

British Birds

VOLUME 79 NUMBER 2 FEBRUARY 1986



Rare breeding birds in the United Kingdom in 1983

Compiled by Robert Spencer and the Rare Breeding Birds Panel

The typescript of a report on rare breeding birds in 1983 was completed as long ago as December 1984. It followed the pattern of its predecessors (e.g. that for 1982, *Brit. Birds* 78: 69-92) and could have been in print a few months later. Readers may be interested to know why this did not happen, for it could have a bearing on the presentation of future reports.

If the system were working to perfection, some six to nine months after the end of each breeding season, there would pass into the Panel's safe custody full details of every rare breeding bird in the United Kingdom. Some six months later, the Panel would publish a report which would give

readers all the information they needed to take an intelligent interest in the progress or decline of each species, and which would accomplish this without revealing information likely to be helpful to that small—but possibly growing—corps of people who put their selfish interests before the well-being of the birds.

In reality, we all have our human imperfections so that the ideal is not achieved. We are, for example, still (in October 1985) awaiting 1983 data from some counties, and know that we have not yet got them because the people concerned carry heavy loads of voluntary ornithological duties. Whenever the records come, no matter how late, they are still invaluable from an archive point of view, so we shall be grateful for them. If, however, one is trying to monitor the annual breeding performance of our rarer and more vulnerable species (as our country is required to do as a member of the EEC), long delays are, at best, frustrating, and at worst could prevent the recognition of a critical situation until it was too late to attempt any conservation measures.

The main conservation reasons for collecting information on rare breeding birds on a national basis are:

1. Population changes can be identified and, if necessary, amendments made to legislation (e.g. adding species to Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act or to Annex 1 of the EEC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds).
2. Changes in status can assist conservation bodies with determining priorities (e.g. reserve acquisitions) and also enable them to give helpful advice to other organisations and individuals who similarly may need to determine priorities and action.
3. Changes in status can alert ornithological, conservation and research bodies to the need for detailed surveys, and ecological studies.
4. The NCC can assess, more accurately, the implications of granting licences for photography and scientific nest visits; it can also determine the need for regional considerations in this respect.

Also, if site details are given:

5. Vulnerable sites can be identified where some form of nest protection might enhance the species' chances of success; also, advice to landowners can be given in cases where damaging practices might destroy a nest.
6. SSSI and nature reserve boundaries and habitat management instructions might, as a result of the presence of a rare breeding bird, require modification.
7. New SSSIs can be considered, so enabling statutory measures to be introduced to protect the habitat (and thus the species).

Whilst, to the best of our knowledge, the work of the Panel is not thought to be controversial, some observers and some recorders certainly regard the Panel's published reports in a critical light. Over a period of more than 12 months during 1984 and 1985, we have been seeking the frank opinions of county recorders and now have many letters to guide us. It would be fair to claim that the majority believes that the Panel should be able to draw upon the data in the files for conservation purposes (the original aim was to set up an archive) and that the Panel's published report is about right. A small minority, however, considers that the report has been unnecessarily secretive, whilst a rather larger number of county recorders (but still a minority) fears that it has revealed too much information. So, partly because it was too incomplete and partly in the hope that we might come up with something more widely acceptable, the draft report mentioned in the

opening paragraph was scrapped.

We need a format which contrives to reassure those who worry about security and yet is educational in the best sense of the word. To strike the right balance between these potentially conflicting requirements may prove impossible, but we have tried, and we hope that this revised version will be judged a step in the right direction. The reactions of county recorders and of readers will help to determine whether it is a once-only experiment or, broadly speaking, the basis of a pattern for several years to come.

In our correspondence from recorders, some of the most thoughtful criticism has been directed towards our method of avoiding naming counties by giving them alphabetical letters. This, it has been argued, is a direct challenge to try to crack the code; and it may be that there is some truth in the claim, bearing in mind that over a thousand people took up the challenge of *The 'British Birds' Mystery Photographs Book*. True or not, in this report we have abandoned the system and have introduced in its place—after sounding opinion—an hierarchical structure: county, region, country and United Kingdom. We continue to name counties where we have been authorised by the relevant recorder to do so (although, in a few cases, we have been more cautious and opted for a region). A region, in this context, is a group of neighbouring counties (generally at least seven). It would have been possible to devise our own set of groupings, but it seemed sensible to make use of a pre-existing one, and we chose that drawn up in the 1960s by the European Committee for Bird Ringing. No grouping would be entirely free from objection, but we consider the Euring one well suited to our purpose. It is as follows:

Northern Ireland Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, Tyrone

England, SW Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Isles of Scilly, Somerset, Wiltshire

England, SE Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Greater London, Hertfordshire, Kent, Middlesex, Oxfordshire, Surrey, Sussex (East and West).

England, E Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire and South Humberside, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Suffolk

England, Central Derbyshire, Herefordshire, Leicestershire (with Rutland), Nottinghamshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire (West Midlands, in the new county structure), Worcestershire

England, N Cheshire, Cleveland, Cumbria, Durham, Greater Manchester, Isle of Man, Lancashire, Merseyside, North Humberside, Tyne & Wear, Yorkshire (North, South and West)

Wales All present-day counties (i.e. includes the former Monmouth)

Scotland, S The former counties of Ayrshire, Berwickshire, Dumfriesshire, Kircudbrightshire, Lanarkshire, Lothian (East, Mid and West), Peeblesshire, Renfrewshire, Roxburghshire, Selkirkshire, Wigtownshire

Scotland, Mid Aberdeenshire, Angus, Banffshire, Clackmannanshire, Dunbartonshire, Fife, Kincardineshire, Kinross, Moray, Nairn, Perthshire, Stirlingshire

Scotland, N & W Argyllshire, Bute, Caithness, Inverness-shire, Orkney, Ross & Cromarty, Shetland, Sutherland, Western Isles (Outer Hebrides)

In place of 'County B', for example, we might now write 'England, SE', meaning that the bird was somewhere in a block of 12 counties. In nearly all cases, the area of land specified will be so large as to thwart even the most dedicated sleuth, but we have the further options of simply saying

'England', 'Scotland', and so on, and it is just conceivable that for even greater security we might write 'Great Britain' or 'United Kingdom'.

The Panel's previous reports have all listed named counties in alphabetical order (a system adopted for most listings). Its disadvantage in this report is that it does not facilitate an appreciation of distribution. For example, under Hobby *Falco subbuteo* in our 1979 report appears the county sequence 'Avon, Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Cambridgeshire, Devon, Dorset, Durham, East Sussex, Gloucestershire . . .', so that the mind might just jump about in its attempt to visualise the distribution. We have in this 1983 report listed all counties by region, and the regions in the order shown above, but alphabetically within each region, for there appears to be no logical sequence of listing within regions which can be applied to all regions.

A third change is the introduction of tabular presentation for a few species, such as Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti* and Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*. The system is experimental, but could be developed further, both in the range of data presented and by extension to other of the more widespread rare breeding birds.

Readers will note that for Marsh Circus *Circus aeruginosus* and Montagu's Harriers *C. pygargus* there is an acknowledgment of the valuable contribution made by John Day. For some years, he has been making a detailed survey of the status of these species, corresponding in the process with all the relevant recorders, and often with observers. Since his information was in some cases more detailed than that available to us, we were grateful to receive draft summaries from him. The principle involved is not new, in that Humphrey Sitters has played a major role in piecing together the account of the decline of the Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirius*, whilst Peter Davis of the Kite Committee has for many years passed us a comprehensive summary of the fortunes of the Red Kite *Milvus milvus*. We hope it may prove possible to establish similar ties with other workers specialising in species which seem not to be adequately covered by our standard reporting procedure.

This report could not have been published without the skill and dedication of the original observers, some of whom spent unnumbered hours in their efforts to prove breeding, obtain evidence of breeding success, and so on. Their contribution completed, it then fell to the county recorders to assemble, transcribe, and sometimes even confirm the data before passing them on to the Panel, and in an ornithologically rich county these tasks can be very considerable. The role of the Panel in the preparation of the report is that of midwife, helping the data into the light of day. To all who have helped, the Panel members express their sincere thanks, coupled with the hopes of continued and extended support.

During 1983, the membership of the Panel was unchanged from 1982, being Dr L. A. Batten, R. H. Dennis, Ian Prestt, Dr J. T. R. Sharrock and Robert Spencer, who succeeded Dr Sharrock as Secretary in the autumn of the year. This report was compiled during the summer of 1985, in which year Richard Porter succeeded Ian Prestt on the Panel and was immediately much involved in the collecting of material and the presentation of this report.

Whilst the work of the Panel is supported, both financially and in other respects, by the NCC, the RSPB, the BTO and *British Birds*, the Panel is autonomous. Its members are appointed as individuals, albeit with a knowledge of, but not directly responsible to, the sponsoring bodies.

The year 1983

The year was notable for the addition of two species to our list. The first was the Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis* present in a Welsh colony of Manx Shearwaters *P. puffinus* (*Brit. Birds* 79: 28-33). The second was the Parrot Crossbill *Loxia pytyopsittacus*, with two pairs in a northern county, the year before the well-publicised breeding in East Anglia. At this stage, it would be wrong to attach much importance to either event. Sporadic breeding attempts may have novelty value, but seldom contribute meaningfully to our avifauna.

Of much greater significance are those species now declining after relative abundance and those whose small beginnings are apparently prospering. Of the former, the Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* and the Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* offer naught for our comfort, but such declines run counter to the general trend of survival and increase. Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*, Marsh and Montagu's Harriers, Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, Redwing *Turdus iliacus*, Cetti's Warbler (despite recent setbacks due to cold winters) and Firecrest all seem to be buoyant or, at the very least, stable. Any reader looking back to our report for 1982 will find a considerable overlap in the list of prospering species then and now, and this lends support to the belief that there is sustained, if slow, increase. There are also slight indications that, after a long period of mere toe-hold presence, both the Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus* and the Serin *Serinus serinus* may be becoming more surely established as breeding birds. What happens to them on our shores must be seen as part of the wider pattern of expansion and colonisation which they have been showing in northwestern Europe.

Systematic list

We have received no relevant 1983 records for the following species:

Great Northern Diver <i>Gavia immer</i>	Green Sandpiper <i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Little Bittern <i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>	Spotted Sandpiper <i>Actitis macularia</i>
Purple Heron <i>Ardea purpurea</i>	Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Pink-footed Goose <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	Glaucous Gull <i>Larus hyperboreus</i>
Scaup <i>Aythya marila</i>	Bee-eater <i>Merops apiaster</i>
King Eider <i>Somateria spectabilis</i>	Shore Lark <i>Eremophila alpestris</i>
Long-tailed Duck <i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	Citrine Wagtail <i>Motacilla citreola</i>
Smew <i>Mergus albellus</i>	Great Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>
Rough-legged Buzzard <i>Buteo lagopus</i>	Great Grey Shrike <i>Lanius excubitor</i>
Kentish Plover <i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	Lapland Bunting <i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>	

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Two sites, involving three individuals.

England, SE One site: one from 20th February to 12th November.

Scotland, S One site: two, sometimes one, in breeding plumage and displaying on several dates between 17th April and 24th June.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	0	1	2	5	2	0	1	3	3	2	2
Pairs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Individuals in summer	0	1	2	5	2	0	1	4	2	2	3

The pair in Scotland may have left as a result of disturbance to the habitat.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

44 sites: 41-79 pairs breeding.

England, N One site: pair in breeding plumage on 23rd April.

Scotland, Mid Four sites.

PERTSHIRE Four sites: (1)-(4) singles at each on dates ranging between 28th March and 31st July, but possibly two individuals at one site on 4th June.

MORAYSHIRE One site: three, possibly four, pairs, reared total of three broods.

Scotland, N & W 38 sites.

INVERNESS-SHIRE 38 sites: (1)-(38) total of 38-70 pairs, rearing total of 29-32 young.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	22	25	23	23	15	18	27	36	35	25	44
Pairs proved breeding	52	58	54	70	42	37	58	53	52	51	41
Pairs possibly breeding	53	63	66	75	51	55	77	80	71	59	79

Many of the pairs in the category 'possibly breeding' were in fact known not to have bred. The sharp increase in the number of sites arises chiefly from extra fieldwork in areas not hitherto covered. Amongst the reasons for failure, observers listed low water levels, sharply rising water levels, and an inflatable power-boat driven over a nest.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

18 sites: 11-29 pairs breeding.

England, SE Three sites, involving two counties: (1) one in breeding plumage on 31st May; one, possibly the same, from 19th to 28th July; (2) single on 30th June; (3) single on 2nd July.

England, E Six sites, involving two counties: (1) two, possibly a pair, arrived on 1st August and may have come from suitable site in vicinity, present daily until 19th August, when one left, second left 4th September, but two arrived on 9th September, remaining until at least 12th September; (2) pair on 20th May, three adults from 24th May to 2nd July, displaying, none subsequently; (3) pair displaying on 11th May; (4) pair displaying on 17th May; (5) one on 3rd July, possibly from site 2; (6) one on 6th July, also possibly from site 2.

England, Central One site: pair present in May and often going into reeds, but not seen after site flooded by torrential rain on 1st June.

England, N Five sites, involving two counties: (1) nine pairs reared total of 33 young; (2) pair on 13th June in breeding plumage, nest material being offered, copulated twice; (3) one in breeding plumage from 24th April to 23rd May; (4) pair moulting from summer to winter

plumage from 31st July to at least 7th August; (5) pair in winter plumage on numerous occasions until 21st December, when only one present.

Elsewhere in England One site: two pairs, rearing broods of two and one.

Wales One site: adult in breeding plumage from 11th April to 2nd May.

Scotland, Mid One site: three pairs, 13th April.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	4	2	4	2	7	6	6	9	7	12	18
Pairs proved breeding	18	15	2	10	11	13	12	11	5	11	11
Pairs possibly breeding	19	18	11	11	16	15	14	21	12	21	29

With 36 young known to have been reared, and substantial increases in both the number of sites and the number of individuals involved, it would appear that the population is in a healthier state than it has been for many years.

Black-browed Albatross *Diomedea melanophris*

One site: one summered with Gannets *Sula bassana*.

Scotland, N & W One site.

SHETLAND One site: adult in colony from 17th March to 16th September.

This is the twelfth successive year that this individual has summered in this Gannet colony.

Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis*

One site: one reported.

Wales One site: female identified by call in colony of Manx Shearwaters *Puffinus puffinus* on 3rd May, but this 'call-only' record was not accepted by the Rarities Committee.

1981 Wales One site: male, first noted on 26th June, and visited the colony on most dark nights until 10th July, captured and ringed on 29th June, retrapped on 7th July.

1982 Wales One site: male (ringed in 1981) present in colony of Manx Shearwaters on 21st June and most nights until 25th July.

There have been fewer than 60 occurrences of this species in British and Irish waters, none previously relating to individuals attending shearwater colonies, so the records listed here represent a most interesting development. For fuller details see *British Birds* (79: 28-33).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

15 sites: 36 or 37 booming males.

England, SE and E 13 sites, of which ten were in Norfolk: (1) individual(s) present to 21st May, but no indication of breeding; (2) one present before and after the breeding season; (3) eight booming; (4) three booming; (5) two booming; (6)-(13) singles booming.

England, N Two sites.

LANCASHIRE Two sites: (1) 11, possibly 12, pairs present; (2) one booming.

Information from one county in 'England, SE and E' is incomplete.

	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	18	17	21	19	16	15	15
Pairs proved breeding	0	2	1	4	1	1	0
Booming males	43	47	51	48	47	35	36-37

It is difficult to obtain proof of breeding for this species.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Four sites: three feral or partly feral pairs, a possibly wild pair and one other individual.

England, N One site.

LANCASHIRE One site: wild individual paired with one originating from the Wildfowl Trust collection at Martin Mere and reared one young.

Scotland, Mid Three sites.

DUNBARTONSHIRE One site: two feral pairs, both of which eventually deserted.

PERTSHIRE Two sites: (1) pair summered; (2) one with two Mute Swans *Cygnus olor* on 9th June.

Black Duck *Anas rubripes*

Two sites: female mated with male Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* at one, and male mated with female Mallard at second.

England, SW One site.

SCILLY One site: female mated with male Mallard and produced three young; hybrids from former years are now merged with the Mallard population.

Wales One site.

GWYNEDD One site: male present all year and hybrids seen as follows: three on 3rd February, two on 30th March, three on 20th August, eight on 23rd September and five on 7th December.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

20 sites: 12-26 pairs breeding.

England, SW One site.

DORSET One site: female with three young: the first breeding record for the county.

England, SE Two sites.

ESSEX Two sites: (1) pair on 14th July with nine young about three weeks old; (2) single on 16th July.

England, E Four sites.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE Two sites: two or three pairs possibly bred, but extensive flooding prevented close investigation.

NORFOLK One site: male on 18th May.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE One site: pair on 4th May: third successive year that pair seen at the site.

England, N Six sites.

CHESHIRE One site: 13, including four adult males, on 10th June, and two males and four females on 25th June: one pair suspected of breeding.

CUMBRIA Five sites: (1) pair, with courtship display on 14th April, female carrying nesting material on 21st April, apparently sitting on 25th April, three two-week-old ducklings in the reeds on 1st July, but not identified specifically; (2) pair with 12 eggs in early June; (3) two immatures on 17th July; (4) female on 25th July; (5) pair on 1st May.

Scotland, N & W Eight sites.

INVERNESS-SHIRE One site: pair arrived on 3rd April, female agitated and protecting young on 3rd June.

WESTERN ISLES One site: pair possibly bred.

ORKNEY Six sites: (1) five females showing distraction display on 19th July; (2) nest with seven eggs in early June; (3) female with eight young on 10th May; (4) pair present in May and June; (5) female with seven young on 28th June; (6) pair possibly bred.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	3	7	11	10	15	10	19	15	16	18	21
Pairs proved breeding	3	10	12	6	10	7	10	9	8	7	12
Pairs possibly breeding	5	11	25	16	26	23	41	25	31	32	26

Though small in numbers, the breeding population of this graceful duck is widely spread.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

57 sites: 14-64 pairs breeding.

England, SW Three sites.

AVON One site: male present 16th May to 15th July, but no report of female.

CORNWALL One site: pair reared at least two young.

DEVON One site: pair during 1st to 8th April, male on 17th April.

England, SE 12 sites.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Two sites: (1) male on 2nd May, male and female on 15th June; (2) single male on 3rd and 14th June, then up to three in August and five in September, with one remaining to end of year.

ESSEX Four sites: (1) male on 15th June; (2) male on 22nd May; (3) female on 4th June; (4) one on 25th June.

HERTFORDSHIRE One site: pair on 26th and 27th March, pair on 26th May, male on 31st May, pair on 10th June.

KENT Five sites: (1) four individuals including three males on 18th June, but no other records during period 17th May to 18th July; (2) present all summer and one pair bred; (3) present all summer and three pairs bred; (4) present from May to July, one pair rearing five young; (5) five pairs present, broods of three and four seen in late July.

England, E 27 sites.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE Four sites: (1) maximum count of 14 males on 18th May and a brood of ten seen on 23rd June, others may have nested; (2) maximum of three males and one female on 16th May, pair present until mid July and probably bred; (3) maximum of four males and one female in May and one male on 1st June; (4) up to two pairs in April and May, last individual on 8th July. There may have been some interchange between sites 3 and 4.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE One site: pair present from 24th March to 13th April in suitable habitat, copulation observed, but did not breed at this site.

NORFOLK 16 sites: (1)-(16) one to five pairs reported from each, and two pairs known to have bred.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE Five sites: (1) pair present during May; (2) pair present on 22nd April, female only on 23rd and 24th April; (3) one with damaged wing from 21st August to 23rd September; (4) male on 27th April; (5) pair present from 10th to 14th May and on 27th June, male and two females on 29th June, one to three individuals present on various dates between 25th July and 17th September.

SUFFOLK One site: one or two pairs reared at least four young.

England, Central Two sites.

LEICESTERSHIRE One site: pair reared two out of six young, this being the first breeding record for the county since 1947.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE One site: pair from 24th to 27th April and wandering males to 21st May, then a gap until reappearance on 30th July.

England, N 13 sites.

CHESHIRE Three sites: (1) male on 9th April and pair on 17th April; (2) pair on 4th April; (3) pair on 29th April, male on 12th May, subsequently two males in eclipse together with female and four juveniles.

CUMBRIA Three sites: (1) female on 31st August; (2) pair from 29th July to 25th September; (3) female from 29th April to 3rd August.

LANCASHIRE Five sites: (1) pair from 22nd April to 7th May, male on 12th May, pair on 25th June, male or female on several dates in July; (2) one from 8th to 31st May; (3) pair from 12th March to 10th April; (4) pair on 1st June, male on 4th June; (5) pair from 22nd April joined by second male from 2nd May to 22nd May, last seen on 25th May.

NORTHUMBERLAND One site: pair reared young.

YORKSHIRE One site: pair probably bred.

	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	34	48	66	57
Pairs proved breeding	4	8	10	14
Pairs possibly breeding	54	58	94	64

Possibly an average year for this species, but a longer series of records will

be needed before the 1983 data can be seen in true perspective. The importance of the southeastern half of England is clearly demonstrated.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Six sites: 10-85 pairs breeding.

Ireland, N One site.

FERMANAGH One site: maximum of 51 breeding pairs with minimum productivity of 45 young from nine broods.

Scotland, Mid Three sites.

DUNBARTONSHIRE/STIRLINGSHIRE One site: census on 24th May indicated four pairs and an additional male, no reports of young received.

PERTHSHIRE Two sites: (1) three pairs on 6th May, two pairs on 29th May, pair plus two males and three females on 18th June, female with one young on 20th July; (2) pair on 6th May.

Scotland, N & W Two sites.

INVERNESS-SHIRE Two sites: (1) 23 males and 2 females on 18th June, other females assumed to be on nests; (2) three pairs on nearby lochans on 18th June.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	13	13	12	14	13	9	17	10	6	17	6
Pairs proved breeding	4	10	32	22	24	16	98	7	5	14	10
Pairs possibly breeding	133	142	159	159	156	141	128	113	82	112	85

Annual variation in numbers probably tends to reflect variation in the degree of cover more than population fluctuations.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

57 sites: 47-57 pairs bred.

England, SE One site.

ESSEX One site: female on 17th June.

England, N Five sites.

CUMBRIA Five sites: (1) two immature males on 23rd May, female on 2nd June; (2) male on 10th June; (3) female on 10th May; (4) male on 16th July; (5) female on 17th May.

Wales One site.

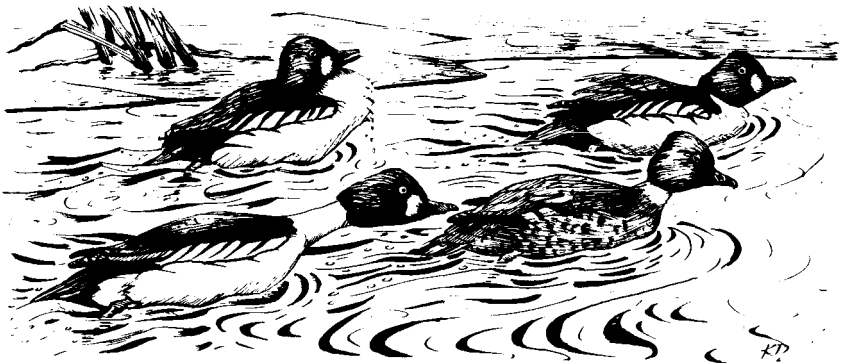
GWYNEDD One site: female present up to 6th July.

Scotland, S One site.

BORDERS One site: male on 14th June.

Scotland, Mid Two sites.

PERTHSHIRE Two sites: (1) two males and five immature females on 17th June; (2) six adult and two immature males, two adult and three immature females on 18th June.



Scotland, N & W Eggs laid in 47 nests: 209 young hatched from 24 clutches, with good survival.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	1	5	3	8	12	18	17	11	13	11	11
Pairs proved breeding	3	3	3	5	6	12	22	26	29	27	47
Pairs possibly breeding	3	7	6	12	14	27	43	37	54	57	56
Young hatched	22	19	10	46	11	40	110	165	286	220	209

The nests in 'Scotland, N & W' have arbitrarily been regarded as one rather than 47 sites: this does not necessarily imply nests in close proximity. The standard warning must be given that the reporting of summering Goldeneyes, although a common practice in English and Welsh counties, is not undertaken systematically at the numerous potential sites in Scotland.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Two sites: 0-2 pairs breeding.

Great Britain Two sites, two pairs: (1) pair summered; (2) pair present from second week of May to 27th July was thought not to have bred.

No information is available from a third locality, where the species is known to have bred in recent years.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	1	3	2	7	8	8	3	3	8	2	2
Pairs proved breeding	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	2	2	1	0
Pairs possibly breeding	1	3	2	7	8	8	3	4	9	2	2

A poor situation for the second consecutive year and one in which the warm dry weather might have been expected to benefit the species.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

46 pairs, 33 breeding, 20 successful, rearing 24 young.

Wales 46 pairs known; 24 young reared. Of the known pairs, 33 laid eggs. There were 20 successful nests, 16 with broods of one, and four with broods of two. Thirteen other pairs were located, of which 11 built or partly repaired nests, but did not lay. Two pairs apparently did not build. In addition, between 16 and 20 unmated individuals were identified in April, giving a total adult population of 107 or more. Of the known failures, seven clutches failed to hatch after full-term incubation (an unusually high proportion), three nests lost young to natural causes, one clutch was deserted at the egg stage, and two nests failed about hatching time. One egg from a clutch of three was apparently taken by an egg-collector. (The Panel is indebted to Peter Davis and the Kite Committee for this precise and detailed information.)

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Total pairs	26	32	32	36	34	39	42	42	46	47	46
Breeding pairs	26	27	28	29	28	32	30	29	32	38	33
Successful pairs	10	9	15	15	12	13	14	21	18	19	20
Young reared	14	12	24	18	17	22	18	27	21	23	24



Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

29 sites: 71 young reared.

England, SE Four sites: (1) pair bred successfully, fledging one young (two eggs failed); (2) female present throughout June; (3) female on 26th June; (4) one on 3rd July.

England, E 22 sites.

NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK 15 sites: (1)-(15) 26 females and 19 males (one trigamous and five bigamous) reared 67 young, reported brood sizes being three of one, three of two, four of three, six of four, and one of five.

ELSEWHERE Seven sites: (1) pair reared three young; (2) pair attempted breeding; (3)-(7) breeding season records, some suggesting continued presence, but no evidence of breeding.

England, N One site: immature female on 11th April, immature male on 5th June and 11th-12th June.

Wales Two sites: (1) two present regularly during March to May, male nearby on 17th and 26th July, breeding thought not impossible, but no evidence to suggest it; (2) single immature male at suitable breeding site on 1st April.

The national totals of 28 nests and 71 young were the highest this century. Mean fledged brood size was 2.5, slightly better than the 2.38 in the period 1971-82. Three nests failed, two due to disturbance by human beings, the other to unknown causes. Twenty-five nests were in reedbeds, and three in arable crops. The latter three were all successful, offering hope that further expansion will not be halted by lack of large reedbeds. (The Panel gratefully acknowledges the important contribution of John Day in the preparation of this species report.)

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Breeding males	1	2	5	4	5	11	13	14	11	16	17	19	21
Breeding females	1	3	6	5	7	11	15	14	16	20	20	24	28
Fledged young	2	8	17	7	18	27	44	36	38	44	48	59	71
Mean fledged young per nest	2.0	2.7	2.8	1.4	2.6	2.4	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.2	2.0	2.5	2.5

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

England, SW, SE and E Eight sites: 6-10 pairs breeding. Six pairs attempted to breed, but three nests failed. Two failures occurred at the egg stage and the third when four young died in the nest. A combination of heavy rain, flattened crops and possibly predation seem to have caused the failures. The three other nests were successful, and broods of two, three and four were reared. At the second of these nests, the female disappeared, leaving four small young; three of them were successfully reared, with human help, from prey brought in by the male. (The Panel is grateful to John Day, who compiled these data.)

Other records received suggest that a maximum of a further four pairs possibly bred.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	5	3	3	4	2	7	4	8	8	7	8
Pairs proved breeding	2	0	0	3	1	2	2	2	2	3	6
Pairs possibly breeding	5	3	3	5	2	7	4	8	9	8	10
Young reared (minimum)	0	0	0	6	0	3	7	4	4	4	9

The most successful breeding year since records were first compiled nationally by the Panel.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

52 sites: 30-52 pairs breeding.

England, SW 12 sites: (1)-(6) total of six nests, from which a total of 14 young fledged; (7)-(11) display observed; (12) single, judged to be female.

England, Central Five sites: (1) pair breeding; (2)(3) single pairs in established sites; (4) pair displaying; (5) male on 23rd April in vicinity of former breeding site.

England, N 23 sites: (1)-(17) single pairs known to have attempted breeding, but nine or ten of these were robbed, three or four deserted, and the female was shot at one; (18)(19) single pairs, but no report of nests being built; (20)-(23) singles in four localities, on 25th May, 8th June, 3rd July, and 28th-31st August.

Wales Seven sites: (1)(2) single pairs bred, fledging at least two young between them; (3) nest with eggshells beneath, located in winter; (4) pair heard in summer and nest found in following winter; (5) pair during breeding season; (6)(7) one or two individuals present in March and April.

Scotland, S Three sites: (1) pair, seen together or singly, on five dates between 9th April and 22nd May, and soaring together on 26th November; (2) male soaring on 28th April; (3) pair soaring on 16th October.

Scotland, N & W Two sites: (1) pair with two eggs, failed due to tree felling; (2) pair reared two young from three eggs.

1979 Wales One site: two fledged young seen, nest subsequently found.

1980 Wales One site: pair seen in spring and summer.

1981 Wales One site: pair seen in spring and summer.

In all, the 30 pairs reported as attempting breeding in 1983 are known to have reared 24 young.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Counties	6	10	14	10	15	18	21	21	27	16	15
Sites	12	20	32	28	33	37	37	42	50	39	52
Pairs proved breeding	6	9	5	12	15	14	23	17	15	23	30
Pairs possibly breeding	12	21	34	28	37	40	44	49	52	41	52

The figures in the table suggest a gradual build-up in numbers, but this is partly attributable to increased fieldwork. With eggs or young taken from one-third of the nests, it is clear that human predation is the chief factor limiting the increase and expansion of the population of this fine raptor.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

30 sites: 24 pairs reared 45 young. Three nests robbed by egg-collectors.

Scotland, Mid One site.

PERTSHIRE Loch of Lowes: nest deserted for reasons unknown, and two chicks found dead in nest. A new pair subsequently took over the nest.

Scotland, N & W One site.

INVERNESS-SHIRE Loch Garten: pair fledged two young from three eggs.

Elsewhere in Scotland 28 pairs: 22 pairs laid eggs and there were 19 successful broods. Of the 20 broods fledging in Scotland, there were four of one, eight of two, and eight of three young. (All data compiled by Roy Dennis on behalf of the RSPB.)

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Pairs	16	14	14	14	20	22	25	25	25	30	30
Successful pairs	10	10	7	10	7	11	16	19	20	21	24
Young reared	21	20	16	20	13	19	30	41	42	45	45

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

246 sites: 78-255 pairs, rearing at least 104 young.

England, SW 34-91 pairs, rearing at least 38 young.

AVON Five sites: (1) many sightings, including one juvenile on 5th and 17th September; (2)-(5) singles on one or more dates.

DEVON One site: pair fledged two young. Information concerning remaining pairs withheld.

DORSET 17 sites: (1)-(17) single pairs, of which 15 reared 24 young; one nest robbed, possibly two.

HAMPSHIRE 42 sites: (1)-(11) single pairs proved to have bred, the only reported brood sizes being one of two and one of three; (12)-(32) total of 21 single pairs probably breeding; (33)-(42) presence in breeding season.

SOMERSET Seven sites: (1) pair bred, but outcome unknown; (2) pair seen on many dates; (3)-(7) records of one, occasionally two, on one or more dates, three of which might possibly indicate attempted breeding.

WILTSHIRE Sixteen sites: (1) pair reared two young; (2) adult and two juveniles seen; (3) pair at nest; (4) pair with one juvenile; (5)(6) single pairs; (7)(8) regular sightings, but known site at 8 apparently not occupied; (9)-(16) single adults seen in suitable habitat during the breeding season, but no indication that pair present.

England, SE 37-78 pairs, rearing at least 53 young.

BEDFORDSHIRE One site: pair reared one young.

BERKSHIRE Five sites: (1)-(3) singles on two to five occasions; (4)(5) single individuals carrying prey, on 12th and 29th July respectively.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE 17 sites: (1)-(8) eight single pairs bred successfully, broods of one, two and three being ringed and fledged young seen at five other nests; (9)-(17) breeding regarded as probable; (18)-(26) casual sightings, sometimes on more than one date, during the breeding season.

ESSEX Two sites: (1)(2) single pairs, each rearing two young.

HERTFORDSHIRE 14 sites: (1) pair with two well-grown young; (2) pair with fledged young; (3) adult carrying food in late August; (4)-(8) singles seen on several dates or two birds together, but no evidence of breeding; (9)-(14) singles seen only once, on dates in June and July.

KENT Three sites: (1) pair from May to August and said to have bred; (2) pair in May and June; (3) one individual from April to July.

SURREY 20 sites: (1) nest with four young, of which at least two fledged; (2) nest with four eggs from which at least two young fledged; (3) nest with three young, all of which fledged; (4) nest from which three young fledged; (5)(6) nests with three young each, of which some fledged; (7) nest with three eggs from which two young fledged; (8)-(11) nests with two young each, of which some fledged; (12)(13) nests with three eggs, each fledging one young; (14) nest from which at least one young fledged; (15) nest with one egg, producing fledged young; (16)(17) individuals seen and heard calling on more than one occasion in circumstances which implied breeding; (18)(19) individuals on more than one occasion in traditional breeding areas; (20) individual in possible breeding area.

SUSSEX Seven sites: (1)-(7) seven single pairs reared total of 11-13 young.

England, E 4-66 pairs, rearing at least nine young.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE 19 sites: (1) single adults seen on several dates in spring and summer and one juvenile on 8th August: several potential breeding sites in the vicinity; (2)-(19) recorded at



about 18 sites (although late August and September records, including a pair with three young on 15th September, assumed to relate to passage).

HUNTINGDONSHIRE One site: single(s) seen on eight dates between 21st April and 28th August.

LINCOLNSHIRE/SOUTH HUMBERSIDE Two sites: (1) single(s) seen fairly regularly from 17th June to 29th July and again from 16th to 21st September; (2) adult and juvenile hunting together on 7th September.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE 27 sites: (1) pair fledged three young; (2) pair fledged at least two young; (3) pair fledged three young; (4) pair fledged one young; (5)-(7) immatures seen in September; (8)-(11) pairs present; (12)-(27) singles during summer.

England, Central 3-19 pairs, rearing at least four young.

DERBYSHIRE One site: pair from 30th April to September.

HEREFORDSHIRE One site: single in August.

LEICESTERSHIRE Three sites: (1)(2) single pairs each reared two young; (3) pair with nest and young.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Seven sites: (1)-(3) regular presence, usually of one individual, but pairs twice; (4)-(7) singles in mid summer. (In addition, singles reported on 23 occasions from July onwards, at 11 different localities.)

STAFFORDSHIRE Three localities: 36 casual sightings, but mostly clustered in three main areas; thought likely that one or two pairs breeding.

WARWICKSHIRE One site: pair reared two young at regular site.

WORCESTERSHIRE One site: (1) pair presumably bred as four present in vicinity of traditional nest site in late August; (2)-(4) several (counted as three) casual sightings elsewhere, and presence of second pair thought likely.

Wales One site: no evidence of breeding.

GWENT One site: pair seen regularly over period of two months.

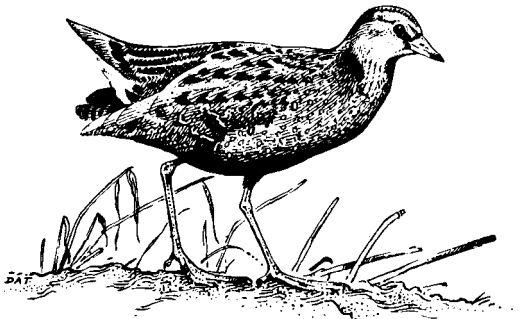
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Pairs proved breeding	24	47	38	59	51	70	80	64	51	97	78
Pairs possibly breeding	65	96	133	143	119	156	132	155	160	202	255
Young reared (minimum)	24	51	42	69	78	96	72	86	89	63	104

The increases apparently result from much assiduous fieldwork rather than a population increase. Even so, several recorders expressed the opinion that the numbers they were reporting were probably too low.

Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana*

Six sites: 1-12 pairs breeding.

England, SE Two sites: (1) up to three calling from 25th April to 8th May; (2) three pairs, one of which reared at least three young.



England, E Four sites: (1) individual(s) heard from 12th to 22nd April and on 22nd June and 6th August (the paucity of calls was assumed by the recorders to suggest that breeding was unlikely); (2) one or two calling nightly from 15th April to 6th May and occasionally to end of May, one calling 14th June; (3) two calling on 10th and 11th June; (4) one calling from 16th to 23rd April.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Counties	0	4	0	1	3	6	2	1	3	1	3
Sites	0	4	0	2	4	6	4	3	4	2	6
Singing males	0	5	0	2	7	6	8	4	9	3	12

A slight improvement on the position in 1982, but the table reveals that the numbers reported tend to fluctuate from year to year.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

One site: 1 pair breeding.

England, E One site.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE One site: one pair laid four eggs on a flooded arable field. The field dried out rapidly, despite attempts to pump water onto it, and the eggs were taken by a predator on the night of 14th June, probably by a fox *Vulpes vulpes*.

This was the first attempted breeding in Britain since 1945.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Nine sites: 238 pairs reared 192-197 young.

England, SE and E Nine sites. As usual, key ones were Havergate Island, where about 126 pairs built 215 nests and eventually fledged 57 young from 34 broods, and Minsmere, where 69 or more pairs fledged 111 young from 50 broods.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	4	4	6	5	6	3	3	5	5	9	9
Breeding pairs (minima)	149	125	158	151	146	145	147	168	201	190	238
Young reared (minima)	115	64	142	68	14	92	99	101	155	150	192

The most successful year to date, continuing the long-term upward trend. At the same time, the productivity figures from the somewhat controlled habitat on Havergate serve to emphasise the uncertainties of breeding.



Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus*

36 sites: 20-67 pairs breeding.

England, SW 15 sites: (1)-(15) total of 12-28 pairs breeding, but only seven young known. Detailed reports from one county highlight the difficulties of successful breeding, as follows. Twelve sites: (1) one individual for four days in early April, not seen on subsequent visits; (2) five pairs present during the season: only pair watched closely hatched two chicks which were lost; second clutch successfully incubated, but these chicks also thought to have been lost; for four other pairs, only one chick seen; (3) pair in April; (4) three pairs during breeding season; two of them hatched young, which disappeared; (5) two pairs present in late April; (6) pair located on 25th April, but field cultivated two days later; (7) two pairs; (8) single individual seen frequently; (9) singles seen on 23rd April and 24th July; (10) eggs being incubated on 23rd May, but no Stone-curlews seen in area on 30th May; (11) single feeding on several dates between 15th June and 27th July; two calling nearby at night thought to include this one; (12) pair reared three young.

England, SE Six sites: total of 4-6 breeding pairs, but only two young known.

England, E 15 sites: (1)-(15) total of 4-33 pairs breeding, but no reports of breeding success.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Pairs proved breeding	26	28	47	16	4	20	34	8	10	8	20
Pairs possibly breeding	90	67	72	109	27	34	81	45	53	67	67

The Stone-curlew is not an easy species to monitor, especially for breeding success, and the Panel is very appreciative of the detailed information submitted. The record is, however, believed to be incomplete, and observers with additional information are urged to submit it in the interests of compiling a reliable national status report of this threatened species.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Incomplete data.

England Two sites: (1) male with two chicks about ten days old on 7th July, and another male with three well-grown chicks on 7th July; (2) male on 17th July.

Scotland Report received from one region only, but this mentioned three pairs with young, a male with three eggs, and 31 young or juveniles in the company of 22 adults.

The above information is rather fuller than that which the Panel was able to publish in the 1982 report, and we are grateful for the co-operation received. It is, however, obvious that many more data need to be brought together before there can be a realistic assessment of the breeding population of this species.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

One site: 0-2 pairs breeding.

Scotland, N One site: up to four adults on dates between 17th May and 26th June, with display indicative of possible breeding.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	1	2	1	2	3	3	4	5	1	3	1
Pairs proved breeding	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	0
Pairs possibly breeding	2	3	2	4	5	6	6	6	1	3	2

There is no reason to suppose that there has been any significant change in status in recent years.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

One site: 0-1 pair breeding.

Scotland, Mid and N One site: one adult on various dates between 13th May and 17th June; no evidence suggestive of breeding.

The site was the one where breeding occurred in 1978, 1979, 1980 and 1982, but not, apparently, in 1981. Thus, the absence of evidence of a pair may not be very significant.

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus*

One site: 0-1 pair breeding.

Scotland One site: pair from 8th to 14th June. Frequent song-fighting by the male, and on one occasion one settled into a depression in short turf, making shuffling movements as though creating a scrape. Only one from 15th to 20th June and from 29th June to 4th July. Not thought to have bred.

Even on its north Scandinavian breeding grounds, the Broad-billed Sandpiper is nowhere common, and there were only 58 records of the species in Britain and Ireland in the 26 years since the establishment of the *British Birds Rarities Committee*.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Six sites: two to seven females breeding.

England, SE One site: single on 18th June and male on 1st July.

England, E Two sites: (1) male and female on 12th and 15th June, then up to ten males lekking strongly before two females, then no females observed from 28th June to 26th July: nesting could have taken place, but there was no evidence of it; (2) single male on three dates in May and June.

England, N Three sites: (1) five males at lek, two females bred, probably a third and possibly a fourth; (2) three males lekking on 15th May and six on 5th July; (3) nine males and one female on 8th May, up to three males later in May and in June, and up to 20 females later in May.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	2	2	5	6	6	4	12	10	10	13	6
Nests	0	2	2	4	0	0	3	3	0	1	2
Max. no. females possibly nesting	8	12	27	17	16	4	22	13	13	23	32

With numbers so given to fluctuations, there is still no real evidence of any long-term trend.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Ten sites: 32-44 pairs breeding.

England, SW One site: 1-2 pairs breeding.

SOMERSET One site: two pairs, one known to have hatched chicks, which believed to have died during thunder-storm.

England, SE Two sites: 1-6 pairs breeding.

ESSEX One site: three in suitable habitat on 16th June.

KENT One site: three pairs present of which one seen with young, second may have bred and third apparently non-breeding.

England, E Five sites: 27-33 pairs breeding.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE Three sites: (1) 11 pairs, but flooding forced them to nest on arable land:

apparently only one pair successful, rearing four young; (2) 14 pairs, nine known to have reared young; (3) pair and third individual in early May, only one by 22nd.

NORFOLK One site: six pairs summered, two on 'washland' which lost nests to floods, and four on arable land, for which outcome unknown.

SUFFOLK One site: pair reared two young.

England, N One site: two pairs heard calling to chicks.

Scotland, N & W One site.

SHETLAND One site: pair reared at least one chick.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	9	12	10	13	11	13	13	11	5	13	10
Pairs proved breeding	55	51	63	72	37	50	39	52	22	38	32
Pairs possibly breeding	61	58	71	87	70	68	64	77	26	69	44

A poor season for this species, although not so bad as 1981. Severe flooding in East Anglia evidently affected breeding numbers and success.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Three sites: 1-5 pairs breeding.

Scotland, N Three sites.

INVERNESS-SHIRE Two sites: (1) displaying from 8th May, three pairs found, at least one of which bred successfully; (2) song on 17th May, two individuals in early June, one staying until 6th July, 'dropped' egg found on 2nd July, but no young seen.

ROSS-SHIRE One site: two individuals, one of them displaying, on 6th June at site occupied in previous years.

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	5	3	4	5	3	4	7	3	4	1	4	3
Pairs proved breeding	5	0	1	2	1	2	4	2	7	1	3	1
Pairs possibly breeding	8	3	5	6	3	5	10	4	12	1	6	5

The breeding population of this migrant wader remains very small and there is no means of knowing to what extent it is self sustaining.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Four sites: 18-26 pairs breeding.

Scotland, N & W Four sites in three counties: (1)-(4) thought that total of not fewer than 18 males attempted incubation and that at least 15 broods hatched.

These figures are more complete than the ones we have been able to publish in recent years.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Six sites: 2-8 pairs breeding.

England, SW and SE Six sites: (1)-(6) two pairs certainly attempted breeding and another two probably did, but only one young known to have been reared. The fact that some of the pairs were adult x adult and others adult x second-summer reduced the likelihood of duplication in counting mobile pairs.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	0	0	0	1	2	1	3	5	4	2	6
Pairs proved breeding	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	3	2	2
Max. no. of pairs/singles	0	0	0	1	2	1	3	5	6	3	8

The best year yet for the species, but it is still dogged by poor breeding success.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

One site: summering only.

England One site: one to four individuals on various dates between 24th April and 14th June at same site as in 1982.

1982 England One site: three individuals summered at site thought to be suitable for breeding.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

One site: adult with juveniles.

England, E One site: adult on 26th July with three very young juveniles. As there was much calling between the adult and juveniles, the party keeping in fairly close contact, it was judged probable that they were of fairly local origin.

This is the first record reported to the Panel since 1978.

Snowy Owl *Nyctea scandiaca*

Three sites: no males, but female laid infertile egg.

Scotland, N & W Three sites: (1) on Fetlar, one of three females which overwintered became difficult to find in late May, then scrape with one egg on 5th June, egg broken on 6th; (2)(3) one or two females in breeding season, thought to be wanderers from Fetlar.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

One site: 1 pair breeding.

England, SW One site: pair entering suitable nest-hole for seven weeks during summer, but no evidence of successful breeding.

Possible breeding attempts occur in Britain less than annually.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*.

Five sites: 0-6 pairs breeding.

England, SE One site.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE One site: single on 9th June, about 1½ km away from 29th to 31st August (and said to have been seen also in early August).

England, N Two sites.

CUMBRIA One site: male on 2nd June.

YORKSHIRE, WEST One site: single mist-netted on 10th May had good incubation patch with numerous blood vessels and swollen cloacal region.

Scotland, N & W Two sites.

INVERNESS-SHIRE One site: pair in tree with male singing and presumed female associating, second male singing nearby, but no second female seen.

SUTHERLAND One site: single singing repeatedly in early mornings of 19th, 20th and 24th June.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	3	6	10	7	17	22	7	11	2	9	5
Pairs proved breeding	2	1	3	1	7	4	1	1	0	0	0
Pairs possibly breeding	3	6	10	7	19	23	9	14	2	10	6

There has been little in recent years to suggest that any significant recolonisation is taking place. Most of the reports probably relate to displaced or delayed migrants.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

One site: 0-1 pair breeding.

England, SW One site: female on 19th-20th May and 1st June, in not unsuitable habitat, but no evidence of breeding.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Nine sites: 3-11 pairs breeding.

England, N One site.

YORKSHIRE, WEST One site: adult and two juveniles feeding with small flock of Mistle Thrushes *Turdus viscivorus* on 12th August, adult and at least two juveniles on 14th August, two juveniles feeding with Mistle Thrushes on 20th August.

Scotland, S Two sites.

EAST LOTHIAN Two sites: (1) agitated adult on 22nd April; (2) moulting adult in Mistle Thrush flock on 27th July about 4½ km from site 1.

Scotland, Mid Three sites.

PERTHSHIRE Three sites: (1) single on 2nd June; (2) flock of 15 on 12th August; (3) flock of five on 26th August.

Scotland, N & W Four sites.

SUTHERLAND (1) single singing on 29th May; (2) pair carrying food on 2nd June.

SHETLAND (1) pair reared two young; (2) two individuals holding territory.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	3	8	10	11	6	3	6	5	6	7	9
Pairs proved breeding	2	3	2	3	4	1	1	1	0	2	3
Pairs possibly breeding	3	7	10	12	6	4	6	5	6	7	11

The association with Mistle Thrushes, reported from two counties, is interesting and may be worth following up in future seasons.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

65 sites: 17-68 pairs breeding.

England, N Three sites.

CHESHIRE One site: two calling in wood on 3rd May.

CUMBRIA One site: one freshly dead on 19th July.

LANCASHIRE One site: male in song on 3rd May.

Scotland, N & W 62 sites.

ROSS-SHIRE/INVERNESS-SHIRE 47 sites: (1)-(47) single pairs or singing males, three pairs known to have bred successfully.

SHETLAND One site: pair nested and three eggs laid, but deserted.

SUTHERLAND 14 sites: (1) at least three pairs with fledged young on 1st May, then successive broods until 7th July; (2) three on 22nd April, all at some stage singing and engaging in

territorial conflict; (3) single singing on 22nd April; (4) pair, first seen on 24th April, carrying food on 29th May; (5)(6) pair at each site, first seen on 29th April and carrying food on 16th June; (7) two pairs carrying food from 26th May to 11th June; (8) pair with young in nest and others just fledged; (9) pair carrying food on 10th May; (10) pair carrying food on 11th June; (11) at least two singing from 13th May to 4th June; (12) pair carrying food on 26th May; (13) single(s) singing on 7th and 16th June; (14) pair carrying food on 24th June.

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	?	12	28	25	10	10	12	6	18	6	42	65
Pairs proved breeding	12	5	4	13	33	2	3	2	7	4	30	17
Pairs possibly breeding	42	13	28	53	15	16	17	9	32	11	62	68

Another good year, but it is clear that the figures, especially for pairs proved breeding, are greatly influenced by the amount of fieldwork devoted to searching for the species.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

72 sites: 90-266 pairs breeding.

England, SW 43 sites: 72-151 pairs breeding.

County	Sites	Breeding proved	Breeding probable	Breeding possible
Cornwall	9	2	3	12
Devon	9	30	35	45
Dorset	9	35	35	62
Hampshire	13	5	5	28
Isle of Wight	1	0	1	1
Somerset	2	0	3	3

England, SE Seven sites: 6-52 pairs breeding.

County	Sites	Breeding proved	Breeding probable	Breeding possible
Berkshire	1	0	0	1
Essex	1	1	1	1
Kent	4	4	49	49
Middlesex	1	1	1	1

England, E 22 sites: 12-63 pairs breeding.

County	Sites	Breeding proved	Breeding probable	Breeding possible
Cambridgeshire	3	1	1	5
Norfolk	18	0	0	47
Suffolk	1	11	11	11

Note that in the above tables (as always in our reports) the figures for 'probable breeding' include those pairs proved to breed, and the figures for 'possible breeding' include both the proved and the probable. Breeding is often difficult to prove and, particularly bearing in mind that the species is frequently polygamous, the figure for the number of possible breeders is perhaps the best indication of population size.

Breeding success is difficult to estimate, but figures are available for two

study areas in Dorset. At one, a population comprising 12 males and 23 females fledged seven young from first broods and 35 from second broods. In the second study, seven males and nine females fledged at least 20 young. The concept of 'sites' is not always easy to apply, particularly when there is extended linear distribution along a river valley.

Whilst the stronghold of the species in the early years of colonisation was undoubtedly Kent, it seems clear that it is now in the southwest of England and, save in East Anglia, there is little evidence of a northerly extension of range.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Counties		2	3	3	8	10	14	14	11	16	12
Pairs proved breeding		1	5	8	8	13	30	46	19	56	29
Pairs possibly breeding		14	16	75	80	153	174	163	198	162	202

Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides*

11 sites: 1-16 pairs breeding.

England, SW Two sites: (1) single male(s) singing on 29th April and 4th May; (2) singing male from 11th June to at least 3rd July.

England, SE Four sites: (1) one singing from 16th to 23rd May; (2) three territories, one of a pair which reared young, one of a probable pair, and one possibly occupied only by a male; (3) singing male from May to July; (4) singing male.

England, E Five sites: (1) singing male from 28th April to 23rd May; (2) three singing males; (3) two singing males; (4)(5) single singing males.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	4	5	3	8	13	15	15	14	8	11	11
Pairs proved breeding	0	1	1	0	3	4	6	2	5	0	1
Pairs possibly breeding	13	8	3	9	26	28	30	29	15	18	16

A number of the singing males were considered to have been lone individuals.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

24 sites: 2-53 pairs breeding.

England, SW Four sites: one pair proved breeding.

DORSET One site: one singing on 8th June.

HAMPSHIRE One site: one singing on 21st May.

ISLE OF WIGHT One site: one singing strongly on 3rd July and on several subsequent dates until 20th July.

WILTSHIRE One site: adult seen with newly fledged young, but date not reported to recorder.

England, SE One site.

ESSEX One site: one singing from 3rd to 12th June.

England, E Three sites: one pair proved breeding.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE One site: one singing on 7th June.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE One site: pair present from 20th May, with nest building from 15th June and two young fledged on 22nd July; a second singing from 18th May to 15th June.
 LINCOLNSHIRE/SOUTH HUMBERSIDE One site: one singing from 4th to 10th June.

England, Central 16 sites.

WORCESTERSHIRE 16 sites: (1)-(16) total of 13 pairs regarded as probably breeding, plus 31 singing males.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	9	6	3	5	6	15	15	8	3	8	8
Pairs proved breeding	5	0	0	0	2	4	1	2	0	2	2
Pairs possibly breeding	15	7	5	5	11	15	23	12	3	9	9

As in the report for 1982, the above table omits all records from the Worcestershire stronghold of the species, but they are included in the brief summary of status at the head of the section.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

Two sites.

England, SE Two sites: possibly 19 individuals.

KENT Two sites: (1) male in sub-song on 6th May and at least ten individuals, several of them immature, between 9th August and 26th September; (2) one singing on 18th June and later about seven individuals, mostly immatures, some occurring as early as 4th August.

Spring reports of Icterine Warblers are not uncommon in Scotland (there were five in 1983), and all probably relate to overshooting migrants. The Kent records are published here because there has been a large increase in the number of spring and autumn records of the species in the county, and they come from near to the established breeding range of the species.

Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*

25 sites: 14-148 pairs or singing males.

England, SW 21 sites.

CORNWALL Eight sites: (1)-(5) total of at least three and possibly five pairs, at least seven juveniles; (6)-(8) apparently single males.

DEVON One site: pair reared three young.

DORSET Four sites: (1)-(4) remarkable increase to total of 60 or more pairs compared with 28 in 1982. In one study area with ten or 11 pairs, productivity averaged rather more than one brood per pair. Dispersing singles noted in various localities outside breeding season.

HAMPSHIRE Five sites: (1)-(5) estimated total of 43 pairs.

ISLE OF WIGHT Three sites: (1) two, probably both males; (2)(3) singles.

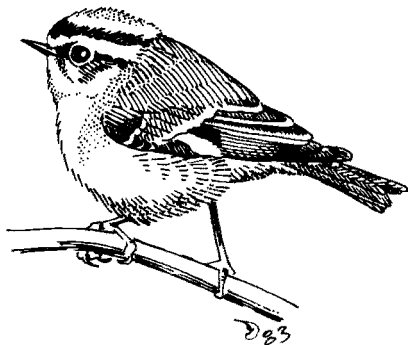
England, SE Four sites.

SURREY (1)-(4) total of at least 32 pairs or singing males. At three other sites which have held up to two pairs in recent years there were no indications of breeding, and a further two similar sites were not checked.

There are too many areas of uncertainty, as for example in the New Forest, for the national total to be more than an estimated minimum number of males, but it would appear that the losses caused by severe weather in winter 1981/82 were largely made good in some areas. A singing male at St Abbs, Borders, on 18th May was the first record for Scotland.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

66 sites: 5-161 pairs breeding.

England, SW 24 sites: 1-44 pairs breeding.

County	Sites	Breeding proved	Breeding probable	Breeding possible
Dorset	2	0	0	2
Gloucestershire	2	0	0	13
Hampshire	19	0	28	28
Wiltshire	1	1	1	1

The Dorset birds were considered to be transients; the remainder were probably potential breeding birds. The Wiltshire pair was feeding four young on 18th July, this constituting the first breeding record for the county.

England, SE 36 sites: 3-110 pairs breeding.

County	Sites	Breeding proved	Breeding probable	Breeding possible
Berkshire	12	0	0	16
Buckinghamshire	5	1	16	20
Essex	1	0	0	1
Kent	5	0	54	56
Surrey	12	2	12	16
Sussex	1	0	0	1

England, E One site.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE One site: pair, only on 29th May.

England, N Three sites.

CHESHIRE Three sites: (1)-(3) singles singing, two of which were thought to be transients.

Wales Two sites: 1-3 pairs breeding.

GWENT One site: male displaying to Goldcrest *R. regulus* on 13th June at site where breeding has occurred in previous years.

POWYS One site: two pairs, of which one fledged four young and second probably bred.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	5	13	32	15	12	7	25	30	35	21	66
Pairs proved breeding	2	1	4	4	2	1	9	7	15	4	5
Pairs possibly breeding	18	37	123	28	31	11	73	78	102	44	161

The table shows that the species tends to show large year-to-year changes, so the high levels of 1983 will perhaps not be sustained. There does seem to have been a shift in the centre of gravity of the population from the Southwest (the original area of colonisation) to the Southeast.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

11 sites: 1-11 pairs breeding.

England, SE Seven sites: (1) male on 5th June; (2) singing male from 19th to 23rd June; (3) singing male on 4th June; (4) pair on 31st May; (5) singing male on 5th June; (6) singing male on 21st May; (7) singing male on 30th May.**England, E** Four sites: (1) pair bred; (2) male singing on 31st July near suitable nesting habitat; (3) male on 2nd June; (4) pair possibly bred.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	
Sites		2	3	4	11	16	14	17	17	13	12	11
Pairs proved breeding		1	2	2	7	6	7	3	2	4	3	1
Pairs possibly breeding		8	4	7	23	21	28	30	28	26	21	11

It should be noted that information has not been received from one normally important county, so it is probable that the position was actually much the same as in 1982.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Six sites: 5-6 pairs breeding.

England, SW One site: female on 8th June.**England, E** Five sites: (1)-(5) single pairs bred, including one known to have reared three young.**1981 Wales** One site: pair laid six eggs, and young fledged successfully.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	
Counties		8	8	7	5	13	11	10	5	6	2	2
Pairs proved breeding		30	30	51	3	48	13	14	23	11	5	5
Pairs possibly breeding		48	52	56	25	64	37	52	31	40	8	6

If all records have been submitted (and there is reason to doubt this), the Red-backed Shrike is rapidly approaching extinction as a breeding species in Britain.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Four sites: 1-4 pairs breeding.

England, N One site.**DERBYSHIRE** One site: male singing from 18th to at least 30th June, seen to chase male Chaffinch *F. coelebs* and visited branches where there was nest belonging to female Chaffinch.**Scotland, N & W** Three sites: (1) pair bred, two young on 19th July; (2) on 23rd June, male 'wheezing' frequently, fed chicks in nest which was also attended by male and female Chaffinches, young in nest thought to be pure-bred Chaffinches, although birchwood site was more characteristic of Bramblings; (3) male singing in open birch wood on 17th June.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	
Sites		1	0	0	0	2	2	3	3	1	10	4
Pairs proved breeding		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	1
Pairs possibly breeding		1	0	0	0	3	2	4	4	1	10	4

Serin *Serinus serinus*

Six sites: 2-6 pairs breeding.

England, SW Four sites.

DEVON Three sites: (1) male singing on five dates between 28th March and 12th May, with display in mid April; (2) immature on 28th September; (3) present from 8th April to 23rd August, with maximum of three singing males and two females, two pairs bred and reared at least six young from three broods.

DORSET One site: juvenile trapped on 13th July.

England, SE One site.

KENT One site: male on 24th April, two males on 25th April, joined by female on 26th, two females on 27th, pair on 6th May, female on 8th May, and male on 3rd June.

England, E One site.**NORFOLK** One site: singing male on 3rd June.

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Sites	0	0	0	2	0	4	0	1	3	5	6
Pairs proved breeding	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	2
Pairs possibly breeding	0	0	0	2	0	4	0	1	6	7	6

The population appears to be increasing, if very slowly, and the presence of juveniles in two localities leaves open the possibility that pairs may be breeding undetected.

Parrot Crossbill *Loxia pytyopsittacus*

One site: 2 pairs breeding.

England, N One site: two pairs attempted breeding. Male singing on 27th February near where a female was seen building nest on 13th March; not seen at site thereafter, although pair fed nearby on 2nd April. Male of second pair also singing on 27th February at site where his female was found building on 2nd April, nest completed by 9th April and female seen sitting on 23rd April, with male in territory; on 5th May, nest found destroyed, apparently by predator.

The Parrot Crossbill is a scarce vagrant to Britain and this constitutes the first known breeding attempt. The birds involved were part of an influx which occurred in the middle of October 1982 (*Brit. Birds* 78: 482-505).

Scarlet Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

One site: 0-1 pair breeding.

Scotland, N & W One site: red-headed male sang intermittently for half an hour on 2nd June, in habitat with birch scrub, field and gardens.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Incomplete data.

Scotland Presumably the normal population was present, but the only report received by the Panel was of a singing male on a boulder field in Perthshire on 16th July.

Girl Bunting *Emberiza cirius*

143 sites: 37-145 pairs breeding.

England, SW 142 sites.

CORNWALL Six sites: (1)-(4) single males; (5) pair, but no evidence of breeding; (6) a female with young.

DEVON 130 sites: (1)-(130) total of 35 pairs proved breeding and a further 99 pairs possibly bred. No apparent change in numbers since the thorough survey in 1982.

HAMPSHIRE One site: male from 27th March to 8th May.

SOMERSET Five sites: (1) pair carrying food in July; (2) two pairs; (3) pair; (4) two singing males; (5) singing male.

England, SE One site.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE One site: singing male on 16th April.

The figures are slightly down on those for 1982, but this may be because there was a special survey in that year rather than any real decline in numbers.

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