

CES Preliminary results for 2010



THANKS FOR A RAPID RESPONSE

We are very grateful to all of you who were able to send your CES data to us so quickly following the end of the season. In total, we were able to include data from 70 sites in the preliminary analyses, reported below, a good proportion of the 124 sites currently active (Figures 1 & 2). The ability to turn round results quickly greatly increases the value of the project in conservation terms, and as news stories are more likely to be picked up if they refer to the current year, it also helps to raise the profile of CES with both government and the general public, so your efforts are greatly appreciated. We look forward to receiving submissions from the remaining sites (many of which were delayed due to larger than usual catches) before 31 January so that we can report on the full set of results in *CES News* at the beginning of 2011.

CES RESULTS IN 2010

One of the first things that emerge from these preliminary analyses is that adult abundance of some of our resident passerines, including Robin, Wren, Greenfinch and Dunnock, was significantly lower compared to average catches over the previous five years. This may be linked to the winter temperatures of 2009/10, the lowest for 30 years, which may have affected ground-feeding species in particular, as frozen soil and snow cover limited food availability. Goldfinch, appear to have bucked the trends, however, displaying higher adult abundance than the average of the previous five years.

While adult abundance may have been low, many resident species appear to have compensated with a successful breeding season. Greenfinch showed a 44% reduction in adult abundance compared to the previous five-year average, possibly related to outbreaks of *Trichomoniasis*, which have led to national population declines in recent years (Robinson and Lawson et al 2010), but productivity was 67% higher. Chaffinch, Great Tit, and Reed Bunting also had a good breeding season, but productivity of both Blackbird and Song Thrush was lower than the average for the previous five years, possibly due to prolonged dry conditions during the early summer, which reduced food availability for nestlings.

Migrants generally had a good CES season. Blackcap, Whitethroat and Reed Warbler were significantly more abundant than would be predicted based on the five-year average, which suggests that conditions in their wintering areas during 2009/10 were favourable. Four migratory species monitored by CES – Chiffchaff, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler

and Willow Warbler – also exhibited increased productivity relative to the average for the previous five years.

Overall, productivity significantly increased for 10 species, comprising residents and summer migrants, which indicate a good breeding season, while adult abundance varied greatly between species. Numbers of resident species were generally lower or on average, while abundance of migrants increased, possibly due to several factors including harsh winter conditions in the season 2009/10.

REFERENCE

Robinson, R.A., Lawson, B., Toms, M.P., Peck, K.M., Kirkwood, J.K., Chantrey, J., Clatworthy, I.R., Evans, A.D., Hughes, L.A., Hutchinson, O.C., John, S.K., Pennycott, T.W., Perkins, M.W., Rowley, S.A., Simpson, V.R., Tyler, K.M. & Cunningham, A.A. (2010) Emerging infectious disease leads to rapid population declines of common British birds. *PLOS One* 5(8): e12215. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0012215 Open access: www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0012215

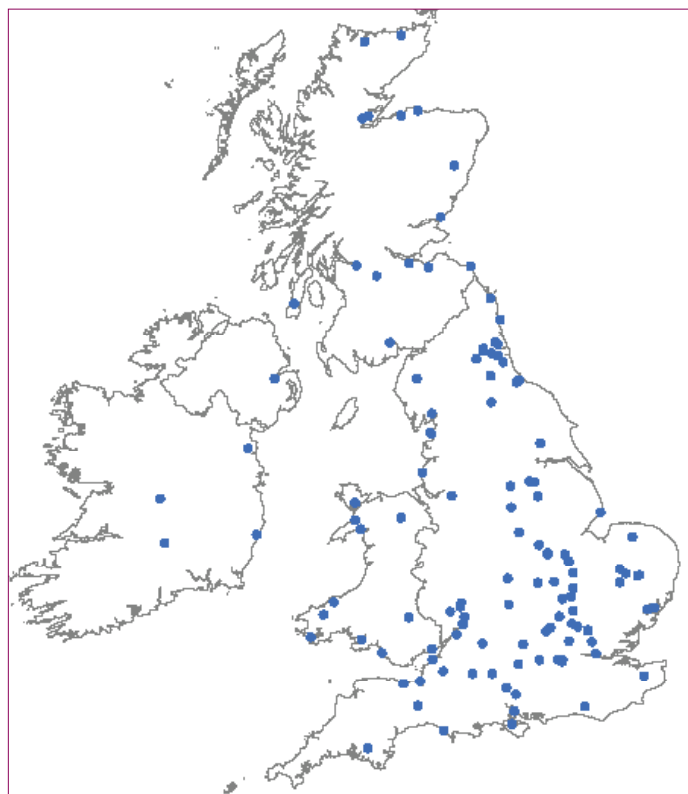


Figure 1. Distribution of current CE Sites. Some areas, such as western Scotland, central Wales, Ireland and parts of western and southern England are currently underrepresented, so more sites in these areas would be very desirable

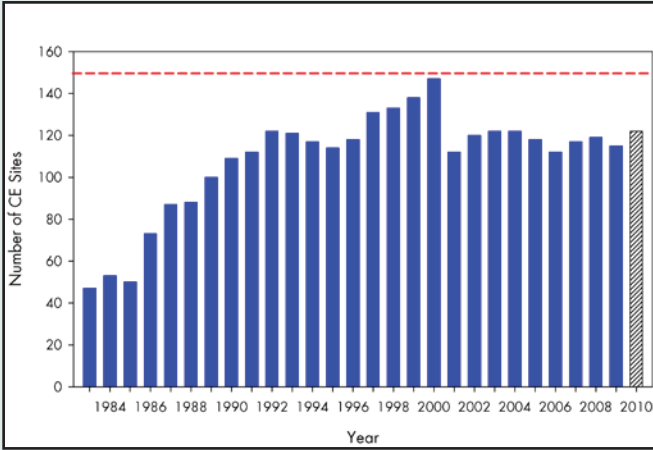


Figure 2. Number of CE Sites across years, since the scheme started in 1983. The highest number (147) was in 2000, just before the Foot & Mouth Disease outbreak, which we would like to surpass in the coming years



Chaffinch by John Harding

Table 1. Preliminary CES Results for 2010 (based on 70 sites).

Changes in abundance and productivity, with significant decreases in **Red** and significant increases in **Green**.

Species	Adult abundance change 2010 vs 5 yr average	Productivity change 2010 vs 5 yr average
Wren	-20%	14%
Dunnock	-12%	-4%
Robin	-27%	22%
Blackbird	-7%	-21%
Song Thrush	-11%	-21%
Cetti's Warbler*	20%	-14%
Sedge Warbler	2%	14%
Reed Warbler	8%	35%
Blackcap	11%	11%
Garden Warbler	0%	13%
Lesser Whitethroat *	-22%	37%
Whitethroat	31%	-2%
Chiffchaff	10%	32%
Willow Warbler	-4%	42%
Long-tailed Tit	11%	-12%
Blue Tit	1%	63%
Great Tit	1%	37%
Treecreeper *	-2%	37%
Chaffinch	-10%	35%
Greenfinch	-44%	67%
Goldfinch	28%	22%
Bullfinch	8%	9%
Reed Bunting	-11%	31%

*denotes small sample size

Notable results (compared to previous highest/lowest year)

Lowest Abundance	Highest abundance	Highest productivity
Greenfinch (1984)	Goldfinch (1989)	Reed Warbler (ever!)
Dunnock (1992)		Chaffinch (2009 but 2nd best ever)
Wren (1997)		Chiffchaff (1988)
Robin (1997)		Willow Warbler (1988)
		Greenfinch (1991)



Reed Warbler by John Harding



Greenfinches by Jill Pakenham