

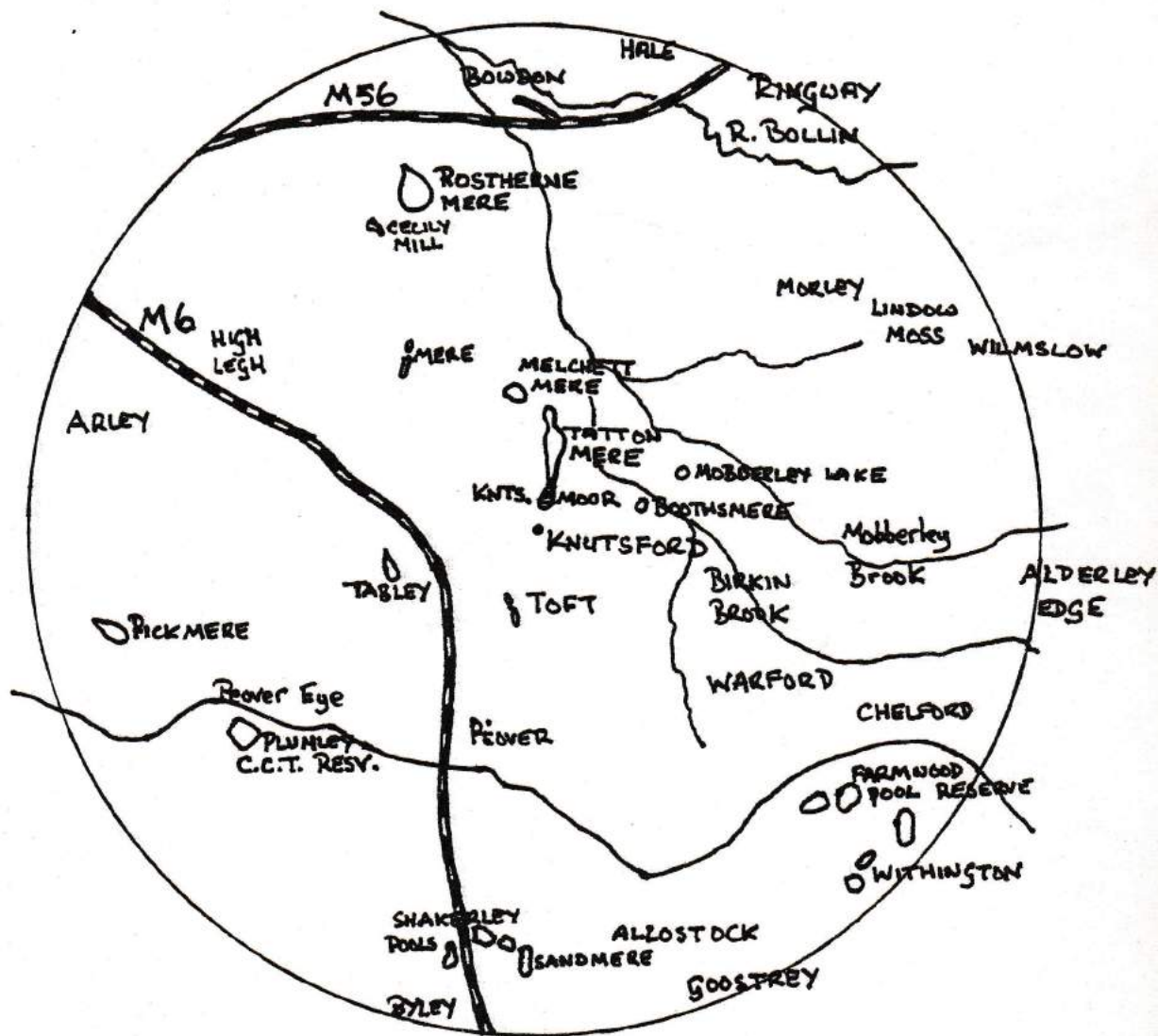
Knutsford Ornithological Society.



REPORT 1976.

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THE AREA COVERED by THIS REPORT



THE KNUTSFORD ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY BIRD REPORT, 1976.

In a year dominated by meteorological extremes breeding species suffered mixed fortunes. Few will forget the tremendous gale in early January which felled so many trees and tales of the long, blistering summer will no doubt be recounted for many years to come. Nevertheless, the area was not as badly affected as some, and although the lakes at Mobberley and Plumley all but dried out Tatton and Rostherne retained their levels well and as luck would have it, record-breaking rainfall in the Autumn soon had water levels at all local waters quickly back to normal. After a series of mild winters we were reminded of what winter can really be like when, with the exception of Rostherne, heavy frosts in December covered all stretches of water with a sheet of ice.

Linnet, Yellowhammer, Lesser Whitethroat and Partridge all seemed to have enjoyed a most successful breeding season, but no Great Crested Grebes were hatched at Rostherne and Kingfishers suffered a set-back after their slow recovery over the past 15 years.

In March one unscrupulous individual decided that the interests of a shooting syndicate came before those of the rest of the population, and with the aid of a baited rabbit, poisoned two of Tatton Park's Buzzards, so reducing the population by at least 50%. The identity of the culprit was known to many local people, he had made his intentions obvious to two witnesses some weeks previously, but despite much publicity, in national as well as local papers, lack of evidence precluded any prosecution.

On a brighter note, the Society continues to flourish, with a membership now stabilised at around the 100 mark. Both indoor meetings and Field trips remain well attended and next year proposed trips include weekends in Edinburgh and Minmere, as well as the ever popular visit to Holy Island where in October 1976, in a 24 hour period members had more than 100 species.

A. C. Usher
Report Editor

FIELD MEETINGS

May	21	Coombes Valley	8.45 am
June	18	Bempton Cliffs	8.00
July	9	Moors & Wildboarclough	9.00
Aug	7	Boat trip Llandudno	
Sep	10	Frodsham & Sandbach	8.30
Sep	30)	Holy Island	
Oct	2)		
Nov	6	Martins Mere	8.30
Dec	11	Red Rocks	8.30
Jan	7/8	Edinburgh weekend	
Feb	4	Shropshire Meres	8.30
Mar	5	Tatton Park/local	9.00
Apr	8	Leighton Moss	8.00
May	7/8	Minsmere/Havergate	

INDOOR MEETINGS

May	27	7.45 pm
Jun	24	7.45
Jul	22	7.45
Sep	23	7.45
Oct	28	7.45
Nov	25	Film night
Dec	16	Party night
Jan	27	7.45
Feb	24	7.45
Mar	31	7.45
Apr	28	AGM

Meetings are held in the
Buffet Room, Civic Hall,
Knutsford.

A SYSTEMATIC LIST OF BIRDS OBSERVED WITHIN THE AREA IN 1976.

Nomenclature and Sequence as The Status of Birds in Britain and Ireland published by the British Ornithologist's Union.

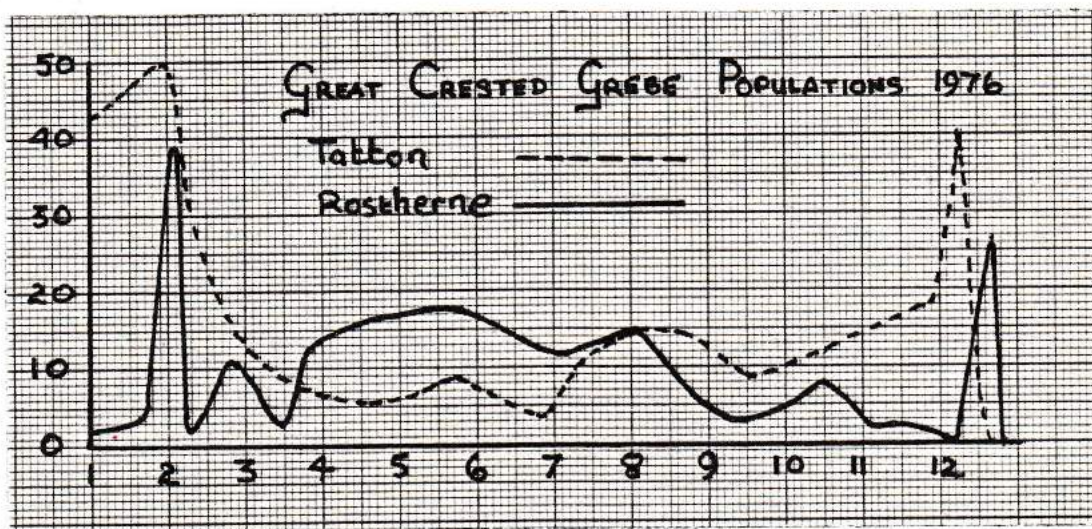
Little Grebe. (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)

3 nesting attempts were made at Rostherne but all failed. At Tatton 2 pairs reared 5 young. Numbers at both waters were lower than in 1975, the maximum being 9 at Tatton on 15/8. Records also came from Boothsmere, Farmwood Pool, Shakerley, Sandmere, Mobberley Lake and Tabley.

Monthly Maxima at Tatton and Rostherne.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jne	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rostherne	4	4	5	6	0	0	3	3	3	3	2	2
Tatton	4	4	2	2	2	4	5	9	7	3	4	4

Great Crested Grebe. (*Podiceps cristatus*)



The high counts at Tatton in December 1975 continued into January and February with 50 on 1/2, but fell away rapidly during late winter to single figures in early summer. Few were present at Rostherne at the beginning of the year but sporadic influxes in February boosted the monthly maximum to 38. Breeding was attempted on both meres but the species was successful only at Tatton where 4 young were raised. Young were also seen at Farmwood Pool Chelford (3), Shakerley (2), Sandmere (1), Boothsmere (1), and Tabley (2). Population levels increased again in the Autumn and early Winter with 54 at Tatton on 8/12 but with the heavy frosts of December numbers declined sharply at Tatton as it became iced over and, as the graph shows, many moved to Rostherne where the population rose from 7 on 18/12 to 27 on 19/12, but by the end of the year this too was deserted as the cold spell continued and the birds moved to the coast.

Monthly Maxima at Tatton and Rostherne

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jne	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rostherne	5	38	13	17	28	15	10	15	4	8	4	27
Tatton	47	50	12	13	8	4	10	13	9	12	38	54

Cormorant. (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)

A record number of 54 birds were roosting at Rostherne on 28/2. Smaller numbers were seen at Tatton, but 47 were present on 11/1.

Heron. (*Ardea cinerea*)

At Tabley 103 nests were thought to be occupied.

Bittern. (*Botaurus stellaris*)

One was seen at Tatton on a number of occasions between 3/2 and 8/2.

Mute Swan. (*Cygnus olor*)

For the first time in many years a pair bred successfully on Knutsford Moor, usually the nest is robbed but this year 7 young appeared on 29/5, they were reduced to 4 by 28/6 and eventually just 3 survived, remaining with the parent birds on the moor or Tatton to the year end.

Bewicks Swan. (*Cygnus bewickii*)

In late February and early March many sightings were reported as large flocks moved through the area on return migration to their summer breeding grounds. At Rostherne there was 1 on 22 and 23/2, 67 on 27/2, 17 on 1 and 2/3 and 22 on 13 and 14/3. 95 flew east over Mobberley on 12/3 with 80 on 22/11 as the birds returned here for the winter.

Whooper Swan. (*Cygnus cygnus*)

8 were identified flying over Tatton on 26/12 and 6, including 3 first winter birds, were at Rostherne on 17/12.

Pink-footed Goose. (*Anser fabalis*)

A flock of 80 were seen over Mobberley on 16/12, 8 days earlier 42 were noted flying north-west over Tatton.

Lesser White-fronted Goose. (*Anser erythropus*)

One appeared at Rostherne on 21/6 and was subsequently recorded on most of the local waters.

Grey lag Goose. (*Anser anser*)

After a record in early April one arrived at Rostherne on 30/5, it was joined by 3 more on 6/6 and eventually 22 were present. They moulted on the mere and at least 9 were in residence until 16/8. Single birds were recorded on Boothsmere, Tatton, Farmwood Pool, Shakerley and Sandmere.

Snow Goose. (*Anser caerulescens*)

A hybrid closely resembling the blue-phase spent most of the year in the area, it was first seen at Rostherne on 1/2.

Bar-headed Goose. (*Anser indicus*)

Another bird that had originated in a wildfowl collection, a Bar-headed Goose, also took a liking to the area and remained in residence for some time. On one occasion Sandmere housed 170 Canada Geese, a Lesser White-front, a Greylag, a Blue Snow Goose, 1 Bar-headed and 5 Barnacle Geese!

Canada Goose. (*Branta canadensis*)

An excellent breeding season for the species with 8 young at Boothsmere, 8 at Farmwood Pool, 4 Mobberley Lake, 40 at Tabley, 20+ at Tatton and 7 at Rostherne. 578 were counted at Tatton on 17/8, this being the years largest aggregation. A smaller and darker bird resembling one of the other North American races was seen at Rostherne on 13/6.

Barnacle Goose. (*Branta leucopsis*)

1 of the areas resident birds paired off with a Canada Goose and they made an unsuccessful nesting attempt at Tatton. At the end of the year up to 5 were present with the Canada Geese flocks.

Egyptian Goose. (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*)

One was seen on Tatton on 18 and 19/12 and Rostherne on 20/12.

Shelduck. (*Tadorna tadorna*)

8 arrived at Rostherne after the overnight gales on 2/1, thereafter the reserve had 2 other records in January with 10 on 30/1. Up to 2 were present in February with further infrequent visits in March, April and June. 1 at Mobberley Lake from 4/2 was joined by another on 9/2, the two remaining until 13/2. Tatton had 2 on 31/1 and Farmwood Pool 1 on 18/4 and 1 on 18/9.

Mallard

Winter counts at Rostherne continued to reveal a marked decline with 1,000 being reached on only one occasion. Things were better at Tatton where 665 were counted in December, compared with last years maximum of 372. The various sand quarries around Chelford held the not insubstantial total of 735 on 12/9. An early brood were seen on Knutsford Moor on 28/4.

Monthly Maxima at Tatton and Rostherne.

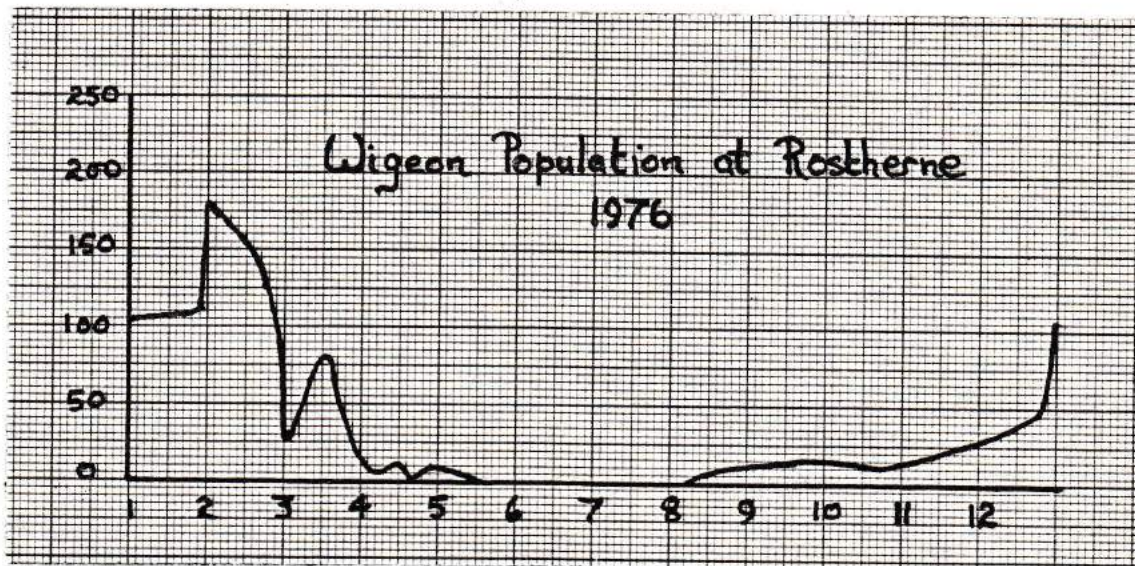
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jne	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rostherne	800	300	200	73	207	500	630	700	650	1,000	850	850
Tatton	287	97	147	93	92	141	152	171	509	451	580	665

Mandarin Duck. (*Aix galericulata*)

A drake was recorded at Rostherne on 23/11.

Wigeon. (*Anas penelope*)

The species was seen at Tatton occasionally with 12 on 1/2 and 30 on 31/1, also at the Farmwood Pool Reserve where there were 2 on 29/12, 50 on 31/1 and 26 on 14/3. Rostherne however remained its stronghold with 180 on 1/2, this was the highest count since December 1971. The graph shows the numbers present on the reserve, with a large influx in early February followed by a slow decline to 25 birds in early March. There was then evidence of Spring passage when this increased to 80 in mid-March falling to nil in May. At the other end of the year numbers remained low until the end of December when the cold spell brought a sudden influx and an increase from 45 on 26/12 to 102 on 31/12.



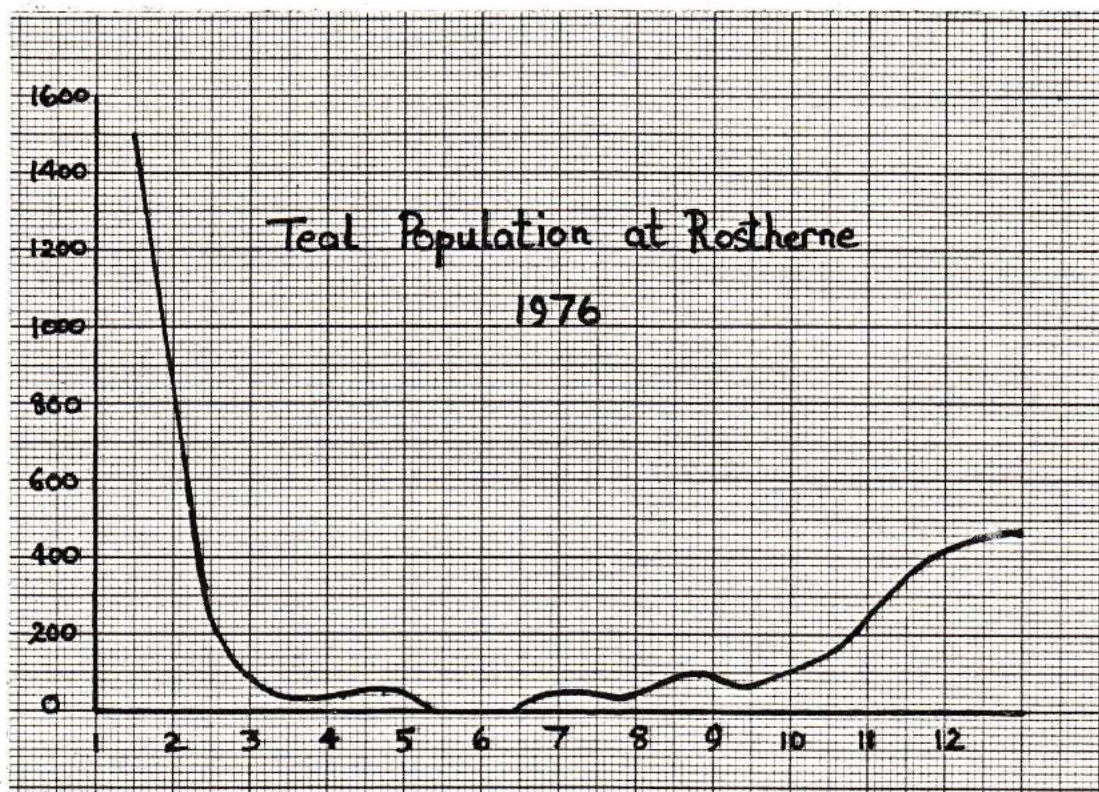
Monthly Maxima at Rostherne

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jne	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rostherne	115	180	80	11	0	1	0	4	14	9	21	102

Gadwall. (*Anas strepera*)

An increase in the number of records in 1976 with birds seen at Rostherne in January, February and March and from August to December, with 5 on 31/10, 7 on 21/11 and 8 on 18/12. There were 2 drakes at Tatton from 14/2 to 22/2.

Teal. (*Anas crecca*)



At the Cheshire Conservation Trust's reserve at Plumley the species was present at both ends of the year. Small numbers were also seen on Boothsmere; maximum 33 on 1/9 and Mobberley Lake with 28 on 4/12. Tatton had its usual low counts until December when small ponds and ditches were frozen over and 79 were counted on the main mere. The Rostherne maximum was 1,500 on 14/1, only down by 300 on last years healthy peak of 1,800. The graph shows the distribution at Rostherne with a disappointingly low 450 bird maximum at the end of the year.

Pintail. (*Anas acuta*)

Another excellent year for the species at Rostherne with a record-breaking 166 on 29/2. A glance at the chart of monthly maxima will reveal that only twice was the previous years peak for that month not equalled or exceeded. The only other records came from Tatton where there were 2 on 12/9 and 6 on 8/2.

Rostherne Monthly Maxima 1975, 1976.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jne	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1976	69	166	150	14	0	0	0	11	7	12	125	103
1975	9	139	72	21	0	0	0	2	56	9	7	61

Garganey. (*Anas querquedula*)

The only record was of a drake on an unrecorded day in May at Cecily Mill.

Shoveler. (Anas clypeata)

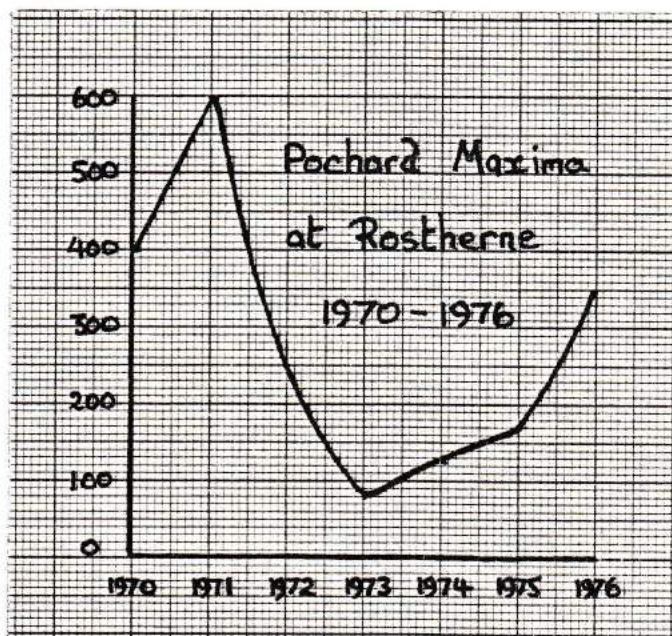
90 at Rostherne on 30/10 was the highest count of the year, comparing rather badly with last years maximum of 140. As usual smaller flocks were seen at Tatton with a maximum of 30 on 18/9. Early in the year a flock built up at Mobberley Lake with 4 on 5/2, 17 on 11/2, 25 on 13/2 and 28 on 26/2.

Monthly Maxima at Tatton and Rostherne

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jne	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rostherne	62	30	26	11	5	13	8	65	31	90	65	15
Tatton	6	20	3	1	1	0	12	12	30	14	4	16

Pochard. (Aythya ferina)

189 on 17/1 was the years best count at Tatton, 30% down on 1975 but still more than the 1974 maximum of 142. Smaller numbers at other waters except Rostherne where 348 on 18/1 was the biggest flock since October 1972. The graph shows the yearly maxima at Rostherne 1970-76, with 600 in January 1971 being followed by a sharp decline to 330 in October 1972 and a continuation down to only 80 in 1973. The downward trend now seems to have ended with 3 successive yearly increases to a level now approaching that of 1971.



Monthly Maxima Tatton and Rostherne 1976.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jne	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rostherne	348	250	145	9	2	51	110	30	175	209	276	141
Tatton	189	13	57	21	0	7	26	153	97	69	34	50

Ferruginous Duck. (*Aythya Nyroca*)

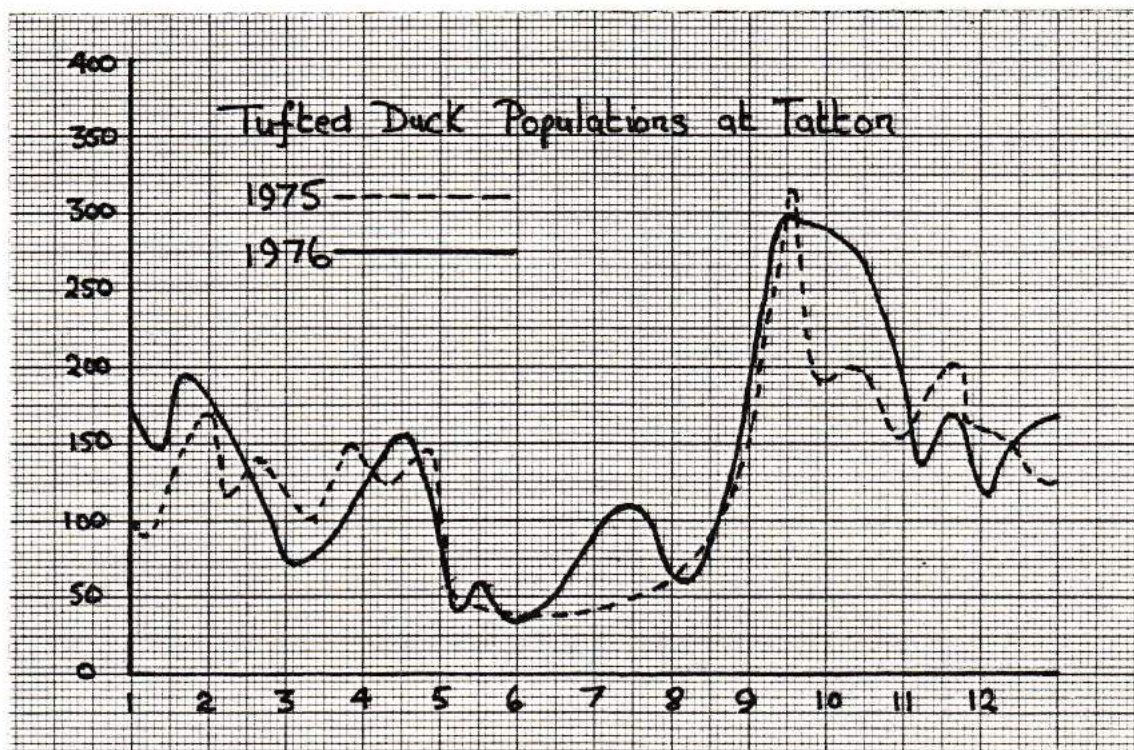
1 at Tabley on 28/6.

Tufted Duck. (*Aythya fuligula*)

4 young seen at Rostherne on 27/7 were the first to brood to be successfully hatched on the reserve for some years. 12 young were seen on the main mere at Tatton, with a further family on the small pond by the Hall. 2 broods of 6 and 9 were observed at the Farmwood Pool reserve on 11/7. Population fluctuations of this species are more predictable than most and once again the Rostherne maximum was reached just at the end of the breeding season with 185 on 31/7. A graph of the distribution at Tatton in 1976 bears a marked resemblance to the 1975 graph and shows clearly the population peaks in mid-September which coincide with low levels at Rostherne, indicating an annual movement of birds from one mere to the other in early Autumn.

Monthly Maxima at Tatton and Rostherne

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jne	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rostherne	41	43	30	36	27	85	185	134	25	23	40	70
Tatton	189	120	94	155	64	70	106	135	298	269	171	148



Common Scoter. (*Melanitta nigra*)

Two Autumn records of this increasingly rare species, a female at Tatton on 28/10 and a drake at Rostherne on 12/12.

Goldeneye. (*Bucephala clangula*)

For the third successive year a female appeared in the area at the end of July and it could well be the same bird returning each year after breeding in the British Isles as opposed to Scandinavia, summer home of the majority of these delightful winter visitors. As usual numbers at Rostherne remained insignificantly low with the largest counts coming again from Tatton.

Monthly Maxima at Tatton and Rostherne

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jne	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rostherne	6	5	10	13	2	0	1	1	1	4	4	4
Tatton	14	31	30	25	2	0	0	0	0	2	13	31

Smew. (*Mergus albellus*)

One, and occasionally two females were at Tatton up to 18/4 and a single bird duly reappeared in mid-November being joined by a second in December. The Tatton birds wandered to Rostherne from time to time, but a drake there on 9/2 was the areas first since April 1971.

Red-breasted Merganser. (*Mergus serrator*)

A male and female at Rostherne on 9/4 were only the 4th and 5th records for the reserve. Tatton had a female and an immature male on 8/5.

Goosander. (*Mergus merganser*)

Recorded sporadically at Rostherne in the first three months of the year with a maximum of 6 on 9/2. 5 birds returned to the reserve on 9/8, an extremely early record, but there were only two subsequent sightings, 3 'brown-heads' on 8/11 and a single bird on 6/12. Normally seen frequently on Tatton's Melchett were the species was conspicuous by its absence with only occasional records in February and none at the other end of the year.

Ruddy Duck. (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)

Present at Tatton throughout the year with 5 on 23/5, 9 on 15/10 and 13 on 17/10. A pair at last bred on the mere producing 8 young but unfortunately they seem to have met with some sort of catastrophe and none survived to maturity. Birds were also recorded in each month at Rostherne and here too nesting was attempted, the first nest was predated and a second clutch of eggs proved to be infertile.

Osprey. (*Pandion haliaetus*)

1 at Twiss's Wood Rostherne on 17/4 was the second record in 3 years.

Sparrowhawk. (*Accipiter nisus*)

A further increase in Summer records indicating a continuation in the species slow recovery with sightings at Mobberley, Chelford, Peover, Plumley, Tatton and Rostherne. 4 or possibly 5 individual birds were seen at Rostherne on 24/10 and one on Knutsford Moor on 18/9 was seen to attack pied wagtails trapped during ringing operations. Knutsford Moor is of course a favourite roost for wagtails and in fact at any such location where birds congregate one is likely to meet up with the Sparrowhawk. The South Manchester Ringing Group caught a number this year whilst mist-netting at Thrush roosts.

Buzzard. (*Buteo buteo*)

An immature male and an adult female were found poisoned in Tatton Park on 13/3, 3 were seen displaying in the park on 26/2. After this a maximum of 2 birds were seen together, at Rostherne in October and on 5/12 in Tatton. 1 was seen over Chelford on 22/8.

Kestrel. (*Falco tinnunculus*)

Although there were fewer records of Kestrel than Sparrowhawk at Rostherne the species was probably under-recorded and elsewhere no change in status was apparent.

Merlin. (*Falco columbarius*)

The only record is of a female at Rostherne on 20/2.

Red-legged Partridge. (*Alectoris ruffa*)

One was shot in Mobberley during November.

Partridge. (*Perdix perdix*)

A succession of mild winters and of late two long dry summers seem to have suited the partridge. Indicative of a very successful breeding season were coveys seen in Mobberley of 30 on 20/7, 20 on 20/10 and two closely associated groups of 17 and 25 on 16/12.

Pheasant. (*Phasianus colochicus*)

Water Rail. (*Rallus aquaticus*)

Up to 2 at Rostherne with a record of 4 at Tatton. A late bird was calling from Knutsford Moor on 16/5.

Moorhen. (*Gallinula chloropus*)

Most moorhens begin life on one of the hundreds of small ponds so common in this part of the country. It therefore seems inevitable that the species will slowly decline as more and more of these ponds are filled in to provide a little extra land for cultivation. Nevertheless it is, at the moment, a common bird and 50 were counted at Rostherne during December.

Coot. (*Fulica atra*)

Prefers larger stretches of water than the Moorhen and breeds at Tatton, Rostherne, Tabley, Boothsmere, Shakerley, Withington, Farmwood Pool and Sandmere. The largest counts are obtained during the winter when visitors from further north augment the local population and this year gave figures of 150 at Rostherne in December and 217 at Tatton on 11/12.

Oystercatcher. (*Haematopus ostralegus*)

2 on 28/2 at the Farmwood Pool Reserve with 1 at Rostherne on the same day.

Lapwing. (*Vanellus vanellus*)

Grey Plover. (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

At Rostherne 9 flying North on 16/9 and 2 on 22/9 were unusual inland records.

Golden Plover. (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

Flocks of up to 1500 birds were again seen by the M6 in Ashley, these, and probably all the records from within the area concern birds from the roost at Ringway dispersing to feed during the daytime.

Ringed Plover. (*Charadrius hiaticula*)

3 on 8/6 at Mobberley Lake.

Little Ringed Plover. (*Charadrius dubius*)

Nested successfully at 3 locations with at least 5 young reared.

Whimbrel. (*Numenius phaeopus*)

3 records, all from Rostherne, 2 on 8/5 flying North, 1 on 22/5 and 1 on 28/7.

Curlew. (*Numenius arquata*).

Small numbers are thought to have bred at various locations in Mobberley as well as the usual sites in Tatton Park.

Redshank. (*Tringa totanus*)

One or two birds at Rostherne on 11 occasions. Numerous records from Mobberley Lake with 6 on 15/7 and 1 in residence from 4/11 to the end of the year.

Greenshank. (*Tringa nebularia*)

No spring records but 5 in the Autumn, with 3 at Sandmere on 28/8, 1 at Tatton on 14/7 and 2/9 and Singles at Rostherne on 9 and 13/8.

Green Sandpiper. (*Tringa Ochropus*)

An early returning migrant was seen on the C.C.T. reserve at Plumley on 29/6, thereafter the maximum recorded was only 4 (on 6/7) and the large flock normally to be found here failed to build up due to the lake drying out in late July. Elsewhere the only record was from Mobberley Lake where there was a single bird on 15/11.

Common Sandpiper. (*Actitis hypoleucos*)

A pair were seen with 4 well-grown young at Farmwood Pool on 3/7. Many records from other parts of the area especially the period 29/4 to 8/5 when large numbers of birds were seen, the majority no doubt on passage to more northerly latitudes.

Turnstone. (*Arenaria interpres*)

One at Rostherne on 30/8 was the first record for many years.

Snipe. (*Gallinago gallinago*)

Together with the Moorhen and Reedbunting the Snipe is one of the main species adversely affected when small pits and marshy areas are reclaimed. 25 years ago it was a common breeding bird in the area but since then numbers have declined considerably. A pair probably nested near the Birkin in Mobberley and a bird was 'drumming' during the Spring in Tatton Park. Considerable flocks built up during the winter months and 60 were seen in Mobberley on 5/3.

Woodcock. (*Scolopax rusticola*)

No change in status reported, the species remaining quite common but of course restricted to a few favoured localities.

Jack Snipe. (*Lymnocryptes minima*)

Apart from a single record on 10/3 of one flying with common snipe in Mobberley, all records are again from Tatton Park's Melchett Mere with a maximum of 3 on 11/12.

Sanderling. (*Calidris alba*)

2 were at Mobberley Lake on 12/5, whilst at Rostherne one arrived on 31/1 and the next day brought much delight to a visiting party of birdwatchers until snatched from the air by a most inconsiderate Sparrowhawk.

Little Stint. (*Calidris minuta*)

An adult in full summer plumage was present at Mobberley Lake on 8/6. A second bird appeared at the same location on 22/10 and remained until 26/10. This particular individual caused much excitement as it was initially identified as a Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*) but when mist-netted and closely examined its true identity was revealed.

Dunlin. (*Calidris alpina*)

Recorded at Sandmere, Tatton, Rostherne and Mobberley Lake, where the maximum was 8 on 14/3. Rostherne had 4 on 12/9 whilst at Tatton mud exposed when the water level was reduced during the winter attracted 10 on 1/2, 11 on 8/2, 14 on 7/2 and 15 on 6/2.

Ruff. (*Philomachus pugnax*)

One with Lapwings at Rostherne on 14/8 was only the 6th reserve record.

Great Skua. (*Stercorarius skua*)

One was at Tatton on 19/11, a very late date, and constituted the first ever record. Similarly a bird seen at Rostherne on 12/9 after overnight N.E. gales was the first for the reserve.

Arctic Skua. (*Stercorarius parasiticus*)

Another rare inland visitor, one was seen at Rostherne at the same time as the Great Skua.

Common Gull. (*Larus canus*)

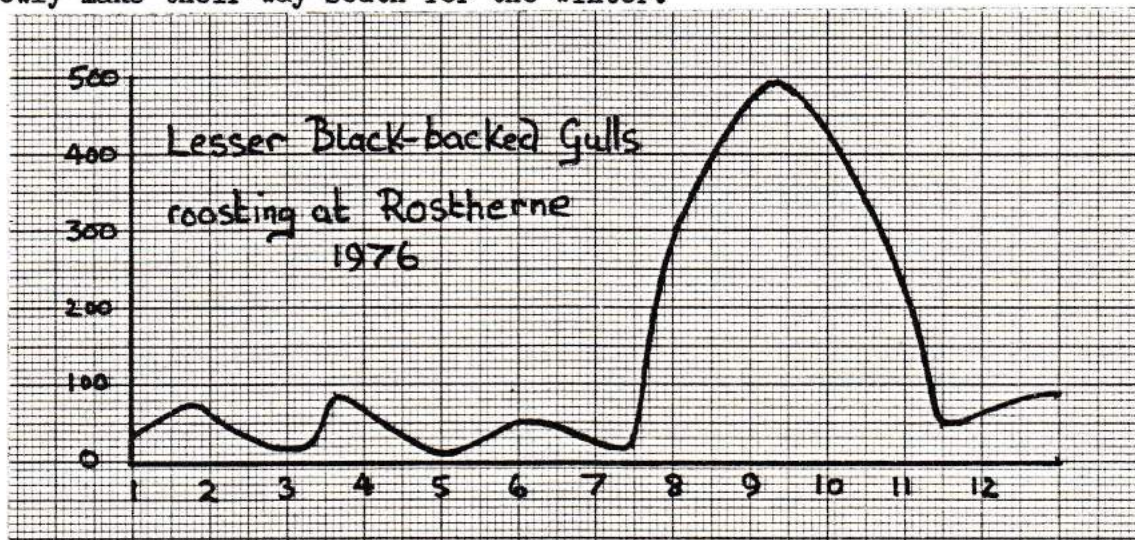
Numbers at Rostherne compared well with last year, the maximum being 500 on 26/12.

Herring Gull. (*Larus argentus*)

1,000 on 31/1 was Rostherne's maximum. 400 were counted during December, a big decrease on last December's 6,000.

Lesser Black-backed Gull. (*Larus fuscus*)

The graph was obtained from counts taken at Rostherne and illustrates well the period of passage from July to November, as large numbers of birds slowly make their way south for the winter.



Great Black-backed Gull. (*Larus marinus*)

Single birds were seen at Tatton during the Winter, with up to 16 roosting at Rostherne in January and 15 in December.

Iceland Gull. (*Larus glaucoides*)

Adults at Rostherne on 11/1, 9/4, 13/10 and at least 6 occasions in December with a first winter bird on 25/2.

Glaucous Gull. (*Larus hyperboreus*)

3 records, again from Rostherne, 1 immature on 10/1, 1 3rd winter on 8/12 and an adult on 23/12.

Mediterranean Gull. (*Larus melanocephalus*)

One 1st winter at Rostherne on 15/1.

Black-headed Gull. (*Larus ridibundus*)

Numbers roosting at Rostherne were well down on normal with 8,000 on 13/1 and only 6,000 in November compared with 12,000 in 1974 and 14,000 last year.

Little Gull. (*Larus minutus*)

Singles at Rostherne on 3/1, 8 and 9/5, 12 and 13/5 followed by 2 on 20/5.

Kittiwake. (*Rissa tridactyla*)

2 adults at Rostherne on 10 and 11/1 with a further record on 4/6.

Black Tern. (*Chlidonias niger*)

Rostherne had 1 on 6/5, 2 on 24/5 and 3 on 28/5 followed in the Autumn by 1 on 3/9 and 3 on 25/9. At Tatton an early bird was seen on 29/4 thereafter there were 3 on 24/5 and 1 on 28/5, but no autumn records.

Common Tern. (*Sterna hirundo*)

Single birds at Tatton on 24/4, 25/4 and 29/5, again no autumn records. At Rostherne singles on 24/5, 26/5, 30/5, 13/6, 24/6 with 2 on 4/6 and 1/7.

Arctic Tern. (*Sterna paradisaea*)

A good passage at Tatton towards the end of April with 21 on 20/4, 1 on 21/4, 1 on 24/4 and 3 on 22/4.

'Commic Tern'

It often happens that adverse lighting conditions or, especially at Rostherne, sheer distance precludes specific identification of migrating terns; they are then referred to as 'commic terns'. At Rostherne there were singles on the 6, 13 and 26/5, 2 on 13 and 26/6, 5 on 8/8 and singles again on 28/8, 3/9 and 12/9. At Tatton 17 on 29/4. During the spring passage sea terns at Tatton have been carefully observed for the past 4 years and they have never been seen to actually dive into the water in their usual manner. Instead they spend their time much as marsh terns, slowly criss-crossing the mere at a height of only a few feet, constantly dipping down to the surface picking off insects. Shortly before dusk they invariably rise in a single flock and, circling the mere they quickly gain height until, invisible to the human eye, they continue with their northerly migration.

Roseate Tern. (*Sterna dougallii*)

1 at Tatton on 15/5.

Stock Dove. (*Columba oenas*)

Fairly numerous again with an average number of breeding records. A flock of 33 was seen at Rostherne on 20/11.

Wood Pigeon. (*Columba palumbus*)

Rather fewer about at the beginning of the year than normal but by the end of November and early December flocks were as large as ever.

Turtle Dove. (*Streptopelia turtur*)

4 records between 23 and 28/7 at Rostherne, including 2 birds on two occasions, indicating possible breeding, although if this were so it seems reasonable to assume the birds would have been discovered sooner. In June a bird spent a week in the grounds of the Margaret Barclay's School, Mobberley and one was seen feeding at nearby Mobberley Lake at the same time.

Collard Dove. (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

Becoming more common in Knutsford and now breeds in Mobberley, where its initial appearance caused much head-scratching among local residents.

Cuckoo. (*Cuculus canorus*)

The first record came from Plumley on 6/5, rather later than normal. Perhaps slightly more sightings than last year especially from Plumley, Knutsford Moor and Rostherne where Reed warblers are presumably used as foster parents.

Barn Owl. (*Tyto alba*)

Apart from a single bird seen near Mobberley Station several times in October there were no records.

Little Owl. (*Athene noctua*)

Records from all the usual locations.

Tawny Owl. (*Strix aluco*)

As with the Little Owl, no discernible change in status.

Short-eared Owl. (*Asio flammeus*)

An unusual record concerns a bird at the Farmwood Pool reserve on 12/9.

Swift. (*Apus apus*)

The first 4 birds of the Spring were seen over Knutsford on the evening of 2/5, 50 were present 8 days later on 10/5. Huge numbers built up at Tatton later in the month with 600 on 26/5 and 700 on 30/5. Autumn counts were smaller, a maximum of 150 on 7/8, stragglers were still passing through well into September, the last being on 27/9.

Kingfisher. (*Alcedo atthis*)

After having returned to pre- 1962-63 levels during the past few years the species would appear to have suffered something of a set-back in 1976. Records from Rostherne were few and far between and in Mobberley 3 1975 nest sites remained deserted. In August early risers were rewarded with the sight of a bird fishing the 'River' Lily where it enters Knutsford Moor.

Green Woodpecker. (*Picus viridis*)

Frequently seen in its stronghold, Tatton Park but many records from Rostherne especially February to April. A bird was seen on Lindow Moss on 28/3 and a juvenile in Spring Wood Mobberley on 20/8.

Great-spotted Woodpecker. (*Dendrocopus major*)

Drumming at Rostherne from 28/2. Nesting commonly throughout the area.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. (*Dendrocopus minor*)

Almost certainly bred in Tatton and possibly along the Birkin Brook in Mobberley. The species remains the least common of our resident woodpeckers.

Skylark. (*Alauda arvensis*)

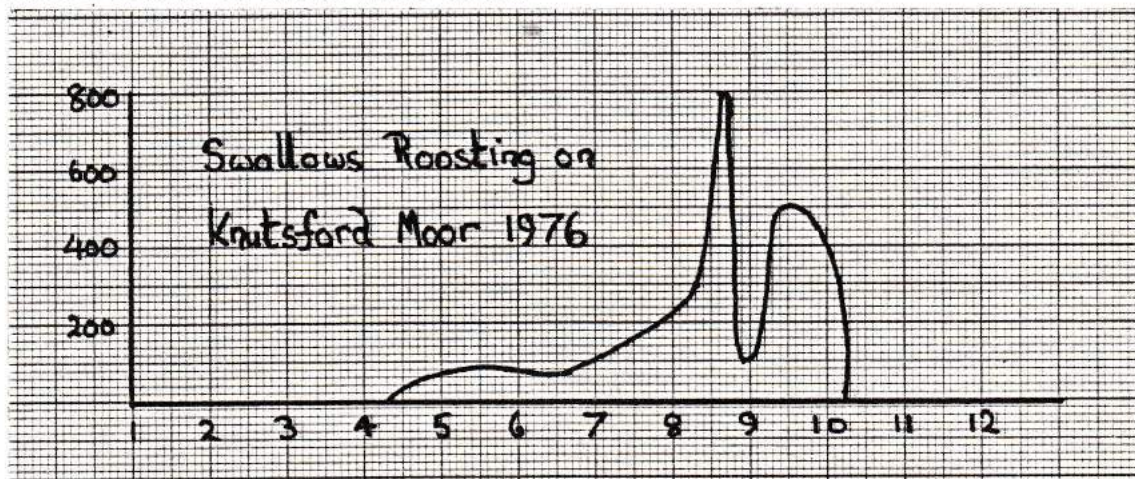
As in previous years the largest flocks were seen in December and in Ashley a flock of 200 was seen on various dates.

Sand Martin. (*Ripara ripara*)

Always one of our first summer migrants to return and its arrival is eagerly awaited each spring. 17 on 3/4 at Tatton were the first recorded in 1976, numbers rose to 50 by 26/4. The species was back in force by 18/4 at the nesting colonies of Sandmere and Withington.

Swallow. (*Hirundo rustica*)

Although ringers reported that locally no change in breeding status was apparent the roost on Knutsford Moor reached only 800 birds compared with 2,000 in 1975. The graph shows the numbers roosting on the Moor, with the peak in mid August (1975's peak came in September). Despite disappointing numbers the S.M.R.G. caught more birds than ever using a tape recording of a swallows song to attract birds to their mist nets.



House Martin. (*Delichon urbica*)

Very few until mid-May, a late bird was seen in Mobberley on 29/10.

Yellow Wagtail. (*Motacilla flava*)

Heavy passage evident at Tatton in May with 13 on 2/5 and 20 on 4/5. 2 pairs nested at Morley.

Grey Wagtail. (*Motacilla cinerea*)

Pollution of the inlet stream at Rostherne during May unfortunately forced a pair to abandon an attempt to nest. Up to 4 were present at the Knutsford Sewerage farm in December.

Pied Wagtail. (*Motacilla alba yarrellii*)

Passage at Tatton from 16/4 and at Rostherne in mid-September. 226 were counted going to roost on Knutsford Moor on 12/8 with 200 on 8/9.

White Wagtail. (*Motacilla alba alba*)

1 at Tatton on 1/5 and 2 on 2/5.

Tree Pipit. (*Anthus trivialis*)

3 at Tatton on 2/5, 1 at Rostherne on 15/8 and at Knutsford sewerage farm, 1 on 4/10.

Meadow Pipit. (*Anthus pratensis*)

At least 6 breeding pairs were seen on Saltersley Moss during June. Small numbers wintered round Mobberley Lake from October to the end of April, with 40 on 28/10 and 60 on 5/11. c.150 were seen in Mereheath Lane, Knutsford on 31/12.

Rock Pipit. (*Anthus spinoletta*)

It was T.A. Coward who once said "I find pipits in the field almost hopeless and not much better in the hand", a sentiment shared by many bird watchers even today. Nevertheless, there are people with the experience and confidence to separate the various races, especially in the Spring and a record of 3 Scandinavian Rock Pipits (*Anthus spinoletta littoralis*) at Tatton on 10/4 is therefore included.

Wren. (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)

Duncock. (*Prunella modularis*)

Robin. (*Erithacus rubecula*)

Redstart. (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*)

1 at Byley on 26/10.

Whinchat. (*Saxicola rubetra*)

2 males at Tatton on 6/5, 1 at Rostherne on 9/5 and 21/9.

Stonechat. (*Saxicola torquata*)

In the Spring a male was seen at Tatton on 28/2 with a female at Rostherne a day earlier. A bird of unrecorded sex was at Chelford on 3/4. In the Autumn there was a male at Melchett Mere on 21/10 and a female was seen round the Tatton Mill Pond on a number of occasions towards the end of the year.

Wheatear. (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)

Good numbers of spring records, the first of which was a male at Mobberley Lake on 23/3. Rostherne had a bird on 13/4 and passage was evident here in May with 4 on 7/5 and 8 on 6/5, a further record came from Mobberley Lake when a pair were seen, also on 6/5. Elsewhere a pair were seen at Tatton on 7/4 and another pair on 18/5 in Green Lane, Knutsford. Fewer Autumn records with 1 at Rostherne on 14/8 and 2 in Tatton on 31/8.

Blackbird. (*Turdus merula*)

Fieldfare. (*Turdus pilaris*)

Good numbers at the beginning of the year, with a large influx on 3/1 after overnight gales, with 250 in Smith Lane, Mobberley. Even more were in evidence in February and numbers held well until mid-March. Less common in the Autumn after a late start, the first record being on 30/10, 3 weeks later than 1975.

Redwing. (*Turdus iliacus*)

Apart from 500 at Boothshall on 14/3 only average numbers at the beginning of the year with a peak in early February. In the Autumn scarce until the end of October, but massive nocturnal migration between 25 and 29/10 after which the population reached record levels with a roost of 5,000 birds at Allostock in December.

Song Thrush. (*Turdus philomelos*)

Mistle Thrush. (*Turdus viscivorus*)

Substantial post-breeding flocks of 10 in Mobberley on 3/7, 22 at Tatton on 14/9 and 30 at Rostherne on 23/10.

Grasshopper Warbler. (*Locustella naevia*)

1 'reeling' on Knutsford Moor from 4/5 to 18/5 and very irregularly in June.

Sedge Warbler. (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*)

Bred on Knutsford Moor and Plumley, a singing male on 8/5 at Rostherne, but still no sign of breeding, birds ringed there in July were thought to be on passage.

Reed Warbler. (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*)

Early clutches of eggs on 22/5 at Rostherne where the species enjoyed a prolific summer with 103 pulli ringed, eclipsing the previous maximum of 66 in 1975. At least 6 singing males on Knutsford Moor, 3 at Plumley and 1 on Cecily Mill.

Garden Warbler. (*Sylvia borin*)

1 in song Dog Lodge Wood on 6/5 with an early record from Rostherne on 25/4. Bred at Rostherne and Plumley.

Blackcap. (*Sylvia atricapilla*)

Very common again with breeding records from all parts of the area. In Dog Lodge wood a pair were feeding young on 23/5.

Whitethroat. (*Sylvia communis*)

The species continues to recover from its set-backs in the early 1970's. At Rostherne in June up to 11 male birds were in song and at least 6 broods were reared around Dog Lodge Wood in Tatton Park.

Lesser Whitethroat. (*Sylvia curruca*)

Another species on the increase, although perhaps often overlooked in the past, with 3 pairs in Mobberley by the end of May. The long, dry summer enabled 1 of these pairs to raise 2 broods successfully and 11 young reached the flying stage, not a common occurrence in this part of the country where just 1 brood is usually the order of the day.

Willow Warbler. (*Phylloscopus trochilus*)

Abundant once again from mid-April when a bird in Tatton on 10/4 provided the years first record.

Chiffchaff. (*Phylloscopus collybita*)

Not nearly as numerous as the willow warbler but nevertheless present again in good numbers from early April until mid-September.

Wood Warbler. (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*)

2 males in song, Square Wood, Mobberley throughout May and June, probably the only breeding birds in the area. A single male in song on 7 and 8/5 in Dog Lodge Wood provided the only other record.

Goldcrest. (*Regulus regulus*)

Very common, song noted in Grove Park, Knutsford from February.

Spotted Flycatcher. (*Muscicapa striata*)

Locally a bad year for the species with numbers well down on normal.

Long-tailed Tit. (*Aegithalos caudatus*)

Much in evidence throughout the year with a party of 50 at Rostherne in September.

Marsh Tit. (*Parus palustris*)

Regular but infrequent records from the Rostherne reserve and at the lay-by along Birkinheath Lane. More frequent sightings in Dog Lodge Wood, possibly its local stronghold.

Willow Tit. (*Parus montanus*)

Much more common than the Marsh Tit, recorded in all parts of the area especially Rostherne, Tatton, Mobberley and Plumley.

Coal Tit. (*Parus ater*)

Great Tit. (*Parus major*)

Blue Tit. (*Parus caeruleus*)

Fewer birds than usual were noted at garden bird tables towards the end of the year, possible reasons range from simply an abundance of natural food to a high mortality rate among young birds during the exceptionally wet Autumn.

Nuthatch. (*Sitta europaea*)

Numerous, birds recorded from all suitable habitats.

Tree creeper. (*Certhia familiaris*)

Corn Bunting. (*Emberiza calandra*)

A species perhaps in decline, indicated by fewer records of singing males during the breeding season than in previous years. 12 were roosting on Knutsford Moor on 1/2 and in late December a flock of up to 18 was seen along Dirty Lane, Rostherne.

Yellowhammer. (*Emberiza citrinella*)

An excellent breeding season in the Mobberley area, with many pairs successfully rearing young. A flock of 23 was seen at Tatton on 25/1 with one of 19 at the same location on 4/12.

Reed Bunting. (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)

Chaffinch. (*Fringilla coelebs*)

A flock of 100 was feeding on beech mast at Rostherne on 16/10. The years biggest flock formed during December in Tatton Park where there were c.300 on 11/12 and c.200 on 27/12, these birds too were feeding on the heavy crop of beech mast.

Brambling. (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

At the start of the year things were much as usual, good numbers at the usual locations with c.100 at Rosthern's Marsh Lane in mid-March, 50 Green Lane Knutsford on 28/3, 60 Smith Lane, Mobberley on 21/2, 35 Lindow Moss on 2/3 and 20 at Tatton on 7/3. 3 males and 3 females in superb summer plumage remained in Dog Lodge Wood until 30/4. In contrast Autumn was something of a disaster, a total of 10 birds seen at Rostherne between 31/10 and the year end while at Tatton only 2 records, 10 on 5/12 and 20 with the large Chaffinch flock on 11/12.

Greenfinch. (*Carduelis chloris*)

Large flocks during the first 3 months of the year, 90 on 23/2 and 60 on 6/1 in Pavement Lane, Mobberley with 75 at Rosthern in mid-March feeding with Brambling and Chaffinch.

Goldfinch. (*Carduelis carduelis*)

Flocks observed during the Autumn were smaller than average although no change in breeding status or success was apparent earlier in the year.

Siskin. (*Carduelis spinus*)

In a disappointing year Rostherne had 15 in early January and 20 on 20/12, at Tatton 16 on 11/1, 2 on 20/4 with only 1 other record concerning a single bird on 11/12.

Redpoll. (*Acanthis flammea*)

Bred with success on Lindow Moss, Sandmere and the C.C.T. reserve at Plumley.

Twite. (*Acanthis flavirostris*)

1 at Tatton on 28/11.

Linnet. (*Acanthis cannabina*)

Locally at least this species can be regarded as a summer visitor with practically no winter records. A large influx in early April with c.100 on 15/4 in Pavement Lane, Mobberley and 'several hundred' Green Lane, Knutsford on 25/4, followed by an immensely successful breeding season.

Bullfinch. (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*)

Elusive during the summer but much in evidence during the winter months.

Hawfinch. (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*)

1 at Rostherne on 28/9.

House Sparrow. (*Passer domesticus*)

Tree Sparrow. (*Passer montanus*)

c.50 Green Lane, Knutsford on 12/12 rising to c.100 on 25/12.

Starling. (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

c.3000 roosting at Rostherne as early as mid-June, c.10,000 roosting Knutsford Moor on 4/12.

Jay. (*Garrulus glandarius*)

A flock of 8 at Plumley on 19/9 was an unusually large gathering.

Magpie. (*Pica pica*)

Jackdaw. (*Corvus monedula*)

A flock of 500 were feeding in Mereheath Lane, Knutsford at the end of January.

Rook. (*Corvus frugilegus*)

Carrion Crow. (*Corvus corone*)

At Rostherne 2 were seen to kill a full-grown rabbit on 3/4 and 2 killed and ate a Jackdaw on 15/6.

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Special thanks go to the Nature Conservancy Council, Tom Wall and Ron
Harrison for their help with the birds of Rostherne, J. P. Guest and
M. Edgecombe, Editors of the Wilmslow Guild Bird Report, Commander P.A.C.
Neate and his staff at Tatton and the members of the South Manchester
Ringing Group.

A LIST OF FIRST AND LAST RECORDS OF NON-RESIDENT SPECIES

1. Summer Visitors

Species	First Record	Location	Last Record	Location
Little Ringed Plover	18/4	Mobberley Lake	25/7	Mobberley Lake
Common Sandpiper	1/4	Rostherne	28/8	Farmwood Pool
Turtle Dove	Mid-June	Mobberley	5/9	Rostherne
Cuckoo	6/5	Plumley	18/9	Rostherne
Swift	2/5	Tatton	27/9	Tatton
Tree Pipit	2/5	Tatton	4/10	Rostherne
Sand Martin	4/4	Tatton	23/9	Knutsford Moor
House Martin	19/4	Rostherne	29/10	Mobberley
Swallow	12/4	Tatton	31/10	Rostherne
Yellow Wagtail	15/4	Tatton	26/9	Knutsford Moor
Grasshopper Warbler	4/5	Knutsford	-	-
Sedge Warbler	6/5	Plumley	4/9	Knutsford Moor
Reed Warbler	4/5	Tatton	14/9	Rostherne
Garden Warbler	25/4	Rostherne	14/8	Knutsford Moor
Blackcap	11/4	Rostherne	18/9	Rostherne
Whitethroat	4/5	Tatton	23/8	Rostherne
Lesser Whitethroat	2/5	Rostherne	22/8	Knutsford Moor
Willow Warbler	10/4	Tatton	2/9	Knutsford Moor
Chiff Chaff	1/4	Rostherne	31/8	Rostherne
Wood Warbler	7/5	Tatton	-	-
Spotted Flycatcher	15/5	Rostherne	20/9	Rostherne

2. Winter Visitors

Species	Last Record	Location	First Record	Location
Cormorant *	8/5	Rostherne	23/8	Rostherne
Whooper Swan	-	-	17/12	Rostherne
Bewicks Swan	14/3	Rostherne	22/11	Mobberley
Teal *	8/5	Rostherne	23/8	Rostherne
Gadwall	14/3	Rostherne	7/8	Rostherne
Pintail	4/4	Rostherne	29/8	Rostherne
Wigeon *	29/4	Rostherne	16/8	Rostherne
Pochard *	15/4	Rostherne	13/6	Rostherne
Goldeneye	15/5	Rostherne	30/7	Rostherne
Smew	18/4	Tatton	14/11	Tatton
Goosander	20/3	Rostherne	6/8	Rostherne
Water Rail	23/5	Rostherne	9/11	Rostherne
Golden Plover	11/4	Rostherne	23/10	Rostherne
Redshank	17/4	Rostherne	15/7	Mobberley Lake
Dunlin	12/5	Mobberley Lake	26/7	Rostherne
Jack Snipe	20/3	Tatton	17/10	Tatton
Iceland Gull	9/4	Rostherne	13/10	Rostherne
Glaucous Gull	10/1	Rostherne	23/12	Rostherne
Redwing	29/3	Peover	10/10	Rostherne
Fieldfare	22/4	Rostherne	30/10	Tatton
Brambling	30/4	Tatton	31/10	Rostherne
Siskin	20/4	Tatton	10/10	Rostherne
Shelduck	18/4	Farmwood Pool	19/9	Farmwood Pool

Dates of those species marked with an asterisk are only approximate as a few birds invariably summer within the area.

3. Species Recorded on Passage.

a) Spring.

Species	Date	Location
Garganey	mid-May	Cecily Mill
Osprey	17/4	Rostherne
Ringed Plover	8/6	Mobberley Lake
Little Stint	8/6	Mobberley Lake
Sanderling	12/5	Mobberley Lake
Whimbrel	8/5, 22/5	Rostherne
'Commic' Tern	29/4 to 26/6	Tatton and Rostherne
Arctic Tern	20/4 to 22/4	Tatton
Common Tern	24/4 to 24/6	Tatton and Rostherne
Roseate Tern	15/5	Tatton
Black Tern	6/5 to 28/5	Tatton and Rostherne
White Wagtail	1/5, 2/5	Tatton
Rock Pipit	10/4	Tatton
Whinchat	6/5, 9/5	Tatton and Rostherne
Wheatear	23/3 to 18/5	Widespread

b) Autumn

Species	Date	Location
Common Scoter	28/10, 12/12	Tatton and Rostherne
Scaup	28/9	Rostherne
Greenshank	14/7 to 2/9	Tatton, Rostherne, Sandmere
Ruff	14/8	Rostherne
Little Stint	22/10	Mobberley Lake
Green Sandpiper	29/6 to 5/11	Plumley, Mobberley Lake
Whimbrel	28/7	Rostherne
Arctic Skua	12/9	Rostherne
Great Skua	19/11, 12/9	Tatton and Rostherne
'Commic' Tern	16/7 to 12/9	Rostherne
Black Tern	3/9, 25/9	Rostherne
Short-eared Owl	12/9	
Whinchat	21/9	Rostherne
Redstart	26/10	Byley
Wheatear	14/8, 31/8	Tatton and Rostherne

THE BIRDS OF KNUTSFORD HEATH - BY BOB GROOM

Knutsford Heath comprises 36 acres of land close to the town centre. Northwich Road divides the main Heath from a smaller, grassed area known as the Little Heath. The Heath proper, bounded by Manchester Road, Tabley Road, Ladies Mile, Northwich Road and the Conservative Club premises, consists of two distinct habitats. Rather more than half is grassed over and frequented by a limited number of species (Carrion Crow, Rook, Jackdaw, Starling, Wood Pigeon, Mistle Thrush, Magpie and House Sparrow principally). The remaining area (approximately one third) is of much greater interest ornithologically. Surrounding a long, deep hollow - formerly a sand pit - and growing over part of it are young trees, gorse bushes, heather and brambles. This vegetation provides a suitable habitat for a wide variety of bird species, as well as small rodents, rabbits (which eke out a precarious existence under the gorse), butterflies (in summer), a multitude of spiders, and such interesting insects as the Devil's Coach-Horse Beetle.

The Heath is criss-crossed with footpaths and in view of the human activity on it - children playing, people exercising dogs and using the paths to go to and from the town centre - it is surprising that as many as 40 species may frequent it through the year. (This total does not include birds such as Cormorant and Heron seen flying over the Heath and species that visit mature gardens nearby (e.g. Tree Creeper and Nuthatch) but do not seem to venture onto the Heath).

Yellowhammers are resident on the Heath for most of the year, only leaving it in November and December to join the large, roving flocks that form in mid-winter and can sometimes be seen near Tatton Mere. Early in the new year they are back on the Heath and males can be heard singing right through from late February until October. Up to six pairs have territories in this restricted area and in the breeding season they rarely leave it.

Linnets are present from mid-March until late autumn, departing (probably for the coast) in November. During the winter their place seems to be taken by large flocks of Greenfinches. Chaffinches are less often seen on the Heath itself, perhaps because of the lack of mature trees. Bullfinches visit the Heath on occasion from the wooded gardens along Tabley Road.

In April the Willow Warblers arrive on the Heath after their long migration from Africa. The young trees and thick bushes provide ideal breeding cover for this species and the male's liquid song can be heard right through to September. Other summer visitors (non-breeding) to be seen on the Heath include Blackcaps, Spotted Flycatchers and an occasional Chiff-Chaff. Swifts, Swallows and House Martins all feed over the Heath, sometimes descending to chase insects along the pathways.

Woodpeckers rarely visit the Heath but I have seen all three resident species there. On three successive stormy days in November, 1974 a pair of Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers could be seen combing the young trees for food. A female Great Spotted Woodpecker frequented the mature trees on the perimeter of the Heath during November and December, 1976. On a sultry day at the end of August, 1975 I was surprised to see an immature Green Woodpecker fly rapidly across the Heath and disappear into the trees beyond Ladies Mile. This was probably a young bird raised in Tatton Park.

Large parties of Blue Tits and Great Tits forage on the Heath in Winter. Coal Tits and, occasionally, Long-Tailed Tits can also be seen there. Goldcrests flit through the gorse bushes in autumn and in that season Meadow Pipits sometimes appear in the sand hollow. Reed Buntings and Pied Wagtails are regular winter visitors to the Heath.

In February the most vocal bird on the Heath is the Dunnock, perhaps its most plentiful resident species but one that is for much of the year rather unobtrusive. Wrens, Robins, Blackbirds and Song Thrushes are also resident on the Heath, the males singing on mild days in early spring. Mistle Thrushes can also be seen on the Heath but they rarely stray far from the mature trees along Tabley Road and Northwich Road. This also applies to the Collard Dove. Even more peripheral are the Black-Headed Gulls that forage near 'Kilrie'.

Kestrels regularly hunt over the Heath and sometimes in early Spring a pair can be seen together. In some winters Tawny Owls can be heard hooting in trees around the Heath, over which they obviously hunt at night. Let us hope that the Heath is allowed to remain undeveloped and its flora and fauna are allowed to develop undisturbed. Inevitably its amenity usage will keep out many bird species, even when its tree cover matures but there should certainly be an increase in the future. Summer gorse fires are an ever-present threat to this interesting habitat and it has several times suffered from the actions of thoughtless children and careless adults. Hopefully these will be less frequent and damaging in the future. Everyone should appreciate the value of the Heath's natural history and enjoy the wildlife to be seen there.

RINGING RECORDS OF LOCAL INTEREST 1976

Data Kindly supplied by the South Manchester Ringing Group.

Swallow

A bird ringed on 30/7/75 as a pullus (nestling) was controlled (re-trapped and released) on 23/11/75 at Betty's Bay, Nr. Cape Town, C.P., South Africa. 3 other locally ringed pulli were controlled during the year, one ringed at Mobberley on 4/7/76 was caught on 25/8/76 at a roost in Shotton, one ringed on 19/6/76 at Tabley was caught on 27/8/76 at Frodsham and one caught on 19/9/76 at Ufton, Warwickshire was ringed on 28/7/76 in Toft. An adult female ringed on 13/9/75 on Knutsford Moor was controlled at Compstall on 13/9/76. 51 juvenile birds ringed within 20 Km of Knutsford were controlled at the Knutsford Moor roost during the year and 6 birds ringed in 1975 at either Knutsford or Rostherne as pullus or as juveniles were subsequently caught in 1976 as nesting adults within 20 Km of Knutsford.

Sand Martin

4 birds controlled at the Lower Withington Colony during 1976 were ringed as juveniles on Knutsford Moor in previous years, thus showing some of the birds roosting on Knutsford Moor are of local origin as does a bird ringed at Lower Withington on 2/8 and controlled 3 weeks later at the Knutsford roost. Movement between local colonies is indicated by an adult and 2 juveniles ringed at Sandmere in June/July 1975 and controlled at Lower Withington in July/August 1976.

Song Thrush

An adult ringed on 1/2/76 at Tatton was killed by a lorry on 27/2/76 between Coventry and Derby.

Blackbird

A bird killed on 10/4/76 in Osnabrück, West Germany had been ringed at Tatton on 21/12/75.

Reed Warbler

During a most successful breeding season at Rostherne the group ringed no less than 103 nestlings of which 100 fledged. Among the birds controlled during July on Knutsford Moor were one first ringed as a juvenile at Beachy Head, Sussex in August 1974 and another ringed in August 1975 at Radipole Lake, Dorset. A female caught at Rostherne in July was ringed in August 1973 as a juvenile at Low Ellers, Doncaster, Yorkshire. The most interesting recovery concerns a bird ringed at Rostherne as a pullus on 26/6/75 and retrapped at Britain's most northerly breeding point, Saltholme, Teesmouth, Durham on 25/6/76.

Sedge Warbler

A bird ringed in August 1974 as a juvenile at Chorlton-cum-Hardy was trapped on Knutsford Moor on 11/7/76 and again on 7/8/76. Also caught on Knutsford Moor in July was a bird ringed on 14/8/74 as a Juvenile at Radipole, Dorset.