



Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

STATISTICAL RELEASE: 30 NOVEMBER 2011

## WILD BIRD POPULATIONS IN THE UK, 1970 TO 2010<sup>1</sup>

- *Overall **breeding bird populations in the UK** have changed little compared with 40 years ago. In 2010 they were 4.4 per cent higher than they were in 1970, following a small decline of 1.3 per cent in the most recent five years, from 2004 to 2009. However there has been considerable variation between individual bird species and groups of species that share the same broad habitats.*
- *In 2010 breeding **farmland bird populations in the UK** were at their lowest level ever recorded at half of what they were in 1970. Most of the declines occurred between the late seventies and the early nineties, but there had also been a decline of 9.4 per cent overall in the most recent five years, from 2004 to 2009.*
- *Breeding **woodland bird populations in the UK** were 19.4 per cent lower in 2010 than what they were in 1970. The greatest decline of woodland birds occurred from the late eighties until the mid nineties, but there had been little change in the most recent five years, from 2004 to 2009.*
- *In 2010 breeding **water and wetland bird populations in the UK** were 4.3 per cent lower than they were in 1975 and had shown a decline of 3.6 per cent overall in the most recent five years, 2004 to 2009.*
- *Breeding **seabird populations in the UK** in 2010 were 30 per cent higher than in 1970 and had increased by 5 per cent overall in the most recent five years, 2003-4 to 2008-9.*
- *In the winter of 2009-10 populations of **wintering waterbirds in the UK** were 83 per cent higher than in the winter of 1975-6. However, populations had been higher and had shown an overall decline of 5.6 per cent over the most recent five winters, from 2003-4 to 2008-9.*

<sup>1</sup> A separate Defra National Statistics Release, Wild bird populations in England, 1970 to 2010, is also published today

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## Factors affecting bird populations<sup>2</sup>

The major declines in some **farmland birds** have several known and potential causes. Many of the declines in bird populations have been caused by land management changes and intensification of farming that took place over a long period, resulting in habitat loss, a lack of suitable nesting habitat, and a reduction in available food sources.

Some farming practices can still have a negative impact on bird populations, but farmers can and do make a positive contribution. In particular a number of schemes<sup>3</sup> are in place to improve environmental stewardship in farming, with some specifically designed to help stabilise farmland bird populations. The ongoing decline for some species may be additionally contributed to by other pressures, for example there is evidence of an impact for some species from weather effects, disease, and land development pressures. There are also an increasing numbers of studies finding evidence of a changing climate affecting birds here and during migration.

The declines in some **woodland birds** have several known and potential causes including past poor woodland conservation management, resulting in a lack of diversity in habitats and food sources in the woodland environment; loss of habitats and food sources through damage caused by increasing deer populations; a reduction in some migratory species owing to pressures elsewhere in the world.

Populations of **wintering wetland birds** are affected by a range of factors including conditions in the countries where the birds are breeding, and changes in migratory patterns, which may be affected by climatic changes.

## Why monitor bird populations?

Bird populations have long been considered by scientists to provide a good indication of the broad state of wildlife because birds occupy a wide range of habitats, they tend to be near or at the top of food chains and there are considerable long-term data on changes in bird populations which help in the interpretation of shorter term fluctuations. Birds also have huge cultural importance and are viewed as a highly valued part of the UK's natural environment by the general public.

Whilst it may not be possible to determine actual bird abundance with any accuracy, it is possible to make estimates of the changes or trends in

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<sup>2</sup> For more information see: "[Understanding the Causes of Decline in Breeding Bird Numbers in England](#)"

<sup>3</sup> See 'Main notes' for more information.

populations, based on a range of national surveys and monitoring schemes coordinated by expert organisations.<sup>4</sup>

This annual Defra National Statistics Release presents trends up to 2010 in populations of birds that are native and breed in the UK, with trends overall and for four main habitat groups (see Annex A for a list of birds in each group):

- (i) 'All species', covering a wide selection of species (121 species)
- (ii) Farmland birds (19 species)
- (iii) Woodland birds (38 species)
- (iv) Water and wetland birds (26 species)
- (v) Seabirds (19 species)

The Release also presents population trends in

- (vi) wintering water birds (water birds that do not breed in the UK, but which are resident here during our winters).

Note: only species native to the UK are included within the indices.

Trends in bird populations are used by policy makers and non-governmental organisations to help monitor the effects of farming practices (including interventions intended to address declines in farmland birds) and other environmental interventions, trends in biodiversity (the variety of living things and the natural environments that support them), and to determine whether our natural environment is being managed sustainably.

## Understanding the bird population indices

Individual bird species population trends, based on the expert surveys, are calculated as an index, which relates the population in a given year to a 'baseline' – the first year that data are available - and this baseline population is given a notional value of 100. Thereafter the index is expressing the population as a percentage of this 'baseline' and in this Release reference will be made to the 'index'.

The indices presented combine individual species indices<sup>5</sup> into a single index to provide an overall trend for each species group mentioned above.

The indices show the year-to-year fluctuation in populations, reflecting the observed changes in the expert survey results. However 'smoothed trends'<sup>6</sup> given

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<sup>4</sup> See 'Main notes' at the end for more details of the surveys sources used.

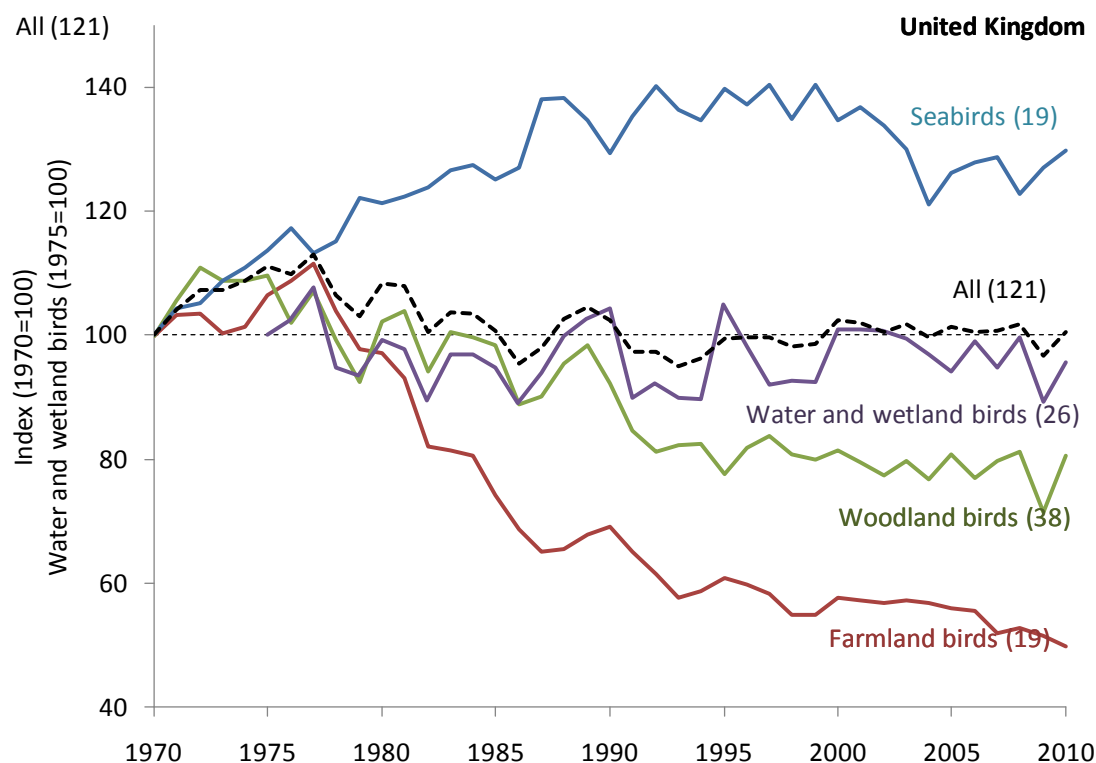
<sup>5</sup> Using a geometric mean - an average calculated by multiplying a set of numbers and taking the nth root, where n is the number of numbers.

<sup>6</sup> It is not possible to produce smoothed trends for seabirds, owing to survey methodologies.

in Annex B are used for formal assessments of change over time, as these reduce the short-term peaks and troughs resulting from, for example, year to year weather and sampling variations. These smoothed trends, derived using a well-established statistical methodology<sup>7</sup>, have been used to make assessments of change over the most recent five-year period possible, from 2004 to 2009 - the smoothing method requires that the most recent year of data, i.e. here 2010, is not estimated by smoothing. Where results from the smoothed indices are quoted they will be clearly indicated.

## Native breeding wild bird populations in the UK

**Figure 1: Populations of wild birds, 1970 to 2010**



Source: RSPB, BTO, JNCC, Defra

Note: figures in brackets show the number of species

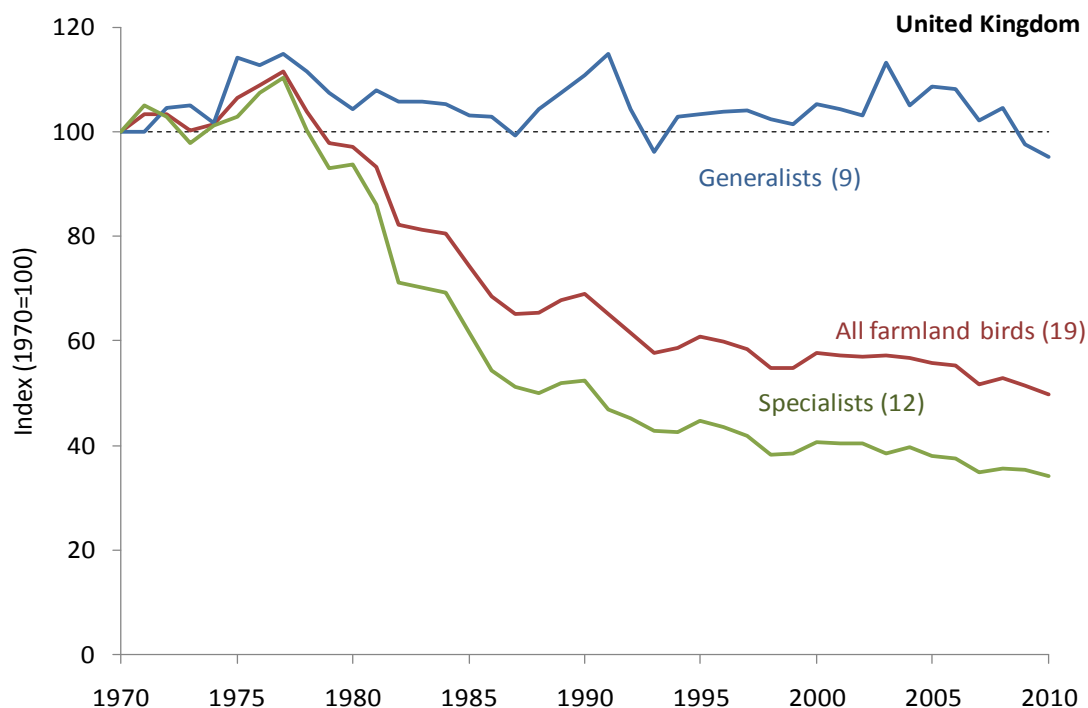
- In 2010 the **all-species index in the UK** (121 species) was 4.4 per cent above its 1970 level. The smoothed index showed a small but statistically significant decline of 1.3 per cent over the most recent five years 2004 to 2009.

<sup>7</sup> See analytical methods on BTO website ([www.bto.org/birdtrends2010/methodology.htm](http://www.bto.org/birdtrends2010/methodology.htm))  
Fewster et al. 2000. Ecology 81: 1970-84...

The species trends within the all-species index vary widely from species increasing several-fold (e.g. Cetti's Warbler, Dartford Warbler, Woodlark) to those having declined to less than a tenth of 1970 levels (Turtle Dove, Corn Bunting, Grey Partridge). The main patterns and drivers of change are best considered by looking at the species group indices (below).

### **Breeding farmland birds populations in the UK**

**Figure 2: Populations of farmland birds, 1970 to 2010**



Source: RSPB, BTO, JNCC, Defra

Note: figures in brackets show the number of species

- The breeding **farmland birds index in the UK** (19 species) was at half (50 per cent) of its 1970 level in 2010 – the lowest level ever recorded.
- Most of the decline for the farmland birds index occurred between the late seventies and the early nineties, but the smoothed indicator shows a significant ongoing decline, of 9.4 per cent between 2004 and 2009.

The smoothed index of farmland generalists shows a significant decline of 8.6 per cent and the farmland specialists a significant decline of 9.9 per cent between 2004 and 2009.

The long term decline of farmland birds in the UK has been driven mainly by the decline of those species that are restricted to or highly dependent on farmland habitats (the 'specialists'). Between 1970 and 2009 the population of farmland

specialists declined by 66.1 per cent while the farmland generalist population declined by 6.4 per cent.

Changes in farming practices, such as the loss of mixed farming systems, the move from spring to autumn sowing, and increase pesticide use, have been demonstrated to have had adverse impacts on farmland birds such as Skylark and Grey Partridge, although other species such as Woodpigeon have benefitted. Three farmland specialists, Grey Partridge, Turtle Dove and Corn Bunting have declined by over 90 per cent relative to 1970 levels. By contrast two farmland specialists, Stock Dove and Goldfinch, have doubled, or nearly so, over the same period, illustrating how the pressures and responses to them varies between species.

As would be expected from viewing the index, generalist species have fared better although one, the Yellow Wagtail, has declined by over 70 per cent relative to 1970. However, Woodpigeon and Jackdaw saw their populations more than double over the same period.

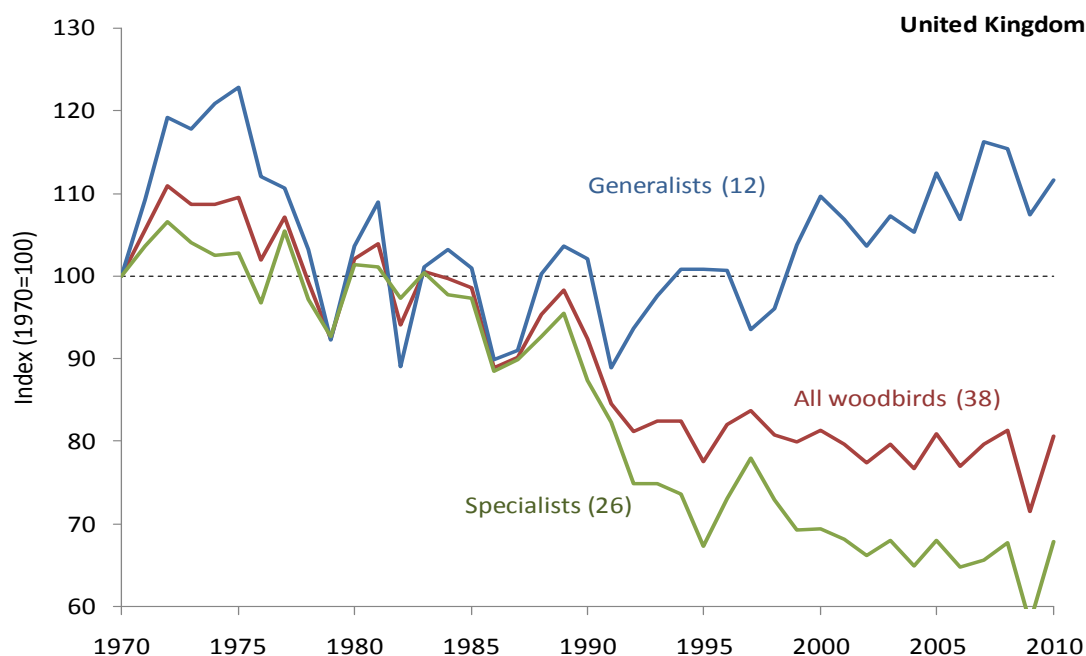
The smoothed indices show that between 2004 and 2009 the population of farmland specialists declined by 9.9 per cent while the farmland generalist population declined by 8.6 per cent.

For Turtle Dove, a farmland specialist, the smoothed index declined by 51.9 per cent between 2004 and 2009. By contrast farmland specialists Goldfinch increased by 33.1 per cent over the same period.

Yellow Wagtail, a farmland generalist, declined by 32.1 per cent between 2004 and 2009. However, Reed Bunting saw its population increase by 10.7 per cent over the same period.

## **Breeding woodland birds populations in the UK**

**Figure 3: Populations of woodland birds, 1970 to 2010**



Source: RSPB, BTO, JNCC, Defra

Note: figures in brackets show the number of species

- In 2010 the breeding **woodland birds index in the UK** (38 species) was 19.4 per cent lower than its 1970 level.
- The greatest decline of woodland birds occurred from the late eighties until the early nineties, and the index has been relatively stable in recent years the smoothed index showed a non-significant decrease of 0.9 per cent between 2004 and 2009.

Although the index of generalist woodland birds has increased by 11.6 per cent relative to 1970, the index for specialist woodland birds decreased by 32.2 per cent over the same period. Compared with 2004, in 2009 the smoothed index of generalist woodland birds had increased by 3.5 per cent while the index of specialist woodland birds dropped by 2.9 per cent.

A number of woodland specialists (Wood Warbler, Willow Tit, Tree Pipit, Spotted Flycatcher, Nightingale, Lesser Redpoll and Capercaillie) have declined by over 70 per cent relative to 1970 levels. By contrast five other woodland specialists (Blackcap, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Green Woodpecker, Nuthatch and Sparrowhawk) saw their population more than double over the same period.

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Amongst woodland generalist populations of Blackbird, Bullfinch, Dunnock, Song Thrush and Tawny Owl have declined relative to 1970. In contrast the Long-tailed Tit population has doubled since 1970.

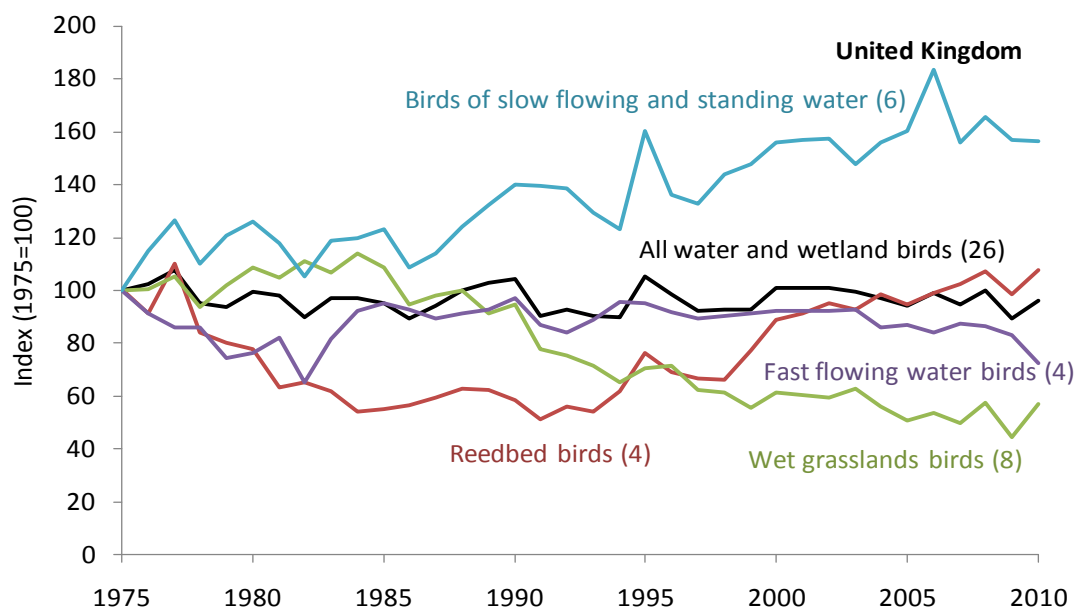
The smoothed indices show that Willow Tit, a woodland specialist, declined by 43.4 per cent between 2004 and 2009. The Capercaillie saw its population decrease by 28.8 per cent over the same period.

Four woodland generalist species declined between 2004 and 2009: Blue Tit, Tawny Owl, Wren and Chaffinch (6.8, 7.9, 7.7 and 0.4 per cent respectively). In contrast Lesser Whitethroat and Long Tailed Tit saw their populations increase by 23.5 and 21.0 per cent respectively between 2004 and 2009.

Although there is less certainty over the drivers of the overall decline in woodland bird populations in the UK, factors such as changes in woodland structure through aging, a decline in active woodland management and overgrazing by deer are implicated in the steep declines in a number of woodland specialists. In addition, problems overseas may be implicated in the declines of a number of long-distance Afro-Palaeartic migrants which breed in UK woodlands. Milder winters may have been beneficial for a number of resident and short-distance migrant species.

### **Breeding water and wetland birds populations in the UK**

**Figure 4: Populations of water and wetland birds, 1975 to 2010**



Source: RSPB, BTO, JNCC, Defra

Note: figures in brackets show the number of species

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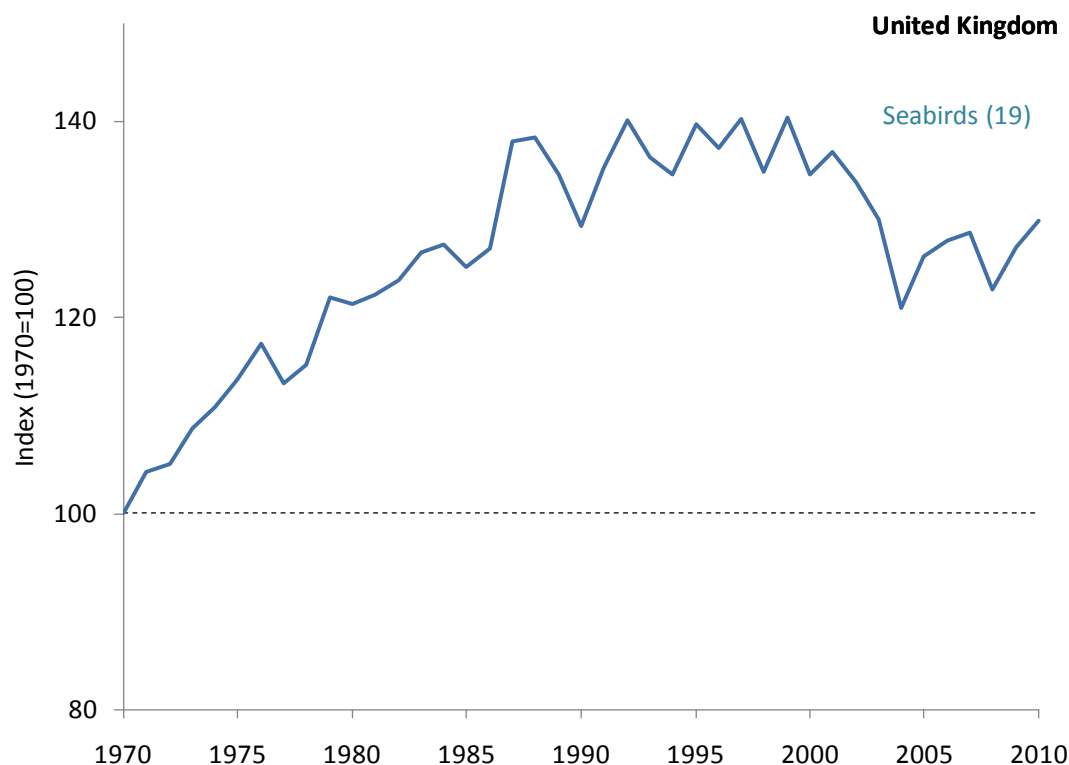


- In 2010 the breeding **water and wetland birds index in the UK** (26 species) is now 4.3 per cent lower than its 1975 level. There was a significant decline in the smoothed index of 3.6 per cent between 2004 and 2009.

The water and wetland birds index can be disaggregated to four sub-habitat indicators showing differing trends, although it should be borne in mind that all are derived from relatively few species trends. Of these, birds of slow flowing and standing water have shown the most positive trend having increased by 57 per cent since 1975, whilst birds of reed bed increased by 7.1 per cent. Conversely, the index for wet grassland birds decreased by 43.1 per cent, while the index for fast flowing water birds decreased by 27.8 per cent compared to 1975.

### **Breeding seabird populations in the UK**

**Figure 5: Populations of seabirds, 1970 to 2010**



Source: RSPB, BTO, JNCC, Defra

Note: figures in brackets show the number of species

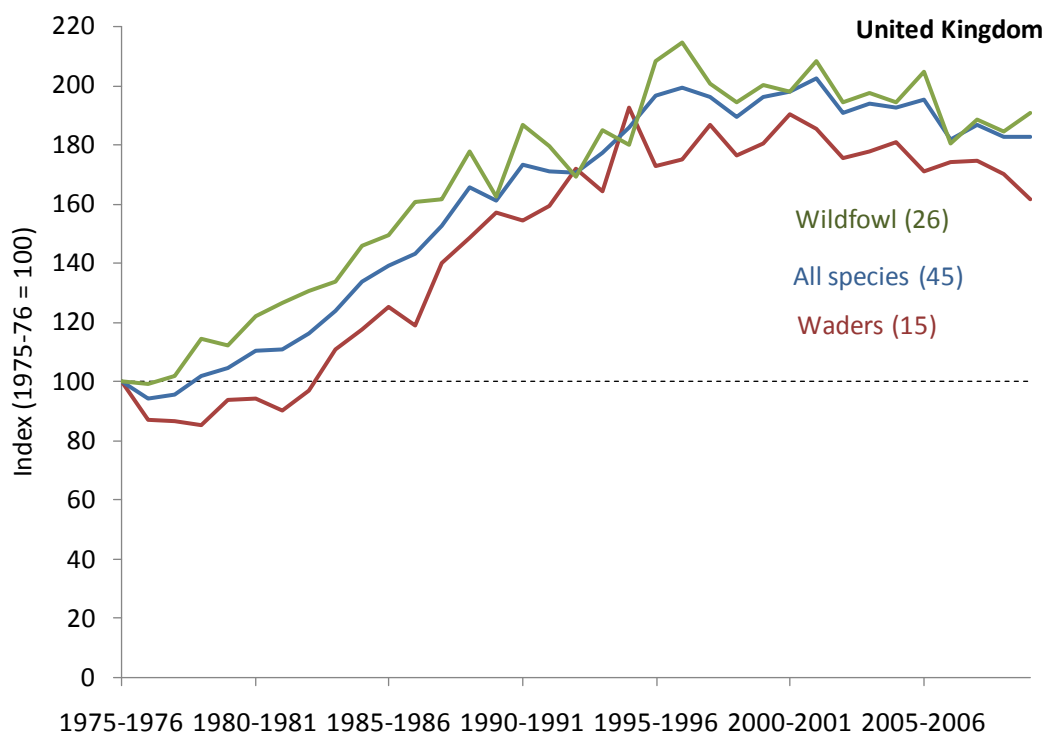
- In 2010 the breeding **seabirds index in the UK** (19 species) was 30 per cent higher in 2010 than its level in 1970; since the peak in 1999, however, populations of seabirds have declined by 7.6 per cent.

Constituent species of the seabird index have had mixed fortunes; for example, Kittiwakes declined by 34 per cent since 1970 and Arctic Skuas, although

increasing between 1970 and 1985, declined by more than half thereafter, whereas Guillemots increased by 168 per cent since 1970. Kittiwakes declines have been linked to increases in sea surface temperatures, a result of climate change, and in some regions to commercial exploitation of their Sandeel prey. Some seabirds have been affected by invasive non-native mammals such as rats and mink, though local control and eradication programmes have been successful.

### **Wintering waterbirds populations in the UK**

**Figure 6: Populations of wintering waterbirds, 1975-6 to 2009-10**



Source: RSPB, BTO in association with WWT, JNCC, Defra

Note: figures in brackets show the number of species in each grouping. Four species (Little Grebe, Great Crested Grebe, Cormorant and Coot) are included in the all species line along with the 26 wildfowl species and the 15 waders.

- In the winter of 2009-10 the **wintering waterbirds index in the UK** (45 species) was 83 per cent higher than its 1975-6 level. The index peaked in the late nineties, and had declined since, with the smoothed index falling by 5.6 per cent between 2003-4 and 2008-09

The populations of wildfowl and waders increased by 90.6 per cent and 61.3 per cent respectively since 1975-6. Between 2003-4 and 2008-9 the smoothed indices for wildfowl and for waders showed declines of 5.9 per cent and 5.7 per cent respectively.

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Amongst wildfowl, European White-fronted Goose, Mallard, and Pochard populations decreased compared with 1975-6. The populations Svalbard Light Bellied Brent Goose increased by almost 21 fold over the same period.

Avocet (a wader) multiplied by a factor of 41 since 1975-6. Over the same period Ringed Plover, Purple Sandpiper, Dunlin, Redshank and Turnstone populations decreased relative to the winter of 1975-6.

Amongst wildfowl European White-fronted Goose decreased by 42.8 per cent between 2003-4 and 2008-9. By contrast Whooper Swan and Pink Footed Goose populations increased by 23.6 and 22.4 per cent over the same period.

Sanderling (a wader) increased by 32.4 per cent between 2003-4 and 2008-9. Over the same period Lapwing populations decreased by 23.4 per cent and Dunlin and Bar Tailed Godwit populations decreased by 20.2 and 20.9 per cent respectively.

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## Main notes

1. The bird population indices have been compiled in conjunction with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) from a wide range of sources, principally:
  - the [Common Birds Census](#) (from 1966 to 2000)
  - the [BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey](#) (from 1994 to 2010)
  - the [BTO/ Waterways Bird Survey](#) (from 1974 to 2007)
  - the [BTO/Environment Agency for England and Wales \(EA\) Waterways Breeding Bird Survey](#) (from 1998 to 2010)
  - the [BTO/Wildfowl & Wetland Trust/RSPB/JNCC Wetland Bird Survey counts](#) (from 1975-76 to 2009-10)
  - the WWT [Goose & Swan Monitoring Programme](#) in partnership with the JNCC and Scottish Natural Heritage
  - the [Seabird Monitoring Programme](#) (from 1986 to 2010) and
  - the Periodic Seabird censuses supplied by JNCC, RSPB, the Seabird Group, SOTEAG (Shetland Oil Terminal Environmental Advisory Group) and other partners.

The census sources provide an indication of the average annual rate of change between censuses for some species, and this is assumed to apply to each year between censuses.

2. The indices cover birds that are native to the UK, excluding rare (less than 500 breeding pairs) and introduced species. The indices portray the annual changes in abundance. Within the indices, each species is given equal weighting, and the overall index is the geometric mean of the species indices. Individual species populations within the index may be increasing or decreasing, irrespective of the overall trends. Species indices are derived by modelling count data and estimates are revised when new data or improved methodologies are developed and applied retrospectively to earlier years.
3. The indices are considered to give reliable medium to long-term trends but strong reliance should not be attached to short term changes from year to year.
4. Tables 1 gives the underlying unsmoothed indices in the UK. The individual species included within each index are given in Annex A.
5. Smoothing is a standard procedure in the generation and reporting of bird population trends ([www.bto.org/birdtrends2010/methodology.htm](http://www.bto.org/birdtrends2010/methodology.htm)) by the BTO and partners in its major bird monitoring schemes, i.e. RSPB and JNCC). The smoothing methodology involves the application of a thin plate smoothing spline to remove the short-term peaks and troughs due to

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weather effects and any between year sampling error. Research by the BTO and RSPB further developed this procedure to enable the production of an indicator based on smoothed individual species' indices. Bootstrapping, a standard statistical technique, is used to calculate 95 per cent confidence intervals in the indicators and in change over any specified period.

6. For the farmland bird index it should be noted that although 20 species were originally chosen for the index, a reliable annual index is not available for Barn Owl, so for that reason it is excluded.
7. Details of agri-environmental schemes designed to improve environmental management in farming can be found via the following administering bodies:
  - [Natural England](#)
  - [Welsh Assembly Government](#)
  - [Scottish Government](#)
  - [Department for Agriculture and Rural Development, Northern Ireland](#)

**Table 1: Wild bird populations in the UK: 1970 – 2010**

Note: the index is set at 100 for 1970 and the subsequent figures give relative size of counts (unsmoothed indices). Source: RSPB, BTO, JNCC, Defra

	All species (114)	Farmland species			Woodland species			Water and Wetland (26)	Wintering Water (44)	Seabird species (19)
		All (19)	Generalist (7)	Specialist (12)	All (38)	Generalist (12)	Specialist (26)			
1970	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0			100.0
1971	104.0	103.4	100.0	105.1	105.7	109.3	103.7			104.3
1972	107.3	103.5	104.5	103.0	111.0	119.2	106.6			105.0
1973	107.3	100.3	105.2	97.9	108.8	117.8	104.0			108.6
1974	108.6	101.4	101.7	101.2	108.8	120.8	102.4			110.8
1975	111.1	106.5	114.2	102.9	109.6	122.8	102.7	100.0		113.6
1976	109.8	108.9	112.9	107.3	102.0	112.1	96.7	102.4	100.0	117.2
1977	113.0	111.6	115.0	110.3	107.3	110.6	105.4	107.7	94.1	113.3
1978	106.4	103.8	111.7	100.1	99.3	103.2	97.1	94.9	95.4	115.1
1979	102.9	97.8	107.6	93.0	92.5	92.2	92.7	93.6	101.8	122.0
1980	108.2	97.1	104.2	93.7	102.2	103.6	101.4	99.3	104.3	121.3
1981	108.0	93.2	108.0	86.0	103.9	108.9	101.2	97.8	110.1	122.3
1982	100.4	82.1	105.8	71.2	94.2	89.0	97.2	89.5	110.7	123.8
1983	103.6	81.3	105.9	70.1	100.6	101.1	100.4	97.0	116.0	126.7
1984	103.4	80.5	105.4	69.3	99.7	103.2	97.7	96.9	124.0	127.4
1985	100.6	74.2	103.2	61.6	98.6	100.9	97.3	94.8	133.9	125.2
1986	95.4	68.6	103.0	54.4	89.0	89.9	88.5	89.1	139.2	127.0
1987	97.8	65.1	99.2	51.3	90.2	91.0	89.8	93.9	143.2	138.0
1988	102.5	65.4	104.3	50.2	95.4	100.3	92.7	99.8	152.4	138.4
1989	104.4	67.7	107.5	52.0	98.4	103.7	95.5	102.7	165.5	134.6
1990	102.3	69.0	110.9	52.6	92.4	102.0	87.3	104.4	161.0	129.4
1991	97.2	65.0	115.0	46.9	84.6	88.9	82.3	90.0	173.3	135.2
1992	97.3	61.5	104.5	45.4	81.2	93.6	74.9	92.3	171.1	140.1
1993	94.9	57.6	96.2	42.9	82.4	97.6	74.8	89.9	170.4	136.4
1994	96.1	58.8	102.8	42.6	82.5	100.8	73.5	89.6	177.3	134.6
1995	99.3	60.8	103.4	44.9	77.6	100.8	67.3	105.0	185.9	139.8
1996	99.5	59.8	103.8	43.6	82.0	100.6	73.0	98.3	196.7	137.3
1997	99.7	58.3	104.0	41.9	83.8	93.6	77.9	92.0	199.5	140.3
1998	98.1	54.9	102.3	38.4	80.8	96.1	72.9	92.6	196.3	134.8
1999	98.5	54.8	101.4	38.5	79.9	103.8	69.3	92.5	189.6	140.4
2000	102.4	57.6	105.4	40.7	81.4	109.6	69.4	100.8	196.3	134.6
2001	101.8	57.3	104.3	40.6	79.6	106.8	68.0	100.9	197.8	136.9
2002	100.5	56.8	103.1	40.4	77.4	103.6	66.1	100.8	202.5	133.8
2003	101.6	57.3	113.4	38.7	79.7	107.2	68.0	99.4	190.6	130.0
2004	99.6	56.7	105.1	39.7	76.8	105.3	64.9	96.9	194.0	121.0
2005	101.2	55.8	108.6	38.1	80.9	112.5	68.0	94.1	192.6	126.2
2006	100.5	55.4	108.3	37.7	77.0	106.9	64.8	99.0	195.1	127.8
2007	100.6	51.8	102.2	35.0	79.7	116.3	65.5	94.7	181.7	128.6
2008	101.8	52.8	104.5	35.6	81.4	115.4	67.7	99.8	186.9	122.8
2009	96.7	51.4	97.5	35.5	71.5	107.4	58.0	89.3	182.6	127.1
2010	100.4	49.7	95.1	34.3	80.6	111.6	67.8	95.7	182.9	129.8

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**Annex A: Bird species by habitat<sup>8</sup> group in the UK****Farmland (19)**

## Generalists (7)

Greenfinch	Rook	Reed Bunting
Jackdaw	Woodpigeon	
Kestrel	Yellow Wagtail	

## Specialists (12)

Corn Bunting	Linnet	Tree Sparrow
Goldfinch	Skylark	Turtle Dove
Grey Partridge	Starling	Whitethroat
Lapwing	Stock Dove	Yellowhammer

**Woodland (38)**

## Generalists (12)

Blackbird	Dunnock	Robin
Blue Tit	Great Tit	Song Thrush
Bullfinch	Lesser Whitethroat	Tawny Owl
Chaffinch	Long-tailed Tit	Wren

## Specialists (26)

Blackcap	Hawfinch	Siskin
Capercaillie	Jay	Sparrow hawk
Chiffchaff	Lesser Redpoll	Spotted Flycatcher
Coal Tit	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	Treecreeper
Crossbill	Marsh Tit	Tree Pipit
Garden Warbler	Nightingale	Willow Tit
Goldcrest	Nuthatch	Willow Warbler
Green Woodpecker	Pied Flycatcher	Wood Warbler
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Redstart	

**Water and wetland birds (26)**

## Fast-flowing (4)

Common Sandpiper	Grey Wagtail	Goosander
Dipper		

## Slow/Standing (6)

Coot	Mallard	Tufted Duck
Little Grebe	Moorhen	Great-crested Grebe

<sup>8</sup> Habitat classifications are generally based on 'Gibbons, D.W., Reid, J.B. & Chapman, R.A. 1993. The New Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland: 1988-1991. London: T. & A.D. Poyser.



Reedbed (4)

Cetti's Warbler	Reed Warbler	Reed Bunting
Sedge Warbler		

Wet Grasslands (8)

Mute Swan	Yellow Wagtail	Teal
Redshank	Curlew	Little Egret
Snipe	Lapwing	

All species only

Oystercatcher	Grey Heron	Sand Martin
Kingfisher		

Seabird (19)

Arctic Skua	European Shag	Mew Gull
Arctic tern	Great black-backed gull	Northern Fulmar
Atlantic Puffin	Great Cormorant	Northern Gannet
Black-headed Gull	Great Skua	Razorbill
Black-legged kittiwake	Herring Gull	Sandwich Tern
Common Guillemot	Lesser black-backed gull	
Common Tern	Little Tern	

Wintering water birds (45)

Wildfowl (26)

Bewick's Swan	Mallard	Shoveler
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	Mute Swan	Svalbard Barnacle Goose
Eider	NW Scotland Greylag Goose	Svalbard Light-bellied Brent Goose
European White-fronted Goose	Pink-footed Goose	Teal
Gadwall	Pintail	Tufted Duck
Goldeneye	Pochard	Whooper Swan
Goosander	Red-breasted Merganser	Wigeon
Greenland White-fronted Goose	Scaup	Nearctic Barnacle Goose
Icelandic Greylag Goose	Shelduck	

Wader (15)

Avocet	Golden Plover	Purple Sandpiper
Bar-tailed Godwit	Grey Plover	Redshank
Black-tailed Godwit	Knot	Ringed Plover
Curlew	Lapwing	Sanderling
Dunlin	Oystercatcher	Turnstone

Other (4)

Coot	Great Crested Grebe	Little Grebe
Cormorant		

## Bird species included in the All-Species index in the UK

The all-species line is comprised of all 121 available population trends for widespread breeding species in the UK, from all landscape types. It excludes rare species (with less than 500 breeding pairs) and all species for which no UK trend information is available.

The species composition of all species index (121 species) includes:

- 19 farmland\* species trends (i.e those in the farmland bird index)
- 38 woodland bird species (ie those in the woodland bird index)
- 26 breeding wetland\* species (ie those in the breeding birds of waterways and wetlands index)
- 19 seabirds

and

- 22 other species trends, including birds of urban areas, heathlands, uplands, coasts and species with no strong habitat preferences (generalists).

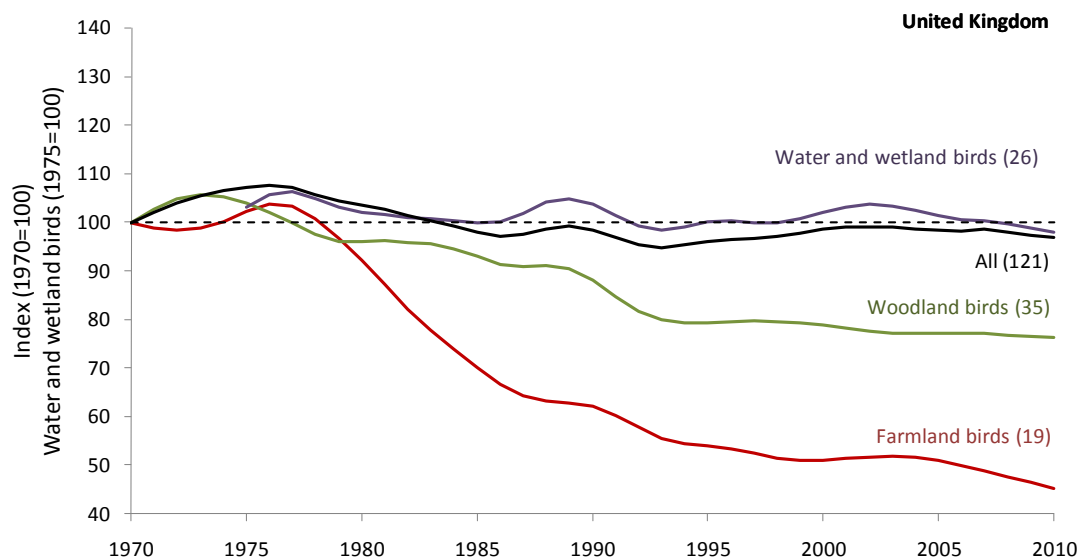
Dartford Warbler	Red Grouse	Red-breasted Merganser
Woodlark	Meadow Pipit	Great Skua
Avocet	Mistle Thrush	Greylag Goose (naturalised)
Cirl Bunting	Pied Wagtail	Gadwall
Buzzard	Swallow	Eider
Corncrake	Shelduck	Common Gull
Peregrine Falcon	Collared Dove	Cormorant
Cuckoo		

\* Note that trends for three species (Yellow Wagtail, Reed Bunting and Lapwing) are included in two separate habitat-specific indicators (farmland and breeding wetland) due to their reliance on both of these habitats. However, only the farmland trend is used in the all-species indicator to avoid duplication.

## Annex B: SMOOTHED INDICES FOR BIRD POPULATION IN THE UK

### All breeding bird populations in the UK (smoothed indices)

**Figure B.1: Populations of wild birds, 1970 to 2010**

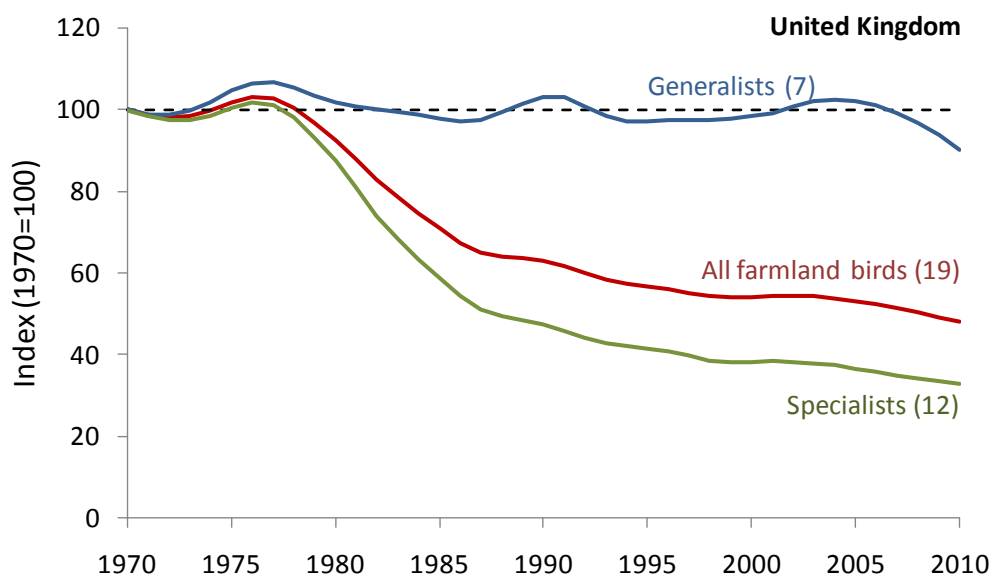


Source: RSPB, BTO, JNCC, Defra

Note: figures in brackets show the number of species

### Breeding farmland birds populations in the UK (smoothed indices)

**Figure B.2: Populations of farmland birds, 1970 to 2010**



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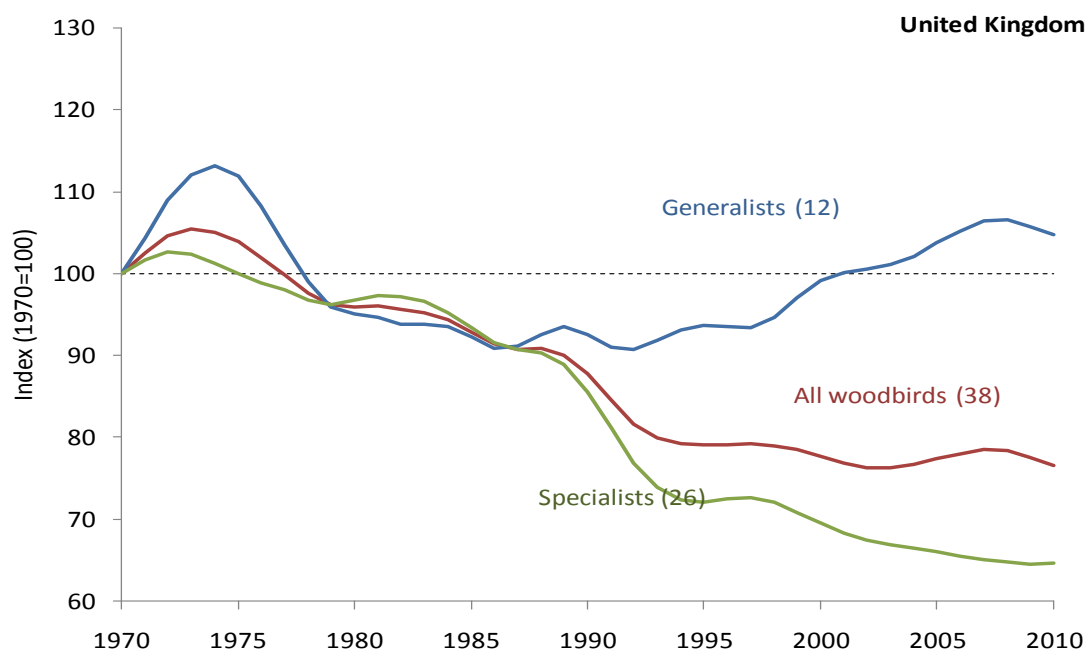
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Source: RSPB, BTO, JNCC, Defra Note: figures in brackets show the number of species

### **Breeding woodland birds populations in the UK (smoothed indices)**

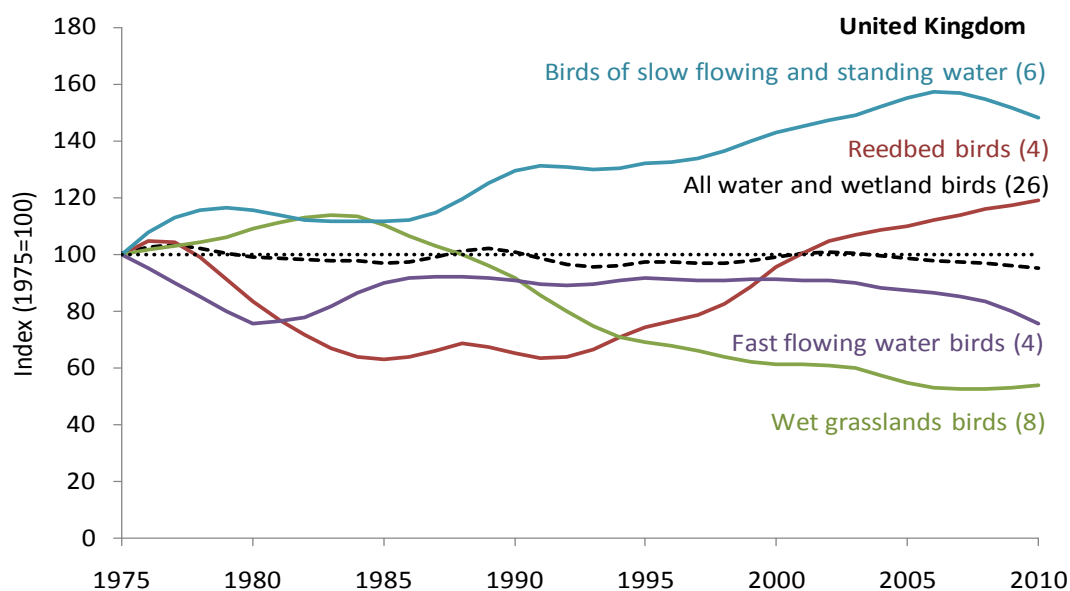
**Figure B.4: Populations of woodland birds, 1970 to 2010**



Source: RSPB, BTO, JNCC, Defra Note: figures in brackets show the number of species

### **Water and wetland birds populations in the UK (smoothed indices)**

**Figure B.3: Populations of water and wetland birds, 1975 to 2010**



Source: RSPB, BTO, JNCC, Defra Note: figures in brackets show the number of species

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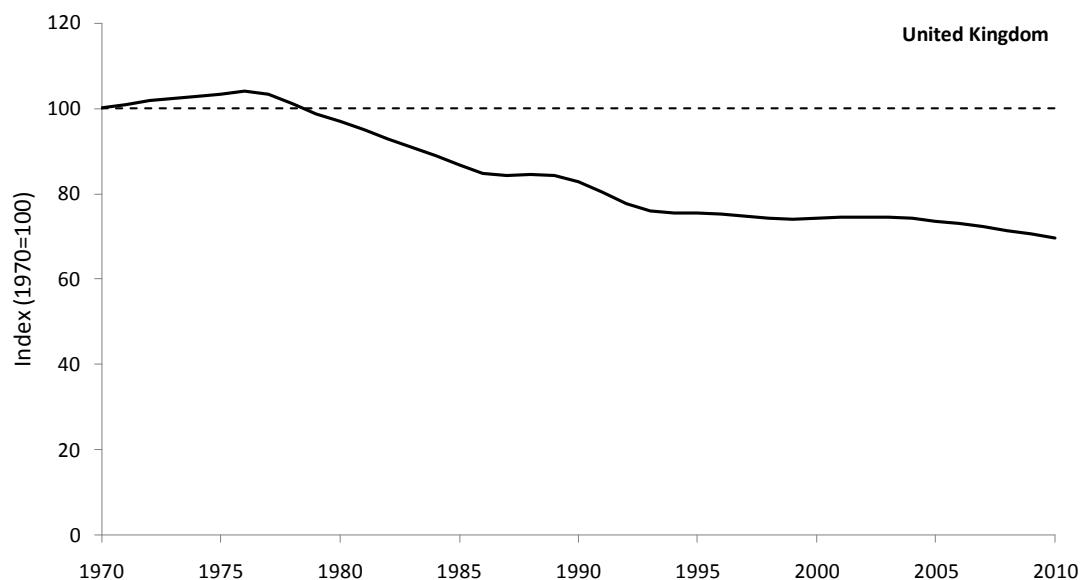
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### **Combined index for farmland, woodland and water and wetland breeding birds populations for the UK (smoothed index)**

**Figure B.5: Combined index for farmland, woodland and water and wetland breeding birds, 1970 to 2009**



Source: RSPB, BTO, JNCC, Defra

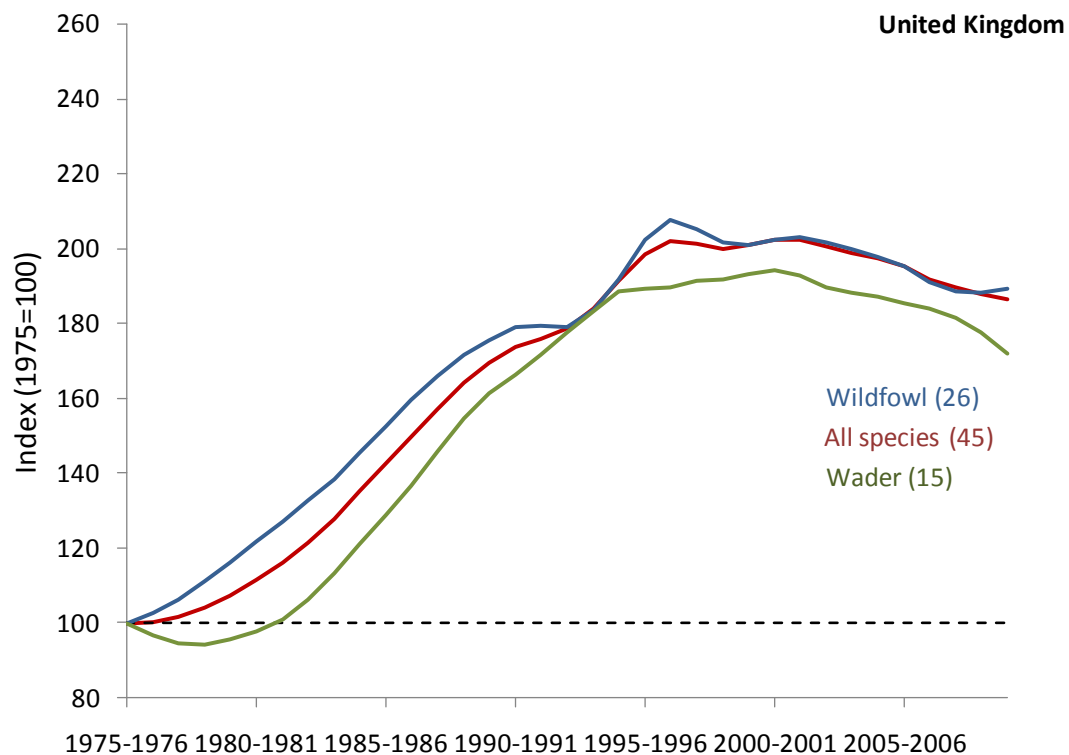
The aggregated index is an unweighted aggregation of the three smoothed indices of farmland, woodland and water and wetland breeding birds relative to 1970. In 2009 the aggregate index was 30 per cent below its 1970 level.

This index was formerly used as a Defra performance measure, but has been superseded by the use of the farmland birds index as a Defra Business Plan<sup>9</sup> indicator. It is therefore proposed that this aggregated index will be discontinued, as it does not provide any addition insight beyond the individual habitat group indices. Any comments on this proposal should be made via [enviro.statistics@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enviro.statistics@defra.gsi.gov.uk).

<sup>9</sup> [www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/about/what/business-planning/](http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/about/what/business-planning/)

## **Wintering waterbirds populations in the UK (smoothed indices)**

**Figure B.6: Populations of wintering waterbirds, 1975-6 to 2009-10**



Source: RSPB, BTO in association with WWT, JNCC, Defra  
show the number of species

Note: figures in brackets