



# ENGLISH FARM WOODLAND BIRD SURVEY - INSTRUCTIONS

## GETTING STARTED

First you will need to select and request the farm woodland plots you would like to survey. This should be done by visiting the EFWS survey webpage ([www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/english-farm-woodland-bird-survey](http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/english-farm-woodland-bird-survey)) and using the interactive map, where you can zoom in and select the 1-km squares containing the woodland plots you wish to cover.

## ACCESS PERMISSION

We are in the process of acquiring permission from landowners, via the Forestry Commission, therefore the confirmation e-mail you receive after your selection is not the final approval.

Once we have landowner access permission confirmed you will be contacted directly by BTO and provided with the relevant contact and access details. In some circumstances landowners may not grant access, in which case we will let you know ASAP and ask you to select another square, if possible.

When your EFWS square has been allocated and access confirmed, you will receive the contact details of the landowner(s) for each of the squares you have selected. Please contact the relevant person ahead of each visit to discuss any access conditions. You will be sent a set of survey maps for each plot and you will be able to download the full survey instructions, summary recording form and other survey information from the Resources section of the EFWS webpage :

<https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/english-farm-woodland-bird-survey/english-farm-woodland-bird-survey-resources>

All known farm woodlands are marked but it is likely that there are other farm woodland plots within the squares, so please ask the landowner if there are other woodlands that have been planted on the farm after 1988. If so please mark them on the square map with letters (e.g. "Plot A", "Plot B", etc) and survey as many as possible. Note that plots with bold black outlines are those where access has been granted, whereas plots with grey outlines do not have access permission and should not be surveyed unless access permission can be arranged, with the help of the local landowner,

## PLOT COVERAGE

Depending upon the size and shape of each plot there are two main methods for coverage and survey routes.

- 1) Small plots (less than 1 hectare) or long thin plots less than 100m wide: these can be covered by walking the entire perimeter.
- 2) Large plots (more than 1 hectare) or greater than 100m wide in parts, will also require complete coverage from the perimeter, as well as walking into the interior, so that all parts of the plots are covered to within 50m, where possible. If a single plot is too large to cover in a morning, then please cover as much as possible (mark the extent on the map) but cover the same area on each visit.

Please read the leaflet 'Health and Safety for Volunteer Fieldworkers', available from the BTO website.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Please treat all sightings as confidential and do not divulge them either in person or in writing, including social media. This is a condition of our access permission for this survey.

## WHEN TO VISIT

Please make a total of four visits (at least two weeks apart) to each plot within the following periods between end of March and 15 July. Each survey visit should start no earlier than 30 minutes after sunrise and finish before 11:00am.

**Visit 1:** mid March – 14<sup>th</sup> April

**Visit 2:** 15<sup>th</sup> April – 14<sup>th</sup> May

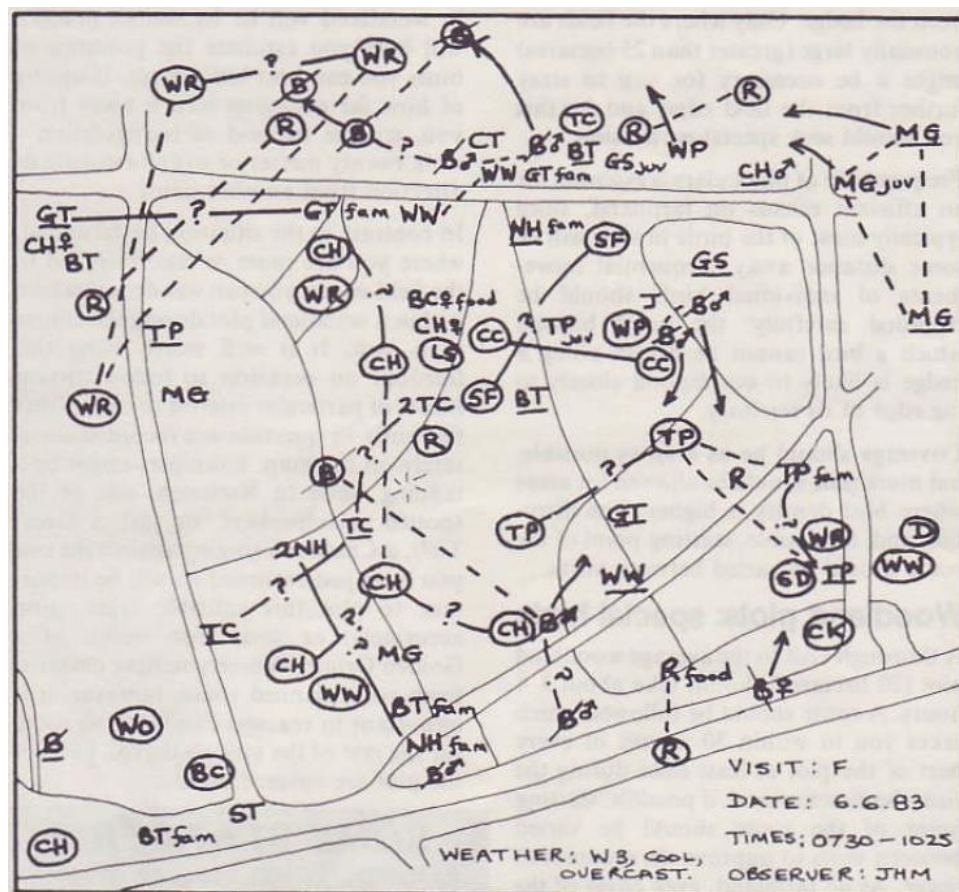
**Visit 3:** 15<sup>th</sup> May – 14<sup>th</sup> June

**Visit 4:** 15<sup>th</sup> June – 15<sup>th</sup> July

Using a separate map for each plot and visit, record all birds you see or hear as you walk along your route at a slow, methodical pace. Where possible walk the entire perimeter of the plot first and for larger plots (>100m wide) please try to get within 50m of all parts of the plot. You can pause to scan for birds, but should not stop for long periods. Try to keep to the same timings as previous visits.

- After the survey is finished please complete the species summary counts form for each visit, giving minimum totals of all territorial individuals (males and pairs) as well as all individuals. This must only include birds within or above the plot boundary. Also, we would like you to estimate the total number of territories per species within the plot, based on your observations from all 4 visits.

### Example of a field survey map showing species and activity codes



## WEATHER

Please do not survey in heavy rain, very poor visibility or strong wind. Record weather using the codes shown below. If the conditions change during your visit, select the single category that best represents the overall conditions.

Cloud cover		Rain		Wind		Visibility	
0 – 33%	– 1	None	– 1	Calm	– 1	Good	– 1
33 – 66%	– 2	Drizzle	– 2	Light	– 2	Moderate	– 2
66 – 100%	– 3	Showers	– 3	Breezy	– 3	Poor	– 3

## HABITAT RECORDING

Habitat recording is an **essential part of the EFWS**. Please record the habitat features in your square on **one visit** using the separate habitat recording sheet. An example is shown on the form.

- Please use a separate form for each plot within the woodland (e.g. plots planted in different years, but still part of the same woodland, should be straightforward to identify – you do not need to report the age of each plot). If not already marked on the map, please mark the separate plots on the map provided and name them with successive letters (e.g. plot A, plot B, etc).
- A tree key can be downloaded from the Resources page to help identify tree species, or check the following webpage: [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees)
- Reference diagrams for recording stand height and structure are included on the recording form.
- Please complete all boxes

## MAMMAL RECORDING

Although the main aim of the EFWS is to record birds and habitats, it would be useful if you could also record sightings of mammals on your square(s), as these can be used when bird data are analysed.

- While carrying out your bird surveys, please count all live mammals seen during your EFWS visits.
- Any estimate of the numbers of a particular species on your survey visits (no matter how rough), is more useful than recording 'too many to count', 'present', etc.
- Note down mammal records on your Mammal Recording Sheets alongside your bird records.
- There is no need to make special visits to count mammals.
- The main species of interest are the easily-observable mammals listed below. There is no need to make a special effort to look for small mammals, bats, etc.

Did you look out for mammals? Recording mammals is optional. Please enter 'Y' in the summary form if you looked out for mammals (even if you saw none), or enter 'N' if you did not participate in mammal recording (i.e. indicating that you may have seen mammals that you did not record).

## SUBMITTING YOUR DATA (BIRDS, HABITAT, VISITS and MAMMALS)

An Excel file can be downloaded from the Resources page, which you can use to **enter all your summary data** (Bird, Habitat, Visit and Mammal) and email to: ***[farmwoodbirds@bto.org](mailto:farmwoodbirds@bto.org)*** or **paper forms** can be returned in the post to BTO HQ.

**NOTE** The original field maps are also required and can be posted back to BTO HQ, or sent as high resolution scans or images.

Submitting data on paper forms.

- Transfer the number of individual birds recorded in each of the four visits dividing between territorial birds and overall bird of each species.
- A list of common woodland species has been pre-entered but please add any further species to the list.
- You may find it helpful to cross out or highlight records on the map as you transfer the information to the Count Summary Sheet. This helps to avoid duplicating or missing records.
- Remember to transfer all visit information (date, times etc.) from your map.
- Please only enter counts in the boxes on the Count Summary Sheets. Please do not enter additional information, such as '+', 'many', male/female, etc.
- If there is no count, please just leave the box empty. Please do not enter zeros or dashes.
- Please make every effort to write clearly and legibly.

## RETURN OF DATA

Submitting data electronically to ***[farmwoodbirds@bto.org](mailto:farmwoodbirds@bto.org)*** or by post. Data should be sent to BTO as soon as possible before **15 August 2019**, which will be acknowledged once received at the BTO HQ.

- The map and Habitat Recording Form are for taking notes in the field.
- The Count Summary, Mammal Summary and Habitat Recording forms should be sent in electronic form (to ***[farmwoodbirds@bto.org](mailto:farmwoodbirds@bto.org)***) or by post.
- A copy of the map can be sent electronically as a scan or high-resolution photo, or by post.

If you are providing name, address and other personal details, BTO will store and use your personal details in line with our published Privacy Policy. You can specify your preferences surrounding the way we contact you at any time. For further details, see [www.bto.org](http://www.bto.org), or email [info@bto.org](mailto:info@bto.org), or phone 01842 750050.

If you have any queries about the survey, please contact the EFWS National Organiser Dr Daria Dadam at BTO (The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 2PU, Tel: 01842 750050, Fax: 01842 750030, Email: ***[farmwoodbirds@bto.org](mailto:farmwoodbirds@bto.org)***), or visit our website: [www.bto.org/efws](http://www.bto.org/efws).

Finally, thanks again for volunteering for the EFWS, and we hope that you enjoy taking part in the survey!

BTO, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 2PU. [www.bto.org](http://www.bto.org) BTO is a Registered Charity, Number 216652 (England & Wales), SC039193 (Scotland).

# *BTO Bird Species Codes*

AV Avocet	GC Goldcrest	LE Long-eared Owl	VI Savi's Warbler
BO Barn Owl	OL Golden Oriole	LT Long-tailed Tit	SQ Common Rosefinch
BY Barnacle Goose	GF Golden Pheasant	MG Magpie	SP Scaup
BA Bar-tailed Godwit	GP Golden Plover	MA Mallard	SW Sedge Warbler
BR Bearded Tit	GN Goldeneye	MN Mandarin	NS Serin
BI Bittern	GO Goldfinch	MR Marsh Harrier	SA Shag
BX Black Redstart	GD Goosander	MT Marsh Tit	SU Shelduck
BJ Black Tern	GI Goshawk	MW Marsh Warbler	SE Short-eared Owl
B. Blackbird	GH Grasshopper Warbler	MP Meadow Pipit	SV Shoveler
BC Blackcap	GB Great Black-backed Gull	MU Mediterranean Gull	SK Siskin
BH Black-headed Gull	GG Great Crested Grebe	ML Merlin	S. Skylark
BN Black-necked Grebe	GS Great Spotted Woodpecker	M. Mistle Thrush	SZ Slavonian Grebe
BW Black-tailed Godwit	GT Great Tit	MO Montagu's Harrier	SN Snipe
BT Blue Tit	GE Green Sandpiper	MH Moorhen	SB Snow Bunting
BU Bluethroat	G. Green Woodpecker	MS Mute Swan	ST Song Thrush
BL Brambling	GR Greenfinch	N. Nightingale	SH Sparrowhawk
BG Brent Goose	GK Greenshank	NJ Nightjar	AK Spotted Crake
BF Bullfinch	H. Grey Heron	NH Nuthatch	SF Spotted Flycatcher
BZ Buzzard	P. Grey Partridge	OP Osprey	DR Spotted Redshank
CG Canada Goose	GV Grey Plover	OC Oystercatcher	SG Starling
C. Carrion Crow	GL Grey Wagtail	PX Peafowl/Peacock	SD Stock Dove
CW Cetti's Warbler	GJ Greylag Goose	PE Peregrine	SC Stonechat
CH Chaffinch	GU Guillemot	PH Pheasant	TN Stone-curlew
CC Chiffchaff	FW Guineafowl (Helmeted)	PF Pied Flycatcher	SL Swallow
CF Chough	HF Hawfinch	PW Pied Wagtail	SI Swift
CL Cirl Bunting	HH Hen Harrier	PT Pintail	TO Tawny Owl
CT Coal Tit	HG Herring Gull	PO Pochard	T. Teal
CD Collared Dove	HY Hobby	Q. Quail	TP Tree Pipit
CM Common Gull	HZ Honey Buzzard	RN Raven	TS Tree Sparrow
CS Common Sandpiper	HC Hooded Crow	RG Red Grouse	TC Treecreeper
CN Common Tern	HP Hoopoe	KT Red Kite	TU Tufted Duck
CO Coot	HM House Martin	ED Red-backed Shrike	TT Turnstone
CA Cormorant	HS House Sparrow	RM Red-breasted Merganser	TD Turtle Dove
CB Corn Bunting	JD Jackdaw	FV Red-footed Falcon	TW Twite
CE Corncrake	J. Jay	RL Red-legged Partridge	WA Water Rail
CR Crossbill	K. Kestrel	NK Red-necked Phalarope	W. Wheatear
CK Cuckoo	KF Kingfisher	LR Lesser Redpoll	WM Whimbrel
CU Curlew	KI Kittiwake	RK Redshank	WC Whinchat
DW Dartford Warbler	KN Knot	RT Redstart	WG White-fronted Goose
DI Dipper	LA Lapland Bunting	RE Redwing	WH Whitethroat
DN Dunlin	L. Lapwing	RB Reed Bunting	WN Wigeon
D. Dunnock	TL Leach's Petrel	RW Reed Warbler	WT Willow Tit
EG Egyptian Goose	LB Lesser Black-backed Gull	RZ Ring Ouzel	WW Willow Warbler
FP Feral Pigeon	LS Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	RP Ringed Plover	OD Wood Sandpiper
ZL Feral/hybrid goose	LW Lesser Whitethroat	RI Ring-necked Parakeet	WO Wood Warbler
ZF Feral/hybrid mallard type	LI Linnet	R. Robin	WK Woodcock
FF Fieldfare	ET Little Egret	DV Rock Dove	WL Woodlark
FC Firecrest	LG Little Grebe	RC Rock Pipit	WP Woodpigeon
GA Gadwall	LU Little Gull	RO Rook	WR Wren
GX Gannet	LO Little Owl	RU Ruff	WY Wryneck
GW Garden Warbler	LP Little Ringed Plover	SM Sand Martin	YW Yellow Wagtail
GY Garganey	AF Little Tern	SS Sanderling	Y. Yellowhammer

## ACTIVITY CODES

### Standard Activity Recording Codes

The standard BTO list of conventions is designed to help you make your field notes clear and unambiguous, and the following are examples of their use. Symbols can be combined where necessary (see *Bird Census Techniques*). Additional activities of territorial significance, such as display or mating, should be noted using an appropriate clear abbreviation. In all cases the standard BTO species recording codes should be used.

<b>RB♂, RB♀</b> <b>3RBjuvs</b>	Reed Bunting sight records, with age, sex or number of birds if appropriate.	<b>— L →</b>	A calling Lapwing flying over (seen only in flight)
<b>RB ♀</b>	A pair of Reed Buntings	<b>(CU) →</b>	A singing Curlew perched then flying away (not seen to land)
<b>PW fam</b>	Juvenile Pied Wagtail with parent(s) in attendance	<b>→ BK ♂</b>	A male Black Grouse flying in and landing (first seen in flight)
<b><u>RG</u></b>	A calling Red Grouse	<b>WR → WR</b>	A Wren moving between two perches. The solid line indicates that it was definitely the same bird.
<b><u>RG</u></b>	A Red Grouse repeatedly giving alarm calls or other vocalisations (not song) thought to have strong territorial significance	<b>(WR) --- (WR)</b>	Two Wrens in song at the same time, i.e. definitely different birds. The dotted line indicates a simultaneous registration and is of very great value in separating territories
<b>(S)</b>	A Skylark in song	<b>* --- * RB RB</b>	Two Reed Bunting nests occupied simultaneously and thus belonging to two different pairs. Only adjacent nests need be marked in this way.
<b>SE SE</b>	An aggressive encounter between two Short-eared Owls	<b>(MP) — (MP)</b>	The solid line indicates that registrations definitely refer to the same bird.
<b>* MP</b>	An occupied nest of Meadow Pipits; do not mark unoccupied nests, which are of no territorial significance by themselves	<b>HH — ? — HH</b>	A question-marked solid line indicates that the registrations probably relate to the same bird. This convention is of particular use when the census route returns to an area already covered – it is possible to mark new positions of (probably the same) birds recorded before, without the risk of double-recording.
<b>K</b>	Kestrels nesting in a specially provided site (e.g. nestbox)	<b>(MP) MP mat</b>	When there is no line joining the registrations, this indicates that the birds are probably different. (It is possible to use a question-marked dotted line, indicating that the registrations were almost certainly of different birds.)
<b>* PW on</b>	Pied Wagtail nest with an adult sitting	<b>*S *S</b>	Where adjacent nests are marked without a line, it will often be assumed that they were first and second broods, or a replacement nest following an earlier failure.
<b>PW mat</b>	Pied Wagtail carrying nest material	<b>PW food</b>	Pied Wagtail carrying food