

# Rook Sample Areas 1927-1933

## Title

Rook Sample Areas 1927-1933

## Description and Summary of Results

The Rook *Corvus frugilegus* is often seen feeding in agricultural fields, and in the 1920s and 1930s it was perceived to be something of a pest as it was thought to be eating spilt grain and indeed sometimes grain that was not yet harvested. Hence there was a move from some farmers and others to try to reduce the numbers. However at the time there was very little information on how many there actually were and a series of censuses in particular areas was organised, largely on the instigation of E M Nicholson although not necessarily organised by him.

Later on after the founding of the BTO there were several nationwide surveys of Rooks including one during the Second World War which showed, among other things, that even though it ate spilt grain it also ate leatherjackets and other insects and invertebrates which were potentially pests of agriculture.

## Methods of Data Capture

Counts were organised of the rookeries in defined areas on the lines of what would become typical BTO surveys.

## Purpose of Data Capture

To determine how many Rooks were nesting in the defined areas.

## Geographic Coverage

The Oxford District in 1927-1928; the Upper Thames area in 1931; in Somerset in 1933; and in Gloucestershire in 1933.

## Temporal Coverage

1927-1933 with each area sampled in one or two of these years.

## Other Interested parties

The surveys were organised by individuals normally with the support of any local bird or natural history society.

**Organiser(s)**

The Oxford area – E M Nicholson (in conjunction with the Oxford Bird Census); Upper Thames area – W B Alexander; Somerset – B W Tucker; Gloucestershire – W B Yapp.

**Current Staff Contact**

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**Publications**

The report for the Oxford District is:

Nicholson, E.M. & Nicholson, B.D. 1930. The rookeries of the Oxford District. A preliminary report. *Journal of Ecology* 18: 51-66.

The report for Somerset is:

Tucker, B.W. 1935. The rookeries of Somerset. *Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society* 81: 149-240.

It appears that reports for Upper Thames and Gloucestershire were never produced.

**Available from NBN?**

No.

**Computer data -- location**

None.

**Computer data -- outline contents**

N/A.

**Computer data -- description of contents**

N/A.

**Information held in BTO Archives**

Oxford area: 1 box containing the data; Upper Thames area: 1 box of letters etc and 2 boxes of data cards; Somerset: 1 folder of data sheets; Gloucestershire: 1 small bundle of data cards.

**Notes on Access and Use****Other information****Notes on Survey Design****Specific Issues for Analysis**