syöville linnuille ominainen piirre. Piekanan muuton lyhenemiseen (abbreviaatioon) näyttää maantieteellisellä esteellä, Suomenlahdella, olevan osuutensa.

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THE BIRD STATIONS OF FINLAND AND THEIR ACTIVITIES IN 1967

OLAVI HILDÉN

There are, at present, nine bird stations more or less permanently in operation in Finland. Their locations are shown in the accompanying figure. The following list gives, in condensed form, information on the locality, year of foundation, activities, and ownership of the stations, etc. The stations are arranged from north to south.

1. *Hailuoto.* In the southwestern corner of the large island of Hailuoto, on the shore of the bay Pöllänlahti, about 35 km west of the town of Oulu. In front of the station there is a treeless marsh almost one kilometre wide, bordered on one side by a wide muddy and stony seashore, and inland by a low alder stand and pine forest. Excursions have been made to the area for several years, and in

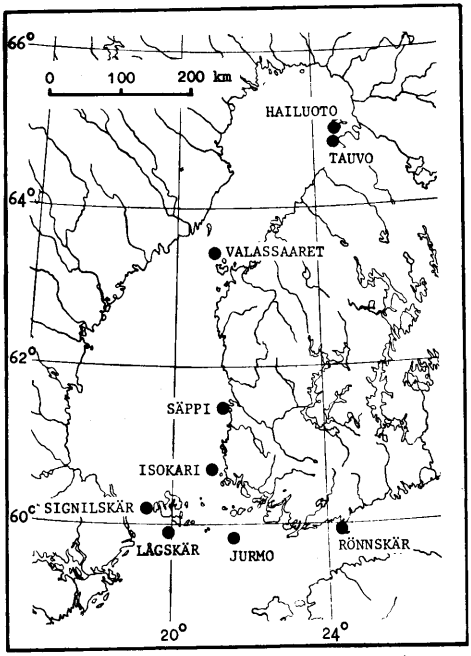

FIG. 1. The Finnish bird stations.

KUVA 1. *Suomen lintuasemat.*

1967 a tentative station was founded there on private initiative. All communications to Mr. Timo Helle (address: Minna Canthinkatu 20, Jyväskylä).

2. *Tauvo.* A tongue of land, named Tauvo, in the commune of Siikajoki, about 45 km southwest of Oulu. Its location is favourable in view of the migratory route along the coast at the head of the Gulf of Bothnia. Wide sandy and muddy shores afford suitable resting places for waders, and the willow and alder scrub edging them attracts numerous other birds. Studies on migration have been undertaken there since the 'fifties, but the station was founded in 1963. It is owned by 'Oulun Luonnonystävien Yhdistys' (Oulu Naturalists' Society), communications to Dr. Seppo Sulkava (address: Institute of Zoology, University of Oulu, Oulu).

3. *Valassaaret* (*Valsörarna*). In the commune of Björköby, in the island group known as Valassaaret, a bird sanctuary about 45 km northwest of the town of Vaasa and only 24 km distant from the nearest islands off the Swedish coast. The island group forms the outermost offshoot of the extensive archipelago of the Quark, the narrowest portion of the Gulf of Bothnia. The area comprises a few large, partly wooded islands — with small bogs, freshwater ponds, and shallow bays — as well as a great number of surrounding small islets (for details, see HILDÉN 1958, 1964). Two routes of lively migration pass through the area, one in the direction SE—NW, across the Quark, and the other in the SW—NE direction, along the Gulf of Bothnia. Both passage migrants and breeding birds have been studied in the area since the beginning of the 'fifties, but an officially recognized bird station was not founded until 1965. It is owned by the Naturalists' Society 'Ostrobothnia Australis', communications to Mr. Leif Österblad (address: Strandgatan 12 C 54, Vasa).

4. *Säppi.* In the commune of Luvia, on the isolated lighthouse island of Säppi, about 20 km west of the town of Pori and 6 km off the closest mainland point. The island is about 1.5 sq.km in area and almost round, with the exception of three stony spits. Elsewhere, the shores are partly wooded, partly marshes which are the favourite resting places of waders. Observations at Säppi were started in 1953, and a bird station was founded in 1962 under the auspices of the Ornithological Society of Pori. Many special investigations have been performed at the station, among others on the migration of arctic waterfowl and the moulting of *Calidris* species. All communications to Mr. Arvi Laaksonen (address: Rautatienpuistokatu 10 B 19, Pori 8).

5. *Isokari.* In the commune of Kustavi, at the outer margin of the southern archipelago of the Gulf of Bothnia, on the isolated lighthouse island of Isokari, about 24 km west-southwest of the town of Uusikaupunki. The island is mostly covered by deciduos woodland and the vegetation is remarkably luxuriant in hollows and around the shallow lake in the southern part. A typical feature of the island, which is 2.5×1 km in area, is the numerous ponds and small boggy depressions. A special

activity of the station consists of watching night migration from the lighthouse, which has yielded good results. The station was founded in 1965 under the auspices of the University of Turku. All communications to Prof. Rauno Tenovuo (address: Institute of Zoology, University of Turku, Turku).

6. *Signilskär.* In the commune of Eckerö, the island group of Signilskär, 10 km west of the main island of Aland and only 30 km east of the Swedish coast. The location is very favourable, especially in autumn, owing to the great migratory route running across Aland to Sweden. For the study of irruptions, especially, Signilskär is perhaps the best locality in Northern Europe. The main island, where the station is located, is 1700×900 m in area and treeless except for two small groups of trees; the shores are bare rocks. The bird station was founded as long ago as 1929, and has been continuously in operation, barring the interruptions caused by the wars. Several papers based on observations made there have been published, the most important being those by BERGMAN (1951) and LINKOLA (1957, 1961). The station is owned by 'Ålands Fågelskyddsförening' (The Society for Bird Protection in Aland), communications to Mag. Ilkka Stén (address: Zoological Museum of the University, Helsinki).

7. *Lågskär.* In the commune of Lemland, south of the main island of Aland, on the lighthouse island of Lågskär, about 30 km from the town of Maarianhamina. The island is situated in the open sea and is very isolated, but lies at the focal point of the natural *Leitlinie* from SW to NE, between the east coast of Sweden and Aland. Especially in the spring, the numbers of birds are much greater than on the nearby Signilskär. The size of the islet is 800×600 m, and there is a wide variety of habitats, e.g. three tree stands, a shallow "lagoon" and several ponds. Observations have been made since 1961, and the station has been officially recognized since 1963. It is owned jointly by Ålands Fågelskyddsförening and the Finnish Ornithological Society. All communications to Mag. Ilkka Stén.

8. *Jurmo.* In the commune of Korppoo, one of the outermost islands at the southern edge of the Arcipelago Sea, about 75 km west of the town of Hanko. The island, about 5 km long, is mainly covered by treeless *Calluna* heath and barren cobbles. There are three tree stands, and the shores are partly meadows and mud flats suitable for waders and waterfowl. The island is very favourable for observations on migration, and there are also interesting features in its breeding and winter bird fauna (see KIVIVUORI *et al.* 1965). The station is owned by the Ornithological Society of Turku and was founded in 1962. All communications to Stud. Hannu Myrsky (address: Juhannuskatu 12 A, Turku).

9. *Rönnskär.* In the commune of Kirkkonummi, off the large peninsula of Porkkala, on the lighthouse islet of Rönnskär, 43 km southwest of Helsinki. The size of the rocky islet is 700×600 m; there are several small tree stands and some scrub. In late spring its situation is favourable for watching the migration of arctic birds, and in autumn the peninsula of Porkkala gathers birds migrating to the southwest like a funnel. The station is owned by the Ornithological Society of Finland and was founded in 1961. All communications to Mag. Kari Vepsäläinen (address: Caloniuksenkatu 7 A 13, Helsinki 10).

Most of the Finnish bird stations are manned each spring and autumn, but, regrettably, usually with minor interruptions. There is no uniform plan for all the different stations, for instance in the form of standardized blanks, but the main activities at each station consist of watching migration, and banding and census of resting birds. The data gathered are so far scattered in many institutions. These disadvantages (fragmentary observations, lack of uniformity of methods, and scattering of the archives) naturally render treatment of the data difficult. Indeed, only a few reports on the activities of the bird stations have so far been published. However, the main results of the last two years have

been gathered into the Journal of Field Ornithology 'Lintumies' ('Bird Watcher'), and it has been decided to continue this custom. Summaries of these annual reports will be published in English in 'Ornis Fennica', in order to inform foreigners of the activities of the Finnish bird stations. The present article is the first of this series, and concerns the year 1967 only. It is a brief report of observations and special features of migration which are of general interest. The accompanying table shows the periods of observation at each station.

Irruptive species

Only a few irruptive species were seen in great numbers in 1967. The most interesting feature was an unusually strong spring invasion of *Dendrocopos major,* recorded at Jurmo, Lågskär, Signilskär and Isokari from mid-April to late May. Twelve were seen at Jurmo and 40 at Isokari on the respective peak days, May 3 and 7. Normally, stragglers are seen in spring very sparsely in the outer archipelago, even after major irruptions the previous autumn. The autumn invasion of the species remained small compared with major irruptions, when thousands are seen (cf. HILDÉN 1963). It was much stronger on the west than on the south coast. Thus, about 300 individuals were observed at Hailuoto on August 7—8, 50 were seen at Isokari and 20 in a single flock at Valassaaret on August 27, and 57 were ringed at Säppi on August 27—29, whereas at Jurmo about ten birds appeared each day on August 26—28, and only a few were recorded at Lågskär and Signilskär during the whole autumn.

The invasion of Crossbills (mainly *Loxia curvirostra*) started in June, when large flocks were seen at Valassaaret and Isokari for instance, and weakened towards the autumn. In October, a second peak was recorded: for instance, 573 invading Crossbills were counted at Signilskär on 24th, and 112 at Lågskär on 29th.

Aegolius funereus occurred in September—October in greater numbers than usual at most of the bird stations, but Signilskär was the only one at which the irruption reached exceptional proportions. The first record was made as early as August 25, the last on December 24; on the peak day, October 21, about 40 owls were resting on the island. The total number of individuals ringed at Signilskär was 172. *Asio otus,* too, occurred on the island in greater numbers than usual: on the peak day, October 26, at least 22 individuals were observed, and a total of 48 were ringed.

Hailuoto 28.7.—29.8.
Tauvo 10—30.5., 8—27.7., 9.8.—2.9., 5—13.9.
Valassaaret 13.5.—11.7., 11—28.8.
Säppi 15—25.3., 23—28.3., 3—7.5., 26—31.5., 23—25.6., 18—22.7., 27—30.7., 25.8.—26.10., 1—5.11.
Isokari 4—11.4., 22—23.4., 6—7.5., 23—27.5., 6.6.—4.7., 29—30.7., 15—29.8., 22—24.9., 7—14.10., 3—5.11.
Signilskär 18.3.—21.4., 17—27.5., 1—15.8., 18—26.8., 20.9.—4.1.
Lågskär 17.3.—3.4., 15—21.4., 8—17.5., 12—21.7., 1.8.—19.9., 6.10.—3.11.
Jurmo 3—7.1., 23—28.3., 24.4.—6.6., 11—16.6., 22—25.6., 8—31.8., 28.9.—2.10., 5—17.10., 2—6.11., 16—24.11., 4—8.12., 29.12.—1.1.
Rönnskär 23—28.3., 8—10.4., 13—21.4., 28.4.—1.5., 13—22.5., 24.5.—3.6., 6—22.9., 4—9.10., 3—5.11.

TABLE 1. Periods of observation at the Finnish bird stations in 1967.

TAULUKKO 1. *Lintuasemien havaintojaksot vuonna 1967.*

The last peak year for these two owl species in Finland was 1966, when rodents were abundant, whereas 1967, after the crash of the rodent population, was a very poor breeding year. Since the large irruption did not immediately follow the peak of 1966, but one year later, there is reason to suggest that rodents were still abundant during the autumn of 1966 and only declined in early 1967. However, as the bulk of the population of these nomadic owl species must have been leaving areas where food was scarce even before the breeding season, the majority of the invaders obviously came from areas outside Finland.

The large invasion of *Parus montanus* at Tauvo and, to a smaller extent, at Hailuoto in July—September is interesting. At these two bird stations a total of 322 and 79, respectively, were ringed, whereas no invasion was recorded at the other stations further south. In 1966, too, 364 Willow Tits were ringed at Tauvo (KAARTINEN 1966). On the other hand, the species has never been recorded at Signilskär, in spite of the favourable location of this island as regards irruptive birds (LINKOLA 1961). These observations, as well as some earlier records made in the outer archipelago of the Bothnian Bay, indicate that the northern populations of this species are more mobile than the southern ones. Normally, *Parus ater, P.major* and *P.caeruleus* show the strongest tendency to invasions among Finnish tits (cf. LINKOLA 1961), but in 1967 only negligible movements, if any, were recorded at the bird stations.

Regulus regulus and *Certhia familiaris,* which are not generally included among invading species, behaved like true irruptive birds during the autumn of 1967. In late September and October, Goldcrests were much more numerous than usual at the bird stations; for instance, at Isokari the number of individuals was estimated to be about 600 on September 24. The exceptional abundance of the species is best illustrated by the ringing results at different stations (the corresponding numbers for 1966 in brackets): Säppi 929 (81), Isokari 222 (72), Lågskär 466 (83), Jurmo 313 (9), and Rönnskär 184 (27). At Signilskär only 156 Goldcrests were ringed (125 in 1966), but no nets were used and the Heligoland traps were in poor condition, which explains the small catch. The irruption was a great surprise, as in the two previous winters the Finnish wintering population had perished almost entirely as a consequence of the hard frosts (see HILDÉN & MIKKOLA 1966, 1967); thus in autumn 1967 the population must have been smaller than usual. This indicates that the irruption originated from regions where the wintering population had succeeded better, probably from the east.

The invasion of Treecreepers, too, exceeded those recorded earlier. Normally, only a few are seen in a day in the outer archipelago (cf. LINKOLA 1961), but now several dozens were ringed and still greater numbers recorded at many bird stations. The ringing results were as follows (numbers in 1966 in brackets): Säppi 139 (18), Isokari 35 (61), Lågskär 72 (19), Jurmo 80 (2), and Rönnskär 16 (22). On the peak day, October 10, no less than 60 individuals were ringed at Jurmo. Probably this invasion also originated from the east, for the Finnish population had suffered heavy losses in the two preceding hard winters and was very scarce in the province of Häme, for instance (LINKOLA, *in litt.*).

Rarities

During almost the whole month of May, very warm weather prevailed to the southeast of Finland, in the Baltic and in Russia, and times slightly touched the

southeastern corner of the country. In the last week of May the warm air reached Finland, and for three of four days mean temperatures of 16—18°C were measured in the whole country. Apparently as a consequence of this exceptional weather, many southern and southeastern rarities were seen at the bird stations: *Anas strepera,* ♂ ♀ at Tauvo in late May; *Falco vespertinus,* ♀ at Lågskär on May 14, ♂ at Jurmo on May 27 and at Valassaaret on June 17; *Recurvirostra avosetta* at Jurmo on June 4; *Chlidonias niger* at Jurmo on May 17; *Streptopelia turtur* at Jurmo May 23; *Merops apiaster* at Tauvo on May 21; *Coracias garrulus* at Jurmo on May 30; *Upupa epops* at Jurmo on May 8; *Ficedula albicollis,* ♂ at Lågskär on May 13, at Jurmo on May 23 and June 1; *Lanius senator* at Lågskär on May 14; *Lanius minor* at Jurmo on May 30; *Serinus serinus* at Isokari on June 18—19.

The remarkable numbers of *Lanius collurio* at Tauvo, outside the regular range of the species, were also clearly connected with the warm spell in late May. On May 28—29, for instance, more than ten individuals were recorded, and this peak exactly coincides with the highest temperatures at Oulu. *Hippolais icterina* was trapped at Tauvo on August 18 and 27, and no less than 32 individuals of *Sylvia atricapilla* were ringed here during the autumn; at Hailuoto, too, one *Hippolais icterina* flew into the net. Neither of these species breeds so far north, for which reason the records indicate some kind of premigratory movements orientated partly northwards (see also MERILÄ & MIKKOLA 1967).

During the autumn, records of eastern rarities were more frequent than usual at the Finnish bird stations. The same phenomenon was also observed elsewhere in Western Europe, e.g. in Britain and in the Netherlands (FERGUSON-LEES & SHARROCK 1967, SHARROCK & FERGUSON-LEES 1968). *Anthus novaezeelandiae* occurred in unprecedented numbers; between August 26 and September 17 no less than 40 individuals were recorded at the stations (3 at Hailuoto, 1 at Valassaaret, 22 at Säppi, 9 at Isokari, and 5 at Lågskär). The species was also recorded at several other localities in Finland (a more detailed report will be published later on in Ornis Fennica). Previously, a total of only 18 records were known from Finland, at the most four in a year, since the first observation in 1948.

Another of the most striking features of the autumn was the appearance of *Phylloscopus inornatus* at several stations. Up to 1967, only three records were known from this country, but last autumn produced six new ones at the bird stations: on August 28 at Isokari, on September 8 at Tauvo, on September 15 at Lågskär, on October 5 two at Signilskär, and on October 6 at Jurmo. In addition, at least one record was made elsewhere in Finland. *Phylloscopus proregulus* was recorded at Signilskär on October 13 and ringed at Lågskär on October 23. The few earlier observations, in autumn 1934, 1961 and 1965, are also from these two bird stations.

Emberiza rustica and *E. pusilla* likewise occurred in greater numbers than usual, both at the bird stations and elsewhere in the country. The former is an annual visitor at Tauvo, but in 1967 it was more frequent than normal, some individuals being observed daily from July 16 to August 31, and a few as late as September; the ringing yielded a total of 27 against 12 in 1966. From the southern stations, where the Rustic Bunting is a rare and not even annual visitor, five birds were reported, one in September, three in October, and one in November. The Little Bunting was seen at Tauvo on August 16 and September 8, at Lågskär on October 13, 28 and

29, at Jurmo on November 6. Additional records were reported from other parts of the country, e.g. from Helsinki. Normally, this species is a very rare autumn visitor in Finland south of its range, records not even being reported every year. *Tarsiger cyanurus* was trapped at Säppi on August 27 (KALINAINEN & LAINE 1968), this being the first autumn record in Finland.

Other rarities deserving mention include *Milvus milvus* at Tauvo on August 27, *Circus macrourus* at Isokari on August 15, *Streptopelia decaocto* at Jurmo on May 15 and at Isokari on June 30 as well as *Lanius minor* at Lågskär on August 4.

Delayed departure

In Finland, the autumn of 1967 was exceptionally warm, the third warmest since 1881. This caused many species to stay much longer than usual (see PAASIVIRTA 1967). At the bird stations, quite a number of very late observations were made. These included many waders. At Jurmo, for instance, *Tringa totanus* was seen still on October 9, *Haematopus ostralegus* on October 14, *Limosa lapponica* on October 16, *Charadrius squatarola* (4 ind.) on November 6, and *Scolopax rusticola* on December 15; *Tringa erythropus* and *T. nebularia* occurred in small numbers daily to October 16. All these records were three to six weeks later than the normal date of departure of the last individuals from Finland. Of other records, the following deserve mention (average cessation of the autumn migration in Finland, according to HILDÉN (1960), in brackets): *Porzana porzana,* a recently dead specimen at the base of the Isokari lighthouse on November 5 (latest record in Finland); *Sterna hirundo/paradisaea,* two on October 8 at Isokari (Sept. 10); *Cuculus canorus* on October 9 at Isokari (Sept. 10); *Sylvia borin* on October 22 at Säppi and October 25 at Signilskär (Sept. 25); *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* on October 25 at Säppi and November 9 at Signilskär (Oct. 10); *Anthus trivialis* on October 17 at Lågskär and October 13 at Jurmo (Oct. 5).

Ringing work

Ringing is one of the main activities of all the Finnish bird stations. There are four big Heligoland traps at Signilskär and one at Säppi, Lågskär and Rönnskär; otherwise nets and small wader traps are used for ringing purposes. At some stations, special traps with a decoy dove for catching hawks are also used.

In 1967, a total of 27510 birds, distributed as follows, were ringed at the bird stations: Hailuoto 1857, Tauvo 6669, Valassaaret 1824, Säppi 4187, Isokari 1245, Signilskär 2393, Lågskär 4452, Jurmo 3509, and Rönnskär 1374. The top ten species on the ringing list were: *Erithacus rubecula* 2547, *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* 2358, *Phylloscopus trochilus* 2331, *Regulus regulus* 2275, *Carduelis flammea* 1339, *Fringilla montifringilla* 1155, *F.coelebs* 1091, *Turdus philomelos* 1060, *Sylvia borin* 889, and *Muscicapa striata* 819.

Ringing of adult birds at bird stations is an important supplement to ringing of the young, as trapping often produces good results even for species which breed in remote regions or hide their nests extremely well. Thus the bulk of *Accipiter nisus, Prunella modularis, Erithacus rubecula, Regulus regulus,* and *Fringilla montifringilla* ringed in Finland were trapped as adults at bird stations. For arctic waders, which occur only on passage in Finland, trapping is the only possible method of ringing. The same is also true for many irruptive species (e.g. *Dendrocopos major, Bom-*

bycilla garrulus, Parus ater, Carduelis flammea, and *Loxia curvirostra*), which as young are ringed only in very small numbers.

Selostus: **Suomen lintuasemat ja niiden toiminta 1967.**

Kirjoituksessa esitellään Suomessa nykyisin toimivat 9 lintuasemaa (ks. kartta s. 59) ja selostetaan lyhyesti niillä vuonna 1967 suoritetun havainnoinnin päätuloksia. Vaelluslintujen esiintymisessä oli erikoisinta käpytikan voimakas kevätvaellus, helmipöllön runsaus Signilskärillä syksyllä (172 rengastusta) sekä hömötiaisen joukkoliikehdintä Tauvossa ja Hailuodossa heinä—syyskuussa (Tauvossa yli 300 rengastusta). Invaasionluontoisesti esiintyivät syksyllä myös hippiäinen ja puukiipijä, joita ei yleensä pidetä vaelluslintuina. Koska molempien lajien kanta Suomessa oli 1967 kahden ankaran talven jälkeen heikko, oletetaan vaelluksen saaneen alkunsa muualta, todennäköisesti maamme itäpuolelta. Touko—kesäkuussa asemilla tavattiin tavallista enemmän eteläisiä ja kaakkoisia harvinaisuuksia, mikä ilmeisesti johtui maamme kaakkoispuolella pitkään pysyneen hyvin lämpimän ilmamassan aiheuttamasta muuton pidentymisestä. Syksyllä taas asemilla näyttäytyi monia itäisiä harvinaisuuksia, etenkin isokirvisiä (40 yks.) ja kirjosiipiuunilintuja (6 yks.), kuten muuallakin Länsi-Euroopassa. Poikkeuksellisen lämpimän syksyn takia syysmuutto viivästyi, ja asemilla tehtiin paljon hyvin myöhäisiä havaintoja. Vuoden rengastussaalis lintuasemilla käsitti 27510 lintua. Asemien toimintaa 1967 on selostettu tarkemmin "Lintumies"-lehdessä 1968/1.

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