

AVOCET

Recurvirostra avosetta

GB max: 4,121 Jan

NI max: 0

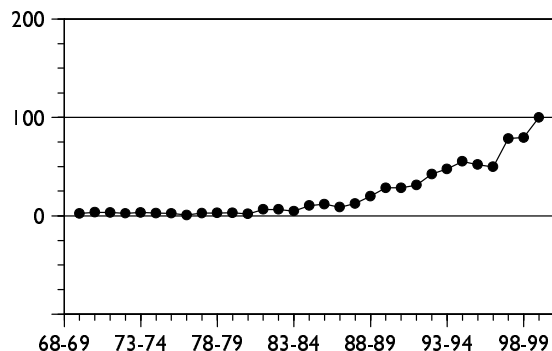


Figure 61. Annual indices for Avocet in UK

The continuing upward trend of the annual index illustrates that 1999-2000 was another good year for Avocets in Britain. Numbers remained high at

International threshold: 700

Great Britain threshold: 10*

All-Ireland threshold: +*

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

the majority of key resorts and the British maximum was the highest winter peak ever recorded.

The absence of counts from the Alde Complex for the previous year's report held the site at the national importance level. However, the addition of late data for 1998-99 means the site regained international importance status following a number of years of relatively low counts.

Poole Harbour and the Thames and Colne Estuaries again held numbers significantly higher than their respective five year averages and a notable high count was also recorded at the Humber Estuary.

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Alde Complex	744	437	884	1,336	1,330	Jan	946 ▲
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Poole Harbour	505	520	585	832	823	Nov	653
Thames Estuary	367	450	488	668	766	Jan	548
Medway Estuary	(256)	(368)	(200)	500	(374)	Feb	500
Hamford Water	(249)	299	587	276	532	Dec	424
Blyth Estuary (Suffolk)	489	242	422	-	-		384
Exe Estuary	303	339	369	400	-		353
Tamar Complex	272	301	595	220	(207)	Jan	347
Swale Estuary	285	(208)	340	306	402	Mar	333
North Norfolk Coast	(41)	(51)	(318)	301	321	Mar	313
Colne Estuary	203	150	214	266	417	Jan	250
Wash	(106)	(83)	196	23	183	Mar	134
Deben Estuary	106	100	102	135	172	Dec	123
Breydon Water & Berney Marshes	97	77	157	94	177	Feb	120
Minsmere Levels	(2)	0	70	120	-		95
Humber Estuary	3	0	28	(49)	82	Mar	32
Blackwater Estuary	0	14	24	(38)	44	Mar	24
Pagham Harbour	14	10	³⁷ 14	19	27	Jan	17
Abberton Reservoir	9	0	64	0	0	Nov	15
Horse Mere	-	-	0	20	-		10

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

North West Solent

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 1999-2000

Ouse Washes 11 Mar

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER

Charadrius dubius

GB max: 217 Jun
NI max: 0

International threshold: ?
Great Britain threshold: ?
All-Ireland threshold: ?

Numbers peaked slightly later than normal, in June. After this numbers declined steadily and there were no records after September. Birds

were recorded at 120 sites, the lowest number in the last five years.

Sites with 10 or more birds in 1999-2000

Old Moor Wetlands	27	May/Jun
Cranwich Gravel Pits	12	May
Acre Nook Square	12	Jun
Upton Warren	12	May
Marden Gravel Pit	10	Jun
Willington	10	Jun
Rutland Water	10	Jun

RINGED PLOVER

Charadrius hiaticula

GB max: 17,816 Sep
NI max: 740 Oct

International threshold: 500
Great Britain winter threshold: 290
Great Britain passage threshold: 300
All-Ireland threshold: 125

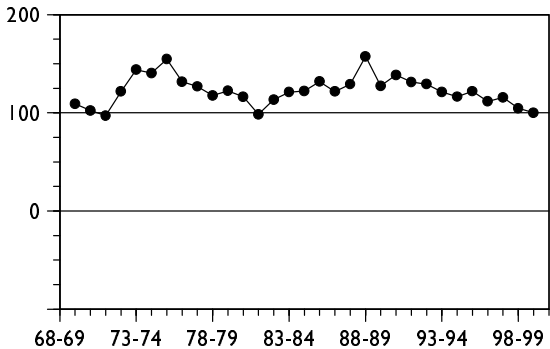


Figure 62. Annual indices for Ringed Plover in UK

The UK annual index continued to decline in 1999-2000. The British and Irish maxima were down on the previous year and whilst the British winter peak remained average, though at the lower end of the range, the Northern Ireland peak winter count was the lowest since 1984-85.

Numbers at many sites were below average, most notably at Jersey Shore and the Wash which were the lowest complete counts of the last ten years, while three further sites dropped below the threshold for international importance. Positions within the all-Ireland table remained the same, though the peak count at the Outer Ards was notably lower than average.

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Colne Estuary	707	(306)	(568)	(468)	(208)	Feb	707
Thames Estuary	755	535	792	620	726	Dec	686
Langstone Harbour	519	660	739	383	605	Jan	581
Tiree	-	-	¹⁶ 534	-	516	Jan	548
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Medway Estuary	682	³⁷ 442	313	(540)	(351)	Feb	494 ▼
North Norfolk Coast	(371)	775	³⁷ 503	318	373	Feb	492
Morecambe Bay	401	528	515	367	522	Nov	467
Hamford Water	(546)	482	281	570	365	Nov	449 ▼
Solway Estuary	321	223	214	906	276	Nov	388
Humber Estuary	316	249	382	³⁷ 504	466	Nov	383
South Uist (West Coast)	-	-	¹⁶ 376	-	-		376 ▼
Thanet	-	197	297	386	558	Dec	360
Stour Estuary	306	597	(87)	257	³⁷ 230	Dec	348

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Forth Estuary	413	259	317	415	309	Nov	343
Chichester Harbour	435	204	483	170	292	Nov	317
Jersey Shore	446	(253)	264	376	143	Jan	307
Wash	390	(147)	311	355	169	Nov	306
Swale Estuary	225	203	301	430	347	Feb	301

Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland

Outer Ards	(317)	575	350	485	223	Nov	408
Carlingford to Newcastle	286	-	-	-	-		286
Strangford Lough	³⁷ 316	³⁷ 346	³⁷ 171	279	216	Jan	266
Belfast Lough	(135)	133	108	167	192	Dec	150
Kilkeel to Lee Stone Point	132	-	-	-	-		132

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Blackwater Estuary

Internationally or nationally important sites not counted in last five years

South Ford
Traighear
East Sanday Coast

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 1999-2000

Carlingford Lough 125 Dec

Sites surpassing passage threshold in Great Britain in 1999-2000

Ribble Estuary	4,784	May	Stour Estuary	497	Oct
North Norfolk Coast	2,700	Aug	Tay Estuary	495	May
Thames Estuary	1,697	Sep	Langstone Harbour	471	Aug
Humber Estuary	1,536	Sep	Medway Estuary	449	Oct
The Wash	1,489	Sep	Thanet Coast	396	Oct
Solway Estuary	1,162	May	Blackwater Estuary	389	Oct
Severn Estuary	1,050	Aug	Pagham Harbour	335	Aug
Morecambe Bay	1,041	Sep	Moray Firth	330	Oct
Hamford Water	752	Sep	Dee Estuary	317	Aug
Swale Estuary	716	Sep	Tees Estuary	309	May
Chichester Harbour	508	Aug			

KENTISH PLOVER

Scarce

Charadrius alexandrinus

Two spring birds were seen in 1999-2000, one at Breydon Water and another at the Dee Estuary (England/ Wales), both in May.

DOTTEREL

Scarce

Charadrius morinellus

A small trip of three birds was present on Dengie Flats in May and a single was on the Duddon Estuary in the same month. This species'

tendency to stop off at remote upland sites or in large tracts of arable land means they are rarely recorded by WeBS.

AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER

Vagrant

Pluvialis dominica

Native range: Americas

Single birds were recorded at Old Moor Wetlands in October and on the North West Solent in November. These are typical dates for this

species, coinciding with the species' migration in America and strong westerly airflows across the Atlantic.

GOLDEN PLOVER

Pluvialis apricaria

International threshold: 18,000

Great Britain threshold: 2,500

All-Ireland threshold: 2,000

GB max: 193,113 Nov

NI max: 15,669 Nov

Both the British and Northern Ireland maxima reflected the continuing fluctuation in Golden Plover numbers. Whilst the winter peak in Northern Ireland fell compared with the previous year, the winter peak in Great Britain was the highest ever recorded by WeBS.

Following a third successive high count at the Wash the site became the second resort to qualify as internationally important, the peak

count being more than double that of the previous year. In contrast, numbers at both Carmarthen Bay and Fairburn Ings fell dramatically.

Amongst the top sites, numbers at the Blackwater Estuary, Breydon & Berney Marshes and Walland Marsh continue to increase steadily, whilst the Forth Estuary witnessed a drop of more than 70% on 1998-99.

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Humber Estuary	(32,532)	8,741	34,444	(42,848)	42,381	Nov	32,189
Wash	12,919	6,879	26,461	20,467	42,761	Nov	21,897 ▲
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Blackwater Estuary	2,055	6,631	8,295	(9,150)	14,902	Feb	8,207
Breydon Wtr & Berney Marshes	5,300	7,550	7,200	10,300	10,600	Jan	8,190
Lower Derwent Valley	8,900	3,000	7,950	6,200	3,400	Jan	5,890
Solway Estuary	7,049	4,617	7,572	5,374	³⁷ 3,984	Dec	5,719
Swale Estuary	1,393	2,227	9,535	(7,722)	7,010	Jan	5,577
Carmarthen Bay	11,000	10,003	(3,300)	500	9	Dec	5,378
Hamford Water	5,073	4,611	8,275	3,847	2,245	Feb	4,810
Ribble Estuary	2,347	6,530	5,325	4,397	3,546	Dec	4,429
Somerset Levels	3,027	683	8,909	3,366	5,401	Feb	4,277
Morecambe Bay	3,616	4,310	4,745	3,618	3,628	Jan	3,983
Lindisfarne	4,580	2,604	2,580	(4,990)	4,830	Nov	3,917
Thames Estuary	2,515	3,875	4,925	3,318	3,826	Nov	3,692
Colne Estuary	1,034	(1,500)	4,350	(3,795)	5,000	Nov	3,545
North Norfolk Coast	3,258	2,040	4,772	4,165	3,442	Feb	3,535
Clifford Hill Gravel Pits	2,400	2,000	4,000	3,620	5,500	Feb	3,504
Criddling Stubbs Quarry Pools	-	2,000	5,000	-	-		3,500
Walland Marsh	-	1,800	2,500	4,500	5,000	Jan	3,450
R Idle: Bawtry To Misterton	1,000	5,000	-	-	-		3,000
Mersey Estuary	3,850	4,000	2,750	³⁷ 1,938	2,440	Jan	2,996
Fairburn Ings	7,000	3,700	2,700	500	0	Nov	2,780
St Mary's Island Seaton Sluice	600	(3,000)	6,500	1,500	2,000	Jan	2,720
Nene Washes	1,086	700	6,109	3,223	2,260	Feb	2,676 ▲
Crouch-Roach Estuary	2,844	(890)	1,218	4,455	1,730	Dec	2,562
Forth Estuary	5,260	2,363	2,147	2,227	594	Dec	2,518
Dagenham Chase GP	-	-	-	-	(2,500)	Jan	(2,500) ▲
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Strangford Lough	³⁷ 7,735	³⁷ 14,375	³⁷ 12,100	6,872	7,076	Nov	9,632
Loughs Neagh & Beg	4,470	3,902	4,300	8,974	6,675	Feb	5,664
Lough Foyle	2,050	(5,207)	5,456	6,585	2,600	Jan	4,380
Outer Ards	(3,517)	5,869	(735)	2,420	2,095	Nov	3,475
Dundrum Outer Bay	2,500	-	-	-	-		(2,500)

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Abberton Reservoir

Internationally or nationally important sites not counted in last five years

New Road Pits

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 1999-2000

Medway Estuary	4,500	Jan
Ouse Washes	4,201	Nov
Priory Water	4,100	Dec
Old Moor Wetlands	4,100	Mar
Pegwell Bay	3,800	Nov
Camel Estuary	3,500	Dec
Taw-Torridge Estuary	3,440	Nov

GREY PLOVER

Pluvialis squatarola

GB max: 42,447 Sep
NI max: 413 Feb

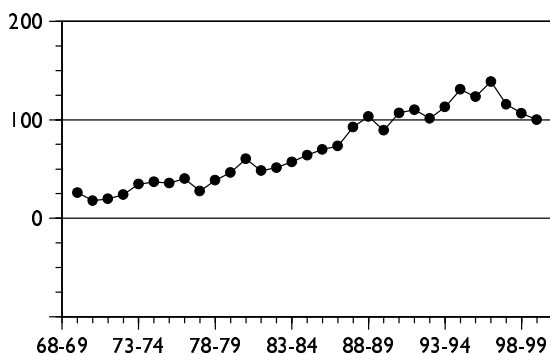


Figure 63. Annual indices for Grey Plover in UK

In 1999-2000, Grey Plover numbers at many UK resorts were below their respective five year averages also reflected in the continuing downward trend of the UK index.

In previous years, the British maximum has occurred during the winter months. In 1999-2000

International threshold: 1,500

Great Britain threshold: 430

All-Ireland threshold: 40*

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

the peak total occurred during the autumn passage and the winter peak of 37,902 was the lowest since 1992-93.

A number of sites, including Hamford Water, the Solway Estuary and Carlingford Lough, have witnessed a steady decline in Grey Plover numbers, a trend that continued in 1999-2000. Such a decline at Morecambe Bay has resulted in the site no longer qualifying as internationally important.

Dundrum Bay was a new addition to the table of all Ireland importance even though the peak count at the site was relatively low. The Orwell Estuary held more than double the number of Grey Plover present in 1998-99 and as a result qualified as nationally important, whilst numbers at the Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal) fell by more than 30% on the previous year.

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Wash	(7,396)	8,952	9,790	5,767	7,432	Jan	7,985
Ribble Estuary	(3,211)	12,856	³⁷ 5,408	8,435	3,234	Dec	7,483
Thames Estuary	(7,515)	9,698	3,708	(5,173)	5,854	Dec	6,694
Blackwater Estuary	(4,230)	(2,383)	(3,549)	(4,874)	4,649	Nov	4,762
Hamford Water	(8,186)	(7,033)	3,270	3,020	1,672	Feb	4,636
Stour Estuary	3,249	³⁷ 3,502	(1,705)	2,414	3,739	Nov	3,226
Dengie Flats	(1,560)	2,160	4,156	(1,966)	3,252	Feb	3,189
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	(2,567)	³⁷ 6,332	³⁷ 3,143	1,204	742	Nov	2,855
Swale Estuary	1,543	(2,822)	5,313	2,614	1,858	Mar	2,832
Medway Estuary	1,899	1,979	4,612	2,631	(2,631)	Feb	2,780
Lindisfarne	(1,728)	2,118	2,950	1,106	(1,165)	Mar	2,058
Alt Estuary	1,456	1,702	2,316	³⁷ 2,314	1,877	Dec	1,933
Chichester Harbour	2,060	2,117	1,434	1,849	(2,145)	Feb	1,921
Humber Estuary	1,533	539	(3,368)	1,849	1,446	Nov	1,747
Langstone Harbour	1,266	(1,480)	2,157	(1,150)	1,454	Nov	1,626
North Norfolk Coast	850	1,867	2,273	1,270	1,637	Jan	1,579
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Mersey Estuary	417	³⁷ 753	³⁷ 3,843	1,623	³⁷ 630	Dec	1,453
Morecambe Bay	1,557	1,695	1,243	1,172	1,072	Nov	1,348 ▼
Pagham Harbour	1,120	³⁷ 1,436	2,452	488	³⁷ 1,139	Feb	1,327
Solway Estuary	1,429	1,276	990	³⁷ 903	³⁷ 678	Dec	1,055

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Colne Estuary	1,050	888	1,462	910	898	Feb	1,042
Beaulieu Estuary	1,021	463	782	756	547	Jan	714
Forth Estuary	730	658	724	608	426	Nov	629
Orwell Estuary	³⁷ 728	294	(585)	417	1,034	Mar	618 ▲
Eden Estuary	510	604	491	580	514	Mar	540
Exe Estuary	513	513	573	429	-		507
Severn Estuary	368	519	(436)	³⁷ 196	707	Dec	448

Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland

Strangford Lough	170	407	189	326	320	Feb	282
Carlingford Lough	57	(93)	93	65	35	Dec	69
Dundrum Bay	(18)	42	38	68	14	Nov	41 ▲

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Jersey Shore

Sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 1999-2000

Duddon Estuary 468 Jan

LAPWING

Vanellus vanellus

International threshold: 20,000**

Great Britain threshold: 20,000**†

All-Ireland threshold: 2,500

GB max: 471,564 Nov

NI max: 21,920 Jan

As in previous years the maxima for Lapwing occurred during the winter months. The British peak total was up on 1998-99 and may be accounted for by the notable high counts recorded at key sites during the same month. The weather during November was relatively mild and may have allowed birds to remain further east than normal. This may have been a factor in the number of Lapwing recorded at the

Nene Washes, the Ouse Washes and the Wash, the last site witnessing a three-fold increase on the previous year.

In Northern Ireland peak counts at the majority of key sites were below average. Whilst numbers at Strangford Lough continue to decline, the count at Loughs Neagh & Beg was the highest for the site since 1991-92.

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Somerset Levels	47,081	16,743	62,886	(55,654)	28,895	Feb	42,252
Wash	24,773	9,132	41,538	27,585	86,129	Nov	37,831
Breydon Wtr & Berney Marshes	24,000	31,000	19,400	27,300	20,500	Nov	24,440
Humber Estuary	23,827	9,222	21,884	(32,731)	30,915	Nov	23,716
Morecambe Bay	24,293	(15,526)	26,190	(17,501)	18,796	Jan	23,093
Sites of national importance in Great Britain †							
Ribble Estuary	28,270	18,108	24,932	15,360	11,022	Jan	19,538 ▼
Walland Marsh	-	4,800	18,500	19,000	17,500	Feb	14,950
Ouse Washes	8,155	(4,675)	15,170	4,435	29,913	Nov	14,418
Swale Estuary	2,995	(6,271)	(15,430)	(16,421)	18,641	Feb	13,372
Mersey Estuary	(11,137)	³⁷ 10,793	³⁷ 13,599	³⁷ 14,129	13,620	Nov	13,035
Blackwater Estuary	(5,280)	4,827	19,377	(11,752)	14,154	Nov	12,786
Severn Estuary	10,956	10,441	(14,843)	8,029	19,001	Dec	12,654
Medway Estuary	(5,991)	(3,366)	(11,435)	(4,715)	(6,728)	Jan	(11,435)
Thames Estuary	8,347	8,574	(18,237)	10,373	8,261	Nov	10,758
Solway Estuary	13,609	6,150	12,004	³⁷ 7,970	8,345	Dec	9,616
Colne Estuary	8,222	(1,900)	12,440	8,725	7,500	Jan	9,222
Lower Derwent Valley	14,543	11,941	8,487	5,430	3,770	Jan	8,834
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	9,590	6,916	8,828	8,828	8,278	Dec	8,488
Nene Washes	7,190	1,800	8,100	5,500	13,080	Nov	7,134
Arun Valley	9,402	6,005	(7,188)	5,667	4,495	Dec	6,551

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Crouch-Roach Estuary	5,964	(2,220)	7,440	5,696	5,962	Jan	6,266
Tees Estuary	10,505	(5,277)	4,500	5,164	3,468	Jan	5,909
Abberton Reservoir	12,425	3,092	10,620	1,850	1,350	Dec	5,867
North Norfolk Coast	4,139	2,339	³⁷ 9,400	4,682	8,744	Feb	5,861 ▲
Hamford Water	(6,335)	3,220	6,968	8,091	4,305	Dec	5,784
Stour Estuary	4,228	³⁷ 6,228	7,466	3,569	6,192	Nov	5,537
Alde Complex	4,577	3,591	6,048	7,558	4,331	Nov	5,221 ▲

Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland

Strangford Lough	11,086	13,547	³⁷ 12,691	7,497	5,736	Feb	10,111
Loughs Neagh & Beg	6,758	7,857	6,777	6,154	10,968	Jan	7,703
Lough Foyle	7,370	(2,665)	2,315	4,781	2,990	Nov	4,364
Outer Ards	3,776	6,104	3,059	3,650	3,624	Nov	4,043

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Rye Harbour & Pett Level

Sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 1999-2000

Stodmarsh & Collards Lagoon	8,000	Dec
Fiddlers Ferry PS Lagoons	6,000	Nov
Taw-Torridge Estuary	5,895	Jan
Belfast Lough	3,112	Nov

† as few sites in Great Britain are of national importance, a qualifying level of 5,000 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report.

KNOT

Calidris canutus

International threshold: 3,500

Great Britain threshold: 2,900

All-Ireland threshold: 375

GB max: 223,200 Jan

NI max: 4,861 Jan

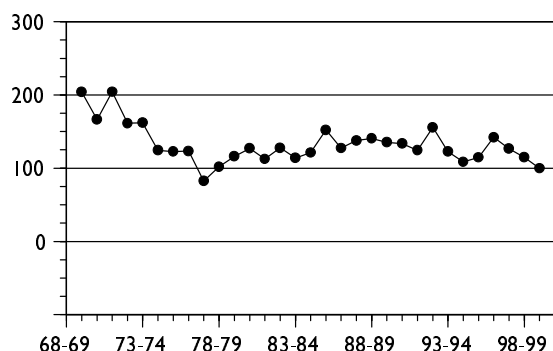


Figure 64. Annual indices for Knot in UK

For the third consecutive year the annual index declined and in 1999-2000 was at its second ever lowest level, only that for 1977-78 being lower. Peak numbers in Great Britain were the lowest

for over a decade and in Northern Ireland they were at the lower end of values for the same period.

Only four sites in the table supported numbers above their five year mean, and only that on the Stour markedly so. Among low counts, those on the Thames Estuary, Ribble Estuary, Dee Estuary (England/ Wales), Strangford Lough, North Norfolk Coast, Cromarty Firth, Montrose Basin and Tees Estuary were all noticeably lower than their five year mean. Numbers at the last two sites declined for the fifth consecutive year.

In light of such counts, the particularly high count on the Medway Estuary is all the more noteworthy.

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Wash	(47,775)	(72,173)	81,950	62,211	60,711	Jan	69,261
Morecambe Bay	37,808	44,134	77,344	71,238	59,530	Jan	58,011
Thames Estuary	47,191	39,121	55,663	(31,090)	21,942	Nov	40,979
Ribble Estuary	(35,321)	55,752	(36,880)	36,595	22,010	Mar	38,119
Humber Estuary	28,076	22,579	30,283	27,355	25,719	Feb	26,802
Alt Estuary	18,002	25,350	35,881	19,009	20,000	Feb	23,648
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	18,520	³⁷ 57,032	14,000	³⁷ 17,041	8,683	Nov	23,055
Dengie Flats	6,050	6,600	10,490	14,560	(5,800)	Dec	9,425
Strangford Lough	13,444	³⁷ 12,688	9,456	7,070	3,685	Jan	9,269

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Solway Estuary	10,516	9,086	5,472	8,986	8,544	Jan	8,521
Forth Estuary	8,950	11,299	7,866	7,381	5,520	Feb	8,203
North Norfolk Coast	5,930	15,236	9,006	6,136	3,356	Feb	7,933
Stour Estuary	4,748	³⁷ 5,893	(3,565)	4,800	9,677	Nov	6,280
Burry Inlet	6,353	8,200	2,080	3,870	(3,562)	Feb	5,126
Swale Estuary	2,517	7,131	5,420	4,020	3,400	Jan	4,498
Cromarty Firth	(6,600)	(6,829)	1,733	4,299	³⁷ 1,685	Dec	4,229
Lindisfarne	3,810	4,625	3,218	(4,040)	(1,954)	Jan	3,923
Hamford Water	1,906	3,162	4,234	5,924	3,533	Dec	3,752 ▲
Inner Moray Firth	2,491	(7,773)	3,097	2,021	3,251	Feb	3,727
Montrose Basin	(6,500)	3,800	3,800	2,483	1,824	Dec	3,681

Sites of national importance in Great Britain

Tees Estuary	5,122	3,520	2,783	2,501	1,671	Jan	3,119
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Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland

Belfast Lough	560	580	(430)	901	600	Nov	660
Dundrum Bay	(546)	123	0	1,500	1,000	Nov	656
Dundrum Outer Bay	600	-	-	-	-		600 ▲
Lough Foyle	1,145	400	270	502	180	Nov	499

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 1999-2000

Medway Estuary	5,055	Jan
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SANDERLING

Calidris alba

GB max: 15,196 **May**
NI max: 155 **Jan**

International threshold: 1,000
Great Britain winter threshold: 230
Great Britain passage threshold: 300
All-Ireland threshold: 35*

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

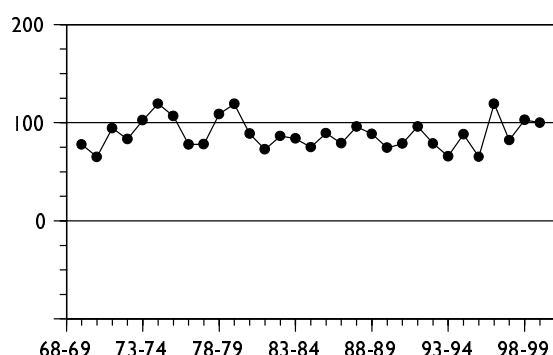


Figure 65. Annual indices for Sanderling in UK.

Following several years of marked fluctuations in the mid to late 1990s the annual index remained stable, at slightly above average levels for the second year running. Peak winter counts in Northern Ireland were the second highest ever recorded under WeBS. Midwinter numbers in Great Britain were about average for the past

decade, though peaking later than in previous years. Typically, the highest British total occurred during spring passage and in 1999-2000 was one of the highest spring counts recorded by WeBS.

The Ribble Estuary was the only site with a notably high count but sustained high numbers on the Alt Estuary saw the site qualify as internationally important for the first time. Numbers along the North Norfolk Coast rose after the previous year's already high count whereas numbers at Carmarthen Bay, Jersey Shore, Thames Estuary and Solway Estuary decreased after record counts in 1998-99.

Four sites surpassed the qualifying level for sites of international importance during passage. For the second year running several sites held much higher than normal numbers, namely Alt Estuary, the Wash and North Norfolk Coast.

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Ribble Estuary	750	3,085	1,134	1,223	2,501	Feb	1,739
Alt Estuary	607	971	1,352	³⁷ 1,355	1,320	Nov	1,121 ▲

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
North Norfolk Coast	476	636	594	720	881	Dec	661
Thanet	-	457	776	603	610	Dec	612
Duddon Estuary	965	404	547	627	485	Nov	606
South Uist (West Coast)	-	-	¹⁶ 528	-	-		528
Carmarthen Bay	323	386	470	797	592	Mar	514
Tiree	-	-	¹⁶ 371	-	589	Jan	480
The Wash	(539)	484	576	348	441	Dec	478
Tees Estuary	465	³⁷ 577	470	346	456	Feb	463
Humber Estuary	413	635	345	406	496	Feb	459
Lade Sands	475	706	460	240	330	Mar	442
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	208	598	429	463	246	Dec	389
Jersey Shore	130	(371)	304	611	443	Jan	372
Thames Estuary	246	(142)	132	687	127	Mar	298
Durham Coast	255	372	(380)	154	250	Nov	282
Solway Estuary	(220)	384	134	(303)	125	Dec	237
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Strangford Lough	0	³⁷ 324	23	0	0		69 ▲
Dundrum Outer Bay	60	-	-	-	-		60
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels							
Ryde Pier to Puckpool Point							
Hamford Water							
Internationally or nationally important sites not counted in last five years							
South Ford (Outer Hebrides)							
Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 1999-2000							
Swansea Bay	235	Feb					
Morecambe Bay	235	Nov					
Bann Estuary	90	Jan					
Sites surpassing passage threshold in Great Britain in 1999-2000							
Ribble Estuary	5,500	May	Carmarthen Bay		506	Apr	
Wash	4,867	May	Morecambe Bay		480	Apr	
Alt Estuary	3,319	Aug	Tees Estuary		459	May	
North Norfolk Coast	1,786	Sep	Humber Estuary		457	Sep	
Thames Estuary	812	Sep	Solway Estuary		395	May	

LITTLE STINT

Calidris minuta

International threshold: 2,100

Great Britain threshold: ?

All-Ireland threshold: ?

GB max: 166 Sep

NI max: 3 Oct

After the exceptionally high numbers recorded by WeBS in the previous autumn, 1999-2000 proved to be an unremarkable year. The peak September count and the 59 sites at which this species were recorded were both well below the five year means and the second lowest values in

the last five years.

The number of sites at which this species has been recorded in winter has remained high for the past three years. In recent winters the number of sites has been around twenty compared to 11 in 1995-96 and just six in 1994-95.

Sites with ten or more birds in 1999-2000

North Norfolk Coast	24	Sep	Swale Estuary	12	Sep
Severn Estuary	16	Sep	Chichester Harbour	11	Sep
Humber Estuary	17	Sep	Pool Of Virkie	10	Sep
Breydon Water & Berney Marshes	15	Sep			

TEMMINCK'S STINT

Scarce

Calidris temminckii

One was present at Priory Water during August and another was on the Tees Estuary in September.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER

Calidris melanotos

Vagrant

Native range: Americas, N Siberia and Australia

Nationally, the autumn of 1999 produced more than 130 records of this species and this was reflected in the above average numbers recorded by WeBS. A total of fourteen birds was recorded

from twelve well scattered locations. Two birds were present at Siblyback Reservoir and the Humber Estuary in September.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER

Calidris acuminata

Vagrant

Native range: E Asia and Australia

One was present on the Thames Estuary in September, the first record of this species on a WeBS count.

CURLEW SANDPIPER

Calidris ferruginea

International threshold: 4,500

Great Britain threshold: ?

All-Ireland threshold: ?

GB max: 1,042 **Sep**
NI max: 13 **Oct**

As in several of recent years, WeBS totals of Curlew Sandpipers in autumn 1999 were high, only just below the record numbers of the previous year. This species was recorded at 79 sites in total, around average for 'good' years. The number of sites with 10 or more birds was also similar to 1998-99, and the same east coast sites feature at the top of the table below. Noteworthy is the large count from the Irvine/Garnock Estuary.

In previous years, large numbers of Curlew

Sandpipers have always coincided with large numbers of Little Stints, though this was not the case in 1999-2000. Arctic-breeding waders can have markedly different breeding success between years, linked, as with some goose species, to cycles in lemming numbers. The numbers recorded by WeBS suggest conditions in the breeding areas of these two species were rather different in 1999.

Sites with ten or more birds in 1999-2000

North Norfolk Coast	142	Sep	Eden Estuary	32	Sep
Humber Estuary	87	Sep	Montrose Basin	27	Sep
Swale Estuary	81	Sep	Chichester Harbour	26	Sep
Breydon Water & Berney Marshes	79	Sep	Burry Inlet	22	Sep
Irvine/Garnock Estuary	69	Sep	Pagham Harbour	14	Sep
The Wash	57	Sep	Dungeness	14	Sep
Severn Estuary	54	Sep	Thames Estuary	14	Sep
Forth Estuary	50	Sep	Ribble Estuary	14	Sep
Alde Complex	24	Sep	Bann Estuary	13	Oct
Dee Estuary	42	Sep	Solway Estuary	12	Sep
Alnmouth to Boulmer	35	Sep	Tees Estuary	10	Sep
Morecambe Bay	32	Sep			

PURPLE SANDPIPER

Calidris maritima

GB max: 1,499 Feb
NI max: 106 Nov

International threshold: 500

Great Britain threshold: 210[†]

All-Ireland threshold: 10*

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

Despite the top five sites in Great Britain not being covered during 1999-2000, the peak British total rose for the fourth consecutive year to the highest recorded under WeBS since 1994-95. However, these maxima do not take into account the European Non-estuarine Waterfowl Survey (NEWS) which was carried out in 1997-98. The much greater numbers recorded in that year illustrate the inadequacies of normal WeBS

coverage for assessing the distribution and abundance of this particular species. The Northern Ireland maximum was average for the last decade.

Of the sites that were covered, numbers were at their lowest for the previous five years with the exception of Seahouses to Budle Point. The peak count in November was the highest ever recorded by WeBS at this site.

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain[†]							
North Ronaldsay	-	-	¹⁶ 400	-	-		400
Farne Islands	-	-	-	360	-		360
South Uist (West Coast)	-	-	¹⁶ 313	-	-		313
East Sanday Coast	-	-	¹⁶ 275	-	-		275
Tiree	-	-	¹⁶ 262	-	263	Jan	263
Seahouses to Budle Point	252	144	207	274	310	Nov	237
Moray Coast	268	223	219	178	129	Jan	203
Tees Estuary	177	155	166	202	137	Dec	167
South Westray	-	-	¹⁶ 159	-	-		159
Durham Coast	163	153	(161)	(132)	85	Feb	141
Cambus to Newbiggin	(46)	²⁴ 142	²⁴ 165	²⁴ 67	35	Jan	125
North Mainland (Orkney)	-	-	¹⁶ 117	-	-		117

Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland

Outer Ards	(48)	89	49	147	100	Nov	96
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Internationally or nationally important sites not counted in last five years

Fraserburgh to Rosehearty

SE Stronsay

SE Deerness

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Deveron Estuary

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 1999-2000

Egilsay	136	Nov
Thurso Bay	120	Feb
Howick to Beadnell	104	Dec
Belfast Lough	19	Dec

[†] as so few British sites are of national importance for Purple Sandpiper, a qualifying level of 100 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report.

DUNLIN

Calidris alpina

GB max: 371,085 Jan

NI max: 12,959 Jan

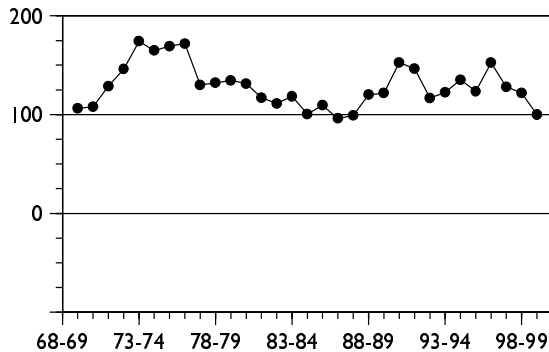


Figure 66. Annual indices for Dunlin in UK

Great Britain and Northern Ireland maxima in 1999-2000 were their lowest for eleven and five years respectively. These low numbers were reflected in the UK annual index which dropped sharply to its lowest level since 1987-88.

The majority of sites held average or below average numbers, with only the peak winter count at Dengie Flats significantly higher than

International threshold: 14,000

Great Britain winter threshold: 5,300

Great Britain passage threshold: 2,000

All-Ireland threshold: 1,250

normal. Numbers at Morecambe Bay, Ribble Estuary, Southampton Water, Portsmouth Harbour, Outer Ards and Belfast Lough all continued recent declines, although positions in the tables remained relatively stable.

Although the peak count at the Wash was only just above average, it marks a steep increase following several years of successive decline. However, the date of the count may suggest that these were passage rather than true wintering birds. The Bann Estuary also held above average numbers, following very low numbers in 1998-99.

An average number of sites exceeded the thresholds for national importance during passage in 1999-2000. However, only three of these held internationally important numbers, as opposed to five in 1998-99 and eight in 1997-98. Peak counts were remarkably low on the Stour, Thames, Blackwater and Mersey Estuaries and also at Morecambe Bay.

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Mersey Estuary	40,501	55,430	52,015	³⁷ 70,837	42,120	Jan	52,181
Morecambe Bay	41,831	57,617	71,731	38,865	28,411	Jan	47,691
Wash	(41,487)	38,741	36,054	32,556	41,503	Mar	38,068
Ribble Estuary	34,215	45,973	³⁷ 45,039	32,160	18,040	Dec	35,085
Thames Estuary	26,933	34,145	37,979	(46,450)	26,676	Feb	34,437
Severn Estuary	(26,150)	29,420	(26,851)	37,172	(19,785)	Dec	33,296
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	24,695	³⁷ 38,416	30,318	31,619	21,627	Nov	29,335
Blackwater Estuary	27,345	33,512	22,304	(22,890)	16,792	Feb	24,988
Humber Estuary	27,600	10,210	20,695	40,121	21,236	Nov	23,972
Langstone Harbour	21,144	(14,240)	(15,000)	25,185	24,090	Feb	23,473
Medway Estuary	17,232	33,313	17,200	11,689	(8,591)	Jan	19,859
Chichester Harbour	22,590	19,567	15,629	16,421	16,680	Nov	18,177
Solway Estuary	11,688	20,042	11,982	17,873	³⁷ 14,746	Jan	15,266
Stour Estuary	15,343	³⁷ 16,676	14,712	13,080	15,168	Nov	14,996
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Swale Estuary	10,971	14,243	15,529	7,661	8,587	Jan	11,398
Forth Estuary	13,830	9,118	9,937	10,887	10,726	Jan	10,900
Duddon Estuary	10,370	14,416	7,232	9,765	7,500	Jan	9,857
Colne Estuary	13,000	8,805	10,510	6,925	8,950	Dec	9,638
Orwell Estuary	³⁷ 17,634	9,576	³⁷ 6,977	³⁷ 4,774	³⁷ 4,976	Dec	8,787
Lindisfarne	(7,031)	10,364	6,039	9,880	(8,148)	Feb	8,761
Burry Inlet	6,966	14,548	4,539	8,040	(9,271)	Nov	8,673
Dengie Flats	4,200	(7,850)	8,100	8,900	10,800	Feb	8,000
Hamford Water	(10,113)	9,146	11,970	4,238	3,967	Nov	7,887
Inner Moray Firth	7,226	8,567	5,417	³⁷ 6,259	7,059	Jan	6,906
Poole Harbour	6,424	6,347	6,355	6,816	6,693	Feb	6,527
Southampton Water	³⁷ 7,796	³⁷ 5,617	³⁷ 7,088	³⁷ 6,454	³⁷ 4,557	Dec	6,302
Portsmouth Harbour	11,151	(4,392)	³⁷ 8,889	3,411	1,737	Feb	6,297 ▲
Cleddau Estuary	4,431	8,561	5,318	5,973	(4,381)	Dec	6,071

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Strangford Lough	³⁷ 12,059	³⁷ 16,629	³⁷ 8,325	6,881	4,103	Jan	9,599
Lough Foyle	7,025	(3,666)	4,106	6,600	3,560	Jan	5,323
Outer Ards	1,709	2,689	1,890	2,175	1,023	Feb	1,897
Belfast Lough	³⁷ 2,106	1,943	³⁷ 1,906	³⁷ 2,055	³⁷ 1,242	Feb	1,850
Carlingford Lough	1,244	(860)	2,002	2,127	1,861	Nov	1,809
Bann Estuary	1,085	2,910	1,075	865	1,650	Jan	1,517

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Dundrum Bay

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 1999-2000

Dornoch Firth 5,793 Jan

Other sites surpassing passage threshold in Great Britain in 1999-2000

The Wash	32,740	Oct	Solway Estuary	4,406	Oct
Ribble Estuary	32,570	May	Stour Estuary	3,934	Oct
Humber Estuary	14,038	Oct	Swale Estuary	3,470	Oct
Blackwater Estuary	8,713	Oct	Dengie Flats	3,350	Oct
Forth Estuary	6,484	Oct	Alt Estuary	2,972	May
Morecambe Bay	5,905	Apr	Hamford Water	2,626	Oct
Thames Estuary	5,190	Sep	North Norfolk Coast	2,583	Oct
Dee Estuary	4,774	Aug	Tay Estuary	2,515	Oct
Medway Estuary	4,625	Oct	Colne Estuary	2,350	Oct
Mersey Estuary	4,550	Aug	Lindisfarne	2,171	Apr

RUFF

Philomachus pugnax

GB max: 963 Feb
NI max: 15 Sep

International threshold: ?

Great Britain threshold: 7*

All-Ireland threshold: +*

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

A total of seven sites held 50 or more birds during the winter, two more than in 1998-99. Unusually, the peak count for Great Britain occurred during winter rather than passage, due to the exceptionally high numbers in January and February at the Ouse Washes (for the second year running), Martin Mere, Breydon Water & Berney Marshes, Ribble Estuary and Holland Marshes.

Numbers at Hamford Water, Arun Valley and the Somerset Levels were well below their five

year means which may account for the increase at other sites. Numbers of Ruff wintering in Great Britain have increased dramatically since the early 1990s and the higher numbers in 1999-2000 continue this trend.

As is usual, most peak counts during passage came from the autumn, with eight sites exceeding the minimum threshold in 1999-2000. Most notable was an exceptionally high count of 257 at the Ouse Washes in April.

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Ouse Washes	139	(113)	60	(292)	288	Feb	195
Lower Derwent Valley	189	81	133	118	111	Jan	126
Martin Mere	45	67	90	96	140	Jan	88
North Norfolk Coast	58	118	³⁷ 81	51	72	Feb	76
Nene Washes	71	19	60	98	50	Mar	60
Breydon Water & Berney Marshes	1	24	28	11	144	Feb	42
Hamford Water	81	(23)	32	38	7	Jan	40
Swale Estuary	76	4	27	20	43	Feb	34
Blackwater Estuary	(12)	19	33	29	41	Jan	31
Arun Valley	43	16	(34)	50	7	Mar	30
Abberton Reservoir	53	18	30	0	37	Feb	28
Rutland Water	19	21	17	31	36	Jan	25
Somerset Levels	37	42	21	18	2	Feb	24
Middle Yare Marshes	0	20	22	15	57	Nov/Mar	23

	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Mon	Mean
Ribble Estuary	17	21	25	5	41	Jan	22
Wash	17	(4)	3	69	0	Nov	22
Thames Estuary	11	52	15	1	25	Jan	21
Dungeness Gravel Pits	7	40	4	15	21	Dec	17
Humber Estuary	15	2	14	³⁷ 30	18	Mar	16
Walland Marsh	-	36	9	2	15	Mar	16
Holland Marshes	-	-	1	0	45	Feb	15 ▲
Sandbach Flashes	21	-	10	11	13	Dec	14
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	17	12	8	10	2	Dec	10
Stodmarsh NNR & Collards Lagoon	0	0	0	7	(37)	Mar	9 ▲
Tees Estuary	16	7	2	17	4	Feb	9
Colne Estuary	30	0	0	(4)	0	Nov	8
Lakenheath Fen	-	-	(13)	0	-		(7)
Druridge Pool	7	-	-	-	-		7

Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland

Strangford Lough	0	0	³⁷ 40	0	0		8
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Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Stour Estuary

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 1999-2000

Glynde Levels	18	Feb
Romney Marsh	11	Jan
Pulfin Bog	8	Mar
Loch of Mey	7	Dec/Jan
Eden Estuary	7	Nov

Sites holding 50 or more birds on passage in 1999

Ouse Washes	257	Apr	Abberton Reservoir	87	Aug
Humber Estuary	151	Sep	Ribble Estuary	80	Oct
North Norfolk Coast	144	Sep	Martin Mere	60	Apr/Sep
Breydon Water & Berney Marshes	90	Sep	Lower Derwent Ings	51	Oct

JACK SNIPE

Limnocryptes minimus

International threshold: ?

Great Britain threshold: ?[†]

All-Ireland threshold: 250

GB max: 113 Jan

NI max: 5 Jan

Numbers of wintering Jack Snipe were similar to those of the previous year. Both the peak count and summed site maxima of 336 were slightly below average but still at the higher end of values for the past five years.

Numbers of Jack Snipe peaked in November and then in January, perhaps indicating a period of movement, maybe in response to cold weather on the Continent.

As for other species, there is a fair degree of overlap in the sites listed each year in the table below. However, this may partly reflect the familiarity of observers with the key locations for Jack Snipe within these sites and the ease of visiting these particular locations whilst undertaking a count of all other species in their count areas.

Sites with five or more birds in 1999-2000

Lower Derwent Ings	24	Oct	Hill Ridware Lake	6	Nov
Chichester Harbour	23	Jan	Fiddlers Ferry Power	6	Mar
Doxey Marshes SSSI	18	Mar	Llangorse Lake	5	Nov
Severn Estuary	15	Jan	Loch O' Th' Lowes (New Cumnock)	5	Oct
Meadow Lane Gravel Pits	12	Mar	Forth Estuary	5	Nov/Dec
Upton Warren	9	Jan	Bramshill Plantation	5	Feb
Somerset Levels	7	Nov	Larne Lough	5	Jan
Shipton on Cherwell Quarry	7	Feb	Walmore Common	5	Feb
Houghton Regis	6	Mar			

[†] as no British or all-Ireland thresholds have been set, a qualifying level of five has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report