

Rare breeding birds in the United Kingdom in 2002

Malcolm Ogilvie and the Rare Breeding Birds Panel

This is the thirtieth annual report of the Rare Breeding Birds Panel, which presents details of the status of Britain's rarest breeding birds for the year 2002. The totals are generally set out by county or region, occasionally by country; most actual localities are omitted, with the exception of those which are well known and previously publicised, usually protected reserves. Where county names are given, these are grouped within the Panel's ten regions (see page ???).

The Panel

The current membership of the Panel is: Humphrey Crick, Ian Francis, Judith Smith, Ken Smith, David Stroud and Malcolm Ogilvie (Secretary). The individual members of the Panel serve in a personal capacity, but three of them are also 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.

It was with deepest regret that the Panel learnt of the death of Colin Bibby on 7th August 2004. Colin had been a member of the Panel from 1990 until he resigned through ill health in April 2004. His knowledge and advice were invaluable and he played a significant part in the development of the Panel into a major source of information of conservation importance.

Coverage

The Panel collects records from the whole of the United Kingdom, including the Isle of Man and

Northern Ireland, but not from the Channel Islands or the Republic of Ireland. The majority of the information presented here is submitted by County Recorders, with additional data from specialist groups and Schedule 1 licence forms received from the three country agencies. Coverage in 2002 was significantly better than in 2001, when foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) seriously interfered with normal survey work across the country. Nonetheless, there were still some gaps, with incomplete records from Caithness, Cornwall, the Isle of Man and Northern Ireland. With regard to the acceptance of records for publication, it is the Panel's policy to follow the opinions of the appropriate County Recorder and local committee, and only in exceptional cases to publish records which have not been vetted in this way.

In past years, we have included records of national rarities and scarce migrants, provided that they showed at least some signs of breeding-related behaviour. These included singing males, even if present just for a single day, but in potential breeding habitat. The justifications for doing so were that, firstly, this met the definition of possible breeding as recommended by the European Ornithological Atlas Committee, which the Panel follows; and secondly, that such records could, one day, show the preliminary steps towards a species' future colonisation. We have now decided to tighten up the application of these criteria and to publish only long-staying individuals doing rather more than just singing for a short period (though *all* such data will still be gratefully received and archived). Similarly, an attempt has been made to exclude from this report single birds of other

species which are probably doing little more than just passing through a locality. For example, every year Garganeys *Anas querquedula* turn up in many potential breeding localities for a few days in April and then disappear. Such records are now largely excluded, though admittedly this is a matter of judgement rather than absolute certainty, and a judgement made first by the County Recorder when submitting the record and then by the Panel's Secretary in deciding whether to publish it.

Review of the year 2002

Both spring and summer were warmer and drier than in some recent years, with March and April in particular experiencing above-average temperatures. The first half of May was cooler, with persistent northerly winds, but in most areas there was a welcome absence of the heavy spring rainfall that produced such damaging flooding of some inland localities in several previous years, and affected ground-nesting waders particularly badly. Brief spells of cyclonic weather in late April and mid May were not sufficient to cause significant problems. The weather in June and July was more mixed, though still with above-average temperatures, especially in southern Britain. Conversely, northern Scotland suffered a wet and windy summer which depressed the breeding success of some species.

Wildfowl

No fewer than five pairs of Whooper Swans *Cygnus cygnus* nested successfully in Shetland and the Western Isles. Although it is not known whether any of the birds were injured and thus unable to migrate to Iceland, this species is now breeding regularly in small numbers and, for the last three years at least, successfully. Scattered breeding by Eurasian Wigeons *Anas penelope* in southern and eastern England may indicate some southward spread of this species' regular breeding range, though again the possibility of escaped or released birds being involved cannot be ruled out. The number of pairs of Gadwall *A. strepera* reported was the highest ever and reflects both good coverage and a genuine increase in several counties. The national total of breeding Pintails *A. acuta* depends heavily on the extent of survey coverage in their main stronghold in Orkney which was incomplete this year. Elsewhere, the presence of five pairs in the Western Isles, two of

which definitely bred, was notable. It was, however, a poor year for Garganey, even allowing for modification of the criteria for inclusion mentioned above, although one pair got as far as the Western Isles and bred there. Numbers of Common Pochards *Aythya ferina* were almost back to the level of 2000, following the access restrictions of 2001, but this remains a difficult species to count in those areas with a network of reservoirs and gravel-pits. A pair of Greater Scaups *A. marila* were seen displaying in Argyll; although thought not to have bred, this is the first record of this species since 1999. Similarly, it is over ten years since Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis* was last included in these reports, but a pair were seen in suitable habitat in the Western Isles in early June. The Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* nestbox schemes in Badenoch and Strathspey (Highland) were surveyed more completely than for several years in 2002, giving rise to a tentative Scottish population estimate of c. 150 egg-laying females. Numbers of birds summering in England continues to increase slowly, notably in Herefordshire, where the regularity of occurrence has encouraged a local nestbox scheme which may yet lead to a small breeding population.

Divers to Eurasian Spoonbill

Red-throated Divers *Gavia stellata* on Shetland and Orkney had a mixed season with breeding success up in some areas but down in others compared with 2001. The number of successful two-chick broods in Shetland was low, suggesting continuing problems with food supply (which is predominantly Lesser Sandeels *Ammodytes marinus*). Monitoring of Black-throated Divers *G. arctica* returned to normal levels in 2002, as did the number of available rafts, following the twin problems of access to sites and of getting rafts back on the water after winter maintenance in 2001. Over half of all known sites in Scotland were visited during the season. The productivity of raft nests was the highest since 1998 and, as usual, significantly better than at natural sites.

Following the first successful breeding by Red-necked Grebes *Podiceps grisegena* in the UK in 2001, it is disappointing to have to report that only a single adult appeared at the breeding site in 2002, one of only two records of summering adults this year. The number of breeding pairs of Slavonian Grebes *P. auritus*

and the number of young raised increased for the third and fourth years running, respectively, although the number of localities with breeding birds fell slightly and is now less than half that reported in the early 1990s. The fact that half the breeding pairs occurred at a single site, Loch Ruthven, in Inverness-shire, is a cause for some concern but does enable effective conservation management to be carried out and it is no coincidence that this one site accounted for 64% of all young reared. Although the number of confirmed breeding pairs of Black-necked Grebes *P. nigricollis* reached a new record high, both the number of localities and the total pairs fell. A similarity with the previous species is shown by the fact that one site, Woolston, in Cheshire, is responsible for about 40% of the confirmed pairs.

Although Leach's Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* has been a Panel species since 1996, when the complete list of Schedule 1 species was adopted, it has not previously appeared in these reports. The recent publication of the results of Seabird 2000 (Mitchell *et al.* 2004) presents an opportunity to rectify this omission. Since the population had never been properly counted before it is not possible to consider any trends, merely to report that the total number of adults on nests in the UK was a fraction over 48,000, on 15 individual islands, all in Scotland.

Eurasian Bitterns *Botaurus stellaris* continue to do well, with further increases in both the number of booming males (from 32 to 37) and booming localities (from 18 to 23). Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta* are now firmly established across much of southern England and East Anglia and continue to spread slowly northwards, including this year to North Wales. Accurate counting of breeding pairs is proving difficult in some of the larger colonies and where the birds are nesting among Grey Herons *Ardea cinerea*. By contrast, and following successful breeding in northern England in 1999, Eurasian Spoonbills *Platalea leucorodia* appears to be marking time in the UK, with nest-building activity by several birds at one site in Suffolk, though it is not thought that any eggs were laid.

Raptors

The numbers of Honey-buzzards *Pernis apivorus* reported in 2002 fell quite markedly and, significantly, this appears due not just to less intensive coverage of some areas but to fewer birds being

found where coverage was good. Monitoring of the Welsh Red Kite *Milvus milvus* population was back to normal after the FMD restrictions in 2001. The total number of pairs was only one more than in 2000, suggesting that estimates for 2001 may have been too high. Discounting those estimates, however, the number of breeding pairs, successful pairs and young reared all reached new peaks, even though little more than one third of the estimated territory-holding pairs could be checked. Furthermore, breeding success was at the lower end of the range with some weather-related losses. The three re-established populations in England all did well, with pairs now spreading outside the Chilterns and Northamptonshire release areas. Similarly, those in the central Scotland release area also did well, with 15 pairs laying compared with ten in 2001. Releases in Dumfries & Galloway continued and the first signs of breeding, stick-carrying and attempted copulation, were noted. The population in the north of Scotland continues to increase, but extremely slowly and recruitment remains poor. There were, however, no confirmed cases of poisoning in the area for the first time since 1995. Although the number of pairs (or trios) of White-tailed Eagles *Haliaeetus albicilla* increased again, only eight of 22 pairs which laid successfully managed to rear young, with natural causes (especially some ill-timed spells of wind and rain) taking a higher than usual toll.

Overall, Marsh Harriers *Circus aeruginosus* were slightly down on the record levels in 2001 (see *Brit. Birds* 97: 210), owing to a marked decrease in Norfolk, but numbers in several other areas increased, and the minimum number of young fledged exceeded 500 for the first time. Breeding took place in four counties in Scotland, confirming the gradual increase and spread taking place there. Sample monitoring of Hen Harriers *C. cyaneus* covered just over 50% of the probable total, and suggested that breeding success was the lowest recorded since the Panel began reporting on this species in 1996, with only ten occupied territories in the whole of northern England. The number of sites where Montagu's Harrier *C. pygargus* were recorded was at a ten-year low in 2002, though productivity of the few pairs that did breed was better than average. Monitoring of Northern Goshawks *Accipiter gentilis* continues to present problems and, with some observers reluctant to pass on even basic information on the numbers of pairs in their study areas, the published

figures are seriously incomplete. Golden Eagles *Aquila chrysaetos* were similarly poorly covered in several areas, a situation which will be remedied when the results of the national census carried out in 2003 are available; in 2002, breeding success, albeit from a smaller than usual sample, was slightly below that of the two previous years. Ospreys *Pandion haliaetus* increased, as they have done every year for two decades, though it is getting noticeably harder to find all the pairs in the core area of northern and central Scotland. Away from there, colonisation is taking place steadily, with five pairs in Argyll, five in Dumfries & Galloway and four in the Borders. For the second year running there were three pairs in Cumbria, though only one was successful, while at Rutland Water one pair bred unsuccessfully.

Merlin *Falco columbarius* monitoring was less complete than usual, although breeding success was the best since 1997, while the number of breeding Hobbies *F. subbuteo* fell for the second year running. In contrast, a national census of Peregrine Falcons *F. peregrinus* was carried out in 2002; the summary totals by area are given in the species account and compared with the last census, in 1991. Overall, there has been a 13% increase in numbers to 1,492 occupied territories, but while Peregrines have increased throughout almost the whole of England and Wales, parts of Scotland, especially in the north and west, showed evidence of a marked decline.

Spotted Crake, Corn Crake and Common Crane

2002 was a poor year for Spotted Crakes *Porzana porzana*, but numbers of Corn Crakes *Crex crex* reached their highest level for at least the last 15 years, a statistic fuelled by increases on 12 of the 19 islands or island groups which comprise the core part of their range in north-west Scotland, and despite further declines on the Scottish mainland. The tiny population of Common Cranes *Grus grus* in Norfolk bred successfully, while two separate summering pairs in Yorkshire gives a glimmer of hope that this species' future in the UK is not entirely dependent on east Norfolk.

Waders

Avocets *Recurvirostra avosetta* continue to take eastern England by storm, with record numbers of colonies and breeding pairs

although productivity at those sites at which it was measured was again poor. Another flag-ship wader, the Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus*, also reached a new record high in 2002, despite access problems hampering monitoring in the Brecks. Also like Avocets, however, it appeared that this cheering news was tempered with lower breeding success than in recent years. Little Ringed Plovers *Charadrius dubius* continue to decline, with habitat losses, either directly through development or indirectly because of increased disturbance from recreational activities, likely to be the most important factor. Breeding success at Welney, in Norfolk, was increased through the use of wire-mesh cages placed over nests as soon as egg-laying had taken place, which was effective in reducing predation from Red Foxes *Vulpes vulpes*, Common Coots *Fulica atra* and gulls *Larus* (see also *Brit. Birds* 96: 344-346); such management may become increasingly important for this attractive species. Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa* were down in numbers, but the absence of late-spring flooding, a problem which has seriously hampered this species in several recent years, allowed improved productivity at one key site in Cambridgeshire. Finally, Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* in Shetland had a good year, with more young reared than in either 2000 or 2001, while reports of phalaropes at as many as seven suitable localities in the Western Isles is certainly encouraging.

Gulls and terns

The number of Mediterranean Gulls *Larus melanocephalus* breeding in England declined, largely because of a sharp decrease at the major Hampshire colony, for which no obvious reason is known. The minimum number of young reared (30) was, however, the same as in 2001. A considerable increase in Roseate Terns *Sterna dougallii*, due largely to the expansion of the colony at Coquet Island in Northumberland by 35%, was excellent news. As with several other species in this report, however, the national total is heavily dependent on one key breeding site, with all the other colonies being small and, consequently, vulnerable. After a particularly good year in 2001, numbers of Little Terns *Sterna albifrons* declined somewhat, but still remain 15% higher than in 1997, the first year in which the Panel collected breeding data.

Barn Owl, Common Kingfisher, European Bee-eater and Wryneck

Monitoring of Barn Owls *Tyto alba* and Common Kingfishers *Alcedo atthis* was reasonably successful, with the highest recorded total for the latter. One or two counties have begun more detailed surveying of Common Kingfishers, something which the Panel has been urging for some time. Among other things, they are an excellent indicator species for the general health of river and stream systems. The first breeding in the UK by European Bee-eaters *Merops apiaster* for more than 50 years caused considerable excitement in Co. Durham, while a singing male Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*, apparently holding territory in Hampshire was at least marginally better than the complete blank in 2001.

Passerines

Survey work in 2002 suggested that Wood Larks *Lullula arborea* are declining in some areas, and that a long period of population growth may be slowing down or even levelling off elsewhere, although counts were incomplete in Hampshire, and possibly also in the Brecks. A careful survey of Black Redstarts *Phoenicurus ochruros* in the London area helped to produce the highest total of pairs since 1997.

Cetti's Warblers *Cettia cetti* reached a new record total, and increased in many counties, especially in southern England. Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides* continues to maintain a toe-hold in east and southeast England, and was found in four counties, although no confirmed breeding records were reported. In contrast, Marsh Warblers *Acrocephalus palustris* had their worst year in the past three decades, and the species' future as a breeding bird in Britain must be in some doubt. Reports of Dartford Warblers *Sylvia undata* were incomplete but, aside from known gaps, the decline in Devon continued, counter-balanced by increases in other counties. Firecrests *Regulus ignicapilla* were present in good numbers in several areas, and the total was the second highest recorded.

The first-ever national census of Bearded Tits *Panurus biarmicus* took place in 2002 and while the results are still preliminary it appears that the population, of around 570 pairs, is significantly higher than previously estimated. This reflects continued increases in several areas, particularly in East Anglia. Golden Orioles *Oriolus oriolus* continue to decline, the

four confirmed and four possible pairs in 2002 comprising the lowest number recorded since the 1970s. Red-billed Choughs *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* nested in Cornwall for the first time in 50 years. Elsewhere they were, as usual, monitored in selected areas only, but these suggested that breeding productivity was quite high. Finally, Bramblings *Fringilla montifringilla* bred in northern Scotland for the second year running, while the first estimate of Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus* numbers for four years suggested an increase of about 27% in the number of breeding pairs.

Conservation uses of Panel data

It is the Panel's policy to make data available for relevant conservation uses. As well as site-specific information (e.g. for the review of Special Protection Areas by JNCC and the country conservation agencies), national data sets have been used by the RSPB for planning surveys. The Panel's data have also played a key role in national population estimates and in the development and implementation of recovery plans for certain species. The publication 'The state of the UK's birds 2002' (Eaton *et al.* 2004) makes extensive use of the Panel's data, as does the recently revised 'The population status of birds in the UK' (Gregory *et al.* 2002).

Publications

The bibliography at the end of this report gives details of published results of censuses and surveys of the numbers and distribution of Panel species, many of these making use of the Panel's data.

Key to geographical regions used in this report

The counties or areas given below are, as far as possible, the names used by the local recorders who sent the Panel their information.

England, SW

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

England, SE

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

England, E

Cambridgeshire, Huntingdon & Peterborough, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Suffolk

England, Central

Derbyshire, Herefordshire, Leicestershire (including Rutland), Nottinghamshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands, Worcestershire

England, N

Cheshire & Wirral, Cleveland, Cumbria, Co. Durham, Greater Manchester, Isle of Man, Lancashire & North Merseyside, Northumberland, 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) (following the Welsh Bird Report, this recording area includes East Glamorgan and Gower), Gwent, Meirionnydd, Montgomery (Trefaldwyn), Pembroke (Penfro), Radnor (Maesfedy)

Scotland, S

The local bird-recording areas of Ayrshire, Borders, Clyde (comprising West and East Dunbartonshire including that part now in Argyll & Bute, North and South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, City of Glasgow, Inverclyde, Stirling–Clyde drainage), Clyde Islands (Arran, the Cumbraes, Bute), Dumfries & Galloway, Lothian

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 (except Bute and former West Dunbartonshire), Caithness, Highland (Badenoch & Strathspey, Inverness, Ross & Cromarty, Sutherland), Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles

Northern Ireland

Co. Antrim, Co. Armagh, Co. Down, Co. Fermanagh, Co. Londonderry, Co. Tyrone

Terminology

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. Within tables, the abbreviations 'Confirmed pairs' and 'Max. total pairs' mean, respectively, 'Number of pairs confirmed breeding' and 'Number of pairs confirmed *plus* possible/probable pairs breeding'.

Within each species account, numbers given in the format '1-4 pairs' indicate (in this case) one proven breeding pair and a possible maximum total of four breeding pairs.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Five localities: five pairs bred. Only those pairs which actually bred have been included in the statistics. In addition, up to 40 summering birds were reported from localities in Highland, Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles. Most of these were single birds (though some were apparently paired), and included a few which are known to be unable to fly. Records of known escapes are now included in the Panel's report on non-native breeding birds (*Brit. Birds* 97: in press). It is admittedly not always easy to determine whether some Whooper Swans are of wild origin. The pair which bred in Ayrshire in 2002 is one such case; they nested within the regular wintering range of Icelandic Whooper Swans, yet their wild origin cannot be absolutely certain.

Scotland, S

AYRSHIRE One locality: pair bred, two young reared; second pair did not breed.

Scotland, N & W

SHETLAND Two localities: (1) pair bred, hatched five eggs and reared four young; (2) pair bred, laying five eggs, but none hatched. WESTERN ISLES Two localities: (1) pair seen with one young; (2) pair hatched three eggs but none reared.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*

The following breeding reports were received.

England, SW

HAMPSHIRE Pair and a single summered at two localities. SOMERSET Single pairs possibly bred at two localities; up to 14 birds summered at four other localities.

England, SE

BEDFORDSHIRE Singles summered at two localities. ESSEX Pair bred, two pairs summered. KENT Nine pairs present, but none thought to have bred. SUSSEX Pair bred.

England, E

CAMBRIDGESHIRE 19 pairs at two localities, no broods seen. NORFOLK Pair bred; up to 40 summering birds at 12 localities. SUFFOLK 1-10 birds at five localities, breeding not suspected.

England, Central

DERBYSHIRE Seven birds summered at two localities. LEICESTERSHIRE Pair summered. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Five birds summered at two localities. STAFFORDSHIRE One summered.

England, N

CHESHIRE & WIRRAL Up to 12 birds summered at six localities. NORTHUMBERLAND Five pairs reared 27 young at one locality; pair reared four young at second.

Wales

CAERNARFON Three singles summered. MEIRIONNYDD Single bird summered.

Scotland, S

BORDERS Three pairs probably bred.

Scotland, Mid

FIFE Pair bred. FORTH Singles at two localities. NORTHEAST SCOTLAND Breeding confirmed at two localities. PERTH & KINROSS At least nine pairs present at four sites, but breeding not proved.

Scotland, N & W

ARGYLL Pair summered at one locality, single males summered at two others. HIGHLAND Ten pairs present at one locality, three pairs bred at a second and 15 summering males at a third. ORKNEY 26 pairs bred at four localities, three pairs present at two other sites. SHETLAND Pair present at one locality.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

The maximum total reported, 1,123 pairs, is the highest total yet recorded.

England, SW

245 pairs. AVON 6. DEVON 7. DORSET 12. HAMPSHIRE 53. SOMERSET 160. WILTSHIRE 7.

England, SE

144 pairs. BEDFORDSHIRE 4. BERKSHIRE 10. KENT 112. SURREY 4. SUSSEX 14.

England, E

320 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE 125. HUNTINGDON & PETERBOROUGH 20. NORFOLK 102. SUFFOLK 73.

England, Central

82-84 pairs. DERBYSHIRE 19. LEICESTERSHIRE 28. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE No count, but bred at five localities. SHROPSHIRE 3. STAFFORDSHIRE 6. WARWICKSHIRE 18-20. WORCESTERSHIRE 3.

England, N

143 pairs. CHESHIRE & WIRRAL 10. CLEVELAND 8. GREATER MANCHESTER 9. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE 7. NORTHUMBERLAND 12. YORKSHIRE 97.

Wales

49 pairs. ANGLESEY 37. CARMARTHEN 10. PEMBROKE 2.

Scotland, S

6 pairs. BORDERS 6.

Scotland, Mid

104 pairs. ANGUS & DUNDEE 4. PERTH & KINROSS 100.

Scotland, N & W

27-28 pairs. ARGYLL 1. ORKNEY 15. SHETLAND 1-2. WESTERN ISLES 10.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

22 localities: 6-26 pairs breeding. Coverage in Orkney was incomplete, but several important sites were visited. In addition to the pairs listed below, single males or females were quite widely reported during May-July.

England, SE

KENT One locality: pair summered, breeding not confirmed.

England, E

CAMBRIDGESHIRE One locality: two pairs, breeding not confirmed. SUFFOLK One locality: pair in May.

England, N

CHESHIRE & WIRRAL One locality: pair in June, but no evidence of breeding.

Wales

PEMBROKE One locality: pair bred, six young seen, but none fledged.

Scotland, Mid

PERTH & KINROSS One locality: pair bred, eight young seen, fledging success not reported.

Scotland, N & W

ARGYLL One locality: pair probably bred and failed. HIGHLAND One locality: pair present in summer. ORKNEY Nine localities: (1)(2) single pairs proved breeding; (3) three-four pairs probably bred; (4) 12 males and one female in suitable habitat; (5)-(9) single pairs present, no evidence of breeding. WESTERN ISLES Five localities: (1)(2) single pairs bred; (3)-(5) single pairs present.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Pintail	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. localities	23	49	25	33	22	28	25	15	12	22
Confirmed pairs	4	20	11	8	5	13	22	10	1	6
Max. total pairs	47	76	45	53	33	50	37	26	30	26

32 localities: 16-55 pairs breeding. A poor year, although more rigorous criteria for publishing records were introduced this year (see above), in particular by omitting pairs present at suitable sites for short periods (and thus presumably migrants). The successful breeding in the Western Isles is noteworthy.

England, SW

Five localities: 1-11 pairs. AVON One locality: one pair. DEVON Two localities: one pair bred, plus one pair. SOMERSET Two localities: eight pairs in total, with probable breeding by some.

England, SE

11 localities: 9-18 pairs. BEDFORDSHIRE One locality: one pair. KENT Eight localities: six pairs bred, eight other pairs. SUSSEX Two localities: three pairs bred.

England, E

Ten localities: 4-20 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Three localities: two pairs bred, 11 other pairs. NORFOLK Three localities: three pairs. SUFFOLK Four localities: two pairs bred, plus two pairs.

England, Central

One locality: 0-1 pair. STAFFORDSHIRE One locality: one pair.

England, N

One locality: one pair. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE One locality: pair bred.

Wales

One locality: 0-1 pairs. ANGLESEY One locality: one pair.

Scotland, Mid

One locality: 0-1 pairs. PERTH & KINROSS One locality: one pair.

Scotland, N & W

Two localities: 1-2 pairs. ORKNEY One locality: one pair. WESTERN ISLES One locality: pair bred.

Garganey	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. localities	73	65	80	60	85	86	77	52	52	32
Confirmed pairs	14	13	9	15	10	22	37	30	9	16
Max. total pairs	163	111	117	78	129	144	108	109	84	55

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

499 pairs.

England, SW

30 pairs. AVON 6. DORSET 2. HAMPSHIRE 2. SOMERSET 19. WILTSHIRE 1.

England, SE

313 pairs. BEDFORDSHIRE 2. BERKSHIRE 1. ESSEX 98. KENT 208. SUSSEX 4.

England, E

55 pairs. NORFOLK 42. SUFFOLK 13.

England, Central

12 pairs. LEICESTERSHIRE 1. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE 10. WORCESTERSHIRE 1.

England, N

59 pairs. CHESHIRE & WIRRAL 11. CLEVELAND 5. GREATER MANCHESTER 6. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE 12. NORTHUMBERLAND 6. YORKSHIRE 19.

Wales

18 pairs. ANGLESEY 18.

Scotland, S

5 pairs. BORDERS 5.

Scotland, Mid

5 pairs. PERTH & KINROSS 5.

Scotland, N & W

2 pairs. ORKNEY 2.

Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*

One locality: 0-1 pairs. This is the first report of this species since 1999, when a pair bred in Northern Ireland.

Scotland, N & W

ARGYLL One locality. A pair was discovered in June, when display was observed. The female remained until late July, but there was no evidence of breeding.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

One locality: 0-1 pairs. The last time Long-tailed Duck appeared in these reports was in 1991, while the last time that a pair was seen in suitable breeding habitat in summer may have been as long ago as 1969, when breeding was suspected in the Western Isles.

Scotland, N & W

WESTERN ISLES One locality: pair in suitable habitat in early June, but not seen thereafter.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Seven localities or areas: 2-25 pairs. The last full census was in 1995 (Underhill *et al.* 1998), when the British & Irish population was estimated to be 195 pairs. Only casual records are available for 2002.

Scotland, Mid

Two localities: pair bred, up to five other pairs.

Scotland, N & W

ARGYLL Four localities: (1) pair bred; (2) up to five or six pairs present; (3) up to three pairs present; (4) pair present. HIGHLAND One area: eight pairs present.

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Approximately 150 pairs. A thorough survey of the Strathspey area of Scotland was carried out in 2002, resulting in a more up-to-date population estimate than we have been able to provide for several

years. Meanwhile, the trend of a slow increase in summering birds in England and Wales continues.

England, Central

Five localities: 0-12 pairs. DERBYSHIRE One locality: pair summered. HEREFORDSHIRE One locality: four males and seven females in April, nestbox scheme in place, but no breeding reported. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Two localities: three summering females and one immature male. WARWICKSHIRE One locality: one summering male.

England, N

Four localities: 0-4 pairs. GREATER MANCHESTER Four localities: summering by four males and three females.

Wales

One locality: 0-3 pairs. ANGLESEY One locality: one pair then two females in June.

Scotland, Mid

Two localities: 0-2 pairs. PERTH & KINROSS Two localities: (1) two pairs, may have bred; (2) up to 40 summering birds, though no evidence of breeding and omitted from the totals.

Scotland, N & W

91+ pairs. HIGHLAND A survey throughout Badenoch and Strathspey, including the nestbox schemes at the RSPB reserves of Insh Marshes and Abernethy, found a minimum of 91 clutches, though 33 of these, all laid in nestboxes, were not incubated; these may be linked to multiple laying by more than one female in some boxes. From these data, a tentative estimate of the Scottish breeding population is of c. 150 egg-laying females. Searches for breeding pairs outside Strathspey found only two nests. Data from the Goldeneye Study Group, 2002 breeding-season newsletter.

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

3-306 pairs breeding. Almost back to the level of 1999, after two poor years, but the number of singing males is still well below the peak counts recorded during several years in the 1990s. The recovery was particularly noticeable in Scotland. The following list refers to singing males unless stated otherwise.

England, SW

65 males. AVON 4. DEVON 3. DORSET 24. HAMPSHIRE 7. SOMERSET 6. WILTSHIRE 21.

England, SE

42 males. BEDFORDSHIRE 1. BERKSHIRE 9. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE 2. ESSEX 8. KENT 9. SUSSEX 13.

England, E

34 males. CAMBRIDGESHIRE 2. HUNTINGDON & PETERBOROUGH 3. NORFOLK 23. SUFFOLK 6.

England, Central

39 males. DERBYSHIRE 2. LEICESTERSHIRE 11. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE 11. SHROPSHIRE 15.

England, N

50 males. CHESHIRE & WIRRAL 15. GREATER MANCHESTER 1. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE 13. NORTHUMBERLAND 21.

Wales

4 males. ANGLESEY 1. GLAMORGAN 1. PEMBROKESHIRE 1. BRECON 1.

Scotland, S

4 males. BORDERS 4.

Scotland, Mid

Three confirmed breeding records, 41 males. ANGUS & DUNDEE One confirmed breeding and three singing males. AYR 2. FIFE 5. MORAY & NAIRN 13. NORTHEAST SCOTLAND Two confirmed breeding and 18 singing males.

Scotland, N & W

24 males. ARGYLL 4. HIGHLAND 5. ORKNEY 6. SHETLAND 9.

Common Quail	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Confirmed broods	1	8	15	5	4	5	5	2	4	3
Max. total pairs	203	612	515	335	867	528	317	203	223	306

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The results of long-term monitoring in Orkney and Shetland are set out below. Casual breeding observations elsewhere are not listed.

Scotland, N & W

ORKNEY On Hoy, a whole-island survey found 63 occupied sites, of which 37 were successful, and produced 41 young (0.65 chicks per occupied site); on Mainland, 12 pairs at five localities reared eight young, but fledging success was not reported for four pairs which all hatched chicks at another locality; on Rousay, six pairs at four localities reared only one young; on Eday, eight pairs nested but success was unknown. The season was less successful than in 2001, but better than in 2000.

SHETLAND At Hermaness, Unst, six pairs reared five young; at Lumbister, Yell, 11 pairs reared five young; on Fetlar, 24 pairs reared 22 young; on Foula, 10 pairs reared two young. Elsewhere, in other regular study areas, it was apparently a poor year in terms of the number of successful pairs.

STRATHCLYDE A complete survey of Islay found eight pairs with eggs, the most found in one year; one pair known to have reared two young, while other sites were not revisited.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

After the restricted survey in 2001 (see *Brit. Birds* 96: 482), the number of territories monitored in 2002 increased to 98, while raft numbers were back to normal levels. In total, 43 out of 50 raft territories were occupied and 35 raft-nesting pairs fledged 18 chicks. A further six pairs nested within these territories using natural sites and fledged one chick. 32 territories without rafts were occupied, from which only six chicks were reared.

Year	Sites monitored	Sites occupied	Rafts used/available	Young fledged (mean chicks per pair)			Production ratio: raft site to natural site
				Rafts	Natural	Total	
1996	120	96	27/45	19 (0.70)	28 (0.41)	47 (0.49)	1.7
1997	98	82	32/41	17 (0.53)	12 (0.10)	29 (0.35)	5.3
1998	114	82	38/45	19 (0.50)	12 (0.28)	31 (0.38)	1.8
1999	90	77	38/48	14 (0.37)	7 (0.27)	21 (0.27)	1.4
2000	93	83	33/57	14 (0.42)	13 (0.33)	27 (0.33)	1.3
2001	51	51	19/unknown	4 (0.21)	8 (0.25)	12 (0.24)	0.8
2002	98	75	43/50	18 (0.42)	7 (0.18)	25 (0.31)	2.3

Note: owing to slight changes in methodology, productivity at natural sites in 2002 is not strictly comparable with past years.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Two localities in two counties; two adults in summer plumage. This constitutes an extremely disappointing year following the first successful breeding in the UK in 2001.

England, E

One locality: breeding-plumaged adult at usual site, 31st March to at least 2nd June.

Scotland, S

One locality: only a single breeding-plumaged adult appeared at the 2001 breeding site; present from 8th March to 25th June.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

16 localities: 46 pairs breeding, fledging 36 young, resulting in breeding productivity of 0.78 young per territorial pair, the fourth highest ever recorded.

Scotland, Mid and N & W

16 localities: (1) Loch Ruthven: 23 pairs present and all probably bred, rearing 23 young; (2)-(16) 23 pairs reared 13 young. A further two sites held single birds only.

Slavonian Grebe	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. localities	33	32	31	24	22	25	24	15	18	16
Confirmed pairs	73	51	58	49	53	42	35	31	40	46
Young reared	25	30	46	17	15	16	12	33	34	36
Young/territorial pair	0.34	0.59	0.79	0.35	0.28	0.38	0.34	1.06	0.85	0.78

Stuart Benn, RSPB, has commented as follows: 'The welcome increase from the record low of 2000 continued, although the recent (and worrying) trend in the contraction of the number of sites used showed no sign of improvement. Loch Ruthven remained the best site by far, with 50% of the breeding pairs and 64% of the fledged young. Overall, productivity was lower than in 2000 and 2001, but still well above the long-term average of 0.58 young per territorial pair.

'Although strenuous efforts are made each year to try to count the entire UK population of Slavonian Grebes, there is always the concern that some rarely visited lochs have been colonised and birds are being missed. To counter this, all lochs in the core range (within about 65 km of Inverness) are checked periodically. 2002 was one such year and in excess of 300 lochs were visited; no unknown sites were found.

'With a bird of such restricted numbers and range it is relatively straightforward to count them each year, but it has proved rather more difficult to identify the reasons behind the observed population changes; the RSPB has continued its research into these issues.

'Recent breeding seasons have been good but, on average, our grebes produce less young than those in Iceland and Norway and predation has been suggested as a possible cause. To this end, tiny cameras were deployed overlooking grebe nests and the results relayed to videotape. Later analysis of the tape established whether the nest had failed and, if so, how. A small number of nests were predated (see, for example, *Brit. Birds* 95: 390-391), but the majority were either successful or failed through natural causes. Most important among these in 2002 were wave action or flooding during a particularly wet and windy summer in northern Scotland. Losses of chicks after they have left the nest still appear to be high and further work is needed to identify the reasons for this.

'Realistic conservation efforts are also severely hampered by a lack of knowledge of some other key aspects of the grebes' lives. For example, we do not know where Scottish birds spend the winter, what



Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Ray Scally

proportion of “Scottish” birds return here in subsequent years or how our population relates to those elsewhere in Europe. 2002 was a bumper season in Iceland where the number of pairs is increasing rapidly and it would be useful to know whether Scotland can expect some knock-on effect from the Icelandic population in the future. To find out more about the movements of birds, a programme of catching and colour-ringing grebes was started in 2001 by dazzling them on one of the lochs where the birds move to moult. Three birds (two adults and a juvenile) were caught and all of these returned to Scotland in 2002, two to Loch Ruthven (where the one ringed as an adult reared a chick). The remaining adult was found paired at another site and was thought to have laid and failed. This pair then moved 30 km to a site where they re-laid; this time they bred successfully, and reared two young. These findings are important for two reasons; they show that at least some birds return to Scotland and that the catching process was not harmful to the birds. A further seven birds were caught in autumn 2002.’

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

26 localities in 14 counties: 50-65 pairs bred. Although there were some gaps in coverage, which may have led to the maximum total being lower than some in recent years, the record numbers at Woolston, in Cheshire, helped raise the number of confirmed breeding pairs to 50, the highest ever in these reports. Twenty breeding pairs were reported at Woolston, although no fewer than 52 adults were counted on 30th April 2002, which is thought to be one of the largest counts ever at a breeding site in the UK. Judith Smith and Brian Martin have commented that these data highlight the need for a study of why Black-necked Grebes at a few sites are consistently successful, while at most sites in the UK the number of young that fledge is low. Factors likely to be important are the presence or absence of predators (particularly American Mink *Mustela vison*, Brown Rats *Rattus norvegicus* and Red-eared Terrapins *Chrysemys scripta elegans*) and/or whether these can be controlled, and also water stability – the latter may well become more critical in a period when global warming seems to be producing a greater number of flash-flooding events.

England, SW

Two localities: 0-2 pairs. AVON One locality: pair in summer plumage in April, but did not breed. HAMPSHIRE One locality: single bird present in May and June.

England, SE

Five localities: 2-5 pairs. ESSEX One locality: pair bred. KENT Four localities: (1) pair bred, juvenile seen in June; (2)(3) pairs present in June; (4) breeding-plumaged bird seen in May in potential breeding habitat.

England, Central

Four localities: 4-5 pairs. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Three localities: (1) two pairs produced 3-4 young; (2) pair with one young in July, but not thought to have bred at this site; (3) pair present in March-April and again May-July. STAFFORDSHIRE One locality: pair laid late in season, clutch failed to hatch.

England, N

Nine localities: 34-40 pairs. CHESHIRE & WIRRAL Two localities: (1) Woolston: at least 20 breeding pairs, with up to 27 juveniles seen at one time, though only seven fledged; (2) two pairs in April, five adults in early July, but no breeding attempted. GREATER MANCHESTER Two localities: (1) two or three pairs fledged at least five young; (2) pair present, but did not breed. NORTHUMBERLAND Three localities: (1) nine pairs built platforms, seven pairs produced 12 young, two pairs failed, but only four young reared; (2) pair fledged two young; (3) pair fledged one young. YORKSHIRE Two localities: (1) pair bred and raised one young, second pair probably bred; (2) pair present in May, did not breed.

Scotland, S

One locality: six pairs. BORDERS One locality: six pairs bred, but only four young fledged from four broods.

Scotland, Mid

Five localities: 4-7 pairs. FIFE One locality: three pairs bred, but all nests were flooded. ANGUS One locality: pair made two nesting attempts, both failed. PERTSHIRE Three localities: (1)-(3) pairs present in suitable habitat, but no successful breeding reported.

Black-necked Grebe	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. localities	31	32	30	32	26	18	22	29	32	26
Confirmed pairs	24	27	30	20	17	35	34	48	42	50
Max. total pairs	50	81	77	53	46	48	53	65	70	65

Leach's Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

Although this species is on the Panel's list, by virtue of being on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act, there has not previously been anything meaningful to report. However, as part of Seabird 2000, the recent census of breeding seabirds in Britain & Ireland, the first-ever national count of Leach's Storm-petrels was carried out between 1999 and 2002, aided by the use of taped call playback. The results are reported in full in Mitchell *et al.* (2004) and summarised briefly here.

The census found 48,047 adults on nests (95% confidence limits: 36,432-64,883), all in Scotland, plus a further 310 adults on nests in Ireland (Stags of Broadhaven, Co. Mayo). The great majority of the Scottish breeding birds (45,433, 94% of the British and Irish population), were on the four main islands in the St Kilda group. Elsewhere, there were 1,425 spread between six islands in the Flannan Isles; 1,132 on North Rona, with five on neighbouring Sula Sgeir; 20 on Gruney and 15 on Foula, Shetland; and 17 on Old Hill Island, Loch Roag, Lewis.

Since there is no previous census with which to compare these results, it is not possible to say whether there have been any significant changes in numbers of breeding Leach's Storm-petrels in the UK. Nevertheless, Mitchell *et al.* (2004) note that there appears to have been no major shift in distribution, at least in the last 70 years.

Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

23 breeding localities, which held a minimum of 31 and a maximum of 37 booming males, with 26-30 known nesting attempts.

England, SW

One locality: single booming male for a short period.

England, SE

Two localities: (1)(2) single booming males.

England, E

17 localities: *Suffolk coast*: (1) Minsmere: Seven booming males, eight nesting attempts; (2) Walberswick: 4-5 booming males, probably three nesting attempts; (3) Easton Broad: 1-2 booming males, 3-4 nesting attempts; (4) North Warren: one booming male, two nesting attempts; (5) Hen: one booming male, one nesting attempt; (6) Benacre: single booming male for short period.

Norfolk Broads: (7) one booming male, two nesting attempts; (8) one booming male, 1-2 nesting attempts; (9) 1-2 booming males, one nesting attempt; (10)(11) one booming male, one unconfirmed nesting attempt; (12) two booming males; (13)-(15) single booming males.

North Norfolk coast: no records of booming or nesting birds in 2002.

Elsewhere: (16) single booming male; (17) single booming male for short periods.

England, N

Four localities: *Lancashire*: (1) Leighton Moss: two booming males, two nesting attempts.

Humberside: (2) one booming male, 2-3 nesting attempts; (3) one booming male, one unconfirmed nesting attempt; (4) no booming heard, but pair bred.

Eurasian Bittern	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. booming localities	11	10	11	10	8	11	15	16	18	23
Confirmed nests	5	5	11	8	15	13	22	19	26	26
Booming males (min.)	15	15	19	22	11	13	19	23	30	31
Booming males (max.)	17	16	20	22	12	17	23	28	32	37

Ray Scally



Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Ken Smith and Gillian Gilbert, RSPB, have commented as follows: ‘2002 marks the fifth consecutive year in which Eurasian Bittern numbers have increased, from a low point of 11 confirmed males in 1997 to 31 in 2002. The number of breeding localities has also increased, to 23 in 2002. There has been a concerted conservation programme for this species and its habitat in the last decade, led by the RSPB and English Nature and involving many organisations including the Broads Authority, the National Trust, the Wildlife Trusts and many others. Major funding has been provided through the EU Life Programme, and the Cooperative Bank has sponsored the programme throughout.

‘The key problem facing Eurasian Bitterns was identified as the drying out of their reedbed habitat, largely as a consequence of natural succession. Habitat management work has been carried out at many existing reedbed sites to restore wet conditions over part of each site. The response of the birds has been spectacular with, for example, numbers at Minsmere increasing from one booming bird in

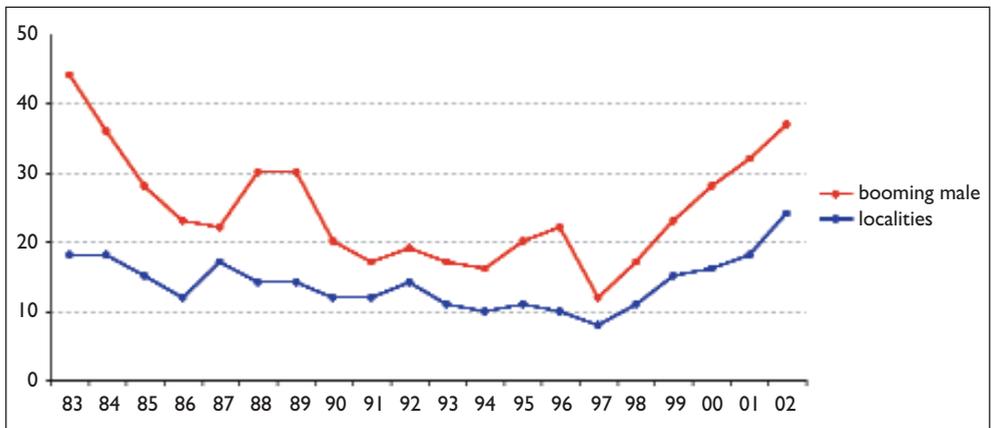


Fig. 1. The British population of Eurasian Bitterns *Botaurus stellaris* has responded well to habitat management in the 1990s. The steady growth in the number of booming males and the number of sites where those males have been present has increased steadily since 1996. Although it is often difficult to establish the precise number of confirmed nesting attempts without causing undue disturbance, these have also shown a corresponding increase (see table).

1991 to seven in 2002, and many formally abandoned sites being recolonised. In addition to work at existing sites, there has been a programme of new reedbed creation. Although this has taken longer to bear fruit, the first signs that newly created reedbeds were being occupied by breeding Eurasian Bitterns were apparent in 2001 and 2002 – a good portent for the future.

‘There are many examples of the success of the habitat restoration work. For instance, on Humber-side, the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust carried out an extensive programme of reedbed restoration and were rewarded with the first booming Eurasian Bittern recolonising one of their sites in 2000. In 2002, there were three occupied sites in the area, signalling a new core population in the making. The Norfolk Broads have always been the stronghold for breeding Eurasian Bitterns in the UK but, during the early 1990s, there were only two or three regularly occupied sites there. Thanks to work by the Broads Authority, RSPB, English Nature, the Norfolk Wildlife Trust and many individual owners, the tide now appears to have been turned. In 2002, there were 10 or 11 booming birds at a total of nine sites.

‘On a less positive note, 2002 was the first year for many decades with no booming records whatsoever from the north Norfolk coast. Problems of tidal inundation and limited habitat quality have resulted in poor productivity in north Norfolk over the last few years. It is hoped that colonising birds from elsewhere will help to maintain the species in this region until the habitat problems can be resolved.’

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

22 localities: 146-162 pairs bred. A further increase in numbers of breeding pairs, though observers at several localities commented on the difficulty of ascertaining exactly how many pairs were actually breeding and what their success was. The breeding which took place in Cheshire & Wirral in 2001 was not repeated, but successful breeding occurred for the first time in north Wales, and the first breeding records for Devon, Norfolk and Suffolk were reported.

England, SW

Eight localities: 69-71 pairs. DEVON. One locality: pair bred; first for county. DORSET Two localities: (1) 42 pairs bred, fledging success unknown; (2) three or four pairs bred. HAMPSHIRE Two localities: (1) 15 pairs bred; (2) at least four pairs bred. SOMERSET Two localities: (1) two pairs bred, rearing four young; (2) two pairs bred, rearing three young. WILTSHIRE One locality: pair present, breeding not proved but strongly suspected.

England, SE

Four localities: 65-73 pairs. ESSEX One locality: 32 pairs reared 46 young. KENT Two localities: (1) 15-20 pairs bred, no details of success; (2) 18 pairs bred, no details of success. SUSSEX One locality: three pairs thought to have bred, up to 15 adults seen.

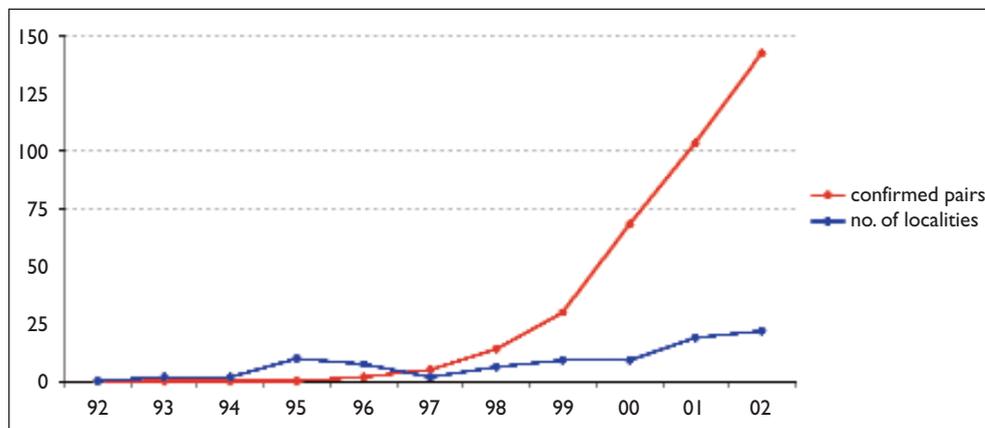


Fig. 2. The spread of Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta* along the south and east coasts of England continues unabated, with the first breeding records for Devon, Suffolk and Norfolk in 2002, and further consolidation within the core range. Expansion along the west coast and into Wales appears to be much slower, although successful breeding was reported from Anglesey in 2002.

England, E

Seven localities: 10-14 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Two localities: (1) pair displaying in May, apparently recently fledged juvenile in mid July, presumed reared nearby as did not breed on site; (2) three birds in suitable habitat until early May. NORFOLK Two localities: (1) five pairs fledged 13 young; (2) three pairs fledged at least six young; first breeding records for the county. SUFFOLK Three localities: (1) two pairs bred, rearing at least two young; (2) pair built nest, but unsuccessful; (3) pair present in suitable habitat, but not clear whether breeding was attempted; first breeding records for the county.

England, N

One locality: 0-1 pairs. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE One locality: female laid at least one egg, no male seen.

Wales

Two localities: 2-3 pairs. ANGLESEY One locality: pair bred and fledged four young, second pair possibly bred and fledged one young; first for county. SOUTH WALES One locality: at least one pair bred.

Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Much nest-building took place at one locality in Suffolk, although nesting attempts did not reach the egg-laying stage. Birds from this site regularly visited several other sites along the Suffolk coast which are also thought to be suitable for breeding, but their visits were usually brief. Colonisation can still be forecast with some confidence, though the birds are taking their time. The numbers breeding in the Netherlands continue to fluctuate, with 1,314 pairs breeding in 2003, down from 1,586 pairs in 2002 (*Dutch Birding* 26: 193-207).

England, E

NORFOLK Birds were reported from at least seven localities during May-July, with 1-5 individuals at most sites, but with 11 at one locality and up to 15 at another (though some duplication involved); no breeding activity was reported. SUFFOLK One locality: up to 19 were present from mid May to late August and built no fewer than ten nests, though it is unclear whether any eggs were laid; no young were seen.

England, N

One locality: four adults in July and August in suitable breeding habitat.

Honey-buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Confirmed breeding by 20 pairs; minimum of 22 young reared. The number of confirmed pairs and probable/possible nesting attempts are well down on those reported in 2001, when FMD access restrictions may have resulted in some pairs being overlooked. The 33% drop in the number of confirmed pairs since 2000 is a cause for concern, and this situation requires careful monitoring. If the decline is real, and not a reflection of under-reporting, its causes are far from clear.

Great Britain

Nine pairs fledged two young, four pairs fledged one young, and seven pairs bred and failed. 14 pairs probably or possibly bred. In addition, four single birds were reported from known breeding localities.

The breakdown of the above into countries is: **England** 16 pairs bred, plus 14 probable/possible pairs; **Wales** no information received; and **Scotland** four pairs bred.

Honey-buzzard	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Confirmed pairs	6	9	9	14	14	17	13	33	27	20
Max. total pairs	27	28	30	34	39	37	43	69	54	34

Red Kite *Milvus milvus***Wales**

A total of 292 territories were checked, of which c. 250 were thought to be occupied. A minimum of 217 nests were active and eggs were laid in not less than 205. Of these, at least 128 pairs fledged a total of 179 young. 64 pairs which laid eggs definitely failed, with an uncertain outcome at 12 others. There was some correlation between nest failure rates and the higher than average rainfall which occurred in the south and southwest of the range. The first

Red Kite – Wales	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total pairs	115	138	146	161	180	200	228	249	(285)	250
Breeding pairs	104	111	127	130	152	167	181	201	(223)	217
Successful pairs	61	70	79	90	99	112	118	103	(168)	128
Young reared	82	99	117	119	129	174	165	141	(247)	179
Young/territorial pair	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.7	0.6	(0.9)	0.7

Note: 2001 data are estimates only for this and the other Red Kite tables. In Wales, these are estimates for the *total* population, whereas the absolute figures in other years show the number of pairs actually located and *not* an estimate of the total population. Visit the website of the Welsh Kite Trust (www.welshkitetrust.org) for further details.

confirmed breeding took place in Pembrokeshire with two pairs each rearing two young. The predicted eastward expansion into England did not materialise in 2002; indeed, three new sites in East Radnor were unoccupied this year.

England, South

A total of 139 breeding pairs was located in the Chilterns and the number of young known to have been reared was 219, the first time since releases began that the number of fledged young was less than the previous year (2001 revised figures of 246 chicks from 132 pairs). Wet weather, combined with the high density of nests in the core area, are thought to have been responsible for the reduced productivity. 18 nests failed and 24 other pairs either did not return to their nests of 2001 or were not located. In addition, three pairs bred in Wiltshire, two of them rearing a total of four young, the third failing at the egg stage.

England, Central

In the East Midlands release area, numbers increased to 23 breeding pairs (compared with 13 in 2001), of which 19 were successful, rearing 43 young. The population continues to expand its range, with several nests found in new areas more than 10 km away from the core part of the range.

England, North

Ten pairs bred, two more than in 2001; nine pairs reared a total of 20 young while the other failed through causes unknown. After the hiatus in 2001, when FMD prevented the planned release of further birds, 18 young birds were taken from nests in the Chilterns and released in the area.

Red Kite – England	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total pairs	12	22	26	na	61	87	na	146	(159)	na
Breeding pairs	9	20	24	37+	57	76	83	131+	(155)	175
Successful pairs	8	17	22	na	50	67	78	na	na	na
Young reared	14	37	55	80	111	146	172	226+	(288+)	286
Young/territorial pair	1.2	1.7	2.1	-	1.8	1.7	-	1.5	(1.8)	1.6*

* There was no count of territorial pairs; the figure given is young reared per breeding pair.

Scotland, South

A further 24 birds were released in summer 2002, of which 20 were from the Black Isle and four from the Chilterns, bringing the total to 57 released in two years. The birds released in 2001 did well, with two pairs being formed. Birds from both pairs were seen carrying sticks and attempting copulation. One pair built a nest but did not lay.

Scotland, Central

15 of 18 known pairs laid eggs, five more than in 2001. Four of these failed during extremely wet weather in May, but the other 11 reared 24-25 young. Included in these totals is a pair which bred successfully in Perthshire, rearing two young; this pair, which failed in 2001, represents the first successful breeding in the county in modern times.

Scotland, North

A total of 38 pairs was located, four more than in 2001, and the rate of increase of this population continues to be slow. Of these, 35 pairs laid eggs and 32 successfully reared 87 young (ten more than in 2001). Although breeding productivity was good, recruitment of second-year birds into this population continues to give cause for concern. For the first time since 1995, no confirmed cases of poisoning were reported although there were three road deaths, and two of these birds had high levels of rodenticides and lead in their blood.

Red Kite – Scotland	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total pairs	8	11	17	22	27	30	39	44	44	58
Breeding pairs	5	8	15	17	23	25	36	40	44	50
Successful pairs	3	6	11	16	19	22	26	38	38	43
Young reared	7	13	26	39	39	47	59	84	84	111
Young/territorial pair	0.9	1.2	1.5	1.8	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.9	1.9	1.9

Ian Carter, English Nature, has commented as follows: 'Red Kite populations in England continue to thrive. Levels of breeding productivity are high, and with the majority of birds breeding for the first time when only two years old, there is plenty of scope for further rapid increase during the coming years. In the main, breeding populations are still concentrated in areas close to the release sites. In the Chilterns, for example, over 58 pairs have been found breeding in the 10 km square containing the release site (see Wotton *et al.* 2002). There has also been some welcome range expansion, however, with at least three pairs in Wiltshire, which hopefully signals the beginning of a more rapid colonisation of areas away from the Chilterns.

'Unfortunately, some birds in England are still lost to deliberate illegal persecution and to accidental death when scavenging on rats killed by highly toxic modern poisons. English Nature and RSPB continue to encourage landowners and pest control companies to consider alternatives to the most toxic rat poisons, and to follow guidelines on safe practice when the use of poisons is unavoidable. An advisory leaflet 'Rat poison and the threat to birds of prey' has been produced and is available from English Nature's Enquiry Service (tel. 01733 455101; e-mail: enquiries@english-nature.org.uk).

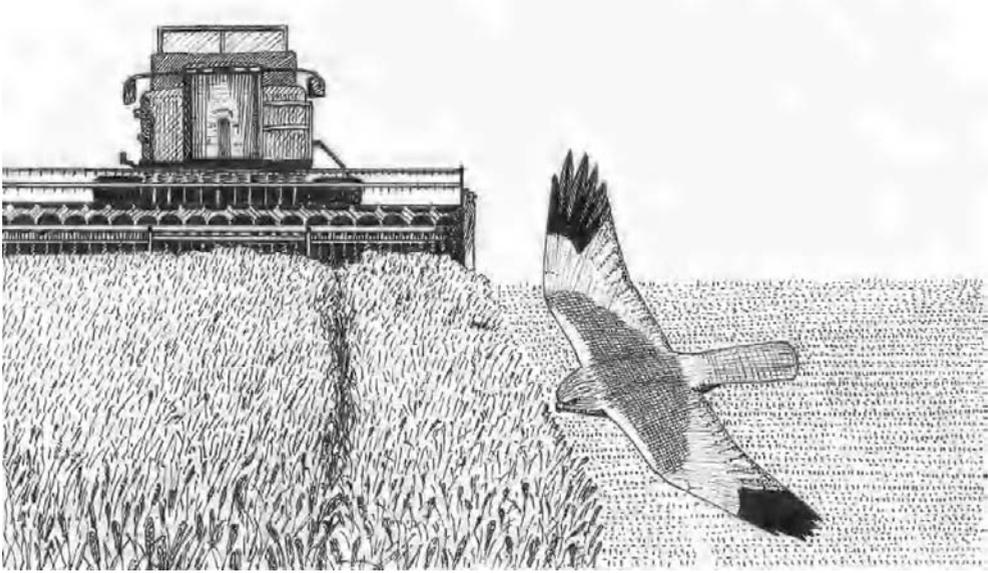
'In Wales, breeding productivity remains low, constrained by the cool, damp spring weather and poor food supply compared with lowland areas farther east. On average, breeding pairs rear only about half the number of young as in England. Despite this, the population has maintained a steady increase over recent years and it can only be a matter of time before birds are found breeding over the border in western England.

'The lack of increase in the northern Scotland (Black Isle) breeding population remains a serious cause for concern. It is worth noting that similar numbers of young Red Kites were released on the Black Isle as in the Chilterns, over approximately the same period. The Chilterns population reached a minimum of 175 breeding pairs in 2002, whereas the Black Isle population of 35 pairs was only 20% of this level, having increased little during the last few years. Breeding productivity is similar in the two areas and the stark difference in fortunes appears to stem mainly because of far higher levels of illegal poisoning in northern Scotland, particularly on areas of moorland managed for Red Grouse shooting. The link between grouse moors and the illegal use of poisons in Scotland was highlighted recently (Whitfield *et al.* 2003):

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

The number of occupied home ranges in Scotland continues to increase, this year by three to 26, with a further range occupied by a single bird. Although 22 pairs, including three new pairs, laid eggs, only 14 were known to hatch eggs and just eight successful pairs reared a minimum of 12 young. The numbers of successful pairs, and of young reared, are both increasing much more slowly than overall numbers, and this was the second consecutive season with low productivity. With the exception of one nest where a breeding male was deliberately poisoned (both young were fostered on to other nests), the failures were all thought to be natural, with no instances of nest robbery this year.

White-tailed Eagle	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Breeding pairs/trios (min)	6	8	9	12	11	18	18	20-21	23	26
Clutches laid	6	8	9	12	11-13	16-17	15-16	18-20	17	22
Successful pairs	4	4	5	7	5	9	6	8	10	8
Young reared	5	5	7	9	9	13	11	12	11	120.8
Young/breeding pair	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5



Simon Gillings

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

222-246 females and 218-238 males bred, rearing at least 503 young. The great majority of the population still breeds within Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, but the spread both south and north from here continues, with increasing numbers in southeast and northern England. Although the successful breeding in Orkney in 2001 was not repeated, pairs reared young in four different areas of Scotland.

England, SW

Three localities: 2-3 females and two males bred, plus three immatures. ISLE of WIGHT One locality: long-staying female in suitable habitat. SOMERSET One locality: up to three immatures in suitable habitat. WILTSHIRE One locality: two pairs reared six young.

England, SE

13 localities or areas: 37-42 females and 36-40 males bred, plus nine non-breeders. ESSEX Six localities: (1) two males and three females bred, rearing six young; (2) pair reared three young; (3) pair bred successfully; (4)-(6) single summering pairs. KENT Seven localities or areas: (1) 24 nests produced minimum 32 young; (2) five pairs bred, three successful nests reared 11 young; (3) pair reared one young, second female possibly bred; (4) pair reared three young, second pair present; (5) pair bred; (6) up to six adults, breeding not proved; (7) up to three birds in June.

England, E

166-181 females and 166-180 males bred. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Seven localities: (1) six pairs reared minimum seven young; (2) three pairs reared 10+ young; (3) two pairs reared three young; (4)(5) pair reared three young, second pair possibly bred; (6) two pairs possibly bred; (7) female built nest but abandoned site. HUNTINGDON & PETERBOROUGH Three localities: (1)-(3) single pairs bred, two successfully, rearing seven young. LINCOLNSHIRE Whole county: 42 pairs reared at least 159 young, one pair probably bred, seven pairs possibly bred. NORFOLK Whole county: 70 pairs reared minimum 115 young, two pairs possibly bred. SUFFOLK Whole county: 38 pairs reared at least 87 young.

England, N

Seven localities: 9-11 females and 6-8 males bred. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE Two localities: (1) one male and three females bred and fledged seven young; (2) pair summered. YORKSHIRE Five localities: (1) two pairs fledged five young; (2) male and two females fledged four young; (3) pair fledged three young; (4) pair bred, success unknown; (5) pair present.

Scotland, Mid

Four localities: eight females and eight males bred. ANGUS & DUNDEE One locality: pair fledged four young. FIFE One locality: pair fledged four young. NORTHEAST SCOTLAND One locality: two pairs bred, fledging eight young. PERTH & KINROSS One locality: four pairs bred, fledging 15 young.

Scotland, N

One locality: 0-1 female bred. ORKNEY One locality: female carrying nest material, but no male present.

Marsh Harrier	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Breeding males	84	114	151	135	131	137	145	184	260	238
Breeding females	110	129	156	136	132	138	145	206	272	246
Young reared	244	255	277	263	206	292	256	377	482	503

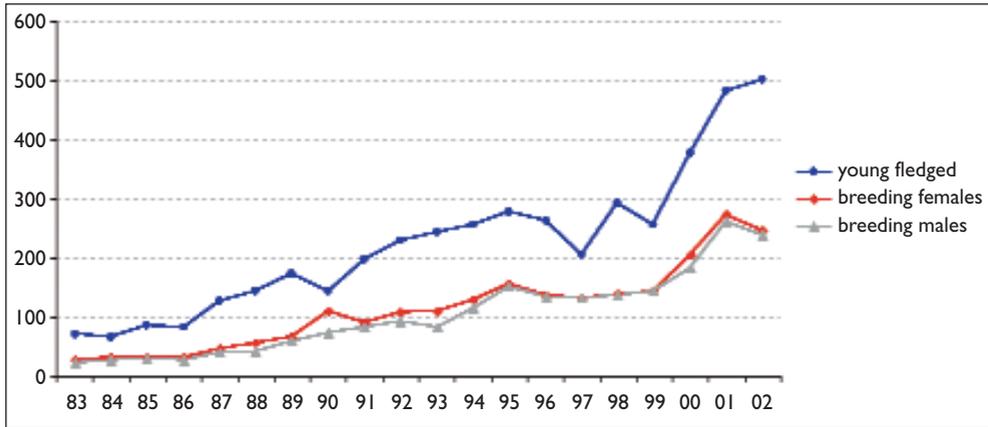


Fig. 3. Marsh Harriers *Circus aeruginosus* are thriving in eastern England, with 150 pairs in the three counties of Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. Expansion into adjacent coastal and inland counties continues, but appears to have stalled along the south coast. Away from the core part of the British range, it is encouraging to see eight pairs breeding in Scotland and 11-13 pairs in northern England.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

The following summary data were received, based on a non-randomised sample rather than a complete survey. Although the number of occupied territories showed a significant increase over that reported in 2001, breeding success was poor in many areas. The total number of territorial pairs found during the 1998 census was 570 (range 499-640) (Sim *et al.* 2001).

Hen Harrier	Occupied territories	Territories known to have fledged young	Min. no. young fledged	Min. young/occupied territory
England, N	10	6	18	1.80
Wales	4	4	?	-
Borders & Lothian	11	3	7+	0.64
Dumfries & Galloway	16	11	21	1.31
South Strathclyde	23	5	13	0.57
Central	12	3	9	0.75
Tayside	25	9	26	1.04
Northeast Scotland	18	12	44	2.44
Argyll & Bute	43	15	36	0.84
Highland & West Moray	36	20	57	1.58
Orkney	47	20	48	1.02
Western Isles	28	14	27	0.96
Northern Ireland	No reports received			
TOTALS	273	122	306	1.12

Note: The Scottish regions in the above table follow the 2002 Raptor Round Up (published by the Scottish Ornithologists' Club, on behalf of the Scottish Raptor Study Groups, as a supplement to *Scottish Birds* vol. 24), which merged Highland with Moray & Nairn and also merged Perth & Kinross with Angus to form Tayside.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Eight localities: 7-11 pairs reared 12 young. A particularly poor year, made all the worse by the relatively high numbers breeding in 2001 when FMD access restrictions may have resulted in some birds being overlooked. The number of localities containing breeding Montagu's Harriers was the lowest for ten years, the count of breeding pairs was the lowest since 1998, and the number of fledged young fell by 40% compared with 2001.

England, SW

Three localities: (1) pair reared one young; (2) pair bred but failed; (3) pair present.

England, SE

One locality: (1) pair bred, result unknown.

England, E

Three localities: (1) three pairs bred, rearing seven young, additional two males and one female present; (2) pair fledged four young; (3) single male briefly on territory in May, no female seen.

England, Central

One locality: (1) pair present in April, started to build nest platform and food pass seen, then only single bird until mid July.

Montagu's Harrier	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. localities	8	15	14	16	13	11	11	18	11	8
Breeding males	5	7	8	6	7	3	4	8	9	7
Other males	2	9	8	8	6	10	4	8	4	5
Breeding females	6	12	9	7	9	3	4	9	11	7
Other females	1	11	4	7	3	5	5	5	1	3
Young	9	13	26	14	11	8	12	7-8	20	12

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

At least 287 localities or areas: 217-297 pairs breeding. Numbers of Northern Goshawks breeding in the UK appear to fluctuate without any clear pattern, but this may, in part, be a result of the difficulty in locating active nests and monitoring their success. Although the number of pairs reported increased considerably over 2001, totals did not quite bounce back to the level seen in 2000. We would urge observers to report breeding pairs even if, understandably, they prefer not to reveal precise locations. In addition, territorial Northern Goshawks are most conspicuous in late winter when displaying over their breeding range. Their presence at this time is indicative of possible breeding later in the year, and the Panel would welcome all reports of displaying birds to establish whether numbers are fluctuating as markedly as the statistics suggest.

England

At least 173 localities in 22 counties: 144 pairs known to have bred, plus 39 other pairs.

Wales

42 localities in ten counties: 25 pairs known to have bred, plus 17 other pairs.

Scotland

72 localities in six recording areas: 48 pairs known to have bred, plus 24 other pairs.

Northern Goshawk	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. counties	35	33	38	33	41	38	42	36	33	38
Confirmed pairs	199	145	249	160	247	179	198	237	157	217
Max. total pairs	299	225	319	213	347	249	293	322	255	297

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

The following summary data were received, based on a non-randomised sample rather than a complete survey. The first complete census since 1992 took place in 2003, and preliminary results suggest little change in the overall total in the intervening period.

Golden Eagle	Occupied territories	Territories known to have fledged young	Min. no. young fledged	Min. young/territorial pair
England, N	1	0	0	—
Dumfries & Galloway Borders	2	1	1	0.50
Central Scotland	7	2	3	0.43
Tayside	11	6	10	0.91
Northeast Scotland	19	na	11	0.58
Argyll	57	15	15	0.26
Highland	na	24	31	na
Western Isles	14	6	7	0.5
No totals are given as the data available are too incomplete.				

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

167 pairs with territories: 142 pairs laid eggs, rearing 220 young. The number of young reared has fallen for the first time in recent years, if only slightly; this is probably related to the difficulty in finding all the pairs now breeding in Scotland. The increase in southern Scotland is particularly exciting, increasing from just one pair in 2001 to nine in 2002, while three pairs again bred in Cumbria. It is also encouraging to see the number of egg-laying pairs in Forth increasing from eight to 11 pairs, although fledging success here was poor compared with 2001. The pair which bred at Rutland Water in 2001 did so again, albeit unsuccessfully. Breeding success in Scotland was patchy, being quite good in Highland, but much less so in Tayside and Argyll.

England, Central

RUTLAND Rutland Water: One pair bred, one young died shortly after hatching following several days of heavy rain; no further birds released since this phase of the re-establishment programme is now complete. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE Pair present from April to June, seen calling and displaying over artificial platform in April but did not breed.

England, N

CUMBRIA Three localities: (1) pair bred, one young reared; (2) pair bred, but failed after hatch; (3) pair attempted to breed, but one adult found dead (persecution).

Scotland, S

BORDERS Four pairs bred, two reared four young. DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY Five pairs bred, three reared six young.

Scotland, Mid

FORTH 13 occupied territories, 11 pairs laid eggs, of which six reared 11 young. TAYSIDE 44 occupied territories, 36 clutches laid, 27 pairs reared 50 young. NORTHEAST SCOTLAND 16 pairs occupied territories, 14 pairs laid, 13 of which reared 28 young.

Scotland, N & W

ARGYLL Five pairs bred of which three fledged six young. HIGHLAND 75 pairs located of which 64 bred and 50 reared 114 young.

Osprey	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Occupied territories	88	95	99	104	111	131	136	151	158	167
Pairs with eggs	78	83	92	93	102	117	125	125	139	142
Successful pairs	56	69	73	74	77	93	87	na	107	105
Young reared	111	146	146	155	159	194	183	209	224	220
Young/occupied territory	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.3

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

The following summary data were received, based on a non-randomised sample rather than a complete census. The number of territories monitored has partly recovered from the low numbers in 2001, though not back to the levels of some of the preceding years. Productivity, however, was the best since 1997. The most recent estimate of the British population is 1,300 (1,100-1,500) pairs in 1993-94 (Rebecca & Bainbridge 1998). In addition to those shown in the table below, one or two pairs possibly bred in southwest England.

Merlin	Occupied territories	Territories known to have fledged young	Min. no. young fledged	Min. young/occupied territory
England, Central	11	8	33	3.00
England, N	173	102	344	1.99
Wales	22	16	49	2.23
Borders & Lothian	22	15	48+	2.18
Dumfries & Galloway	8	0	0	–
Tayside	40	27	70+	1.75
Northeast Scotland	43	31	112	2.60
Argyll & Bute	4	0	0	–
Highland	33	19	64	1.94
Orkney	21	12	41	1.95
Shetland	9	6	14+	1.56
Western Isles	11	?	26	2.36
Northern Ireland	No reports received			
TOTALS	397	236	801	2.02

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Minimum of 277-590 pairs breeding. These figures are considerably lower than comparable reports for 2001 (370-697 pairs) and 2000 (381-711 pairs). This species creates particular problems for County Recorders who, in the main, receive few confirmed breeding reports, and are faced with calculating the breeding population in their area from the sometimes considerable numbers of sightings over the summer period. More than one has urged their observers to spend a little longer trying to see whether birds are actually breeding. This total remains well below the recent estimate of 2,200 pairs for the total British breeding population (Clements 2001). In the far north of the species' British range, at least one pair bred in Highland for the second year running.

England, SW

46-149 pairs. AVON 4-9. DEVON 19-22. DORSET 2-14. GLOUCESTERSHIRE 1. HAMPSHIRE 6-53. ISLE OF WIGHT 1. SOMERSET 2-6. WILTSHIRE 11-43.

England, SE

143-228 pairs. BEDFORDSHIRE 1-2. ESSEX 13-23. KENT 120. OXFORDSHIRE 5. SURREY 4-28. SUSSEX 0-50.

England, E

23-65 pairs. HUNTINGDON & PETERBOROUGH 9-17. LINCOLNSHIRE 1. NORFOLK 7-11. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE 3-5. SUFFOLK 3-31.

England, Central

55-109 pairs. DERBYSHIRE 23-27. LEICESTERSHIRE 1-9. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE 7. SHROPSHIRE 2-21. STAFFORDSHIRE 5-10. WARWICKSHIRE 17-35.

England, N

9-31 pairs. CHESHIRE & WIRRAL 3-9. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE 0-3. NORTHUMBERLAND 6-8. YORKSHIRE 0-11.

Wales

0-6 pairs. BRECON 0-5. MEIRIONNYDD 0-1.

Scotland, N

1-2 pairs. HIGHLAND 1-2.

Hobby	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Confirmed pairs	152	170	161	190	167	161	246	381	470	277
Max. total pairs	493	500	430	454	624	675	553	711	697	590

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

A national census of the Peregrine was carried out in 2002, the full results of which will be published in *Bird Study*. Here, the summary totals for each region are presented as a comparison between the 2002 census and the 1991 census; data from BTO, RSPB and SNH. There may be some minor amendments to the totals when finally published.

Since 1991, the number of Peregrines breeding in the UK has increased from 1,316 to 1,492 occupied territories; an overall increase of 13.4%. This, however, masks the fact that there have been significant declines in parts of Scotland, especially in Highland and Argyll, while the species is now extinct as a breeding bird in Shetland. Set against these declines, there has been a continued general expansion of both range and numbers, especially in southern and central England. The south coast of England has been recolonised and Peregrines now breed in inland counties where they have not previously been recorded. There were also increases in south Wales, parts of northern England and southern Scotland, some of which have coincided with the use of new sites, particularly quarries and tall buildings.

Region	Occupied territories 1991	Occupied territories 2002	difference	Region	Occupied territories 1991	Occupied territories 2002	difference
SE England: coastal	6	25	317%	Western Isles	12	20	67%
SE England: inland	0	14	–	Highlands: coastal	54	41	-24%
SW England: coastal	96	128	33%	Highlands: inland	120	79	-34%
SW England: inland	19	71	274%	NE Scotland: coastal	12	17	42%
South Wales: coastal	52	67	29%	NE Scotland: inland	51	42	-18%
South Wales: inland	78	105	35%	Tayside: coastal	2	4	100%
North Wales: coastal	23	23	0%	Tayside: inland	94	94	0%
North Wales: inland	110	93	-15%	Central	40	37	-8%
W Midlands & Lancs lowlands	15	49	227%	Argyll: coastal	63	43	-32%
NW England: coastal	20	29	45%	Argyll: inland	40	30	-25%
NW England: inland	81	77	-5%	S Strathclyde: coastal	7	13	86%
Pennines	51	84	65%	S Strathclyde: inland	17	21	24%
Cheviots	13	23	77%	Dumfries & Galloway: coastal	23	26	13%
NE England: coastal	3	6	100%	Dumfries & Galloway: inland	51	52	2%
NE England: inland	1	4	300%	Lothian & Borders: coastal	5	10	100%
Central East England	0	9	–	Lothian & Borders: inland	31	37	19%
Shetland	5	0	-100%	Northern Ireland: coastal	26	23	-12%
Orkney	22	26	18%	Northern Ireland: inland	73	70	-4%
				Totals	1,316	1,492	13.4%

Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*

11 localities: 18 singing males. A particularly poor year, with fewer than usual, or even none at all, reported from several regular haunts, especially in Scotland. The national census carried out in 1999 (Gilbert 2002) remains the most accurate recent estimate of the total British population.

England, SW

One locality: two males. SOMERSET One locality: 1-2 singing males.

England, E

Seven localities: 11 males. CAMBRIDGESHIRE One locality: three singing males. NORFOLK Four localities: (1) three singing males including, on one occasion, a pair singing; (2)-(4) single singing males. SUFFOLK Two localities: (1)(2) single singing males.

Scotland, N & W

Three localities: five males. HIGHLAND One locality: two singing males. ORKNEY One locality: one singing male. SHETLAND One locality: two singing males.

Spotted Crake	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. localities	19	5	8	8	13	16	40	22	23	11
No. pairs/singing males	31	11	10	13	14	31	46-77	34	35	18

Corn Crake *Crex crex*

676 singing males. The total of 660 singing males in the 'core area' of the Hebrides and Orkney is an increase of 61 over 2001, which is the largest increase since 1995. There were increases on all the Inner Hebridean islands with the exception of Eigg, where the one bird in 2001 did not reappear. The increase on Coll and Tiree (from 205 to 246) was especially noteworthy, while the first Corn Crakes since 1998 were reported on Canna. In the Western Isles, numbers increased on two islands and declined on four, although the overall total was down only by four. Numbers on the mainland of Scotland declined for the second year running. No data were available for Northern Ireland.

England, SW

One locality: one singing male. DEVON One locality: one singing male.

England, E

One locality: one singing male. NORFOLK One locality: one singing male.

England, N

One locality: one singing male. YORKSHIRE One locality: one singing male.

Scotland, Mid

Two localities: one singing male, one dead adult. AYR Two localities: (1) singing male for 10 days in May; (2) adult killed by combine in July.

Scotland, N & W: Mainland

Two main areas: ten singing males. CAITHNESS One singing male. SUTHERLAND Up to nine singing males.

Scotland, N & W: Hebrides and Orkney, the 'core area'

17 localities or areas: 660 singing males. Total number of singing males: ARGYLL – INNER HEBRIDES 292 (Coll 74, Tiree 172, Mull 1, Iona 12, Colonsay & Oronsay 25, Islay 8), HIGHLAND – INNER HEBRIDES 29 (Skye 23, Canna 2, Muck 4), ORKNEY 16, WESTERN ISLES 323 (Lewis 57, Harris 5, Berneray 1, North Uist 71, Benbecula 30, South Uist 98, Barra & Vatersay 61).

Scotland, N & W: Shetland

One locality: one singing male.

Corn Crake	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Singing males in 'core area' (see above)	446	463	537	583	637	543	571	591	597	660
Singing males, UK total	480	478	551	605	644	589	576	622	619	676

Common Crane *Grus grus*

The Norfolk birds bred successfully for the second year in a row, while the summering of two pairs in Yorkshire is a first indication of breeding elsewhere.

England, E

NORFOLK One locality: two pairs nested, one of which reared two young.

England, N

YORKSHIRE Two localities: (1) pair summered and displayed, but no nest built; (2) pair summered.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

52 localities: 1,262-1,266 pairs. Information on breeding success was incomplete, but 142 young were known to have been reared. Both the number of colonies and the number of breeding pairs were new record totals. At many colonies, however, including several of the larger ones, breeding success was extremely poor or non-existent, thanks to the regular inhibitors of predation and bad weather. The continued rapid growth in numbers, despite the poor production of recent years, prompts speculation that the breeding population may not be wholly dependent on home-grown recruitment.

England, SW

One locality: two pairs. HAMPSHIRE One locality: two pairs bred, one reared two young, first breeding for the county.

England, SE

20 localities: 508 pairs. ESSEX Nine localities with breeding pairs, no information on numbers of young reared: (1) 49 pairs; (2) 28 pairs; (3) 25 pairs; (4) 21 pairs; (5) 20 pairs; (6) four pairs; (7) two pairs; (8)(9) single pairs. KENT 11 localities with breeding pairs, no information on numbers of young reared: (1) 99 pairs; (2) 70 pairs; (3) 60 pairs; (4) 45 pairs; (5) 37 pairs; (6) 18 pairs; (7) 15 pairs; (8) seven pairs; (9) three pairs; (10) two pairs; (11) one pair.

England, E

27 localities: 715-717 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Two localities: (1) four pairs bred; (2) pair bred, but failed. LINCOLNSHIRE Two localities: (1) 50 pairs bred; (2) 17 pairs bred. NORFOLK 14 localities with 381-383 pairs; at nine localities where breeding success recorded, 304 pairs reared 90 young. SUFFOLK Nine localities: (1) 105 pairs bred, no young fledged; (2) 54 pairs bred, no young fledged; (3) 31 pairs bred, no young fledged; (4) 23 pairs reared four young; (5) 15 pairs reared at least 11 young; (6) 23 pairs reared at least 14 young; (7) five pairs bred, no young fledged; (8) three pairs reared one young; (9) three pairs bred, success unknown.

England, N

Four localities: 37-39 pairs. CHESHIRE One locality: pair bred, rearing four young from second clutch; first breeding in county. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE Two localities: (1) 2-4 pairs reared 7-11 young; (2) two pairs reared seven young. YORKSHIRE One locality: 32 pairs reared two young.



Avocets *Recurvirostra avosetta*

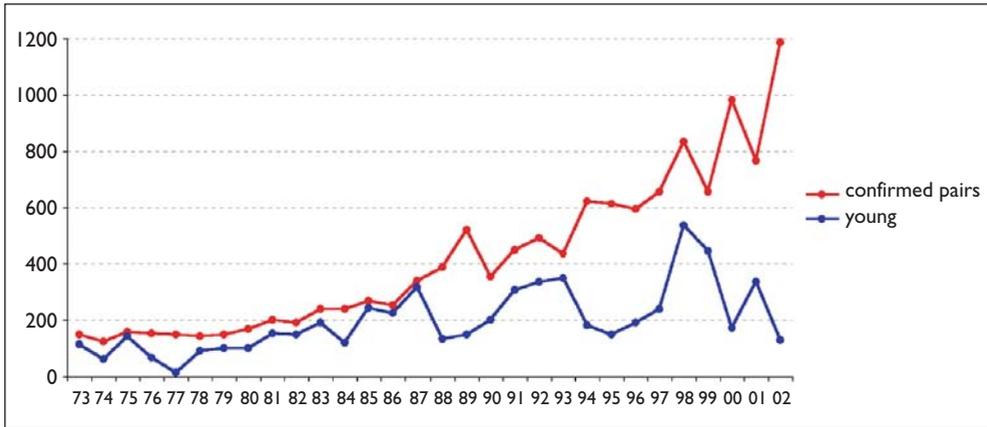


Fig. 4. In 2002, Avocets *Recurvirostra avoetia* reached a record total of 1,188-1,190 breeding pairs. While this may appear rosy, the gap between the number of breeding pairs and the number of young they produce continues to increase at an unsustainable and alarming pace. Recruitment into the UK population from elsewhere in Europe may be sustaining the population increase and data to support this would be welcome.

Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicanus*

Six counties: 272-297 pairs fledged 140 young. Major problems of access in the Brecklands of Norfolk and Suffolk continued into 2002. As a result, these data are less complete and accurate than those obtained prior to 2001. The increase in breeding numbers in Wiltshire continues, but is not matched by those in Hampshire.

England, SW

100-125 pairs. DEVON One locality: pair present in breeding season. HAMPSHIRE 24 pairs fledged ten young, plus five pairs not proved to breed. WILTSHIRE 76 pairs fledged 37 young, plus 19 pairs not proved to breed.

England, SE

Six pairs. BERKSHIRE Six pairs bred, and reared two young.

England, E

166 pairs. NORFOLK 91 pairs reared at least 58 young. SUFFOLK 75 pairs reared 33 young.



Fig. 5. Access restrictions to breeding sites in the Norfolk and Suffolk Brecks continues to thwart attempts to establish just how many Stone Curlews *Burhinus oedicanus* are breeding there. Despite this, numbers are increasing steadily as this figure shows, particularly in Wiltshire, and in 2002 the estimated UK population comprised 272-297 pairs which fledged 140 young.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

The following summary data are based on a non-randomised sample rather than a complete census. The total number of pairs reported continues to fall; comparative figures being 545 in both 2001 and 2000 and 636 in 1999. Comments from County Recorders suggest that this is a genuine decline rather than less thorough coverage, although this highly opportunistic species is extremely difficult to monitor, making temporary use of areas (such as development sites) which birdwatchers might not check before the birds have bred and then moved on to a new site in the following year. The most recent estimate of the British population was 825-1,070 pairs in 1991 (Gibbons *et al.* 1993).

Little Ringed Plover	Confirmed breeding pairs	Max. total pairs
England, SW	25	31
England, SE	59	90
England, E	44	49
England, Central	85	106
England, N	70	126
Wales	30	49
Scotland, Mid	6	6
TOTALS	319	457

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

One report received from outside main Scottish breeding areas. The Panel seeks only to record those away from the core breeding range, which lies north of a line from the Firth of Clyde to the Firth of Tay, and holds in the region of 840-950 pairs (Gibbons *et al.* 1993).

Scotland, S

One locality: one pair. BORDERS One locality: two in area where breeding has occurred, mid May.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Two localities: three males. Although a slight improvement over 2001, again no females were seen. Monitoring the breeding performance of this species is particularly difficult without causing excessive disturbance. Like Purple Sandpiper (see below), the tenacity with which this species clings on in the UK is remarkable. Over the last 20 years, the maximum possible number of pairs (which includes the presence of displaying males without any other proof of breeding) has fluctuated between two and five, and in many years it has not been possible to confirm breeding or even the presence of females. Despite this, they continue to return each year, suggesting that successful breeding occurs with sufficient frequency to maintain this isolated population.

Scotland, N & W

Two localities: (1) two displaying males in late May and early June, but not thereafter and no proof of breeding; (1) single male displaying in mid May, but no proof of breeding.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

One locality: one pair.

Scotland, N & W

One locality: pair present, may have bred.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Three localities: three leks. Leks were reported from the two usual localities in Cambridgeshire as well as at a loch in Orkney, but there was no indication of nesting at any of these.

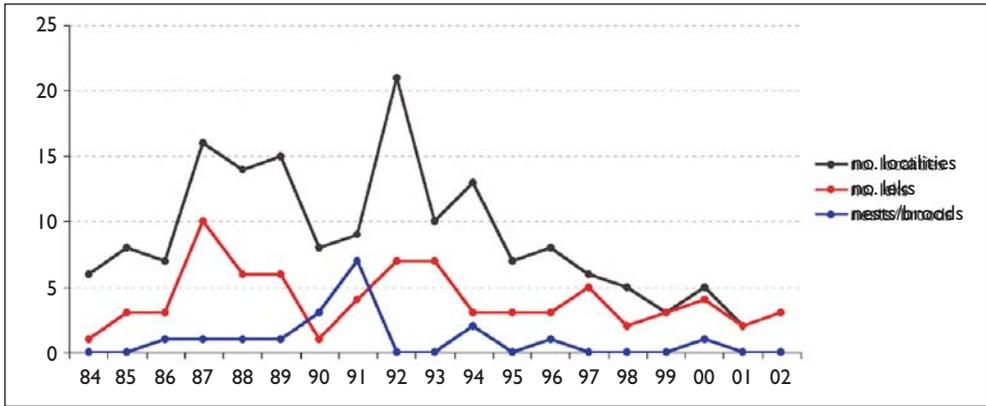


Fig. 6. Lekking Ruffs *Philomachus pugnax* persist in their attempts to attract passing females, but clearly need to try harder: There has not been a successful breeding attempt in the UK since 1996, and the number of leks continues to decline.

England, E

Two localities: two leks. CAMBRIDGESHIRE Two localities: (1) c. 30 males lekking in May; (2) seven males lekking, and three females present, in April and May. No evidence of breeding of breeding at either locality.

Scotland, N & W

One locality: one lek. ORKNEY One locality: two males lekking vigorously on 14th May; a single male was in suitable habitat nearby on 25th.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Eight localities: 47-48 pairs breeding. There was a further drop in the number of localities where breeding godwits were reported, and eight is the lowest since 1981. Nonetheless, the number of confirmed breeding pairs is the third highest since then, bettered only by 55 in 1984 and 52 in 2001. The number of confirmed pairs has, in fact, remained fairly stable over the last six years. Notably, breeding success improved at a key site in Cambridgeshire in 2002, where flooding during the breeding season has proved disastrous in recent years.



Simon Gillings

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

England, SE

Two localities: five pairs. KENT Two localities: (1) three pairs bred; (2) two pairs bred. No information on breeding success at either site.

England, E

Three localities: 34 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE. Two localities: (1) 29 pairs reared at least 27 young from 81 that hatched; (2) two pairs bred, one reared two young. NORFOLK One locality: three pairs bred, two pairs fledged five young.

England, N

One locality: 1-2 pairs. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE One locality: pair hatched one young, but not thought to have fledged, plus second pair.

Scotland, N & W

Two localities: seven pairs. ORKNEY One locality: four pairs reared at least one young. SHETLAND One area: three pairs bred, two pairs each reared one young.

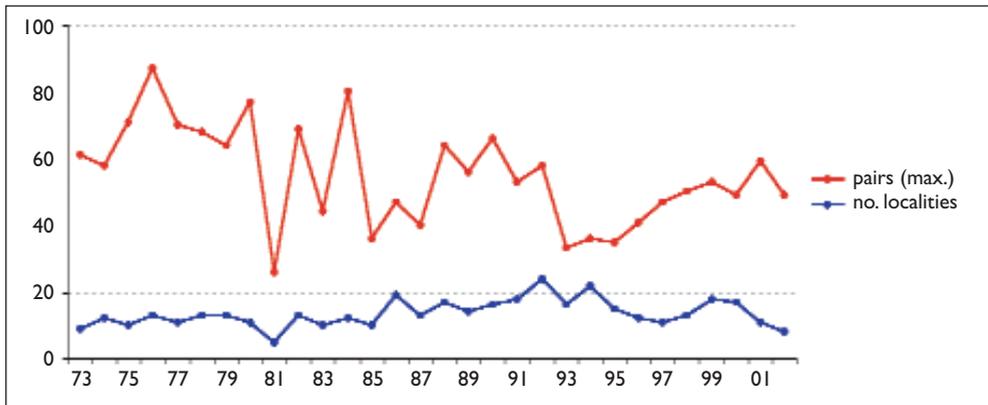


Fig. 7. Although breeding Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa* were present in just nine localities in 2002, the number of confirmed pairs was the third highest since 1981. Breeding success was also high, particularly in Cambridgeshire, where there was thankfully no repeat of the disastrous flooding of recent springs.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

No breeding reports were received away from the species' stronghold in Orkney and Shetland. The Scottish population is estimated at 530 pairs (Stone *et al.* 1997).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

The following limited information was received, and we repeat our appeal for information from bird-watchers visiting the Highlands. In this enormous, under-watched region, all records are welcome, in particular of displaying birds or singing males. This information can be sent to the local recorder, or directly to the Panel Secretary. The Scottish population is estimated at 1,100-1,600 pairs (Gibbons *et al.* 1993).

Scotland, N & W

ARGYLL At least one pair bred, two other possible pairs. HIGHLAND 55 pairs reported of which five proved breeding. SHETLAND Pair bred. WESTERN ISLES 12 pairs bred.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Four localities: one pair and three males. For the fourth year running, a pair was present at the same locality, although it is not known for certain whether they bred this year. The presence of displaying males at three other sites is encouraging. The only confirmed breeding record prior to 1999 was in Inverness-shire in 1959 (*Brit. Birds* 52: 430-432).

Scotland, N & W

HIGHLAND Four localities: (1) one pair probably bred; (2)-(4) single displaying males.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Seven localities: 4-12 pairs bred. An increase in both sites used and breeding pairs found for the second year running, following poor years in 1999-2000. Significantly, birds were found at three new (and previously unknown) localities in 2002, suggesting that others may be lurking elsewhere in the remote regions of northern Scotland.

Scotland, N & W

Seven localities: (1) four pairs bred; (2) two displaying pairs; (3) three birds, including two displaying males; (4)-(6) single pairs present; (7) single displaying male in suitable habitat.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Nine localities: 19 breeding males reared at least 17 young, plus at least eight males. 2002 brought a welcome further increase in the number of breeding males in Shetland and more young reared than in either 2000 or 2001. Even though breeding was not confirmed in the Western Isles, the situation there looks decidedly promising.

Scotland, N & W

Nine localities: at least 27 males. SHETLAND Two localities: (1) 13 breeding males, at least 17 young fledged; (2) six breeding males, no young fledged. WESTERN ISLES Seven localities, but no proof of breeding: (1) four males and four females present, May-July; (2) two males and three females present, May to July; (3) pair present in June; (4) at least one pair present; (5) two birds present, May to July; (6)(7) singles in June.

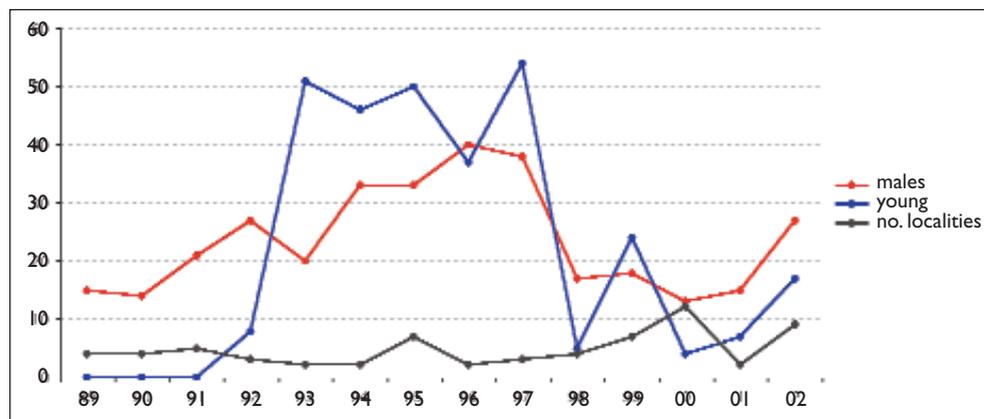


Fig. 8. Following several poor seasons, Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* finally seem to be making something of a comeback. An increase in the number of localities where breeding adults are being recorded, particularly in the Western Isles, is matched by the number of males and number of young raised, particularly in Shetland. The heady years in the mid 1990s relate chiefly to the success of birds on Fetlar, Shetland.

This, at least in part, reflects successful habitat creation and management work by the RSPB, although the species' decline on Fetlar in the late 1990s remains unexplained (Pennington *et al.* 2004).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

17 localities: 63-75 pairs. A disappointing year, after a decade of sustained increase, with the lowest number of breeding localities reported since 1995. Although much of the decline in the number of pairs can be accounted for by poor returns at a major colony in Hampshire, which had 38 pairs in 2000, 46 in 2001 but only 19 in 2002, the data from 2001-02 suggest a downward trend, which merits careful monitoring over the coming years.

England, SW

Four localities: 20-26 pairs. HAMPSHIRE Three localities: (1) 19 pairs raised up to 11 young; (2) five pairs present, breeding status unknown; (3) pair hatched two young, unknown if fledged. ISLE OF WIGHT One locality: one pair present, but breeding not confirmed.



Ben Green

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

England, SE

Nine localities: 36-41 pairs. ESSEX Three localities: (1) four pairs bred, one brood seen, fledging success unknown; (2)(3) single pairs present. KENT Three localities: (1) 12 pairs bred, success unknown; (2) eight pairs bred, fledging one young; (3) pair present. SUSSEX Three localities: (1) 12 pairs bred, fledging five young; (2) pair probably bred; (3); pair present, April to June, did not breed.

England, E

Two localities: five pairs. NORFOLK One locality: three pairs bred, two rearing six young. SUFFOLK One locality: two pairs bred, but all failed.

England, N

Two localities: 2-3 pairs. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE One locality: two pairs reared three young. NORTHUMBERLAND One locality: 1-2 adults present, but did not breed.

Mediterranean Gull	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. localities	14	16	16	18	24	27	28	28	22	17
Confirmed pairs	15	16	18	31	33	54	60	90	90	63
Max. total pairs	32	30	28	45	53	65	79	109	104	75

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus (cachinnans) michahellis*

Four localities: 2-3 pairs, plus one mixed pair. Unfortunately, the two pairs in Dorset, attempting to breed for the second year running, both failed.

England, SW

Two localities: two pairs. DORSET Two localities: (1)(2) single pairs bred, but eggs predated.

England, SE

One locality: one mixed pair. BEDFORDSHIRE One locality: male paired with Lesser Black-backed Gull *L. fuscus*, but did not breed.

England, E

One locality: 0-1 pairs. SUFFOLK One locality: pair displaying in mid April.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Eight localities: 73-74 pairs reared a minimum of 90 young. A welcome increase in the number of confirmed pairs, and the highest total since 1994, largely brought about by the growth of the main colony, Coquet Island, in Northumberland, which increased from 42 pairs in 2001 to 57 pairs this year, the highest since 1975.

England, SW

One locality: one pair. HAMPSHIRE One locality: pair bred, fledging one young.

England, N

Four localities: 60 pairs. CLEVELAND One locality: pair bred, fledging two young. NORTHUMBERLAND Three localities: (1) Coquet Island: 57 pairs fledged 72 young; (2) pair reared two young; (3) pair reared one or two young.

Wales

One locality: seven pairs. ANGLESEY One locality: seven pairs raised seven young.

Scotland, Mid

One locality: 1-2 pairs. FIFE One locality: one or two pairs bred, fledging two young.

Northern Ireland

One locality: four pairs. CO. ANTRIM One locality: four pairs reared three young.

Roseate Tern	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Confirmed pairs	84	74	72	66	54	50	61	52	58	73
Max. total pairs	18	14	15	11	14	11	8	7	7	8

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Summary information for each area is presented, based on a non-random sample rather than a complete survey. Until this year, Little Terns have shown a pattern of steady growth since the mid 1990s, with the greater protection of vulnerable beach-nesting colonies undoubtedly playing a significant role in this trend. Survey effort in 2002 appeared to be consistent with that in previous years, so it may be that the population is levelling out; time will tell. The current estimate of the total British breeding population during the period 1998-2002 is 1,947 pairs (Mitchell *et al.* 2004), which includes 20 pairs on the Isle of Man. Previous national seabird censuses found 2,575 pairs in 1985-88 and 1,602 in 1969-70.

Little Tern	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
England, SW	260	218	235	155	257	240
England, SE	182	152	103	199	154	175
England, E	561	642	776	694	712	618
England, NE	104	146	151	100	132	149
England, NW	9	42	50	45	55	44
Wales	80	45	86	na	85	57
Scotland	185	215	253	304	447	312
TOTALS	1,381	1,460	1,654	1,497	1,842	1,595

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

2,022 pairs. An increase of almost 400 pairs on the totals in 2000 and 2001. Note that the figures given below are a mixture of actual counts and estimates provided by County Recorders. No data were available for Northern Ireland this year, where 65 pairs were estimated in 2001.

England, SW

388 pairs. AVON 8. CORNWALL 5. DEVON 106. DORSET 5. GLOUCESTERSHIRE 6. HAMPSHIRE 16. ISLE OF WIGHT 42. SOMERSET 30. WILTSHIRE 170.

England, SE

272 pairs. BEDFORDSHIRE 60. BERKSHIRE 10. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE 8. ESSEX 41. HERTFORDSHIRE 8. KENT 25. OXFORDSHIRE 47. SUSSEX 73.

England, E

182 pairs. CAMBRIDGESHIRE 12. HUNTINGDON & PETERBOROUGH 12. LINCOLNSHIRE 65. NORFOLK 69. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE 14. SUFFOLK 10.

England, Central

169 pairs. DERBYSHIRE 31. HEREFORDSHIRE 1. LEICESTERSHIRE 13. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE 25. SHROPSHIRE 11. STAFFORDSHIRE 40. WARWICKSHIRE 45. WORCESTERSHIRE 3.

England, N

648 pairs. CHESHIRE & WIRRAL 55. CLEVELAND 1. CUMBRIA 114. GREATER MANCHESTER 5. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE 140. NORTHUMBERLAND 33. YORKSHIRE 300.

Wales

82 pairs. BRECON 10. CAERNARFON 1. CEREDIGION 21. DENBIGH 1. MERIONNYDD 1. MONTGOMERY 47. PEMBROKE 1.

Scotland, S

188 pairs. Ayrshire 6. BORDERS 82. DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY 98. Lothians 2.

Scotland, Mid

22 pairs. CENTRAL 4. FIFE 5. MORAY & NAIRN 1. NORTHEAST SCOTLAND 10. PERTH & KINROSS 2.

Scotland, N & W

71 pairs. ARGYLL 58 pairs. HIGHLAND 13.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

1,117 pairs. This is the highest total reported to the Panel since monitoring of this species began, in 1996. As in past years, however, many of the county totals are estimates based on the number of sightings during the breeding season rather than definite breeding pairs. In addition, a number of counties did not submit figures this year.

England, SW

248 pairs. AVON 30. DEVON 9. DORSET 19. HAMPSHIRE 145. SOMERSET 45.

England, SE

158 pairs. BEDFORDSHIRE 13. BERKSHIRE 15. ESSEX 19. GREATER LONDON 1. KENT 36. SURREY 16. SUSSEX 58.

England, E

105 pairs. HUNTINGDON & PETERBOROUGH 26. NORFOLK 44. SUFFOLK 35.

England, Central

216 pairs. DERBYSHIRE 6. LEICESTERSHIRE 29. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE 87. SHROPSHIRE 10. STAFFORDSHIRE 4. WARWICKSHIRE 80.

England, N

266 pairs. CHESHIRE & WIRRAL 30. GREATER MANCHESTER 33. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE c. 100. NORTHUMBERLAND 21. YORKSHIRE 82.

Wales

33 pairs. BRECON 14. CEREDIGION 2. GLAMORGAN 10. GOWER 5. PEMBROKE 2.

Scotland, S

28 pairs. BORDERS 22. Lothians 6.

Scotland, Mid

61 pairs. ANGUS & DUNDEE 44. CENTRAL 4. NORTHEAST SCOTLAND 4. PERTH & KINROSS 9.

Scotland, N & W

2 pairs. HIGHLAND 2.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Two localities: one pair bred, plus one possible breeding pair. This constitutes the first recorded breeding in the UK since 1955. The pair in Co. Durham attracted huge crowds when news of their presence became public knowledge, but the RSPB and Durham Wildlife Trust succeeded in ensuring that visitors to the site were able to enjoy these terrific birds without causing disturbance. All involved are to be congratulated on the successful outcome of this project.

England, N

Two localities: 1-2 pairs. CO. DURHAM One locality: pair bred at Bishop Middleham Quarry and fledged two young. YORKSHIRE One locality: four birds, either four adults or two adults and two first-summers, were present from mid July to mid August in a river valley close to a stretch with sandy banks. The observer and the County Recorder believe that the possibility of a breeding attempt, washed out by floods in July, cannot be ruled out. There is no possibility that this record involves the family from the Co. Durham site, since the young there did not fledge until mid August.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

The only breeding-season report received was of a bird apparently holding territory and calling loudly in Hampshire on one day in June. If, as seems likely, this refers to a wandering male that failed to attract a mate, 2002 becomes the second blank year in succession for this species.

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*

The following county totals were received (data show number of pairs), which are compared with those from the previous five years, including the full census in 1997. A number of County Recorders reported limited declines at some sites or that populations have stabilised after many years of increase.

Wood Lark	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
England, SW	260	218	235	155	257	240
Cornwall	0	0	0	0	0	0
Devon	53	7	12	10	5	9
Dorset	105	54	66	2	47	55
Hampshire	294	174	179	c. 325	158	160+
Somerset	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wiltshire	3	2	9	0	1	1
Bedfordshire	1	1	0	0	1	1
Berkshire	63	2	40	na	0	26
Buckinghamshire	6	3	5	0	1	2
Essex	0	3	2	0	0	0
Kent	3	6	1	3	4	1
Surrey	171	134	135	c. 162	133	c. 160
Sussex	71	60	61	78	44	61
Lincolnshire	37	40	51	na	44	na
Norfolk	248	326	364	c. 300	56	377
Suffolk	457	459	474	470	305	348+
Nottinghamshire	31	78	135	57	24	27
Staffordshire	7	3	0	0	0	26
Yorkshire	2	19	27	22	33	33
TOTALS	1,552	1,371	1,561	1,429	856	1,287
+ indicates a count which is known to be incomplete						

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

70 localities: 30-93 pairs breeding. The best year since 1997, which is due largely to a thorough survey of London by a group of observers working on the Black Redstart Action Plan of the London Biodiversity Partnership. In addition, there were also increased numbers breeding in those parts of Essex and Kent outside London. The Action Plan observers have also contributed records gathered in 2001 which were not available when the Panel's report for that year was compiled. Consequently, the totals in the table have been adjusted to take account of an additional 21 localities holding six breeding pairs, eight possible breeding pairs and seven singing males in 2001. Elsewhere, the picture is not so rosy, with no birds found in Greater Manchester for the first time for several years.

England, SW

One locality: 0-1 pairs. HAMPSHIRE One locality: pair probably bred.

England, SE

54 localities: 25-74 pairs. BEDFORDSHIRE One locality: singing male. BERKSHIRE Two localities: (1) pair bred, plus three singing males; (2) three pairs probably bred. ESSEX Eight localities: (1) three pairs bred; (2) pair bred; (3)-(8) single singing males. HERTFORDSHIRE Three localities: (1) two pairs bred; (2)(3) single pairs probably bred. INNER LONDON & MIDDLESEX 17 localities: (1) pair bred, plus singing male; (2)-(6) single pairs bred; (7)-(10) single pairs possibly bred; (11)-(17) single singing males. KENT 18 localities: (1) three pairs bred, plus singing male; (2) two pairs bred, third pair possibly bred; (3) two pairs bred; (4) pair bred, plus singing male; (5)-(8) single pairs bred; (9) three pairs probably bred; (10) two pairs probably bred; (11) pair probably bred, plus singing male; (12)-(14) single pairs probably bred; (15)(16) single pairs possibly bred; (17)(18) single singing males. SUSSEX Five localities: (1) pair probably bred; (2)(3) single singing males; (4) male seen in mid June; (5) juvenile on 24th June, suggesting it had been bred nearby.

England, E

12 localities: 5-15 pairs. HUNTINGDON & PETERBOROUGH One locality: singing male. NORFOLK Two localities: (1) two pairs bred; (2) probable pair present. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE One locality: pair bred. SUFFOLK Eight localities: (1) pair bred, plus two other females; (2) pair bred; (3) pair possibly bred; (4)-(8) single singing males.

England, Central

One locality: 0-1 pairs. DERBYSHIRE One locality: singing male.

England, N

Two localities: 0-2 pairs. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE Two localities: (1) male in March and September; (2) female in May-June.

Black Redstart	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. localities	53	66	58	46	67	71	39	39	52	70
Confirmed pairs	32	32	19	28	33	32	15	24	25	30
Max. total pairs	76	95	82	65	99	91	50	66	65	93

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Six localities: 1-2 pairs breeding. These were the only reports, fewer than in recent years and with none in England, but confirmed breeding for the third year running.

Scotland, N & W

HIGHLAND Two localities: (1) pair bred; (2) adult in suitable habitat.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

16 localities: 2-21 pairs breeding. A better showing than in the previous two years, but we reiterate our plea for all observers, especially birdwatchers visiting the Highlands, to listen out for singing birds and to report them to the local Recorder or the Panel Secretary.

Scotland, N & W

HIGHLAND 15 localities: (1)-(15) 2 pairs bred, 18 pairs or singing males. WESTERN ISLES One locality: one singing male.



Ben Green

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

851-878 singing males. A new record total, and a considerable increase over the previous record total, in 2000. Data refer to singing males.

England, SW

552-579 singing males. AVON 19. CORNWALL 12. DEVON 53-65. DORSET 68. GLOUCESTERSHIRE 4. HAMPSHIRE 180. ISLE OF WIGHT 22. SOMERSET 170-185. WILTSHIRE 24.

England, SE

63 singing males. BERKSHIRE 27. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE 1. ESSEX 12. SUSSEX 23.

England, E

194 singing males. NORFOLK 161. SUFFOLK 33.

England, Central

Four singing males. LEICESTERSHIRE 1. WARWICKSHIRE 1. WORCESTERSHIRE 2.

Wales

38 singing males. ANGLESEY 8. CARMARTHEN 3. CEREDIGION/PEMBROKE 3. GLAMORGAN 7. GOWER 17.

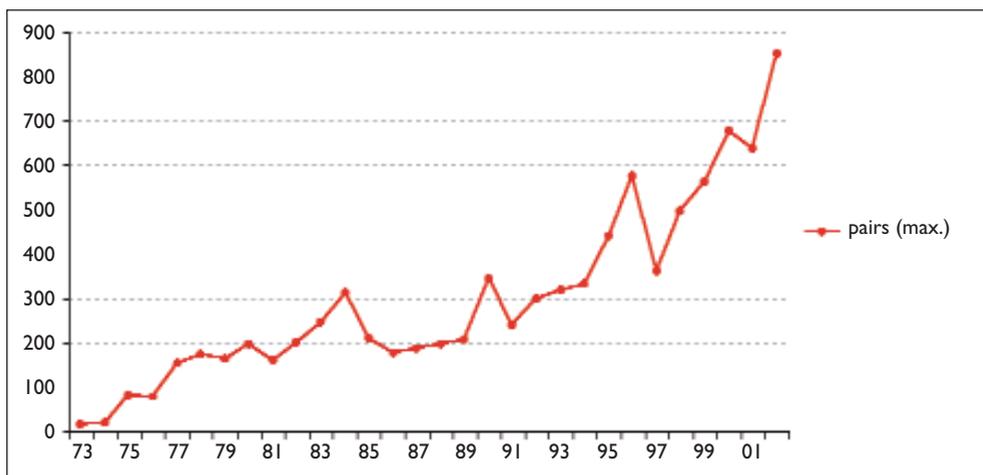


Fig. 9. Cetti's Warblers *Cettia cetti* go from strength to strength, no doubt aided by the recent run of mild winters. In 2002, at least 851 singing males were reported from 23 counties, extending as far north as Anglesey in the west and Norfolk to the east.

Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides*

Six localities: 0-6 pairs. Fewer than in 2001, but still the third-highest tally since the ten in 1994.

England, SE

KENT Two localities: (1)(2) single singing males in June. SUSSEX One locality: singing male in May-June.

England, E

CAMBRIDGESHIRE One locality: singing male in May. NORFOLK Two localities: single singing males in May.

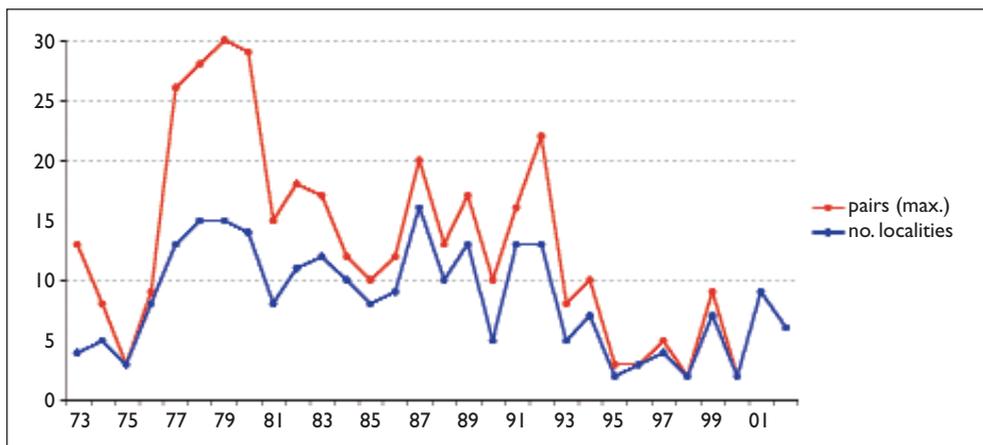


Fig. 10. The long-term fluctuations in both the number of Savi's Warblers *Locustella luscinioides* and the localities in which they occur is clearly demonstrated here. Numbers have now returned to those of the early 1970s, and the decision to put this species back on the BBRC list looks well-founded.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

Nine localities: 0-14 pairs breeding. 2002 was thus the worst year for this species, both in terms of the number of sites and pairs, since record collation began, in 1973.

England, SE

Seven localities: 0-4 pairs, plus eight singing males. ESSEX Two localities: (1)(2) single pairs probably bred. KENT

Four localities: (1) three singing males; (2)-(4) single singing males. SUSSEX One locality: two pairs and two males

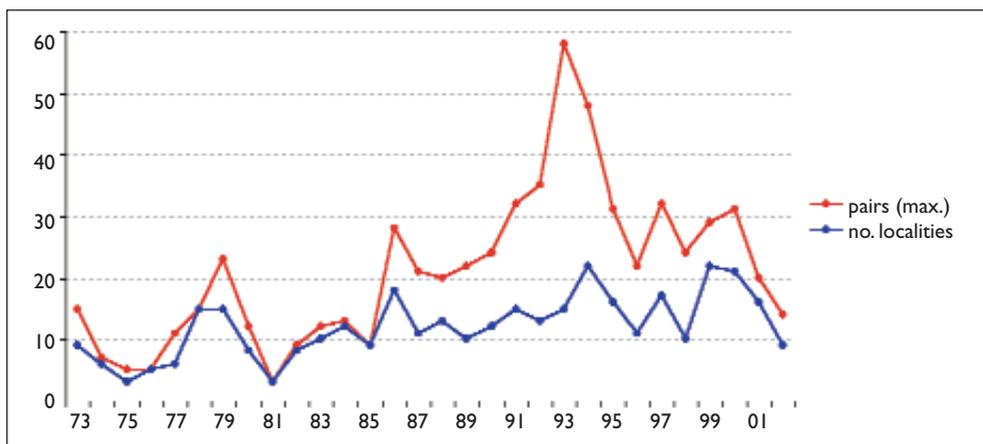


Fig. 11. Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris* remains one of Britain's rarest breeding warblers, and is clearly in trouble in the UK, even though it is an abundant breeding bird across most of northern Europe. Numbers have declined sharply over the past decade and in 2002 there were no confirmed breeding reports for the second time in three seasons. It should be noted that the Panel did not receive data from this species' former stronghold, centred on Worcestershire, during the 1970s, at a time when this population was in decline; most data from this region is omitted from fig. 11. From the 46 singing males located in 1977, it was estimated that 50-60 pairs were breeding in Worcestershire (*Brit. Birds* 72: 378).

in May and June, no evidence of breeding.

England, E

Two localities: two singing males. NORFOLK One locality: singing male in June. SUFFOLK One locality: singing male in May.

Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*

1,547 pairs. Although this total is higher than that in 2001, it still excludes the population stronghold of the New Forest. In the 1999 report, a total of 800 pairs was estimated for Hampshire, which suggests that the total UK population remains well over 2,000 pairs. The data from Somerset, Surrey and Suffolk all show an increase, but the Devon figures show a continued decline from the peak of 277 pairs in 1998.

England, SW

626-646 pairs. DEVON 160. DORSET 164. HAMPSHIRE c. 200 (excluding the New Forest). ISLE OF WIGHT 8. SOMERSET 90-110. WILTSHIRE 4.

England, SE

858 pairs. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE 1. SURREY 742. SUSSEX 115.

England, E

62 pairs. SUFFOLK 62.

Wales

One pair. GLAMORGAN 1.

Dartford Warbler	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. counties	11	10	12	12	11	12	11	9	12	11
Max. total pairs	1,146	1,675	1,679	552	915	947	1,747	1,925	1,203	1,547



Ben Green

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

33 localities or areas: 5-112 pairs breeding. Even without a repeat of the Kent Ornithological Society survey of Forest Enterprise woodlands, which last year found 19 males in nine localities, this is still the second-highest figure in these reports, with good surveys taking place in Hampshire and Sussex, and modest but encouraging increases in Buckinghamshire and Warwickshire.

England, SW

12 localities or areas: 2-63 pairs. HAMPSHIRE Two areas and two localities: (1) 39 pairs across 18 sites; (2) 10 pairs across five sites; (3)(4) two pairs. SOMERSET One locality: singing male. WILTSHIRE Seven localities: (1)(2) pairs bred; (3)(4) two singing males; (5)-(7) single singing males.

England, SE

11 localities: 2-36 pairs. BEDFORDSHIRE Two localities: (1)(2) single singing males. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Four localities: (1) two pairs bred, plus five pairs probably bred; (2) two singing males; (3)(4) single singing males. KENT Two localities: (1) three singing males; (2) singing male. SUSSEX Three localities: (1) two pairs and 14 singing males; (2) two singing males; (3) singing male.

England, E

Seven localities: 0-8 pairs. NORFOLK Three localities: (1) pair present; (2)(3) single singing males. SUFFOLK Four localities: (1) two singing males; (2)-(4) single singing males.

England, Central

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

Wales

One locality: 0-3 pairs. MONTGOMERY One locality: three pairs present.

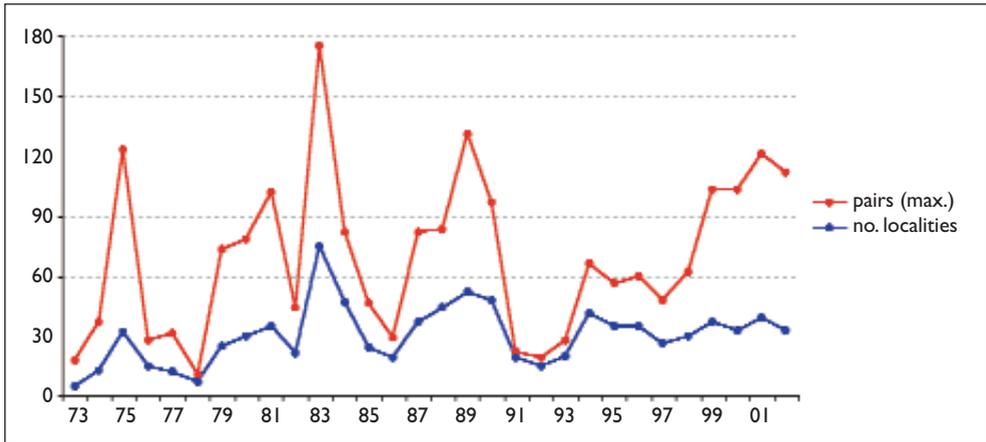


Fig. 12. Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla* is an elusive breeding species which can be difficult to locate during the breeding season, and this is reflected here. Concerted survey effort in suitable habitat frequently produce a blip in the numbers located, as in 2001 when Kent was covered thoroughly. Although no specific surveys took place in 2002, the numbers held up well, suggesting that this attractive species may be genuinely increasing.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

504-559 pairs. The first-ever national census of this species took place in 2002, organised by the RSPB. The total of 504-559 pairs is the highest recorded since the Panel began monitoring Bearded Tits, in 1996, and compares with the 339-408 pairs estimated in 1992 by Campbell *et al.* (1996). Unfortunately, numbers at the RSPB's Leighton Moss reserve, in Lancashire, have not recovered from the population crash in 2001 caused by severe winter flooding and/or extremely poor setting of *Phragmites* seed. Elsewhere, numbers in Dorset and Scotland have also declined but these are offset to some extent by increases in other areas, particularly in eastern England. Census data from the RSPB are preliminary figures and some may be adjusted when the final census report is published.

England, SW

38-45 pairs. DORSET 18-23 pairs at six localities. HAMPSHIRE 18-20 pairs at four localities. SOMERSET One locality: two pairs.

England, SE

105-123 pairs. ESSEX 19-20 pairs at six localities. KENT 77-91 pairs at 11 localities. SUSSEX 9-12 pairs at four localities.

England, E

295-314 pairs. LINCOLNSHIRE Two pairs at one locality. NORFOLK 173-180 pairs at 21 localities. SUFFOLK 120-132 pairs at ten localities.

England, N

52-56 pairs. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE 10-14 pairs at one locality. YORKSHIRE 42 pairs at four localities.

Wales

0-1 pairs. CEREDIGION Single in May at suitable locality.

Scotland, Mid

14-20 pairs. PERTH & KINROSS Survey of part of one extensive locality found 14-20 pairs.

Bearded Tit	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Min. total (pairs)	221	258	384	368	483	385	504
Max. total (pairs)	232	291	396	373	520	396	559

Crested Tit *Parus cristatus*

The only information received is set out below. The estimated total population is 900 pairs (Gibbons *et al.* 1993).

Scotland, Mid

MORAY & NAIRN Estimated county total 50-100 pairs. NORTHEAST SCOTLAND Six pairs bred in nestboxes; the county total is estimated at 50-100 pairs.

Scotland, N & W

HIGHLAND A single nestbox had a brood of six which fledged, but there was no estimate of the number breeding in the core area of Badenoch and Strathspey.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Eight localities: 4-8 pairs breeding. Within the East Anglian study area, 37 of a possible 51 sites were visited, with the presence of birds being confirmed at just eight of these. Breeding was confirmed at four sites, with at least one fledged young being seen or heard at all four. There was also an extra male present at one of the four sites, while one or two birds were reported at four more. These results establish 2002 as the worst year for Golden Orioles in Britain since the 1970s. For the second year running, there were no reports of any territorial males outside the study area.

Golden Oriole	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Confirmed pairs	14	7	8	7	9	10	5	5	3	4
Max. total pairs	33	35	35	22	24	22	24	20	11	8
No. localities	33	34	34	22	23	19	24	20	11	8

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Three localities: 0-3 pairs breeding. Two reports of males in Highland region in May and a singing male in Fife in June are perhaps worth reporting. A handful of records of single birds, seen briefly in England, have been omitted as almost certainly referring to migrants. The last confirmed breeding was in 1999.

Scotland, Mid

FIFE One locality: male singing on 20th June.

Scotland, N

HIGHLAND Two localities: (1) male on 22nd May; (2) male on 29th May.

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

The following information was received. In England, a pair bred in Cornwall, for the first time for over 50 years. Islay was surveyed more completely than in some recent years. Although these figures suggest that more Red-billed Choughs bred in Scotland than in Wales, there were incomplete/no reports received from several Welsh counties and the Isle of Man.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

One locality: one pair. The second year running in which breeding has been confirmed after a gap of seven years.

Scotland, N & W

HIGHLAND One locality: pair bred and fledged three young.

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

The following information was received for England and Wales. The few Scottish records received are not presented. There was a considerable irruption into England in the second half of the year, so can more breeding records be anticipated in 2003?

Red-billed Chough	Occupied sites	Successful pairs	Young reared	Young/territorial pair
Cornwall	1	1	3	3.00
Anglesey	4	2	na	–
Caernarfon	7	7	28	4.00
Ceredigion	30	26*	na	–
Glamorgan	1	na	na	–
Gower	1	1	1	1.00
Pembroke	1	1	1	1.00
Dumfries & Galloway	1	1	1	1.00
Colonsay & Oronsay	8	6	20	2.50
Islay	61	37	93	1.52
Antrim	2	0	0	0
TOTALS	115	82+	147+	1.28

*No. of pairs proved to breed

England, SW

DEVON 12 localities. DORSET Nine localities. HAMPSHIRE Seven localities. SOMERSET 2-5 pairs.

England, SE

SUSSEX Nine pairs.

England, E

NORFOLK Four pairs. SUFFOLK 16 pairs.

England, Central

DERBYSHIRE Two pairs. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Nine pairs.

England, N

CHESHIRE & WIRRAL Two localities. LANCASHIRE & NORTH MERSEYSIDE One pair. YORKSHIRE 21 pairs.

Wales

GLAMORGAN Six pairs. GOWER 1-2 pairs. GWENT Five localities.

Scottish Crossbill *Loxia scotica*

No detailed reports were received from the two main study areas, so this information merely confirms that breeding actually occurred in 2001. See Summers *et al.* (2002) for more information on the distribution and habitats of this species. No data are available on populations.

Scotland, N & W

Four localities: Abernethy Forest RSPB reserve: 10+ pairs, identified by sonograms of calls and songs; Corrimony RSPB reserve: at least 2-5 pairs; (3)(4) single pairs bred.

Parrot Crossbill *Loxia pytyopsittacus*

The distribution, status and breeding biology of this species were discussed recently (Summers 2002; Summers *et al.* 2002), but neither paper gave any estimate of population size, which is still not known.

Scotland, N & W

HIGHLAND At least 30 pairs at the RSPB Abernethy Forest reserve, five of them rearing 15 young.

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirius*

In Devon, a partial census, based on a 50% sample of tetrads within the known range, produced a minimum population estimate of 576 pairs. A full survey was carried out in 2003 (Wotton *et al.* 2004).

Acknowledgments

The hard work and willing co-operation of numerous individuals, the county, regional and local recorders throughout the UK, and many specialist study groups and conservation organisations, is gratefully acknowledged. The Panel, and in particular the Secretary, would like to express sincere thanks to all those individuals whose fieldwork produced the observations which form the basis for this report. Important information for many species was also supplied by English Nature (EN), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), the Countryside Commission for Wales (CCW), and the RSPB, and the Panel gratefully acknowledges their efforts and role they played in the production of this important report.

We wish to extend particular thanks to Jake Allsopp and the Golden Oriole Group, Stuart Benn, Roger Broad, Dave Butterfield, Ian Carter, Tony Cross and the Welsh Kite Trust, Roy Dennis, Dusty Gedge and the Black Redstart Action Plan Group, Gillian Gilbert, Bob Image, Carl Mitchell, Dave Redding, Sabine Schmitt and Simon Wotton, who all supplied information for their particular specialities. Thanks are also due to the members of the Scottish, Welsh, Cumbrian and Wiltshire Raptor Study Groups, the Sea Eagle Project Team, and the Osprey Study Group, who monitor the important raptor populations in their respective regions.

Last but by no means least, we are particularly grateful to the licensing officers of the three country agencies – Jo Oldaker (EN), John Ralston (SNH) and Sian Whitehead (CCW) – for their ready co-operation in supplying information.

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Dr M. A. Ogilvie, Glencairn, Bruichladdich, Isle of Islay PA49 7UN

