Little Ringed Plover

Charadrius dubius

International threshold:	2,500
Great Britain threshold:	?†
All-Ireland threshold:	?†

GB max: **258** **Jun**
NI max: **0**

In 2009, Little Ringed Plovers were recorded at 140 sites during WeBS Core counts, including three sites in Scotland.

In March, the species was seen at 18 locations, suggesting a relatively early arrival (although interpretation of arrival dates of migratory species is obviously complicated by the timing of the Core count date).

The highest Core counts during the course of the year were in July; 18 at Dungeness & Rye Bay and 16 at Uttoxeter Quarry. A light autumn passage had concluded by the end of September.

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of 10 or more birds in Great Britain†							
Nosterfield Gravel Pits	11	23	24	(8)			19
Uttoxeter Quarry					16	Jul	16
Old Moor	14	10	(18)	19	11	Jul	14
Dungeness and Rye Bay	11	9	9	12	18	Jul	12
Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in Summer 2009 in Great Britain†							
River Avon - Fordingbridge to Ringwood		(1)	(1)	4	12	Jun	8
Rutland Water	14	8	9	6	10	Jun	9
Humber Estuary	3	4	1	(4)	10	May	5
Sandbach Flashes	6	4	3	4	10	Apr	5

† *as no British or All-Ireland thresholds have been set a qualifying level of 10 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report*

Ringed Plover

Charadrius hiaticula

International threshold:	730
Great Britain threshold:	340
All-Ireland threshold:	150

GB max: **27,232** **Aug**
NI max: **564** **Nov**

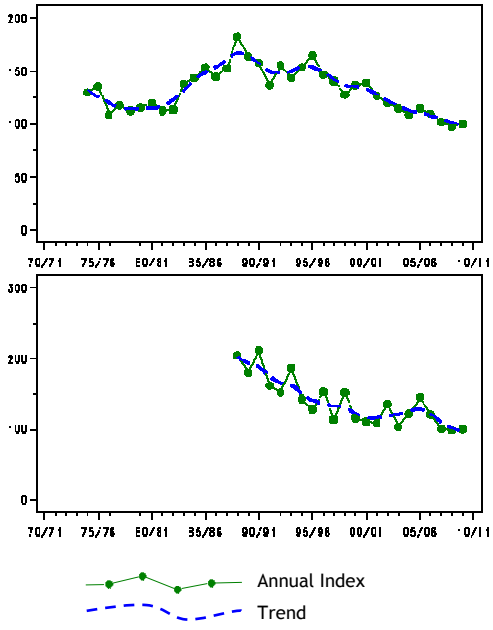


Figure 43.a, Annual indices & trend for Ringed Plover for GB (above) & NI (below).

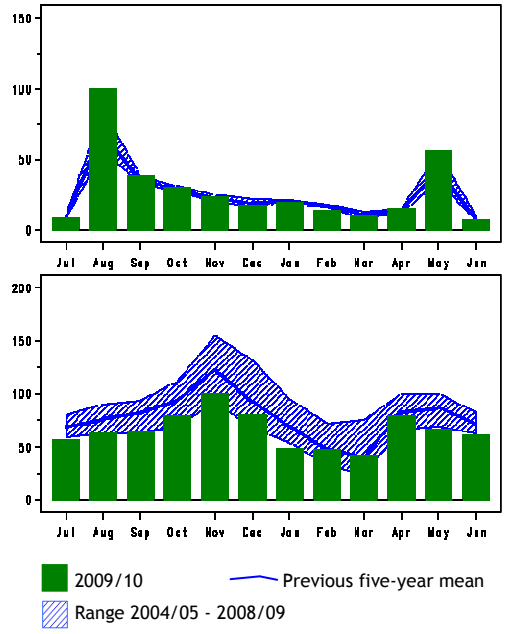


Figure 43.b, Monthly indices for Ringed Plover for GB (above) & NI (below).

Britain and Ireland are of considerable importance for Ringed Plovers, providing wintering refuges for both British and continental breeders, and critical passage sites for long-distance migrants of *tundrae*/*psammodroma* races. The breeding population comprises a large proportion of the nominate race *hiaticula*.

The Ringed Plover trends in both Britain and Northern Ireland have been in steady decline for over twenty years. These falls have coincided with an increase in The Netherlands over the course of the last thirty years (Hornman *et al*. 2011) and are therefore considered partly attributable to a shift of core wintering range (Maclean *et al*. 2008), but also due to the fact that in the UK the breeding population is in steady decline (Conway *et al*. 2008).

The numbers of passage Ringed Plovers using UK sites in spring and autumn are much greater than those which remain to overwinter. Hence, virtually all the peak monthly counts from the principal sites relate to passage periods, particularly August. This bias towards passage periods probably applies to Ringed Plover more than any other species of wader. In contrast to the downward trend overall, the peak count during 2009/10 was a very high 5,420 at Ribble Estuary in August, just twelve birds short of the most ever noted (in May 2000). Similarly, very high May counts of 2,505 at Humber Estuary and 2,138 at The Wash were attributable to an exceptional spring passage (M. Pilsworth, pers. comm.). Both counts represent the largest ever spring totals at those sites.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean	
Sites of international importance in the UK								
Ribble Estuary	1,950	(1,016)	1,734	(2,931)	5,420	Aug	3,035	
Humber Estuary	(2,168)	(783)	(860)	(781)	(2,505)	May	(2,505)	
North Norfolk Coast	2,310	2,046	1,023	1,814	2,758	Aug	1,990	
Solway Estuary	(665)	(644)	(402)	(936)	(1,644)	Aug	(1,644)	
Severn Estuary	(662)	1,453	(363)	1,457	(982)	Aug	1,455	
The Wash	1,416	(1,127)	400	1,831	2,138	May	1,446	
Thames Estuary	1,262	1,197	748	830	(733)	Aug	1,009	
Swale Estuary	(392)	(465)	(294)	(605)	(830)	Aug	(830)	▲
Morecambe Bay	1,000	355	(428)	936	894	Aug	796	
Sites of national importance in Great Britain								
Dengie Flats	331	(127)	1,013	577	710	Oct	658	
Tiree	648 [32]						648	
Forth Estuary	348	290	502	(875)	1,080	Aug	619	
Lindisfarne	415	581	(139)	(224)	(734)	May	577	
Stour Estuary	610	390	428	582	798	Aug	562	
Blackwater Estuary	367	418	531	767	(689)	Aug	554	
Crouch-Roach Estuary	(270)	816	594	349	419	Aug	545	
Barnkirk Point at Annan					535 [12]	Aug	535	▲
Duddon Estuary	757 [10]	(495)	200	525	407	Aug	477	
South Ford	300	743	400	300			436	
Tay Estuary	212	235	(170)	658	(611)	Aug	429	
Alt Estuary	404	257	515	515	416	Aug	421	
Dee Estuary (England & Wales)	392	127	(551)	744	265	Aug	416	
Taw-Torridge Estuary	(395)	(223)	(176)	(298)	(307)	Aug	(395)	
Chichester Harbour	400	365	233	395	422	Aug	363	▲
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland								
Strangford Lough	449	278 [10]	227 [10]	277 [10]	288 [10]	Nov	304	
Outer Ards Shoreline	308	338	125	308	238	Nov	263	
Carlingford Lough	247	247	154	(105)	(54)	Oct	216	
Belfast Lough	168 [10]	180	253	147 [10]	187	Oct	187	
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain								
Traeth Melynog	0			1	365	Aug	122	

American Golden Plover

Pluvialis dominica

Vagrant
Native Range: America

An American Golden Plover was at Baleshare (North Uist) in October; the 13th WeBS record, and third from Scotland following the first and second in 2007/08 and 2008/09, respectively.

Golden Plover

Pluvialis apricaria

International threshold:	9,300
Great Britain threshold:	4,000
All-Ireland threshold:	1,700

GB max: 150,337 Nov
NI max: 10,272 Nov

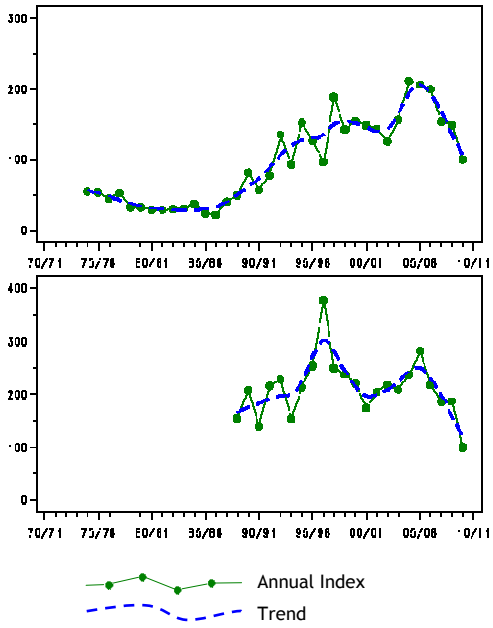


Figure 44.a, Annual indices & trend for Golden Plover for GB (above) & NI (below).

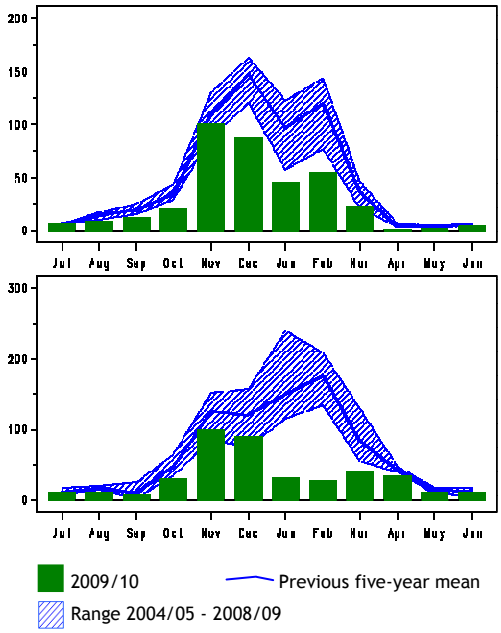


Figure 44.b, Monthly indices for Golden Plover for GB (above) & NI (below).

The British national index for Golden Plover fell sharply in 2009/10, returning the species to a level similar to that during the early 1990s. The counted monthly maximum of 150,337 birds in November was 19% lower than the peak total noted in 2008/09.

In common with those for Lapwing, the monthly indices are worthy of close scrutiny when evaluating the winter for Golden Plovers. Following a typical November, it is apparent that numbers were well below average during the remainder of the winter, presumably as a consequence of the cold winter forcing birds southwards out of north-west Europe including the UK.

Following a peak in the trend during the period of 2004/05 to 2006/07, the following the three years have seen a marked drop in index values. With The Netherlands having experienced a steady increase in the number of wintering Golden Plovers since the 1990s, it will be interesting to examine the effects of colder winters within a general context of climatic amelioration with associated shifts in ranges of waders (Maclean *et al*. 2008).

Six WeBS sites continue to surpass the threshold for international importance for Golden Plovers, and following the revision of the estimated wintering population by Gillings & Fuller (2009) 18 sites qualify as being of national importance. Peak numbers were generally low at all sites, notably at Somerset Levels where the maximum was approximately one-third of the peak recorded during the previous year. A similarly pronounced decline was also noted for Lapwing with which this species often forms mixed flocks at inland sites.

In Northern Ireland, the fall in the national index was even more marked than in Britain, dropping to its lowest ever level. All the major sites held their lowest peaks for several years, and the exodus during the cold period, as indicated by the monthly indices, was even more marked than that which occurred in Britain.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean	
Sites of international importance in the UK								
Humber Estuary	47,118	50,188	(23,526)	(29,172)	(13,719)	Nov	48,653	
The Wash	26,996	31,350	19,643	40,588	25,628	Nov	28,841	
Breydon Water & Berney Marshes	28,220	24,930 [10]	15,790 [12]	30,800 [12]	21,900 [12]	Dec	24,328	
Swale Estuary	12,014	(10,520)	17,327	(7,407)	6,112	Jan	11,818	
Blackwater Estuary	11,949	(15,810)	5,703	(13,173)	(4,224)	Dec	11,659	
Somerset Levels	5,018	12,054	12,422	18,467	6,874	Nov	10,967	
Sites of national importance in Great Britain								
Dengie Flats	12,678	5,520	4,520	11,070	8,500	Nov	8,458	
Hamford Water	8,859	(5,362)	10,228	7,234 [10]	2,284	Dec	7,151	
Carmarthen Bay	4,047	12,700	10,420	4,244	3,569	Feb	6,996	
Lower Derwent Ings	6,776	10,600	5,433	2,500	4,124	Nov	5,887	
Lindisfarne	(7,081)	(3,236)	(2,324)	4,228	(1,470)	Oct	5,655	
Ribble Estuary	3,829	(3,950)	6,610	4,307	5,815	Nov	5,140	
Old Moor	(6,200)	6,500	(3,800)	5,000	2,000	Oct	4,925	
Camel Estuary	9,000	(3,000)	2,501	6,000 [12]	2,100	Nov	4,900	
North Norfolk Coast	5,315	4,552	3,154	5,914	5,527	Nov	4,892	
Crouch-Roach Estuary	(3,718)	(2,387)	(6,696)	3,298	4,342	Dec	4,779	
Nene Washes	4,500	8,500	5,650	3,500	1,600	Mar	4,750	
Otmoor	(1,200)	4,670 [12]	(1,080)	(1,908)	(1,250)	Mar	4,670	▲
Pegwell Bay	7,000	4,170	(5,500)	3,500	3,150 [12]	Dec	4,664	
Dungeness and Rye Bay	3,600	5,000	7,210	3,772	3,450	Nov	4,606	
Ouse Washes	10,069	3,312 [12]	2,427 [12]	485	6,071 [12]	Nov	4,473	
Solway Estuary	3,991	5,746	3,761	3,223	5,428	Nov	4,430	
Thames Estuary	7,401	4,817	4,267	2,129	2,014	Feb	4,126	
Morecambe Bay	5,768	(3,429)	(3,382)	1,716	(4,715)	Nov	4,066	▲
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland								
Strangford Lough	7,970	8,513 [10]	8,817 [10]	11,328 [10]	7,435 [10]	Nov	8,813	
Lough Foyle	7,640	9,534	9,211	8,486	5,091	Dec	7,992	
Loughs Neagh and Beg	6,537	6,475	7,712	7,337	4,687	Nov	6,550	
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels in WeBS-Year 2009/2010								
Overcote Marina		6,000 [12]		2,500	6	Jan	2,835	
Bann Estuary	2,610	2,100	1,350	900	1,360	Apr	1,664	

Golden Plovers *(Ben Green)*

A poor winter for Golden Plovers in both Britain and Northern Ireland was probably weather related.

Grey Plover

Pluvialis squatarola

GB max:	**36,209**	**Jan**
NI max:	**262**	**Jan**

International threshold:	**2,500**
Great Britain threshold:	**430**
All-Ireland threshold:	**65**

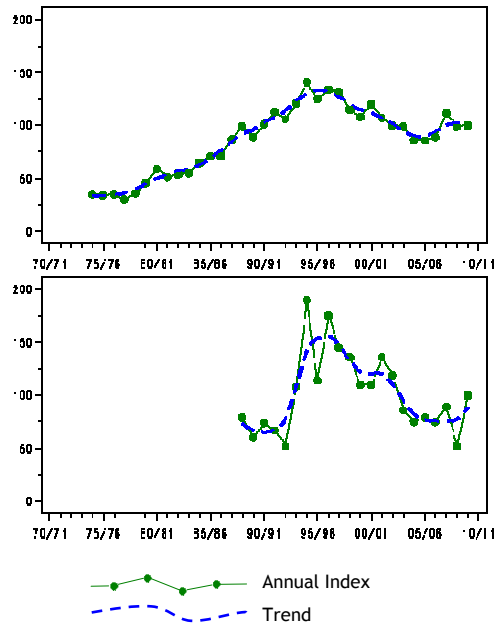


Figure 45.a, Annual indices & trend for Grey Plover for GB (above) & NI (below).

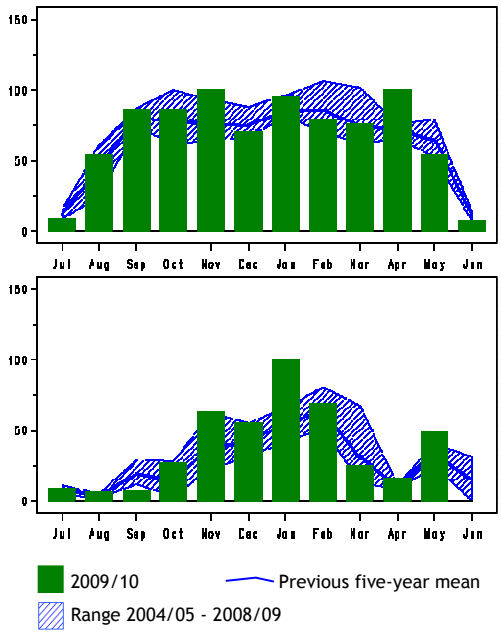


Figure 45.b, Monthly indices for Grey Plover for GB (above) & NI (below).

Grey Plovers breed in the tundra zones of Eurasia and North America, with the most important wintering areas in Europe being the southern North Sea coasts, other British estuaries, and the Atlantic coast of France. Further areas in the Mediterranean basin, along the Atlantic coast of Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Africa, are also used.

For a decade from the mid 1990s to the mid 2000s, Grey Plovers declined steadily at sites in Britain (having increased at an equally steady rate during the decade up to the mid 1990s). This fall occurred at the same time as a long-term increase at sites in The Netherlands, primarily the Wadden Sea, and has therefore been attributed to a north-eastward shift in core wintering range (Maclean *et al*. 2008). The last four years have seen an apparent reversal in that downward trend, but only time will tell whether numbers now stabilise. At the same time, Grey Plovers continue to increase on the Wadden Sea in The Netherlands (Hornman *et al*. 2011).

As first noted in last year's report, the WeBS monthly indices again show higher than normal numbers present in the UK at both the start and end of the core wintering period, with fewer than expected present during mid winter. Notably, a similar pattern of monthly abundance has occurred on the Wadden Sea in recent years (Hustings *et al*. 2009, Hornman *et al*. 2011).

Eight WeBS sites surpassed the threshold for international importance in 2009/10. The Wash and Dengie Flats continue to be the most important two sites, the April count at the former being especially noteworthy. The count of 15,411 has only ever been surpassed at The Wash on three previous occasions; the maximum there (and for WeBS overall) being 17,404 in March 1995. Based on the monthly maxima generated through the last four years of WeBS monitoring, approximately half of all Grey Plovers in Britain now occur at just these two principal sites; The Wash and Dengie Flats.

Elsewhere, peaks at most of the other listed sites were close to average. A notable exception was the early-spring aggregation at Alt Estuary which peaked at 3,141 birds in April, the most there for seven years. In the autumn, the adjacent Ribble Estuary held its highest number for six years; yet that total of 4,463 still compares poorly with an historic maximum of 16,395 birds there in May 2000.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean	
Sites of international importance in the UK								
The Wash	8,604	9,750	7,455	11,734	(15,411)	Apr	10,591	
Dengie Flats	4,909	7,239	11,940	10,669	9,550	Jan	8,861	
Thames Estuary	13,028	5,700	2,970	2,801	4,734	Feb	5,847	
Blackwater Estuary	2,650	(4,819)	5,766	(2,083)	(4,056)	Nov	4,412	
Ribble Estuary	(3,813)	3,518	3,902	2,315	(4,463)	Sep	3,602	
Humber Estuary	2,792	1,923	(3,417)	(3,530)	2,732	Apr	2,879	
Hamford Water	(2,198)	(2,685)	(2,658)	(2,394)	(2,246)	Mar	(2,685)	
Stour Estuary	3,263	2,355	2,329 [10]	2,003 [10]	2,910	Nov	2,572	▲
Sites of national importance in Great Britain								
Alt Estuary	2,837	1,244	1,206	1,731	3,141	Apr	2,032	
Lindisfarne	1,361	2,171	(989)	2,058	(512)	May	1,863	
Swale Estuary	(1,244)	(1,415)	1,631	(1,322)	2,003	Jan	1,817	
Chichester Harbour	2,017	1,592	1,604	1,416	1,960	Dec	1,718	
North Norfolk Coast	1,483	1,626	1,339 [10]	1,693	2,169	Aug	1,662	
Medway Estuary	989	(467)	(1,586)	(1,331)	(349)	Jan	1,302	
Dee Estuary (England/Wales)	1,091	1,214	762	2,033 [10]	1,160	Jan	1,252	
Pagham Harbour	1,067	902	1,269	1,059	1,329	Jan	1,125	
Morecambe Bay	1,074	(1,065)	747	994	1,073	Feb	991	
Langstone Harbour	(879)	702	848	989	820	Sep	848	
Colne Estuary	(800)	(840)	(720)	(740)	(726)	Sep	(840)	
Jersey Shore		939	373				656	
Crouch-Roach Estuary	595	816	292	526	431	Feb	532	
Deben Estuary	(719)	342	(574)	509	516	Nov	532	
Beaulieu Estuary	381	640	545	526	519	Jan	522	
Eden Estuary	(356)	400	590	558	173	Jan	430	
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland								
Strangford Lough	249 [10]	141	118	84	204	Jan	159	

Lapwing

Vanellus vanellus

International threshold: 20,000**
Great Britain threshold: 6,200
All-Ireland threshold: 2,100

GB max: 239,514 Nov
NI max: 9,424 Nov

The Lapwing population wintering in the UK comprises the part of the breeding population that does not move southwards to continental Europe, supplemented by birds from Scandinavia, Eastern Europe and Russia. Numbers wintering in the UK are known to vary in response to temperatures, both here and particularly in continental Europe.

As described for Golden Plover, the monthly indices for Lapwing often prove fascinating. In 2009/10, they indicate that the relatively cold winter probably forced a relatively large number of birds out of the UK to escape the cold conditions experienced during the mid-winter period, the monthly index being typical in November before falling sharply in December. As with Golden Plover the monthly maximum was noted in November, and was 17% lower than the peak in 2008/09.

The maxima at virtually all the sites of international and national importance were below average during 2009/10 (the only exception being a typical November peak at Ribble Estuary). The particularly low maximum from Somerset Levels, some 50% lower than recent years, provides further indication of the effects of a cold winter; birds generally tending to be forced towards the coast, at least initially, during freezing conditions. However Somerset Levels, along with The Wash and Breydon Water & Berney Marshes, remain sites

which surpassed the threshold for international importance.

In The Netherlands, the trend for this species has been stable over the last thirty years, although freshwater sites have experienced a recent decline (Hornman *et al*. 2011). One assumes that the close similarity of the trends for Lapwing and Golden Plover in the UK will continue to be maintained in future years, and that the fortunes of the two species will continue to follow the same path. However, interestingly, the trend for Golden Plover across the North Sea is one of a recent increase and therefore contrasts somewhat with Lapwing.

A comparison of the effects on Lapwings and other species of recent cold winters, both in the UK and in neighbouring countries such as The Netherlands, will be a particularly interesting aspect of future annual reports of the respective monitoring schemes.

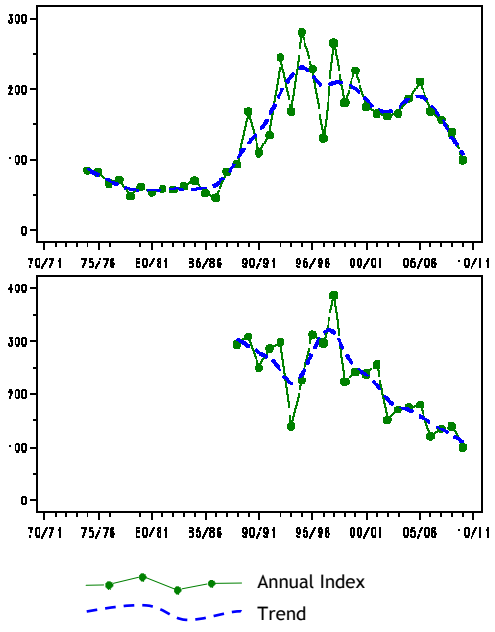


Figure 46.a, Annual indices & trend for Lapwing for GB (above) & NI (below).

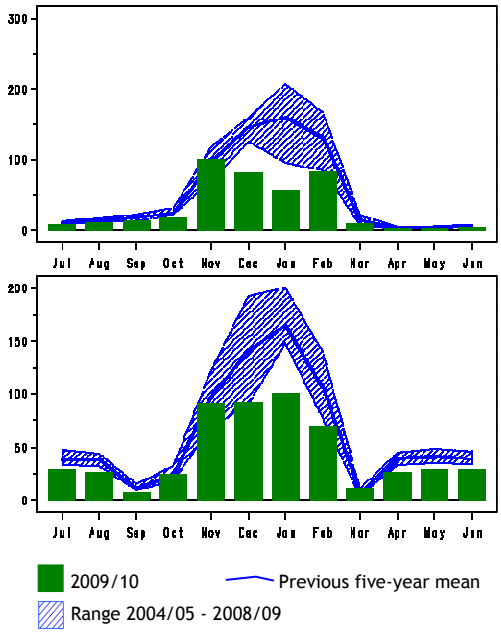


Figure 46.b, Monthly indices for Lapwing for GB (above) & NI (below).

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Somerset Levels	48,116	38,388	44,457	31,928	19,683	Nov	36,514
The Wash	36,327	36,998	11,186	24,543	21,265	Dec	26,064
Breydon Water & Berney Marshes	25,140	17,620 [12]	19,700 [12]	38,700 [12]	19,820 [12]	Dec	24,196
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Humber Estuary	27,421	(19,403)	16,500	11,700 [12]	(7,784)	Nov	18,756
Ribble Estuary	24,265	13,821	18,066	16,777	19,517	Nov	18,489
Morecambe Bay	19,192	13,484	(10,683)	(17,535)	(18,225)	Nov	17,109
Thames Estuary	18,662	17,270	(8,728)	(8,101)	9,246	Jan	15,059
Ouse Washes	25,835	13,026	11,222	(7,343)	7,340 [12]	Dec	14,356
Swale Estuary	14,913	(10,840)	23,479	9,996	8,744	Feb	14,283
Severn Estuary	19,434	9,895	11,035	11,951	7,967	Jan	12,056
Pegwell Bay	(8,100)	17,000	12,000	8,260 [10]	10,000 [12]	Dec	11,815
North Norfolk Coast	13,305	11,560	11,185	10,419	9,462	Dec	11,186
Dungeness and Rye Bay	9,320	9,936	12,758	5,320	7,553	Jan	8,977
Crouch-Roach Estuary	8,464	8,438	(9,255)	8,002	7,101	Nov	8,252
Blackwater Estuary	6,766	(8,160)	8,503	10,129	5,166	Nov	7,745
Dee Estuary (England and Wales)	8,800	5,319	9,526	4,402	5,641	Feb	6,738
Solway Estuary	(9,381)	(7,622)	(5,128)	5,023	(5,504)	Nov	6,532

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Loughs Neagh and Beg	6,684	5,421	(7,720)	6,263	2,550	Nov	5,728
Strangford Lough	6,635	5,154 [10]	3,906 [10]	5,198 [10]	5,110	Dec	5,201
Lough Foyle	4,745	2,543	1,816	2,945	2,663	Nov	2,942
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels in WeBS-Year 2009/2010							
Nene Washes	6,070	4,720	10,575	6,353	1,996	Feb	5,943
Mersey Estuary	10,098 [10]	4,572	7,154	3,500	3,290	Feb	5,723
Alde Complex	7,843	5,406	7,322	(5,462)	2,001	Dec	5,643

Knot

Calidris canutus

International threshold: 4,500
Great Britain threshold: 3,200
All-Ireland threshold: 190

GB max: 251,035 Nov
NI max: 8,549 Jan

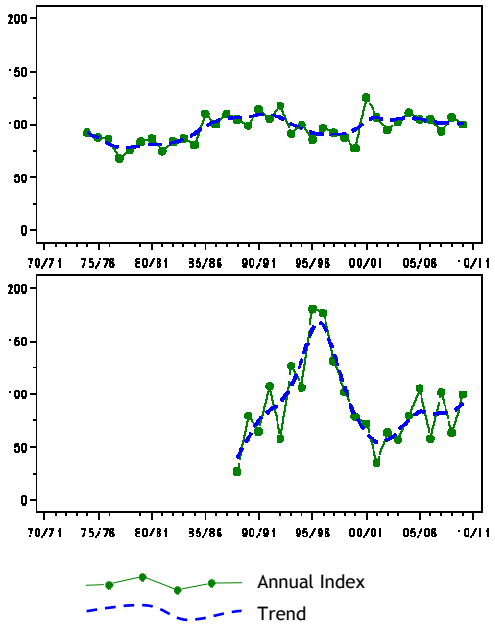


Figure 47.a, Annual indices & trend for Knot for GB (above) & NI (below).

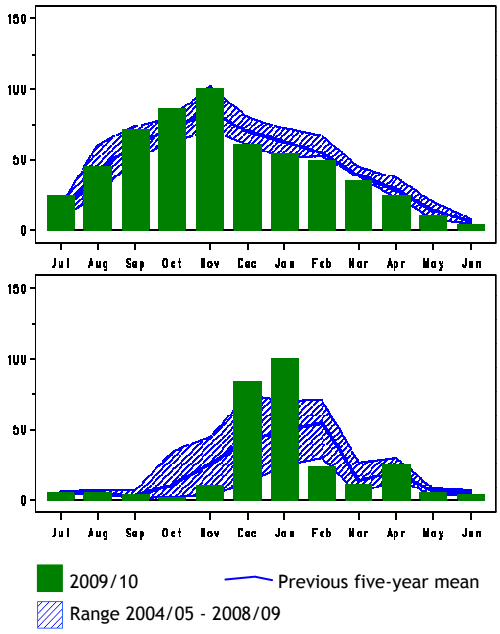


Figure 47.b, Monthly indices for Knot for GB (above) & NI (below).

The principal sub-population of Knot, which both passes through the UK on passage and remains to winter, relates to *islandica* (breeding in northeast Canada and Greenland), while *canutus* (breeding in Taimyr) largely stages on the Wadden Sea in The Netherlands and winters in West Africa having not passed through Britain (Davidson 2002).

Overall, the British trend has remained generally steady over the course of the last 25 years. Numbers of Knot in Britain are generally highest between September and December, with many moving west having stopped to moult at the Wadden Sea which supports approximately 75% of staging birds (Davidson 2002). 2009/10 was a typical year in that respect; the monthly indices illustrating a clear build-up during the autumn, culminating with a prominent peak in November. Thereafter, numbers during the main winter period were below average. This may have been at least partly attributable to a westward shift of birds to Northern Ireland where the monthly indices were well above average in December and January. However, such a movement would not account for the bulk of this apparent exodus, so one can only assume that birds left UK shores. The status and distribution of Knots in the Wadden Sea during this particular period is not yet published. However, potentially just as likely considering the cold conditions which were

experienced in the midwinter period would have been a movement west to Ireland or south to France. Typically, approximately 27,000 Knots winter in France (Stroud *et al*. 2004) and 18,970 in Ireland (Crowe *et al*. 2008) each winter.

Knot numbers reported from eastern England in late 2009 provided further evidence of the importance of both The Wash and North Norfolk Coast. November's total included a very high count of 180,572 at The Wash, a figure that has been surpassed on just one previous occasion (November 1992). A recent recovery in numbers of Knot on The Wash followed a period of steady decline and a change in overall waterbird assemblage, which arose from over-exploitation of the shellfishery stock and increased nutrient input (Atkinson *et al*. 2010). As discussed in last year's report, the monthly counts from The Wash and adjacent North Norfolk Coast indicate significant overlap in use. This is perhaps best exemplified by the November maximum from The Wash occurring at the same time as just 4,104 were logged at North Norfolk Coast. Notably, the previous two months had both seen counts of 76,000+ from North Norfolk Coast.

Knots *(Dawn Balmer)*

Among the other 11 sites of international importance, below average numbers were again reported from Thames Estuary where the maximum represents the lowest since 1985/86, and approximately one-fifth of the peak there just three years ago. It remains to be seen whether this represents a temporary blip in fortunes at this site. Notably below average numbers were also reported from Dee Estuary, Solway Estuary and Burry Inlet. In contrast, the maximum from Morecambe Bay was the most there since 2003/04.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean	
Sites of international importance in the UK								
The Wash	139,270	135,889	162,724	93,957	180,572	Nov	142,482	
Morecambe Bay	(31,245)	(19,635)	(24,544)	42,671	60,719	Dec	51,695	
North Norfolk Coast	25,551	22,928	11,239	84,812	83,003	Sep	45,507	
Thames Estuary	24,254	83,716	45,162	28,203	17,861	Feb	39,839	
Ribble Estuary	(26,106)	(41,681)	30,136	(45,400)	(25,000) [12]	Aug	39,072	
Humber Estuary	35,004	(33,529)	41,772	(17,552)	(35,595)	Jan	38,388	
Dengie Flats	15,650	30,500	17,375	10,200	(18,960)	Oct	18,537	
Dee Estuary (England & Wales)	24,505	12,937	11,212	20,850 [10]	10,465	Dec	15,994	
Alt Estuary	12,454	15,011	12,900	19,602	15,250	Oct	15,043	
Solway Estuary	(7,662)	8,910	(14,385)	(13,364)	6,006	Dec	10,065	
Strangford Lough	8,014 [10]	5,380 [10]	7,360 [10]	6,376 [10]	7,452	Dec	6,916	
Stour Estuary	6,701	3,028	6,660	4,357 [10]	7,455 [10]	Dec	5,640	
Blackwater Estuary	(5,326)	2,610	(3,492)	(8,630)	(4,032)	Jan	4,818	
Sites of national importance in Great Britain								
Burry Inlet	4,301	4,300	7,100	2,830	1,302 [10]	Feb	3,967	▼
Medway Estuary	3,574	(550)	(2,940)	4,304	(400)	Feb	3,939	
Hamford Water	3,185	3,550	2,200	4,263 [10]	(6,250)	Jan	3,890	▲
Inner Moray and Inverness Firth	5,146	2,762	2,485	5,952	3,027	Jan	3,874	
Forth Estuary	4,685	(3,542)	3,298	4,088	2,934	Nov	3,751	
Swale Estuary	4,060	4,506	5,002	3,528	1,650	Mar	3,749	
Severn Estuary	(2,642)	(966)	5,510	4,081	1,182	Jan	3,591	▼
Lindisfarne	(4,172)	1,475	(4,111)	(4,150)	(1,125)	Dec	3,477	
Orwell Estuary	3,569 [10]	(1,825)	3,552 [10]	3,357 [10]	3,421 [10]	Feb	3,475	▲
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland								
Dundrum Inner Bay	270	100	2,560	1,023	1,200	Jan	1,031	
Tyrella				(495)			(495)	
Lough Foyle	470	225	501	400	38	Feb	327	
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain								
Dornoch Firth	4,215	1,400	2,500	1,731	4,315	Feb	2,832	

Sanderling

Calidris alba

International threshold: 1,200
Great Britain threshold: 160
All-Ireland threshold: 65

GB max: 11,340 Oct
NI max: 492 Sep

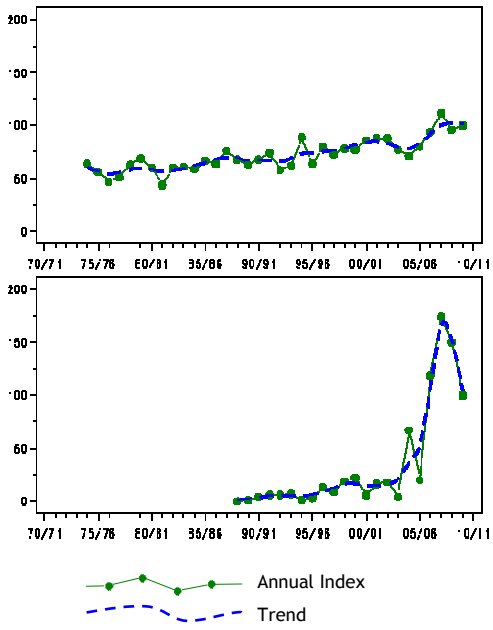


Figure 48.a, Annual indices & trend for Sanderling for GB (above) & NI (below).

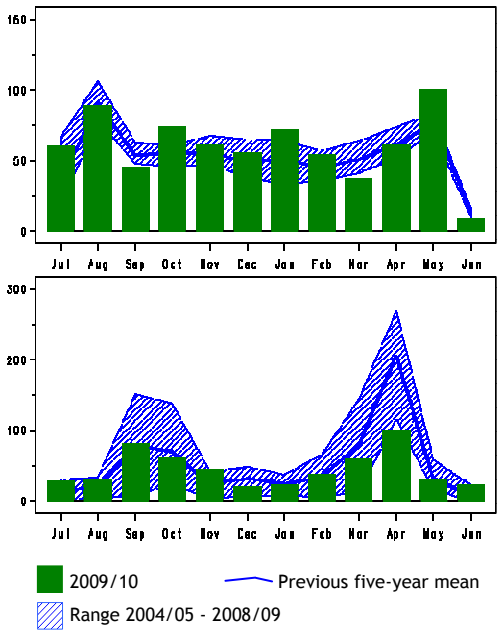


Figure 48.b, Monthly indices for Sanderling for GB (above) & NI (below).

Sanderling breed in the high Arctic and birds from both the Siberian and Greenland populations migrate south from northwest Europe utilising a network of key sites, reviewed by Reneerkens *et al.* (2009).

An increase in the number of Sanderlings in Britain has occurred at the same time as a more pronounced rise in The Netherlands (Hornman *et al.* 2011). Similarly, the index for Northern Ireland, albeit based on a relatively small number of birds, has been at a high level in five of the last six years, with Lough Foyle again supporting the largest aggregation during the year. The reasons behind these changes are not yet properly understood but are considered to be linked to a decrease in the proportion of birds using open coastlines.

Four sites again surpassed the threshold for international importance based on the use of monthly maxima from throughout the WeBS-year. The largest Core count during 2009/10 was 5,794 at The Wash in August. This is the largest number ever noted there, surpassing the previous maximum of 4,867 in May 1999. The peak total from Alt Estuary (3,629 in April) was also high compared to the total during the last five years, but short of the historical peak of 6,894 birds in August 2003. The all-time spring and autumn peaks, both from Ribble Estuary, are 8,737 in May 1992 and 9,450 in July 1972, respectively.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Ribble Estuary	3,491	(4,690)	4,700	(4,800)	(2,444)	Sep	4,420
The Wash	3,291	1,504	1,430	1,420	5,794	Aug	2,688
Alt Estuary	2,317	3,090	2,171	1,833	3,629	Apr	2,608
Carmarthen Bay	(800)	2,370 [10]	1,955 [10]	1,812	2,224	Jan	2,090
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
North Norfolk Coast	1,241	973	1,200 [10]	927	1,307	Nov	1,130
Humber Estuary	(576)	(362)	(706)	(662)	(970)	Aug	(970)

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean	
Thames Estuary	1,072	870	689	951	587	Oct	834	
Jersey Shore		831	739				785	
Scuthvie Bay		(110)	705	810	530	Jan	682	
Dee Estuary (England & Wales)	1,020	370	762	778	280	Nov	642	
Morecambe Bay	925	332	(477)	532	624	May	603	
North Bay (South Uist)	300	318	650	780			512	
Lindisfarne	(294)	509	467	480	(433)	Oct	485	
Duddon Estuary	332	623 [12]	(450) [11]	(241)	(490)	Jan	482	
Tiree	468 [32]						468	
Solway Estuary	(524)	501	(455)	189	(450)	Oct	424	
Ardivachar Point (South Uist)	500	350	267	372			372	
Thanet Coast	307	322	431	282	499	Oct	368	
Swansea Bay	467	440 [10]	(279)	327	154	Mar	347	
Forth Estuary	290	168	(387)	(315)	404	Dec	313	
Tees Estuary	253	191	(193)	(351)	(353)	Feb	287	
Ryde Pier to Puckpool Point	305	200	310		292	Oct	277	
Severn Estuary	222	(140)	(29)	324	(45)	May	273	
South Ford	172	218	300	400			273	
Dungeness and Rye Bay	330	183 [12]	300 [12]	234	(178)	Nov	262	
Tay Estuary	635	303	103	160	102	Oct	261	
Taw-Torridge Estuary	(269)	(183)	(150)	(176)	203 [12]	Sep	236	
Chichester Harbour	109	324	245	242	210	Mar	226	
Inner Moray and Inverness Firth	193	197	243	(106)	188	Nov	205	
Pegwell Bay	41	120	110	280 [12]	386 [12]	Mar	187	▲
Durham Coast	186	(88)		(116)	(75)	Jan	186	
Don Mouth to Ythan Mouth	85	(49)	132	(150)	(361)	Apr	182	▲
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland								
Lough Foyle	(0)	(190)	879	925	488	Sep	764	
Bann Estuary	268	251	69	108	148	Apr	169	
Dundrum Inner Bay	5	180	200	155	0		108	
Tyrella				(73)			(73)	
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels in WeBS-Year 2009/2010								
South Hayling Seafront			150	180	140	Nov	157	
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain								
Loch Gruinart	91	39	108	60	326	Sep	125	
Loch Paible (North Uist)	(150)	185	25	18	302	Feb	136	
Eden Estuary	132	44	55	188 [10]	194	Oct	123	
Colne Estuary	152	100	132	114	166	Feb	133	

Little Stint

Calidris minuta

International threshold: **2,000**
Great Britain threshold: **1**†
All-Ireland threshold: **?**†

GB max: **46 Sep**
NI max: **1 Sep**

Little Stints breed across Siberia and west into the extremes of Scandinavia, typically wintering in the Mediterranean and Africa. The species was recorded at 30 WeBS sites in 2009/10, a very lean year. Away from England and the English/Welsh estuaries, these included single sites in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

A poor autumn passage built up to a peak of just 46 birds in September, including maxima of 11 at Severn Estuary and six at North Norfolk Coast. Numbers elsewhere related to one or twos at a scattering of coastal sites, the only inland record being two birds at Belvide Reservoir.

Typically, a very small wintering population, totalling some eight birds, was detected during Core counts in 2009/10 at four widespread sites; Camel Estuary, Dungeness & Rye Bay, Humber Estuary and Solway Estuary. In spring, singles were noted at five coastal sites in May and June.

Sites with 3 or more birds during passage periods in 2009/10†

Severn Estuary	11	Sep	Morecambe Bay	3	Sep
North Norfolk Coast	6	Sep	Humber Estuary	3	Dec
The Wash	3	Sep			

† *a qualifying level of 3 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report*

Temminck's Stint

Scarce

Calidris temminckii

One was at Swale Estuary in August, the second WeBS record there, following a record in October 1998.

White-rumped Sandpiper

Vagrant

Calidris fuscicollis

Native Range: America

One was at Abberton Reservoir in November; the 34th WeBS record.

Baird's Sandpiper

Vagrant

Calidris bairdii

Native Range: America

An unseasonal Baird's Sandpiper present at Barns Ness (Lothian) from November to January (*per* www.birdguides.com), was recorded during the WeBS Core count in December. It represents the 17th WeBS record, and the third in Scotland.

Pectoral Sandpiper

Vagrant

Calidris melanotos

Native Range: America, N Siberia, Australia

Pectoral Sandpipers noted at eight WeBS sites were typically all in autumn. September birds were at Dee Estuary (2), Morecambe Bay, Draycote Water, Castle Lake and Old Moor, while the following month the species featured at Camel Estuary (2), Ribble Estuary and Abberton Reservoir.

Curlew Sandpiper

Calidris ferruginea

International threshold:	**10,000**
Great Britain threshold:	**?†**
All-Ireland threshold:	**?†**

GB max:	**72**	**Sep**
NI max:	**0**	

Curlew Sandpipers are passage migrants to the UK, breeding in central Siberia with the bulk wintering in central and southern Africa. They are scarce in the UK in spring, and autumn numbers are largely dependent on the summer's breeding productivity and weather conditions during migration. The species primarily passes to the east of the UK on passage, rendering it relatively scarce; in contrast, a staging site on the German part of the Wadden Sea has, impressively, hosted up to 27,000 birds (Delany *et al*. 2009).

The species was recorded at 43 WeBS sites in Britain, with no records from Northern Ireland. The peak count of an unexceptional autumn passage was 25 at North Norfolk Coast in July, with the only other records reaching double-figures being 10 at WWT Martin Mere in August and 11 at Humber Estuary in September.

Singles were reported from three locations in eastern England during the winter; Pegwell Bay, Crouch-Roach Estuary and Hamford Water.

Noted at ten sites in April to June, the peak count of a typically light spring passage was four birds at The Wash in May.

Sites with 6 or more birds during passage periods in 2009/10†

North Norfolk Coast	25	Jul	WWT Martin Mere	10	Aug
Humber Estuary	11	Sep	Forth Estuary	6	Sep

† *as no British or All-Ireland thresholds have been set a qualifying level of 6 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report*

Purple Sandpiper

Calidris maritima

GB max:	**1,060**	**Jan**
NI max:	**59**	**Mar**

International threshold:	**750**
Great Britain threshold:	**130**
All-Ireland threshold:	**35***

**50 is normally used as a minimum threshold*

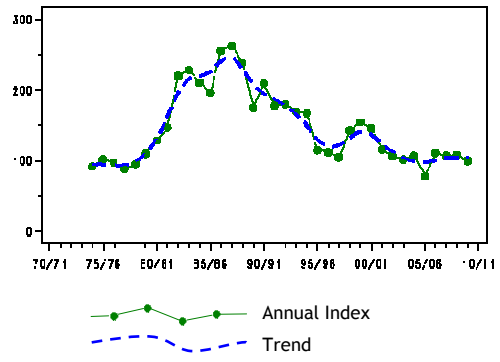


Figure 49.a, Annual indices & trend for Purple Sandpiper for GB.

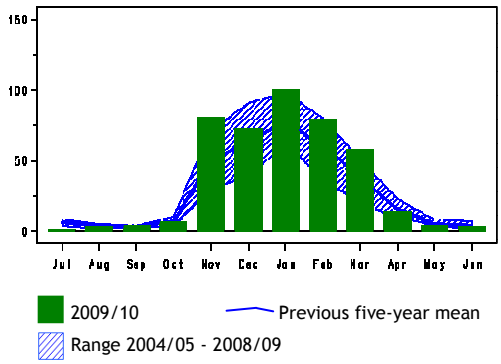


Figure 49.b, Monthly indices for Purple Sandpiper for GB.

Most Purple Sandpipers in the UK occur on the relatively poorly monitored rocky shores of Scotland. Such habitats are, of course, covered more effectively by NEWS (Non-Estuarine Waterbird Survey), last carried out in 2007 (Austin *et al.* 2008).

Following a marked decline during the 1980s and 1990s, the national indices in the most recent decade have been largely stable at their current relatively low level. There is a suggestion of a shift in winter distribution of this species in recent years, with the proportion of birds now found in the north-western parts of the UK having increased, indicating a shift towards Canadian breeding grounds (Rehfisch *et al.* 2004). The wintering population of Purple Sandpipers in the UK comprises birds which breed in eastern Canada, Scandinavia and Svalbard, while breeding birds on Iceland and much of Greenland are considered more likely to be resident.

In 2009/10, the largest Core counts were 280 on Papa Westray (Nov), 160 on Egilsay (Feb) and 147 at Forth Estuary (Jan). Away from Scotland, noteworthy numbers were present on the Northumberland coast, exemplified by peaks of 85 at Seahouses to Budle Bay (Nov) and 96 at Beadnell to Seahouses (Jan), while further south in England, 43 at Thanet Coast (Jan) was perhaps the most notable aggregation.

In Northern Ireland, numbers at Outer Ards Shoreline, the most important site for the species in the region, were lower than average; further indication of a downward trend at the site which has a historic maximum of 156 birds in February 1990.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Island of Papa Westray	431		413	324	(280)	Nov	389
Tiree	368 [32]						368
Farne Islands	116	(184)	(171)	(348)	73	Jul	178
Ardivachar Point (South Uist)	200	139	108	233			170
Moray Coast	118	67	229	199	88	Jan	140
Island of Egilsay	130	(90)		99	160	Feb	130
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Outer Ards Shoreline	60	122	66	85	45	Nov	76
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels in WeBS-Year 2009/2010							
Dee Estuary (Scotland)	157	140	88	145	105	Mar	127
Scuthvie Bay		(35)	164	130	80	Mar	125
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain							
Forth Estuary	112	98	145	(114)	(147)	Jan	126

Dunlin

Calidris alpina

International threshold:	13,300
Great Britain threshold:	3,500
All-Ireland threshold:	880

GB max:	364,628	Jan
NI max:	6,508	Feb

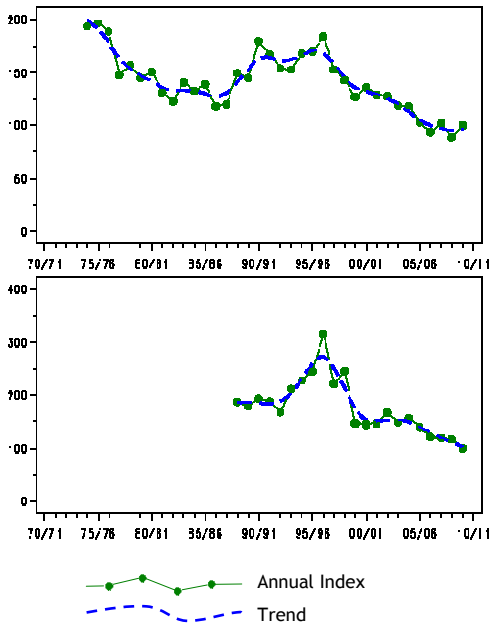


Figure 50.a, Annual indices & trend for Dunlin for GB (above) & NI (below).

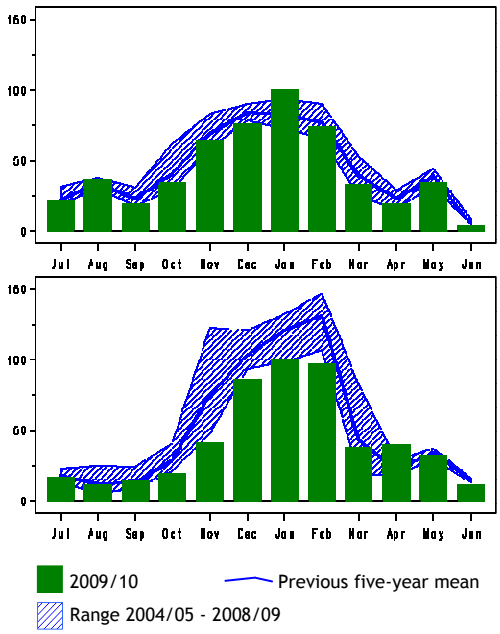
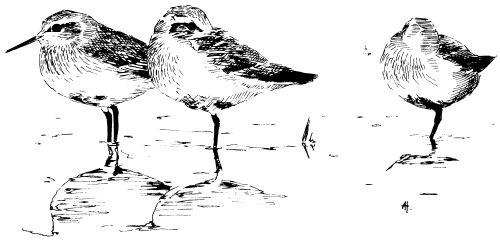


Figure 50.b, Monthly indices for Dunlin for GB (above) & NI (below).

Dunlins in Britain have been in steady decline since the mid 1990s, and the species has declined at one of the fastest rates of the regularly wintering waders. This fall has taken place at the same time as numbers have increased in The Netherlands (e.g. Hornman *et al.* 2011), suggesting that a larger proportion of birds from northern breeding populations now winter on the Wadden Sea, considered to be an effect of climate change (Maclean *et al.* 2008). This is in keeping with declines in wintering numbers of other wader species in Britain, including Bar-tailed Godwit and Curlew, which have similarly also been attributed to shifts in wintering range.

Eleven sites surpassed the threshold for international importance; the same selection as in 2008/09. In contrast to recent years, the highest individual site count this year did not relate to spring passage at Ribble Estuary, where birds of the nominate race (which breeds from Scandinavia north and westwards) are joined by the *arctica* and *schinzii* races. Indeed, the maximum at Ribble Estuary in May 2010 was the lowest annual peak there for five years. Instead, the year's highest count, related to 44,030 birds at Mersey Estuary in January, representing the most at that site since 2002/03. Other sites were generally close to recent average in terms of maxima, although the peak at Dee Estuary was the lowest reported there for over 30 years.



Dunlins *(Alan Harris)*

In light of the decline in wintering numbers of Dunlin, Musgrove *et al.* (2011) list a revised 1% threshold for national

importance of 3,500 birds, representing a decrease of 37% compared to the previous threshold figure of Rehfisch *et al*. (2003). Consequently, more sites of national importance are listed below compared to tables published in recent years. Included among the twenty sites is Alt Estuary where the total recorded in January was the most ever at the site. If the five-year average is maintained at that level, the site will surpass the threshold for international importance. Also worthy of mention is the peak at Swale Estuary, which was the most there for seven years. In contrast, the peaks at both Burry Inlet and Lindisfarne were both well below average.

In Northern Ireland, the recent trend is also one of decline. In 2009/10, peaks at individual sites were generally close to or below recent average. The maximum reported from Lough Foyle was the lowest for 25 years (following a stronger year in 2008/09).

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Ribble Estuary	29,305	33,506	52,551	(45,662)	28,940	May	37,993
Mersey Estuary	34,731 [10]	34,600	41,270	23,115	44,030	Jan	35,549
Thames Estuary	39,889	33,335	34,941	32,123 [10]	(23,217)	Dec	35,072
The Wash	35,468	25,913	24,523	24,444	33,181	Jul	28,706
Morecambe Bay	(27,110)	(38,248)	24,409	20,289	31,084	Jan	28,228
Severn Estuary	(19,561)	16,625	(16,072)	27,136 [10]	21,640	Jan	21,800
Humber Estuary	(26,305)	(14,951)	16,730	15,444	(15,426)	Jan	19,493
Chichester Harbour	12,989	14,152	(18,759)	26,311	17,465	Dec	17,935
Blackwater Estuary	15,178	9,581	15,015	17,966	(19,606)	Jan	15,469
Dee Estuary (England & Wales)	19,867	15,584	12,094	16,855 [10]	9,654	Feb	14,811
Langstone Harbour	22,356	12,950	15,007	8,126	9,994	Jan	13,687
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Stour Estuary	7,019	7,231	8,150	18,338 [10]	19,984 [10]	Nov	12,144
Dengie Flats	13,018	(7,340)	6,116	10,650	11,570	Jan	10,339
Portsmouth Harbour	(9,228)	(6,592)	(7,002)	(6,842)	(6,530)	Feb	(9,228)
Duddon Estuary	8,741 [10]	6,542	14,523	8,000 [12]	7,481	Dec	9,057
Medway Estuary	7,367	(5,222)	(9,132)	(10,633)	(3,795)	Feb	9,044
Alt Estuary	5,184	7,630	7,652	7,819	16,004	Jan	8,858
Solway Estuary	9,396	6,512	(7,194)	7,836	10,094	Jan	8,460
Swale Estuary	7,830	5,706	(7,692)	6,419	13,073	Jan	8,257
Colne Estuary	(5,323)	(3,756)	6,716 [10]	(4,970)	(4,891)	Feb	6,716
Forth Estuary	6,422	5,488	4,937	6,565	(5,357)	Dec	5,853
Breydon Water/Berney Marshes	8,072 [10]	5,755 [10]	5,310 [12]	4,720 [12]	5,108 [12]	Jan	5,793
Burry Inlet	6,965	6,218 [10]	6,903	5,703	2,412	Nov	5,640
Lindisfarne	(5,540)	6,951	(5,315)	3,755	2,108	Nov	4,734
Blyth Estuary	(1,228)	4,895	6,130	2,715	2,743	Feb	4,121
Alde Complex	2,595	3,149	5,380	4,782	4,601	Jan	4,101
Dornoch Firth	2,577	5,681	3,911	(1,050)	3,474	Jan	3,911
Crouch-Roach Estuary	(2,226)	3,684	(4,403)	2,930	(4,037)	Dec	3,764
Hamford Water	(3,534)	(3,735)	(3,340)	3,731 [10]	(2,945)	Jan	3,733
Cleddau Estuary	3,420	2,664	4,666	3,988	3,433	Jan	3,634
Exe Estuary	3,526	3,091 [10]	3,975	4,005	3,559	Jan	3,631
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Bann Estuary	1,090	1,030	900	671	1,060	Jan	950
Belfast Lough	920	(1,712)	742	699	743	Dec	963
Carlingford Lough	1,573	(2,185)	2,621	1,552	(1,370)	Dec	1,983
Dundrum Inner Bay	1,202	1,047	1,186	1,277	1,157	Dec	1,174
Lough Foyle	3,334	1,592	2,028	3,750	1,183	Feb	2,377
Outer Ards Shoreline	1,119	2,810	739	605	425	Mar	1,140
Strangford Lough	7,669 [10]	3,151 [10]	4,115 [10]	4,455 [10]	2,514 [10]	Dec	4,381
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels in WeBS-Year 2009/2010							
North West Solent	2,632	2,743	2,920	5,850 [10]	3,025	Feb	3,434
Poole Harbour	(2,182)	(2,196)	(2,350)	(3,271)	(1,280)	Jan	(3,271)
Inner Moray and Inverness Firth	4,748	3,629	2,420	2,027	2,703	Jan	3,105
Lavan Sands	4,643	4,020	(2,516)	1,748	1,778	Feb	3,047
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain							
North Norfolk Coast	3,333	3,321	4,088	2,811	3,830	Jan	3,477

Broad-billed Sandpiper

Limicola falcinellus

Vagrant
Native Range: Asia

A Broad-billed Sandpiper at Tees Estuary in June is the first for WeBS since October 2003. Eight of the eleven WeBS records have been in spring.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper

Tryngites subruficollis

Vagrant
Native Range: America

Three were seen at Lough Foyle in September, the 20th WeBS record. Three of the previous WeBS records have involved duos, but never before has a group of three been seen during a Core count.

Ruff

Philomachus pugnax

International threshold:	**12,500**	
Great Britain threshold:	**8***	
All-Ireland threshold:	**+†**	

**50 is normally used as a minimum threshold*

GB max:	**336**	**Feb**
NI max:	**15**	**Sep**

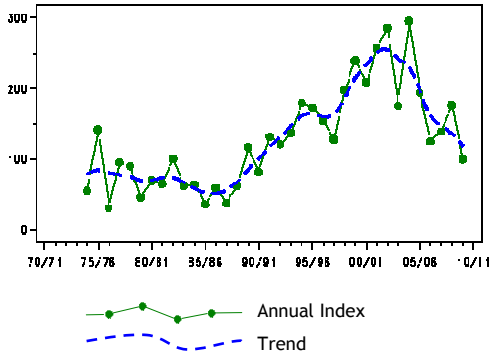


Figure 51.a, Annual indices & trend for Ruff for GB.

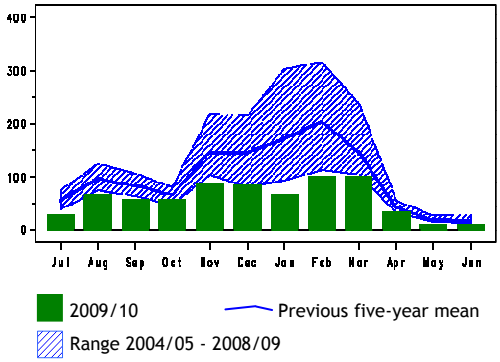


Figure 51.b, Monthly indices for Ruff for GB.

There was a drop in the national index for Ruff, and the monthly British maximum (336, Feb) was the lowest for many years. Reasons for the apparent recent decline in wintering numbers, following a marked increase during the 1990s and early 2000s, are unclear. However, the similarity with the trends for Golden Plover and Lapwing is striking, and so the trend may be habitat-related or in the case of 2009/10 in response to a period of cold weather.

Maxima at most of the important sites were below the five-year averages. The highest count on the coast was 116 at North Norfolk Coast in October while inland, where peak numbers often occur in midwinter, 78 were at Lower Derwent Ings in February. The peak count from Northern Ireland was 14 at Loughs Neagh & Beg in September.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Ouse Washes	357 [12]	82 [12]	135 [12]	115	73 [12]	Nov	152
North Norfolk Coast	193	121	90	189	116	Oct	142
Lower Derwent Ings	50	148	129	93	78	Feb	100
Humber Estuary	84	61	62	79	34	Aug	64
Overcote Marina		112 [12]		58	13	Feb	61
WWT Martin Mere	(50)	76	67	48	42	Jan	58
Breydon Water & Berney Marshes	72	55 [11]	89 [12]	20	38 [12]	Feb	55
Somerset Levels	12	29	96	48	37	Dec	44
Swale Estuary	37	49	40	14	44	Feb	37

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Nene Washes	2	4	38	76	62	Mar	36
Ribble Estuary	17	32	37	40	21	Apr	29
Dungeness and Rye Bay	56	34	16	22	14	Dec	28
Hickling Broad	0	3		55	47	Sep	26
Middle Yare Marshes	40	27	21	18	12	Dec	24
Tees Estuary	(29)	33	15	19	22	Sep	24
Abberton Reservoir	36	(9)	21	5	26	Aug	22
Fen Drayton Gravel Pits	1	33	60	8	8	Feb	22
Rutland Water	32	29	15	20	12	Oct	22
Morecambe Bay	4	92	3	2	3	Mar	21
Thames Estuary	38	3	(4)	11	22	Feb	19
Severn Estuary	16	33	14	18	9	Sep	18
Blackwater Estuary	18	10	15	18	11	Sep	14
Tophill Low Reservoirs	4	0	62 [12]	1	1	Jul	14
The Wash	14	11	(2)	12	15	Apr	13
Loch of Strathbeg	21	8	6	11	17	Aug	13
Stour Estuary	55	1	1	1	1	Sep	12
Minsmere	12	20	10	9	10	Apr	12
Nosterfield Gravel Pits	3	23	9				12
Hamford Water	18	5	14	7	12	Sep	11
Dee Estuary (England and Wales)	(10)	9	11	13	(7)	Mar	11
Sandbach Flashes	13	14	12	8	7	Oct	11
Stodmarsh	14	5	8	10	9	Aug	9
Otmoor	0	31 [12]	3 [12]	3 [12]	7 [12]	Feb	9
Cresswell Pond	6	10	2	24	1	Sep	9
Forth Estuary	(9)	14	4	6	10 [12]	Aug	9
Arun Valley	7	10	(10)	3	(9)	Feb	8
Holland Marshes	10	17	7	3	2 [12]	Sep	8
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels in WeBS-Year 2009/2010							
East Chevington Pools	28	6	1	0	1	May	7
Hurworth Burn Reservoir	10	0	3	17	0		6
Buckden and Stirtloe Pits				10	0		5
Crouch-Roach Estuary	4	2	6	5 [12]	2	Sep	4
Sites with mean peak counts of 8 or more birds in Northern Ireland†							
Loughs Neagh and Beg	7	34	6	0	14	Sep	12
Belfast Lough	4 [10]	1 [10]	39	2	0		9
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain							
Somersham Gravel Pit	0	0	0	0	19	Feb	4
Bolton-on-Swale Gravel Pits	0	1	2	5	12	Jan	4
Scorton Quarry	0	1	1	3	11	Oct	3

† *as no All-Ireland threshold has been set a qualifying level of eight has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report*

Jack Snipe

Lymnocryptes minimus

International threshold: **?**
Great Britain threshold: **1,000†**
All-Ireland threshold: **250†**

GB max: **114** **Dec**
NI max: **4** **Mar**

Few reliable inferences can be drawn from analysis of each year's WeBS counts of Jack Snipe, as the species has very low detectability and favours habitats poorly covered by the survey. However, as emphasised in previous reports, standardised searches at regularly used sites can be valuable in assessing changes in status at the local level at least.

In 2009/10, Jack Snipes were recorded at 132 WeBS sites during Core counts, a very similar number to the previous year. Peak numbers were 15 at Somerset Levels (Mar), 14 at Severn Estuary (Dec) and 12 at Cathkin Marsh (Nov). Additionally, a supplementary count of 25 was received from Chat Moss, a regular site for the species. Doxey Marshes SSSI presumably also remains a favoured site for the species, despite only single-figure peaks having been reported from there since 2004/05 when 60+ were counted.

The species was seen at three sites in Northern Ireland during the winter.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of 5 or more birds in Great Britain†							
Craigmarloch		15 [12]	35				25
Chichester Harbour	18	37	21	8	10	Dec	19
Bickershaw Colliery Area	18 [19]	32 [19]	4 [19]	21 [19]			19
Windlaw Marsh	22	25	12	6	3	Oct	14
Chat Moss	14 [19]	7 [19]	6 [19]	11 [19]	25 [19]	Oct	13
Severn Estuary	19	6	12	7	14	Dec	12
Somerset Levels	(3)	9	9	9	(15)	Mar	11
Lower Derwent Ings	24	14	4	7	4	Feb	11
Rumworth Lodge Reservoir		21 [19]	1 [19]				11
Cainhoe Lakes				11	6	Feb	9
Fiddlers Ferry Power Station	16	5	5				9
Kinsham Pool	8	7	16	4	5	Jan	8
Doxey Marshes SSSI	18	9	6	6	3	Oct	8
Dee Estuary (England and Wales)	1	2	18	(8)	2	Jan	6
Cathkin Marsh				0	12	Nov	6
Inner Moray and Inverness Firth	2	7	11	2	(2)	Dec	6
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain†							
R.Avon - Ringwood to Christchurch	(1)	1	2	1	7	Feb	3
Southampton Water	(2)	1	(0)	1	7 [12]	Mar	3
Morecambe Bay	4	3	(0)	4	6	Jan	4
Malltraeth RSPB	1	0	10	2	6	Oct	4
Pegwell Bay	0	5	5	3	5 [12]	Jan	4
North Norfolk Coast	2	3	3	3	5	Nov	3
Wedholme Flow		0	0	2	5	Nov	2
Harelaw Reservoir (Barrhead)	0	0	5 [12]	0	5 [12]	Nov	2
Ugie Estuary	0			0	5	Dec	2
River Lea - East Hyde	0	0	0	0	5	Feb	1

† *as few sites exceed the British and All-Ireland thresholds, a qualifying level of five has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report*

Snipe

Gallinago gallinago

International threshold: 20,000**
Great Britain threshold: 10,000†
All-Ireland threshold: ?†

GB max: 8,260 Dec
NI max: 239 Sep

In winter, Snipe are found in a range of habitats, both inland and coastal, and the population is considered to comprise residents as well as immigrants from northwest Europe. Because many favoured habitats are relatively poorly covered through WeBS, and there are difficulties in obtaining accurate estimates of numbers due to their secretive habits, interpretation of national figures for this species is notoriously difficult.

Snipe *(Richard Richardson)*

Musgrove et al. (2011) estimate that in the order of one million birds may be present in Britain during the winter period, while although the breeding population has experienced marked declines historically, there are indications that the number of 'drummers' may now be increasing (Baillie *et al*. 2010).

In 2009/10, the largest WeBS counts were, typically, from Lower Derwent Ings (765, Feb) and Somerset Levels (711, Dec); however, both represented decreases of over 40% compared to the respective maxima noted during the previous year. In general, counts at most of the other major sites were largely as to be expected.

The numbers reported do not indicate any obvious movements, towards the coast for example, during the spell of freezing weather in mid-winter. A count of 166 at Fleet & Wey in January, well above the

average expected from the site, was perhaps the most notable in that respect.

In Northern Ireland, the peak during the year was 204 at Loughs Neagh & Beg in September; the most ever there.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of 200 or more birds in Great Britain†							
Somerset Levels	713	1,012	1,794	1,240	711	Dec	1,094
Lower Derwent Ings	1,182	567	302	1,396	765	Feb	842
North Norfolk Coast	155	96	1,225 [10]	135	217	Jan	366
Doxey Marshes SSSI	455	224	278	495	209	Oct	332
Malltraeth RSPB	251	261	573	328	206	Nov	324
Morecambe Bay	304	140	107	378	276	Jan	241
Middle Yare Marshes	(237)	(34)	(159)	(26)	(29)	Oct	(237)
Severn Estuary	337	113	402	170	115	Nov	227
Southampton Water	210	(66)	(74)	(138)	204 [12]	Jan	207
Arun Valley	130	171	197	210	(315)	Dec	205
Sites with mean peak counts of 50 or more birds in Northern Ireland†							
Loughs Neagh and Beg	31	33	110	23	204	Sep	80
Strangford Lough	68 [10]	38 [10]	(27)	(27)	102 [10]	Jan	69
Belfast Lough	170	33	57	35	20	Sep	63
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain†							
Alde Complex	33	80	82	77	280	Dec	110
North Warren and Thorpeness Mere	58	20	32 [12]	24	256	Dec	78
Castlemartin Corse	23	50	(23)	40	250	Jan	91
Wedholme Flow		0	71	257	242	Nov	143
Chichester Harbour	219	190	140	135	(236)	Jan	184
Camel Estuary	320	103	53	(189)	(215)	Nov	176
R.Avon - Ringwood to Christchurch	(20)	(21)	46	37	210	Dec	98

† *as no sites exceed the British threshold and no All-Ireland threshold has been set, qualifying levels of 200 and 50, respectively, have been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report*

Long-billed Dowitcher

Limnodromus scolopaceus

Vagrant
Native Range: America

In north-west England, singles were present at both Morecambe Bay and Ribble Estuary in October. One at Loughs Neagh & Beg in November was then followed by records from Maer Lake, Bude in both December and January.

Woodcock

Scolopax rusticola

International threshold: 20,000**
Great Britain threshold: 14,000
All-Ireland threshold: ?

**50 is normally used as a minimum threshold*

GB max: 204 Jan
NI max: 1 Feb

Due to its secretive habits and preference for habitats not monitored by WeBS, drawing inferences from counts of Woodcock is always difficult. Musgrove *et al*. (2011) estimate the number wintering in Britain to be in the order of 1.4 million birds; 83% of which are considered to be of continental origin (Hoodless & Powell 2010).

Records were received from 147 WeBS sites in 2009/10. This is considerably more than recent years, probably as a result of the prolonged period of frozen conditions experienced in mid winter, which is likely to have forced birds into normally unused areas. A monthly maximum of 204 birds was logged in January. The majority of records were of singletons but there were several counts of more than five birds, the highest of which were all from the coast in January; 30 at Grouville Marsh (Channel Islands), 13 at Hamford Water (Essex) and 12 at Thanet Coast (Kent). Just one was reported from Northern Ireland, at Lower Lough Erne in February.

Black-tailed Godwit

Limosa limosa

International threshold:	470
Great Britain threshold:	430
All-Ireland threshold:	140

GB max:	34,977	Sep
NI max:	1,748	Sep

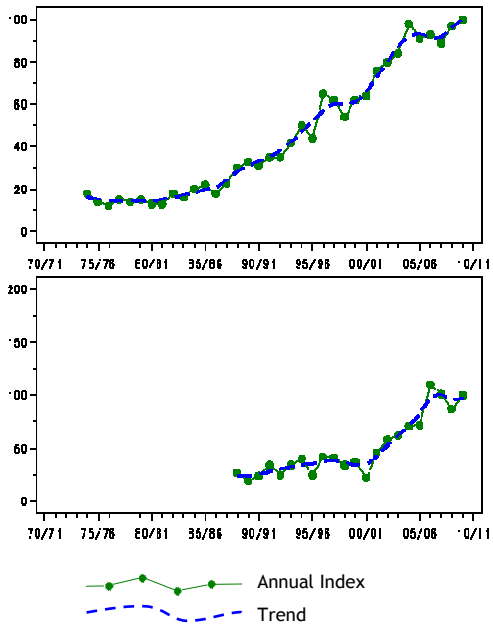


Figure 52.a, Annual indices & trend for Black-tailed Godwit for GB (above) & NI (below).

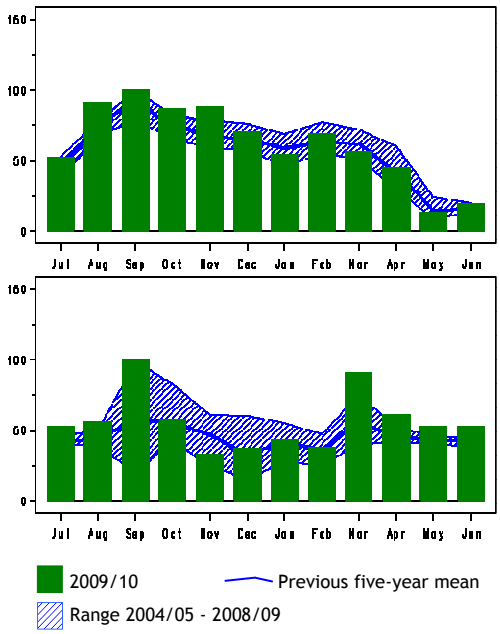


Figure 52.b, Monthly indices for Black-tailed Godwit for GB (above) & NI (below).

Most of the non-breeding Black-tailed Godwits that occur in Britain and Northern Ireland are of Icelandic origin, arriving in July and August and forming large moulting flocks at coastal sites that tend to peak in September. In addition, a small proportion of passage birds are of the nominate race which are mainly to be found in the south and east of England where a very small number breed.

After a brief period of apparent stability, the British index rose to its highest ever level in 2009/10, thereby continuing the long-term increase which this species has undergone over course of the last thirty years. This rise has occurred in line with that of the flyway population, considered partly attributable to higher productivity on the Icelandic breeding grounds and the high quality of stopover sites in Portugal (Gill *et al*. 2007, Lourenço & Piersma 2008).

Thirty-five sites surpassed the threshold of international importance in 2009/10. Peaks at most of the sites towards the top of the table below were above recent average. Notably, The Wash held over 9,600 birds in both August and November, a threshold that been surpassed only twice before (including last year). In northwest England, the maxima at Dee Estuary has only been surpassed in 2004/05, while the 5,714 at Ribble Estuary represents the most ever there, and Morecambe Bay again fared well after a record-breaking year in 2008/09.

Following the latest review of wintering waterbird populations in Britain, the 1% threshold for national importance for this species rose from 150 to 430 birds (Musgrove *et al*. 2011). As a consequence, fewer sites are listed compared to the number that readers will have become accustomed to seeing in recent years.

The trend for Northern Ireland follows a very similar trajectory to that for Britain. In 2009/10, the maximum at the main site, Strangford Lough, was the lowest for seven years, although a slight improvement compared to recent years was noted at Lough Foyle.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean	
Sites of international importance in the UK								
The Wash	8,205	8,090	(6,961)	10,839	9,925	Nov	9,265	
Thames Estuary	5,221	4,893	8,081	4,709	5,783	Aug	5,737	
Dee Estuary (England & Wales)	5,379	3,713	5,278	3,923	5,763	Oct	4,811	
Ribble Estuary	(2,921)	5,095	3,913	3,088	5,714	Nov	4,453	
Humber Estuary	3,296	5,323	4,554	3,828	3,897	Oct	4,180	
Nene Washes	156	1,120	3,800	3,530	3,500	Mar	2,421	
Poole Harbour	(1,431)	1,907	(1,413)	(2,371)	(1,926)	Nov	2,068	
Ouse Washes	4,154 [12]	1,790 [12]	761	2,067 [12]	809 [12]	Feb	1,916	
Breydon Water / Berney Marshes	1,675	1,421 [10]	2,469 [12]	2,712 [10]	1,023 [12]	Nov	1,860	
Blackwater Estuary	1,243	2,201	2,387	1,572	(1,712)	Mar	1,851	
R.Avon: Ringwood - Christchurch	1	(3,000)	2,000	650	2,530	Feb	1,636	
Swale Estuary	(1,389)	1,396	(1,186)	(1,545)	1,825	Mar	1,611	
Stour Estuary	1,507	1,215	2,148	1,939	1,214	Aug	1,605	
Mersey Estuary	2,510	420	(339)	(54)	(270)	Jul	1,465	
Morecambe Bay	747	(928)	759	1,844	1,605	Apr	1,239	
Medway Estuary	(190)	(1,120)	(490)	(603)	(384)	Jan	(1,120)	
Alde Complex	1,181	1,385	774	(840)	1,114	Oct	1,114	
Exe Estuary	1,090	999	913	943	980	Feb	985	
Belfast Lough	642	(586)	708	690 [10]	1,510	Sep	888	
Overcote Marina		850 [12]		1,400	373 [12]	Jan	874	
North Norfolk Coast	940	645	1,139	804	809	Aug	867	
Pagham Harbour	340	(764)	1,100	960	833	Feb	808	
Orwell Estuary	975	523	845 [10]	813 [10]	816	Sep	794	
R.Avon: Ford'bridge - Ringwood	0	(1,750)	888	(920)	381	Jan	788	
Chichester Harbour	(995)	685	775	613	603	Sep	734	
Crouch-Roach Estuary	(265)	(554)	754	627	764	Dec	715	
Warton Floods			600	950	570	Nov	707	
Deben Estuary	575	622	707	948	503	Apr	671	
Colne Estuary	171	800 [12]	617 [10]	500 [12]	812 [12]	Mar	580	
Langstone Harbour	665	562	674	422	574	Sep	579	
Strangford Lough	717 [10]	535 [10]	645	707	193 [10]	Dec	559	
Fen Drayton Gravel Pits	0	571	31	1,800	200	Mar	520	
Portsmouth Harbour	(494)	(398)	371	666 [10]	(30)	Nov	519	
North West Solent	474	353	469	525	640	Dec	492	▲
Hamford Water	625	372	441	521 [10]	(440)	Feb	490	▲
Sites of national importance in Great Britain								
Southampton Water	489	295	(374)	(490)	514	Aug	447	▲
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels in WeBS-Year 2009/2010								
Burry Inlet	994	300 [10]	40	200 [10]	343	Oct	375	
Lough Foyle	397	60	52	25	113	Oct	129	
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain								
Abberton Reservoir	74	2	3	2	493	Nov	115	
Forth Estuary	380	348	280	601	473	Sep	416	

Black-tailed Godwits *(Jill Pakenham)*

The ratio of Bar-tailed to Black-tailed Godwits in Britain has fallen from 4:1 to less than 1:1 in a decade (Musgrove *et al.* 2011).

Bar-tailed Godwit

Limosa lapponica

International threshold:	1,200
Great Britain threshold:	380
All-Ireland threshold:	160

GB max:	42,984	Feb
NI max:	1,879	Mar

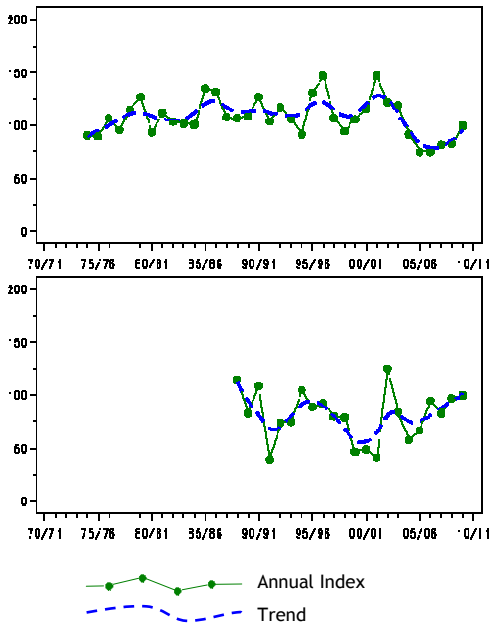


Figure 53.a, Annual indices & trend for Bar-tailed Godwit for GB (above) & NI (below).

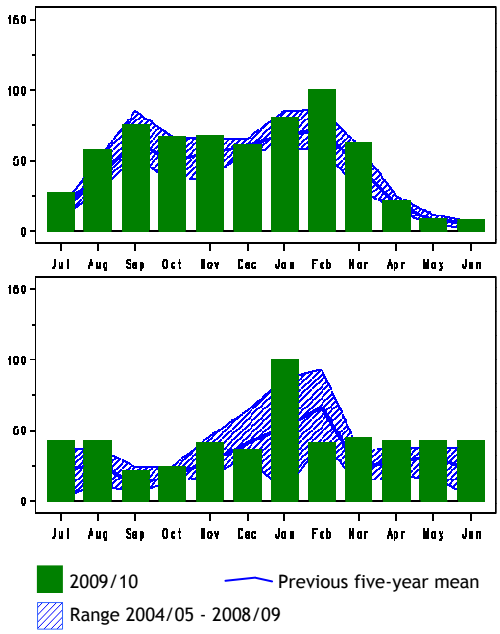


Figure 53.b, Monthly indices for Bar-tailed Godwit for GB (above) & NI (below).

Bar-tailed Godwits seen in Britain during winter are of the nominate race *lapponica* whose breeding range extends from northeast Europe to western Siberia. Many passage birds (at least in spring) are of the central Siberian race *taymyrensis*; regularly seen passing the south coast of England in April and May.

Bar-tailed Godwits *(Al Downie)*

In 2009/10, the national index rose in comparison to the preceding four years. It remains to be seen whether this represents an increase that will be maintained over the longer term, the British trend for this species over the last 15 years has typically been characterised by peaks and troughs. This pattern has contrasted with the steady rise in numbers in the Netherlands (Hornman *et al.* 2011), indicative of an eastward shift of the wintering population in western Europe (Maclean *et al.* 2008).

The monthly indices indicate above average numbers present in mid winter, during January and February; it is unknown the extent to which this may have represented a response to cold weather on the continent. The February count from The Wash is the highest ever monthly WeBS count for a site since the 21,086 there in August 2003 (surpassed only by the all-time maximum of 23,751 in March 2002). Following Alt Estuary's impressive showing in 2008/09, the peak there returned to near average in 2009/10.

Among the nine other sites surpassing the threshold for international importance, peaks were also generally close to or slightly above average. Encouragingly, the maxima at North Norfolk Coast and Thames Estuary represent the highest at those sites for six and three years, respectively.

In Northern Ireland, the annual index was at the same level as the previous year and the maximum at the principal site, Strangford Lough, was also close to recent average.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
The Wash	(9,849)	11,900	10,755	15,381	15,490	Feb	13,382
Thames Estuary	6,613	8,629	3,711	3,804	7,903	Feb	6,132
Humber Estuary	(2,227)	(1,871)	(1,490)	(5,926)	(2,020)	Mar	(5,926)
Alt Estuary	4,221	4,100	2,939	8,171	5,265	Oct	4,939
Ribble Estuary	(3,510)	4,628	(5,162)	2,762	3,419 [10]	Feb	3,993
North Norfolk Coast	3,273	2,990	1,783	1,382	5,010	Mar	2,888
Dengie Flats	1,550	1,062	(1,500)	4,170	2,910	Jan	2,423
Lough Foyle	(1,133)	(2,672)	2,300	2,789	1,501	Mar	2,316
Lindisfarne	1,787 [10]	2,535	(2,170)	2,333	(1,398)	Oct	2,218
Morecambe Bay	(2,158)	(2,157)	(417)	(1,331)	(2,164)	Nov	(2,164)
Forth Estuary	1,188	1,502	921	1,270	(1,293)	Nov	1,235
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Hamford Water	(657)	(1,239)	1,255	655	(622)	Mar	1,050
Dee Estuary (England and Wales)	328	187	215	4,213 [10]	65	Oct	1,002
Chichester Harbour	(1,200)	630	(1,228)	802	1,006	Feb	973
Cromarty Firth	651	803	(707)	717	1,549	Feb	930
Swale Estuary	481	585	750	842	1,806	Mar	893
Tay Estuary	1,050	1,002 [10]	(1,000)	482	815	Oct	870
Dornoch Firth	1,681	541	301	871	749	Feb	829
Solway Estuary	958	529	473	(860)	952	Jan	754
Eden Estuary	(470)	555	605	682	(348)	Nov	614
South Ford	422	782	454	574			558
Inner Moray and Inverness Firth	770	785	390	311	464	Jan	544
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Strangford Lough	(1,378)	529	(1,305)	969 [10]	1,158	Jan	1,068
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels in WeBS-Year 2009/2010							
Belfast Lough	139	(159)	212	167	43	Mar	144
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain							
Stour Estuary	186	259	212	500	425	Jan	316
Loch Gruinart	450	209	258	314	404	Feb	327

Whimbrel

Numenius phaeopus

International threshold: **6,800**
Great Britain threshold: **1+**†
All-Ireland threshold: **+**†

GB max: **1,182** **Apr**
NI max: **51** **Apr**

The majority of Whimbrels seen in Britain are en route to and from breeding sites in Iceland, Scandinavia and western Siberia, and the main wintering areas in west Africa. In 2009/10, the species was recorded at 139 WeBS sites across the UK, including five in Northern Ireland.

In spring, the short period of passage generally peaks in late April and early May. Being outside the mid-month Core count priority dates, this tends to result in the species being relatively poorly monitored by WeBS. Therefore, further supplementary counts for use in the table below are welcomed. Spring passage of Whimbrels tends to have a more westerly distribution than autumn passage (Grant 2002). This is illustrated by the site maxima listed in the table; a highest Core count in spring of 226 at Severn Estuary in April, while east coast peaks at The Wash and North Norfolk Coast were both noted in July.

A very small number of individuals winter on favoured British estuaries. In 2009/10, twelve sites held birds during the December to February period, involving approximately 25 birds. None were seen during the winter in Northern Ireland.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of 50 or more birds in Great Britain†							
Barnacre Res. & Grizedale Lea	270 [37]	477 [11]	417 [11]	372 [11]	529 [11]	May	413
Brockholes Quarry	154 [37]	210 [11]	304 [11]	246 [11]	290 [11]	Apr	241
The Wash	292	233	324	151	150	Jul	230
Severn Estuary	101	(186)	(85)	331 [12]	226	Apr	219
Dungeness and Rye Bay	222 [11]	246 [11]	287 [11]	23	28	Apr	161
North Norfolk Coast	129	70	257	123	97	Jul	135
Burry Inlet	111	223	40	94	108	May	115
Chichester Harbour	78	31	209	83	132	Jul	107
Taw-Torridge Estuary	(89)	(42)	(17)	93	(76)	Apr	93
Ribble Estuary	0	9	7	58	390 [11]	Apr	93
Morecambe Bay	60	(53)	(17)	103	76	Apr	80
Langstone Harbour	96	58	84	73	58	Jul	74
Pegwell Bay	27	76	19	51	191 [12]	Apr	73
Exe Estuary	(48)	109	60	51	33	Jul	63
Southampton Water	63	(27)	(7)	(46)	(21)	Jul	63
Humber Estuary	107	78	36	57	24	Aug	60
Solway Estuary	(7)	(46)	(4)	(22)	(52)	May	(52)
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain†							
Breydon Water & Berney Marshes	59	40 [12]	2	1	116 [12]	Apr	44
Tamar Complex	46	(29)	17	33	59	Apr	39

† *as all sites exceed the British or All-Ireland winter threshold (1), a qualifying level of 50 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report*

Curlew

Numenius arquata

International threshold: 8,500
Great Britain threshold: 1,400
All-Ireland threshold: 550

GB max: 84,531 Sep
NI max: 4,640 Nov

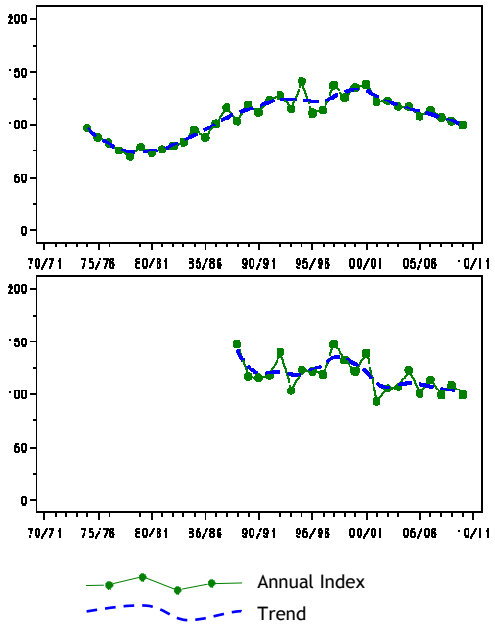


Figure 54.a, Annual indices & trend for Curlew for GB (above) & NI (below).

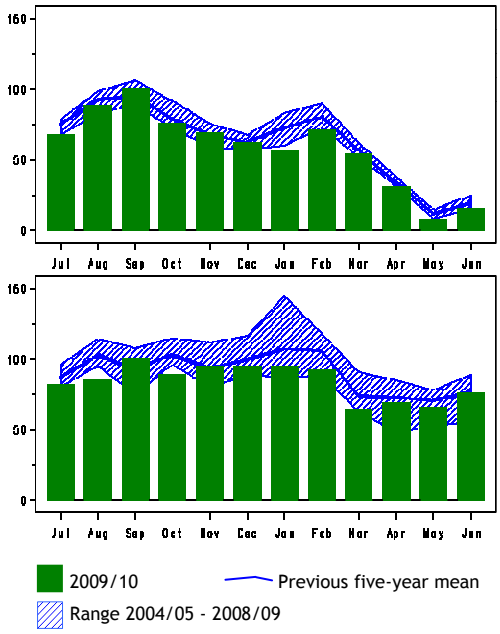


Figure 54.b, Monthly indices for Curlew for GB (above) & NI (below).

The wintering population of Curlews in UK comprises both British and Scandinavian breeding birds. The WeBS trend for Britain indicates that numbers of wintering Curlew increased from the mid 1970s until the start of the 2000s, since when the trend has been

one of a steady decline. This fall is likely to be associated with a decline in the UK breeding population (Baillie et al. 2010) and with a shift in wintering distribution (Maclean *et al*. 2008). The latter is supported by the situation in The Netherlands where numbers in the winter are continuing to increase steadily, both on the Wadden Sea and in the wider Dutch countryside (Hornman *et al*. 2011).

Following the second highest count of Curlews ever at the site, The Wash regained its status as a site of international importance for the species, joining Morecambe Bay as one of the two sites which surpass the threshold in the UK. The all-time record count of Curlews relates to 22,300 at Morecambe Bay in August 1973; as speculated in last year's report, it is doubtful if the magnitude of which will be seen again in the UK assuming a continuation of the current downward trend. Counts at most of the other major sites were either similar to recent years, or below average such as Dee Estuary, Humber Estuary, Forth Estuary and Solway Estuary all of which held their lowest peaks for at least five years.

The trend for Northern Ireland suggests a continuation of the slow decline of recent years. At the two principal sites, numbers at Strangford Lough were the highest since 2000/01, whereas the peak at Lough Foyle was the lowest since 2001/02.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean	
Sites of international importance in the UK								
Morecambe Bay	9,515	(14,027)	11,530	13,136	11,167	Sep	11,875	
The Wash	5,140	9,710	7,664	7,548	12,811	Sep	8,575	▲
Sites of national importance in Great Britain								
Thames Estuary	(3,611)	6,993	3,722	4,130	4,603	Aug	4,862	
Dee Estuary (England and Wales)	4,666	5,565	5,346	3,608	3,590	Aug	4,555	
Humber Estuary	(4,818)	5,180	3,993	(3,099)	2,966	Mar	4,239	
Forth Estuary	3,599	4,567	3,568	4,023	2,939	Oct	3,739	
Solway Estuary	(3,456)	4,007	(3,185)	(2,691)	2,698	Sep	3,387	
Severn Estuary	2,514	(3,230)	(2,560)	3,396	3,731	Sep	3,218	
North Norfolk Coast	2,284	2,190	2,884	2,318	2,293	Aug	2,394	
Duddon Estuary	1,816	2,113	2,145	(2,315)	1,716	Dec	2,021	
Lavan Sands	1,955	3,243	1,091	1,839	1,878	Oct	2,001	
Lindisfarne	1,548	(1,174)	(1,441)	(1,260)	(2,102)	Nov	1,825	
Inner Moray and Inverness Firth	1,838	(1,939)	1,687	1,840	1,702	Oct	1,801	
Chichester Harbour	1,889	2,052	1,760	1,481	1,763	Jan	1,789	
Inner Firth of Clyde	1,417	2,017	1,673	1,716	1,845	Sep	1,734	
Burry Inlet	2,587	1,413	1,370	1,689	1,488	Sep	1,709	
Cleddau Estuary	1,246	(1,869)	1,832	1,428	1,682	Jul	1,611	
Ribble Estuary	1,189	1,497	1,419	(1,308)	1,926	Sep	1,508	▲
Blackwater Estuary	1,914	1,296	(1,267)	1,481	1,249	Aug	1,485	
Montrose Basin	1,536	1,115	1,734	1,822	1,094	Sep	1,460	▲
Swale Estuary	1,118	(1,516)	1,357	(1,433)	1,808	Jan	1,446	▲
Langstone Harbour	1,811	1,343	1,279	1,228	1,469	Aug	1,426	
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland								
Lough Foyle	2,038	2,681	2,510	2,588	1,834	Nov	2,330	
Strangford Lough	1,523	1,918 [10]	1,552	1,571	2,040	Dec	1,721	
Belfast Lough	494 [10]	779 [10]	821	567	824	Jan	697	
Carlingford Lough	576	754	(759)	470	(106)	Jan	640	
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels in WeBS-Year 2009/2010								
Stour Estuary	1,171	1,424	1,669	1,231 [10]	1,480	Sep	1,395	
Mersey Estuary	1,792	1,379	(982)	1,038	1,051	Sep	1,315	
Poole Harbour	(1,013)	(1,135)	(908)	(866)	(549)	Nov	(1,135)	
Outer Ards Shoreline	632	519	238	601	721	Mar	542	
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain								
Dengie Flats	546	(621)	357	517	(2,076)	Sep	823	
Exe Estuary	1,302	1,129	1,285	1,143	1,508	Oct	1,273	
Stour Estuary	1,171	1,424	1,669	1,231 [10]	1,480	Sep	1,395	
Cromarty Firth	1,374	1,373	1,318	1,147	1,447	Oct	1,332	
Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in Winter 2009/2010 in Northern Ireland								
Outer Ards Shoreline	632	519	238	601	721	Mar	542	

Common Sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos

International threshold: **17,500**
Great Britain threshold: **1**†
All-Ireland threshold: **?**†

GB max: **872** **Jul**
NI max: **16** **Jul**

Away from upland breeding areas, Common Sandpipers are seen at a range of wetland habitats throughout Britain on migration, with the bulk of autumn passage taking place in July and August. Pegwell Bay again hosted the peak count of the year, 84 in August, albeit slightly lower than the current five-year mean for the site of 103 birds. Elsewhere, highest numbers were seen at locations which regularly attract high numbers, an exception being Chew Valley Lake where an August count of 31 birds is the most ever there.

A small number of Common Sandpipers over-winter in Britain. Musgrove *et al.* (2011) estimate the total to be over 70 birds, the majority typically being singles at coastal sites, primarily in the south. In 2009/10, during the mid-winter period of December to February the species was seen at 35 WeBS sites, including a peak of four birds at Severn Estuary in December. The only site to feature during this period which is a significant distance away from the coast was Staines Reservoirs, where two were seen in December. In Northern Ireland, one was at Loughs Neagh & Beg in January, the second year in succession that the species has wintered there.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of 30 or more birds in Great Britain†							
Pegwell Bay	39	163 [10]	106	122	84	Aug	103
Thames Estuary	(8)	50	41	(15)	(14)	Aug	46
Humber Estuary	(7)	(14)	46	(19)	(12)	Aug	46
Dungeness and Rye Bay	49	37	30	72	35	Aug	45
Severn Estuary	(11)	(12)	(20)	(40)	42	Aug	42
Morecambe Bay	32	48	(38)	21	48	Jul	37
Swale Estuary	36 [10]	(15)	(8)	(13)	(10)	Aug	36
Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in Summer 2009 in Great Britain†							
The Wash	23	22	10	(26)	33	Jul	23
Chew Valley Lake	9	5	3	8	31	Aug	11

† *as all sites exceed the British winter threshold (1) and All-Ireland threshold has been set, a qualifying level of 30 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report*

Spotted Sandpiper

Actitis macularius

Vagrant
Native Range: America

Four Spotted Sandpipers were recorded during WeBS Core counts in 2009/10, at Abberton Reservoir (Nov), Endrick Water (Nov-Dec), Tamar Complex (Feb) and Forth Estuary (May). The latter is only the second ever WeBS record in May.

Green Sandpiper

Tringa ochropus

International threshold: **17,000**
Great Britain threshold: **9**†
All-Ireland threshold: **?**†

GB max: **599** **Aug**
NI max: **0**

Green Sandpipers were recorded during Core counts at 299 WeBS sites in 2009/10, but as in the previous year there were none in Northern Ireland. Widely distributed, particularly across England, during the autumn passage period, the monthly maximum typically fell in August when a high total of 599 birds were logged. The peak count of 43 at North Norfolk Coast represents the highest WeBS count there since 49 in August 1995. The historical maximum WeBS count of this species is 82 at Thames Estuary in August 1973.

During the period of November to February, when sites with at least some flowing freshwater (such as streams and

watercress beds) tend to be favoured, the species was noted at 154 WeBS sites. Typifying recent years, the two top sites for wintering Green Sandpipers were River Avon (Salisbury to Fordingbridge) and Beddington Sewage Farm, where maxima of ten and 11 birds, respectively, were noted during the winter. Elsewhere, notable winter counts included nine at Medway Estuary and eight at both Chew Valley Lake and River Cam, Kingfishers Bridge. Away from England, counts of more than one winterer were received from four sites in Wales and just one in Scotland.

Sites with 20 or more birds during passage periods in 2009/10[†]

North Norfolk Coast	43	Aug	Crouch-Roach Estuary	24	Aug
Blackwater Estuary	28	Aug	Thames Estuary	22	Aug
Beddington Sewage Farm	25	Aug	Rutland Water	20	Aug

[†] *a qualifying level of 20 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report*

Spotted Redshank

Tringa erythropus

International threshold: **900**
Great Britain threshold: **1**[†]
All-Ireland threshold: **+**[†]

GB max: **135** **Oct**
NI max: **0**

Spotted Redshank breed from Scandinavia through sub-arctic Russia, most wintering in equatorial Africa, with a small proportion remaining in western Europe. In general, very little is known about population trends in the species, although breeding populations appear to be stable (Delany *et al*. 2009).

In 2009/10 in the UK, typically the majority were recorded in autumn and winter, with a smaller number in spring. Overall, numbers during the course of the year were disappointing and the year was one of the poorest on record. The 67 WeBS sites where the species was recorded is also a drop compared to recent years.

The British peak monthly count was 135 birds in October, just slightly higher than the maximum noted in the previous year. The peak site count was 28 at The Wash in August which is the lowest ever site maximum during the course of a WeBS-year. However, away from the sites listed below, October peaks at Beaulieu Estuary (14) and Swale Estuary (20) represent the highest counts of the species at those sites for several years, although both fall some way short of the respective historic peaks; 150 at Swale Estuary (Aug 1988) and 65 at Beaulieu Estuary (Oct 1971).

Spotted Redshank *(John Harding)*

During the core winter period, the largest counts were eight at both North West Solent (Jan) and North Norfolk Coast (Feb). There were no records from Northern Ireland during the year.

	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of 10 or more birds in Great Britain[†]							
The Wash	39	86	40	48	28	Aug	48
North Norfolk Coast	35	42	29	26	18	Sep	30
Blackwater Estuary	24	8	32	26	9	Aug	20
Minsmere	14	3	6	47	23	Jul	19
Abberton Reservoir	26	(0)	14	4	23	Oct	17
Humber Estuary	10	25	13	13	25	Sep	17
Dee Estuary (England and Wales)	8	14	12	14 [10]	11	Apr	12
Sites below table qualifying levels but exceeding threshold in WeBS-Year 2009/10 in Great Britain[†]							
Swale Estuary	(4)	6	1	(3)	20	Oct	9
Beaulieu Estuary	8	10	0	(1)	14	Oct	8

[†] *a qualifying level of 10 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report*