten years having increased in each of the last five years as shown in the table below.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
90	73	64	73	94	68	75	86	125	143

Number of sites in Avon

Flocks Sizeable flocks of 100+ were noted at West Littleton Down with 110 on May 5th and Weston STW with 116 on Nov. 24th.

Breeding At CVL six pairs made 13 nesting attempts, 26 eggs were laid and 16 young fledged from 19 pulli hatched. One pair laid four clutches in the same nest box, successfully rearing three broods. The only other confirmed breeding was at Burnett where two eggs were recorded in a nest box on June 15th. At Aust Warth a pair was noted copulating and entering a nest box on the very early date of Jan. 8th. At BL a pair was present on April 24th. Song was recorded at five other locations.

Observers are again encouraged to submit all breeding records. (*Eds*).

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*

Abundant breeding resident and migrant.

The Avon population of this abundant species appears to be stable.

Survey data It was recorded by the BBS in 191 squares, which represented a 100% distribution. The total counted over two visits was 6984. Avon BBS data can be summarised as follows:

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
67%	14%	7%	4%	-4%	1%	-4%	12%	-10%	-5%	10%	4%

BBS percentage changes

WGS recorded presence in 100% of participating gardens, as in the previous seven years. CABS counts produced 26 per hour this year, compared to the average rate of 22 per hour for the last decade. Both 2015 and 2014 saw very large winter flocks that did not occur this year.

January to May 40 records of three-figure counts were noted (45 in 2013 and 11 in 2014 and 24 in 2015). Spring migration was seen on just two dates, with 14 heading NE on Feb.12th at New Passage, and 40 also to NE on March 19th at OPS.

Breeding As usual, evidence of breeding was not well reported with just two records of juveniles from two locations, Burnett and OPS.

Summer flocks included 250 in Compton Dando on July 23rd and 100 at Paulton on Aug.14th.

Autumn migration 175 moved SW on Oct. 26th at Wain's Hill, CI-Y followed by 325 on 28th; 400 headed SW over Timsbury on Nov. 3rd and 210 at New Passage on 5th with 200 reported over OPS on the same date. Flocks were then reported flying NE over OPS on 8th (320) and 26th (300).

Winter Flocks Congresbury Moor produced 500 on Nov. 28th and 1000 were reported on Dec. 2nd in the Marshfield area with 300 on Oct. 31st and 200 on Dec.11th; also 200 were at CI-Y on Nov 23rd.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

Common breeding resident.

The population appears to be relatively stable.

Survey data This species was recorded by the BBS in 129 squares, 67.5% of those surveyed. The total counted over two BBS visits was 768. Avon BBS data can be summarised as follows:

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
28%	-29%	-19%	7%	-13%	1%	-4%	11%	-2%	-17%	2%	5%

BBS percentage changes

Collared Dove cont. WGS recorded presence in 68% of participating gardens, the percentage recording this species was up by 5% on the previous year. CABS recorded a slight increase over last year, but a steep decline from the peak in 2002. The population has been stable for six years.

There were 44 double-figure counts (47 in 2014 and 59 in 2015). The only count of 50 or more was of 60 at Marshfield on Jan.1st.

Breeding Just two records were received: two were ringed in the nest at Littleton Brick Pits on Aug. 4th and a juvenile was with an adult on May 25th in Portbury.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur* (24, 1)

Formerly a fairly common summer visitor, but has undergone a steep decline and our last breeding record was in 1983. It is now only a scarce passage migrant.

Descriptions required.

One record, the first since 2013: a single bird in gardens at New Passage from May 11th until 13th (many observers, photographed – see opposite page 97.).

The table below summarises the records for the last decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of bird-days	2	3	2	0	2	3	1	0	0	3
No. of records	2	3	2	0	2	3	1	0	0	1

Bird-days and records each year

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

[Red 3]

Uncommon and seriously declining spring migrant and breeding summer visitor. Very scarce after June; but recent tracking has shown that most UK adults depart at this time.

A comparable number of records to last year was noted, a ten-year high for the species, possibly indicating that the local population of this seriously declining species has now stabilised.

Whilst the numbers recorded by the BBS in Avon are so low that quantitative comparison is not possible, they do give some indication of the declining status of this species over the last two decades as shown in the table below. Records were down on 2015 (seven records in seven squares) with a total of four records in three squares.

1994	34 * recorded in 25 squares (41% of the area surveyed)	2004	9 * recorded in 9 squares (5 % of the area surveyed)	2016	4 * recorded in 3 squares (1.6% of the area surveyed)
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Avon BBS records - Numbers quoted are "best counts" avoiding any double counting of territorial individuals

The first Avon area report for 2016 was from Bleadon Levels on the early date of April 5th (*cf.* 11th in 2011, 12th in 2012, 20th in 2013, 15th in 2014 and 15th in 2015).

Following last year's improvement, a further ten percent increase in bird-days and a similar number of records were noted in 2016. Records of more than one were as follows: at CVL at least four were noted on May 8th in a coordinated count, otherwise two to four were recorded between May 7th and June 24th (22 dates); two were recorded at the Axe Estuary on April 23rd, at BL in May and June (three dates), at OPS on May 26th and Weston STW on June 10th.

Sites with records for more than four days were: OPS (18), Sand Bay/Point (14), Weston STW (22), CVL (44) and BL (26).

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of bird-days	100	74	43	93	86	104	51	113	199	221
No. of records	98	70	43	73	76	58	48	103	166	167

Bird-days and records each year

No confirmed breeding was reported this year and no juveniles recorded, although pairs were present at both CVL and Weston STW in June.

The final report of the year was one seen on Aug. 17th at Saltford. The table below gives the breakdown of records during the year and comparisons with 2015 in brackets.

	April	May	June	July	August
Bird-days	28 (31)	127 (112)	64 (52)	0 (3)	2 (1)
Records	27 (30)	90 (90)	48 (42)	0 (2)	2 (1)
Sites	10 (13)	27 (25)	12 (16)	0 (1)	2 (1)

Month-by-month breakdown of 2016 bird-days, records and sites (2015 in brackets)

BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

Breeding resident, uncommon after long-term decline, but slowly recovering locally in recent years and benefitting from conservation efforts in several areas.

An average year with breeding success down on 2015.

This species is not recorded in sufficient numbers, either by the BBS or by any other generic survey, to be able to apply any meaningful quantitative comparison.

The number of records received saw a decrease on 2015 of 13%, closer to the ten-year average of 138. The number of sites increased by 15%, as shown in the table below.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of records	91	115	137	95	110	161	224	128	171	148
No. of sites	26	35	41	42	42	54	66	35	46	53

Number of records and sites per year

Breeding The Avon details are as follows with number of owlets and sites given.

SG -- Falfield – four owlets ringed in one nest box on June 10th, and a further 11 were ringed on June 20th; Marshfield area – eight owlets in two nest boxes were ringed on Aug. 12th.

BA -- Elm Farm, Burnett – three boxes were occupied with an adult on five eggs and another with four young on May 15th. Seven owlets from the three nest boxes were ringed on Aug. 12th;

CVL – two nest boxes were occupied with three young ringed on June 26th and another two ringed on July 5th;

BL -- on Oct. 30th two addled eggs were discovered in a nest box;

Cam Valley -- the ongoing survey of this area recorded seven pairs in Avon, of which five bred producing a total of ten chicks.

NS -- Congresbury Moor/Yatton -- on June 20th seven owlets (three in a box near Yatton and four in a box on the Moor) were ringed, and on July 7th a further two were ringed at a site near Yatton but on the edge of the Moor;

Kingston Seymour – four ringed on June 20th;

Redhill – two owlets ringed on July 28th.

Breaking down the reports received into months (see below) indicates a reasonable start of the year with good winter survival followed by a rather average breeding season, with number of records stable rather than increasing in September and October as the young disperse.

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Records	15	18	28	11	13	16	9	12	8	9	13	7

Monthly breakdown

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

Introduced in the 19th century. Uncommon breeding resident, declining.

Again, many of the records come from a few known pairs, therefore the number of sites, perhaps, gives a better indication of how this species is faring; see the table below. A second year of apparent increase in this figure compared with the previous three years gives some grounds for hope after the recent decline.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of records	139	87	91	98	192	132	132	185	240	197
No. of sites	66	49	48	40	39	27	27	27	40	47

Number of records and sites per year

Only recorded regularly at Marshfield, Northwick Warth, Saltford (maximum of four on four dates) and Winford Manor.

Breeding Following a report of nesting on May 8th from Saltford, juveniles were reported as follows: two on July 17th and single birds on June 9th and 20th, July 2nd and 12th, and Aug. 5th in the Hounsley Batch / Winford Manor area: two on Aug. 8th in Redhill and one on July 11th in Newton Park. Reports during the breeding season (between April and June) came from 17 sites (11 in 2014 and 21 in 2015).

Observers are again encouraged to submit all records. (*Eds*).

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

[Amber 3]

Fairly common breeding resident.

The number of records was at a ten-year high, however, the number of sites was within the typical annual variation for this species; see the table below. As in 2015 it is worth noting that 62 of these records came from a single site, Saltford.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of records	293	213	276	206	186	256	216	287	309	352
No. of sites	95	81	111	79	78	84	59	71	81	89

Number of records and sites per year

Breeding The numbers of reported owlets with the sites and dates were as follows: two were seen at Yatton on May 6th, whilst at CVL, they were noted at three sites around the lake during the breeding season and two were ringed on June 12th. Single birds were noted at Winford Manor on May 15th, June 7th and July 2nd, and on May 8th one was noted at Walton Common. Eight records of owlets in 2016 compares to nine in 2015, but at least 37 in 2014. It would appear that, following on from 2015, it was another poor breeding season.

The highest count of the year was four at Saltford on Aug. 27th.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus* (130, 1)

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; very rare in summer but bred successfully in 1991, 2010, 2011 and 2015.

Descriptions required.

One that was watched hunting on Feb.15th was subsequently seen roosting between Feb.16th and March 29th at an undisclosed site. It or another was in the same general area on Dec. 20th.

Wing feathers found by P J Hazelwood at OPS on May 14th were identified by E Drewitt as belonging to this species.

The table shows the varying fortunes of this species in the Avon area during the past two decades.

1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
14	3	1	3	2	3	3	0	0	2	1	2	1	7*	6*	4	3	1	2*	1

Number of individuals recorded each year (* includes successful breeding)

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

[Amber 4]

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant, mainly on the coast.

Average numbers of both records and bird-days were recorded in 2016, with a peak count of four on the Axe Estuary in April. The table below summarises the year's data.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	:	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	2016 (2015)
Records	7	21	16	39	20	3		3	1	7	6	10	133 (98)
Bird-days	12	34	22	50	23	3		3	1	7	8	12	177 (114)
Max. count	3	3	3	4	3	1		1	1	1	3	3	4 (3)

Monthly breakdown

The records are as follows, with single birds unless otherwise stated:

First winter period

Coastal records:

OPS -- two dates in February (maximum of three); one in March; 11 in April (maximum of three); seven in May; and one on June 3rd;

Aust Warth/Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands – recorded on five dates in January; four in February (maximum of two); two in March (maximum of two); one in May; and a late individual on June 5th was possibly the same as that seen at Severn Beach (see below);

Severn Beach – three dates in April (maximum of three); one in May (maximum of three); and an late individual on June 5th;

PWD – two dates in March;

CI-Y – two dates in February; two in March; and two in April;

Sand Point – one date; April 19th

Axe Est. – six dates in January (maximum of three); 11 in February (maximum of three); nine in March (maximum of three); eight in April (maximum of four); and four in May (maximum of two).

Inland, one was seen on Chipping Sodbury Common between April 13th and 19th; at Yatton on Feb. 10th and April 20th; at Wickwar on April 7th; at Wraxall Moor on 20th; and at Shepperdine on May 7th.

Second winter period

Coastal records:

OPS – noted on three dates in October; and one in December;

Aust Warth/Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands – one on Aug. 28th was the first of the autumn in Avon and was reported on the following two days; one in September; then seen on three dates in October; and five in December;

Severn Beach – one on Dec. 3rd;

CI-Y – one date in October; and three in December (maximum of three);

Axe Est. – three dates in November (maximum of three);

There were three inland records of single individuals as follows: at CVL on Nov.1st; Filton Airfield on 10th; and between Frampton Cotterell and Iron Acton also on 10th.

Short-eared Owl cont. The table below summarises the data since 2008.

	2008	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Bird-days	260	105	67	194	423	127	75	114	177
Records	186	100	48	113	222	91	46	98	133

Bird-days and records each year

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*

[Amber 4]

Scarce passage migrant and presumed regular breeding summer visitor in very small numbers.

Descriptions are required for records away from the Mendips.

Noted on two dates at traditional sites in the south of our region, and a further three just over the border in Somerset. The details are as follows:

Dolebury Warren – a ‘churring’ male on June 7th;

Burrington – two on June 9th.

The table below shows how this species has fared in Avon over the past decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Churring males	3	1	3	3	2	6	4	2	2	1
Reports	5	3	4	3	2	3	6	2	2	2

Number of churring males and reports each year in Avon

It would be helpful to receive all records from the regular Mendip sites, where the species maintains a small toehold in the Avon area.

The three Somerset records are as follows, they all came from Rod’s Pot, a site south-west of Burrington within a few hundred metres of the Avon-Somerset border.

May 29th – a female hatched in 2015 and a churring male;

June 15th – an adult male hatched before 2015 was trapped and ringed with a second adult male, a retrap that had been ringed in June 2015 at the same site; and

July 8th – a male and two females were seen.

SWIFT *Apus apus*

[Amber 3]

Common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

In line with that in the country as a whole, the Avon population is in long-term decline.

Arrival The first of the year was one at CVL on April 17th, the same date as last year. The first away from the reservoirs were single birds over Clifton and Hengrove, Bristol on 20th. The first three-figure count was 100 plus at CVL on 22nd.

BBS data This species was recorded by Avon BBS in 79 squares, representing 41.4% of the area surveyed; the total number counted over two BBS visits was 52. Whilst the upturn in fortunes during 2016 is to be welcomed the Avon BBS data indicates a long-term decline. It can be summarised as follows:

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-80%	-66%	11%	-26%	5%	-7%	-11%	11%	-26%	-38%	-19%	14%

BBS percentage changes

Summer flocks There was only a single estimate in excess of 1000, from CVL on June 1st, with 600 reported from BL on the same date.

Breeding Visits to nest sites were reported from Chew Magna in May; Nailsea, Hanham (Bristol) and Henleaze (Bristol), in June; and Frampton Cotterell in July, where young were heard in the nest. Nesting continues to be seriously under-reported, observers are asked to submit all observations of breeding activity. (*Eds.*)

Departure The last three-figure count was of 500 at CVL on Aug.11th with further records up to the month. There was a single report of one from September, over Tickenham, on the 7th. A very late swift species was watched briefly at New Passage on Oct. 25th (P D Bowerman), the same day as reports of Pallid Swifts on Lundy, Devon and the Isles of Scilly.

HOOPOE *Upupa epops* (28, 6)

Very scarce spring migrant, rare in autumn.
Descriptions required.

An excellent year, the best for more than three decades, with six records. Details as follows in chronological order.

Sand Point – one photographed on April 12th (D Gibbs, G Warren);

Hanham – one videoed in a garden on May 9th and 10th (A Dring *per* V Polley);

Weston-s-Mare – one on June 24th (A Cross);

Langford – one in a garden on July 3rd (Mrs J Bowyer);

Tortworth – one around the car park of Tortworth Plants between 14.00 and 16.30 on Oct. 10th (F Marshall, photographed) may have been the individual seen a few days later across the border in Gloucestershire.

Burrington – one seen briefly in flight to the north-west of the village on Oct. 28th (D Nevitt).

The table below summarises the records for the past 20 years. It is worth noting that from the 1950s to the 1990s this species was noted almost annually with multiple records in some years; in 1977 up to eight were present and at least one pair bred hatching three young. Also October records are quite rare although one at Sand Bay in 2012 did remain into early November.

1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
0	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	2	1	3	1	0	1	1	6

Number of individuals recorded each year

BEE-EATER *Merops apiaster* (16, 1)

Rare summer vagrant
Descriptions required.

One record: one was heard twice, but not seen, at Aust Services on July 31st (C Lewis).

This is the tenth Avon area record. During the last decade there have been two records: one in Lady Bay, Clevedon in May 2008, and six at Woolley, Bath in June 2015.

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

[Amber 1]

Fairly common breeding resident, distributed in small numbers on waters throughout the area.

WeBS: the English coast of the Severn Estuary was ranked 18th in importance in 2015/16. English ten-year trend 1%.

Reports showed a further improvement.

Avon BBS recorded three over two BBS visits. The two squares in which they were found represented 1.0% of the area surveyed. Overall, reports were received from 125 sites in Avon, the highest number for ten years, see the table given on the next page. CVL reported the highest count with six on Oct.10th, and five were recorded here on Sept 29th and at Saltford on Oct.7th.

Kingfisher cont.

A summary of the data for the past decade is given below.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
80	95	75	96	82	96	96	97	117	125

Number of sites each year in the last decade

During the first winter period, January saw 92 records from 27 sites (*cf.* 33 in 2007, 26 in 2008, 19 in 2009, 23 in 2010, 17 in 2011, 21 in 2012, 18 in 2013, 51 in 2014 and 64 in 2015). February saw 66 records from 27 sites and March showed 72 records from 30 sites.

Breeding At CVL, six young ringed between July 24th and Aug. 24th suggested successful local breeding, as did one record from Littleton Brick Pits and three from the Cam Valley during August.

Post-breeding dispersal with 2015 data in brackets As usual this created an increase in the number of records. August saw a rise to 90 from 33 sites (64 from 22 sites). September saw the peak at 100 records from 35 sites (101 from 37 sites), numbers then remained stable for the remainder of the year with 87 records from 30 sites in October (83 from 31), 92 records from 27 sites in November (53 from 22) and 89 records from 29 sites in December (51 from 17).

WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla* (53, 4)

Scarce autumn passage migrant, very rare in spring.
Descriptions required.

A good year with three records involving four individuals, all in gardens, as is often the case, feeding on ants. Details as follows in chronological order:

Hinton Blewitt – one on Aug. 30th and 31st (J Hutchings) was possibly seen in a neighbouring garden on 28th;

Yatton – two watched over a 20 minute period at about 17.00 on Sept. 2nd (A Sykes);

Thornbury – one watched for over five minutes around Oct.1st (M Walden).

The table below shows the distribution of records for the past 20 years.

1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
3	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	3	1	7	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	4

Number of individuals recorded each year

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Fairly common breeding resident, increasing nationally.

A dramatic increase of 63% over 2015 was recorded by the BBS, reflecting the increase in the number of sites and number of records reported.

Survey data This species was recorded by the BBS in 83 squares, which represented a 43.5% distribution. The total counted over two BBS visits was 158, Avon data can be summarised as follows:

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-2%	-10%	-26%	52%	-6%	-8%	-20%	17%	-2%	-33%	-7%	63%

BBS percentage changes

WGS recorded presence in 29% of gardens surveyed, an increased of 6% on 2015. As shown below there was, again, a significant increase in both the number of records and the number of sites compared to the previous year.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Records	529	524	453	458	413	516	621	642	940	1261
Sites	235	227	209	197	180	151	162	154	224	282

Records and sites each year

Breeding A total of 454 records was received from 186 sites during April, May and June (*cf.* 241 from 130 sites in 2008, 191 from 121 sites in 2009, 202 from 131 sites in 2010, 164 from 107 sites in 2011, 139 from 70 sites in 2012, 188 from 85 sites in 2013, 149 from 66 sites in 2014 and 299 from 122 sites in 2015), representing a 52% increase in both records and sites from 2015 during this early summer period.

The sites recorded during this early summer period are listed in the table below. 2016 recorded the highest number of sites occupied during this period in the last nine years.

	2008	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
April	63	47	71	57	39	67	39	74	123
May	67	65	53	49	26	27	26	54	86
June	53	52	35	29	21	17	23	51	46

Number of sites with records during the breeding season

At CVL, numbers picked up after last year's low, with six pairs in the vicinity of the lake (*cf.* seven in 2008, five in 2009, six in 2010, eight in 2011, five in 2012, seven in 2013, three in 2014 and two in 2015). In Avon as a whole, records of fledged young were noted as follows: one in May at OPS and three in Newton Park; in June one in Compton Dando; in July, five at OPS in two family groups; also reported from Severn Beach, Compton Dando, Nailsea and Frampton Cotterell; two from the Cam Valley and single birds at BL, Banwell, Winford Manor and Newton Park in August; and three from the Cromhall area in September.

The year's highest count came from Overscourt Wood, Siston where 15 were noted on Jan. 23rd.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*

Fairly common breeding resident increasing both nationally and locally.

All indicators would suggest an increased population in 2016 with a further rise in the number of records and sites during the year compared to 2015, which already had the highest figures in the last ten years.

Survey data This species was recorded by the BBS in 95 squares, which represented 49.7% of those surveyed. The total counted over two BBS visits was 186. The BBS data since 1994 is summarised below.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
111%	21%	10%	-7%	-19%	46%	-7%	-1%	-2%	7%	-10%	13%

BBS percentage changes

WGS data recorded presence in 36% of gardens surveyed, up by 6% on 2014/15.

A significant increase in the number of records and sites was also noted; see below:

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Records	415	372	317	402	423	590	666	749	1021	1435
Sites	191	172	181	182	197	200	199	193	258	322

Records and sites per year

The highest counts during the year were of seven at Weston Woods on May 10th and Saltford on May 30th. Although there were many records from the coast, none specifically referred to migration.

Great Spotted Woodpecker breeding Drumming was recorded from 21 sites (*cf.* 28 in 2007, 23 in 2008, 13 in 2009, four in 2010, 12 in 2011, 14 in 2012, 21 in 2013, 13 in 2014, and 13 in 2015). At CVL, 11 pairs were reported with young noted on May 17th, and July 27th and 28th. A number of other breeding records are given below:

A pair feeding young at BG on May 19th; and an female feeding young at Awkley on 26th; one with young in the nest at the R. Avon, Keynsham on 28th; three at Newton Park, seven in three nests at Salford and a nest with young in Keynsham Memorial Park all on 30th; in June, two adults and two juveniles were present in a garden in Nailsea all month; a juvenile was seen with an adult at BL on 3rd; adults were feeding young at Marshfield on 10th; two adults were visiting a well grown juvenile at OPS on 20th and 21st which had fledged by 30th; an adult and juvenile were present at Stoke Bishop on 21st; and a family party of two adults and a juvenile was seen at Portishead on the 24th. In July, young were reported from Abbots Leigh on 1st, 2nd and 4th, and Banwell until Aug. 16th. Additional records of juveniles in August were as follows: OPS on 6th and 23rd; Cam Valley on 6th and 10th, and Littleton Brick Pits on 27th.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

[Amber 3]

Fairly common but declining breeding resident.

Prior to 2012 a count of 700 or more records in a year was considered to be high, with this figure only being exceeded seven times since 1984. However, in four of the last five years this figure has been easily exceeded, with the 1409 records received in 2016 the highest to date. It is unclear why the number of records suddenly increased but as noted in recent reports, electronic recording is making it easier for observers to submit records, although this does not explain the low count in 2013.

The table below gives the monthly distribution for 2016, showing a high of 175 in April and lows of 90 or fewer in February, August, November and December (67), it also gives the data for the previous five years.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2011	36	50	67	59	59	84	35	49	40	62	69	40	650
2012	79	78	125	129	101	113	67	79	103	119	103	102	1198
2013	72	54	68	79	52	47	64	39	36	78	68	57	714
2014	63	76	101	112	80	93	75	117	111	98	102	93	1121
2015	98	82	116	154	129	111	92	99	123	116	72	60	1252
2016	123	77	143	175	112	110	146	90	121	155	90	67	1409

Monthly distribution of records

Breeding This year the breeding season extended to the end of July. There were 11 confirmed pairs whose progress was monitored, with 37 young hatched, of which 17 were ringed, and 34 are presumed to have fledged. In addition juveniles were reported from a further 12 sites but without any further details, pairs were reported in the breeding season (April – July) from another five sites and counts of two (but with no details of sex) in the breeding season were received from a further 12 sites. This suggests a total of 40 possible pairs, continuing the decline over the last decade as is shown in the table below.

	1997-06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
SG	23	25	36	31	22	23	21	23	20	8	10
BA &	62	68	63	53	45	51	52	30	43	36	26
Bristol	8	7	4	6	8	7	6	5	4	4	4
Total	93	100	103	90	75	81	79	58	67	48	40

Breeding sites

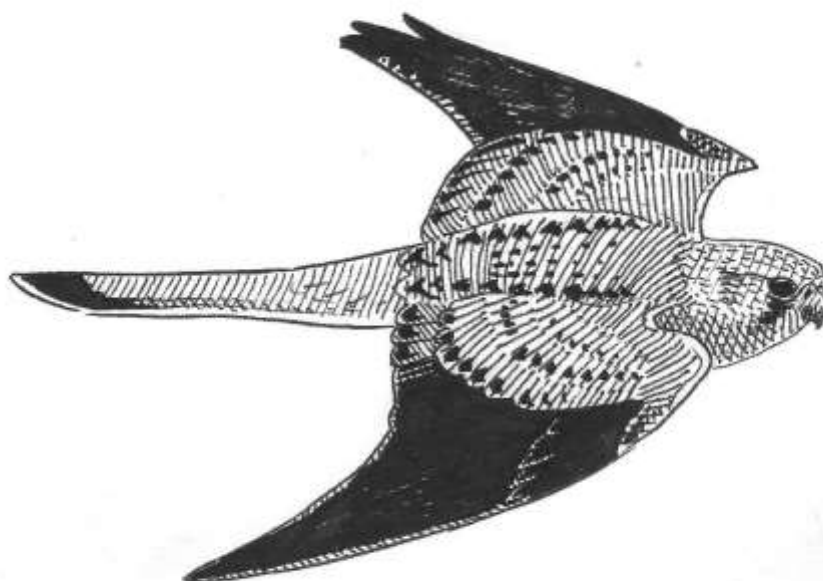
The distribution of breeding sites in 2016 was ten in SG, 11 in BA, 15 in NS and four in Bristol; notes on some of these are set out below.

SG A nest box was used for the fifth successive year at the Rolls Royce site at Filton, three fledglings were seen in the car park on July 4th. Other juveniles were seen at Shepperdine, OPS and Aust Warth.

BA For the fourth successive year nest boxes were used at Burnett, on June 15th one contained four chicks too young to ring, and another held four which were ringed (plus one not expected to survive). In a pole box at Compton Dando three were ringed on July 4th. Juveniles were seen at Chew Stoke, CVL, Stanton Prior and Saltford. A pair was regularly seen at Newton Park.

NS Nest boxes were used at the following sites: at Sidcot School, three nearly fledged young were seen on July 6th; at Congresbury, four were ringed on June 30th; at Langford, three recently fledged juveniles were too small to ring on 18th and two were ringed on 30th; at Butcombe, there were four eggs but no sign of adults on 18th; and at BG, four were ringed also on 18th. In addition two juveniles were seen at Black Rock Quarry, Portishead, on July 7th.

Bristol In the Avon Gorge five fledged juveniles were seen on July 1st and four on 14th, while in Hick's Gate four fledged juveniles were in a hollow tree on 12th.



Kestrel drawn by John Martin

MERLIN *Falco columbasius*

[Red 2]

Uncommon and erratic by year passage migrant and winter visitor; most are recorded on the coast; scarce inland.

An improvement on last year with 100 bird-days, but under the average for the last ten years of 105; see table below.

	97/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Avon area	76	76	143	84	84	111	143	113	107	93	100
Sevenside	38	69	93	65	47	45	60	43	39	38	33

Bird-days per year

There were 76 bird-days in the first half-year, the highest number since 2012 (*cf.* 61 in 2013, 30 in 2014 and 55 in 2015). This total was made up by 24 in January, 14 in February, and 18 in both March and April. The last two records came from New Passage on May 2nd and 26th (the latest spring record was one day later in 1993).

However, the second half of the year was very poor with only 24 bird-days. This compares with 46 in 2012, 52 in 2013, 77 in 2014 and 38 in 2015. There were no records in August and only two in September, at Uphill on the 16th and another at New Passage on the 30th. October and December both had 10 bird-days but there were only two in November, both inland at Clutton and Duchess's Pool/Stoke Park (Bristol). Only four of the records came from Sevenside, seven from CI-Y (four in October), two at Sand Point, one at Uphill and ten from inland sites with three at Marshfield and two at CVL.

Coastal records

A third of these, 65 in total, were from Sevenside, mainly between Aust Warth and New Passage, with 33 bird-days during the year (*cf.* 43 in 2013, 39 in 2014 and 38 in 2015), 29 in the first half-year and four in the second half (*cf.* 12 and 31 in 2013, seven and 32 in 2014 and 22 and 16 in 2015). There were more reports from CI-Y in 2016 with 20 bird-days (*cf.* 23 in 2013, 22 in 2014, 13 in 2015), 13 of which were in the first half-year and seven in the second (*cf.* 12 and 11 in 2013, nine and 13 in 2014, eight and five in 2015). Other coastal sites with records were: OPS (one), PWD (one), Sand Point and Bay (three), Uphill and Weston STW (seven).

Inland records The main site was Marshfield with 18 bird-days (15 in the first-half of the year and just three in the second), followed by CVL with four (two in each half). Other inland sites not already mentioned were in the first half year: BG, Itchington, Kenn Moor (two), Lansdown, Queen Charlton, Saltford, Stanton Prior and Weston Airfield, and in the second half: BL (on Dec. 29th), Lansdown and Yatton.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

[RBBP]

Uncommon passage migrant and scarce breeding summer visitor.

Although arrival was early and departure late it was a very poor year for breeding, the worst for at least two decades. Records refer to single birds unless stated otherwise.

Arrival The first reports were from CVL on the early dates of April 6th and 7th, and Saltford on 8th with then a gap before sightings at CI-Y on 11th and Severn Beach on 12th. The next were at Bristol International Airport on 16th, BL on 17th and CVL again on 18th, with records almost daily thereafter. The earliest arrival dates in the preceding five years were all in April as follows: 15th in 2011, 25th in 2012, 17th in 2013, 4th in 2014 and 11th in 2015.

Breeding Although there were no confirmed nests, pairs with a total of five juveniles were seen at three sites and were presumed to have nested nearby. A pair was thought to be nesting in SG but no young were seen. A summary of the data for the past 20 years is given below.

	1997-06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
SG	2.2	2	2	2	1	2	0	2	1	1	1
NS	3.3	6	3	6	3	6	4	6	7	3	2
BA	5.3	4	5	5	2	2	3	3	3	2	1
Total	10.8	12	10	13	6	10	7	11	11	6	4

Breeding status (pairs) both confirmed and suspected

The Reservoirs Frequently reported at CVL with one or two often seen, the maximum count was four on May 3rd and 22nd and on Aug. 16th. The last record of the year here was on Sept. 30th, a second-calendar-year individual that had been present since at least Aug. 22nd. Reported at BL between April 17th and Oct. 3rd with a maximum count of seven in the air together on Aug. 30th, also five on April 30th and four on May 2nd.

Other sightings Away from the breeding sites and reservoirs, reports were received from a further 57 widely scattered localities, 12 in SG, ten in BA, 31 in NS, and just two in Bristol: Redland (July and August) and Sea Mills (September). The table below gives a monthly summary of these locations for 2016.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
SG	5	7	2	3	5	3	1
Bristol				1	1	1	
BA	1	3	2	3	6	2	2
NS	6	8	3	6	3	10	4
Total	12	18	7	13	15	16	7

Number of localities per month where individuals were observed

Departure Unusually there were a number of reports in October, between 1st and 7th, with a final very late report from Weston-s-Mare on 23rd. The only later dates for the Avon area are Oct. 29th (Backwell 1998), and Nov. 11th (Dundry 2005).

Systematic List

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PEREGRINE *Falco peregrines*

[RBBP]

Uncommon resident, winter visitor and breeder.

It was a good breeding year.

Although the number of occupied sites was low, the nine successful nests and the 23 chicks that fledged were both slightly above average (see table at the top of the next page for details of the last two decades).

	1997-06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. of sites occupied	9.4	12	11	13	13	12	12	16	16	16	10
No. of successful nests	6.6	9	7	6	9	8	8	10	8	8	9
No. of birds fledged	14.9	21	20	11	26	25	17	28	19	20	23

Breeding success

The details for 2016 are given on the next page.

Peregrine cont.

Avon Gorge – a pair fledged three chicks which were ringed on May 17th. This is about average for this site over the last decade, see table below;

1997-06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
2.3	3	5	1	5	5	3	4	1	3	3

Breeding success in the Avon Gorge, number of fledged juveniles

Wick Quarry – again very few records were received, and none of breeding, at this once regular site (*cf.* four fledged young in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 with two in 2014 but none in 2015);

St. John's Church, Bath – used for the eleventh consecutive year, with three chicks raised which is slightly more than the average for this site over the last decade, see table below.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
2	2	1	4	3	2	2	1	3	3

Breeding success at St John's Church in Bath, number of fledged juveniles

*Undisclosed sites***SG**

A pair was present at one site but there was no evidence of breeding (*cf.* two sites in 2012, no breeding noted; four sites in 2013 with one young fledging; three sites in 2014, no fledglings; and two sites in 2015, no breeding noted);

BA

Reported from one regular site where a pair fledged three young which were ringed on May 22nd (*cf.* one site in 2012 with one young fledged, two in 2013 with four fledged, two in 2014 with four fledged, and two in 2015, no young fledged);

NS

Pairs bred successfully at five sites, fledging a total of 12 young. All five sites had been used in previous years, with just one on the coast;

Bristol away from the Avon Gorge – a pair, which fledged three in 2013 and two in 2015, fledged two again.

Non-breeding records

One or two were frequent throughout the year at OPS and Severnside, with annual bird-day totals of 238 and 103, respectively. The table on the next page gives monthly bird-day totals for the other well-watched sites, where they are probably under recorded.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
PWD	1	1	3	2		2	3	2	3	5		4	26
CI-Y	2	3	4	2	1	4	4	1	7	3	2	6	39
Sand Point and Bay			1	2	1				1	1		3	9
Weston STW area	4	2	4	6	1	1	4	2	3			1	28
CVL	3	2	6	17	14	4	6	8	3	11	8	1	83
BL				1	2			1	14	7	7	5	37
Saltford	1	2	8	7	2		1	10	6	7	2		46
Yatton	7			1				1		1	2	3	15
Marshfield	2	1		1				1	1	1		1	8

Monthly bird-days for well watched sites

Records were received from a further 72 widely scattered sites, with a high number in Bristol suggesting there is quite a bit of duplication with the breeders which presumably range quite widely.

RING-NECKED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri*

A scarce visitor, some records may refer to wanderers from the substantial home counties feral population whilst others probably refer to escapes.

An increase in 2016 was noted with 19 records, from probably only nine (or even six) individuals moving about (*cf.* two in 2012, five in 2013, four in 2014, and ten records involving six individuals in 2015). The details in date order are as follows:

Bristol, St George's Park – one on Jan. 5th;

Bristol, Easton, Greenbank Rd – one on Jan. 23rd;

Speedwell, Whitefield Allotments – one on Feb. 2nd;

Bristol, Redland – one on April 2nd, and 14th;

Saltford – one on Aug. 11th, 12th, 17th, 19th, 20th and 21st (identified as a female on this date), one again on Sept. 3rd and 5th, and an immature male on Oct. 9th and 10th;

Bristol, Sneyd Park – one on Oct. 28th and 30th;

New Passage – one on Oct. 29th;

Bristol, Clifton – one on Nov. 14th.

GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus* (16, 1)

Rare passage migrant.

Descriptions required.

One was heard singing for a few minutes, but not seen, at Pilning Wetlands at 08.35 on May 26th (P D Bowerman).

Previously more regular, it was recorded annually from 1984 to 1993 (except for 1987), often in Blaise Woods. Since then the only records are for May 1995 at Sand Bay, May 2003 at CVL, and May 2005 when there were two at Sand Bay.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor* (15, 1)

Very scarce winter visitor.

Descriptions required.

One record: one was watched for a couple of minutes on the top of Sand Point on Oct. 25th (P A Gregory).

This is a fairly typical showing as indicated by the table below.

1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	1

Number of individuals recorded per year

CHOUGH *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* (1, 1)

Very rare vagrant.

Descriptions required.

One was seen and heard near the top of the beach at Uphill on Jan. 27th (E Pettifer). It flew off over the dunes.

There are three previous Avon records: over the Avon Gorge in July 1900, at Sandford in December 1941 staying into 1942, and at Sand Point in April 2006.

MAGPIE *Pica pica*
Common breeding resident.

This adaptable species is able to exploit both urban and rural environments and remains common but it has declined significantly over the past two decades. It was recorded from all tetrads in the Avon Atlas 2007-11 and there is no reason to think that the situation has changed.

Breeding A total of 1659 was recorded in the two BBS counts over 181 squares in 2016 representing 95% of the area surveyed. This compares with a distribution rate of 94% of the squares surveyed in 2015. There was a decrease of 4% compared to the BBS results for 2015 but this is unlikely to be significant (see table below) although in the longer term there does appear to have been a significant decline locally. The BBS figures for England show an increase of 1% for the period 1995 to 2014 whereas the figures for Avon are -21% for the same period. However, there is considerable variation across the English regions and a decline of -17% for the same period in Wales. At least nine pairs were noted around CVL.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-29%	4%	3%	2%	-9%	5%	-1%	1%	0%	-2%	9%	-4%

BBS percentage changes

Other records In the WGS this species was recorded in 97% of gardens in the winter of 2015/16 compared with 93% the previous winter. There were 49 records of over 20 during the year, the large majority being post-breeding and winter records. The highest count was of 70 from a survey around Salford on Sept.17th while 40 were recorded in Horfield on Jan.16th.

JAY *Garrulus glandarius*
Fairly common breeding resident.

This species is widespread in small numbers although the population does fluctuate.

Breeding The BBS recorded a total of 165 in the two BBS counts from 77 squares representing 40% of those surveyed. No change was recorded compared with 2015. Six pairs were noted in the vicinity of CVL and two juveniles were reported here on July 6th.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-12%	10%	17%	-9%	16%	-5%	-10%	4%	14%	-6%	-6%	0%

BBS percentage changes

Other records In the WGS this species was recorded in 65% of gardens in the 2015/16 winter period, an increase of 8% over the previous winter although numbers recorded remained much the same. Records were evenly distributed throughout the year and there was no evidence of migration in either spring or autumn. Most records were of one or two and the highest counts were of 13 at Backwell Lake on March 10th and ten at Montpelier Station, Bristol, on the 31st.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*
Abundant breeding resident; uncommon passage migrant.

This is a versatile species that is equally at home in quarries, chimney pots or old woodland, wherever there are holes for their nests. They were present in 98% of tetrads surveyed during the summer for the 2007-11 Atlas and there has been no significant change to their status since then.

Breeding The BBS recorded a total of 4243 in the two counts from 174 squares representing 91% of those surveyed. BBS results in Avon (see table below) suggest a stable population over the past ten years but with some longer term decline. However, this is at odds with the national picture where the BBS results for England show an increase of 65% between 1995 and 2014. The reasons for this are unclear. Three nests at CVL produced young, average two per nest.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-7%	1%	-4%	-1%	-5%	6%	-2%	-1%	-6%	4%	6%	5%

BBS percentage changes

Other records CABS noted an increase from an average number of birds per hour of 15 in 2015 to 19 in 2016 but this is well below the average of 26 per hour since 1994 and the high of 43 per hour recorded in 2001. The immediate cause seems to be a reduction of the flock nesting around the Clifton Suspension Bridge, perhaps caused by the extensive work here in recent years. In the Northwick Warth area between 15 and 35 were noted throughout the year with occasionally up to 50, but on Oct. 2nd flocks of up to 28, totalling 141 in all, were moving SW in sunny weather, sometimes mixed with Carrion Crows and Rooks. There were fewer records of large flocks than in 2015, the largest being 1500 at Marshfield on Feb. 21st. Other flocks of over 500 were 1000 also at Marshfield on Jan.15th, 800 at a roost at OPS also on 15th and 600 going into roost at Yatton on Dec. 5th. In contrast in 2015 five flocks of 1000 or more were recorded.

Nordic Jackdaw *Corvus monedula monedula* (6 since first in 2008, 1)

Very rare winter vagrant.

Descriptions required.

Two records from the Northwick Warth area probably related to the individual seen here in November 2015. The first of these was on April 22nd and 23rd (P D Bowerman, photographed) while the second was on June 1st and 9th (P D Bowerman, photographed). Another was photographed at Tockington on April 23rd (D Hanks *per* Birds of South Gloucestershire).

Apart from the initial records in 2008 the only others of this distinctive subspecies are from Northwick Warth in December 2014 and November 2015.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*

Common breeding resident.

While it remains a common species it has been subject to significant declines in the past 20 years both locally and nationally.

Breeding BBS recorded a total of 2135 in the two counts from 82 squares representing 43% of those surveyed. This is a 20% increase compared with the previous year which also recorded a substantial increase (see the table below). The BBS is not ideally suited to measuring a colonial species such as this and the picture can be further muddled by the appearance of post-breeding flocks during the period of the survey. However, the most recent Avon Rookery Survey in 2015 (see this Report for 2015) which counts nests in rookeries recorded a decline of about 40% since 1995 and this would seem, broadly, to confirm the BBS picture of a significant long term decline.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-50%	10%	17%	-9%	21%	-25%	-20%	-10%	31%	-27%	39%	20%

BBS percentage changes

Other records There was an increase in reports of flocks of 100 or more in 2016 (23) compared to 2015 (nine). However, no really large flocks were noted. The largest count was 185 at Coalpit Heath on Feb. 2nd compared to flocks of 1000 and 250 in 2015. Counts of 150 were made at OPS on Feb.14th and May 28th, at Keynsham on Feb. 28th and at Stanton Wick on Sept.16th. As recently as 2010 flocks of between 500 and 900 were seen regularly, and in 2006 there was one of 1500. While records of some flocks of mixed corvids in winter have not been broken down to species the main cause is likely to be the significant recent decline in the breeding population.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone**Common breeding resident.*

This adaptable species is found throughout the Avon area with records from all tetrads in the 2007-11 Avon Atlas and significant numbers are recorded in both urban and rural areas.

The National BBS figures for England show an increase of 26% between 1995 and 2014 well in excess of the Avon figures, but there is considerable regional variation and the local population has been stable over the past 20 years.

Breeding The species was counted in 188 squares during the 2016 BBS representing 98% (97% in 2015) of the squares surveyed with a total of 3398 (3060 in 2015) noted during the two visits.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
3%	-9%	-7%	-4%	2%	4%	-4%	-1%	6%	1%	-10%	4%

BBS percentage changes

Other records The largest flocks noted were 300 at Littleton Warth on March 8th, 250 flying NE over Henleaze on the evening of Aug. 28th, 150 at Cl-Y on May 24th and 145 at Weston STW on April 1st. It was noted on Feb. 11th preying on voles flushed out by the high tide.

RAVEN *Corvus corax**Uncommon but widespread breeding resident, and possibly an uncommon passage migrant.*

The local population has increased steadily since 1994. See the table below which shows the more or less steady expansion in distribution of this species over the past decade.

Breeding In the BBS in 2016 a total of 82 was counted during the two visits in 41 squares which represent 21% of the area surveyed. This is very similar to the 76 recorded in 38 squares in 2014 and reverses the apparent decline noted in 2015, see table. Breeding was noted at ten locations.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Squares surveyed	20	12	23	26	28	21	31	38	33	41
% surveyed	10.9	7.7	14.4	15.1	16.3	12.7	17.6	21.3	18.5	21.5

Avon BBS data

Other records More than 1400 records were received in 2016, about 25% more than in 2015. Again it was recorded from every ten-km square in the Avon area. Most records were of one or two but there were 16 records of ten or more, mostly post breeding. The largest groups recorded were 29 at Hawkesbury Upton on Aug. 23rd, 17 in the CVL vicinity on Sept. 22nd, and 16 at Saltford on Aug. 14th and Sept. 8th.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus**Fairly common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

This species is a fairly common breeding resident in both woodland and urban areas, especially where there are conifers. Its high-pitched call can be difficult to hear. The sedentary breeding population is swelled by migrants although our knowledge of their movements is very incomplete.

Breeding A total of 216 from 79 squares (41% of the area surveyed) was recorded in the two BBS visits. While no increase was reported in 2016 (see table below) it was recorded in a higher proportion of the squares surveyed than in 2015 when 189 were recorded from 61 squares representing 35% of the area surveyed. This species fluctuates dramatically and is benefitting from the succession of mild winters since 2013. The cold late spring that year led to a major decline from which it now appears to have recovered.

BBS data.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
50%	19%	17%	-1%	-47%	13%	21%	38%	-47%	60%	21%	0%

BBS percentage changes

The improved status of this species is also reflected in the greatly increased numbers in 2016 with 1352 records covering at least 3676 individuals. Records reached their lowest level in July (34 records) before increasing again from the second half of August with an increase in reports from coastal locations. Over 80% of records were of five or fewer. However, 30 were noted at Blake's Pools, CI-Y on Oct.12th, 22 at OPS on Nov.12th (which was a site record) and 20 at Northwick Warth also on Oct.12th. These records presumably reflect migration. Inland, 25 were recorded at Eastville Park on Jan. 7th while 45 were caught and ringed at CVL.

FIRECREST *Regulus ignicapilla*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Has bred.

Fewer on migration, some long-stayers in winter.

First winter period Notably one was seen regularly by many observers in the Eastville Park area of Bristol from Jan.1st to March 12th, with a second individual here on several dates during the same period, at least until Feb. 28th. Elsewhere, one was noted at Orchard Pools, Severn Beach on Jan. 4th, 5th and 8th, and in the Salford area on five dates between Feb. 25th and March 12th.

Most were recorded on one day only: at CI-Y on Jan.1st; in Clifton on 9th with one in Weston-s-Mare on the same date; at Sand Point on Feb.11th, and in the Hengrove area of Bristol on 22nd. One in the Avon Gorge on March 1st. might have been an early migrant. Others were at CVL on 10th and at Sand Point on 22nd and 24th. In the early summer at least one was reported from a site in Compton Dando where nesting has occurred in the past, but no evidence was received in 2016.

Autumn and second winter period Migrants were seen at Severn Beach on Oct. 2nd and at nearby Aust Services on 8th, and there was one at Sand Point on 18th. Winter records came from Weston-s-Mare (one on Dec. 2nd) and Salford (one on Nov. 1st and Dec. 25th), while on Dec. 28th one was again back in Eastville Park. The winter trend data tabulated below shows a slow rise since the low point in 2010 but fewer were seen in the autumn/second winter period of 2016 compared with the same period in 2015.

2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
10	10	19	18	4	5	11	14	15	18

Estimates of the number of individuals seen each winter, October to March

BLUE TIT *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Abundant breeding resident.

This very common species showed a small recovery this year but numbers are still significantly down on those of a decade or so ago, probably as a result of a succession of poor breeding seasons. It was present in all tetrads in the 2007-11 Avon Atlas.

Breeding A total of 2077 was recorded in the two BBS visits over a total of 184 squares representing 96% of those surveyed in the Avon area, and the survey indicates a modest increase of 5%. Nationally the BBS figures for England show an increase of 1% for the period 1995 to 2014, while the equivalent figure for the Avon area is -15%, and most of this decline has occurred over the last ten years. A succession of mild winters will have helped over-wintering survival rates but this has been offset by some poor breeding seasons.

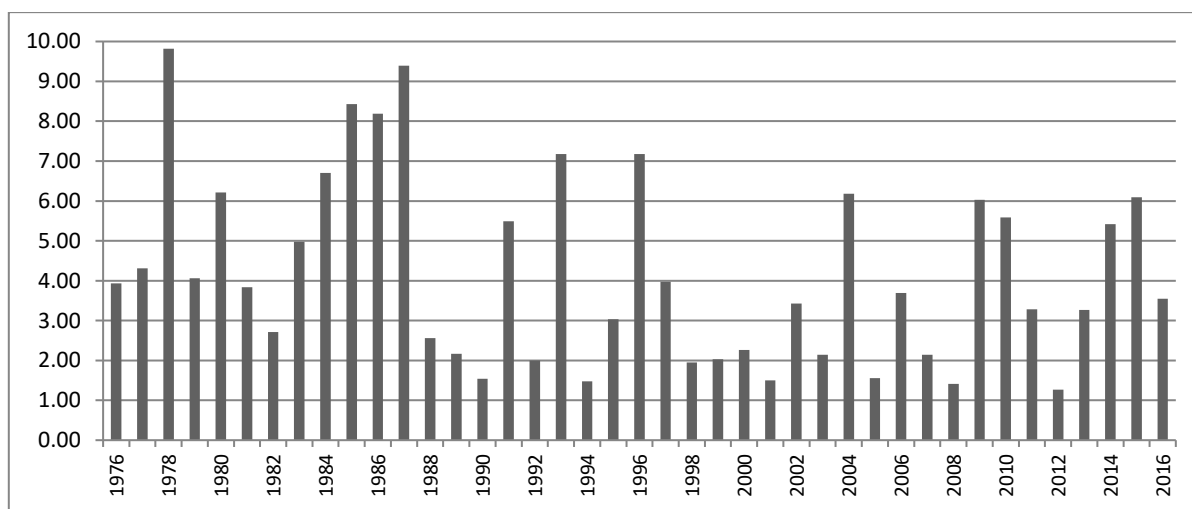
Blue Tit cont.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-24%	-17%	-9%	-3%	-8%	21%	-3%	-9%	-3%	0%	-6%	5%

BBS percentage changes

At CVL, of the 67 nests that were monitored 46 were successful, and an average of 5.6 young fledged from each successful nest. At Folly Farm there were 11 occupied nest boxes, of which only five produced fledged young, with an average of 4.6 young per successful nest.

The chick survival rate at CVL showed a marked deterioration over 2015. The chart below provided by CVRS shows productivity around the lake in the period from Aug. 1st and Dec. 31st in each year from 1976 to 2016. It was calculated by comparing the juvenile to adult ratio for individuals that were alive between August and December during this period. In 2016, 3.55 juveniles were recorded for each adult compared to 6.09 juveniles in the same period in 2015. This is a return to the level following the very cold spring in 2013, while still an improvement on the low point of 1.27 juveniles in 2012. It is evident that since 1987 there have been far more poor breeding seasons than good ones.



Productivity at CVL 1976 to 2016

Other records CABS shows a decrease of 22% over 2015 and a 39% decrease over ten years with the lowest reporting rate since the inception of the survey -- at 2.5 recorded per hour compared with an average of 10.6 in the first ten years of the survey from 1994.

It was present in all gardens in the WGS in the 2015/16 winter but the annual change in the average number per garden per week since 2014/15 was an increase of 14%.

GREAT TIT *Parus major* *Abundant breeding resident.*

This is a common species, which was recorded in all tetrads in the 2007-11 Avon Atlas.

Breeding A total of 1464 was recorded in the two BBS visits in 183 squares representing 96% of the total area surveyed. There was a small increase of 1% over 2015 (see table below) compared to a decrease of 2% in 2015 so that the species has not undergone any significant change in the past two years after a succession of poor years. At CVL, 37 of the 43 nests that were monitored were successful with an average of 4.9 young fledged from each successful nest. However, at Folly Farm only three out of seven occupied boxes produced fledged young, with an average of two young per successful box. Five pairs were noted at Weston STW.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-12%	-27%	-12%	6%	-10%	18%	-13%	0%	-8%	-7%	-2%	1%

BBS percentage changes

Other records The recording rate in CABS was up 31% in 2016 compared to 2015 (thus largely eliminating the decrease noted in 2015) although the ten-year figure indicates a decrease of 55%. The rate at which the species was recorded was the lowest since the inception of the survey at 2.5 per hour (compared to the highest rate of 5 per hour in 2005).

The species was recorded in 97% of gardens surveyed in the WGS in the winter of 2015/16 and the average number per garden per week increased by 24% over 2014/15.

COAL TIT *Periparus ater*

Fairly common breeding resident, probably also a passage migrant.

This species is widely but thinly distributed around our area. There was a large increase in the records for this species in 2015 and numbers remained above average in the first part of 2016.

Breeding The BBS recorded a total of 129 in the two visits over 49 squares which represented 26% of those surveyed. This compares to 85 in 45 squares also representing 26% of those surveyed in 2015. The numbers counted in the BBS are too small to make confident estimates of population change but judging from the number of squares in which it is recorded the breeding population is stable. Eight pairs were located around CVL during the breeding season compared to four in 2015.

The table shows the percentage of BBS squares in which it was recorded in the past ten years.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
32%	26%	30%	34%	27%	28%	24%	27%	26%	26%

Percentage of BBS squares in which this species was recorded

Other records A total of 342 records of at least 531 individuals was recorded in the first quarter of the year spread fairly evenly over the three months. This compares to 183 records of 285 individuals in the same period of 2015. After last autumn's influx there was a return passage in spring. In the Northwick Warth area this peaked with five on March 21st while six were noted at Sand Point on April 5th. In April as a whole there was a marked increase with 154 records of at least 270 individuals, largely from inland locations. One was still singing at New Passage on May 13th but not thereafter. Numbers fell off markedly in May with 64 records of 119 individuals, and thereafter continued to decline reaching a low point in July. They started to pick up again from August onwards. In the last quarter of the year there were 194 records of 262 individuals.

In the WGS for the winter of 2015/16 the species was recorded in all of the gardens surveyed compared to 73% in 2014/15. In their previous peak in the winter of 2002/03 they were recorded in 97% of gardens.

MARSH TIT *Poecile palustris*

[Red 3]

Uncommon breeding resident.

A locally and nationally declining species.

In 2016 this species was noted in 50 one-*km* squares (compared to 40 in 2015), including five BBS squares (four in 2015), although in total there were only 147 records this year (195 individuals) compared to 185 records (227 individuals) in 2015. This is a sedentary easily overlooked species and it is worth noting that in 26 of the 50 squares in which it was recorded in 2016 it had not been reported in the previous three years. It may be assumed that it is substantially under-recorded.

Marsh Tit cont. The species has experienced significant declines both locally and nationally in the past 20 years possibly caused by changes in their woodland habitat which are only poorly understood. The National BBS shows a decline of 35% for England in the period 1995 to 2014 but too few are counted in the BBS locally to provide a meaningful measure for the local decline. The highest number of squares in which it has been recorded in the BBS was 12. This figure was last reached in 2002 (7.5% of the squares surveyed that year) with 25 individuals. The table below shows the number of squares in which it has been recorded by the BBS in the past ten years.

A pair was at Ashton Hill Plantation on May 2nd and a pair was observed courtship feeding in Keed's Wood, on 3th, while one was seen carrying food here on 20th. Family groups were noted as follows: five including four fledglings at Winscombe on May 31st and four including two juveniles on Aug. 7th at Newton Park.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
BBS squares	7	4	5	9	3	3	6	5	4	5
% of area surveyed	3.8	2.6	3.1	5.2	1.7	1.8	3.4	2.8	2.3	2.6

BBS squares in which this species was recorded

Other records There were counts of five at Almondsbury on Jan. 28th, and at Compton Martin on April 16th. Most of the others were of one or two. The species was recorded visiting gardens in Banwell, Backwell, Chew Magna, Compton Martin and Clifton.

BEARDED TIT *Panurus biarmicus* (94, 15)

Very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor with the majority recorded from the extensive reedbeds at CVL, where breeding took place in 1991.

Descriptions required.

The only records came from the reservoirs.

First winter period At least four at CVL on March 25th, one seen well was a male (P J Burston).

Second winter period There were records from both CVL and BL, details as follows:

CVL – at least four were present, with records as follows: a female at Herriott's End on Oct. 3rd (K E Vinicombe), 8th and 15th (C Craig); a male here at 09.35 on 19th (A H Davis); four here, with a female photographed, on 22nd (I Stapp); a pair at Moreton hide on 26th with a female here next day (I Stapp); one on 30th; two by Stratford hide on Nov. 4th (K E Vinicombe) and 29th (A H Davis);

BL – one heard near Top End at 11.00 on Oct. 21st (A H Davis) with at least six seen briefly late morning on Dec. 13th (N R Milbourne).

The majority of local records come from CVL, with 74 of the 94 recorded between 1983 and 2015.

WOODLARK *Lullula arborea* (21, 1)

Very scarce late autumn migrant.

Descriptions required.

One record: one was sound recorded, but not seen, at an undisclosed site on July 13th (G Rabin).

The table below gives the numbers during the past two decades.

1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
0	0	0	0	1	0	7	0	0	4	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1

Individuals each year

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

[Red 3]

Common breeding resident in appropriate habitat, also a passage migrant and winter visitor.

A normal year.

First winter During January and February 1961 bird-days were recorded out of a total of 7351 for the whole year -- rather lower figures than in 2015 (3105 bird-days out of 8301). The highest counts were 150 at Marshfield on Jan.15th and 100 at Paulton on 11th. In contrast, in January 2015 a flock of 1000 was recorded also at Marshfield. At Weston STW the count of 81 on 23rd was the highest for the year but most other records were of small groups of fewer than 30 from a variety of coastal and inland locations. Song was first noted on Feb. 5th at Littleton Warth.

Spring Numbers fell somewhat in March with a total of 616 bird-days recorded. The highest counts were 50 at Paulton on 7th and 43 at Saltford on 6th. Numbers then appeared to stabilise with 686 bird-days recorded in April and 651 in May. However, there was no specific evidence of migration.

Breeding Season In 2016 a total of 670 was counted during the two BBS visits in 81 squares representing 42% of the squares surveyed. The species was reported from a total of 120 squares including the 81 that were surveyed by the BBS. Ten territories were noted at Weston STW.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-50%	-32%	2%	-13%	-10%	2%	-12%	1%	-22%	29%	-8%	1%

BBS percentage changes

Numbers decreased rapidly in June to 321 bird-days. Counts were almost all in single figures but 30 were noted at Marshfield on 6th.

Autumn passage Records dropped away sharply in July with only 88 bird-days and 132 in August. Numbers picked up again in the autumn and peaked in October with 1645 bird-days. Visible migration was noted from Sept. 22nd, mainly in single figures, continuing until the end of October with most heading NE. With the build up of records it is not always easy to distinguish between passage migrants and those that have arrived to over-winter. Inland counts included 155 at Saltford on Oct.14th and a flock of 34 at BG on 25th while numbers were stated to be building up in Marshfield on 17th - with '100s across the patch'.

Second winter period There were 859 bird-days in November and December, that is half the number noted in January and February but also significantly less than the 1479 bird-days noted in the same period in 2015. The highest count was 100 at Marshfield on Dec.12th.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

Fairly common passage migrant; local and uncommon breeding summer visitor.

An unusual year with large numbers recorded in spring, few breeding records and a very light autumn passage.

Arrival and passage The first report came from CVL, as usual, on March 13th, five days later than average: two were noted with five the next day. On the coastal strip the first were two at New Passage on the 16th. Numbers built up steadily with 26 at CVL on the 23rd, 100 on the 24th and 1050 on the 27th. There were 300 reported at BL on the 27th also. A summary is given in the table at the top of the next page.

Numbers tailed off but, on April 23rd, 2000 were over the dam at CVL – the day of the Bird Fair. In total, numbers were almost three times those recorded in 2015, see table on page 122.

Sand Martin spring data

	March		April			May	
	13 - 21	22 - 31	1 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 30	1 - 10	11 - 20
Bird-days	38	3280	5040	1360	2540	430	8
Max count	5	1050	1000	410	2000	200	6

Spring passage

Breeding The BBS counted 52 (63 in 2015) from two squares (1% of the total), a figure that is too small for any meaningful statistical inferences to be made.

Definite breeding activity was noted from only two sites, BG (as usual) and Feeder Road, Bristol, described by the observer as a traditional site. At BG a colony of 25 was reported on May 5th and subsequent days, and six active nests were recorded on June 22nd. At Feeder Road, Bristol, six were noted on May 15th so this may equate to one or two pairs. No reports were received from the Keynsham site, so the Avon total can only be estimated at seven pairs. Breeding was suspected at Batheaston and by the R. Avon in Bath.

1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
23	23	15	14	14	14	9	15	14	4	7	5	7	7	20	18	15	12+	11	7+

Estimate of the total number of breeding pairs 1997-2016

Autumn Passage Two at CVL on June 30th were followed by 105 on July 6th, the first definite indication of autumn passage and this figure was not surpassed during the remainder of the autumn. Indeed, the rest of the autumn migration was unremarkable: 40 at Pilning Wetlands was the highest coastal count, on 18th. Two at CVL on Sept. 29th and a single bird here on Oct.1st were the last of the year.

	July			Aug			Sept		
	1 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 30	31 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 29	30 - 8	9 - 18	19 - Oct 1
Bird-days	290	110	30	30	67	80	46	89	52
Max count	105	40	10	9	30	20	8	50	25

Autumn passage

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica**Common passage migrant and common breeder.*

Both spring and autumn passages were broadly similar to those of 2015.

Arrival and spring passage The first in spring was noted at BL on March 21st, an average date. Three were seen at Northwick Warth the next day and there were 24 at CVL on the 23rd. Most reports thereafter were in single figures and the first big count was of 60 at CVL on the 29th with 200 at BL on April 1st. There were many reports until mid-May, with 500 at CVL on May 2nd being the best count. However, see the notes on 'hirundine passage' on page 122. The best coastal count was 390 at Severnside on April 22nd. The table below summarises the passage, which was around 25% better than in 2015.

	April			May		
	1 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 30	1 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 31
Bird-days	1125	1820	2780	1560	630	500
Max count	200	350	390	500	70	35

Spring passage

Breeding The BBS counted 959 (1021 in 2015) from 132 squares, 69% of those surveyed and in line with previous years' surveys. The species breeds widely in farm buildings, stables and suitable open sheds in large gardens.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-4%	-48%	34%	-45%	10%	5%	-22%	25%	-24%	-4%	7%	-20%

BBS percentage changes

There were 21 successful nests at a farm near Winford, many of these being second or third attempts. This colony was regularly harassed by a Sparrowhawk and at least two nests were predated. The owners installed anti-hawk balloons in the two barns where the Swallows nested, and this appeared to reduce the number of visits into the barns by the hawk.

Autumn passage The first three-figure count was of 100 at CI-Y on July 19th. Inland 200 were reported at CVL on the 31st. The table below details bird-days and largest numbers recorded from Aug. 1st to Oct.19th. Numbers in this period were very similar overall to last year. Notable counts included 200 at Weston-s-Mare airfield on Aug.18th, 200 at Kenn on Sept.1st, and 130 at New Passage the next day. The largest count of the year was 850 at OPS on Sept.15th, 300 were at CVL on the 19th and 500 at Saltford, the largest inland record, on the same day. Also 350 were seen at OPS on 20th, after which late numbers declined rapidly, with the only three-figure count thereafter being 125 at Saltford on 25th.

The penultimate record was one at PWD on Oct. 31st and the last of the year was another at OPS on Nov.11th – three days later than average; see page 177.

	August			September			October	
	1 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 30	31 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 29	30 - 9	10- 19
Bird-days	310	1070	1220	1520	4100	1620	430	26
Max. count	60	200	100	200	850	350	48	5

Autumn passage

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum*
Common passage migrant and breeder.

[Amber 3]

The spring passage was similar to last year, but numbers were very low in the autumn.

Arrival and passage The first records were of single birds at New Passage and Tockington on March 14th, about a week earlier than average. The first double figure count was 20 at CVL on April 6th followed by 75 at CI-Y on the 11th. There were 100 at CVL on the 15th, 220 at Saltford, 150 at Sand Point and 165 at Severn Beach on the 22nd, followed by 250 here, the maximum spring count, on 24th. Smaller numbers were reported thereafter. The records are summarised below.

	April			May		
	1 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 30	1 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 30
Bird-days	112	460	1670	440	440	740
Max count	20	100	250	60	100	150

Spring passage

Breeding The BBS counted 564 (355 in 2015) from 61 squares, being a 31% distribution, a small improvement on the previous two years which were record low figures. The table below shows large declines from both 1994 and 2006, but the better numbers in 2016 have reduced the deficit a little.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-55%	-23%	76%	-42%	-17%	-5%	14%	13%	-38%	4%	-15%	35%

BBS percentage changes

Nests reported as follows (with nest counts): Abbots Leigh (two), Bath (Lidl) (one), Bickfield Farm, near CVL (nine), Clapton-in-Gordano (ten), Frampton Cotterell (one), Old Passage (nine), Sea Mills (six) and Severn Beach (four). There were two interesting reports from Keynsham of birds circling and flying close to a hot air balloon. Attacks by Hobbies were noted at Ubley and Frampton Cotterell.

House Martin autumn passage The passage began slowly and continued in the same vein, with the first three-figure count not being reported until Aug.15th. The best count was 500 (at OPS) on Sept. 21st, compared with 1500 (at CVL) in 2015, also 270 were noted at New Passage on Oct.1st. Counts of 150 at OPS on the 15th and 158 at Saltford on Sept.19th were the only ones in excess of 100.

There were 50 at Walton Down on Oct. 7th and then small numbers until the 18th when the last, a single bird, was at Marshfield. This is ten days earlier than the average last date.

The table below summarises the autumn passage. As can be seen from the second, general hirundine passage table, it was only half of the number recorded last year.

	July	August		September			October	
	21 - 30	31 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 29	30 - 8	9 - 18	19 - 28	29 - 8
Bird-days	195	400	750	670	1000	960	1630	600
Max. count	70	70	100	100	100	150	500	270

Autumn passage

A note on hirundine passage

Hirundine passage includes a large number of mixed species flocks. Estimating the proportions of these flocks is often difficult and a considerable number of records are received with a total of the flock size, but no indication of individual species counts. In 2016 the total birds reported in mixed flocks amounted to around a third of those noted with individual species counts. So in future observers are asked, where possible, to give at least some idea of the numbers present – for example, hundreds, thousands...; and also with mixed hirundine flocks some idea of the proportions – for example, about half-and-half, or mostly one species. This will enable the editors to obtain some idea of the total numbers passing through.

It has been estimated that the total Swallow passage through Avon, in both spring and autumn, is at least 50000 per year, and the records received, including an estimate for the mixed flocks, account for just under a quarter of this figure. The table below shows the summary data (excluding mixed flocks) for 2016 and the two previous years, spring passage was higher than in 2014 and 2015, whilst the autumn numbers were lower than for the previous years.

	Spring 2014	Spring 15	Spring 2016	Autumn 2014	Autumn 15	Autumn 2016
Sand Martin	8550	4300	12700	1820	2470	790
Swallow	7630	6760	8800	17600	10900	10300
H. Martin	2540	3700	3860	15150	12400	6200

Visible hirundine passage, 2014 to 2016

CETTI'S WARBLER *Cettia cetti*

[RBBP]

Uncommon resident. First definitely bred in 1995.

A steady recovery in numbers continues.

Reports of singing males were received on a regular basis from OPS (up to four, with juveniles noted in June), Severnside (at least three), PWD (up to eight), CI-Y (up to three) and Weston STW (estimated at six territories), not dissimilar to the previous year. Up to three were regularly reported from the Gordano Valley, and one or two were noted on many dates from the Strawberry Line, Yatton. They were also reported from Littleton Pits, a ringing site where a juvenile was ringed in July, indicating local breeding.

At CVL the population was estimated at 22 singing males, a rapid increase from the four only two years previously. Also at the lake 59 was ringed during the year by CVRS. Interestingly, 39 were female and 20 male, a 2:1 discrepancy. All the adult males caught in the first nine months of the year had previously been ringed at the lake, as were the majority, but not all, of the adult females. The 12 juveniles ringed between July and September, and presumably born at the lake, were equally split, male and female. In last three months of the year, there appeared to be either an influx of females (13 out of the 16 previously unringed), or some sort of comparative loss of the males, either moving away or dying. See opposite page 97 for a photograph of a nest with four eggs.

Away from the main sites, during the year reports were received from Avonmouth STW, Eastville Park, Keynsham STW, Pill, Saltford, Sand Bay, Sandford, Uphill and Wick St. Lawrence mostly just on a few dates at any one place.

The table below shows the number of singing males at CVL since 2000.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
10	12	14	18	15	17	22	21	21	28	31	14	6	3	4	14	22

Singing males at CVL

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus*

Common breeding resident.

Widely reported throughout the year with an apparently excellent breeding season.

WGS records came from 97% of surveyed gardens in the 2015/16 winter, well up on the previous winter, and indicating that currently this species is doing well. This was confirmed by the BBS survey where a total of 391 was counted over two visits, with the population showing a remarkable increase of 45% over 2015, as shown in the table below. The species was found in 101 squares representing 53% of those surveyed.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-27%	0%	26%	-9%	-2%	10%	-33%	1%	-25%	9%	0%	45%

BBS percentage changes

One at Litton Resrs. was still collecting nesting material on May 12th, while a family party of ten was seen in Stockwood on 19th, with other family parties reported late in this month, in early June and on into July.

PALLAS'S WARBLER *Phylloscopus proregulus* (1, 1)

Very rare vagrant.

Descriptions required.

One was watched for ten minutes amongst a flock of mainly Long-tailed Tits at about 07.40 on Oct. 23rd on the bank of the R. Avon at Saltford (J W Duckworth).

There is one previous Avon record, from Wain's Hill, CI-Y, in November 1996.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus* (42 since first in 1986, 9)

Scarce or very scarce autumn visitor; rare in winter.

Descriptions required.

A record year, the best to date, with at least nine individuals, seven in October as part of a national influx, and two in December; the ratio of coastal to inland being about one to two.

The details, in chronological order, are given on the next page.

Yellow-browed Warbler cont.

Aust Services – an elusive individual from Oct. 7th until 9th (M Hobbs *et al.*, photographed);
 CVRS – one trapped, ringed and photographed on Oct. 8th was retrapped on 16th;
 Weston-s-Mare – one seen and heard in Milton on Oct. 9th (P A Bowyer);
 CVL – an elusive individual on the Bittern Trail on Oct. 13th (M Davis *et al.*);
 Saltford – one seen for a couple of minutes at 07.40 on Oct.17th was heard calling about 75 minutes later (J W Duckworth);
 Severn Beach – one on Oct. 21st and 22nd (A D Scott *et al.*);
 Worle – one seen and heard in Plumley Park from Oct. 28th until 30th (A Hockey *et al.*);
 Bath – one at Weston Lock seen and heard on Dec. 2nd (J W Duckworth);
 Bristol – one in Eastville Park from Dec. 18th to 20th (L Sweetland *et al.*, photographed).

The table below shows the numbers recorded in each of the last 20 years. Five were seen in 1986, the first year they were recorded in the Avon area.

97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	2	2	5	0	1	3	4	1	5	6	9

Records each year

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

[Red 3]

Scarce spring passage migrant. Rare on autumn passage. Last bred in 1996.

Descriptions required for autumn records.

An encouraging upturn in records.

The first of the year was reported from Yate on April 19th and 20th, followed by one in Fishponds, one at Sand Point, and one at Weston STW, all on 21st. Another was at North Widcombe on 23rd, then there was a series of records from nearby CVL with two on 25th, one on 27th, one on May 3rd, one on 4th and another on 5th; these last three all noted at different parts of the lake. Two others occurred singly at OPS on April 30th and Saltford on May 4th. Assuming that they were mostly different individuals, the spring total comes to 13, the highest for over a decade.

Autumn records are extremely unusual, but this year there were two. The first was of one on Sand Point on Aug. 8th (P A Gregory) and then one was seen the next day in Ravenhill Avenue, Knowle, in the south of Bristol (P. Bryant).

The table below shows the numbers recorded on spring passage in each of the last ten years.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
5	3	7	8	2	7	8	6	5	13

Passage totals in spring each year

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*

P. c. collybita Common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor. Also an uncommon winter visitor, and therefore possibly an uncommon resident.

Wintering numbers were similar to 2015, and breeding numbers continue to creep up.

Although it is hard to estimate the total number wintering, at least 52 were noted at 20 sites in January, and 44 at 15 sites in February, similar numbers to the previous year. Waterside sites, including several sewage treatment works, were clearly favoured, but even urban habitats could hold an individual or two. The maximum on any one day at CVL was eight, while 16 were found in the extensive area around Saltford, where the River Avon must be an attraction.

From mid March sightings, although still in low numbers, started to become more widespread, seven at Weston STW on 19th, 12 at Litton on 27th and 20 on Sand Point on 31st indicating that migrants were starting to arrive in force. The largest numbers were in the first week of April with 40 at New Passage, 17 at Wain's Hill, CI-Y, 20 at Sand Point and 50 on Weston Moor, all on the 2nd, marking a notable arrival. Later it becomes hard to distinguish migrants from breeders, with widespread counts thereafter, but 50 at Aust STW on 11th, 20 at Sand Point on 12th and 35 at Littleton Warth on 13th would have included at least some still on the move.

The Avon BBS survey found this species in 166 squares, representing 87% of those surveyed, confirming the species' widespread distribution in the breeding season. The total counted over two BBS visits was 1317, the data indicating another small increase of 5% in numbers as shown in the table below.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
16%	51%	21%	8%	-6%	6%	15%	-5%	-25%	26%	6%	5%

BBS percentage changes

At CVL, which is surveyed on a regular basis, the number of singing males increased from 60 to 65, just below the 67 of 2014.

In the autumn, double-figure totals on several days between mid August and mid September from the ringers at Littleton Brick Pits indicated the main passage period, while at CVL the 11 trapped on Aug. 24th were laden with fat ready for migration. Numbers dropped in October, although 21 at New Passage on 2nd and 25 at Aust on 8th indicated movement was still on-going, and there were several double-figure counts to mid October. Thereafter, up to seven, although usually less, could be found at a wide scatter of sites with at least 35 individuals noted at 17 sites in December.

Siberian Chiffchaff *P. c. tristis* (56, 8)

Scarce or very scarce late autumn migrant and winter visitor, rare in spring.

Descriptions required.

Another excellent year with eight new individuals found. At CVRS, DNA from trapped birds again confirmed the identification, this time of four individuals.

First winter period Three remained from 2015 and there were three new, details as follows:

CVL – the ringed individual on the Bittern trail in December 2015 was seen again between Feb. 2nd and 22nd;

Chew Stoke STW – one present in December 2015 was joined by a second from Jan. 6th and a third from 13th, with all three remaining for the rest of the month (R Mielcarek *et al.*, photographed). Two were noted on Feb.10th with just one on 23rd;

Saltford STW – one present in December 2015 was heard singing again on Jan. 25th, watched calling on Feb. 5th and was seen on 24th, March 14th and April 2nd (all J W Duckworth);

Keynsham STW – one found on Jan.15th (R Palmer) was photographed on 28th (R Mielcarek) and seen again on Feb.18th (J Aldridge).

Second winter period Five were noted, details as follows:

CVRS – trapped individuals were confirmed from DNA samples taken on Oct. 23rd, 29th, Nov. 5th and Dec. 3rd, a photograph of the December individual appears opposite page 128.

Keynsham STW – one on Dec. 5th (J Aldridge).

Siberian Chiffchaff cont. The table summarises the totals seen over the last decade.

2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
1	1	3	2	1	3	2	8	5	8

Numbers seen in each winter during the past decade

This is a subtle subspecies where the plumage tones change with the angle of viewing and the light, so it is important to get a decent view. The identification paper in this Report for 2007 is an essential guide.

2005 – Two additional accepted records of single individuals have been noted, both from New Passage, on Feb. 6th and Oct. 9th (J P Martin).

Scandinavian Chiffchaff *P. c. abietinus* (0, 1)

Very rare vagrant.

Note that the English name of this subspecies is not standard, some authors use the term 'European Chiffchaff'.

A DNA sample taken by CVRS from one trapped and ringed at CVL on Dec. 3rd was confirmed to belong to this subspecies, see photograph opposite page 128.

This is the first confirmed local record of this subspecies (there are no valid criteria for identification 'in the field'). Its main breeding range is eastern and north-eastern Europe east to the Ural mountains where there is a 'intergrade zone' with the previous subspecies.

To put the record into context it is only the ninth genetically confirmed record for the UK, compared with 86 for the subspecies *tristis*.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

[Amber 3]

Common passage migrant and fairly common breeding summer visitor.

Good numbers in the spring, and appears to be stable in the breeding season.

This is a species where the early migrants are often seen well inland, and this year was no exception with the first two noted at Saltford and Thornbury on March 27th. The next were on 30th, one each at CVL and BL, with five the next day at Saltford, two at New Passage, and one each at Pill, Sand Point and North Widcombe. The main arrival was in April, with 15 at New Passage on 2nd, 20 at CI-Y on 4th and at least 50 at Sand Point the same day. There were 11 in Eastville Park on 7th, 27 at BG on 8th, 30 at Sand Point on 9th, 15 at Aust STW on 11th, 24 at CI-Y on 14th and 40 at PWD on 16th, these being some of the higher counts during the first half of the month, with mostly smaller numbers thereafter. A photograph taken on April 23rd of a rather 'grey' individual caught and ringed by CVRS appears opposite page 128, the species identification was confirmed by DNA analysis.

In May records came from about 30 different sites, indicating that they were reasonably well distributed, and from about 20 in June. BBS data showed presence in only 20% of squares, much the same as in 2015. At CVL, two singing males held territory, a welcome return after the blank the year before. Juveniles started to appear at several sites from the beginning of July.

Records were more widespread in August with 15 at Sand Point on 9th, nine caught at Littleton Pits on 13th and six seen at New Passage on 29th indicating movement. During September, numbers were down to ones and twos, the last few records coming from Little Sodbury on 20th, OPS on 22nd, Frampton Cotterell on 26th with a final sighting at Marshfield on Oct. 3rd.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*

Common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor. It is now also a fairly common winter visitor, most frequently recorded in gardens.

Lower numbers this year in both winter periods, but breeding numbers up.

Throughout the first three months of the year, reports mostly came from towns and villages, with daily counts of up to 13 in January and 10 in February and March being remarkably consistent throughout this period. In some gardens birds came to feeders virtually every day, up to four at any one spot, although at others visitors were more transient, some not appearing until March. The impression was of ones and twos in most places, and although the WGS recorded this species from 77% of all survey gardens, only slightly down on 2015, total numbers counted were almost halved. One was heard singing in Weston-s-Mare on Jan. 27th, but it was not until early March that song was more widely reported.

There were no obvious migrants in March until two appeared at Sand Point on 31st, but these were rapidly followed by an influx in early April with 18 counted on 1st, 31 on 2nd and 27 on 3rd and records from OPS, Littleton Brick Pits, New Passage, Weston STW, CVL and BL among other places where there had been few if any records earlier in the year. They rapidly became widespread from then on, but counts rarely made it into double figures at any one spot, and by mid-April they were well distributed at breeding sites, while gardens were mostly deserted by the end of the first week.

During the BBS survey, the species was found in 164 squares, representing 86% of those surveyed, slightly up on last year. A combined total of 1119 was counted over two visits, the data again indicating a slight increase of 7% in numbers as compared with 2015, as shown in the table below.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
63%	40%	11%	-11%	9%	20%	17%	-1%	-17%	17%	-11%	7%

BBS percentage changes

At CVL, 80 singing males were located, up again on the 69 in 2014 and 73 in 2015. One here on June 27th was heard mimicking a nearby Garden Warbler. The 35 counted at BL on May 20th was another impressive total. The first young were reported on June 15th from OPS.

Autumn departure was not particularly well marked, with 20 at Saltford on Aug.14th, 10 at OPS on Sept.1st, 33 at the Gordano Valley Ringing Station on 3rd, 20 at Littleton Pits on 7th and 19 here on 15th being the highest counts. Small numbers, one to four mostly, continued to be reported almost daily, both from the usual coastal and inland watchpoints but also widely seen elsewhere, right through to the end of November. The fact that they only appeared in gardens, and then just in ones and twos, from early December onwards perhaps indicates that food was still easily available in the wider countryside.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

Fairly common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

A typical year, but a relatively early departure.

The first of the year was recorded at OPS on April 13th, followed by two at CVL on 17th. The next day saw one at CI-Y, with single birds at Hanham and Severn Beach on 19th. The first records from Sand Point and BL occurred on 20th, and thereafter sightings became more widespread, although generally only in ones and twos. At least 27 sites reported this species in May, so it remains reasonably widespread, although not numerous enough for the BBS to provide reliable breeding data. At CVL, which is surveyed annually, 35 singing males were located, slightly down on the 38 in 2015; see table on page 130.

Garden Warbler cont. Migrants started to appear at coastal sites from early August with records from New Passage on 5th and Sand Point on 8th. In the second half of the month seen at Saltford (one on 17th and 26th), Gordano Valley Ringing Station (two on 29th), New Passage (one on 29th) and Weston STW (one on 31st). The only September record was at Saltford on 16th.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Fairly common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

A typical year, apart from a relatively early departure.

There were multiple arrivals on April 13th, with three at Weston STW, two on Chipping Sodbury Common, and one each at OPS, Littleton Warth, BG and Saltford. Seven were seen on 14th, with the Gordano Valley, Severn Beach and Tockington added to the list of sites, then nine on 15th including one at Sand Bay. Thereafter sightings became more numerous and widespread both inland and along the coast. Eight at OPS on 23rd was a good count, as was the same number at PWD on May 7th, although between one and four was a more usual total elsewhere.

This is a species for which there are not really enough data for the BBS to give reliable results but they were found in 18 squares, slightly down again on the previous year. At CVL two singing males were recorded, also down, by two, on 2015. Nevertheless, there were plenty of sightings from across the region during the summer, including from OPS, Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands, PWD, CI-Y, Chipping Sodbury Common, Batheaston, Cold Ashton, Shirehampton, the Gordano Valley and Yatton, so for the moment it appears to be holding its own as a breeder.

They continued to be seen at breeding sites through to Sept. 7th, but then there was a gap before the last were noted on 17th, with one at Saltford and four still present on Chipping Sodbury Common. The average departure date is Oct. 8th, so they were gone quite early this year, more so than in 2015.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

No great changes this year.

Arrival started on April 11th, with one at Anchor Head, Weston-s-Mare, and then one each at Sand Point and Weston STW on 12th. The next day saw single birds at OPS, New Passage, PWD and Stoke Park, with five at the first site on 14th, when there were also three in Bradley Stoke and one each at New Passage, Sand Point and Saltford. Thereafter records became widespread, although 14 at OPS on 23rd, 19 at Sand Point on 24th, 25 at OPS on May 3rd, 43 at Stockwood Open Space on 4th and 18 at Weston STW the same day were just some of several counts that indicated on-going arrival.

BBS surveyors counted a total of 337 over their two visits, the data indicating a small increase of 6% in numbers compared with 2015, as shown in the table below. The species was found in 100 squares, this representing 52% of those surveyed, slightly up on last year's figures.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
19%	-8%	5%	-16%	21%	10%	34%	-38%	-5%	28%	-27%	6%

BBS percentage changes

During the breeding season counts of singing males at regularly surveyed sites included nine at CVL, down one from 2015, but the 35 territories noted at Weston STW was well up. Elsewhere, between one and five pairs, occasionally more, could be found almost anywhere in the countryside, and it remains a reasonably common breeding species, despite some fluctuations year on year.

Because the coastal watchpoints are often also breeding sites, migrants as such are hard to distinguish, and small numbers continued to be seen regularly through to mid September. The last few records, all singletons, came from PWD and Chipping Sodbury Common on Sept. 17th, and from OPS and New Passage on 22nd, a slightly earlier departure than average.

DARTFORD WARBLER *Sylvia undata* (44, 3)

Formerly rare, now a scarce visitor. Has bred.

Descriptions required.

There was a series of records from Sand Bay and Point, involving at least three individuals as follows:

Sand Bay – one along Beach Road on Jan. 6th (P A Gregory, photographed) was joined by a second on 9th and both remained (many observers, photographed; see opposite page 129). There were three present at one stage but the last record was of a male photographed on April 20th. Another was photographed here on Oct. 11th and 12th, and Dec. 3rd;

Sand Point – one singing on April 9th (P A Gregory *et al.*).

The Avon area records for the past 20 years are summarised below.

1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
6*	2	2	3	0	1	2	1	9	5	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	3	3	3

Total annual records; * indicates a breeding record.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*

[Red 3]

Uncommon passage migrant; scarce breeding summer visitor.

Higher numbers during migration periods, but little evidence of breeding.

As in 2015, Sand Point recorded the first of the year, on April 3rd, with up to three noted here on seven dates through to 30th. Two were at Aust STW on 11th, with one at PWD on the same day. On 12th one appeared at Saltford, as did one at OPS, followed by one or two here on four more days to 29th. Other sites included Filton (one on 13th), Littleton Brick Pits (one on 16th and 17th), PWD (one on 18th), Severn Beach (one on 19th and 28th), CVL (one on 20th), CI-Y (one on 20th and 24th, two on 28th). Between May 1st and 10th, single birds were noted at New Passage, CI-Y, Sand Point, and in a garden in Bath.

The only site to record birds in June was Weston STW, where after two had first been seen on April 19th, one was seen or heard reeling on various dates through to June 21st. One reeling at OPS on July 3rd could also conceivably indicate breeding.

One heard briefly at Charlton Fields on July 31st was probably a migrant, but then there was a flurry of records starting with four juveniles trapped at the Gordano Ringing Station on Aug. 27th, with another four there on 29th. One was also caught at Littleton Pits on 27th, with another noted at Lower Woods on 29th, along with one the same day at nearby Chipping Sodbury Common. There was one at New Passage on 31st, with the only September records coming from PDW and the Gordano Ringing Station on 3rd, and one at the latter site on 14th.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Spring	32	29	67	74	105	53	52	44	29	49
Breeding season	11	4	6	6	0	1	4	4	2	1
Autumn	3	6	7	16	9	4	4	5	6	15

Avon spring and autumn passage bird-days and breeding season territories

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus**Fairly common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.*

A fairly typical year.

After one at CVL on April 2nd and another in the Gordano Valley on 3rd, there was a lull until two were seen at OPS on 10th. Weston STW reported its first sighting on 12th with three here the next day, but from 14th onwards records started to become more widespread, with New Passage, CI-Y, Yatton (Strawberry Line), Congresbury Moor and BL all soon added to the list of sites before 19th. Most records were of between one and four individuals, and all these places are known or potential breeding sites, with records continuing to come from them through the summer. Regular sightings also came from Littleton Pits, PWD and Newton Park. There was an apparent influx in early May, when eight were noted at Chittening Warth on 2nd, 17 at OPS on 3rd, 15 at CI-Y on 5th, ten at Pilning Wetlands on 6th, while one at Sand Point on 7th also indicated movement was still in progress.

At CVL 14 different singing males were counted, while 26 territories appeared to be occupied at Weston STW, well up on the 14 of 2015. The first juveniles were reported on June 19th at CVL, with two near Bath on 22nd. Ringing sites provided the bulk of records later in the season, with 19 trapped at CVL on July 30th, 13 at the Gordano Valley Ringing Station on Aug. 29th, and still ten at CVL on Sept. 4th. There were two at Pilning Wetlands on 20th and at Weston STW on 21st, followed by a trickle of catches at CVL through to Oct. 3rd. The last record was of one seen at CVL on 10th, four days after the previous latest date of 6th, in 2007.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus**Fairly common passage migrant and localised breeding summer visitor.*

A fairly typical year, apart from one late record in November.

There was no repeat of last year's mid-winter record, the first of the year being one in the Gordano Valley on April 3rd, some way ahead of the average first arrival date of recent years of 12th. This was followed by one each at CVL and the Strawberry Line, Yatton on 5th, one at PWD on 8th and one at each of OPS and Weston STW on 10th. After this multiple records started coming from these and other places including Littleton Pits, New Passage, CI-Y, Lawrence Weston, Salford and BL, all known breeding sites. At Weston STW, an estimate of 12 territories was made (nine in 2015).

By early June the ringers were starting to catch *pulli* at CVL and this continued until late July, with 401 ringed in all, followed by large numbers of fledgings thereafter. There were sightings from several of the breeding sites through to mid September, but subsequent records came only from the ringing sites at Littleton Pits, where the last was on 23rd, and CVL, with ones and twos until Oct.13th, and then a final bird trapped on the late date of Nov. 26th. This was, in fact, a retrap, having previously been ringed, in the nest, on July 2nd, 2015.

The table below shows the varying fortunes of the common warblers (except Reed Warbler) at CVL over the past decade.

Warblers at CVL

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Chiffchaff	38	38	45	57	73	83	48	67	60	65
Willow Warbler	7	9	3	0	6	1	2	1	0	2
Blackcap	35	45	49	47	70	76	66	69	73	80
Garden Warbler	27	29	37	40	58	46	51	44	38	35
Whitethroat	3	6	8	10	12	12	8	11	10	9
L. Whitethroat	1	1	4	2	6	2	3	3	4	2
Sedge Warbler	7	41	20	41	31	16	14	8	12	14

Counts of singing males by K E Vinicombe within the CVL perimeter using a standardised method

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*

Scarce irruptive winter visitor. Erratic locally with a big influx in winter 2004/05 and a smaller one in winter 2010/11.

Descriptions required.

Although good numbers were reported nationally during the second winter period there were only four records locally up to the year end. Details are as follows in chronological order:

Redland, Bristol – one seen on Northumberland Road on Nov.14th (M Hill) and again on 16th (R L Bland);

Worle – one photographed at the Summerhouse public house during the morning of Nov.19th (P Marsh);

Clevedon – one seen on Fairleigh Road on Dec. 5th (W Dommatt).

Records continued in early 2017 and a full analysis will be given in next year's Report. The table below gives details of previous winters when the species has been recorded locally.

	81/82	88/89	95/96	98/99	00/01	02/03	04/05	05/06	08/09	09/10	2010/11
B-days	6	1	c.75	3	c.107	c.42	10875	1	c.70	22	2897
Max. flk	3	1	5	1	6	2	377	1	14	20	112

Winters in which this species was seen in Avon

NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

Fairly common breeding resident.

Another very good year.

Breeding The BBS counted 105 from 51 squares (27% of the total surveyed), compared with 98 in 33 squares in 2015 (see the table below).

This can be an elusive species at times and the numbers recorded by the BBS are too small to provide a confident trend. However, the indications are that it is faring well. Since 1998 there have been records from 451 one-*km* squares and in 2016 it was recorded from a total of 157 one-*km* squares, 29 of which were new since 1998. As it is a sedentary species it is likely that breeding will have been at least attempted in a majority of these squares. The large increase recorded in 2015 (see table below) has been further extended but this is likely at least in part to be the result of the increased number of BirdTrack records. Three nests were recorded at CVL, of which two were successful with seven fledged, and three juveniles were first noted in a Banwell garden on June 6th.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
BBS Squares	30	18	18	32	28	30	39	29	33	51
% of area surveyed	16	12	11	19	16	18	22	16	19	27
Sq. with records	54	42	65	83	81	68	86	93	142	157
New sq. since 1998	13	6	22	31	23	32	38	36	34	29

Number of BBS squares and total of one-*km* squares in which this species was reported each year

There was a total of 1176 bird-days during the year.

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris*

Fairly common breeding resident.

Another very good year.

A total of 39 was recorded in the two BBS visits in 21 squares representing 11% of the total area surveyed. This compares to 27 from 17 squares in 2015 and is in line with the results from recent years. This is an elusive species that is easily missed on recording visits and numbers are too small to produce a trend.

Treecreeper cont. The species was noted from a record total of 118 one-*km* squares (including the BBS squares), 40 of which were new since 1998. This is a further considerable advance on previous years (see the table below) but as with the previous species it is likely that this is at least in part due to an increase in observer effort. The high proportion of squares where the species has not been recorded in the past 19 years is an indication that it is still a very under-recorded species. Ten singing males or pairs were noted at CVL. The table below summarises the records of this species over the past decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
BBS Squares	15	14	12	16	13	19	25	15	17	21
% of area surveyed	8	9	7	9	8	11	14	8	10	11
Sq. with records	41	36	44	57	69	71	72	65	97	118
New sq. since 1998	14	10	14	13	22	22	36	25	29	40

Number of BBS squares and total of one *km* squares in which this species was reported each year

The only nest recorded was at CVL where five young fledged successfully. Three juveniles were noted at Newton Park on July 7th, they presumably bred locally. There were no other confirmed breeding records.

Other records One noted at Sand Point on Oct.18th was an unusual record for this site. One was regularly noted in a garden in Banwell in January and December.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Abundant breeding resident.

A good year.

Breeding In the BBS a total of 4051 was recorded in 189 squares representing 99% of the area surveyed and an 8% increase over 2015 (see table below). This species, which can suffer badly in adverse weather conditions, is benefiting from the succession of relatively mild winters. Song was first noted on Jan.1st (Jan. 27th in 2015). In contrast CABS recorded a further 9% decrease over 2015 and shows a 52% decline over the ten-year period. The rate of 3.2 birds per hour was the lowest since this survey started and compares to a long term average of 8.0 since 1994.

There were 21 territories at Weston STW. The highest count was of 62 on a walk around BL on May 20th while 58 were counted in the vicinity of Backwell Lake on March 10th. The highest BBS count was 45 in a square near Easter Compton on April 25th. At CVL 20 nests were recorded, but of these six certainly failed and only nine were confirmed as successful with an average of only 2.6 fledged per successful nest.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
14%	37%	10%	3%	-3%	-2%	-7%	13%	-11%	18%	7%	8%

BBS percentage changes

In the WGS for 2015/16 this species was recorded in 100% of the gardens surveyed (compared to 98% in the 2014/15 winter) although there was a 9% decrease in the average number recorded per garden per week over the previous winter.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

[Red 3]

Still abundant breeding resident, declining rapidly; also passage migrant and winter visitor.

While impressive flocks can still be seen in winter there has been a considerable reduction in the wintering population while the breeding population has suffered a massive decline – one for England of 60% in the period 1995 to 2014 while the equivalent period in Avon has seen a decline of 80%.

First winter period At OPS, 6000 were noted going into roost at dusk on Jan. 29th. There were also counts on this site of 1000 on Feb. 6th and 1500 on 8th. The next largest counts were at CVL with 5000 noted on Feb. 12th, with 4000 on Jan. 25th, 3000 on 28th and 2000 on Feb. 23rd. However, as in 2015 most of the other larger counts (1000 plus) were in North Somerset but numbers were rather lower than in the same period in 2015. There were 1500 at Congresbury Moor on Jan. 29th and 2000 at Kingston Seymour on Feb. 12th. At CI-Y 1600 were recorded on Jan. 24th including a single flock of 1200 on one wet field. At Weston STW the maximum count in January or February was 520 (January) compared to 1600 (February) in 2015. A winter survey of the North Somerset Levels by the RSPB Weston-s-Mare Group recorded a total of 4775 over the winter of 2015-16 compared to 10805 in the previous winter but this was still their third best result for the species in the past ten years.

The WGS recorded them in 58% of gardens in the winter of 2015/16 compared to 60% in the previous winter and the numbers recorded were only marginally lower.

March At CVL 5000 were noted at the evening roost on 4th, but after that flocks quickly dispersed. Subsequently the largest numbers noted were 200 at New Passage on 5th, 150 at CVL on 19th and at Littleton Warth on 15th and 20th, and 120 at Newton Park on 20th. There was no specific evidence of migration.

Breeding season The BBS counted 1832 from 104 squares which, at 54%, is for the third consecutive year the lowest proportion yet recorded (58% in 2014). Before 2005 this proportion never fell below 80% and since 1994 the survey has recorded an 88% fall in numbers, the most substantial part of which has occurred in the past ten years and appears to be continuing.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-88%	-66%	-16%	-21%	-9%	1%	2%	-16%	-14%	7%	-22%	-9%

BBS percentage changes

Post breeding The first record of fledged young was on May 9th at Saltford. There were then numerous records of small post breeding flocks, mostly in suburban and coastal areas, including 40 in a Bishopston garden (with at least 30 juveniles) on 25th, 100 at CI-Y on 13th and 70 at Severn Beach on 23rd. After that numbers gradually increased with larger flocks, mostly at coastal sites - including 150 (mainly juvenile) at CI-Y on June 19th, 140 at New Passage on July 4th, 450 at New Passage on Aug. 22nd increasing to 500 here on Sept. 4th.

October Visible migration was noted from 9th when 13 were seen heading NE at New Passage. At Severn Beach 900 were heading NE on 21st and at New Passage 3200 also heading NE were noted in three and a quarter-hours of observation on 23rd. Migration was specifically noted up to 25th when 1000 were recorded heading NE at OPS in one and a half hours' observation. At Littleton a flock of 1000 were in a single field on 23rd and inland 700 were noted at Marshfield on 31st.

Second winter period The highest counts were from OPS, increasing from 1500 on Nov. 2nd to a maximum of 3500 on 23rd. Other high counts were of 3000 at CI-Y on Dec.16th and 2700 at Weston STW on Nov. 20th which was the highest count for the site in 2016. Inland 1000 were recorded at Marshfield on Dec.14th and at Kenn Moor on Nov. 23rd, and 770 were at Saltford also on 23rd. The best count at CVL was 600 on 19th. Also at CVL a pale creamy-brown leucistic individual was noted in the roost on 17th and 18th.

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus*

[Amber 3]

Uncommon breeding resident, present locally on all suitable streams and rivers.

A good year but less evidence of breeding was presented than in previous years and it is at present unclear whether this was a reflection of the actual breeding performance or a vagary of recording.

Dipper cont. The species was recorded from 41 sites which is a big increase over previous years (see table below) while the BBS recorded nine from four squares which is also a big improvement on the two from one square in 2015.

Breeding Nest building was noted at Snuff Mills (R. Frome) on April 5th. Probable breeding was then noted at Fishponds (R. Frome) on May 7th where a territorial individual was attacking a pair of Grey Wagtails and entering a probable nest site. On 20th a pair was noted attending young in a nest at Pensford (R. Chew) and juveniles were noted at Fishponds (R. Frome) from 23rd with three juveniles being seen on 25th. In addition they were present in the breeding season on the R. Avon at Lambridge and Freshford, the R. Boyd in Golden Valley, the Cam Brook at Dunkerton and Paulton; the Catherine Brook at Northend, the R. Chew at Chew Magna, Compton Dando, Keynsham and Publow, the R. Frome at Chipping Sodbury, Whiteshill and Yate, the Siston Brook at Willsbridge, and the Winford Brook at Lower Littleton.

Other records No records were received between June 21st (two at Compton Dando) and Aug. 14th (one at Lower Littleton on the Winford Brook). In the final four months of the year records were received from some additional sites - two at Radstock (Wellow Brook) on Nov. 12th, one at Hambrook (Bradley Brook) on 27th and 30th, one at Wraxall Moor (Land Yeo) on Dec. 27th and 28th, and one on the Blaise Castle Estate (R. Trym) on 31st. In addition between one and two were noted at Eastville Park on various dates between Sept. 6th and Dec. 29th.

The table below summarises the records for the past decade.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Bird-days	77	84	173	201	205	125	135	139	180	211
Sites	12	8	9	18	23	25	26	26	27	41

Total bird-days and number of reported sites

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*

[Red 3]

Scarce passage migrant, very scarce in autumn, mostly on or near the coast.

Spring passage numbers were similar to those of the past two years, but well below the recent average in terms of bird-days (the 2007 to 2015 average is 17), while the autumn passage returned to low numbers after last autumn's good showing. An estimated ten individuals were seen in April, and four between Oct. 9th and 11th; the table below puts this data into context, and the full details are given below.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Spring	8	20	2	4	9	20	12	64	10	12	10
Autumn	1	0	2	4	2	0	0	5	1	13	4

Spring and autumn passage, total individuals

Spring passage All sightings were in April as follows: the first was at OPS on 2nd (a male), three on the 3rd at Chipping Sodbury Common (one male), CI-Y (Wain's Hill) and Sand Point, and one again on 4th at Sand Point. Portbury Dock had one on the 11th. Another was seen at two areas in Dundry on the same day, and again on the 12th, with two at Sand Point also on the 12th. One at Over/Pegwell Wood (near Almondsbury) was seen twice on the 16th. The last sighting was at Cold Ashton on the 24th.

Autumn passage Recorded on just two days in October as follows: the first was one at Kingsgate Park, Yate on 9th, the earliest autumn record since 1990 when the current recording system began, and three were seen on 11th, a male at Battery Point (Portishead) and two at Sand Point.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Abundant resident, passage status uncertain.

First winter period The WGS recorded them in all of the gardens surveyed and there was a 9% decrease in the average number recorded per garden per week. On Jan.17th, 43 were seen at New Passage but most other records in January and February were of less than 20.

Breeding season In the BBS a total of 4740 was counted in 191 squares, which were all of the squares surveyed in 2016. A decrease of 1% was recorded which is statistically insignificant and appears to indicate that the population is stable. While the BBS records over the past ten years show a decrease of 5% the results since 1994 show an overall increase of 13%.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
13%	-5%	-1%	4%	-5%	-2%	0%	7%	-8%	7%	-5%	-1%

BBS percentage changes

Song was noted on Feb. 27th and nest building was recorded on March 6th but the first juvenile was not seen until April 15th. At Weston STW a total of 27 territories was counted. At CVL 25 nests were recorded but 19 of these failed and only three were confirmed as successful with an average of three young fledged per nest. This appears to support national data which indicate a poor breeding season for the species - the BTO's Nest Record Scheme and Constant Effort Scheme sites reported that the number of fledglings in 2016 was about 20% lower than the average for the previous five years.

There were no specific migration records in the spring but small numbers of probable migrants were noted at OPS from Sept. 20th. The highest figure was of 30 grounded here on Oct. 22nd.

Second winter period As in the first winter period, counts were mostly below 20 although 30 were counted at Narrowways in St Werburghs (Bristol) on Dec. 2nd and 38 were counted on a survey north of Queen Charlton on 3rd. There was some evidence of an increase at coastal sites at the end of the year with 30 noted at OPS on 30th and 33 at New Passage on the same date.

Other sightings The CABS shows an increase of 5% in 2016 but a decrease of 9% over ten years.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

[Red 3, 4]

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; can occur in large numbers in hard winters.

Large flocks were seen in January, but counts only rose above 300 again in December. Although caution is needed when comparing year on year bird-day statistics, the numbers in spring, at 11871, reflected the good autumn in 2015 when 11638 were counted. Total bird-days for the second winter period, at 9890, was down on those in 2015.

First winter period Bird-day numbers were highest in January, when over half for the period were recorded (see table below) and they were low in the first half of March when only 689 were noted. For the whole period flocks of 100 or more were seen at CI-Y, Frampton Cotterell, Kenn Moor, Ingst, Marshfield, OPS, Paulton, Saltford, Shirehill, Warmley and Yatton. Peak counts were recorded at both Marshfield (300 on Jan. 1st and 500 on 16th) and Frampton Cotterell (300 also on the 16th). The last were seen west of Nailsea (two) on April 8th, and Chipping Sodbury Common (four) on 21st, a week later than last year and the 25-year average first-winter period last date of April 16th.

	Jan 1-15	Jan 16-31	Feb 1-15	Feb 16-28	Mar 1-15	Mar 16-31	Apr 1-21
Bird-days	3075	3964	1315	1460	689	1317	102
Max count	300	500	200	170	70	200	25

First winter period

Fieldfare second winter period The first of the period were recorded on Oct.7th at two sites: Old Sodbury (12) and Thornbury (one). This date is two days later than the long-term average first-arrival date. Bird-day numbers peaked during the second half of November (see table below). Kenn Moor and Yatton had the most consistently high numbers, CI-Y 325 reported on Dec. 5th, and the highest daily counts were 595 on Nov. 20th (seven sites) and 600 on 23rd (seven sites). Bird-days totals were over 10% down on 2015. This data are summarised in the table below.

	Oct 1-15	Oct 16-31	Nov 1-15	Nov 16-30	Dec 1-15	Dec 16-31
Bird-days	106	1028	1246	3052	2646	1812
Max count	40	167	200	275	325	350

Second winter period

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

[Red 3]

Common breeding resident.

A normal year.

First winter period Song was reported from Jan. 5th with four noted at OPS and three at CVL on the same date, and it continued to be recorded through to July. In the WGS this species was noted in 35% of gardens compared to 53% in 2015.

Breeding season The BBS counted 796 from 160 squares, 84% of those surveyed, a distribution rate that has been remarkably constant over the past 20 years. There was a minor decrease of -2% over 2015 (see the table below).

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-6%	-12%	-9%	20%	-9%	2%	-14%	11%	-13%	6%	2%	-2%

BBS percentage changes

At CVL a total of 21 nests was recorded, and of these 17 failed and only five were recorded as successful with an average of 4.2 young fledged per successful nest. This is a similar story to Blackbird above and points to a very poor breeding season for the species and again this reflects national BTO data which show a 10% decline in fledglings produced and a significant reduction in productivity, measured by the ratio of juveniles to adults caught at Constant Effort Scheme ringing sites.

Migration This was reported in small numbers from Oct. 4th when 13 were noted at New Passage. Numbers recorded were typically in single figures but 25 were passing Aust on 8th and a further 25 at OPS on 22nd.

Second winter period All counts were of 11 (at Saltford on Dec. 31st) or less.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

[Red 3]

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Can occur in large numbers in hard winters.

Numbers were again not great in the first winter period but autumn numbers were much higher.

First winter period The total bird-days recorded was down slightly from 12863 in 2015 to 12318 this year, but commensurate with the autumn count of 13873 in 2015. Although numbers were consistent with January and February 2015, there was a steep drop in early February 2016. The only large flock (over 250) seen during the whole period was of 400 at Congresbury Moor (as in 2015) on Jan.19th. The last was recorded at CVL on April 20th, only one day earlier than the latest since 1990 (when the current counting system began), of April 21st in 2012. The following table summarises the data.

	Jan 1-15	Jan 16-31	Feb 1-15	Feb 16-28	Mar 1-15	Mar 16-31	Apr 1-20
Bird-days	2472	2824	1149	1831	2078	1952	12
Max count	150	400	100	133	175	125	3

First winter period

Second winter period The first was noted at Kingswood on Oct. 3rd, five days later than average. Numbers grew consistently reaching a peak of 6519 in the second half of November, much higher than last year, with a total of 23,585 bird-days. However, there were no remarkable days like last year when 3262 were recorded on Oct. 15th. Counts of 765 and 730 were noted on Severnside during migration watches, and there was a count of 1000 at BL on Christmas Eve. Saltford recorded five counts of 380+ with one of 600 on Nov. 20th. Congresbury Moor and CI-Y both had counts of 400. Altogether there were 21 counts of 250+. These data is summarised in the table below.

	Oct 1-15	Oct 16-31	Nov 1-15	Nov 16-30	Dec 1-15	Dec 16-31
Bird-days	1973	2376	3876	6519	4539	4302
Max count	765	730	465	600	400	1000

Second winter period

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

[Red 3]

Uncommon breeding resident, and passage migrant.

This species has been subject to significant declines in the past 20 years both nationally and locally. In England the decline has been calculated as 40% for the period 1995 to 2014. It is, however, still a widespread species with over 1500 bird-days recorded from 177 sites across the Avon area with most records being of ones and twos.

Breeding season The BBS counted 86 from 46 squares which was 24% of the total surveyed. The numbers recorded are too low to make confident estimates of change. The table below shows the numbers recorded in the BBS over the past ten years and the numbers of squares in which it was recorded, which may be a better indicator of change for this species. By way of comparison, in 1996 127 were recorded in the BBS in 43 squares which was 48% of the squares that were surveyed in that year.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. recorded by the BBS	97	99	72	78	64	73	61	71	90	86
BBS Squares	49	45	41	41	37	43	36	37	41	46
% of area surveyed	27	29	26	24	21	26	20	21	24	24

BBS squares in which this species was recorded

Song was noted from the start of the year up to April 5th. Nest-building was reported in St Andrew's Park, Bishopston on March 20th and five young were noted in the nest on April 24th. Nesting was also recorded in Redland while an adult was seen carrying food at New Passage on April 30th and newly fledged young were seen at Spaniorum Hill, Easter Compton on June 3rd. Four pairs were present in the vicinity of CVL, but no other records of breeding were received

Other records From July onwards post-breeding flocks were noted, the largest of which were 30 at Kenn Moor on 31st, 30 at Newton Park on Sept. 9th and 45 at Ashton Court on Oct. 7th. Numbers were higher than in 2015. Migration was noted between Oct. 8th and 26th with 20 at Aust on 8th and 16 here on the 13th heading east. At New Passage 15 were recorded on 20th but the few counts from other sites were all in single figures. One at Weston STW on Oct. 25th was only the fourth site record. Song had recommenced by Nov.10th.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

[Red 3]

Uncommon passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

Spring passage, the breeding season and autumn passage were all normal.

Arrival The first of the year was reported at CVL on April 20th (the earliest record for the period from 1990) followed by the main passage from May 6th when 14 individuals were recorded at Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands, Sand Point, Weston STW, Saltford and BL. Three at BL on May 29th completed the arrival giving a May total of 43. This compares with 15 in May 2013, 53 in May 2014 and 22 in May 2015.

In June and July breeding was proved at BL and Folly Farm (two were also proved in 2015) with probable breeding at Marshfield, Newton Park and CVL. There were no BBS reports, last year there were three reports involving three birds.

Departure In August, 85 bird-days were reported from 24 widespread sites including family parties noted at Newton Park, Folly Farm and Paulton. The last record was on Sept. 24th at Saltford a few days earlier than average. The corresponding figures for 2014 and 2015 were 94 and 73 bird-days, respectively.

The table below puts the 2016 data into context showing that the species is holding its own at the present time.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Bird-days	58	98	97	100	81	92	114	164	131	141
June / July records			18	15	14	10	26	18	27	25
June and July sites			14	11	10	9	16	12	13	12

Total bird-days, and breeding season records and sites where available

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula**Abundant breeding resident.*

This common species was recorded in every tetrad in the 2007-11 Avon Atlas and there is no reason to doubt that this has changed.

Breeding season The BBS recorded a total of 2662 in the two BBS counts from 187 squares representing 98% of those surveyed and a modest increase of 4% was noted. Nationally the BBS has recorded a 21% increase for England in the period 1995 to 2014 while the equivalent figure for Avon is an increase of 23%.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
32%	13%	7%	9%	2%	-12%	-6%	11%	-1%	2%	-2%	4%

BBS percentage changes

At CVL the first egg that was known to have been laid was on April 1st. Nine nests were recorded here of which five were successful, with an average of 4.2 young fledged per successful nest, further evidence of what was a poor breeding season for many species. Away from CVL no other records were received of confirmed breeding until an adult was seen carrying food on April 24th. The first juvenile was not recorded until May 13th. These late dates may, however, simply be the result of breeding activity for this common species being under-reported.

Over the whole year CABS counts showed a welcome increase over 2015 -- the counts per hour increasing from 6.7 to 8.3. However, they are running 30% below the rate for 1994 which is in marked contrast to the BBS which shows an increase of 32% for the same period.

Other records In the WGS this species was again recorded in all gardens surveyed but the average number per garden week of observation was at 1.2, an 8% decrease on the previous winter. There was a build up of sightings along the coast from October with evidence of some movement including 31 at Northwick Warth on 2nd and 35 at Aust on 8th. At OPS the maximum number recorded in October increased to 23 from two in September while at Weston STW the maximum count in October was 27 (the highest of the year) compared to six in September.

NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos*

[Red 3, 4]

Very scarce breeding summer migrant, and scarce or very scarce passage migrant.

With no breeding records for a second successive year we must conclude that this species is extinct as a breeder in our area, see table below.

There was one record: a spring migrant, on the morning of May 1st at Kingston Seymour, CI-Y.

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
8	6	5	3	3	4-5	5	1-4	1	0	0

Estimate of number of pairs attempting to breed each year

Due to its current scarcity, from the beginning of 2017 this species has been added to the list of those that require descriptions. (*Eds.*)

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*

[Red 3]

Uncommon passage migrant, scarce in autumn, and rare summer visitor; bred in 1988.

There was a better than average spring passage, 19 records from 12 sites, with Sand Point producing the most sightings. Records are of unsexed individuals unless stated and all records are listed as follows:

The first arrival was a male at BL on April 9th with another male the next day at Sand Point. The following week saw almost daily single records from Compton Dando, CI-Y, Clapton Moor, PWD, Warmley Forest Park and Yate Common. The first definite female was at Walton Common on 26th and again on May 1st with another at Sand Point on 6th. Two (a male and a female) were noted at CVL (Sutton Wick) on 5th, and another two from the Axe Estuary on June 9th, were the highest counts.

The autumn passage was average: one at Wickwar on Aug.14th, one at Middle Hope on 24th, and one trapped at the Gordano Valley RS on Sept.18th.

Average numbers over the 20-year period for the data in the table below are 12 (spring) and three (autumn), so this was another species with a showing slightly above average in 2016.

97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
3	15	4	20	18	22	1	7	14	22	2	22	1	8	12	7	30	3	9	19
6	1	4	2	6	2	3	1	12	0	1	0	2	3	0	0	3	0	2	3

Spring (second row) and autumn (third row) passage numbers recorded per year

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*

[Red 3]

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant. Rare in summer; has bred recently.

The above average total of 98 bird-days recorded (the average for the past decade is 72, see table on the next page) includes a number of individuals noted on several dates, and an estimate of the number involved is 24. No reports of breeding were received.

Black Redstart cont.

1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
27	33	45	111	88	63	125	71	34	52	98

Annual bird-days

First winter period A total of 24 bird-days was recorded from the following five sites between Jan.1st and March 13th: OPS, Portishead, Clevedon, Weston-s-Mare and St. Werburgh's (Bristol). In general these were single individuals, apart from records from Clevedon (two on Jan. 17th and 18th), OPS (two on Feb. 9th), and Portishead (two on March 12th).

Second winter period First reported on Oct. 25th at Pilning Wetlands (female or first-winter) and Weston-s-Mare. Following this ten sites produced a total of 74 bird-days up to the end of the year, they were: Bristol, Clevedon, Congresbury, OPS, Portishead, PWD, Sand Point, Severnside, Weston-s-Mare and Yatton. On Nov. 14th three were reported from Royal Portbury Dock (two female and one male). There were regular reports from OPS, Clevedon, and Weston-s-Mare throughout the period.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

[Amber 1]

Uncommon passage migrant.

Spring passage numbers were again well above the latest ten-year average while there was also an above average autumn passage compared with data over the last decade.

Spring passage The first arrivals were seen on April 2nd (an average date) at Chipping Sodbury Common, Dundry, and Sand Bay. There were then almost daily records until May 3rd with 22 seen on April 11th including 10 at PWD, these sightings are summarised below.

	Apr 1-10	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-10
Bird-days	45	83	22	4
Max count	6	10	2	1

Spring passage

Autumn passage The number of bird-days was down on last year's passage but still above the ten-year average. The first to return was at Chipping Sodbury Common on July 3rd with a steady flow through July and early August. From mid to late August Chipping Sodbury Common again provided many of the records with a maximum of nine on Aug. 29th. The last seen were one on Clifton Downs on Sept. 21st and a juvenile on 30th at Severn Beach. The records are summarised below.

	July 21-31	Aug 1-10	Aug 11-20	Aug 21-31	Sep 1-10	Sep 11-20	Sep 21-30
Bird-days	6	6	28	48	9	8	2
Max count	2	2	7	9	3	2	2

Main autumn passage

The final table puts the 2016 records into context over the past two decades. The 2007-16 averages are 70 and 67, so the species is doing well but these increases are at least partly accounted for by better recording procedures over the past few years.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Spring	31	18	26	28	24	37	138	136	59	86	154
Autumn	30	16	20	17	29	78	18	71	130	183	105

Bird-days recorded on spring and autumn passage each year

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

[Red 3]

Uncommon passage migrant.

An excellent spring passage was followed by a good autumn passage, both exceeding the ten-year average by 60% in terms of bird-days, although sightings were slightly down on those of 2015. Little data was provided regarding sexing and ageing of those recorded.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Spring	46	31	24	18	37	34	89	58	36	88	84
Autumn	123	33	127	88	92	77	44	114	273	309	230

Bird-days recorded on spring and autumn passage each year

Spring passage The first was seen on April 13th at Chipping Sodbury Common (a week earlier than average) and then almost daily until May 9th. The last was at CI-Y on 24th. A peak record was noted on April 20th with 23 bird-days from eight sites – four coastal and four inland, and there were two notable single site maxima: Gordano Valley – seven on April 20th, and CVL – five on 25th. The next table summarises the data.

	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-10	May 11-20	May 21-25
Bird-days	26	35	22	0	1
Max count	7	5	4	0	1

Spring passage

Autumn passage A total of 230 bird-days was recorded, with the first at Clapton Moor on July 24th. The main passage commenced on Aug. 7th with steady, almost daily, records until Oct. 3rd. There was one further record after this date: eight on Chipping Sodbury Common on Oct. 7th. The five sites which produced daily totals of more than five as listed below:

OPS – Sept. 10th and 11th (six);

Weston SWT – Sept. 6th (six);

Chipping Sodbury Common – Aug. 29th; Sept. 8th, 14th, 15th, and 22nd; Oct. 2nd and 7th (12);

Kenn Moor – Sept. 8th (seven);

CVL (Herons Green) – Sept. 15th (six).

The last table summarises the records for the main autumn passage period.

	Aug 1-10	Aug 11-20	Aug 21-31	Sep 1-10	Sep 11-20	Sept 21-30	Oct 1-10
Bird-days	5	11	41	70	54	21	25
Max count	3	2	12	8	10	9	10

Main autumn passage

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata*

Uncommon winter visitor, passage migrant, and scarce breeder.

Breeding was suspected at five sites but no proof of breeding was received, and counts recorded throughout the year were very similar to 2015; this is shown in the table below.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Jan. – Feb.	44	55	51	22	17	30	22	35	93	94
Breeding pairs	7	15	2	2	3	0	0	0	1	0
Nov. – Dec.	63	69	50	16	19	29	50	72	89	83

Summary of data for the last decade: number of successful breeding pairs and counts of individuals in the winter periods

First winter period In January and February an estimated maximum of 94 individuals (average for the past ten years 46) generated 391 bird-days from 26 sites, 13 of them coastal. Sites that recorded more than four individuals on any one day were: OPS, CI-Y, Sand Bay, Marshfield and Easton Compton. There were six days with bird-day counts of 15 or more: Jan. 6th (16), 13th (16), 16th (15) and 23rd (17); Feb. 16th (16) and 18th (15).

Spring passage Bird-days recorded in March totalled 151, lower than in 2015 (203). Only one count greater than six was recorded – eight on 6th at Chipping Sodbury Common. In April, 61 bird-days were noted with the last on 30th at Felton Common. The passage is summarised on the next page.

Stonechat cont. Spring passage data

	Mar 1-10	Mar 11-20	Mar 21-31	Apr 1-10	April 11-20	Apr 21-30
Bird-days	59	47	45	16	32	13
Max. count	8	4	4	3	6	3

Main spring passage

Breeding season As noted above no proof of breeding was received, the evidence we have is as follows. A pair was first noted at Weston STW on March 24th and then with two juveniles on June 4th; further records on July 26th and 28th suggest a second brood. At Felton Common a pair was noted on April 4th, 24th and 30th with two families present on July 3rd. Another pair was observed at Sand Point on May 3rd and again on June 1st with two juveniles. A further record from Sand Point on Aug. 5th of a pair with two newly fledged from a second brood. Records of a juvenile from OPS on June 27th, July 2nd and 27th may indicate a possible local breeding record.

Autumn passage Excluding possible/probable breeders, bird-days recorded in July were just three and in August also three. The September and October records are summarised in the table below, as with the spring passage counts were similar to those in 2015. Sites recording more than seven were: Sand Bay (eight on Oct. 11th and nine on 14th) and OPS (eight on 15th and nine on 22nd).

	Sep 1-10	Sep 11-20	Sept 21-30	Oct 1-10	Oct 11-20	Oct 21-31
Bird-days	2	8	32	117	121	113
Max. count	2	2	5	6	9	9

Main autumn passage

Second winter period A total of 415 bird-days was recorded from 25 sites, seven of them coastal, involving an estimated 83 individuals (the average for the past ten years is 54). Sites that recorded more than four on any one day were: OPS, Northwick Warth and Marshfield. There was a notable series of records from five sites, listed in day count order: CVL (39 days), OPS (29 days), BL (19 days), Stoke Park, Bristol (12 days) and Newton Park (11 days).

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Fairly common passage migrant, mainly on the coast and at traditional inland sites.

Both nominate O. o. oenanthe and O. o. leucorhoa (Greenland Wheatear) occur and both are probably common migrants, albeit hard to distinguish with certainty in the field.

A much smaller spring passage than has been normal over the past few years was followed by an excellent autumn passage; see the summary tables below.

Spring passage The first arrivals were at OPS on March 20th ten days later than the long-term average first arrival date. Records were then on an almost daily basis with two high bird-day counts in April: 2nd (75) and 20th (78). There were counts of more than 14 from CI-Y (15 on March 30th, 18 on April 14th, 30 on 20th, and 23 on 23rd, and 17 on May 3rd), Sand Bay (18 on April 2nd), and Dundry (26 also on 2nd). The first table below summarises the main spring data.

	Mar 20	M 21-31	A 1-10	A 11-20	A 21-30	M 1-10	M 11-20	M 21-31
Bird-days	2	90	120	231	78	66	8	2
Max count	2	15	26	30	23	17	1	2

Spring passage

The BBS counted 13 from nine squares which is 4.7% of the total number of squares surveyed.

Autumn passage With a count of 852 bird-days, this was the best for at least 30 years. The first autumn migrants were at CI-Y and Sand Point on July 11th. From Aug. 7th onwards records were on an almost daily basis until Oct. 18th with a further three records until Nov. 8th: Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands (one on Oct. 21st), Chittingen Warth (one on Oct. 25th), and CI-Y (one on Nov. 8th).

There were 22 days with bird-day counts of over 15: Aug. 24th (43) and 29th (34), Sept. 1st (34), 6th (34) and 23rd (40). The highest site counts were from New Passage (25 on Aug. 24th), Axe Estuary (18 on Sept.12th), Marshfield (20 on Sept. 23rd), and Cl-Y (15 on Oct. 3rd, 16 on 5th and 11 on 12th). The following table summarises this data.

	Jul	Aug			Sep			Oct		
	21-31	1-10	11-20	21-31	1-10	11-20	21-30	1-10	11-20	21-31
Bird-days	4	13	29	175	206	124	136	111	52	2
Max ct.	1	3	5	25	12	18	20	16	11	1

Autumn passage

The relationship between the spring and autumn passage counts varies widely. Presumably in part this variation reflects the success, or otherwise, of the breeding season suggesting that 2016 was a good year for breeding. The table below shows how these counts have varied over the past two decades. The spring and autumn averages for the past decade are: 921 and 623, respectively.

	1997/06 Av.	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Spring	669	450	496	418	296	980	2273	1920	728	1037	599
Autumn	503	332	670	495	482	842	617	624	767	546	852

Spring and autumn passage bird-days each year

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

[Amber 3]

Abundant breeding resident.

A normal year. This species, which was recorded in every tetrad in the 2007-11 Atlas, remains widespread and common and may be encountered anywhere in Avon. The population is stable albeit subject to fluctuations as a result of adverse weather.

Breeding In the BBS 1124 were counted in 176 squares representing 92% of the squares surveyed. There was a further increase of 5% (see the table below).

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
4%	-10%	-6%	-3%	1%	8%	-3%	1%	-10%	-5%	4%	5%

BBS percentage changes

Song was noted from Jan. 5th. At CVL, 15 nests were recorded of which seven failed and only five were recorded as successful producing an average of 2.6 young per successful nest.

Other records In the WGS this species was recorded in all of the gardens that were surveyed, while the average number per garden increased to 1.26 per garden week, an rise of about 8%.

The species is not one that occurs in flocks and larger counts relate to walks around a district, the largest being of 40 around Backwell Lake and the Nailsea area on March 10th. In the BBS, which involves a two km walk, a count of ten or more was recorded in 14 squares.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

[Red 3]

Abundant breeding resident.

This species suffered massive declines in the last quarter of the 20th century and the BBS figures for England show a decline of 17% in the period 1995 to 2014. However, it has fared relatively well in Avon and remains a very common species being the sixth most abundant species in the BBS in Avon. Flocks of 40 were noted at New Passage on Feb.14th and at Cold Ashton on March 28th. In the Backwell Lake and Nailsea area 179 were counted on 10th - the highest count of the year.

House Sparrow cont. A total of 3349 was recorded in the two BBS visits in 128 squares representing 67% of the total area surveyed, 19 of these visits produced counts of 40 or more. A further small decrease was experienced which marks the fourth consecutive negative year for this species. However, the past three years have seen a decrease in each case of only a statistically insignificant 2% so that it is difficult to judge how much real change is taking place.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
12%	2%	-1%	1%	-2%	1%	11%	9%	-10%	-2%	-2%	-2%

BBS percentage changes

Other records In the WGS for the winter of 2015/16 this species was recorded in 68% of gardens surveyed, compared to 67% in 2014/15. This compares to the winter of 1975/76 when it was recorded in 96% of the surveyed gardens. An average number per garden per week of 4.5 was recorded in 2015/16 which was an increase of 4% over the previous winter.

In the second half of the year there were 56 counts of 40 or more from 11 locations. The highest was 78, again in the regularly counted Backwell Lake and Nailsea area. Other relatively large counts included 64 at Horfield on Sept. 2nd, 57 at New Passage on July 17th, and 50 at Lower Knowle on Sept. 2nd.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

[Red 3]

Very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Now probably extinct as a breeding species.

There was only one confirmed record this year -- an individual coming to a garden feeding station with House Sparrows in Chew Magna on Feb. 26th, it was seen well for five minutes. This is the worst year yet for this species (see the table below).

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Bird-days	5	2	5	8	8	2	4	13	9	1
Sites	3	2	2	1	5	1	2	2	3	1

Bird-days and sites recorded each year

Due to its current scarcity, from the beginning of 2017 this species has been added to the list of those requiring descriptions. (*Eds.*)

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

[Red 3]

Uncommon passage migrant and very scarce breeding summer visitor.

Both spring and autumn passages were good with welcome increases in bird-day counts – 330 and 544, respectively.

Spring passage The first arrivals were on April 11th at: Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands (four), PWD (three) and CI-Y (two), just a few days later than average. There were then almost daily records until May 13th with a further seven records to June 15th.

Three sites recorded more than ten: Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands (16 on April 15th, 17 on 22nd, 15 on 23rd, 15 on 24th, and 11 on May 10th), Severn Beach (11 on April 22nd) and CI-Y (28 on April 18th and 11 on 20th). The next table summarises the spring counts.

	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-10	May 11-20	May 21-31
Bird-days	120	131	54	18	7
Max count	28	17	11	5	2

Main spring passage

Breeding No definite evidence was submitted, and the BBS counts were low -- single birds in two squares. On the other hand a few records were received during this period as follows: Marshfield (one on May 17th), CI-Y (two on 24th), Sand Point (one on 24th), Severn Beach (one on 24th), Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands (one on 27th), PWD (one on June 7th) and Tormarton (one on 15th).

Autumn passage The return passage began at Northwick Warth on July 6th, and then it was almost daily until Sept. 25th. The last record was of one on Oct.1st at BL. The autumn peak was from mid August to mid September with notable counts from: Northwick Warth/Pilning Wetlands (20 on Aug. 17th) and Sand Point (40 on Aug. 26th and 25 on 31st, Sept.1st, 2nd and 11th). The following table summarises the autumn counts from all sites, counts have been fairly similar since 2010.

	Jul 11-20	Jul 21-31	Aug 1-10	Aug 11-20	Aug 21-31	Sep 1-10	Sep 11-20	Sep 21-30
Bird-days	41	44	43	79	142	133	51	5
Max count	18	6	13	20	40	25	25	2

Main autumn passage

The final table, which summarises the spring and autumn records for the past two decades, puts the 2016 records into context. These were significantly higher than the 20-year average for both spring and autumn passage, which were 132 and 264, respectively.

	1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Spring	72	49	131	118	78	62	59	121	67	125	86	164	25	42	165	439	203	198	98	330
Autumn	91	88	273	188	279	72	132	386	160	125	156	102	147	404	258	278	723	534	343	544

Bird-days for spring and autumn passage over the past two decades

Blue-headed Wagtail *M. f. flava* (11, 1)

Rare spring passage migrant.

Description required.

One record: a male was at Pilning Wetlands from April 17th until 24th (B Thompson *et al.*); see photograph opposite which shows that this individual had a somewhat weaker pale supercilium and slightly darker ear coverts than is often the case.

The most recent record was of one at Severn Beach in April 2008 with three others since 2000.

We have previously published records of females of this subspecies, see the 1991, 1996 and 1999 Reports. Recent research of the literature suggests females cannot reliably be identified to subspecies and so those previous records have now been removed from the statistics.

Channel Wagtail *M. f. flava x M. f. flavissima* (4, 1)

Rare spring passage migrant.

Description required.

'Channel Wagtail' is the name given to intergrades between Blue-headed and Yellow Wagtails which occur in the UK and coastal areas of Western Europe, especially northern France. It typically shows a paler almost lavender blue crown and ear coverts with a larger white subocular area and often more white on the throat compared with typical Blue-headed. A male of this form was found on Northwick Warth at 07.00 on April 14th, see photograph opposite.

This hybrid subspecies was recorded in 2013 at BG and 2014 at New Passage, with a 'possible' on Severnside in 2009. Re-examination of the notes relating to a male at Northwick Warth in May 1993, and published in the 1993 Report as showing features of both the *flava* and *beema* subspecies, indicates that it also fits this intergrade rather well, and so has now been accepted as such.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

[Red 3]

Fairly common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Another good year.

A total of 2147 bird-days (including BBS records) was recorded during the year at 174 locations - see table below. This compares with 1590 bird-days and 162 locations in 2015. While much of this increase must be accounted for by increased observer participation it would seem to confirm that, at the least, the species is holding its own comfortably. Most records were of ones and twos with some family groups during the breeding season.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total bird-days	126	173	256	174	119	144	189	149	171	282	164	200
Coast bird-days	28	11	21	12	15	9	10	23	45	57	20	22

Total bird-days, and bird-days recorded at coastal locations

First winter period and spring migration January commenced with an increased level of sightings over the end of 2015 and numbers built up quite rapidly to a peak of 256 bird-days in March (146 bird-days in March 2015). Numbers started to fall again in April and reached a low point for the year of 119 in May. Counts at coastal locations were highest in January (about 22% of records) and then fell reaching a low point of nine bird-days in June. There was no evidence of migration - only 12 bird-days were recorded at the coast in April. The highest counts were of 12 at Paulton STW on March 2nd and ten at BG on 19th.

Breeding In the BBS a total of 38 was counted in 18 squares which compares to 32 in 14 squares in 2015 (see table below). The numbers recorded are too small to provide a reliable trend but do indicate that the species has recovered from the low point experienced in 2010 after a hard winter. Evidence of breeding was noted at 11 locations. The first juvenile was seen at Chew Stoke on April 30th and the last record was of adults feeding a juvenile at Sea Mills on July 24th. Family parties were noted as the season drew to a close including 12 at BL on 25th and ten at BG on 29th. As in previous years the species withdrew from the coastal locations in the breeding season (see the table above) although a nest with young was noted at Pilning Wetlands on May 6th.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
No. counted	38	25	23	14	16	16	18	38	32	38
Squares	20	12	13	9	10	11	10	15	14	18
% surveyed	10.7%	7.7%	8%	5.2%	5.8%	6.6%	5.7%	8.4%	7.4%	9.5%

BBS squares in which this species was recorded

Autumn migration and second winter period Numbers recorded increased from September and peaked at 282 bird-days in October. In contrast to the spring there was also a marked peak in records from coastal locations which increased from ten bird-days in July to 57 in October. It seems likely that some of this increase is attributable to migration although only ones and twos were actually noted as such. Numbers fell back again in November but ended the year with 200 bird-days recorded in December compared to 96 in December 2015 and 126 in January 2016.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba***Pied Wagtail** *M.a. yarrellii**Common breeding resident, winter visitor, and passage migrant.*

A normal year. Reports from 228 one-km squares were received from a wide variety of locations - urban, coastal and rural - most in single or low double figures.

First winter period A total of 3835 bird-days was recorded during the first three months of the year compared to 4536 in 2015.

Five counts over a hundred were recorded: 130 at Saltford on Jan.1st, 105 at Nailsea on Feb. 3rd, 200 at Bristol International Airport on 13th, 300+ at Severn Beach on March 23rd and 200+ at New Passage on 28th. BL with 67, Paulton STW with 55, and OPS with 50, were the only other sites to record 50 or more.

Spring passage Counts in double figures continued to April 22nd with 20 at Paulton STW the last. CI-Y had 50 on 11th and Northwick Warth, which saw most of the migration, had 60 on 14th. The highest count at CVL was 30 on March 30th. There was no evidence of any migration after April 22nd.

Breeding A total of 148 was recorded in the two BBS visits from 70 squares representing 37% of those surveyed in the Avon area. This compares with 119 in 49 squares (28% of those surveyed) in 2015, so shows a 10% increase over 2015 (see table below). Nationally the BTO has recorded a 10% increase in England between 2014 and 2015 while over the same period the Avon area has shown a 25% increase although these numbers are at the low end for producing a reliable trend. Breeding evidence was recorded from OPS, Compton Dando, BG, CVL and BL. At Hengrove juveniles were recorded again on Aug.16th as in 2015.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
19%	36%	38%	4%	-12%	1%	-17%	1%	-27%	26%	24%	10%

BBS percentage changes

Autumn passage Numbers began to increase across the Avon area from July, with the best numbers at CVL of 29 and 31 on the 7th and 8th, respectively. Later in the month Northwick Warth had 40 on 15th and 70 on 24th; 70 roosted at CVL on 19th. The largest count was of 134 at Weston STW on Sept. 2nd. Two other 100 plus counts were: 105 at CVL on Oct. 3rd and 100 at Farrington Gurney for a week from 8th, both on newly ploughed fields. The highest number observed migrating was 12 at New Passage on 13th. After mid-October it was difficult to distinguish passage migrants from those that have arrived to over-winter.

Second winter period There were 2939 bird-days during November and December, similar to 2015. The coastal areas were relatively quiet with 70 present at OPS on Nov. 4th, and 47 at New Passage on Dec. 24th. Several roosts were recorded with a maximum of 250+ at the South Gate Shopping Centre in Bath on Dec.13th, a popular site throughout the winter. Other inland large counts included: 200 at Blagdon on Nov. 22nd, 185 at Weston STW and 100 at CVL (Moreton), both on Nov. 4th, 100 in Bristol City Centre on 17th, 85 at Paulton STW on Dec. 18th; and 70 plus were noted at Winford Manor on Oct.16th, Bath University on 28th, and Marshfield on Nov.14th.

White Wagtail *M. a. alba* *Uncommon passage migrant.*

The 2016 spring passage was not only the highest in the last 20 years, but well over double the previous record of 277 in 2013, with 654 bird-days. A total of 517 of the records came from one area, Severnside, with some probably staying for several days; the autumn passage was slightly above average, but lower than in most recent years

Spring passage There were three March records with the first a single bird at CI-Y on the 21st, two days later than last year, one was at Northwick Warth on 28th and four at CI-Y again on 30th. In April single birds were recorded on the 1st and 4th. Daily sightings began on the 6th, with double figure counts at Northwick Warth on every day between 11th (16) and 26th (15), bar the 22nd (seven), and there was a maximum of 73 on the 14th, all-together totalling 471 bird-days. The remaining spring records came from PWD (nine, max. four on 11th), CI-Y (87, max. 16 on 11th), Marshfield (five, max. three on 29th), BG (11, max. two on 10th and 18th) and CVL (19, max. four on 7th), and with records of ones from Sand Point (four dates), Frampton Cotterell (16th) and Churchill (20th). The last in spring were single birds at CI-Y and Sand Point on May 13th.

White wagtail cont. The spring total, 654, has increased the average since 1997 from 75 to 84.

	Mar 19-31	Apr 1-10	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-13
Bird-days	6 (2)	41 (16)	483 (188)	102 (29)	22 (19)
Max count	4 (1)	7 (5)	73 (27)	15 (9)	7 (4)

Spring passage with 2015 data in brackets

Autumn passage As usual this passage was much lighter than in spring with 19 bird-days in total (eight records received). This total was just above the average since 1997 of 17. No reports were received in August, and only two in September; three on the 12th at Northwick Warth and one on the 22nd at Portishead. The October sightings occurred between the 3rd and 9th with five at CVL on the 3rd, three at North Widcombe on the 4th, four at BL on the 5th and single birds at Northwick Warth and PWD on the 9th. There were no sightings from CI-Y, Sand Bay, Marshfield or BG, regular sites for this species in the past. The last record came with one on Nov. 2nd from PWD, a late 'last date'.

	Sep 12	Sep 22	Oct 3-9	Nov 2
Bird-days	3	1	14	1
Max count	3	1	5	1

Autumn passage

The last table puts the 2016 records into context by showing the long-term variation in numbers.

	1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Spring	67	144	81	51	34	46	29	64	81	34	43	64	67	39	59	67	277	95	252	654
Autumn	12	7	2	7	2	4	11	74	24	9	7	15+	6	5	43	32	26	15	31	19

Bird-days for spring and autumn passage each year

BLYTH'S PIPIT *Anthus godlewskii* (0, 1)

Very rare vagrant.

Descriptions required.

The first record for Avon: initially seen briefly on Dec. 14th and 18th (N R Milbourne) it was finally seen well by a number of observers on the 19th when the identification was confirmed. It was present until 30th although it became increasingly elusive towards the end of its stay. [BBRC].

See page 164 for an account of this record and opposite page 152 for some photographs.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

[Red 3]

Uncommon passage migrant and very scarce breeder.

Spring passage numbers fell again, to below the ten-year average of 73. In autumn numbers were close to those recorded for the previous two years, and was again higher than the ten-year average. See the summary table at the end of this entry.

Spring passage The first of the year was at Sand Point, on April 3rd, three days earlier than in 2015. There was a gap between the 4th and 10th but thereafter there were sightings on most days until May 8th, after which records became more irregular. The highest count was five on three dates, one from Severnside and the other two from Sand Point. Passage continued until the 24th, a late date when one was at Severn Beach. This data are summarised in the first table below.

	Apr 1-10	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-10	May 11-20	May 21-30
Bird-days	5	30	9	15	3	1
Max count	3	5	2	5	2	1

Spring passage

Breeding Records were confined to single birds on three days between May 24th and July 3rd. Again no breeding evidence was reported and it appears to retain the flimsiest of toeholds as a breeder in the Avon area.

Autumn passage This too was very similar to last year with just one more bird-day. The first record was on Aug. 4th and there were regular reports until 18th, then more sporadic records until the last on Sept.14th. Ten at Sand Point on Aug.16th was the best count.

	Aug 1-10	Aug 11-20	Aug 21-31	Sept 1-10	Sept 11-20
Bird-days	5	19	8	2	3
Max count	2	10	2	1	1

Autumn passage

The final table shows how this species has fared during the last decade but it should be noted that the recent good series of counts is at least in part as a result of better coverage at the main site – Sand Point.

	2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
Spring	55	48	25	33	44	119	118	120	87	63
Autumn	25	23	12	35	30	15	51	40	36	37

Total number of passage individuals each year

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

[Amber 3]

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Uncommon breeding species, mainly on the coast.

A fairly typical year but with larger numbers in autumn than in 2015.

January and February During this first winter period a total of 1224 bird-days was recorded. This is just over half the number for 2015, but very similar to the 2014 total. The highest counts came from Salford with a maximum of 56 and five other counts of 45 or more. No large flocks were reported from coastal sites, with 45 from CI-Y on Jan. 24th being the best.

Spring Passage Numbers in March were higher than they were in 2015, but then they dropped off significantly during April – see the table below which summarises the records received in 2016 compared to 2015.

	Mar 1-7	Mar 8-15	Mar 16-23	Mar 24-31	Apr 1-7	Apr 8-15	Apr 16-23	Apr 24-30
Bird-days 2016	47	1183	1223	554	273	646	259	24
Max count 2016	15	700	175	200	80	255	60	4
Bird-days 2015	278	312	1056	254	2976	1334	1056	24
Max count 2015	100	63	200	40	788	450	210	9

Spring passage

A total of 115 at CI-Y on March 11th was the first evidence of migration and there were 50 at OPS the next day. An impressive 700 at Northwick Warth on 14th was the highest count during this period and numbers during April were generally much lower with 255 at CI-Y on 11th the best count. Numbers inland were low with 50 at Chipping Sodbury Common on April 16th being the best.

Breeding season The species is mainly a coastal nester in low numbers. There were records in May and June from sites along the Severn, with two recorded singing at New Passage, from where most records emanated, on July 4th. Most records were of between one and four, but there were nine at Sand Point on June 1st and 20 at Aust Warth on the 18th, perhaps including some of this year's young.

Meadow Pipit autumn passage The autumn passage was stronger than in 2015, particularly between mid-September and early October. As in previous years the majority of records came from coastal sites but there were regular counts in excess of 100 from Saltford, with a maximum of 150 on Sept. 23rd. Other notable inland records came from CVL, 130 on Oct. 3rd, with 79 at BL on 12th and 75 at Lower Gurney Farm, near West Harptree, on 4th.

The largest overall count was of 350 flying south west at New Passage on Sept. 30th. As with the spring passage the table below summarises the data and gives a comparison with the 2015 data.

	Sept 1-7	Sept 8-15	Sept 16-23	Sept 24-30	Oct 1-7	Oct 8-15	Oct 16-23	Oct 24-31
Bird-days 2016	63	197	634	1077	1667	1327	666	427
Max count 2016	32	25	150	350	210	145	120	120
Bird-days 2015	66	287	381	283	574	1240	518	564
Max count 2015	12	150	130	35	100	292	80	100

Autumn passage

November and December There were 1837 bird-days, an increase from the 2015 figure of 1279, but lower than the 2014 figure; 50 at BL and 40 at Paulton recorded during the first week of November were presumably late migrants, as numbers then dropped until 80 were noted at CI-Y on 16th. A count of 50 at Newton Park and a similar number at Marshfield were the best subsequent inland records and the only three-figure count was of 105 at CI-Y on Dec. 16th.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*

A. p. petrosus - Uncommon breeding resident on the coast. Fairly common and more widespread as a coastal passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce inland on spring or autumn passage.

Another typical year.

First winter period and spring passage There was a total of 263 bird-days in the period January to March, with 12 at Royal Portbury Dock (PWD) and single figure counts at OPS, Littleton Warth, Severnside, Chittening Warth, Portishead, CI-Y, Sand Point, Weston-s-Mare and Uphill.

Breeding season Breeding was recorded at Anchor Head, Weston-s-Mare and Wain's Hill, CI-Y. There were regular reports from PWD during the breeding season and the highest number, eight, was recorded here on July 5th.

Autumn passage and second winter period The first report inland was of two at CVL on Oct. 10th. Two at Sea Mills and a single bird at BG were the only other inland records. The sites recorded in the first winter period were re-occupied with the best count of seven being recorded at Littleton Warth. There were only 76 bird-days in November and December, less than half of the comparable figures for 2014 and 2015.

Scandinavian Rock Pipit *A. p. littoralis* (13, 1)

Wintering Rock Pipits are assumed to include an unknown proportion of this subspecies, some of which become identifiable in spring.

Descriptions required.

One videod at OPS on March 22nd (P J Hazelwood).

Other than a colour-ringed individual, all local records of this subspecies have been reported between the beginning of March and mid April when they are in summer plumage.

WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*

[Amber 5]

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant primarily to CVL and the coast.

A very poor year, with no records at all in the first winter period and low numbers in the second.

Second winter period There were no records until two at CVL on Nov. 17th, one on 25th, two again on 28th, and then from Dec.14th seen regularly (maximum three) to the year end. The only other records came from Severnside (just three bird-days) and finally one seen at BL on Dec. 31st.

The table below summarises the data for the past decade.

	2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
CVL max.	5	7	6	20	2	1	3	1	1	3
Coastal	6	7	7	5	10	28	14	11	16	3
Other inland	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Maximum counts at CVL and estimated numbers at coastal and other inland sites each winter

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla**Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant, although numbers vary considerably from year to year.*

Another year with very few sightings.

During the first winter period, a pair coming to a garden feeder near the lake at Blagdon, from Jan. 8th to March 6th and joined by a third on Feb.11th and 14th, were the only regular sightings. These were also seen close to the lake (BL) during the period. Other records came from New Passage, Marshfield, Saltford, Montpelier, Yate, Compton Dando, Burnett, Portishead, Banwell and Worle mostly just one or two on an irregular basis, although there were up to 12 in Saltford on a few dates between January and March, and ten at Burnett on March 12th. One appeared at CVL on 5th, and again on 29th and 30th, with two here on April 12th the last spring record.

The first autumn record was one at Saltford on Oct. 3rd, followed by up to four on Severnside on eight dates from 9th to 25th. One or two were noted from CI-Y (19th), Sand Point (20th, 25th), Saltford (22nd) and OPS (23rd, 26th). November records came from CVL (1st), Saltford (3rd), PWD (4th), New Passage (15th) and Timsbury (21st), all singletons until two at CVL on 29th and three on 30th. The only December record was one in a Bristol garden on 21st.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs**Abundant breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Breeding numbers still dropping slowly, and a thin autumn passage.

The largest flock noted in the first winter period was of 650 at Weston STW on Jan.16th, breaking the previous site record of 172 by quite some distance. Other three-figure counts came from Paulton (120 on 4th), OPS (130 on 15th), Marshfield (100 on 20th), Saltford (134 on 24th) and Holts Down, Bath (150 on Feb. 27th). Elsewhere, there was a wide scattering of small group and garden sightings (the WGS showed a slight drop in numbers), and most had dispersed by the end of March. A count of 64 at Severn Beach on 14th was the only significant indication of migration at this time.

During the BBS survey, the species was found in 161 squares, this representing 84% of those surveyed, not very different from the previous two years. A combined total of 1436 was counted over two visits, the data indicating another drop of 7% in numbers as compared with the previous year, this is shown in the table below.

Chaffinch cont.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-56%	-45%	-5%	-1%	-15%	1%	-10%	4%	-11%	-6%	-6%	-7%

BBS percentage changes

The reasons for the decline are still unclear although the disease *Trichomonosis*, which has had such a devastating impact on the Greenfinch population, is a prime suspect. Moreover, this decline is not evenly spread. Until 2010 the Bristol population appears to have been in step with the rest of the region but from 2011 it has experienced an accelerated decline resulting in a large decrease of 84% over the past ten years. One might speculate that there is a higher concentration of bird feeders in the city, perhaps increasing the spread of the disease here. By excluding Bristol a more modest reduction in numbers of 25% is indicated for the rest of the region. The number of occupied squares in the City has also fallen, from 100% of those surveyed in 2008 to 45% in 2016.

Single-figure counts from a wide range of sites was the general picture through the summer months to the end of September. A count of 50 at OPS on Oct. 8th marked the start of autumn migration, with 155 counted at New Passage on 10th. At nearby Aust Cliff 1030 were counted on 12th, 510 on 13th and 326 on 14th. Numbers at other coastal sites were in no more than double figures at this time. There was another flurry starting on 22nd with 270 at Aust Cliff, 1785 at New Passage on 23rd and 400 at OPS the same day. On 25th, there was a further good movement with rough estimates of 2000 over New Passage and 1000 at OPS, while Wain's Hill recorded 365 the next day and 725 on 28th. Thereafter, just a few were on the move to mid November.

No large flocks were noted in the second winter period, with 60 each at CVL and Easton-in-Gordano on Dec.11th the highest counts from a widespread scattering of small groups.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* (90 since 2003, 1) [Red 3, 4]
Scarce to rare winter visitor and passage migrant, formerly bred.
 Descriptions required.

One record at Saltford where one flew out of a small copse calling on Oct. 3rd (J W Duckworth).

The table below summarises the records for the past decade, it shows a very varied picture. This species was much commoner formally, see the historical note in the 1986 edition of this Report.

2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
2	1	41	0	2	3	12	3	0	3

Number of individuals seen (July to June)

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* [Amber 3]
Fairly common breeding resident.

A typical year.

As usual, this species was widely reported, mostly in pairs or small groups, on an almost daily basis. OPS was particularly favoured, with up to a dozen throughout the year. Elsewhere, similar sized groups were noted from Saltford, Congresbury Moor, Warmley Forest Park and Stockwood Open Space, mostly in the winter months.

During the BBS survey, the species was found in 57 squares, this representing 30% of those surveyed. A combined total of 133 was counted over two visits, the data indicating an increase of 27% in numbers as compared with the previous year, this is shown in the table below where the pattern of fluctuations from year to year is very evident. At CVL, eight pairs were counted, up on the five in 2015, but down on the 11 in 2014, remarkably similar to the BBS picture shown below.

BBS data.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-47%	-17%	4%	10%	-15%	17%	-5%	4%	-35%	16%	-23%	27%

BBS percentage changes

In the autumn the 11 noted at New Passage on Oct. 23rd was the only count from coastal watchpoints during this period indicating possible movement. Elsewhere, numbers were not significantly different from those of the rest of the year.

GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris*

Common breeding resident, passage migrant, and winter visitor.

Still widespread, but numbers continue to decline.

Although widely reported throughout the year, numbers at any one spot were rarely into double figures. For instance, 15 at OPS on Jan. 2nd, 25 at a pre-roost gathering in Bishop Sutton on Feb. 21st, and 20 at Buckland's Pool, Nailsea on March 10th were among the highest counts in the first three months of the year, apart from 43 moving past New Passage on March 14th, the only evidence of any migration in the spring. The WGS reported a drop in occupancy from 77% to 71% over the previous winter, and there were several reports of this species as an unusual visitor to gardens.

During the BBS survey, the species was found in 126 squares, this representing 66% of those surveyed, down from the 75% the previous year. A combined total of 558 was counted over two visits, and as the table shows, there was a significant drop in numbers as opposed to the slight increase in 2015.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-59%	-75%	-20%	-33%	-2%	-12%	-26%	11%	-5%	-6%	1%	-26%

BBS percentage population changes

There were a few counts of up to 25 from OPS, New Passage, CI-Y and Saltford between Oct. 9th and the end of the month, perhaps flocks on the move, but few if any counts into double figures thereafter, just small numbers widely scattered, with no obvious pattern of occurrence.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*

[Red 3]

Common breeding resident, passage migrant, and winter visitor.

Last year's apparent increase in the breeding population was not maintained.

In addition to counts of up to 50 at several places in January and February, there were three-figure counts at Avening Green (260 on Jan. 9th), Elm Farm, Burnett (300 on 16th), Huntingford Mill (100 on 20th), Weston STW (180 on 23rd) and Marshfield (800 on Feb. 3rd). Numbers were lower in March and April, although there were still 140 in fields near Thornbury on March 29th, 100 at BL on April 8th, while 215 at Weston STW on 11th was the site's highest count of the year.

Spring migration was not particularly obvious, with 60 at CI-Y on April 20th, the same number at Severn Beach on 22nd, and 21 at OPS on 23rd, and small numbers elsewhere at this time indicating the main period of movement.

During May and June, the picture was of small numbers, widely distributed. The BBS survey found the species in 65 squares, this representing 34% of those surveyed, much the same as in 2015 although the combined total of 398 counted over two visits was somewhat down on last year's 449, reflected in the 20% drop in numbers indicated in the table below. This could be seen as a 'correction' to the remarkable increase of 80% in 2015. As the table shows, numbers have fluctuated quite widely over the years, with an overall downward trend both locally and nationally.

Linnet cont.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-50%	-11%	-38%	169%	-54%	22%	7%	22%	-35%	-22%	80%	-20%

BBS percentage changes

In July and August parties of up to 40 or so started to form, larger gatherings being 120 at New Passage on Aug. 3rd, 85 at Littleton Warth on 14th, 180 at Salford on 15th and 110 on Backwell Common on 24th. Visible migration along the coast was not particularly marked, although 100 at OPS on Sept. 17th and 140 at Pilning Wetlands the same day were good counts during the autumn period.

By Sept. 23rd there were 100 at Marshfield with 700 here on Nov. 30th, the highest of several three-figure counts here towards the end of the year. Other high counts in the last three months of the year included 200 at Stanton Wick on Oct. 8th, 136 at Salford on 12th, 130 at Compton Dando on 17th, 173 at Weston STW on 25th and 100 at Easton-in-Gordano on 30th. Otherwise it was a picture of scattered groups of up to 60, the coastal fringe being, in general, the more favoured habitat.

LESSER REDPOLL *Carduelis cabaret*

[Red 3]

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; scarce in summer. Records received as 'Redpoll' are included in this account, and so a few may actually refer to Common Redpolls.

Only present in small numbers, and none in the summer.

In the first winter period, Salford was the only area reporting on a regular basis, with monthly maxima of five in January, 12 in February, 25 in March, 49 in April and seven in May. Otherwise records came from a scattering of sites such as OPS, PWD, Keynsham, Warmley Forest Park, Wickwar, CVL, BL and Paulton among others, but only in very small numbers, with 20 in Newton Park on Jan. 11th and ten at Tockington on March 7th the only double-figure counts. One at Sand Point on 23rd was the first of a few coastal records of odd birds on the move through to mid April, with 25 here on 21st, then up to 50 on both May 7th and 8th. Otherwise, 12 at Northwick Warth on 5th was the only other evidence of much movement at this time, with just odd single birds at other coastal sites. Four at Sand Point on 17th were the last in spring.

Apart from five at PWD on July 21st, the next record was of one from OPS on Oct. 4th, with up to four here and on Severnside, CI-Y, Sand Point, CVL and BL to the 22nd when 65 were counted passing over Aust Cliff, the highest total anywhere during the year. Eight at OPS the same day, 13 in the Gordano Valley on 23rd and 54 at Salford on 26th indicated a small influx at this time. But from then on to the end of the year only one to six could be found at spots such as New Passage, Sand Point, Bishopston, Coalpit Heath, Sea Mills, Salford and BL, and only OPS reporting them regularly.

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

Regular but erratic visitor and passage migrant, whose numbers vary sharply from year to year.

No influx, but conceivably a breeding attempt.

The fact that at Walton Common, one on March 22nd was followed by six on 29th (two females, four males), and then an adult with two begging young on June 22nd raises the possibility that breeding took place locally.

Other than this, it was once again a question of a few transient migrants. At New Passage, five were seen on March 23rd, a small party flew over Weston-s-Mare on April 9th, there were three at Sand Point on May 8th and one in Redland on 30th. After two at Dolebury Warren on July 3rd, single birds were seen at Sand Point on Aug. 5th, at Salford on Oct. 28th and at CVL (a female) on Nov. 2nd with 17 at Salford the next day..

The table below summarises the data for the past decade

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
0	90	47	96	120	146	140	26	59	44

Bird-days each year

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Common breeding resident, partial migrant, many leaving in winter for France and Iberia.

Breeding numbers continue to rise, although spring passage was rather thin.

The pattern in the first three months was, as usual, of parties of up to 15 through to 40 scattered throughout the region. Counts of 70 at Yate on Jan. 27th, at Easton Compton the next day and at Bucklands Pool, Nailsea on Feb. 1st were the highest made during this period. The numbers from the WGS increased slightly, with 90% of gardens having at least one sighting (it was 100% in 2015).

In mid March, 50 at New Passage on 14th seemed to be on the move, but numbers elsewhere were not noticeably different from the winter picture until early April when 50 were seen at Wain's Hill, with 60 here on 10th. Towards the end of the month there was a flurry of movement with 85 at CI-Y on 20th, 50 at OPS the next day, and 220 in a two-hour morning count on Severnside on 22nd.

The BBS survey found the species in 168 squares, this representing 88% of those surveyed, much the same as in 2015. A combined total of 1953 was counted over two visits, the data also indicating an increase of 7% in numbers as compared with 2015, as shown in the table below. At CVL, eight pairs were located (ten in 2015). It seems that this is one species that is doing well in our area.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
187%	78%	-13%	18%	4%	5%	11%	18%	-8%	16%	8%	7%

BBS percentage changes

Counts in the summer were rarely far into double figures, so 90 at PWD on Aug. 9th and 140 at New Passage on 11th marked the start of a post-breeding build-up, with 100 at Weston-s-Mare on 17th, 80 at CI-Y on 23rd and 90 at OPS on 27th among higher counts at this time. During September there were 120 at New Passage on 5th, 150 at CI-Y on 6th, 170 at OPS on 10th, and 200 at CVL (Heron's Green) on 21st, with plenty of smaller groups elsewhere.

In October, 150 at New Passage on 12th and 100 at Marshfield on 15th stood out, while 255 at Weston STW on 25th was the highest count here during the year. Apart from these, there was no obvious surge during the autumn migration period, although groups of up to 60 could be found throughout the area right through to the end of the year. The only significant concentrations were at Congresbury Moor with 125 on Nov. 1st with 110 near Keynsham on 24th.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant in varying numbers, sometimes common; scarce in summer.

Reasonable numbers in the first half of the year, but only a few in the second.

Following the influx in the second half of 2015, some flocks remained at a few favoured places. On Jan. 1st there were 40 by the R. Avon at Keynsham, 35 at nearby Saltford and 40 in Warmley Country Park. There were 80 at this latter site on 24th, and up to 40 at the other two through to the end of February. The WGS reported an increase, with reports from 35% of gardens during the first part of the year, well up on the 3% in 2015. Nevertheless, 30 at PWD on 13th and at Eastville Park on 21st were the largest concentrations elsewhere at this time. There was some indication of movement during this period.

Siskin cont. in March, with ones and twos flying over sites such as OPS, PWD, the Downs in Bristol, Portishead, Weston-s-Mare and CVL, although the largest count was only of 14 at Severn Beach on 14th. One garden in Stoke Bishop reported 20 on 19th, after smaller numbers previously. The pattern of small numbers at many scattered sites continued through April, although 25 at New Passage on 21st and 11 at Sand Point the same day indicated continuing movement on the coast. Odd individuals continued to be reported, mostly coastal fly-overs, through to mid June. There were no reports of breeding, although 11 at BL on July 15th, one at Langford on Sept. 4th and one at Dolebury on 18th may have originated no further away than the Mendips.

The first at Saltford since May appeared on Sept. 23rd with 24 here on 30th. At CVL there was also one on 23rd, with small numbers at New Passage, Bath and BL over the next couple of weeks. In October, New Passage, with 23 on 8th, 22 on 22nd, 47 on 23rd and 180 on 25th was the only site to report much movement. At CVL, 22 flying over on Nov. 7th was the highest count from this well-watched site, and only Huntingford Mill, with 45 on Dec.18th and 70 on 31st reported any significant flocks at the end of the year.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*

[Amber 5]

Scarce winter visitor.

The only record this year was of one flying north-east over Severn Beach on Oct.10th.

The table below shows the varying fortunes of this species in the Avon area over the past decade.

2006/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
0	1	0	5-6	15	16	12	5	3	1

Individuals seen each winter

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcalius lapponicus* (49, 1)

Very scarce autumn migrant and very rare winter visitor, mainly on the coast.

Descriptions required.

One record, the first in Avon since 2013: one flushed from grass on Sand Point flew off calling on Dec. 3rd (P A Gregory).

The table below summarises the records for the last two decades.

1997	98	99	00	01	02	03	04 - 06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
0	0	1	0	1	1	5	0	1	1	0	13	0	2	1	0	0	1

Individuals each year

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citronella*

[Red 3]

Fairly common breeding resident, uncommon passage migrant.

A small improvement in breeding numbers.

As usual, Marshfield stood out as the best place to find good numbers of this and other finches and buntings during the first part of the year. Some sample counts include 300 on Jan.1st and again on Feb. 3rd, 100 on March 29th and 200 on April 10th. At Paulton there were 60 on Jan.11th and 75 on Feb. 27th, while Elm Farm, Burnett hosted 45 on March 12th, with smaller counts on other dates. Elsewhere, small parties and odd individuals could be found at a few localities, Newton Park attracting up to 26 on various dates through to mid April. After this the picture was of small numbers at various breeding sites, few counts reaching double figures before the end of September.

During the BBS survey, the species was found in 53 squares, this representing 28% of those surveyed, slightly higher than in 2015. A combined total of 327 was counted over two visits, the data indicating the third increase in numbers in a row, as shown in the table below.

Since 1994	2006/16	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	2015/16
-15%	1%	-19%	13%	-13%	16%	11%	-3%	-21%	7%	3%	16%

BBS percentage changes

There was no significant evidence of migration on the coast, but by Nov.18th there were 100 at Marshfield rising to 150 on 30th, nine at Newton St. Loe on Dec. 5th was the next highest count among a scattering of smaller ones.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*

[Amber 3]

Localised breeding resident, and passage migrant.

Remains thinly scattered apart from at a few favoured sites.

Apart from Weston STW with between 16 and 27 in the first half of the year, and OPS, with between four and 30 over the same period, few places reported any more than single-figure counts on a regular basis. There were 14 at PWD on Jan.16th, 16 near Easter Compton on 28th, 15 at Thornbury on Feb. 9th and 14 ringed in a garden in Chew Stoke on 27th, but otherwise just ones and twos could be found at various sites with damp or rough ground.

There was no real evidence of spring migration and the summer picture was again of scattered pairs at suitable breeding spots across the area. The BBS locally does not include enough squares to come up with a significant picture of population change, but counts at CVL show a slight decline over the past four years, see table below. However, the count at Weston STW was of 26 singing males, the same as in 2015.

2007	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
32	31	30	36	43	51	53	44	41	38

Singing males at CVL each year

Any autumn migration was not obvious, and most counts in the second winter period were in single figures. Again, Weston STW provided the best numbers with 31, 44 and 74 in October, November and December, respectively. The equivalent maxima at OPS were 50, 15 and 25 over the same period. Totals of 14 at CI-Y on Dec.16th and 20 at PWD on 21st confirmed a bias towards coastal locations.

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra*

[Red 2, 3, 4]

Local and uncommon breeding resident, confined to arable areas in the east of the region. Rare elsewhere as a passage migrant/winter visitor.

No major changes to report.

Between January and the end of March, all the records came from the Marshfield/Tormarton area, with up to 150 reported on many dates throughout this period, the flocks being split into several groups, it appears. Between April and the end of June, small numbers were regularly reported, the maximum count being 30, but the precise breeding population remains uncertain. Numbers increased from October onwards, with 200 a couple of dates in November and 40 the best count in December.

In the Horton/Hawkesbury Upton area, a maximum of ten were noted on May 17th, with smaller numbers reported between April and the end of July. There were no records outside the breeding season here this year. The only record away from these traditional sites was of one on Felton Common on April 13th.

ESCAPED AND RELEASED BIRDS

BAR-HEADED GOOSE *Anser indicus*

A high altitude native of central Asia often kept in collections.

A series of records in the spring, similar to the events of 2015.

PWD – one on March 15th, similar to the record in 2015;

CI-Y area – two flew south over Clevedon on March 4th and what is presumed the same two were seen at Acorn Carp Fishery, Kingston Seymour the next day;

Backwell Lake – two were seen here on Feb.14th and 19th, March 24th and 27th, and April 12th. Previously two were noted here in March 2014 and again in spring 2015.

RED-BREASTED GOOSE *Branta ruficollis*

A possible winter vagrant from arctic Siberia, this ornamental small goose is often kept in collections.

One at CVL on Feb. 6th and 8th.

FULVOUS WHISTLING DUCK *Dendrocygna bicolor*

Native of central and northern South America, south and central Africa and the Indian subcontinent. Often kept in ornamental collections.

CVL – one on Jan. 26th was presumably the individual present in 2015.

WOOD DUCK *Aix sponsa*

Native to North America, commonly held in collections.

Winterbourne – one on Flaxpits Lane from Jan. 9th until Feb. 21st, similar to the events of 2015.

MUSCOVY DUCK *Cairina moschata*

Native to Central and South America.

Eastville Park – two present between Jan. 18th and March 6th but five on Feb. 7th;

Backwell Lake – one from Sept. 25th into 2017.

CATTLE EGRET *Bubulcus ibis*

Cosmopolitan species

1997 – late submission of an adult of the eastern race *B. i. coromandus*, photographed on Moreton Bank, CVL on July 7th, 1997. An adult of this race had been present at CVL during 1994/95.

CRANE *Grus grus*

Between 2010 and 2015 a total of 93 from German stock were raised and released on the Somerset Levels and flocks have started to wander. Breeding occurred in 2015 and 2016 with most young unringed.

Descriptions are required for individuals considered to be of wild origin.

Again the majority of records came between mid March and mid May. It was thought likely that all but one record of the records relate to the Great Crane Project, the Somerset reintroduction project that uses chicks hand reared at Slimbridge and released on the levels (see page 60 for details of a record considered to relate to 'wild' individuals, and page 4 for some general comments).

The best year to date with 16 records involving probably 55 individuals. After one record of a single bird in 2011, there were six (24 individuals) in 2012, nine (25 individuals) in 2013, 11 (at least 17 individuals) in 2014, and eight (probably at least 15 individuals) in 2015.

The records are listed below in chronological order.

OPS – three on Feb. 23rd;

Thornbury – three on March 15th;

Pilning Wetlands – two circled a couple of times at height before departing to SE at around 15.00 on March 17th;

Congresbury, Strawberry Line – six flew to SSE on March 21st;

CVL – four circled for about 35 minutes as if lost from about 11.00 before departing to SW on April 1st. On 5th two arrived from the east at 12.35, circled around before departing high to NW 25 minutes later;

OPS – trumpeting calls heard twice but bird(s) not located on April 17th;

Clevedon Court – two flew south along the coast during the morning of April 17th;

PWD – two circling and gaining height at 17.50 on April 17th;

Sheppardine – two flew over at 09.45 on May 5th;

Easter Compton – six flew north over the Wild Place Project at 15.00 on May 12th;

Thornbury – two on May 15th;

Wick – four flew west at 10.30 on May 17th;

CVL – four flew along the east shore at 10.35 on May 18th before thermalling off to NE at 10.50. Two were over Herriott's Pool between 13.20 and 13.40 on 24th;

Crook Peak – 11 to W into the Avon area between 13.00 and 13.30 on June 12th.

HELMETED GUINEAFOWL *Numida meleagris*

Native to Africa but held as a free range poultry species.

Chewton Place, Keynsham – one on Aug. 21st. This species was recorded from Chewton Keynsham annually between 2011 and 2014.

DIAMOND DOVE *Geopelia cuneata*

A common species in the arid interior of Australia

CVL – one photographed on May 7th.

RING-NECKED DOVE *Streptopelia capicola*

An abundant resident of southern Africa

Brentry, Bristol – one on Fishpool Hill on May 9th.

RED-and-YELLOW BARBET *Trachyphonus erythrocephalus*

A common species of east Africa

Keynsham – one on the High Street on Sept. 23rd.

AUSTRALIAN ZEBRA FINCH *Taeniopygia castanotus*

A common resident of Australia widely kept as a cagebird.

Weston STW – two leucistic individuals on Aug. 12th.

HYBRIDS

It should be noted that the parentages reported in this section are what the observer(s) considered to be the most likely.

BARNACLE x CANADA GOOSE *Branta leucopsis x Branta canadensis*

CVL – two Canada Geese types with lots of white peppering in the black of the face and neck, seen in early 2015 and possibly of this hybrid origin were noted again on Jan. 28th.

TEAL x PINTAIL *Anas crecca x Anas acuta*

A male at New Passage between March 19th and 25th was photographed.

CHILOE WIGEON x MALLARD *Anas sibilatrix x Anas platyrhynchos*

One at BL on Nov. 26th, photographed.

AYTHYA HYBRIDS

Details of all records, in chronological order, are as follows:

A male at CVL on April 12th resembled a cross between a Ring-necked Duck and a Lesser Scaup. A hybrid reported the previous day is assumed to be the same individual;

One at CVL on June 13th was assumed to have a Tufted Duck as one of its parents;

A male presumed Tufted x Pochard was at BL on July 5th and 13th, with what is assumed the same individual at CVL on 18th, it was back at BL on Aug. 9th;

One was at BG on July 24th;

A male, Lesser Scaup type but with wrong bill pattern, was noted at BL on Aug. 1st, 22nd and 24th;

An eclipse male, similar to a Lesser Scaup but with an orange eye and probably a Pochard x Tufted type, was at CVL on Aug. 18th, 19th and 30th, Sept. 23rd and Oct. 6th and 14th;

A different eclipse male, probably a Pochard x Tufted but with a plum coloured head and a dull eye, was at CVL between Sept. 1st and Oct. 26th;

A female at CVL on Oct. 17th looked like a cross between a Ring-necked Duck and a Pochard;

A male at CVL on Oct. 19th was like a Tufted Duck but with a rounded head and a dark grey mantle. It was thought to be a Pochard x Tufted and, what was assumed to be the same individual, was seen again on Nov. 2nd and 7th;

A female at CVL on Oct. 21st was similar to a Scaup but thought probably to be a Tufted x Pochard;

A male, similar to a Scaup, was at BL between Nov. 3rd and 29th;

A male at BL on Nov. 3rd and 14th was thought to be another Tufted x Pochard;

A male Paget's Pochard, a hybrid between Ferruginous Duck and Pochard, was at CVL on Nov. 7th;

A female, considered to be a Tufted x Pochard, was at CVL on Nov. 24th;

One was at BL on Nov. 25th;

One was at BG on Dec. 18th.

In order to help track individuals it would be very useful if observers of *Aythya* hybrids could include some descriptive notes of the individual's appearance (*Eds.*).

HERRING x LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus argentatus x Larus fuscus*

A single record, of an adult, at BL on Sept. 11th.

The table below gives the number of bird-days since 1998, the first year this hybrid was reported.

1998	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	2016
1	6	1	1	1	0	0	9	4	6	29	6	7	7	3	5	1	2	1

Bird-days recorded per year since 1998

The Changing Status of the Little Owl in and near the Chew Valley

David Warden

History

The presence of the Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) in the British Isles is due to several releases of continental birds which took place in the nineteenth century. Breeding in England was first recorded in 1879 and was regular by 1896. Successful releases in Northamptonshire, Rutland and Kent led to an explosive spread of birds north and west, reaching every county in England and Wales by 1930. (Nicholson [1951], Sharrock [1976])

Little Owls were first reported in Somerset in 1907 at Tickenham and breeding occurred at Pensford in 1910 and Chewton Mendip and Priddy in 1917 (Davis [1948], Lewis [1955]). There was a decline in the 1930s and they became rare in some areas by 1975 (Balance [2006]).

Little Owl pairs occupy their territory throughout the year (Glue and Scott [1980], Mikkola [1983]) and are largely sedentary. The mean distance moved by all ringed birds was 15 km and by juveniles ringed in the southwest only two km. (Wernham *et al.* [2002]). This makes its rapid spread in the first half of twentieth century all the more surprising.

Observations

The present paper is based on records of over 700 sightings during normal daily journeys through and near the Chew Valley from 1963 until the present. Any birds seen or heard were located to a one km square. Observations were opportunistic, depending only on daily work routes. It follows that some routes near my home were travelled daily, others only very irregularly.

Most sightings were in daylight and of birds perching on gates, fences, telegraph poles or tree branches. They were seen in all months of the year, and at all times of day. In winter, a pair would often be seen perching side by side with occasional allopreening. There were peaks in the sightings in May, June and July (see Figure 1).

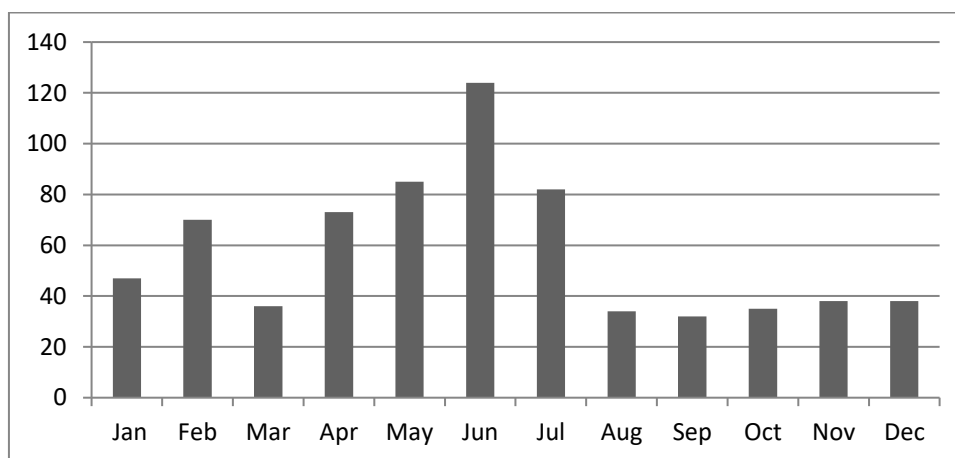


Figure 1 -- Monthly distribution of all records.

Casualties

Nineteen owls were found dead or injured on roads. Mortalities peaked in July and August with a second peak in November, probably involving inexperienced juveniles; see Figure 2. On July 19th, 1972, a juvenile was seen standing on the corpse of its sibling, pecking at the flesh at the back of the skull; it was on the road very close to its nest tree.

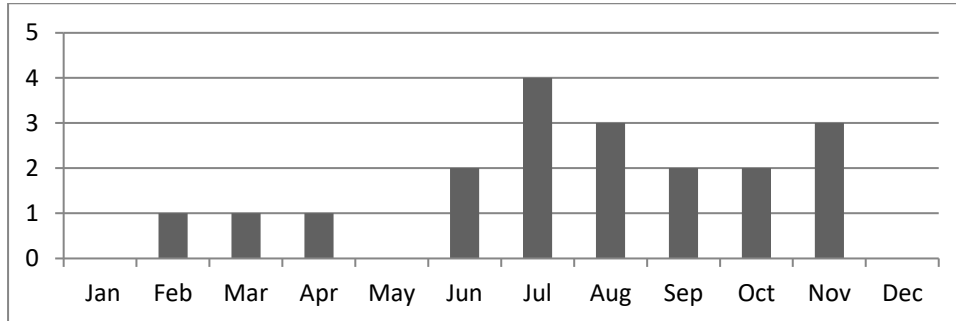


Figure 2 -- Distribution of road casualties by month

Site occupancy

The number of occupied sites has varied over the years and sightings have been grouped into five year mean; see Figure 3. The initial increase from 1963/67 to 1978/82 may possibly show a recovery after the hard winter of 1962/63. From 1993/97 onward, however, there has been a steep decline and no indication of a recovery. This is shown in the chart below.

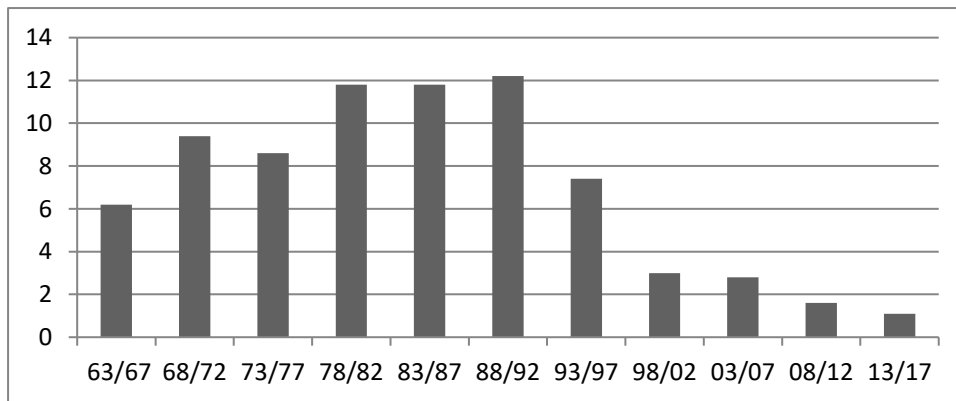


Figure 3 -- Number of occupied sites grouped in five-year means.

Pattern of distribution

The most frequently visited nest sites are mapped in Figure 4. It shows their position in relation to CVL and the local villages. Most were in hedgerow trees, usually Oaks or Ashes, often in the pollarded trunk or in hollow branches. One was in a hole at the base of an Oak, possibly shared with Rabbits. Two sites were in old stone barns. Some of these sites were in use for up to 19 years, although not necessarily in consecutive years. The longest number of consecutive years in apparent use was 12. One site, in a hole in the almost vertical branch of an Oak, was used until it began to callous over. It was then used by Starlings until it became too small for them, when Great Tits occupied it for a few more years! Ten nest sites in the 35 squares kilometres of the Chew Valley compares very favourably with five to ten per 100 sq. kms nationally as quoted by Gibbons *et al.* [1993].

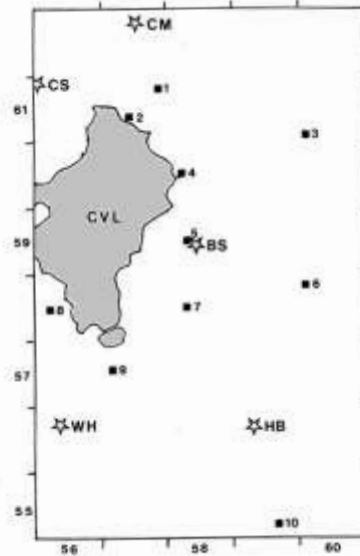


Figure 4 – Key to map of Chew Valley above Villages: CM – Chew Magna, CS – Chew Stoke, BS – Bishop Sutton, WH – West Harptree, HB – Hinton Blewitt. Nest sites: 1 – Round Hill Farm, 2 – Denny Lane, 3 – Knighton Sutton, 4 – Hollow Brook, 5 – Bishop Sutton, 6 – Stowey Hill, 7 – Wick Green, 8 – Morton Point, 9 – South Widcombe, and 10 – Litton.

Possible causes of decline

It seems likely that changes in agricultural practice may have been responsible for, or have contributed to, the local decline of the Little Owl. However, in the case of two sites, in field Oaks in permanent pasture grazed by cattle in summer, there was no apparent change in agricultural practice during the last half century. Owls were present at one site for 18 years, but were last seen in 1998. At the second site, they were present until 2011 but not since. At most other sites, permanent pasture has been replaced by arable crops or, in one case, by *Mischanthus*, grown for biofuel. The owls have gone even though the nest trees remain. Owls feeding young have been watched running over the grass at dusk, catching beetles. This would obviously be impossible in tall arable crops. It is also possible that ground beetles have declined, as so many other invertebrate species appear to have done, a result of farming practice, climate change or pesticide use.

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Blyth's Pipit at Blagdon Lake – New to the Avon Area

Nigel Milbourne

I first saw the bird on Dec.14th in the same place that I had previously noted a grey, possibly eastern-race, Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* on Oct. 23rd, 2013, in Holt Bay of BL. It was clearly a pipit species with a body not much larger than a Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*, and with striking features that included its pale colour, pale lores, sparse upper breast streaking, peachy underparts, short tail, upright gait, apparent long pale tarsi, and a feeding action that reminded me of a Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*. I grabbed half a dozen distant photographs at the time which later confirmed my notes. It was in view for three to five minutes and then disappeared while I referred to a field guide. A search later in the day with Andy Davis failed to relocate it. During discussion with Andy about its identity, I told him I suspected Blyth's Pipit *Anthus godlewskii* as the most likely possibility, but he suggested quite rightly that other possible, though unlikely, candidates would need to be ruled out. While I was driving along the access road on 18th I was surprised to see it again, on its own, in the same place. I watched it for a few minutes, and then drove to the far end of the lake. I saw it again on the way back. Later, I spent a great deal of the evening researching images of Blyth's Pipits on the internet because by now I was sure that's what it was. During the WeBS count on 19th, Andy rang to say he was watching it, for the first time, in the same place and had taken some photos. I said to him "It's a Blyth's." Unfortunately, although the WeBS team of Roy Curber, Phillip Delve, Terry Doman, Robert Hargreaves and I were only yards away at Green Lawn; it was flushed by a helicopter before we got there. I re-found it later on Rainbow Point, and we had excellent and prolonged views. We were joined by Andy and Richard Mielcarek. Being fairly satisfied with the identification as a Blyth's Pipit, although no call had been heard, we contacted the county recorder John Martin, and Keith Vinicombe. Richard Mielcarek described the bird to John over the phone and he suggested Blyth's without being told of our thoughts, and Keith got to the site as we finished the count, he watched it until almost dark and told me he was also satisfied it was a Blyth's Pipit. Thanks to all the above-mentioned for their help in clinching the identity.

Description

Size, behaviour and structure The bird had a chat-like gait. It often hopped and jumped with both legs, ran at considerable speed when it chose to, and had a very different feeding action to the Meadow Pipits with which it associated on 19th. The Meadow Pipits moved with their heads down in a random fashion, whereas the Blyth's feeding action was often likened to that of a plover – run directly, pick, and run etc. On the 20th I noticed that it was dipping its tail in a downward motion frequently when walking around feeding. Occasionally, it would spring up with both legs to catch an insect, or jump over a small puddle.

Head The lores were pale, and there was a quite broad cream supercilium, particularly behind the eye which was accentuated in the field by the densely-streaked cap. It had heavy black crown streaks. The eye ring was noted, as was a short black moustachial stripe. The lateral throat-stripe was fine and indistinct and did not end in a blotch like that of a Richard's Pipit. The nape appeared to be slightly paler than the crown. The chin was buff.

Body The breast, belly and under tail were essentially peachy-buff in colour with a stronger cinnamon suffusion on the upper rear flanks. There was a gorget of fine pencil streaks across the upper breast, which was dark brown rather than black. Over the weekend I had read more about Blyth's key features and knew we had to hear it call and see the tail pattern. On the 19th while I was trying to photograph it, some of the watchers told me they had seen the classic tail pattern when it briefly spread the tail during preening. I was busy picking myself up off the ground with my camera, 600mm lens and tripod at the time, having tripped in the copse while taking a shortcut to keep up with it! Terry Doman reckoned the.

white on the fifth feather was angled, for about 20 to 25% of its length. Richard Mielcarek saw the rump and suggested it was plain, with no obvious streaking. The tertials masked the primaries as suggested in the literature. In the field I could not see any median coverts for most of the time, but on some occasions the outer two median coverts were visible and photos showed these to have dark centres with white fringes indicative of their being retained juvenile feathers. There was a fine crescent formed by the white tips on the greater coverts. The overall pale colour was probably due to a delayed moult from juvenile to first-winter plumage, and corresponding lack of wear.

Bare parts The bill was short, with a fine tip and broad base. It was pinkish at the base of the lower mandible with a dark tip. The gape was pink. The legs were orange, especially when viewed from behind, and slightly more flesh-coloured when viewed from the front, but this seemed to vary depending on the intensity of sunlight and the background it was viewed against. I asked a number of other viewers what colour they thought the legs were and often got the answer "pink". The tarsus appeared long and the rear toe was the same length as the lightly curved claw.

Call - On the Dec. 20th, the bird was left on its own when the pipit flock moved ahead of it at Rainbow Point. It suddenly flew up and overhead, when we heard its call for the first time. I wrote it down as a thin, 'see-ooo', which was high-pitched and fairly quiet. Later during its stay I heard the bird give a 'chip' call as it flew out of Holt Bay towards Wood Bay past me.

Observations

I watched the bird daily, except for Dec. 25th to 27th inclusive, and spent most of my time trying to get visiting birders onto it. Lots of pictures were taken and some video has since appeared on the internet as well (from Nigel Tucker and Jeff Hazell). I also have some video footage. It preferred to feed on the exposed lake bed either at the water's edge or on the moss-covered sediment, occasionally coming right up to the edge of the meadows to feed among the *ruderal* weeds. I was amazed at how much food it was apparently finding and estimated that it was defecating about once every minute or two! Its appearances became more infrequent during the last couple of days that I saw it, and despite looking for it for hours on the Dec. 30th I did not see it. Kevin Shales contacted me later in the day to say he had seen it in Holt Bay briefly after I had gone home at 1510 hrs, before it flew to Wood Bay.

To be honest I was a little surprised by how many birders had to be 'put on the bird' before they could see it was different to the accompanying Meadow Pipits, although another rather curious pipit was present that also had a more upright gait than the other Meadow Pipits, and also held its tail cocked and wing in a drooped fashion like a chat. I think this bird probably had a slight injury to one wing, but was nevertheless a Meadow Pipit. It did cause confusion for some visitors.

On a couple of occasions, I saw the Blyth's Pipit fly south over the farm meadows towards Holt Farm or the Yeo Valley yoghurt factory. It also seemed to suddenly appear from that direction when it had gone missing, so it is possible that it spent time on the farm, having found a preferred feeding area or somewhere quiet to roost. The weather was colder towards the end of its stay, with frost on the ground in the morning, consequently it put in more sporadic and shorter appearances at the lakeside.

Discussion

The back appeared to be quite pale when I first saw it, with ill-defined streaks along the length, reminiscent of a Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris*. However, I could rule this species out due to its pale lores. The tail was short unlike a Richard's Pipit *A. richardi* and when I saw it in flight on the first day beside a Meadow Pipit it appeared to be barely larger in size. So, this left very few candidates for its identification. Tree Pipit *A. trivialis* was easily ruled out due to the pattern of streaking, although juvenile

Meadow Pipit could possibly be similar. Buff-bellied Pipits *A. rubescens* of American and Asian subspecies, as well as Water Pipit *A. spinoletta* and Rock Pipit *A. petrosus*, were easily ruled out due to leg colour, and I have seen all of them previously so was confident none of them fitted the bill. I have seen many Olive-backed Pipits *A. hodgsoni*, both in the UK and abroad and knew the face pattern was wrong for that species, while the back pattern did not fit Pechora Pipit *A. gustavi* or Red-throated Pipit *A. cervinus* either, both of which I have also seen previously.

I had seen two Blyth's Pipits on the Isle of Portland in 1998, but the views were not great as they were in long grass, and anyway, that was a long time ago! More recently I had seen seven in Goa, India, in November 2004, but again I do not really have any particular recall of those encounters unfortunately, so this was a steep learning curve, but I am pleased we managed to nail its identity, and in time for lots of birders to come and enjoy excellent views of it before it moved on.

Photographs

Three photographs of this individual taken at BL in December appear in the Report opposite page 152.

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Batheaston Nature Reserve

Brian Edge

Batheaston Nature Reserve is an eight hectare (20 acre) wildlife refuge, bounded to the north and east by the River Avon, to the west by the flat pastures of Bathampton Meadows, and to the south by the A4 Batheaston By-Pass. Created between 1994 and 1997 to offset the loss of the flood plain during the construction of the by-pass, the reserve is today actively managed on behalf of the Highways Agency by the Avon Wildlife Trust. At its heart is the artificially created Oxbow Lake some 320m in length, 20m in width, with small reedbeds at either end. In addition there is a shallow pond 20m in diameter, together with a 'scrape' of similar size. The latter dries out completely during the summer months. The close proximity of the reserve to the R. Avon causes it to flood annually in winter and/or early spring, sometimes for prolonged periods when floodwaters consistently cover more than 50% of its entire area. It is given over predominantly to tall meadow and waterside grasses, mature vegetation is limited to a pair of Oaks, half a dozen Poplars and several well-established Blackthorn and willow thickets. One or two Alders survive on the riverbank, alongside a few Sycamores, and a continuous hedgerow borders both the pasture and the wide A4 verge.

Not only does the Reserve attract a wide range of birds -- the number of different native species recorded at the site is now close to 100 -- it is also home to Grass Snakes, Roe Deer, Foxes, butterflies including Purple Hairstreak, dragonflies and a good variety of meadow and waterside plants such as Pyramidal Orchid and Ragged Robin. The occasional half-eaten Carp carcass indicates Otters also pass through. Over the past 20 years, nature has reclaimed the site – it would have been overwhelmed but for the AWT's maintenance works – giving rise to a number of discrete micro-habitats. Whitethroats and Bullfinches favour the brambles and hedgerows, Sedge and Reed Warblers restrict themselves to the reedbeds, and in winter Water Rails regularly take up residence in a patch of dead Purple Loosestrife little bigger than a single parking space. Song Thrushes and Collared Doves never venture further into the reserve than the Sycamores on the eastern riverbank. Similarly, Redwings keep to the fringes during their November to March residency. Cormorants congregate on a pylon prior to their day's fishing either in the Oxbow or on the R. Avon; Jays, Kestrels and Green Woodpeckers seem to prefer the more open areas of short grass adjacent to the dual carriageway, whereas Magpies and Great Spotted Woodpeckers generally keep to the mature riverside trees. Flooding draws good numbers of gulls away from the centre of Bath – otherwise they are surprisingly absent. In such conditions the Reserve will also be visited by Little Grebes, as well as the odd pair of Wigeon or Tufted Duck. Mallard numbers increase dramatically, too; flocks of 100 are not uncommon – with some hybrids from the nearby Kennet & Avon Canal.

As for the Oxbow Lake itself, Moorhen, Mallard and Reed Warbler breed annually, and nearby breeders such as Kingfisher and Sand Martin regularly come to feed. Coot and Mute Swan have bred successfully, but unfortunately both species suffer unduly from springtime flooding, with nests often being abandoned. Canada Geese breeding numbers rose markedly between 2007 (two nests) and 2015 (nine), with a crèche of 32 goslings being documented in June 2014. However, in 2016, the number of nests fell to just three, none of which were successful. During the construction of a second pylon in 2015 as part of the Great Western rail electrification project, the geese put in their best performance to date, so the drop in numbers is something of a mystery.

Breeding is not confined to the Oxbow: Pheasants nest in the open grassy areas and Reed Buntings can be observed in the centre of the reserve with beaks full of mayflies during late spring.

The Herons, Buzzards and Cormorants seen on virtually every visit, are testament to the Reserve's importance as a 'feeding station' on the outskirts of what is undoubtedly an urban area. But perhaps more noteworthy is how bird sightings in general has fluctuated over the years, that is both in the variety and the absolute numbers of actual species seen. Wader numbers, including the ever-resilient Snipe, have dwindled, Lapwing in particular. Jays did not 'find' the Reserve until the autumn of 2006 but are now true residents. Even Little Egrets can perhaps be regarded as predictable. As with any 'patch' the Reserve has the ability to throw up some welcome surprises, the most startling of which has to be the drake Common Scoter seen in October 2012, eclipsing even the Bittern encountered during the hard winter of 2010 and the Nightingale which sang for 20 minutes on a rainy April afternoon the following year. Surprise absentees include Great Crested Grebe, Coal Tit and maybe a long-overdue Common Tern on passage, with House Sparrow and Rook narrowly missing out on featuring on *that* list with just one appearance apiece! The latter was recorded on just a single occasion, feeding at the margins during widespread flooding -- this despite there being an active rookery nearby at Bathampton weir.

Perhaps the most unexpected and possibly unwelcome observation is just how sensitive the birds are to changes and disturbance. A few years ago, a developer felled a dozen alders on the Batheaston side of the River Avon, completely exposing 200 *metres* of the Reserve's northern perimeter. It remains to be seen what the long-term impact of this action will be, other than depriving the Siskins of their favoured pit stop and reducing sightings to little more than one or two overhead in an average year. Also at Batheaston, the Local Council has constructed a bridge over the Avon, complete with a cycle path running to Bathampton. And of course there is the [heavily opposed] plan to build a Park & Ride on the neighbouring Bathampton Meadows. *Added in press:* as it currently stands this proposal has been rejected.

Within the Reserve itself, grazing by a handful of cattle during the summer months has coincided with a reduction in the number of roosting Meadow Pipits and the disappearance of once regular Stonechats and Whinchats. It is really quite impressive just how much vegetation can be trampled into a dense mat by a modest herd of cows.

Ironically, the disturbance is sometimes the fault of the birds themselves. The proliferation of Canada Geese appears to have contributed to the move by the Mute Swans, relocating downstream towards the relative tranquility of Bath. Both species are pretty bellicose at the best of times but during the breeding season something clearly had to give... However, without the presence of the Reserve's burgeoning Canada Goose flock it is doubtful that the Egyptian, Greylag and Red-Breasted Geese (not forgetting the Black Swan we have all ticked elsewhere in Avon) would have been tempted to drop in to feed.

The commoner resident birds – Blackbird, Robin, Blue Tit and the like – will doubtless take any and all changes in their stride but it is the variety and diversity of species, from raptors to waders, warblers to ducks, by which the overall health of even an unassuming reserve like this one is properly measured.

Observations

The table on the following two pages details the species recorded during the period 2000 to 2016 inclusive. Comments including breeding data and/or notable numbers are shown in the right-hand column.

Species	Date (first)/status	Comment or breeding data
Mute Swan	2003 onwards	Seven cygnets in 2003, failed nests in 2012 and 2013
Greylag Goose	2011 onwards	Single bird occasionally seen with next species
Canada Goose	Annual	Has bred since 2007, present in all months except Sept/Oct., highest count 145 (Jan. 1st, 2009), average count 85
Egyptian Goose	2010	Noted on Sept. 1st and 16th, and on Oct. 15th
Shelduck	April 21st, 2013	A drake
Mandarin Duck	March 27th, 2009	A drake
Wigeon	Nov. 19th, 2001	A pair with three further records in 2007, 2013 and 2014
Gadwall	July 14th, 2006	One record, a male and two females
Teal	Autumn/winter	Annual, max. count - 29 Feb. 11th 2011
Mallard	Resident	Three or four pairs bred annually
Garganey	Occasional	Pair on Sept. 6th, 2012, a female on May 1st, 2013
Shoveler	Dec. 26th, 2006	Two drakes
Tufted Duck	Oct. 10th, 2001	Three, then pairs in May 2011, 2012 (3) and 2016
Common Scoter	March 10th, 2013	A drake
Goosander	Jan. 16th, 2011	A drake with a redhead on Feb. 1st
Red-leg. Partridge	April 5th, 2007	With six further records up to June 2013, max, four
Pheasant	Resident	Breeds, max. count: 23 on March 15th, 2008
Cormorant	Frequent	Max count – 26 on Nov. 16th, 2013, ten regular
Bittern	Dec. 28th, 2010	Single bird
Little Egret	Dec. 7th, 2008	One or two on six further dates
Grey Heron	Annual	One or two regular, max. count 10 on Jan. 1st, 2013
Little Grebe	Winter	Usually one but three on Feb. 15th, 2009
Red Kite	July 7th, 2016	Single bird
Sparrowhawk		Occasional autumn/winter visitor
Buzzard	Frequent	One or two, but eight on April 2nd, 2010
Water Rail	Autumn/winter	Occasionally up to three
Moorhen	Annual	Resident, breeds, max count 12 on Dec. 16th, 2001
Coot	Annual	One or two pairs in spring, breeding was successful in 2003
Lapwing	Feb. 2nd, 2002	200, then up to 50 (in winter) until 2009, and only one sighting since: three on Dec. 8th, 2012
Com. Sandpiper	Aug. 18th, 2003	Two, then in 2008 (3), 2012 and 2013
Green Sandpiper	Annual to 2013	Single birds but two in November 2007 and August 2008
Redshank	March 16th, 2002	One record of one
Jack Snipe	Annual (winter)	Usually one or two, max. seven on Jan. 17th, 2015
Woodcock	Dec. 1st, 2007	Winter visitor on five dates since
Snipe	Annual (winter)	Up to 20 but 62 on March 3rd, 2002
Black-hd Gull	Occasional	Up to 100 in flood conditions
Common Gull	Occasional	Small numbers but up to 200 flying over to CVL
Lesser B-b Gull		Small numbers in flood conditions
Herring Gull	Annual (spring)	Max. count 30 on May 1st, 2012
Stock Dove	Occasional	Four on April 1st, 2002 and May 22nd, 2006
Woodpigeon	Resident	Normally up to 40 present, breeds, max. count 200 on April 1st, 2002 and March 8th, 2008
Collared Dove	Occasional	Has bred, max. four on Oct. 12th, 2008
Barn Owl	Feb. 2nd, 2009	One, also one on Sept, 1st, 2010
Swift	Summer visitor	Feeds over Oxbow Lake, max count 150 on May 13th, 2007
Kingfisher	Annual	Seen singly in most months
Green Woodpecker	Regular visitor	Slightly more common than next species
Gt. Sp. Woodpecker	Regular visitor	
Kestrel	Autumn/winter	Occasional, less common than Sparrowhawk
Hobby	May 29th, 2005	One bird
Peregrine	Irregular	Not annual

Species	Date (first)/status	Comment or breeding data
Magpie	Resident	Up to ten roosting but 22 on Dec. 25th, 2007
Jay	Resident	Small family groups autumn to spring
Jackdaw	Annual	300+ in May 2007, November 2010 and June 2012
Rook	Jan. 12th, 2008	Five, the only record
Carrion Crow	Resident	Frequent visitor
Raven	Occasional	Usually singly but six on Sept. 1st, 2010
Goldcrest	Autumn/winter	Small numbers, max. 6 on Oct. 29th, 2015
Blue Tit	Resident	
Great Tit	Resident	
Skylark	Very occasional	Two on Nov. 2nd, 2008 and one on Feb. 7th, 2009
Sand Martin	Summer annual	Max. counts: 30 on July 20th, 2001 and 50 on May 1st, 2004
Swallow	Summer annual	Max. counts: 100 on Sept. 24th, 2006 and April 21st, 2008
House Martin	Summer annual	Breeds nearby, max. counts: 20 on Oct. 7th, 2006 and May 28th, 2007 and 60 on Sept. 18th, 2009
Long-tailed Tit	Resident	Bred in 2007 2012 and 2013, up to 20 regularly seen
Chiffchaff	Summer annual	Occasionally seen in winter, max. count 13 on Aug. 30th, 2016
Willow Warbler	Spring migrant	Usually seen in April with max. of four on April 14th, 2013
Blackcap	Summer annual	Seven singing males on May 25th, 2015
Garden Warbler	Summer annual	One or two usually seen in May
Lesser. Whitethroat	Occasional	Two May records in 2003 and 2004
Whitethroat	Summer annual	Usually two pairs hold territories and breed
Sedge Warbler	Summer annual	Bred in 2013, usually two males singing in spring with six on April 20th, 2011
Reed Warbler	Summer annual	Two pairs usually bred with four singing on April 27th, 2011
Treecreeper	Occasional	Two records: April 28th, 2006 and March 22nd, 2016 (2)
Wren	Resident	
Starling	Occasional	Small numbers but 120 on Sept. 14th 2006 and 200 in snowy conditions on Feb. 5th, 2009
Blackbird	Resident	Over ten regular during winter, breeds
Fieldfare	Winter visitor	Max. counts: 50 on Dec. 26th, 2005 and 70 on Jan. 19th, 2013
Song Thrush	Resident	Presumed breeder, two or three singing from February on
Redwing	Winter visitor	Usually about 30, max count: 150 on Jan. 1st, 2014
Mistle Thrush	Very occasional	Usually only one but three on Feb. 7th, 2007
Robin	Resident	
Nightingale	April 14th, 2011	Singing male
Whinchat	Occasional	Two on June 9th, 2006, one on May 5th, 08 and April 23rd, 2010
Stonechat	Autumn/winter	Formally regular, few recently (in 2008 and 2010)
Wheatear	Very occasional	Single birds on May 18th, 2007 and Sept. 16th, 2010
Dunnock	Resident	
House Sparrow	Feb. 18th, 2012	Just a single record of one male!
Grey Wagtail	Occasional	Breeds nearby
Pied Wagtail	Occasional	Small numbers but 21 on March 7th, 2014
Meadow Pipit	Autumn/winter	Occasional at roosting time, max count: 45 on Feb. 2nd, 2012
Brambling	Jan. 10th, 2009	A female
Chaffinch	Resident	Presumed breeder, two pairs usually, 20 on Dec. 29th ,2007
Bullfinch	Resident	Presumed breeder, one or two pairs usually present
Greenfinch	Resident	Probably breeds, max. 20 on Oct. 28th, 2007
Linnet	Feb. 7th, 2009	Four, the only record
Goldfinch	Resident	Does not breed, usually up to 15 but 38 on Dec. 10th, 2005
Siskin	Winter	Small numbers, but 30 on Jan. 19th, 2008 and Jan. 26th, 2013
Reed Bunting	Resident	Up to three pairs bred, max. 12 on Jan. 29th, 2012
Black Swan	May 27th, 2014	One
Red-breast. Goose	Dec. 30th, 2011	Single bird remained until Jan. 2nd, 2012

THE BREEDING BIRD SURVEY IN THE AVON REGION, 2016

Dave Stoddard

INTRODUCTION

The Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) is organised on a national basis by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and is the main scheme for monitoring the population trends of the UK's common breeding species. The survey is organised on a regional basis and the BTO Avon Region includes the four unitary authority areas that formerly constituted the County of Avon, namely Bath & North East Somerset, City of Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, together with an area of Somerset (*c.*333 sq km) that covers much of the Mendips and the area around Cheddar. The BBS was first established in 1994 and from the outset a local survey within the Avon area has also been conducted using the same methods but in a simplified form. This has provided, in particular, a better coverage in the urban areas, but it extends throughout the region and provides a much better understanding of the fortunes of our local populations. The results of the national and local schemes are combined in this report.

METHOD

The survey is conducted by birdwatchers who have the ability to recognise all species that are likely to be encountered by both sight and sound. This year 116 observers participated in the survey, many of whom are members of either the Bristol Ornithological Club, the Bristol Naturalists' Society or the BTO (or possibly all three!). The survey consists of visits to one-kilometre squares that have been randomly selected by the BTO (or self-selected by the observer in the case of the local survey). Two recording visits are made to each square, one before the middle of May and one at least four weeks later but before the end of June, making two one-kilometre transects across the square recording all birds seen or heard. In addition data is included from the Waterways Breeding Bird Survey (WBBS) (three locations) where the methodology is similar except that in this case the transects follow the course of a river.

RESULTS FOR 2016

A total of 223 squares, including 140 for the national BTO scheme, was surveyed. These squares are spread reasonably evenly across the region (see Table 1 below). Overall about 14% of the Avon BTO Region was surveyed which gives a good measure of the varying fortunes of the breeding birds of the region. In the 2016 survey 73,708 birds were recorded in 223 squares at the rate of 123 birds per hour. This is the highest number of squares surveyed since the commencement of the Survey in 1994, and the third highest number of birds recorded, behind 77,832 in 2006 and 77,160 in 2007.

Unitary Authority	Squares surveyed	% of UA area surveyed	Numbers recorded	% of total recorded
Bath & NE Somerset	46	13.1	15027	20.4
North Somerset	59	17.4	19404	26.3
South Gloucestershire	48	11.0	16143	21.9
City of Bristol	38	33.9	10362	14.1
Somerset (BTO Avon)	32	9.6	12772	17.3
Total			73708	

Table 1 – Breakdown of squares surveyed

Table 2 on the next page lists all the species recorded in the Survey in 2016 and gives the number counted and the percentage of the total of the squares surveyed in which they were encountered.

Species	Counts in 2016	Distribution in area surveyed 2016		Species	Counts in 2016	Distribution in Area surveyed 2016	
		Squares in which recorded	% squares			Squares in which recorded	% squares surveyed
Mute Swan	219	28	12.6	Carrion Crow	4632	220	98.7
Canada Goose	263	36	16.1	Raven	144	57	25.6
Egyptian Goose	1	1	0.4	Goldcrest	239	84	37.7
Shelduck	197	14	6.3	Blue Tit	2354	213	95.5
Mandarin	2	2	0.9	Great Tit	1700	213	95.5
Gadwall	4	2	0.9	Coal Tit	136	53	23.8
Mallard	876	107	48.0	Marsh Tit	6	6	2.7
Pochard	3	1	0.4	Skylark	868	99	44.4
Tufted Duck	120	10	4.5	Sand Martin	156	4	1.8
Red-legged Partridge	34	8	3.6	Swallow	1415	161	72.2
Grey Partridge	2	1	0.4	House Martin	777	78	35.0
Pheasant	784	130	58.3	Cetti's Warbler	33	11	4.9
Cormorant	52	26	11.7	Long-tailed Tit	429	112	50.2
Little Egret	13	7	3.1	Chiffchaff	1514	196	87.9
Grey Heron	132	56	25.1	Willow Warbler	123	52	23.3
Little Grebe	6	3	1.3	Blackcap	1250	192	86.1
Great Crested Grebe	17	5	2.2	Garden Warbler	31	19	8.5
Red Kite	1	1	0.4	Lesser Wh.throat	35	22	9.9
Marsh Harrier	1	1	0.4	Whitethroat	422	119	53.4
Sparrowhawk	28	23	10.3	Grasshopper W	1	1	0.4
Buzzard	232	109	48.9	Sedge Warbler	119	22	9.9
Moorhen	116	48	21.5	Reed Warbler	143	21	9.4
Coot	65	13	5.8	Nuthatch	114	56	25.1
Oystercatcher	36	7	3.1	Treecreeper	43	23	10.3
Lapwing	4	3	1.3	Wren	4808	221	99.1
Ringed Plover	4	1	0.4	Starling	1984	116	52.0
Whimbrel	60	5	2.2	Dipper	11	5	2.2
Curlew	26	5	2.2	Blackbird	5394	222	99.6
Black-tailed Godwit	4	1	0.4	Fieldfare	2	1	0.4
Bar-tailed Godwit	5	1	0.4	Song Thrush	943	189	84.8
Dunlin	42	2	0.9	Mistle Thrush	108	55	24.7
Common Sandpiper	3	2	0.9	Spotted Flycat.	1	1	0.4
Greenshank	2	1	0.4	Robin	3065	218	97.8
Redshank	14	2	0.9	Pied Flycatcher	3	2	0.9
Woodcock	1	1	0.4	Redstart	5	3	1.3
Black-headed Gull	7	6	2.7	Whinchat	3	3	1.3
Lesser Bk-backed Gull	2127	139	62.3	Stonechat	14	8	3.6
Herring Gull	1867	147	65.9	Wheatear	15	10	4.5
Great Bk-backed Gull	7	4	1.8	Dunnock	1304	202	90.6
Feral Pigeon	1226	75	33.6	House Sparrow	3844	151	67.7
Stock Dove	219	59	26.5	Tree Sparrow	1	1	0.4
Wood Pigeon	8061	223	100.0	Yellow Wagtail	1	1	0.4
Collared Dove	853	146	65.5	Grey Wagtail	46	22	9.9
Cuckoo	10	7	3.1	Pied Wagtail	201	88	39.5
Little Owl	2	1	0.4	Tree Pipit	9	3	1.3

<i>BBS 2016 cont.</i>							
Tawny Owl	5	5	2.2	Meadow Pipit	101	15	6.7
Short-eared Owl	1	1	0.4	Rock Pipit	5	2	0.9
Swift	591	89	39.9	Chaffinch	1939	193	86.5
Kingfisher	3	2	0.9	Bullfinch	165	69	30.9
Green Woodpecker	169	90	40.4	Greenfinch	651	144	64.6
Gt Spot Woodpecker	217	110	49.3	Linnet	627	86	38.6
Kestrel	35	29	13.0	Lesser Redpoll	1	1	0.4
Hobby	4	4	1.8	Goldfinch	2274	195	87.4
Peregrine	6	6	2.7	Siskin	1	1	0.4
Magpie	1824	206	92.4	Yellowhammer	420	60	26.9
Jay	172	83	37.2	Reed Bunting	81	23	10.3
Jackdaw	5050	203	91.0	Corn Bunting	57	9	4.0
Rook	3112	103	46.2				

Table 2 – Birds recorded in the 2016 BBS

Table 3 below provides percentage change figures for the more commonly recorded species (those with a count in excess of 200 or were recorded in more than 25 squares). No attempt has been made to provide figures for the gulls as most of those recorded will have been non-breeders.

Species	2015-16	2014-15	2006-16
Mute Swan	-24	-10	-22
Canada Goose	47	-21	-54
Mallard	-19	11	-14
Pheasant	-9	0	-23
Buzzard	-2	-6	-45
Feral Pigeon	4	22	-25
Stock Dove	-21	22	24
Wood Pigeon	4	8	14
Collared Dove	4	1	-26
Swift	28	-17	-57
Gt Spot. Woodpecker	12	-7	21
Magpie	-7	8	0
Jackdaw	5	8	10
Rook	32	21	1
Carrion Crow	2	-4	-8
Goldcrest	-6	23	12
Blue Tit	4	-4	-16
Great Tit	3	-1	-24
Skylark	8	-12	-27
Swallow	-14	6	-36
House Martin	37	-8	-23
Long-tailed Tit	21	7	5
Chiffchaff	3	8	53
Blackcap	4	-9	44
Whitethroat	3	-23	-13
Wren	7	8	37
Starling	-5	-21	-65
Blackbird	-2	-3	-4
Song Thrush	0	2	-6
Robin	4	0	12
Dunnock	3	5	-11
House Sparrow	0	0	8
Pied Wagtail	19	4	53
Chaffinch	-4	-6	-41
Greenfinch	-22	4	-74
Linnet	-10	58	-20
Goldfinch	4	15	81
Yellowhammer	17	-3	2

Table 3 – Percentage change by the BBS in Avon

In Table 3 on the previous page the percentage change over the year from 2015 to 2016 is given together with the equivalent figure for 2014 to 2015 as a comparison, also a figure showing the percentage change over the ten years from 2006 to 2016 is provided as an indicator of the medium term trend. The one-year figures given in this table should of course be treated with a degree of caution, particularly where samples are relatively small. However, differences of more than 5% are likely to reflect a genuine change, particularly for the more widely recorded species. The ten-year period, 2006 to 2016, is a reasonable one to show developing trends (for example the explosive increase of the Goldfinch) and a reasonably consistent number of squares were surveyed during the period (216 in 2006 with an average of 199 squares per annum during the period).

The percentage change figures above are based on the 190 squares that were surveyed by the same observer in both 2015 and 2016, the highest number of 'repeat' squares since the Survey started, the previous highest being 188 in 2015, and this level of commitment by observers adds immensely to the value of the data.

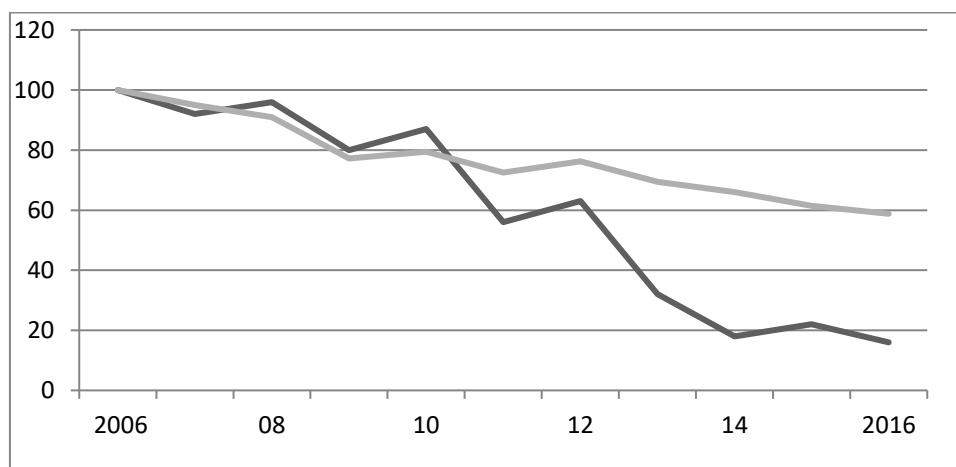
Table 4 below lists the 20 commonest species recorded in the Survey in 2016, ranked in order of abundance in 2016, and their comparable positions in 2006. Note Goldfinch and Greenfinch.

2016 rank	2006 rank	Species	2016 Count	2006 Count
1	1	Woodpigeon	8061	7511
2	2	Blackbird	5394	5711
3	6	Jackdaw	5050	3990
4	7	Wren	4808	3662
5	4	Carrion Crow	4632	4619
6	5	House Sparrow	3844	4600
7	12	Rook	3112	2444
8	11	Robin	3065	2742
9	10	Blue Tit	2354	2779
10	21	Goldfinch	2274	1054
11	13	Lesser Black-backed Gull	2127	2223
12	3	Starling	1984	5425
13	8	Chaffinch	1939	2921
14	19	Herring Gull	1867	1407
15	15	Magpie	1824	2007
16	16	Great Tit	1700	1978
17	22	Chiffchaff	1514	869
18	17	Swallow	1415	1693
19	18	Duncock	1304	1444
20	23	Blackcap	1250	860
-	9	Greenfinch	651	2866
-	14	Feral Pigeon	1226	2103
-	19	Collared Dove	853	1407

Table 4 – Species recorded in the Survey ranked by abundance in 2016

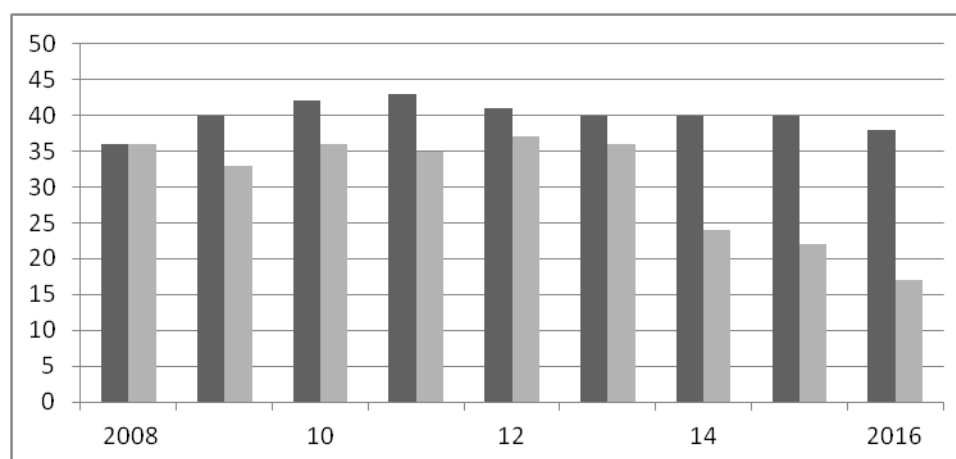
The local Chaffinch population

The graph at the top of the next page shows the trend for Chaffinch in the City of Bristol and in the Avon BTO Region (including Bristol) over the past decade. The species has experienced a steady decline, the reasons for which are still unclear although the disease *Trichomonosis*, which had such a devastating impact on the Greenfinch populations, is a prime suspect. However, that decline has not been evenly distributed across the region. Until 2010 the City of Bristol population appears to have been in step with the rest of the region but from 2011 it has experienced an accelerated decline resulting in a colossal decrease of 84% over the ten-year period compared to one of 41% for the region as a whole. If Bristol is excluded from the figures then its decline over the ten years would be reduced from 41% to 25%.



Chaffinch Grey line – Avon; Black line – Bristol; see note above, vertical axis figures are percentages

This decline is confirmed by a sharp fall in the number of Bristol squares where this species has been recorded as shown in the chart below. The period 2008 to 2016 (nine years) is used here because a reasonably consistent number of squares was surveyed in the City in each year (36 to 43), while 57 were surveyed in 2007 as part of the work for the Bristol Breeding Season Atlas.



Number of one-km squares in which Chaffinch was recorded: black – Avon, grey -- Bristol

Occupancy of squares surveyed in Bristol fell to 44.75% in 2016 from 100% in 2008. It should be noted that during the period covered by the Bristol Breeding Season Atlas, the fieldwork for which was done between 2000 and 2008, this species was recorded in every square in the city. In 2016 in the Avon BTO Region 86.5% of the squares surveyed for the BBS held this species compared to 98.9% in 2008. However, if the Bristol squares are excluded from the region then that figure would rise to 95.1% so that there appears to have been only a very modest breeding season range contraction outside of the City. It would be interesting to know to what extent, if any, this pattern is repeated in other urban/suburban areas of the region but the coverage is insufficient to draw definitive conclusions.

By way of comparison, Greenfinch which has also been subject to a significant decline, was recorded in 62% of squares surveyed in Bristol in 2016 compared to 64.6% of squares in the Avon BTO Region. In 2008 the equivalent figures were 92% of Bristol squares and 84.6% of the squares in the Region.

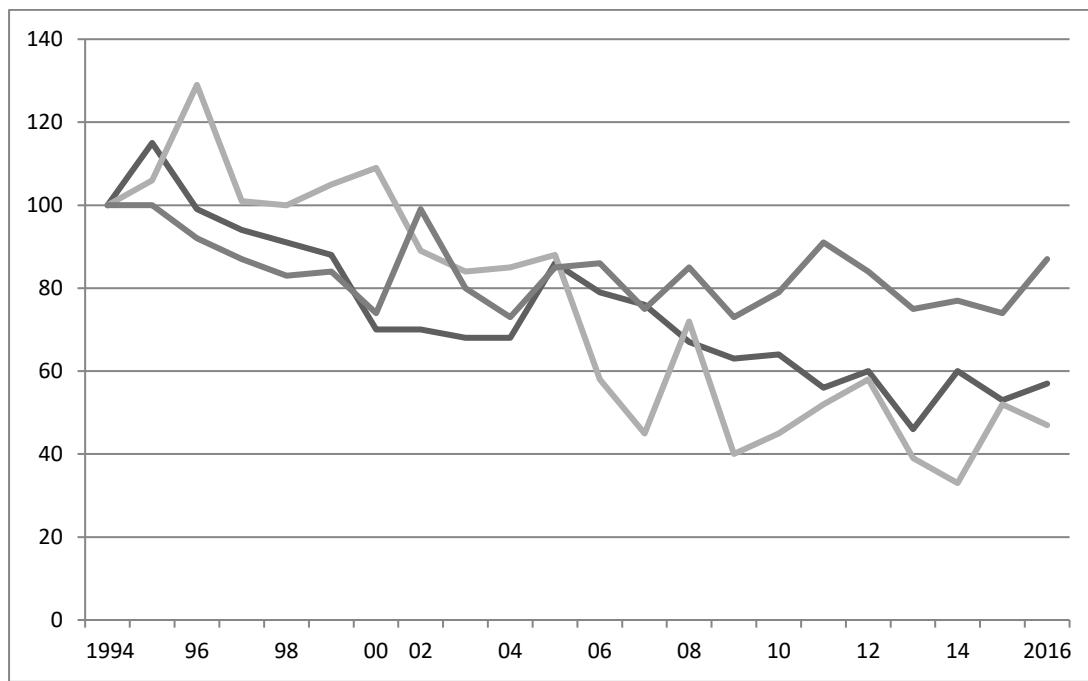
FARMLAND BIRD TRENDS BETWEEN 1994 AND 2016

For many years, certainly pre-dating the inauguration of the national BBS in 1994, our farmland birds have given cause for concern. Skylark, Linnet and Yellowhammer are all typical farmland species, and all had already experienced significant declines prior to 1994. This commenced in the late 1960s in the case of the Linnet, due largely to the intensification of agriculture. None of these three species has shown any consistent recovery since 1994 (see the chart below) but the Yellowhammer has been relatively stable over the past 15 years showing a decline of 11% in the period.

The Linnet story is less straightforward with a decline of 53% over the period. There are number of 'spikes' showing apparent increases but these seem to be related to the relatively social nature of the species during the breeding season, and perhaps lingering winter flocks, which can lead to large fluctuations in the numbers recorded. For instance the apparent significant increase in 2008 was caused by several large flocks but in 2009 numbers returned to the previous level.

Skylark shows a decline of 42% since 1994 but it seems to have stabilised since about 2009 -- the sharp decline in 2013 has proved to be temporary and was probably due to adverse weather conditions that spring and the preceding winter.

The chart below illustrates the Avon data, note that the year 2001 is missing due to the 'Foot and Mouth' epidemic that year.



Trends since 1994: Black line - Skylark; dark grey line - Yellowhammer; pale grey line – Linnet;

Vertical axis figures are percentages

As I postscript it is worth noting that a new book by Ian Newton (*Farming and Birds*, HarperCollins, London, 2017) gives a detailed picture of the decline in the farmland bird populations in the UK over the past 60 years.

First and Last Avon Migration Data – 2016

Harvey Rose

Last year's Avon Bird Report (pp. 147 – 51) provided an account of the first and last migration dates for the migrants occurring in the Avon area, and gave new tables for the period 1990 to 2015; the reader should consult that paper for further details. Here we give up-dated tables for the period 1990 to 2016 using the same methodology as in the previous paper -- Table 1 for summer visitors and Table 2 for winter visitors.

Table 1 – Summer Visitors

Species	Season	Earliest since 1990	Latest since 1990	Average	Diff. 1992/15	2016 Early/late
Garganey	Spr	Mar 13, 93	May 5, 00	April 4th	-2	April 4th*
	Aut	Aug 29, 07	Dec 13, 92	Oct. 14th	15	Nov. 14th
Quail	Spr	May 8, 96	Jun 29, 91	June 1st		May 29th
	Aut	No data	No data			July 31st
Osprey	Spr	Mar 20, 14	May 19, 94	April 9th		March 24th
	Aut	Jul 29, 90	Oct 26, 94	Sept. 16th		Sept. 20th
Lt. Ringed Plover	Spr	Mar 12, 15	Apr 30, 94	March 28th	-18	March 22nd
	Aut	Aug 26, 91	Oct 15, 12	Sept. 16th	6	Sept. 17th
Whimbrel	Spr	Mar 29, 90/02	Apr 18, 98	April 10th	-3	April 8th*
	Aut	Sep 16, 93	Dec 12, 15	Oct. 12th	19	Oct. 25th
Curlew S.piper (A)	Aut 1	Jul 31, 08	Sep 11, 92	Aug. 14th		Aug. 19th
	Aut 2	Sep 26, 09	Nov 20, 10	Oct. 24th		Oct. 18th
Wood S.piper (A)	Aut 1	Jul 6, 98	Aug 23, 93	Aug. 2nd		July 27th
	Aut 2	Aug 5, 91	Oct 8, 00/06	Sept. 7th		Sept. 22nd
Little Tern	Spr	Apr 16, 03/15	May 12, 05	April 27th		May 2nd
	Aut	Jul 12, 97	Oct 28, 96	Aug. 27th		Aug. 19th
Black Tern	Spr	Apr 14, 03/06/13	May 14, 09	April 24th	1	May 1st
	Aut	Sep 9, 08	Nov 3, 00	Oct. 4th	-12	Sept. 19th
Sandwich Tern	Spr	Feb 18, 12	May 29, 95	April 14th		March 28th
	Aut	Jul 21, 09	Oct 30, 93	Sept. 13th		Sept. 19th
Common Tern	Spr	Mar 30, 06	Apr 21, 98	April 10th	[-5]	April 14th
	Aut	Aug 25, 04	Oct 28, 09	Oct. 1st	[-15]	Oct. 10th
Arctic Tern	Spr	Mar 29, 15	Apr 26, 95	April 15th	[0]	April 12th
	Aut	Sep 9, 08	Nov 21, 96	Oct. 6th	[-10]	Sept. 8th
Cuckoo	Spr	Apr 6, 05	Apr 20, 94/97	April 13th	1	April 5th
	Aut	Jun 13, 04	Sep 30, 12	Aug. 12th	-24	Aug. 17th
Swift	Spr	Apr 8, 01	Apr 27, 90	April 17th	-5	April 17th
	Aut	Aug 27, 99	Oct 29, 04	Sept. 18th	-3	Sept. 7th
Hobby	Spr	Mar 30, 90	Apr 28, 91	April 18th	-11	April 6th
	Aut	Sep 24, 90	Nov 11, 05	Oct. 10th	16	Oct. 23rd
Sand Martin	Spr	Feb 23, 08	Mar 21, 06	March 8th	-10	March 13th
	Aut	Sep 14, 14	Oct 29, 91	Oct. 6th	-3	Oct. 1st
Swallow	Spr	Mar 8, 15	Mar 28, 98	March 19th	-8	March 21st
	Aut	Oct 16, 07	Dec 17, 13	Nov. 8th	5	Nov. 11th
House Martin	Spr	Mar 4, 97	Apr 7, 07	March 24th	-7	March 14th
	Aut	Oct 9, 11	Dec 5, 04	Oct. 28th	-8	Oct. 18th
Wood Warbler	Spr	Apr 8, 98	May 2, 08	April 21st	0	April 19th
	Aut	No data	No data			***
Willow Warbler	Spr	Mar 13, 11	Apr 1, 07	March 24th	-4	March 27th
	Aut	Sep 5, 92	Oct 11, 94	Sept. 23rd	1	Oct. 3rd

Garden Warbler	Spr	Mar 29, 90	Apr 28, 91	April 16th	1	April 13th
	Aut	Sep 6, 15	Nov 21, 93	Sept. 30th	4	Sept. 16th
Lesser Whitethroat	Spr	Apr 10, 10/14	Apr 27, 91	April 18th	-4	April 13th
	Aut	Sep 12, 04	Dec 9, 09	Oct 8th	12	Sept. 17th
Whitethroat	Spr	Apr 2, 12	Apr 24, 90	April 12th	-4	April 11th
	Aut	Sep 11, 07	Oct 27, 03	Sept. 27th	1	Sept. 22ndt
Grasshopper Warbler	Spr	Mar 28, 97	Apr 24, 96	April 13th	-2	April 3rd
	Aut	Aug 13, 91	Oct 7, 97	Sept. 16th	2	Sept. 3rd
Sedge Warbler	Spr	Mar 30, 07	Apr 18, 98	April 9th	-6	April 2nd
	Aut	Sep 16, 00	Oct 6, 07	Sept. 27th	-1	Oct. 10th
Reed Warbler	Spr	Apr 1, 12/15	Apr 28, 91	April 12th	-11	April 3rd
	Aut	Jul 28, 90	Nov 16, 08	Oct. 2nd	8	Nov. 26th
Ring Ouzel	Spr	Feb 9, 08	Apr 28, 99	March 26th	-4	April 2nd
	Aut	Oct 10, 08	Nov 15, 14	Oct. 25th	7	Oct. 11th
Spotted Flycatcher	Spr	Apr 21, 03/06	May 17, 09	May 2nd	0	April 20th
	Aut	Sep 6, 98	Oct 15, 04	Sept. 27th	6	Sept. 24th
Nightingale	Spr	Apr 8, 02	May 7, 08	April 22nd	0	May 1st
	Aut	No data	No data			***
Pied Flycatcher	Spr	Mar 30, 02	May 19, 07	April 13th	-3	April 9th
	Aut	Aug 5, 07	Oct 14, 05	Sept. 1st	-10	Sept. 18th
Redstart	Spr	Mar 17, 11	Apr 21, 90	April 4th	-6	April 2nd
	Aut	Sep 13, 09	Nov 30, 14	Oct. 12th	-3	Sept. 30th
Whinchat	Spr	Apr 14, 09/15	Apr 28, 90	April 20th	3	April 13th
	Aut	Sep 3, 95	Nov 14, 12	Oct. 11th	-4	Oct. 8th
Wheatear	Spr	Feb 28, 98	Mar 25, 06	March 10th	-2	March 20th
	Aut	Oct 14, 92	Dec 12, 94	Nov. 7th	10	Nov. 8th
Yellow Wagtail	Spr	Mar 21, 92	Apr 20, 90	April 7th	1	April 10th
	Aut	Sep 19, 09	Nov 1, 02	Oct. 7th	-10	Oct. 1st
White Wagtail	Spr	Mar 1, 07	Apr 9, 97	March 23rd	-8	March 21st
	Aut	Sep 8, 90	Nov 23, 03/14	Oct. 7th	14	Nov. 2nd
Tree Pipit	Spr	Mar 16, 92	Apr 27, 91	April 3rd	-4	April 3rd
	Aut	Sep 11, 99/05	Oct 21, 90	Sept. 27th	-5	Sept. 14th

Data for summer visitors and double-passage migrants

Notes on Table 1

The table above gives the data for the 'summer visitors' including the double passage migrants, that is those species that leave the Avon area completely for some part of the autumn/winter/spring period; and there are two rows for each species. The first of these (labelled Spr) gives the first-arrival data, that is the earliest (in bold) and the latest dates that the corresponding species was first reported in the Avon area during the period 1990 to 2015 inclusive – Columns 3 and 4. Column 5 gives the average of the 26 dates over this period. The second row (labelled Aut) gives the last departure data. Entries marked (A) in the table, and in Column 2 (for seasons) Aut 1 and Aut 2, refer to their first-arrival and last-departure during the autumn period only. Column 6 gives the difference in days between the 1992 date and that shown in Column 5. The entries for both Arctic and Common Tern are in square brackets because in the 1992 paper lumped these together as 'Commic Tern'.

Column 7 gives the relevant data for the current year 2016. Dates set in bold indicate that the record was exceptional. Two species are starred, this indicates that an individual was present for a while in winter and so is not being counted as a migrant.

Table 2 – Winter Visitors

Species	Winter period	No record	Earliest	Latest	Average 1990/2015	2016
Bewick Swan	1st	2	Jan 3, 05/07	Mar 28, 92/96	Feb. 12th	Jan. 12th
	2nd	1	Oct 11, 91/04	Dec 13, 08	Nov. 1st	Oct. 19th
White-fronted Goose	1st	3	Jan 1, 02	Apr 30, 00	Feb. 23rd	April 17th
	2nd	7	Oct 15, 92	Dec 19, 04/06	Nov. 23rd	Oct. 23rd
Brent Goose	1st	1	Jan 12, 90	Jun 2, 15	April 14th	March 22nd
	2nd	1	Aug 10, 11	Dec 28, 08	Oct. 8th	Nov. 24th
Pintail	1st		Feb 27, 94	May 22, 15	April 16th	May 21st
	2nd		Jun 10, 95	Sep 4, 04	Aug. 1st	Aug. 18th
Scaup	1st	2	Jan 7, 99	May 20, 95	April 16th	May 3rd
	2nd	1	Jun 24, 13	Nov 11, 95	Sept. 23th	Sept. 30th
Goosander	1st		Mar 3, 03	May 19, 08	April 8th	April 30th
	2nd		Aug 8, 90	Nov 2, 09	Sept. 28th	Nov. 5th
Golden Plover	1st	1	Mar 29, 15	May 14, 92	April 19th	May 3rd
	2nd		Jun 28, 14	Sep 24, 13	Aug. 17th	Aug. 17th
Purple Sandpiper	1st	3	Jan 10, 93	May 28, 13	April 27th	May 8th
	2nd		Aug 28, 91	Dec 29, 92	Nov. 10th	Nov. 15th
Green Sandpiper	1st		Mar 29, 96	May 5, 98	April 18th	April 21st
	2nd		May 30, 03	Jul 2, 12	June 17th	June 16th
Sp. Redshank	1st	2	Jan 1, 13	May 6, 91	April 10th	May 15th
	2nd		Jun 24, 94	Sep 16, 09	Aug. 5th	July 3rd
Jack Snipe	1st		Mar 17, 91	Apr 25, 11	April 10th	April 12th
	2nd		Sep 13, 98	Oct 30, 99	Oct. 7th	Sept. 29th
Woodcock	1st		Feb 15, 01	Apr 30, 94	March 18th	April 3rd
	2nd		Oct 9, 90	Dec 29, 92	Oct. 30th	Nov. 1st
Little Gull	1st		Apr 12, 94	Jun 9, 91	May 11th	May 5th
	2nd		Jun 29, 09	Oct 14, 14	Aug. 6th	Aug. 19th
Short-eared Owl	1st		Mar 3, 94	Jul 5, 12	April 28th	June 5th
	2nd		Aug 3, 11	Oct 23, 13	Sept. 22nd	Aug. 28th
Merlin	1st		Mar 31, 91/09	May 27, 93	April 21st	May 26th
	2nd		Aug 5, 06	Oct 20, 91	Sept. 9th	Sept. 16th
Firecrest	1st	1	Jan 24, 99	Apr 27, 12	March 16th	April 12th
	2nd	3	Aug 26, 11	Dec 5, 99	Oct. 14th	Oct. 2nd
Fieldfare	1st		Mar 22, 05	May 1, 09	April 16th	April 21st
	2nd		Aug 29, 94	Oct 27, 00	Oct. 5th	Oct. 7th
Redwing	1st		Mar 17, 01	Apr 21, 12	April 7th	April 20th
	2nd		Sep 15, 04	Oct 9, 91/00	Sept. 29th	Oct. 3rd
Water Pipit	1st		Mar 2, 11	Apr 17, 92	March 31st	April 19th
	2nd		Sep 10, 95	Nov 16, 13	Oct. 20th	Oct. 25th
Brambling	1st	1	Jan 30, 01	May 8, 11	April 8th	April 12th
	2nd		Sep 17, 13	Oct 22, 95	Oct. 8th	Oct. 3rd
Snow Bunting	1st	15	Jan 1, 94	Apr 10, 05	Feb. 17th	No records
	2nd	4	Sep 28, 03	Dec 2, 90	Oct. 22nd	Oct. 10th

Table 2 – Data for winter visitors

Most of the comments given above for Table 1 also apply to Table 2. Each species again has two rows, here labelled “1st” and “2nd”, referring to the first and second winter periods, respectively; and the main data is given in Columns 4 to 6 with the 2016 data in Column 7. There is no comparison with the 1965-92 data as very little was given in the earlier paper for winter visitors. Unlike the summer visitor records, there were a number of years when some species were not recorded at all in the first, or second, or both, winter periods. The number of these ‘absent’ winter periods is given in Column 3. It is perhaps of interest to note that up to 2015 no such column was needed in Table 1.

Avon Ringing Report for 2016

Mike Bailey and Ed Drewitt

The number of birds ringed in Britain and Ireland in 2016 was 1064,598, this is the third highest total on record, only exceeded by 1103,914 in 2010 and 115,8429 in 2011. In December the ringing community was alerted to the avian influenza virus H5N8 that was spreading throughout Europe. The BTO reminded ringers that they should continue to practice good personal hygiene and that ringing operations would need to stop in areas where any outbreak occurred. Ten temporary suspensions were introduced in early 2017 although none within the Avon area.

Results from the BTO's Constant Effort Site (CES) ringing scheme provided information on the year-to-year abundance for the adults and juveniles of 24 common songbird species. Long-term trends within the UK from 1983 to 2016 show large increases in Chiffchaff and Blackcap numbers of 248% and 179%, respectively. However, in contrast, the six long-distance migrant warblers (Willow, Garden, Lesser Whitethroat, Whitethroat, Sedge and Reed) reveal long-term declines.

Top Twenty Totals

During 2016 a total of 9,978 birds was ringed in the Avon area, a small increase on the previous two years and well up on 2012. The first table shows the top 20 species ringed in the Avon area (with 2015 positions shown in brackets), and the percentage change in the ringing total between 2015 and 2016. Some year-to-year changes were affected by ringing effort, weather conditions and catching opportunities. Eighteen of the top 20 species remain the same, although, as usual, there is some change in their relative positions. Reed Warbler continued to hold the number one spot whilst Redwing and Lesser Black-backed Gull joined the list, with Coal Tit and Willow Warbler dropped out. Those that moved up the table mainly did so as a result of chance. These were Canada Goose and Swallow with more successful catches at CVL, Redwing with improved catches using playback lures at both Gordano Valley and Littleton Brick Pits, and Lesser Black-backed Gull as a result of Peter Rock's long-term study about urban gulls. The exception was Goldfinch with birds attracted to feeding stations, representing a continuing genuine increase in their population. This is also reflected in the national totals for 2016 where Goldfinch (55,754) is now the second most commonly ringed species after Blue Tit (100,565).

Top twenty Table

Position	Species	2015	2016	% change
1 (1)	Reed Warbler	1507	1311	-13
2 (2)	Blue Tit	1293	1000	-23
3 (6)	Goldfinch	372	971	+161
4 (4)	Chiffchaff	847	805	-5
5 (3)	Blackcap	1068	795	-26
6 (5)	Great Tit	658	577	-12
7 (9)	Swallow	263	530	+102
8 (32)	Redwing	37	439	+1086
9 (7)	Long-tailed Tit	297	291	-2
10 (8)	Robin	290	284	-2

Position	Species	2015	2016	% change
11 (11)	Sedge Warbler	247	252	+2
12 (13)	Goldcrest	217	208	-4
13 (10)	Wren	255	200	-22
14 (12)	Chaffinch	222	199	-10
15 (14)	Greenfinch	216	199	-8
16 (15)	Dunnock	197	196	-1
17 (19)	Canada Goose	104	153	+47
18 (16)	Blackbird	170	148	-13
19 (17)	Reed Bunting	146	124	-15
20 (24)	Lesser B-back Gull	66	116	+76

Recoveries

The recovery records, shown in the appendix to this report, are listed because of the distance traveled and/or longevity. Remarkably this list includes 29 species and 81 individuals. Most local recaptures have been omitted. The first lines of each entry gives details of the original ringing, subsequent lines provide details of the recovery, including the distance traveled and elapsed time from the original ringing date. Colour ringing is effective and noticeable in the recovery/sightings of the gulls and waders, especially the large number of Black-headed Gulls from Poland. Several of the larger gull histories have been shortened following multiple sightings within the same area.

Systematic List of Birds Ringed in 2012 – 2016

Species annual ringing totals for the period 2012 to 2016 are given below, together with the average number of birds ringed annually for the previous four years 2012-2015 in the right-hand column. No new species were added to the 'Avon Ringing List' in 2016.

Species	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	4 Yr Av.
Mute Swan	2	0	4	1	18	1.8
Greylag Goose	0	0	0	0	1	0.0
Canada Goose	0	63	78	105	153	61.5
Egyptian Goose	0	0	1	0	0	0.3
Teal	10	10	2	29	23	12.8
Mallard	22	18	29	19	13	22.0
Garganey	1	0	0	0	0	0.3
Tufted Duck	0	2	20	1	1	5.8
Sparrowhawk	7	2	3	5	2	4.3
Buzzard	3	1	0	0	1	1.0
Water Rail	29	38	27	12	18	26.5
Spotted Crake	0	0	1	0	0	0.3
Moorhen	59	79	51	30	17	54.8
Coot	5	2	14	4	1	6.3
Lapwing	0	0	0	1	0	0.3
Ringed Plover	9	0	0	0	0	2.3
Dunlin	0	0	31	11	0	10.5

Snipe	0	0	2	1	0	0.8
Woodcock	0	0	5	1	0	1.5
Common Sandpiper	0	0	1	2	0	0.8
Green Sandpiper	0	1	1	0	0	0.5
Redshank	0	0	6	2	0	2.0
Black-headed Gull	0	0	0	1	4	0.3
Lsr Black-backed Gull	129	97	61	66	116	88.3
Herring Gull	61	49	38	55	73	50.8
Stock Dove	1	1	0	6	23	2.0
Wood Pigeon	12	3	7	16	18	9.5
Collared Dove	1	2	5	3	5	2.8
Cuckoo	0	0	1	2	0	0.8
Barn Owl	43	12	77	62	29	48.5
Little Owl	0	0	0	0	3	0.0
Tawny Owl	12	3	22	3	5	10.0
Nightjar	0	2	1	2	1	1.3
Swift	8	0	0	0	0	2.0
Kingfisher	8	13	7	8	16	9.0
Wryneck	1	1	0	0	0	0.5
Green Woodpecker	3	5	2	4	4	3.5
Gt Spotted Woodpecker	21	10	22	24	27	19.3
Peregrine	13	12	14	11	11	12.5
Kestrel	28	35	29	16	26	27.0
Magpie	11	8	3	4	3	6.5
Jay	6	3	7	6	9	5.5
Jackdaw	0	6	12	27	11	11.3
Rook	0	0	0	1	0	0.3
Carrion Crow	1	2	1	2	1	1.5
Raven	5	3	5	2	0	3.8
Goldcrest	67	19	62	217	208	91.3
Firecrest	0	0	2	5	0	1.8
Blue Tit	709	545	984	1282	1000	880.0
Great Tit	545	331	575	658	577	527.3
Coal Tit	63	23	54	102	110	60.5
Bearded Tit	0	0	1	2	0	0.8
Marsh Tit	0	0	2	3	6	1.3
Sand Martin	6	13	11	14	20	11.0
Swallow	214	954	365	263	530	449.0
House Martin	13	3	4	0	0	5.0
Cetti's Warbler	24	21	40	61	43	36.5
Long-tailed Tit	195	138	182	297	291	203.0
Yellow-browed Warbler	0	0	1	0	1	0.3
Chiffchaff	454	428	825	847	805	638.5
Willow Warbler	172	175	153	121	104	155.3

Blackcap	591	512	1166	1068	795	834.3
Garden Warbler	53	42	76	42	35	53.3
Lesser Whitethroat	19	35	25	30	24	27.3
Whitethroat	53	83	68	35	23	59.8
Grasshopper Warbler	5	9	6	3	12	5.8
Sedge Warbler	96	212	301	247	252	214.0
Reed Warbler	428	788	1475	1507	1311	1049.5
Nuthatch	23	11	12	20	18	16.5
Treecreeper	19	12	38	41	42	27.5
Wren	147	146	190	255	200	184.5
Starling	7	56	41	64	26	42.0
Dipper	0	0	0	0	4	0.0
Blackbird	162	125	183	170	148	160.0
Fieldfare	10	5	2	4	1	5.3
Song Thrush	57	47	51	84	72	59.8
Redwing	6	2	12	37	439	14.3
Mistle Thrush	5	0	0	0	0	1.3
Spotted Flycatcher	2	1	1	1	0	1.3
Robin	178	154	284	290	284	226.5
Nightingale	0	1	0	0	0	0.3
Pied Flycatcher	0	1	0	0	2	0.3
Redstart	12	5	11	10	3	9.5
Whinchat	0	1	0	0	0	0.3
Stonechat	0	0	1	0	0	0.3
Wheatear	0	1	0	0	0	0.3
Dunnock	133	106	203	197	196	159.8
House Sparrow	38	42	56	60	28	49.0
Grey Wagtail	1	2	3	3	3	2.3
Pied Wagtail	21	6	4	6	11	9.3
Tree Pipit	0	1	1	0	0	0.5
Meadow Pipit	15	4	16	22	21	14.3
Water Pipit	1	0	0	0	0	0.3
Chaffinch	131	105	198	222	199	164.0
Brambling	2	0	0	0	0	0.5
Bullfinch	66	33	79	78	100	64.0
Greenfinch	176	223	616	216	199	307.8
Linnet	47	8	6	34	9	23.8
Redpoll (Lesr /Common)	36	4	14	24	84	19.5
Goldfinch	146	165	373	372	971	264.0
Siskin	25	51	25	12	12	28.3
Yellowhammer	0	0	52	81	2	33.3
Reed Bunting	87	98	124	146	124	113.8
TOTAL	5,766	6227	9564	9798	9978	7838.8

Nest recording and pullus ringing around CVL

The ringing of nestlings accounts for around 20% of the Avon ringing total. The main species are the larger urban gulls, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Reed Warbler and Swallow. However, many other species are also recorded as can be seen in the table below compiled by ringers in, and around, CVL.

Species	Nest Rcds	Av. clutch	Range	Failed	Successful	Ringed
Barn Owl	3	4.5	4-5	1	1	5
Blackbird	25	3.4	1-5	19	3	13
Blackcap	11	4.6	3-6	5	4	22
Blue Tit	67	7.6	2-14	19	46	275
Bullfinch	1	5.0	5-5	0	0	
Buzzard	1	1.0	1-1	0	1	
Canada Goose	4	2.8	1-7	2	1	
Cetti's Warbler	2	4.0	4-4	1	1	3
Chaffinch	2	4.0	4-4	2	0	
Chiffchaff	5	5.6	5-6	3	0	
Coal Tit	3	8.7	7-10	0	3	28
Collared Dove	3	1.5	1-2	1	1	
Coot	47	5.5	1-10	10	0	
Dunnock	15	3.7	2-5	7	5	14
Goldfinch	1	6.0	6-6	0	1	5
Great Tit	43	5.8	1-10	3	37	175
Greenfinch	1	5.0	5-5	1	0	1
Grey Heron	1	2.0	2-2	0	0	
Jackdaw	6	4.2	4-5	2	3	8
Kestrel	1	3.0	3-3	0	1	
Little Grebe	2	3.5	3-4	2	0	
Long-tailed Tit	8	6.6	3-9	4	1	
Moorhen	17	7.3	2-17	4	0	
Mute Swan	10	3.7	1-6	3	1	
Nuthatch	3	7.0	6-8	1	2	5
Raven	3	3.3	1-6	0	2	
Reed Bunting	7	4.1	2-5	3	3	7
Reed Warbler	221	3.7	1-5	74	67	401
Robin	9	4.9	3-7	4	5	17
Sedge Warbler	1	2.0	2-2	1	0	
Song Thrush	23	4.1	1-5	17	5	17
Sparrowhawk	1	2.0	2-2	0	1	
Stock Dove	13	2.0	1-3	4	9	16
Swallow	17	4.6	3-6	1	13	52
Tawny Owl	3	1.7	1-2	1	2	2
Treecreeper	1	5.0	5-5	0	1	5
Water Rail	1	3.0	3-3	0	0	
Whitethroat	1	5.0	5-5	0	1	3
Woodpigeon	10	1.9	1-2	5	3	4
Wren	20	4.5	2-6	9	5	3

Details about annual ringing recoveries and totals for the British Isles, since 2007 can be seen on the BTO website <https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/publications/online-ringing-reports>



Reed Warbler nest at CVL drawn by Mike Bailey

Appendix – Ringing recoveries

Mute Swan

Ring Number	Z21124	
First-year	11-09-2006	Harry Stoke, near Bristol
Alive	04-12-2008	Patchway 4km 2y 2m 23d
Caught by ringer	18-01-2011	Cosmeston Lakes, (Vale of Glamorgan) 45km W 4y 4m 7d
Alive	(26-03-2015)	Highbridge 42km SW 8y 6m 15d
Alive (ring read in field)	05-01-2016	Apex Park, Burnham-on-Sea 44km SW 9y 3m 25d

Canada Goose

Ring Number	5213571	
Adult Male	27-06-2000	CVL
Caught by ringer	29-06-2004	CVL 4y 0m 2d
Alive (ring read in field)	27-07-2007	CVL 7y 1m 0d
Caught by ringer	30-06-2009	CVL 9y 0m 3d
Alive (ring read in field)	13-07-2012	CVL 12y 0m 16d
Caught by ringer	05-07-2016	CVL 16y 0m 8d

Ring Number	5215674	
Adult Female	26-06-2001	CVL
Caught by ringer	29-06-2004	CVL 3y 0m 3d
Caught by ringer	30-06-2009	CVL 8y 0m 4d
Alive (ring read in field)	17-06-2016	CVL 14y 11m 22d

Ring Number	5250524	
Full-grown	10-12-2008	Slimbridge
Caught by ringer	05-01-2016	CVL 50km SSW 7y 0m 26d

Ring Number	5254333	
Adult	24-06-2008	CVL
Shot	01-09-2016	Kingston Seymoor Sea Wall 20km WNW 8y 2m 8d

Ring Number	5259111	
Adult	29-Jun-2010	CVL
Alive (ring read in field)	7-Jul-2016	Llanwern, Newport, 36km, 2200days

Ring Number	5262150	
Adult	28-Jun-2011	CVL
Caught by ringer	26-Jun-2016	Llangorse Lake, Powys, 80km, 1825 days

Ring Number	5267901	
Adult Female	24-06-2014	CVL
Freshly dead (shot)	02-01-2016	North Tawton (Devon) 107km WSW 1y 6m 9d

Ring Number	5274050	
Adult Female	28-06-2014	Bowness-on-Windermere (Cumbria)
Alive (colour rings seen)	07-12-2015	Pillhead Gout, near Thornbury 307km S 1y 5m 21d

Teal

Ring Number	EZ04507	
First-year Male	28-11-2015	CVL
Freshly dead	19-01-2016	Foucarville (Manche), France 234km SSE 0y 1m 22d

Teal - Ring Number	EZ04520	
First-year female	19-12-2015	CVL
Freshly dead (shot)	27-10-2016	Bayeux Seigne Maritime, France 342km SE 0y 10m 8d
Cormorant		
Ring Number	9010191	
Nestling	01-06-2016	Trintelhaven, The Netherlands
Alive (colour rings seen)	31-10-2016	CVL 567km WSW 0y 4m 30d
Ring Number	9010195	
Nestling	03-06-2016	Andijk, The Netherlands
Alive (colour rings seen)	11-11-2016	BL 565km WSW 0y 5m 8d
Ring Number	5267105	
Nestling	08-06-2014	Denny Island, Bristol Channel
Alive (colour rings seen)	04-07-2014	CVL 24km SSE 0y 0m 26d
Alive (colour rings seen)	06-06-2015	CVL 24km SSE 0y 11m 29d
Alive (colour rings seen)	25-07-2016	Litton Reservoir, 30km SSE 2y 1m 17d
Alive (colour rings seen)	04-11-2016	Litton Reservoir, 30km SSE 2y 4m 27d
Ring Number	5259470	
Nestling	07-06-2015	Denny Island, Bristol Channel: 51°31'N 2°47'W (Newport)
Alive (colour rings seen)	20-12-2016	Blagdon Lake, 22km SSE 1y 6m 13d
Great White Egret		
Ring Number	1071061	
Nestling Male	27-05-2016	Ham Wall, Glastonbury (Somerset)
Alive (colour rings seen)	13-09-2016	Durleigh Reservoir, 19km W 0y 3m 17d
Alive (colour rings seen)	07-10-2016	CVL 23km NNE 0y 4m 10d
Water Rail		
Ring Number	EY39179	
Adult Female	25-09-2014	CVL
Freshly dead	19-12-2016	CVL 2y 2m 24d
Ringed Plover		
Ring Number	NW21720	
Nestling	30-05-2004	Portbury (Docks)
Caught by ringer	14-12-2015	Usk Lighthouse (Newport) 19km WNW 11y 6m 14d
Black-tailed Godwit		
Ring Number	DD84918	
Adult Male	29-09-2012	Harty (Kent)
Alive (colour rings seen)	08-07-2013	Pilning Reserve, 247km W 0y 9m 9d
Alive (colour rings seen)	25-07-2013	Keyhaven (Hampshire) 188km WSW 0y 9m 26d
Alive (colour rings seen)	15-08-2013	Oare, (Kent) 3km 0y 10m 17d
Alive (colour rings seen)	24-03-2014	Fishbourne (West Sussex) 133km WSW 1y 5m 23d
Alive (colour rings seen)	13-08-2014	Oare (Kent) 3km 1y 10m 15d
Alive (colour rings seen)	09-07-2015	Oare (Kent) 3km 2y 9m 10d
Alive (colour rings seen)	28-01-2016	Avon Valley (Hampshire) 199km WSW 3y 3m 30d
Alive (colour rings seen)	16-02-2016	Avon Valley (Hampshire) 199km WSW 3y 4m 18d

Redshank

Ring Number	DK10753	
Adult	22-02-2016	Saltmarsh - Sluice House Farm (Newport)
Alive (colour rings seen)	03-03-2016	Penarth Marina (Cardiff Bay) 11km SW 0y 0m 10d
Alive (colour rings seen)	11-03-2016	Woodspring Bay, 17km SE 0y 0m 18d

Black-headed Gull

Ring Number	ST229385	
Nestling	25-06-2003	Seinajoki(Vaasa) Finland
Freshly dead (injury)	15-11-2016	East Clevedon, 1,984km SW 13y 4m 21d

Ring Number	EY85304	
Adult	21-03-2015	Pitsea Landfill Site, (Essex)
Alive (colour rings seen)	01-10-2016	CVL 219km W 1y 6m 10d

Ring Number	EY45539	
Adult	22-02-2014	Rainham Tip, (Greater London)
Caught by ringer	08-03-2014	Pitsea Landfill Site, (Essex) 23km ENE 0y 0m 14d
Alive (colour rings seen)	23-09-2015	New Passage 198km W 1y 7m 1d

Ring Number	EY83030	
Nestling	08-06-2014	Hosehill Lake (West Berkshire)
Alive (colour rings seen)	01-06-2015	Hosehill Lake (West Berkshire) 0km 0y 11m 24d
Alive (colour rings seen)	22-03-2016	Hosehill Lake (West Berkshire) 0km 1y 9m 14d
Alive (colour rings seen)	18-07-2016	Royal Portbury Dock 115km W 2y 1m 10d
Alive (colour rings seen)	05-11-2016	Birk Brow (Redcar and Cleveland) 345km N 2y 4m 28d

Ring Number	EY83295	
Nestling	04-06-2016	Hosehill Lake (West Berkshire)
Alive (colour rings seen)	17-07-2016	CVL 110km W 0y 1m 13d

Ring Number	EY83213	
Nestling	13-06-2015	Hosehill Lake (West Berkshire)
Alive (colour rings seen)	22-07-2015	CVL 110km W 0y 1m 9d
Alive (colour rings seen)	09-08-2016	CVL 108km W 1y 1m 27d
Alive (colour rings seen)	01-10-2016	CVL 108km W 1y 3m 18d

Ring Number	FS07378	
Nestling	05-06-2014	Kiszkowo (Wielkopolskie), Poland
Alive (colour rings seen)	11-08-2014	CVL 1,371km W 0y 2m 6d

Ring Number	FS05485	
Adult	07-05-2013	Bielinek (Zachodnio-Pomorskie), Poland
Alive (colour rings seen)	24-09-2014	BL 1,163km W 1y 4m 17d

Ring Number	FS07378	
Nestling	05-06-2014	Kiszkowo (Wielkopolskie), Poland
Alive (colour rings seen)	19-12-2015	CVL 1,371km W 1y 6m 14d
Alive (colour rings seen)	30-07-2016	CVL 1,371km W 2y 1m 25d
Alive (colour rings seen)	11-08-2016	CVL 1,371km W 2y 2m 6d

Ring Number	FN67809	
First-year	21-10-2015	Olsztyn-Kormoran (Warminsko-Mazurskie), Poland
Alive (colour rings seen)	20-12-2016	Eastville Park 1,576km W 1y 1m 29d

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Ring Number	GF13965	
Nestling	06-06-1994	Flat Holm (Cardiff)
Freshly dead (injury)	07-06-2016	Weston-Super-Mare 11km ESE 22y 0m 1d
Ring Number	FP24105	
Adult	10-04-2000	near Hempsted, Gloucester
Alive (colour marks seen)	2001 - 2011	Multiple sightings near Hempsted, Gloucester
Alive (colour rings seen)	27-07-2013	Shawell Gravel Pits (Leicestershire) 96km NE 13y 3m 17d
Alive (colour rings seen)	30-06-2016	Northway, Transfer Station SG 42km SSW 16y 2m 20d
Ring Number	GN49125	
Nestling	05-07-2002	Bath
Alive (colour marks seen)	26-03-2003	Playa de San Lorenzo, Spain 907km SSW 0y 8m 21d
Alive (colour rings seen)	10-01-2012	Lower Farm Gravel Pit (West Berkshire) 76km E 9y 6m 5d
Alive (colour rings seen)	17-12-2015	Lower Farm Gravel Pit (West Berkshire) 76km E 13y 5m 12d
Ring Number	FP86226	
Adult	31-10-2005	near Wingmore Farm, Stoke Orchard
Alive (colour marks seen)	2005 - 2013	Multiple sightings in Gloucestershire region
Alive (colour rings seen)	07-12-2013	Albion Landfill Site (Leicestershire) 99km NNE 8y 1m 6d
Alive (colour marks seen)	24-08-2015	Bristol 64km SSW 9y 9m 24d
Alive (colour rings seen)	24-06-2016	Bristol 64km SSW 10y 7m 24d
Ring Number	D6588	
Adult Male	22-05-2012	Chouet Landfill (Guernsey) Channel Islands
Alive (colour rings seen)	24-06-2015	Bath 210km N 3y 1m 2d
Ring Number	D6806	
Second-year	24-05-2012	Chouet Landfill (Guernsey) Channel Islands
Freshly dead	30-06-2016	Bristol 217km N 4y 1m 6d
Herring Gull		
Ring Number	GN31672	
Nestling	02-07-2001	Central Bristol
Alive (colour marks seen)	03-01-2002	Hempsted (Gloucestershire) 48km NNE 0y 6m 1d
Alive (colour marks seen)	14-03-2003	near Hempsted, Gloucester 50km NNE 1y 8m 12d
Freshly dead (disease)	04-05-2016	High Littleton 16km SSE 14y 10m 2d
Ring Number	GC22603	
First-year	11-11-2006	near Hempsted, Gloucester
Alive (colour marks seen)	2006 - 2010	Multiple sighting in the Gloucestershire area
Alive (colour rings seen)	06-09-2016	Northway, Transfer Station SG 42km SSW 9y 9m 26d
Ring Number	GN84357	
First-year	28-10-2006	near Hempsted (Gloucestershire)
Alive (colour rings seen)	2006 - 2016	Multiple sighting in the Gloucestershire area
Alive (colour rings seen)	05-07-2016	Northway, Transfer Station SG 42km SSW 9y 8m d
Ring Number	GR53379	
First-year	21-08-2015	Rufforth Waste Disposal Site (York)
Alive (colour rings seen)	17-02-2016	Norton St Philip 306km SSW 0y 5m 27d
Alive (colour rings seen)	24-05-2016	Northway, Filton 290km SSW 0y 9m 3d

Herring Gull - Ring Number

	GR62522	
Nestling	29-06-2012	Central Bristol
Alive (colour rings seen)	31-12-2013	Beddington Sew Wks (Greater London) 169km E 1y 6m 2d
Alive (colour rings seen)	07-05-2014	Gravesend (Kent) 205km E 1y 10m 8d
Alive (colour rings seen)	01-04-2015	Dungeness (Kent) 254km ESE 2y 9m 3d

Yellow-legged Gull

Ring Number	MA01255	
Nestling	25-05-2016	Fanel (Berne) Switzerland
Alive (ring read in field)	25-07-2016	CVL 853km NW 0y 2m 0d

Great Black-backed Gull

Ring Number	MA30855	
Nestling	16-06-2013	Denny Island, Bristol Channel
Alive (colour rings seen)	30-04-2015	CVL 25km SSE 1y 10m 14d
Alive (colour rings seen)	07-09-2016	CVL 25km SSE 3y 2m 22d
Alive (colour rings seen)	27-11-2016	Camel Estuary 182km SW 3y 5m 11d

Ring Number

	MA30853	
Nestling	16-06-2013	Denny Island, Bristol Channel
Alive (colour rings seen)	26-01-2014	Cadgwith (Cornwall) 239km SW 0y 7m 10d
Alive (colour rings seen)	15-10-2014	BL 22km SSE 1y 3m 29d
Alive (colour rings seen)	24-01-2015	Coverack (Cornwall) 233km SW 1y 7m 8d
Alive (colour rings seen)	03-07-2016	CVL 25km SSE 3y 0m 17d

Gt Spotted Woodpecker

Ring Number	LA72846	
First-year Male	31-07-2009	CVL
Caught by ringer	30-01-2010	CVL 0km 0y 5m 30d
Caught by ringer	30-11-2013	CVL 0km 4y 3m 30d
Caught by ringer	19-03-2016	CVL 0km 6y 7m 17d

Peregrine

Ring Number	GC46051	
Nestling	21-05-2012	Site Confidential, near Avon Gorge
Alive (colour rings seen)	31-12-2014	Bishops Cleeve 65km NE 2y 7m 10d
Alive (colour rings seen)	27-06-2015	Site Confidential (Shropshire) 125km N 3y 1m 6d

Ring Number

	GC46047	
Nestling	28-05-2011	Site Confidential (North Somerset)
Alive (ring read in field)	13-06-2016	Westbury (Wiltshire) 47km E 5y 0m 16d

Ring Number

	GR99147	
Nestling Female	23-05-2015	Ruspidge (Gloucestershire)
Alive (colour rings seen)	23-03-2016	Site Confidential, near Avon Gorge

Jackdaw

Ring Number	ER37639	
First-year	17-03-2007	CVL
Caught by ringer	05-12-2015	CVL 0km 8y 8m 18d

Cetti's Warbler

Ring Number	Y410081	
Unaged female	27-Sep-2014	New Passage, S. Glos.
Caught by ringer	28-Jul-2015	CVL 28km S 0y 9m 2d
Caught by ringer	26-Jun-2016	CVL 28km S 1y 8m 19d

Chiffchaff

Ring Number	JKB601	
Unaged	29-Aug-2016	Littleton Brick Pits, South Glos.
Alive (ring read in field)	31-Oct-2017	Lanzarote, Spain 2648km SSW 0y 2m 2d

Ring Number	HXD690	
First-year	17/07/2016	CVL
Caught by ringer	26/06/2016	Boys Hill, Dorset 50km S 0y 1m 26d

Ring Number	JRV593	
First-year	21-Aug-2016	Stanley Downton, Glos.
Caught by ringer	5-Nov-2016	CVL 52km S 0y 2m 16days

Ring Number	HTT752	
First-year	06-09-2016	Drum, Peterculter (Aberdeenshire)
Caught by ringer	02-10-2016	Walton in Gordano 627km S 0y 0m 26d

Ring Number	JKB800	
First-year	29-10-2016	Littleton Brick Pits
Caught by ringer	28-12-2016	Colyton (Devon) 102km SSW 0y 1m 29d

Willow Warbler

Ring Number	X28646	
First-year	26-09-2015	Charito - Silves (Faro) , Portugal
Caught by ringer	14-08-2016	CVL 1,638km NNE 0y 10m 19d

Blackcap

Ring Number	X164099	
Juvenile Male	17-08-2009	Walton in Gordano
Caught by ringer	11-07-2010	Walton in Gordano 0km 0y 10m 24d
Caught by ringer	24-08-2016	Walton in Gordano 0km 7y 0m 7d

Ring Number	D909197	
First-year	23-07-2016	Souter's Croft Wood (Dumfries and Galloway)
Caught by ringer	17-09-2016	Walton in Gordano 394km SSE 0y 1m 25d

Ring Number	7803225	
First-year Female	28-09-2014	Dunes du Fort Vert (Pas-de-Calais) , France
Freshly dead (hit glass)	14-04-2016	Bristol 318km W 1y 6m 17d

Ring Number	TX34333	
Nestling	17-May-2014	CVL
Caught by ringer	3-Apr-2016	Portland Bill, Dorset. 92km S 1y 10m 18d

Ring Number	D463814	
First-year female	1-Sep-2014	Swanage Dorset
Caught by ringer	17-Apr-2016	CVL 95km S 1y 7m 17d

Ring Number	Z676066	
First-year female	28-Sep-2015	CVL
Caught by ringer	17-Dec-2016	Broad Oak Devon. 82km SW 1y 2m 20d

Sedge Warbler

Ring Number **7447948**
 Adult 16-08-2015 Le Bonhomme (Loire-Atlantique), France
 Caught by ringer 08-05-2016 CVL 482km N 0y 8m 22d

Reed Warbler

Ring Number **V929292**
 First-year Female 02-08-2008 CVL
 Caught by ringer 10-07-2011 CVL 0km 2y 11m 8d
 Caught by ringer 17-06-2012 CVL 0km 3y 10m 15d
 Caught by ringer 17-07-2016 CVL 0km 7y 11m 15d

Ring Number **Z676797**
 Nestling 18-06-2016 CVL
 Caught by ringer 11-08-2016 Pett Level, Sussex 235km ESE 0y 1m 24d

Ring Number **Z234048**
 Nestling Male 19-06-2015 CVL
 Caught by ringer 19-07-2015 CVL 0km 0y 1m 0d
 Caught by ringer 09-06-2016 Lax Hill (Rutland) 198km NE 0y 11m 21d

Ring Number **D569979**
 Juvenile 06-09-2016 Tewin Bury Farm (Hertfordshire)
 Caught by ringer 24-09-2016 Walton in Gordano 188km WSW 0y 0m 18d

Ring Number **Z104102**
 Adult 15-05-2016 Pitsford Reservoir, Northampton
 Caught by ringer 26-06-2016 CVL 164km SW 0y 1m 11d

Ring Number **Z677862**
 Nestling 24-06-2016 CVL
 Caught by ringer 24-08-2016 Stortons Gravel Pits, Northampton 155km NE 0y 2m 0d

Ring Number **1Y21504**
 Adult 01-09-2015 Salburua, Vitoria-Gasteiz Spain
 Caught by ringer 29-07-2016 CVL 941km N 0y 10m 28d

Redwing

Ring Number **H358166**
 First-year Male 02-11-2014 Vinkenbaan, Westenschouwen, The Netherlands
 Dead 26-02-2016 Chipping Sodbury (South Gloucestershire) 422km W 1y 3m 24d

Greenfinch

Ring Number **TV82108**
 First-year male 10-Dec-2014 CVL
 Taken by cat 27-Jun-2016 Calne, Wilts. 44km E 17 2m 20d

Lesser Redpoll

Ring Number **13715931**
 First-year Female 23-11-2015 Tessenderlo (Limburg), Belgium
 Caught by ringer 06-11-2016 Walton in Gordano 553km W 0y 11m 14d

Ring Number **S200394**
 First-year 23-10-2016 Walton in Gordano
 Caught by ringer 13-11-2016 Ryewater Nursery, Boys Hill (Dorset) 68km SSE 0y 0m 21d

Goldfinch

Ring Number	L006018	
Juvenile male	18-10-2009	Cam Valley, Cameley
Caught by ringer	31-07-2011	Cam Valley, Cameley 0km 1y 0m 13d
Caught by ringer	15-07-2012	CVL 5km 2y 8m 27d
Caught by ringer	19-05-2016	CVL 5km 6y 8m 1d

Ring Number	S072446	
First-year	08-10-2016	Littleton Brick Pits, South Glos
Caught by ringer	25-11-2016	Timsbury, Bath 33km S 0y 2m 20d

Ring Number	D981828	
First-year Male	13-01-2016	Upper Farm, near Failand
Caught by ringer	16-04-2016	Illeaune, Milltown (Galway) 488km WNW 0y 3m 3d

Siskin

Ring Number	Z280176	
Juvenile Male	19-07-2015	Walton in Gordano
Freshly dead (hit glass)	26-03-2016	near Eglingham (Northumberland) 452km N 0y 8m 7d

Ring Number	Z739514	
First-year Male	28-02-2016	Weston Down
Caught by ringer	10-04-2016	Catterick Garrison (North Yorkshire) 331km NNE 0y 1m 13d

Reed Bunting

Ring Number	Y410088	
First-year Male	27-09-2014	New Passage
Caught by ringer	28-02-2015	Bilbie Road, Chew Stoke 25km S 0y 5m 1d

Ring Number	Z838618	
Juvenile	05-08-2016	Uskmouth, Newport
Caught by ringer	02-10-2016	CVL 34km SE 0y 1m 27d

Observers

The following list gives the names of the observers whose records have been used in this Report. AOG thanks them for their contributions, the Report could not exist without them. If any names has been mis-spent or missed off completely, we apologise, please contact the editor.

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The need for descriptions

This note updates and expands on an article first published in the 2005 Report. It reminds the reader why we ask observers to provide documentation in support of records of locally rare or scarce species. It also gives some guidance as to what we are looking for, and some reasons to explain why some records do not always end up in the Report.

Why is documentation required?

All recorders' committees and bird report editors have a responsibility to ensure that published records are as accurate as possible, and this includes the scarce and rare species. If records of unusual species are to stand the test of time then ideally there should be some supporting evidence in the archive for future authors or reviewers to consult.

As our knowledge improves, identification criteria can change over time and having a written description on file allows us to go back and review past records in the light of the latest developments. This could be important in respect of closely related species and sub-species.

A recent development is hoax sightings, with some well publicised ones from other parts of the country, and 2015 saw the first confirmed hoax report from the Avon area.

The onus is on the observer/s to provide a description if the record is to be published – note that to be fair to everyone we require a description of a locally scarce species regardless of whether it is common elsewhere, easy to identify, or the observer considers themselves to be very familiar with it.

How much should I write?

Certain species will, by their very appearance, require less describing than others, so for example, one short paragraph may be all that is required for a convincing description of a Great White Egret in flight.

Conversely very detailed notes, with if possible a photograph, would be needed for something like a Rough-legged Buzzard or one of the rarer passerines, Greenish Warbler for example.

Your description should be detailed enough to prove beyond reasonable doubt that you have identified the species correctly. An 'ideal' description should take us through and describe each part of the bird, although how much detail you can provide depends on how well you saw the bird and for how long. You should also describe, as best you can, any calls you heard or behaviour that you feel may be significant.

Some observers submit an annotated drawing rather than a written description, both are acceptable and an annotated drawing has the advantage of making you think about all parts of the bird.

There is no right or wrong length for a description. We have stopped short of dividing our list of description species into 'short notes required' and 'full description required' as some county recorders committees do, because we believe it is up to the individual to provide a description with enough detail to demonstrate they saw the species claimed.

Description format

When sending in a description please do not forget to include details about yourself and your observation as well as what the bird looked like. It helps greatly when evaluating a record if you include the following as listed at the top of the next page.

- Your name and contact details;
- Date, time and length of observation;
- Distance from bird/s and viewing including weather conditions, this is important;
- Basic details of optical equipment used;
- Your previous experience of the species and any confusion species;
- Other observers with you and their opinion on the identification.

Can I just send a photograph?

The committee receives a good number of descriptions that are supported by photographs, and these greatly aid the assessment process. However, please ensure that you also provide at least some supporting details, site, date, etc., particularly if you were the sole observer.

Although photographs can be of great help, they do not always show all the relevant features or correctly show colours. If relying mainly on a photograph, it is important that the accompanying notes highlight any additional features that you noted in the field, or plumage colours which are not accurately reflected.

Why do we reject records?

One reason why some records of locally uncommon species do not appear in the Report is simply because no confirmatory details were supplied with them at all.

In the majority of other cases that do not appear the notes supplied are too brief and do not describe the bird in enough detail, and/or fail to eliminate a similar species. It is not because we think the observer has got the identification wrong, just that the information supplied is insufficient. For example, although '*a tiny warbler with two pale wingbars*' may well have referred to a Yellow-browed Warbler, it is not enough to allow us to publish it because other species share these characteristics.

With species that are tricky to identify, or even 'easier' species that have been seen briefly or at long range, the observer needs not just to describe the bird but also to establish that they have considered similar species and eliminated them. It is fine to reel off a string of so-called 'diagnostic features' but what did the rest of the bird look like? Why was it the species you are claiming it was, and not something else? Try not to restrict your description to the bare minimum you think is required to 'get it through' in the hope the committee will contact you should further evidence be required – your submission should include everything from your observations that enabled you to identify the bird. If you leave out any important fieldmarks, then the committee does not have the time to chase you up to ask if there is anything you forgot.

If a record is not accepted for publication it does not mean we think you have made a mistake. In most cases there is simply not enough convincing or conclusive detail *in the submitted description* to justify publication. Only a few of the unpublished records relate to birds that we believe were misidentified while in a few others the observer him/herself was not fully certain of the identification.

Who needs to submit the description?

Ideally we like to receive notes from the original finder and/or identifier of the bird, but we will accept them from anyone who saw it! If it remains in the area for a few days we do not need additional notes for subsequent dates unless it has been missing for a period. For popular, long-staying rarities we will often assess the record just from published photographs but we prefer, where possible, to have notes from the initial observers, if only so they can be credited with the find in the Report.

Problems arise from multi-observer, but brief, sightings, such as on a 'sea-watch' where there is no clear 'finder' and everyone assumes someone else is going to submit notes. In such cases it is better to be safe, and have multiple notes, than sorry and have nothing with the record falling by the wayside. For sightings from sea or migration watches it is useful for the notes to include the time, flock size and direction of flight so that we can try to link your sighting to others in different locations.

Do any species cause particular problems?

Amongst others, two species stand out as having high rejection rates:

Ringtail Hen Harrier -- Before going into the minutiae you need to explain why the bird was even a harrier. Buzzards with pale rumps are not uncommon.

Goshawk -- A 'difficult' species that is hard to describe accurately. A bird that looks like large Sparrowhawk is probably just that. The reference here is Keith Vinicombe's identification article in the 2004 edition of this Report.

Which species qualify as rare or scarce?

The list of species set out overleaf is reviewed annually and updated as appropriate. Species in italics have not yet been recorded in the Avon area but are on the list because they are not considered as national rarities by the British Birds Rarity Committee (BBRC). The figures in brackets give the number of live individuals recorded in the Avon area between 1983 and 2015, except for Tree Sparrow and Nightingale which have only just been added to the list.

We also require descriptions for locally rare subspecies – that is any subspecies which is not regularly recorded in Avon. As a guide the list given at the bottom of the main table shows most of the 'recognisable' rare subspecies that have been seen in the Avon area.

As well as the species and subspecies listed on the next page, we also require descriptions for:

- all 'British Birds' rarities (see the BBRC website <http://www.bbrc.org.uk> for a list of such species and details of how to submit them), and
- out-of-season migrants (for example a Whimbrel in January, or a Goosander in July).

When should I send the description?

As soon as possible, that is while the sighting is still fresh in your mind. Ideally you should make some immediate notes while in the field, type them up later and then submit them. You do not need to save them up until the end of the year. If you submit them promptly it saves us having to chase you up.

Where should I send the description?

If you submit your records online via BirdTrack you will automatically get a description form to complete as part of the submission process; a copy of this form then gets forwarded to the Recorder.

Otherwise descriptions should be emailed to the Recorder at avonbirdrecorder@gmail.com. If you prefer a form is available to download at <http://bristolornithologicalclub.co.uk/birding/bird-recording>.

Will I be told if my record has been accepted?

In addition to the 100 to 150 rare bird descriptions each year we receive tens of thousands of standard records; as such the Recorder does not have the time to contact an individual to advise whether a record has been accepted or not. However, should you wish to query a particular record please direct your enquiry to the Recorder.

Description Species List

Whooper Swan (59)	Crane ³ (12)	Hooded Crow (7)
Bean Goose (29)	Stone-curlew (10)	Penduline Tit (2)
Pink-footed Goose (12)	Black-winged Stilt (2)	Willow Tit (51)
American Wigeon (2)	American Golden Plover (3)	Bearded Tit (94)
Green-winged Teal (18)	Kentish Plover (7)	<i>Short-toed Lark</i>
Ring-necked Duck (28)	Dotterel (18)	Woodlark (21)
Lesser Scaup (10)	Temminck's Stint (10)	Shore Lark (9)
Eider ¹ (2)	Purple Sandpiper ¹ (4)	Red-rumped Swallow (3)
Long-tailed Duck (59)	White-rumped Sandpiper (5)	Greenish Warbler (1)
<i>Surf Scoter</i>	Buff-breasted Sandpiper (6)	Pallas's Warbler (1)
Velvet Scoter (39)	Pectoral Sandpiper (35)	Yellow-browed Warbler (42)
Quail ² (6)	Red-necked Phalarope (7)	<i>Radde's Warbler</i>
Red-throated Diver (71)	Grey Phalarope (80)	Dusky Warbler (2)
Black-throated Diver (15)	Pomarine Skua ¹ (250)	Wood Warbler in autumn (9)
Great Northern Diver (52)	Arctic Skua ¹ (39)	<i>Barred Warbler</i>
<i>White-billed Diver</i>	Long-tailed Skua (12)	Dartford Warbler (44)
Fulmar ¹ (9)	Great Skua ¹ (32)	Subalpine Warbler (1)
Cory's Shearwater (2)	Puffin (5)	Icterine Warbler (1)
<i>Great Shearwater</i>	Black Guillemot (2)	Melodious Warbler (1)
Sooty Shearwater (0)	Razorbill (47)	<i>Blyth's Reed Warbler</i>
Manx Shearwater ¹ (12)	Little Auk (18)	Marsh Warbler (3)
Balearic Shearwater (1)	Guillemot ¹ (1)	Waxwing
<i>Wilson's Petrel</i>	White-winged Black Tern (10)	Rose-coloured Starling (10)
Storm Petrel ¹ (13)	Roseate Tern (3)	Nightingale
Leach's Petrel (206)	Sabine's Gull (38)	Bluethroat (4)
Shag (80)	Ring-billed Gull (72)	Red-flanked Bluetail (1)
Night-heron (5)	Caspian Gull (9)	<i>Red-breasted Flycatcher</i>
Cattle Egret (10)	Iceland/Kumlien's Gull (43/6)	Tree Sparrow
Great White Egret (36)	Glaucous Gull (16)	Citrine Wagtail (2)
Purple Heron (4)	Turtle Dove (24)	Richard's Pipit (23)
White Stork (14)	Long-eared Owl (130)	<i>Olive-backed Pipit</i>
Glossy Ibis (14)	Nightjar ⁴ (8)	Hawfinch (90)
Spoonbill (45)	Alpine Swift (4)	Common Rosefinch (4)
Red-necked Grebe (17)	Hoopoe (28)	Twite (37)
Slavonian Grebe (52)	Bee-eater (16)	Common Redpoll (18)
Honey-buzzard (21)	Wryneck (53)	<i>Arctic Redpoll</i>
Black Kite (3)	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Parrot Crossbill</i>
White-tailed Eagle (0)	Red-footed Falcon (2)	Serin (2)
Hen Harrier (90)	Golden Oriole (16)	Lapland Bunting (50)
Montagu's Harrier (12)	Red-backed Shrike (8)	Cirl Bunting (3)
Goshawk (49)	Great Grey Shrike (15)	<i>Ortolan Bunting</i>
Rough-legged Buzzard (0)	Woodchat Shrike (6)	Little Bunting (3)
Spotted Crake (39)	Chough (1)	
Corncrake (6)		

¹ records away from the Estuary/coast, including records upstream of the old Severn Bridge

² sight records of non-singing birds away from established breeding areas

³ claims of wild birds ⁴ records away from the Mendips

Subspecies

Greenland White-front <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i> (3)	Siberian Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita tristis</i> (56)
Pale-bellied Brent Goose <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> (36)	Blue-headed Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava flava</i> (11)
Arctica Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina arctica</i> (30)	Grey-headed Wagtail <i>Motacilla flave thunbergi</i> (1)
'Continental' Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa l. limosa</i> (24)	Scandinavian Rock Pipit <i>Anthus petrosus littoralis</i> (13)
'Nordic' Jackdaw <i>Monedula monedula monedula</i> (6)	

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