

very noticeably in the British Isles in the past 100 years. It was accordingly selected for special study by the British Trust. The paper also deals with its nesting and feeding habits. It is of interest to us, especially from the point of view of the methods used in tackling such an investigation.

INVASION OF SPINE-TAILED SWIFTS.

The bird nests in eastern Asia and winters in Australia and Tasmania. According to Oliver's book, only one specimen has been taken in New Zealand, but at the end of November "hundreds" were reported near Greymouth, and specimens have been seen as far apart as Auckland and South Canterbury. Clearly this is worth special mention, and all members are asked to look out for these birds, to gather information, and to send it in, so that a full account may be prepared. This bird has a wing spread of about 18 inches, very long wings, and a swift and conspicuous flight.

Report for Period Ending June, 1942, on Population, Song, and Habits of Birds in Masterton Gardens.

By J. M. CUNNINGHAM.

(The first part of this paper, dealing with methods of observation, appeared in the third bulletin for 1941-42.)

J. M. Cunningham—March 12-June 30.

R. H. D. Stidolph—April 1-June 30.

S. B. Yelverton—April 15-June 30.

The following notes are those of J.M.C. first, with any essential differences noted by R.H.D.S. and S.B.Y. added. The areas under observation are: J.M.C.—town garden with open paddock on two sides, and R.H.D.S. and S.B.Y.—the district adjoining this, between their homes and work. The times of observation are before nine, lunch hour, and after about three in all cases, plus week-ends.

BLACKBIRD.—This bird has been constantly present, with little fluctuation in numbers. An autumn song commenced on March 12, the first for some time, at least a month (four songs were heard in February, each lasting only three or four seconds). It continued, spasmodically (two or three songs every day or two), through April and ceased on May 5, since when it has not been heard. Except for one or two full songs, this song was short, up to half a minute, but during April were heard about a dozen sub-songs, which last several minutes, and while exceedingly beautiful, are audible only within a few yards of the singer.

General moulting took place through the whole of March, and was complete by the beginning of April, except for one female seen in moult on May 14. A record of male fighting male was recorded on April 24.