

THE NUMBERS OF GREYLAG AND PINK-FOOTED GESE

FOUND IN BRITAIN ON 20 MARCH 1966

About 32,000 Greylag Geese Anser anser and 45,000 Pink-footed Geese A. brachyrhynchus were found in Scotland and England on, or about, 20th March 1966, by over 130 observers.

The following table shows the numbers of geese roosting in each county where some were found in any of the last three searches. The county figures are rounded to the nearest ten and the national total to the nearest thousand. Figures in brackets are doubtfully complete; those marked x differ substantially from those in the reports circulated after the previous counts. A minus sign indicates that the species has no regular haunt in the county.

	GREYLAGS			PINKFEET		
	Mar. 1966	Nov. 1965	Mar. 1965	Mar. 1966	Nov. 1965	Mar. 1965
Orkney	50	30	0	-	-	-
Caithness	30	180	10	-	-	-
Sutherland	0	20	30	-	-	-
Ross & Cromarty	980	1830	(3440)	(2050)	1270	(2470)
Inverness	150	400x	990	0	0	100
Nairn, Moray	650	1150	1300	150	0	0
Aberdeen	3040	2540	2790	4920	11640	3300
Angus, Kincardine	1200	3530	1280	2930	980	2680
Perth	10240	18440	9770	12080	18560	10180
Fife	(1010)	800	1580	(4880)	6500	4700
Kinross	50	1200	950	2500	1000	1200
Stirling	490	0	170	410	0	1180
Dumbarton	110	340	450	10	10	-
Lanark	(690)	30	(0)	(1140)	3080	200
Midlothian	680	1380	50	4440	4520	2440
East Lothian	-	-	-	40	260	300
Berwick	50	300	0	340	3000	630
Peebles	-	-	-	1280	330	470
Roxburgh	320	0	0	0	250x	0
Argyll	(1200)	1130	1810	-	-	-
Bute	3100	6300	(3000)x	-	-	-
Renfrew	20	0	90	-	-	-
Ayr	310	0	540	-	-	-
Wigtown	3950	4120	1290	650	50	1300
Kirkcudbright	880	860	3500	1410	0	(2000)
Dumfries	1790	240	700	(1920)	7800	(4100)x
Northumberland	10	150	0	-	-	-
Cumberland	850	390x	0	3500	300	2300
Westmorland	240	40	240	-	-	-
Lancashire	-	-	-	0	2200	0
Yorkshire	-	-	-	350	2000	0
Lincolnshire	-	-	-	0	3460	30
Norfolk	-	-	-	0	0	10
Wales	-	-	-	0	70	0
BRITISH TOTAL	32000	45000	34000	45000	67000	40000

By the standards of winter goose-counting the weather on 19/20 March was unusually helpful and the search for geese was the most extensive yet made. The resulting picture of their distribution was similar to that given by previous March counts. The difference in regional distribution from that in November 1965 is shown by the following table:

Regional/

Regional distribution of Greylags and Pinkfeet in
November 1965 and March 1966

<u>Region</u>	<u>Greylags</u>		<u>Pinkfeet</u>	
	Nov.	Mar.	Nov.	Mar.
North Scotland	13.0	15.3	19.2	15.8
East-Central Scotland	54.4	40.8	40.4	50.7
South-east Scotland	3.8	5.5	16.7	16.1
South-west Scotland	28.3	35.0	11.8	8.8
England and Wales	0.5	3.4	11.9	8.6
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0%

In the report on the November count it was noted that since 1960 there has been a marked increase in the number of Pinkfeet in north Scotland and a decrease in England. No clear trends are yet apparent in the March counts, which began in 1963.

The co-ordinated counts made each November since 1960 provide the foundation of a detailed study of changes in the abundance and distribution of Pinkfeet in Britain during the last fifteen years which I intend to complete this summer. A similar study of the Greylag will follow. Though I hope that these studies will help to answer many questions I am sure it will be necessary to continue censuses at least once a year.

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I must apologise for the delay in compiling and sending out this report.

Hugh Boyd,
The Nature Conservancy,
12 Hope Terrace,
Edinburgh, 9.

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