

Lapland Bunting
Calcarius lapponicus.
Snow Bunting
Plectrophenax nivalis.

House Sparrow
Passer domesticus.
Tree Sparrow
Passer montanus.

Two on 28th September increased to three on 6th October, five on 7th, 7 on 12th but only two 19th October.

One on 24th September increased to 8 on 30th and up to five 1st to 10th October, five on 24th November, two on 8th December. and one on 19th.

Bred as usual and 42 counted at High Street on 4th August.

A single on 16th March, six on 24th May, 16 on 29th, 19 on 7th June, eleven on 16th, seven on 18th July and 12 on 17th August.

RARITY DESCRIPTIONS

Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*. 15th April, 1975. First year.

At about 16.15 hours my attention was caught by mobbing calls of Herring Gulls which were diving at a bird flying northwards along the east coast of the island. My initial impression with the naked eye was of an owl-like bird because of its broad, rounded wings and slow but buoyant wing-beats. Through binoculars its long, straight, pointed bill, feet projecting beyond tail and dark cap were clear and I realised that the bird was a Night Heron. Having flown past me it landed on the top of the cliffs about 300 yards to the north, where it was out of sight and unapproachable because of the dense Rhododendron thickets above the cliffs. I then went to fetch I.G. Black and we returned to the area where the bird's position was still clear from the mobbing activities of the gulls. Later it apparently moved a short distance without our seeing it and at about 17.30 we flushed it from the edge of the Rhododendrons. It flew south (in by now poor light), circled several times about 500 yards from us and then returned north past us (when I.G.B. was using my binoculars) and on out of sight.

Description: Length about equal to Herring Gull. Wings broad, rounded and Large. Neck not prominent in flight as in Grey Heron. Bill dagger-shaped and dark. Feet yellowish, projecting beyond short tail. Whole of body, wings and tail except mantle and scapulars uniform buff with smoky grey tinge. Mantle and scapulars dark — apparent greenish sheen noted on first sighting (AMT), bronze sheen on second sighting (IGB). On the head the buff colour faded to whitish on chin and cheeks. A narrow white forehead band separated the bill from the very dark cap which reached down to the top of the eye.

A.M. Taylor

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*. 27th and 28th August, 1975.

On the morning of 27th August my wife and I noticed a falcon perched on a fence post some 150 yards from us. Through binoculars we noted large conspicuous white face patches, which, coupled with the immature Swallow-like shape led us to believe it was a juvenile Hobby. A close approach revealed the absence of any rufous thighs. The bird allowed approach to within fifteen yards and we managed to walk it a distance of 300 yards to a Heligoland trap where it took off to a greater distance. During this time it fed like a shrike, returning to the fence posts to consume the crane fly and large beetles it was catching. Later in the afternoon the same bird was on fence posts 40 yards from my cottage window and when it had gone an alarm bell rang in my mind and an immediate search was launched to relocate the bird, now a possible Red-footed Falcon. The description below is mainly from notes taken after the possibility of such a species had occurred to me.

Top of head pale ginger, looking orange in evening light. Large off white area behind eye extending to ear coverts with a thin moustachial stripe (appeared black) separating this from a smaller pale area around the bill. My wife commented when seeing the bird head on that it appeared owl-like. Back as Kestrel, although the stripes were perhaps thinner and more numerous. Underparts, deep buff with longitudinal heavy dark streaks. Tail pale tipped, barred, with a heavier subterminal band. In flight the head pattern was remarkably like a Hobby/Peregrine and reminded me of one of the North African pale capped falcons. Feet and legs yellow, thighs as underparts with no trace of fufous or ginger.

General shape much as Kestrel but flight pattern different being more fluid and when seen from the side was very Hobby-like, the wings almost reaching the tail. When perched it carried its body at 45 degrees with the legs pushed forward whereas the Kestrels perched upright. Seen hovering like Kestrel, hawking insects and strangely when feeding on the ground it took insects in its bill directly.

The bird was also seen on 27th and 28th August by N.A. Clark and C.C. Baillie.

M. Rogers

Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Tryngites subruficollis*. 8th September, 1975.

I was informed of the presence of this bird by C.C. Baillie at 17.40 hours and managed to snatch views for five minutes before opening the Tavern.

Structure, long and slim-necked, long legged wader intermediate between large Dunlin and small Reeve, probably nearer the latter. Bill black, fine and as long as the head, dark eye, large for size of bird, legs yellow, wings long, overlapping tail.

Plumage: Face, neck and upper breast cinnamon buff. Top of head flecked dark as was back of neck. Underparts mainly off white, a good deal paler than the bird I saw in 1973. Back as Reeve, but closer patterned, the tips of the back feathers edged buff with the edging tending to grey on the wings.

Feeding quickly on the short turf by picking, interspersed with quick runs. Neck stretching occurred when alert.

The bird was also seen by R. Britton, C.C. Baillie and N.A. Clark.

M. Rogers

Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Tryngites subruficollis*. 29th September to 5th October, 1975.

The bird was seen at 10.00 hours on Airfield feeding on the short turf with a wader flock and was considerably smaller than a Golden Plover and larger than a Dunlin. The yellow legs, scaly upperparts, thin neck, buff face, white wing linings seen in flight but no conspicuous buff pattern. It was considered to be the bird seen by N.A. Clark two days previously as the buff was confined to the breast and the rest of the underparts off-white. All other usual characteristics were noted.

M. Rogers

Serin *Serinus serinus*. 3rd November, 1975.

The bird was seen on the ground in a weed covered stable yard feeding with Linnets and Chaffinches. It then flew up onto a wall, perched briefly and flew away. During a subsequent search the bird was flushed once and flight views obtained once again.

A 'yellow' bird when on the ground, markedly smaller than the Linnets with pale tips to the lesser and median coverts. Flying to a wall it showed a brown, unmarked tail and yellow rump. Perched on the wall the stubby bill, heavy streaking on the breast extending onto the paler, almost white belly and slight yellow-green supercilium were seen.

In flight a dumpier bird than a Siskin with very undurating flight, the yellow rump and brown tail were again visible, also the yellowish chest with paler abdomen, clearly streaked and cleft tail, more rounded than Siskin. The flight call, heard once, was a 'trill-lil-hill'.

M. Rogers

Scarlet Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*. 19th May to 1st June, 1975.

The bird was first seen sitting on a dead tree about 15 yards from me and in spite of the short time and difficult light conditions I was confident that it was a female type of Scarlet Rosefinch. (19th May). On the following day (20th May) I relocated the bird with C.C. Baillie and I.G. Black when it was seen at ten to twenty yards range feeding amongst low bushes and rank vegetation and detailed field descriptions were taken. On 1st June, R. Britton and myself heard a snatch of song given by this bird which sounded like a short section of a Willow Warbler song but stronger and less fluty, a note with a downward inflection, followed by two brief uninflected notes and then another with downward inflection (cheeoo-chi-chi-cheeoo). The bird was later caught and ringed and then continued to feed and sing for the rest of the day being seen by I.G. Black, C.C. Baillie and others.