

**Vol. V**

**Part III.**

**PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
ISLE OF WIGHT  
NATURAL HISTORY  
AND  
ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
FOR 1958.**

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**Copies may be obtained from the Editor  
price 10/- post free**

**Issued December, 1959.**

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**Isle of Wight:  
THE COUNTY PRESS, NEWPORT  
1268/1959.**

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## LIST OF OFFICERS.

(Elected at the Annual General Meeting, 17th January, 1959).

### President :

E. H. WHITE, M.B.O.U., F.R.H.S.

### Vice-Presidents :

MISS G. BULLOCK, Binstead.  
CAPT. G. C. C. DAMANT, C.B.E., R.N., East Cowes.  
G. C. DUNNING, B.Sc., F.S.A., London.  
O. H. FRAZER, Brighstone.  
A. L. HUTCHINSON, M.A., Carisbrooke.  
G. F. MEW, B.E.M., C.C., Seaview.  
E. W. POLLARD, B.Sc., Dorking.  
D. ROBERTS, Wootton.

### Councillors :

J. D. JONES, M.A., Carisbrooke Castle Museum (*ex-officio*).  
D. ATTRILL  
MRS. D. E. BROOK  
MISS I. ELEY  
MRS. E. M. HENRY  
MRS. M. M. SEABROKE  
W. SHEPARD  
J. STAFFORD, M.A. (*ex-officio*)  
V. S. WADHAM  
S. G. WHITE  
MISS T. WHITE (*ex-officio*)

### Secretary :

J. E. COOPER, Cliff Close, 99 Victoria Avenue, Shanklin, I.W.

### Treasurer :

A. J. HENRY, The Lodge, Westhill Road, Shanklin, I.W.

### Auditors :

MISS E. M. NEWNHAM, Shanklin; S. G. WHITE, Shanklin.

### Editor of Proceedings :

O. H. FRAZER, Mottistone Mill, Brighstone, I.W.

### Bird Recorder :

J. STAFFORD, M.A., Westering, Moor Lane, Brighstone, I.W.

### Flower Recorder :

MISS T. WHITE, St. Catherine's Home, Ventnor, I.W.

(Publications sent in exchange should be addressed to the Editor as above).

## NEW MEMBERS.

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The following list gives the names and addresses of all candidates elected to the Society during 1958 :—

- COLES, MISS E., Wayside, Carpenters Road, St. Helens, I.W.  
COOMBES, MISS D. R., The Thatch, Brookside, Brighstone, I.W.  
FRAZER, SQDN.-LEADER L. J., B.A., St. Davids, Bouldnor, Yarmouth, I.W.  
FRAZER, MRS. E. D., St. Davids, Bouldnor, Yarmouth, I.W.  
PASMORE, MISS N., Upper Chine School, Shanklin, I.W.  
PELHAM, MRS. C. N., Ashknowle, Whitwell, I.W.  
SEABROKE, MRS. M. M., Marsh Farm House, Newtown, I.W.  
WAITE, S. T., Whitways, Queen's Road, Cowes, I.W.  
WAITE, MRS. N. L. G., Whitways, Queen's Road, Cowes, I.W.

## OBITUARY.

JOHN WILLIAM SAUNT, A.L.S.

John William Saunt, an entomologist well known in the Midlands and in the Isle of Wight passed to his rest on 11th July, 1958, at the age of seventy-seven years.

His interest in Natural History began when he was living near Nottingham in his early teens (there are a large number of his county records in Prof. Carr's "*Natural History of Notts*"). His interests were wide, covering entomology, ornithology, botany and gardening. As with many of us, his entomological collecting commenced with the lepidoptera, but he soon began to concentrate on hymenoptera in which he made extensive collections of bees, wasps, ichneumons and sawflies. During the later years of his life he worked almost entirely on the sawflies, of which he had one of the best collections in the country. He was an exceptionally good field naturalist, being remarkably observant, with a wonderful eye for anything unusual; on entering any room his first glance was always at the windows and often he would hurry to one with his tube and capture some unusual dipteran.

His love of natural history was entirely self-developed, for no one in his family had any leaning towards the subject nor any knowledge of it, neither did he receive any help from his school, the ordinary primary one, for such subjects as biology and botany were not taught in his schooldays. Neither did he receive any teaching in the classic languages; nevertheless he realised from the first the importance of scientific names, so forced himself to learn them and always used them. He used to say that for many years he ploughed a lonely furrow, but later on, as his work became known, he was in touch with experts such as J. F. Perkins and R. B. Benson in his particular groups.

Some twenty years ago he was made an Associate Member of the Linnean Society, an honour which pleased him greatly.

Earning his livelihood as a wood-working machinist he was naturally clever with his hands; he made his own cabinets and store-boxes, and was a most skilful setter of insects. I well remember his giving a lecture to the Coventry Natural History Society at which he displayed a thousand micros, all beautifully set. He would have made an excellent museum curator, but unfortunately his lack of a university education debarred him from this.

He did not write or speak much but when he did he expressed himself very lucidly. His last note was on the sawfly *Athalia cornubiae* Bens. five records of which exist in Great Britain, three of them recorded by him. At my last meeting with him, in May of this year, he told me he had since taken a fourth.

He was also keenly interested in Cacti, of which he possessed a large collection.

Our sympathy goes to his wife and their three children. A.H.N.

## BALANCE SHEET, 1958.

RECEIPTS.	£	s.	d.
Balance brought forward .....	64	15	1
Subscriptions .....	77	18	6
Donations .....		5	0
Sale of <i>Proceedings</i> and Offprints .....	4	17	0
Profit on Teas .....	2	6	3
Interest on Investments .....	10	15	6
	£160 17 4		

EXPENDITURE.	£	s.	d.
Purchase of old <i>Proceedings</i> .....	1	4	0
Binding of Society's <i>Proceedings</i> .....	8	11	11
Miscellaneous printing .....	4	13	3
Stationery .....	3	10	2
Prizes (Book Tokens) .....	1	1	0
Lecturers' Expenses .....	1	4	4
Hire of Rooms and Caretaker's Fees .....	8	6	4
Donations and Subscriptions .....	3	10	0
Repayment of subscriptions overpaid .....		15	0
Sundries .....	1	17	0
Petty cash (including postages) .....	7	10	11
Balance in Hand .....	118	13	5 <sup>a</sup>
	£160 17 4		
Investment, 3½ Per Cent. War Stock (par value) —	£322	15	3

<sup>a</sup>—It should be noted that the cost of production of the *Proceedings* for 1957 has not been presented for 1958.

Audited and found correct.

(Signed) S. G. WHITE, E. M. NEWNHAM, <i>Hon. Auditors.</i>	(Signed) A. J. HENRY, <i>Hon. Treasurer.</i>
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## GENERAL MEETINGS, EXHIBITIONS AND EXCURSIONS.

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**General Meeting** held on Saturday 22nd February, 1958.

The President in the chair.

Over 70 members and friends saw a programme of outstanding nature films. The first was "Woodpeckers," which made such an impression when it was first shown on TV in Peter Scott's programme "Look." The second, in colour, was "The Rival World," showing some of the interesting features of insects and man's struggle against those which carry disease and damage crops. This was followed by a short film, also in colour, on the chameleon, showing its powers of colour change and methods of feeding. Finally, another film by Hanz Sielmann, "Summertime Meadow," also recently shown on TV, was seen to great advantage in full colour. The President expressed the appreciation of the audience to Mr. O. H. Frazer, who arranged the programme and acted as projectionist.

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**Informal Meeting** held on Friday 14th March, 1958.

Subject for discussion—Ornithology.

Records were discussed, and these are embodied in the Bird Report elsewhere in these *Proceedings*.

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**Excursion to Brading Roman Villa** on Saturday 29th March, 1958.

Leader, Mr. J. D. Jones, M.A., Curator of Carisbrooke Castle Museum.

Seventy members visited the Roman Villa at Brading, which was specially opened for them by kind permission of Brig-General C. Aspinall Oglander, C.B. Before viewing the villa and exhibits, the party were given a short talk by Mr. J. Jones on the Romans in the Island and events leading to the re-discovery of the villa.

---

**Excursion to Havenstreet** on Saturday 12th April, 1958.

Leader, Miss G. Bullock.

Fifty members met at Havenstreet, where Miss Bullock led them on a botanical walk through Briddlesford and Firestone Woods, by kind permission of Col. R. S. Clarke and Mr. K. W. Fox. Although the spring was very late, a number of uncommon plants were observed.

**Visit to Bembridge School** on Saturday 10th May, 1958.

Leader, the President.

Fifty members and friends met at Bembridge School, by kind invitation of the Head Master, Mr. G. R. Rees Jones. In his unavoidable absence the party were welcomed by the senior master and Mr. Dearden, the school archivist, who gave a short talk on the history of the school and its outstanding collection of Ruskin's drawings and manuscripts, which is the largest in the world. A wide selection of these were displayed in the Ruskin Gallery, together with other noteworthy exhibits connected with the school's history.

After viewing the school chapel, tea was enjoyed in the library, after which the party visited the school laboratories. An excellent range of tropical and sea-water aquaria in the biology laboratory were greatly admired, and in the absence of the biology master, owing to other duties, the objects of interest were explained by an enthusiastic student. The printing room, where the school magazine and historical pamphlets are printed by the boys was also visited with interest.

The grateful thanks of the members for a very interesting and pleasant afternoon was expressed by the President.

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**Excursion to St. Catherine's Down** on Saturday 14th June, 1958.

Leader—Mr. G. F. Mew, B.E.M., C.C.

Forty-six members and friends met on St. Catherine's Down, where the leader pointed out details of the Oratory and gave a short talk on its history. He then pointed out the sites where, with Mr. G. C. Dunning, he had made some interesting archaeological finds. The leader was thanked by the President.

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**Excursion to the Lower Undercliff, Niton,** on Saturday 12th July, 1958.

Leader, the President.

Twenty-five members met at the Buddle Inn for a botanical ramble along the cliff path on the Undercliff to St. Lawrence. The leader pointed out the variety of interesting plants which grew in this favoured area, including the Milk-vetch, *Astragalus glycyphyllos*, which is not found elsewhere in the Island, or in the whole of Hampshire.

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**General Meeting** held on Friday 25th July, 1958.

Mr. G. F. Mew, B.E.M., C.C., in the chair.

Dr. J. F. D. Frazer, F.Z.S., committee member of the Mammal Society of the British Isles and President of the British Herpetological Society, gave an illustrated lecture on "Whaling in the Faroe Islands."

After describing the distinctive features of the main groups of whales, with the aid of lantern slides, the lecturer showed an interesting colour film taken personally during a visit last year with Professor Huggett, and shown only a few days previously to the International Zoological Congress in London. Remarkable shots of the herding and catching of the whales were seen, and the traditional methods of distribution of the whale meat were explained.

This was followed by an excellent colour film showing the breeding habits and development of the South American Pouched Tree-frog, *Gastrotheca marsupiatum*, with a spoken commentary by the lecturer. Taken at the London Zoo for the Royal Veterinary College, this film showed in detail the extraordinary life history of this interesting amphibian, in which the eggs when laid are pushed by the male into a pouch-like cavity on the female's back. Here they are retained until they hatch, and are later released as fully formed tadpoles into the water by the female opening the pouch with the toes of its hind legs.

The lecturer was thanked on behalf of the members present by the chairman.

#### **General Meeting** held on Friday 22nd August, 1958.

Mr. O. H. Frazer in the chair.

This was an experimental meeting. Members were invited to collect objects of interest and to make notes of any observations, and bring these along to this meeting for discussion. Owing to the regrettable absence of the President, who was still in hospital following an accident, the chair was taken by Mr. O. H. Frazer.

A wide range of interesting objects were brought and provoked a most lively discussion, which was much enhanced by the wide and varied knowledge of all the members taking part. Among the exhibits were a good collection of grasses by Miss V. Fisk, a most interesting collection of objects, including hatching snail eggs, leaf-miners, wood-borers, black adder and ichneumon flies, brought by Mr. W. Shepard, a parasitic fly found on a thrush by Mr. Stafford, some fossils by Mr. Machin, a varied collection by Mrs. Taylor, and flints by Mr. Elcox. All members contributed to the discussions and were all agreed that there should be further meetings of this nature in future.

#### **Excursion to Brook** on Saturday 13th September, 1958.

Leader, Mr. O. H. Frazer.

Thirty-six members and friends met at Brook in ideal weather for studying the flora and fauna of the seashore, taking advantage of the very low tide. The leader had arranged a display of specimens in the Old Lifeboat House, by kind permission of the owner, Capt. M. H. Scott, R.N., and gave a short talk on the exhibits, with some indications

of what to look for on the shore. After being issued with collecting equipment, members then dispersed in groups over the rocks, and searched for specimens amongst weeds and in the rock pools.

After a most welcome tea, the day's finds were sorted out, identified and discussed by a smaller band of enthusiasts until darkness began to fall. Among the many interesting finds were several species of bristle worms, sea anemones, goose barnacles, a live piddock, the blue-rayed limpet, colonies of the Golden Stars Compound Sea-squirt, and the lovely red weed, *Delesseria sanguinea*. The opportunity was also taken by some members to search for fossils and examine the pine-raft.

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**Exhibition of Wild Fruits** on Saturday 11th October, 1958.

Leader, the President.

It was with a feeling of great happiness that 36 members welcomed back their President, after his serious road accident. The purpose of the meeting was to arrange a labelled display of Wild Fruits of the countryside gathered by members earlier in the day and brought to the Science Laboratory at the Priory Secondary Girls' School, Newport. There was a good display of over 100 species, but time was not available to arrange them in systematic order as the organisers would have wished, and once again the Society's lack of a room of their own was keenly felt, as such a display could then have been set up for several days and would have given much interest to school parties and members of the public. The President gave a short talk on some of the exhibits, and was ably assisted by Miss G. Bullock, who identified and named the plants.

Members were especially grateful to a party of senior pupils from the school, who prepared and served a delightful tea, while members were left free to examine and discuss the exhibits.

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**Informal Meeting** held on Friday 21st November, 1958.

Subject for discussion—Ornithology.

Records were compared and discussed, and these are embodied in the Bird Report elsewhere in these *Proceedings*.

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**General Meeting** held on Saturday 22nd November, 1958.

The President in the chair.

Mr. A. J. Henry gave a talk on his experiences while bird-watching at the famous bird sanctuaries, Havergate and Minsmere, on the east coast. The lecture was illustrated by a number of coloured slides taken by the speaker, and these were followed by a film on bird-life

at Minsmere, sponsored by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. In thanking the speaker for an interesting afternoon, the President expressed the hope that other members would feel encouraged to follow the example of the lecturer and undertake some serious study in one of the sanctuaries.

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**General Meeting** held on Saturday 13th December, 1958.

The President in the chair.

Two members gave short lectures on widely differing topics. In introducing the speakers, the President said that it was always a joy to have lectures from members, especially when they were so well known for their knowledge and keen observation of nature. Miss T. White spoke of her latest personal discoveries of rare and exciting plants in the Ventnor area. Amongst those she mentioned was the Three-cornered Leek, *Allium triquetrum*, which she discovered by chance in the evening light growing beside a lane, down which she had often walked, and a rare foreign species of Salsify, *Tragopogon hybridis*, which appeared quite unaccountably in a wild part of the garden. Rubbish heaps and council tips were always worth searching, and it was on one of the latter that she found the Fuller's Teasel, distinguished by its hooked prickles. Pressed specimens were displayed for all to examine, and with a record of eight new finds to her credit in the last four years in a comparatively small area, Miss White hoped that other members would be encouraged to search diligently and bring other rarities to light. In this connection, it was good to hear, as announced later in the afternoon, that Miss White had accepted nomination as the Botanical Recorder for the Society, and all records should be sent to her at St. Catherine's Home, Ventnor, I.W.

Mr. W. Shepard spoke on Mammals, with particular reference to the habits of Rodents and Lagomorphs (rabbits and hares). Specimens of skulls and footprints were passed round so that members could see the essential differences between these two groups of mammals, which were formerly grouped together. Many interesting features were touched upon, including the habit of "refection" in rabbits, in answer to the question "Do rabbits chew the cud?" The evidence is, in fact, that they do, but not in the same way as the ruminants. The familiar dry pellets are produced only during the day, and the night droppings are moist and only partly digested so they are returned to the stomach by swallowing and passed through again. This has been observed in tame rabbits, and in wild rabbits the times of refection are altered and probably occur twice in the 24 hours. There was a lengthy discussion on the incidence of myxomatosis and its effects on the rabbit population of the Island, and whether this in turn had had any effect on the number and distribution of hares.

The President thanked both speakers for what had been a most enjoyable and instructive afternoon.

**Annual General Meeting** held on Saturday 17th January, 1959.

The President in the chair.

In his opening address, the President gave a brief review of the past year's activities and thanked the members for their support. Those who attended the meetings were the very backbone of the Society, and, served as they were by lively and efficient officers, they could look forward with confidence to another year of interest and enjoyment. He much regretted having to record the death of three members in the course of the year, Messrs. Craddock, Renwick, and Saunt. In Mr. Saunt we had lost a very great friend and a country-wide expert in entomology. Members stood in silent tribute.

Membership now stood at 179. This was less than last year, but it was a more realistic figure, as it now only included paid-up members. It was, however, his earnest wish to see the membership raised to 200 during this year.

The Treasurer's report showed a balance of over £118, but against this had to be set the cost of printing the *Proceedings*, which would reduce the balance to slightly less than last year. The accounts were passed unanimously.

All the present officers were re-elected with the inclusion of Mrs. Henry, Mrs. Seabroke, and Mr. S. G. White as councillors, to replace those who had completed their three years.

Mr. W. Shepard reported on the activities of the special sub-committee appointed to enquire into the protection of bird and plant life at Newtown.

Votes of thanks were passed to the Headmaster of the County Grammar School, the Headmistress of the Priory Secondary Girls' School, the Education Committee and the I.W. County Press, for their help and co-operation during the year.

Tea was served by Miss Pollard, Miss Eley, and helpers, while members took part in a Quiz organised by Mr. O. H. Frazer. Book tokens for the highest marks were won by Miss T. White and Master G. Sims.

## NOTES ON BREEDING THE WAVED BLACK MOTH, *PARASCOTIA FULIGINARIA*.

By JOHN LOBB.

Previous to the year 1899, little was known of the life history of this interesting moth. In that year several larvae were found feeding on some fungus on an old wooden structure in the London area. Several specimens of the moth were successfully bred from these larvae by Mr. E. Upton and Mr. W. H. Tugwell. This discovery started off the really intensive search by other entomologists, and resulted in the full life history coming to light in 1932, when Mr. E. Green discovered larvae feeding on the fungus, *Polystictus versicolor*, under a felled birch trunk in his garden (ref. The Entomologist, Vol. 65, 1932).

It was due to the generosity of Mr. S. Wakely, of the South London Entomological Society, that the opportunity occurred for me to breed this interesting insect. It was early in August when I received the package from Mr. Wakely, and on opening it I found a portion of the fungus and some birch bark. Finding the small larvae was quite a problem, for seldom have I found such a good example of protective resemblance as with this insect. All four larvae were eventually located on the birch. At this stage they were a greyish colour, and had the appearance of being semi-transparent, about two-mm. long. They were in a resting position, lying very flat on the bark, and their outline had a fringe of greyish hairs, which had the effect of making them appear as part of the bark. So perfect was the illusion that I had to use a strong glass to discover two of the larvae. They hibernate in their third instar, and to prepare for this eventuality I procured an eight-inch pot, and placed one inch of broken crocks in the bottom, on top of which I laid about two inches of clean stones, next a layer of twigs, following with some portions of birch bark and fungus on which were the larvae. A few more twigs were placed on these, and finally a piece of butter muslin was tied over the pot as a protection from predators. The pot was sunk in the ground, leaving about four inches above ground level, and standing on four or five inches of stones for drainage. The pot was protected by a sheet of glass fixed well above it, and this was removed in reasonable weather. The pot was then left undisturbed and without examination for nine months. At the end of this period the pot was lifted, and the contents were spread on a sheet of white paper.

I was delighted to find that three of the larvae had successfully come through the hibernating period, but there was no trace of the fourth. Possibly cannibalism or predators had been responsible. The larvae at this stage were about four-mm. long and of a pale ochreous colour with a dark irregular stripe down the back. Finding quantities of the right kind of fungus was the next step, and this was duly obtained

from under some fallen birch trunks. On this the larvae were placed and kept in a tin under the floor of my shed, care being taken to keep the fungus moistened slightly, a very important point in successfully rearing this species. The larvae made good progress and moulted three times after the change of colour. After the final moult the ground colour became black, or very dark brown, with bright orange warts, arranged two dorsally and three on each side of each segment. When next the tin was opened, I was surprised to find one larva had spun up, the cocoon being slung hammock-fashion by two silk cords, each attached to the underside of the lid by two silk pads. I was very curious to know how the larva performed this operation, so I placed the other larvae in a plastic box with some of the fungus. When ready to pupate, the larvae, after completing the cord from one pad to the other, moved to the middle and proceeded to build up the cocoon round itself and the cord by spinning and covering the cocoon with small pieces of rubbish on the outside, eventually closing itself in completely, a very ingenious operation. The remaining larva spun up in a like manner, but from the side of the container. The period of pupation varied from 20 to 24 days, and all three imagines emerged successfully between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.

Here follows a summary of the description of this insect in its various stages :—

**Ova.** Generally laid mid-July to August. Ova at first pale green, changing to brown in 48 hours. Round and slightly flat, with vertical ribs.

**Larva.** On hatching, it consumes the egg shell, and is a pale ochreous colour with dark irregular stripe down the back. Length two-mm. When fully grown and about to pupate, its ground colour becomes black, or very dark brown, with bright orange warts, arranged two dorsally and three on each side of each segment. From each wart a long curved hair arises. An unusual feature of this larva is the absence of the first two pairs of prolegs, the creature moving as a geometer does by looping.

**Pupa.** Rather long and narrow, coloured a mottled pale greenish brown, with an interrupted dorsal stripe and two or three pairs of elongate dorsal marks.

**Adult Moth.** Bluish black on emergence, tending to lose the bluish sheen later. Fore wings have three cross lines. The inner is concave near the base. The second is bent twice, rather irregular, and the third, or sub-marginal line, is more broken. The lines consist of pale, ochreous, lunar-shaped marks placed end to end. The hind wings are of a similar colour, perhaps a little lighter, with a central curved line of light marks, and an outer line of less distinct ones. The space between the inner margin lines is lighter. There is a darker inner line terminating in a discal black spot. The wing fringes are alternately black and ochreous checkered. The flight is brisk, and when in a resting position, on usually a dark background, the moth is most difficult to see.

In conclusion, to the best of my knowledge there is no definite record of this insect having been found in any of its stages in the Isle of Wight.

(Ref. my note in *Proceedings*, Vol. IV, part VI, for 1951, page 188.) Now more knowledge of its life history has come to light, a search for the larvae may bring its reward and a new Island record. April is the best month to search for the larvae, which can be found feeding on the fungus under felled birch trunks, and a powerful glass will be a great help to the enterprising entomologist who seeks them.

## *HIPPOPHAE RHAMNOIDES* IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

By E. H. WHITE, M.B.O.U., F.R.H.S.

At the exhibition of wild fruits, held by the Society in 1958, the striking orange berries of the Sea Buckthorn, *Hippophae rhamnoides*, created considerable interest. The spray came from the Duver at St. Helens.

Sea Buckthorn is dioecious, and in 1858 Mr. A. G. Moore planted a number of male and female bushes. Since then the shrubs have spread, and to-day they cover a considerable area of the sand dunes there. The plant was not considered native in the Island, and Townsend in his "*Flora of Hampshire*," and other old botanists, only gave the Duver as its habitat for the whole county. Since 1858 it has spread along the sea-cliffs towards Seaview.

In the *Proceedings of the Botanical Society of the British Isles* for July, 1958, the distribution of *Hippophae rhamnoides* is given by E. W. Groves for the whole of Britain, and it is interesting to see that habitats other than the Duver have now been recorded in the Wight.

The following is a copy of these records:—

- "10. ISLE OF WIGHT: Earliest notice: 1886, East of Seaview (see below). Yarmouth, 1956, *Mrs. J. E. Smith*; low bushes, no fruit seen, 'probably planted as sand binder,' 1956 & 1957, *R. I. Sworder*. Alum Bay, cliff top, 1950, *Mrs. L. M. P. Small* (BM); 1956, *G. Halliday*. Totland Bay, 1900, *C. E. Palmer* (OXF). East of Seaview nr. Ryde, 1886, *J. Fraser* (K); sea cliffs between Seaview and St. Helens Spit, 1894, *J. Vaughan* (OXF); Priory Bay, S. of Seaview, 'masses of shrubs,' 1950, *Mrs. L. M. P. Small*; St. Helens Spit, 1898, *A. Loydell* (OXF); 1900, *C. E. Salmon* (BM); 1910, *J. E. Lister* (CGE); 1911, *H. E. Fox* (OXF). Duver, St. Helens, 'in fruit,' 1956, *R. G. B. Laidlaw*; bearing fruit in considerable quantity, 'planted as a sand binder,' 1956 & 1957, *R. I. Sworder*. According to Stratton (1909) *Hippophae* was 'very rare' in the I.O.W. at the time he wrote, citing only the one locality at St. Helens. By 1931, however, Drabble & Long (1932) state that it was 'certainly not rare now' and 'fruits freely (e.g., at Totland) and may be bird-sown in many of its stations.'"

## SPIDERS

(Including a list of those species recorded from the Isle of Wight)

By A. F. MILLIDGE.

Although spiders have been somewhat neglected by naturalists, the enthusiastic work of a small number of amateurs has made the spider fauna of the British Isles probably better known than that of any other country. At the present time there are a number of competent arachnologists at work in this country, and this paper is written with the hope of persuading others to take up this very interesting branch of natural history.

Spiders are members of the animal group known as *Arthropoda*. This group is the largest in the animal kingdom, including, as it does more species than all the other groups combined. An arthropod is an invertebrate whose body is composed of a variable number of segments, some or all of which carry paired, jointed appendages. The *Arthropoda* are split up into a number of Classes, one of which is the well-known *Insecta*; another is the *Arachnida*, which includes the spiders and related orders such as harvestmen, scorpions, and mites.

Spiders are often falsely described as insects, but they differ from these in a number of particulars, some of the most obvious being: adult insects have a body composed of three segments (head, thorax, and abdomen), while spiders have only two body segments, the head and thorax being fused; insects have six legs, spiders eight; spiders always have simple eyes; and insects in the normal way undergo a metamorphosis, whereas spiders do not, being hatched from the eggs as more or less small replicas of their parents.

The *Arachnida* are of great antiquity. The coal measures have yielded many spiders and scorpions; the spiders are clearly recognisable but have the primitive character of a segmented abdomen. Spiders have also been found in amber, many of them identifiable as belonging to genera still in existence to-day.

Spiders vary in body length from less than one millimetre to about nine centimetres. The largest British species is not much more than twenty millimetres, though some long-legged species may give the impression of being larger. All spiders have the body divided sharply into two parts, the abdomen and the cephalothorax, joined together by a narrow waist. They have eight legs articulated to the cephalothorax and not (as so often shown in popular drawings) to the abdomen. The cephalothorax is never segmented, but the abdomen is in a few primitive (foreign) species. They have at the most eight eyes, reduced in some families to six or even fewer. The cephalothorax bears, besides the eyes and the legs, a pair of palps, used as feelers in the female and the subadult male, but changed into accessory sex organs in the adult male; and a pair of jaws, the chelicerae, which carry the fangs

used for injecting poison into the prey. The abdomen bears at the posterior end the spinnerets from which the characteristic silk is extruded.

There are two sexes, and in some families the males give forms of courtship display before the females; this is particularly true of the jumping spiders (*Salticidae*), such as the common zebra spider. The work of Bristowe and others has shown that there is practically always some form of courtship, if only tactile, by the male before mating occurs with the female, presumably to subjugate the normal aggressive instincts of the female.

The female lays eggs which are always enclosed in some form of silk cocoon. The spiderlings remain inside this cocoon after hatching until after the first moult, and then emerge. They grow by a series of moults, each cast skin being larger than the previous one, until they attain sexual maturity at the final moult. The number of moults depends on the species and on external conditions, food supply, etc. The mature males live often only for a short time; the complete life of most British spiders is a year or less.

Spiders will, in general, attack and consume only living prey. They can absorb their food only in liquid form, and to do this they predigest their prey externally by injecting or soaking it with digestive juices; the liquefied tissues are then sucked in. By repetitions of this process, coupled with squeezing by their "jaws" (the *chelicerae*), they can consume all but the hardest tissues of the prey.

The prey is captured in a variety of ways. The most obvious is by means of a web of some kind, but a number of species either stalk their prey and pounce upon it, or lie in wait for it. The web builders, of course, catch mainly flying insects, whereas the ground hunting species capture running or hopping insects. Spiders are cannibals, and will eat any other spider of suitable size. Only a few species can inflict a bite which is poisonous to human beings, and no British spider is dangerous in this respect.

One of the characteristic things about a spider is the production of silk from the abdominal spinnerets. Several different types of silk can be made, all of which are strong and elastic. The silk is quite similar in chemical composition to that of silkworms. It is used by the spider for a variety of purposes, for example web building, swathing the prey, covering the eggs, building "nests" and as a dragline. The silk has no commercial importance, apart from a very limited use for the cross-lines in some optical instruments.

Spiders occur universally on land, wherever there are insects, etc., to be preyed upon. The seashore, woods, hedges, meadows, heaths, swamps, mountains, mines, caverns, cellars, sheds and houses all furnish spiders. Many of the species are widely distributed, but others are limited to certain types of habitat. As with other groups, relatively uncultivated, unspoiled country is usually most productive of species. Spiders may be found at all seasons, different species being adult at different times.

There are some 584 species known from the British Isles, grouped in 24 families. Although many parts of the country have been worked fairly intensively, species new to Britain still turn up occasionally even to-day, and since 1945 some 33 such species have been recorded, including four new to science. I consider it to be fairly certain that at least one species new to Britain could be uncovered in the Isle of Wight with sufficiently intensive searching.

Spiders are relatively soft-bodied creatures and cannot be preserved satisfactorily in the dry state as they shrink so as to become unrecognisable. Hence they are kept in fluid, usually alcohol, and for that reason a collection of spiders has not the appeal associated with a beautifully arranged collection of butterflies or beetles. The methods of collection used are various, but require very simple equipment. Dead leaves (particularly deep leaf litter), roots of grass, etc., and other loose material should be shaken or sieved over newspaper or some sheet of white material; bushes, tree branches, etc., should be beaten into an inverted umbrella; low herbage, such as heather or rushes, should be searched by hand or swept with a strong canvas net; some species lurk under stones or loose bark; many web-formers can be seen readily, while a number of active species run in the open, particularly when the sun is shining.

Spiders are normally killed and preserved in 75 per cent. (approx.) alcohol. They are caught in small glass tubes (specimen tubes) in which they can be examined with a hand lens and then transferred to spirit or kept alive as desired. The smaller specimens may be picked up, particularly when they have been shaken out over newspaper, by a small camel-hair brush dipped in spirit, or even by the moistened cork of the spirit tube, and then transferred at once to spirit. Separate tubes of spirit should be kept for spiders from each locality and type of habitat.

A collection of spiders is kept in spirit in a number of glass tubes, with at least one tube for each species. Each tube is plugged with cotton wool and inverted in a larger wide-mouthed bottle or jar which is stoppered or tightly corked to avoid loss of spirit; the bottles should be topped up periodically. A slip of paper giving the name, locality and date of capture is placed in each tube.

For the examination and identification of most species a low-powered microscope is necessary. The specimens are examined in spirit in shallow vessels of glass or porcelain. The identification at species level is usually based on the sex organs, and for this reason immature specimens often cannot be identified and may not therefore be worth collecting unless it is intended to rear them. In some families it is difficult to identify even the genus if the specimen is not sexually mature.

For anyone undertaking a serious study of British spiders the best book, for identification of species, is:

British Spiders, Vols. I and II, by G. H. Locket and A. F. Millidge,  
Ray Society, London, 1951 and 1953.

Other very useful works dealing with British spiders are :

The Comity of Spiders, Vols. I and II, by W. S. Bristowe,  
Ray Society, London, 1939 and 1941.

The World of Spiders, by W. S. Bristowe ; Collins, 1958.

Although in this short article I have dealt mainly with the collection of spiders, this, of course, is only the beginning. Knowledge of the distribution and ecology of spiders is in its infancy, and much remains to be learnt on their biology and habits.

#### I.W. List.

Notes on spiders, together with lists of species recorded from the I.W., have been published by Morey (" A Guide to the Natural History of the Isle of Wight ") and Falconer (Proc. of I.W. Nat. Hist. and Arch. Soc. for 1931). Since then a number of species have been added, these records having been published in various journals.

The list below includes 282 species for the I.W., but there is no doubt that this number could easily be increased by careful searching throughout the year. (More than 400 species have been recorded from Hampshire.) The nomenclature used in the list is that given in " British Spiders."

#### ATYPIDAE

*Atypus affinis* Eichw.

#### DICTYNIDAE

*Cimiflo fenestralis* (Stroem)

*C. similis* Bl.

*C. ferox* (Walck.)

*Dictyna arundinacea* (Linn.)

*D. uncinata* Thor.

*D. latens* (Fabr.)

*D. puella* Sim.

*Lathys humilis* (Bl.)

*Argenna subnigra* (Cambr.)

#### OONOPIDAE

*Oonops pulcher* Templ.

#### DYSDERIDAE

*Dysdera erythrina* (Walck.)

*D. crocota* C.L.K.

*Harpactea hombergi* (Scop.)

*Segestria senoculata* (Linn.)

#### SCYTODIDAE

*Scytodes thoracica* Latr.

#### PHOLCIDAE

*Pholcus phalangioides* (Fuessl.)

#### GNAPHOSIDAE

*Drassodes lapidosus* (Walck.)

*D. pubescens* (Thor.)

*D. signifer* (C.L.K.)

*Herpyllus blackwalli* (Thor.)

*Zelotes pedestris* (C.L.K.)

*Z. lutetianus* (L.K.)

*Z. pusillus* (C.L.K.)

*Z. latreillei* (Sim.)

*Z. apricorum* (L.K.)

*Gnaphosa lugubris* (C.L.K.)

*Micaria pulicaria* (Sund.)

*M. scintillans* (Cambr.)

#### CLUBIONIDAE

*Clubiona reclusa* Cambr.

*C. stagnatalis* Kulcz.

*C. pallidula* (Clk.)

*C. terrestris* Westr.

*C. neglecta* Cambr.

*C. lutescens* Westr.

*C. compta* C.L.K.

*C. brevipes* Bl.

*C. trivialis* C.L.K.

*C. diversa* Cambr.

*Cheiracanthium erraticum*  
(Walck.)

*C. virescens* (Sund.)

*Agroeca brunnea* (Bl.)

*A. proxima* (Cambr.)

*A. inopina* (Cambr.)

*Scotina celans* (Bl.)

*Zora spinimana* (Sund.)

*Phrurolithus festivus* (C.L.K.)

*P. minimus* C.L.K.

## ANYPHAENIDAE

*Anyphaena accentuata*  
(Walck.)

## SPARASSIDAE

*Micrommata virescens* Clk.

## THOMISIDAE

*Thomisus onustus* Walck.

*Misumena vatia* (Clk.)

*Xysticus cristatus* (Clk.)

*X. audax* (Schr.)

*X. kochi* Thor.

*X. erraticus* (Bl.)

*X. lanio* C.L.K.

*X. luctuosus* (Bl.)

*Oxyptila blackwalli* Sim.

*O. nigrita* (Thor.)

*O. sanctuaria* (Cambr.)

*O. praticola* (C.L.K.)

*O. trux* (Bl.)

*O. simplex* (Cambr.)

*O. atomaria* (Panz.)

*O. brevipes* (Hahn)

*Philodromus dispar* Walek.

*P. aureolus* (Clk.)

*Thanatus striatus* C.L.K.

*Tibellus oblongus* (Walck.)

## SALTICIDAE

*Salticus scenicus* (Clk.)

*Heliophanus cupreus* (Walck.)

*H. flavipes* C.L.K.

*Bianor aenescens* (Sim.)

*Ballus depressus* (Walck.)

*Neon reticulatus* Bl.

*Euophrys frontalis* (Walck.)

*E. aequipes* (Cambr.)

*Evarcha falcata* (Clk.)

*Myrmarachne formicaria*  
(Degeer)

## LYCOSIDAE

*Lycosa agrestis* Westr.

*L. purbeckensis* F. Cambr.

*L. monticola* (Clk.)

*L. tarsalis* Thor.

*L. pullata* (Clk.)

*L. prativaga* L.K.

*L. amentata* (Clk.)

*L. nigriceps* Thor.

*L. lugubris* (Walck.)

*L. hortensis* Thor.

*L. proxima* C.L.K.

*L. paludicola* (Clk.)

*Xerolycosa miniata* (C.L.K.)

*Tarentula pulverulenta* (Clk.)

*T. cuneata* (Clk.)

*T. barbipes* (Sund.)

*Trochosa ruricola* (Degeer)

*T. robusta* (Sim.)

*T. terricola* Thor.

*Arctosa perita* (Latr.)

*A. leopardus* (Sund.)

*Pirata piraticus* (Clk.)

*P. latitans*. (Bl.)

## PISAURIDAE

*Pisaura mirabilis* (Clk.)

## AGELENIDAE

*Argyroneta aquatica* (Clk.)

*Agelena labyrinthica* (Clk.)

*Tetrrix denticulata* (Oliv.)

*Tegenaria atrica* C.L.K.

*T. domestica* (Clk.)

*T. silvestris* L.K.

*Cicurina cicur* (Fabr.)

*Antistea elegans* (Bl.)

*Hahnia montana* (Bl.)

*H. nava* (Bl.)

*H. helveola* Sim.

## MIMETIDAE

*Ero furcata* (Vill.)

## THERIDIIDAE

*Episinus angulatus* (Bl.)

*E. truncatus* Latr.

*Dipoena prona* (Menge)

*D. inornata* (Cambr.)

*D. tristis* (Hahn)

*Crustulina guttata* (Wid.)

*Asagena phalerata* (Panz.)

*Steatoda bipunctata* (Linn.)

*Theridion vittatum* C.L.K.

*T. aulicum* C.L.K.

*T. lunatum* (Clk.)

*T. tepidarium* C.L.K.

*T. sisyphium* (Clk.)

*T. impressum* L.K.

*T. simile* C.L.K.

- T. varians* Hahn  
*T. melanurum* (Hahn)  
 (= *denticulatum* Walck.)  
*T. blackwalli* Cambr.  
*T. tinctum* (Walck.)  
*T. ovatum* (Clk.)  
*T. instabile* Cambr.  
*T. bimaculatum* (Linn.)  
*T. pallens* Bl.  
*Enoplognathathoracica* (Hahn.)  
*Robertus lividus* (Bl.)  
*R. arundineti* (Cambr.)  
*Pholcomma gibbum* (Westr.)
- NESTICIDAE
- Nesticus cellulanus* (Clk.)
- TETRAGNATHIDAE
- Tetragnatha extensa* (Linn.)  
*T. montana* Sim.  
*T. obtusa* C.L.K.  
*Pachygnatha clercki* Sund.  
*P. listeri* Sund.  
*P. degeeri* Sund.
- ARGIOPIDAE
- Meta segmentata* (Clk.)  
*M. merianae* (Scop.)  
*M. menardi* (Latr.)  
*Araneus gibbosus* (Walck.)  
*A. angulatus* Clk.  
*A. diadematus* Clk.  
*A. quadratus* Clk.  
*A. marmoreus pyramidatus*  
 Clk.  
*A. alsine* (Walck.)  
*A. cornutus* Clk.  
*A. patagiatus* Clk.  
*A. umbraticus* Clk.  
*A. redii* (Scop.)  
*A. adiantus* (Walck.)  
*A. triguttatus* (Fabr.)  
*A. cucurbitinus* Clk.  
*Zilla dioidea* (Walck.)  
*Singa pygmaea* (Sund.)  
*Cercidea prominens* (Westr.)  
*Zygiella x-notata* (Clk.)  
*Z. atrica* (C.L.K.)  
*Mangora acalypha* (Walck.)  
*Cyclosa conica* (Pall.)
- LINYPHIIDAE
- Ceratinella scabrosa* (Cambr.)  
*Walckenaera acuminata* Bl.  
*Wideria antica* (Wid.)  
*W. cucullata* (C.L.K.)  
*W. melanocephala* (Cambr.)  
*W. fugax* (Cambr.)  
*Trachynella nudipalpis*  
 (Westr.)  
*Prosopotheca monoceros* (Wid.)  
*Tigellinus furcillatus* (Menge)  
*Cornicularia unicornis*  
 (Cambr.)  
*C. cuspidata* (Bl.)  
*Dicymbium nigrum* (Bl.)  
*Entelecara acuminata* (Wid.)  
*E. erythropus* (Westr.)  
*E. flavipes* (Bl.)  
*Moebelia penicillatus* (Westr.)  
*Erigonidium graminicola*  
 (Sund.)  
*Gnathonarium dentatum*  
 (Wid.)  
*Gongylidium rufipes* (Sund.)  
*Dismodicus bifrons* (Bl.)  
*Hypomma bituberculatum*  
 (Wid.)  
*H. cornutum* (Bl.)  
*Metopobactrus prominulus*  
 (Cambr.)  
*Hybocoptus decollatus* (Sim.)  
*Gonatium rubens* (Bl.)  
*G. rubellum* (Bl.)  
*Maso sundevalli* (Westr.)  
*Peponocranium ludicrum*  
 (Cambr.)  
*Pocadicnemis pumila* (Bl.)  
*Oedothorax fuscus* (Bl.)  
*Oe. agrestis* (Bl.)  
*Oe. retusus* (Westr.)  
*Oe. apicatus* (Bl.)  
*Trichopterna thorelli* (Westr.)  
*Lophocarenum parallelum*  
 (Wid.)  
*L. nemorale* (Bl.)  
*Silometopus curtus* (Sim.)  
*Cnephlocotes obscurus* (Bl.)  
*Trichoncus saxicola* (Cambr.)

- Tiso vagans* (Bl.)  
*Troxochrus scabriculus* (Westr.)  
*Minyriolus pusillus* (Wid.)  
*Thyreosthenius biovatus*  
 (Cambr.)  
*Monocephalus fuscipes* (Bl.)  
*Gongylidiellum vivum* (Cambr.)  
*G. latebricola* (Cambr.)  
*Micrargus herbigradus* (Bl.)  
*M. subaequalis* (Westr.)  
*M. laudatus* (Cambr.)  
*Erigonella ignobilis* (Cambr.)  
*Savignia frontata* Bl.  
*Diplocephalus cristatus* (Bl.)  
*D. latifrons* (Cambr.)  
*D. picinus* (Bl.)  
*Araeonus humilis* (Bl.)  
*Typhocrestus digitatus* (Cambr.)  
*Scotargus inerrans* (Cambr.)  
*Erigone dentipalpis* (Wid.)  
*E. atra* (Bl.)  
*E. promiscua* (Cambr.)  
*E. arctica* (White)  
*E. vagans* Aud.  
*Leptorhoptrum robustum*  
 (Westr.)  
*Phaulothrix hardyi* (Bl.)  
*Halorates reprobus* (Cambr.)  
*Ostearius melanopygius*  
 (Cambr.)  
*Porrhomma egeria* Sim.  
*Syedrula innotabilis* (Cambr.)  
*Meioneta rurestris* (C.L.K.)  
*M. mollis* (Cambr.)  
*M. saxatilis* (Bl.)  
*Microneta viaria* (Bl.)  
*Centromerus sylvaticus* (Bl.)
- C. dilutus* (Cambr.)  
*C. serratus* (Cambr.)  
*Centromerita bicolor* (Bl.)  
*C. concinna* (Thor.)  
*Oreonetides abnormis* (Bl.)  
*Macrargus rufus* (Wid.)  
*Bathyphantes dorsalis* (Wid.)  
*B. concolor* (Wid.)  
*B. pullatus* (Cambr.)  
*B. gracilis* (Bl.)  
*B. parvulus* (Westr.)  
*B. nigrinus* (Westr.)  
*Poecilometes globosa* (Wid.)  
*Drapetisca socialis* (Sund.)  
*Tapinopa longidens* (Wid.)  
*Floronia bucculenta* (Clk.)  
*Taranuncus setosus* (Cambr.)  
*Labulla thoracica* (Wid.)  
*Stemonyphantes lineatus* (Linn.)  
*Leptyphantes nebulosus*  
 (Sund.)  
*L. leprosus* (Ohl.)  
*L. minutus* (Bl.)  
*L. obscurus* (Bl.)  
*L. tenuis* (Bl.)  
*L. zimmermanni* Bertk.  
*L. mendei* Kulcz.  
*L. flavipes* (Bl.)  
*L. ericaeus* (Bl.)  
*L. pallidus* (Cambr.)  
*Helophora insignis* (Bl.)  
*Linyphia triangularis* (Clk.)  
*L. montana* (Clk.)  
*L. clathrata* Sund.  
*L. peltata* Wid.  
*L. pusilla* Sund.  
*L. hortensis* Sund.

## BIRD REPORT FOR 1958.

By J. STAFFORD, M.A., M.B.O.U., Grad.R.Ae.S.

1958 was another good year, and the total of 177 species, 10 more than in 1957, was easily the highest yet recorded. The number of observers also continues to increase satisfyingly.

A Twite seen at Newtown was a new species for the Island, as there had been only one very vague and unacceptable record over a hundred years ago. Some other unusual species which deserve special mention are Rose-coloured Starling, Aquatic Warbler, Long-tailed Duck, and Spotted Redshank.

Two events of some local interest in the breeding season were the first definite reports for many years of nesting Dartford Warblers and the re-establishment of the colony of Black-headed Gulls at Newtown.

The report has been considerably curtailed this year to save expense, and apologies are offered to anyone whose notes have consequently received less than justice. This applies particularly to the observers at St. Catherine's Point. As always, however, the report is based on a much larger volume of information which has all been taken into consideration, and all notes, whether published or not, are valuable for this purpose. My thanks are due to all the contributors for their continued support.

**Abbreviations, Etc.**—Records with an element of doubt are enclosed in square brackets [ ]. The order, numeration, and nomenclature follow the B.O.U. *Check-List* (1952), except that the English names are those used by *British Birds*. All records refer to 1958 unless otherwise stated. Observers are indicated by their initials in the systematic list; m.o., many observers (more than four); ♂ male; ♀ female.

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\*—Observers marked thus contributed notes referring to St. Catherine's Pt., which are not acknowledged individually in the systematic list.

#### SYSTEMATIC LIST.

- 1-4 **Divers.** The three usual species below were all seen frequently at St. Catherine's Pt. in the spring, almost all flying E., but only 2 were seen in the autumn—a Great Northern flying W. on Sept. 27th and an unidentified diver flying E. on Nov. 4th.
- 1 **Black-throated Diver.** The only one reported away from St. Catherine's Pt. was in Osborne Bay on Dec. 30th (MMS).
- 2 **Great Northern Diver.**
- 4 **Red-throated Diver.** In addition to those seen off St. Catherine's Pt., 9 were reported along the Western Solent in Jan., April, and Nov. (m.o.).
- 8 **Black-necked Grebe.** 3 at Newtown on Nov. 3rd (MMS) and 1 at Yarmouth on Dec. 14th (JS).
- 9 **Little Grebe.** 20 at Newtown on March 3rd (MMS) exceeded the record number of 1957.
- 14 **Storm Petrel.** 1 at St. Catherine's Lighthouse before dawn on Nov. 16th.
- 16 **Manx Shearwater.** At St. Catherine's Pt. 1 flew E. on April 19th and 1 W. on April 27th. 1 flew W. past Brook on Oct. 19th (JS).
- 26 **Fulmar.** Up to 4 were seen flying about the cliffs near the Needles from April 26th to June 10th (MB, JS, NFOC).
- 27 **Gannet.** At St. Catherine's Pt. on Jan. 25th 143 flew E. into a strong S.E. wind and showers. There were no large movements there during the usual migration seasons.
- 30 **Heron.** 12 nests were occupied in the Wootton heronry (JS).
- 45 **Mallard.** Bred more successfully than usual at Yarmouth, resulting in a flock of at least 26 adults and young on July 27th (MCA).
- 50 **Wigeon.** Over 300 at Newtown in Feb. and March (MMS).
- 52 **Pintail.** A ♀ flew E. past St. Catherine's Pt. on Oct. 19th.
- 53 **Shoveler.** At Newtown, 14 on Feb. 16th, 4 (the first of the winter) on Dec. 9th, and 16 on Dec. 14th (MMS).
- 56 **Tufted Duck.** A ♂ at Newtown on Feb. 16th (MMS), a ♀ at Yarmouth on April 7th (MCA), and up to 3 at Bembridge in Oct. and Dec. (MCA, AJH, JS).
- 57 **Pochard.** A ♂ at Bembridge in Oct. and Dec. (MCA, JS, AJH), and 2 ♂♂ at Yarmouth on Dec. 27th (MCA).
- 60 **Goldeneye.** An immature at Yarmouth on Jan. 20th and 21st (MCA). A ♀ flew E. past St. Catherine's Pt. on April 17th.

- 61 **Long-tailed Duck.** One flew E. past St. Catherine's Pt. on April 5th.
- 62 **Velvet Scoter.** Recorded only at St. Catherine's Pt.—18 flying E. on April 20th and a ♂ flying W. on Oct. 19th.
- 64 **Common Scoter.** Many were again seen at St. Catherine's Pt. in the spring, nearly all flying E. 3583 were counted on 26 days in March and April, including 1139 on April 19th and 1575 on the 20th. There were only small numbers there in the autumn.
- 67 **Eider.** Recorded only at St. Catherine's Pt. Out of 16 seen on 5 days in April, all except 1 were flying E., 8 on Nov. 4th, 2 flying W., and 6 E.
- 73 **Shelduck.** Nesting localities: Newtown (m.o.); 1 or 2 pairs at Yarmouth (MCA); in a cliff-top burrow E. of Freshwater Bay (a new locality) (JS); possibly also at Sconce Pt. (another new locality) (MCA).  
The flocks at Newtown again increased, totalling c. 400 in Jan. and Feb. (MMS).
- 76 **White-fronted Goose.** 7 at Newtown from Jan. 6th to 9th (MMS)
- 80 **Brent Goose.** 2 at Newtown on Jan 5th (JS) and 6 there on March 16th (RJM). 15 flew E. past St. Catherine's Pt. on March 22nd, as did 5 on the following day.
- 85 **Whooper Swan.** One at Newtown on Dec. 8th and 10th (MMS).
- 91 **Buzzard.** One soaring over E. Cowes on June 4th and 5th (JH) was the only one reported.
- 99 **Marsh Harrier.** A ♀ at Newtown on Sept. 17th (MMS).
- 102 **Montagu's Harrier.** A ♀ flew E. past St. Catherine's Pt. on April 16th (RHD, BAEM, WHT).
- 107 **Merlin.** One at St. Catherine's Pt. on Nov. 9th.
- 115 **Red-legged Partridge.** A pair returned to nest this year on the Shorwell beat where they were introduced in 1954, after nesting was reported on two adjacent beats in 1957 (FC).
- 117 **Quail.** One was caught at St. Catherine's Lighthouse before dawn on May 10th (RHD, EJW).
- 133 **Lapwing.** One at St. Catherine's Lighthouse on March 22nd.
- 139 **Grey Plover.** Numerous records, all at Newtown. Maximum of 35 on Dec. 14th (MMS).
- 143 **Turnstone.** Parties of c. 15 and 20 at St. Catherine's Lighthouse during the nights of May 9th-10th and 10th-11th.
- 145 **Snipe.** 12 at Newtown on Dec. 31st—an unusually large number there (MMS).
- 147 **Jack Snipe.** One at Yarmouth on Dec. 7th (MCA).
- 148 **Woodcock.** During the breeding season a deliberate search was made for this species in the West Wight, in the area roughly bounded by Newport, Shorwell, Brook, Newtown, and Parkhurst. 12 "roding" males, presumably breeding, were located at the following sites. (JS).

<i>Situation.</i>	<i>National grid reference.</i>
Calbourne Bottom .....	420 850
Westover Plantation .....	418 852
Chessell Down .....	401 852
Brightstone Down .....	431 851
Rowridge Copse .....	452 866
Mudless Copse .....	449 870
Northpark Copse .....	436 886
Three Gates Copse.....	440 896
Parkhurst Forest (2 pairs) .....	471 899
Walter's Copse .....	431 905
Shalcombe Down .....	393 855

One was killed at St. Catherine's Lighthouse on an unknown date in the winter of 1957-8.

- 151 **Whimbrel.** The first recorded were a flock of 43 flying E. past St. Catherine's Pt. on April 18th.
- 154 **Black-tailed Godwit.** The largest flock at Newtown was c. 110 on Aug. 10th (MCA, MMS).

There have been distinctly fewer records at Yarmouth in the last five years than in the previous four years, and none at all in 1958. This may be connected with the greatly improved conditions at Newtown caused by the flooding in 1954, although some of the increased numbers there might be expected to wander as far as Yarmouth. (MCA).

- 155 **Bar-tailed Godwit.** Two at Newtown on Jan. 5th and 16th were the only ones recorded (JS, MMS).
- 156 **Green Sandpiper.** Two stayed at Sandown rubbish dump from Sept. 16th to 26th (LK), in addition to the usual records at Newtown, Yarmouth, and St. Catherine's Pt.
- 162 **Spotted Redshank.** One stayed at Yarmouth from Dec. 21st to Jan. 18th, 1959 (MCA). This is only the fifth record for the Island, and the first since 1953.
- 165 **Greenshank.** 19 at Newtown on Sept. 22nd (MMS).
- 169 **Knot.** C. 100-110 at Newtown on three dates in Jan. (MMS, MCA, JS).

11 flew W. past St. Catherine's Pt. on Sept. 9th. Also heard at the lighthouse early on Sept. 10th and several times on the 15th.

- 171 **Little Stint.** One heard at St. Catherine's Lighthouse after dark on Sept. 9th. No other records this year.
- 179 **Curlew Sandpiper.** 2 at Newtown on May 18th, and 1 on Aug. 1st (MMS). 1 flew E. off Ryde on Dec. 15th (LK).
- 187 **Grey Phalarope.** 4 at Freshwater Bay on Oct. 5th, feeding among seaweed which had been washed on to the esplanade (JMNW, JS). A local angler said that they had been there for about a week. 2 which were seen closely were adults.

- 189 **Stone Curlew.** One at St. Catherine's Pt. on May 3rd (JKS).
- 193 **Arctic Skua.** One flew E. past St. Catherine's Pt. on April 17th (JKB, RHD, BAEM), as did 3 on May 4th (JKB).  
[Single unidentified skuas flew W. there on Sept. 12th and Oct. 19th.]
- 194 **Great Skua.** One flew E. past St. Catherine's Pt. on April 19th and 20th (JKB, RHD, BAEM, WHT).
- 198 **Great Black-backed Gull.** 8 pairs nested at the western end of the Island, all in exactly the same spots as in 1957 (JS).
- 199 **Lesser Black-backed Gull.** At St. Catherine's Pt. between Aug. 2nd and Nov. 16th 615 were counted flying to W. and 248 to E. The easterly movements all occurred against E. winds. There were estimated to be about 15 times as many Scandinavian (*fuscus*) as British (*graellsii*).
- 200 **Herring Gull.** 3 pairs nested on the sea wall at Newtown (RJM, WS) (see 1957 *Report*).
- 208 **Black-headed Gull.** A gullery was established on the saltings S. of Brickfield Farm, Newtown, containing 52 nests, and many young were reared successfully (GJL, RJM, WS, JS).  
The history of this gullery in recent years is rather obscure. The Black-headed Gull census carried out by the British Trust for Ornithology in 1958 was a repeat of one in 1938 when c. 50 nests were reported at Newtown, apparently at the same site. Since then there have been no definite reports of nesting, but only infrequent rumours of a few nests, which were usually said to be washed away by high tides. There has certainly been no gullery on the 1958 scale, and it is quite likely that the 1958 nesting was the first in the Island for twenty years. There are two large colonies, each of c. 1000 pairs, within 5 miles of Newtown on the Hampshire coast, and the Newtown birds have possibly overflowed from one of these.
- 211 **Kittiwake.** The movements past St. Catherine's Pt. (mainly to E. at all seasons) are given in full: 87 to E. on Jan. 29th; 14 to E. on Feb. 8th; 95 to E. on Feb. 9th; 3 to E. on March 29th; 4 to E. on April 17th; 1 to W. on April 18th; 10 to E. on Aug. 24th; 1 to E. on Aug. 17th; 1 to W. on Sept. 9th; 1 to W. on Sept. 12th; 14 to W. on Nov. 2nd; 4 to E. on Nov. 3rd. Those seen on Nov. 2nd were all immature.  
2 at Newtown on Oct. 18th (MMS).
- 217-8 **Common Tern and Arctic Tern.** The first 5 were seen at St. Catherine's Pt. on April 20th, and the last 2 (Common) at Newtown on Nov. 17th (MMS).  
A pair nested among the Black-headed Gulls at Newtown, but the eggs eventually disappeared (RJM, WS, JS).
- 222 **Little Tern.** First at St. Catherine's Pt. on April 20th.  
One nested at Thorness Bay (RJM)—the first recorded there, and the first on the Island since 1953.

- 223 **Sandwich Tern.** First at St. Catherine's Pt. on April 18th.  
Small numbers now occur throughout the summer along the western Solent, no doubt from the colony which has been established on the Hampshire mainland.
- 226 **Little Auk.** One diving close inshore at Foreland, Bembridge, on Nov. 14th (MS).
- 234 **Woodpigeon.** 25-30 flew E. past St. Catherine's Lighthouse before dawn on March 23rd. There was an influx to the Point on October 25th, when the numbers rose from 20 to 150. Several other small movements were recorded at the Point and elsewhere.
- 235 **Turtle Dove.** First on May 3rd, at Headon Hill (NFOC) and St. Lawrence (JS).
- 237 **Cuckoo.** First heard at Cowes on April 20th (GAHW).
- 249 **Short-eared Owl.** One flew over St. Catherine's Pt. from S.E. on April 6th.
- 252 **Nightjar.** The census of breeding nightjars carried out for the British Trust for Ornithology in 1957 and 1958 was much better supported in the former year. The following is a summary of both years, showing a total of about 27 pairs in 10 localities.

<i>Situation.</i>	<i>No. of Pairs.</i>	<i>Observers.</i>
Brightstone Down .....	c. 4	GAHW
Mottistone Down .....	2	OHF, DF
Clamerkin, Newtown .....	2	DJW
Hamstead Estate .....	c. 8	JS
Parkhurst Forest .....	4	WS
St. George's Down, Blackwater .....	2	JS
Bleak Down, Rookley .....	1	JS
Lynnbottom Copse, N. of Arreton .....	1	WGE
Combley Great Wood, near Havenstreet .....	2	WGE
Firestone Copse, Wootton .....	1	WGE

There were also negative reports from several apparently suitable localities between Shanklin and Chale (MCA).

Other localities where the species has nested (or at least been present during the summer) in the last few years are Alverstone in 1953 (DJA), Rowlands Wood, Havenstreet, in 1953 (GA), Sibden Copse, Shanklin, in 1953 (EMN), Lee Copse, Shalfleet, in 1954 (MCA), Headon Hill in 1955 (MCA), and Sconce Pt., Yarmouth, regularly since 1950 (MCA). Only one pair was reported at each of these six sites, and only Sibden Copse was visited in 1957-8, with negative results (AJH).

- 255 **Swift.** The first flew W. past St. Catherine's Pt. on April 27th.
- 258 **Kingfisher.** Nested at Yarmouth (MCA) and Newtown (RJM).
- 261 **Hoopoe.** There were 14 records, which probably referred to only about 10 birds (*i.e.*, at least as many as the record number of 1956): At Porchfield on March 30th (PH); by Parkhurst Forest on March 31st (AGS); in Clatterford Shute, Carisbrooke, on April 1st (DMC); in Walter's Copse, Newtown, on April 19th and 20th (RJM, WS, JS); in Corbett Road, Ryde, on April 24th and 25th (HMC), and probably the same bird in Pell Lane about

the end of April (TJE); on Headon Hill on May 4th (NFOC); at Yafford on May 10th (DLW); at Ford Farm almost daily, July 21st-31st (LW, WFC), in Strathwell Park on Aug. 5th and 6th (WFC) and 20th (AB), and on Week Down on Aug. 31st (BGB, RSL) (these four records near Whitwell were possibly all the same bird); in Newtown Marsh on Aug. 10th (MCA, MMS); on Headon Hill on Sept. 12th (KMBH).

- 263 **Great Spotted Woodpecker.** In January-March there were several records of this species visiting bird tables, at Shide (GLP), Ryde, Binstead, and Fishbourne (IG), and Brighstone (MKR). The British Trust for Ornithology is conducting an inquiry into this apparently new habit, and any further information would be welcome.
- 264 **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.** One at Newtown on Jan. 14th (MMS).
- 265 **Wryneck.** A few days before Sept. 19th one was caught by a cat at Rew Street, Gurnard, suffering an injured wing and the loss of its tail. It was taken to Godshill and cared for for two days, during which it fed and seemed quite well, but it then escaped. (CHH, RJM). This was during a widespread occurrence of the species over much of the British Isles.
- 271 **Woodlark.** The only ones recorded were 7 at St. Catherine's Point on March 16th and 23rd.
- 272 **Skylark.** C. 150 flew N. past St. Catherine's Lighthouse before dawn on Oct. 19th, and there was a continual passage N. over the Point on the morning of Nov. 16th.
- 274 **Swallow.** First on March 27th at Newport (JS), and last on Nov. 16th at Yarmouth (MCA) and St. Catherine's Pt.
- There were several notable movements at St. Catherine's Pt. in the autumn, the largest being on Sept. 28th when the rate of eastward passage increased from c. 600 per hour at dawn to c. 6000 per hour on a half-mile front by mid-morning, but died away to nothing when the N.E. wind veered S.W.
- 276 **House Martin.** First 4 on April 10th at Newport (JS), and last 2 on Nov. 10th at Ventnor (TW).
- 277 **Sand Martin.** First on March 26th at Yarmouth (ED), and last on Sept. 28th at Yarmouth (MCA) and St. Catherine's Pt.
- 279 **Raven.** There were several reports of small parties near the Needles (m.o.), including 2 adults and 3 probable juveniles on April 20th (MCA).
- 2 flew E. past Yarmouth early on Nov. 9th (MCA), and the same observer has previous records of such early morning eastward flights there.
- 281 **Hooded Crow.** 3 records of a single bird at Ventnor, on April 5th-6th (MCA), Sept. 20th, and Oct. 11th (TW).
- 282 **Rook.** The rookery census in April showed the same trend as last year—fewer nests but more rookeries. 4751 nests were counted in 185 sites. These include 5 sites which were missed in

- 1957 (containing 97 nests in 1958), 4 old sites which were re-occupied, and 27 new sites (with 145 nests). (Summary of analysis by AJH of counts by MCA, WGE, OHF, AJH, LK, RJM, WS, JS, MRT, GAHW, and DJW).
- 289 **Blue Tit.** There were two recoveries of ringed birds. An adult ringed (B 22858) at Cowes on Nov. 26th, 1955 (JS, GAHW), was found dead where ringed on Feb. 28th, 1958, following a cold spell (SS). The second was an adult ringed (E 98559) at St. Catherine's Pt. on April 18th and killed by a cat in Shanklin, 6 miles E.N.E., about two days later (BAEM).
- 294 **Long-tailed Tit.** Several records suggested an influx in the autumn: 15 on Oct. 18th and c. 40 on the following day at St. Catherine's Pt.; 25 at Yarmouth on Nov. 9th (MCA); c. 20 on Nov. 16th at St. Catherine's Pt.; 17 at Ventnor on Nov. 29th (TW).
- 296 **Nuthatch.** One at Osborne on March 13th (MMS).
- 298 **Treecreeper.** Two in bushes at St. Catherine's Pt. on April 20th were evidently migrating.
- 303 **Song Thrush.** One killed through flying into a window at Brighstone on July 22nd was harbouring a parasitic ♀ louse-fly *Ornithomyia avicularia* (JS, DSH).
- 307 **Ring Ouzel.** Seen only at St. Catherine's Pt. 4 on Sept. 17th and 27th and 1 on 28th.
- 308 **Blackbird.** There were several nocturnal records at St. Catherine's Lighthouse in both spring and autumn, with a particularly heavy passage on the night of Nov. 15th-16th.  
An almost completed nest was discovered in a Newtown garden on Dec. 23rd. On the 26th a bird was sitting, but on the 31st the nest had been completely destroyed, probably by a cat (MMS).
- 311 **Wheatear.** First on March 23rd at Sconce Pt. (MCA), and last on Oct. 12th, on Compton Down (MCA) and at St. Catherine's Pt.  
There was no record during the breeding season this year.
- 317 **Stonechat.** A pair nested on Headon Hill (MCA, JKB). During the breeding season pairs were present on Mottistone Down and at Compton Bay (JS), as well as a second pair on Headon Hill (MCA), but there was no direct evidence that these were nesting.
- 318 **Whinchat.** An early ♀ on March 15th at Osborne (MMS), but no others were seen until May 4th, at Newtown (MMS) and Yarmouth (MCA).
- 321 **Black Redstart.** As in other parts of the country there were more records than usual in the spring. At St. Catherine's Pt., 1 on March 30th, 4 on April 4th-6th, 2 on 7th, 1 on 13th, 20th, and 27th, and 1 on Oct. 26th. Also 1 on Compton Down on March 9th (MCA), 1 at Alum Bay on April 13th (MCA), 2 in Whitecliff Bay in the second week of April (CJ, AS), and 1 near the Needles on May 3rd (NFOC).
- 322 **Nightingale.** First heard on April 20th, at Brighstone (JS).

- 327 **Grasshopper Warbler.** 3 in the Alum Bay area on May 3rd-4th (NFOC). 4 at St. Catherine's Lighthouse on the night of Sept. 9th-10th, with one present at the Point next day, and single birds at the Lighthouse on the nights of Sept. 14th-15th and 16th-17th.
- 333 **Reed Warbler.** First on April 29th, at Newport (RJM).
- 337 **Sedge Warbler.** First on April 26th, at Yarmouth (MCA).
- 338 **Aquatic Warbler.** One was seen in the grounds of St. Catherine's Lighthouse during the morning of Aug. 17th (JKS). This is the seventh record for the Island (and for St. Catherine's Pt.). Several others were reported in England during the month.
- 343 **Blackcap.** First on April 7th, at Wilmingham (MCA).
- 346 **Garden Warbler.** First on May 3rd, near Totland (NFOC).
- 347 **Whitethroat.** The first was a ♂ seen in a Ryde garden on March 29th (MRT).

There was a heavy passage at St. Catherine's Lighthouse during the night of May 9th-10th, when well over 500 were seen, mostly ♀♀.

- 348 **Lesser Whitethroat.** First on May 3rd, at St. Catherine's Pt.
- 352 **Dartford Warbler.** Two new breeding localities were discovered in 1958.

Locality E. On June 8th a pair was watched for an hour at close range. The ♂ several times openly carried food into a very thick clump of gorse. (MCA).

Locality F. A pair with 3 young on Aug. 31st and Sept. 27th (JKS).

Locality B. A ♂ was seen again in May, although none could be found in 1957 (JS).

Early on April 14th a ♂ was caught at St. Catherine's Lighthouse, some miles from any known breeding locality (JKB, RHD, BAEM, WHT).

- 354 **Willow Warbler.** The first arrivals were reported at three places on March 29th—Newport and Godshill (RJM) and St. Catherine's Pt.
- 356 **Chiffchaff.** First on March 16th, at St. Catherine's Pt. A bird of one of the northern races *abietinus* or *tristis* was seen there on April 27th.
- 357 **Wood Warbler.** One in song at Yarmouth on May 4th (MCA) was the only record this year.
- 365 **Firecrest.** At St. Catherine's Pt. there were 3 on March 29th-April 3rd, 5 on April 4th, and 3 on April 5th-7th. Then 1 was seen, usually near the Buddle Inn, on several occasions until April 26th. On March 30th 1 came in from the sea and worked N. through the Lighthouse grounds. Elsewhere there were 2 on Tennyson's Down on April 4th (MCA) and 1 near the Needles in the second week of April (CJ, AS). Unusual numbers were reported in various parts of England during the same period.

Also 1 at Osborne on Dec. 30th (MMS).

- 366 **Spotted Flycatcher.** First on May 3rd, near the Needles (NFOC) and at St. Catherine's Pt., and last on Sept. 28th at St. Catherine's Pt.
- 368 **Pied Flycatcher.** The only spring record was of a pair at Yarmouth on April 23rd (ED, MM). There was a late bird on Culver Down on Oct. 18th (JKB).  
There were several autumn records at St. Catherine's Pt., including c. 85 at the Lighthouse on the night of Sept. 14th-15th and c. 20 on the night of Sept. 16th-17th.
- 376 **Tree Pipit.** Numerous records, but only in the migration seasons.
- 379 **Rock Pipit.**  
**Water Pipit.** One in Watershoot Bay on May 3rd (JKS).
- 380 **Pied Wagtail.** At Sandown on Aug. 30th there had been a large increase in numbers overnight; these birds remained for at least a fortnight (LK).  
**White Wagtail.** Only a few records, all at St. Catherine's Pt. in April and September.
- 381 **Grey Wagtail.** The only summer record was a ♀ on the mill-stream at Newbridge on July 5th (MCA).
- 382 **Yellow Wagtail.** First on April 12th at Yarmouth (MCA) and last on Oct. 18th on Culver Down (JKB).  
A general movement was recorded on Aug. 30th, when there were 6 at Sandown (having arrived overnight with Pied Wagtails) (LK), 14 at Calbourne (MCA), and c. 30 at St. Catherine's Pt.
- 388 **Red-backed Shrike.** A pair near Seaview on April 21st (WM) and 1 at St. Catherine's Pt. on Sept. 8th (MWB).
- 390 **Rose-coloured Starling.** An adult was seen at close range at Sandown on Oct. 18th, feeding on the rubbish dump with a flock of Starlings (JKB). This was one of five reported in the British Isles during the autumn.
- 391 **Hawfinch.** A ♂ was found dead in East Hill Rd., Ryde, on Feb. 14th (WM).
- 393 **Goldfinch.** Two family parties were reported in September—at Sandown on the 8th (LK) and at Ventnor on the 17th and 18th (TW). In each case the young were being fed on teasel seeds.
- 394 **Siskin.** 3 at Newtown on Jan. 16th (MMS) and 9 in trees around Brading rubbish dump on March 14th (MRT).
- 396 **Twite.** A ♂ was seen at Newtown on Oct. 9th (MMS)—apparently the first satisfactory record for the Island. Bury, writing in 1856, reported that "two or three were once seen on Freshwater Downs," but this is hardly acceptable without further details.
- 397 **Redpoll.** At St. Catherine's Pt. 2 flew to W. on April 3rd and 2 to N.W. on April 13th. There were no other records.



## RAINFALL AT NEWTOWN, 1954-58.

The following details of rainfall were recorded by Mr. A. V. Gravely at his home, Thistle Finches, Newtown, I.W.

**Table 1.** (a) Monthly totals of rainfall recorded in inches.  
(b) Number of days in each month on which it fell.

	1954		1955		1956		1957		1958	
	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b
Jan.	1.63	7	4.15	17	5.80	18	3.275	19	4.485	17
Feb.	3.87	14	2.27	13	.32	7	4.99	24	3.12	15
March	4.81	17	1.36	7	.60	6	2.31	14	1.36	10
April	.28	4	.60	9	2.19	13	.14	3	.58	6
May	2.53	14	4.04	20	.37	7	1.24	11	2.92	18
June	2.71	14	3.795	14	2.69	11	1.76	8	3.70	13
July	4.04	12	.28	5	2.835	13	4.73	16	2.085	10
Aug.	3.365	16	.99	5	4.895	24	2.81	15	4.105	20
Sept.	3.22	20	2.23	11	4.225	14	4.13	19	5.73	14
Oct.	3.00	17	3.01	9	1.365	11	2.80	16	3.19	15
Nov.	6.42	21	3.37	9	.91	11	3.95	8	3.39	14
Dec.	3.42	12	5.525	24	5.99	20	2.815	18	4.16	20
Year	39.295	168	31.62	143	33.19	155	34.95	171	38.825	172

**Table 2.** Dates on which falls of over  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch, and under  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch were recorded :—

1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
Feb. 18	Feb. 5	April 13	Feb. 6	Jan. 5
Feb. 19	May 2	April 14	June 19	Jan. 11
March 2	May 28	June 4	July 12	Feb. 24
May 30	June 3	July 20	Sept. 9	Feb. 25
June 8	June 7	Aug. 7	Sept. 26	May 5
June 13	June 12	Sept. 2	Dec. 11	July 17
July 7	Aug. 12	Dec. 16		July 26
Aug. 6	Sept. 23	Dec. 17		July 28
Sept. 24	Oct. 6			Aug. 19
Nov. 11	Nov. 4			Aug. 25
Nov. 28	Dec. 15			Sept. 6
Dec. 7				Sept. 24
Dec. 8				Dec. 14
Dec. 12				

**Table 3.** Dates on which falls of over  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch and under 1 inch were recorded :—

1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
March 20	May 17	Jan. 10	Jan. 31	Sept. 21
Oct. 24	June 4	July 9	Feb. 8	Sept. 22
Nov. 7	Oct. 19	Dec. 26	July 6	Dec. 12
Nov. 27	Oct. 20	Dec. 28	Aug. 9	
Nov. 30	Nov. 3		Sept. 11	
Dec. 9	Nov. 6		Oct. 18	
	Dec. 4		Nov. 5	

**Table 4.** Dates on which falls of over 1 inch were recorded :—

1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
July 26 (2.05ins.)	Jan. 14 Dec. 12	Jan. 31 Aug. 2 Aug. 6 Sept. 5 Sept. 28	July 3 Nov. 3 Nov. 4	Jan. 29 June 3 Nov. 2

## METEOROLOGICAL REPORT FOR 1958.

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This summary was compiled by Mr. H. Hoare, Meteorological Officer for Shanklin.

The Maximum, Minimum, Wet and Dry Bulb Thermometers, and the Rain Gauge are situated in Big Mede, Church Road, 180ft. above sea level.

The Sunshine Recorder and Weather Vane are on the roof of the Town Hall.

Readings are taken at 0900 hours and 1800 hours daily, G.M.T.

"Hope springs eternal . . .", wrote Pope, and when one surveys the weather of 1958, one can be thankful that it does. As month followed month, cold, wet and sunless, people kept on saying this simply cannot continue, but, alas, it did, a wintry Easter being followed by a bleak summer.

Sunshine for the year was the lowest on record with 1700.1 hours (average 1978.8 hours), rainfall was above average at 37.54ins. (average 35.2ins.), and the mean temperature was only saved from disgrace by the mild October, November, and early December.

Surveying the weather, month by month, January served up very varied weather, with some sunny spring-like days and others when it was freezing all day. Sun and temperature were below, and rainfall above average.

February again was very similar, with very wide fluctuations in temperature, rainfall being above average and both sun and temperature below.

March was drier, but again with a poor sunshine total, and very cold. At Newlyn, Cornwall, there was ice on the sea one morning.

The customary showers did not materialise during April, only .52ins. of rain being recorded, making it the driest month of the year, but the cold spell continued until the close, when spring-like weather prevailed. Sunshine for the month was again poor.

The mild, spring-like weather continued in May, but unfortunately for only a short period, as another cold spell set in. Sunshine and temperature for the month were below, and rainfall was above average.

June, July, and August can be bracketed under one heading as three wet, depressing, sunless, and cold months, which are best forgotten.

September was similar for the first half, and then, when the season to all intents and purposes had ended, there was a welcome spell of warm weather which continued until early December, a very welcome change, with rainfall less than usual.

Snowfall for the twelve months was very light. Although there were 14 recordings they were chiefly sleet showers and only once was any recordable depth registered, and then only just over 2in.

The maximum temperature, as was to be expected, did not once reach the 80°F. mark, the highest being 77°F. on July 8th, and the lowest 21°F. on January 22nd.

The last winter frost occurred on April 14th, and the first after the close of summer on November 1st. Thunder was of a very minor character with only six recordings for the year.

There were 185 rainless days, and on four occasions an inch or more was recorded for the 24 hours.

The weather diary for 1958 will make very depressing reading, but we should bear in mind, however, that the Island escaped nearly all the severe gales, snowstorms, floods, etc., experienced on the mainland. For example, the heavy snow falls in February, when Devon had drifts of 5ft., the continuous thunderstorms in August, accompanied at times with torrential downpours from Kent to Cornwall, where twice the normal rainfall was recorded and flooding was prevalent, the tornado in the South on September 5th, that caused great damage, and the almost continuous November and December fogs were, happily, not experienced in the Island.

### 1958 WEATHER AT SHANKLIN.

Month	Max. Min.		Temperatures				Rainfall (Inches)	Sunshine (Hours)
	(Mean)		Extremes		Dry (Mean)	Wet (Mean)		
Jan.	45.0	36.0	54	21	40.3	39.0	5.01	63.2
Feb.	48.2	38.6	56	28	43.9	42.6	3.39	56.0
Mar.	45.1	35.3	53	23	40.5	38.3	1.59	122.7
April	51.5	39.2	67	29	45.8	43.3	.52	181.1
May	57.2	47.3	69	40	53.4	50.8	3.03	249.4
June	61.5	50.7	69	45	57.6	55.4	3.02	208.1
July	65.6	54.9	77	48	61.9	59.1	1.72	240.0
Aug.	64.9	56.1	70	50	61.4	59.6	4.38	167.3
Sept.	64.7	55.2	71	46	60.9	58.9	4.07	173.6
Oct.	58.6	49.6	63	41	55.1	53.2	3.04	119.6
Nov.	50.3	41.9	58	33	46.5	45.1	3.17	69.2
Dec.	48.2	39.3	54	29	43.7	42.6	4.66	49.9
Year	—	—	—	—	—	—	37.54	1700.1

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES.

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**Red Gurnard at Yarmouth.**—S.Q.M.S. R. Hardcastle, R.A.S.C., caught a Red Gurnard, *Trigla cuculus*, Linn., while fishing on Whit-Sunday from Fort Victoria, Yarmouth. It weighed 1lb.8oz.

June, 1958.

*I.W. County Press.*

**Bottle-nosed Dolphin at Yarmouth.**—The body of a bottle-nosed dolphin, *Tursiops tursio*, measuring six feet in length and weighing about 1½-cwt., was found floating off Yarmouth Common on Tuesday, 22nd July, 1958, by Kevin Lewis.

July, 1958.

*I.W. County Press.*

**B.S.B.I. Plant Distribution Maps Scheme.**—A number of members have taken part in the National Plant Distribution Maps Scheme, organised by the Botanical Society of the British Isles at Cambridge. As a result, the following letter was received :—

Dear Mrs. Frazer,

Many thanks for your letter of the 28th September, and for your further records from the Isle of Wight. Please extend our thanks to all those who have helped with the recording ; they have done surprisingly well under the circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Franklyn Perring.

The members who took part were : Mr. and Mrs. O. H. Frazer, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Henry, Miss F. M. Hopkins, Miss L. Kennedy, Miss T. White, and Mr. R. Wyatt. Others may have sent in records independently.

October, 1958.

*Mrs. D. A. Frazer.*

**Late Adder.**—An adder, 21in. long, was shot on the downs above Leeson Road, Ventnor, on December 6th, 1958.

December, 1958.

*Miss T. White.*

**Grey Seal at Yarmouth.**—A Grey Seal, *Halichoerus grypus*, was seen basking in the sunshine on the beach at Yarmouth on Monday 8th December, 1958. Later, after swimming about off the end of the pier for some time, it made off in the direction of the Needles.

December, 1958.

*I.W. County Press.*

