

Bird Atlas 2007-11

February 2008



Tremendous start

Twenty-four million bird records, twelve thousand tetrads visited, £189,000 raised from supporters, over 24 species with sponsors and great news for species such as Buzzard and Little Egret. It has been a dream start to Bird Atlas 2007-11.

In the late 1960s, during the planning of the first breeding atlas, there was great debate whether an atlas of distribution could be achieved by volunteer birdwatchers. Fortunately, optimistic BTO Council members supported the idea and the rest is history. Now, thanks to modern communication and a bigger pool of birdwatchers upon whom we can call, we have made tremendous progress with Bird Atlas 2007-11 in just a few months. In this newsletter we are delighted to be able to reveal some of the new distributions for species, based upon Atlas visits and BTO/RSPB/BWI BirdTrack results. Records from other schemes, such as BTO/CJ Garden BirdWatch and the BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey, will be used to 'top-up' the database in the near future. There is still plenty of birdwatching to do, especially in counties where bird clubs have challenged people to visit every tetrad and in the more remote areas of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England, but we are confident of success.

Thank you!

We are grateful to everyone who has supported Bird Atlas 2007-11 so far, the most ambitious and important project ever taken on by the BTO. Most members of the BTO family are part of the Atlas, contributing by sending in their records from gardens, birdwatching excursions and Timed Tetrad Visits (TTV). In addition, 2,400 Members, Garden BirdWatchers and other supporters have already raised £189,000 for the appeal, through their donations and promises of long-term support. This number constitutes about 1 in 10 of the people to whom the appeal mailing was sent last April. To make sure that we have the funding we need for this project, we would like to increase that fraction to a quarter ... or even a third ... We appreciate every donation, however small.

Andy Clements (BTO Director)

Extra benefits from the tax man

We are delighted that charities can still claim an extra 28% Gift Aid to add to donations from tax payers, as revealed in the Chancellor's Budget Statement on Wednesday, 12 March. Anyone who is paying sufficient personal income tax or capital gains tax can add over a quarter to the value of each donation to the Atlas Appeal. Simply tick the box which asks us to check that we already have a Gift Aid declaration set up in your name and we will make sure that full advantage is being taken of this facility.

Graham Appleton (Head of Fundraising & Publicity)

giftaid it

Percent of expected species richness

Winter

- Over 90%
- 75 - 89%
- 50 - 74%
- 1 - 49%
- No coverage

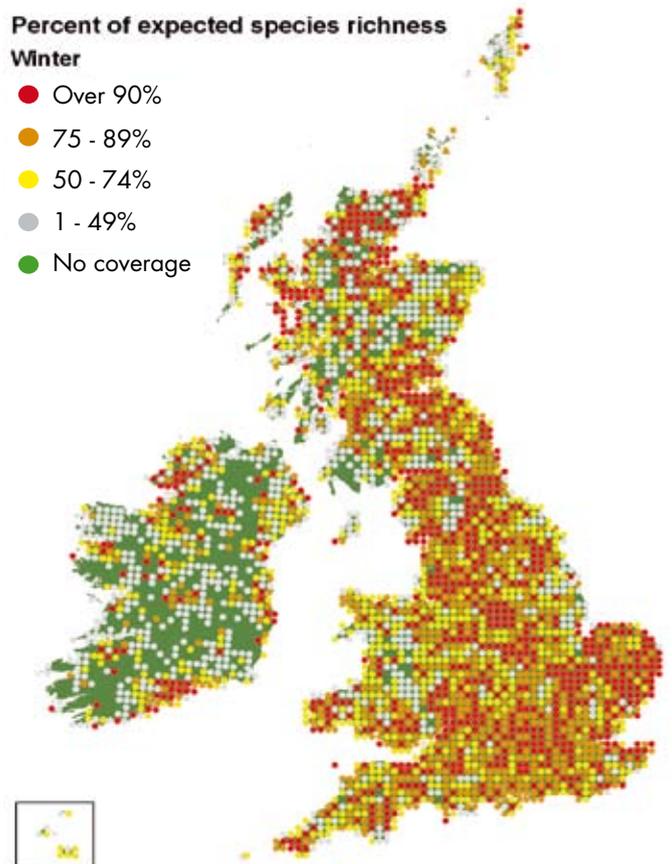


Figure 1. There are still gaps in many areas but, with your help, we have found plenty of birds. Red circles show where we have received records for over 90% of the species we expect to find in a 10-km square, with orange showing over 75% and yellow over 50%.

First report from Dawn Balmer, the Atlas Coordinator

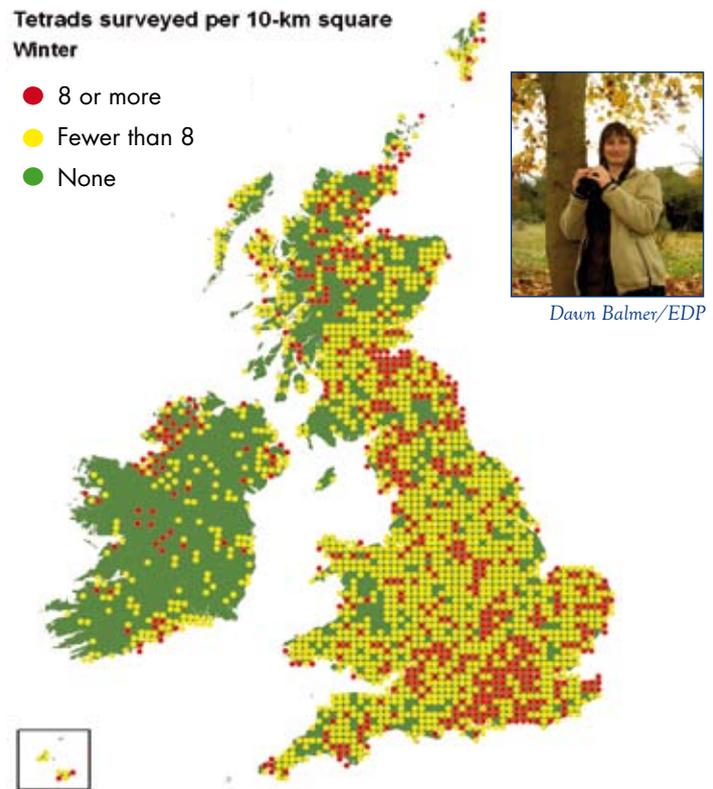
Atlas fieldwork got off to a tremendous start on 1 November 2007; over the first two months more than 11,000 tetrads (2x2 km squares) were visited for timed counts. During the four years of Atlas fieldwork we are aiming to cover a minimum of eight tetrads in each 10-km square across Britain and Ireland. Figure 2 shows where tetrads have been completed so far and results submitted via the website (www.birdatlas.net). By the end of February 2011 we hope the whole map will have turned red! It's a fantastic start but clearly shows the massive amount of fieldwork required over the next few years to achieve our goal.

By early February over 307,000 Roving Records had been submitted online and over 370,000 records incorporated from BirdTrack. Roving Record paper forms have started to trickle in to the National Organisers – please send all this winter's paper forms in by 30 March 2008.

Figure 2. Map of Britain and Ireland showing the number of tetrads covered in the first winter and submitted online by mid-January. Each circle is a 10-km square. Red indicates that eight or more tetrads have been covered and yellow indicates fewer than eight tetrads covered. Green is background colour. Paper records are yet to be incorporated.

Tetrads surveyed per 10-km square
Winter

- 8 or more
- Fewer than 8
- None



Dawn Balmer/EDP



Jonny Pott - Atlasing in Burnach Mor (NH50Z)

It has been an exciting (and busy!) few months for the National Atlas Organisers and Regional Organisers, getting the Atlas off the ground, corresponding with volunteers, assigning tetrads and answering questions on methods. It's a real pleasure to hear from volunteers who have been 'atlasing' and how much they have enjoyed it. It's true to say that Atlas fieldwork takes you to many new places! Jonny Pott sent in this photograph of the tetrad he was covering (NH50Z) in Inverness-shire – he certainly chose a fantastic day to visit and it serves as a reminder of the real challenges faced by Atlas volunteers, whether it's walking over mountains or walking the streets of Manchester! Photos are always welcome; please send to Dawn Balmer at BTO (dawn.balmer@bto.org).



The website has proved an amazing resource, allowing Timed Tetrad Visit counts and Roving Records to be entered online and for you to view the list of species recorded by yourself, and by others, in the tetrads and 10-km squares in which you are working. Since Christmas, there have been major upgrades to the website, providing much easier and quicker access. Sample species maps for 12 species that are good indicators of coverage in a range of habitats show us how the big picture is building. The regional species richness maps are particularly useful for highlighting 10-km squares that need more survey effort.

The map for Wren (Figure 3) looks impressive already, but it will take a lot of time and great effort to fill in the gaps over the next few years.

Figure 3. The distribution of Wren in 10-km squares based on online submissions by mid-January. The gaps suggest a lack of coverage rather than an absence of Wrens. Photo: Jill Pakenham/BTO

Breeding season fieldwork starts 1 April – can you help?

After a month's rest from Atlasing in March, you will all be raring to get started on the breeding season fieldwork which starts on 1 April and runs to the end of July. For those of you doing Timed Tetrad Visits there are two counting periods: April-May for the first visit and June-July for the second visit. This should mean that at least one visit will be undertaken once the bulk of summer visitors have arrived. Roving Records can be gathered at any time in the breeding season and we are keen to build up evidence of breeding from your birdwatching activities and observations around the garden.

There are still many tetrads to cover (thousands!), so you can sign up for a tetrad in advance of breeding season fieldwork. Contact your Regional Organiser to find out where you can help. Roving Records are needed from all areas to help fill in those gaps. If you are holidaying in Britain and Ireland between April and July, do consider spending a bit of time gathering Roving Records. You can enter your records online at www.birdatlas.net or request paper forms from BTO, SOC or BirdWatch Ireland.

Recording breeding evidence

The Timed Tetrad Visit and Roving Records forms for both winter and the breeding season have a column for breeding evidence. **You also use this column on the Roving Records form to record any birds flying over (F).**

During April-July, one of the primary aims of Atlas fieldwork, particularly Roving Records, will be to gather evidence of breeding for species in each 10-km square. For those counties undertaking local atlases, organisers will be keen to record breeding evidence in every tetrad. The standard codes we use are printed on the Roving Records form, Timed Tetrad Visit instructions and are online at http://www.bto.org/birdatlas/taking_part/bevidence.htm. In addition we have a handy card with the codes on – a copy of which is enclosed.

There are three levels of breeding evidence: **Possible**, **Probable** and **Confirmed**. Each level has a number of categories that are indicators of breeding evidence; many are easy to record during day-to-day birdwatching and observation. A few codes warrant further explanation:

T (Permanent Territory) should be used for territorial behaviour, such as song, observed on at least two days, a week or more apart, at the same site.

D (Courtship and Display) is to be used for those species that display during the breeding season; for example, Great Crested Grebes, seabirds, some species of wader, Wood pigeons. Song-fighting of a Skylark should be recorded as **S** (singing male present).

Wildfowl, for example, Goldeneye in southern Britain, pair up on the wintering grounds and display to each other; this should not be recorded as **D** because the birds are not in suitable nesting habitat.

Special care should be taken with the code **DD** (Distraction Display/feigning injury), this is mostly likely to be seen from waders pretending to have a broken wing to distract your attention from their eggs or chicks *e.g.* Ringed Plover.

The code **FL** (Fledged Young) refers to young (nidicolous species *e.g.* Blackbird, Robin) or downy young (nidifugous species *e.g.* Lapwing, Mallard). Records of independent juveniles should not be used because young birds often move a long way from their natal area, so sightings of juveniles



Possible breeding

Code **S**: Singing male present in the breeding season in suitable breeding habitat.



Probable breeding

Code **V**: Visiting probable nest site.



Confirmed breeding

Code **FL**: Recently Fledged young or downy young. Evidence of dependency on adults is important.

Robin photos by John Harding

that are not dependent on their parents do not necessarily prove breeding in that tetrad.

There are three non-breeding codes which have been introduced for this Atlas project:

F (Flying over) is to be used on Roving Records forms during winter and the breeding season to indicate birds simply flying over a tetrad or 10-km square and not using the habitat. A hovering Kestrel or a party of Swifts screaming around buildings should not be given the **F** code, as they are not just passing through.

M is for a species seen in the breeding season but suspected to still be on migration. A good example would be a Ring Ouzel on the coast in April; it is not in suitable breeding habitat and is clearly a migrant.

U is for a species that is suspected to be a summering non-breeder; waterfowl are most likely to fall into this category. An example might be a Wigeon summering on a lake in Suffolk.

Making every record count

We are in the very fortunate position for Bird Atlas 2007-11 in being able to utilise records from other BTO-led projects, which will help with the distribution maps. We can easily bring in records from BTO/CJ Garden BirdWatch, BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey, BTO/RSPB/BWI BirdTrack and all these will be treated as 'top-up' Roving Records. In addition, we can add in records from the Ringing Scheme and the Nest Record Scheme; these two schemes have the added bonus of providing information on breeding success. It's also possible to enter breeding evidence on BirdTrack, so any extra information added here can be fed through to the Atlas. It's important for BirdTrack that you take a few minutes to define your sites, so that we can be sure that your records relate to a specific 1-km square, tetrad or 10-km square. We hope to be able to use records from BTO/WWT/RSPB/JNCC Wetland Bird Survey for the national 10-km Atlas. RSPB will provide us with relevant datasets for inclusion in the Atlas, to ensure it is as comprehensive as possible.

Your support for BBS, GBW, BirdTrack, WeBS, Nest Record Scheme and Ringing throughout the Atlas period will be very valuable and is much appreciated.

Recording rare and scarce birds

If you are lucky enough to come across a rare or scarce breeding bird during Atlas work then we encourage you to submit the record in the normal way, either online or on paper forms. We have been working hard over the



Little Ringed Plover by Derek Belsey/BTO

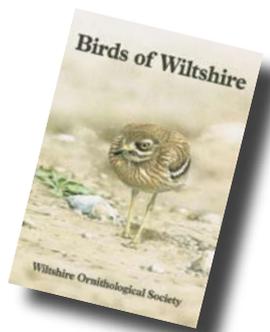
past few months with the Rare Breeding Birds Panel (RBBP) to produce a BTO Policy on the mapping of rare and scarce birds during the four years of Atlas

fieldwork. This should reassure you that maps will only be produced at the appropriate scale for the species. There will be no maps at the tetrad (2x2 km square) scale. We have decided to only show online maps of 12 species that are good indicators of fieldwork coverage in different habitats. Occasionally we will need to produce maps for articles and talks and, again, these will be produced at the appropriate scale. When it comes to final map production for the Atlas then all maps will be scrutinised by RBBP to ensure species are mapped appropriately. Our online summaries for 10-km squares and tetrads will omit records of nationally rare and scarce birds. The policy can be viewed online at <http://www.bto.org/goto/confpolicy.htm> or a copy can be requested from BTO.

Local atlases

It's fantastic news that over 30 counties/areas are planning to undertake local tetrad-scale atlases over the next few years. Some counties will focus on the breeding season, whilst others will tackle the winter season too. A full list of participating counties/areas can be found online at <http://www.bto.org/goto/localatlas.htm>

In these areas, organisers will be aiming for comprehensive species lists at the tetrad-scale, so any extra help you can give will be appreciated. We are planning a one-day meeting at BTO in April for organisers of local atlases, so that experience and knowledge can be shared.



Several counties have just reached the end of their local atlas fieldwork, such as Wiltshire, Norfolk and north-east Scotland, so we hope they find the enthusiasm to contribute to the national Atlas. It's looking very encouraging so far! With so many counties undertaking local atlases it would be great if you could enter your Roving Records with a tetrad letter. So far 95% of the Roving Records have been submitted online at the tetrad level, which is really encouraging.

Nocturnal visits

During the breeding season we encourage you to make at least one evening visit to your 10-km square (or tetrad) to listen out for owls or to catch a glimpse of a Woodcock roding. Evenings can also be a good time to listen out for Nightingale, Quail or Water Rail, if suitable habitat exists in your area. These species could be missed during the daytime when Timed Tetrad Visits are made. This extra visit will help make the distribution maps as complete as possible.



Tawny Owl by Sean Gray/BTO

Frequency of Timed Tetrad Visits

Each tetrad you cover should only have Timed Tetrad Visits in one winter season and one breeding season, at some point over the four years of the project. A tetrad should not be counted in all four years. You can add extra information for your tetrad, to increase your species list, by submitting Roving Records.

Found a nest?

If you find a nest during the course of Atlas fieldwork then please consider submitting the details to the Nest Record Scheme. At least one further visit to check the contents of the nest will add immense value to the record, helping to measure the productivity of our common birds. A 'Starter Pack' for the Nest Record Scheme can be obtained by contacting BTO HQ (Tel: 01842 750050 or e-mail: nest.records@bto.org).



Species Sponsorship

One of the ways in which we are raising the required funds for Bird Atlas 2007-11 is through the Species Sponsorship Scheme. Interest in the Scheme has been gathering momentum since its launch last summer. Our aim is to encourage a wide base of support from companies, organisations and individuals, in line with our desire to involve the whole of the birding and conservation community in this powerful project. One look at the list of sponsors below indicates that this aim is beginning to be realised. Each sponsor has had a different reason for choosing their species and these have been as diverse as the species themselves. The total raised to date through species sponsorship is £72,000, which will make a real contribution to this £1,157,000 project. The guide price for sponsorship is between £2,000 and £10,000, depending upon species.

If you know of an organisation or company that might be interested in sponsoring a species please contact Kate Aldridge for further details and a copy of the National Bird Atlas Appeal booklet, on 01842 750050 or e-mail: kate.aldridge@bto.org. Companies wishing to sponsor the Irish element of the Atlas should contact Katie Jennings on 353 (0) 1 2819878 or e-mail: kjennings@birdwatchireland.ie. Our heartfelt thanks go to all the companies, organisations and individuals that have sponsored species so far.

Support of Bird Atlas 2007-11 at this level will secure sole sponsorship of the chosen species and ensure acknowledgement of the sponsor's association with the project on the bird's pages in the published Atlas.



Grey Partridge by Jill Pakenham/BTO



Grey Wagtail by Jill Pakenham/BTO



Corn Bunting by Jill Pakenham/BTO



Yellowhammer by Jill Pakenham/BTO

Species	Sponsor
Manx Shearwater	Sponsored by a BTO Member
Gannet	BTO
Cormorant	Essex & Suffolk Water
Red Kite	Northumbrian Water
Montagu's Harrier	Devon BirdWatching and Preservation Society
Osprey	Anglian Water
Corncrake	Sponsored for BirdWatch Ireland
Lapwing	Philip Merricks - Elmley Estate
Short-eared Owl	Hamish & Doris Crichton Trust
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	Sponsored by a BTO Member
Grey Wagtail	Environment Agency
Dipper	Environment Agency
Wren	WREN (Waste Recycling Env.)
Grey Partridge	The Holkham Estate
Robin	Gardman
Stonechat	Sussex Ornithological Society
Reed Warbler	Vine House Farm
Dartford Warbler	Clinton Devon Estate
Wood Warbler	DJEnvironmental (Tim Davis & Tim Jones)
Pied Flycatcher	Lake District National Park
BlueTit	Gardman
Coal Tit	Sponsored for BirdWatch Ireland
Yellowhammer	SongBird Survival
Corn Bunting	Vine House Farm

Appeal update

Although the BTO's appeal was only officially launched in April 2007, we have already received gifts and promises which total £771,000. One third of this money came from the Joy Danter legacy. This still leaves £446,000 to find. BTO Council has set aside a reserve from *Birds in Trust*, our legacy-based fund, to help to underpin the Atlas. However, use of this money will impact upon the ability of the Trust to maintain its full range of scientific and survey projects.

Charitable Trusts

We are very grateful to the following Charitable Trusts for their support for Bird Atlas 2007-11. The Trusts with asterisks are specifically supporting the Atlas in Scotland.

Aberbrothock Charitable Trust*, AEB Charitable Trust*, Barbour Trust, E G & M A Bousfield Charitable Trust, A S Butler Charitable Trust, Hamish & Doris Crichton's Charitable Trust*, D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust, Dennis Curry Charitable Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Hobart Trust, Mercers' Company, Norman Family Trust, Orr Mackintosh Foundation, Cecil Pilkington Charitable Trust, Sandra Charitable Trust, Shears Charitable Trust, Slater Foundation, John Swire 1989 Charitable Trust, Tay Charitable Trust*, Uplands Charitable Trust, Emily Weircroft Charitable Trust, J & J R Wilson Charitable Trust*.

Support so far (mid-January)

	Received/Promised
Membership Appeal	£189,000
Charitable Trusts	£168,000
Joy Danter Legacy	£250,000
Species Sponsorship (mainly businesses)	£58,000
From BTO <i>Birds in Trust</i> fund	£46,000
To find	£446,000
Total	£1,157,000

Christmas Bird Count

At the time of writing, the Christmas Bird Count has added £5,766 to the Appeal, whilst the raffle, supported by Swarovski at the annual BTO Conference at Swanwick, raised £1,000.

How to help?

I never cease to be amazed by the diversity of individual supporters' fundraising activities. We have had donations in lieu of birthday presents, fees provided for giving talks to bird clubs or on guided walks, money that was earned from undertaking surveys or PhD vivas and lots of gifts from bird clubs. Perhaps a BTO member will win the lottery or a Garden BirdWatcher might be one of the million pound Premium Bond winners? That would help!

Graham Appleton

Irish Funding

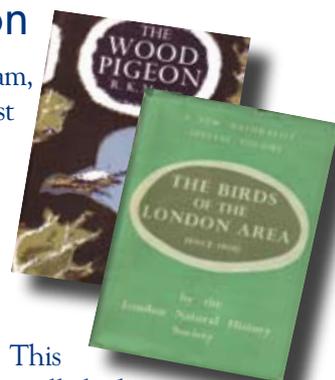
Bird Atlas 2007-11 is a joint project with BirdWatch Ireland and the Scottish Ornithologists' Club. BTO is taking the lead in fundraising in England, Scotland and Wales, with BirdWatch Ireland taking on the same role in Ireland. The costs of administering the whole project and of developing and running online services are being met from the BTO-led appeal. Within Ireland, funding for organising and undertaking Atlas fieldwork is being provided by The National Parks & Wildlife Service, The Heritage Council, The Environment & Heritage Service - Northern Ireland and The Environmental Protection Agency.

One of the biggest challenges of Bird Atlas 2007-11 is to find enough birdwatchers. We are delighted that Environment Wales are providing funding for training in bird survey techniques in Wales and that Scottish Natural Heritage are helping BTO Scotland and SOC to develop the bird recording network in Scotland, with support from the Gillman Trusts.

June Book Auction

With the help of Keys of Aylsham, Norfolk, we hope to raise at least £30,000 for the Atlas Appeal, by selling one member's collection of bird books on 20 June. If other members have books that they would like

to donate then perhaps we could raise as much as £50,000. This is a specialist auction and we are really looking for individual books valued at £30 or more. It is expected that potential purchasers will be able to view books on June 18 and 19 and that bids can be sent in by e-mail prior to the auction. Buyers can only make bids if they have registered with Keys' sales office prior to the auction. Printed catalogues will be available and there should be an online catalogue from mid-April. See www.aylshamsalerooms.co.uk for details. The BTO has received many books from members and other birdwatchers, only some of which are sufficiently valuable to be added to the catalogue for this auction. For less expensive books, there will be a special book sale at The Nunnery between 17 and 21 June. Contact Kate Aldridge on kate.aldridge@bto.org or Graham Appleton on graham.appleton@bto.org, Tel: 01842 750050.



Not donated yet? There's still time!

You can make a donation using our online donation facility, just go to www.bto.org/appeals/index.htm and click the 'to make an online donation' button at the bottom of the page. Alternatively, you can send a cheque (payable to 'British Trust for Ornithology') with your name and address details to Atlas Appeal, BTO, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 2PU or telephone a member of the Fundraising Team on 01842 750050 and we can take your credit/debit/CAF card details over the telephone and your receipt will be posted to you. **Please do not send cash through the post.**

Early findings

The submission of records online allows us very quickly to build a picture of the distributions of birds. However, these maps do not show the complete picture – it will take four years to do that! The orange dots on the maps below are based entirely on records submitted to the website as Roving Records and Timed Tetrad Counts and show presence in a 10-km square. Records are not yet validated and we still need thousands of TTVs to get more counts of these species.

Little Egret

In the Winter Atlas (1981-84) just one Little Egret was recorded – from Orkney (HY44) of all places! Over 25 years later and the winter distribution is very different. So far, Little Egrets have been recorded mostly in southern England in a line from the Humber to the Severn, Wales and coastal north-west England. There are a few records from Scotland and in Ireland records are mainly from the east and south coasts. It will be fascinating to see how the distribution changes for the breeding season.

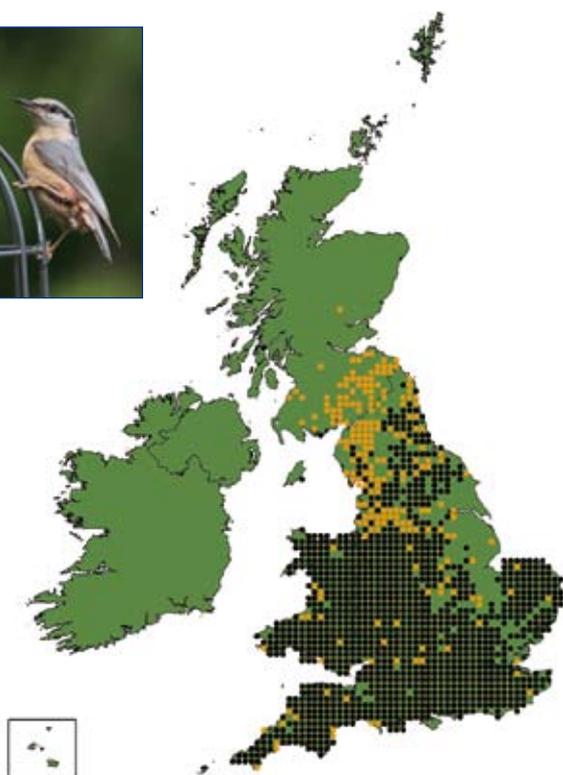
Figure 4. The distribution of Little Egret in 10-km square based on online submissions by mid-January.



Nuthatch

The distribution of Nuthatch in the Winter Atlas (1981-84) is shown by the black dots and additional records from the first two and a half months of fieldwork for Bird Atlas 2007-11 are shown in orange. The increase in northern England and southern Scotland is impressive. The recently published *Birds of Scotland* indicates that Nuthatches have been appearing more widely across Scotland since 2000. As an example, there were two pairs in the Borders in 1989 and by 2004 the population had grown to 220 pairs. It will be exciting to document the changes in range over the next four years – keep those records coming!

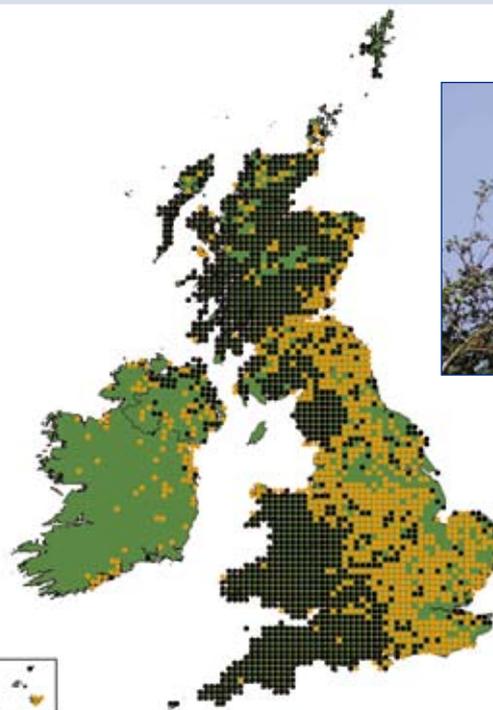
Figure 5. The distribution of Nuthatch from the Winter Atlas (1981-84) (black dots) and additional records from the Bird Atlas 2007-11 (orange dots) based on online submissions by mid-January.



Buzzard

The black dots show the distribution of Buzzard from the Winter Atlas (1981-84) with the bulk of the population in the west of England, Wales and Scotland and just a few records in Northern Ireland. Scattered black dots along the east coast may refer to birds of continental origin or shifts during cold-weather movements. The additional orange dots are records in 10-km squares from Bird Atlas 2007-11. There has been a real shift eastwards with much of East Anglia, south-east England, north-east England and south-east Scotland now occupied. Given the relatively poor coverage in Ireland to date, we might expect greater range expansion here too.

Figure 6. The distribution of Buzzard from the Winter Atlas (1981-84) (black dots) and additional records from the Bird Atlas 2007-11 (orange dots) based on online submissions by mid-January.



Tetrad Population Estimates

As part of the Bird Atlas project, we should like to develop population estimates for breeding and wintering species, as these are extremely important for conservation agencies. For many breeding species we already have estimates from the BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) but they are lacking for scarcer species and many winter visitors.

Following your Timed Tetrad Visits we have asked you to (optionally) enter a population estimate for the tetrad for each species you encountered. You can do this for just a few of the species you recorded or for all if you wish. Based on your two visits, and the habitats covered, it is possible to come up with a broad estimate of individuals for the whole tetrad. This is not an exact science and will be easier for some species than others. Just enter those species you are happy with. For some tetrads you may have extra local knowledge, and will know that a species is present in a tetrad even though you missed it on your two visits. You can enter a Tetrad Population Estimate (TPE) for a species that you did not encounter on your two Timed Tetrad Visits providing:

1. The knowledge is based on observations of the species during Atlas fieldwork period, *i.e.* 1st November 2007 – 31 July 2011.
2. The observations were made in the relevant season (winter period is Nov-Feb and breeding season period is Apr-Jul inclusive) with the exception in point 3.

3. For a handful of early/late nesting species breeding season TPEs can be based on observations outwith April-July. These species include Goshawk, Crossbill, Scottish Crossbill, Parrot Crossbill and Long-eared Owl.

The Tetrad Population Estimates from the Atlas provide just one way of gathering extra information that may be helpful when developing population estimates. We will, of course, be using all other available sources of population estimates such as BBS and WeBS data.



Species like Golden Plover and Lapwing can move around a tetrad or a 10-km square making it more difficult to estimate numbers in a tetrad. Local knowledge may help. Photo: Simon Gillings/BTO

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Does the same tetrad need to be covered for Timed Tetrad Visits in all four years?

A. No, a single tetrad requires just two visits in the winter, and two visits in the breeding season. Additional Roving Records can be made at any time in the four years of Atlas work.

Q. Do the pairs of visits need to be in the same season?

A. It is highly desirable that the two winter visits are in the same winter, and the two breeding visits are in the same breeding season. It doesn't matter if the breeding visits come before the winter visits or vice versa. We will accept visits in different winters/breeding seasons. If you have missed a late winter visit just do it next winter.

Q. What route should I take through the tetrad?

A. Your route should take you through all the major habitat types in the square. Don't be tempted to ignore open farmland or urban areas – all are equally interesting when it comes to putting the distribution maps together. You can vary your route between visits if you wish.

Q. What do I do if I see flocks of birds moving between tetrads?

A. If you are doing timed counts in several tetrads on the same day and you see a flock of birds moving between tetrads, just record them in the first tetrad in which they are encountered.

Q. Can I record counts on Roving Records?

A. From 1 January 2008 you can enter counts for Roving Records on the website. The downloadable PDF has been revised to accommodate this. Unfortunately, there are no spaces for counts on paper Roving Records forms which were distributed in 2007. Counts are most useful for flocking species such as Lapwing, Golden Plover, Twite and Fieldfare.

Q. Can I record all species?

A. Yes, we are keen to collect information on all species so do record introduced species such as Black Swan.

Written by Graham Appleton, Kate Aldridge, Dawn Balmer, Andy Clements & Simon Gillings. Maps by Simon Gillings. Design/typesetting by Samantha Rider.