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Glossary

The terms listed below are generally restricted to those that have been adopted specifically for use within WeBS or more widely for monitoring.

Autumn For waders, autumn comprises July to October inclusive. Due to differences in seasonality between species, a strict definition of autumn is not used for wildfowl.

British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) The BTO is a well-respected organisation, combining the skills of professional scientists and volunteer birdwatchers to carry out research on birds in all habitats and throughout the year. Data collected by the various surveys form the basis of extensive and unique databases, which enable the BTO to objectively advise conservation bodies, government agencies, planners and scientists on a diverse range of issues involving birds.

Complex site A *WeBS site* that consists of two or more *sectors*.

Core Counts The fundamental WeBS counts that monitor all types of wetlands throughout the UK once per month on priority dates. Used to determine population estimates and trends and identify important sites.

Local Organiser Person responsible for coordinating counters and counts at a local level, normally a county or large estuary, and the usual point of contact with the *WeBS office*.

Incomplete counts When presenting counts of an individual species, a large proportion of the number of birds was suspected to have been missed, *e.g.* due to part coverage of the site or poor counting conditions, or when presenting the total number of birds of all species on the site, a significant proportion of the total number was missed.

I-WeBS An independent but complementary scheme operating in the Republic of Ireland to monitor non-breeding waterbirds, organised by the IWC BirdWatch Ireland, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (Ireland) and The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) JNCC is the statutory body constituted by the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to be responsible for research and advice on nature conservation at both UK and international levels. The committee is established by English Nature, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Council for Wales, together with independent members and representatives from the Countryside Commission and Northern Ireland, and is supported by specialist staff.

Low Tide Counts (LTC) WeBS counts made at low tide to assess the relative importance of different parts of individual estuaries as feeding areas for intertidal waterbirds.

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) The RSPB is the charity that takes action for wild birds and the environment in the UK. The RSPB is the national BirdLife partner in the UK.

Spring For waders, spring comprises April to June inclusive. Due to differences in seasonality between species, a strict definition of spring is not used for wildfowl.

Waterbirds WeBS follows the definition adopted by Wetlands International. This includes a large number of families, those occurring regularly in the UK being divers, grebes, cormorants, herons, storks, ibises and spoonbills, wildfowl, cranes, rails, waders and gulls and terns.

Waterfowl Used as a collective term in this publication to refer to all *waterbirds* excluding gulls, terns and Kingfisher.

WeBS count unit The area/boundary within which a count is made. The generic term for *sites*, *sub-sites* and *sectors*.

WeBS Office Main administrative centre for the day-to-day running of WeBS and main

point of contact for information or data pertaining to WeBS (see *Contacts* section).

WeBS sector The unit of division of large *sites* into areas that can be counted by one person in a reasonable time period. They are often demarcated by geographic features to facilitate recognition of the boundary by counters. The finest level at which data are recorded.

WeBS site A biologically meaningful area that represents a discrete area used by waterbirds such that birds regularly move within but only occasionally between sites. The highest level at which count data are stored.

WeBS sub-site A grouping of *sectors* within a *site* to facilitate coordination. In most cases, sub-sites also relate to biologically meaningful units for describing waterbird distribution.

Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) Founded by Sir Peter Scott in 1946, WWT is the largest wildlife conservation charity specialising in wetlands and the wildlife they support in the UK. It has pioneered the bringing together of people and wildlife for the

benefit of both and seeks to raise awareness of the value of wetlands, the threats they face and the actions needed to save them. To this end, WWT has eight centres throughout the UK and is dedicated to saving wetlands for wildlife and people.

Winter For waders, winter comprises November to March inclusive. Due to differences in seasonality between species, a strict definition of winter is not used for wildfowl.

1% criterion The Ramsar Convention has established site selection criteria. Criterion 6 states that “. . . a wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird”.

1% threshold This logically derives from the *1% criterion* and relates to the number of birds that are used as the nominal 1% of the population for the purposes of site selection. Thus, an international population of 75,215 Shelduck has a derived 1% threshold (adopting rounding conventions) of 750.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1. INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Any site recognised as being of international ornithological importance is considered for classification as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (EC/79/409), whilst a site recognised as an internationally important wetland qualifies for designation as a Ramsar site under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat. Criteria for assessing the international importance of wetlands have been agreed by the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention Bureau 1988). Under criterion 6, a wetland is considered internationally important if it regularly holds at least 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird, while criterion 5 states that any site regularly supporting 20,000 or more waterbirds also qualifies. Britain and Ireland's wildfowl belong, in most cases, to the northwest European population and the waders to the east Atlantic flyway population (Wetlands International 2002)

A wetland in Britain is considered nationally important if it regularly holds 1% or more of the estimated British population of one species or subspecies of waterbird, and in Northern Ireland important in an all-Ireland context if it holds 1% or more of the estimated all-Ireland population.

The 1% thresholds for British, all-Ireland and international waterbird populations, where known, are listed in Table A1. Thus, any site regularly supporting at least this number of

birds potentially qualifies for designation under national legislation, or the EC Birds Directive or Ramsar Convention. The international population for each species and subspecies is also specified in the table. However, it should be noted that, where 1% of the national population is less than 50 birds, 50 is normally used as a minimum qualifying threshold for the designation of sites of national or international importance.

It was agreed at the meeting of the Ramsar Convention in Brisbane that population estimates will be reviewed by Wetlands International every three years and 1% thresholds revised every nine years (Rose & Stroud 1994; Ramsar Resolution VI.4). 1% thresholds have not been derived for introduced species since protected sites would not be identified for these birds.

Sources of qualifying levels represent the most up-to-date figures following recent reviews: for wildfowl in Britain see Kershaw & Cranswick (2003); for waders in Britain see Rehfish *et al.* (2003); for gulls in Britain see Burton *et al.* (2003); for all-Ireland importance for divers see Danielsen *et al.* (1993) and for other waterbirds see Whilde (*in prep.*) cited in Way *et al.* (1993). International criteria follow Wetlands International (2002).

It should be noted that for some populations, where the British total is the international total, the precise figure given for the estimates may differ because of different rounding conventions applied in the relevant publications.

Table A1. 1% thresholds for national and international importance

	Great Britain	all-Ireland	International	Subspecies/Population
Red-throated Diver	49	*10	10,000	NW Europe (non-br)
Black-throated Diver	*7	*1	10,000	<i>arctica</i>
Great Northern Diver	*30	?	50	NW Europe (non-br)
Little Grebe	78	?	3,400	<i>ruficollis</i>
Great Crested Grebe	159	*30	4,800	<i>cristatus</i>
Red-necked Grebe	*2	?	1,000	<i>griseogena</i> , NW Europe (non-br)
Slavonian Grebe	*7	?	35	<i>auritus</i> , NW Europe (large billed)
Black-necked Grebe	*1	?	2,800	<i>nigricollis</i> , Europe, N Africa
Cormorant	230	?	1,200	<i>carbo</i> , NW Europe
Shag	?	?	2,400	<i>aristotelis</i>
Little Egret	?	?	1,300	<i>garzetta</i> , W Europe, NW Africa
Grey Heron	?	?	2,700	<i>cinerea</i> , W Europe, NW Africa (br)

Table A1. continued

	Great Britain	all-Ireland	International	Subspecies/Population
Mute Swan: <i>British</i>	375	n/a	380	Britain
<i>Irish</i>	n/a	100	100	Ireland
Bewick's Swan	81	*25	290	<i>bewickii</i> , NW Europe (non-br)
Whooper Swan	57	100	210	Iceland (br)
Bean Goose: <i>Taiga</i>	*4	+	1,000	<i>fabalis</i>
Pink-footed Goose	2,400	+	2,400	Greenland, Iceland (br)
European White-fronted Goose	58	+	10,000	<i>albifrons</i> , Baltic-North Sea
Greenland White-fronted Goose	209	140	300	<i>flavirostris</i>
Greylag Goose: <i>Iceland</i>	819	*40	1,000	<i>anser</i> , Iceland (br)
<i>Hebrides/N Scotland</i>	90	n/a	90	<i>anser</i> , NW Scotland
Barnacle Goose: <i>Greenland</i>	450	75	540	E Greenland (br)
<i>Svalbard</i>	220	+	230	Svalbard (br)
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	981	+	2,200	<i>Bernicla</i> , W Siberia (br)
Light-bellied Brent Goose: <i>Canada</i>	+	200	200	<i>hrota</i> , Ireland (non-br)
<i>Svalbard</i>	*30	+	50	<i>hrota</i> , Svalbard, N Greenland (br)
Shelduck	782	70	3,000	NW Europe (br)
Wigeon	4,060	1,250	15,000	NW Europe (non-br)
Gadwall	171	+	600	<i>strepera</i> , NW Europe (br)
Teal	1,920	650	4,000	NW Europe (non-br)
Mallard	3,520	500	**20,000	<i>platyrhynchos</i> , NW Europe (non-br)
Pintail	279	60	600	NW Europe (non-br)
Garganey	+	+	**20,000	W Africa (non-br)
Shoveler	148	65	400	NW & C Europe (non-br)
Red-crested Pochard	+	+	500	C Europe & W Mediterranean
Pochard	595	400	3,500	NE & NW Europe (non-br)
Tufted Duck	901	400	12,000	NW Europe (non-br)
Scaup	76	*30	3,100	<i>marila</i> , W Europe (non-br)
Eider	730	*20	15,500	<i>mollissima</i> , NW Europe ¹
Long-tailed Duck	160	+	**20,000	W Siberia, N Europe (br)
Common Scoter	500	*40	16,000	<i>nigra</i>
Velvet Scoter	*30	+	10,000	<i>fusca</i> , Baltic, W Europe (non-br)
Goldeneye	249	110	4,000	<i>clangula</i> , NW & Central Europe (non-br)
Smew	*4	+	400	NW & C Europe (non-br)
Red-breasted Merganser	98	*20	1,700	NW & C Europe (non-br)
Goosander	161	+	2,700	<i>mergamser</i> , NW Europe ²
Moorhen	7500	?	**20,000	<i>chloropus</i> , Europe, N Africa (br)
Coot	1,730	250	17,500	<i>atra</i> , NW Europe (non-br)
Oystercatcher	3,200	500	10,200	<i>ostralegus</i> , Europe, NW Africa
Avocet	*35	+	730	W Europe (br)
Ringed Plover: <i>winter</i>	330	125	730	<i>hiaticula</i> , Europe & N Africa (non-br)
<i>passage</i>	300			
Golden Plover	2,500	2,000	9,300	<i>altifrons</i> , Iceland & Faeroes, E Atlantic ³
Grey Plover	530	*40	2,500	E Atlantic (non-br)
Lapwing	**20,000	2,500	**20,000	Europe (br)
Knot	2,800	375	4,500	<i>islandica</i>
Sanderling: <i>winter</i>	210	*35	1,200	E Atlantic, W & S Africa (non-br)
<i>passage</i>	300			
Purple Sandpiper	180	*10	750	<i>maritima</i> , E Atlantic
Dunlin: <i>winter</i>	5,600	1,250	13,300	<i>alpina</i> , W Europe (non-br) ⁴
<i>passage</i>	2,000			
Ruff	*7	+	?	W Africa (non-br)
Jack Snipe	?	250	?	NE Europe (br)
Snipe	?	?	**20,000	<i>gallinago</i> , Europe (br)
Woodcock	?	?	**20,000	Europe (br)
Black-tailed Godwit	150	90	350	<i>islandica</i>
Bar-tailed Godwit	620	175	1,200	<i>lapponica</i>
Whimbrel	+	+	6,100	<i>islandicus</i>
Curlew	1,500	875	4,200	<i>arquata</i>
Spotted Redshank	+	+	1,000	Europe (br)
Redshank	1,200	245	1,300	<i>britannica</i> ⁵
Greenshank	*6	*9	3,100	Europe (br)
Green Sandpiper	?	?	14,500	Europe (br)
Common Sandpiper	?	?	17,000	N, W & C Europe (br)
Turnstone	500	225	1,000	<i>interpres</i> , NE Canada, Greenland (br)

Table A1. continued

	Great Britain	all-Ireland	International	Subspecies/Population
Little Gull	?	?	840	N, C & E Europe (br)
Black-headed Gull	19,000	?	**20,000	N & C Europe (br)
Common Gull	9,000	?	17,000	<i>canus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	500	?	5,300	<i>graellsii</i>
Herring Gull	4,500	?	13,000	<i>argentatus</i> ⁶
Great Black-backed Gull	400	?	4,700	NE Atlantic
Kittiwake	?	?	**20,000	<i>tridactyla</i> , E Atlantic (br)
Sandwich Tern	?	?	1,700	<i>sandvicensis</i> , W Europe (br)
Common Tern	?	?	1,900	<i>hirundo</i> , S, W Europe (br)
Little Tern	?	?	340	<i>albifrons</i> , W Europe (br)
Black Tern	?	?	4,000	<i>niger</i>

? Population size not accurately known.

+ Population too small for meaningful figure to be obtained.

* Where 1% of the British or all-Ireland wintering population is less than 50 birds, 50 is normally used as a minimum qualifying level for national or all-Ireland importance respectively.

** A site regularly holding more than 20,000 waterbirds qualifies as internationally important by virtue of absolute numbers.

- 1 The degree of interchange of UK Eiders with birds on the continent is unclear, and although Wetlands International (2002) has recommended that birds in Britain and Ireland should be treated as a separate biogeographical population, a recent review of available data by DEFRA's SPA and Ramsar Scientific Working Group has found limited evidence to support this conclusion, and recommended that for site-selection purposes, British Eider continue to be considered as a component of the four groups of the Northwest European groups of the race *mollissima* with an international 1% threshold of 15,500. It is hoped that future genetic studies will help clarify the situation.
- 2 Although Wetlands International (2002) considers Goosanders breeding in Scotland, northern England and Wales to be a discrete population, a recent review of available data by DEFRA's SPA and Ramsar Scientific Working Group has found limited evidence to support this conclusion for the time being, and recommended that for site-selection purposes, British Goosanders continue to be considered as a component of the NW and C European population of Goosander, with an international 1% threshold of 2,700.
- 3 Three populations of Golden Plover listed by Wetlands International (2002) overlap in the UK in winter. Draft guidelines from Ramsar suggest that the largest of the three thresholds (*i.e.* that for *altifrons*, Iceland & Faeroes, E Atlantic) should be used for site-selection purposes.
- 4 Whilst several populations of Dunlin occur in the UK at different times of the year, most wintering birds are referable to the listed population.
- 5 Three populations of Redshank listed by Wetlands International (2002) overlap in the UK in winter: *totanus* E Atlantic (non-br), *robusta* and *britannica*. Most *totanus* winter outside the UK but the other populations are known to occur widely. Draft guidelines from Ramsar suggest that the larger of the two thresholds (*i.e.* that for *britannica*) should be used for site-selection purposes.
- 6 Two populations of Herring Gull overlap in the winter in the UK; *argentatus* and *argenteus*. Draft guidelines from Ramsar suggest that the larger of the two thresholds, *i.e.* that for *argentatus*, should be used for site-selection purposes.