

## RBBP Species selection criteria

Each species on the RBBP list can be assigned to one of three categories: **regular** breeders, **occasional** breeders, and **potential** breeders.

### *Regular breeders*

The main part of list is composed of species which attempt to breed in most years. All of these species have been proved to breed in the UK at least once in the past, and our published reports show that they bred, attempted to breed, or were recorded present in at least eight of the last ten years. For each of these species, our annual reports (since that for 2009) present a species banner showing the population range (calculated from the average total number of breeding pairs over the last five years) in one of four categories:

Very Rare species: less than 30 breeding pairs in the UK

Rare species: 30-300 breeding pairs in the UK

Scarce species: 301-1,000 breeding pairs in the UK

Less Scarce species: over 1,000 breeding pairs in the UK.

For the rarest species, those with estimated populations of less than 300 pairs, we request records for all sites where these species occur in a specific year. For other, more numerous, species which nest in colonies or where compiling a site gazetteer is an important role of the RBBP, we also request all site data. These species are Eurasian Wigeon, Red-throated Diver, Little Egret, Marsh Harrier, Water Rail, Avocet, Dotterel, Whimbrel, Greenshank, Mediterranean Gull, Little Tern and Hawfinch.

For other regular breeders with populations of over 300 pairs, and where there are over ten pairs or sites within the recording area we will continue to collect county totals only. The full breakdown of species and categories is detailed on the species list downloadable from the Species List web page.

All regularly breeding species with sustained populations estimated at fewer than 2,000 pairs in a typical year qualify automatically for inclusion on the RBBP list. Within this numerical limit, one or more of the following issues may further support the need for monitoring of a species by RBBP:

- the population is believed to be declining now, or monitoring data indicate this may happen in the short to medium term;
- population monitoring is poor;
- RBBP data can usefully document edge-of-range expansion/contraction;
- the breeding range is restricted;
- there is other conservation need (e.g. influence of persecution or habitat loss);
- RBBP reporting may help to boost monitoring effort;
- the collation of data provides useful site information;
- RBBP monitoring offers something that no other monitoring does;
- the UK population is of international significance.

***Occasional breeders***

These are species which have bred at least once in the UK but not sufficiently often to be included in the regular breeders' category. We aim to collect full nest and site details for any records of all of these species.

***Potential breeders***

These are species which have not yet bred in the UK but have shown behaviour indicating that they may do so in the future. These include pairs in present in suitable breeding habitat during the breeding season, and singing male passerines present in breeding habitat for at least a week. We aim to collect full site details for any records of all of these species, preferably also to include the dates when the birds were present.