

# Bird Atlas 2007-11

Mapping Britain and Ireland's birds



## Introduction and how to help

Bird Atlas 2007-11 aims to produce maps of distribution and relative abundance for all bird species breeding and wintering in Britain and Ireland. It will allow us to assess changes in bird distributions since previous breeding atlases in 1970 and 1990, and since the last winter atlas of the early 1980s. Atlases have been immensely important for furthering bird knowledge and conservation and Bird Atlas 2007-11 is destined to set the agenda for the next decades of ornithology in Britain and Ireland. Read on to help make the Bird Atlas a success.

### Getting involved

Fieldwork will span four winters and four breeding seasons, starting on 1 November 2007, during which we will cumulatively survey the whole of Britain and Ireland. To fulfil these objectives there are two core methods:

#### **Roving Records – whatever you see, whenever, wherever!**

For distribution maps to be comprehensive we need complete species lists for every 10-km square in Britain and Ireland for the breeding season and winter. *Roving Records* are a means of submitting lists for grid squares, one-off records of hard to find species, and anything in between. They are also a means of accumulating evidence of breeding and for providing records of nocturnal species. Everyone can take part by supplying *Roving Records*.

#### **Timed Tetrad Visits**

*Timed Tetrad Visits* (TTVs) are principally concerned with discovering the broad patterns of relative abundance across Britain & Ireland by counting birds for fixed periods in tetrads. Tetrads are 2km x 2km squares and labelled A to Z within each 10-km square as shown (right). TTVs do not aim to produce a complete species list for the tetrad, but a sample of what one can find during a pair of visits (one early, one late) in winter and/or breeding season. We aim to cumulatively cover at least eight tetrads in every 10-km square in Britain and Ireland during winter and the breeding season. You can take on as many tetrads as you wish. This is a great opportunity to visit those hidden corners of the landscape and find new birds and follow the seasonal changes.

E	J	P	U	Z
D	I	N	T	Y
C	H	M	S	X
B	G	L	R	W
A	F	K	Q	V

### How to help

Anyone and everyone can take part by completing *Roving Records* forms. These are available from your Regional Organiser, from BTO HQ and can be printed off directly from the website ([www.birdatlas.net](http://www.birdatlas.net)). If you'd like to take on one or more tetrads for *Timed Tetrad Visits* please contact your Regional Organiser who will be coordinating coverage. If you do not know your RO, either visit the website ([www.birdatlas.net](http://www.birdatlas.net)), or speak to BTO HQ.

### **[www.birdatlas.net](http://www.birdatlas.net) - see where you can help, plus up to date local results**

The Bird Atlas is a huge project and we anticipate millions of individual bird records. We have developed a dedicated online system to allow you to see where the gaps are – you can see which tetrads are available or, for example, look at the distribution for a range of species. So please submit your data directly online. Register at [www.birdatlas.net](http://www.birdatlas.net).

Bird Atlas 2007-11 is a partnership between the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), BirdWatch Ireland (BWI) and the Scottish Ornithologists' Club (SOC).

## What are the breeding evidence codes?

When you are out birdwatching in spring and summer you will probably encounter bird behaviour that is indicative in some way of breeding, and different types of evidence mean different degrees of confirmation of breeding. For example, a bird singing might possibly be breeding, whereas recent fledglings are clear confirmation of local breeding. For the Bird Atlas we follow the standard set of criteria used across Europe for all atlases. Where possible please apply the codes below for any sightings you make. Taken with all other observers, we will map the highest evidence (Possible → Probable → Confirmed). On your visits please record the highest level of breeding evidence you see against each species. If you have access to the web, visit [www.birdatlas.net](http://www.birdatlas.net) to see which species have been 'confirmed' in your area and then help plug the gaps. Note that birds flying over (Code F) should only be used on the *Roving Records* form. Record birds flying over in the 'Code' column.

**All codes for Possible, Probable and Confirmed breeding must relate to individuals in potentially suitable nesting habitat.**

### NON-BREEDER

**F** Flying over  
**M** Migrant  
**U** SUMmerring

### POSSIBLE BREEDER

**H** Observed in suitable nesting **H**abitat  
**S** Singing male

### PROBABLE BREEDER

**P** Pair in suitable nesting habitat  
**T** Permanent **T**erritory (many individuals on 1 day or 1 individual over 1+ wk)  
**D** Courtship and **D**isplay  
**N** Visiting probable **N**est site  
**A** **A**gitated behaviour  
**I** Brood patch of **I**ncubating bird  
**B** Nest **B**uilding or excavating

### CONFIRMED BREEDER

**DD** **D**istraction **D**isplay  
**UN** **U**sed **N**est or eggshells found from this season  
**FL** Recently **F**ledged young or downy young  
**ON** Adults entering or leaving nest-site indicating **O**ccupied **N**est  
**FF** Adults carrying **F**aecal sac or **F**ood for young  
**NE** **N**est containing **E**ggs  
**NY** **N**est with **Y**oung seen or heard

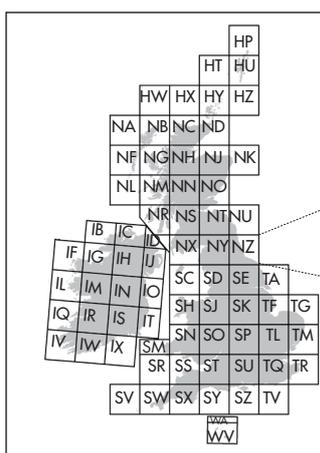
## What are tetrads and how do I find them?

All mapping for the Atlas uses the British and Irish Ordnance Survey national grids and grid references identify individual squares. There are two scales at which you can supply records – at the 10-kilometre scale and at the tetrad scale. A 10-km square is 10km by 10km and contains 25 tetrads, each 2km by 2km. The figures below show how to give a valid 10-km or tetrad reference:

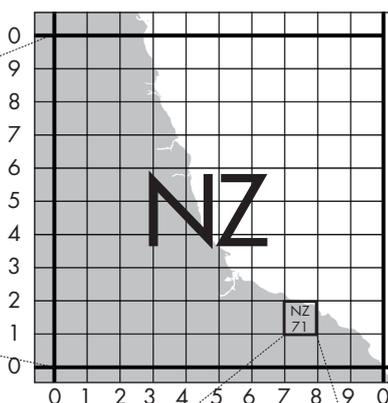
1. Find the two-letter prefix, e.g. NZ
2. Find the 10-km square, e.g. NZ71 – this is a valid 10-km square reference
3. Find the tetrad suffix letter, e.g. P
4. The map shows the tetrad NZ71P – this is a valid tetrad reference

For further information see [www.birdatlas.net](http://www.birdatlas.net) or see the key on an OS map.

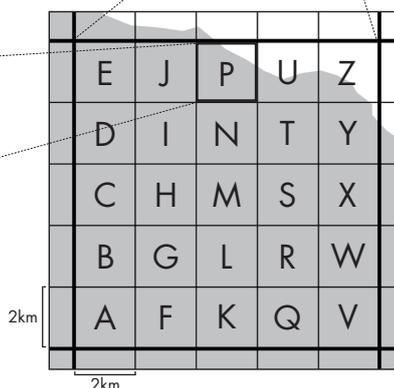
Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



Step 4



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