

PRINCIPAL SITES

Table 5 below lists the principal sites for non-breeding waterbirds in the UK as monitored by WeBS. All sites supporting more than 10,000 waterbirds are listed, as are all sites supporting internationally important numbers of one or more waterbird species. Naturalised species (e.g. Canada Goose and Ruddy Duck) and non-native species presumed to have escaped from captive collections have been excluded from the totals, as have gulls and terns since the recording of these species is optional (see *Analysis*). In contrast to previous years, all Greylag Geese are now included following a reclassification of the listing of populations. Table 6 lists other sites holding internationally important numbers of waterbirds, which are not routinely monitored by standard WeBS surveys but by the Icelandic Goose Census and aerial surveys.

A total of 211 sites are listed in Tables 5 and 6. This is a lower total than recent years, mainly due to the removal of Northwest Scotland Greylag Goose from the species that can contribute to a site's international importance. (The national threshold for British/Irish Greylag Goose has been used as an international threshold). Of the 244 sites, 225 supported one or more species in internationally important numbers and 84 held a five-year mean peak of 10,000 or more birds. Typically there are

few changes to the top twenty sites listed in the principal sites table, with the order of the top ten changing little from year to year.

The Wash remains as the key waterbird site in terms of absolute numbers and in 2009/10 held figures well above average for recent years. The total of 435,227 birds represents the highest site total in WeBS history. With the exceptions of North Norfolk Coast and Morecambe Bay, numbers at the majority of other top 10 sites were below recent average. Following the highest total at Ribble Estuary for ten years in 2008/09, the total in 2009/10 was the lowest since 2001/02. Reduced totals were especially marked at the two most important non-estuarine sites, namely Somerset Levels and Ouse Washes. This was probably attributable to the effects of freezing weather conditions during the midwinter period.

Across the UK, five-year averages of sites holding 10,000 or more waterbirds were relatively similar compared to the previous year, with 73 of the 84 sites undergoing changes of less than 10%. The greatest increases were experienced at Nosterfield Gravel Pits (18%), Mersehead RSPB (17%) and Lower Derwent Ings (14%). The greatest decreases were at WWT Caerlaverock (Inland) (22%), Stour Estuary (13%) and Poole Harbour (12%).

Table 5. Total number of waterbirds at principal sites in the UK, 2005/2006 to 2009/10 (includes data from all available sources) and species occurring in internationally important numbers at each. (Species codes are provided in Table 7.)

Site	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Average	Int.Imp.Species
The Wash	399,378	381,341	373,565	345,609	435,227	387,024	PG,DB,SU,PT,OC,RP,GP,GV,L,KN,SS,DN,BW,BA,CU,RK
Ribble Estuary	220,933	214,506	263,487	274,779	210,699	236,881	WS,PG,WN,T,PT,OC,RP,GV,KN,SS,DN,BW,BA,RK
North Norfolk Coast	242,845	217,121	144,140	209,045	204,250	203,480	PG,DB,RP,KN,BW,BA
Morecambe Bay	206,452	194,990	155,048	220,209	236,976	202,735	PG,QN,SU,PT,OC,RP,KN,DN,BW,BA,CU,RK
Thames Estuary	186,784	226,591	189,813	158,941	141,278	180,681	DB,GA,SV,OC,AV,RP,GV,KN,DN,BW,BA,RK
Humber Estuary	187,591	168,246	146,689	126,711	121,723	150,192	MS,PG,DB,SU,RP,GP,GV,KN,DN,BW,BA,RK
Dee Estuary (England and Wales)	130,648	103,753	104,315	124,122	103,072	113,182	SU,PT,OC,KN,DN,BW,RK

Site	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Average	Int.Imp.Species
Breydon Water & Berney Marshes	106,943	97,128	100,555	128,151	92,573	105,070	PG,WN,SV,AV,GP,L., BW
Solway Estuary	103,053	118,199	89,948	88,039	93,915	98,631	WS,PG,YS,PT,OC,RP, KN,RK
Somerset Levels	87,910	108,222	114,306	104,429	74,534	97,880	MS,WN,T.,PT,SV,GP,L.
Ouse Washes	134,143	73,012	67,604	78,260	68,535	84,311	MS,BS,WS,WN,GA,T., PT,SV,BW
Strangford Lough	83,667	74,657	87,535	81,876	74,063	80,360	MS,WS,QN,SU,KN,BW, RK
Swale Estuary	84,063	62,313	92,110	66,623	87,601	78,542	DB,T.,RP,GP,BW
Forth Estuary	76,269	59,926	76,441	93,609	68,463	74,942	PG,JI,SU,BA,RK
Severn Estuary	80,419	66,918	72,614	86,217	67,397	74,713	MS,BS,SU,PT,SV,RP,DN
Blackwater Estuary	70,416	72,445	71,693	86,467	66,794	73,563	DB,GP,GV,KN,DN,BW,R
Mersey Estuary	84,156	66,709	68,499	39,236	60,723	63,865	SU,T.,DN,BW,RK
Loch of Strathbeg	84,266	51,244	52,062	61,125	67,483	63,236	WS,PG,YS
Dengie Flats	58,285	61,848	53,043	58,269	64,265	59,142	DB,GV,KN,BA
Loughs Neagh and Beg	58,887	51,400	57,561	46,607	47,748	52,441	MS,WS,PO,SP,CA
Inner Moray/Inverness Firth	73,248	47,199	43,380	42,200	45,062	50,218	PG,JI
Chichester Harbour	47,685	44,029	54,125	55,980	48,518	50,067	DB,DN,BW
Alt Estuary	41,837	50,363	40,261	48,790	60,285	48,307	PG,KN,SS,BA
Lindisfarne	58,941	47,957	46,950	44,989	36,134	46,994	PG,YS,QS,BA
Montrose Basin	57,115	45,569	45,843	55,216	23,031	45,355	PG
Stour Estuary	38,094	35,069	40,305	49,937	55,449	43,771	MS,GV,KN,BW
Hamford Water	43,886	34,467	45,489	49,199	35,783	41,765	DB,T.,GV,BW
Burry Inlet	46,404	44,625	44,794	42,640	29,126	41,518	PT,OC
Carmarthen Bay	45,244	52,991	48,034	28,941	31,695	41,381	OC,SS
Lower Derwent Ings	39,898	43,648	34,294	26,055	38,770	36,533	
Lough Foyle	39,783	36,225	34,836	39,211	29,936	35,998	WS,QN,BA
Alde Complex	34,741	33,419	47,038	31,324	32,876	35,880	AV,BW,RK
West Water Reservoir	28,244	43,252	27,960	47,361	26,400	34,643	PG
Dungeness and Rye Bay	34,600	35,636	39,400	27,378	34,760	34,355	MS,SV
Loch Leven	40,355	34,279	19,699	44,962	29,497	33,758	MS,WS,PG,T.,PT
Nene Washes	20,723	30,467	37,849	30,430	45,394	32,973	BS,WS,PT,BW
Duddon Estuarv	34,854	28,924	34,971	35,220	28,284	32,451	PT,RK
Crouch-Roach Estuary	29,785	31,943	36,222	32,183	31,836	32,394	DB,BW
Abberton Reservoir	50,987	12,777	30,379	25,631	37,187	31,392	MS,GA,SV
Cromarty Firth	35,799	23,332	39,055	25,256	29,410	30,570	PG,JI
Dornoch Firth	34,313	28,356	30,940	32,282	26,867	30,552	JI
Langstone Harbour	41,481	28,041	30,784	22,066	29,051	30,285	DB,DN,BW
Medway Estuary	30,990	24,673	36,476	40,126	18,270	30,107	PT,AV,BW
Rutland Water	31,684	30,860	23,393	27,355	31,501	28,959	MS,GA,SV
WWT Martin Mere	38,161	28,860	22,660	26,507	28,045	28,847	WS,PG
Pegwell Bay	20,425	29,881	24,090	19,646	25,985	24,005	
Cleddau Estuary	33,420	19,659	23,336	21,693	19,004	23,422	
Orwell Estuary	26,996	23,995	20,510	23,934	21,009	23,289	BW
Colne Estuary	19,552	17,734	31,470	23,598	20,908	22,652	DB,BW
Tees Estuary	23,962	23,036	23,222	17,356	23,881	22,291	
Inner Firth of Clyde	23,161	24,257	22,174	19,801	19,710	21,821	
Loch of Skene	24,764	24,338	20,620	20,401	17,968	21,618	PG,JI
Wigtown Bay	14,994	18,101	26,145	19,647	20,218	19,821	WS,PG,YS
Pagham Harbour	20,800	22,679	18,437	16,672	16,909	19,099	DB,BW
Deben Estuary	19,390	17,540	21,611	18,521	16,669	18,746	BW
Belfast Lough	19,736	18,964	19,414	16,262	18,647	18,605	BW
Exe Estuary	19,172	17,774	19,275	19,566	17,069	18,571	BW

Site	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Average	Int.Imp.Species
Tay Estuary	25,896	18,461	18,198	14,440	14,368	18,273	
Carsebreck and Rhynd Lochs	17,026	17,239	14,294	19,873	22,527	18,192	PG
Lavan Sands	19,844	22,772	16,502	13,991	15,824	17,787	
West Frunch					17,657	17,657	PG,NW,II
Ythan Estuary	17,748	20,245	14,116	18,458	14,620	17,037	
Orkney West Mainland	17,008	.	.	.	.	17,008	JI
Poole Harbour	17,710	15,993	15,777	17,899	15,113	16,498	AV,BW
Eden Estuary	12,190	5,688	12,958	36,796	11,406	15,808	PG
Slains Lochs	12,615	11,408	17,603	19,700	14,100	15,085	PG
North West Solent	13,714	13,916	15,625	16,758	15,210	15,045	DB,BW
Middle Yare Marshes	18,412	12,711	18,658	13,819	11,600	15,040	
Fleet and Wey	17,352	13,777	13,051	14,355	15,686	14,844	MS
Portsmouth Harbour	17,245	14,276	14,019	14,037	12,172	14,350	DB,BW
Taw-Torrige Estuary	17,260	13,166	10,244	16,374	12,234	13,856	
Blyth Estuary	11,769	13,433	19,188	14,092	10,020	13,700	
Cotswold Water Park (West)	12,205	12,197	12,531	13,364	17,434	13,546	
WWT Caerlaverock (Inland)	16,300	14,199	13,932	10,544	6,223	12,240	WS,YS
Dyfi Estuary	12,022	13,123	12,332	12,814	9,607	11,980	
Southampton Water	13,673	11,467	11,360	11,170	11,623	11,859	
Nosterfield Gravel Pits	11,346	12,290	11,195	.	.	11,610	
Arun Valley	9,835	13,791	11,964	10,838	9,595	11,205	
Ouse Fen and Pits	11,483	12,953	8,729	13,247	8,406	10,964	
Camel Estuary	16,425	10,049	8,157	12,727	7,170	10,906	
Mersehead RSPB Reserve	124	16,113	12,456	1,420	22,808	10,584	YS,PT
Loch of Lintrathen	10,330	10,936	11,156	13,135	5,641	10,240	PG
Pitsford Reservoir	12,417	11,472	8,406	7,888	10,892	10,215	
Stodmarsh	12,309	9,648	10,440	7,717	10,678	10,158	
Outer Ards Shoreline	9,960	12,293	9,674	9,734	8,543	10,041	
Dundrum Inner Bay	8,435	6,565	13,582	8,634	9,270	9,297	QN
Loch of Harray	7,566	12,639	7,252	7,676	10,206	9,068	JI
Carlingford Lough	10,166	9,692	10,705	10,290	4,255	9,022	QN
Fen Drayton Gravel Pits	7,506	9,299	8,161	10,740	8,456	8,832	BW
Lee Valley Gravel Pits	8,982	7,477	9,073	9,005	8,635	8,634	GA
R.Avon: R'wood to C'church	3,164	12,900	9,306	4,749	9,631	7,950	BW
Loch Spynie	27,245	9,000	1,181	1,404	677	7,901	PG
R.Avon: F'bridge to Ringwood	6,535	8,636	8,238	7,810	8,090	7,862	GA,BW
Upper Lough Erne	9,216	8,785	7,460	6,455	6,043	7,592	MS,WS
Kilconquhar Loch	3,731	1,187	7,622	14,884	10,471	7,579	PG
Dupplin Lochs	.	1,450	2,100	.	18,608	7,386	PG
Loch Fleet Complex	7,972	7,141	7,754	4,803	7,745	7,083	JI
Hule Moss	6,954	2,648	7,095	6,570	10,251	6,704	PG
R.Nith: Keltonbank-Nunholm	.	8,115	.	4,282	7,563	6,653	YS
Wedholme Flow	.	1,295	2,534	8,271	12,848	6,237	PG
Horse Mere	6,240	5,430	.	.	.	5,835	PG
Loch of Stenness	6,475	6,038	5,992	4,961	5,043	5,702	JI
Heigham Holmes	5,670	.	.	.	.	5,670	PG
Loch of Boardhouse	7,159	5,983	4,940	5,199	4,607	5,578	JI
Hornsea Mere	7,481	4,859	4,704	5,378	5,114	5,507	MS
The Ouse and Laird Water	8,020	4,991	3,780	4,346	6,310	5,489	JI
Overcote Marina	.	7,828	.	6,055	2,006	5,296	BW
Tiree	15,171	5,297	4,196	979	787	5,286	NW,YN
Lochhill	4,576	1,816	5,506	7,516	7,000	5,283	PG
RClyde: Carstairs-Thankerton	5,785	3,666	6,283	5,833	4,445	5,202	PG

Site	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Average	Int.Imp.Species
Traeth Melynog	4,580	.	.	4,945	5,871	5,132	QN
Loch Eye	15,005	1,085	1,667	2,002	5,708	5,093	WS,JI
Larne Lough	5,557	4,123	4,071	6,294	4,657	4,940	QN
Fala Flow	3,750	2,170	3,650	1,510	13,190	4,854	PG
Rossie Bog	3,060	.	2,645	8,855	4,664	4,806	PG
Loch Heilen	7,863	2,567	4,898	492	7,979	4,760	WS,JI
East Mainland	8,589	424	.	.	.	4,507	JI
Biggar Moss	2,327	638	7,443	7,375	.	4,446	PG
R.Tay - Haughs of Kercock	6,252	5,045	3,622	3,295	3,264	4,296	PG
Loch of Isbister	3,464	4,326	3,492	2,759	7,013	4,211	JI
Orchardton and Auchencairn	3,571	4,170	2,800	5,017	5,223	4,156	YS
Loch Watten	2,447	2,964	2,827	3,863	7,611	3,942	JI
Island of Papa Westray	4,067	.	3,144	4,139	3,484	3,709	JI
Loch Bee (South Uist)	3,430	3,907	3,672	3,709	.	3,680	MS
Loch Gruinart	3,808	3,042	3,276	3,323	4,338	3,557	JH
North Uist	2,671	4,437	.	.	.	3,554	YN
Killough Harbour	4,164	2,838	.	.	.	3,501	QN
Loch of Skail	4,310	2,542	2,785	2,619	4,712	3,394	JI
Tweed Estuary	3,520	3,672	2,784	2,981	3,416	3,275	MS
Ravenstruther	987	2,344	2,131	9,650	1,208	3,264	PG
Martham Broad	1,820	1,059	1,199	10,932	1,178	3,238	PG
Loch of Swannay	2,778	3,075	3,729	3,259	3,130	3,194	JI
Sanday	2,990	.	.	.	.	2,990	JI
Inner Loch Indaal	960	810	870	.	8,473	2,778	YN
Islands of Shapinsay	5,200	178	.	.	.	2,689	JI
Warton Floods	.	.	3,049	3,138	1,691	2,626	BW
Lower Lough Erne	3,018	3,139	3,283	1,065	1,143	2,330	MS
Upper Quoile River	4,468	1,177	653	.	.	2,099	MS
Broubster Leans	1,123	2,979	.	.	.	2,051	JI
Gadloch	2,049	2,310	1,922	2,991	312	1,917	JI
Isle of Coll	4,000	3,143	1,245	351	323	1,812	NW,YN
Machrihanish	2,106	1,831	1,432	1,494	2,180	1,809	NW
Newmains Ponds	.	.	.	.	1,782	1,782	YS
Colonsay/Oronsay	.	.	1,200	.	.	1,200	YN
Loch Ussie	3,604	447	1,514	249	74	1,178	JI
Island of Eday	1,060	.	.	.	.	1,060	JI
Rhunahaorine	955	940	1,451	879	1,017	1,048	NW
Island of Rousay	1,024	.	.	.	.	1,024	JI
Isle of Cumbrae	1,000	.	.	.	.	1,000	JI
Loch Garten	1,715	1,573	284	.	2	894	JI
Stronsay (Whole Island)	2,393	.	.	9	3	802	JI
Sound of Gigha	520	105	194	1,350	1,600	754	ND
Stranraer Lochs	282	1,105	877	273	490	605	NW
Balnakiel Farm	1,196	288	1,109	33	225	570	YN
Keills Peninsula /Isle of Danna	816	300	913	239	214	496	YN
Scapa Flow and Shapinsay	457	.	.	.	.	457	ND
Scarp to Vatersay offshore	280	.	.	.	.	280	ND
Outer Loch Indaal	279	.	.	.	.	279	ND
Coll and Tiree and west Mull	73	.	.	.	.	73	ND

Table 6. Other sites in the UK holding internationally important numbers of waterbirds in 2009/10 which are not routinely monitored by standard WeBS surveys. (Species codes are provided in Table 7.)

Site	Int.Imp.species	Site	Int.Imp.species
Berney Marshes	PG	Morecambe Bay	PG
Bute	JI	Wyre to Cockerham	PG
Caithness Lochs	JI	Wyre Estuary	PG
Colonsay/Oronsay	YN	North Norfolk Coast	PG
Cromarty Firth	JI	Holkham Bay	PG
Dingwall Bay	JI	Holme and Thornham	PG
Nigg Bay	JI,PG	Norton Marsh	PG
East Fenton Farm Reservoir	WS	Scolt Head	PG
Floodwater South Of Braco	PG	Wells-next-the-Sea	PG
Forth Estuary	PG	North Uist	YN
Aberlady Bay	PG	Balranald, Clettraval & Tigharry	YN
Forth Grangemouth to Kincardine	PG	Berneray	YN
Hule Moss (West)	PG	Malaclete To Grenitote	YN
Read's Island Flats	PG	Orkney	JI, YN
Inner Moray and Inverness Firth	PG,JI	Isle of South Ronaldsay	JI
Beaully Firth	PG,JI	South Walls (Hoy)	YN
Easterton - Fort George	PG,JI	Simonswood Peat Moss	PG
Findhorn Bay	PG	Solway Firth	YS
Munlochy Bay	JI	Southwest Lancashire	PG
Island of Islay	NW,YN	Strathearn (West)	PG,JI
Isle of Oronsay	YN	Tay and Isla Valley	PG,JI
Isle of Lismore	NW	Tayinloan	NW
Loch Fleet	JI	The Wash	PG
Lune Estuary	PG	Snettisham	PG
Martin Mere and Ribble Estuary	WS	Winter Loch, St Fergus Gas Term.	PG
Meikle Loch	PG		
Moray Firth	ND		

Table 7. Species codes for species listed in Tables 5., 6. and 8.

AV	Avocet	JE/JH	British/Irish Greylag Goose	RH	Red-throated Diver
BA	Bar-tailed Godwit	JI	Greylag Goose	RK	Redshank
BS	Bewick's Swan		(Icelandic population)	RM	Red-breasted Merganser
BV	Black-throated Diver	KN	Knot	RP	Ringed Plover
BW	Black-tailed Godwit	L.	Lapwing	RU	Ruff
CA	Cormorant	LG	Little Grebe	SP	Scaup
CO	Coot	MA	Mallard	SS	Sanderling
CU	Curlew	MS	Mute Swan	SU	Shelduck
CX	Common Scoter	ND	Great Northern Diver	SV	Shoveler
DB	Dark-bellied Brent Goose	NW	Greenland White-fronted Goose	SZ	Slavonian Grebe
DN	Dunlin	OC	Oystercatcher	T.	Teal
E.	Eider	PG	Pink-footed Goose	TT	Turnstone
EW	European White-fronted Goose	PO	Pochard	WN	Wigeon
GA	Gadwall	PS	Purple Sandpiper	WS	Whooper Swan
GG	Great Crested Grebe	PT	Pintail	YN	Barnacle Goose
GK	Greenshank	QN	Light-bellied Brent Goose		(Nearctic population)
GP	Golden Plover		(Nearctic population)		
GV	Grey Plover	QS	Light-bellied Brent Goose		
			(Svalbard population)		