

# Rare breeding birds in the United Kingdom in 2013

Mark Holling and the Rare Breeding Birds Panel



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Willow Tits *Poecile montana*

**Abstract** This report documents the status of 91 rare or scarce species that were recorded breeding, or potentially breeding, in the UK in 2013. The spring of 2013 was much colder than normal and led to lower numbers of, for example, breeding Corn Crakes *Crex crex* and Stone-curlews *Burhinus oedicanus*. More encouragingly, the return of milder winters since 2011 seems to have aided the recovery of some resident passerines such as Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus* and Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*.

This is the 40th report published by the Rare Breeding Birds Panel (RBBP), and includes details of 82 species or distinctive races that bred (or showed signs of breeding) in the UK in 2013. Three other rare breeding species occurred in 2013 but no relevant data were received; these species are placed in Appendix 1. A further six potential breeding species are listed in Appendix 2, and the overall total of 91 is the lowest since we last added new species to the list, in 2010.

As in 2012, the area covered and reported

on by the UK Rare Breeding Birds Panel includes the four countries of the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland), plus the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. Using 'the UK' as a shorthand reference for this area is in line with other national reporting systems, such as the BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey (e.g. Harris *et al.* 2014), the Statutory Conservation Agency and RSPB Annual Breeding Bird Scheme (SCARABBS) and Birds of Conservation Concern (e.g. Eaton *et al.* 2009).

Many of the species we report on, although rare in the UK, are more numerous and widespread elsewhere in Europe. To put some of the UK data into context, we have on occasions made reference to trends documented by the Pan European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme (PECBMS). We have used the latest (2014) update available; this covers the time period 1980–2012 and can be found online at [www.ebcc.info/index.php?ID=557](http://www.ebcc.info/index.php?ID=557). Twenty-seven countries provide data to this scheme.

### Review of the year 2013

Following the wet and stormy late spring of 2012, which had an impact on the numbers and success of several rare breeding birds, a prolonged cold spell in March and April 2013 also had a negative effect. Met Office data show that the temperature across the UK was consistently below the 1960–90 average throughout those two months (that for March was 3.3°C below the long-term average) and that it was the coldest spring in the UK since 1962. Even away from upland areas, snowfall was recorded in late March and early April. In contrast, it was the warmest summer in the UK since 2006, with a prolonged heatwave during 3rd–22nd July. As a result of settled summer weather, later-nesting species seem to have had a more productive season.

The exceptionally cold spring may be implicated in a significant drop in the numbers of calling Corn Crakes *Crex crex* (-24%) and of Stone-curlews *Burhinus oedipnemus* (-33%), two species whose populations had been increasing steadily each year for over a decade. Long-eared *Asio otus* and Short-eared Owls *A. flammeus* were reported in low numbers, perhaps because any breeding attempts failed early. Indeed, it is likely that no eggs were laid at many sites because of the poor condition of the adults. The BTO Nest Record Scheme received 50–60% fewer nest records for Barn *Tyto alba* and Tawny Owls *Strix aluco* in 2013 compared with 2012, reflecting the low nesting rate of commoner species which are also dependent on the availability of small mammal prey (Barimore 2014).

Ten years ago there were just seven pairs of breeding Whooper Swans *Cygnus cygnus* in

the UK, whereas in the last five there have been an average of 23. In 2013, nine pairs bred in Shetland, equalling the peak count of 2011, but productivity was low with just one young bird fledged. The decline of both Pintails *Anas acuta* and Common Pochards *Aythya ferina* in Scotland continued, although Lesser Scaup *A. affinis* makes its first appearance in the RBBP report, courtesy of a long-staying male in Caithness that was seen mating with a female Tufted Duck *A. fuligula*. Common Goldeneyes *Bucephala clangula* nested successfully in Northumberland for the fourth consecutive year, and a second pair bred in England, in Avon.

Some wetland species are doing particularly well in the UK at the moment, notably herons and their allies. Another new record total was set for Eurasian Bitterns *Botaurus stellaris*, while Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta* bred at over 100 sites for the first time. Little Bitterns *Ixobrychus minutus* and Great White Egrets *Ardea alba* were proved breeding again in Somerset, and the Norfolk colony of Eurasian Spoonbills *Platalea leucorodia* was occupied for the fourth consecutive year.

A notable event in 2013 was the first successful nesting by White-tailed Eagles *Haliaeetus albicilla* in eastern Scotland in modern times, and the total number of confirmed breeding pairs across the range increased to 75. This species is well monitored, but for some other species of birds of prey (e.g. Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*, Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis* and, increasingly, Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*) only a sample of the population is being counted each year, affecting the accuracy of the totals reported here. Many of these species are studied annually by licensed raptor workers, but there is an important role here for birdwatchers to report signs of nesting behaviour that do not require visits to nests (e.g. pairs on territory, display, fledged young).

After the 2012 survey of Spotted Crakes *Porzana porzana* found 28 singing males at 11 sites, 22 males were heard in 2013, but at a larger number of sites (16). Despite this recording effort, no Baillon's Crakes *P. pusilla* were located, suggesting that the events of 2012 were related to the unusual conditions in that spring (Ausden *et al.* 2013). Common Cranes *Grus grus* further expanded their

range to southwest England, where birds from the reintroduction project bred for the first time. The reintroduced population of Great Bustards *Otis tarda* fledged no young for the fourth consecutive year, however.

Very low numbers of Whimbrels *Numenius phaeopus* were reported, which at least partly reflects the minimal coverage of the species in Shetland – there is clearly an opportunity for some useful survey work there. Fewer Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa* nested than in recent years, although it is believed that all nesting pairs were found and counted. The low numbers may be a result of poor fledging success in the Washes of East Anglia in both 2011 and 2012, as a result of flooding; in the drier conditions in 2013, 39 young fledged there from two sites. There were no confirmed breeding Green Sandpipers *Tringa ochropus*, although pairs were present at two sites.

Golden Orioles *Oriolus oriolus* again failed to establish a territory and this species' extinction as a breeding bird in the UK is surely imminent. After no young were fledged in England in the wet summer of 2012, only one pair of Red-backed Shrikes *Lanius collurio* was found in Devon, but two young fledged. A pair also nested successfully in Scotland. In 2013 there was further evidence of a recovery of resident species sensitive to cold weather, including Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus* and Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*. Overshooting spring migrants that established territories included Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*, Iberian Chiffchaff *P. ibericus*, Savi's *Locustella luscinioides*, Icterine *Hippolais icterina* and Melodious Warblers *H. polyglotta*, and Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*. Two pairs of Marsh Warblers *Acrocephalus palustris* bred, in Northumberland and in Sussex.

An analysis of the sites used by Black Redstarts *Phoenicurus ochruros* in 2013 showed that the majority are in urban or industrial locations but, in addition, rocky upland sites were used in Scotland and Wales. Unusually, one or perhaps two pairs of Blue-headed Wagtails *Motacilla flava flava* bred and there was a report of a long-staying European Serin *Serinus serinus*, the first for seven years.

Overall, eight species were recorded in 2013 for which no evidence of breeding was

received in 2012. There was sufficient evidence to include four of them in the main report: Greenish and Melodious Warblers, Blue-headed Wagtail and Common Rosefinch *Erythrura erythrura*. Records for the remaining four (Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*, Lesser Scaup, Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* and Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*) are listed in Appendix 2.

Ten species were included in the 2012 report for which there was no evidence of breeding in 2013: Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*, Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*, White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*, Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*, Baillon's Crake, Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*, Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*, Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* and Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*. Many of these show breeding behaviour in the UK only occasionally. We urge anyone with information on these, or any other RBBP species, for 2013 or any other year, to submit the records to the Panel Secretary as soon as possible; such records are always welcome and help to maintain our definitive archive. This report only includes information about records that have been verified by county recorders – only these can become part of the ornithological record.

Readers should note that, since 2012, Red Kite *Milvus milvus* and Woodlark *Lullula arborea* are no longer considered by the Panel (see Holling *et al.* 2014). There were no other changes to the RBBP list in 2013.

### Data sources and submission

Each year we try to source as much information as possible from all areas of the UK, and we aim to provide prompt and accurate feedback via these annual reports. The most critical source of data is the annual return from the bird recorder network. County and regional recorders are at the hub of bird recording within their area and they are generally in the best position to compile an accurate summary of the breeding evidence for each species. They receive records from a variety of sources, often directly from observers, but increasingly via the BTO/RSPB/BirdWatch Ireland/SOC/WOS BirdTrack system. Thus recorders, and in turn the RBBP, are highly dependent on bird-

watchers submitting records in the first place. It is critical that birders across the UK make their sightings available, not least for their conservation value.

For a variety of reasons, some counties were unable to submit rare breeding bird data for 2013, even with the extended deadlines offered. In England, the only missing counties were Essex and West Midlands (for the latter, no data have been submitted to the Panel since 2009). Data were available for all counties in Wales, although for Meirionnydd the only source was the Welsh Bird Report (Pritchard 2014); while in Scotland, a change in recorder at the end of 2014 meant that no data were available for the Outer Hebrides. For Northern Ireland, only limited records were available via the Irish Rare Breeding Birds Panel (Perry & Newton 2015) and the Northern Ireland Raptor Study Group. To supplement areas with no input from county recorders, the BTO allowed us access to selected data from the BirdTrack system for the first time. To limit the volume of potential records and in the absence of local expertise, only those BirdTrack records with a breeding evidence code were used.

We very much hope that all recording areas will be able to supply data for 2013 and any other missing years in due course. To maintain the definitive archive of rare breeding bird records, we are always grateful for late submissions and updates to published records. Researchers should note that additions, amendments and corrections to published reports from 2005 onwards are available on the RBBP website ([www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-reports](http://www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-reports)).

Other data sources include the reports from Schedule 1 licence holders, Nest Record Scheme returns, Raptor Study Group data, national surveys and counts from RSPB reserves. These additional sources mean that general levels of data provision were broadly comparable with those in recent RBBP reports. The number of unique records submitted by the end of May in 2015 was around 6% lower than in 2012, at just over 6,000. With the exception of just one county (Meirionnydd) all data came in electronically and mostly in the recommended MS Excel format, with sites listed separately for each species (see [\[submission\]\(#\)\). A further increase in the number of records that include a grid reference is pleasing; this is essential for validation and for detection of duplicate records. Sadly, and as in previous years, some otherwise good records \(especially of raptors\) could not be used because the location could not be verified, which greatly diminishes the conservation value of the fieldwork effort.](http://www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-data-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

Raptor monitoring in many parts of the UK is achieved largely by the various Raptor Study Groups (RSGs). In Scotland, the results are collated by the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Coordinator on behalf of the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme and the RBBP. For the first time, the majority of records could be placed within the system of bird recording areas we use. However, a few records without grid references could not be assigned to an area; these were not used in this report, leading in some instances to lower totals than published elsewhere. Again, we implore all fieldworkers to ensure that rare bird breeding records are supported by an accurate grid reference. In much of northern England, mainly upland raptors are monitored by an array of groups operating under the Northern England Raptor Forum (NERF). Schedule 1 raptor data from Wales are collated for RBBP by RSPB Wales under contract to Natural Resources Wales. For the first time in a number of years, we have been able to use summary data on birds of prey from the Northern Ireland Raptor Study Group, improving the totals for species such as Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*, Merlin *Falco columbarius* and Peregrine Falcon *F. peregrinus*.

Recorders should submit their records to the RBBP by the end of each calendar year, for the *previous* year's breeding season – i.e. data for 2014 should be submitted by 31st December 2015. Recommendations and guidelines on data submission are available at [www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-recording-standards](http://www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-recording-standards). Species-specific guidelines are added as they become available ([www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-species-recording](http://www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-species-recording)), and anyone with particular experience in monitoring a rare species is encouraged to offer their expertise in compiling these guidelines.

## Conservation and other uses of RBBP data

It is RBBP policy to make data available for relevant conservation uses, with appropriate controls. Site-specific information is used by JNCC and the country conservation agencies, and national datasets by the RSPB, for survey and conservation planning. Over the last 12 months, requests for the use of RBBP data have been received for around 40 species, mainly to support the JNCC-led third review of the UK's network of EU Special Protection Areas – an important conservation initiative for which RBBP data have played a key role, and which will help to improve the conservation of many species. Other uses included the support of some survey work and help with other conservation science projects led by the RSPB.

The population totals published in the *BB* reports are also widely used by conservation staff at the RSPB, BTO, JNCC and the four country agencies. All but the most recent reports are available online ([www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-reports](http://www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-reports)); the 'Explore Reports' feature ([www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-online-reports](http://www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-online-reports)) permits access to these same reports firstly by species and then by year, which opens up this information to a wider audience. We are keen for individuals to use this to compile species reviews for potential future publication – please contact the Panel Secretary. In all cases where RBBP data are used or referred to, we ask that the contribution of the Panel is acknowledged and that we receive copies of any new datasets compiled and any outputs. Our data access policy

is available at [www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-access-policy](http://www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-access-policy).

## The Panel

In 2014, Simon Gillings, who had served on the Panel since spring 2007 as the representative for the BTO, was replaced by Dawn Balmer. We thank Simon for his efforts during those years, especially his insight into the development of *Bird Atlas 2007–11* and the data-sharing opportunities to enhance both that project and the RBBP archive. The membership of the Panel is currently: Mark Eaton (Chairman), Dawn Balmer, Ian Francis, Andrew King, David Norman, David Stroud and Mark Holling (Secretary). Members serve in a personal capacity, but some also reflect the interests and requirements of the funding partners. The Panel is funded by the JNCC (on behalf of the country conservation agencies) and the RSPB with additional financial contributions from the BTO. Panel membership aims to achieve broadly representative geographic coverage and to include members who have active involvement in monitoring schemes and specialist research groups, or who participate in various external groups, to facilitate liaison between the Panel and researchers, nest recorders, ringers, surveyors and conservationists.

The RBBP Twitter account now has around 1,000 followers. You can keep up to date with the work of the Panel by following us (@ukrbbp), although we request that no sensitive data are broadcast over Twitter.

## Terminology

### Recording areas

The recording areas used in this report are the same as in previous reports (see Holling *et al.* 2007 and [www.rbbp.org.uk](http://www.rbbp.org.uk)); these match the bird recording areas used by recorders across the UK, with Gower and East Glamorgan presented separately *contra* Ballance & Smith (2008). We attempt to collate all breeding records by recording area (usually 'county') wherever possible and urge contributors to submit records in the same manner, via recorders.

Records from the Greater London recording area, which covers all areas within a 20-mile radius

of St Paul's Cathedral, are reported as follows, in order to reduce the possibility of duplication with surrounding county recording areas. Under the Greater London heading we list only records from the Inner London area and the old county of Middlesex. Records away from this area and within the counties surrounding London – Hertfordshire, Essex, Kent and Surrey – are listed under those county headings.

### Species banners

For all regular breeding species (those which have bred at least once in the UK and have been recorded at least as present in eight out of the last ten years), we give four pieces of information:

1. An indication of population status in one of four categories:
  - **very rare** (<30 breeding pairs (bp) per annum);
  - **rare** (30–300 breeding pairs per annum);
  - **scarce** (301–1,000 breeding pairs per annum);
  - **less scarce** (>1,000 breeding pairs per annum).
2. A population estimate, based where possible on the mean maximum population size from the last five years and shown as ‘5-yr mean’ (in this report the five years are 2009–13). In some cases, we show the totals estimated in national surveys, or, particularly for species with poor coverage, the best available national population estimate.
3. The degree of coverage (in 2013), defined as follows:
  - **near-complete** (RBBP reports present more or less accurate annual totals);
  - **high** (a good estimate of the number of pairs breeding annually, though a small but unknown proportion has not been recorded/reported);
  - **moderate** (a less accurate estimate of the number of pairs breeding annually, which is nonetheless a significant proportion of the total population);
  - **low** (the quality of the data received is so poor that population estimates are of little value for conservation or status reviews; however, maintaining an archive of known sites is useful, and this information can be used in the design of future targeted surveys).
4. The population status as determined by Birds of Conservation Concern 3 (BoCC3) (Eaton *et al.* 2009).

The BoCC3 status can be Red, Amber or Green. The majority of Red- and Amber-listed species on the RBBP list are categorised as such because of some criteria related to their breeding status, whether it be population size (rarity or recent/historical decline), breeding range (localisation or decline) or international importance of the UK breeding population. Some Amber-listed species are also noted as being Species of European Conservation Concern (SPEC). The only species in this report which is Amber-listed for criteria that are not related to the breeding population is the Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*, which owes its status to the localised distribution and international importance of its wintering population.

Occasional breeding species are defined as having bred at least once in the UK but are not

regular breeders. Potential breeding species have not previously bred in the UK but, in some years, show signs that they may do so (e.g. presence of singing males holding territory, pairs in suitable breeding habitat). New colonists are those species that first bred in the UK in 2011–13, or have been proved to breed in the UK subsequent to 2013.

#### Definitions of breeding evidence

The definitions of ‘confirmed breeding’, ‘probable breeding’ and ‘possible breeding’ follow those recommended by the European Bird Census Council (Hagemeijer & Blair 1997). Within tables, the abbreviation ‘confirmed breeding pairs’ means ‘number of pairs confirmed breeding’. Where tables show the number of occupied territories, these are the sum of confirmed and probable breeding pairs, as territorial birds are classed as being probably breeding, unless a nest has (at least) progressed to the stage where eggs have been laid, in which case the pair is classified as a confirmed breeding pair. It is important to note that confirmed breeding is *not* the same as successful breeding; nests that fail with eggs or with young still fall into the confirmed category. A successful breeding pair is one that fledges at least one young bird from a nesting attempt. In the species accounts, the following terminology is used:  $x$  pairs bred (= confirmed breeding);  $y$  probable breeding pairs and  $z$  possible breeding pairs.

Readers should note that in all cases the identity of the birds has been confirmed; it is only breeding *status* that is possible/probable/confirmed. Probable breeding is as defined by EBCC (e.g. a pair holding territory), and does not mean that a breeding attempt probably (i.e. was likely to have) occurred.

The Panel does not routinely include breeding records of hybrids (where one of the parents is a species on the RBBP list) in its reports, e.g. hybrids between Black Duck *Anas rubripes* and Mallard *A. platyrhynchos*, but where young are hatched they will be noted in an Appendix.

#### Definition of numbers used

Within each species account, numbers given in the format ‘1–4 pairs’ indicate (in this case) one confirmed breeding pair and a maximum total of four breeding pairs (thus also including possible and probable breeding pairs). In the tables, ‘n/a’ indicates that no data were received from that county, but the species normally breeds there. For some species, estimated totals (in round brackets) are also included, where these have been provided by county recorders according to the criteria given on the RBBP website.

**Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*****Very rare: 5-yr mean 23 bp****Coverage: near-complete****Amber**

22 sites: 17–22 pairs. After six consecutive years of increasing numbers, fewer pairs of Whooper Swans were reported in 2013, and the number of breeding sites also dropped, by four. In Northern Ireland, the numbers of pairs dropped from five to two, although there was limited information from the province. Nine pairs in Shetland, the main county for breeding Whooper Swans, matched the previous peak total there (in 2011), but productivity was very low: five pairs hatched chicks but only one chick fledged. This is the second successive year of poor productivity for the main UK population.

**Scotland, S**

**Ayrshire** One site: one pair bred, fledging two young. **Clyde** One site: one pair bred. An injured pair hatched two young but none fledged. **Dumfries & Galloway** One site: one probable breeding pair.

**Scotland, Mid**

**Moray & Nairn** One site: one possible breeding pair, recorded on only one date in late June.

**Scotland, N & W**

**Highland** Two sites: one pair bred, one probable breeding pair. **Orkney** One site: one pair bred, but no young fledged. This is the first recorded breeding on the islands since perhaps the 1700s. **Outer Hebrides** Four sites: two pairs bred, with one pair successfully fledging four young; two probable breeding pairs. **Shetland** Nine sites: nine pairs bred but only one chick fledged.

**Northern Ireland**

**Co. Derry** One site: one pair bred. **Co. Fermanagh** One site: one pair bred.

Summering individuals or late-staying pairs were also recorded in a number of counties including **Argyll**, **Cambridgeshire**, **Caernarfonshire**, **Cornwall**, **Cumbria** and **North-east Scotland**. In addition, a naturalised pair was present but did not breed in **Bedfordshire**.

**Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*****Rare: 5-yr mean 173 bp****Coverage: low****Amber**

86 sites: 30–142 pairs. Eurasian Wigeon is common and widespread in winter but as a breeding species it is far more localised (Balmer *et al.* 2013). The main areas where breeding occurs are in the Scottish highlands and islands, the northern Pennines, the East Anglian Fens and the Thames Estuary. No confirmed breeding occurred away from these areas in 2013.

**England, SW**

**Avon** One site: one possible breeding pair. **Devon** One site: one possible breeding pair. **Gloucestershire** One site: two possible breeding pairs. **Somerset** Two sites: two probable breeding pairs.

**England, SE**

**Essex** One site: one pair bred (one brood of five young). **Kent** Three sites: two pairs bred, three probable breeding pairs. **Sussex** One site: one possible breeding pair.

**England, E**

**Cambridgeshire** Seven sites: seven probable and 12 possible breeding pairs. **Lincolnshire** One site: one possible breeding pair. **Norfolk** One site: one probable breeding pair.

**England, C**

**Nottinghamshire** Two sites: two possible breeding pairs.

**England, N**

**Cumbria** Five sites: five possible breeding pairs. **Co. Durham** Four sites: four pairs bred (four broods totalling 19 young). **Northumberland** One site: one probable breeding pair. **Yorkshire** Three sites: two pairs bred (two broods totalling five young), two probable and seven possible breeding pairs.

**Scotland, S**

**Borders** One site: one probable breeding pair. **Clyde** One site: two probable breeding pairs. **Dumfries & Galloway** One site: one probable breeding pair. **Lothian** Three sites: three possible breeding pairs.

**Scotland, Mid**

**Angus & Dundee** One site: two possible breeding pairs. **Fife** Four sites: one probable and three possible breeding pairs. **Moray & Nairn** Three sites: four possible breeding pairs. **North-east Scotland** Six sites: two pairs bred (two broods totalling eight young), four possible breeding pairs. **Perth & Kinross** One

site: one possible breeding pair.

Scotland, N & W

Argyll Four sites: three pairs bred (three broods totalling eight young), four probable and four possible breeding pairs. Caithness One site: three probable breeding pairs. Highland Nine sites: two pairs bred and at least 15 probable breeding pairs. Orkney 11 sites: six pairs bred (with five broods counted holding 24 young), eight probable and seven possible breeding pairs. Outer Hebrides Five sites: seven pairs bred (six broods were counted, comprising 35 young), one probable breeding pair. Shetland One site: one pair bred (one brood of four young).

As in previous reports, records of summering birds and pairs that showed no evidence of breeding are not included in the totals. Such pairs remain together throughout the summer, often at lowland sites, which may occasionally be used for breeding, but generally seem not to be. Pairs are assigned to the 'possible' breeding category based on habitat and behavioural criteria but it can be difficult to distinguish these from 'summering' pairs. As well as counties that reported breeding evidence, summering pairs were reported from Anglesey and Northamptonshire.

**Pintail *Anas acuta***

Rare: 5-yr mean 30 bp

Coverage: high

Amber

13 sites: 3–25 pairs. The recent decline (see Holling *et al.* 2014) continues, with confirmed breeding only in Kent and Argyll. For the second consecutive year there were no confirmed breeding records in the former stronghold of Orkney, where as recently as 2010 there were 18 pairs.

England, SE

Kent Two sites: one pair bred (brood of ten), one possible breeding pair.

England, E

Cambridgeshire Two sites: four possible breeding pairs.

England, N

Yorkshire One site: two possible breeding pairs.

Scotland, S

Dumfries & Galloway One site: three possible breeding pairs. Lothian One site: one possible breeding pair.

Scotland, Mid

Perth & Kinross One site: one possible breeding pair.

Scotland, N & W

Argyll Three sites: two pairs bred (a nest with nine eggs and a brood of young), five probable and two possible breeding pairs. Orkney Two sites: two probable and one possible breeding pairs.

**Garganey *Anas querquedula***

Rare: 5-yr mean 89 bp

Coverage: high

Amber

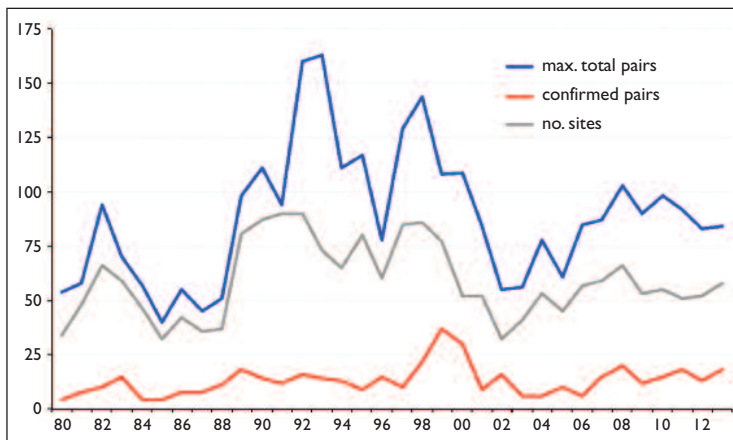


Fig. 1. Breeding status of Garganey *Anas querquedula* in the UK, 1980–2013.

58 sites: 18–84 pairs. The Panel has been reporting numbers of breeding Garganey since 1980. Fig. 1 shows that after peaks in the early and late 1990s, numbers reported annually have been reasonably, with maxima of around 80–100 breeding pairs each year since 2005, of which no more than



20 are confirmed, usually records of females with broods. As usual, most confirmed records in 2013 were from counties in the eastern half of England, from Yorkshire south to Sussex.

England, SW

Gloucestershire Two sites: two possible breeding pairs. Hampshire Two sites: two possible breeding pairs. Somerset One extensive site: three probable and two possible breeding pairs.

England, SE

Buckinghamshire One site: one possible breeding pair. Essex Two sites: one pair bred, one probable breeding pair. Kent Six sites: two pairs bred, seven probable breeding pairs. Oxfordshire One site: one probable breeding pair. Sussex Three sites: one pair bred (brood of four), two possible breeding pairs.

England, E

Cambridgeshire Seven sites: three pairs bred (broods totalling 18 young), four probable breeding pairs and seven possible breeding pairs. Lincolnshire Three sites: one probable and two possible breeding pairs. Norfolk Five sites: three pairs bred, five probable breeding pairs. Northamptonshire One site: two possible breeding pairs. Suffolk Two sites: two pairs bred.

England, C

Nottinghamshire One site: one pair bred (female with five well-grown ducklings seen in August). Shropshire One site: one possible breeding pair.

England, N

Cleveland One site: one probable breeding pair. Lancashire & N Merseyside Three sites: two pairs bred, one probable and one possible breeding pairs. Yorkshire Seven sites: three pairs bred, two probable and nine possible breeding pairs.

Wales

Carmarthenshire One site: one possible breeding pair.

Scotland, S

Borders One site: one possible breeding pair.

Scotland, Mid

Angus & Dundee Two sites: two possible breeding pairs. Fife One site: one probable breeding pair. North-east Scotland One site: one probable breeding pair.

Scotland, N & W

Argyll One site: one possible breeding pair. Orkney One site: one probable breeding pair.

Northern Ireland

Co. Antrim One site: one probable breeding pair.

**Shoveler *Anas clypeata***

Less scarce: 5-yr mean 974 bp

Coverage: high

Amber

391–964 pairs.

Shoveler	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs			
			Surrey	0	4
			Sussex	4	10
England, SW	6	58	England, E	210	407
Avon	2	3	Cambridgeshire	106	217
Dorset	0	7	Lincolnshire	23	38
Gloucestershire	0	4	Norfolk	17	87
Hampshire	3	3	Northamptonshire	0	1
Isle of Wight	0	2	Suffolk	64	64
Somerset	1	39	England, C	6	15
England, SE	51	142	Nottinghamshire	3	4
Bedfordshire	0	2	Shropshire	0	1
Berkshire	0	9	Staffordshire	1	4
Essex	42	61	Warwickshire	1	4
Greater London	3	8	West Midlands	0	1
Hertfordshire	1	11	Worcestershire	1	1
Kent	1	19	England, N	61	189
Oxfordshire	0	18	Cheshire & Wirral	1	6
			Cleveland	1	6



Ben Green

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Shoveler cont.	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs			
			Lothian	0	1
			Scotland, Mid	14	25
Cumbria	0	8	Angus & Dundee	0	4
Co. Durham	3	3	Fife	1	2
Greater Manchester	3	6	North-east Scotland	0	6
Lancashire & N Merseyside	3	32	Perth & Kinross	13	13
Northumberland	0	1	Scotland, N & W	22	78
Yorkshire	50	127	Argyll	6	32
Wales	6	17	Highland	0	2
Anglesey	1	2	Orkney	13	28
Denbigh & Flint	0	9	Outer Hebrides	3	14
Gower	1	1	Shetland	0	2
Gwent	2	2	Northern Ireland	0	5
Pembrokeshire	2	3	Co. Antrim	0	3
Scotland, S	15	27	Co. Down	0	2
Borders	0	6	Channel Islands	0	1
Clyde	3	6	Guernsey	0	1
Dumfries & Galloway	12	14	TOTALS	391	964

**Common Pochard *Aythya ferina***

Scarce: 5-yr mean 653 bp

Coverage: high

Amber

360–622 pairs. Only nine pairs were reported in Scotland, with just three confirmed breeding records (all at one site). This species’ decline in Scotland, and in Northumberland, contrasts with the relatively stable numbers across much of England. At present it is unclear what lies behind this change in status in northern Britain.

Pochards require nutrient-rich waterbodies but many apparently favourable sites in southern and eastern Scotland, and in Orkney, have been deserted in recent years. For both Pochards and Shovelers, it helps greatly if birdwatchers report all pairs found in suitable breeding habitat in spring and summer. In cases where pairs are found in April or May, it is especially useful to revisit the site in June or July to look for broods of ducklings.

Common Pochard	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs			
			England, C	7	7
			Nottinghamshire	5	5
			Worcestershire	2	2
England, SW	15	106	England, N	91	114
Avon	1	1	Cheshire & Wirral	7	7
Dorset	4	9	Cleveland	22	22
Hampshire	5	5	Cumbria	0	1
Somerset	3	89	Co. Durham	1	1
Wiltshire	2	2	Greater Manchester	0	5
England, SE	163	218	Lancashire & N Merseyside	22	22
Bedfordshire	5	5	Northumberland	2	2
Berkshire	7	10	Yorkshire	37	54
Essex	56	72	Wales	17	18
Greater London	19	20	Anglesey	2	3
Hertfordshire	28	56	Carmarthenshire	11	11
Kent	36	36	Gwent	4	4
Oxfordshire	1	5	Scotland, S	0	1
Surrey	2	5	Clyde	0	1
Sussex	9	9	Scotland, Mid	3	8
England, E	48	129	Fife	0	5
Cambridgeshire	9	52	Perth & Kinross	3	3
Lincolnshire	13	26	Northern Ireland	16	21
Norfolk	23	48	Co. Armagh/Co. Down	16	21
Suffolk	3	3	TOTALS	360	622

**Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra***

Rare: 52 bp (Eaton et al. 2008)

Coverage: near-complete

Red

Seven sites: 10–33 pairs. Common Scoter is the focus of annual monitoring by RSPB Scotland and we believe that most pairs are now counted annually. There has been a small decline in numbers from 2010, when up to 42 pairs bred.

Scotland, Mid

Perth & Kinross Five sites: one pair bred (a brood of two seen), one probable and six possible breeding pairs.

Scotland, N & W

Caithness/Highland One extensive site (Flow Country): seven pairs bred (seven broods yielded at least 34 young; at least 18 fledged) and a further 12 probable breeding pairs. Highland One site: two pairs bred and four other pairs present.

**Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula***

Rare: 5-yr mean 140 bp

Coverage: low

Amber

A minimum of 105 breeding females. The main population, in Strathspey, Highland, was again not monitored fully so the totals are less representative than those reported prior to 2011, reflected in the decline in the five-year mean. Breeding remains unusual in England: since the Panel began reporting the species (in 1973) there have been records in 1990, 1991, 2008 and annually since 2010. Successful breeding in Northumberland occurred for the fourth year in a row. Pairs and individuals lingered into the summer in at least five other counties: Angus & Dundee, Cumbria, Fife, Hertfordshire and Leicestershire & Rutland.

England, SW

Avon One site: one pair bred. A female and two young (about four weeks old) were seen in late June and were still present in August.

England, N

Northumberland One site: one pair bred. Eight ducklings hatched and there were three juveniles still on site in mid July.



Alan Harris

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Scotland, Mid

North-east Scotland Deeside: 43 pairs bred.

Scotland, N & W

Highland Badenoch & Strathspey: at least 60 pairs bred.

**Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix***

**Scarce: 5-yr mean 839 singing males**

**Coverage: high**

Amber

2–237 singing males or pairs. There were records of confirmed breeding from Hertfordshire, the Isle of Man and Northumberland but 2013 was the poorest year for Quails since 2001. Many county recorders noted the low numbers and remarked that most were heard on one date only, which might suggest that some moved on quickly after arrival.

Common Quail	Total pairs or singing males		
		Lincolnshire	7
		Norfolk	7
		Northamptonshire	2
		Suffolk	3
England, SW	41	England, C	14
Avon	4	Derbyshire	3
Cornwall	1	Leicestershire & Rutland	3
Devon	1	Shropshire	3
Dorset	1	Staffordshire	2
Gloucestershire	9	Warwickshire	3
Hampshire	2	England, N	57
Somerset	2	Cheshire & Wirral	4
Wiltshire	21	Cleveland	3
England, SE	46	Durham	9
Bedfordshire	5	Lancashire & N Merseyside	3
Berkshire	7	Northumberland	9
Buckinghamshire	4	Yorkshire	29
Hertfordshire	9	Wales	6
Kent	3	Caernarfonshire	1
Oxfordshire	15	Denbigh & Flint	1
Sussex	3	Pembrokeshire	2
England, E	20	Radnorshire	2
Cambridgeshire	1		

Common Quail <i>cont.</i>	Total pairs or singing males		
		Perth & Kinross	2
		Upper Forth	1
Scotland, S	28	Scotland, N & W	13
Borders	14	Argyll	3
Dumfries & Galloway	2	Highland	6
Lothian	12	Orkney	2
Scotland, Mid	10	Shetland	2
Angus & Dundee	2	Isle of Man/Channel Islands	11
Fife	5	TOTAL	237

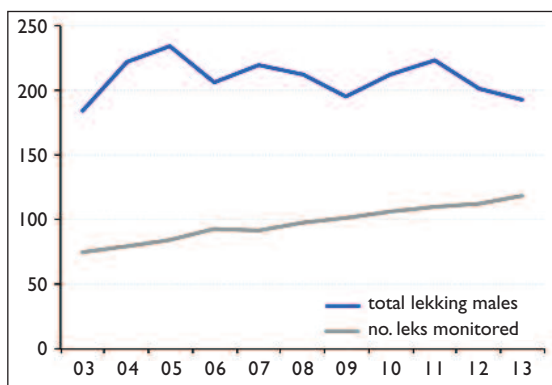
**Capercaillie *Tetrao urogallus***

Rare: 5-yr mean 205 lekking males

Coverage: moderate



119 leks were monitored, a further increase in the number checked since RBBP reporting began, but a similar number (70) were active and a total of 193 displaying males was counted, a further decrease on the totals of the previous two years. Fig. 2 shows how, despite the improved monitoring effort, the number of males recorded has not increased over the same time period. The estimated number of individual birds derived from the national transect-based survey in the 2009/10 winter was 1,285 (see Ewing *et al.* 2012).



**Fig. 2.** The total number of Capercaillie *Tetrao urogallus* leks monitored and the number of lekking males counted in the UK, 2003–13.



Simon Knight

**232.** Displaying male Capercaillie *Tetrao urogallus*, Speyside, February 2013.

Scotland, S

Clyde Four leks monitored but no activity recorded. However, one male was heard at one site in April.

Scotland, Mid

Moray & Nairn Ten active leks: 14 males. North-east Scotland Seven active leks: 12 males. Perth & Kinross One active lek: one male.

Scotland, N & W

Highland 52 active leks: 165 males. In the Abernethy Forest RSPB recording area, 26 males and 19 females were counted and 14 chicks were found during a brood-count census.

**Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata***

**Less scarce: 1,255 bp (Dillon *et al.* 2009) Coverage: low**

Amber

Details were received for just 206 nesting pairs, only a fraction of the estimated 1,255 pairs breeding in Scotland (Dillon *et al.* 2009). Since we are unable to provide accurate figures for most recording areas, we summarise only those records submitted away from the Northern Isles. In Shetland, data from study areas showed that the number of pairs with chicks in late summer was the lowest ever (12 compared with an average of 31 for 2004–13; Heubeck & Parnaby 2015). This low productivity is thought to reflect problems with food availability. Similarly poor fledging success was also reported from Orkney mainland.

Scotland, S

Clyde One site: one probable breeding pair. Clyde Islands On Arran and Bute, at least two pairs bred and there were a further nine probable breeding pairs.

Scotland, Mid

Moray & Nairn One site: one possible breeding pair. North-east Scotland One pair bred; one egg laid but no young believed to have fledged. Perth & Kinross One pair bred, seen with two young.

Scotland, N & W

Limited data received, as follows: Argyll At least six pairs bred plus three probable breeding pairs. Caithness Five pairs bred with young seen at four of these. Highland At least 28 pairs bred, plus one probable breeding pair. Outer Hebrides At least 30 pairs bred plus two probable breeding pairs.

**Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica***

**Rare: 217 bp (Dillon *et al.* 2009) Coverage: moderate**

Amber

23–53 pairs. Data received were effectively only a sample of the population in N & W Scotland, although it is believed that all pairs elsewhere were located. There was nevertheless a small increase in the number of pairs reported.

Scotland, S

Ayrshire One probable breeding pair. Dumfries & Galloway One pair bred.

Scotland, Mid

Moray & Nairn One pair bred, fledging one young (the first successful breeding at this site in six years). Perth & Kinross Two possible breeding pairs. Upper Forth Three possible breeding pairs.

Scotland, N & W

Argyll Five pairs bred, with two pairs being successful, fledging three young in total, and one probable breeding pair. Another seven traditional sites were not checked for occupancy. Highland Nine pairs bred, 20 probable breeding pairs. Outer Hebrides Details were received of just ten pairs; of these, seven pairs bred, plus two probable and one possible breeding pairs.

**Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris***

**Rare: 5-yr mean 120 booming males Coverage: near-complete**

Red

73 sites: 121–140 booming males, with at least 46 breeding attempts at 23 sites. Even though this species is no longer subject to a full annual survey by the RSPB, the number of breeding pairs, based on records of booming males (see note below), continues to rise and the five-year mean increased by ten in 2013. As monitoring is reduced, additional records submitted to the RBBP become a more important component of the annual review.

Eurasian Bittern	No. sites	Minimum no. booming males	Maximum no. booming males	Minimum no. nests	Maximum no. nests
<b>England, SW</b>	11	33	36	14	14
Dorset	1	0	1	0	0
Hampshire	1	0	1	0	0
Somerset	9	33	34	14	14
<b>England, SE</b>	6	8	8	1	1
Bedfordshire	2	2	2	0	0
Kent	2	3	3	1	1
Oxfordshire	1	2	2	0	0
Sussex	1	1	1	0	0
<b>England, E</b>	43	65	77	25	27
Cambridgeshire	11	12	16	6	7
Lincolnshire	4	3	6	0	0
Norfolk	18	20	22	5	6
Suffolk	10	30	33	14	14
<b>England, C</b>	3	3	3	0	0
Derbyshire	2	2	2	0	0
Nottinghamshire	1	1	1	0	0
<b>England, N</b>	10	12	16	6	7
Greater Manchester	1	1	1	0	0
Lancashire & N Merseyside	2	1	2	0	0
Yorkshire	7	10	13	6	7
<b>TOTALS</b>	73	121	140	46	49

These figures are based on the RSPB monitoring methodology; the minimum figure is the closest to the number of occupied territories. The minimum number of booming males is based on residency at a site for at least a week, while the maximum figure includes males booming for a shorter period only and cases where it was not possible to confirm that different males were involved.

### Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 2 bp**

Two sites: 1–4 pairs. Although there was again just one confirmed breeding pair, there was some evidence of three other territories, indicating a possible consolidation of this new population, which first bred in the Somerset Levels in 2010.

#### England, SW

**Somerset** Two sites: (1) one pair bred, fledging at least two young, and at least two other unattached males; (2) one barking male heard between 24th April and 2nd June.

### Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

**Scarce: 5-yr mean 816 bp**

**Coverage: moderate**

**Amber**

107 sites: 724–755 pairs. The number of sites with breeding Little Egrets passed the century mark for the first time, and another milestone was the first reported breeding for Nottinghamshire, but the number of nesting pairs reported dropped to its lowest level for six years. In part, this is probably due to an increasing level of apathy over recording this species, with perhaps ten colonies not counted in 2013; for these we have had to assume a count of just one. However, several of these colonies have not been counted in recent years either. We calculate that at least 80 nests went uncounted in 2013; taking this into account, there was a small decrease (<10%) between 2012 and 2013. This matches a decline in the number of nests of Grey Herons *Ardea cinerea* counted by the BTO Heronries census in recent years, which is likely to be a response to the sequence of cold winters earlier this decade (Baillie *et al.* 2014). Trend data from Europe

Little Egret	No. sites	Confirmed and probable breeding pairs			
			Norfolk	7*	67+
			Northamptonshire	2	4
			Suffolk	7	37
England, SW	30	156	England, C	3	14
Cornwall	3	10	Leicestershire & Rutland	2	6
Devon	9*	62+	Nottinghamshire	1	8
Dorset	2*	3+	England, N	3	66
Gloucestershire	3	16	Cheshire & Wirral	1	60
Hampshire	5*	27+	Cumbria	1	5
Somerset	6	30	Yorkshire	1	1
Wiltshire	2	8	Wales	11	85
England, SE	28	223	Anglesey	2	12
Berkshire	2	4	Caernarfonshire	2	40
Buckinghamshire	2	10	Carmarthenshire	3	17
Essex	5	59	Ceredigion	1*	1+
Hertfordshire	3	11	Gower	2	14
Kent	5	83	Gwent	1*	1+
Oxfordshire	1	2	Northern Ireland	1	3
Sussex	10	54	Co. Down	1	3
England, E	24	178	Channel Islands	7	30
Cambridgeshire	3	26	TOTALS	107	755
Lincolnshire	5	44			

\* Colonies occupied but at least one in the county was not counted.

(PECBMS 2014) also showed a decline in numbers between 2011 and 2012, and a longer-term decline of -30% between 2003 and 2012.

### Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

#### New colonist

One site: two pairs. Great White Egrets nested for the second consecutive year in the Somerset Levels, with two pairs again present.

England, SW

Somerset One site: two pairs bred fledging a total of five young.

### Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Very rare: 5-yr mean 9 bp

Coverage: near-complete

Amber

One site: Ten pairs. Reports of summering birds are becoming more common but so far Holkham remains the only nesting site in the UK.

England, E

Norfolk One site (Holkham): ten pairs bred, fledging a total of 18 young.

### Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Very rare: 5-yr mean 27 bp

Coverage: near-complete

Amber

17 sites: 23–26 pairs bred. The low numbers of breeding pairs in the Scottish Highlands continues to give cause for concern. The displaying pair outside the normal range was unusual, and, much farther away, a single bird summered for its seventh consecutive year in Devon.

The decline in the UK contrasts with the situation in Iceland. Stuart Benn of the RSPB, who monitors the species in Scotland, commented: ‘Slavonian Grebes have undergone a dramatic increase in Iceland recently, from some 300 pairs in the early to mid 1990s, to 850 pairs in 2005 and 1,000 pairs in 2011–12. There is some indication that this increase has now levelled off.



By contrast, breeding numbers in north Norway have crashed over that same period. The RSPB has been working with Slavonian Grebe researchers in these countries for the last few years and they are now beginning to get some idea of why these large-scale changes are taking place.’

### Scotland, Mid and N & W

**Angus & Dundee** One site: one pair was recorded, late in the season, but courtship display was seen and two nests were built. **Highland/Moray & Nairn** 16 sites: 23 pairs bred at 14 sites, elsewhere two possible breeding pairs. Loch Ruthven was again the major site with ten breeding pairs but only three young fledged.

### Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

**Rare: 5-yr mean 51 bp**

**Coverage: near-complete**

Amber

20 sites: 28–55 pairs. In England, breeding occurred mainly at traditional sites, with a slight improvement in the number of pairs and sites over the last two years. It is now ten years since breeding was last confirmed in Scotland (Holling 2014) and there were no reports of even possible breeding from the country between 2009 and 2013.

### England, SE

**Essex** One site: one pair bred, hatching two young, but neither fledged. **Hertfordshire** One site: four pairs bred, fledging two young; eight probable breeding pairs. **Kent** Two sites: (1) one pair bred, fledging one young; six probable breeding pairs; (2) one possible breeding pair. **Surrey** One site: two probable breeding pairs (display but no further evidence of breeding).

### England, E

**Cambridgeshire** One site: one pair bred, fledging three young. **Lincolnshire** Three sites: (1) two pairs bred fledging seven young; (2)–(3) one possible breeding pair at each.

### England, C

**Nottinghamshire** Two sites: (1) two pairs bred (five young fledged from seven hatched); one possible breeding pair; (2) one possible breeding pair.

### England, N

**Cheshire & Wirral** One site: nine pairs bred, fledging 11 young. **Co. Durham** One site: one pair bred, fledging two young. **Greater Manchester** One site: one possible breeding pair. **Northumberland** Three sites: (1) one pair bred, fledging two young; one probable breeding pair; (2) two possible breeding pairs; (3) one possible breeding pair. **Yorkshire** Three sites: (1) four pairs bred, with seven fledged or large young; (2) one pair bred hatching three and fledging one young, plus one possible breeding pair; (3) one pair bred hatching two and fledging one young.

### Honey-buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

**Rare: 5-yr mean 43 bp**

**Coverage: high**

Amber

18–34 pairs and at least 16 territories where only single birds present; at least 28 young fledged. After low numbers and poor productivity in 2012, the total of breeding pairs was again low in 2013 but the number of large young was a big improvement on the ten fledged in 2012. The high number of sites with only a single bird reported will in some instances refer to unpaired birds, but may also reflect the secretive habits of Honey-buzzards and the need for long periods of observation from vantage points to survey a site effectively. We know that at least 12 sites for this species in England and Wales were not surveyed in 2013. With other apparently suitable habitat in England, Scotland and Wales not being searched for Honey-buzzards, Roberts & Law (2014) suggested that there may be over 100 pairs nesting in Britain. They used data from the RBBP to show that birds have been recorded in breeding habitat in 34 counties since 2000, compared with the 17 reported here.

### England, SW

**Dorset** Three territories occupied by single birds only. **Hampshire** Six pairs bred, fledging at least ten young, with at least single birds present at three other sites. **Wiltshire** One pair bred, fledging two young; two probable breeding pairs and two further territories with just a single bird present.

### England, SE

**Kent** One probable breeding pair. **Surrey** Two pairs bred, fledging four young. **Sussex** Three pairs bred,

fledging six young; two probable and one possible breeding pairs. One territory occupied by a single bird.

England, E

Norfolk One probable and one possible breeding pair and two single birds elsewhere.

England, C

Nottinghamshire One pair bred (young were fledged but number unknown) and one possible breeding pair.

England, N

Cumbria One probable breeding pair. Yorkshire At least one pair bred (no information on young), and one possible breeding pair.

Wales

East Glamorgan/Gower Two pairs bred, fledging four young; two probable breeding pairs. Meirionnydd One single bird recorded.

Scotland, S

Borders One single bird recorded. Dumfries & Galloway One pair bred, fledging two young; one probable breeding pair and one further single bird.

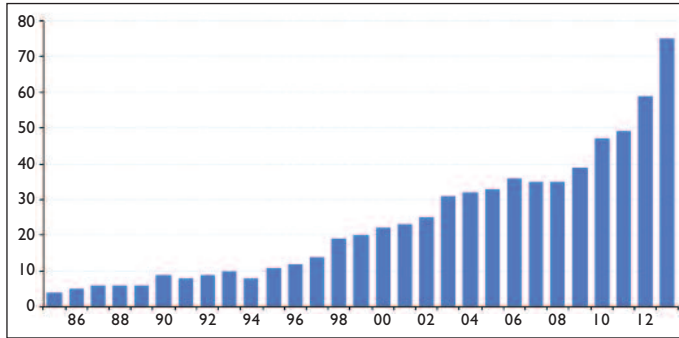
Scotland, Mid

Moray & Nairn Records of single birds at two sites only. Perth & Kinross One pair bred but number of young not known; also one probable breeding pair. Upper Forth One probable breeding pair.

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

Rare: 5-yr mean 61 bp

Coverage: near-complete



**Fig. 3.** The total number of confirmed breeding pairs of White-tailed Eagles *Haliaeetus albicilla* in the UK since breeding was first recorded, in 1985.

75–84 pairs; 62 young fledged. The first breeding attempt in eastern Scotland for nearly 200 years took place in 2013, and a single chick fledged. This follows the recent reintroductions there: both members of the breeding pair were released in 2009. Meanwhile, the established west-coast population continued to increase, reaching another new peak (fig. 3).

Scotland, Mid

Angus & Dundee One territorial pair. Fife One pair bred, fledging one young.

Scotland, N & W

Argyll 35 pairs bred, two further territorial pairs. At least 26 young fledged.

Highland 18 pairs bred, with a further three territorial pairs. At least 14 young fledged.

Orkney One territorial pair.

Outer Hebrides 21 pairs bred, two other territorial pairs. At least 21 young fledged.



Dan Powell

**Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus***

Scarce: 5-yr mean 351 bp

Coverage: moderate

Amber

280–323 breeding females/pairs. Under-recording of this species in some parts of its core range, notably the Thames marshes of Essex and Kent, and the Norfolk Broads, means that the total numbers reported are less than might be expected; the five-year mean of pairs reported to RBBP is about 100–150 pairs below the likely minimum population. The range continues to expand to the west with possible breeding in Cornwall and Warwickshire. In continental Europe, an analysis of numbers across 13 countries points to a moderate increase since 2005 (PECBMS 2014).

England, SW

**Cornwall** One possible breeding pair. **Dorset** Three pairs bred, including the first breeding at Poole Harbour for about 60 years. **Somerset** Three pairs bred and one probable breeding pair.

England, SE

**Essex** 19 pairs bred, four probable and two possible breeding pairs. **Kent** Clearly under-recorded, with data received on just 17 breeding pairs in 2013; previous atlas work suggests 80–100 pairs in the county. **Sussex** Two pairs bred and two probable breeding pairs.

England, E

**Cambridgeshire** 25 pairs bred, six probable and two possible breeding pairs. **Lincolnshire** 31 pairs bred, one probable and one possible breeding pairs. **Norfolk** A minimum of 62 pairs bred, plus six probable breeding pairs. Coverage was incomplete, however, especially in the Broads. **Suffolk** 63 pairs bred.

England, C

**Nottinghamshire** One pair bred and one probable breeding pair. **Warwickshire** One possible breeding pair.

England, N

**Cheshire & Wirral** Two pairs bred and one probable breeding pair. **Cumbria** One possible breeding pair. **Lancashire & N Merseyside** Eight pairs bred and one possible breeding pair. **Northumberland** One pair bred. **Yorkshire** 30 pairs bred, two probable and four possible breeding pairs.

Scotland, S

**Borders** One possible breeding pair.

Scotland, Mid

**Angus & Dundee** One probable breeding pair, recorded at two different sites. **Fife** One pair bred. **Perth & Kinross** Four pairs bred. Single birds also recorded in **Moray & Nairn** and **North-east Scotland**.

Channel Islands

**Jersey** Six pairs bred. **Guernsey** Two pairs bred, two probable and two possible breeding pairs.

**Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus***

Scarce: 662 bp (Hayhow et al. 2013)

Coverage: moderate

Red

Hen Harrier	Confirmed breeding pairs	Territories occupied by pairs			
			<b>Scotland, Mid</b>	27	41
			Moray & Nairn	6	7
			North-east Scotland	1	2
			Perth & Kinross	20	32
<b>England, N</b>	3	3	<b>Scotland, N &amp; W</b>	138	177
<b>Wales</b>	23	31	Argyll	30	39
Breconshire	1	1	Caithness	0	2
Caernarfonshire	0	1	Highland	17	18
Denbigh & Flint	3	5	Orkney	74	101
East Glamorgan	0	1	Outer Hebrides	17	17
Meirionnydd	12	14	<b>Northern Ireland</b>	16	55
Montgomeryshire	3	3	Co. Antrim	2	15
Radnorshire	4	6	Co. Derry	0	5
<b>Scotland, S</b>	26	51	Co. Fermanagh	9	19
Ayrshire	6	7	Co. Tyrone	5	16
Borders	3	3	<b>Isle of Man</b>	3	3
Clyde	6	9			
Clyde Islands	1	20	<b>TOTALS</b>	236	361
Dumfries & Galloway	10	12			

236–361 monitored pairs. In 2013, the status of the Hen Harrier became national news in England when no young at all were raised. The main breeding area in recent years had been the Forest of Bowland (Lancashire & N Merseyside) but, as in 2012, no pairs settled on territory there (in 2011 there had been seven breeding pairs, when 12 young fledged). Three pairs attempted to nest elsewhere in the north of England in 2013 but all failed. At one, where a 24-hour watch was set up to protect the nest, the eggs did not hatch and proved to be infertile (the female may have been an immature bird). At another, the male disappeared from the site in suspicious circumstances just a week after the nest was found. The female was incubating at the time but deserted the nest, perhaps because of the lack of food provisioning by the male.

A new survey of breeding Hen Harriers in the UK and Isle of Man will be undertaken in 2016.

**Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 13 bp**

**Coverage: near-complete**

**Amber**

Five sites: 7–8 pairs fledged six young. This represents another poor year for Montagu's Harriers in Britain. Again there was just one pair in the former stronghold, in the hinterland of the Wash, although a single male was present for a month in Cambridgeshire. Males can roost over 10 km from a nest site (M. Thomas pers. comm.) so it is feasible that a pair may have been overlooked in the area.

England, S

Four sites: six 'pairs' bred (at one site a polygamous male paired with two females), four young fledged; plus one possible breeding pair.

England, E

Norfolk One site: one pair bred, fledging two young.

**Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis***

**Scarce: 5-yr mean 469 bp**

**Coverage: moderate**

**Green**

361–464 pairs. Some detailed Goshawk studies reported that the cold and late spring in 2013 caused many pairs to desert when nest-building or at the early stages of egg-laying or incubation (Challis *et al.* 2014). Nevertheless, a large proportion (76.5%) of the submitted records in 2013 were of confirmed breeding, even higher than the average of 68% in the last 20 years – these are nests visited by licensed fieldworkers for productivity monitoring and to ring the chicks. We believe that there is consistent under-recording of Goshawks, at the local and national scale, because birdwatchers are not reporting many records of the species' spring display – the one time of the year when this secretive hawk becomes more conspicuous.

Northern Goshawk	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs			
			Derbyshire	11	11
			Herefordshire	13	20
England, SW	76	98	Nottinghamshire	8	8
Cornwall	4	4	Shropshire	16	19
Devon	8	8	Staffordshire	3	3
Gloucestershire	25	27	Warwickshire	1	1
Hampshire	26	40	Worcestershire	3	3
Somerset	0	2	England, N	48	83
Wiltshire	13	17	Cheshire & Wirral	0	2
England, SE	1	4	Cleveland	0	1
Surrey	0	1	Cumbria	1	4
Sussex	1	3	Co. Durham	0	8
England, E	14	15	Greater Manchester	0	1
Norfolk	9	9	Lancashire & N Merseyside	0	1
Suffolk	5	6	Northumberland	26	34
England, C	55	65	Yorkshire	21	32

Northern Goshawk <i>cont.</i>	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs	Scotland, S	54	54
			Ayrshire	1	1
Wales	52	82	Borders	19	19
Breconshire	4	10	Clyde	2	2
Caernarfonshire	0	2	Dumfries & Galloway	31	31
Carmarthenshire	0	1	Lothian	1	1
Denbigh & Flint	2	2	Scotland, Mid	61	63
East Glamorgan	1	2	Angus & Dundee	5	5
Gower	3	8	Moray & Nairn	1	1
Gwent	24	24	North-east Scotland	51	53
Montgomeryshire	7	13	Perth & Kinross	1	1
Pembrokeshire	4	4	Upper Forth	3	3
Radnorshire	7	16	TOTALS	361	464

**Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos***

Scarce: 442 bp (Eaton et al. 2007)

Coverage: moderate

Amber

194–265 pairs. The total of 128 fledged young is the highest since 2010, when a similar number of territories were monitored, mainly by members of the Scottish Raptor Study Groups. A national survey in 2015 will update our knowledge of the status of the Golden Eagle in Scotland.

Golden Eagle	Singles <sup>1</sup>	Probable breeding pairs <sup>2</sup>	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs	Min. no. young fledged
England, N	1	0	0	0	0
Scotland, S	0	3	8	11	2
Borders	0	0	1	1	0
Clyde	0	0	1	1	1
Clyde Islands	0	2	5	7	1
Dumfries & Galloway	0	1	1	2	0
Scotland, Mid	5	10	34	44	26
Angus & Dundee	1	1	3	4	3
Moray & Nairn	0	1	0	1	0
North-east Scotland	2	2	11	13	6
Perth & Kinross	2	4	16	20	15
Upper Forth	0	2	4	6	2
Scotland, N & W	13	58	152	210	100
Argyll	0	20	43	63	28
Caithness	1	1	0	1	0
Highland	12	32	79	111	51
Outer Hebrides	0	5	30	35	21
TOTALS	19	71	194	265	128

<sup>1</sup> Total includes home ranges occupied by single birds or showing signs of occupation but no pair seen.

<sup>2</sup> May include some pairs that laid eggs but failed early, and pairs on territory that were not fully monitored, so evidence of egg-laying was not available. Total also includes immature pairs.

**Osprey *Pandion haliaetus***

Rare: 5-yr mean 206 bp

Coverage: moderate

Amber

178–208 pairs. A minimum of 307 young fledged. Although there are increasing numbers of pairs nesting in England, Wales and southern Scotland (totals of 15, seven and 31 pairs respectively, the highest ever reported in all three areas), there has been no such increase in the rest of Scotland.

This may be due to data received being largely from the same study areas each year, the size of which are constrained by the time available to volunteers, which in turn results in some new territories going unrecorded. Unfortunately, accurate locations of many of these nests are not submitted to the Panel, meaning that it is impossible to identify new and additional sites reported by more casual observers. This is hampering our knowledge of the changing status of this species and its conservation and we urge that full site details are submitted.

England, E

Northamptonshire One territorial pair.

England, C

Leicestershire & Rutland Five pairs bred, fledging 14 young.

England, N

Cumbria Three pairs bred, with two of these fledging four young; three other territorial pairs. Northumberland Two pairs bred, fledging four young; and one territorial pair.

Wales

Meirionnydd Two pairs bred fledging four young; one territorial pair and two other immature pairs.

Montgomeryshire One pair bred, fledging two young; and one probable breeding pair.

Scotland, S

Ayrshire One territorial pair. Borders Eight pairs bred, fledging 14 young. Clyde Nine pairs bred, fledging 14 young; three other territorial pairs. Clyde Islands One pair bred, but no young fledged. Dumfries & Galloway Five pairs bred, fledging ten young; three other territorial pairs. Lothian One pair bred but failed before the eggs hatched. This is the first confirmed breeding record for the county.

Scotland, Mid

Angus & Dundee Eight pairs bred, fledging 11 young; one other territorial pair. Fife One pair bred, fledging one young. Moray & Nairn 13 pairs bred, fledging 27 young. North-east Scotland 18 pairs bred, fledging 33 young. Perth & Kinross 29 pairs bred, fledging 43 young; two other territorial pairs. Upper Forth Nine pairs bred, fledging 13 young; three other territorial pairs.

Scotland, N & W

Argyll 16 pairs bred, fledging 33 young; three other territorial pairs. Caithness Two pairs bred, fledging four young, and one possible breeding pair. Highland 45 pairs bred, fledging 76 young; four other territorial pairs.

**Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus***

Less scarce: 5-yr mean 1,315 bp

Coverage: moderate

Green

At least 464 sites: a minimum of 1,627 territories; 145 confirmed breeding pairs. The Water Rail has been on the RBBP list for eight years now and these are the highest reported totals of both sites and territories. Despite this, at around 60 of these sites Water Rails were recorded merely as ‘present during the breeding season’: no counts were made and a minimum of one at each has had to be assumed. This degree of under-recording supports the belief that the national population is over 2,000 territories (see also Holling *et al.* 2013).

Water Rail	Sites	Territories			
			Bedfordshire	6	10
			Berkshire	2	2
England, SW	41	408	Buckinghamshire	3	3
Avon	3	8	Essex	4	22
Cornwall	1	1	Greater London	2	2
Devon	4	4	Hertfordshire	8	13
Dorset	6	296	Kent*	95	95
Gloucestershire	1	3	Oxfordshire	2	3
Hampshire	17	38	Surrey	7	10
Isle of Wight	1	1	Sussex	8	13
Isles of Scilly	1	1	England, E	63	401
Somerset	4	53	Cambridgeshire	16	36
Wiltshire	3	3	Lincolnshire	8	15
England, SE	137	173	Norfolk	16	22

<b>Water Rail cont.</b>	<b>Sites</b>	<b>Territories</b>			
			Denbigh & Flint	2	2
			East Glamorgan	3	3
			Gower	5	6
Northamptonshire	1	1	Gwent	3	7
Suffolk	22	327	Montgomeryshire	4	10
<b>England, C</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>59</b>	Pembrokeshire	1	1
Derbyshire	4	4	Radnorshire	7	9
Leicestershire & Rutland	1	1	<b>Scotland, S</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>54</b>
Nottinghamshire	5	12	Ayrshire	3	8
Shropshire	3	3	Borders	10	22
Staffordshire	4	19	Clyde	3	7
Warwickshire	5	10	Dumfries & Galloway	10	14
Worcestershire	4	10	Lothian	2	3
<b>England, N</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>Scotland, Mid</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>56</b>
Cheshire & Wirral	13	14	Angus & Dundee	6	40
Cleveland	4	35	Fife	3	3
Cumbria	6	13	Moray & Nairn	2	2
Co. Durham	7	7	North-east Scotland	5	5
Greater Manchester	13	40	Perth & Kinross	5	6
Lancashire & N Merseyside	2	146	<b>Scotland, N &amp; W</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>31</b>
Northumberland	16	20	Argyll	6	8
Yorkshire	21	84	Caithness	1	1
<b>Wales</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>83</b>	Highland	9	9
Anglesey	2	27	Orkney	8	12
Breconshire	5	5	Outer Hebrides	1	1
Caernarfonshire	5	10	<b>Channel Islands</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Carmarthenshire	1	1	Jersey	2	3
Ceredigion	1	2	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>1,627</b>

\* Numbers in Kent are based only on the number of occupied tetrads during survey work in 2007–12.

**Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 26 singing males Coverage: moderate**

**Amber**

16 sites: 0–22 pairs/singing males. A year after the national survey in 2012 (Schmitt *et al.* 2015), and despite the presumed reduction in recording effort, there was only a slight decrease in the number of potential pairs reported, while the number of sites increased from 11 to 16. Nevertheless, the survey results point to a decline of 65% since the previous one, in 1999. All records listed refer to singing birds reported in suitable breeding habitat.

**England, SW**

**Somerset** One site: at least three during 2nd–8th June.

**England, E**

**Cambridgeshire** Two sites: (1) Nene Washes: up to four; (2) Ouse Washes: one.

**England, N**

**Yorkshire** Two sites: (1) extensive site with two singing males in May and June; (2) one for two weeks in late June and early July.

**Wales**

**Breconshire** One site: one from 29th May to 1st June. **Ceredigion** One site: one for ten days from 29th May.

**Scotland, S**

**Dumfries & Galloway** Three sites: three birds.

**Scotland, Mid**

**Angus & Dundee** One site: one from 27th June to 1st July.

**Scotland, N & W**

**Argyll** Two sites: (1) one on 17th and 27th June; (2) one on 21st May only. **Caithness** One site: one. **Highland** One site: one on 23rd May. **Orkney** One site: one from 29th May to 2nd June and then it or another at a nearby site on 9th–10th June.

**Corn Crane *Crex crex*****Less scarce: 5-yr mean 1,191 bp****Coverage: near-complete****Red**

982 singing males. A comprehensive survey of Corn Crakes in the core part of the Scottish range was again undertaken in 2013, when a significant fall in numbers (-24%) became apparent, following years of increasing counts (Wotton *et al.* in press). This decline was attributed to the exceptionally cold spring of 2013. The mean spring temperature (March–May) in northern Scotland was 4.5°C in 2013, compared with 6.5°C in 2012 and 7.4°C in 2014 (Met Office data).

**England, E**

Cambridgeshire One extensive site (Nene Washes): seven calling males, including five confirmed breeding pairs.

**Scotland, Mid**

Perth & Kinross One site: one.

**Scotland, N & W**

Argyll Total 582: Coll 64, Colonsay & Oronsay 53, Iona 25, Islay 87, Mull 3, Staffa 1, Tiree 348, Treshnish Isles 1. **Highland** Total 57: Eigg 3, Mainland 14, Muck 2, Skye 38. **Orkney** Total 12. **Outer Hebrides** Total 321: Barra & Vatersay 67, Benbecula 10, Berneray 3, Harris 4, Lewis 75, Mingulay and other islands south of Vatersay 7, North Uist 80, South Uist 75. **Shetland** Total 1.

**Northern Ireland**

Co. Derry One site: one.

**Common Crane *Grus grus*****Very rare: 5-yr mean 19 bp****Coverage: near-complete****Amber**

12 sites: 15–25 pairs, eight young fledged. There was another increase in the numbers and range of the Common Crane in the UK in 2013, with at least possible breeding recorded at 12 sites, the most since the recolonisation in 1981, while the number of breeding pairs also reached a new record. This was partly a consequence of the first attempted breeding by birds from the Great Crane Project at Slimbridge, in Gloucestershire, but note also the increase in Scotland – where the breeding pair was successful for the second year in a row and at least one other pair was also present.

**England, SW**

Gloucestershire One site: one pair bred (the young died within two days of hatching), and one possible breeding pair. Somerset One site: one pair built a nest but did not lay eggs. All three pairs were from the Great Crane reintroduction project.

**England, E**

Cambridgeshire Four sites: (1) two pairs bred, one successful pair fledging two young, with a further non-breeding pair; (2)–(4) one possible breeding pair. Norfolk One extensive site (Norfolk Broads): eight pairs bred, three pairs were successful with up to four young fledged; also one probable breeding pair. Suffolk One site (Lakenheath): two pairs bred, both were unsuccessful.

**England, N**

Greater Manchester One site: one possible breeding pair. Yorkshire One extensive site: one pair bred, fledging one young; also one possible breeding pair.

**Scotland, Mid**

North-east Scotland Two sites: (1) one pair bred, fledging one young; (2) one non-breeding pair.

**Great Bustard *Otis tarda*****Reintroduced population first bred in 2007**

One extensive site: two pairs. The small reintroduced breeding population was again unsuccessful; young have been fledged only in 2009.

**England, SW**

Wiltshire One site: two females laid eggs but no chicks hatched.



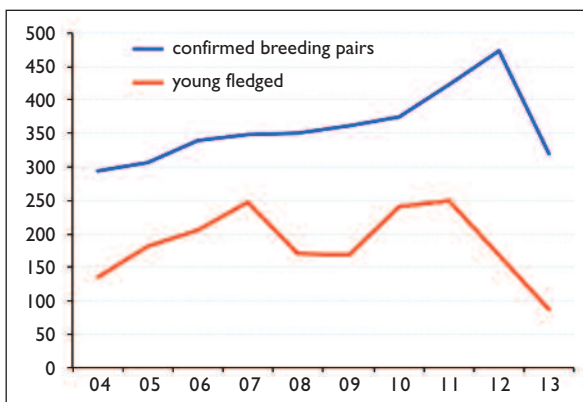
**Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus***

Scarce: 5-yr mean 390 bp

Coverage: near-complete

Amber

Seven counties: 319 confirmed breeding pairs fledged a minimum of 87 young. After a record year in 2012, numbers plummeted in 2013, owing to the effect of the cold, late spring (fig. 4). Malcolm Wright, who collates data for the Panel from the East Anglian Brecks, commented: ‘The breeding season of 2013 was easily the worst in the 28 years since detailed monitoring began, in 1985, as a result of the coldest spring in southern England since the early 1960s. Bitterly cold easterly winds blew across East Anglia throughout March and the first half of April, with snow and hard frosts at times. About 30 Stone-curlews were discovered lying dead on fields and heathland in April and May, but inevitably more must have died that were never found or consumed quickly by scavengers. It appeared that many of the birds were unable to find sufficient food during the really bad spring weather and some had starved to death. Many other species were affected by this severe weather but in Suffolk Stone-curlews and Barn Owls appeared to be particularly badly caught out. The overall Breckland population dropped from 259 pairs in 2012 to 202 pairs in 2013. The productivity of 170 pairs that were closely monitored was a miserly 0.28 chicks fledged per breeding pair, way below the 0.70 which has been estimated as necessary to maintain the population (Green *et al.* 1997). It is likely that some of the females were in such poor condition that they were unable to lay a clutch of eggs. After 27 years of gradual improvement, there is no doubt that 2013 was a real setback for Britain’s Stone-curlew population.’



**Fig. 4.** The total number of confirmed breeding pairs of Stone-curlews *Burhinus oedicnemus* and the number of young fledged in the UK, 2004–13.

Stone-curlew	Confirmed breeding pairs	Min. no. young fledged			
			Oxfordshire	3	1
			Sussex	1	0
England, SW	83	26	England, E	225	60
Hampshire	9	2	Norfolk	107	27
Wiltshire	74	24	Suffolk	118	33
England, SE	11	1	TOTALS	319	87
Berkshire	7	0			

**Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta***

Less scarce: 5-yr mean 1,747 bp

Coverage: near-complete

Amber

At least 115 sites: 1,715 pairs. The number of breeding sites reached a new peak, but breeding was not repeated in Somerset or Staffordshire, where Avocets bred for the first time in 2012. The overall count of pairs in the UK also dropped, perhaps after the poor productivity in 2012. To maintain the accuracy of our reports for this species, and to minimise potential duplication, we ask that those reporting Avocets include a precise six-figure grid reference and the best count of nesting or prospecting pairs at each site.

The number of pairs at the single colony in Wales was the highest recorded there since breeding began in 2003, increasing from 27 in 2012 to 41 in 2013. Although displaying pairs have been recorded in North-east Scotland (Balmer *et al.* 2013), we still await the first confirmed breeding record for Scotland.

Avocet	No. sites	Minimum no. confirmed breeding pairs			
			Suffolk	9	212
			England, C	7	27
			Leicestershire & Rutland	1	*
			Nottinghamshire	5	14
			Worcestershire	1	13
England, SW	4	42	England, N	26	279
Gloucestershire	1	3	Cheshire & Wirral	3	43
Hampshire	3	39	Cleveland	2	14
England, SE	31	349	Co. Durham	1	4
Essex	16	130	Lancashire & N Merseyside	5	105
Kent	12	168	Northumberland	3	8
Sussex	3	51	Yorkshire	12	105
England, E	46	977	Wales	1	41
Cambridgeshire	6	34	Gwent	1	41
Lincolnshire	12	218	TOTALS	115	1,715
Norfolk	19	513			

\* Birds attended colony but no eggs were laid.

**Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius***

Scarce: 5-yr mean 614 bp

Coverage: moderate



545 pairs. Little Ringed Plovers are a popular study species but it is disappointing that some Schedule 1 returns do not contain accurate grid references; such records often cannot be used by the RBBP because of potential duplication when reviewed against other records submitted for a county. Equally, some birdwatchers are not even reporting Little Ringed Plovers at potential breeding sites, or following up observations made early in the spring to see if a pair later establishes a territory. All of these factors have affected the 2013 total, which is less than half that recorded in the last national survey, in 2007, when the population was estimated at 1,115 pairs (Conway *et al.* 2008). Consequently, it is difficult to provide any indication of trends since that survey.

Little Ringed Plover	Confirmed and probable breeding pairs		
		Cambridgeshire	19
		Lincolnshire	19
		Norfolk	19
England, SW	37	Northamptonshire	6
Avon	1	Suffolk	2
Devon	1	England, C	108
Gloucestershire	3	Derbyshire	23
Hampshire	18	Herefordshire	8
Isle of Wight	1	Leicestershire & Rutland	7
Somerset	4	Nottinghamshire	18
Wiltshire	9	Shropshire	8
England, SE	95	Staffordshire	25
Bedfordshire	6	Warwickshire	10
Berkshire	14	West Midlands	3
Buckinghamshire	2	Worcestershire	6
Essex	9	England, N	164
Greater London	10	Cheshire & Wirral	13
Hertfordshire	4	Cleveland	4
Kent	21	Cumbria	6
Oxfordshire	7	Co. Durham	9
Surrey	8	Greater Manchester	19
Sussex	14	Lancashire & N Merseyside	32
England, E	65	Northumberland	17
		Yorkshire	64

<b>Little Ringed Plover</b> <i>cont.</i>	<b>Confirmed and probable breeding pairs</b>	Montgomeryshire	7
		Radnorshire	3
		Scotland, S	5
Wales	61	Clyde	2
Breconshire	6	Dumfries & Galloway	2
Caernarfonshire	1	Lothian	1
Carmarthenshire	27	Scotland, Mid	10
Denbigh & Flint	3	Angus & Dundee	3
East Glamorgan	6	Fife	5
Gower	1	North-east Scotland	1
Gwent	1	Perth & Kinross	1
Meirionnydd	6	TOTAL	545

**Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus***

**Scarce: 423 breeding males (Hayhow et al. in press)**      **Coverage: low**

Amber

In 2013, data were received relating to 67 confirmed and probable breeding pairs nesting within the main Scottish range, with records from mountain ranges within the recording areas of Highland, North-east Scotland and Perth & Kinross.

**Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus***

**Scarce: 300+ bp (Jackson 2009)**      **Coverage: low**

Red

4–7 apparently occupied territories. The low total is a reflection of the coverage and reporting from Shetland, which was even poorer than normal.

Scotland, N & W

Caithness One pair in late May. Fair Isle One displaying pair in suitable breeding habitat in mid April, then a singing male elsewhere on the island on 29th–30th May. Orkney Two pairs behaving as if with chicks. Shetland The only records received were of two nests at a Mainland site.

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

**Rare: 5-yr mean 59 bp**      **Coverage: near-complete**

Red

Eight sites: 48–50 pairs. At 48 confirmed breeding pairs, this is the lowest number of Black-tailed Godwits for ten years and for the first time since 1968 there were no breeding records from Kent. In recent years the few pairs breeding in the grazing marshes of north Kent have had poor breeding success due to the predation of small young or trampling of nests by livestock (Clements *et al.* in press).

***L. l. limosa***

Four sites: 43–45 pairs fledged 39 young.

England, E

Cambridgeshire One site (Nene Washes): 41 pairs fledged 37 young. Norfolk One site (Welney): two pairs fledged two young.

England, N

Lancashire & N Merseyside One site: one bird present in May and seen displaying.

Scotland, S

Dumfries & Galloway One site: a single bird was present in late May and up to four in June, in suitable habitat. Note that the race of these birds was not recorded.

***L. l. islandica***

Four sites: five pairs fledged 2–4 young.

Scotland, N & W

Orkney One site: two pairs bred, one of which fledged two young. Shetland Three sites: three pairs bred. One pair hatched two chicks, which may have fledged; the other pairs had no young.

**Ruff *Calidris pugnax***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 8 females**

**Coverage: high**

**Red**

Three sites: 0–10 breeding females. Birds returned to the two sites where confirmed breeding occurred in 2012, with lekking in April and early May. There was no further evidence of breeding, although the presence of two males and a female in June might suggest that some birds had stayed to nest.

England, N

Lancashire & N Merseyside One site: 15 males and two females at a lek but no further evidence of breeding. Yorkshire One site: up to 17 males and eight females were present at leks in mid April with six (five males) lekking until 6th May. More suggestive of possible breeding was the record of two males and a female on 1st–2nd June.

Scotland, N & W

Outer Hebrides One site: two males behaving aggressively towards each other on 31st May.

**Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 1 bp**

**Coverage: near-complete**

**Amber**

One site: two pairs.

Scotland, N

One site: two pairs bred, with records of two broods, each of three chicks, in July.

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

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 34 bp**

**Coverage: near-complete**

**Red**

11 sites: 3–38 breeding pairs/males. Data received for 2013 relate mainly to counts of apparently breeding males and confirm the increase in numbers of recent years. An out-of-range female in North-east Scotland recalled the run of breeding on the Scottish mainland in the period 1977–84. A single female also summered in Gloucestershire.

Scotland, Mid

North-east Scotland One site: one female present at a suitable breeding site from 5th June to 4th July.

Scotland, N & W

Argyll One site: one pair bred; two chicks fledged. Outer Hebrides Three sites: three probable and three possible breeding pairs. Shetland Six extensive sites: 30 males in total with confirmed breeding by at least two pairs.

**Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 3 bp**

**Coverage: high**

**Amber**

Two sites: 0–2 pairs.

Scotland, N & W

Highland Two sites: two possible breeding pairs.

**Greenshank *Tringa nebularia***

**Less scarce: 1,080 bp (Hancock et al. 1997)**

**Coverage: low**

**Green**

Data were received for a minimum of 146 pairs, with at least 25 pairs confirmed breeding. Records came from five areas: Argyll (two pairs), Caithness (14), Highland (113), Outer Hebrides (16) and Shetland (1). It is pleasing to see the high numbers reported from Highland given that there was no survey or atlas project underway, but there is still great potential for the casual visitor to northern Scotland to contribute to our knowledge of the status of this species by reporting all records of Greenshank in suitable breeding habitat between May and July. In the latter part of this period, adults are very noisy in the presence of chicks and so alert the observer



Dan Powell

**Greenshank *Tringa nebularia***

well before they are close to the young. Such records can be reported as confirmed breeding (distraction display) and negate the need to look for nests or chicks (which would in any case require a disturbance licence).

**Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 27 bp**

**Coverage: near-complete**

**Amber**

11 sites: 2–28 pairs. One of these sites was a new one for the monitoring team led by RSPB Scotland, which tries to check all known and potential sites each year.

**Scotland, N & W**

**Caithness** Four sites: one probable and three possible breeding pairs. **Highland** Seven sites: two pairs bred, 21 probable and one possible breeding pairs.

**Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus***

**Scarce: 2, 136 bp (Mitchell et al. 2004)**

**Coverage: moderate**

**Red**

146 apparently occupied territories (AOTs). At least 16 young fledged. Eaton *et al.* (2009) added Arctic Skua to the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) Red list owing to the steep decline in its breeding population. Since then, data published by the RBBP has confirmed that the decline (apparently driven by low productivity, which relates mainly to food supply but also to predation by Great Skuas *S. skua* in some areas; Forrester *et al.* 2007) has continued. In 2010 we reported 558 AOTs but that included a full survey on Orkney (which found 376 AOTs). The 2013 total of 146 is the lowest yet reported. In 2011–13, two important Shetland colonies (Fair Isle and Foula) fledged just five young between them (all in 2012).

**Scotland, N & W**

**Argyll** Probable breeding was reported from Coll (one AOT). **Caithness** Two AOTs at one inland site, behaviour of one indicated young nearby. **Fair Isle** 19 AOTs but no young fledged. **Highland** Ten pairs fledged 12 young on Handa. **Orkney** A total of 57 AOTs were counted from 12 sites (not a full survey); just one young known to have fledged but numbers unknown at seven sites. **Outer Hebrides** On North Uist there was

evidence of only one AOT; two nests with eggs were reported on Lewis and two pairs on St Kilda fledged one young each. **Shetland** A total of at least 52 AOTs was counted from ten sites, but full counts were not available at all of these. From six sites where information on productivity was available, just one young fledged. The largest colony was on Foula – 35 AOTs – where 26 pairs were known to have laid eggs. Young hatched at just eight of these but the chicks appeared not to have been fed and died within a few days; none fledged.

**Little Tern *Sternula albifrons***

**Less scarce: 5-yr mean 1,546 bp**

**Coverage: moderate**

**Amber**

Minimum of 1,553 pairs at 56 colonies. A minimum of 814 young fledged. This is the second-highest number of young fledged since 2007, perhaps aided by the dry summer. The many problems faced by breeding Little Terns are illustrated by the situation at the large Cleveland colony, where only a single chick fledged. In mid June, about half the eggs were stolen by a thief, and the remaining pairs then lost their eggs to Hedgehogs *Erinaceus europaeus*. Many pairs relaid but two Common Kestrels *Falco tinnunculus* eventually predated all but one of the chicks.

September 2013 saw the launch of the EU LIFE+ Little Tern Recovery Project. The main objective of the project, which will last for five years, is to secure the long-term recovery of breeding Little Terns in the UK through actions including site management, reviewing the effectiveness of different management techniques and increasing public awareness and support.

Little Tern	No. sites	Confirmed breeding pairs	Min. young fledged
England, SW	3	73	31
Dorset	1	25	30
Hampshire	2	48	1
England, SE	12	83	19
Essex	6	53	18
Kent	2	4	0
Sussex	4	26	1
England, E	13	918	540
Lincolnshire	1	2	0
Norfolk	9	901	536
Suffolk	3	15	4
England, N	6	155	60
Cleveland	1	50	1
Cumbria	2	34	2
Northumberland	2	35	17
Yorkshire	1	36	40
Wales	1	129	65
Denbigh & Flint	1	129	65
Scotland, S	1	0	0
Lothian*	1	0	0
Scotland, Mid	2	43	30
Moray & Nairn	1	3	1
North-east Scotland	1	40	29
Scotland, N & W	17	108	41
Argyll	7	61	38
Caithness	1	3	0
Highland	2	8	2
Orkney	2	2	0
Outer Hebrides	5	34	1
Isle of Man	1	44	28
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1,553</b>	<b>814</b>

\* Birds attended a colony but no eggs laid.

**Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*****Rare: 5-yr mean 83 bp****Coverage: near-complete****Red**

Three sites: 79 pairs plus two mixed pairs. A total of 79 young (including four hybrids) probably fledged. The UK population of Roseate Terns is now almost entirely confined to Coquet Island, in Northumberland, but there are larger numbers in the Republic of Ireland. Data from the Seabird Monitoring Programme show that in 2013 there were 1,214 pairs at Rockabill in Co. Dublin and 150 at Inish, Co. Wexford.

**England, N**

**Northumberland** One site (Coquet Island): 78 pairs raised at least 75 large young.

**Wales**

**Anglesey** One site: two mixed pairs bred, each fledging two hybrid young. Both Roseate Terns were paired with Common Terns *S. hirundo*.

**Northern Ireland**

**Co. Antrim** One site: one pair bred, laid one egg, but no sign of any fledged young.

**Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*****Scarce: 5-yr mean 878 bp****Coverage: moderate****Amber**

46 sites: 895–926 pairs. The trend over the last five years indicates a stable population but some of the main colonies were not counted accurately in 2013. The number of sites increased to 46, which suggests that breeding is becoming more widespread (as shown by the maps in Balmer *et al.* 2013) and that numbers of breeding pairs may be higher than published here. We encourage observers to obtain accurate counts of known Mediterranean Gull colonies and to check other gull colonies, since this species typically begins breeding alongside other gulls, especially Black-headed Gulls *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*.

**England, SW**

**Dorset** One site: at least 80 pairs normally breed here, but no accurate count made in 2013. **Hampshire** Six sites: (1) 184 pairs fledged 49 young; (2)–(6) 30 pairs bred and two probable breeding pairs.

**England, SE**

**Berkshire** One site: one mixed pair bred but no young reared and the 2nd-summer Mediterranean Gull was not seen after the end of May. **Essex** Five sites: (1)–(5) four pairs bred and four possible breeding pairs. **Kent** Seven sites: (1) no accurate count made in 2013 but at least 200 pairs estimated; (2) 115 pairs bred; (3)–(7) seven pairs bred and ten probable breeding pairs. **Sussex** Four sites: (1) no accurate count made in 2013 but at least 150 pairs estimated; (2)–(4) 43 pairs bred.

**England, E**

**Cambridgeshire** One site: one possible breeding pair – a single adult held territory in a Black-headed Gull colony from April to July. **Lincolnshire** Three sites: three possible breeding pairs. **Norfolk** Four sites: (1)–(4) 35 pairs bred.

**England, C**

**Shropshire** One site: one pair bred and fledged three young.

**England, N**

**Cheshire & Wirral** One site: three pairs bred. **Greater Manchester** One site: two probable breeding (displaying) pairs. **Lancashire & N Merseyside** Two sites: (1) 26 pairs bred, and four probable breeding pairs; (2) two possible breeding pairs (two territorial males). **Northumberland** One site: four pairs bred fledging three young. **Yorkshire** Three sites: (1)–(3) four pairs bred and one probable breeding pair; young fledged from only one site.

**Wales**

**Anglesey** One site: three pairs bred fledging two young.

**Scotland, Mid**

**North-east Scotland** One site: one possible breeding pair – an adult and a 2nd-summer bird paired and displayed in April but not seen subsequently.

**Northern Ireland**

**Co. Antrim** One site: three pairs bred, fledging three young. **Co. Down** One site: two pairs bred. **Co. Fermanagh** One site: one possible breeding pair – an adult and a 2nd-summer bird paired but no further evidence of breeding.

**Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 4 bp**

**Coverage: near-complete**

**Amber**

Three sites: One pair plus 1–2 mixed pairs. Since 2007 we have reported a breeding pair in Dorset and one or more mixed pairs in Hampshire, with little indication of any increase in numbers there, or further spread elsewhere.

**England, SW**

**Dorset** One site: one pair bred, one young fledged. **Hampshire** One site: one mixed pair bred; a Yellow-legged Gull paired with a Herring Gull *L. argentatus* fledged three hybrid young for the sixth year in a row.

**England, N**

**Yorkshire** One site: one possible breeding mixed pair. A 3rd-summer Yellow-legged Gull, paired with a 3rd-summer Lesser Black-backed Gull *L. fuscus*, began nest-building but abandoned the site in late May.

**Long-eared Owl *Asio otus***

**Scarce/Less scarce: 1,800–6,000 bp\***

**Coverage: unknown**

**Green**

109–194 pairs. Long-eared Owls are under-recorded throughout their range, so our reported totals will always be a gross underestimate. Typically, the majority of records of breeding Long-eared Owls refer to calling juveniles. If the owls either do not breed or do not raise any young, searching for them on summer evenings produces few records and county totals are correspondingly low. This was the case in 2013, perhaps due to the effects of a cold and late spring. The confirmed breeding record in Shetland is notable as it was the first for the county since 1975; three young fledged from a nest in a small plantation.

[\* (Musgrove *et al.* 2013)]

Long-eared Owl					
	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs			
			Yorkshire	26	38
			Wales	5	18
England, SW	1	4	Denbigh & Flint	0	1
Avon	1	1	Gwent	0	8
Hampshire	0	1	Montgomeryshire	0	2
Isle of Wight	0	1	Radnorshire	5	7
Somerset	0	1	Scotland, S	7	12
England, SE	4	8	Borders	3	6
Essex	1	1	Clyde Islands	1	2
Kent	3	4	Dumfries & Galloway	1	1
Oxfordshire	0	1	Lothian	2	3
Sussex	0	2	Scotland, Mid	10	11
England, E	5	14	Angus & Dundee	3	3
Cambridgeshire	1	5	Moray & Nairn	0	1
Lincolnshire	2	3	North-east Scotland	1	1
Norfolk	1	1	Perth & Kinross	3	3
Suffolk	1	5	Upper Forth	3	3
England, C	14	22	Scotland, N & W	18	19
Derbyshire	2	7	Argyll	4	4
Nottinghamshire	12	12	Caithness	1	1
Staffordshire	0	2	Highland	12	13
Warwickshire	0	1	Shetland	1	1
England, N	38	77	Northern Ireland	3	3
Cumbria	0	1	Channel Islands	4	6
Co. Durham	3	11	Guernsey	2	2
Greater Manchester	3	10	Jersey	2	4
Lancashire & N Merseyside	1	2	TOTALS	109	194
Northumberland	5	15			



**Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus***

Scarce/Less scarce: 620–2,180 bp\*

Coverage: unknown

Amber

47–184 pairs. As for the previous species, 2013 was a poor year for the Short-eared Owl, with the lowest numbers of pairs yet reported and a low level of confirmed breeding. Many counties reported single birds seen only briefly at sites, suggesting a wandering non-breeding population; these are not included in the table below. Again, the cold spring may have affected the availability of mammalian prey and hence the condition of the adults preparing to breed.

[\* (Musgrove *et al.* 2013)]

Short-eared Owl	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs			
			Pembrokeshire	5	5
			Radnorshire	3	3
			Scotland, S	4	24
England, E	0	4	Borders	1	9
Lincolnshire	0	3	Clyde	1	1
Norfolk	0	1	Clyde Islands	0	12
England, C	0	11	Dumfries & Galloway	2	2
Derbyshire	0	7	Scotland, Mid	8	12
Staffordshire	0	4	Moray & Nairn	1	3
England, N	5	33	North-east Scotland	1	3
Cumbria	1	7	Perth & Kinross	5	5
Co. Durham	1	4	Upper Forth	1	1
Greater Manchester	0	1	Scotland, N & W	21	85
Lancashire & N Merseyside	1	3	Caithness	2	8
Northumberland	0	1	Highland	2	2
Yorkshire	2	17	Orkney	10	68
Wales	9	11	Outer Hebrides	7	7
Denbigh & Flint	0	1	Isle of Man	0	4
East Glamorgan	1	1	TOTALS	47	184
Meirionnydd	0	1			

**Wryneck *Jynx torquilla***

Very rare: 5-yr mean 3 bp

Coverage: moderate

Red

One site: 0–1 pairs.

Scotland, N & W

North-east Scotland One site: one singing male in early June.

**Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor***

Less scarce: 1,000–2,000 bp (Musgrove *et al.* 2013)

Coverage: low

Red

21–348 pairs. Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers are under-recorded throughout their range; they are elusive and the difficulty of finding them in deciduous woodland increases once trees are in leaf. Dedicated searching, and in particular listening out for calling and drumming birds, from February to April is the best way of locating breeding sites and such records can be logged as possible breeding at least. Based on the data submitted, the New Forest is a stronghold; twice as many pairs were recorded in Hampshire (the great majority in the New Forest) as in any other county.

PECBMS (2014) showed a decline of 63% since 1990 in the monitored European population of Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers in Europe (based on data from 16 countries) indicating that declines are not restricted to the UK. The European population is now c. 20–30% of its level in 1980.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker				
	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs		
			Suffolk	3 5
			England, C	5 70
			Derbyshire	1 10
			Herefordshire	0 14
England, SW	2	93	Leicestershire & Rutland	1 5
Devon	0	4	Nottinghamshire	0 9
Dorset	0	2	Shropshire	2 10
Gloucestershire	1	7	Staffordshire	0 6
Hampshire	1	61	Warwickshire	0 4
Somerset	0	8	Worcestershire	1 12
Wiltshire	0	11	England, N	2 37
England, SE	4	94	Cheshire & Wirral	0 3
Bedfordshire	1	3	Co. Durham	0 5
Berkshire	0	6	Greater Manchester	0 3
Buckinghamshire	0	11	Lancashire & N Merseyside	0 2
Essex	0	3	Yorkshire	2 24
Greater London	0	4	Wales	5 28
Hertfordshire	0	5	Breconshire	0 1
Kent	0	31	Carmarthenshire	1 3
Oxfordshire	0	1	Ceredigion	0 2
Surrey	2	19	Denbigh & Flint	0 1
Sussex	1	11	East Glamorgan	1 5
England, E	3	26	Gwent	0 4
Cambridgeshire	0	7	Meirionnydd	0 3
Lincolnshire	0	3	Montgomeryshire	0 2
Norfolk	0	5	Radnorshire	3 7
Northamptonshire	0	6	TOTALS	21 348

**Merlin *Falco columbarius***

Less scarce: 1,160 bp (Ewing et al. 2011) Coverage: moderate

Amber

268–322 pairs monitored. As usual, this is a sample of pairs monitored by dedicated fieldworkers; this species requires much effort to establish the occupation of breeding territories in its favoured

Merlin	Confirmed breeding pairs	Territories occupied		
			Clyde	6 6
			Dumfries & Galloway	8 8
England, C	16	19	Lothian	3 3
Derbyshire	15	16	Scotland, Mid	57 63
Shropshire	1	1	Angus & Dundee	8 8
Staffordshire	0	2	Moray & Nairn	14 16
England, N	86	106	North-east Scotland	26 27
Cumbria	8	9	Perth & Kinross	9 12
Co. Durham	32	40	Scotland, N & W	50 56
Lancashire & N Merseyside	8	8	Argyll	2 4
Northumberland	13	17	Caithness	1 2
Yorkshire	25	32	Highland	21 21
Wales	14	22	Orkney	6 8
Breconshire	3	5	Outer Hebrides	7 7
Ceredigion	1	2	Shetland	13 14
Denbigh & Flint	1	2	Northern Ireland	10 21
Meirionnydd	4	5	Co. Antrim	4 6
Montgomeryshire	2	3	Co. Derry	2 4
Radnorshire	3	5	Co. Fermanagh	0 1
Scotland, S	35	35	Co. Tyrone	4 10
Ayrshire	6	6	TOTALS	268 322
Borders	12	12		

remote moorland sites. The mean number of occupied territories reported over the last five years is just 348, 30% of the UK breeding population estimated by the 2008 survey (Ewing *et al.* 2011).

**Hobby *Falco subbuteo***

Less scarce: 5-yr mean 1,052 bp

Coverage: moderate



206–1,025 pairs. The Hobby is one of the most difficult species to provide accurate annual estimates for. It breeds late, with the peak of activity after the main breeding bird survey period, and many pairs nest in trees in open farmland, a habitat not favoured by birdwatchers in summer. Many breeding pairs are consequently overlooked, since it is now relatively common in parts of southern England, and the number of records received by county recorders in some areas is low. To compound the problem, some fieldworkers licensed to visit nests keep locations secret, even to the RBBP, meaning that such records cannot always be incorporated into county totals. Returns from counties vary from accurate counts in areas at the edge of the range, to good estimates where it is scarce, and more general estimates in areas where it is common (with little or no evidence provided to recorders to support those assertions). This is unfortunate and helps to explain the wide variation in numbers presented in the table.

Clements & Everett (2012) studied the dispersion pattern of Hobbies in three counties in southeast England during 2005–10 and found that densities were higher than in previous studies conducted in Britain, at 9–15 pairs per 100 km<sup>2</sup>. It would be valuable to repeat this work elsewhere in the Hobby's range, but birdwatchers can also help, by reporting all Hobbies found in breeding habitat after the main spring passage period, roughly from mid May to early September

Hobby	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs			
			Herefordshire	2	10
			Leicestershire & Rutland	2	22
England, SW	53	226	Nottinghamshire	6	7
Avon	2	12	Shropshire	3	41
Cornwall	3	9	Staffordshire	1	16
Devon	2	2	Warwickshire	0	9
Dorset	6	30	West Midlands	1	1
Gloucestershire	6	21	Worcestershire	1	11
Hampshire	18	62	England, N	14	87
Isle of Wight	0	4	Cheshire & Wirral	10	25
Somerset	6	19	Co. Durham	0	2
Wiltshire	10	67	Greater Manchester	0	14
England, SE	30	397	Lancashire & N Merseyside	1	15
Bedfordshire	1	4	Yorkshire	3	31
Berkshire	3	7	Wales	13	36
Buckinghamshire	1	6	Anglesey	0	1
Essex	2	3	Breconshire	3	11
Greater London	4	5	Caernarfonshire	0	1
Hertfordshire	5	27	Carmarthenshire	0	1
Kent	1	(300)*	Denbigh & Flint	0	3
Oxfordshire	4	15	East Glamorgan	1	3
Surrey	6	17	Gower	1	3
Sussex	3	13	Gwent	3	3
England, E	48	130	Meirionnydd	0	2
Cambridgeshire	9	31	Montgomeryshire	1	3
Lincolnshire	8	46	Radnorshire	4	5
Norfolk	7	15	Scotland, Mid	2	2
Northamptonshire	15	25	Angus & Dundee	2	2
Suffolk	9	13	Scotland, N & W	1	1
England, C	45	146	Highland	1	1
Derbyshire	29	29	TOTALS	206	1,025

\* Estimated total.

(see [www.rbbp.org.uk/downloads/sp\\_guidelines\\_hobby.pdf](http://www.rbbp.org.uk/downloads/sp_guidelines_hobby.pdf)). We request that county recorders follow these guidelines when compiling their annual submission, to provide greater consistency across years and counties.

**Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus***

**Less scarce: 1,530 pairs (Banks et al. 2010)**

**Coverage: moderate**

**Green**

803–1,072 pairs. In some counties all pairs are monitored, but for most we receive data from only a sample of the population. The 2014 national survey of breeding Peregrines will be discussed in our next report, but initial findings confirm the loss of some pairs from traditional sites in northern Britain (coastal northwest Scotland and some upland shooting estates) and an increase in lowland habitats where many Peregrines take advantage of man-made structures for nesting.

Peregrine Falcon	Confirmed breeding pairs	Territories occupied by pairs			
			Cheshire & Wirral	7	7
			Cleveland	2	4
			Cumbria	10	10
England, SW	128	182	Co. Durham	5	7
Avon	12	17	Greater Manchester	8	9
Cornwall	34	59	Lancashire & N Merseyside	14	23
Devon	26	27	Northumberland	17	20
Dorset	16	28	Yorkshire	38	47
Gloucestershire	9	10	Wales	89	160
Hampshire	15	15	Anglesey	1	9
Isle of Wight	2	5	Breconshire	8	9
Isles of Scilly	2	2	Caernarfonshire	3	9
Somerset	7	12	Carmarthenshire	3	8
Wiltshire	5	7	Ceredigion	3	4
England, SE	53	68	Denbigh & Flint	8	8
Bedfordshire	2	2	East Glamorgan	19	29
Berkshire	1	4	Gower	3	10
Buckinghamshire	2	2	Gwent	5	6
Essex	2	2	Meirionnydd	3	6
Greater London	12	19	Montgomeryshire	1	10
Hertfordshire	0	3	Pembrokeshire	25	39
Kent	14	14	Radnorshire	7	13
Oxfordshire	2	4	Scotland, S	124	146
Surrey	8	8	Ayrshire	21	23
Sussex	10	10	Borders	28	35
England, E	31	38	Clyde	13	13
Cambridgeshire	4	5	Clyde Islands	6	10
Lincolnshire	18	20	Dumfries & Galloway	41	45
Norfolk	4	4	Lothian	15	20
Northamptonshire	1	2	Scotland, Mid	83	95
Suffolk	4	7	Angus & Dundee	12	16
England, C	84	110	Fife	11	11
Derbyshire	29	29	Isle of May	1	1
Herefordshire	0	12	Moray & Nairn	9	9
Leicestershire & Rutland	6	13	North-east Scotland	24	26
Nottinghamshire	13	15	Perth & Kinross	14	17
Shropshire	18	18	Upper Forth	12	15
Staffordshire	9	10	Scotland, N & W	29	33
Warwickshire	1	4	Argyll	9	10
West Midlands	1	1	Caithness	1	1
Worcestershire	7	8	Fair Isle	1	1
England, N	101	127	Highland	5	6

Peregrine Falcon <i>cont.</i>	Confirmed breeding pairs	Territories occupied by pairs	Co. Down	10	12
			Co. Fermanagh	11	14
			Co. Tyrone	8	15
Orkney	6	7	Isle of Man	3	4
Outer Hebrides	4	5	Channel Islands	11	11
Shetland	3	3	Guernsey	3	3
Northern Ireland	67	98	Herm	1	1
Co. Antrim	28	37	Jersey	5	5
Co. Armagh	2	5	Sark	2	2
Co. Derry	8	15	TOTALS	803	1,072

**Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 3 bp**

**Coverage: near-complete**

Red

Two sites: 0–2 pairs. The news from the erstwhile stronghold of the East Anglian Fens remains bleak, with two birds present only for a few days in 2013. The singing male in Shetland was undoubtedly a misplaced migrant but remained in potential breeding habitat for a week and thus ‘qualifies’ for a report entry. The number of migrant Golden Orioles has generally declined since the mid 1990s, although numbers in 2012 were higher than when the breeding population was at its peak (White & Kehoe 2015). Across Europe, the Golden Oriole population is judged to be stable and indeed showed an increase from 2004 to 2009 (PECBMS 2014).

England, E

Suffolk One site (Lakenheath): one possible breeding pair. A male and a female/1st-summer male were present for nine days in May.

Scotland, N & W

Shetland One site: one singing male, 2nd–9th June.

**Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 4 bp**

**Coverage: moderate**

Red

Four sites: 2–4 pairs. Just one pair returned to Devon but another pair bred at a new site in Scotland (see Cook 2015). The latter demonstrates the importance of following up potential breeding records even when they occur in unexpected places, and was the first confirmed breeding for Moray & Nairn. Red-backed Shrikes bred, or attempted to breed, in Scotland from 2003 to 2010.

A paper on the conservation of Red-backed Shrikes in Britain and the prospects for recolonisation will be published in *BB* later in the year.

England, SW

Devon One site: one pair bred, fledging two young.

England, E

One site: one singing male during 2nd–23rd June but not subsequently.

Scotland, Mid

Moray & Nairn One site: one pair bred, fledging two young.

Scotland, N & W

Fair Isle One site: one possible breeding pair. A pair was present in suitable habitat for at least a week in the second half of May. The birds were seen copulating but nothing more was suspected.

**Red-billed Chough *Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax***

**Scarce: 5-yr mean 380 bp**

**Coverage: high**

Amber

242–314 pairs. These are typical numbers for recent years, reflecting both the comparable monitoring effort from year to year and the stability of the Chough population in the key areas. A national census was carried out in 2014, which will be discussed in our next report.

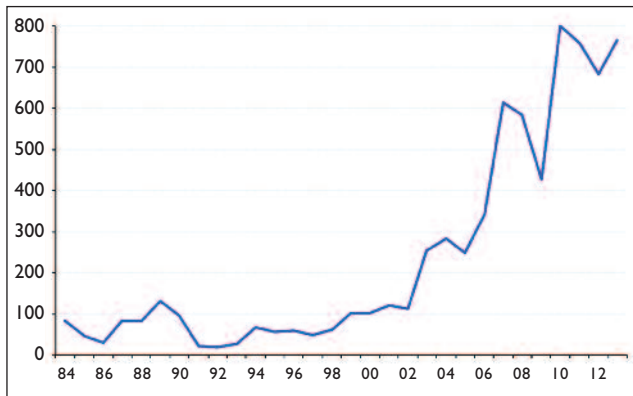
Red-billed Cough	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs			
			Gower	2	2
			Meirionnydd	16	22
England, SW	5	9	Pembrokeshire	49	66
Cornwall	5	9	Scotland	23	24
Wales	188	251	Argyll: Colonsay & Oronsay	10	11
Anglesey	33	40	Argyll: Islay	13	13
Caernarfonshire	67	89	Northern Ireland	1	1
Ceredigion	19	29	Co. Antrim	1	1
Denbigh & Flint	1	2	Isle of Man	25	29
East Glamorgan	1	1	TOTALS	242	314

**Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla***

Scarce: 5-yr mean 687 bp

Coverage: moderate

Amber



**Fig. 5.** The maximum total number of singing male Firecrests *Regulus ignicapilla* reported in the UK, 1984–2013.

766 territories or singing males. Fig. 5 shows that in the last 30 years the number of breeding Firecrests was stable at or below 100 pairs until 2003. Since then, the increase to the current levels of 700–800 territories reported annually is striking. Intensive fieldwork in some counties of southeast England and the New Forest has produced larger counts than are reported annually but such fieldwork is time-consuming and not repeated every year. Singing Firecrests can be difficult to locate in the tree canopy and their high-pitched song is inaudible to some observers. We suspect that this species is greatly under-recorded in areas where it is now common and we welcome the results of more detailed surveys of defined areas, as are currently underway in Hampshire. Note that the figure for Kent is an estimate based on the results of the county’s recent atlas project (Clements *et al.* in



Ben Green

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

press) rather than records submitted in 2013. At present, the Firecrest remains a rare species north and west of a line between the Wash and Poole Harbour (Balmer *et al.* 2013).

<b>Firecrest</b>	Singing males/ territories	Oxfordshire	8
		Surrey	44
<b>England, SW</b>	<b>263</b>	Sussex	6
Avon	3	<b>England, E</b>	<b>96</b>
Cornwall	2	Cambridgeshire	3
Devon	3	Norfolk	55
Dorset	4	Suffolk	38
Gloucestershire	15	<b>England, C</b>	<b>1</b>
Hampshire	187	Herefordshire	1
Somerset	7	<b>Wales</b>	<b>9</b>
Wiltshire	42	East Glamorgan	1
<b>England, SE</b>	<b>(391)</b>	Gwent	5
Bedfordshire	3	Montgomeryshire	3
Berkshire	50	<b>Channel Islands</b>	<b>6</b>
Buckinghamshire	70	Guernsey	2
Hertfordshire	10	Jersey	4
Kent	(200)*	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>766</b>

\* Estimated total.

### Willow Tit *Poecile montana*

Less scarce: 3,400 bp (Musgrove *et al.* 2013) Coverage: moderate

Red

102–626 pairs. We have been reporting Willow Tits for only four years but these are the lowest totals so far of both confirmed breeding and total pairs.

<b>Willow Tit</b>	Confirmed breeding pairs	Total pairs	<b>England, N</b>	47	325
			Cheshire & Wirral	6	30
<b>England, SW</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>30</b>	Cleveland	1	5
Cornwall	2	5	Cumbria	0	7
Devon	0	1	Co. Durham	20	55
Gloucestershire	3	13	Greater Manchester	7	41
Hampshire	0	8	Lancashire & N Merseyside	0	(50)*
Wiltshire	3	3	Northumberland	1	15
<b>England, SE</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	Yorkshire	12	122
Berkshire	0	4	<b>Wales</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>50</b>
Oxfordshire	0	2	Breconshire	0	5
<b>England, E</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>55</b>	Carmarthenshire	0	1
Lincolnshire	8	36	Ceredigion	0	11
Norfolk	6	15	Denbigh & Flint	0	2
Northamptonshire	1	1	East Glamorgan	0	2
Suffolk	0	3	Gower	0	1
<b>England, C</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>144</b>	Gwent	1	1
Derbyshire	5	32	Meirionnydd	0	1
Herefordshire	0	20	Montgomeryshire	2	10
Leicestershire & Rutland	1	5	Pembrokeshire	0	2
Nottinghamshire	0	32	Radnorshire	3	14
Shropshire	3	15	<b>Scotland, S</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>
Staffordshire	7	30	Ayrshire	0	1
Warwickshire	0	9	Dumfries & Galloway	10	15
West Midlands	0	1	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>626</b>

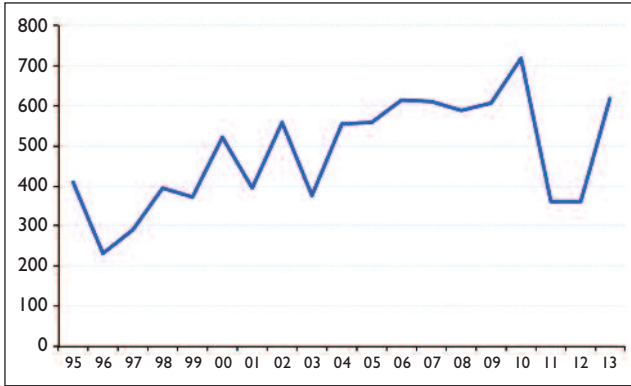
\* Estimated total.

**Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus***

Scarce: 5-yr mean 533 bp

Coverage: moderate

Amber



**Fig. 6.** The maximum total of breeding pairs of Bearded Tits *Panurus biarmicus* reported in the UK, 1995–2013.



Richard Porter

**233.** Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*, Cley Marshes, Norfolk, January 2013.

At least 69 sites; a minimum of 618 pairs. Holling *et al.* (2013) showed that the national population of Bearded Tits declined by almost 50% between 2010 and 2011, which was thought to have been caused by the cold winter of 2010/11. A decline after the very cold winter of 1995 is also apparent in fig. 6. Numbers remained stable in 2012 but an increase in 2013 suggests that the milder winters since 2010/11 have allowed a recovery; an increase in the

number of sites occupied, the highest since 2002 (the year of the last full survey), supports this. The first breeding records for North-east Scotland, Oxfordshire and Upper Forth occurred in 2013, suggesting that productivity in 2012 was high and there was dispersal from the core sites at the end of that breeding season.

A symposium on the status of the Bearded Tit in the UK was held earlier this year and highlighted the difficulties of censusing this species accurately. A report will be published in *BB* later this year.

Bearded Tit	Minimum no. sites	Confirmed and probable breeding pairs			
			Norfolk	15	50
			Suffolk	10	145
			England, N	3	101
England, SW	8	55	Lancashire & N Merseyside	1	18
Dorset	4	13	Yorkshire	2	83
Hampshire	2	5	Wales	1	5
Somerset	2	37	Gwent	1	5
England, SE	19	149	Scotland, Mid	3	77
Essex	4	13	North-east Scotland	1	1
Kent	13	(125)*	Perth & Kinross	1	75
Oxfordshire	1	1	Upper Forth	1	1
Sussex	1	10	Channel Islands	1	3
England, E	34	228	Jersey	1	3
Cambridgeshire	6	17	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>618</b>
Lincolnshire	3	16	* Estimated total.		



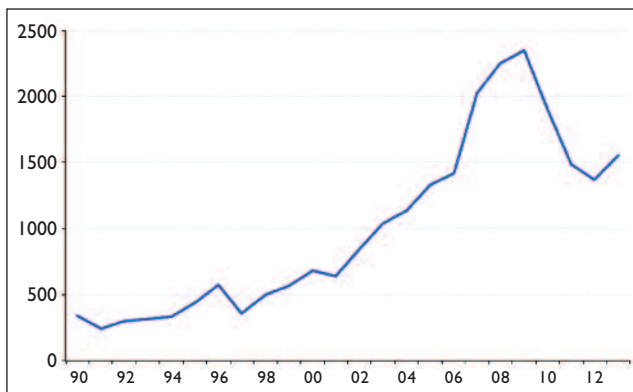
**Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti***

Less scarce: 5-yr mean 1,733 bp

Coverage: moderate

Green

1,556 singing males or territories. In the three years prior to the cold winters of 2009/10 and 2010/11, over 2,000 territories of Cetti's Warblers were recorded, but since then numbers have fallen back to around 1,500 territories (fig. 7). The numbers in 2013 increased by 13% on 2012, indicating a degree of recovery, although Norfolk, Suffolk and Warwickshire reported some evidence of a continued decline (cold weather in East Anglia in early 2013 may have contributed in that region).



**Fig. 7.** The maximum total number of singing male Cetti's Warblers *Cettia cetti* reported in the UK, 1990–2013.

However, central England overall recorded its highest total yet, with a 171% increase since 2011. Owing to the problems of censusing larger sites, full counts from some counties (e.g. Dorset and Kent) are not always available and we urge birdwatchers and reserve managers to carry out a full census of this species wherever possible, to help to confirm its current status.

Cetti's Warbler	Singing males/ territories		
		<b>England, C</b>	<b>84</b>
		Derbyshire	18
<b>England, SW</b>	<b>498</b>	Leicestershire & Rutland	12
Avon	21	Nottinghamshire	17
Cornwall	16	Staffordshire	14
Devon	32	Warwickshire	16
Dorset	84	West Midlands	1
Gloucestershire	22	Worcestershire	6
Hampshire	143	<b>England, N</b>	<b>33</b>
Isle of Wight	5	Cheshire & Wirral	12
Somerset	140	Greater Manchester	3
Wiltshire	35	Lancashire & N Merseyside	9
<b>England, SE</b>	<b>341</b>	Yorkshire	9
Bedfordshire	9	<b>Wales</b>	<b>139</b>
Berkshire	60	Anglesey	9
Buckinghamshire	11	Breconshire	4
Essex	117	Caernarfonshire	5
Greater London	17	Carmarthenshire	20
Hertfordshire	21	Ceredigion	2
Kent	43	East Glamorgan	17
Oxfordshire	8	Gower	21
Surrey	3	Gwent	43
Sussex	52	Meirionnydd	1
<b>England, E</b>	<b>441</b>	Pembrokeshire	17
Cambridgeshire	108	<b>Channel Islands</b>	<b>20</b>
Lincolnshire	15	Jersey	20
Norfolk	98	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,556</b>
Northamptonshire	20		
Suffolk	(200)*	* Estimated total.	

Ben Green



Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

**Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides***

**Potential breeder**

One site: one singing male. It is 20 years since we reported a long-staying singing Greenish Warbler (two in Kent in June–July 1993). Since 2003 we have not included apparently transient passerines on passage, but do report those that stay for a week or more, although the 2013 bird was present for just six days. White & Kehoe (2015) noted that occurrences of singing males staying for more than a day are slowly increasing, with nine reported in May and June 2011–12.

England, N Lancashire & N Merseyside One site: a male singing from 13th to 18th June.

**Iberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus ibericus***

**Potential breeder**

One site: one singing male.

Wales Carmarthenshire One site: a male singing from 17th April to 8th July.

**Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata***

Less scarce: 3,214 bp (Wotton et al. 2009)

Coverage: moderate

Amber

Dartford Warbler	Total pairs	England, E	63
England, SW	369	Norfolk	3
Cornwall	13	Suffolk	60
Devon	17	England, C	1
Dorset	288	Staffordshire	1
Hampshire	45	Wales	24
Somerset	6	Caernarfonshire	6
England, SE	116	Gower	11
Berkshire	4	Pembrokeshire	7
Surrey	97	Channel Islands	50
Sussex	15	Jersey	50
		TOTAL	623

623 territories. Taken at face value, these figures suggest that there has been no real recovery in numbers since the impact of cold winters at the end of the last decade, but there were no counts available from the important New Forest population in 2013. This can be a difficult species to locate and when counts are based only on casual records the numbers reported will generally underestimate the population of a site. In a broader context, this species has shown a moderate decline across its European range since 1998 (PECBMS 2014).

**Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 5 bp**

**Coverage: near-complete**

Red

Two sites: 0–2 pairs. Short-staying singing birds were also noted from Devon, Gloucestershire, Hampshire and Sussex (Hudson *et al.* 2014) but none was recorded for more than two days.

England, E

Suffolk Two sites: (1) one singing male from 12th May to 9th June; (2) one singing male from 25th May to 7th June.

**Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina***

**Occasional breeder; last bred in 2009**

Two sites: 0–2 pairs. These are the first reports since 2009, when there was a small influx to Highland and one pair bred (Swann 2010).

Scotland, Mid

North-east Scotland One site: one singing male from 1st to 8th June.

Scotland, N & W

Highland One site: one singing male from 17th to 24th June.

**Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta***

**Potential breeder**

One site: 0–1 pairs. Melodious Warblers breed mostly to the south of Icterine Warblers in spring and this species has yet to be confirmed breeding in the UK.

England, C

Nottinghamshire One site: one singing male from 21st to 30th June.

**Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 9 bp**

**Coverage: high**

Red

Six sites: 2–7 pairs. These are typical numbers and locations with breeding confirmed in Sussex and, for the first time ever, in Northumberland.

England, SE

Essex One site: two singing males recorded from 8th to 21st June. Kent One site: one singing male wandered between three nearby locations from 9th to 20th June. Sussex Two sites: (1) one pair bred, probably fledging three young; (2) a singing male in late May.

England, N

Northumberland One site: one pair bred, present from 4th June with two juveniles on 6th July. First breeding record for the county.

Scotland, N & W

Highland One site: one singing male from 16th to 28th June.

**Fair Isle Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes fridariensis***

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 34 bp**

**Coverage: near-complete**

Red

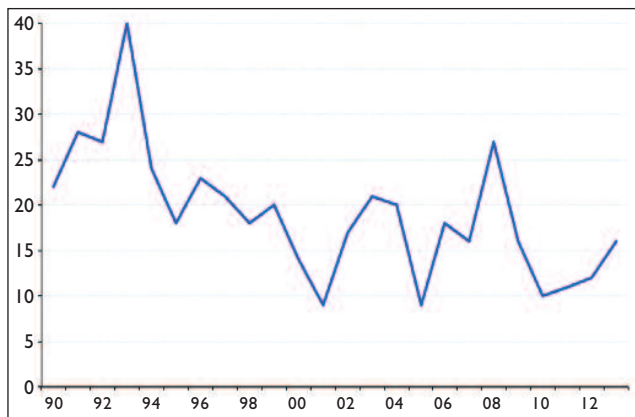
The all-island survey in 2013 revealed a total of 33 territories (five fewer than 2012). The first fledged chicks were seen on 4th June.

**Redwing *Turdus iliacus***

Very rare: 5-yr mean 13 bp

Coverage: low

Red



**Fig. 8.** The maximum total number of Redwings *Turdus iliacus* reported in the UK, 1990–2013.

in summer should be alert for evidence of breeding by Redwings and ensure that records are submitted to the local recorder or BirdTrack, with the appropriate breeding evidence code.

**Scotland, Mid**

**Moray & Nairn** One site: one probable breeding pair. **North-east Scotland** Two sites: one singing male and one possible breeding pair. **Perth & Kinross** One site: one probable breeding pair.

**Scotland, N & W**

**Highland** Ten sites: two pairs bred, two probable breeding pairs and six singing males. **Shetland** One site: two pairs bred but no young fledged.

15 sites: 4–16 pairs. Holling et al. (2010) noted the steady decline in numbers since the 1980s (when the totals peaked at 121 pairs in 1984). Since 1990, the number of potential breeding pairs has fluctuated between nine and 40 showing a recent peak coinciding with the first year of fieldwork for *Bird Atlas 2007–11* (fig. 8). It is likely that breeding Redwings are under-recorded, especially in the Highland glens, where most breeding pairs occur. Visitors to these areas in

**Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica***

Occasional breeder, last bred in 1995 (Red-spotted) and 1996 (White-spotted)

One site: one singing male. Ausden et al. (2014) discussed how the breeding population of White-spotted Bluethroats *L. s. cyaneacula* has been increasing in the Netherlands but noted how few summering or breeding birds have been recorded in the UK. White & Kehoe (2015) also illustrated how the trend in numbers of Bluethroats reaching the UK (all races, but primarily nominate *svecica*) has declined over the period 1990–2012. The creation of new wetlands in southern Britain could provide potential new nesting habitat and this is a species that bird-watchers should be aware of at such sites. In 2013, however, the only records were of birds in June, and these perhaps referred to late migrants, since they occurred at sites where they are unlikely to have been overlooked earlier in the year. One bird, in Norfolk, is listed below, while the second, although singing from suitable habitat in Lancashire and N Merseyside, was present for only three days (19th–21st June).

**England, E**

**Norfolk** One site: one singing male *L. s. cyaneacula* on 1st–3rd and 8th–11th June.

**Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros***

Rare: 5-yr mean 53 bp

Coverage: high

Amber

48 sites: 12–53 pairs. The maximum total number of breeding Black Redstarts in recent years has been reasonably consistent although this species is not particularly site faithful and new sites are discovered each year. They can be overlooked in urban areas, where the song may be drowned out by traffic noise, while pairs in rural areas generally occur in remote upland sites or in quarries, which are often out of bounds to the public. In 2013, the majority of reported sites (35) were

in traditional urban locations with a further four associated with industrial sites such as power stations. Only two sites were on coastal cliffs, a habitat that has frequently been used in the past in Kent and Sussex. Five sites, all in Wales and Scotland, were in upland areas associated with quarries or rocky screes, and these included a family party recorded late in the season in the Southern Uplands (Borders), where breeding has not previously been confirmed. Possibly a new development was the occurrence of two birds around farm buildings at two sites in Cambridgeshire – could this reflect the species taking up a broader range of habitats in the UK, as they do on the near Continent? European data show a recent increase after a period of relative stability since the late 1990s (PECBMS 2014).

### England, SW

**Hampshire** One site: one singing male.

### England, SE

**Berkshire** Three sites: two possible breeding pairs and one singing male. **Buckinghamshire** One site: one possible breeding pair. **Greater London** 17 sites: two pairs bred, three probable breeding pairs, three possible breeding pairs and ten singing males. **Hertfordshire** Two sites: two singing males. **Kent** Five sites: One pair bred, two probable breeding pairs and two singing males.

### England, E

**Cambridgeshire** Two sites: one possible breeding pair and one singing male. **Norfolk** One site: three pairs bred and two singing males. **Suffolk** One site: one pair bred.

### England, C

**Derbyshire** One site: one singing male.

### England, N

**Co. Durham** One site: one pair bred. **Greater Manchester** One site: one singing male. **Yorkshire** Four sites: four possible breeding pairs.

### Wales

**Ceredigion** One site: one possible breeding pair. **Denbigh & Flint** One site: one pair bred, fledging at least three young at a site used in 2012. **Gwent** One site: one pair bred.

### Scotland S

**Borders** One site: one pair bred; a family party was located in early September. **Lothian** One site: one possible breeding pair.

### Channel Islands

**Jersey** Three sites: one pair bred, one possible breeding pair and a singing male.



Ben Green

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

**Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla f. flava*****Very rare: 5-yr mean 2 bp****Coverage: high****Green**

Two sites: two pairs. After a blank year in 2012, a pair of nominate *flava* wagtails nested in Orkney (where Yellow Wagtails *M. f. flavissima* do not nest) – this was the third record of Blue-headed Wagtails breeding in the islands. Another pair (possibly a mixed pair) nested in typical *flavissima* nesting habitat in Norfolk.

England, SE

Norfolk One site: one pair, possibly a mixed pair, bred. A male nominate *flava*, first seen on 18th May, was seen taking food into a cereal field on 2nd June, but the female was not seen.

Scotland, N & W

Orkney One site: one pair bred. First seen on 28th May, they had fledged five young by 13th July.

**White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*****Very rare: 5-yr mean 3 bp****Coverage: high****Green**

Seven sites: 19–20 pairs. Breeding in Shetland is not unexpected, but the two confirmed breeding records in southeast England (Kent and Sussex) are considerably more unusual. The only similar record in the RBBP database is of a pure pair that bred at Cley, Norfolk, in 1997. On the Channel Islands, White Wagtail is the regular breeding form (and the data for those islands are omitted from the five-year mean shown above).

England, SW

Isles of Scilly One site: one possible breeding pair.

England, SE

Kent One site: one pair bred. Both adults were recorded in late June and were seen carrying a faecal sac.

Sussex One site: one pair bred, two young fledged.

Scotland, N & W

Shetland Two sites: two pairs bred on Unst, and both fledged young.

Channel Islands

Limited data were received but a minimum of five pairs bred on Jersey and ten pairs on Guernsey.

**Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*****Less scarce: 5-yr mean 127 bp\*****Coverage: low****Red**

13–204 pairs. Monitoring this shy species is difficult, and only where dedicated surveys are undertaken (in 2013 only in the New Forest, Hampshire) are more realistic numbers obtained. The location of the records submitted closely matches the UK distribution shown in Balmer *et al.* (2013). [\* 2011 estimate was 500–1,000 bp (Clements 2013).]

England, SW

Gloucestershire Limited data from the Forest of Dean: three pairs bred and six possible breeding pairs.

Hampshire In the New Forest, 85 territories at 14 sites were located, and there were seven other pairs elsewhere in the county. Wiltshire Three pairs bred.

England, SE

Kent The only data available were a count of 46 birds on 5th April from a core breeding area. The county population estimate is 50–70 pairs. Sussex Two possible breeding pairs.

England, E

Cambridgeshire One possible breeding pair. Norfolk Three possible breeding pairs.

England, C

Derbyshire One possible breeding pair. Nottinghamshire One possible breeding pair.

England, N

Cumbria 14 possible breeding pairs. Lancashire & N Merseyside Two pairs bred. Yorkshire Eight possible breeding pairs.

Wales

Caernarfonshire Two possible breeding pairs. Carmarthenshire One pair bred, the first confirmed breeding

record since 2009. **East Glamorgan** One probable breeding pair. **Gwent** One pair bred and two possible breeding pairs. **Meirionnydd** One probable and two possible breeding pairs. **Radnorshire** Two pairs bred and five probable breeding pairs.

[Scotland, Mid](#)

**Perth & Kinross** One site: one pair bred.

### Common Rosefinch *Erythrura erythrura*

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 2 bp**

**Coverage: low**

Green

Two sites: 0–2 pairs. In the last decade there have been 12 instances of long-staying singing male Common Rosefinches, with one or two in seven of the ten years. All but two have been in mainland Scotland, the others both on Anglesey. Only two of these records have involved an accompanying female bird, however: in Caithness in 2006 and in Highland in 2008.

[Wales](#)

**Anglesey** One site: one singing male from 21st June to 3rd July.

[Scotland, Mid](#)

**Perth & Kinross** One site: one singing male from 18th June to 15th July.

### Common Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 9 bp**

**Coverage: low**

Green

Nine sites: 3–16 pairs. Up to 16 pairs reported in one year is the highest total since 2004.

[Scotland, N & W](#)

**Highland** One site: two probable breeding pairs found at an island site on 7th June. **Orkney** Two sites: (1) two pairs bred; (2) one possible breeding pair. **Shetland** Six sites: in total, one pair bred (fledging three young in July), four probable and four possible breeding pairs, and two singing males.

### European Serin *Serinus serinus*

**Very rare: 5-yr mean 5 bp**

**Coverage: low**

Green

One site: 0–1 pairs. This is the first report of Serin since 2006.

[England, SE](#)

**Kent** One site: one possible breeding pair. A single bird was seen intermittently from 13th April into June, while two birds were reported on 20th April.

### Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

**Rare: 79 bp (2011 survey)**

**Coverage: low**

Amber

Casual records from the main breeding areas of the Cairngorms (**Highland/Moray & Nairn/North-east Scotland**) provided evidence of 43 pairs: two confirmed, four probable and eight possible breeding pairs, plus 29 other singing males. Some 25 of these were located in a survey of the Abernethy RSPB reserve.

### Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus*

**Scarce: 862 bp (Stanbury et al. 2010)**

**Coverage: low**

Red

A minimum of 144 territories, but only part of the Devon population was monitored.

[England, SW](#)

**Cornwall** 28 pairs bred on the Roseland Peninsula, and in total 65 young were fledged. There was an additional singing male elsewhere, at some distance from the core population. **Devon** Information was received on 114 territories.

[Channel Islands](#)

**Jersey** One pair bred.

**Appendix 1.** Other species considered by the RBBP for which no data were received in 2013.

The following taxa are regular breeding birds in the UK but the size of their populations qualifies them to be reported annually by the RBBP. However, in 2013, no breeding records were submitted to the Panel.

**Short-toed Treecreeper *Certhia brachydactyla***

The Short-toed Treecreeper has always been on the RBBP's radar as a potential breeding species. Following the addition of the Channel Islands to the area covered in 2012, we now include the small population of Short-toed Treecreepers that breeds in woodlands, parks and large gardens on the islands of Guernsey and Jersey (Balmer *et al.* 2013).

**St Kilda Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes hirtensis***

The St Kilda Wren is Red-listed because of its small population and restricted range (Eaton *et al.* 2009) but since this race was added to the RBBP list, in 2009, there have been no all-island counts. The last census was in 1993; this covered only part of the islands and 136 territories were counted. Forrester *et al.* (2007) considered the population to be 230–250 breeding pairs.

**Parrot Crossbill *Loxia pytyopsittacus***

In 2013, no breeding records of Parrot Crossbills were received from North-east Scotland and the only report from Highland was that they were present in Abernethy Forest. Summers & Buckland (2011) estimated the Scottish population to be 131 individuals or 50 breeding pairs, but the confidence intervals around this figure were large.

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**Appendix 2.** Other species considered by the RBBP and also recorded in 2013.

The following occasional or potential breeding species were recorded during the breeding season in 2013, but showed no further signs of breeding than are documented here.

**Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca***

In Avon, a male was recorded on a number of days in May, June and August.

**Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis***

In Caithness, between 10th May and 11th June, a male associated with Tufted Ducks and was seen mating with a female Tufted Duck.

**Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea***

In Gower, an adult was present at one site from 25th April to 26th June.

**Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena***

At a site in Cambridgeshire a single bird in breeding plumage summered for the third consecutive year. It was present from 7th April to 9th August. In Fife, one was on an inland loch from 18th June to 13th July. In its ninth consecutive year of residence, a single male was again recorded on a number of occasions at a site in Yorkshire between 12th March and 23rd June.

**Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis***

In Perth & Kinross, in late May, an adult was reported at the site where breeding occurred in 2009, but there was no indication that the bird was paired.

**Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus***

In Northumberland a male was singing on 19th–21st May, and may have been present earlier.



## Acknowledgments

The Rare Breeding Birds Panel would like to thank the many contributors who have supplied the data that this report is based upon. Birdwatchers across the country provide many of the original observations and we gratefully acknowledge them for sharing these. However, in most cases their records are made available to the RBBP only because of the hard work and diligence of those county and regional bird recorders who form a unique network of expertise across the whole of the UK. All of them do this invaluable but time-consuming work on a voluntary basis, and we salute the willing co-operation and assistance of recorders past and present. There are too many individuals to list here, but they are named individually on our website. Most recorders also helped further by reviewing an early draft of this report, helping to ensure the accuracy of the data presented.

Input from specialist study groups, conservation bodies and various key individuals also means that the report can be even more comprehensive. Valuable supplementary data were submitted from a number of national monitoring schemes, both professional and amateur. Information for many species was supplied via the Schedule 1 licensing system by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), Natural England (NE), Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), the BTO and the RSPB. For significant additional information on Schedule 1 species we acknowledge in particular the help of Jez Blackburn (BTO), Amy Challis (Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme), David Raw (North of England Raptor Forum), Eimear Rooney (Northern Ireland Raptor Study Group) and Adrienne Stratford (RSPB Wales). Carl Barimore (BTO), Will George (RSPB), John Marchant (BTO) and Roddy Mavor (JNCC/RSPB/SOTEAG Seabird Monitoring Programme) were also helpful in providing access to Nest Record Scheme, RSPB reserves, Little Egret and seabird data respectively. Will has also given the benefit of his data management experience in the development of the RBBP database. We also thank the BTO for allowing access to selected records from the BTO/RSPB/BirdWatch Ireland/SOC/WOS BirdTrack dataset. More generally, many individuals in these organisations provide friendly advice and information over the year, for which we are most grateful.

The Secretary would also like to thank the Panel members for their time and expertise; Jill Andrews for help with data input; and Stuart Benn and Malcolm Wright for describing the status of Slavonian Grebe and Stone-curlew in 2013 respectively.

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