

Rare Breeding Birds Panel

The Rare Breeding Birds Panel met on Monday 24th November 2008.

Present: David Stroud (in the Chair), Mark Eaton, Ian Francis, Simon Gillings, David Norman, Judith Smith, and Mark Holling (Secretary).

Apologies for absence: none.

The following key items were discussed.

- 1) Review of the recent activities of the Panel Secretary.
 - a) The next report produced by the Panel will cover the 2006 breeding season and will be published in the April 2009 issue of *British Birds*. It will include summaries of the single species surveys completed in 2006, namely Red-throated Diver, Black-throated Diver, Wood Lark and Dartford Warbler. It is intended to produce the report for 2007 later in 2009 thus improving on the current reporting frequency.
 - b) Following the recent BOU conference on the impact of non-native species, the profile of the Panel's recording of rare non-native species breeding in the UK will be raised both with county bird recorders and to the wider birdwatching public. The need for adequate monitoring data was highly stressed at the BOU conference, and RBBP's key role highlighted.
- 2) Further discussion on the new Agreement which defines the new partnership contributing to the running of the Rare Breeding Birds Panel. It is intended that this Agreement will come into effect in the new financial year (April 2009) following formal signature by the partner organisations.
- 3) Details of the relationship between RBBP and the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme, of which RBBP is a partner, were discussed, with a view to further improve the flow of information between the two schemes.
- 4) Species reporting.
 - a) The list of species considered by the Panel will continue to be reviewed on an *ad hoc* basis, determined by ornithological events, but a full review would be planned for 2012 when the initial results of the 2007-11 Atlas project will be available. The question of inclusion of rare sub-species will be reviewed at a future meeting to formulate a Panel policy for the future.
 - b) Records of Rose-ringed Parakeets will no longer be collected by the Panel, as their numbers now greatly exceed the criteria defining a rare breeding bird (an average of less than 1,000 pairs or nesting at a restricted range of sites), and indeed this species is now being monitored by BBS. It is expected that out of range records will continue to be reported to county bird recorders and so any further spread away from the current established range in and around London will continue to be monitored.
 - c) Species reported annually are to be classified according to the completeness of the data received.
 - d) In the future, data collected will be made available by Government Region, but for the time being the regions currently used in the Panel's published reports will continue to be used.

- 5) Publicity.
 - a) RBBP will have a presence at the 2009 British Birdwatching Fair, as part of the *British Birds* stall.
 - b) Over the course of the next year the website will be updated to include a species bibliography of papers on the distribution or status of Panel species, and with the first tranche of guidelines for recording species on the Panel list and interpreting the results.
 - c) A Recording Standards document giving general background to collecting data and guidance on best practice will be printed for circulation in the spring of 2009, alongside supporting articles in some birdwatching magazines and journals.
- 6) Re-appointment of Secretary: it was confirmed that Mark Holling will continue as Secretary for the year 2009-10.