

Help with the conservation of the UK's waterbirds...

What is the Wetland Bird Survey?

- WeBS (for short), is the monitoring scheme for non-breeding waterbirds in the UK.

The principle aims of WeBS

- To determine the population size of waterbirds in the UK.
- To determine trends in numbers and distribution.
- To identify important sites for waterbirds.

WeBS data are used:

- To designate Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar Sites.
- In public inquiries to defend important sites against development or degradation.
- For research into the causes of population change.
- To determine conservation priorities and strategies.
- To prepare management plans for wetland sites and waterbirds.



Barnacle Geese



The Wetland Bird Survey

Do you want to make your bird watching count?

Become a WeBS volunteer...

If you feel you could help, return the attached form today, and start contributing to the conservation of the UK's waterbirds and the habitats they rely on.

To find out more about WeBS

If you have any queries about WeBS, or wish to obtain WeBS count data please contact:

WeBS Office, The British Trust for Ornithology,
Thetford, IP24 2PU.

Tel: 01842 750050

Email: webs@bto.org



Website: www.bto.org/webs



WeBS is a partnership scheme of the British Trust for Ornithology, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee in association with the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust.

PHOTOS: JOHN HARDING/NEIL CALBRADE/NICK MORAN/CHRIS MILLS/JILL PAKENHAM



www.bto.org/webs

More about the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS)

By participating in WeBS, you can directly help the conservation of the UK's waterbirds and their wetland habitat.

The UK is of outstanding international importance for waterbirds, with more than 12 million relying upon our wetlands each winter. WeBS is the monitoring scheme for non-breeding waterbirds in the UK which provides principal data for conservation of their populations and habitats.

WeBS counts

WeBS monitors all species of waterbirds - divers, grebes, cormorants, herons, swans, geese, ducks, rails, waders, gulls and terns. Regular monitoring of waterbirds in the UK through Core Counts began in 1947, with monthly counts made during the winter period. Low Tide Counts are made on selected estuaries to determine the feeding distribution of waterbirds.



Mixed Godwit flock

WeBS RELIES ON VOLUNTEER INPUT

Conservation

WeBS counts form a cornerstone for conservation of the UK's waterbirds and the wetlands upon which they depend. Counts from all sites, small or large are used for research and conservation. Around 2,000 wetlands - estuaries, lakes, ponds, reservoirs, gravel pits, rivers, marshes and open coast - are counted each year. Around 3,000 counters contribute to the largest volunteer waterbird monitoring scheme in Europe. The WeBS database already contains data for half a million visits to these important wetlands.

Getting involved

New counters are always needed to cover new sites, particularly habitats such as rivers which are monitored less comprehensively, and to take over from counters who retire. Core Counts take just a few hours and are made once a month, primarily between September and March. Counters are asked simply to record the number of all visible waterbirds in a predefined area. A network of Local Organisers coordinates coverage of sites locally. WeBS counters can now submit their counts through WeBS Online. We now receive over 90% of all WeBS data in this way which allows us to make the data available more efficiently.

I would like to participate in WeBS

Please return this form to:
WeBS Office, BTO, Thetford, IP24 2PU

The success of WeBS over the last 60 years has been dependent on the invaluable contribution of volunteers. If you wish to participate in WeBS and help toward the conservation of their wetland habitats, please complete and return the form to the address overleaf.

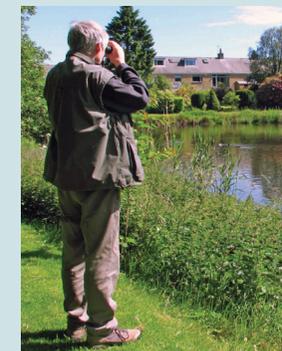
We will provide you with background information about the WeBS scheme and contact details of your Local Organiser who will ensure your efforts are coordinated with existing volunteers. All counters receive recording forms, an annual Newsletter and a free copy of the comprehensive WeBS annual Report which includes results of Core and Low Tide Counts, the Irish Wetland Bird Survey and a summary of key conservation and research issues for waterbirds.

Your details:

Title: _____ First name: _____
Surname: _____
Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone: _____
Mobile telephone: _____
E-mail (if applicable): _____

Your contact information will be kept on database at BTO. It will be used solely for the administration of waterbird surveys.



'Apart from being enjoyable birding, the fact that my WeBS counts contribute to the knowledge of waterbird populations at local, UK and international levels is very satisfying.'

Neil Bielby, WeBS counter

