



# Shoveler

## *Anas clypeata*

### Status

Amber listed: WI  
Non-SPEC  
Annex II/1 of EC Wild Birds Directive

### National monitoring

WeBS.

### Population and distribution

In the UK, breeding shovelers are usually found on shallow eutrophic waters, with highest numbers in the south-east and Midlands of England (88–91 *Atlas*). Breeding numbers have recently declined after an increase during the 1960s and 1970s (88–91 *Atlas*). In winter, shovelers are widespread on the inland waters of England up to the Midlands, but are more scarce in Wales and Scotland (*Winter Atlas*). There are an estimated 1,000–1,500 pairs of shovelers breeding and 10,300 individuals wintering in the UK (*Population Estimates*). Shovelers use man-made wetlands in the winter and this may be a key reason for the increase in numbers to the current relatively high level (Kirby et al 1995).

### Ecology

Shovelers breed in or near wetland areas, feeding on small crustaceans, molluscs, insects and their larvae, and plant material. A clutch of 9–11 eggs is laid between mid-April and early June. There is a single brood and the young fledge in July. In winter, shovelers frequent shallow freshwater areas on marshes, flooded pasture, reservoirs and lakes with plentiful marginal reeds or emergent vegetation (*Red Data Birds*).

### Breeding season survey

See *Dabbling and diving ducks* in the generic survey methods section.

### Winter survey

See the generic method section on WeBS counts.

### Reference

Kirby, J S, Salmon, D G, Atkinson-Willes, G L and Cranswick, PA (1995) Index numbers for waterbird populations. III. Long-term trends in the abundance of wintering wildfowl in Great Britain, 1966/67–1991/92. *J. Applied Ecology* 32: 536–551.