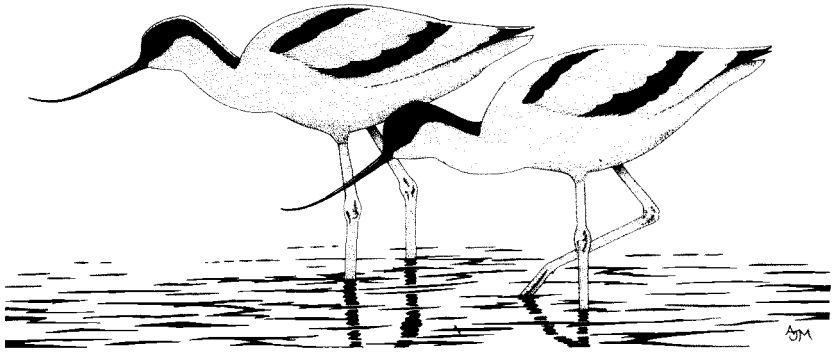


# Rare breeding birds in the United Kingdom in 1988



*Robert Spencer and the Rare Breeding Birds Panel*

This is the sixteenth annual report published by the Panel: the fifteenth report, for 1987, was published last year (*Brit. Birds* 82: 477-504). Once again, the Panel has received widespread co-operation from county recorders, and from a number of observers who have reported directly to us. We are totally dependent on others for our raw material, and are greatly obliged to those who labour to supply it. In this context it is a pleasure to report that two counties from which data were largely lacking in 1987—Yorkshire and Inverness-shire—are now properly represented in these pages.

The year-by-year summary tables provided for many species reflect the Panel's deep interest in numbers: How many pairs? How many pairs definitely breeding? How many young reared? The Panel has a monitoring role, and for the reasons for this one need look no further than Article 2 of the European Community's *Directive on the conservation of wild birds*, which reads: 'Member States shall take the requisite measures to maintain the population of the species . . . [listed] . . . at a level which corresponds in particular to ecological, scientific and cultural requirements . . .' To fulfil this Community obligation H.M. Government relies on the Nature Conservancy Council, and they in turn look to the Panel and, through the Panel, to the network of competent and dedicated observers to help them establish what the population levels are for those species within the Panel's remit. If this task is to be well done, it calls for the widest possible co-operation.

After numbers, the Panel is concerned with distribution and with the related aspect of habitat. In what parts of the country does a species chiefly occur? Coupled with numbers, is it extending its range, or is it retreating? It is this *where?* aspect which causes some observers, and one records committee, to hesitate about giving their wholehearted co-operation, on the entirely understandable grounds that rare species are, almost by definition, vulnerable or endangered, and that, if a nesting

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locality became known, at the best there could be a dangerously large influx of observers, and at the worst egg-collectors and others of similar persuasion would wreak their damage.

Now the Panel, in its report, seldom names a locality—the naming of Unst as the summer home of the Black-browed Albatross *Diomedea melanophris* was a typical exception—being content to locate no more precisely than to a county, and often to the larger unit of a region consisting of six or more counties. By contrast, some mapping of localities is to be found in a growing number of tetrad atlases, the editorial policy of which is always under the control of a local society. Less revealing, because they are accurate only to a 10-km square, are the BTO's Breeding Bird and Wintering Atlases. Even then, for sensitive species which might be tracked down by their specialised habitat needs, great trouble is taken to meet the concerns of recorders and their observers before maps are finalised. The Panel, using no maps, and limiting itself to counties, believes that these annual reports constitute less security risk than the kind of data already being published.

Whilst for these published reports the Panel uses a coarse grid, in its files there is a very real need to be able to pinpoint pairs. With no group of birds is this more true than with the raptors. Some of them, notably the Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*, are subjected to determined persecution wherever their presence becomes known, and all raptor species inspire a fierce loyalty and a determination on the part of their devotees to protect them by saying as little as possible. Admirable though their motives are, such practices have their unwelcome side effects. The Goshawk will again serve as an example. For 1988 over 100 forms were received, the majority of them clearly intended to reveal as little as possible, and simply naming a county. Was the pair which one observer reported from county 'x' the same pair as that which another observer reported, or were they quite different? If all reports reached the Panel through county recorders the problem would be much reduced, but such is not the case. Information documented in a Schedule 1 return may not be known to the county recorder, and it took hours to study the one hundred forms and, on the basis of suspected duplication, to reduce them to less than 40. This is an imprecise and unsatisfactory exercise. We therefore appeal to observers to report to their county recorders whenever possible, and to both observers and recorders to make use of National Grid references. We give here the undertaking which we gave in the report for 1985: confidentiality will be strictly observed. Happily, many recorders already comply. What is more, with the growth of county tetrad surveys, the use of computers to handle the large volume of data becomes yearly more commonplace, and some recorders now submit excellent print-outs with their returns. This is much appreciated by the Panel.

The year 1988, featured in this report, gave more reasons for satisfaction than for dismay. The Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*, which has been reconnoitring here for a number of years, finally reached the stage of egg-laying, but then failed, so we have yet to see parents feeding tiny young on a British water. In the case of the Black-necked

Grebe *P. nigricollis*, although numbers remain modest, breeding is being reported from more counties. So much grebe activity can take place within the privacy of a reedbed that breeding may easily escape detection.

We are used to reporting the breeding of feral Whooper Swans *Cygnus cygnus*, but the successful breeding by a wild pair is a noteworthy event. Almost as rare an occasion is the breeding in Britain of Scaup *Aythya marila*, so that to have two, and probably three cases in the same year—one as far south as Wales—is very remarkable.

Raptor populations were discussed in the introduction to the report for 1987, but this year let us draw attention to their productivity. No fewer than 38 young Red Kites *Milvus milvus*, 81 young Ospreys *Pandion haliaetus* and 145 young Marsh Harriers *Circus aeruginosus* left their nests: figures which are unlikely to have been approached in any other year in the last one hundred. Without the activities of egg-collectors, two of those figures would have been appreciably higher; that they are not appreciably lower is due in no small measure to the conservation bodies and the army of volunteers who, year after year, promote or support surveillance. The concept of 'Neighbourhood Watch' has been adapted with some success to the protection of birds.

It is many years ago now that the first Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*—which happened to be wearing an East German ring—was found in a Hampshire colony of Black-headed Gulls *L. ridibundus*. Subsequent would-be colonists of the species have had a somewhat chequered career in Britain, attempting breeding in every recent year, but often paired with a Black-headed Gull. No fewer than six pairs nested in 1988, with varying fortunes, and there were a further ten potential pairs. Doubtless there will be further vicissitudes, but such numbers must surely indicate that the gull is finally here to stay.

Fieldwork continues to reveal the position of the Woodlark *Lullula arborea* to be more favourable than had at one time been feared, and the relationship between it and the earliest stages of forestry continues to impress. Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* numbers edge upwards, and the species may well be rather commoner, if not more widespread, than is generally appreciated; it is nesting at several power stations, both conventional and nuclear, and these are places neither where permission for entry is easily obtained, nor where observation is easily carried out. Perhaps the slight warming of climate which is reported to have already taken place may help both the Woodlark and the Black Redstart to thrive. Could that be true of the Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*, which had its best year to date, or should we attribute the high numbers to the diligence of the specialist Golden Oriole Group? Similarly, in the case of the Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*, another species which reaches its northwest limits in England, the extraordinary numbers in 1988 spring essentially from a detailed survey of the New Forest heaths and one in Dorset, though doubtless helped by a milder winter and better breeding-season weather. The very modest increase in the numbers of Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*, which was similarly affected by the severe cold of January 1987, is probably a better indicator of how much of the increase in Dartford

Warbler numbers might be attributed to climate. The two mild winters of 1988/89 and 1989/90 in due course may be expected to give a better indication of the effects of reduced winter mortality on the population levels of such species.

For 1989, no nesting pair of Red-backed Shrikes *Lanius collurio* has yet been reported to the Panel and it thus seems likely that the solitary English pair detailed in this report was the very last. We are not alone in our loss, for declines are reported from elsewhere in western Europe. Climate may have some bearing on what is happening, but a decrease in insects resulting from the use of herbicides and pesticides may provide a more promising line of investigation.

### The Panel

The membership of the Panel remained unchanged in 1988: Dr L. A. Batten, R. H. Dennis, Richard Porter, Dr J. T. R. Sharrock and Robert Spencer (Secretary). Although they reflect the interests and needs of the Panel's sponsoring bodies, NCC, the RSPB, the BTO and *British Birds*, it is felt to be important that individual members should be free to place the interests of the birds first, and for that reason they are appointed in a personal capacity.

This work was commissioned by the NCC as part of its programme for nature conservation. Other financial contributions to the work of the Panel are made by the RSPB, the BTO and *British Birds*.

### Key to geographical regions used in this report



Fig. 1. Geographical regions of the United Kingdom used in this report

Numbers refer to fig. 1.

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

2. ENGLAND, SW Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Isles of Scilly, Somerset, Wiltshire
3. ENGLAND, SE Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Greater London, Hertfordshire, Kent, Middlesex, Oxfordshire, Surrey, Sussex (East and West)
4. ENGLAND, E Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire & South Humberside, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Suffolk
5. ENGLAND, CENTRAL Derbyshire, Herefordshire, Leicestershire (with Rutland), Nottinghamshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire (West Midlands in the new county structure), Worcestershire
6. ENGLAND, N Cheshire, Cleveland, Cumbria, Durham, Greater Manchester, Isle of Man, Lancashire, Merseyside, Northumberland, North Humberside, Tyne & Wear, Yorkshire (North, South and West)
7. WALES All present-day counties (i.e. includes the former Monmouth)
8. SCOTLAND S The former counties of Ayrshire, Berwickshire, Dumfriesshire, Kirkcudbrightshire, Lanarkshire, Lothian (East, Mid and West), Peeblesshire, Renfrewshire, Roxburghshire, Selkirkshire, Wigtownshire
9. SCOTLAND, MID Aberdeenshire, Angus, Banffshire, Clackmannanshire, Dunbartonshire, Fife, Kincardineshire, Kinross, Morayshire, Nairn, Perthshire, Stirlingshire
10. SCOTLAND, N & W Argyll, Bute, Caithness, Inverness-shire, Orkney, Ross & Cromarty, Shetland, Sutherland, Western Isles (Outer Hebrides)

## Systematic list

### Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One locality: one individual.

**Scotland, N & W** One locality: adult seen in the breeding areas of Black-throated Divers *G. arctica*, but no indication that it was breeding.

### Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Eight localities: two pairs attempted breeding.

**England, SE** One locality: one present from 7th to 28th July, and presumably the same individual on 6th August.

**England, E** Four localities: (1) pair nested and laid one egg, which was taken by a Magpie *Pica pica*; a second clutch of three eggs was laid, but failed to hatch although incubated for more than the full term; (2) pair in full breeding plumage on 14th May only, displaying; (3) one in full breeding plumage present from 19th to 29th June; (4) pair present from 15th July to 11th September, with much courtship and, on 9th August, copulation.

**England, Central** One locality: one in breeding plumage on 4th April and 1st May, 'and probably on most dates in between'.

**Scotland, S** Two localities: (1) pair laid two eggs by 20th June, but evidence suggests that the nest was preyed on by mink *Mustela lutreola/vison*; (2) adult, in breeding plumage, from 5th April to 10th June.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	0	1	3	3	2	2	1	1	5	10	8
No. individuals	0	1	4	2	2	3	1	4	5	9	12
No. pairs	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	3

Although we still lack proof that this species has bred successfully in Britain or Ireland, the steady increase in numbers during the years 1984-88 encourages one to believe that we shall not have much longer to wait.

### Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

21 localities: 37-41 pairs breeding.

**Scotland, S** Four localities: (1) one present from 4th April to 16th October, possibly the individual which summered in 1986 and 1987; (2) adult, in breeding plumage, from 21st

April to 20th May; (3) one on 12th June; (4) one from 15th to 20th June, and on 11th August. The bird(s) at (2)-(4) were the first known cases of summering in the region concerned, and could have involved only one individual.

**Scotland, Mid, N & W** 17 localities: (1)-(17) combined total of 37 pairs, which, between them, may have fledged 45 young. The species was absent from a further 11 suitable waters in the regions.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	18	27	36	35	25	44	26	40	43	35	21
Confirmed (pairs)	37	58	53	52	51	41	39	63	68	60	37
Possible (pairs)	18	19	27	19	8	38	21	18	19	10	4
Max. total (pairs)	55	77	80	71	59	79	60	81	87	70	41

It appears that fewer waters were occupied than in any year since 1978, for there was fairly good cover of potential sites. On the other hand, the breeding success was encouraging. The presence of birds on waters in southern Scotland is odd, and more characteristic of an expanding rather than a contracting population.

### Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

20 localities in 11 counties: 14-33 pairs breeding.

**England, SE, E & Central** 11 localities: (1) adult from 21st May to 11th June; (2) pair, in breeding plumage, present from 2nd to 20th March and attempted nest-building, one individual remaining until 20th April; (3) singles on 11th April, 18th May and 3rd-4th July; (4) four, three in breeding plumage, on 2nd April, one daily 3rd-10th April, two on 18th April, one, swimming out of dense reed cover, on 2nd July; (5) pair on 7th May; (6) one on 25th May; (7) a maximum of five in early spring, but four pairs on 20th July, while ten individuals on 29th August included two juveniles; (8) one, in breeding plumage, from 11th to 28th May at a site frequently visited by the species in spring and summer; (9) pair present 8th to 10th May; (10) three on 10th May, one remaining until 13th May; (11) pair, displaying, on 15th May only. Sites (1)-(3) were in one county, (4)-(6) in a second county, (7)-(8) in a third and (9)-(11) in a fourth. The possibility of birds moving between waters within a county cannot be precluded.

**England, N** Three localities: (1) pair with one young on 17th June, the second successive year of breeding at the locality; (2) two on 1st April, increasing to 24 by 7th May, nine or ten pairs hatched 31 young; (3) pair displaying in mid May.

**Wales** One locality: two on 2nd May at a locality adjacent to a previous summering locality.

**Scotland, Mid** Five localities: (1) pair reared two young, one other adult present; (2) four pairs and four unpaired birds on 14th April, seven adults on 22nd May and six on 22nd June; (3) a lone individual on 17th April; (4) two pairs bred; (5) five present in June at a new site.

**1983 England, N** One locality: two pairs.

**1984 England, Central** Two localities: (1) two recently fledged young on 11th July, and on 1st August a party of five included three immatures; nine present on 27th August; (2) two separate flocks, of three and four, all in juvenile or winter plumage, on 25th July.

**1985 England, Central** Two localities: (1) seven, in breeding plumage, in late April, and six during May and June; a flock of five on 30th August included an adult feeding a half-grown juvenile; (2) pair, in breeding plumage, from late June to mid August.

**1986 England, N** One locality: one, in breeding plumage, from 6th May to 27th July.

**1987 England, E** One locality: one on 16th June, and pair on 27th June.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	6	6	9	7	13	19	17	17	15	17	20
Confirmed (pairs)	13	12	11	5	11	11	17	9	11	26	14
Possible (pairs)	2	2	10	7	12	21	13	13	22	11	19
Max. total (pairs)	15	14	21	12	23	32	30	22	33	37	33

The long-term trend for this species is clearly upwards.

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

14 localities: 30 booming males.

**England, E** 12 localities: (1)-(3) two boomers at each; (4) pair thought likely to have bred; (5) up to nine booming males; (6) three booming in April; (6)-(12) single booming males.

**England, N** One locality: six or seven booming males, and one successful nest found.

**Wales** One locality: one booming on 3rd March.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	17	21	19	16	15	18	18	15	12	17	14
Confirmed (pairs)	2	1	4	1	1	0	5	0	0	1	2
Booming males	47	51	48	47	35	44	36	28	23	22	30

The first sign for several years of an improvement in the fortunes of this species, although the number of localities at which it was recorded was the second lowest since 1978.

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

Three localities: 3-5 pairs breeding, two of them feral.

**Scotland, Mid** One locality.

DUNBARTONSHIRE One locality: two feral pairs, both of which hatched one young, one of which disappeared.

**Scotland, N & W** Two localities: (1) an adult and an immature throughout the summer; (2) two pairs, one of which fledged two young from a clutch of five eggs (this nest was at an open site on common grazings).

The successful northern pair seems likely to have belonged to wild stock:

**Blue-winged Teal** *Anas discors*

One locality: one individual.

**England, E** One locality.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE One locality: a female, paired with a male Shoveler *A. clypeata*, reared three young to 25th September. (This record is still being considered by the Rarities Committee.)

This is the first time that this species has featured in one of the Panel's reports.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

19 localities: 14-29 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** One locality.

DORSET One locality: a male summered, as in 1987.

**England, SE** Four localities.

KENT Four localities: (1) two males on 1st May and three females on 20th May; (2) two pairs on 28th May; (3) one male throughout May, and on 5th and 25th June and 17th July; (4) single female on 29th April and on 14th May.

**England, E** Two localities.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE Two localities: (1) pair nested, but no young seen; (2) pair bred.

**England, N** Two localities.

CHESHIRE One locality: female on five dates from 29th April to 26th June.

CUMBRIA One locality: pair on 25th May, and single male on 29th June and 12th July.

**Wales** One locality.

DYFED One locality: female with eight newly hatched ducklings on 10th May, while a second female, first seen on 21st and 23rd May, appeared on 7th June with two well-grown ducklings.

**Scotland, Mid** One locality.

ANGUS One locality: three pairs on 18th April.

**Scotland, N & W** Eight localities.

ARGYLL One locality: two pairs, one female with young and the other showing anxiety.

INVERNESS-SHIRE One locality: pair seen April to 3rd June and singles thereafter, thought probably to have bred.

ORKNEY Six localities: (1) four or five pairs bred, two nests found; (2) male on 21st May; (3) male on 5th June; (4)-(5) two broods seen at each; (6) pair present during the summer.

**1983 England, N** One locality: five pairs present.

**1985 England, SW** Two localities: (1) two pairs up to 14th May, and a male on 12th June; (2) one to four individuals in June and July.

**1986 England, N** One locality: male on 21st May.

**1987 Scotland, N** One locality: pair from 1st April, may have bred.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	10	19	15	16	18	23	15	17	14	16	19
Confirmed (pairs)	7	10	9	8	7	12	5	9	6	7	14
Possible (pairs)	16	31	16	23	25	20	13	12	12	14	15
Max. total (pairs)	23	41	25	31	32	32	18	21	18	21	29

The successful breeding in Wales is encouraging, but Orkney remains the breeding stronghold of the species.

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula*

35 localities: 8-48 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** Five localities: 0-5 pairs breeding.

**England, SE** Nine localities: 1-8 pairs breeding.

**England, E** 12 localities: 6-26 pairs breeding.

**England, Central** Six localities: 0-6 pairs breeding.

**England, N** Two localities: 1-2 pairs breeding.

**Scotland, Mid** One locality: 0-1 pair breeding.

**1983 England, N** Two localities: (1) four pairs present; (2) pair probably bred.

**1985 England, Central** One locality: pair from 26th May to 21st June, and a female on 30th June.

**1985 England, N** Two localities: (1) pair on 5th and 6th May; (2) male on 1st June.

**1986 England, N** Four localities: (1) pair on 3rd May; (2) female on 5th May; (3) male on 13th and 17th May and 1st June; (4) two males and a female on 3rd June, one male and female on 4th June.

**1986 Scotland, Mid** One locality: three males and a female on 13th May, two surplus males departed about 26th May, and pair last seen on 7th June.

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	34	48	66	59	46	32	42	36	35
Confirmed (pairs)	4	8	10	15	4	4	8	8	8
Possible (pairs)	50	50	84	55	53	36	47	37	40
Max. total (pairs)	54	58	94	70	57	40	55	45	48

The Panel did not start collecting data for this species until 1980. The individual county totals for 1988 are listed in the appendix.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

132 localities: 180-337 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** Nine localities: 13-14 pairs breeding.

**England, SE** 38 localities: 84-114 pairs breeding.

**England, E** 52 localities: 17-121 pairs breeding.

**England, Central** Nine localities: 3-18 pairs breeding.

**England, N** 18 localities: 56-61 pairs breeding.

**Wales** One locality: one pair breeding.



**Scotland, S** Three localities: 2-4 pairs breeding.

**Scotland, Mid** One locality: three pairs breeding.

**Scotland, N** One locality: one pair breeding.

**1985 Wales** One locality: female with eight young on 9th June.

**1986 England, N** Two localities: (1) although 52 males and seven females summered, the only proof of breeding was a female with a small duckling on 23rd June; (2) five broods, totalling 19 young, by 24th June, and a further two broods, totalling 14 young, by 1st July.

**1986 Wales** One locality: two individuals, no dates given.

**1986 Scotland, S** Three localities: (1) two broods, possibly three; (2) two pairs, but no evidence of breeding; (3) one pair, but no evidence of breeding.

**1986 Scotland, Mid** One locality: two broods on 5th July.

**1987 England, N** One locality: six ducklings from early July.

These are by far the highest totals since the Panel started collecting data on this species in 1985. The detailed county totals are listed in the appendix.

### **Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Five localities: 3-5 pairs breeding.

**Wales** One locality.

**ANGLESEY** One locality: pair reared five young.

**Scotland, Mid** Two localities.

**DUNBARTONSHIRE** One locality: female with nine young from 14th to 20th July. A pair had been seen together in the same place on 9th May, and a female with six young was there from 24th July to 2nd August 1987. The identity of the females is not in doubt, but it has been claimed that the single showing of a male on 9th May is not enough to rule out the possibility of a mixed mating.

**TAYSIDE** One locality: pair on 10th and 17th April.

**Scotland, N** Two confidential localities: (1) pair on 3rd June, and a female with four ducklings on 17th July; (2) male on 30th June.

**1985 England, N** Two localities: (1) five on 15th April; (2) male on 30th June.

**1987 Scotland, Mid** One locality (that also occupied in 1988): female with six young from 24th July to 2nd August.

The Scaup is one of the rarest of our breeding ducks, so that, even if one hesitates to accept the Dunbartonshire record on the grounds that it could have involved a mixed mating, it would still be remarkable to have two records in one year, and especially to have one so far south as Wales. The Anglesey record has been accepted by the Cambrian Ornithological Society.

### **Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

36 localities: 14-90 pairs breeding.

**Northern Ireland** One locality: seven pairs, but no young seen.

**Scotland, S** One locality: two males on 13th March at a water where breeding has occurred.

**Scotland, Mid** One locality: two males and three females on 2nd and 15th May, at a regular breeding site.

**Scotland, N & W** Nine localities.

**ARGYLL** One locality: six to eight pairs probably attempted to breed, but neither nests nor young located.

**CAITHNESS** Two localities: (1) maximum of seven males and six females on three dates between 3rd June and 24th August; (2) pair and one additional male on 15th May.

INVERNESS-SHIRE Three localities: (1) pair on 29th May, and a female with six ducklings on 5th August; (2) maximum count of 21 males and 14 females on 1st May, and a female with six ducklings on 7th July; (3) 12 on 10th May and four on 18th May.

ROSS-SHIRE Two localities: (1) pair displaying on 20th June; (2) female with four ducklings in July.

SHETLAND One locality: minimum of five males and three females, but probably only two young reared.

(In addition to the above, a team organised by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust surveyed a further 27 different waters and located totals of 48 females and 34 young.)

**1985 England, N** Two localities: (1) male on 11th May; (2) two males on 19th June, and one on 30th June, a female with seven immatures on 10th September.

**1985 Scotland, N** Three localities: (1) three on 8th May, two pairs on 12th May, one pair on 13th and 27th May; (2) 11 pairs on 22nd May; (3) one pair.

**1987 Scotland, N** Four localities: (1) pair on 25th May; (2) female with four young, and four older young nearby; (3) three pairs on 4th May, one pair on 25th May; (4) 13 males and nine females displaying on 25th May.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	9	17	10	6	17	6	9	25	35	15	36
Confirmed (pairs)	16	98	7	5	14	10	17	2	8	29	14
Possible (pairs)	125	30	106	77	98	75	52	72	92	33	76
Max. total (pairs)	141	128	113	82	112	85	69	74	100	62	90

The decline in Northern Ireland continues at an alarming rate, whilst the slightly improved totals in Scotland are due largely to intensified fieldwork. It may be necessary to make two or more visits to an isolated water before it can be established that the species is present or breeding. Walkers visiting isolated waters in the north of Scotland are urged to look out for the species (which is often unobtrusive) and to report their findings to the appropriate recorder, or to the Panel.

### Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Mainly one extensive locality: 90-105 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** One locality.

DORSET One locality: male summered for the second consecutive year.

**England, SE** Two localities.

KENT Two localities: (1) eclipse male from 7th to 16th July, and presumably the same individual from 3rd to 7th August and on 18th August; (2) male on 12th August.

**England, Central** Three localities.

LEICESTERSHIRE Three localities: (1) two remained until 22nd May; (2) first-year male remained until 20th May; (3) first-year male on 30th May and 30th June.

**England, N** Three localities.

CHESHIRE One locality: immature male from 2nd May to 30th June.

LANCASHIRE Two localities: (1) one feral pair bred, success not reported; (2) two broods hatched, and two females with two large young seen on 3rd July. It is reported that there are 40 full-winged birds at the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust reserve of Martin Mere, from which these breeders stem.

**Scotland, S** Five localities.

BORDERS Five localities: (1) maximum of one male and two females/immatures on 22nd May, one female summered from May to September; (2) immature or female on 22nd May; (3) adult male on 7th July; (4) female or immature on 9th June; (5) pair on 8th July.

**Scotland, Mid** Two localities.

TAYSIDE Two localities: (1) pair in eclipse on 9th and 10th July; (2) one on 16th May.

**Scotland, N & W** Two localities.

CAITHNESS One locality: male on 1st June.

NAIRN One locality: pair present in May.

**Elsewhere in Scotland** One extended locality: of 87 nests, at least 51 had clutches, and there were 44 successful clutches from which at least 427 ducklings hatched.

**1985 England, N** Four localities: (1) two females on 6th May, and a pair on 15th June; (2) female on 10th May, and a pair on 15th May; (3) male from 24th to 26th May; (4) female on 2nd May.

**1986 England, N** One locality: a male summered, and was seen with a female on seven dates in May, two dates in June and four dates in July.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Confirmed (pairs)	12	22	26	29	27	47	53	67	77	80	90
Young hatched	40	110	165	286	220	209	311	336	390	332	427

Whilst the centre of interest remains within a 40-mile (64-km) radius of Inverness, there are slight signs that the species is beginning to extend its range. At the same time, there is an increasing incidence of Goldeneyes summering far to the south of their present breeding area. The presence of free-winged individuals at Martin Mere will tend to mask any future colonisation of northern England by Scottish-bred Goldeneyes. The Panel is indebted to Roy Dennis and his RSPB colleagues for their detailed account of breeding fortunes in Scotland.

### Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

12 localities: 1-10 pairs breeding.

**Great Britain** 12 localities: (1) pair reared one young, and second adult male present throughout breeding season; (2) regular sightings throughout April to June; (3) singles on several dates in midsummer; (4) one flying west on 15th May, and one on 2nd August; (5) one flying southeast on 17th May; (6) two flying southwest on 3rd September; (7) two flying north on 5th September; (8) one light-phase on 30th May and 4th, 5th and 11th June, one dark-phase on 4th June [sites (4)-(8) were all in the same county]; (9) one soaring with two Buzzards *Buteo buteo* on 5th June, and a male displaying on 6th August; (10) several sightings of singles during the summer; (11) one or two at a fairly regularly used breeding site, thought to be breeding; (12) has certainly summered for the last ten years and may well have bred.

**1976 England, N** One locality: pair summered, being seen on many dates, and considered to have bred, but nest not searched for.

**1977 England, N** One locality: male in locality used by pair in 1976.

**1978 England, N** One locality: pair in same area, thought to have deserted owing to forestry activities.

**1981 England, N** One locality: an apparently new pair summered near previous locality.

**1983 England, SW** One locality: pair fledged one young.

**1984 England, SW** One locality: two young fledged.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Confirmed (pairs)	1	2	3	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	1
Max. total (pairs)	9	4	5	9	3	5	2	4	6	7	10

Once again we must regretfully report that the account we are able to give is very incomplete. No information has been forthcoming (on the grounds of security) for two important areas. We think it possible that the true population could amount to 20 or more breeding pairs.

**Red Kite** *Milvus milvus*

67 pairs, of which 48 laid eggs and fledged 38 young.

**England, Central** Four localities: (1)-(3) singles on 5th April, 10th April and 20th April, thought likely to be same individual; (4) seen twice in a tetrad between 30th May and 8th June, thought likely to be one individual.

**Wales** 67 localities: (1)-(67) total of 67 pairs known (plus at least 40 unmated individuals), of which 48 definitely bred and up to four others may have done so; one pair repeated after an early failure. Of these, 27 pairs reared a total of 37 young, whilst an orphan chick was reared by a pair of Buzzards *Buteo buteo*. The April population was about 174 individuals and the August population at least 210.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Total pairs	39	42	42	46	47	46	46	54	58	59	67
Breeding pairs	32	30	29	32	38	33	33	43	40	44	48
Successful pairs	13	14	21	18	19	20	13	19	23	27	27
Young reared	22	18	27	21	23	24	21	25	29	39	38

Another good season, which would have been better still had not three pairs been robbed by egg-collectors and two caused to desert owing to human disturbance. Half the nest failures occurred during wet and windy conditions in late May and early June, when most pairs had small young. The Panel is most grateful to Peter Davis, who is employed by the NCC to study Red Kites, for the detailed report given here.

**White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Re-introduction: 11 pairs held territory.

**Scotland** 11 pairs held territory, six nests were found in which clutches were laid, and one pair successfully reared two young, which fledged on 1st and 15th August; two nests could not be located.

The Panel is indebted to Dr M. Pienkowski of the NCC for this information.

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

56 nests: at least 145 young reared.

**Great Britain** Numbers continue to rise, with the breeding population increasing at an average annual rate of 17% since 1983. In 1988, at least 145 young fledged from 56 nests in seven counties, an average of 2.55 young per nest; there were 46 successful nests, for which the average productivity was 3.11 young per nest. Fourteen females were mated to bigamous males and were not significantly less successful than the paired females, with 2.36 young per nest and 3.0 young per successful nest, and three failures. Eight other pairs were located, some of which may have bred. Figures from one well-recorded area suggest that about 34% of the summering population are non-breeding; if this figure is typical of the country as a whole, the total summering population in Britain is about 160-185 adults.

**1986 Wales** One locality: sub-adult present in summer.

**1987 England, E** One locality: pair fledged four young, the whole family remaining together until 29th August.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Breeding males	14	11	16	17	19	21	27	29	26	40	42
Breeding females	14	16	20	20	24	28	32	31	32	46	56
Fledged young	36	38	44	48	59	71	66	86	82	126	145

The remarkable success of the Marsh Harrier, aided by careful protection and, locally, by sympathetic landowners, has enabled it to break out from its East Anglian stronghold to occupy marshy areas in the Welsh marches, northern England and Scotland. If this trend continues, within a few years many reedbeds of suitable size will have been claimed by the species. The Panel is indebted to John Day for the above summary.

### Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Six nests: 17 young reared.

**Great Britain** The breeding population of this harrier remains at a precariously low level, with only six nests, from five of which a total of 17 young fledged; the second nest of the only bigamously mated male, which was on saltings, failed for unknown reasons. Despite the continuing low numbers, there are two encouraging signs. At least four of the breeders were carrying colour rings, showing them to be from recent British nests, and thus suggesting that the protection of the very small number of nests of the last few years is beginning to show results. Secondly, there were at least eight non-breeders present, a big increase from earlier when there were few or none, indicating a possible upward trend in general numbers.

**1985 England, SW** One locality: male and two females, but no evidence of successful breeding.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	7	4	8	8	7	8	2	9	10	10	14
Confirmed (pairs)	2	2	2	2	3	6	1	3	7	6	6
Possible (pairs)	5	2	6	7	5	4	1	6	3	4	8
Max. total (pairs)	7	4	8	9	8	10	2	9	10	10	14
Fledged young	3	7	4	4	4	9	3	7	13	15	17

As with the previous species, the Panel is indebted to R. A. Image for much precise information relating to parts of East Anglia, and to John Day for preparing the text.

### Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

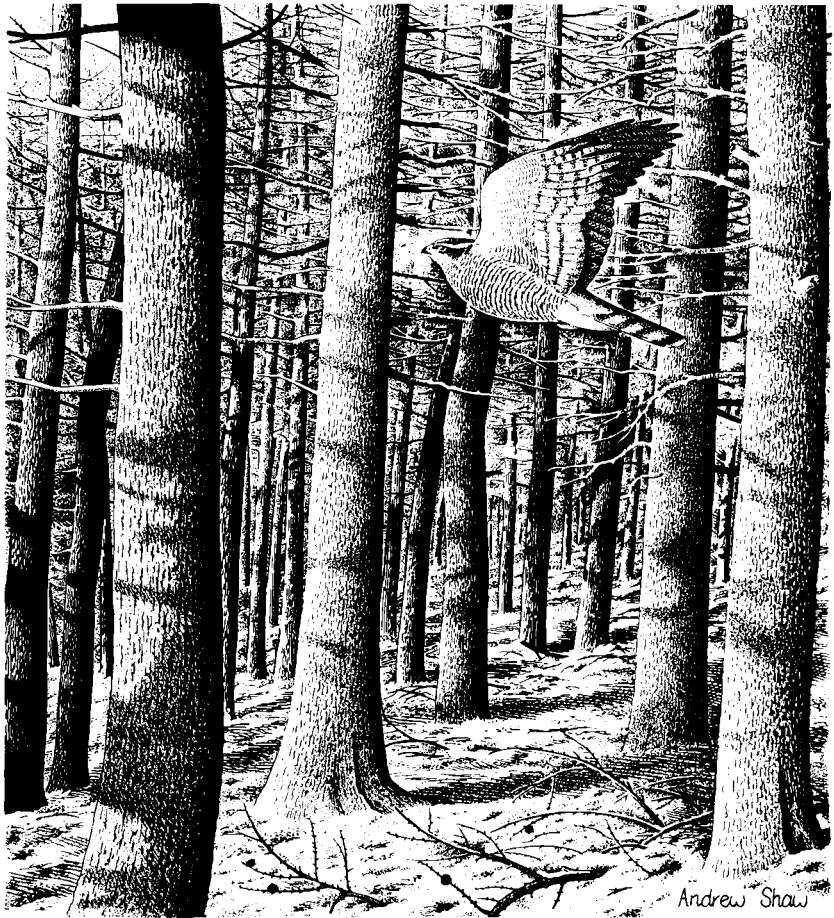
168 localities: 108-176 pairs breeding.

**England & Wales** 141 localities involving 26 counties: (1)-(141) 89 pairs known to have attempted breeding, hatching at least 135 young, with a further 34 pairs probably breeding and a further 26 possibly breeding.

**Scotland** 27 localities in five regions: (1)-(27) 19 pairs bred, hatching at least 39 young, one pair probably bred, and there were a further seven 'possibles'.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. counties*	19	22	22	28	17	19	22	20	31	31	31
Confirmed (pairs)	16	25	17	17	24	34	36	36	57	54	108
Possible (pairs)	26	20	33	36	19	27	42	39	59	40	68
Max. total (pairs)	42	45	50	53	43	61	78	75	116	94	176

\*Regions in Scotland



Whilst the trend is clearly upwards, a part of the increase in 1988 was due to much co-ordinated fieldwork, and to better reporting. The Panel is indebted to I. K. Morgan of the NCC and to S. Petty of the Forestry Commission Wildlife and Conservation Research Branch for help in these ways. It may perhaps be mentioned that the figures given above are minima, and informed opinion puts the population of Goshawks at between 200 and 250 pairs.

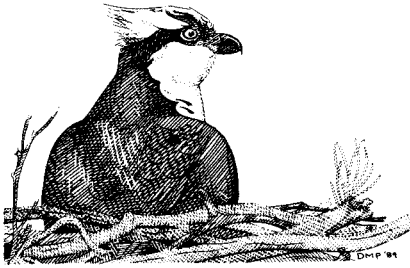
### **Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

53 known pairs: 39 pairs hatched 81 young.

**England, N** One locality: one from 6th May to at least 9th July.

**Scotland, S** Two localities: (1)(2) persistent single individual frequented two waters during June and July.

**Elsewhere in Scotland** A total of 53 eyries known to be occupied by pairs, which is an increase of three pairs on 1987. Some of the 1987 sites were not occupied, but eight new sites were located; singles were present in at least a further three sites. Clutches were laid in 49 nests, an increase of five on 1987. There were 39 successful pairs, which reared a total of at



least 81 young, the largest number (by 25) for any one year. The mean brood size was 2.23, reflecting the good season, and productivity of young per occupied nest was about average, at 1.53. The pair which reared four young in 1985 again fledged four. Two pairs failed, apparently from natural causes, and eleven nests were robbed. But for that loss, the number of young fledging would probably have exceeded the landmark total of 100.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Pairs	22	25	25	25	30	30	31	34	42	50	53
Successful pairs	11	16	19	20	21	20	21	22	24	30	39
Young reared	19	30	41	42	45	45	47	53	48	56	81

With growing success come growing problems, for the Osprey is on the threshold of colonising areas distant from its well-monitored heartland. When this happens, birdwatchers will, it is hoped, behave responsibly by minimising disturbance. Alas, the threat from egg-collectors is increasing, and the Panel urges observers locating Osprey pairs in new areas to notify the RSPB so that, if appropriate, security arrangements can be made. The Panel is grateful to Roy Dennis and his team of observers for the detailed information listed above.

**Hobby *Falco subbuteo***

321 localities: 101-361 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** 35-103 pairs breeding, 56 young reported.

**England, SE** 26-155 pairs breeding, 26 young reported.

**England, E** 26-64 pairs breeding, 28 young reported.

**England, Central** 12-26 pairs breeding, 25 young reported.

**England, N** 0-2 pairs breeding, no young reported.

**Wales** 2-11 pairs breeding, five young reported.

**1985 England, SW** 29 localities: (1)-(29) 20 confirmed pairs plus one 'probable' and one 'possible' reared a minimum of 27 young.

**1985 England, SE** Three localities: (1)-(3) one pair reared one young, and two pairs probably bred.

**1985 England, Central** One locality: pair bred successfully.

**1985 England, N** One locality: male on 4th July, and four records in September-October.

**1987 England, E** Four localities: (1)-(4) one summering, the remainder on one or two dates.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Confirmed (pairs)	70	80	64	51	97	80	93	98	91	107	101
Possible (pairs)	86	52	91	109	105	182	116	148	202	164	260
Max. total (pairs)	156	132	155	160	202	262	209	246	293	271	361
Young reared (minima)	96	72	86	89	63	104	91	117	126	158	140

Whilst it is true that in a few counties the Hobby is the subject of a special monitoring effort, which would tend to lead to higher totals, there can be little doubt that the species is thriving in most areas. It is becoming more firmly established in counties where it was formerly an irregular

breeder, and the Panel is receiving more reports of the species breeding successfully on ordinary farmland. The individual county totals for 1988 are listed in the appendix.

### Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

122 localities: 5-155 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** 33 localities: 1-49 pairs breeding.

**England, SE** 14 localities: 0-16 pairs breeding.

**England, E** 27 localities: 0-42 pairs breeding.

**England, Central** 20 localities: 1-18 pairs breeding.

**England, N** 17 localities: 2-18 pairs breeding.

**Wales** Five localities: 0-5 pairs breeding.

**Scotland, S** Two localities: 0-2 pairs breeding.

**Scotland, Mid** Three localities: 1-3 pairs breeding.

**Scotland, N** One locality: 0-2 pairs breeding.

**1986 England, Central** Five localities: (1)-(5) singles singing, one in June and July, and four in July only.

**1986 Scotland, S** Four localities: (1)-(4) singles singing, at one site breeding thought 'probable'.

**1987 England, E** One locality: one calling.

The year 1988 was only the third for which the Panel collated information about the numbers of Quail reaching our shores and attempting to breed. The population was considerably smaller than in 1987, and very much smaller than in the bumper year of 1989, which will be dealt with in the report for that year. The individual county totals for 1988 are listed in the appendix.

### Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*

Six localities: 0-10 pairs breeding.

**England, SE** One locality.

SUSSEX One locality: one singing on 4th April and again from 1st to 10th May.

**England, E** One locality.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE One locality: two singing in late April and to 2nd May, one singing late May to 10th June.

**England, Central** One locality.

SHROPSHIRE One locality: adult on 10th July.

**Wales** One locality.

GWENT One locality: one singing on 28th May.

**Scotland, N** Two localities.

INVERNESS-SHIRE One locality: four singing from 1st to 9th June.

HIGHLAND One locality: one singing 13th-20th April.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. counties	6	2	1	3	1	3	3	2	3	4	5
No. localities	6	4	3	4	2	6	4	2	3	7	6
No. singing	6	8	4	9	3	12	10	3	4	18	10

A most difficult species to monitor. Singing tends to stop when males have secured a mate, after which the chances of locating any are much reduced.



**Corncrake** *Crex crex*

40 localities: 1-41 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** Three localities.

CORNWALL One locality: one singing for two weeks in early May.

DEVON Two localities: (1) one singing on 19th July in an area where breeding occurred in 1987; (2) one seen, and heard singing, on two days in mid July.

**England, SE** One locality.

BEDFORDSHIRE One locality: one singing from 10th to 23rd June, when field was mown for silage.

**England, Central** One locality.

DERBYSHIRE One locality: one singing in uncut hayfield for several days before and after 10th June.

**England, N** Four localities.

CUMBRIA Two localities: (1) one singing for several days in a silage field, after mowing it fell silent, but restarted in a different area after a lapse of a week; (2) one singing for more than a week, but date not reported.

ISLE OF MAN Two localities: (1) one, a fresh Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* kill, on 8th May; (2) adult on 27th June with very small downy black chick.

**Scotland, N** 31 localities.

CAITHNESS Four localities: (1) one singing on 7th June; (2) one singing on 17th June; (3) one singing on 22nd June, and two on 24th June; (4) one on 26th July.

ORKNEY A survey by the RSPB of twelve islands indicated the presence of 26-32 males; the lower figure has been taken in calculating the total.

1987 **Scotland, N** One locality: nest with 11 eggs on 1st June.

1987 **England, E** ERRATUM The entry for Cambridgeshire in fact referred to Norfolk.

This is obviously a very incomplete picture; for a fuller one see the paper on status and distribution of Corncrakes in Britain in 1988 (*Brit. Birds* 83: 173-187). Because of the need for continued monitoring, the Panel would be grateful to receive all breeding-season (May-July) records of this species away from the Western Isles.

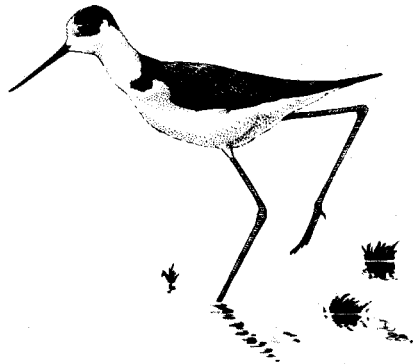
**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*

One locality: one pair.

**England, SE** One locality.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE One locality: pair in first-summer plumage from 7th to 18th June, display and copulation seen on 9th.

This event happened at Milton Keynes. Who knows what might have occurred had the pair chanced upon a more suitable water? A pair attempted to breed in Cambridgeshire in 1983, and in 1987 a pair fledged two young in Norfolk.



**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

27 localities: 389-391 pairs reared at least 136 young.

England, SE & E 22 localities: at Havergate, 50 breeding pairs reared only ten young, whilst at Minsmere 45 pairs fledged 14 young; other colonies fared rather better.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	3	3	5	5	9	9	11	14	15	18	27
Confirmed (pairs)	145	147	168	201	190	238	237	269	255	341	389
Young reared (minima)	92	99	101	155	150	192	118	245	227	315	136

Although there were more pairs, and more colonies, than ever before, it was the poorest breeding season since 1984. Some of the new colonies are close to existing ones, and it appears that practices differ among observers as to whether or not to regard them as new colonies. In this report the Panel has tended to follow the 'splitters' rather than the 'lumpers', but there can be no doubt that some completely new colonies are being formed.

**Stone-curlew** *Burhinus oediconemus*

Nine counties/ 129 pairs.



**England, SW** Three counties: 22-32 pairs attempted breeding, 16 young known.

**England, SE** Three counties: eight pairs thought to have attempted breeding, and four juveniles seen in a flock on 23rd September.

**England, E** Three counties: 89 pairs thought to have attempted breeding, and 42 young known to have fledged.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Confirmed (pairs)	20	34	8	10	8	20	19	68	103	137	126
Possible (pairs)	14	47	37	43	59	76	52	47	12	0	3
Max. total (pairs)	34	81	45	53	67	96	71	115	115	137	129

As in 1987, the figures here are based on detailed and extensive fieldwork organised on behalf of the RSPB by Dr Rhys Green. They suggest that currently the species is, at least in East Anglia, more or less holding its own. It is, however, vulnerable to modern farming practices, and it is to be hoped that the EEC agricultural policy of 'set-aside' will prove beneficial to it.

### **Dotterel** *Charadrius morinellus*

270-867 pairs breeding.

**England, N** Two localities.

**CUMBRIA** Two localities: (1) pair fledged two young from a clutch of three eggs, the first estimated to have been laid on 6th or 7th May, which is the earliest known date in Cumbria; (2) clutch of two eggs, outcome unknown.

**Wales** One locality.

**GWYNEDD** One locality: one on 16th June, and an unconfirmed report of successful breeding.

**Scotland, S** One locality: four seen on 8th May, but none thereafter; breeding has occurred nearby.

**Scotland, Mid and N & W** A repeat of the 1987 survey was carried out, with 114 observers covering 175 mountains. Breeding was confirmed in over 55 10-km squares, involving 270 pairs.

An estimate of at least 867 pairs breeding in Britain was made by extrapolating from the density of numbers of pairs observed in the area covered to the number likely to be present in the total area suitable for the species. There is now sound evidence from ringing that some breed in Britain and Scandinavia in different years, and even within the same year. Sixteen ringing recoveries of Scottish-bred Dotterels have been obtained from Morocco.

**1979 Scotland, Mid** One locality: one nest, young hatched.

**1984 Scotland, N** Three localities: (1) pair with nest and eggs; (2) pair probably had a nest, and possibly an additional female; (3) pair with two eggs, and possibly an additional female.

Two seasons' work by field teams organised by the NCC has revealed a much larger population than had been expected. It also showed that



random sightings by hill-walkers, although valuable in monitoring range, cannot be used to obtain a reliable indication of numbers; for that, a carefully organised field survey is essential. The Panel is grateful to Dr D. B. A. Thompson for providing the brief summary given above.

### Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Two localities: 2-4 pairs breeding.

**Scotland, N** Two localities: 6-7 individuals.

HIGHLAND Two localities: (1) adult in breeding plumage on 23rd May; (2) 5-6 adults present on dates between 20th May and 30th June, two nests each with four eggs and one empty nest found, all failed.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	3	4	5	1	3	1	1	2	2	1	2
Confirmed (pairs)	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	4	2
Possible (pairs)	5	4	5	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2
Max. total (pairs)	6	6	6	1	3	2	1	2	3	5	4

A somewhat disappointing follow-up to the encouraging situation in 1987. Can a population as small as the Scottish one seem to be really viable? Could it be that the species breeds in small numbers elsewhere in Scotland, quite undetected, or is there frequent immigration from Scandinavia? If the former, one might have expected Atlas fieldworkers to have discovered some new localities.

### Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

One locality: one or two pairs breeding.

**Scotland, N & W** One locality: two adults on 10th June, at least one and probably two broods of young.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1
Confirmed (pairs)	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	3	1
Possible (pairs)	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	0	1
Max. total (pairs)	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	3	2

Breeding has been annual for five consecutive years, but the numbers are so low that it would be easy for human recreational activity to cause disturbance too great for the nesting birds to accept. Alas, a notice 'Nesting birds, please keep clear' would be likely to attract attention and disturbance.

### Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

14 localities: one female reared a brood of two.

**England, SE** Five localities.

ESSEX Three localities: (1) two or three males and one female well into May, a female to the last week; (2) two females well into May; (3) two males well into May.

KENT Two localities: (1) displaying males in April, with 13 on 24th and 15 on 30th, singles still present on 11th, 18th and 21st June; (2) single on 27th May and 5th June.

**England, E** Five localities: (1) 12 lekking sites in spring, and brood of two seen later; (2) two to five present during the breeding season, but breeding not proved; (3) four males lekking on 24th April, a male and female present on 1st May; (4) four males lekking on 24th April; (5) two males and a female on 29th May, while a male and a juvenile on 10th July could have been returning migrants.

**England, N** Two localities: (1) two males and a female displaying for ten days in May; (2) two displaying on 15th June and three displaying on 1st July.

**Scotland, N** Two localities: (1)(2) a single female at each on 22nd June, not found during return visit on 23rd June.

**1976 England, N** One locality: four nests, in three of which eggs hatched; two broods were trodden on by cows, and a third was flooded and deserted.

**1985 England, N** Two localities: (1) five on 19th April, one on 6th May; (2) one from 21st to 23rd April, and from 20th to 22nd May.

**1987 England, N** One locality: two displaying on 4th June.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	4	12	10	10	13	8	6	8	7	16	14
Nests	0	3	3	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	1
Max. no. females possibly nesting	4	22	13	13	23	32	6	8	9	69	11

It seems likely that many of those in May were still on passage; others may well have been not fully mature non-breeders.

**Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa***

17 localities: 36-64 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** One locality.

SOMERSET One locality: pair attempted to breed, but nest was abandoned in early June; there has been no successful breeding at the site since 1984.

**England, SE** Five localities: (1) four summered; (2) species present during the breeding season; (3) pair displaying on 25th and 28th June; (4) one on 20th May and pair from 8th to 19th June, at a traditional breeding site; (5) three pairs attempted to breed, two of them failed, the third fledged three young, the first weak flight being noted on 26th May.

**England, E** Seven localities: (1) 17 pairs hatched 13 young between them; (2) 12 pairs reared at least ten young; (3) nine pairs held territory, but only two nests were known, of which one was successful; (4) pair copulated and built nest-scrape on 17th April, but then left the area; (5) one in display flight on 7th May; (6) three pairs present in the breeding season, one pair rearing two young; (7) pair present in suitable breeding terrain during May.

**England, N** Two localities.

CHESHIRE One locality: up to 18 summered, copulation observed and aggressive behaviour towards passing crows *Corvus*, with occasional display flights, but neither nest nor chicks seen.

CUMBRIA One locality: pair with two young able to fly, date not given.

**Scotland, Mid** One locality.

ANGUS One locality: calling and display flight noted on 21st April.

**Scotland, N** One locality.

SHETLAND One locality: pair reared two young at a regular site.

**1974 England, N** One locality: pair fledged one young.

**1985 England, N** Three localities: (1) one from 15th April to 4th May; (2) six on 20th July; (3) three on 11th May, and two on 6th July.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	13	13	11	5	13	10	12	11	19	13	17
Confirmed (pairs)	50	39	52	22	38	32	55	22	23	28	36
Possible (pairs)	18	25	25	4	31	12	25	17	24	12	28
Max. total (pairs)	68	64	77	26	69	44	80	39	47	40	64

Over the years, the Black-tailed Godwit has bred, or attempted to breed, in a number of widely scattered localities, but few of these seem to come into regular occupation. At some of the sites most favoured, it is very vulnerable to spring flooding.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

Four localities: 3-4 pairs breeding.

**Scotland, N** Four localities.

**HIGHLAND** Four localities: (1) single in mid May and again on 17th July; (2) one agitated adult, probably with young, on 13th June, and two disturbed adults on 20th June; (3) three by 10th May, pair with young on 12th June, and what was probably a different adult with a brood from 26th June to 2nd July; (4) singles on seven dates between 14th May and 12th June, but no evidence of breeding.

**1987 Scotland, N** One locality: singles from 22nd to 24th May and on 2nd and 7th June, but no evidence of nesting.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	7	3	4	1	4	3	4	3	2	3	4
Confirmed (pairs)	4	2	7	1	3	1	4	2	2	3	3
Possible (pairs)	6	2	5	0	3	4	1	1	1	1	1
Max. total (pairs)	10	4	12	1	6	5	5	3	3	4	4

The numbers, and the numbers breeding, have changed very little during the past six years.

**Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus*

Two localities: 14-16 pairs breeding.

**Scotland, N & W** Two localities: (1) maximum of 17 females and 14 males seen, 13 or 14 broods reared; (2) two pairs present early in the season, two males on 20th July, one of them with two juveniles, showing alarm, both pairs thought to have bred.

If the species is now reduced to only two localities, even though they are both protected, the future prospects do not seem very good. A northern species at the southern limit of its range might be expected to be disadvantaged by any 'greenhouse effect' but the Red-necked Phalarope's decline goes back over many years.

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

Nine localities in seven counties: 6-16 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** Three localities: (1) pair seen regularly; (2) pair displaying on 27th April; (3) two pairs present, one adult and the other second-summer, the adult pair fledged two young.

**England, SE** Three localities: (1) two pairs bred, an additional pair of adults present plus an adult paired with a second-summer individual; (2) two pairs each reared one young, and three other pairs present in May; (3) pair probably laid, but deserted by early June.

**England, E** One locality.

**SUFFOLK** One locality: pair displaying and sparring on 4th June.

**England, N** One locality.

**LANCASHIRE** One locality: one in colony of Black-headed Gulls *L. ridibundus* from 31st March to 6th May.

**Scotland, Mid** One locality: one in large colony of Common Gulls *L. canus*.

**1985 England, SW** Two localities: (1) pair in Black-headed Gull colony from 4th to 10th April.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	1	3	5	4	2	6	4	3	5	3	9
Confirmed (pairs)	0	2	1	3	2	2	4	3	1	1	6
Possible (pairs)	1	1	4	3	1	6	1	5	4	2	10
Max. total (pairs)	1	3	5	6	3	8	5	8	5	3	16

A dramatic upturn in the fortunes of the species as a British breeding bird. It remains to be seen whether the success will be maintained.

**Little Gull** *Larus minutus*

Four localities: 0-4 pairs breeding.

**England, SE** Three localities: (1) adult on 27th and 29th May, and second-summer individual on 1st May and from 25th May to 5th July, with two to three present in August; (2) singles on 8th-9th and 24th-25th April, with two from 1st to 11th May; (3) up to eight in May and up to four in June and July. Localities (1)-(3) were all in the same county.

**Scotland, Mid** One locality: one very recently fledged juvenile, still with down on the head and secondaries not to full length, on 17th June.

The presumption is that many of the birds in England were late migrants.

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*

13 localities: 164-197 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** Two localities.

**DORSET** Two localities: (1) pair with a small chick on 3rd July; (2) pair on several dates between 11th May and 12th July, but no evidence of breeding.

**England, SE** Two localities: (1) singles on 1st May, 12th, 25th and 27th June, one to two in July, with three on 30th and 31st July, and one from 4th to 20th August; (2) one adult on 24th June and two from 25th to 27th June, with display noted on former date, one adult regularly from 1st to 23rd July, with three on the latter date. The two localities are sufficiently close together that movement between them cannot be ruled out.

**England, N** Three localities: (1) 21 pairs fledged 22 young; (2) 21 pairs bred; (3) five pairs reared 12 young.

**Wales** Two localities.

**GWYNEDD** Two localities: (1) 19 pairs fledged a total of 18 young; (2) 75 pairs present, 45 of which attempted to breed, but success very low and only six are thought to have fledged.

**Scotland, S** One locality: 21 pairs laid eggs.

**Northern Ireland** Three localities: (1)-(3) a total of 31 pairs bred.

**1985 England, SW** One locality: two pairs on 2nd June, copulation observed and one pair started to incubate eggs, but eventually deserted.

Major colonies are routinely monitored, but small numbers—often no more than a pair—do sometimes settle in colonies of other tern species, where they may be overlooked. The Panel is anxious to receive all such reports.

**Snowy Owl** *Nyctea scandiaca*

One locality: two females.

**Scotland, N & W** One locality.

**SHETLAND** One locality: two females up to 3rd June, one of which laid four eggs; the birds wandered during the summer, but returned in September.

Yet another year without a prospective mate appearing.

**Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*

One locality: one individual.

**England, Central** One locality.

**SHROPSHIRE** One locality: one remained for several days in mid May.

Never anything but rare, this species is occurring even less frequently now.

**Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*

Nine localities: 1-10 pairs breeding.

**England, SE** Three localities.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Two localities: (1) one seen on five occasions between 10th and 17th May, calling on three dates; (2) one seen on numerous occasions between 10th May and 31st August at the site referred to in the report for 1987.

SUSSEX One locality: one on 20th May, not seen subsequently.

**England, Central** One locality.

SHROPSHIRE One locality: one on 24th April.

**Scotland, N & W** Five localities: (1) two males singing; (2) pair at nest hole from 28th May to 25th June, feeding young in the nest from 10th to 20th July, followed by successful fledging; (3)-(5) apparently single males, singing on 5th, 8th and 15th June.

**1987 Scotland, N** Five localities: (1)-(5) one calling at each, on, respectively, 17th May, 28th May, 30th May, 3rd and 4th June, 20th to 26th June.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	22	7	11	2	9	14	9	9	9	10	9
Confirmed (pairs)	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Possible (pairs)	19	8	13	2	10	15	10	8	8	9	9
Max. total (pairs)	23	9	14	2	10	15	10	9	9	10	10

Nearly all the individuals listed must be assumed to have been misplaced migrants, and, with few Wrynecks in the northern and northwestern areas of France, the prospects of a recolonisation of southern England seem remote.

### Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

111 localities: 88-245 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** 36 localities: 57-105 pairs breeding.

**England, SE** 20 localities: 24-66 pairs breeding.

**England, E** 52 localities: 4-71 pairs breeding.

**England, Central** Three localities: three pairs breeding.

**1984 England, E** One locality: a family party of seven.

**1985 England, SW** Three localities: (1) several pairs; (2) two pairs; (3) one pair.

**1985 England, E** One locality: pair feeding young in nest, and possibly a second pair.

This is the fifth year for which the Panel has collected Woodlark data. It would appear that, during those five years, more counties have made a special effort to monitor the species, a process facilitated by the recent appreciation of the importance to the species of certain stages of forestry activities. Unfortunately, certain areas of classic Woodlark habitat are occupied by military ranges, where entry is inevitably restricted. The figures given may thus be an under-estimate of the total population. The individual county totals are listed in the appendix.

### Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*

One locality: one individual.

**England, SW** One locality.

DORSET One locality: a male present at a House Martin *Delichon urbica* colony from 18th July to 10th September, sang frequently and seemed to be acting as a 'helper' at one particular martin's nest, often feeding young, and actually entering the nest. There was no suggestion of hybridisation, the young, seen well on fledging, being entirely typical of House Martins.

The Red-rumped Swallow is slowly extending its range northwards in Iberia, but episodes like the one described above are presumably unlikely to occur very often.



**Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus***

One locality: one, probably two, individuals.

**Scotland, Mid** One locality.

TAYSIDE One locality: one, probably two, individuals on 8th May.

This record is included because of the unusually late date. Some eruptive species, notably crossbills *Loxia*, do sometimes stay and breed somewhere near the terminal point of their eruption.

**Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica***

One locality: one individual.

**England, Central** One locality.

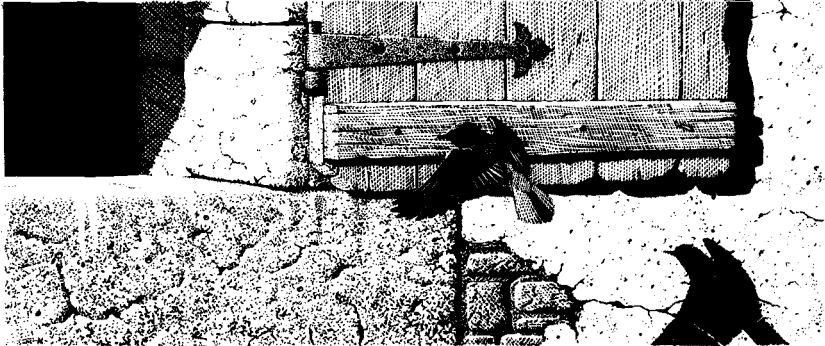
STAFFORDSHIRE One locality: adult of northern, red-spotted race *L. s. svecica* in spring, date not provided.

1987 **England, E** One locality: male of southern white-spotted race *L. s. cyaneula* held a territory in willow *Salix* scrub from 19th to 30th May.

It is interesting that this species, a Hoopoe *Upupa epops* and a Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* should all be found so far west in the same season.

**Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros***

79 localities: 54-110 pairs breeding.



**England, SW** Three localities: 0-4 pairs breeding.

DORSET Two localities: (1) male on at least one date; (2) two first-year males from 14th April to 26th May.

HAMPSHIRE One locality: one very young juvenile trapped, and remained in vicinity from 13th to 25th August.

**England, SE** 35 localities: 19-42 pairs breeding.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Two localities: (1) juvenile on two days in August; (2) male singing on 17th August. Both late dates, but four of the seven county records for the year were within a few miles of each other.

ESSEX Six localities: (1) three pairs, at least two of which bred; (2)(3) two pairs bred at each; (4) one pair bred; (5) two singing males; (6) one singing male.

KENT Five localities: (1) a cliff nest, two juveniles seen on 9th June; (2) pair with a juvenile on 14th June; (3) pair bred in an old building; (4) presumed that two pairs bred; (5) two pairs probably bred. Access at (4) and (5) difficult.

LONDON/MIDDLESEX 13 localities: (1)-(4) pairs bred; (5)(6) pairs present; (7)-(13) singing males.

SURREY Seven localities: (1)(2) pair at each, each rearing two young; (3) pair bred, and one unmated male; (4) pair was disturbed and left; (5) male singing on 18th May, then two individuals; (6) female on 16th June, and two males on 18th July; (7) singing male on a Thames quayside.

SUSSEX Two localities: (1) pair hatched one young; (2) pair hatched two young.

**England, E** 21 localities: 23-39 pairs breeding.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE Four localities: (1) one singing from 1st to 12th May, and pair seen; (2) one singing from 9th to 19th April, and in May; (3) one singing on 9th May; (4) female on 6th July. All four had previously been reported as sites of possible breeding.

LINCOLNSHIRE Five localities: (1) two pairs, of which one fledged four young from a first brood and one from a second, and the other fledged young from a repeat in July; (2) two pairs reared broods of two and three, respectively, third pair seen, and a male holding territory; (3) male from 7th May to 2nd June, and female on the latter date; (4) two males in May and June; (5) female from 6th April to 1st May.

NORFOLK Five localities: (1) six singing males, but only two pairs definitely bred; (2)-(5) one pair bred at each locality.

SUFFOLK Seven localities: (1) three pairs bred, rearing total of 12 young, and two pairs possibly bred; (2) pair bred; (3) pair bred in a hangar, rearing two young; (4) five pairs bred; (5) two pairs bred, rearing total of six young; (6) pair reared four young; (7) male singing from 25th May to early June.

**England, Central** Nine localities: 6-12 pairs breeding.

DERBYSHIRE Two localities: (1) three pairs present, one of which was proved to breed; (2) female on 16th May, and a pair on 11th June.

HEREFORDSHIRE One locality: pair fledged at least two young. The first breeding record for the county.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE One locality: two, possibly three, males holding territory from 8th May onwards.

STAFFORDSHIRE Three localities: (1) pair reared two broods; (2) one adult and two juveniles; (3) one singing.

WEST MIDLANDS Two localities: (1) brood of four fledged on 22nd July; (2) pair fledged a brood of four on 12th July, and a brood of two on 28th August.

**England, N** Ten localities.

LANCASHIRE Three localities: (1)(2) males, singing in May and June; (3) male singing from May to mid July.

YORKSHIRE Seven localities: (1) pair reared four young; (2)-(5) four pairs, two of which reared broods of four and five, and two extra males; (6)(7) singing males.

**Wales** One locality: one pair breeding.

SOUTH GLAMORGAN One locality: pair fledged four young on 30th June.

**1984 England, E** One locality: pair fledged five young.

**1985 England, E** Two localities: (1) pair reared two broods; (2) pair reared one brood.

**1986 England, E** 11 localities: (1) pair fledged three young; (2) singing male; (3) one pair bred, two pairs probably bred, and there were two singing males; (4) five pairs bred, one pair probably bred, and four pairs possibly bred; (5) three pairs bred; (6) seven pairs bred, and one pair probably bred; (7) three pairs bred, and four pairs possibly bred; (8) two pairs bred; (9) singing male; (10) one pair bred, and one singing male; (11) pair probably bred. All eleven localities lie within the recording area of one county society, but, because old Watsonian vice-county boundaries are used, figures for two localities may already have been submitted by another county. The Panel does recommend the adoption of boundaries based on 10-km squares as being the best way of obtaining unequivocal boundaries which are unaffected by any redrawing of any county, district or region boundaries.

The totals are very similar to those for 1987.

### **Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

Seven localities: 2-7 pairs breeding.

**England, SE** One locality.

BERKSHIRE One locality: four fledged young moving as a family group on 25th June.

**England, E** One locality.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE One locality: one on several dates in mid June in potentially suitable habitat, not heard to sing.

**England, N** Two localities.

CUMBRIA One locality: adult in suitable breeding habitat on 10th May, two adults seen for about a week from 2nd July, much agitated and using alarm calls.

NORTHUMBERLAND One locality: pair on 30th July escorting three newly fledged young.

Scotland, S Three localities.

BORDERS Three localities: (1) one singing and driving off other thrushes *Turdus* on 30th April, but not located during the next 2-3 weeks; (2) one present on 15th May, but not seen subsequently; (3) one present and singing from 5th to 15th May, but not found thereafter. The recorder adds: 'all could have vanished in vastly underwatched suitable areas'.

1985 England, N One locality: eight on 8th May.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	3	6	5	6	7	10	4	3	2	7	7
Confirmed (pairs)	1	1	1	0	2	3	0	0	2	1	2
Possible (pairs)	3	5	4	6	5	9	4	3	0	6	5
Max. total (pairs)	4	6	5	6	7	12	4	3	2	7	7

Currently, there are few signs of the species establishing itself in an area as, for several years, it did in the Peak District. One might hazard a guess that, if there is a present centre of gravity, it lies somewhere in the border lands between England and Scotland. Note the comment by the recorder for the Borders Region.

**Redwing *Turdus iliacus***

22 localities: 10-40 pairs breeding.

England, SE One locality.

KENT One locality: one on 5th June.

Scotland, N & W 21 localities.

INVERNESS-SHIRE 12 localities: (1) three pairs in close proximity, two with clutches of five and six eggs, the third with fledged young; (2) one, singing in late May; (3) two singing in spring; (4) two singing on 24th May; (5) two singing on 13th June; (6) two singing May to June; (7) three singing on 20th April and 15th May; (8) one singing on 5th June; (9) one singing on 31st May; (10) one singing on 13th July; (11) pair with fledged young on 6th July; (12) pair collecting food on 23rd May, and two juveniles on a lawn on 9th July.

MORAY & NAIRN Two localities: (1) one singing in birch woods on three dates in May; (2) a juvenile, not recently fledged, in a birch wood on 2nd August.

ROSS-SHIRE Four localities: (1) adult feeding young in May and June; (2) three singing intermittently for a week in mid May; (3)(4) singing males in May and June.

SUTHERLAND Two localities: (1) pair with five eggs, 18th to 27th May, and up to seven other singing males within five miles; (2) two pairs, one with a well-grown brood of four.

ELSEWHERE One locality: adult carrying food into a young conifer plantation.

1984 Scotland, Mid One locality: one singing on 28th May.

1985 England, N Two localities: (1) one singing on 21st May; (2) a nest with three eggs, outcome unknown.

1986 Scotland, N One locality: two pairs located.

1987 Scotland, Mid One locality: one singing on 28th May (see record for 1984, above; the bird was in exactly the same locality).

1987 Scotland, N & W 11 localities: (1) three singing, one juvenile found dead; (2) one or two singing from 21st April to 6th May; (3) one singing on 14th May; (4)-(7) singles singing on 28th May, 30th May, 13th June and 19th June, respectively; (8) pair carrying food on 17th May; (9) pair singing and carrying food; (10) one or two singing in April and May; (11) one singing on 28th May.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	12	6	18	6	42	65	58	35	32	39	22
Confirmed (pairs)	3	2	7	4	30	17	31	12	20	9	10
Possible (pairs)	14	7	25	7	32	51	48	23	26	41	30
Max. total (pairs)	17	9	32	11	62	68	79	35	46	50	40

In quite large areas of afforested northern Scotland anyone familiar with the song of the Redwing, and free to drive around early in the morning in May and June, would have a good chance of detecting the species. Individuals can be quiet for lengthy periods if there is no near neighbour to provoke them into song, and there can be little doubt that the species is under-recorded in many districts.

### Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

78 localities: 24-198 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** 57 localities: 22-164 pairs breeding.

**England, SE** Four localities: 2-6 pairs breeding.

**England, E** 13 localities: 0-20 pairs breeding.

**Wales** Four localities: 0-8 pairs breeding.

**1983 Wales** One locality: one singing from 2nd January to 4th July, and from 2nd October to 29th December.

**1984 Wales** One locality: one singing from 29th January to 31st December, with three singing on 5th March, possibly four singing in June, four at the end of November and seven on 30th December.

**1985 Wales** One locality: minimum of six males and five females on 17th to 18th April; breeding proved.

**1986 Wales** One locality: at least six territory-holding males, seven on several occasions, and could be as many as ten.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. counties	14	14	11	16	12	13	13	13	11	14	14
Confirmed (pairs)	30	46	19	56	29	90	78	59	4	31	24
Possible (pairs)	144	117	179	106	173	157	238	190	175	156	174
Max. total (pairs)	174	163	198	162	202	247	316	249	179	187	198

The species is making a slow recovery from the collapse which occurred between 1984 and 1986, but was by 1988 extinct in its former stronghold of Kent. The importance of the southwest is now even more marked. It will be interesting to see how much a sequence of two exceptionally mild winters accelerates the recovery. As in previous reports, the top line of the table is labelled 'No. counties', for this is a species for which the concept of a locality is inappropriate: there can be almost continuous distribution along a favoured river valley, so the extent of distribution is measured by the number of counties from which the species is recorded. The individual county totals in 1988 are listed in the appendix.

### Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides*

Ten localities: 0-13 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** Three localities.

**CORNWALL** One locality: one singing from 4th to 24th May.

**DORSET** Two localities: (1) pair thought to be probably breeding; (2) one singing, date not provided.

**England, SE** One locality: two males singing from 1st May to 1st June. Breeding has occurred at the site in the past.

**England, E** Five localities.

**NORFOLK** Two localities: (1) up to three singing regularly from 21st May; (2) one singing from 9th to 29th July.

**ELSEWHERE** Three localities: (1) one singing from 8th to 26th May; (2) one singing on 5th and 6th May; (3) one singing on the late date of 24th July.

**England, Central** One locality: one singing from a reedbed for part of the summer.

**1985 England, SW** Two localities: (1) singing males from 15th to 24th April—singularly early—and from 31st May to 6th June; (2) singing males on 28th and 29th April, and on 4th May.

**1985 England, Central** One locality: male from 11th to 19th May.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	15	15	14	8	11	12	10	12	9	16	10
Confirmed (pairs)	4	6	2	5	0	2	0	1	1	0	0
Possible (pairs)	24	24	27	10	18	15	12	14	11	20	13
Max. total (pairs)	28	30	29	15	18	17	12	15	12	20	13

For the first time, two consecutive years with no proof of breeding. It would be helpful to know the expectation of life of the species. If it were low, we would be almost entirely dependent on migrants over-shooting in spring. Many of the records published in the Panel's reports probably fall into that category.

### Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

13 localities: 6-20 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** One locality.

**DORSET** One locality: one singing on 15th June.

**England, SE** Seven localities: (1) male on 5th and 6th June; (2) four on 29th May; (3) present 3rd June to 9th July, a pair from 6th June, and one heard close to a site occupied in 1987; (4) at least two pairs; (5) at least two pairs and one unpaired male on 22nd June; (6) male singing on 1st June, but not subsequently; (7) two singing from 28th May to at least 13th June.

**England, E** Two localities.

**SUFFOLK** Two localities: (1) one singing from a reed-fringed dyke on 2nd and 3rd June; (2) one singing from reed scrub on 28th and 29th May.

**England, Central** Three localities.

**WORCESTERSHIRE** Three localities: (1) two pairs bred successfully, although no flying young seen; (2) one male sang on 4th June only; (3) male found singing on 14th June, not present on 1st July.

**1985 England, SW** One locality: two singing males on 2nd and 3rd June.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	15	15	8	3	8	10	12	10	13	9	10
Confirmed (pairs)	4	1	2	0	2	3	4	2	5	7	4
Possible (pairs)	11	22	10	3	7	9	9	9	14	10	12
Max. total (pairs)	15	23	12	3	9	12	13	11	19	17	16

The yearly totals in the table omit figures from Worcestershire, so long the British headquarters of the species, but now supporting a tiny remnant of the population.

### Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

None reported in 1988.

**1970 England, N** One locality.

**YORKSHIRE** One locality: a nest containing two eggs was discovered on 31st May 1970, and the birds watched; six days later, the nest and eggs had disappeared.

*The Handbook* states that a nest with three eggs found near Marlborough, Wiltshire, in May 1907 was identified as belonging to this species. The record above appears not to have been submitted to any national body and predates the founding of the Rare Breeding Birds Panel, but was published by J. R. Mather in *The Birds of Yorkshire* (1986).

**Dartford Warbler** *Sylvia undata*

Six counties: 29-639 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** 25 localities.

**CORNWALL** One locality: male singing in early March, but not subsequently.

**DEVON** One general area: six pairs known to have bred, and possibly seven more pairs.

**DORSET** 18 localities: (1)-(18) pairs widely distributed, the largest concentrations being of 33, 26, 24 and 20 pairs; the 24 pairs were recorded as a result of a special survey of an NNR, which also reported three broods of four. 'Almost all observers remarked on the high success rate of the breeding season.'

**HAMPSHIRE** One broad locality—the New Forest—and four other sites: (1) 454 pairs or singing males, 'a record total since modern recording began', and the result of a special survey organised on behalf of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Naturalists' Trust; (2)-(5) seven pairs bred, but cover incomplete.

**England, SE** Four localities.

**KENT** One locality: male present from 19th to 21st April.

**SURREY** Three localities: (1) 13 pairs, all successfully rearing at least two broods; (2) one pair bred; (3) two pairs probably bred.

**1985 England, SW**

DORSET Delete entry in the Panel's report for 1985 and substitute '20 localities: (1)-(20) a total of about 97 pairs breeding.'

These are much the highest numbers since the Panel started keeping records, but the totals were much inflated by two species surveys. With a good breeding season, followed by a mild winter, further increases seem likely, and perhaps the populations on the Surrey heaths will be restored to their levels of a few years ago. In connection with this species, the term 'locality' presents difficulties for recorders. For example, for good ecological reasons the New Forest is treated as a whole, but because of fragmentation it could be treated as a series of separate heathland localities.

**Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus***

43 localities: 11-80 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** 11 localities.

DORSET One locality: one singing from 5th to 14th May.

HAMPSHIRE Seven localities: (1)-(4) total of three pairs with young plus seven additional singing males; (5) male in sub-song on 4th April; (6) one singing on 6th May; (7) female on 22nd May, and three, including a pair, on 19th June.

SOMERSET One large locality: two pairs, at least one of which reared young successfully, and five males singing until mid July.

WILTSHIRE Two localities: (1) one male singing on 7th May, 24th May and 12th June, two singing on 14th and 15th May and on 18th June.

**England, SE** 23 localities.

BEDFORDSHIRE One locality: pair from 3rd to 8th April.

BERKSHIRE One locality: pair on 15th May, the male singing.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Six localities: (1) 13 territories, and one possibly transient male; (2) one established territory; (3) one singing on four dates between 29th May and 3rd July, with a second individual pulling cobwebs on 31st May, and two males singing on 5th June; (4)-(6) singing males at each, one on 2nd May and others on 29th May.

ESSEX Four localities: (1) one singing in May and June; (2) one singing on 8th April; (3) one singing on 10th and 11th July; (4) male present from 9th April to 9th July. In the past, breeding has been recorded at sites (1) and (4).

HERTFORDSHIRE Two localities: (1) one singing on 8th and 14th May, in adjoining locations; (2) two, one a juvenile, from 28th to 31st August and 4th to 25th September.

KENT Four localities: (1)-(3) singles singing on 7th April, 8th May and 19th June, respectively; (4) one singing on 11th and 21st May.

SURREY Three localities: (1)(2) singles singing on 23rd April and 7th May, respectively; (3) one singing on 29th May and 2nd July.

SUSSEX Two localities: (1) one singing from 7th May to 16th July; (2) one singing on 24th June.

**England, E** Five localities.

SUFFOLK Five localities: (1) pair bred successfully; (2) adult carrying food on 12th July; (3) two males singing from April to June, breeding suspected; (4) one singing from 7th April to 21st May; (5) one singing on 12th June.

**England, Central** Two localities.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE One locality: one singing on 10th and 11th April (and one calling 200 yards away on 17th August).

WORCESTERSHIRE One locality: singing male in territory from 6th March to 15th May, when seen to be carrying food, no female Firecrest located, but a Goldcrest *R. regulus* was present.

**Wales** Two localities.

GWENT Two localities: (1) four pairs, with a total of 12-15 young, and judged to be three to five other territories; (2) two singing on 13th April, and one on 17th April, 21st May and 1st June.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	7	25	30	35	21	75	47	24	19	37	43
Confirmed (pairs)	1	9	7	15	4	6	4	5	1	8	11
Possible (pairs)	10	64	71	87	40	169	78	41	28	74	69
Max. total (pairs)	11	73	78	102	44	175	82	46	29	82	80

The species was more widely distributed than for several years, and the small community in Gwent is a welcome development.

### Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

35 localities: 16-41 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** One locality: one singing from 30th May to 4th July.

**England, SE & E** 30 localities: (1) female on 20th June; (2) male summered; (3) pair bred; (4) one singing in May; (5) one singing on 15th May; (6) one singing from 8th to 12th May; (7) immature male, singing on 4th June; (8) pair bred; (9) one singing on 2nd June; (10) immature male singing on 25th and 26th June; (11) one singing on 3rd May; (12) pair bred, rearing four young; (13) pair failed with their first nest, but fledged two from a repeat; (14) a family party seen; (15) male present throughout the season; (16) two or three calling on 30th May and one on 1st June, none thereafter; (17) one male on 12th July; (18) two pairs bred,





three young ringed from one nest; (19) two pairs bred, one known to have failed, but the outcome of the second not known; (20)(21) one pair at each, outcome unknown; (22) pair reared four young; (23) pair nested, but failed; (24) pair present; (25) male calling throughout the season; (26)(27) male present at each on several dates; (28) pair bred, and at least three singing males during spring and summer; (29) two pairs definitely bred, and a third probably did so; (30) male singing on 5th July.

**England, Central & N** Three localities: (1) immature male singing and calling from 5th to 12th June; (2) male seen by one observer and a female by three others, with no subsequent sightings; (3) male in woodland on 7th May.

**Wales** One locality: one singing in woodland on 5th June.

**1984 England, SE** One locality: pair on 13th and 22nd May, with a male on 20th, 21st and 23rd May.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	14	17	17	13	12	14	11	12	13	22	35
Confirmed (pairs)	7	3	2	4	3	2	4	4	5	11	16
Possible (pairs)	21	27	26	22	18	19	14	11	11	20	25
Max. total (pairs)	28	30	28	26	21	21	18	15	16	31	41

An excellent year, with a number of obvious over-shoot migrants but many breeding pairs. The Panel is indebted to the Golden Oriole Group for much valuable information. Their discreet watching brief may well have contributed to the success of the season.

### Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Six counties: 1-7 pairs breeding.

**England** Six localities in five counties: (1) singing male on 21st May; (2) pair in Norfolk successfully reared three young to flying stage; (3) male, on 25th May only; (4) male in suitable breeding habitat from 29th May to 30th June; (5) male on 3rd June; (6) male on 4th June in Shropshire (see the comment under Bluethroat).

**Scotland** One locality: male on 14th June.

**1985 England, N** One locality: male on 16th May.

**1987 Scotland, N** One locality: male on 20th June.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. counties	11	10	5	6	2	3	4	7	3	8	6
Confirmed (pairs)	13	14	23	11	5	11	6	6	4	2	1
Possible (pairs)	24	38	8	29	3	1	4	6	2	11	6
Max. total (pairs)	37	52	31	40	8	12	10	12	6	13	7

A species moving towards a sad, but seemingly inevitable extinction as a breeding bird in England.

### Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Two localities: 1-2 pairs breeding.

**Scotland** Two localities.

**ORKNEY** One locality: a nest found on 6th July contained three tiny young, but was empty on 11th July, after gales.

**SHETLAND** One locality: territorial male from 13th to 23rd June.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	2	3	3	1	10	8	10	3	1	3	2
Confirmed (pairs)	0	1	0	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	1
Possible (pairs)	2	3	4	0	8	7	8	3	1	2	1
Max. total (pairs)	2	4	4	1	10	8	9	3	1	3	2

A species with an annual presence in the breeding season, but not one which is clearly bent on colonising Britain.

**Serín** *Serinus serinus*

Six localities: 0-9 pairs breeding.

**England, SW** Four localities.

DEVON One locality: male singing on 7th April, at traditional breeding site.

DORSET Three localities: (1) up to three males singing and apparently holding territory from 22nd February to 22nd March; (2) many records of up to three individuals between 11th April and 7th August, but no evidence of breeding; (3) male singing on 19th February, not looked for subsequently.

**England, SE** One locality.

OXFORDSHIRE One locality: male holding territory for two weeks in summer.

**England, Central** One locality.

SHROPSHIRE One locality: pair found in July (date unspecified) in a large garden.

**1985 England, SW** One locality: pair, with song, and copulation observed, in May, but no evidence of successful breeding.

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
No. localities	4	0	1	3	5	7	4	5	2	4	6
Confirmed (pairs)	1	0	0	2	1	2	2	1	0	0	0
Possible (pairs)	3	0	1	4	6	5	3	5	3	5	9
Max. total (pairs)	4	0	1	6	7	7	5	6	3	5	9

A third consecutive year without any proved breeding, but the mild flurry of activity in Dorset suggests that the process of colonisation continues, and may be gathering a little momentum.

**Parrot Crossbill** *Loxia pytyopsittacus*

One locality: one individual.

**Wales** One locality.

BRECON One locality: one unmated male. (This record has not yet been submitted to the Rarities Committee.)

It is interesting that an individual of this species should still be present so long after the major invasion which occurred in the middle of October 1982.

**Scarlet Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus*

One locality: one individual.

**Scotland, N** One locality.

HIGHLAND One locality: one singing from 6th or 7th June, in suitable breeding habitat.

**1985 Scotland, N** One locality: male singing on 17th June, in very suitable habitat (immature male singing 1.6 km away on 29th May was presumed to be on passage).

**1987 Scotland, N** Two localities: (1) one singing from 3rd to 9th June, at a site where one sang in 1986; (2) immature singing on 18th June.

The first and only confirmed breeding was as long ago as 1982.

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

One extensive locality and ten others: 0-24 pairs breeding.

**Scotland, Mid and N & W** 11 localities: (1) male and two females on 7th April; (2) male feeding and singing on 12th June; (3) nine singing males and one male and female together on boulder scree; (4) one singing male; (5) pair on 22nd May, and a male singing on 18th June; (6) male singing on 18th June; (7) pair collecting food on 5th June; (8) female on 12th June; (9) male singing on 21st June; (10) one, not an adult male, on 15th August; (11) four individuals, at least two of them males, at the top of a scree slope on 7th May.

**1983 Scotland, Mid** One locality: two nests, one with young, found on 9th July, and a nest with five eggs on 23rd July.

**1984 Scotland, N & W** Two localities: (1)(2) single singing males on 27th May.

**1985 Scotland, N & W** One locality: male seen to feed a wing-fluttering individual on 26th June, but not known whether latter a female or young.

**1986 Scotland, N & W** Four localities: (1) female, in July; (2) male on 3rd July; (3) male with a juvenile on 12th July; (4) male with food on 11th July.

**1987 Scotland, N & W** Six localities: (1) single male on 17th June; (2) a flying female on 17th June; (3) male with food in a bergschrund on 17th June; (4) pair near a summit; (5) singing male on 13th June; (6) four males, a female and 13 juveniles on 25th July.

This is possibly the best list which the Panel has been able to publish for Snow Bunting, and we thank those hill-walkers who kindly responded to our request for information.

### **Cirl Bunting** *Emberiza cirlus*

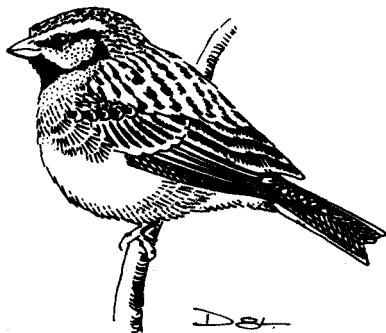
Three counties: 2-58 pairs breeding.

#### **England, SW**

**CORNWALL** Two localities: (1) noted throughout the year, with maximum of five (two males) in May and November; (2) pair from April to June.

**DEVON** Perhaps 50 localities: (1)-(50) an estimated population of at least 50 pairs, two of which are known to have bred (one brood of four) and 17 presumed to have done.

**SOMERSET** Two localities: (1) up to three singing males from May to July; (2) one singing for about a month from 9th May.



With the population for Devon forming such a large part of the total, and being no more than an informed estimate, it would be unwise to conclude that any further change had taken place.

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### **Appendix.** Individual county totals for 1988 for selected species.

For each species, the counties are arranged in alphabetical order within the regions (see page 356).

#### **Garganey** *Anas querquedula*

County	Localities	Breeding confirmed	Breeding probable	Breeding possible	Maximum total
Avon	1	0	1	0	1
Devon	4	0	0	4	4
Bedfordshire	1	0	0	1	1
Hertfordshire	3	1	0	1	2
Kent	5	0	1	4	5
Cambridgeshire	2	3	10	0	13
Lincolnshire	1	0	0	2	2
Norfolk	2	2	0	0	2
Northamptonshire	4	0	0	4	4
Suffolk	3	1	3	1	5
Leicestershire	3	0	0	3	3
Nottinghamshire	1	0	0	1	1
Staffordshire	2	0	0	2	2
Cheshire	1	0	0	1	1
Yorkshire	1	1	0	0	1
Angus	1	0	0	1	1

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

County	Localities	Breeding confirmed	Breeding probable	Breeding possible	Maximum total
Dorset	1	0	1	0	1
Hampshire	6	9	0	0	9
Wiltshire	2	4	0	0	4
Buckinghamshire	1	1	0	0	1
Essex	9	24	10	3	37
Hertfordshire	12	4	1	7	12
Kent	7	23	0	6	29
Middlesex	8	30	0	3	33
Surrey	1	2	0	0	2
Cambridgeshire	1	1	0	0	1
Huntingdonshire	1	1	0	0	1
Lincolnshire	5	8	4	0	12
Norfolk	40	?	?	?	90-100
Northamptonshire	2	2	0	0	2
Suffolk	3	5	0	0	5
Derbyshire	1	1	0	0	1
Leicestershire	2	0	1	7	8
Nottinghamshire	2	2	0	0	2
Shropshire	2	0	4	1	5
Staffordshire	1	0	0	1	1
Worcestershire	1	0	1	0	1
Cheshire	2	11	0	0	11
Cleveland	2	3	0	0	3
Lancashire	2	9	0	0	9
Greater Manchester	1	5	0	0	5
Northumberland	3	9	0	0	9
Yorkshire	8	19	0	5	24
Gwynedd	1	1	0	0	1
Borders	3	2	0	2	4
Fife	1	3	0	0	3
Caithness	1	1	0	0	1

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

County	Localities	Breeding confirmed	Breeding probable	Breeding possible	Maximum total
Avon	4	0	0	4	4
Cornwall	4	0	2	2	4
Devon*	—	—	—	—	—
Dorset	14	14	0	0	14
Hampshire	47	10	0	37	47
Somerset	5	2	2	1	5
Wiltshire	27	9	6	14	29
Bedfordshire	9	3	1	5	9
Berkshire	6	0	5	1	6
Buckinghamshire	16	3	0	13	16
Essex	7	5	4	0	9
Hertfordshire	50	3	3	44	50
Kent	9	3	1	5	9
Middlesex	3	2	1	0	3
Oxfordshire	10	1	0	9	10
Surrey	22	6	8	8	22
Sussex	21	0	1	20	21
Cambridgeshire	20	7	13	0	20

\*We have been asked by the Devon Bird Watching and Preservation Society not to publish a figure for their county.

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo* (continued)

County	Localities	Breeding confirmed	Breeding probable	Breeding possible	Maximum total
Huntingdonshire	8	2	5	1	8
Lincolnshire	7	5	2	0	7
Norfolk	2	2	0	0	2
Northamptonshire	18	8	6	4	18
Suffolk	9	2	0	7	9
Derbyshire	2	2	0	0	2
Leicestershire	7	6	1	0	7
Nottinghamshire	5	1	5	0	6
Shropshire	2	0	1	1	2
Staffordshire	1	1	0	0	1
Warwickshire	2	1	1	0	2
Worcestershire	6	1	3	2	6
Cheshire	2	0	1	1	2
Gwent	11	2	2	7	11

**Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*

County	Localities	Breeding confirmed	Breeding probable	Breeding possible	Maximum total
Cornwall	2	0	0	2	2
Devon	2	0	0	2	2
Dorset	10	0	0	14	14
Hampshire	4	0	0	5	5
Somerset	4	0	0	5	5
Wiltshire	11	1	3	17	21
Bedfordshire	3	0	0	3	3
Buckinghamshire	1	0	0	1	1
Essex	1	0	0	1	1
Hertfordshire	2	0	0	2	2
Kent	3	0	1	2	3
Sussex	4	0	0	6	6
Cambridgeshire	2	0	0	2	2
Huntingdonshire	1	0	0	1	1
Lincolnshire	10	0	0	20	20
Norfolk	8	0	0	12	12
Northamptonshire	2	0	0	2	2
Suffolk	4	0	3	2	5
Derbyshire	2	0	0	2	2
Leicestershire	4	0	0	4	4
Nottinghamshire	1	0	0	1	1
Shropshire	7	1	1	5	7
Staffordshire	2	0	0	2	2
Worcestershire	4	0	1	1	2
Cheshire	2	0	2	0	2
Cumberland	1	1	0	0	1
Lancashire	4	0	0	5	5
Isle of Man	1	0	0	1	1
Northumberland	4	0	0	4	4
Yorkshire	5	1	4	0	5
Dyfed	1	0	0	1	1
Gwynedd	4	0	0	4	4
Dumfriesshire	1	0	0	1	1
East Lothian	1	0	0	1	1
Fife	1	0	0	1	1
Grampian	2	1	0	1	2
Orkney	1	0	0	2	2

**Woodlark** *Lullula arborea*

County	Localities	Breeding confirmed	Breeding probable	Breeding possible	Maximum total
Cornwall	1	0	0	1	1
Devon	7	3	6	1	10
Dorset	3	0	17	0	17
Hampshire	24	54	17	5	76
Wiltshire	1	0	0	1	1
Berkshire	3	1	0	2	3
Surrey	8+	?	54+	?	54+
Sussex	9	1	3	5	9
Lincolnshire	4	4	0	0	4
Norfolk	1	0	20	0	20
Elsewhere	47	0	47	0	47
Nottinghamshire	3	3	0	0	3

**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

County	Localities	Breeding confirmed	Breeding probable	Breeding possible	Maximum total
Cornwall	9	0	11	4	15
Devon	8	0	31	6	37
Dorset	10	21	15	6	42
Hampshire	22	0	52	4	56
Isle of Wight	1	0	0	1	1
Somerset	5	1	0	10	11
Wiltshire	2	0	2	0	2
Berkshire	1	2	0	1	3
Sussex	3	0	1	2	3
Norfolk	9	0	16	0	16
Suffolk	3	0	2	1	3
Elsewhere	1	0	1	0	1
Dyfed	3	0	7	0	7
Gwent	1	0	1	0	1