

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.