

# A CATALOGUE OF THE BIRDS OF THE STOUR ESTUARY.

BY W. B. NICHOLS.

(See also *chart*).

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## PART I.

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The compiler of this Catalogue offers it with some hesitation to the notice of the Members of the Suffolk Archæological and Natural History Institute. His only ground for writing it is that for twenty years he has noted the birds he has seen, with the dates of arrival of spring migrants, etc. He has included other observations which struck him as worth recording, and it is possible that the material thus gathered together may not be without interest to Members of the Suffolk Institute. The order and nomenclature of the Catalogue are those of the British Ornithologists' Union's catalogue:—"A List of British Birds, compiled by a Committee of the British Ornithologists' Union," 2nd Ed., 1915.

An \* before the name of a bird denotes that the species breeds, or has bred, in the district. It will be noticed that the writer's observations have been made on the Essex side of the estuary. This will, however, make no practical difference in the dates of the coming and going of the birds recorded in comparison with S. Suffolk records.

The writer hopes that the catalogue may be of use, at any rate, to those Members who may be beginning the study of local ornithology, in giving them an idea of what they may expect to see on, and about, the Stour estuary. He will be grateful for any additions, emendations or corrections of his Catalogue that may be sent to him.

\***Raven** (*Corvus corax*). Nested at Lawford 1870-8. They had two nests in adjacent Scots firs on a barrow in a field on the Lawford Hall estate. An epidemic among the cattle on the estate soon after their arrival was ascribed by the superstitious villagers to their malign influence. They came, I believe, from Stutton, where they nested near the Rectory. (Babington, *Birds of Suffolk*, p. 252.).

The cock bird was always wilder and more wary than his mate, and would rush, every neck feather a-bristle, hoarsely croaking his anxiety and anger, from the nesting trees at the first distant sight of an intruder. The hen bird, especially towards the end of incubation, would often sit on the nest till one tapped the trunk of the tree on which the nest was. They had a delightful habit of turning somersaults, side ways, when soaring on calm days in great circles round their home. The first year they were with us they killed some weakly lambs, pecking out their eyes, but afterwards did no damage near home. They were never interfered with in any way beyond the taking of an occasional "brancher" for a friend to tame, and I do not know what caused them to leave. The nest was occupied by a pair of kestrels after the departure of the ravens, but I do not think that the kestrels could have driven away such powerful birds.

\***Carrion Crow** (*C. corone*). Not numerous, nests sparingly in the district.

\***Hooded Crow** (*C. cornix*). Numbers are seen on the estuary from October to March. On 27, xi., 17, I watched for half an hour about 40 grey crows playing at Wrabness Point. They rose, like corks on a fountain, in an eddy caused by the strong W. wind striking against the cliff, returning again and again to the foot of the cliff.

\***Jackdaw** (*C. monedula*). Numerous resident.

\***Rook** (*C. frugilegus*). A numerous resident. (Mr. C. K. Norman while fishing off Clacton, Nov. 1st, 1893, saw many rooks and starlings fly in from the sea, from feeding on the Gunfleet at low water).

\***Magpie** (*Pica pica*). Not infrequently met with on the Essex side of the estuary.

\***Jay** (*Garrulus glandarius rufitergum*). This, the British form of jay, is numerous and resident.

**Chough** (*Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax*). Two at Landguard Lighthouse, April 2nd, 1888. ("The Birds of Essex," p. 131).

\***Starling** (*Sturnus vulgaris*). Very numerous.

\***Greenfinch** (*Chloris chloris*). Numerous.

\***Hawfinch** (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*). A few seen most years, but it is such a shy, wild species, that it is probably more numerous than it appears to be.

\***Goldfinch** (*Carduelis carduelis britannica*). Fairly common.

**Siskin** (*Spinus spinus*). A few are seen most winters.

\***Sparrow** (*Passer domesticus*). Far too numerous. This species is very subject to partial albinism.

\***Tree-Sparrow** (*Passer montanus*). Common, nests in pollard willows, under marsh bridges, etc.

\***Chaffinch** (*Fringilla coelebs*). Very numerous. May often be seen hawking for flies like a Flycatcher. Singing Feb. 14th, 1904.

**Brambling** (*Fringilla montifringilla*). A winter visitor, sometimes in considerable numbers. The latest date on which I have noticed them is April 17th, in 1900.

\***Linnet** (*Acanthis cannabina*). Abundant. 10, vi., 15, My gardener brought me in a live linnet caught by a blade of grass, the flowering head of which was twisted in the flight feathers.

**Lesser Redpole** (*A. linaria cabaret*). Is common on migration. I have not found it breeding.

**Twite** (*A. flavirostris*). Common on migration in winter.

\***British Bullfinch** (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula pileata*). Common where gardeners do not shoot it.

**Crossbill** (*Loxia curvirostra*). About 20 appeared in my garden, Bradfield, on July 11th, 1902, first attracting my notice by their unknown note, as they flew over at a great height. After passing, they wheeled round, apparently attracted by some Scots firs, into which they dropped, where I was able, with the aid of my binoculars, to detect what they were. They were evidently three or four family parties which had formed one small flock, as I saw four cocks in their lovely red plumage, several greenish yellow hens, and some dozen of young birds. They came from the north, and after an hour or two's stay went off in a N.W. direction. 16, xi., 16, one caught alive, but injured, in the village street, Bradfield.

\***Corn-Bunting** (*Emberiza calandra*). Fairly numerous.

\***Yellow Hammer** (*E. citrinella*). Common.

\***Cirl Bunting** (*E. cirulus*). Is very rare in this neighbourhood. I saw a cock bird in full song at Wrabness, June 6th, 1910, when it was presumably nesting. This is the only Cirl-Bunting I have seen in twenty-five years of observation in this district.

**Ortolan Bunting** (*E. hortulana*). One male seen among a mixed flock of buntings and linnets at Bradfield, in the winter of 1915.

\***Reed Bunting** (*E. schoeniclus*). Common.

**Snow Bunting** (*Plectrophenax nivalis*). Occasionally in winter. One male, 2 females, 12, xii., 02; 4, xi., 05, 1 male, 14, iii., 17.

\***Sky Lark** (*Alauda arvensis*). Very numerous. In 1905, Mr. H. R. Green found a lark's nest containing four lark's eggs with three song thrush's eggs.

**Shore Lark** (*Otocorys alpestris*). A scarce winter visitor.

\***White Wagtail** (*Motacilla alba*). A rare visitor. I believe has nested at least once in this neighbourhood, as I saw a male feeding a young bird at Lawford, 20, viii., 14. I have notes of others seen 29, iii., 99; 10, iv., 02; 6, iii., 03.

\***Pied Wagtail** (*M. lugubris*). A sparse resident and numerous summer visitor.

**Grey Wagtail** (*M. boarula*). A fairly common winter visitor.

\***Yellow Wagtail** (*M. raii*). A summer visitor. Earliest date of arrival, April 2nd; latest, May 19th. Average of 22 years, April 22nd.

**Blue-headed Wagtail** (*M. flava*). I saw on 28, iv., 00, a bird which I believe to have been of this species at Brantham, Suffolk.

\***Tree Pipit** (*Anthus trivialis*). A summer visitor in, I think, decreasing numbers.

\***Meadow Pipit** (*A. pratensis*). Numerous.

**Rock Pipit** (*A. petrosus*). I have seen this species occasionally on the mud at low water above Manningtree.

\***British Tree Creeper** (*Certhia familiaris britannica*). A fairly common resident. I have heard its rather pretty little song very early in the year. On February 13th, 1914, one sang incessantly all the morning.

\***Nuthatch** (*Sitta cœsia*). A common resident. On April 1st, 1914, I saw a pair of nuthatches, with several chaffinches and robins, hawking for flies over a pond at Lawford Hall exactly like fly-catchers.

\***Gold Crest** (*Regulus regulus*). A resident which has suffered sadly, I fear, from the severity of last winter, 1916-17.

**Bearded Titmouse** (*Panurus biarmicus*). One found dead near Harwich, March 30th, 1895 (*Essex Nat.*, ix., 52). Seven seen by Mr. Richardson near Flatford, about New Year's Day, 1914.

\***British Great Titmouse** (*Parus major newtoni*). An abundant resident.

\***British Coal-Titmouse** (*P. ater britannicus*). An abundant resident.

\***British Marsh-Titmouse** (*P. palustris dresseri*). A fairly abundant resident.

\***British Blue-Titmouse** (*P. cœruleus obscurus*). Resident and abundant.

**White-headed Long-tailed Titmouse** (*Ægithalus caudatus*). I saw two of this species, 22, iii., 12, in some trees on the shore of the estuary at Nether Hall, Bradfield.

\***British Long-tailed Titmouse** (*Æ. caudatus roseus*). A common resident and early breeder. I have seen it building as early as the middle of March.

**Grey Shrike** (*Lanius excubitor*). There are three records of this species, being obtained near Harwich, 9, xi., 75; 6, xii., 79; and 7, xii., 89. I saw one, 1, ii., 90, at Lawford.

\***Red-backed Shrike** (*L. collurio*). A summer visitor. Not so often seen as formerly, owing to the cutting down of the old fashioned high fences. Earliest date of arrival, 30, iv.; latest date, 30, v. Average of 23 years, 15, v.

**Waxwing** (*Ampelis garrulus*). An irregular visitor in the hardest winters. Four were about some gardens in Dovercourt for some weeks in Jan.-Feb., 1914. Another is recorded as seen alone in a garden in Dovercourt, 13, xii., 82. Others were killed in this neighbourhood in the winter of 1892-3.

\***Whitethroat** (*Sylvia communis*). An abundant summer visitor. Earliest arrival, 12, iv.; latest, 30, iv. Average of 23 years, 21, iv.

\***Lesser Whitethroat** (*S. curruca*). Abundant summer visitor, arriving a week or so later than the common Whitethroat. Earliest arrival, 17, iv. ; latest, 6, v. ; average of 21 years, 28, iv.

\***Garden Warbler** (*S. simplex*). A fairly abundant summer visitor. Earliest arrival, 21, iv. ; latest 14, v. ; average of 22 years, 4, v. On 12, v., 11, I heard at least a dozen singing together in a small clump of trees near the railway line in Bradfield, evidently a freshly arrived party not yet dispersed to their territories.

\***Blackcap** (*S. atricapilla*). Also a fairly abundant summer visitor. Earliest arrival, 7, iv. ; latest, 6, v. ; average of 23 years, 19, iv.

\***Grasshopper Warbler** (*Locustella noevia*). A summer visitor in small numbers. I have only heard its unmistakable song two or three times in my own district, but it is said to "breed round Harwich." (Christy, Birds of Essex, p. 88).

\***Reed Warbler** (*Acrocephalus streperus*). An abundant summer visitor wherever there are reed beds for it to nest in. It is a late arrival, appearing about the end of the first week in May, and disappearing about the end of September. On 15, vi., 16, one sang all day in my garden.

\***Sedge-Warbler** (*A. schoenobæus*). Fairly abundant summer visitor. Earliest arrival, 21, iv. ; latest, 7, v. ; average of 23 years, 27, iv. 6, ix., 05, one sang all day long in my garden.

\***Willow-Warbler** (*Phylloscopus trochilus*). An abundant summer visitor. Earliest arrival, 29, iii. ; latest, 25, iv. ; average of 24 years, 11, iv.

**Wood-Warbler** (*Ph. sibilatrix*). In my district a scarce summer visitor. I have only four notes of its appearance, 20, iv., 95 ; 23, iv., 09 ; 22, iv., 11 and 6, v., 12. I have not yet found it nesting.

\***Chiffchaff** (*Ph. collybita*). A summer visitor in decreasing numbers. Earliest arrival, 24, iii. ; latest, 10, v. ; average of 24 years, 6, iv.

\***Mistle-Thrush** (*Turdus viscivorus*). An abundant resident. A pair which had their nest in a plane tree in the garden of my then residence in Mistle, were hawking for moths at 9.30 p.m. on 1, vii., 94. The grass beneath the nesting tree was thickly strown with the stones of the wild cherry. Flocks of these birds may be seen on wild cherry trees throughout July. I saw a beautiful variety of

this bird at Lawford, 11, v., 00. Head, cream colour with dark stripe through eye, breast and underparts white with very faint spots, lower back pigeon blue.

\***British Song-Thrush** (*T. musicus* Clarkii). An abundant resident which suffered much from the severe and late winter of 1916-17. I have found a nest on one occasion built into an old nest. On 6, iv., 05, a pair were fighting in my garden and both singing all the time.

**Redwing** (*T. iliacus*). A winter visitor, numerous in some years. On 13, iii., 01, hundreds were singing dispersed all over Mistley Hall park. 17, iv. is the latest date on which I have seen them.

**Fieldfare** (*T. pilaris*). Like the last species a winter visitor in varying numbers, sometimes very numerous. I saw twelve on 3, v., 06, an exceptionally late date.

\***Blackbird** (*T. merula*). An abundant resident which also seems to have suffered from the last late and severe winter. I have seen a good many pied blackbirds in this district; one was curiously marked as it had a semilunar white patch on its throat, and no other white feather. The Rev. P. Benwell had three broods in one nest in his garden at Wix vicarage in the summer of 1894. My friend, Mr. Bridges, of Bradfield, told me, 12, iv., 06, that, some years previous to that date, he had seen a male blackbird with wattles round beak and eye like a carrier-pigeon. On 12, vi., 16, I saw a blackbird picking and eating a young sparrow.

**Ring-Ousel** (*T. torquatus*). A passing migrant on its way to its more northerly breeding quarters. I have the following dates, 12, iv., 06; 9, iv., 12; 19, iv., 12, and on the return journey, 24, ix., 13; when two came for some days to a mulberry tree in Dovercourt.

\***Redstart** (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*). A summer visitor in decreasing numbers. Earliest arrival, 11, iv.; latest, 18, v.; average of 23 years, 17, iv.

**Black Redstart** (*Ph. titys*). A winter visitor. Only once noticed 22, iii., 11, when I saw a male in my garden, Bradfield. There are two records, 14, iv., 79 and xii., 87 for the district, in "Birds of Essex."

\***British Redbreast** (*Erithacus rubecula melophilus*). Numerous resident.

\***Nightingale** (*Luscinia megarhynca*). Numerous summer visitor. Earliest date of arrival, 10, iv.; latest, 30, iv.; average of

23 years, 18, iv. One was singing as late as 19, vii in 1897. In May, 1913, a pair built their nest under the eaves of a shed, in jasmine, in a neighbour's garden, 5 ft. 9 in. from ground.

**Red-Spotted Bluethroat** (*Cyanosylvia suecica*). Recorded in Christy's "Birds of Essex," as having been seen near Harwich.

\***Stonechat** (*Saxicola rubicola*). A resident in small numbers.

\***Whinchat** (*Saxicola rubetra*). A summer visitor in small numbers.

\***Wheatear** (*Enanthe cœnanthe*). A summer visitor, breeding in small numbers, much more numerous on migration. Earliest arrival, 21, iii.; latest, 25, iv.; average, 10, iv. On 29, iv., 08, I saw at least a dozen males together on a small marsh in Bradfield. I saw a young bird being fed at Lawford, 27, vi., 13.

\***Hedge-Sparrow** (*Accentor modularis*). A numerous resident. One with cream coloured flight feathers in my garden, Bradfield, 1, iii., 06.

**Dipper** (*Cinclus cinclus*). There are two records for the district in Christy (Birds of Essex).

\***Wren** (*Troglodytes troglodytes*). Abundant and resident.

\***Spotted Flycatcher** (*Muscicapa grisola*). A summer visitor. Earliest date of arrival, 6, v.; latest date, 30, v.; average date in 23 years, 12, v.

**Pied Flycatcher** (*M. atricapilla*). I have only two notes. Two were in my garden, Bradfield, 20, ix., 06; and on 15, ix., 13, one at Dovercourt. In the Rev. Revett Sheppard's table of the arrival of summer migrants at Wrabness, 1818-30; two spring records are given, 16, v., 22 and 28, iv., 23. Sheppard's table was published in the Transactions of the Linnean Society, and reprinted in "The Birds of Essex" (Christy).

\***Swallow** (*Hirundo rustica*). Summer visitor. Earliest date of arrival, 4, iv.; latest, 25, iv.; average of 24 years, 14, iv. Latest date of departure, 8, xi, 11: A white swallow was seen at Mistley Place, 5, x., 05.

\***Martin** (*Delichon urbica*). Summer visitor. Date of first arrival, 10, iv.; latest, 2, v.; average of 23 years, 18, iv. Latest appearance, 4, xii., 13.



## Dates of Arrival of Spring Migrants at Bradfield, Essex.

	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.	1910.	1911.	1912.	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.
Redstart .. ..	—	11, iv.	24, iv.	24, iv.	19, iv.	13, iv.	20, iv.	12, iv.	13, iv.	27, iv.	23, iv.	13, iv.	11, iv.	—	—	16, iv.	17, iv.	18, v.	—	15, v.	—	22, iv.	—	—
Nightingale .. ..	—	19, iv.	15, iv.	20, iv.	16, iv.	17, iv.	21, iv.	17, iv.	15, iv.	28, iv.	17, iv.	13, iv.	10, iv.	24, iv.	30, iv.	16, iv.	18, iv.	17, iv.	20, iv.	21, iv.	12, iv.	21, iv.	23, iv.	28, iv.
Whitethroat .. ..	—	19, iv.	25, iv.	26, iv.	21, iv.	12, iv.	21, iv.	19, iv.	12, iv.	28, iv.	23, iv.	12, iv.	30, iv.	18, iv.	28, iv.	22, iv.	21, iv.	22, iv.	20, iv.	24, iv.	13, iv.	30, iv.	30, iv.	30, iv.
L. Whitethroat .. ..	—	—	—	25, iv.	—	4, v.	4, v.	21, iv.	17, iv.	6, v.	23, iv.	3, v.	30, iv.	6, v.	4, v.	22, iv.	28, iv.	26, iv.	27, iv.	23, iv.	27, iv.	28, iv.	27, iv.	30, iv.
Garden Warbler .. ..	—	—	26, iv.	4, v.	2, v.	29, iv.	2, v.	24, iv.	—	9, v.	10, v.	3, v.	21, iv.	6, v.	14, v.	26, iv.	4, v.	11, v.	29, iv.	3, v.	29, iv.	5, v.	1, v.	12, v.
Blackcap .. ..	—	19, iv.	18, iv.	18, iv.	24, iv.	13, iv.	20, iv.	18, iv.	11, iv.	27, iv.	16, iv.	11, iv.	21, iv.	6, v.	22, iv.	19, iv.	19, iv.	24, iv.	7, iv.	25, iv.	14, iv.	22, iv.	18, iv.	29, iv.
Sedgewarbler .. ..	—	21, iv.	24, iv.	—	23, iv.	28, iv.	1, v.	22, iv.	23, iv.	1, v.	28, iv.	1, v.	30, iv.	6, v.	—	24, iv.	27, iv.	2, v.	24, iv.	22, iv.	28, iv.	27, iv.	1, v.	7, v.
Chiffchaff .. ..	9, iv.	11, iv.	29, iii.	2, iv.	—	9, iv.	4, iv.	—	7, iv.	—	10, v.	29, iii.	28, iii.	—	—	6, iv.	6, iv.	—	27, iii.	11, iv.	3, iv.	24, iii.	—	30, iv.
Willow-Warbler .. ..	9, iv.	11, iv.	17, iv.	29, iii.	11, iv.	8, iv.	19, iv.	8, iv.	12, iv.	5, iv.	12, iv.	8, iv.	11, iv.	10, iv.	25, iv.	3, iv.	11, iv.	7, iv.	12, iv.	2, iv.	3, iv.	31, iii.	7, iv.	24, iv.
Wood-Warbler .. ..	—	20, iv.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23, iv.	—	22, iv.	6, v.	—	—	—	—	—
Yellow Wagtail .. ..	—	—	4, v.	—	—	2, iv.	25, iv.	22, iv.	16, iv.	30, iv.	3, v.	20, iv.	21, iv.	24, iv.	29, iv.	26, iv.	23, iv.	20, iv.	8, iv.	22, iv.	28, iv.	27, iv.	19, v.	15, v.
Red-backed Shrike .. ..	—	30, iv.	—	—	—	—	15, v.	—	30, v.	24, v.	18, v.	15, v.	14, v.	18, v.	16, v.	8, v.	15, v.	26, v.	17, v.	—	13, v.	—	19, v.	12, v.
Spotted Flycatcher .. ..	—	9, v.	—	—	22, v.	—	7, v.	15, v.	27, v.	21, v.	15, v.	18, v.	17, v.	16, v.	6, v.	11, v.	12, v.	30, v.	16, v.	12, v.	6, v.	10, v.	10, v.	7, v.
Swallow .. ..	—	14, iv.	20, iv.	14, iv.	15, iv.	13, iv.	16, iv.	18, iv.	11, iv.	13, iv.	19, iv.	4, iv.	16, iv.	15, iv.	25, iv.	7, iv.	14, iv.	13, iv.	12, iv.	16, iv.	8, iv.	13, iv.	21, iv.	16, iv.
Martin .. ..	—	23, iv.	21, iv.	23, iv.	12, iv.	20, iv.	25, iv.	—	11, iv.	15, iv.	15, iv.	11, iv.	18, iv.	24, iv.	30, iv.	10, iv.	18, iv.	24, iv.	27, iv.	17, iv.	15, iv.	2, v.	25, iv.	29, iv.
Sand Martin .. ..	—	19, iv.	15, iv.	14, iv.	9, iv.	3, iv.	13, iv.	2, iv.	11, iv.	12, iv.	7, v.	27, iii.	17, iv.	4, iv.	19, iv.	9, iv.	12, iv.	4, v.	1, iv.	26, iii.	15, iv.	24, iv.	12, iv.	22, iv.
Swift .. ..	—	5, v.	—	—	8, v.	7, v.	29, iv.	9, v.	30, iv.	11, v.	16, v.	13, v.	5, v.	10, v.	5, v.	24, iv.	6, v.	8, v.	27, iv.	28, iv.	30, iv.	3, v.	24, iv.	5, v.
Wryneck .. ..	—	—	—	—	17, iv.	15, iv.	19, iv.	21, iv.	18, iv.	21, iv.	16, iv.	29, iii.	29, iii.	19, iv.	30, iv.	13, iv.	15, iv.	22, iii.	—	16, iv.	—	28, iv.	—	—
Cuckoo .. ..	13, iv.	17, iv.	20, iv.	20, iv.	16, iv.	18, iv.	21, iv.	22, iv.	21, iv.	28, iv.	16, iv.	12, iv.	16, iv.	28, iv.	29, iv.	14, iv.	19, iv.	21, iv.	19, iv.	22, iv.	6, iv.	23, iv.	21, iv.	23, iv.
Turtle Dove .. ..	—	22, iv.	—	—	3, v.	4, v.	10, v.	—	18, v.	18, v.	30, iv.	7, v.	8, v.	8, v.	29, iv.	22, iv.	7, v.	4, v.	6, v.	25, iv.	9, v.	29, iv.	4, v.	2, v.
Common Sandpiper .. ..	—	—	—	—	16, v.	5, v.	1, v.	11, v.	—	—	—	4, v.	—	—	—	26, iv.	5, v.	4, v.	—	22, v.	6, v.	—	—	1, v.
Green Sandpiper .. ..	—	—	—	—	26, iv.	—	—	11, v.	—	—	—	—	6, iv.	—	—	—	—	—	—	22, iv.	19, iv.	17, iv.	—	11, iv.
Wheatear .. ..	—	—	—	—	—	3, iv.	—	—	10, iv.	22, iii.	—	4, v.	21, iii.	10, iv.	25, iv.	—	—	—	—	13, iv.	—	—	21, iv.	—
Whimbrel .. ..	—	—	—	—	—	5, v.	7, v.	11, v.	—	2, v.	—	1, v.	15, v.	7, v.	4, v.	—	—	11, v.	15, v.	1, v.	28, iv.	1, v.	3, v.	10, v.

*After 1894 a blank implies, either that the bird was not seen at all, or that, in rare cases, the note made has been lost.*

W. B. N.

BRADFIELD. Jan., 1918.

\***Sand Martin** (*Riparia riparia*). Summer visitor. Earliest date of arrival 26, iii. ; latest, 7, v. ; average of 23 years, 12, iv.

\***British Great Spotted Woodpecker** (*Dryobates major anglicus*). A sparse resident.

\***Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** (*Dryobates minor*). As last.

\***Green Woodpecker** (*Picus viridis*). A fairly common resident.

\***Wryneck** (*Iynx torquilla*). A summer visitor in decreasing numbers. Earliest date of arrival, 22, iii. ; latest, 30, iv. ; average of 20 years, 15, iv.

\***Cuckoo** (*Cuculus canorus*). A summer visitor. Earliest date of arrival, 6, iv. ; latest, 28, iv. ; average of 24 years, 19, iv. A most beautiful young bird with every feather edged with white, as if with hoar frost, in my garden 11, vii., 16.

\***Swift** (*Micropus apus*). Summer visitor. Earliest date of arrival, 24, iv. ; latest, 16, v. ; average of 23 years, 6, v. Last seen, 17, x., an exceptionally late date. At 9.37 p.m., 29, v., 09, while looking at the moon through a telescope, I saw a Swift pass across the disk.

\***Nightjar** (*Caprimulgus europæus*). Summer visitor, not common in the district. I have usually seen it in the autumn in migration, but have three notes of visits to my garden, 19, vi., 10 ; 21, v., 15 and 22, vi., 16. A few pairs nest in Stour Wood, Wrabness, and in Mistle Park.

**Hoopoe** (*Upupa epops*). There are several records of the appearance of this species in this district during the last century, e.g., the Rev. R. Sheppard notes its arrival at Wrabness on May 3rd, 1821, May 4th, 1822, and April 14th, 1825. Dr. Bree records one shot in the Rectory garden at Erwardon, Suffolk, in the beginning of May, 1862.

\***Kingfisher** (*Alcedo ispida*). A resident, frequently to be seen on the shore of the estuary and about the marsh drains, more especially after the breeding season. On 10, xii, 00, I was sitting quite still near the bathing place at Mistle, when a kingfisher flew by and settled on a pile about ten yards from me, not seeing me till he had settled. When he saw me, instead of flying away, he adopted an extraordinary attitude of concealment. Drawing himself up very tall and thin with his beak pointing straight upwards, he dropped his wings, half opened, and expanding his tail feathers, raised them

straight up his back. In this attitude he looked like a spiky termination of the post, and might have been passed unnoticed by me if I had not seen the whole performance.

\***Barn Owl** (*Flammea flammea*). A resident; unfortunately still shot by fools. I have twice found this owl frozen to death in barns.

\***Long-eared Owl** (*Asio otus*). Is reported as "common and breeding round Harwich." My own experience is that it is an uncommon winter visitor.

\***Short-eared Owl** (*A. accipitrinus*). Undoubtedly nested at Little Oakley in 1889, but generally known as an annual winter visitor. I have generally seen it about the marshes, sometimes hunting by daylight. On one occasion three together on the Lawford marshes.

\***Tawny Owl** (*Strix aluco*). A fairly common resident. On 19, iv., 12, I was sitting in the garden at Lawford Hall, when one of these birds defiantly hooted in answer to the sound of the gong announcing lunch. He would not, however, answer my hoots, to which they will usually respond readily at night.

**Snowy Owl** (*Nyctea nyctea*). In the eighth of the British Association's Reports on the Migration of Birds, that for 1886, p. 39, an example of this species is reported by Mr. Owen Boyle, keeper of the Landguard Lighthouse, to have been killed near the light on Feb. 9th, 1885.

**Little Owl** (*Carine nostua*). In November, 1914, a neighbour, Mr. Brasnett, reported to me that while rabbiting a few days before on the borders of Bradfield and Wix, he had seen a small spotted owl "about the size of a partridge," and without ear-tufts: this could have been only a Little Owl. This species, introduced by the late Lord Lilford, and others, is gradually spreading all over the eastern, southern and midland counties. On 31, x., 17, I heard near the same spot an Owl with a, to me, unfamiliar note, not unlike the note of the Scops Owl which I have known well in Italy. On 20, vii., 17, I met with a Little Owl while shooting at Foxash, on the borders of Lawford and Ardleigh.

**Marsh Harrier** (*Circus œruginosus*). I saw one in the late 70's on the Lawford Marshes. Mr. Richardson, of Flatford, Bergholt, saw one near there last year (1916).

**Hen Harrier** (*C. cyaneus*). Has been seen and some shot several times near Harwich.

**Buzzard** (*Buteo buteo*): I saw one 27, iv., 03, pass over in slow circles going N., and another 30, iii., 17. "Round Harwich a few are seen nearly every year." (Kerry, in Christy's "Birds of Essex").

**Rough-legged Buzzard** (*B. lagopus*). Mr. Hope writes (Bird<sup>s</sup> of Essex), "Common on the coast. . . I once saw twenty-five hawking rabbits . . . within three miles of Harwich, and obtained three of them." Mr. Kerry records one shot at Harwich, Nov., 1876. I have a record of one shot near Manningtree, 1, xi., 79.

**White-tailed Eagle** (*Haliaëtus albicilla*). There are several old records in Christy's "Birds of Essex." One was seen near Manningtree in December, 1879. The latest record that I have is of one shot by my friend, Mr. P. Stanford, on Houbridge Hall, Gt. Oakley, in 1906. This is a young bird and a very fine specimen.

\***Sparrow Hawk** (*Accipiter nisus*). A resident in small numbers, most commonly seen in the autumn and winter.

**Peregrine Falcon** (*Falco peregrinus*). 'An irregular winter visitor. I have only seen it some three or four times, but Kerry ("Birds of Essex," p. 173) says, "some are seen every year round Harwich."

**Hobby** (*F. subbuteo*). I have only two records: one caught at Mistley, 15, v., 88, and another seen by me at Mistley, v., 00.

**Merlin** (*F. oesalon*). One shot by Mr. Kerry at Dovercourt. I saw a bird which I believe was a Merlin, male, on 15, ix., 91.

\***Kestrel** (*F. tinunculus*). A fairly common resident. I saw one at Lawford strike and kill a Missel-thrush which was mobbing it.

**Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax carbo*). Common on the estuary all the year round. Some of the local puntsmen assert that it breeds in the marshes at Holbrook: I have not been able to verify this, but have seen young birds being fed by old ones.

**Shag** (*Ph. graculus*). I know of no record of this species save that of Sheppard and Whitear (Cat. of Norfolk and Suffolk Birds).

**Gannet** (*Sula bassana*). "A few are seen near Harwich every year" (Kerry, "Birds of Essex").

**Grey Lag Goose** (*Anser anser*). A few are seen most years.

**Bean Goose** (*A. fabalis*). Mr. W. Richardson shot one on Lawford Hall farm, 30, xii., 90. On the same day I saw nine, and on the next day six. Four were on the Lawford Marshes 27, xi., 93. One was brought to me, 10, xi., 08.

**White-fronted Goose** (*A. albifrons*). The commonest of the grey geese in this district. Ten flew over me at Lawford, flying very low, 8, x., 97; four, 13, xii., 02. Two were brought to me 2, iii., 07. One of them measured in length 28 ins., bill 1 8-12 in., pink with white nail, wing length 16½ ins., weight 4 lbs. 3¼ ozs. During the hard winter of 1916-17, I saw several small lots on the estuary.

**Pink-footed Goose** (*A. brachyrhynchus*). I have no personal record of this species, but have no doubt it visits us.

**Brent Goose** (*Branta bernicla*). Common on the coast. A good many were to be seen up the estuary last winter. (1916-17).

**Barnacle Goose** (*Branta leucopsis*). Very rare. Four were shot at Dovercourt before 1890.

**Whooper Swan** (*Cygnus cygnus*). Not uncommon in hard winters. I saw seven off Wrabness 3, ii., 91, and the same winter 18 off Bradfield several times; seven off Mistley ii., 95; nine 4, ii., 12 5 adults, 4 juvs., just below my house, Bradfield.

**Bewick's Swan** (*C. bewicki*). Two, 4, xii., 90. Length 48 ins., weight, 13 and 14 lbs.

**Mute Swan** (*C. olor*). Is often seen on the estuary, but probably none are really wild birds.

**\*Common Sheld-duck** (*Tadorna tadorna*). A breeding species in increasing numbers. At least a dozen pairs, possibly many more, nest, usually in rabbit holes, up and down the estuary. I saw one which had its nest in the highest part of the cliff at Wrabness, perhaps forty feet up, fly straight into its nesting hole without any appreciable pause at the entrance, like a clown diving through a "trick" door. It sometimes gathers into big flocks. I saw sixty-two together 12; i., 13, and 89 on 26, ii., 13. On 1, iii., 17, forty-eight off Wrabness point. These were already mating, the males fighting and showing off. In the bright sunshine they were a most beautiful sight.

(TO BE CONTINUED).