

# RARE BREEDING BIRDS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM IN 1997



Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* (Alan)

MALCOLM OGILVIE AND THE RARE BREEDING BIRDS PANEL

**ABSTRACT** With this report, the Rare Breeding Birds Panel completes 25 years of annual reporting on the status of Britain's rarest breeding species. The first report of the Panel covered the year 1973 and included details of 33 species (Sharrock *et al.* 1975). This compares with the present report, covering the year 1997, which includes information on 87 species, some but not all of the increase occurring as a result of the recent expansion of the Panel's list to include all species on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. As usual, the amount of detail included varies according to the perceived sensitivity of the species to intentional disturbance or to nest robbery. Thus, for the majority, the records are grouped into the Panel's ten regions (see below), though for some it is possible to list the actual counties. For a few species, only UK totals are given.

The publication of this report, less than six months after the report for 1996, puts the annual series of reports back on schedule after some slippage. The aim has always been to publish the report for each year approximately 18 months after the end of the year being reported on.

## THE PANEL

The current (May 1999) membership of the Panel is Dr L. A. Batten, Dr C. J. Bibby, Dr H. Q. P. Crick, Dr J. T. R. Sharrock, Dr K. W. Smith, D. A. Stroud and Dr M. A. Ogilvie (Secretary). The individual members of the Panel serve in a personal capacity, but four of them are additionally able to reflect the interests and needs of the respective sponsoring bodies. The work of the Panel is supported financially by the JNCC (on behalf of the country conservation agencies) and the RSPB, with additional support coming from the BTO and *British Birds*.

The Panel collects records from the whole of the United Kingdom, including Northern Ireland, but not from the Republic of Ireland. Coverage in 1997 was very nearly complete, with records (or nil returns) received from virtually every county and region. Information for some species remains patchy, however, and any known gaps are mentioned in the species accounts.

## REVIEW OF THE YEAR 1997

The weather in 1997 mirrored to some extent that of 1996. A very cold January was succeeded by a milder late winter and spring, but with spells of adverse weather which had serious effects on nesting birds. The first of these was in early May, when a spell of freezing weather, with sleet and snow, covered the whole of the UK. In the middle of May, and then several times in June, torrential rainstorms occurred widely. Indeed, June 1997 became the wettest for over 100 years. Losses of nestlings were high for a wide variety of species, as will be seen from some of the comments in the body of this report.

The wet weather caused problems for Black-throated Divers *Gavia arctica*, especially those using natural sites, those on rafts generally escaping the floods. It is disappointing to record a further decline in the number of breeding Slavonian Grebes *Podiceps auritus*, which furthermore

achieved very poor production of young. Great Bitterns *Botaurus stellaris* generally survived the bad weather, but the number of booming males fell back from last year's 22 to 14. Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta* bred for the second year running, both at the original site in Dorset and in neighbouring Hampshire.

Northern Pintails *Anas acuta* had their poorest year for a long time, but numbers of Garganeys *A. querquedula* bounced back from last year's low, occurring more widely than usual, including as far north as the Western Isles and Shetland. Numbers of Common Pochards *Aythya ferina* were very similar to those of last year. The breeding of a pair of Greater Scaups *A. marila* in Northern Ireland was a first for the province and the first in the United Kingdom since 1989.

European Honey-buzzards *Pernis apivorus* reared at least 18 young, for the second year running. A major paper on the breeding ecology and status of this species in Britain was published last month in *British Birds* (Roberts *et al.* 1999).

The steady increase of the wild population of Red Kites *Milvus milvus* in Wales continued, despite some losses of young to the bad summer weather, while the re-established populations in England (now breeding in two areas) and Scotland also did well. Nine more young White-tailed Eagles *Haliaeetus albicilla* fledged, despite some complete nest failures caused by the wet conditions. Marsh Harriers *Circus aeruginosus* are becoming harder to census accurately because of the increasing population in some areas, but those pairs which were located lost many young during the rainy spells, as did Montagu's Harriers *C. pygargus*, which had the lowest production of young for several years. Golden Eagles *Aquila chrysaetos* and Ospreys *Pandion haliaetus* also suffered from reduced breeding success, even though the latter reached a new record in the number of pairs breeding.

Common Quails *Coturnix coturnix* arrived in the largest numbers since the

last really big year of 1989, and there were no fewer than 34 reported from the far north and west of Scotland. It was also a slightly better year for Spotted Crakes *Porzana porzana*. The Corn Crane *Crex crex* continued its recovery, with the total of singing males topping 600. In Norfolk, the Common Cranes *Grus grus* finally managed to produce two fledged young after no fewer than eight successive failures. There was the now-familiar story with the Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, where a new record total of breeding pairs lost significant numbers of eggs and chicks to predators and floods. Five Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* leks were reported, but no breeding was attempted. Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa* had a good breeding year, even though the number of localities has fallen further. Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* reversed last year's pattern, with a slight decline in the number of males, but increased production of young.

Mediterranean Gulls *Larus melanocephalus* had their best year to date, while two pairs of Yellow-legged Gulls *L. cachinans* bred for only the second time in Britain. Roseate Terns *Sterna dougallii* declined for the fourth year running, a drop partially offset by increases in the Republic of Ireland.

The breeding by a pair of Wrynecks *Jynx torquilla* in northern Scotland was the first since 1993 and there were, encouragingly, a further four singing males. The results of the 1997 census of Wood Larks *Lullula arborea* revealed a much larger population than had been expected, with over six times the total found in the last census, in 1986. Good coverage of several of the main Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* areas produced the highest total of pairs and breeding pairs since the late 1980s.

No Savi's Warblers *Locustella luscinioides* bred, for the third successive year, but there was a welcome increase in the number of Marsh Warblers *Acrocephalus palustris* after the very poor year in 1996. Golden Orioles *Oriolus oriolus* had a second

successive bad year, with the cold wet weather again having a serious effect. A pair of Red-backed Shrikes *Lanius collurio* bred in northern Scotland.

## CONSERVATION USES OF PANEL DATA

It is the policy of the Panel to make data available for conservation uses where this is compatible with the constraints of confidentiality. As well as site-specific information (e.g. for reviews of Special Protection Areas), national data sets have been used by the RSPB to plan surveys. Panel data have also played a key role in reviews of birds of conservation concern and national population estimates, together with the development of recovery plans for certain species.

## PUBLICATIONS

The bibliography at the end of this report gives details of published results of surveys into the numbers and distribution of Panel species.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Panel, and in particular its Secretary, very gratefully acknowledges the willing co-operation of all the many county, regional and local recorders throughout the United Kingdom. Completing the forms is just one more burden put upon their willing shoulders, and their help is greatly appreciated.

The following specialist contributors are also deserving of thanks: Jake Allsopp and the Golden Oriole Group, Colin Croke, Peter E. Davis and the Welsh Kite Trust, Roy Dennis, Dr Andy Evans, Ian Carter, Dr Rhys Green, Bob Image, Malcolm Henderson and Dr Ron Summers.

We are grateful to the licensing officers of the three country agencies – Peter Clement and John Holmes (English Nature), John Ralston (Scottish Natural Heritage) and Sian Phillips (Countryside Council for Wales) – for their ready co-operation in supplying information.

We should also like to express our

sincere thanks to all the very many individuals whose fieldwork produced the observations which make up this report.

### KEY TO GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

Note that recent further reorganisation of local government throughout Britain has made some of the names below obsolete. Exactly as happened after the last major reorganisation, in 1974, however, some English county and area bird societies have changed their recording areas and others have not. So, without defining the precise boundaries of the 'counties' given below, these are, so far as possible, the names used by the local recorders who sent the Panel their information.

For Wales and for Scotland, it has been decided, again so far as possible, to use the names of the recording areas included in the respective annual bird reports of those two countries. Each publishes a map showing the names and boundaries, that for Wales being based on the Watsonian vice-counties, and that for Scotland on the local bird-report areas.

**ENGLAND, SW** Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Isles of Scilly, Somerset, Wiltshire.

**ENGLAND, SE** Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, London & Middlesex, Oxfordshire, Surrey, Sussex (East and West).

**ENGLAND, E** Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Suffolk.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL** Derbyshire, Herefordshire, Leicestershire (with Rutland), Nottinghamshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands, Worcestershire.

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

**WALES** The Watsonian vice-counties of Anglesey (Môn), Brecon (Brycheiniog),

Carmarthen (Caerfyrddin), Caernarfon, Ceredigion, Denbigh (Dinbych), Flint (Fflint), Glamorgan (Morgannwg), Gwent, Meirionnydd, Montgomery (Trefaldwyn), Pembroke (Penfro), Radnor (Maesyfed).

**SCOTLAND, S** The local bird-recording areas of Dumfries & Galloway, Borders, Lothian, Ayrshire, Clyde (comprising W and E Dunbartonshire including that part now in Argyll & Bute, N and S Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, City of Glasgow, Inverclyde, Stirling - Clyde drainage), Clyde Islands (Arran, the Cumbraes, Bute).

**SCOTLAND, MID** The local bird-recording areas of Angus & Dundee, Fife, Forth (Clackmannanshire, Falkirk, Stirling), Perth & Kinross, Northeast Scotland (Aberdeenshire), Moray & Nairn.

**SCOTLAND, N & W** The local bird-recording areas of Argyll & Bute (excluding Bute and former W Dunbartonshire), Caithness, Highland (Badenoch & Strathspey, Inverness, Ross & Cromarty, Sutherland), Orkney, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides.

**NORTHERN IRELAND** Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, Tyrone.

### SYSTEMATIC LIST

The definitions of 'Confirmed breeding', 'Probable breeding' and 'Possible breeding' used in the Panel's reports follow those recommended by the European Ornithological Atlas Committee (now part of the European Bird Census Council). Within tables, the abbreviations 'Confirmed (pairs)' and 'Possible/probable (pairs)' mean 'Number of pairs confirmed breeding' and 'Number of pairs possibly or probably breeding', respectively.

## RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*

Three surveys carried out. Other, more casual, breeding observations not listed.

### SCOTLAND, N & W

ARGYLL A total of 11 pairs known to have bred, of which at least six were successful, with a further 12 pairs located in an incomplete survey.

ORKNEY Of a total of 86 pairs monitored in a complete survey of Hoy and Rousay, together with a sample on Mainland, 17 were known to have failed, and 36 pairs were known to have fledged 40 young, with below-average produc-

tivity of 0.46 per pair, very similar to 1996.

SHETLAND A total of 54 successful pairs was located in Shetland, four fewer than in 1996. The ratio of broods of one to broods of two was 1:0.65, close to average. Breeding success was poor on Whalsay, only seven successful pairs out of 21, rearing nine young, and on Foula, where 13 pairs fledged only four young, whereas, in two other areas, 31 pairs fledged 26 young.

The only complete survey is that in Shetland. The total British breeding population was estimated at 935 pairs in 1994 (Gibbons *et al.* 1997).

## BLACK-THROATED DIVER *Gavia arctica*

The RSPB monitored 98 sites, of which 82 were occupied. Rafts have been put on several lochs to provide nesting sites which are safer from flooding than those on banks and islands.

Year	Sites	Sites	Rafts used/ available	Young fledged (av. chicks per pair)		
	monitored	occupied		Rafts	Natural	Total
1996	120	96	27/45	19 (0.70)	28 (0.41)	47 (0.49)
1997	98	82	32/41	17 (0.53)	12 (0.10)	29 (0.35)

Although more rafts were used in 1997 than in 1996, production was lower, while pairs nesting on natural sites did very badly, probably because the wet spring resulted in many natural sites being flooded.

The following detailed information is included in the totals in the table.

### SCOTLAND, N & W

ARGYLL Pairs at nine sites, five known to have bred, two young reared.

HIGHLAND Total of 80 sites monitored, 67 of which were occupied by breeding pairs and a total of 25 young fledged, with below-average

production of 0.37 young per pair.

WESTERN ISLES Three pairs bred at four monitored sites, only one young reared. At least nine other pairs, but success unknown.

### SCOTLAND, MID

CENTRAL Two pairs, both of which failed.

A very poor season resulting from bad spring weather, but a comparison of the breeding success on rafts with that on natural sites shows how much worse it would have been in the absence of the rafts. The Panel is grateful to the RSPB for the above information.

## GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*

One locality: pair possibly bred.

### SCOTLAND, N & W

One locality: pair with juvenile landed on sea

(coming from inland) on 23rd July; remained in vicinity until 3rd August.

Full details of this fascinating record have been submitted to *Scottish Birds*. One interpretation is that the pair bred on a nearby loch and were bringing their fledgling to the sea. The only known breeding record is of a pair in 1970 (*Scot. Birds* 6: 195), though it has subsequently been suggested that this was a hybrid pairing with Black-throated Diver *G. arctica*. Such pairs have been recorded occasionally, with a failed breeding attempt in 1986.

**RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena***

Four localities in three counties: pair and three single adults in summer plumage.

**ENGLAND, E**

Three localities: (1) usual male from 29th March to 14th August; (2) one in summer plumage, 23rd March to 5th July; (3) one in summer plumage, 23rd June to 25th July.

**SCOTLAND, S**

One locality: pair with nest, bird seen apparently incubating for two or three weeks, but no evidence any eggs were laid.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	10	8	6	5	3	9	7	10	6	8	4
No. individuals	9	12	9	3	4	12	7	13	10	10	3
No. pairs	1	3	3	2	1	3	0	1	4	2	1

The poorest showing for many years. A pair has been trying, and failing, to breed in South Scotland almost every year since 1983.

**SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus***

22 localities: 53-56 pairs breeding.

**SCOTLAND, MID AND N & W**

22 localities: (1)-(24) total of 53 pairs bred, pro-

ducing just 15 young to fledging; also three unmated birds.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	39	22	39	36	31	34	33	32	31	24	22
Confirmed (pairs)	33	31	70	74	61	72	73	51	58	49	53
Possible/probable (pairs)	6	6	8	12	13	5	4	8	7	6	3
Max. total pairs	39	37	78	86	74	77	77	59	65	55	56

A very slight increase in the number of pairs over last year, but a further decline in productivity, with only 15 young known to have fledged, compared with 17 in 1996 and 46 in 1995. The number of young reared per pair was very low, at only 0.29. There has been no recovery following the drop between 1993 and 1994. It has been suggested that many adults from this population may have died in a seabird wreck off the east coast of Scotland in February and March 1994 and numbers have not recovered since. The Panel is grateful to the North of Scotland Regional Office of the RSPB for information on numbers and breeding performance.

**BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis***

26 localities in 13 counties: 17-44 pairs breeding, fledging at least seven young.

**ENGLAND, SE**

Two localities: 0-2 pairs.

ESSEX One locality: up to three birds present in June. HERTFORDSHIRE One locality: pair present and displaying late March to early April.

**ENGLAND, E**

Four localities: 0-6 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE One locality: single in breeding plumage, perhaps passage bird. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE Three localities: displaying pair and four singles, all adults in summer plumage.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

Nine localities: 0-10 pairs. LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND Five localities: pair and five singles, all adults in summer plumage. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Two localities: two singles. STAFFORDSHIRE Two localities: single pairs (perhaps the same) at each.

**ENGLAND, N**

Six localities: 12-20 pairs. CHESHIRE Two localities: five pairs bred, three or four young fledged. GREATER MANCHESTER Two localities: two

pairs bred, fledging three young, plus one pair present only briefly. NORTHUMBERLAND Two localities: five pairs bred, pair probably bred, up to six more pairs present.

#### SCOTLAND, S

Three localities: 4-6 pairs. BORDERS Three local-

ities: four pairs bred and hatched young, but only one fledged; also two singles.

#### SCOTLAND, MID

Two localities: 1-2 pairs. FIFE One locality: pair summered. TAYSIDE One locality: pair bred.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	19	22	19	19	25	29	31	32	30	34	26
Confirmed (pairs)	27	15	25	21	19	26	24	27	30	23	17
Possible/probable (pairs)	12	20	15	16	34	34	26	54	47	34	29
Max. total pairs	39	35	40	37	53	60	50	81	77	57	46

The lowest total for several years, with fewer summering adults or pairs, especially in England.

### GREAT BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris*

Ten localities, with 14 booming males; at least 18 young fledged from minimum of 15 nests known to have been active. Birds were seen at another site.

#### ENGLAND, SW

Two localities: (1) pair bred, fledging two young; (2) pair present through spring and summer, booming reported in May; adult and suspected juvenile seen early August, presumed to have been reared at this site.

#### ENGLAND, SE

One locality: three overwintering birds to end March, when one displaying; then none until

single in July.

#### ENGLAND, E

Six localities: (1) two booming males, five nests found, of which three successful, fledging nine young; (2) two booming males; (3)-(6) single booming males.

#### ENGLAND, N

Two localities: (1) three booming males; (2) single booming male late April to early June.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. booming localities	17	14	14	12	13	14	13	16	13	10	10
Confirmed nests	1	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	11	8	15
Booming males	22	30	30	20	19	19	17	20	20	22	14

Another decline, taking this species to perilously low numbers. The increased number of confirmed nests is the result of increased research effort by the RSPB, to whom the Panel is grateful for supplying many of these data.

### LITTLE BITTERN *Ixobrychus minutus*

One locality: 0-1 breeding pair.

ENGLAND, E One locality: male singing 13th-16th June, and probably from 11th.

There were three records of males and two of females in May and June (*Brit. Birds* 91: 461), but this was the only one reported to 'sing', which it did vociferously.

### NIGHT HERON *Nycticorax nycticorax*

One locality: pair possibly bred.

#### ENGLAND, SW

SOMERSET One locality: pair displaying in June; up to three individuals at nearby site on

five days during 12th-25th August, but ages not determined in views at dusk, except that one was certainly an adult.

This intriguing record lacks the detail needed to prove the first breeding by this species in Britain.

### **LITTLE EGRET** *Egretta garzetta*

Two localities: 5-6 pairs bred.

#### **ENGLAND, SW**

Two localities. DORSET Five pairs raised 12 young at Brownsea Island, Poole Harbour.

HAMPSHIRE Pair with six young on 10th June

Breeding continued at Brownsea Island, and it seems almost certain that a pair also bred in Hampshire. Although birds were present in many other localities, as far north as Cheshire, no other breeding behaviour was reported.

and adult with one juvenile seen early July, near locality where breeding was eventually proved in 1998.

### **EURASIAN SPOONBILL** *Platalea leucorodia*

Minimum of 13 birds at eight localities.

#### **ENGLAND, E**

NORFOLK No information received. SUFFOLK At least 11 birds seen during summer at five localities, though movement made accurate assessment difficult; largest flock, ten, Minsmere, in late May.

#### **ENGLAND, N**

CHESHIRE One locality: single summer-

plumaged adult in March and April, joined by second bird towards end of month, when some nest-building seen in same place as in 1996, but both then left. LANCASHIRE One or two localities: two adults summered, 10th May to 16th August, moving between two localities; no breeding attempted. Perhaps same as Cheshire pair.

Slightly fewer than in 1996, and with less breeding activity.

### **WHOOPER SWAN** *Cygnus cygnus*

Four localities: three pairs bred unsuccessfully, at least three other pairs.

#### **SCOTLAND, N & W**

Three localities: (1)-(3) single pairs laid eggs, none hatched.

#### **N IRELAND**

One locality: up to three pairs present, but not thought to have bred. Also present there in 1996.

The above are all thought to have been of wild origin. Records of escaped birds are now included in the Panel's report on non-native breeding birds.

### **BLACK DUCK** *Anas rubripes*

One locality: one bird.

#### **ENGLAND, SW**

One locality: male. SCILLY The male, which has

been present on Tresco since 1st April 1994, stayed throughout 1997 (*Brit. Birds* 91: 466).

In 1995, this male was seen to be paired to a female Mallard *A. platyrhynchos*, but has since remained solitary.

### **EURASIAN WIGEON** *Anas penelope*

Breeding reports were received as follows:

#### **ENGLAND, SW**

SOMERSET Up to eight males and three females summering at two localities. WILTSHIRE Pair in early summer, with two males summering.

#### **ENGLAND, SE**

ESSEX Five pairs at three localities, one probably bred. KENT Summering birds, including a pair,

at three localities. SUSSEX Two pairs summered at one locality.

#### **ENGLAND, E**

CAMBRIDGESHIRE Three pairs summered at one locality and one at another. NORFOLK Total of 60 birds at 12 localities in June and July, but no evidence of breeding.



**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Pair bred at one locality, fledging one young. WARWICKSHIRE Pair and single summered at two localities.

**ENGLAND, N**

NORTHUMBERLAND Six pairs bred at one locality (25 young seen) and two pairs bred elsewhere.

**SCOTLAND, S**

BORDERS Reported from four localities, no proof of breeding. CLYDE Summering birds at three localities.

More pairs were located in the southern half of England than in 1996. Information from the main part of the range in Scotland remains extremely patchy, as is to be expected with only a limited number of observers.

**GADWALL *Anas strepera***

Breeding reports were received as follows:

**ENGLAND, SW**

AVON Five or six pairs bred at three localities. GLOUCESTERSHIRE Several tens of pairs bred in and around the enclosures of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust centre at Slimbridge. HAMPSHIRE 19 pairs proved to breed and five pairs probably bred, but county total thought to be 50-100 pairs. SOMERSET Eight pairs bred and about 20 more pairs thought to be present. WILTSHIRE Five pairs present in one area, but no proof of breeding.

**ENGLAND, SE**

BEDFORDSHIRE Several broods at one locality. BERKSHIRE Four pairs bred and six pairs possibly bred. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE A total of five pairs bred at four localities. ESSEX Nine pairs proved to breed and at least 25 pairs probably bred. HERTFORDSHIRE 40 broods seen (27, totalling 181 young, at one locality), plus four pairs. KENT 31 pairs bred or probably bred. MIDDLESEX One pair bred. OXFORDSHIRE At least four pairs bred at three localities. SUSSEX Four pairs bred, four pairs probably bred, plus seven singles.

**ENGLAND, E**

CAMBRIDGESHIRE 17 pairs proved to breed, two pairs probably bred, plus a pair. NORFOLK 59 pairs bred and 25-33 pairs probably bred, but county total estimated as at least 100-150 pairs.

More English counties submitted records or estimates than in 1996, though there were fewer reports from Scotland. The total reported above, of about 420 pairs, is slightly below last year's.

**SCOTLAND, MID**

FIFE Pair summered at one locality. GRAMPIAN Four pairs with 19 young at one locality; up to 11 pairs at nine others.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

ARGYLL Four pairs bred at one locality, one pair at second. HIGHLAND Nine pairs at one locality. ORKNEY At least 11 pairs bred at five localities, breeding suspected at three more. SHETLAND Seven pairs bred successfully in three areas. WESTERN ISLES Pair bred at one locality.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE At least eight pairs bred, at six localities. SUFFOLK 42 pairs reported from five localities.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

DERBYSHIRE Nine pairs proved to breed, plus ten pairs. LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND Five pairs bred at four localities. SHROPSHIRE Pair at each of two localities. WARWICKSHIRE Two pairs proved to breed, plus at least 18 further pairs.

**ENGLAND, N**

CHESHIRE 21 pairs bred at three localities and summering birds were noted at two more. CLEVELAND One pair probably bred. GREATER MANCHESTER Six pairs bred at two localities. LANCASHIRE & MERSEYSIDE Six pairs bred at four localities, plus single pairs at two more. NORTHUMBERLAND 11 pairs bred at two localities.

**WALES**

ANGLESEY Ten pairs bred at three localities.

**SCOTLAND, S**

BORDERS Pair bred; single pairs at two more localities. CLYDE Nine of 18 pairs bred at four localities. DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY Pair in May.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

ARGYLL Pair present. ORKNEY Pair bred at one locality, four pairs present at a second.

## NORTHERN PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

22 localities: 5-33 pairs breeding.

### ENGLAND, SE

Five localities: 0-6 pairs. KENT Four localities: three pairs, and two singles. SUSSEX One locality: male throughout June.

### ENGLAND, E

Two localities: 0-2 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE One locality: pair summered, no evidence of breeding. NORFOLK One locality: pair until 17th May, then male to 21st June.

### ENGLAND, N

One locality: 0-3 pairs. CHESHIRE One locality: three pairs in early May, with display, but no further evidence of breeding.

### WALES

One locality: pair. PEMBROKESHIRE One locality: pair bred and fledged one young; both adult female and juvenile showed some features of Mallard *A. platyrhynchos*.

### SCOTLAND, N & W

13 localities: 4-21 pairs. ARGYLL One locality: pair bred. ORKNEY Nine localities (no full survey): three pairs bred, ten pairs possibly bred, and three males.

SHETLAND Three localities: two pairs and two males, no evidence of breeding.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	16	20	16	20	28	23	23	49	25	33	22
Confirmed (pairs)	7	14	11	9	4	13	4	20	11	8	5
Possible/probable (pairs)	14	15	28	27	39	35	43	56	34	45	28
Max. total pairs	21	29	39	36	43	48	47	76	45	53	33

The poorest year since the late 1980s, with birds absent from a number of counties where they had seemed to be becoming regular.

## GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

At least 85 localities: 10-129 pairs breeding.

### ENGLAND, SW

13 localities: 1-19 pairs. AVON Three localities: (1)(2) single pairs, late March to mid June; (3) pair on 10th June only. DEVON Two localities: (1) two males and female regular from 7th April to early June; (2) male during 4th-7th June. GLOUCESTERSHIRE Two localities: (1) pair copulating on 13th May, male present to 4th June; (2) two pairs early April, one pair to 18th, female and juvenile on 5th August, but no proof that bred there. HAMPSHIRE One locality: pair on 6th June only. SOMERSET Four localities: (1) pair bred, female and seven young on 4th August; (2) four males and three females, no sign of breeding; (3) two pairs but disappeared after floodwater subsided; (4) pair, breeding not proved. WILTSHIRE One locality: male in late April and early June, moulting pair on 7th July.

### ENGLAND, SE

16 localities: 1-20 pairs. HERTFORDSHIRE Two localities: (1)(2) single males summered. ESSEX One locality: up to three summering pairs. KENT Four localities: (1) pair bred; (2)(3) two pairs probably bred at each; (4) female summered. MIDDLESEX Two localities: (1) pair on

13th April and male on 4th June; (2) male on 2nd June. OXFORDSHIRE One locality: pair in May. SUSSEX Six localities: (1) displaying pair; (2) pair April to July; (3) male in April, May and July; (4)-(6) single males in May or June.

### ENGLAND, E

27 localities: 5-42 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Two localities: (1) up to seven pairs, three broods seen; (2) three pairs, one brood seen. HUNTINGDONSHIRE Five localities: (1) pair in April, male in May; (2)-(4) single pairs seen in June; (5) male in May. LINCOLNSHIRE One locality: female in early June. NORFOLK Ten localities: (1) pair bred; (2)-(10) summer records of singles or pairs, but no proof of breeding. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE Four localities: (1) up to four males in May and early June; (2) two males in May and June; (3) two males in May; (4) female on 17th May. SUFFOLK Five localities: (1) pair throughout summer, and pair with juvenile on 27th July, possibly locally bred; (2) up to five birds summered and possibly bred; (3) male in May, pair in June; (4) pair in May; (5) male on 5th May.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

Four localities: 0-5 pairs. LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND One locality: two males and a female April and early May. SHROPSHIRE One locality: male during 16th-28th May. WARWICKSHIRE Two localities: (1) pair in May and June; (2) pair in June.

**ENGLAND, N**

Seven localities: 1-11 pairs. CHESHIRE Five localities: (1) two males in May and June; (2) up to three males in May and June; (3) male in early May and female in June; (4) male in early May; (5) male in late May. LANCASHIRE Two localities: (1) pair bred, second pair probably bred; (2) pair possibly bred.

**WALES**

No count of localities: 0-12 pairs. Totals of 12 records in May and two in June; no evidence of breeding.

**SCOTLAND, S**

Five localities: 0-6 pairs. BORDERS Three localities: (1) female in late April, two males in May; (2) male in May and June; (3) male on 11th May. CLYDE Two localities: (1) pair in late April and male on 15th May; (2) pair from 28th April to 1st May, and apparently moulting male on 26th May.

**SCOTLAND, MID**

One locality: 0-1 pair. ABERDEENSHIRE One locality: pair in May, male into June.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

12 localities: 2-13 pairs. ARGYLL One locality: pair bred. ORKNEY Four localities: (1) pair on 18th May and two males on 6th June; (2)-(4) single males in May. SHETLAND Two localities: (1)(2) single males in May. SUTHERLAND One locality: pair bred. WESTERN ISLES Four localities: (1) pair in May; (2)-(4) single males in May.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	36	37	81	87	90	90	73	65	80	60	85
Confirmed (pairs)	8	11	18	14	12	16	14	13	9	15	10
Possible/probable (pairs)	37	40	80	97	82	144	149	98	108	63	119
Max. total pairs	45	51	98	111	94	160	163	111	117	78	129

A much better year than 1996, though still below the peak reached in 1993. Note that records in March and April only are omitted as being of probable migrants. While this may also apply to May records in Scotland, these have been included.

**COMMON POCHARD *Aythya ferina***

At least 99 localities or areas (unspecified for some counties): 246-380 pairs breeding.

**ENGLAND, SW**

At least six localities: 10-11 pairs. AVON One locality: five pairs bred. HAMPSHIRE Two pairs bred. SOMERSET Three localities: two pairs bred, one pair possibly bred. WILTSHIRE One locality: pair bred.

**ENGLAND, SE**

At least 19 localities: 107-149 pairs. BERKSHIRE Two localities: pair probably bred, plus a pair. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE One locality: pair bred. ESSEX 26 pairs bred, 25 or more pairs probably bred. HERTFORDSHIRE Five localities: 11 pairs bred, plus eight pairs. MIDDLESEX & INNER LONDON Six localities: at least nine pairs bred. KENT 55 pairs bred, plus three pairs. SURREY Five localities: five pairs bred, plus four pairs.

**ENGLAND, E**

At least 17 localities: 71-97 pairs, excluding the higher estimate of 75 pairs in Norfolk. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Two localities: two pairs summered. HUNTINGDONSHIRE Two localities:

pair bred, plus a pair. LINCOLNSHIRE Two localities: 13 pairs bred. NORFOLK 46 pairs bred and one pair probably bred; county total probably about 75 pairs. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE Six localities: up to 22 pairs, but no confirmed breeding. SUFFOLK Five localities: at least 11 pairs bred.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

22 localities: 3-31 pairs. LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND 11 localities: up to 17 pairs, no evidence of breeding. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Three localities: two pairs bred, plus two pairs. SHROPSHIRE Three localities: up to five pairs, no evidence of breeding. WARWICKSHIRE Four localities: pair bred, three other pairs. WEST MIDLANDS One locality: pair summered.

**ENGLAND, N**

16 localities: 25-44 pairs. CHESHIRE Three localities: 11 pairs bred, and two males. CLEVELAND Two localities: four pairs bred. CUMBRIA One locality: pair bred. GREATER MANCHESTER Three localities: three pairs bred,

pair probably bred. LANCASHIRE Three localities: (1)-(3) 16 pairs probably bred. NORTH-UMBERLAND Four localities: six pairs bred.

**WALES**

Six localities: 15-17 pairs. ANGLESEY Three localities: 14 pairs bred. BRECON One locality: summering male. GLAMORGAN One locality: pair bred. GWENT One locality: summering male.

**SCOTLAND, S**

Eight localities: 6-9 pairs. BORDERS Seven localities: six pairs bred, two pairs probably bred. LOTHIAN One locality: pair in June.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

Three localities: 1-6 pairs. ORKNEY Three localities: pair bred, plus five pairs.

**N IRELAND**

One area: 8-16 pairs. Lough Neagh basin: 16 pairs present, 8 broods seen.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	63	138	116	133	161	145	117	158	142	98	99
Confirmed (pairs)	130	185	260	207	284	266	237	347	309	269	246
Possible/probable (pairs)	44	162	76	86	144	292	179	291	185	100	134
Max. total pairs	174	347	336	293	428	558	416	638	494	369	380

Very similar figures to those of 1996. Some counties acknowledge that counts or estimates of the number of breeding pairs are incomplete.

**GREATER SCAUP *Aythya marila***

Two localities: 1-4 pairs.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

One locality: female in possible nesting habitat on 30th May.

**N IRELAND**

One locality: pair bred, fledging four young; total of three males and two females present.

The breeding record from Northern Ireland is a first for the province and the first in the United Kingdom since 1989.

**COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra***

Eight localities: 2-35 pairs.

**SCOTLAND, Mid**

TAYSIDE Three localities: five pairs in May, five females in July.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

ARGYLL Three localities: two pairs bred, plus 13 pairs. HIGHLAND Two localities: up to 15 pairs, with very poor breeding success.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	15	36	7	9	14	32	38	47	61	10	8
Confirmed (pairs)	29	14	8	6	9	9	16	5	nc	11	2
Possible/probable (pairs)	33	76	32	23	21	62	72	79	76-89	32	33
Max. total pairs	62	90	40	29	30	71	88	84	89	43	35

Only minimal information is available this year, with no counts from the main breeding area in Caithness and Sutherland, which held 64-77 pairs in 1995.

**COMMON GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula***

Breeding occurs predominantly in two nestbox schemes in Scotland for which only sample data are available, so there is no longer an estimate of the total number of breeding pairs. Breeding occurred at two other Scottish sites away from the core range, and by two released/escaped pairs in England.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND Two localities: (1) male throughout June, three females in July; (2) first-summer male to 28th May. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Two localities: (1) female summered; (2) male summered.

**ENGLAND, N**

CHEESHIRE One locality: male on 16th June. LANCASHIRE One locality: two released pairs bred, but no young hatched. NORTHUMBERLAND One locality: female and first-year male from June to August.

**WALES**

MEIRIONNYDD One locality: pair in suitable habitat on 13th-14th May.

**SCOTLAND, S**

CLYDE Two localities: (1) pair on 15th May; (2)

female on 24th May. LOTHIAN One locality: pair on 11th May and female on 24th June.

**SCOTLAND, MID**

ABERDEENSHIRE Two localities: two pairs bred. TAYSIDE Three localities: (1) pair bred and at least eight other pairs; (2)(3) pairs in May.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

HIGHLAND Two localities: (1) RSPB Abernethy Reserve: 24 pairs bred, 23 in nestboxes, 10 nests successful, 81 young fledged (8.1 per successful nest); two or three pairs nested in natural sites; (2) RSPB Insh Marshes Reserve: 35 pairs bred in nestboxes, 20 nests successful, 144 young fledged (7.5 per successful nest). An estimated 15 additional pairs are thought to have bred in the Badenoch and Strathspey area.

The results from Highland Region refer to only a sample of the many boxes available to the species. Elsewhere, successful breeding occurred in Aberdeenshire, but there was no evidence of breeding farther south in Scotland.

**EUROPEAN HONEY-BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus***

26 localities in 15 counties: 14-39 pairs breeding; minimum of 18 young reared.

**GREAT BRITAIN**

26 localities: (1) pair raised two young, second displaying male present; (2) pair raised two young, third adult present; (3) pair raised one young, up to three other adults present; (4) pair raised one young, third adult present; (5)-(9) single pairs each raised two young; (10)(11) single pairs each raised one young; (12)(13)

single pairs bred, success unknown; (14) pair laid two eggs but failed; (15) pair present, plus two singles; (16) pair present, extra male and female on separate dates; (17) pair present, third bird in early August, but no conclusive proof of breeding; (18)-(23) single pairs present; (24) two males present; (25)(26) singles in suitable habitat.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Confirmed (pairs)	1	1	2	3	2	8	6	9	9	14	14
Max. total pairs	7	10	20	19	22	26	27	28	30	34	39

The most successful year to date, with the minimum of 18 fledged young equalling last year's peak. The above information is incomplete, with no reports received from at least one known breeding area, but there does appear to be an upward trend in the population. It is hoped that observers will submit their records to the Panel for safekeeping and so help to determine the true size of the British population and monitor any trends. A paper on the status of the species in Britain was published in *British Birds* last month (Roberts *et al.* 1999), together with proposals for a census of the species in the year 2000 (RBBP 1999).

**RED KITE *Milvus milvus***

151 wild pairs reared 129 young, and at least 54 pairs from released stock reared 119 young.

**WALES**

151 pairs were proved to breed, of which 99 were successful, rearing 129 young. All three totals are not only new records this century, but show that the upward trend, which appeared to

stutter slightly in 1996, has regained its momentum. Productivity, however, fell below the levels of the last three years. Complete nest failures included three that were robbed.

Wales	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Total pairs	59	68	71	84	92	101	115	138	146	161	177
Breeding pairs	44	49	54	65	76	84	104	111	127	130	151
Successful pairs	27	27	33	47	41	60	61	70	79	80	99
Young reared	39	38	49	73	62	96	82	99	117	119	129
Young/successful pair	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.3

In addition, there were a further 26 non-breeding pairs, while 135 unmated individuals were identified during the spring. The total population was estimated as at least 489 birds in April and 612 in August. The breeding range continued to expand, mainly to the south and west. Although young birds from the re-established population in England have been reported in Wales, none has yet bred, and nor have there been any long-distance recoveries of Welsh kites. The Panel wishes to thank Peter Davis and the Welsh Kite Trust for the above information.

**CORRECTION**

In the Reports on 'Rare Breeding Birds in the United Kingdom' for 1995 and 1996, it was wrongly stated that the monitoring work on the Red Kite in Wales was funded by the RSPB and the Welsh Office 'Kite Country' initiative. In fact, no funding was received from the Kite Country initiative. In 1995, the monitoring was funded mainly from private sources, with assistance from the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and the RSPB. In 1996, the work was organised by the newly formed Welsh Kite Trust, which received grant aid from CCW together with additional support from the RSPB, while more than half the Trust's income came from private and charitable sources. The Secretary of the Rare Breeding Birds Panel wishes to apologise to Peter Davis and the Welsh Kite Trust for the inclusion of wrong information in these reports.

The re-established breeding populations in England and Scotland continue to increase and the Panel is grateful to Ian Carter (English Nature) and Brian Etheridge, Colin Crooke and Terry Burns (RSPB) for the following information.

**ENGLAND**

At least 57 pairs bred, 50 of them successfully, rearing 111 young (2.2 young/successful pair). Pairs bred in the East Midlands release area for the first time, and two other pairs nested or attempted to do so in other counties in southern England. One of these involved an untagged pair, perhaps of Continental origin, which bred for the second year in succession. A further 20 birds were released at the East Midlands site.

**SCOTLAND**

A total of 27 pairs was located, of which 23 laid and 19 fledged 39 young. This was the same number as last year, but from more pairs, so productivity declined from 2.4 to 2.1 young/successful pair. Prolonged periods of heavy rain in late May and again in early July were thought to have contributed to the reduced breeding success. A further 17 birds from Germany were released in central Scotland in July.

England	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Total territorial pairs	2	7	12	22	26	37	61
Breeding pairs	2	4	9	20	24	35	57
Successful pairs	0	4	8	17	22	33	50
Young reared	0	9	14	37	55	80	111
Young/successful pair	-	2.3	1.8	2.2	2.5	2.4	2.2

Scotland	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Total territorial pairs	2	8	11	17	22	27
Breeding pairs	1	5	8	15	17	23
Successful pairs	1	3	6	11	16	19
Young reared	1	7	13	26	39	39
Young/successful pair	1.0	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.1

## WHITE-TAILED EAGLE *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Re-establishment.

### SCOTLAND

A total of 13-15 pairs or trios of territory-holding birds laid an estimated 11-13 clutches. Six of these were known to have hatched and five pairs raised nine young, including an unprecedented three young from one nest. Several failures were attributed to the cold, wet spring

experienced in the breeding range. The number of breeding birds, or birds thought to be capable of breeding, increased to 31. For the fifth year running, further chicks, ten this year, were brought over from Norway and released in August, bringing the total to 56.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Breeding pairs/trios (min.)	6	6	6	9	8	9	6	8	9	12	11
Successful pairs	2	1	3	2	4	4	4	4	5	7	5
Young reared	3	2	5	2	7	7	5	5	7	9	9
Young/successful pair	1.5	2.0	1.7	1.0	1.75	1.75	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.8

Despite the drop in the number of successful pairs, the number of young raised was the same as in 1996. The Panel is grateful to the Sea Eagle Project Team for providing it with information. The Project is jointly supported by the JNCC, SNH and the RSPB.

## MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*

131 males and 132 females bred, rearing at least 206 young.

### ENGLAND, SW

Two localities: two pairs. SOMERSET Two localities: (1) pair bred and reared one young; (2) pair bred but failed.

### ENGLAND, SE

Six localities or areas: 21-32 pairs. ESSEX One locality: one male and two females built two nests, but not known if eggs laid and neither successful. KENT Four areas: (1) 21 pairs bred, 12 successfully rearing at least 29 young, three pairs probably bred; (2) three summering adults; (3) two summering adults; (4) single summering

adult. SUSSEX One locality: male and two females, but male moved on.

### ENGLAND, E

37 localities or areas: 104-111 'pairs' bred. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Three localities: (1) three pairs fledged at least three young; (2) two pairs fledged at least three young; (3) male seen carrying nest material, but no further sightings. LINCOLNSHIRE 14 localities or areas: 25 pairs bred, rearing at least 46 young, one pair probably bred, and five pairs possibly bred. NORFOLK 17 localities or areas: 56 pairs bred,

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Breeding males	40	42	58	73	83	92	84	114	151	135	131
Breeding females	46	56	66	110	91	107	110	129	156	136	132
Young reared	126	145	172	145	198	229	244	255	277	263	206

rearing at least 88 young. SUFFOLK Three localities: at least 18 pairs bred and reared 26 young.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

Two localities: 0-2 pairs. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Two localities: (1)(2) single females in May or June.

**ENGLAND, N**

One locality: four pairs. LANCASHIRE One locality: three males and four females reared nine young.

**WALES**

One locality: 0-1 pair. CEREDIGION One locality: male April to June.

**SCOTLAND, S**

Two localities: 0-2 pairs. DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY Two localities: single females in June.

**SCOTLAND, MID**

One locality: 1-2 pairs. FIFE One locality: one pair raised two young, second pair present.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

One locality: 0-1 pair. HIGHLAND One locality: single female in late May.

It is not certain that the decline in breeding birds since 1996 is real, as locating them and proving breeding is becoming increasingly difficult with the increasing numbers in, particularly, eastern England. This certainly explains the relatively low number of young reported as reared, since nest-finding effort fails to match the growth in pairs.

**HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus***

The following summary information has been received. For each area, it is based on a non-randomised sample rather than a complete survey.

Area	Occupied territories	Territories known to have fledged young	Min. no. young fledged	Min. young/successful nest
England, N (all counties)	9	7	20	2.9
Wales	24	10	31-32	3.2
Borders & Lothian	5	3	4-5	1.5
Dumfries & Galloway	37	19	66	3.5
South Strathclyde	32	19	48	2.5
Angus	1	0	0	
Perthshire	18+	18	55	3.1
North-east Scotland	14	5	13	2.6
Argyll & Bute	37	25	79	3.2
Moray	8	5	17	3.4
E Sutherland	4	4	9	2.3
Orkney	31	7	17	2.4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>359-361</b>	<b>3.0</b>

Although the areas surveyed in the two years are not identical, the 1996 totals were 229 occupied territories and at least 347 young fledged. The total of territories known to have fledged young in 1996 was incomplete. The Panel is grateful to the Scottish, Welsh and Cumbrian Raptor Study Groups for much of the above information.

**MONTAGU'S HARRIER *Circus pygargus***

13 localities: seven males and nine females reared 11 young.

**ENGLAND, SW**

Six localities: (1) pair fledged three young; (2) pair fledged two young; (3) immature male and female, June-July; (4) male, May-July; (5)(6) single males in July.

**ENGLAND, SE** One locality: probable pair seen June-July.

**ENGLAND, E**

Six localities: (1) male and two females fledged three young from one nest, second nest failed; (2) pair fledged three young; (3) male and two females laid two clutches, both failed; (4)(5) single pairs laid but failed; (6) female seen in May, male in July.



	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	10	14	15	9	14	12	8	15	14	16	13
Breeding males	4	5	4	8	5	7	5	7	8	6	7
Other males	4	4	5	4	3	2	2	9	8	8	6
Breeding females	5	6	6	11	7	8	6	12	9	7	9
Other females	4	4	7	2	6	4	1	11	4	7	3
Young reared	13	17	14	20	14	12	9	13	26	14	11

The poorest year for pairs and for young reared since 1993. The failures in eastern England were attributed to desertion during spells of bad weather. The results were particularly disappointing in the year when some of the bumper crop of young produced in 1995 might have been expected to return to breed for the first time.

### NORTHERN GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis*

At least 228 localities or areas: 247-347 pairs breeding.

#### ENGLAND

Over 85 localities in 24 counties: 83 pairs known to have bred, plus 61 other pairs.

#### WALES

Over 73 localities in nine counties: 92 pairs

known to have bred, plus 22 other pairs.

#### SCOTLAND

Up to 70 localities in eight recording areas: 72 pairs known to have bred, plus 17 other pairs.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. counties	31	31	23	30	36	34	35	33	38	33	41
Confirmed (pairs)	54	108	112	93	158	150	199	145	249	160	247
Possible/probable (pairs)	40	68	54	79	71	93	100	80	70	53	100
Max. total pairs	94	176	166	172	229	243	299	225	319	213	347

The best year's recording to date. It is pleasing to receive fuller records from several counties and areas, even though it is known that some observers are still withholding information because of the risk of persecution to the birds. We do urge that all information be deposited with the Panel in order to assist this species' conservation.

### GOLDEN EAGLE *Aquila chrysaetos*

The following summary information has been received. For each area other than northern England, it is based on a non-randomised sample rather than a complete survey.

Area	Occupied territories	Territories known to have fledged young	Min. no. young fledged	Min. young/successful nest
England, N	1	0	0	
Dumfries & Galloway	2	0	0	
Borders	2	1	1	1.0
South Strathclyde	1	0	0	
Central Scotland	8	5	6	1.2
Tayside, W	19	1	1	1.0
Tayside, E	11	5	8	1.6

...Continued

Area	Occupied territories	Territories known to have fledged young	Min. no. young fledged	Min. young / successful nest
North-east Scotland	18	12	14	1.2
Argyll	53	25	31	1.2
Highland	94	43	48	1.1
Uists	15	3	4	1.3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>1.2</b>

The Panel is grateful to the Scottish and Cumbrian Raptor Study Groups for much of the above information. Breeding success was very poor in West Tayside mainly because of bad weather, although at least two nests may have been robbed, and was patchy elsewhere. The eggs in the Cumbrian nest failed to hatch.

### **OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus***

111 pairs: 102 pairs laid eggs, rearing 159 young.

#### **ENGLAND, SW**

SOMERSET One locality: single summered for the third year running.

#### **ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND: eight more young were translocated from Scotland to Rutland Water, all of which fledged and left the area; an adult female was present sporadically through June and July and what was presumed to be the same bird stayed through August.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE One locality: single in May-July, also seen at other sites in the area.

#### **ENGLAND, N**

UNNAMED COUNTY One locality: pair present in suitable area, possible breeding attempt

made, but failed.

#### **SCOTLAND, S**

BORDERS Three localities: pair, sometimes joined by third bird, seen displaying and nest-building, two other singles summered.

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY One locality: two adults summered, one carrying fish, no evidence of breeding. LOTHIAN One locality: single seen regularly from May to August.

#### **SCOTLAND, MID AND N & W**

A total of 111 occupied nests was found. Five further pairs seen, but no nests located or they did not attempt breeding. Eggs were laid in 102 nests, of which 93 hatched eggs and 77 reared 159 young.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Pairs with nests	50	53	58	62	73	76	88	95	99	104	111
Pairs with eggs	44	49	51	56	64	63	78	83	92	93	102
Successful pairs	30	38	38	44	44	47	56	69	73	74	77
Young reared	56	81	81	90	82	103	111	146	146	155	159
Young / successful pair	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.0	1.9	2.2	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.1

Although all the totals for Scotland are new records, the failure rate of nests was higher than in 1996, mainly, it is thought, because of heavy and prolonged rain at critical periods. No fewer than 16 nests failed at the chick stage, following earlier failure of nine nests at the egg stage. In addition, three clutches were stolen. The Panel is grateful for the information supplied to it by Roy Dennis, Colin Croke and the Osprey Study Group.

### **MERLIN *Falco columbarius***

The following summary information has been received. For each area, it is based on a non-randomised sample rather than a complete survey.

Area	Occupied territories	Territories known to have fledged young	Min. no. young fledged	Min. young/successful nest
England, SW	6	No data	No data	
England, Central	30	9	29	3.2
England, N	142	74	195-211	2.6-2.9
Wales	27	11	26	2.4
Borders & Lothian	27	21	67	3.2
Dumfries & Galloway	18	8	19	2.4
South Strathclyde	27	15	39	2.6
Angus	15	8	26	3.3
Perthshire	28	13	34	2.6
North-east Scotland	43	29	90	3.1
Argyll & Bute	8	6	17	2.8
Highland	41	18	56	3.1
Orkney	19	15	54	3.6
Shetland	17	14	45	3.2
TOTALS	448	241	697-713	2.9-3.0

Observers from several areas, but especially northern England and parts of Highland region, reported high losses of chicks in the nest caused by prolonged periods of heavy rain. The above data are more complete than in 1996, when the number of young per successful pair was 3.2. The Panel is grateful to the Scottish Raptor Study Groups for the Scottish information.

## HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

Minimum of 167-624 pairs breeding.

### ENGLAND, SW

39-133 pairs. AVON 4-10 pairs. DEVON 9-12 pairs. DORSET 7-13 pairs. GLOUCESTERSHIRE 1 pair. HAMPSHIRE 11-54 pairs. SOMERSET 1-13 pairs. WILTSHIRE 6-30 pairs.

### ENGLAND, SE

68-255 pairs. BEDFORDSHIRE 3 pairs. BERKSHIRE 10-15 pairs. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE 4-13 pairs. ESSEX 16-49 pairs. INNER LONDON 3-7 pairs. HERTFORDSHIRE 3-24 pairs. KENT 9-25 pairs. OXFORDSHIRE 7-15 pairs. SURREY 9-40 pairs. SUSSEX 4-64 pairs.

### ENGLAND, E

24-78 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE & HUNTINGDONSHIRE 6-14 pairs. LINCOLNSHIRE 2-8 pairs. NORFOLK 5-10 pairs. NORTHAMPTON-

SHIRE 8-26 pairs. SUFFOLK 3-20 pairs.

### ENGLAND, CENTRAL

27-129 pairs. DERBYSHIRE 9-17 pairs. LEICESTERSHIRE 1-51 pairs. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE 3 pairs. SHROPSHIRE 10-12 pairs. STAFFORDSHIRE 2-3 pairs. WARWICKSHIRE 2-30 pairs. WORCESTERSHIRE 0-12 pairs. WEST MIDLANDS 0-1 pair.

### ENGLAND, N

3-9 pairs. CHESHIRE 0-3 pairs. NORTHUMBERLAND 2-5 pairs. YORKSHIRE 1 pair.

### WALES

6-20 pairs. BRECONSHIRE 0-5 pairs. GLAMORGAN 0-1 pair. GWENT 4-11 pairs. RADNOR 0-1 pair. MONTGOMERY 2 pairs.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Confirmed (pairs)	108	103	140	154	159	255	152	170	161	190	167
Possible/probable (pairs)	164	226	250	287	310	327	341	330	269	264	457
Max. total pairs	272	329	390	441	469	582	493	500	430	454	624

A major increase on last year to reach the highest total of pairs ever recorded. Some of the increase is a result of more counties recording singles and infrequent sightings of pairs, though a number of county recorders comment on how difficult it is to be certain how many pairs are breeding.

### PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus*

The following summary information has been received. For each area, it is based on a non-randomised sample rather than a complete survey.

Area	Occupied territories	Territories known to have fledged young	Min. no. young fledged	Min. young/ successful nest
England, SW	40	11	28	2.5
England, SE	18	6	19	3.2
England, Central	36	3	6	2.0
England, N	138	91	204	2.2
Wales	151	70	129	1.8
Borders & Lothian	47	22	51	2.3
Dumfries & Galloway	80	51	108	2.1
South Strathclyde	25	8	16	2.0
Angus	29	20	20	1.0
Perthshire	41	24	57	2.4
Central Scotland	20	8	15	1.9
North-east Scotland	65	34	64	1.9
Argyll & Bute	18	10	18	1.8
Highland	33	28	56	2.0
Uists	10	5	12	2.4
Orkney	17	4	No data	
Shetland	1	0	0	
Northern Ireland	60	58	146	2.5
TOTALS	829	453	949	2.1

The number of occupied territories included in the table has increased from the 741 monitored in 1996. The number of successful nests is only slightly up, but not all sites with pairs are subsequently visited to check on breeding success, so this is a minimum figure. The Panel is grateful to the Scottish Raptor Study Groups for most of the Scottish information.

### COMMON QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

4-867 pairs breeding.

#### ENGLAND, SW

0-182 pairs. AVON 18 singing males. DEVON 13 singing males. DORSET 12 singing males. GLOUCESTERSHIRE 19 singing males. HAMPSHIRE Nine singing males. SOMERSET 19 singing males. WILTSHIRE 92 singing males.

#### ENGLAND, SE

0-114 pairs. BEDFORDSHIRE 9 singing males. BERKSHIRE 20-23 singing males. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Six or seven singing males. ESSEX Eight singing males. KENT 21 singing males. OXFORDSHIRE 17 singing males. SUSSEX 29 singing males.

**ENGLAND, E**

0-163 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE & HUNTINGDONSHIRE 30 singing males. LINCOLNSHIRE 29 singing males. NORFOLK 46 singing males. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE 28 singing males. SUFFOLK 30 singing males.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

0-111 pairs. DERBYSHIRE 24 singing males. LEICESTERSHIRE 16 singing males. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE 25 singing males. RUTLAND Seven singing males. SHROPSHIRE 11 singing males. STAFFORDSHIRE Five singing males. WARWICKSHIRE 12 singing males. WORCESTERSHIRE Seven singing males. WEST MIDLANDS Four singing males.

**ENGLAND, N**

3-145 pairs. CHESHIRE 17 singing males. CLEVELAND Four singing males. LANCASHIRE At least 100 singing males (including possible 50 released birds in one area). NORTHUMBERLAND Three pairs bred and 21 singing males.

**WALES**

0-32 pairs. ANGLESEY Five singing males. BRECON Two singing males. CAERNARFON One singing male. CARMARTHEN Five singing males. CEREDIGION Seven singing males. FLINT One singing male. GLAMORGAN Three singing males. PEMBROKE Eight singing males.

**SCOTLAND, S**

1-48 pairs. BORDERS 21 singing males. CLYDE Three singing males. DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY Pair bred, and nine singing males. LOTHIAN 14 singing males.

**SCOTLAND, MID**

0-21 pairs. ABERDEENSHIRE Nine singing males. FIFE 12 singing males.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

0-51 pairs. ARGYLL 17 singing males. HIGHLAND At least 19 singing males. ORKNEY Seven singing males. SHETLAND Six singing males. WESTERN ISLES Two singing males.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Confirmed (pairs)	1	5	27	13	2	9	1	8	15	5	4
Possible/probable (pairs)	245	158	1,628	364	105	481	202	604	500	330	863
Max. total pairs	246	163	1,655	377	107	490	203	612	515	335	867

The best year since the bumper one of 1989. Numbers were up all across Britain, though more noticeably so in the East than in the West.

**SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana***

13 localities: 1-14 pairs breeding.

**ENGLAND, E**

Three localities: 0-4 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Three localities: (1) two singing males in June and July; (2)(3) single singing males in May.

**ENGLAND, N**

One locality: 0-1 pair. LANCASHIRE One locality: singing male on 4th May.

**SCOTLAND, S**

Two localities: 0-2 pairs CLYDE Two localities: (1)(2) single singing males.

**SCOTLAND, MID**

Three localities: 1-3 pairs. ABERDEENSHIRE Three localities: (1) pair bred, young seen; (2)(3) single singing males during breeding season.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

Four localities: 0-4 pairs. ARGYLL One locality: single singing male. HIGHLAND One locality: bird flushed on 13th May, so perhaps breeding even though no singing heard. SHETLAND Two localities: (1)(2) single singing males.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. counties	4	5	7	6	5	9	12	4	5	5	7
No. localities	7	6	14	14	7	12	19	5	8	8	13
No. pairs/singing males	18	10	21	21	14	14	31	11	10	13	14

A reasonable year, with increases in the number of localities and very slightly in the number of actual birds, while a confirmed breeding record was a bonus. A detailed study in northeast Scotland and the collation of past records has just been published (Francis & Thorpe 1999). This confirms the value of more intensive fieldwork. The RSPB will be carrying out a national survey in 1999.

## **CORN CRAKE *Crex crex***

644 pairs or singing males.

### **ENGLAND, E**

One locality: 0-1 pair. CAMBRIDGESHIRE One locality: singing male on 9th June to 14th July.

### **WALES**

One locality: 0-1 pair. CARMARTHEN One locality: one on 13th August.

### **SCOTLAND, MID**

One locality: 0-1 pair. ABERDEENSHIRE One locality: singing male from mid May to early June.

### **SCOTLAND, N & W: MAINLAND**

One locality: 0-1 pair. ARGYLL One locality: singing male to end of May.

### **SCOTLAND, N & W: ISLANDS**

0-637 pairs. Totals of singing males: HIGHLAND - INNER HEBRIDES 23 (Skye 23), STRATHCLYDE - INNER HEBRIDES 211 (Coll 42, Tiree 136, Iona 8, Colonsay 6, Oronsay 2, Islay 17), ORKNEY 21, WESTERN ISLES 382 (Lewis 114, Harris 5, Berneray 4, North Uist 78, Benbecula 45, South Uist 62, Barra 57, Vatersay 17).

### **N IRELAND**

0-3 pairs. FERMANAGH One locality: singing male. TYRONE Two localities: two singing males.

A total of 637 singing males was found by RSPB, SNH and Scottish Crofting Union teams on the Scottish islands this year, compared with 584 in 1996 and 537 in 1995. This further welcome increase was quite evenly distributed with the exception of Orkney, where numbers were only half the 1996 total. The Small Isles remain empty, but the single bird back on Berneray in 1996 was followed by four this year. The increases are further proof of the success of the RSPB/SNH/SCU Corncrake Initiative.

Although there were no records from Co. Antrim this year, where last year the first Northern Ireland pair bred since 1989, three singing males from elsewhere in the province were welcome news.

## **COMMON CRANE *Grus grus***

One extensive locality.

### **ENGLAND, E**

NORFOLK One locality: three pairs nested, one pair fledging two young.

After eight years of failure, the first successful breeding since 1988.

## **BLACK-WINGED STILT *Himantopus himantopus***

One locality: single male present.

### **ENGLAND, E**

One locality: male present all year.

The single bird present at Titchwell, Norfolk, for the last four years stayed on this year, too (*Brit. Birds* 91: 471).

## **AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta***

At least 35 localities: up to 654 pairs reared a minimum of 238 young.

### **ENGLAND, SE**

16 localities: up to 257 pairs. ESSEX Seven localities: (1) 38 pairs present, minimum eight clutches laid and five young reared, with losses

to ground predators; (2) 16 pairs, of which 15 bred, at least seven young fledged; (3) ten pairs bred, only one successful brood of two young; (4) nine pairs fledged nine young; (5) three pairs

fledged nine young; (6) one pair fledged four young; (7) three pairs summered. KENT Eight localities: (1) 77 pairs bred, only about 22 young fledged because of heavy predation; (2) 40 pairs bred, at least seven young fledged; (3) 17 pairs bred, only five young fledged because of heavy predation; (4) 14 pairs fledged only two young; (5) 14 pairs fledged only one young; (6) six pairs all failed; (7) five pairs bred, outcome unknown; (8) three pairs bred, outcome unknown. SUSSEX One locality: pair bred, but failed.

**ENGLAND, E**

17 localities: at least 378 pairs. NORFOLK 13 localities: (1)-(3) 160 pairs fledged 102 young at three sites; (4) 18 pairs fledged just four young;

(5) three pairs fledged six young. Details of other sites not available. SUFFOLK Four localities: (1) 97 pairs bred, 17 young fledged; (2) 81 pairs bred, three young fledged; (3) 15 pairs fledged 15 young with losses to floods and predators; (4) four pairs bred, two young fledged.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

One locality: 3 pairs. RUTLAND One locality: three pairs present, displaying and mating, but no eggs laid.

**ENGLAND, N**

One locality: 16 pairs. YORKSHIRE One locality: 16 pairs bred, 16 young fledged.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	18	27	24	21	21	29	25	29	25	25	35
Confirmed (pairs)	341	389	521	355	448	492	436	623	613	592	654
Young reared (min.)	315	136	150	200	305	336	347	181	149	189	238

Although there was an increase both in breeding pairs and in the number of young reared, the combination of bad weather, high tides and ground predators continues to wreak havoc in some of the larger colonies. Birds returned to Rutland Water for the second summer running, but there was no evidence of any breeding attempt.

**STONE-CURLEW *Burhinus oedicanemus***

Seven counties: 192-203 pairs.

**ENGLAND, SW**

59-68 pairs. DORSET Two pairs fledged two young. HAMPSHIRE 22-25 pairs, of which 20-23 bred and fledged 21 young. WILTSHIRE 41 pairs located, of which 37 bred and fledged 25 young.

**ENGLAND, SE**

4-5 pairs. BERKSHIRE Five pairs, of which four bred, fledging six young. OXFORDSHIRE None bred.

**ENGLAND, E**

129-130 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Pair summered, no evidence of breeding. NORFOLK Brecks: 57 pairs bred and fledged 64 young. Elsewhere: four pairs bred and fledged three young. SUFFOLK Brecks: 65 pairs bred and fledged 45 young. Elsewhere: three pairs bred, but reared only one or two young between them.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Confirmed (pairs)	137	126	126	139	139	155	146	141	165	174	192
Possible/probable (pairs)	0	3	17	10	16	4	16	32	9	14	11
Max. total pairs	137	129	143	149	155	159	162	173	174	188	203
Min. no. of young fledged	nc	62	79	112	123	111	101	91	164	155	167

The continuing increase in the population of this species reflects the conservation action being taken by the RSPB and others. The Panel wishes to thank Dr Rhys Green, RSPB, for his assistance in compiling the data.

### LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

The following summary information has been received. For each area, it is based on a non-randomised sample rather than a complete survey.

Area	Possible/ probable pairs	Definite breeding pairs	Total pairs
England, SW	14	22	36
England, SE	51	93	144
England, E	39	42	81
England, Central	54	58	112
England, N	27	75	102
Wales	2	61	63
Fife	0	1	1
Northeast Scotland	0	1	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>540</b>

A slightly lower total than last year's 553, though more counties reported breeding numbers. In Hertfordshire, a pair bred at Tring for the first time in 21 years, on purpose-built habitat within 100 m of the first British breeding site (in 1938).

### DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus*

Outside main Scottish breeding areas: one pair probably breeding

#### ENGLAND, N

One area. CUMBRIA One area: no sign of breeding in usual localities; a pair and separate male and female in three other localities in late May, so probably still on passage.

#### WALES

One locality. BRECON One locality: pair on 1st June, but not subsequently.

#### SCOTLAND, N & W

One locality. ARGYLL One locality: pair present, distraction display seen.

The Panel seeks records only if away from the main breeding range, which lies north of a line from the Firth of Clyde to the Firth of Tay, and accepts that at least some of the birds on hilltops in southern Scotland and northern England will be on passage. A paper examining the history of breeding by Dotterels in northern England is in preparation for publication in *British Birds*.

### TEMMINCK'S STINT *Calidris temminckii*

One locality: up to three pairs.

#### SCOTLAND, N & W

One locality: at least two males on 6th June, and

male chasing female on 10th with two other displaying males; no nest searches were made.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Confirmed (pairs)	4	2	2	1	0	1	2	0	0	1	1
Possible/probable (pairs)	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	2	1	2
Max. total pairs	5	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	3

To avoid unnecessary disturbance, the minimum amount of monitoring of this species is carried out, just enough to establish presence.



**PURPLE SANDPIPER** *Calidris maritima*

Two localities: three pairs bred.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

Two localities: (1) two pairs with broods in tradi-

tional area; (2) adult distracting, clearly with brood, though not seen.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2
Confirmed (pairs)	3	2	2	1	3	1	1	4	1	2	3
Possible/probable (pairs)	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Max. total pairs	3	2	4	1	4	2	1	4	1	2	3

As with the preceding species, only minimal monitoring is carried out.

**RUFF** *Philomachus pugnax*

Six localities: five leks reported, but no evidence of breeding.

**ENGLAND, SE**

Two localities. SUSSEX Two localities: (1) six males and eight females present and lekking; (2) up to 15 birds present.

to eight males and two females lekking in late April and early May; (2) birds present and lekking. LANCASHIRE Two localities: (1) up to 30 birds on 18th April, with some lekking; (2) 15 males and four females lekking in early May.

**ENGLAND, N**

Four localities. CHESHIRE Two localities: (1) up

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	16	14	15	8	9	21	10	13	7	8	6
No. of leks	10	6	6	1	4	7	7	3	3	3	5
Nests/broods	1	1	1	3	7	0	0	2	0	1	0

Despite more leks than for a few years, there was no evidence of breeding at any of the localities.

**BLACK-TAILED GODWIT** *Limosa limosa*

11 localities: 42-47 pairs breeding.

**ENGLAND, SE**

Three localities. KENT Two localities: (1) four pairs bred, no young fledged; (2) pair bred, hatched but final success unknown, second pair failed. SUSSEX One locality: pair probably bred.

**ENGLAND, N**

One locality. LANCASHIRE One locality: pair bred, success unknown.

**ENGLAND, E**

Two localities. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Two localities: (1) 17 pairs bred and fledged up to 25 young; (2) 14 pairs thought to have bred and to have fledged up to 15 young.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

Five localities. ORKNEY Three localities: (1)(2) single pairs probably bred; (3) bird display-calling. SHETLAND Two localities: (1) four pairs bred, one fledging three young; (2) pair present, not known if nested.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	13	17	14	16	18	24	16	22	15	12	11
Confirmed (pairs)	28	36	34	33	28	20	28	20	28	34	42
Possible/probable (pairs)	12	28	22	33	25	38	5	16	7	7	5
Max. total pairs	40	64	56	66	53	58	33	36	35	41	47

For the third year running, the number of breeding localities has declined, but the number of breeding pairs has risen to its highest total since 1984. The minimum total of 43 young fledged is also much higher than for some years. Those in Scotland are most likely to be of the race *islandica*.

### WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

Away from Orkney and Shetland: one pair possibly bred.

#### SCOTLAND, N & W

HIGHLAND One locality: pair held territory and may have bred.

### GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

The following limited information was received:

#### SCOTLAND, N & W

ARGYLL Six pairs were reported from six localities. CAITHNESS & SUTHERLAND 19 pairs

were reported from nine localities. SHETLAND

Single pairs bred at two localities. WESTERN ISLES Three pairs bred in one area.

The number of breeding pairs in Shetland is thought to have declined in recent years.

### WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

Five localities: 0-9 pairs bred.

SCOTLAND, N & W Five localities: (1) five pairs present, success unknown but likely; (2)(3)

single pairs present and probably bred; (4)(5) single pairs present and possibly bred.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	3	4	6	2	2	4	4	8	6	3	5
Confirmed (pairs)	3	3	2	1	1	1	2	6	7	8	0
Possible/probable (pairs)	1	1	4	1	1	5	6	5	4	0	9
Max. total pairs	4	4	6	2	2	6	8	11	11	8	9

In addition to the above, it is believed that another six pairs are likely to have been present at four traditional sites which were not checked in 1997.

### RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus*

Three localities: 38 breeding males reared at least 54 young.

#### SCOTLAND, N & W

Three localities. SHETLAND Two localities on Fetlar: (1) 29 breeding males, at least 41 young fledged; (2) eight breeding males, at least 12

young fledged. WESTERN ISLES One locality: male and two females bred, two young hatched, but only one thought to have fledged.

A slight decline in breeding males at the main site was offset by a doubling at the second site and also the best production of young since the Panel's formation in 1973. It is also pleasing to see successful breeding in the Western Isles.

### MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

24 localities: 33-53 pairs, plus hybrid pair.

#### ENGLAND, SW

Four localities. DORSET One locality: eight pairs probably bred, no further information. UNNAMED COUNTY

Three localities: (1) five pairs bred, two of which raised five young; (2) single pair bred, success unknown; (3) single pair present.

**ENGLAND, SE**

Nine localities. ESSEX Three localities: (1) two pairs bred, but failed; (2) pair probably bred; (3) pair present. KENT Four localities: (1) 16 pairs laid but were flooded out, eight re-laid, of which four fledged six young; (2) three pairs fledged four young, plus one pair; (3) two pairs bred, success unknown; (4) one pair bred, success unknown. SUSSEX Two localities: single pairs possibly bred.

**ENGLAND, E**

Six localities. NORFOLK One locality: two pairs bred, one fledging one young. SUFFOLK Two localities: (1)(2) single pairs summered.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

Two localities. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE One locality: hybrid Mediterranean Gull (presumed with Black-headed Gull *L. ridibundus*) bred with Black-headed Gull and produced three second generation hybrid young. SHROPSHIRE One locality: adult in Black-headed Gull colony on 13th July.

**ENGLAND, N**

Three localities. CHESHIRE One locality: three adults and two immatures summered, display noted. LANCASHIRE Two localities: (1) pair bred, fledging two young; (2) up to seven adults in Black-headed Gull colony all summer.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	3	9	5	10	13	15	14	16	16	18	24
Confirmed (pairs)	1	5	6	11	15	19	15	16	18	31	33
Possible/probable (pairs)	2	10	3	5	8	12	17	14	10	14	20
Max. total pairs	3	15	9	16	23	31	32	30	28	45	53

A further slight increase, with a minimum of 16 young fledged, plus the successful hybrid pair.

**YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus cachinnans***

One locality: two pairs bred.

**ENGLAND, SW**

DORSET One locality: two pairs bred, one of which fledged two young.

The second successful breeding of this species in Britain, the first having been in 1995.

**LESSER CRESTED TERN *Sterna bengalensis***

One locality: one female bred with Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandwicensis*.

**ENGLAND, N**

One locality. NORTHUMBERLAND One locality: female bred with Sandwich Tern, fledged one hybrid young at usual site on Farne Islands; egg hatched on 18th June and chick

fledged on 18th July, being seen in Vendée, France, on 23rd September. Note that hatching and fledging dates correct those published previously (*Brit. Birds* 91: 482), where wrongly given as 10th June and 8th July.

This is the fourth hybrid young to fledge from this pairing; the others were in 1989, 1992 and 1996.

**ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii***

14 localities: 54-55 pairs breeding, fledging a minimum of 38 young; plus successful hybrid pairing with Common Tern *S. hirundo*.

**ENGLAND, SW**

One locality: pair bred, success unknown.

**ENGLAND, E**

Two localities: (1) pair bred, but nest washed out

within two days of hatching; (2) pair bred, but nest destroyed by predators.

**ENGLAND, N**

Five localities: (1) 25 pairs bred, fledging 17

young, with northerly gales in June causing high chick mortality; (2) three pairs bred, fledging five young; (3) two pairs bred, fledging two young; (4) pair bred, nest washed out; (5) pair displaying, mating and nest-building on 11th-12th July, not thought to have laid.

**WALES**

Two localities: (1) two pairs bred, fledging two young; (2) pair bred unsuccessfully and adult

bred with Common Tern and fledged one hybrid young.

**SCOTLAND, MID**

One locality: (1) eight pairs bred, fledging eight young.

**NORTHERN IRELAND**

Three localities: (1) six pairs bred, fledging four young; (2) two pairs bred, success unknown; (3) one pair bred, success unknown.

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	13	17	15	13	15	18	14	15	11	14
Confirmed (pairs)	164	172	93	52	62	84	74	72	66	54
Possible/probable (pairs)	33	5	31	5	10	21	24	13	9	1
Max. total pairs	197	177	124	57	72	105	98	85	75	55

The worst year yet, despite three more localities in use compared with last year. In contrast, the number of pairs recorded at Rockabill, Co. Dublin, increased from 557 to 602, with productivity of just over 1.0 per pair. At Lady’s Island Lake, Co. Wexford, however, there was a major drop, from 120 to 47 pairs, though productivity, at 1.22, was good.

**LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons***

The following summary information has been received. For each area, it is based on a sample rather than a complete survey.

Area	Pairs in 1997
England, SW	260
England, SE	182
England, E	561
England, NE	104
England, NW	9
Wales	80
Scotland	185
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,381</b>

No comparison is possible with 1996 as the data received were less complete.

**BARN OWL *Tyto alba***

The following information has been received. Several county recorders emphasised how incomplete their information was and have used estimates.

Area	Pairs 1996	Pairs 1997
Avon	5	7
Cornwall	11	1++
Devon	42	58
Hampshire	25	60
Isle of Wight	nc	22

...Continued

Area	Pairs 1996	Pairs 1997
Somerset	nc	19
Wiltshire	74	78
Bedfordshire	nc	25
Berkshire	nc	5-10
Buckinghamshire	6	3++
Essex	30	30+
Hertfordshire	5	nc
Kent	26	15+
Oxfordshire	nc	24+
Surrey	13	9
Sussex	24+	39
Cambridgeshire	26	15
Huntingdonshire	3+	11
Lincolnshire	22	36
Norfolk	59	22+
Northamptonshire	55	40
Suffolk	20	23
Derbyshire	4	12
Leicestershire/Rutland	nc	30
Nottinghamshire	22	22
Shropshire	3	15
Staffordshire	nc	1
Warwickshire	10	12
Worcestershire	12	10
West Midlands	nc	1
Cheshire	12	12-15
Cleveland	1	2
Cumbria	7	2
Greater Manchester	3	3
Lancashire	20+	38
Northumberland	16+	19
Yorkshire	16	10
Anglesey	10	4
Brecon	5	17
Caernarfon	25-30	25-32
Ceredigion	14	14
Denbigh	nc	4
Glamorgan	nc	22
Gwent	3	2
Montgomery	11	21
Pembroke	20	21
Borders	1	85
Ayr	14	8
Clyde	10	12
Clyde islands	4	nc
Dumfries & Galloway	62+	150
Lothian	2	6

...Continued

Area	Pairs 1996	Pairs 1997
Forth	2	nc
Aberdeenshire	3	2
Fife	0	0
Moray & Nairn	10	nc
Argyll	41	47
Highland	12	80
TOTALS	821-826	1,251-1,266

The British breeding population of the Barn Owl was estimated at 4,400 pairs in 1982-85 (Shawyer 1987), and preliminary results of the Project Barn Owl survey, which was completed in 1997, are suggesting a decline to around 4,000 pairs.

### SNOWY OWL *Nyctea scandiaca*

Three localities: three singles.

#### SCOTLAND, N

Three localities. HIGHLAND One locality: male on 9th July. SHETLAND One locality: female (returned?) to Fetlar, 22nd March to 19th April.

WESTERN ISLES Two localities: male on Lewis 29th May to 19th June and, presumed same bird, South Uist to at least 28th June.

The last sighting in Shetland was in 1993.

### COMMON KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

The following information has been received. Several county recorders emphasised how incomplete their information was and have used estimates.

Area	Pairs 1996	Pairs 1997
Avon	nc	20
Cornwall	2	nc
Devon	19	91-110
Gloucestershire	nc	10++
Hampshire	28	13++
Somerset	nc	14
Wiltshire	18	21
Bedfordshire	nc	7++
Berkshire	nc	11+
Buckinghamshire	c.50	4++
Essex	c.100	17
Hertfordshire	30	13+
Kent	24	7+
Middlesex	6	6
Surrey	29	20
Sussex	11	27
Cambridgeshire	31	10-19
Huntingdonshire	6	3
Norfolk	10-13	15
Northamptonshire	27	6++

...Continued

Area	Pairs 1996	Pairs 1997
Suffolk	30	12
Derbyshire	20++	11+
Leicestershire/Rutland	nc	30
Nottinghamshire	nc	70-100
Shropshire	nc	12
Warwickshire	11+	10
Worcestershire	27	15++
West Midlands	6	20
Cheshire	7	22
Cleveland	1	5
Greater Manchester	30-40	35
Lancashire	16	50
Northumberland	15+	23
West Yorkshire	4	nc
Brecon	12	nc
Ceredigion	3+	1
Pembroke	nc	c.50
Gwent	5	nc
Montgomery	nc	10-20
Borders	16	c.30
Clyde & Ayr	11	19
Dumfries & Galloway	3-5	12
Lothian	6	4+
Forth	6	nc
Angus & Dundee	5	nc
Fife	5	10
Perthshire & Kinross	1	nc
Moray & Nairn	2	nc
Argyll	1	nc
Highland	2-4	6
TOTALS	636-653	765-833

It is obvious that the information in the table is very incomplete. County bird clubs might like to consider carrying out surveys in order to improve estimates for this species.

### **HOOPOE** *Upupa epops*

One locality: one or two present.

#### **ENGLAND, N**

**GREATER MANCHESTER** One locality: one or possibly two birds in June and July in suitable habitat.

Breeding could not be proved at this site because of lack of access, but the occurrence follows the breeding record in Wales in 1996.

### **WRYNECK** *Jynx torquilla*

Five localities: pair bred and four singing males.

#### **SCOTLAND, N & W**

Five localities: (1) pair bred, fledging at least two

young; (2)-(5) single singing males in late May and June.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	10	9	8	6	6	1	6	1	3	4	5
Confirmed (pairs)	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Possible / probable (pairs)	9	9	7	6	5	2	5	1	3	4	4
Max. total pairs	10	10	8	6	6	2	6	1	3	4	5

The first breeding record since 1993. The breeding pair and two of the singing males were in the same general area.

### WOOD LARK *Lullula arborea*

The results of the 1997 census are given in the table together with the figures for the previous census in 1986.

County	Pairs in 1986	Pairs in 1997
Cornwall	6	0
Devon	12	53
Dorset	5	105
Hampshire	92	294
Somerset	1	0
Wiltshire	2	3
Bedfordshire	1	1
Berkshire	6	63
Buckinghamshire	0	6
Kent	0	3
Surrey	38	171
Sussex	0	71
Lincolnshire	4	37
Norfolk	24	248
Suffolk	49	457
Nottinghamshire	1	31
Staffordshire	0	7
Yorkshire	0	2
TOTALS	241	1,552

The figures in the table are the maxima for each county, the minima and maxima being 1,426 and 1,552. The more than six-fold increase in the last decade has been accompanied by some movement out of the 'traditional' habitats of young forestry plantations and heathland into low-intensity farmland, golf courses, orchards and coppiced woodland. In Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, many pairs are breeding on bare ground around old coal-mine sites.

### HORNED LARK *Eremophila alpestris*

One locality: one pair.

#### SCOTLAND, N & W

HIGHLAND One locality: pair present in suitable breeding habitat in June.

The first record since 1977, when a pair bred successfully.



**PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba***White Wagtail *M. a. alba*

One locality: pair bred.

**ENGLAND, E**

NORFOLK One locality: pair fledged two broods of three and two young.

A rare occurrence worth recording.

**BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros***

67 localities: 33-99 pairs breeding.

**ENGLAND, SW**

Three localities: 0-3 pairs. DORSET Two localities: (1)(2) single juveniles seen in suitable habitat in July. HAMPSHIRE One locality: singing male in April-July.

**ENGLAND, SE**

37 localities: 17-52 pairs breeding. BERKSHIRE Two localities: (1) two singing males; (2) singing male. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE One locality: pair bred. ESSEX Three localities: (1) pair bred; (2) four or five singing males; (3) singing male. INNER LONDON &amp; MIDDLESEX 11 localities: (1) pair bred, plus three other pairs; (2)(3) single pairs bred, plus singing male; (4)-(11) single singing males. KENT 16 localities: (1) three pairs bred; (2)(3) single pairs bred, plus single additional singing males; (4)-(10) single pairs bred; (11) pair; (12)-(14) single singing males; (15)(16) single females. SURREY Four localities: (1) pair plus singing male; (2)(3) single pairs; (4) singing male.

**ENGLAND, E**

13 localities: 6-20 pairs breeding. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Two localities: (1) two pairs bred, plus two pairs; (2) pair bred but failed.

LINCOLNSHIRE One locality: male in March-

April and again in August. NORFOLK Three localities: (1) pair bred, plus two singing males; (2) pair bred; (3) two singing males. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE Two localities: (1) two singing males; (2) singing male. SUFFOLK Five localities: (1) pair bred, plus singing male; (2)-(5) at least one pair may have bred.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

Seven localities: 5-17 pairs breeding. DERBYSHIRE Three localities: (1) pair bred, second pair probably did, plus singing male; (2) pair bred, plus singing male; (3) pair bred. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE One locality: up to two singing males. RUTLAND One locality: pair bred. WARWICKSHIRE One locality: juvenile found dead on car on 15th June, perhaps brought from some distance away. WEST MIDLANDS One large area: pair bred and up to six singing males.

**ENGLAND, N**

Seven localities: 5-7 pairs breeding. CLEVELAND One locality: pair bred. GREATER MANCHESTER Three localities: (1) pair bred; (2)(3) single singing males. LANCASHIRE Three localities: (1)-(3) single pairs bred.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	77	70	56	50	36	44	53	66	58	46	67
Confirmed (pairs)	46	54	36	28	23	14	32	32	19	28	33
Possible/probable (pairs)	63	58	46	46	46	57	44	63	63	37	66
Max. total pairs	109	112	82	74	69	71	76	95	82	65	99

A much better year, with improved coverage of several city centres.

**FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris***

Two localities: 0-2 pairs breeding.

**SCOTLAND, S**One locality: single in late July with post-breeding Mistle Thrush *T. viscivorus* flock.**SCOTLAND, N & W**

One locality: single in suitable habitat in May.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	7	7	12	12	13	7	5	5	6	6	2
Confirmed (pairs)	1	2	3	5	2	2	2	0	1	1	0
Possible/probable (pairs)	6	5	10	7	11	8	3	5	5	5	2
Max. total pairs	7	7	13	12	13	11	5	5	6	6	2

It is now over five years since establishment seemed imminent.

### REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Seven localities: 3-17 pairs breeding.

#### SCOTLAND, N & W

Five localities: two pairs bred, plus 13 sites with singing males.

#### SCOTLAND, MID

Two localities: (1) pair bred; (2) singing male.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	39	22	38	17	15	13	22	15	9	28	7
Confirmed (pairs)	9	10	12	6	7	9	5	4	3	3	3
Possible/probable (pairs)	41	30	39	15	13	15	22	15	11	35	14
Max. total pairs	50	49	51	21	20	24	27	19	14	38	17

A disappointingly small number of records received.

### CETTI'S WARBLER *Cettia cetti*

356-361 singing males.

#### ENGLAND, SW

260-264 singing males. AVON Six singing males. DEVON 83-87 singing males. DORSET 29 singing males. GLOUCESTERSHIRE Four singing males. HAMPSHIRE 78 singing males. SOMERSET 53 singing males. WILTSHIRE Seven singing males.

#### ENGLAND, SE

33-34 singing males. BEDFORDSHIRE Three singing males. BERKSHIRE Ten singing males. ESSEX One singing male. KENT Seven singing males. OXFORDSHIRE Four or five singing males. SUSSEX Eight singing males.

#### ENGLAND, E

36 singing males. CAMBRIDGESHIRE (including HUNTINGDONSHIRE & PETERBOROUGH) One singing male. NORFOLK 25 singing males. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE Five singing males. SUFFOLK Five singing males.

#### ENGLAND, CENTRAL

Four singing males. WARWICKSHIRE Three singing males. WORCESTERSHIRE One singing male.

#### WALES

23 singing males. ANGLESEY One singing male. CEREDIGION Two singing males. GLAMORGAN 13 singing males. GWENT Two singing males. PEMBROKE Five singing males.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. counties	14	14	15	21	17	18	21	23	25	28	24
Confirmed (pairs)	31	24	12	19	27	15	11	14	15	nc	nc
Possible/probable (pairs)	156	174	196	326	214	273	306	318	426	574	361
Max. total pairs	187	198	208	345	241	298	317	332	441	574	361

As is quite usual with a species which requires a determined effort to survey accurately, the year after a full census sees a considerable drop in numbers.

**RIVER WARBLER *Locustella fluviatilis***

One locality: one singing male (*Brit. Birds* 91: 505).

**ENGLAND, SE**

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE One locality: singing male at Linford Gravel-pits on 15th-16th June.

Singing males have now been reported for five years running, though this bird did not stay so long as some have.

**SAVI'S WARBLER *Locustella luscinioides***

Four localities: 0-5 pairs breeding.

**ENGLAND, SE**

Two localities. KENT One locality: singing male on 17th May only. SUSSEX One locality: two singing males during April and May; no evidence of breeding.

**ENGLAND, E**

Two localities. CAMBRIDGESHIRE One locality: singing male on 4th-8th June only. SUFFOLK One locality: singing male from 29th April to at least 25th May.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	16	10	13	5	13	13	5	7	2	3	4
Confirmed (pairs)	0	0	0	1	0	2	4	1	0	0	0
Possible/probable (pairs)	20	13	17	9	16	20	4	9	3	3	5
Max. total pairs	20	13	17	10	16	22	8	10	3	3	5

This species is only just hanging on. It was pleasing to see a return to Suffolk, but there was just a single brief record from Kent.

**MARSH WARBLER *Acrocephalus palustris***

17 localities: 5-32 pairs breeding.

**ENGLAND, SW**

One locality: two singing males on 24th May and again on 2nd June.

**ENGLAND, SE**

Nine localities: (1) two pairs bred, four more pairs present; (2) four singing males and two females present; pair bred and fledged four young, second pair probably bred; (3) pair bred, plus two pairs; (4) pair bred; (5)-(7) single pairs

present; (8)(9) single singing males.

**ENGLAND, E**

Five localities: (1)-(5) single singing males.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

One locality: singing male 29th May to 15th June; it had been ringed at this site in 1991.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

One locality: singing male on 14th June.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	11	13	10	12	15	13	15	22	16	11	17
Confirmed (pairs)	10	6	11	13	9	9	12	0	2	3	5
Possible/probable (pairs)	11	14	11	11	23	26	46	48	29	19	27
Max. total pairs	21	20	22	24	32	35	58	48	31	22	32

An improvement on last year, but still well below the levels of the early 1990s.

**GREAT REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus arundinaceus***

Four localities: four singing males (*Brit. Birds* 91: 506).

**ENGLAND, SW**

SCILLY One locality: singing male on St Mary's during 19th-23rd May.

**ENGLAND, CENTRAL**

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE One locality: singing male at Netherfield Gravel-pits during 12th-29th June.

**SCOTLAND, S**

BORDERS One locality: single male at St Abbs during 1st-6th June.

**SCOTLAND, MID**

ANGUS & DUNDEE One locality: singing male at Loch of Kinnordy during 30th May to 30th June, and possibly to 24th July.

The eighth consecutive year in which males have been reported in song.

**DARTFORD WARBLER *Sylvia undata***

915 territories identified.

**ENGLAND, SW**

County totals: AVON 1, DEVON 147-206, DORSET 300+, HAMPSHIRE 73 in very incomplete survey, ISLE OF WIGHT 10, SOMERSET 45.

**ENGLAND, SE**

County totals: BERKSHIRE 3, SURREY 234, SUSSEX 38.

**ENGLAND, E**

County totals: NORFOLK 1, SUFFOLK 4.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. counties	8	6	5	8	8	7	11	10	12	12	11
Confirmed (pairs)	8	26	23	55	67	63	93	nc	nc	nc	nc
Possible/probable (pairs)	239	616	499	873	634	863	1,053	1,675	1,679	552	915
Max. total pairs	247	642	522	928	701	926	1,146	1,675	1,679	552	915

A better count than last year, but still missing some important areas.

**SUBALPINE WARBLER *Sylvia cantillans***

**ENGLAND, SE**

SUSSEX One locality: singing male at Beachy Head on 24th-25th May.

**ENGLAND, N**

NORTHUMBERLAND One locality: singing male at Tynemouth on 3rd May.

Two localities: two singing males (*Brit. Birds* 91: 506).

The only previous time this species has been mentioned in these reports was in 1994, when three males sang.

**FIRECREST *Regulus ignicapillus***

**ENGLAND, SW**

11 localities: 0-23 pairs breeding. DORSET One locality: bird seen in suitable habitat. GLOUCES- TERSHIRE Two localities: (1)(2) single singing males. HAMPSHIRE Five localities: (1) 13 singing males (incomplete coverage); (2)-(5) single singing males. WILTSHIRE Three localities: (1)-(3) single singing males.

ESSEX Two localities: (1)(2) single singing males. SURREY Two localities: (1) Three singing males; (2) one or two singing males. SUSSEX Four localities: (1) Three singing males, including one carrying nest material; (2)-(4) single singing males.

**ENGLAND, SE**

Ten localities: 1-20 pairs breeding. BUCKING- HAMPSHIRE Two localities: (1) pair bred, plus four singing males; (2) two singing males.

**ENGLAND, E**

Five localities: 1-5 pairs breeding. NORFOLK Three localities: (1) pair bred; (2)(3) singles in breeding season. SUFFOLK Two localities: (1) pair with male in song; (2) single singing male.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	37	44	52	48	19	15	20	41	35	35	26
Confirmed (pairs)	8	11	19	9	2	3	3	4	4	4	2
Possible/probable (pairs)	74	72	112	88	20	16	25	62	52	56	46
Max. total pairs	82	83	131	97	22	19	28	66	56	60	48

26 localities: 2-48 pairs breeding.

Even allowing for incomplete coverage of the important New Forest area of Hampshire, this was a disappointing year.

## BEARDED TIT *Panurus biarmicus*

### ENGLAND, SW

DORSET 14 pairs. HAMPSHIRE 11-12 pairs.

SOMERSET 10-15 pairs.

### ENGLAND, SE

ESSEX 20 pairs. KENT 39 pairs. SUSSEX 18 pairs.

### ENGLAND, E

CAMBRIDGESHIRE One pair, did not breed.

NORFOLK At least 44 pairs. SUFFOLK At least 13 pairs.

### ENGLAND, N

LANCASHIRE 45 pairs. YORKSHIRE 70 pairs.

The following incomplete information has been received, amounting to 285-291 pairs.

The comparable figures for 1996 were 221-232 pairs.

## GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus*

### ENGLAND, SE

Two localities: (1) male in May, pair in June; (2) male in May and early June.

### ENGLAND, E

48 sites surveyed, with presence confirmed at 20. A minimum of nine breeding pairs found, of

which eight are known to have fledged 15 young. Two other pairs probably bred, there were also pairs or singing males at ten other sites. In addition, there was a singing male on 15th May only, outside the study area.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	22	35	29	38	27	37	33	34	34	22	23
Confirmed (pairs)	11	16	15	10	16	14	14	7	8	7	9
Possible/probable (pairs)	20	25	22	32	12	23	19	28	27	15	15
Max. total pairs	31	41	37	42	28	37	33	35	35	22	24

23 localities: 9-24 pairs breeding, producing a minimum of 17 young.

A second poor year in succession. The Panel is most grateful for the detailed information on the eastern England population supplied by the Golden Oriole Group. A paper on the breeding biology of the eastern England birds has been published (Milwright 1998).

## RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio*

### SCOTLAND, N & W

Six localities: (1) pair bred, four young seen in the nest, thought to have fledged; (2)(3) single pair(s) seen on single date in May, not far apart

and so possibly the same; (4) male on 22nd and 23rd May; (5) male on 15th June; (6) female on 25th May.

Six localities: 1-6 pairs breeding.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. localities	8	6	3	7	5	13	6	7	1	3	6
Confirmed (pairs)	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1
Possible/probable (pairs)	11	6	6	7	4	12	6	7	1	3	5
Max. total pairs	13	7	6	8	5	13	6	8	1	3	6

A welcome breeding record after a gap of two years, with at least one, possibly two, further pairs.

### RED-BILLED CHOUGH *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

The following information was received:

Area	Breeding pairs	Young reared	(pairs)	Productivity (per successful nest)
<b>Wales</b>				
Anglesey	7	16	(6)	2.7
Caernarfon (Bardsey only)	nc	10	(6)	1.7
Ceredigion	17	48	(17)	2.8
Pembroke	50	108	(45)	2.4
Montgomery	1			
<b>Scotland</b>				
Dumfries & Galloway	1	2	(1)	2.0
Colonsay	9	16	(6)	2.7
Islay (small area only)	5	3	(1)	3.0
Mull	2	0		
<b>Northern Ireland</b>				
Co. Antrim	2	0		
TOTALS	94	203	(82)	2.5

Productivity improved compared with 1996, when the young per successful nest was 2.2.

### BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

#### SCOTLAND, N & W

One locality: female with probable brood (begging calls heard).

One locality: one pair probably bred.

A welcome return after no records in 1996.

### EUROPEAN SERIN *Serinus serinus*

One locality: 0-1 pair.

#### ENGLAND, E

NORFOLK One locality: male caught and ringed on 15th May.

A disappointing year after the breeding record in 1996. No report was received from the West Country.

### COMMON CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

Although this species is now on the Panel's list, by virtue of its being on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, no meaningful information was received.

**SCOTTISH CROSSBILL** *Loxia scotica*

The only information received on this species, new to the Panel's list, was that 11 nests were studied by the RSPB, from seven of which 24 young were reared.

**PARROT CROSSBILL** *Loxia pytyopsittacus*

One locality: pair probably bred.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

One locality: pair probably bred.

It is now thought that many of the large-billed crossbills in Abernethy Forest are of this species.

**COMMON ROSEFINCH** *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Eight localities: pair bred and seven singing males.

**ENGLAND, SE**

Two localities: (1) singing male on several dates in June; (2) male on 18th May.

**ENGLAND, E**

Two localities: (1)(2) single singing immature males.

**SCOTLAND, MID**

One locality: singing male in June and July.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

Three localities: (1) pair bred, fledging at least one young; (2)(3) single singing males.

The first confirmed breeding since 1992, though overall the species seems to be getting less common. A paper on this species will be published shortly in *British Birds*.

**LAPLAND LONGSPUR** *Calcarius lapponicus*

Two localities: at least one, possibly two, males.

**SCOTLAND, N & W**

Two localities: (1)(2) single males in full breeding plumage seen in June and July respec-

tively. The two localities were not very far apart and it is possible that the same individual was involved.

There was a single male reported in 1995, which was the first since 1989.

**SNOW BUNTING** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Four areas or localities: up to 18 pairs breeding.

**SCOTLAND, MID AND N & W**

Four areas or localities: 18 pairs or singing males.

The above is the result of limited survey work in one area, plus casual records.

**CIRL BUNTING** *Emberiza cirrus*

360-380 breeding pairs.

**ENGLAND, SW**

DEVON The sample tetrad survey now carried out on an annual basis, led to an estimate of 360-380 pairs in the county. The breeding season was

very poor because of wet weather and only 16 of 31 nests studied were successful, fledging 38 young (mean 2.4) with almost no successful second broods.

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Confirmed (pairs)	36	48	98	113	92	43	42	nc	nc
Possible/probable (pairs)	83	85	143	207	269	369	337	337	380
Max. total pairs	119	133	241	320	361	412	379	337	380

The tetrad survey indicates a welcome increase in numbers after two years of decline. The Panel is grateful to the RSPB for the above data.

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