

1914.

1914.

May 9th - 10th; Hickling, cont².

Red Bunting; nest, cl. 5 & nest, ready.

Water Rail; cl. 8, nearly fresh, in thick rushes at Whiteslea on the south side of the broad opposite Vincent's boat house; - also cl. 9, fresh, on the marshes to the south of Treadow Dyke near "Blackflut" in very thin rushes; the nest was comparatively conspicuous, domed with reed flags, & the bird sat closely, only leaving when I stood right over the nest.

Snipe; cl. 4, incub. advanced, on the big "sand" on Hickling; & cl. 4, incub. of a very dark variety - on the marshes behind Whiteslea. Caught a young bird - only 2 or 3 days old, from which the old bird rose.

Redshank; saw about 20 nests, incl. cl. 3, of a very light dull green var., almost resembling the eggs of a Greenshank in colouration.

Great-crested Grebe; nest, 3 eggs, fresh, - on the West side of Hickling by "Warbush" in the centre of a reed bed. Several others, Jim Vincent informed me, had just hatched out.

Shoveler; several nests, eggs incub., on the marshes, which we did not visit.

Grasshopper Warbler; several singing, one just at the back of Whiteslea.

1914.

May 10th; Orpington.

1914.

D.H.L.

Lesser Whitethroat

Garden Warbler

One nest of each with 1 egg.

NOTE:-

Hobby; ♂ bird shot at Glympton Park, Oxfordshire, May 13th, & forwarded to me in the flesh.

Turtle-dove; 1. Amy the cut out Turtle-dove at High Beech on May 14th with cl. 9 on the point of hatching.

May 16th; Wytham, Berkshire. C.H.L.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

Sparrow Hawk

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker; cl. 4, fully a week incubated, in one of the topmost decayed branches of a dead beech about 30 ft. high in the S.W. corner of "Great Wood," Wytham Park. The pair reared young in this same tree in 1913, (vide 24th May, 1913). Between 12.15 - 12.30 the female three times was flushed from & returned to her eggs; each time she left silently & alighted on a tree in the immediate vicinity. Between 12.0 & 1.0 the ♂ called once or twice from some 50 yds. away. At 5.30 p.m. with the aid of a 36 rung ladder, accompanied by Mr. J. Walby & his brother, we reached the nest, at which time the female was off - but she rapidly returned & displayed

1914.

1914.

May 16th ; Wytham, cont².Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, cont²;

the greatest anxiety within a few feet of me. One of the eggs had been badly damaged by the bird. The shaft was only about 9 in. deep, & the bowl contained very little sawdust.

Sparrow Hawk; cl. 5, incub. just commenced, in the fork of a tall oak about 45 ft. high, nearly at the top of the tree, in the N.W. corner of "Great Wood", Wytham Park.

Spotted Flycatcher had arrived.May 17th ; Warley.

C.H.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker; cl. 4, incubated about 9 days, in an old hole in the rotten branch of an elm overhanging Childerditch pond - revisited & taken on May 19th. The bird sat very closely, & was off her eggs on 17th at 11.45, but was sitting at 12.15. & left when the tree was well kicked; she returned in 20 minutes. About 1 pm she again was off the nest. Cut a small slit at the back & saw 4 eggs with a light, & patched it up again with rotten wood & clay. She returned $\frac{1}{4}$ hr. after I left the tree, & forthwith inspected the mudded-up back & pecked it once - scrutinised above & below the hole, back & front, sounding it

1914.

May 17th; Warley, -cont^d.

1914.

D.H.M.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, -cont^d;

with her beak, & then flew to a neighbouring tree. There she climbed about for about 1 minute, beat a tattoo, & flew back to the nesting branch. After taking more soundings & many cautious peeps into the hole, looking all round her after each peep, she entered very nervously, & within a minute after she had entered had three times looked out from the hole again to ascertain that all was well. The male had several times tattooed from the wood adjoining at the back of the pond. On 19th the bird was off her egg at 7 a.m., but when I climbed up appeared on the next tree. The shaft was about 10 or 11 inches deep, & there was not very much sawdust.

I also saw a bird near the rookery, where there are several old borings, but failed to locate it.

Little Owl; visited both holes from which the eggs were taken (vide Ap. 19th, 25th, & 30th), but both were empty.

May 16th; Orpington, Kent.

D.H.M.

Wynneck

Wynneck; nest, 2 eggs, in an old apple tree, in a natural hole about 1 ft. deep, in a small disused orchard at Green Street Green. The bird had been singing in the immediate vicinity throughout the month.

1914.

1914.

May 21st - 22nd; West Trill, Hitchin. } J. B. Smith
 Little Grebe } C. H.
 Garden Warbler
 Whinchat.

Little Grebe; rowed from West Trill to the head of the stream, & took cl. 5 saw the nest from which J. B. S. had taken cl. 5 on May 8th, nests containing ^{incub. advanced} 4 eggs, & 1 egg, and a nest building. All the nests were quite substantial, due probably to the abundance of material.

Garden Warbler; cl. 5, nearly fresh, in herbage near the head of the stream.
Whinchat; cl. 6, incub. a few days, in a tussock of grass on the Common by West Trill.

Also saw nests of Wren, young & 2 eggs;
Red Bunting, cl. 4; Whitethroat, 3 & 4 eggs;
Tree Pipit, 5 eggs; & Strike building.

May 24th; Oxington district, Kent. } D. H. H.
 Wryneck } C. H.
 Blackcap
 Sky Lark
 Bullfinch

Wryneck; nest at Green Street Green (vide 16th) taken with cl. 9. Another pair observed calling in a spinney on the Eynsford-Shoreham road, just by the junction of the road to Chelsfield.

Blackcap; cl. 6, incub. commenced, in the spinney above mentioned on the Eynsford-Shoreham road.

1914.

May 30th - June 1st; Clive.

1914.

C.P.M.

Whinchat

Lesser Redpoll

Barn Owl

Whinchat; cl. 7 & cl. 5, incub. commenced, in a rough field at Tilley.Lesser Redpoll; nest, 4 young, about a week old, in an apple tree in the orchard, Clive; the nest was lined with hair & feathers - no willow down. also young fledged.Barn Owl; cl. 5 in old oak in Fredrods.May 30th & June 5th; Orpington.

D.H.K.

Wryneck

Red-backed Strike.

Wryneck; nest, 1 egg, (in the same hole from which eggs were taken on May 24th) - on 30th May.Red-backed Strike; cl. 5, fresh, in a thorn on a common at Green-street.
Green on 5th June.June 6th - 7th; Wells-on-Sea, Norfolk. C.P.M.

Common Tern

Lesser Tern

Ringed Plover

Redshank

Arrived at Wells 4.30 pm. on 6th, & proceeded thence to the Ternery on the East Sandunes and on the adjacent Treal Marshes, where I arrived about 6 pm. Here Mr Frank Cringle, the watcher, and his brother, Jack Cringle, met me; walked round till 9.0 pm, & put up at Mr Cringle's boat-house;

1914.

1914.

June 6th - 7th; Walls-on-Sea, cont?

which is right on the ground, for the night. On 7th we rose & made breakfast at 3 a.m., & spent the rest of the day among the colony until 3.30 pm., when I left to catch the 4.55 pm. back. Mr. Crumple and his brother extended every hospitality to me.

Common Tern; the main colony, consisting of some 1500 - 2000 pairs, is established on the North & East ridges of the "Eastern Sandhills", on the shingle at the foot of the same facing the sea, & on the shingle patches on the Tidal Marshes at the foot of the inner slopes of the dunes. The main sandunes, largely overgrown with rushes, were avoided on the whole in favour of more open situations. Many of the nests were built quite substantially of grass, etc.; other eggs were laid in mere scrapes in the shingle or sand without a vestige of lining. Many nests had but 1 egg, and had not completed laying; of the remainder about 60% contained 2 eggs, & about 40% 3 eggs; I saw one nest with 4 eggs, probably two birds. On two reefs of shingle lying to the Eastward in the direction of Blakeney Point, known as "The ~~Shingles~~", ^{inner & outer banks} there were also some 40 or 50 pairs, but no

1914.

1914.

June 6th - 7th; Wells-on-Sea, cont?

Lesser Terns on these reefs. One nest, on the slopes of the dunes on the East side facing the sea (i.e. facing Blakeney point) we found ^{with} a remarkable cl. 3, pink eggs blotched with blood red, fresh. The eggs of this bird, which the Comingle informed me had been known for some 10 years there, appear to be quite unique, and are referred to in "Brit. Birds" of Feb. ¹⁹¹⁴, p. 256. The Comingle further told me that she always layed within a few yards of the same spot, except that on three occasions she had layed at Blakeney instead, where she was apt to migrate if disturbed at Wells. Apparently her off-spring (if she has ever been allowed to rear any) have not followed this characteristic; at any rate no similar eggs have been found at Wells.

I watched these terns attacking with great vigour a pair of partridges which had wandered into a breeding area, swooping on them & striking them freely, though the attack seemed mainly centred against the male, which met the onslaughts by jumping up at the descending terns; eventually the partridges retired into the rushes on the sandhills. The Comingle informs me that the Common Terns not infrequently thus kill the partridges, & similarly

1914.

1914.

June 6th - 7th; Wells-on-sea, -cont?

attack and slay the Cuckoos.

Little Tern; there were three small colonies, each consisting of about 12 to 15 pairs; one was situated inside the sandhills on a patch of shingle on the Treal Marshes by the boat-house; the other two on the shingle, just above high water mark, at the northern & southern corners respectively of the eastern face of sandhills. These areas were entirely separate from the sites of the Common Tern, and the birds seemed also to keep apart. The eggs were layed in mere scrapes in the shingle or sand, no sort of lining being introduced. Only 4 nests contained 3 eggs, some 25 nests had 2 eggs or 1 egg, and some apparently had not layed. The males fed the females on the nest, taking fish to her.

Ringed Plover; saw about a dozen nests, about 6 with 4 eggs, & others with less. To some of the nests which were scraped in the loose sand there were well worn & very visible tracks, often extending several feet from the nests, a feature which I had not noticed with the species previously.

Redshank; 3 nests, with 4 eggs each, incub. advanced.

Sheld. Duck; saw a nesting hole, with "down" outside; the Cruik informed me the bird had been sitting some time; she was beyond the reach of a stick.

1914.

June 13th - 14th; Oxford district.

1914.

C.H.

On 13th searched the woods by the G.C. Rly. just north of Finnerley Sta. for Hobby, where Mr Goff, keeper, was under the impression he had seen one; but saw nothing. Also searched part of the Tringwick Woods, nr Buckingham, examined several old nests of Crow, Thrush, & Sparrow Hawk, all in oak, but without result. These woods seem first rate for Hobby; Mr Laney, keeper, picked up a wounded one in the woods in mid-May, & had seen one circle the wood this very morning. I watched outside the wood from 7 pm. - 8.45 pm., but saw no Hobby.

On 14th searched Wytham, Berks, for hrs., accompanied part of the time by Mr Dalby, the keeper; we felt nearly certain at the finish that no Hobbies were tenanted this wood. Found Sparrow Hawk, with 3 eggs & 3 young just hatched; & took Swallow, cl. 5.

June 20th - 21st; Oxford district.

C.H.

On 20th visited Heythrop Park, Chipping Norton, for Hobby, where young were reared, one of which was shot, in 1912. In 1913 an adult was shot from the nest in the same wood in June, the remains of which I inspected in the keeper's "larder"

1914.

1914.

June 20th - 21st; Oxford district, cont^d?

in February, 1914. Visited & thoroughly searched the breeding-wood of former years, the nest of 1913 being that of a Crow, placed in the fork of an immense oak about $\frac{2}{3}$ rd up the tree. Mr Paterson, head-keeper, extended every hospitality, but we failed to find any trace of their presence.

Thence visited Glympton Park & Woods where a male ^{Hobby} had been shot on May 18th, but saw nothing.

On 21st visited Sandford Brake, Littlemore

(vide June 22nd, 1913), where the new keeper, Mr Goodey, reported having seen the Hobbies frequently during May & early June. Saw nothing of them, though the old Crow's nest used in 1913 appeared to have been recently scraped, bore traces of "down", & the best exit between a fork seemed to be soiled as though a bird had been passing in & out. May be she had been taken or had not commenced to lay. None of the nests in the Brake had been tenanted, and the only other Crow's nest outside which I could find was a nest of the year, from which I removed the lining. The keeper assured me that the birds had not been shot.

1914.

June 24th; Wells-on-Sea.

Common Tern

Lesser Tern

Ringed Plover

Redshank.

Arrived Wells 9 pm on 23rd, put up at Mr Cringle's boat by the Turnery, & on 24th was out at 9 a.m. until about 2.30 pm when I returned to London.

Common Tern & Lesser Tern; about half the nests had hatched out, young birds up to about 10 days old abounding; the young Common Terns varied considerably in colour, some being much darker than others of the same age, and the black markings on the back being much more pronounced in some than in others. The very young Common Terns had flesh coloured legs & beaks, with dark tips - those about a week old reddish beaks, with black tips. The young Lesser Terns varied very little. Eggs, many quite fresh, were still plentiful on the Eastern Sandhills, a few on the Inner Bank, & about 20 nests of the Common Tern & one of the Lesser Tern on the Outer Bank. At the N.E. corner of the Eastern Sandhills, facing the sea, again found the 2nd clutch of Common Tern with cl. B, pink - almost red - eggs, blotched with blood red (vide June 6th - 7th), if anything a shade darker than the

1914.

C.H.

1914.

1914.

June 24th; Wells-on-Sea, cont^d.

Common Tern; first clutch. They were
laid some 350 yds. from the site of
the first nest.

Ringed Plover; saw several nests with
eggs, & young were plentiful. The
young had the chin, throat, & breast
pure white.

Redshank; nest with 4 eggs.

June 27th - 28th; Tingewick Woods, Bucks: C.H.

Sparrow Hawk.

Sparrow Hawk; nest, 3 eggs, bird sitting.

Hobby; thoroughly searched the "West Wood" &
"Round Wood", & searched the "East Wood" -
climbed numerous Crows & Hoppie's nests,
both inside & outside the woods, but
found no trace of Hobby.

NOTE :-

Hobby; ♀, in 2nd or 3rd year's plumage, shot
in Great Wood, Wytham Park, Berkshire,
on July 6th, & forwarded to me in the
flesh.



1914.

1914.

Summary :-

Whinchat
 Lesser Whitethroat
 Blackcap
 Goldcrest
 Bearded Tit
 Tenthredinid
 Red-backed Shrike
 Lesser Redpoll
 Wrenneck
 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker
 Kingfisher
 Bram Owl
 Long-eared Owl
 Little Owl
 Sparrow Hawk
 Peregrine
 Shield-duck
 Mallard
 Gadwall
 Shoveler
 Teal
 Water Rail
 Ringed Plover
 Snipe
 Redshank
 Common Tern
 Lesser Tern
 Great-crowned Grebe
 Little Grebe

also Notes on :-

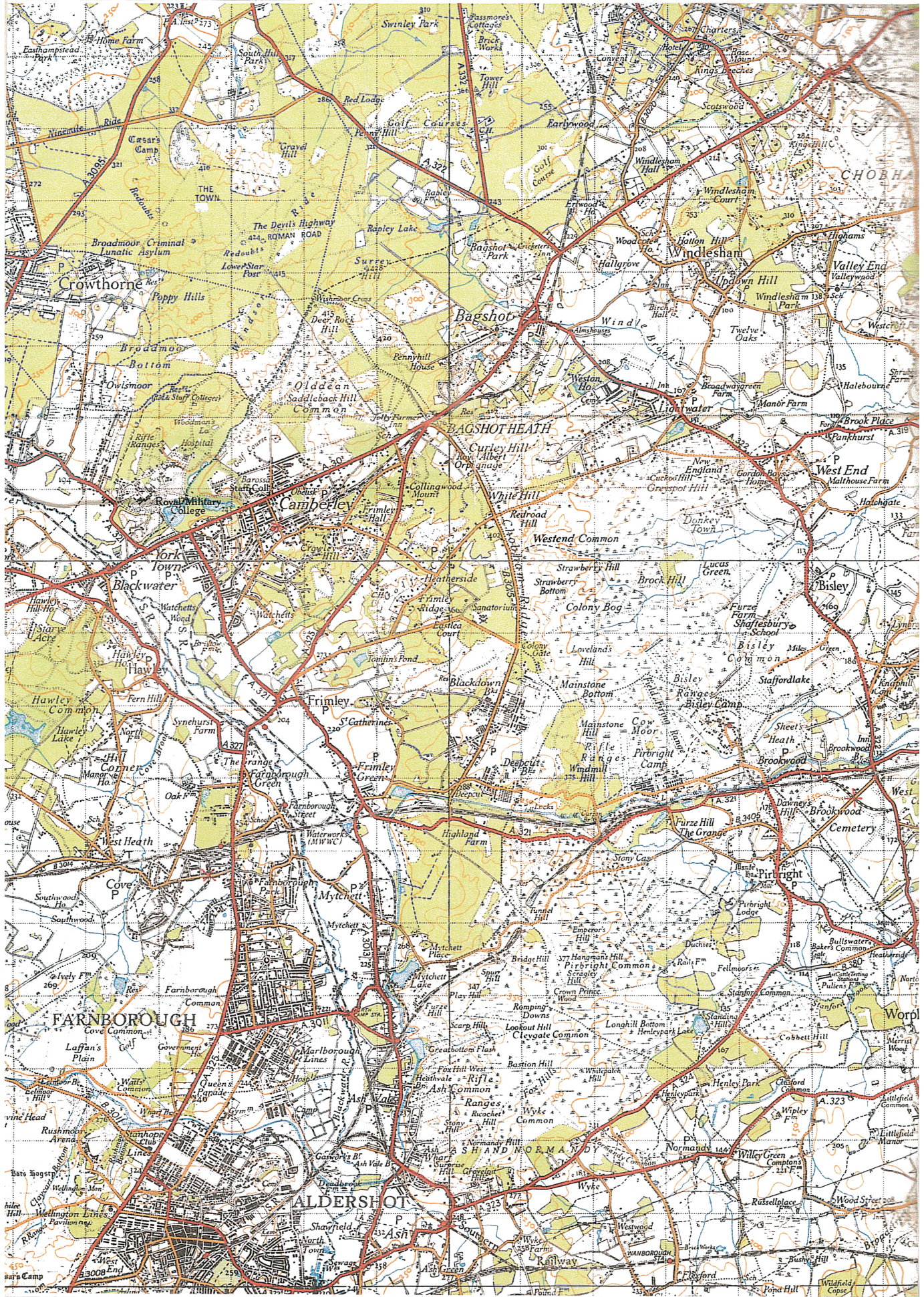
Dartford Warbler
 Hobby

1916.

In Memoriam.

*Captain Cecil Stanley Meares
19th (att^{ch})~~24th~~ Royal Fusillers
killed in action near Delville Wood,
in battle of the Somme, France.
on 30th July 1916.*





OS 1" ALDERSHOT MAP (169) PUBLISHED IN 1940.

This map covers nearly all the Hobby nesting sites looked at by Douglas Meares from 1934 to 1948 around his home at Ash Vale.