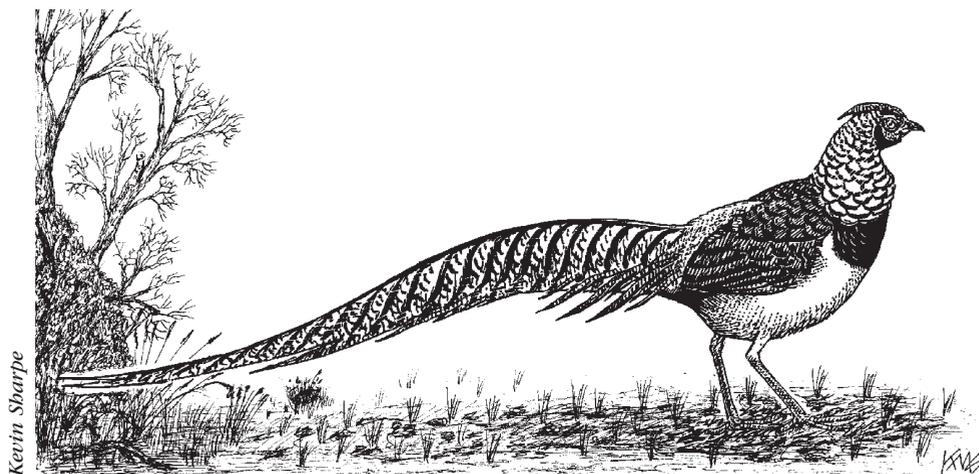


Non-native birds breeding in the United Kingdom in 1998

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Lady Amherst's Pheasant

This is the third report on non-native species of birds breeding in the United Kingdom and covers the year 1998. Coverage has further improved, but we do encourage observers to record species that, in the past, they might have ignored, and to pass on the information to their county recorder. There is an increasing need to monitor present and potential breeding by introduced or escaped birds.

Records of all non-native species in 1998, and some for 1997, involving breeding or potential breeding activity are listed below. Pairs or, for some species such as the pheasants, just males in suitable habitat qualify for inclusion. The letters after the species' names are the categories used by the British

Ornithologists' Union Records Committee. The absence of a letter indicates that the species is not currently listed.

- A Species which have been recorded in an apparently natural state at least once since 1st January 1950.
- B Species which were recorded in an apparently natural state at least once up to 31st December 1949, but have not been recorded subsequently.
- C Species that, although originally introduced by Man, either deliberately or accidentally, have established breeding populations derived from introduced stock, that maintain themselves without necessary recourse to further introduction.

E Species that have been recorded as introductions, transportees or escapees from captivity, and whose breeding populations (if any) are thought not to be self-sustaining. These are marked E* when they have been recorded as nesting with their own kind.

The following species, shown as Category C in the British List, are dealt with in the Panel's reports on rare breeding birds (Ogilvie *et al.* 2000): Gadwall *Anas strepera*, Red Kite *Milvus milvus* and Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*.

The Panel is not gathering information for the following relatively common species of which introduced or escaped populations breed in the wild (categories in brackets): Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* (AC), Greylag Goose *Anser anser* (AC), Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* (AC), Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata* (C), Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* (AC), Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis* (C), Capercaillie *Tetrao urogallus* (BC), Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa* (C), Chukar Partridge *A. chukar* (E*), Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* (C), Rock Dove (and Feral Pigeon) *Columba livia* (AC), and Little Owl *Athene noctua* (C).

Records are given by county, in alphabetical order in the country order England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Systematic list

Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* (AE*)

One locality: unknown number of pairs bred. LOTHIAN There were 35 full-winged birds, including five juveniles, at Edinburgh Zoo on 15th August.

No reports were received concerning the full-winged birds at Great Witchingham Park, Norfolk. A number of singles were also reported, some of which may have been escapes. Late-arriving information from Edinburgh Zoo reveals that, in 1997, a number of young were taken from nests prior to fledging and dispersed to other collections.

Trumpeter Swan *Cygnus buccinator* (E*)

One locality: one pair.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE A pair which bred at Tansor Gravel-pits in 1997 was present in January and March, but did not stay and breed.

The year 1997 appears to be the first in which breeding by this species in the wild state was recorded in the United Kingdom. The birds had escaped from a wildfowl collection.

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus* (E*)

Four localities in four counties: four pairs bred.

ESSEX Pair bred and seen with two young in May on Raphael Park Lake, Upminster, where they bred in 1996. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE Pair raised at least one young at Deene Lake, where they bred in 1997. WILTSHIRE Pair bred at Ramsbury Manor, a regular site, seen with two young in early June. LOTHIAN Pair reared three young on the Union Canal, Ratho, where they bred in 1997.

All four breeding records refer to well-established pairs. Reports of singles and pairs were also received from several other areas.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* (AE*)

One locality: one pair possibly bred.

BERKSHIRE A juvenile was present from 25th June, but its origins are unclear.

This was the only report received, in contrast to the definite breeding record and two other pairs in England in 1997. Two apparently wild pairs bred in Scotland in 1998 (Ogilvie *et al.* 2000).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus* (AE*)

One locality: one pair possibly bred.

ROSS & CROMARTY A flock of five on the Cromarty Firth on 17th July was believed to be a family party of two adults and three well-grown young.

It is always difficult to know whether records like this refer to genuine wild birds that failed to migrate back to their breeding grounds in Iceland and Greenland or to introduced or escaped birds, which are quite widespread. Delany (1993) found a total of 88 at 29 sites in 1991, including a breeding pair in Lancashire.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* (AE*)

Three localities in two counties: three pairs bred.

NORFOLK Single pairs at two sites both reared young. ARGYLL Three full-winged

pairs of the race *flavirostris* bred on Islay near a waterfowl collection; one brood of two young was reared.

The small group on Islay stems from a small waterfowl collection. Breeding success is low.

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus* (E*)

Six localities in five counties: six pairs bred, plus possible hybrid pair.

AVON A clutch of six eggs was laid on Denny Island, Bristol Channel, but may have been produced by a hybrid pair (with Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*). DERBYSHIRE Pair raised one young at Queen's Park, Chesterfield. GREATER LONDON Six full-winged pairs in Kew Gardens in late May, with broods of five, four and three; also a hybrid pair (with Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus*) with three young. GREATER MANCHESTER Pair bred unsuccessfully at Pennington Flash. HAMPSHIRE The only breeding report from the regular locality at Stratfield Saye was of one mated to a Greylag Goose *Anser anser* raising four young. There were a number of reports of pairs or singles from elsewhere in the county.

The Derbyshire pair was present, but not breeding, in the previous summer. Although there could be as many as 100 birds in the country - Delany (1993) reported 85 at 27 localities in 1991 - very few breeding attempts have been reported.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens* (AE*)

Three localities in three counties: at least three pairs bred.

HAMPSHIRE Two pairs bred at Stratfield Saye, but no young fledged. NORFOLK A colony of free-flying individuals was reported from Sandringham, but it is not known whether any pairs bred away from the lake there. ARGYLL Maximum of 38 birds was seen on Coll during the year; at least one pair bred, with four young.

Apart from the self-sustaining flock on Coll, this species seems to breed only very sporadically away from collections.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis* (AE*)

20 localities in 11 counties: at least 54 pairs bred or probably bred.

AVON Pair raised three young on Denny Island, Bristol Channel. BERKSHIRE Pair with

two young at Eversley Gravel-pits on 20th June. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE The flock at Emberton, which has been present for some years, numbered at least 40, but there was no information on breeding. ESSEX Three pairs were present at two sites; all probably bred but their success is unknown. GLOUCESTERSHIRE Flock of 30 or more full-winged individuals present in New Grounds and Frampton Pools area, but breeding success unknown. HAMPSHIRE 24 pairs bred at Stratfield Saye, 42 young being raised from 124 eggs laid; pair raised seven young at Baffin's Pond, Portsmouth. LANCASHIRE Two pairs bred at Belmont, near Bolton, and breeding took place at Knowsley Park, Liverpool, though number of pairs not recorded. Breeding possibly occurred at Ormskirk, Southport and Stocks Reservoir. NORFOLK 13 pairs bred in Stanford Battle Area; pair raised three young at Ditchingham Gravel-pit; pair (including a Swedish-ringed male present since 1993) raised five young at another site; two pairs at fourth site both failed. SUFFOLK Three pairs seen with broods, but an increase from 70 to 140 birds in the county over the summer suggests several pairs went unrecorded. WEST MIDLANDS Pair raised six young, Edgbaston. ANGLESEY Four pairs laid at Llyn Crigyll.

Although it may take a while to become established, this species appears to have high productivity thereafter.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus* (CE*)

Minimum of 20 localities in six counties: at least 82 pairs recorded.

BERKSHIRE Pair at Whiteknights Park laid in December 1997, but deserted by 9th January 1998, but laid again and had three young from 30th March; the female was incubating again in December. Pairs bred at Binfield (seven young in March), South Coke (seven young) and Dinton Pastures (six young in April), while display was seen at Summerleaze Gravel-pit in April. ESSEX Pair bred at Little Totham, but the eggs disappeared. GREATER MANCHESTER Four pairs at Compstall, one brood seen briefly in March; a later attempt fledged one young. HERTFORDSHIRE Pair raised brood on Amwell Gravel-pit and had further two or three nesting attempts. NORFOLK A total of 53

pairs was recorded in the county. SUFFOLK At least 18 pairs seen at 12 sites and 14 broods were reported.

The total of pairs in Norfolk is not claimed to be complete, but reflects an increasing awareness of the species. The Suffolk total represents a genuine increase on past years. The ability of this species to nest during the winter is well demonstrated by the records from Berkshire.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea* (BE*)

One locality: one or two pairs.

NORFOLK One or two pairs present all year, but no breeding reported.

No other reports of this species were received.

Cape Shelduck *Tadorna cana* (E)

One locality: one hybrid pair.

SURREY As in 1997, a pair of which one was a hybrid, either between Cape Shelduck and Paradise Shelduck *T. variegata*, as reported in 1997, or between Australian Shelduck *T. tadornoides* and Paradise Shelduck, as now suggested, hatched five young, reducing to two, in the Queen Elizabeth II Reservoir and West End Common area.

The precise identification of the hybrid adult remains uncertain.

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata* (E*)

Four localities in four counties: one pair bred.

GREATER MANCHESTER Two territorial pairs recorded on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, but breeding not reported. NORFOLK One pair present throughout the year south of Thetford, but not recorded as breeding. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Up to nine at Rufford during the summer, but no confirmed breeding. SURREY Pair bred, adult and young seen, Clapham.

These were the only reports received, compared with the seven counties with pairs in 1997. No reports were forthcoming from the known regular site on the River Ouse at Ely, Cambridgeshire, or from any of the following listed by Cranswick *et al.* (1999): Lothing Lake and Oulton Broad, Norfolk (52 in December 1997), Nafferton Lake, Yorkshire (30 in December 1997), Wilderness Pond, Glamorgan (12 in July and September 1997), Lancaster Canal, Lan-

cashire (eight in January 1998), Derwent Water, Cumbria (eight in October and December 1997), or Gun Knowe Loch, Borders (seven in April 1997).

We hope that observers will send in breeding records of this species in future years.

Ringed Teal *Callonetta leucophrys* (E)

One locality: one pair possibly bred.

HAMPSHIRE Pair at Titchfield Haven on 8th February and again on 19th June, when accompanied by a possible juvenile.

It is not certain that this was a definite breeding record, but if so it would represent a first in the wild in Britain.

Wood Duck *Aix sponsa* (E*)

One locality: one pair.

DEVON Pair, plus an additional one or two males, present on River Plym from May to September; breeding not confirmed.

This was the only breeding-season report received.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina* (AE*)

Five localities in five counties: six pairs bred. ESSEX Adult with two young in July, Harrow Lodge. GLOUCESTERSHIRE Up to 74 were present in the Cotswold Water Park in winter 1997/98, but no breeding reports were received. LINCOLNSHIRE At least four pairs bred on the Deepings Gravel-pits close to the Cambridgeshire border. NORFOLK Full-winged birds are based on a waterfowl collection at Pensthorpe, but there were no reports of breeding away from there. OXFORDSHIRE Pair fledged five young at Shipton-on-Cherwell.

Reports concerning the well-established population in the Cotswold Water Park would be very welcome.

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* (A)

One locality: two pairs bred.

LANCASHIRE Two pairs, of known captive origin, bred at Mere Sands Wood, but no young hatched.

Up to four pairs, originating from birds which flew away from a waterfowl collection, have been breeding at this Lancashire site since at least 1988 and have previously been included in the main Panel report. The

nests have frequently been robbed, which may account for the static or even diminishing number of pairs.

Northern Bobwhite *Colinus virginianus* (E*)

One locality: single singing male.

ISLE OF MAN Singing male in potato field, Smeale, 5th to 12th July.

The first time that this species has appeared in these reports.

Silver Pheasant *Lophura nycthemera* (E*)

No records were received.

Reeves's Pheasant *Syrnaticus reevesii* (E*)

One locality: single bird.

SUSSEX One at High Hurstwood on 25th March.

The only record received.

Golden Pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus* (CE*)

27 localities in six counties: minimum of 85 birds recorded.

HAMPSHIRE A pair and six males (four calling) were reported from four localities. NORFOLK A total of at least 58 was reported from 14 localities, but the true county total is thought to exceed 100. SUFFOLK Calling males were reported from Kings Forest (six or seven), Mayday Farm, Brandon (six), and Thetford Warren Lodge (one). SUSSEX At least one calling male in West Dean Woods and in Kingley Vale. AYRSHIRE Male at North Craig reservoir, 14th April. DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY Single males were reported from Beattock (there was also one there in 1997, which was not included in our 1997 report) and Loch Ken, but none was seen at the traditional Palnure area, though no thorough search was made.

No reports were received from Furzey or Brownsea Islands, Dorset, or from Tresco, Isles of Scilly, sites which are known to have held this species in previous years.

Lady Amherst's Pheasant *Chrysolophus amberstiae* (CE*)

Three counties: 94 pairs or territories recorded.

BEDFORDSHIRE A total of 85 territories was identified during an intensive survey carried out by the Bedfordshire Bird Club (Cannings 1999). BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Eight pairs were

recorded at three sites. NORFOLK A pair was seen in November.

The number found by the Bedfordshire Bird Club compares with the estimated 100-200 individuals in 1991 (Trodd & Kramer 1991), suggesting less of a decline than had been thought.

Red-rumped Parrot *Psephotus baematonotus*

One locality: One pair possibly bred.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE Up to six feeding in garden at Moulton in late August, when one young one found dead; then still six (three males and three females) on 2nd September.

It is probable that this group escaped together, but just possible that breeding may have taken place in the wild.

Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria* (E*)

One locality: two pairs bred.

MERSEYSIDE Two pairs bred at Fazackerley, where a single pair bred in 1997, and raised broods of five and three, with all 12 birds being seen together on 1st May. Several were, however, subsequently shot by youths with airguns, though at least one pair survived the winter. While we must condemn the vandalism, we also do not wish another member of the parrot family to become established as a breeding species in Britain.

Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* (CE*)

Five counties.

BERKSHIRE Pairs reported from four localities. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Up to 40 birds in six or seven areas during the breeding season, but true number of breeding pairs unknown; 150 seen going to roost at Wraybury Gravel-pit in January, and 160 in November. HAMPSHIRE Three records, but no breeding reported. MIDDLESEX Five pairs bred on Crane River Island. SURREY Up to 27 nesting or territory-holding pairs reported, though these are not representative of the county total. The roost at Esher held 1,373 in October and 1,704 in December.

There is evidence of an increase and spread in Buckinghamshire.

Monk Parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus* (E*)

Four localities: no confirmed breeding reports.

HERTFORDSHIRE There is a small breeding population in Borehamwood, with up to 15 seen together. SURREY Reports of pairs and small flocks from a number of localities, including Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road reservoirs and Richmond Park, but no actual breeding noted.

No report was received from the known haunt in Devon.

Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo* (E*)

Two localities: one pair bred.

ENGLAND Pair bred at a location in northern England and fledged two young. ROSS & CROMARTY An adult called throughout January at a locality where a nest scrape was made in 1997.

This is the third year running that the northern England pair has bred successfully.

The Scottish bird was present for the second year running (its presence was not included in our 1997 report). The only previous breeding record was of a pair which bred in Moray & Nairn in 1984 and again in 1985, fledging a single chick (Cook 1992).

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