



**MERSEYSIDE
RINGING
GROUP**



**Annual Report
2014**

MERSEYSIDE RINGING GROUP

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Report Editor: Peter Coffey



Cover: a very special female Barn Owl of the continental sub-species *Tyto alba guttata* found nesting with a male *Tyto alba alba*. Whilst some *guttata* Barn Owls have been reared in captivity in the UK, this is only the second record of a wild *guttata* breeding here. See pages 3-8 (Photo: S Binney)

Acknowledgements

Merseyside Ringing Group receives vital co-operation from many landowners, farmers and gamekeepers in Merseyside, Cheshire and north Wales. They permit group members to work on their property and without their generous help, much of the work of the group would be impossible. The Group also receives considerable support from local authority countryside and ranger teams, local Wildlife Trusts and private individuals. Thank you all for your support.

Maps showing the distribution of controls and recoveries have been produced using DMAP.

Merseyside Ringing Group operate under the auspices of the BTO Ringing Scheme which is funded by a partnership of the British Trust for Ornithology, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (on behalf of: Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Department of the Environment Northern Ireland), The National Parks and Wildlife Service (Ireland) and the ringers themselves. Data from the BTO Ringing Scheme has been used in several articles in this report and we acknowledge the use of this valuable resource.

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Editor’s note

Two Barn Owl articles take pride of place in this edition. The first, by Steve Binney, documents the *Tyto alba guttata* female he discovered breeding in one of his nest boxes, only the second such record for the UK. The second is a tribute to Andrew Duncalf who died in January 2015; Andrew made a huge contribution to the Group’s Barn Owl ringing and the article is based on his own words from his blog which he steadfastly updated throughout his illness.

The successful breeding of Common Terns at Shotton for the first time since 2008 provided an opportune moment to reflect on the development of the colony and its significance nationally, why the colony failed to breed and what has happened since.

It is sixty years since our founder members, Rob Cockbain and Graham Thomason, started ringing in 1954 and ten years since the Group produced its 50th Anniversary Report. This edition updates a summary of foreign controls and recoveries for 1954-2014.

“GUTTATA” SURPRISE

Steve Binney

The Barn Owl season in 2014 started off promisingly with a healthy number of early nests. Little did I know when I set out on 21 May for a routine evening visit checking my Barn Owl boxes in Wirral that I was to get the biggest surprise of my many years of ringing Barn Owls: I trapped a bird of the “*guttata*” sub-species. The box was occupied by a pair of adult Barn Owls, with one recently hatched chick and two eggs. The male had been ringed in the same box the previous year as an adult but the female was unringed and was distinctly different from the hundreds of other Barn Owls I have handled.

Taxonomy

The Barn Owl was once considered the most widely-distributed land bird in the world being present on every continent except Antarctica. However, the advent of DNA sequencing has resulted in extensive re-classification and many Barn Owl sub-species are now considered to be species in their own right. Instead of there being one species (‘Barn Owl’) with a world distribution separated into 36 sub-species, the species ‘Barn Owl’ now has just ten sub-species covering Europe, Africa, Arabia, India and Asia southeast to Java. The sub-species in the UK, *Tyto alba alba* (*Taa*), is restricted to western and southern Europe and north Africa (from Scotland to Morocco and from Portugal to Greece). The darker sub-species, *Tyto alba guttata* (*Tag*), is found mainly in central and eastern Europe, from Sweden to Bulgaria and Netherlands to western Russia. A zone of intergradation, where extensive interbreeding occurs between the two races, exists in eastern France, Netherlands, Belgium, western Germany, central Switzerland, Hungary and the central Balkans.

Taa v Tag

When I processed the female, my initial thought was that it was an “African Barn Owl”, presumably an escaped captive or a deliberate release which had been known to occur in other parts of the UK. I checked with other members of the Cheshire Barn Owl groups for similar records of dark phase Barn Owls – none had been reported. I then contacted Colin Shawyer, founder and co-ordinator of the Barn Owl Conservation Network; he is widely acknowledged as a leading expert in Barn Owls and a person who has handled birds of the *Tag* sub-species. Colin spent a couple of weeks in the Dijon region of France where the two sub-species commonly interbreed, giving him the opportunity to see and compare the adults and young of *Taa* and *Tag* and their offspring. He also found a *Tag* female breeding with a *Taa* male in Norfolk in 2008, the former having been ringed in Holland as a chick in 2007 and confirmed by his Dutch colleagues to be from an adult *Tag* pairing (the predominant sub-species in Holland). This was the first record of a *Tag* breeding in the UK.

Colin advised me of the key characteristics for identifying a *Tag*; a British Birds Rarities Committee review of the identifying criteria of “dark-breasted Barn Owls in Britain” (Paul R French 2009) was also referenced. As the *Tag* bird was a female, in the remainder of this article all comparisons with *Taa* birds relate to females because *Taa* males tend to have lighter-coloured plumage and few, if any, spots/freckles on the underparts. All of the images are of this *Tag* bird, with comparisons with several different *Taa* females.

There are no known biometric differences that would help in separating the sub-species. There were no shed feathers in the nest and I was not licensed to take feathers from the bird, so there is no possibility of molecular (DNA) analysis. The key characteristics for identifying a *Tag* bird are differences in plumage, examined in detail below.

Wing

The *Tag* wing has a deep almost mahogany-like colour (red/brown pigmentation) present in the very dark outer vanes (including the barring) of the primaries and secondaries. The cross-bars are more extensive in *Tag* and the wing coverts are dark grey rather than burnt ochre or golden bronze on the upper wing surfaces of *Taa*.



1: *Tag* wing (top) and **2:** *Taa* wing (bottom): the contrast between the wings of *Tag* and *Taa* is clearly visible in these photos

Profiles of the birds, shown below, also demonstrate the difference in colour.



3: *Tag* profile

4: *Taa* profile

5: *Tag* front view

Underparts

The dark buff colouration, with extensive dark freckles, covers the sides of the head of *Tag* and extends through the underparts, including the underwing (photo 6). This colour extends through the legs to the feet (visible on photos 3 and 5), a particularly important characteristic. Any bird showing a contrast between a dark breast and a pale belly and leg feathers is not a *Tag*.

Taa may have spots that are usually less extensive than a *Tag*, and a light buff colouration to the upper breast. However *Taa* females vary considerably: photo 7 shows a very pale female with the slightest tinge of buff colouration at the side of the breast and very few spots whilst photo 8 shows a female with buff colouration and extensive spots down the side of the head and across the breast. However both *Taa* females have white bellies.



6: *Tag* female

7: Light-coloured *Taa*

8: Darker-coloured *Taa*

Facial disc

The facial disc of *Tag* is generally sooty in appearance, often more so than female *Taa*, with dark, often deep purplish, feathering usually extending from around the eyes outwards towards the edges of the facial disc. The edge of the facial disc is also darker, on average, in *Tag*. Both features can be seen in photos 9 and 10.



9: *Tag* facial disc

10: *Taa* facial disc

Despite these seemingly clear differences, it is nevertheless sometimes quite difficult to distinguish between a particularly dark *Taa* and a true *Tag*. Having examined the photos of my potential *Tag*, Colin Shawyer replied:

“I have been sent numerous pictures of dark Barn Owls by BOCN Advisers/BTO ringers during the last 25 years but never have I considered any to have been a Tag until now”.

The adult female *Tag* appeared to be in her third calendar year. As often happens with female Barn Owls, she was moulting some flight-feathers during incubation. Looking at the primary feathers (photo 1), P8 and P4 are emerging whilst the barring on P6 and P5 is of a lighter shade of grey, indicating these feathers would have been moulted last year; P9 and P10 are feathers grown as a nestling, being slightly more grey/brown in hue and with a somewhat more pointed shape. She would have first bred or attempted to breed in 2013.

Did the chicks inherit “guttata” characteristics?

Two chicks, both females, hatched and fledged. The earliest photo (11) of the chicks, taken when the chicks were 35-38 days old, show no real difference to those of most *Taa* pairings although one appears to have inherited some of mum's genes, having a darker plumage than the other.



11: Chicks from *Taa/Tag* pairing; chick “A” on the left has a darker facial disc.

Photographs of the chicks taken three weeks later confirm that one chick has a darker facial disc. Chick A (photo 12) has more extensive and darker feathering around the eyes, feathers at the edge of the disc with more pronounced dark tips and a general discolouration compared to chick B (photo 13). The crown feathers of chick A appear to be darker grey and more extensive than those of chick B, and chick A has dark spots at the side of its head.

Photographs of the undersides show chick A (photo 14) has quite extensive coverage of dark spots, prominent on the flanks and underwing but muted on the breast which has a buff colouration. Chick B (photo 15) has fewer spots but has buff colouration on the upper breast.



12: Chick "A" facial disc



13: Chick "B" facial disc



14: Chick "A" underside



15: Chick "B" underside

At this stage, neither chick appears to have inherited the distinctive dark buff colouration of the mother; let's hope they are retrapped so that their adult plumage can be examined in detail.

Where did my Tag come from?

Nineteen foreign-ringed Barn Owls have been recovered or controlled in the UK (Robinson *et al.* 2015) but the records did not differentiate between *Tag* and *Taa* birds. Ten were from the Netherlands, five from Germany, three from Belgium and one from Denmark. Most were found in the eastern counties, from Kent through to Suffolk, Norfolk, Lincolnshire, Yorkshire and up to Aberdeenshire. However some moved much further: two reached Cornwall, and singles reached Somerset, Worcestershire, Argyll and Bute, Highland and Orkney.

All had been ringed as nestlings and fifteen were recovered between October and April of their first year. The remaining four birds all survived long enough to have started breeding but three were found dead without proof of breeding before the start of a second breeding season. The final bird was the ringed female *Tag* discovered by Colin Shawyer breeding with a *Taa* male in Norfolk in June 2008, with a clutch of five eggs, the first record of a *Tag* breeding in the UK; she sadly perished in July, a casualty of traffic on the A10, close to the nesting site.

As noted earlier, my female's first breeding year would have been 2013. From the evidence of the foreign-ringed Barn Owls, it is most likely that my bird would have crossed into Britain in the autumn of 2012 or early in 2013. If she bred in 2013, it was probably somewhere in the UK.

Tags are far less sedentary than the nominate race. Over 54% of recoveries of chicks ringed in a German study were found more than 50 km from their natal site and that increased to 62% of birds more than one year old when ringed (Bairlein 1985). For *Taas* in Britain and Ireland, only 11.1% of chicks and 11.3% of older birds moved more than 50 km (Wernham *et al* 2002). More locally, within the MRG area and excluding vehicle-assisted movements, only eight out of 307 recoveries/controls in 2007-14 moved more than 50 km. All eight had been ringed as chicks. Interestingly, two chicks ringed in 2011 moved from Lincolnshire and Gloucestershire to Cheshire where they were controlled as breeding females in 2012 and 2014 respectively. Both moved 132 km, unusually long distances for *Taas*.

The distance moved by young *Tags* varies from year to year and the term "Wanderjahren" has been applied to years with increased dispersal. In those years, good breeding success is followed by widespread collapse in vole *Microtus* populations. The dispersal takes place in late summer and is completed by mid-November. Vole numbers in the UK were low in the winter of 2012/13 and into the spring of 2013 before recovering from July 2013 onwards. Many Barn Owls were underweight and out of condition for breeding and it may be that a naturally less sedentary *Tag* was encouraged to wander further afield in search of a good food supply.

Its origins, of course, are unknown and will remain so. The release of numerous sub-species and mixed sub-species of Barn Owl in the 1980s and 1990s resulted in their being placed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The keeper of any bird of a species which lives in the wild has to be able to show that the bird is held lawfully (i.e. captive-bred) and a licence would be required to release the bird. Natural Resources Wales and Natural England confirmed that no licences were issued for the release of captive Barn Owls during the relevant time period (July 2012-May 2014). It is still possibly a captive escape – some wild birds are held illegally – but I leave the final comment to Colin Shawyer:

"Whilst illegal escapes still occur and Tags are still held along with other sub-species in bird collections throughout the UK, on balance, and because breeding between a known wild Tag and Taa was confirmed in 2008, I believe your pairing in Wirral is also a true example of this".

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Colin Shawyer for his helpful advice and comments upon which much of this article is based. I took all photographs in this article except photo 8 which is from Andrew Duncalf. The editor of this Annual Report, Peter Coffey, provided much useful guidance.

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MID-CHESHIRE BARN OWLS 2013 AND 2014:

TWO RECORD YEARS

Andrew Duncalf*

2013

This was the worst breeding season since the formation of the mid-Cheshire Barn Owl Group, and was reported as probably the worst for fifty years nationally. The combination of low vole populations and a cold, wet, spring – particularly snow in late-March – meant that most adult birds did not achieve breeding condition and many of them held territory without laying. Pellets were noticeably smaller than usual and contained more shrews than voles, about one-third, or less, of the nutritional value but probably taking the same effort to catch.

The earliest egg laying date for mid-Cheshire Barn Owls in 2013 was 24 April. This compares to 3 March in 2012, 8 April in 2011, 2 April in 2010 and 11 March in 2009. The earliest chick, a single bird, was ringed on 1 July. Many breeding attempts failed; for instance, on 14 August three sites were visited in the south of the county, expecting to ring chicks, but all three broods had died. Only six active nests were found in July or August, and 16 chicks ringed.

There were occasional bright spots including a roosting adult male, trapped on 7 August near Comberbach, that had been ringed as a chick in July 2004 just a few miles away in Pickmere. As a bird in his tenth year, he becomes the oldest owl that I have ever recovered.

In 2013, 21 adults were newly-ringed, with 26 retraps and recoveries. Eight of the latter were found dead, and eight were breeding or roosting in the same box as in previous years. Only six were discovered more than 10 km from where they had originated. Amongst these was our furthest ever traveller, a female that had been ringed as a chick in 2007 near Malltraeth on Anglesey, 127 km away and the longest movement of a Barn Owl to or from mid-Cheshire.

Some conservation organisations published doom-laden reports about the poor breeding season but there were already more hopeful signs in the later part of 2013. As birds fed on the young voles born this year, some were prompted to breed and three Barn Owl nests were found from mid-September containing a total of 13 ringable chicks, the last of them ringed on 30 October. The year had ended with just nine broods ringed, a total of 29 chicks, but it was with some optimism that we approached the 2014 season.

2014

On 30 March 2014 the first Barn Owl nest was found, with a female already incubating a large clutch of seven eggs, and the next day the above-mentioned adult male, ringed in 2004, was found in a box with a female incubating five eggs. Another box visited on 8 April held a clutch of five eggs and a newly-hatched chick. The first chicks, a brood of five, were ringed on 1 May and it was clear that the 2014 season was going to be early, and productive.

Things moved on apace and the month of May was busy, with May Day bringing the 25th nest of the season, a brood of five chicks whose ages indicated eggs laid at the end of February, the earliest laying date locally since 2007. On 5 May a female was found incubating nine eggs, the largest clutch I have ever found and a direct reflection of the abundance of prey this year. By 31 May, 50 nests were being monitored. On 12 June the 150th owlet of the season was ringed,



Two Barn Owls ready to fledge from a mid-Cheshire nest-box (Photo: A Duncalf)

with the 200th following on 20 June. On 29 June there was another indication of this remarkable season when a ringed female was discovered incubating six eggs, her number revealing that we had already ringed her brood of six owlets on 26 May at a different site, not far away. She had quickly got on with a second clutch, on the earliest date that I have ever found a bird with a second clutch following successful fledging of the first.

On 7 July I had another record when a female brooding her young owlets tipped the scales at 497g, probably the heaviest Barn Owl in Cheshire and another indicator of plentiful food supplies. Ringing slowed down from the beginning of July, with a further 50 chicks until the last, a second brood of three on 30 October, matching the record of 2013 although that was for a late first brood.

Thus, 2013 and 2014 were both record years for Barn Owls breeding in mid-Cheshire, the former the worst and the latter the best, illustrating well the natural cycles in abundance and productivity, and this species' ability to bounce back from adversity.

*The above reports have been extracted by David Norman from Andrew Duncalf's blog <http://midcheshirebarnowls.blogspot.co.uk/>. What readers of his blog would not have known, for he never mentioned it, was that Andrew was suffering from cancer, diagnosed in April 2013, to which he finally succumbed in January 2015. He fitted in all of his nest-recording and ringing around surgery and sessions of chemotherapy, displaying immense fortitude and resilience. In 2014, as well as personally visiting 68 Barn Owl nests, he also recorded 11 Kestrel, 8 Tawny Owl and 6 Little Owl nests.

He was particularly skilled at trapping adult Barn Owls, yielding lots of useful information on site-fidelity. Over the last eight years (2007-14) he submitted (via MRG) 378 nest records to the BTO (313 Barn Owl, 38 Kestrel, 15 Tawny Owl and 12 Little Owl), and ringed over 1,000 Barn Owls.

It was touching that Andrew wrote, in November 2014 when he declined any further treatment, "I have been fortunate in that I have been able to get out and about pretty much as normal this year and the time that I have enjoyed monitoring and ringing my owls has provided a much needed escape from my illness without which life would have been much more of a struggle."

Davenham Church was full for Andrew's memorial service on 20 January 2015. It is probable that Barn Owls have never previously been mentioned so much in a funeral, or indeed ever, and it was especially good that several farmers attended, a tribute to the great network of conservation-minded landowners that he had nurtured. Alison, his wife, decided to share donations given in Andrew's memory between a local hospice and a bursary, to be administered by MRG, to support the continuation of his conservation and monitoring work with Barn Owls and other raptors.



A brood of four Barn Owl chicks showing a spread of sizes and ages resulting from their asynchronous hatching. (Photo: Andrew Duncalf)

COMMON TERNS AT SHOTTON

Peter Coffey

There was good news in 2014 from Shotton, Flintshire, home of the largest Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* colony in Wales: birds successfully bred, with a minimum of 445 chicks fledging, for the first time since the colony failed to breed in 2009. Merseyside Ringing Group (MRG) has been involved with the colony from its inception 45 years ago. This article explains the development of the colony and its significance nationally, explores why the colony failed to breed and describes what has happened since.

Development of the Shotton colony

Common Terns were first reported breeding in the Dee estuary in 1918 on rapidly-growing saltmarsh off Burton Point. By 1934, fifty pairs were present (Farrar 1938) and a small colony, varying between ten and eighty pairs, maintained a tenuous foothold up to 1970. Breeding success was often poor, mainly because nests would be flooded on any tides exceeding 9.2 metres.

Members of MRG noticed that pairs of Common Terns had occasionally attempted nesting on bunds in the cooling lagoons at Shotton steelworks. In 1970, at the request of the group, British Steel Corporation declared the lagoons and surrounding reedbeds a nature reserve. They also granted permission to anchor a hastily-constructed raft (4 metres square) in one of the pools to see if Common Terns would nest there. It was an instant success: 12/13 pairs nested and 17 chicks were ringed and fledged. The group received the Prince of Wales Award in 1971 in recognition of their efforts in establishing the reserve.

Development of suitable nesting areas continued over the years to meet the demands of an ever-increasing colony and to develop solutions that required lower annual maintenance. Small floating rafts were replaced by a larger fixed wooden platform, which was subsequently extended twice. Photographs 1 and 2 show the immaculately-constructed platform with appreciative Common Terns settled on it. The background view of blast furnaces is a reminder of the heavily-industrialised environment in which the colony developed.



1 and 2: The early nesting platform (R Birch)

The condition of the platform was found to be deteriorating rapidly in 1987 so a decision was taken to create an island out of one of the bunds projecting into the lagoons. The terns had a choice of nesting sites: 259 chicks were ringed on the old platform and just 15 on the new island! The platform was demolished in the winter of 1987/88 and, after some initial wariness, the terns settled into their new home, with 461 chicks being ringed – a new record for the site.

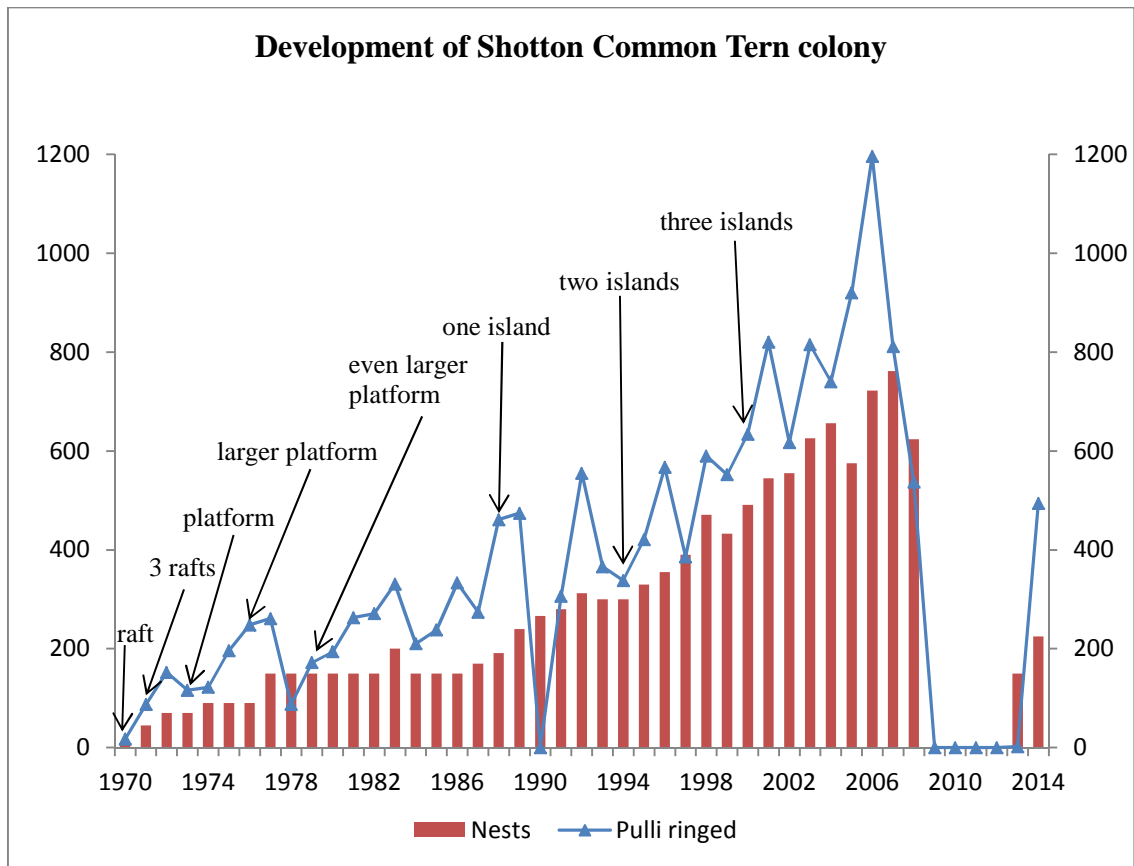
A second island was created in 1994 and the third in 2000. Each island is approximately 64x6m, subdivided into eight compartments (see photo 3), and the total area of the islands is approximately ten times the size of the extended platform. The islands are clearly visible in the aerial photograph (photo 4).



3: The nesting islands (P Coffey)



4: Aerial view of Shotton Lagoons and Reedbed SSSI (© Google Earth)



The colony peaked in 2006 with 722 apparently occupied nests, 1196 young ringed and a minimum of 967 fledged young (see chart above). After two moderately successful years in 2007/2008, a total of 15,673 Common Tern chicks had been ringed since the start of the colony. But the pattern of growth at the colony stopped with a failure to breed in 2009.

National significance

The colony became a key feature of the avifauna of the Dee estuary and nationally. Common Tern colonies in Wales are restricted to Anglesey and Shotton, the latter being by far the largest. It was in the top five colonies in the UK, accounting for up to 5% of the British population. Shotton also had relatively high productivity, regularly fledging more than one chick per pair, compared to productivity for the UK of 0.3 – 0.8 chicks per pair (Source: Seabird Monitoring Programme (jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-2895)). That importance is reflected in its status as an interest feature in both the Dee Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) and Shotton Lagoons and Reedbeds SSSI which carry conservation objectives to maintain the feature in favourable condition. Common Tern became an amber-listed species of conservation concern because of the localisation of its population, at least half of the UK breeding birds being found in ten or fewer sites; that status is confirmed in Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (Eaton et al, 2015).

Abandonment of the Shotton colony

Abandonment of long-established tern colonies occurs irregularly but is not exceptional. At Shotton, the colony had previously failed once before, in 1990, but on that occasion birds had started to breed, laying 715 eggs by 27th May. However the colony was abandoned in June; examination showed that eggs had not been incubated to embryo stage. Research showed that other tern colonies in the Irish Sea had been affected and there had been a widespread collapse of small fish numbers.

In 2009, parties of up to 70 terns visited the islands between mid-April and mid-May but few nest scrapes were made and only four eggs were laid. MRG considered that one year of failure to breed was of concern but not alarm. In 2010, up to 500 adults returned and appeared to be settling on the islands. However by 22nd May they had disappeared; inspection of the islands showed 150 scrapes but only one egg had been laid. Birds appeared keen to breed but conditions in the Dee estuary were not favourable. The closest colony, Seaforth at the mouth of the Mersey estuary, struggled for an entirely different reason – birds nested but severe overcrowding following an influx of birds from the Dee in the last week of May resulted in the loss of many eggs and a greatly reduced number of fledged young (White S, personal communication 2010). Checks at other tern colonies in north Wales showed that those colonies had successful seasons in both 2009 and 2010. That set the alarm bells ringing!

Possible reasons for the abandonment

Analysis of conditions at the nesting islands found no material change over the previous five years but assessment of the wider environment of the Dee estuary was more challenging. Four factors were examined:

- *Water quality*: monitoring of the estuary is carried out regularly to fulfil the Water Framework Directive and Shellfish Waters Directive, alongside opportunistic reporting of apparent incidents. No algal blooms or major pollution incidents were recorded in 2008-10 and, generally, water quality is higher now than three decades ago.
- *Fish*: the Dee estuary is an important fish nursery for many species and usually a good source of small fish, the preferred prey of Common Terns. Liverpool Bay area is an important spawning ground for sandeel *Ammodytidae* (Ellis et al, 2012) but no data are available to show if, and when, the sandeel population in the Dee estuary declined. One species, *Ammodytes tobianus*, is often found in estuaries and spawns in the autumn.
- *Dredging operations*: fish can be affected by increasing turbidity or changing the nature of sedimentary deposits in spawning grounds. Dredging occurs at two locations. (i) At Broughton, six kilometres upstream from Shotton, where, since 2007, a small amount of material is dredged daily and deposited immediately back into the river using a spraying action known as “rainbowing”. Monitoring reports indicate that there is no effect on turbidity 200m downstream from the operation; (ii) a much larger operation at Mostyn Docks removes material from the port access channel and deposits it in Mostyn Deep. Up to 2009, the channel could be dredged to two metres below chart datum (CD); consent was granted in 2010 to dredge to four metres below CD but had not been implemented in 2011. Dredgings mainly comprise coarse-grained sandy material.
- *Flood waters*: in exceptional circumstances, floods can lead to scouring of the channel leading into the estuary. The very wet weather in 2007, with rainfall totals in the Dee valley 250% above average, created those conditions.

The most probable cause for the failure to breed was the lack of available food within a reasonable distance of the tern colony, although the reason is not clear.

Looking back, the warning signs were there. Whilst the number of apparently occupied nests rose 55% from 491 in 2000 to 762 in 2007, productivity fell significantly:

- the mean clutch size declined from 2.65 eggs in 2000 to 2.23 in 2008; and
- from 2000 onwards, the five-year average chicks per pair index fell below 1.34, the baseline specified in the Dee Estuary SPA that needs to be met to maintain favourable condition status.



Hoping for a recovery

So was there any cause for optimism? Three characteristics of Common Terns provided some: they are long-lived, many surviving for more than 20 years; breeding adults tend to be loyal to their colony, returning each year; and adults choose not to breed if they are not in good condition – they would rather avoid the stress and return the following year.

5: Clutch of three eggs about to hatch (D Norman)

Waiting and watching

Only natural processes would determine whether or not sustainable fisheries could re-emerge. The nesting islands were repaired and weeds cleared ready for potential breeding. But MRG wanted to learn more about Common Tern behaviour in the estuary and at the colony, to be achieved by conducting boat and land-based surveys across the estuary and by installing cameras capable of recording day and night-time activity on the nesting islands. The results are summarised in table 1.

In 2011 and 2012 courtship displays and mating were observed but birds spent long periods away from the colony loafing on sandbanks. Reassuringly, the terns used the nesting islands for roosting in 2012 but fish must not have been abundant enough to encourage breeding.

That changed in 2013 when at least 200 pairs nested again. However predation by Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes*, the first case ever recorded at Shotton, meant we had to wait for another year for success. Fox-deterrent fencing was erected around each nesting island in the winter 2013/14 to prevent further attacks.



6: Working party from Dee Wildfowlers helping to erect fox-deterrent fencing (P Coffey)

Table 1: Common Tern activity in the Dee estuary and at Shotton, 2011-14

| Year | Estimated population (individuals) | Average foraging distance from Shotton | Period present | Activity at Shotton |
|------|------------------------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| 2011 | 500+ | 7.0 km | 25/4-17/5 02/6-05/6 | Sporadic visits only. Maximum of 150 terns on 05/6. No breeding recorded |
| 2012 | 400+ | 5.0 km | 08/5-12/6 | Night-time roosts on 20 out of 23 nights between 21/5-12/6. Peak activity at high tides greater than 8.5 metres. Daytime visits were of short duration. Fewer than 10 eggs laid. |
| 2013 | 400+ | 4.5 km | 19/5 01/6-16/8 | Nesting on all three islands. Red Fox raided the colony on 16/06 – all nests abandoned. Approximately 250 adults stayed but only 40 new nests started. Second visit by Red Fox. Colony abandoned except for two pairs feeding chicks. Two chicks ringed and fledged. |
| 2014 | 450-500 | 3.0 km | 30/5-01/9 | Nesting on all three islands. No predation. Estimates of 605 eggs yielding 550 chicks, of which 494 were ringed and 445 fledged. Foraging activity by adults with chicks to feed monitored (see below). |

Foraging distances for Common Terns are important because, unlike most other seabirds, they do not collect multiple prey items in their bills or gullets; they return with just one item. Recent studies suggest the average foraging distance for Common Tern is 4.5 ± 3.2 km SD (Thaxter et al, 2012). The average foraging location shown in table 1 represents the distance from Shotton. In 2011-12 birds were loafing on sandbanks closer to the feeding areas and chose not to fly to the nesting islands; in later years, as the availability of prey items improved, the average distance shortened from 7.0 km in 2011 to 3.0 km in 2014.

Monitoring (boat survey and land-based observations) in 2014 showed that feeding activity was concentrated within 5 km of the colony, depending on the state of the tide. At high tide, intensive feeding could be observed by the Flint bridge and the jetty, within 500m of the colony, and birds were recorded regularly upstream from the colony for the first time since 2008. Only one tern was recorded feeding more than eight kilometres from Shotton. The success rate of terns hunting for prey was very high: it was generally more than 50%, and two sessions observing at slack water on the high tide under the Flint bridge recorded success rates as high as 75%. Terns dived for most prey items but occasionally (<10%) birds would take prey from the surface. Once they had captured their prey, they immediately departed for the colony.

A strong recovery

After four blank years with no attempted breeding, and one false start in 2013 disrupted by Red Fox predation, 2014 finally brought success. Fortunately breeding conditions were excellent – benign weather, no predation and abundant prey items enabled 445 chicks to fledge. No accurate nest counts were made during the breeding season but calculations against a variety of assumptions show that there were 420-500 breeding birds with the chick per pair index at 1.80-2.15, well above the 1.34 threshold. MRG will continue to survey the Dee estuary and monitor breeding performance, checking for those warning signs that the colony is under stress again. Let's hope that "our" colony, now in its 45th year, will prosper for many years to come!

Acknowledgements

The resolute support of the landowners (initially British Steel and currently Tata Steel UK) has been fundamental to the success of the Shotton colony; they have facilitated each stage in its development and contribute to on-going maintenance and security of the islands. Special thanks to Steve Hughes for his prodigious efforts over the last few years to restore tern breeding.

MRG also wish to thank Natural Resources Wales (NRW) for their financial support and Dee Wildfowlers and Wetland Management Club for work maintaining and fencing the islands. Matthew Murphy (NRW), Keith Marland (Marland Marine Services) and Kenny McNiffe (MRG) helped with boat surveys. Dr Euan Dunn (RSPB) gave helpful advice and support and Alan Winstone and Dave Thorpe (Environment Agency Wales) facilitated provision of water quality data. Finally, thanks to MRG colleagues, past and present, who, over the years, have dedicated enormous amounts of time and effort to ensure Common Terns thrived at Shotton.

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7: Recently hatched chick with second chick breaking through the egg shell (H Pulsford)

RECORDS SECRETARY'S REPORT

Bob Harris

The first winter period for 2014 was the stormiest in twenty years with rainfall at 165% of the five-year average resulting in flooding across much of the UK. Temperatures were above the expected mean with winter 1.5°C above and March /April being one or two degrees above. After a wet May, rainfall in June and July was below average. Mild winter temperatures helped resident birds survive but rain affected early breeding attempts. For migrants returning to the UK, another poor year was indicated.

Following on from a very poor year in 2013 (82 birds ringed), local Barn Owls followed the national trend with an increase to 574 birds ringed – an increase of 700%! Tawny Owl and Little Owl also had good years with the Group catching 19 Little Owl (up 70%) and Tawny Owl up over 350% with 42 birds ringed. Kestrel had a reasonable year with 99 new birds ringed compared to 44 in 2013; they also passed 1500 birds now ringed by the Group. Peregrine, Hobby, Sparrowhawk and Buzzard, as a selection of other raptors, all returned average results for individuals captured each year.

Several species had good years compared to the recent past. A new duck trap at Woolston brought 45 Teal, the largest catch since 1991, and Black-headed Gull with a total of 123 was the largest total since 203 adults were cannon-netted in 1998. The Common Tern colony at Shotton continues to improve following the failure of recent years with only two birds in 2013 and now 494 this year. Grey Wagtail had a good year: pulli were ringed at Pandy and Llanarmon and the use of a new sound-lure helped the capture of predominantly juveniles on autumn passage at six other sites, bringing the group's total for the year to 42 – the highest since 1971 – and passed 1000 birds ringed for this species.

The August captures of three Green Sandpipers at Woolston returned this species to the annual totals since its last presence in 2003. Whilst that was welcome, it is disappointing to note that the Group ringed only nine waders in total, a far cry from the hundreds ringed annually in the first three decades of the Group. Pied Flycatcher numbers continue to increase from a low point in 2011. This year 589 birds were ringed, an increase of 29.7% since 2011, but nowhere near the total of 808 ringed in 2008. The Group never catch many Tree Pipits so the single bird caught at Woolston in August prevented another blank year. Equally newsworthy was the record number of 383 Meadow Pipits ringed, more than double the previous record of 177 in 2013.

Ringing thresholds of note were reached for nine species. Stock Dove breached 400 with 405 now ringed while Woodpigeon (3140), Collared Dove (1012), House Martin (3014), Redwing (6138) and Bullfinch (6105) all passed appropriate thousand totals. Blackcap (15,000), Chiffchaff (12,000) and Siskin (10,000) all passed the respective thousand barriers.

No new species were ringed in 2014 but an interesting sub-species was: the Barn Owl *Tyto alba guttata*, which features on the cover and is examined in a separate report (pp 3-8).

Within the year's Top Ten there were no additions and losses, simply a changing of order. Blackcap, Swallow, Chiffchaff and Goldfinch moved up in the table, Blackcap by five places, while Greenfinch, Reed Warbler and Siskin all moved down - with Siskin being the biggest mover. Last year 60% of the yearly total was contained within the Top Ten, from 18460 birds ringed, while this year the Top Ten made up 57.9% of the total from 21051 birds ringed.

Controls and recoveries generated from MRG activity within the year are presented in a separate report. Fourteen Group-ringed birds were controlled overseas, mainly from EU countries with

one to Russia (a late notification of a Teal ringed in 1979 shot in Russia in 1984); while movements in the opposite direction only revealed four foreign-ringed birds recovered or controlled by the group. These were a Woodcock from Poland, a Black-headed Gull from Finland, a Chiffchaff from Spain and a Goldfinch from France.

Every year the Group recaptures up to 5,000 birds already wearing MRG rings; an analysis of data for 2013 and 2014 includes retrap information for 45 species and local movements for nineteen species (see “Selected retraps and local movements 2013-14” pp 51-62).



An overwintering male Blackcap (Photo: P Coffey). Blackcap was the third most-numerous species ringed by MRG in 2014.

GRAND TOTALS 2014

| Species | Adult | Pullus | Total |
|---------|-------|--------|-------|
| 85 | 16796 | 4255 | 21051 |

GRAND TOTAL SINCE 1954

| Species | Total |
|---------|--------|
| 200 | 788059 |

TOP TEN SPECIES RINGED IN 2014

| Species | Number ringed | % of yearly total |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Blue Tit | 2746 | 13.0 |
| Great Tit | 1703 | 8.0 |
| Blackcap | 1325 | 6.3 |
| Swallow | 1080 | 5.1 |
| Chiffchaff | 1053 | 5.0 |
| Greenfinch | 984 | 4.7 |
| Reed Warbler | 888 | 4.2 |
| Goldfinch | 838 | 4.0 |
| Siskin | 807 | 3.8 |
| Chaffinch | 764 | 3.6 |
| Totals | 12188 | 57.9 |

Ringing Totals 2014

Nomenclature and taxonomy based on BTO Ringing reports

| Species | Adult | Pullus | Total | Total since 1954 |
|----------------------|-------|--------|-------|------------------|
| Mute Swan | | | | 762 |
| Whooper Swan | | | | 1 |
| Greylag Goose | | | | 1 |
| Canada Goose | | | | 164 |
| Shelduck | | | | 75 |
| Mandarin Duck | | | | 10 |
| Gadwall | | | | 7 |
| Teal | 45 | | 45 | 1672 |
| Mallard | 28 | | 28 | 1210 |
| Pintail | | | | 40 |
| Garganey | | | | 6 |
| Shoveler | | | | 8 |
| Tufted Duck | 1 | | 1 | 4 |
| Red-legged Partridge | | | | 1 |
| Grey Partridge | | | | 13 |
| Common Pheasant | | | | 1 |
| Fulmar | | | | 2 |
| Manx Shearwater | | | | 1 |
| Storm Petrel | | | | 21 |
| Cormorant | | | | 228 |
| Shag | | | | 109 |
| Grey Heron | | | | 1693 |
| Little Grebe | | | | 17 |
| Great Crested Grebe | | | | 3 |
| Marsh Harrier | | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| Hen Harrier | | | | 1 |
| Goshawk | | | | 3 |
| Sparrowhawk | 16 | | 16 | 1553 |
| Common Buzzard | 1 | 15 | 16 | 259 |
| Rough-legged Buzzard | | | | 1 |
| Quail | | | | 1 |
| Water Rail | 2 | | 2 | 158 |
| Spotted Crake | | | | 4 |
| Corncrake | | | | 1 |
| Moorhen | 16 | | 16 | 968 |
| Coot | 1 | | 1 | 65 |
| Avocet | | | | 6 |
| Oystercatcher | | 1 | 1 | 2688 |
| Golden Plover | | | | 186 |
| Grey Plover | | | | 31 |
| Lapwing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2883 |
| Little Ringed Plover | | | | 175 |
| Ringed Plover | | 1 | 1 | 1314 |
| Whimbrel | | | | 6 |
| Curlew | | | | 351 |
| Black-tailed Godwit | | | | 19 |
| Bar-tailed Godwit | | | | 193 |
| Turnstone | | | | 1127 |

| Species | Adult | Pullus | Total | Total since 1954 |
|--------------------------|-------|--------|-------|------------------|
| Knot | | | | 5490 |
| Ruff | | | | 77 |
| Curlew Sandpiper | | | | 44 |
| Sanderling | | | | 3974 |
| Dunlin | | | | 22618 |
| Purple Sandpiper | | | | 1 |
| Little Stint | | | | 111 |
| Buff-breasted Sandpiper | | | | 1 |
| Pectoral Sandpiper | | | | 4 |
| Common Sandpiper | | | | 127 |
| Green Sandpiper | 3 | | 3 | 12 |
| Spotted Redshank | | | | 1 |
| Greenshank | | | | 13 |
| Wood Sandpiper | | | | 7 |
| Redshank | | | | 4128 |
| Jack Snipe | | | | 108 |
| Woodcock | | | | 11 |
| Snipe | 1 | | 1 | 637 |
| Puffin | | | | 42 |
| Razorbill | | | | 57 |
| Guillemot | | | | 242 |
| Little Tern | | 14 | 14 | 1144 |
| Black Tern | | | | 3 |
| Sandwich Tern | | | | 37 |
| Common Tern | | 494 | 494 | 17968 |
| Roseate Tern | | | | 1376 |
| Arctic Tern | | | | 1583 |
| Kittiwake | | | | 276 |
| Black-headed Gull | | 123 | 123 | 6302 |
| Little Gull | | | | 1 |
| Common Gull | | | | 79 |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | | | | 1619 |
| Herring Gull | 1 | | 1 | 5912 |
| Yellow-legged Gull | | | | 2 |
| Iceland Gull | | | | 1 |
| Great Black-backed Gull | | | | 287 |
| Stock Dove | 8 | 21 | 29 | 405 |
| Woodpigeon | 26 | 118 | 144 | 3140 |
| Collared Dove | 32 | 3 | 35 | 1012 |
| Turtle Dove | | | | 13 |
| Cuckoo | | | | 37 |
| Barn Owl | 58 | 516 | 574 | 3668 |
| Little Owl | 6 | 13 | 19 | 234 |
| Tawny Owl | 8 | 34 | 42 | 460 |
| Long-eared Owl | | | | 53 |
| Short-eared Owl | | | | 8 |
| Nightjar | | | | 5 |
| Swift | | | | 7757 |
| Hoopoe | | | | 1 |
| Kingfisher | 11 | | 11 | 262 |
| Green Woodpecker | | | | 44 |

| Species | Adult | Pullus | Total | Total since 1954 |
|---------------------------|-------|--------|-------|------------------|
| Great Spotted Woodpecker | 63 | | 63 | 1315 |
| Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | | | | 21 |
| Kestrel | 5 | 94 | 99 | 1551 |
| Merlin | | | | 12 |
| Hobby | | 2 | 2 | 7 |
| Peregrine Falcon | | 6 | 6 | 84 |
| Woodchat Shrike | | | | 1 |
| Magpie | 57 | 1 | 58 | 1210 |
| Jay | 34 | | 34 | 963 |
| Jackdaw | 44 | 25 | 69 | 483 |
| Rook | 1 | | 1 | 615 |
| Carrion Crow | | | | 435 |
| Raven | | | | 31 |
| Goldcrest | 477 | | 477 | 8502 |
| Firecrest | 1 | | 1 | 85 |
| Blue Tit | 1820 | 926 | 2746 | 88467 |
| Great Tit | 1055 | 648 | 1703 | 47622 |
| Coal Tit | 107 | 17 | 124 | 6734 |
| Willow Tit | 44 | | 44 | 1430 |
| Marsh Tit | 2 | | 2 | 176 |
| Bearded Tit | | | | 42 |
| Woodlark | | | | 1 |
| Skylark | | | | 831 |
| Horned Lark | | | | 1 |
| Sand Martin | 44 | | 44 | 18969 |
| Swallow | 751 | 329 | 1080 | 78273 |
| House Martin | 73 | | 73 | 3014 |
| Cetti's Warbler | 18 | | 18 | 53 |
| Long-tailed Tit | 402 | | 402 | 12341 |
| Arctic Warbler | | | | 1 |
| Pallas's Leaf Warbler | | | | 2 |
| Yellow-browed Warbler | | | | 7 |
| Western Bonelli's Warbler | | | | 1 |
| Wood Warbler | | | | 460 |
| Chiffchaff | 1047 | 6 | 1053 | 12109 |
| Willow Warbler | 290 | 6 | 296 | 18656 |
| Blackcap | 1320 | 5 | 1325 | 15667 |
| Garden Warbler | 57 | | 57 | 1542 |
| Barred Warbler | | | | 1 |
| Lesser Whitethroat | 7 | | 7 | 715 |
| Whitethroat | 325 | 9 | 334 | 8999 |
| Grasshopper Warbler | 5 | | 5 | 578 |
| Icterine Warbler | | | | 1 |
| Aquatic Warbler | | | | 3 |
| Sedge Warbler | 327 | 2 | 329 | 13959 |
| Blyth's Reed Warbler | | | | 1 |
| Marsh Warbler | | | | 5 |
| Reed Warbler | 885 | 3 | 888 | 19325 |
| Waxwing | | | | 86 |
| Nuthatch | 29 | 18 | 47 | 2074 |
| Treecreeper | 28 | 10 | 38 | 1144 |

| Species | Adult | Pullus | Total | Total since 1954 |
|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|------------------|
| Wren | 429 | 1 | 430 | 12749 |
| Starling | 275 | 1 | 276 | 17939 |
| Dipper | 1 | 11 | 12 | 530 |
| Ring Ouzel | | | | 54 |
| Blackbird | 306 | 53 | 359 | 30727 |
| Fieldfare | | | | 1522 |
| Song Thrush | 76 | 12 | 88 | 6942 |
| Redwing | 305 | | 305 | 6138 |
| Mistle Thrush | | | | 867 |
| Spotted Flycatcher | 1 | 15 | 16 | 587 |
| Robin | 543 | 23 | 566 | 15887 |
| Nightingale | | | | 2 |
| Bluethroat | | | | 3 |
| Red-breasted Flycatcher | | | | 2 |
| Pied Flycatcher | 80 | 509 | 589 | 23736 |
| Black Redstart | | | | 1 |
| Redstart | 8 | 36 | 44 | 1342 |
| Whinchat | | | | 1695 |
| Stonechat | | | | 293 |
| Wheatear | | | | 1696 |
| Dunnock | 317 | 11 | 328 | 13661 |
| House Sparrow | 126 | 49 | 175 | 3597 |
| Tree Sparrow | 1 | 40 | 41 | 6276 |
| Yellow Wagtail | | | | 1881 |
| Grey Wagtail | 32 | 10 | 42 | 1000 |
| Pied/White Wagtail | 5 | | 5 | 2568 |
| Tree Pipit | 1 | | 1 | 122 |
| Meadow Pipit | 382 | 1 | 383 | 2960 |
| Rock Pipit | | | | 116 |
| Water Pipit | | | | 1 |
| Brambling | 5 | | 5 | 7808 |
| Chaffinch | 755 | 9 | 764 | 28696 |
| Hawfinch | | | | 1 |
| Bullfinch | 276 | | 276 | 6105 |
| Greenfinch | 984 | | 984 | 50863 |
| Linnet | 38 | | 38 | 11971 |
| Twite | | | | 86 |
| Lesser Redpoll | 159 | | 159 | 1964 |
| Common Redpoll | 2 | | 2 | 8 |
| Redpoll sp | 1 | | 1 | 3411 |
| Arctic Redpoll | | | | 1 |
| Crossbill | | | | 36 |
| Goldfinch | 829 | 9 | 838 | 12358 |
| Serin | | | | 1 |
| Siskin | 807 | | 807 | 10219 |
| Snow Bunting | | | | 37 |
| Yellowhammer | 3 | | 3 | 1260 |
| Little Bunting | | | | 1 |
| Reed Bunting | 466 | | 466 | 19981 |
| Corn Bunting | | | | 304 |
| Totals | 16796 | 4255 | 21051 | 788059 |

SELECTED CONTROLS AND RECOVERIES 2014

Peter Coffey

A selection of 134 records from 38 species is shown below. Fourteen MRG-ringed birds were recorded from seven foreign countries: one each from Netherlands and Russia, two each from Belgium, Spain and Sweden, and three each from France and Portugal. Only four foreign-ringed birds were recorded or controlled here: one each from Finland, France, Poland and Spain. Seven old records notified to the Group in the last twelve months have been included. Five relate to late foreign recoveries: a fabulous Teal recovery in deepest Russia dating back to 1984, a Black-headed Gull record from Sweden dating back to 1994, a Blackcap to Belgium in 2011 and, in 2013, a Blackbird to the Netherlands and a Spanish-ringed Chiffchaff. The remaining late records are of UK movements of Blackbird (2007) and Barn Owl (2012).

The symbols and conventions used are given below:

Sex: M = Male F = Female

Age when ringed (Euring Code):

- 1 Pullus (nestling or chick)
- 2 Fully grown – year of hatching unknown
- 3 Definitely hatched during the calendar year of ringing
- 3J Definitely hatched during the calendar year of ringing and still completely or partially in juvenile body plumage
- 4 Hatched before current calendar year – exact year unknown
- 5 Definitely hatched during the previous calendar year
- 6 Hatched before last calendar year – exact year unknown
- 7 Definitely hatched two years before year of ringing
- 8 Hatched more than two calendar years before year of ringing

Condition at recovery:

- X found dead
- XF found freshly dead or dying
- XL found dead – not recent
- + shot or intentionally killed by man
- +F shot or intentionally killed by man – fresh
- SR sick or injured – released with ring
- V alive and probably healthy, caught and released but not by a ringer
- VV alive and probably healthy, ring or colour marks read in the field but not by ringer
- R caught and released by ringer
- B caught and released by ringer – nesting
- RR alive and probably healthy, ring or colour marks read in the field by ringer
- // condition on finding totally unknown
- © bird caught at breeding colony
- ® bird caught at roost

Abbreviations used for foreign ringing schemes:

- | | | | |
|-----|----------------|-----|-------------------|
| ESI | Spain, Madrid | FRP | France, Paris |
| PLG | Poland, Gdansk | SFH | Finland, Helsinki |

Mute Swan

| | | | | |
|--------|----|------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| ZY6421 | 5M | 18.04.2012 | Marine Lake, Southport, Merseyside | |
| | RR | 29.04.2014 | Spike Island, Widnes, Halton | 39 km 151° |

Seven Mute Swan movements were recorded in 2014 and this was the longest. Others were between 11-28 km, mostly along the Mersey between Liverpool and Woolston and two from Spike Island, Widnes to Deeside Industrial Park, Flintshire and Dunham Massey, Altrincham, Greater Manchester.

Canada Goose

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| 5272512 | 4M | 02.07.2013 | Bowness-on-Windermere, Cumbria | |
| | R | 28.06.2014 | Bowness-on-Windermere, Cumbria | |
| | RR | 14.09.2014 | Hale, near Runcorn, Cheshire | 115 km 182° |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| 5272867 | 4M | 28.06.2014 | Bowness-on-Windermere, Cumbria | |
| | RR | 28.11.2014 | Sefton Park, Merseyside | 112 km 182° |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| 5274067 | 4F | 29.06.2014 | Bowness-on-Windermere, Cumbria | |
| | RR | 28.11.2014 | Sefton Park, Merseyside | 112 km 182° |

These birds were part of a flock of c.1000 birds ringed by the RSPCA whilst moulting at Windermere.

Teal

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|---|-------------|
| EH75056 | 3M | 05.09.1979 | Hale, Widnes, Cheshire | |
| | +F | 10.06.1984 | Near Salekhard, River Poluy 66°25'N 66°47'E Yamal-Nenets A.O. RUSSIA | 4089 km 70° |

This recovery arrived with no explanation for the late record. This appears to be by far the most easterly, and among the most northerly (almost on the Arctic Circle), of all MRG Teal recoveries: see map on MRG website. The BTO recoveries map (<http://blx1.bto.org/ring/countyrec/resultsall/rec1840all.htm>) shows it in the top ten most northeasterly Teal recoveries.

Buzzard

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| MA17098 | 1 (2/2) | 27.06.2012 | Waverton, Cheshire | |
| | VV | 14.04.2014 | Grindleford, Derbyshire | 79 km 81° |

Curlew

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| FC79566 | 1 | 09.06.2010 | Garstang, Lancashire | |
| | XF | 13.01.2014 | Liverpool Airport, Merseyside | 66km 190° |

Woodcock

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|---|------------|
| PLG | 3 | 15.10.2011 | Stacja "Wicie", 54°30'N 16°28'E Zachodniopomorskie, POLAND | |
| FN95622 | +F | 11.01.2014 | Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire | 912 km 93° |

Black-headed Gull

| | | | | |
|----------|----|------------|--|-------------|
| SFH | 1 | 12.06.2012 | Aukkokari, Mynamaki 60°37'N 21°49'E Turku-Pori, FINLAND | |
| ST286977 | XF | 13.01.2014 | Pickerings Pasture, Halton | 1691km 242° |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|--|-------------|
| EN28351 | 5 | 19.11.1991 | Rixton, Warrington | |
| | +F | 15.07.1994 | Mjallby Ljunga, Mjallby, 56°03'N 14°44'E Blekinge, SWEDEN | 1144 km 76° |

Another record submitted late to the BTO - this bird was shot at a fur farm.

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|--|-----------|
| ES29945 | 6 | 09.11.1996 | Moss Side Farm, Risley, Warrington, | |
| | VV | 07.03.2014 | Pennington Flash, Leigh, Gr Manchester | 6 km 339° |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| EY03437 | 1 | 10.06.2013 | Cerney Wick, Gloucestershire | |
| | RR | 26.06.2014 | Sefton Park, Liverpool, Merseyside | 202 km 340° |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|---|--------------|
| EY53840 | 1 | 20.07.2014 | Shotton Steel Works, Flintshire | |
| | +F | 26.12.2014 | Cavado Estuary, Esposende, 41°32'N 8°47'W | |
| | | | Braga, PORTUGAL | 1368 km 199° |

Most of the Group's Black-headed Gull recoveries come from the north or east so this was a pleasant surprise. The only previous record of an MRG-ringed pullus moving south was a bird ringed at Llyn y Tarw 10.6.62 and found dead at Brest, Finistere, France on 23.1.63. An adult ringed at Risley on 9.11.96 and seen at Ain in central France (46° 15'N, 5°13'E) on 5.12.1998 is the only adult to have moved south.

Herring Gull

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| GF03724 | 3 | 22.10.1994 | Moss Side Farm, Risley, Warrington | |
| | VV | 10.07.2014 | Prestatyn, Denbighshire | 63 km 258° |

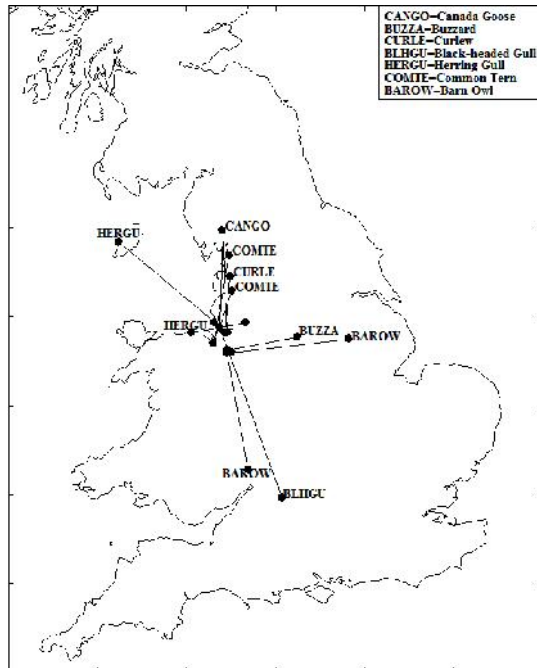
| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|---|-------------|
| GR48894 | 3 | 30.11.2012 | Peel Bay, Peel, Isle of Man | |
| | RR | 26.09.2014 | New Brighton, Wirral (also on 23.10.14) | 140 km 129° |

Common Tern

Sixteen Common Terns were ringed as pulli at Shotton Steel Works and sighted at Preston Docks breeding colony, 63 km 19°:

| Ring No | Date ringed | Date sighted |
|---------|-------------|--------------|
| SV41223 | 18.07.2000 | 23.07.2014 |
| SV82387 | 23.06.2002 | 06.07.2014 |
| SV82457 | 23.06.2002 | 29.06.2014 |
| SV92203 | 22.06.2003 | 29.06.2014 |
| SV92006 | 22.06.2003 | 01.07.2014 |
| SV92804 | 20.06.2004 | 01.07.2014 |
| SR24152 | 08.08.2004 | 26.05.2014 |
| SR24631 | 26.06.2005 | 27.07.2014 |
| SR24663 | 26.06.2005 | 27.07.2014 |
| SR24676 | 26.06.2005 | 29.06.2014 |
| SR24922 | 26.06.2005 | 27.07.2014 |
| SR42192 | 24.07.2005 | 26.05.2014 |
| SR65103 | 08.07.2007 | 03.08.2014 |
| SR50686 | 24.07.2007 | 29.06.2014 |
| SR65644 | 29.06.2008 | 29.06.2014 |
| SR65773 | 13.07.2008 | 27.07.2014 |

UK non-passerine movements > 60km



| | | | | |
|---------|---|------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| SV62006 | 1 | 06.08.2000 | Shotton Steel Works, Flintshire | |
| | X | 24.08.2014 | Near Bolton-le-Sands, Lancashire | 102 km 10° |

Woodpigeon

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| FA04902 | 6 | 23.02.2008 | Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside | |
| | XL | 12.12.2014 | Hargrave Hall Farm, Merseyside | 12 km 157° |

Barn Owl

| | | | | |
|---------|----------|------------|------------------------------|------------|
| GR72681 | 1F (6/6) | 03.06.2014 | Near Deansgreen, Warrington | |
| | XF | 20.12.2014 | Charnock Richard, Lancashire | 33 km 336° |

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| GR12912 | 1 (5/5) | 15.06.2011 | Near Laughterton, Lincolnshire | |
| | R (=F) | 09.06.2012 | Oakfield Farm, near Huxley, Cheshire | 132 km 264° |

| | | | | |
|---------|-------------------|--------------------------|---|-------------|
| GR00719 | 1 (5/5) R (=F) | 11.06.2011 20.05.2014 | Betty Daw's Wood, Four Oaks, Gloucestershire Golborne Hall, Cheshire | 132 km 350° |
| GC78802 | 1M R | 30.06.2010 10.03.2014 | Dragons Lane, Sandbach, Cheshire Ince Marshes, Cheshire | 31 km 290° |
| GC78921 | 1F R | 01.07.2011 13.06.2014 | Shandon House Farm, Coppenhall, Cheshire Newhouse Fm, Manley, Cheshire | 27 km 315° |

A total of 38 Barn Owls were reported: 18 dead birds and 20 controls or retraps of live birds. See "Selected retraps and local movements 2013 and 2014" pp 51-62 for details of some local movements.

Tawny Owl

| | | | | |
|---------|---------------|--------------------------|--|-----------|
| GC51683 | 1 (1/1) XF | 27.05.2013 18.07.2014 | Pulford, Cheshire Cox Lane Farm, Rossett, Wrexham | 4 km 197° |
|---------|---------------|--------------------------|--|-----------|

Great Spotted Woodpecker

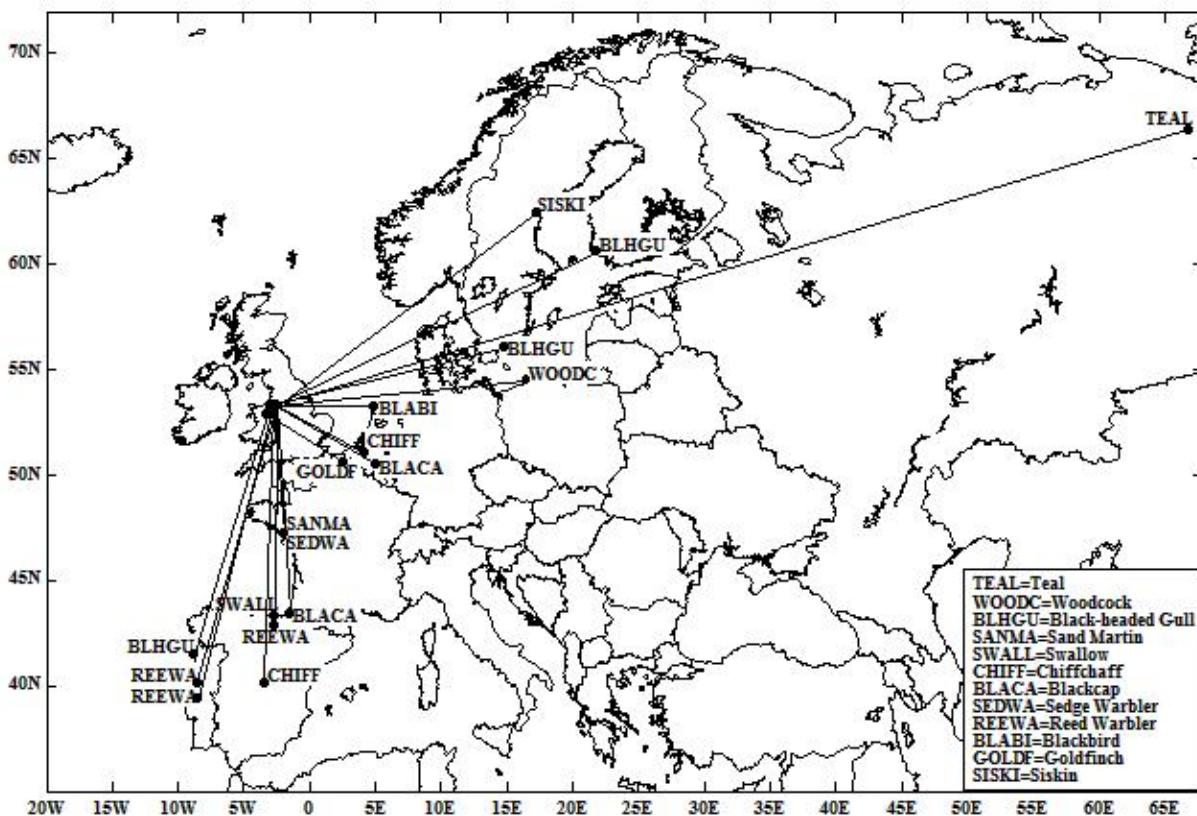
| | | | | |
|---------|----------|--------------------------|---|------------|
| RJ64567 | 4F XF | 23.12.2012 14.03.2014 | Shotton Steel Works, Flintshire Prees Higher Heath, Shropshire | 43 km 142° |
|---------|----------|--------------------------|---|------------|

The BTO Migration Atlas notes that 95% of all movements for this species are of distances less than 40km. This individual died after hitting a window.

Kestrel

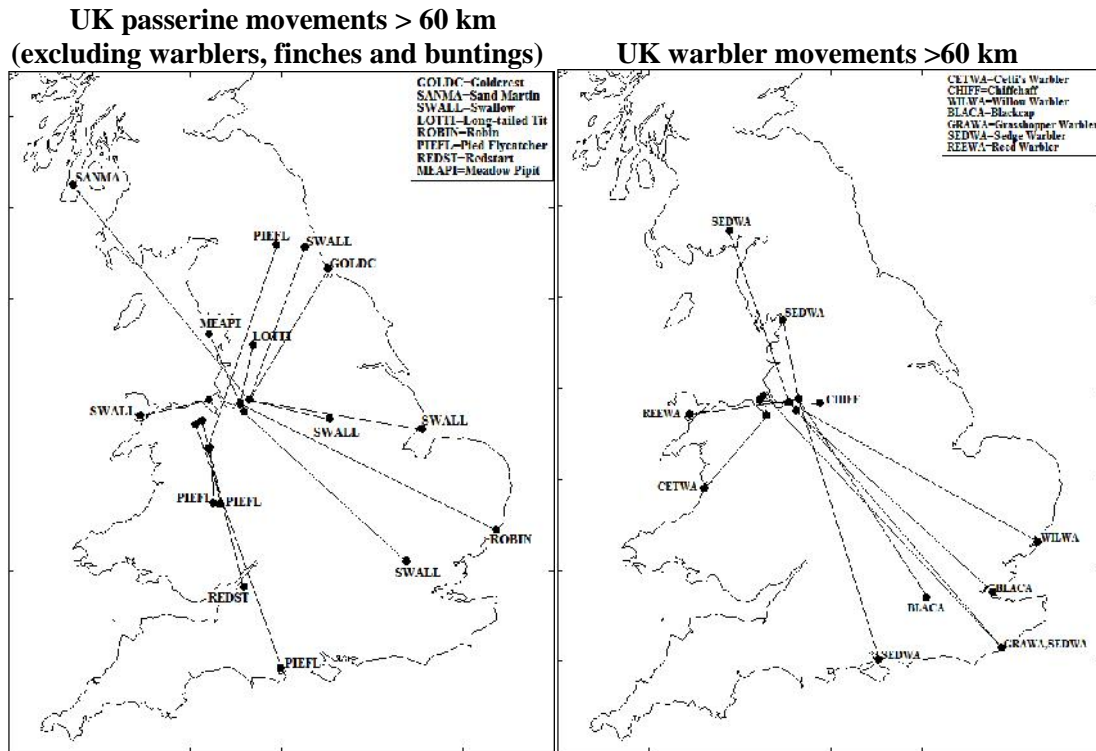
| | | | | |
|---------|-------------------|--------------------------|--|-----------|
| ET63078 | 1 (3/3) R (=M) | 02.06.2006 11.09.2014 | Meols, Wirral, Merseyside Hilbre Island, Wirral, Merseyside | 6 km 252° |
| EL65829 | 1 (5/5) XF | 01.06.2007 25.06.2014 | Near Hockenhull Hall, Cheshire Tarvin, Cheshire | 3 km 31° |

Foreign controls and recoveries



| | | | | |
|--|---------|------------|--|--------------|
| Magpie | | | | |
| ET63134 | 6M | 01.06.2006 | Poplar Hall Fm, Gatesheath, Cheshire | |
| | X | 26.11.2014 | Woolston, Warrington | 33 km 22° |
| Goldcrest | | | | |
| DRX983 | 3F | 15.10.2014 | The Headland, Hartlepool | |
| | R | 09.11.2014 | No.1 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | 169 km 212° |
| Potentially a Scandinavian bird that made landfall in Hartlepool after crossing the North Sea. | | | | |
| Sand Martin | | | | |
| Z174509 | 3 | 20.07.2014 | Calliburn Croft, Argyll and Bute (8 days) | |
| | R | 28.07.2014 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | 306 km 140° |
| D649043 | 3J | 06.08.2014 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire (20 days) | |
| | R | 26.08.2014 | Reserve du Massereau, Frossay, 47°14'N 1°56'W Loire-Atlantique FRANCE | 682 km 176° |
| Swallow | | | | |
| Y389959 | 3J | 24.09.2011 | Lamesley Sewage Works, Tyne and Wear | |
| | R (=F) | 05.09.2014 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | 180 km 200° |
| D647067 | 1 (5/5) | 17.07.2014 | New Hall Farm, near Hoylake, Merseyside | |
| | R | 19.09.2014 | Cors Ddyga, Llangefni, Isle of Anglesey | 78 km 257° |
| D141597 | 4 | 11.05.2014 | Near Warsop Vale, Nottinghamshire | |
| | R (=F) | 22.08.2014 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | 91km 283° |
| D646405 | 3 | 28.07.2014 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | |
| | R | 31.08.2014 | Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire | 193 km 90° |
| D645572 | 1 (5/5) | 06.06.2014 | Acton Bridge, Cheshire | |
| | R | 19.08.2014 | Rye Meads, Hertfordshire | 244 km 134° |
| D948040 | 3J | 04.08.2014 | No.1 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | |
| | R | 15.09.2014 | Gautegiz-Arteaga, 43°21'N 2°39'W Vizcaya, SPAIN | 1115 km 181° |
| Cetti's Warbler | | | | |
| Y568682 | 3JF | 26.08.2012 | Dyfi-Aber Leri NR, nr Borth, Ceredigion | |
| | R | 13.04.2014 | Shotton Steel Works, Flints (+ 18.05.14) | 105 km 39° |
| Long-tailed Tit | | | | |
| ETP053 | 2 | 11.10.2014 | New Laithe Farm, Newton, Lancashire | |
| | R | 16.11.2014 | Norton Priory, Runcorn, Cheshire | 69 km 193° |
| ETP056 | 2 | 11.10.2014 | New Laithe Farm, Newton, Lancashire | |
| | R | 16.11.2014 | Norton Priory, Runcorn, Cheshire | 69 km 193° |
| Chiffchaff | | | | |
| DJR034 | 3 | 22.09.2010 | Frodsham Marsh, Cheshire | |
| | XF | 16.05.2014 | Skelmersdale, Lancashire | 26 km 3° |
| DCV718 | 4M | 03.07.2013 | Newton, Wirral, Merseyside | |
| | R | 30.03.2014 | Nr Woodford, Gr Manchester (+27.04.14) | 66 km 92° |

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| EJY810 | 3J | 21.07.2014 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire | |
| | R | 05.10.2014 | Sint Amands, Antwerpen | |
| | | | 51°03'N 4°13'E BELGIUM | 535 km 112° |
| ESI | 5 | 23.03.2013 | Laguna de San Juan, Chinchon | 40°09'N 3°28'W |
| FX4309 | | | Madrid, SPAIN | |
| | R (=F) | 27.07.2013 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire | 1468 km 3° |



Willow Warbler

| | | | | |
|--------|-----|------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| EJY798 | 3JF | 20.07.2014 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire | |
| | R | 14.08.2014 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire | |
| | R | 31.08.2014 | Landguard Point, Felixstowe, Suffolk | 313 km 121° |

Blackcap

| | | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|---|--------------|
| D327472 | 3JF | 08.09.2013 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | |
| | R | 03.05.2014 | Queen Mary Reservoir, Surrey | 259 km 148° |
| D946623 | 3F | 21.09.2014 | Saltersford Locks, near Barnton, Cheshire | |
| | R | 02.10.2014 | High Halstow, Rochester, Kent | 294 km 134° |
| L871083 | 3JF | 26.07.2011 | Saltersford Locks, near Barnton, Cheshire | |
| | R | 23.09.2011 | Bierwort, Namur, 50° 33'N 5° 01'E | |
| | | | BELGIUM | 601 km 112° |
| Y384334 | 3JF | 08.08.2012 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | |
| | R | 26.07.2013 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | |
| | R | 25.09.2014 | Villefranche, 43°27'N 1°28'W Pyrénées-Atlantiques, FRANCE | |
| | | | | 1107 km 176° |

This bird is only the second MRG-ringed Blackcap reported from France.

Grasshopper Warbler

| | | | | |
|---------|-------|------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Y905766 | 3 | 06.08.2013 | Icklesham, East Sussex | |
| | R(=M) | 11.07.2014 | Leasowe, Wirral, Merseyside | 380 km 318° |

Sedge Warbler

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|---|-------------|
| D864617 | 4M | 24.05.2014 | Mains of Auchenfranco, Lochfoot, Dum & Gall | |
| | R | 31.05.2014 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire | 200 km 160° |

This bird was moving south in spring! Did it overshoot in its initial migration or had it settled in a breeding territory only to be washed out in a month when local rainfall was recorded at 158% of the long-term average? (Source: Climatological Observers Link, May 2014) We'll never know.

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|--|------------|
| D550514 | 3J | 24.07.2013 | Leighton Moss, near Silverdale, Lancashire | |
| | R | 16.08.2014 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | 89 km 169° |

| | | | | |
|---------|---|------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| D646739 | 3 | 15.08.2014 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | |
| | R | 23.08.2014 | Titchfield Haven, Fareham, Hampshire | 299 km 163° |

| | | | | |
|---------|-------|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Y912097 | 3 | 05.08.2012 | Icklesham, East Sussex | |
| | R(=M) | 12.06.2014 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire | 356 km 320° |

| | | | | |
|---------|---|------------|--|-------------|
| D645946 | 3 | 31.07.2014 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire | |
| | R | 30.08.2014 | Reserve du Massereau, Frossay, 47°14'N 1°56'W Loire-Atlantique FRANCE | 682 km 176° |

Reed Warbler

| | | | | |
|---------|--------|------------|---|-------------|
| Y155922 | 4 | 14.07.2012 | No.1 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | |
| | R (=M) | 05.07.2014 | Cors Ddyga, Llangefni, Isle of Anglesey | 120 km 262° |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|---|--------------|
| Y672606 | 3J | 08.08.2012 | Frodsham Marsh, Cheshire | |
| | XF | 13.04.2014 | Entroncamento, 39°27'N 8°28'W Santarem, PORTUGAL | 1599 km 196° |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|---|--------------|
| Y156486 | 3J | 13.08.2011 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | |
| | R | 22.08.2014 | Paul de Arzila, 40°10'N 8°33'W Coimbra, PORTUGAL | 1538 km 198° |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|--|--------------|
| D646084 | 3J | 12.07.2014 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | |
| | R | 31.08.2014 | Salburua, Vitoria-Gasteiz, 42°51'N 2°38'W Álava SPAIN | 1171 km 181° |

(Eleven other birds with movements of <30km were reported)

Blackbird

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|---|------------|
| CT63079 | 4M | 20.11.2010 | Brimstage, Wirral, Merseyside | |
| | R | 05.11.2013 | Reddingbootpad, 53°15'N 4°57'E Vlieland, NETHERLANDS | 532 km 91° |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| CL64269 | 3M | 13.10.2002 | Dales Brow, Swinton, Gr Manchester | |
| | R | 21.05.2007 | Meols, Wirral, Merseyside | 54 km 256° |

Robin

| | | | | |
|---------|---|------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| D649808 | 3 | 16.09.2014 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire | |
| | R | 12.10.2014 | Caldwell Hall Fm, Hollesley, Suffolk | 314 km 118° |

Pied Flycatcher

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|------------|--|-------------|
| X184925 | 1 (6/6) | 15.06.2012 | Linnel Hill, near Hexham, Northumberland | |
| | B (=F) | 09.06.2014 | Pandy, near Glyn Ceiriog, Wrexham | 244 km 134° |
| L412886 | 1 (6/6) | 15.06.2013 | Cefn Llwyni, Powys | |
| | R (=F) | 17.05.2014 | Nr Llanarmon-Yn-Ial, Denbighshire | 40 km 10° |
| Y159929 | 1 (7/7) | 05.06.2012 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham | |
| | R(=M) | 02.06.2014 | Selley Hall, near Purlogue, Shropshire | 62 km 175° |
| D328277 | 1 (5/5) | 01.06.2014 | Llewesog Hall, Prion, Denbighshire | |
| | XF | 23.07.2014 | Fleet's Corner, Poole, Dorset | 284 km 161° |

D328277 is one of very few records of MRG-ringed Pied Flycatchers (juveniles and adults) moving south on migration to Africa. Sadly, this bird didn't make it! There were seven other Pied Flycatcher movements of <25 km.

Redstart

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|------------|--|-----------------------------|
| L638592 | 1 (5/5) | 25.05.2014 | Glyn Arthur, near Llangwyfan, Denbighshire | |
| | XF | 30.08.2014 | Aztec Business Park, Bristol, S Glos. | 188 km 165° (Hit window) |

Meadow Pipit

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|--|------------|
| Z355081 | 3J | 16.09.2014 | South Walney, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria | |
| | R | 28.09.2014 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire | 84 km 156° |

Chaffinch

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Y670462 | 6F | 20.03.2013 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham | |
| | X | 13.05.2014 | Lazonby, Cumbria | 204 km 9° (Hit window) |
| D030094 | 6F | 31.03.2013 | Shotton Steel Works, Flintshire | |
| | XF | 17.05.2014 | Casterton Fell, Cumbria | 117 km 18° |

Bullfinch

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| L951822 | 3M | 26.12.2013 | Great Warford, Cheshire | |
| | R | 29.04.2014 | No.1 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | 19 km 301° |

A highly sedentary species, so this movement of 19 km is unusual. The BTO Migration Atlas notes that 80% of winter movements are of distances less than 5 km.

Greenfinch

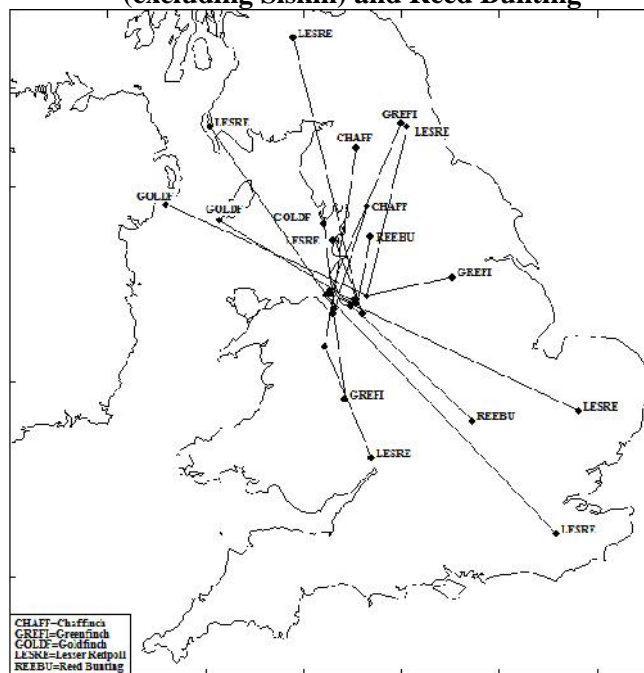
| | | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|--|------------|
| TL06786 | 3M | 01.10.2013 | Leasowe, Wirral, Merseyside | |
| | XF | 25.05.2014 | Newton, Northumberland | 188 km 24° |
| TP22142 | 3JM | 20.05.2014 | Woodlands, nr Doncaster, South Yorkshire | |
| | R | 13.12.2014 | No.1 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington | 91 km 259° |
| TR06928 | 3M | 23.12.2012 | Shotton Steel Works, Flintshire | |
| | XF | 26.11.2014 | Craven Arms, Shropshire | 89 km 171° |

Lesser Redpoll

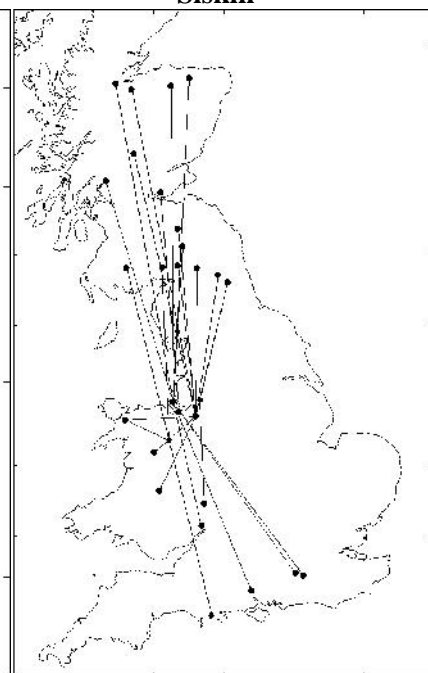
| | | | | |
|---------|--------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| D027240 | 3 | 10.11.2012 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire | |
| | R (=M) | 09.03.2014 | Damhead Farm, Carlisle, S Lanarkshire | 274 km 346° |
| | | (Also on 18.04, 20.04 and 02.05.2014) | | |
| D241060 | 6M | 14.05.2013 | Stranraer, Dumfries and Galloway | |
| | R | 16.04.2014 | Meols, Wirral, Merseyside | 209 km 144° |

| | | | | |
|---------|--------------|--------------------------|---|-------------|
| D327877 | 5M R | 29.03.2014 14.04.2014 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington Branch End, Stocksfield, Northumberland | 178 km 14° |
| L733098 | 6M R | 06.04.2013 08.03.2014 | Rossall School, Lancashire Sandiway, Cheshire | 82 km 159° |
| Y155779 | 5 R (=M) | 22.03.2012 28.02.2014 | No.1 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington Petre Crescent, Rishton, Lancashire | 42 km 11° |
| D323324 | 4F R (=M) | 23.11.2013 15.11.2014 | Water Lane Farm, Widnes, Merseyside Whixall & Fenn's Mosses, Wrexham | 53 km 176° |
| Y467574 | 3 R (=M) | 21.10.2011 24.03.2014 | Newent Woods, Glasshouse, Gloucestershire Llwynmawr, Wrexham | 124 km 337° |
| Y970454 | 6M R | 09.02.2013 16.04.2014 | Culford School, Suffolk Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside | 280 km 296° |
| D951840 | 5F R (=M) | 27.03.2014 16.04.2014 | Cardinal Close, Tonbridge, Kent Meols, Wirral, Merseyside | 338 km 317° |

**UK movements > 60 km for finches
(excluding Siskin) and Reed Bunting**



**UK movements > 60 km for
Siskin**



Goldfinch

| | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--|-------------|
| X309632 | 3F R | 06.10.2012 21.03.2014 | No.3 bed Woolston Eyes, Warrington Killough, Down N Ireland | 226 km 295° |
| Y859720 | 5M R(=F) (Wing = 75.5mm) | 02.05.2013 10.04.2014 | Calf of Man, Isle of Man Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Cheshire | 163 km 121° |
| Y476453 | 3M R | 20.10.2011 20.03.2014 | South Walney, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria Burton, Wirral, Cheshire | 88 km 173° |

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--|-------------|
| FRP 7091559 | 2M R | 03.02.2013 20.04.2014 | Maison, St. Venant 50°37'N 2°32'E Pas-de-Calais, FRANCE Llwynmawr, Wrexham | 468 km 304° |
| This is the first French-ringed Goldfinch controlled by MRG. | | | | |
| Siskin | | | | |
| D028963 | 5F R | 05.03.2013 11.05.2014 | Sandiway, Cheshire Merlo, 62°29'N 17°19'E, Timra, SWEDEN | 1559 km 49° |
| This is the first MRG-ringed Siskin reported from Sweden. | | | | |
| D648757 | 6F R | 29.03.2014 18.05.2014 | Sandiway, Cheshire Inverarnie, Highland | 474 km 348° |
| Y382326 | 6M R | 29.03.2013 30.03.2014 | Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside Breakachy, Highland (also on 31.03.14) | 460 km 349° |
| D324087 | 6F XF | 28.02.2014 15.07.2014 | Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside Grange, Keith, Moray | 462 km 3° |
| D324083 | 6M XF | 28.02.2014 28.07.2014 | Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside Aberlour, Moray | 451 km 359° |
| D648557 | 6M R | 28.02.2014 26.04.2014 | Sandiway, Cheshire Fearnan, Loch Tay, Perth & Kinross | 385 km 346° |
| L316711 | 3 R(=6F) | 14.07.2013 08.03.2014 | Tarbet, Cnoc, Loch Lomond, Argyll & Bute Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside | 328 km 162° |
| D028049 | 5F R | 27.02.2013 06.03.2014 | Little Sutton, South Wirral, Cheshire Townhill, Dunfermline, Fife | 313 km 355° |
| D648706 | 5M SR | 22.03.2014 06.08.2014 | Sandiway, Cheshire Walkerburn, Scottish Borders | 269 km 355° |
| Y670281 | 6M R | 20.02.2013 22.03.2014 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham St John's Town of Dalry, Dum& Gall | 252 km 345° |
| Y550842 | 5M R | 11.05.2012 05.04.2014 | Torwood Lodge, Lockerbie, Dum& Gall Llwynmawr, Wrexham | 245 km 177° |
| D324222 | 5F XF | 06.04.2014 07.09.2014 | Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside Chisholme, Scottish Borders | 223 km 3° |
| D648695 | 5M R (Also on 25.04.2014) | 14.03.2014 07.04.2014 | Sandiway, Cheshire Torwood Lodge, Lockerbie, Dum& Gall | 218 km 347° |
| D648625 | 5M XF | 01.03.2014 04.04.2014 | Sandiway, Cheshire Torwood Lodge, Lockerbie, Dum& Gall | 218 km 347° |
| D647861 | 5F XF | 20.02.2014 02.06.2014 | Sandiway, Cheshire New Langholm, Dumfries and Galloway | 217 km 353° |

Siskin (continued)

| | | | | |
|---------|--------------|--------------------------|---|-------------|
| D648647 | 5M R | 04.03.2014 02.04.2014 | Sandiway, Cheshire Humshaugh, Northumberland | 205 km 9° |
| D648538 | 5M R | 28.02.2014 17.03.2014 | Sandiway, Cheshire Branch End, Stocksfield, Northumberland | 197 km 14° |
| Y673969 | 6F R | 30.03.2014 02.04.2014 | Birchwood, Warrington (3 days) Branch End, Stocksfield, Northumberland | 172 km 14° |
| D256572 | 3J R (=M) | 12.07.2013 22.03.2014 | Mynydd Llandegai, Gwynedd Sandiway, Cheshire | 101km 87° |
| D528141 | 3J R (=F) | 18.06.2013 10.04.2014 | Mynydd Llandegai, Gwynedd Llwynmawr, Wrexham | 69 km 115° |
| L867896 | 5M R | 15.05.2011 03.04.2014 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham Bont Newydd, Dolgellau, Gwynedd | 47 km 250° |
| Y159595 | 5M R | 18.03.2012 28.02.2014 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham West Kirby, Wirral, Merseyside | 50 km 358° |
| D648721 | 6M VV | 25.03.2014 04.05.2014 | Sandiway, Cheshire Lake Vyrnwy, Powys (also on 05.05.14) | 78 km 229° |
| Y383314 | 3J R (=M) | 03.07.2012 19.03.2014 | Sandiway, Cheshire Crossgates, Llandrindod Wells, Powys | 117 km 206° |
| Y079981 | 5F R | 03.03.2013 26.02.2014 | Birchwood, Warrington, Cheshire Cradley, Herefordshire | 147 km 178° |
| Y382393 | 6M R | 17.04.2013 27.01.2014 | Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside Pope's Hill, Gloucestershire | 181 km 167° |
| D407660 | 3J R (=F) | 01.06.2013 15.05.2014 | Braytown, near Wool, Dorset Llwynmawr, Wrexham | 259 km 346° |
| D597268 | 5M R | 22.03.2014 08.04.2014 | Straight Mile, near Romsey, Hampshire Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside | 289 km 338° |
| D907475 | 6M R | 06.03.2014 31.03.2014 | Chilworth, Surrey Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside | 299 km 325° |
| D847922 | 5M R | 16.03.2014 31.03.2014 | Dukes Warren, Surrey Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside | 310 km 324° |

Reed Bunting

| | | | | |
|---------|---|--------------------------|--|------------|
| Y159221 | 3F R (Also on 10.02.2014) | 29.09.2011 02.02.2014 | Frodsham Marsh, Cheshire Stortons Gravel Pits, Northamptonshire | 171km 134° |
| L870950 | 3F V (Also on 08.04 and 27.04.2013) | 13.10.2011 22.03.2014 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire New Laithe Farm, Newton, Lancashire | 67 km 13° |

A SUMMARY OF FOREIGN CONTROLS AND RECOVERIES 1954-2014

Peter Coffey

To mark 60 years of ringing by Merseyside Ringing Group (MRG), a summary of foreign controls and recoveries is shown below. This includes birds ringed by MRG and subsequently reported from a foreign country, and foreign-ringed birds controlled or reported by MRG; some of the latter are birds whose details have been passed on to us by landowners, wildfowlers and others. Relatively few birds make the flight across the Irish Sea to or from Ireland (Eire and Northern Ireland): 97 birds of 31 species in sixty years. In addition, twelve birds of eight species moved between the Isle of Man and the MRG area; five Isle of Man-ringed birds moved here whilst seven MRG-ringed birds made the reverse movement. To help to identify species making those trips, they have been included in this report.

A grand total of 1710 controls and recoveries have been reported, 1316 for MRG-ringed birds reported abroad and 394 birds ringed in other countries and reported by MRG. Records come from 54 “countries” – geographically separate dependencies such as Greenland, Faeroes, Svalbard, Corsica, Sardinia and, of course, the Isle of Man, are treated as separate countries. Where countries have changed their names, the current name is applied and where boundaries have changed, recoveries have been allocated to the appropriate country based on the coordinates of the finding/ringing location. MRG-ringed birds have been reported from 53 countries and five are “stateless” – birds reported at sea and sufficiently far from land to determine where they might be heading. Foreign-ringed birds came from 25 countries; Gibraltar is the only country to have one of its birds reported by MRG (a Pied Flycatcher at Llanarmon-yn-Ial) but not to report an MRG-ringed bird. Most records come from Europe but the contribution from 21 African countries may be a surprise.

Records have come from far and wide. The most northerly recovery was a male Ringed Plover, caught at West Kirby in 1971, and shot at a nest in July 1973 by researchers at Jørgen Brønlund Fjord in the far north of Greenland (82°10'N 30°30'W). This was not the most westerly bird – that status belongs to a Knot, ringed at West Kirby in 1970 and found dead in late May 1972 at Dundas, Thule, Greenland (76°34'N 68°48'W). The most easterly bird is the recently-notified male Teal, ringed at Hale in 1979 and shot in June 1984 to the east of the Urals in the Yamal-Nenets area of Russia (66°25'N 66°47'E), beating the previous record-holder, another Teal, by 9°35' longitude. The most southerly record is from a Common Tern, ringed as a chick at Shotton in June 1986 and found dead in February 1990 at Strand, Cape Province, South Africa (34°06'S 18°49'E). An Arctic Tern, ringed as a chick at Rhosneigr in 1960 and found with a broken wing in April 1961 at Coffee Bay, Eastern Cape, South Africa (31°59'S 29°08'E), moved the furthest east for seabirds passing round the Cape of Good Hope. However the most easterly record in the southern hemisphere belongs to one of the twenty-five Swallows that travelled to South Africa; sadly this bird was shot in Durban (29°53'S 31°00'E).

Our foreign controls and recoveries have involved 78 species of bird; MRG-ringed birds covered 74 species compared to 43 species for foreign-ringed birds. The four species that had foreign-ringed birds reported by MRG but no corresponding MRG-ringed birds reported from abroad are Bewick's Swan, Wigeon, Tufted Duck and Woodcock – no surprise at all considering the Group has ringed none, none, four and eleven respectively of these species!

Dunlin is in a league of its own, accounting for 297 (17.6%) of all foreign controls and recoveries. MRG-ringed Dunlins (151) were reported from 16 countries and one “at sea”. They included a bird in Greenland shot “because it had a ring” and identified as the race *Calidris alpina arctica* by Copenhagen Museum, and a bird found on a Hull-based trawler off Bear Island in the Svalbard archipelago. Foreign-ringed Dunlins (146) included a bird ringed in

Morocco in February 1971 and caught six months later at West Kirby, and a bird caught at Bidston in 1979 that was ringed as an adult near Worms in the Rhine Valley 250 km from the coast in October. Two Dunlins ringed on Great Ainov Island off Murmansk in Russia have been reported by MRG and two MRG-ringed birds have been controlled there.

Common Tern, our logo species, has the distinction of being reported from 21 countries, more than any other species, with records covering 94°49' of latitude from Finland to South Africa. The Finnish bird was one of only four foreign-ringed terns reported by MRG; it was ringed as a chick in 1967 at 60°46'N 21°13'E and controlled off the beach at Hoylake 39 days later. Two MRG-ringed Common Terns reached South Africa. The chick ringed at Shotton and found dead at Strand, 25 km east of the Cape of Good Hope, is referred to above; the second, an adult ringed at Point of Air in September 1975, was found dead in December 1980 at Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape, South Africa (33°46'S 26°25'E), 700 km east of the Cape. The text for the BTO Migration Atlas (written by David Norman) suggests that birds from Fennoscandia are more likely to migrate to South Africa and even further across the Indian Ocean to Australia, so maybe the adult caught at the Point of Air originated there. However two more chicks from Shotton have been controlled in Namibia which, together with the chick found dead at Strand, could indicate that movements of British birds along the Atlantic coast of Africa south of the equator are not that unusual, although the majority, as with the MRG-ringed recoveries, winter in west Africa along the Gulf of Guinea coast.

Cannon-netting provided some fabulous catches yielding many foreign recoveries. One catch at the Point of Air on 29 January 1972 had eighteen foreign-ringed Dunlins from seven countries (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden) and seventeen Dunlin ringed at the catch were later reported from five countries (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Netherlands and Sweden). The bonus was a single Knot recovery – from Greenland!

Cannon-netting Black-headed Gulls was equally productive. Birds caught at a session at Rixton on 16 February 1991 included two controls from Belgium and one from Denmark. Seventeen birds ringed at the catch were subsequently reported from seven countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Poland and Sweden). Frustratingly, catches at Rixton also included two Black-headed Gulls wearing soft metal rings with inscriptions in Cyrillic text that were so worn that they proved impossible to decipher.

Catching Starlings at roosts is a different proposition! In the early days before mist-netting, the Group's founders, Rob Cockbain and Graham Thomason, swished hand nets through bushes to catch the birds. Such netting in the period January–March 1959 produced sixteen foreign recoveries from seven countries. Roost catches for the same period in 1963 included a foreign-ringed bird from Sweden and nineteen birds were later reported from nine countries (Belarus, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Russia and Sweden).

The records for Sanderling are exceptional. A total of 28 records from 13 countries range from inside the Arctic Circle to 5° above the Equator, from Iceland in the northwest to Russia in the northeast to Ghana in the south. MRG records contributed enormously to understanding the migration pattern of Sanderling, representing some of the earliest records of BTO birds to Morocco (1st and 2nd), Western Sahara (1st), Mauritania (2nd), Senegal (1st and 2nd) and Ghana (1st). It also includes the first Sanderling ringed in Mauritania found in Britain.

Other “firsts” for MRG-ringed birds cover an interesting spectrum. They include first and second BTO-ringed Grey Herons to Iceland and Denmark respectively, the first Bar-tailed Godwit to Germany, the first Knots to Germany and Norway, the first Ruff recorded in Africa (in Morocco), the first and second Common Terns to Western Sahara, the only Swift to Norway, the only Swallow to Poland, and the first Common Redpoll to Denmark. A Kingfisher to Netherlands was the second BTO-ringed bird reported but was the first live bird controlled there. Two MRG-ringed chicks also set records: a Pied Flycatcher chick ringed at Prion was

controlled as a breeding female in Belgium, the only case on record, and a Chaffinch chick ringed at Pandy was controlled as a male in the Netherlands, the only record of emigration to the continent by a British Chaffinch chick.

Some birds have been caught in three different countries. The Russian Dunlin ringed as an adult female on 24 July 1970 inside the Arctic Circle at 69°50'N 31°35'E was caught in the Point of Air catch on 29 January 1972, mentioned above; it was controlled again on 27 July 1974 at the southern tip of Sweden (55°25'N 12°50'E), over 1850 km southwest of its ringing location despite the July dates of capture being similar.

Common Tern reports from two African countries are exceptional but MRG has three of them. One was controlled by a British ringer in the Ivory Coast in its first year, then sighted as a four-year old at Seaforth and eventually found dead, in its twelfth year, in Sierra Leone. The second bird, in its first year, was caught in Gambia then four months later in Senegal. A third bird was caught by fishermen, first in December off the coast of Guinea Bissau and then the following July off the coast of Togo where it was spending its first summer. On both occasions, the fishermen recorded their numbers and released the bird unharmed, a welcome success for education and conservation.

A Black-headed Gull ringed at Rixton in February 1996 was controlled in the Netherlands in March 1998 and then controlled again on the North Frisian Islands, Germany in July 2009. A Bewick's Swan ringed at Arkhangelsk in the far north of Russia in August 1992 was sighted at Meols two months later. The bird was subsequently reported from three different locations in Germany in 1993 and 1994, each time on its spring migration.



A Black-headed Gull at New Brighton, Wirral on 19th March 2008 carrying a Lithuanian ring. Photo: Richard Steel who has kindly allowed us to use this image.

Most of the species referred to so far are long-lived species; they provide more opportunity for controls and multiple captures and, not surprisingly, top the list of foreign recoveries (see Appendix 2). However the Group's wader-ringing activity has been much reduced for more than two decades so there is little prospect of adding significantly to current totals. Black-headed Gull reports from cannon-netting activity in the 1990s are still being received but in diminishing numbers. These may be supplemented in the future by sightings of ringed birds at places like New Brighton and from recent pullus ringing at Shotton, possibly yielding records from new directions, as the recent recovery from Portugal demonstrates. If the recently installed duck trap at Woolston is as successful as the Hale duck decoy in 1976-85, which generated 96 records from twelve countries, many more interesting reports should be received in the future. Successful breeding at the Shotton Common Tern colony should also generate more recoveries.

Passerines with the greatest numbers of foreign recoveries/controls are Starling (107 from 16 countries), Swallow (73 from 17 countries), and Blackbird (62 from 10 countries). More than one-third of Swallow records are from South Africa; they include a juvenile, making its first migration, reaching South Africa in the first week in November at an average speed of 115 km per day and another first-year bird not leaving South Africa until after 11 April. A second juvenile on autumn migration travelled at an average speed of over 150 km per day for 46 days to reach Katanga in the Democratic Republic of Congo where it was shot.

The spring migration of hirundines can be on a broad front across the Sahara, as April records of Sand Martin in Malta and Swallow in Tunisia and Corsica show. However an MRG-ringed Swallow controlled in Sardinia in October took a most unusual route for its autumn migration. A Sand Martin provided another unusual record: David Norman ringed F912139, a juvenile, at a colony in Cheshire, controlled in its wintering grounds in Senegal and then retrapped it the following summer as a breeding male at the original colony.

Thrushes from Fennoscandia and Russia have provided a rich source of records, particularly Redwing which often migrate to different areas of Europe each winter. They have provided twenty records from ten countries, ranging from Arkhangelsk and Moscow in Russia to Avila in central Spain. MRG has had just five records from mainland Italy – three were Redwings and the other two were fellow birds from Fennoscandia, Brambling.

MRG's memorable "Brambling winter" was in 1981 when roosts of 16-20,000 birds assembled in the grounds of Speke Hall. At the end of January, the massed ranks of MRG caught more than 500 in the first weekend of catching and by mid-March the total was 1262. Disappointingly, no foreign-ringed birds were caught and those catches only yielded two foreign recoveries of MRG-ringed birds. One was from the Netherlands and the other from Vesteralen Islands north of the Arctic Circle in Norway (68°43'N 16°33'E) – it was a breeding male and was killed in a collision with a car on what was probably the only road on the island. By contrast, Tony Ormond caught far fewer Bramblings feeding at Bidston but two of his birds were reported on spring migration at Heligoland and East Frisian Islands, Germany. In total for all years, 7808 Bramblings ringed by MRG have produced 24 records from nine countries at a rate of approximately one recovery per 300 birds ringed. Eleven foreign-ringed birds from three countries, Norway, Netherlands and Belgium, have been reported here.

Chaffinch has the most foreign recoveries of the finches: 43 MRG-ringed birds and 15 foreign-ringed birds from eleven countries. Almost half were from the Low Countries as birds passed through on migration to or from Fennoscandia. However Siskin has the most interesting set of recoveries. The Group didn't record its first domestic recovery of Siskin until 1981 and its first foreign recovery until 1983 – a Dutch-ringed bird controlled at Frodsham. Since then a further nine foreign-ringed birds, from Belgium, Netherlands, Spain and Norway, have been controlled and eight MRG-ringed birds have been reported from Norway, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Ireland and France. Three of the records, MRG-ringed birds to France and Ireland and a Norwegian-ringed bird controlled here, were reported in 2013 and the bird to Sweden, our most

northerly record (62°29'N 17°19'E), was reported in 2014, suggesting there may be many more records to come.

The rate of warbler recoveries has also accelerated since 1980, a reflection in part of the increased ringing of those species by MRG and in part by the development of ringing schemes in southern European countries – including British ringers setting up ringing stations abroad. An interesting example of the latter is a Sedge Warbler ringed at Oxmoor as a juvenile on 23 August 2008 and controlled by Pete Fearon as an adult on 26 August 2010 in Portugal, already well into its migration! The Group did not receive its first foreign Blackcap record, a control in Belgium, until 1984 and 13 of the 20 foreign records have been received since 2000. Eight records are from north Africa, the highest total for passerines, and that includes three from Algeria, a country that has only recorded one other species, Swallow.

The exception to the accelerating rate of recoveries is Whitethroat: five of the seven records occurred before 1967 and the latest record was in 1993 when a first-year was controlled in Senegal. Less than 1000 Whitethroat had been ringed by 1966 and the total now stands at 9000 so it is a bit of a mystery why there have not been more recoveries.

The remainder of this report contains the following appendices:

Appendix 1: Details of foreign recoveries/controls for each species

Appendix 2: Numbers of foreign recoveries/controls by country (table A) and species (table B)

APPENDIX 1

The following abbreviations have been used for countries listed in tables of foreign recoveries:

| | | | | | |
|------|-----------------|-----|---------------|-----|----------------|
| Alg | Algeria | Ger | Germany | Mau | Mauritania |
| Bel | Belgium | Gha | Ghana | Mor | Morocco |
| BeR | Belarus | Gld | Greenland | Ned | Netherlands |
| BuF | Burkina Faso | GuB | Guinea Bissau | Nig | Nigeria |
| Can | Canada | Gui | Guinea | Nor | Norway |
| Ch I | Channel Islands | Ice | Iceland | Pol | Poland |
| Cze | Czech Republic | Ita | Italy | Por | Portugal |
| Den | Denmark | Ire | Ireland | Rus | Russia |
| Est | Estonia | IvC | Ivory Coast | Sen | Senegal |
| Fae | Faeroes | Lat | Latvia | SeL | Sierra Leone |
| Fin | Finland | Lib | Liberia | Spa | Spain |
| Fra | France | Lit | Lithuania | Swe | Sweden |
| Gam | Gambia | Mal | Malta | WS | Western Sahara |

Mute Swan (Cygnus olor)

Four records of Mute Swan moving from the MRG area to Ireland, and two to the Isle of Man.

Bewick's Swan (Cygnus columbianus)

Four foreign-ringed Bewick's Swans recorded by MRG have produced records from six separate foreign locations. The birds were ringed in Russia (2) and Netherlands (2). One of the Russian birds has also visited two different locations in Germany.

Whooper Swan (Cygnus cygnus)

Two records, the only Whooper Swan ever ringed by MRG, later shot in Iceland, and a female ringed in Iceland in 1994 that visited Ireland and France before being seen on Hale Marsh in 1997-99.

Wigeon (Anas penelope)

Two Wigeon from Russia have been formally recorded but it is known that others have been shot in the MRG area. MRG still has not ringed Wigeon.

Teal (Anas crecca)

| | Rus | Fin | Lat | Pol | Swe | Den | Ger | Ned | Fra | Ire | +++ | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 10 | 18 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 19 | 2 | 1 | 13 | 20 | 2 | 90 |
| Foreign | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 1 | 6 |

+++ MRG-ringed birds were reported from Czech Republic and Ukraine, in both cases the only MRG-ringed bird of any species recorded there, and a foreign-ringed bird from Estonia was shot in the Mersey estuary. The Czech recovery was the sixth BTO-ringed Teal to that country. One of the birds recovered in France had moved to the Mediterranean coast for winter.

Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos)

14 MRG-ringed Mallards have been recovered abroad: 6 Netherlands, 3 Denmark, 3 Germany, 1 Finland and 1 France.

Pintail (Anas acuta)

Only one MRG-ringed Pintail has been recovered abroad – in Germany. Three foreign-ringed birds have been recorded by MRG: one each from Estonia, Denmark and Netherlands.

Tufted Duck (Aythya fuligula)

The only foreign recovery for this species recorded by MRG is a Latvian-ringed bird shot on Frodsham Marsh.

Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo)

Fifteen foreign records have been received for MRG-ringed Cormorants: 10 to France, 3 to Spain and one each to Ireland and Netherlands.

Shag (Phalacrocorax aristotelis)

One record only – to Ireland

Grey Heron (Ardea cinerea)

Four recoveries of MRG-ringed Grey Herons were from Iceland, Denmark, Ireland and Spain. The Icelandic recovery is still the only BTO-ringed Grey Heron to that country and only two BTO-ringed birds have been recovered in Denmark.

Moorhen (Gallinula chloropus)

One MRG-ringed bird was controlled in Denmark.

Avocet (Recurvirostra avosetta)

A colour-ringed Avocet was ringed as an adult in Brittany, France in June 2006 and spent the next winter on the Colne estuary, Essex before moving back to Brittany in the summer of 2007. It was observed at Frodsham Marsh in April 2008 close to the area where MRG ringed its first Avocets (six chicks) in 2003.

Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus)

| | Ice | Nor | Fae | Ger | Ned | Fra | Spa | Total |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 4 | 20 | 18 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 51 |

The MRG-ringed Oystercatcher to Spain was ringed as a chick while all the other overseas recoveries were from fully-grown birds. The only foreign-ringed bird recorded by MRG came from Netherlands.

Golden Plover (Pluvialis apricaria)

Two MRG-ringed Golden Plovers have been recorded abroad, both in France.

Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)

Five MRG-ringed Lapwings were reported from Ireland (2), Russia, Netherlands and France.

Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*)

One MRG-ringed bird was shot in France.

Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)

Nine MRG-ringed birds have been recorded abroad: two to France, Spain and Morocco and one each to Greenland, Ireland, and Portugal.

Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)

Seven MRG-ringed Curlews have been reported overseas – in Denmark (3), Finland (2), Germany and Sweden. Only one foreign-ringed bird, from Finland, has been recorded.

Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)

One MRG-ringed Black-tailed Godwit, found dead in Iceland in 1982, was only the second record of a British bird to Iceland. Through colour-ringing, a minimum of 23 Icelandic-ringed birds of the *islandica* race have been sighted by MRG members at various sites around the Mersey and Dee estuaries, including two birds ringed as ten-day-old chicks at the same location and arriving at Hale forty days later. Two French-ringed Godwits have also been reported.

Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)

Germany and Russia were the destinations for the two MRG-ringed Bar-tailed Godwits recovered abroad – they were the first and second records of BTO-ringed birds to those countries respectively.

Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)

The five MRG-ringed Turnstones recovered abroad are of exceptional quality, including birds to Greenland, Canada, Iceland (2) and Morocco. The latter was the second BTO-ringed Turnstone recorded there (in 1967). The Canadian recovery was from Baffin Island – it remains the only BTO-ringed Turnstone reported from there.

Knot (*Calidris canutus*)

| | Gld | Can | Ice | Nor | Den | Ger | Ned | Ire | Fra | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 10 | | 22 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 57 |
| Foreign | | 1 | 16 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 19 |

The ten Knots to Greenland all show movement to the northwest/west coast area. One of the birds controlled in Iceland was caught four days after being ringed at Hoylake in mid-February and would probably rest and replenish fat reserves before moving on to Greenland/Canada.

Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*)

Three MRG-ringed Ruff have been reported: one each from Russia, Sweden and Morocco. The latter was the first British-ringed Ruff recorded in Africa. It was found at an inland location where it had been shot just 23 days after being ringed!

Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)

| | Rus | Den | Bel | Fra | Spa | Por | Mal | Mor | WS | Mau | Sen | Gha | Total |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 25 |

Three foreign-ringed birds recorded by MRG are from Iceland, France and Mauritania.

Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)

| | Ice | Nor | Swe | Fin | Pol | Den | Ger | Ned | Fra | Por | +++ | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 6 | 1 | 34 | 18 | 7 | 15 | 15 | 10 | 25 | 7 | | 151 |
| Foreign | 5 | 26 | 51 | 12 | 8 | 13 | 20 | 2 | 4 | | 5 | 146 |

+++ Other MRG-ringed birds were recorded in Greenland (2), Svalbard (Bear Island), Russia (3), Ireland, Spain (2), Morocco (3), Mauritania and one in the North Sea off the Netherlands. Other foreign-ringed Dunlins are from Russia, Belgium, Morocco (2) and Mauritania.

Little Stint (Calidris minuta)

Two MRG ringed birds have been reported, from France and Morocco.

Common Sandpiper (Actitis hypoleucos)

The only foreign record for Common Sandpiper is an MRG-ringed bird found in Morocco.

Redshank (Tringa totanus)

Fifteen Redshanks ringed by MRG and reported abroad went to Iceland (10), France (4) and Faeroes.

Woodcock (Scolopax rusticola)

Two foreign-ringed Woodcocks have been reported. One, a bird ringed in Lithuania, was shot in Wirral in 2003 and the second, a Polish-ringed bird, was shot at Aston, Cheshire in 2014.

Snipe (Gallinago gallinago)

Six Snipes ringed by MRG have been reported from two countries: Ireland (2) and France (4).

Razorbill (Alca torda)

The only foreign record of an MRG-ringed Razorbill was a bird to France.

Guillemot (Uria aalge)

The three foreign recoveries of Guillemot are reported from France and Netherlands (2).

Little Tern (Sternula albifrons)

Six records of Little Tern ringed by MRG are from Ireland, Belgium, Spain, Senegal and Guinea Bissau (2). The latter were both controlled at Areias, the most southerly location of a BTO-ringed Little Tern until 2014 when one was found freshly dead on a ship off Sierra Leone

Common Tern (Sterna hirundo)

| | Ned | Bel | Fra | Spa | Mor | Sen | WS | SLe | Lib | IvC | Gha | +++ | Total |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 4 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 4 | 39 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 21 | 20 | 125 |

+++ Other MRG Common Terns reported include three each to Guinea Bissau and Gambia, two each to Norway, Ireland, Mauritania, Guinea, Namibia and South Africa, and one each to Portugal and Togo. Only 4 foreign-ringed Common Terns have been recorded, one from Finland and three from Ireland.

Roseate Tern (Sterna dougallii)

| | Ire | Fra | Spa | Mor | WS | Sen | SLe | Lib | IvC | Gha | Total |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 14 | 26 |

No foreign ringed Roseate Terns have been reported by MRG.

Arctic Tern (Sterna paradisaea)

Six Arctic Terns ringed by MRG have been reported from France, Spain, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and South Africa.

Kittiwake (Rissa tridactyla)

Four records of MRG-ringed birds show movements to Canada (Newfoundland) (2), Germany and France. The latter bird was shot at a location 75 km from the coast.

Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus)

| | Nor | Swe | Fin | Est | Lat | Lit | Pol | Den | Ger | Ned | Ire | +++ | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 7 | 12 | 16 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 27 | 9 | 12 | 6 | 6 | 108 |
| Foreign | 2 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 3 | | 4 | 37 |

+++ Other MRG-ringed birds were reported from Russia (3), France (2) and Portugal. The other foreign-ringed birds are from Belgium (3) and Russia.

Mediterranean Gull (Larus melanocephalus)

A chick, ringed in Belgium in 1984, was sighted in Wallasey 15 years later.

Common Gull (Larus canus)

Only one MRG-ringed Common Gull has been reported overseas (in Norway) but four foreign-ringed birds have been reported from Norway, Sweden, Finland and Netherlands.

Lesser Black-backed Gull (Larus fuscus)

Sixteen MRG-ringed Lesser Black-backed Gulls have been reported: Morocco (2), Portugal (6), Spain (2), France (3) and Netherlands (2) and Isle of Man.

Herring Gull (Larus argentatus)

Four MRG-ringed birds moved to Ireland (2), Norway and Netherlands. A chick ringed on Isle of Man in 1977 was controlled at Risley in 1994 and shot in 2000 just 10 km from its birthplace.

Woodpigeon (Columba palumbus)

An MRG-ringed chick moved to France where it was shot dead in its third year. Only 56 BTO-ringed Woodpigeons have been recovered abroad and 54 of those were in France.

Collared Dove (Streptopelia decaocto)

Four birds ringed by MRG have been reported from abroad, one in Germany and 3 in Ireland. Two Belgian-ringed Collared Doves have been controlled by MRG.

Long-eared Owl (Asio otus)

The only MRG-ringed Long-eared Owl to be recorded abroad was shot in Sweden.

Swift (Apus apus)

The five records from abroad of MRG-ringed Swifts are of very high quality. One, from Norway, is the only BTO-ringed Swift recorded there; one was found dead on a ship in the middle of the North Sea; two travelled to Morocco; and one was found in Malawi where only eleven BTO-ringed Swifts have been reported.

Kingfisher (Alcedo atthis)

For a species not known for long-distance movements, the control of an MRG-ringed bird in Netherlands was the first such record for the BTO scheme.

Kestrel (Falco tinnunculus)

One MRG-ringed bird has been recorded in Ireland and two in France and no foreign birds have been recorded by MRG. Long-distance dispersals of Kestrel are unusual. The Migration Atlas suggests that late chicks may be more likely to make rapid long distance movements.

Goldcrest (Regulus regulus)

Two MRG-ringed Goldcrests have been reported from Netherlands and Germany. One ringed in Ireland and two on the Isle of Man have been controlled by MRG.

Bearded Tit (Panurus biarmicus)

Two Dutch-ringed Bearded Tits were reported by MRG and two MRG birds went to Germany and Netherlands. All four records relate to irruptions of Bearded Tits from the continent.

Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*)

| | Ire | ChI | Bel | Fra | Spa | Malta | Sen | Mali | IoM | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|------|-----|-------|
| MRG | 1 | | | 16 | 11 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 36 |
| Foreign | 1 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 2 | | 1 | | | 16 |

The Malta bird was controlled in early April and was the fourth record of a BTO-ringed Sand Martin to that country. The Mali bird was accidentally caught in a fishing net in the Niger inundation zone at the eastern limit of their Sahel wintering area.

Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

| | Ire | ChI | Fra | Spa | Mor | Alg | Nig | SA | +++ | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 6 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 25 | 9 | 69 |
| Foreign | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | 4 |

+++ Single MRG-ringed birds have been reported to Poland, Germany, Belgium, Corsica, Sardinia, Tunisia, Cameroon, Congo (Brazzaville), and Democratic Republic of Congo. It is unusual for British Swallows to be recovered to the north and east; the Polish recovery, in 1968, is still the only BTO-ringed bird found there and only six BTO-ringed Swallows have been recorded in Germany.

Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*)

Six MRG-ringed birds were reported from Belgium (2), Netherlands, France, Portugal and Spain and four foreign-ringed birds from Spain (2), Portugal and Netherlands were controlled.

Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*)

Four foreign-ringed Willow Warblers have been reported by MRG, from Belgium, the Channel Islands, France and Spain. Seven MRG-ringed birds have been reported from Germany, Belgium, Channel Islands, France (2) and Spain (2).

Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*)

| | IoM | Ger | Ned | Bel | Fra | Spa | Por | Mor | Alg | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 1 | | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 18 |
| Foreign | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | 3 |

The Belgian and French-ringed birds were controlled in May/June. The German bird, ringed as a first-year female in April 2012 on Heligoland, was controlled at Woolston in October 2012.

Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*)

One MRG-ringed juvenile was controlled in France in 2012.

Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*)

Six Whitethroats ringed by MRG were reported from France (2), Portugal (3) and Senegal and a single foreign-ringed Whitethroat, from Belgium, was controlled by MRG in 1990.

Sedge Warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*)

| | Ire | Ned | Bel | Ch I | Fra | Spa | Por | Mal | Mor | Sen | BuF | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 25 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 36 |
| Foreign | | | 1 | 1 | 9 | | | | | 2 | | 13 |

The Burkina Faso recovery was the third BTO-ringed bird recorded there and is MRG's most southerly Sedge Warbler. The Maltese bird was controlled in March on its spring migration. Ten of the 13 foreign-ringed birds were reported in April/May and several adults had already returned to Iberia in August.

Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*)

| | Ned | Bel | Ch I | Fra | Spa | Por | Mor | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 1 | 2 | 1 | 13 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 27 |
| Foreign | 1 | | | 6 | 2 | 2 | | 11 |

Half of the Reed Warblers ringed by MRG have been ringed from 2000 onwards; 19 of the 27 MRG-ringed birds and all of the foreign-ringed birds have been reported since 2000.

Starling (Sturnus vulgaris)

| | Nor | Swe | Rus | BeR | Fin | Est | Pol | Den | Ger | Ned | +++ | Total |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 4 | 20 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 25 | 10 | 8 | 98 |
| F'gn | | 2 | 2 | 1 | | | | | | 2 | 2 | 9 |

+++ Other MRG-ringed Starlings have been reported from Ireland (3), Belgium (2), France, Latvia and one from a ship in the North Sea; other foreign-ringed birds were from Belgium and Lithuania. Seven of the foreign-ringed birds had been reported by 1963.

Blackbird (Turdus merula)

| | Nor | Swe | Fin | Est | Den | Ger | Ned | Bel | Fra | Ire | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 10 | 13 | 9 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 57 |
| Foreign | 2 | | | | 1 | | 2 | | | | 5 |

One of the Dutch birds, ringed in November, was controlled one month later at Bidston and again the following winter. A bird ringed at Bidston in 1977 was controlled in Norway in March 1980 and then controlled again on Fair Isle in November 1982, presumably on its way south.

Fieldfare (Turdus pilaris)

Six MRG-ringed Fieldfares have been reported from Sweden (2), Finland, Germany, France and Ireland. Two birds were found above 64°N, close to their northern limit.

Song Thrush (Turdus philomelos)

Two MRG-ringed Song Thrushes have been reported abroad from Ireland and Netherlands.

Redwing (Turdus iliacus)

| | Rus | Nor | Fin | BeR | Ger | Bel | Fra | Ita | Spa | Ire | Total |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 19 |

The only foreign-ringed Redwing was Norwegian. The Finnish recovery came from Ylilikk, 65°20'N, the most northerly of all the thrush recoveries. Most of the long-distance movements are in subsequent seasons, so the bird ringed at Connah's Quay in December 1976, shot in the Gironde, France seven weeks later is unusual.

Spotted Flycatcher (Muscicapa striata)

An adult ringed in Flintshire in August 1968 was shot in Zaragoza, Spain 26 days later.

Robin (Erithacus rubecula)

The only foreign record for Robin was a juvenile moving to France in 1963.

Pied Flycatcher (Ficedula hypoleuca)

MRG-ringed Pied Flycatchers have been reported from Morocco (5), Spain (5), France (3) and Belgium. The three foreign-ringed Pied Flycatchers all came from the Iberian peninsula, two from Spain, controlled within days of each other in 2009, and one from Gibraltar.

Redstart (Phoenicurus phoenicurus)

The only foreign recovery involved a chick ringed in June 1984 at Glyn Arthur at a natural nest site. It was trapped in a building in Morocco three months later.

Yellow Wagtail (Motacilla flava)

Nine MRG-ringed Yellow Wagtails were reported from Channel Islands, France (2), Spain (2), Portugal (3) and Morocco. The only Yellow Wagtail ringed abroad came from France.

Pied Wagtail (Motacilla alba)

No foreign-ringed Pied Wagtails were recorded by MRG but five MRG-ringed birds have been reported from France, Spain (3) and Portugal. All Pied and Yellow Wagtail records were reported by 1984, nine in the 1960s.

Meadow Pipit (Anthus pratensis)

A Meadow Pipit ringed as a chick in May 1968 was found dead in Portugal in February 1969.

Brambling (Fringilla montifringilla)

| | Nor | Swe | Den | Ger | Ned | Bel | Fra | Ita | +++ | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 24 |
| Foreign | 3 | | | | 6 | 2 | | | | 11 |

+++ This Brambling was found on a ship in the Baltic Sea, exact location unknown. Brambling ringing in the 1960s provided many insights into their migration strategies, with MRG-ringed birds being only the second BTO-ringed birds reported from Sweden, Denmark and Italy.

Chaffinch (Fringilla coelebs)

| | Nor | Swe | Fin | Den | Ger | Ned | Bel | Ire | Ch I | IoM | +++ | Total |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 4 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 43 |
| F'gn | | 1 | | 1 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 1 | | | | 15 |

+++ This female Chaffinch was ringed at Woolston in February 2006 but died in April on the Tyra West Platform in the North Sea attempting to return to Scandinavia.

Greenfinch (Chloris chloris)

Three MRG-ringed Greenfinches have been recorded in Ireland and one French-ringed bird has been controlled here.

Linnet (Linaria cannabina)

Twelve records of MRG Linnets found abroad include birds to France (7), Spain (4) and Ireland (1). One foreign-ringed Linnet, from the Channel Islands, has been controlled by MRG.

Lesser Redpoll (Carduelis cabaret)

Six MRG-ringed birds have been controlled in just three areas: Belgium (4), Ireland and Isle of Man. Seven foreign-ringed birds come from the same three countries: Belgium, Ireland (4) and Isle of Man (2).

Common Redpoll (Carduelis flammea)

The only record for Common Redpoll is a first-winter male ringed in Wirral in February 1987 and controlled in Denmark 56 days later, the first BTO-ringed bird reported from Denmark.

Goldfinch (Carduelis carduelis)

Four MRG-ringed Goldfinches have been controlled in Spain, France and Ireland (2); two Goldfinches from Ireland and one from France were controlled by MRG.

Siskin (Carduelis spinus)

| | Nor | Swe | Fin | Ned | Bel | Ire | Fra | Spa | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MRG | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | | 2 | 1 | | 8 |
| Foreign | 1 | | | 3 | 5 | | | 1 | 10 |

Foreign-ringed birds were predominantly from the Low Countries but the two latest records came from Spain (2009) and Norway (2013).

Reed Bunting (Emberiza schoeniclus)

MRG has controlled two foreign-ringed Reed Buntings, from the Netherlands (1962) and the Channel Islands (1985).

Appendix 2: Foreign recoveries/controls by country (table A) and species (table B)

Table A: analysis of MRG-ringed birds found in 53 countries and foreign-ringed birds from 25 countries

| <i>Number of birds recovered/controlled</i> | | <i>Number of species recorded</i> | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|----|-------------|----|
| <i>MRG-ringed</i> | <i>Foreign-ringed</i> | <i>MRG-ringed</i> | <i>Foreign-ringed</i> | | | | |
| France | 197 | Sweden | 57 | France | 46 | Netherlands | 17 |
| Sweden | 98 | Iceland | 46 | Ireland | 30 | Belgium | 14 |
| Denmark | 95 | France | 38 | Netherlands | 25 | France | 12 |
| Netherlands | 87 | Netherlands | 36 | Spain | 25 | Ireland | 9 |
| Germany | 82 | Norway | 36 | Germany | 21 | Norway | 7 |
| Ireland | 81 | Belgium | 26 | Morocco | 18 | Spain | 7 |
| Finland | 75 | Germany | 25 | Belgium | 15 | Channel Is | 6 |
| Spain | 71 | Denmark | 24 | Denmark | 14 | Denmark | 6 |
| Norway | 57 | Finland | 22 | Norway | 14 | Finland | 5 |
| Senegal | 51 | Ireland | 16 | Portugal | 14 | Germany | 5 |
| Iceland | 47 | Poland | 15 | Sweden | 12 | Iceland | 5 |
| Morocco | 45 | Spain | 11 | Finland | 11 | Poland | 5 |
| Belgium | 37 | Russia | 8 | Russia | 9 | Russia | 5 |
| Ghana | 37 | Channel Is | 6 | Iceland | 8 | Sweden | 5 |
| Portugal | 35 | Lithuania | 6 | Senegal | 7 | Estonia | 3 |
| S Africa | 28 | Isle of Man | 5 | Channel Is | 6 | Isle of Man | 3 |
| Russia | 27 | Estonia | 4 | Isle of Man | 6 | Lithuania | 3 |
| Faeroes | 19 | Latvia | 3 | Poland | 5 | Latvia | 2 |
| Poland | 19 | Portugal | 3 | Greenland | 4 | Mauritania | 2 |
| Greenland | 14 | Senegal | 3 | Estonia | 3 | Portugal | 2 |
| Channel Is | 8 | Mauritania | 2 | Ghana | 3 | Senegal | 2 |
| Estonia | 7 | Morocco | 2 | Italy | 3 | Belarus | 1 |
| Isle of Man | 7 | Belarus | 1 | Latvia | 3 | Canada | 1 |
| Ivory Coast | 7 | Canada | 1 | Malta | 3 | Gibraltar | 1 |
| Sierra Leone | 7 | Gibraltar | 1 | Mauritania | 3 | Morocco | 1 |
| Algeria | 6 | | | S Africa | 3 | | |
| Belarus | 6 | | | Sierra Leone | 3 | | |
| Italy | 6 | | | Western Sahara | 3 | | |
| Latvia | 6 | | | Algeria | 2 | | |
| Liberia | 6 | | | Belarus | 2 | | |
| Guinea Bissau | 5 | | | Canada | 2 | | |
| Nigeria | 5 | | | Faeroes | 2 | | |
| Western Sahara | 5 | | | Guinea Bissau | 2 | | |
| Mauritania | 4 | | | Ivory Coast | 2 | | |
| Canada | 3 | | | Liberia | 2 | | |
| Gambia | 3 | | | Nigeria | 2 | | |
| Malta | 3 | | | Burkina Faso | 1 | | |
| Guinea | 2 | | | Cameroon | 1 | | |
| Lithuania | 2 | | | Congo Brazz | 1 | | |
| Namibia | 2 | | | Congo DR | 1 | | |
| Burkina Faso | 1 | | | Corsica | 1 | | |
| Cameroon | 1 | | | Czech Rep | 1 | | |
| Czech Rep. | 1 | | | Gambia | 1 | | |
| Congo Brazz | 1 | | | Guinea | 1 | | |
| Congo DR | 1 | | | Lithuania | 1 | | |
| Corsica | 1 | | | Malawi | 1 | | |
| Malawi | 1 | | | Mali | 1 | | |
| Mali | 1 | | | Namibia | 1 | | |
| Sardinia | 1 | | | Sardinia | 1 | | |
| Svalbard | 1 | | | Svalbard | 1 | | |
| Togo | 1 | | | Togo | 1 | | |
| Tunisia | 1 | | | Tunisia | 1 | | |
| Ukraine | 1 | | | Ukraine | 1 | | |

Table B: analysis of MRG-ringed birds of 74 species and foreign-ringed birds of 43 species

| <i>Number of birds recovered/controlled</i> | | | <i>Number of countries recorded</i> | | | | |
|---|-----|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----|
| <i>MRG-ringed</i> | | <i>MRG-ringed</i> | <i>MRG-ringed</i> | | <i>MRG-ringed</i> | | |
| Dunlin | 151 | L Ringed Pl | 1 | Common Tern | 21 | Golden Plover | 1 |
| Common Tern | 125 | Black-t Godwit | 1 | Swallow | 17 | Black-t Godwit | 1 |
| Bl-headed Gull | 108 | Com Sandpiper | 1 | Dunlin | 16 | Com Sandpiper | 1 |
| Starling | 98 | Common Gull | 1 | Starling | 15 | Common Gull | 1 |
| Teal | 90 | Razorbill | 1 | Bl-headed Gull | 14 | Razorbill | 1 |
| Swallow | 69 | Woodpigeon | 1 | Teal | 12 | Woodpigeon | 1 |
| Knot | 57 | L-eared Owl | 1 | Sanderling | 12 | L-eared Owl | 1 |
| Blackbird | 57 | Kingfisher | 1 | Chaffinch | 11 | Kingfisher | 1 |
| Oystercatcher | 51 | Garden Warbler | 1 | Roseate Tern | 10 | Garden Warbler | 1 |
| Chaffinch | 43 | Spot Flycatcher | 1 | Blackbird | 10 | Spot Flycatcher | 1 |
| Sand Martin | 36 | Robin | 1 | Redwing | 10 | Robin | 1 |
| Sedge Warbler | 36 | Redstart | 1 | Sedge Warbler | 9 | Redstart | 1 |
| Reed Warbler | 27 | Meadow Pipit | 1 | Brambling | 9 | Meadow Pipit | 1 |
| Roseate Tern | 26 | Com Redpoll | 1 | Knot | 8 | Com Redpoll | 1 |
| Sanderling | 25 | | | Blackcap | 8 | | |
| Brambling | 24 | | | Oystercatcher | 7 | | |
| Redwing | 19 | | | Sand Martin | 7 | | |
| Blackcap | 18 | <i>Foreign-ringed</i> | | Reed Warbler | 7 | <i>Foreign-ringed</i> | |
| LBB Gull | 16 | Dunlin | 146 | Ringed Plover | 6 | Dunlin | 13 |
| Cormorant | 15 | Bl-headed Gull | 37 | Arctic Tern | 6 | Bl-headed Gull | 12 |
| Redshank | 15 | Black-t Godwit | 25 | LBB Gull | 6 | Chaffinch | 6 |
| Mallard | 14 | Knot | 19 | Siskin | 6 | Teal | 5 |
| Pied Flycatcher | 14 | Sand Martin | 16 | Mallard | 5 | Sand Martin | 6 |
| Linnet | 12 | Chaffinch | 15 | Little Tern | 5 | Starling | 5 |
| Ringed Plover | 9 | Sedge Warbler | 13 | Chiffchaff | 5 | Knot | 4 |
| Yellow Wagtail | 9 | Reed Warbler | 11 | Willow Warbler | 5 | Common Gull | 4 |
| Siskin | 8 | Brambling | 11 | Fieldfare | 5 | Willow Warbler | 4 |
| Curlew | 7 | Siskin | 10 | Yellow Wagtail | 5 | Sedge Warbler | 4 |
| Willow Warbler | 7 | Starling | 9 | Cormorant | 4 | Reed Warbler | 4 |
| Mute Swan | 6 | Lesser Redpoll | 7 | Grey Heron | 4 | Siskin | 4 |
| Snipe | 6 | Teal | 6 | Lapwing | 4 | Pintail | 3 |
| Arctic Tern | 6 | Blackbird | 5 | Curlew | 4 | Sanderling | 3 |
| Little Tern | 6 | Bewick's Swan | 4 | Turnstone | 4 | Swallow | 3 |
| Chiffchaff | 6 | Common Tern | 4 | Pied Flycatcher | 4 | Chiffchaff | 3 |
| Whitethroat | 6 | Common Gull | 4 | Ruff | 3 | Blackcap | 3 |
| Fieldfare | 6 | Swallow | 4 | Redshank | 3 | Blackbird | 3 |
| Lesser Redpoll | 6 | Chiffchaff | 4 | Herring Gull | 3 | Brambling | 3 |
| Lapwing | 5 | Willow Warbler | 4 | Kittiwake | 3 | Lesser Redpoll | 3 |
| Turnstone | 5 | Pintail | 3 | Swift | 3 | Bewick's Swan | 2 |
| Swift | 5 | Sanderling | 3 | Goldcrest | 3 | Black-t Godwit | 2 |
| Pied Wagtail | 5 | Goldcrest | 3 | Whitethroat | 3 | Woodcock | 2 |
| Grey Heron | 4 | Blackcap | 3 | Pied Wagtail | 3 | Common Tern | 2 |
| Herring Gull | 4 | Pied Flycatcher | 3 | Linnet | 3 | Goldcrest | 2 |
| Kittiwake | 4 | Goldfinch | 3 | Lesser Redpoll | 3 | Pied Flycatcher | 2 |
| Collared Dove | 4 | Wigeon | 2 | Goldfinch | 3 | Goldfinch | 2 |
| Greenfinch | 4 | Woodcock | 2 | Mute Swan | 2 | Reed Bunting | 2 |
| Goldfinch | 4 | Collared Dove | 2 | Little Stint | 2 | Whooper Swan | 1 |
| Ruff | 3 | Bearded Tit | 2 | Snipe | 2 | Wigeon | 1 |
| Guillemot | 3 | Reed Bunting | 2 | Bar-t Godwit | 2 | Tufted Duck | 1 |
| Kestrel | 3 | Whooper Swan | 1 | Guillemot | 2 | Avocet | 1 |
| Golden Plover | 2 | Tufted Duck | 1 | Collared Dove | 2 | Oystercatcher | 1 |
| Little Stint | 2 | Avocet | 1 | Kestrel | 2 | Ruff | 1 |
| Bar-t Godwit | 2 | Oystercatcher | 1 | Bearded Tit | 2 | Curlew | 1 |
| Goldcrest | 2 | Ruff | 1 | Song Thrush | 2 | Med Gull | 1 |
| Bearded Tit | 2 | Curlew | 1 | Greenfinch | 2 | Herring Gull | 1 |
| Song Thrush | 2 | Med Gull | 1 | Whooper Swan | 1 | Collared Dove | 1 |
| Whooper Swan | 1 | Herring Gull | 1 | Pintail | 1 | Bearded Tit | 1 |
| Pintail | 1 | Whitethroat | 1 | Shag | 1 | Whitethroat | 1 |
| Shag | 1 | Redwing | 1 | Moorhen | 1 | Redwing | 1 |
| Moorhen | 1 | Yellow Wagtail | 1 | L Ringed Pl | 1 | Yellow Wagtail | 1 |
| | | Linnet | 1 | | | Linnet | 1 |

SELECTED RETRAPS AND LOCAL MOVEMENTS 2013-14

David Norman

Each year the Group recaptures up to 5,000 birds already wearing MRG rings, at or near the ringing site. These are crucial for calculations of annual survival/ mortality, and can be amongst the most valuable for showing longevity, site fidelity and sometimes local movements. This report details a small selection of the 'oldest' retraps for the two years 2013 and 2014, with summaries for many species. Note that the term 'oldest' refers to the elapsed time between ringing and last recapture; except in a few cases where birds were ringed as nestlings, 'oldest' does not refer to the age of the bird.

For birds that were handled many times, only a selection of recapture dates is given. In the summary tables, birds ringed in 2013 are counted only if they were recaptured in 2014, so that birds ringed and recaptured only in 2013 are not included.

Local movements are in italics and appear after the retraps for each species. C= control; R= retrap; RR= ring read in field by ringer; V= caught and released by non-ringer. Retraps usually involve movements of 5 km but for some species (eg Barn Owl) it is 10 km.

Mallard

GC27615 3F 13/10/2012 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 15/03/2014 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington (1 yr 153days)

Buzzard

MA19926 1 30/06/2013 *Frankby, Wirral, Merseyside*
 V 16/10/2013 *Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside* (6 km, N, 108 days)

Redshank

DD48385 5 07/03/2011 *Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside*
 R 03/12/2013 *Hoylake, Wirral, Merseyside* (5 km, WSW, 2 yrs 271days)

Black-headed Gull

EK57175 4 30/12/2009 New Brighton, Wirral, Merseyside
 RR 26/11/2014 New Brighton, Wirral, Merseyside (4 yrs 331days)

EK57176 4 30/12/2009 New Brighton, Wirral, Merseyside
 RR 26/11/2014 New Brighton, Wirral, Merseyside (4 yrs 331days)

Woodpigeon

FA60870 6 08/07/2006 Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside
 R 02/06/2009 Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside
 R=M 02/04/2010 Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside
 R 10/08/2011 Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside
 R 13/05/2012 Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside
 R 17/08/2013 Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside (7 yrs 40days)

Barn Owl

Barn Owls recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at or near the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 18 | 20 | 14 |

GN48415 1 13/07/2004 Pickmere, Cheshire
 R=M 07/08/2013 Hall Lane, nr Comberbach, Cheshire (7 km, W, 9 yrs 25days)
 R=M 31/03/2014 Heath Lodge Fm, Little Leigh, Ches (7 km, W, 9 yrs 261days)

This Barn Owl, ringed as a chick, was not retrapped for nine years; see also the article on p.9.

GC00439 1M 28/06/2005 Common House Farm, Clotton, Cheshire
R 25/06/2009 Lower House Fm, Clotton, Cheshire (1 km, E, 3 yrs 362days)
R 07/11/2013 Woodlane Farm, Utkinton, Cheshire (2 km, E, 8 yrs 132days)

We have nearly 4,000 handlings of Barn Owls in the MRG records. One aspect that would merit analysis is the different movements of siblings, such as the following two, still going strong in their seventh year:

GC27717 1 11/06/2007 Queastybirch Hall, Cheshire
R=M 11/10/2009 White House, Acton Bridge, Ches (4 km, SSW, 2 yrs 122days)
R 29/04/2014 Manor Farm, Cheshire (2 km, S, 6 yrs 321days)

GC27722 1 11/06/2007 Queastybirch Hall, Cheshire
C=F 09/06/2012 Outside Farm, Cheshire (15 km, S, 4 yrs 364days)
R 10/05/2014 Lower Farm, Cheshire (16 km, S, 6 yrs 333days)

GC78933 1 01/07/2011 Ashbank Farm, Scholar Green, Cheshire
C=M 29/09/2013 Sandhole Farm, Cheshire (19 km, N, 2 yrs 90days)

GC78961 1F 06/07/2011 Brook Farm, Great Barrow, Cheshire
C 23/07/2013 Moore Nature Reserve, Warrington
C 16/09/2013 Moore Nature Reserve, Warrington
C 12/05/2014 Moore Nature Reserve, Cheshire (20 km, NE, 2 yrs 310days)

GR25777 1M 06/06/2012 Portford Farm, Cheshire
C 11/05/2013 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, W'ton (16 km, NNW, 339 days)
C 19/04/2014 Firtree Farm, Cheshire (11 km, NNW, 1 yr 317days)

GR54867 1F 14/06/2012 Oak Tree Farm, Cheshire
C 19/06/2014 Caldecott Leches Gorse, Cheshire (16 km, SW, 2 yrs 5days)

Little Owl

EL95249 6F 26/05/2013 Moss Side Farm, Cheshire
R 09/05/2014 Moss Side Farm, Cheshire (348 days)

Tawny Owl

GH80280 10F 26/02/2011 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
R 21/01/2012 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
R 04/01/2014 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington (2 yrs 312days)

Two other females were retrapped, at Brimstage and Woolston, but GH80280 was the 'oldest'.

Swift

SA76027 6F 13/07/2009 Cotebrook, Cheshire
R 13/07/2010 Cotebrook, Cheshire
R 14/07/2011 Cotebrook, Cheshire
R 22/07/2012 Cotebrook, Cheshire
R 06/07/2013 Cotebrook, Cheshire
R 14/07/2014 Cotebrook, Cheshire (5 yrs 1day)

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Birds recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 1 | 4 | 13 | 7 |

CT64764 2M 22/12/2009 Burton, Cheshire
R 20/04/2013 Burton, Cheshire
R 03/04/2014 Burton, Cheshire (4 yrs 102days)

Jay

Jays recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 |

The oldest were both recaptured on the same date:

DD10647 3J 11/08/2007 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R=F 25/07/2009 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 31/05/2014 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington (6 yrs 293days)

DD48217 3J 07/08/2008 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R=F 30/05/2009 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 05/06/2010 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 22/07/2011 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 07/08/2012 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 08/06/2013 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 31/05/2014 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington (5 yrs 297days)

Jackdaw

Only one Jackdaw was retrapped in a subsequent year:

EL95014 4 18/06/2010 Llwynmawr (PEN), Wrexham
 R 14/06/2014 Llwynmawr (PEN), Wrexham (3 yrs 361days)

Goldcrest

Goldcrests do not live long. Birds recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at or near the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|
| 4 | 5 |

EJY541 3F 13/11/2013 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton
 R 17/11/2013 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton (2 km, N, 4 days)

EBJ732 3M 05/11/2012 Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton
 R 17/11/2012 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton
 R 16/11/2014 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton (2 km, N, 2 yrs 11days)

EBJ752 4M 10/11/2012 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 02/11/2013 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton (2 km, S, 357 days)

Firecrest

EBH991 3M 03/11/2012 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton
 R 06/01/2013 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton
 R 11/02/2013 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton (100 days)

Blue Tit

Blue Tits recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 7 | 33 | 92 | 129 | 271 | 286 |

V848825 1 17/05/2008 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 04/10/2008 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 03/04/2009 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R=M 06/04/2011 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 09/06/2012 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 20/04/2013 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 28/06/2014 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington (6 yrs 42days)

| | | | | |
|---------|---|------------|--|--------------------------|
| Y158661 | 3 | 20/10/2012 | Birkenhead High School Academy, Merseyside | |
| | C | 12/01/2013 | Burton, Cheshire | (15 km, S, 84 days) |
| Y671096 | 1 | 02/06/2013 | Moore Nature Reserve, Warrington | |
| | C | 21/12/2013 | Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton | (6 km, SSW, 202 days) |
| Y672432 | 3 | 23/12/2012 | Shotton, Flintshire | |
| | R | 14/03/2014 | Burton, Cheshire | (4 km, NNE, 1 yr 81days) |

Great Tit

Great Tits recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 26 | 45 | 93 | 130 | 130 |

| | | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| T161440 | 3J | 24/06/2005 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R=M | 03/02/2006 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R | 07/02/2009 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R | 24/12/2009 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R | 30/10/2012 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R | 02/03/2013 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | (7 yrs 251days) |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| L406280 | 3M | 17/10/2010 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | C | 18/02/2011 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | C | 11/03/2012 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R | 11/11/2012 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R | 05/05/2013 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | (6 km, S, 2 yrs 200days) |

Coal Tit

Coal Tits recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 10 | 10 | 45 | 27 |

| | | | | |
|---------|---|------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| X065737 | 5 | 15/03/2009 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham | |
| | R | 10/11/2014 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham | (5 yrs 240days) |

Willow Tit

Willow Tits recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 5 |

| | | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| V214001 | 3J | 13/08/2006 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 24/12/2006 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 12/09/2007 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 05/08/2008 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 16/02/2009 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 12/09/2009 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 29/10/2010 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R=F | 14/04/2011 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 24/08/2011 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 12/01/2012 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 19/08/2013 | Birchwood, Warrington | (7 yrs 6days) |

Marsh Tit

| | | | | |
|---------|---|------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| L639717 | 5 | 08/02/2011 | Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire | |
| | R | 24/02/2011 | Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire | |
| | R | 23/02/2012 | Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire | |
| | R | 23/03/2014 | Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire | (3 yrs 43days) |

Swallow

L115034 4F 16/07/2010 Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington
 R 05/09/2014 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington (4 yrs 51days)

House Martin

Four House Martins ringed at Hapsford in 2013 (two as adult males, two as juveniles) were retrapped there in 2014.

Cetti's Warbler

D030197 2M 10/11/2013 Shotton, Flintshire
 R 13/04/2014 Shotton, Flintshire (154 days)

D030199 2F 10/11/2013 Shotton, Flintshire
 R 05/10/2014 Shotton, Flintshire (329 days)

Long-tailed Tit

Birds recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2 | 1 | 6 | 22 | 35 | 63 | 60 |

AYD795 4 26/02/2007 Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire
 R 09/02/2008 Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire
 R 24/02/2009 Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire
 R 22/03/2011 Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire
 R 15/03/2014 Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire (7 yrs 17days)

BHJ321 3J 26/05/2007 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 03/11/2007 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 25/03/2008 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 06/12/2008 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 26/10/2009 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 17/03/2010 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 21/10/2010 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 19/03/2011 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R=F 18/06/2011 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 12/11/2011 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 21/03/2012 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 09/11/2012 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 06/03/2013 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington (5 yrs 284 days)

BTL121 4 02/03/2008 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton
 R 03/11/2012 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton
 R 12/10/2013 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton (5 yrs 224days)

These three old Long-tailed Tits illustrate the different behaviour of individual birds. AYD795 was handled seven times in seven years; BTL121 was caught only three times in over five years while BHJ321 was caught 35 times in all, although only once in the breeding season. This could be influenced by feeding stations at Woolston while none is provided at Aston or Norton Priory.

ERP309 3J 09/08/2014 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R 14/09/2014 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 C 16/11/2014 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton (11 km, WSW, 99 days)

ERP244 3J 26/07/2014 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 C 16/11/2014 Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton (11 km, WSW, 113 days)

Chiffchaff

Chiffchaffs recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 3 | 4 | 14 | 20 |

| | | | | |
|--------|---------------------|--|--|---------------------------|
| DCY454 | 3JF R | 03/09/2010 17/09/2014 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | (4 yrs 14days) |
| CHN739 | 4F R R | 24/07/2009 10/07/2010 22/04/2013 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | (3 yrs 272days) |
| BHJ161 | 3J C C=M | 09/09/2009 18/04/2013 03/05/2013 | Marston, Cheshire Birchwood, Warrington Birchwood, Warrington | (19 km, N, 3 yrs 236days) |
| DCX876 | 3J C=M C C | 05/08/2011 18/06/2012 06/09/2012 28/04/2013 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington Oxmoor Wood, Runcorn, Halton Oxmoor Wood, Runcorn, Halton Oxmoor Wood, Runcorn, Halton | (11 km, WSW, 1yr 266days) |
| EBH824 | 3 C | 03/09/2012 20/04/2013 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | (11 km, ENE, 229days) |

Willow Warbler

Willow Warblers recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|
| 2 | 2 | 12 | 5 |

| | | | | |
|--------|----------------|--|--|-----------------------|
| DCV549 | 4 R=F R | 01/05/2010 26/06/2010 10/08/2013 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton | (3 yrs 101days) |
| DCY309 | 3J R=M R | 06/08/2010 16/04/2011 20/07/2013 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | (2 yrs 348days) |
| EJX226 | 3J C | 13/07/2013 20/07/2014 | Moore Nature Reserve, Warrington Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | (7 km, E, 1 yr 7days) |

Blackcap

Blackcaps recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|
| 3 | 10 | 13 | 6 |

| | | | | |
|---------|--------------|--|--|-------------------------|
| X928236 | 4M R R | 17/04/2010 06/04/2011 26/07/2013 | Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | (3 yrs 100days) |
| X931083 | 6M R | 09/04/2010 16/07/2013 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton | (3 yrs 98days) |
| D030913 | 4F R R | 02/05/2013 20/08/2013 02/06/2014 | Meols, Wirral, Merseyside Leasowe, Wirral, Merseyside Leasowe, Wirral, Merseyside | (5 km, NE, 1 yr 31days) |

D327525 3M 14/09/2013 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 C 03/06/2014 Oxmoor Wood, Runcorn, Halton (11 km, WSW, 262 days)

Garden Warbler

Only one Garden Warbler was recaptured in a subsequent year:

Y385035 4M 25/07/2012 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 25/05/2013 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 31/05/2014 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton (1 yr 310days)

Whitethroat

Whitethroats recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 11 | 5 |

V850705 4M 24/06/2008 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 30/05/2009 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 01/06/2011 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 12/07/2013 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton (5 yrs 18days)

V214960 3J 11/07/2009 Woolston Eyes, Warrington
 R=F 31/05/2014 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington (4 yrs 324days)

This bird was not caught between these two dates.

Sedge Warbler

Sedge Warblers recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 6 |

V852893 4 13/06/2009 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 R=M 25/05/2013 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed (10), Warrington (3 yrs 346days)

D645911 3 31/07/2014 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 C 05/08/2014 Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington (11 km, ENE, 5 days)

Reed Warbler

Reed Warblers recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 17 | 19 | 24 | 43 |

T536767 3J 31/08/2005 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R=M 14/07/2007 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 24/06/2008 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 04/06/2009 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 21/05/2010 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 01/06/2011 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 09/06/2012 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton
 R 21/07/2013 Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton (7 yrs 324days)

D327249 3J 07/09/2013 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 C=M 20/07/2014 Oxmoor Wood, Runcorn, Halton (11 km, WSW, 316 days)

D646168 3J 25/07/2014 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 C 05/08/2014 Oxmoor Wood, Runcorn, Halton (11 km, WSW, 11 days)

X928774 3J 03/07/2010 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
 C=M 05/08/2012 Oxmoor Wood, Runcorn, Halton
 C 11/07/2013 Oxmoor Wood, Runcorn, Halton (11 km, WSW, 3 yrs 8days)

Y157837 4 17/05/2012 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
C=M 30/06/2013 Oxmoor Wood, Runcorn, Halton (11 km, WSW, 1 yr 44days)

Y384235 3J 02/08/2012 Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington
C=M 17/06/2013 Rostherne Mere, Cheshire (11km, ESE, 319 days)
C 07/07/2013 Oxmoor Wood, Runcorn, Halton (11 km, WSW, 339 days)

This Reed Warbler travelled round three different sites in the Mersey valley.

Nuthatch

Nuthatches recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 3 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 17 | 8 |

TJ07507 2M 22/11/2008 Delamere Forest, Cheshire
R 30/10/2009 Delamere Forest, Cheshire
R 20/11/2010 Delamere Forest, Cheshire
R 05/01/2013 Delamere Forest, Cheshire
R 26/12/2013 Delamere Forest, Cheshire
R 16/02/2014 Delamere Forest, Cheshire (5 yrs 86days)

TL07281 3M 28/12/2009 Delamere Forest, Cheshire
R 21/03/2010 Delamere Forest, Cheshire
R 20/11/2010 Delamere Forest, Cheshire
R 31/01/2011 Delamere Forest, Cheshire
R 23/10/2012 Delamere Forest, Cheshire
R 28/12/2014 Delamere Forest, Cheshire (5 yrs 0days)

Treecreeper

Only seven Treecreepers were retrapped in a subsequent year, the oldest being:

EBE275 5 29/02/2012 Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire
R 13/02/2014 Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire (1 yr 350days)

CEJ575 4 23.01.2011 Runcorn Hill Local Nature Reserve, Runcorn
R 13.03.2014 Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire (6 km, ESE, 3 yrs 49days)

Wren

Wrens recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2 | 4 | 17 | 33 | 30 |

CHP440 5F 23/06/2009 Meols, Wirral, Merseyside
R 30/07/2010 Meols, Wirral, Merseyside
R 16/07/2011 Meols, Wirral, Merseyside
R 10/07/2012 Meols, Wirral, Merseyside
R 28/04/2013 Meols, Wirral, Merseyside (3 yrs 309days)

Starling

Starlings recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 14 | 15 |

CW48097 3J 26/07/2006 Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton
R=F 27/05/2010 Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton
R=F 18/05/2013 Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton (6 yrs 296days)

Blackbird

Blackbirds recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 3 | 5 | 2 | 13 | 21 | 34 | 70 | 32 |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| CT63474 | 5F | 03/02/2006 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 31/07/2007 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 04/02/2009 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 15/08/2009 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 10/06/2010 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 25/05/2011 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 06/06/2013 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 02/05/2014 | Birchwood, Warrington | (8 yrs 88days) |

Song Thrush

Compared to Blackbird, it is striking how few Song Thrushes are recaptured. Birds recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 2 | 7 | 5 |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| RT96914 | 5M | 22/04/2010 | Bidston Moss, Merseyside | |
| | R | 21/09/2014 | Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside | (1 km, W, 4 yrs 152days) |

Robin

Birds recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 9 | 21 | 21 | 56 | 36 |

| | | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| V850463 | 5 | 26/02/2008 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton | |
| | R=F | 30/05/2008 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton | |
| | R=F | 25/05/2011 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton | |
| | R | 26/09/2011 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton | |
| | R | 30/11/2012 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton | |
| | R=F | 16/05/2013 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton | (5 yrs 79days) |

| | | | | |
|---------|---|------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| L869758 | 5 | 15/01/2012 | Leasowe, Wirral, Merseyside | |
| | R | 03/03/2013 | Bidston Moss, Merseyside | (3 km, SE, 1 yr 47days) |

Pied Flycatcher

Birds recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 0 | 2 | 14 | 12 | 16 | 37 |

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| T833470 | 5M | 31/05/2007 | Pandy, nr Glyn Ceiriog), Wrexham | |
| | R | 04/06/2008 | Pandy, nr Glyn Ceiriog, Wrexham | |
| | R | 09/06/2009 | Pandy, nr Glyn Ceiriog, Wrexham | |
| | R | 15/06/2013 | Pandy, nr Glyn Ceiriog, Wrexham | (6 yrs 15days) |
| L113929 | 5M | 10/06/2010 | Pandy, nr Glyn Ceiriog, Wrexham | |
| | R | 06/06/2011 | Ddol-hir, near Pandy, Wrexham | |
| | R | 04/06/2012 | Ddol-hir, near Pandy, Wrexham | (2 km, NNE, 1 yr 360days) |
| | X | 05/05/2013 | Pandy, nr Glyn Ceiriog, Wrexham | (2yrs 329days) |
| L329516 | 1 (8/8) | 07/06/2010 | Bucknell Wood, Shropshire | |
| | C=F | 30/05/2011 | Ddol-hir, near Pandy, Wrexham | |
| | C | 26/05/2012 | Pandy, nr Glyn Ceiriog, Wrexham | |
| | C | 24/05/2014 | Pandy, nr Glyn Ceiriog, Wrexham | (2 km, SSW, 2yrs 359days) |
| X932482 | 1 | 06/06/2010 | Llewesog Hall, Prion, Denbighshire | |
| | C=F | 10/05/2014 | Glyn Arthur, Denbighshire | (8 km, ENE, 3 yrs 338days) |

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|--|
| X932382 | I | 31/05/2010 | Llewesog Hall, Prion, Denbighshire |
| | C=M | 09/06/2012 | Glyn Arthur, Denbighshire |
| | C | 15/06/2013 | Glyn Arthur, Denbighshire |
| | C | 08/06/2014 | Glyn Arthur, Denbighshire (8 km, ENE, 4 yrs 8days) |
| L869086 | I | 03/06/2011 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham |
| | R=F | 26/05/2013 | Pandy, nr Glyn Ceiriog, Wrexham (3 km, SW, 1 yr 357days) |
| Y079690 | I | 08/06/2012 | Penbedw, nr Nannerch, Flintshire |
| | C=F | 09/05/2014 | Llewesog Hall, Prion, Denbigh (11 km, WSW, 1 yr 335days) |
| Y159934 | I | 05/06/2012 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham |
| | R=M | 02/06/2014 | Pandy, nr Glyn Ceiriog, Wrexham (3 km, SW, 1 yr 362days) |
| Y381950 | I | 02/06/2012 | Llewesog Hall, Prion, Denbighshire |
| | C=F | 17/05/2014 | Glyn Arthur, Denbighshire (8 km, ENE, 1 yr 349days) |
| X062920 | I | 12/06/2010 | Near Llanarmon-Yn-Ial, Denbighshire |
| | C=M | 09/06/2012 | Glyn Arthur, Denbighshire |
| | C | 15/06/2013 | Glyn Arthur, Denbighshire |
| | C | 30/05/2014 | Glyn Arthur, Denbighshire (9 km, NW, 3 yrs 352days) |
| X065438 | I | 31/05/2010 | Pandy, nr Glyn Ceiriog, Wrexham |
| | R=F | 27/05/2013 | Ddol-hir, near Pandy, Wrexham (2 km, NNE, 2 yrs 361days) |

Two other Pied Flycatchers, one male and one female, ringed as pulli in 2013 were controlled as breeding adults in 2014.

Dunnock

Dunnocks recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 3 | 6 | 10 | 23 | 48 | 52 |

| | | | |
|---------|---|------------|--|
| V651377 | 4 | 16/02/2008 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington |
| | R | 06/12/2008 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington |
| | R | 29/03/2012 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington |
| | R | 26/06/2013 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington |
| | R | 02/10/2014 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington (6 yrs 228days) |

House Sparrow

House Sparrows recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 2 |

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|--|
| TP83319 | 3JF | 22/06/2010 | Near Pensby, Merseyside |
| | R | 14/06/2014 | Near Pensby, Merseyside (3 yrs 357days) |
| TL07209 | 2F | 15/10/2009 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton |
| | R | 19/06/2010 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton |
| | R | 13/05/2013 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton (3 yrs 210days) |

Chaffinch

Chaffinches recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 22 | 44 |

| | | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| T161389 | 5F | 25/02/2005 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R | 20/11/2010 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R | 02/06/2013 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R | 28/06/2014 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | (9 yrs 123days) |
| L639446 | 3M | 26/12/2010 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton | |
| | R | 07/02/2014 | Aston, Frodsham, Cheshire | (2 km, SSE, 3 yrs 43days) |
| Y383902 | 3F | 11/11/2012 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | C | 02/09/2013 | Birchwood, Warrington | (6 km, N, 295 days) |
| Y670516 | 3J | 14/06/2012 | Caldy, Wirral, Merseyside | |
| | R=F | 02/05/2013 | Meols, Wirral, Merseyside | (4 km, N, 322 days) |
| L405763 | 3M | 20/11/2010 | Delamere Forest, Cheshire | |
| | R | 05/01/2013 | Fox Howl, Delamere Forest, Cheshire | (2 km, W, 2 yrs 46days) |
| L868799 | 3J | 30/07/2011 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton | |
| | R=F | 09/01/2014 | Norton Priory, Runcorn, Halton | (2 km, S, 2 yrs 163days) |

Bullfinch

Bullfinches recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2 | 7 | 11 | 19 | 55 | 57 |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| V384185 | 5M | 17/02/2008 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 11/05/2010 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 20/06/2011 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 24/06/2011 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 30/07/2011 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R | 06/02/2014 | Birchwood, Warrington | (5 yrs 354 days) |

Greenfinch

Greenfinches recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at or near the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 6 | 5 | 46 | 52 |

| | | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|--|---------------------------|
| TJ08137 | 5M | 25/03/2010 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham | |
| | R | 12/04/2010 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham | |
| | R | 24/05/2014 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham | (4 yrs 60days) |
| TL06122 | 5M | 22/06/2009 | Deeside Industrial Park, near Shotwick, Flintshire | |
| | R | 03/08/2014 | Shotton, Flintshire | (4 km, WSW, 5 yrs 42days) |
| TR06556 | 3JF | 20/06/2013 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | C | 15/11/2014 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | (6 km, S, 1 yr 148days) |
| TJ07849 | 4M | 23/09/2012 | Leasowe, Wirral, Merseyside | |
| | R | 10/02/2013 | Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside | (2 km, SSE, 140 days) |
| TL07832 | 3M | 24/11/2012 | Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | |
| | C | 18/10/2013 | Birchwood, Warrington | (6 km, N, 328 days) |
| TP83114 | 3M | 04/12/2010 | Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | |
| | C | 17/07/2014 | Birchwood, Warrington | (6 km, N, 3 yrs 225days) |

Lesser Redpoll

Lesser Redpolls recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|
| 2 | 0 | 4 | 1 |

The oldest was presumably a local breeder:

| | | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| L114306 | 3J | 05/08/2010 | Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R=F | 20/02/2013 | Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R=F | 10/04/2013 | Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R=F | 30/06/2013 | Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R=F | 16/02/2014 | Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R=F | 26/04/2014 | Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R=F | 21/06/2014 | Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R=F | 28/12/2014 | Woolston Eyes No 3 Bed, Warrington | (4 yrs 145days) |

Goldfinch

Goldfinches recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 3 | 3 | 4 | 12 | 11 |

| | | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| X572142 | 3J | 25/08/2009 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton | |
| | R=M | 20/01/2014 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton | (4 yrs 148days) |
| X306812 | 3J | 17/09/2009 | Birchwood, Warrington | |
| | R=F | 02/02/2014 | Birchwood, Warrington | (4 yrs 138days) |
| L868782 | 3J | 30/07/2011 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton | |
| | R | 20/02/2013 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton | (4 km, S, 1 yr 205days) |
| X930719 | 3F | 16/11/2013 | Willaston, Cheshire | |
| | R | 14/03/2014 | Burton, Cheshire | (4 km, S, 118 days) |
| Y385871 | 3JM | 16/09/2012 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton | |
| | R | 19/02/2013 | Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Halton | (4 km, S, 156 days) |

Siskin

Siskins recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 1 | 3 | 11 | 9 |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| X065742 | 6F | 17/03/2009 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham | |
| | R | 18/03/2013 | Llwynmawr, Wrexham | (4 yrs 1day) |
| D717809 | 5M | 25.04.2014 (06:45) | Llanfyllin, Powys | |
| | R | 25.04.2014 (12:30) | Llwynmawr, Wrexham | (17 km, NNE, 0days) |
| | | | Same-day movement | |

Reed Bunting

Birds recaptured in 2013 or 2014 at the place of ringing had been ringed in:

| 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2 | 1 | 3 | 14 | 12 | 24 | 18 |

| | | | | |
|---------|----|------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| V215531 | 5F | 13/04/2007 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R | 23/01/2010 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | |
| | R | 20/11/2014 | Woolston Eyes No 1 Bed, Warrington | (7 y 7 m 7 d) |
| Z208073 | 3M | 23/09/2014 | Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Halton | |
| | C | 02/10/2014 | Frodsham Marsh, Cheshire | (8 km, SW, 9 days) |

NEST RECORDS 2014

David Norman

MRG members submitted 966 nest records of 54 species, again making the Group the third-highest contributor to the BTO's national scheme. Our top five species for 2014 were Blue Tit, Great Tit, Barn Owl, Swallow and Pied Flycatcher. All records were sent to the BTO by the end of October 2014 for inclusion in their analyses of laying dates and breeding success, using clutch size, brood size, egg stage survival, chick survival and number of fledglings produced (see <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/nrs/results/nrs-preliminary-results-2014>). Summary data for the Welsh records were also provided to the North East Wales Bird Report.

The classification in Birds of Conservation Concern 3, although now revised in version 4 published in December 2015, was in force in 2014 and has been used in this report. Over half (51%) of our total of nest records was from species of conservation concern, 64 on the **Red List** and 430 on the *Amber List*. Cavity-nesting passerines provided 452 records and 220 were from open-nesting passerines, the latter a category for which the Nest Record Scheme is keen to encourage more submissions.

The Group has amassed a total of 9,556 nest records in the 12 years (2003-14) since we started collecting them electronically, with large samples of a number of species that would be suitable for members to perform their own analyses.

Nest record cards submitted in 2014

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|------------|
| Mute Swan | 3 | Little Owl | 9 | Nuthatch | 3 |
| <i>Mallard</i> | 1 | Tawny Owl | 15 | Treecreeper | 2 |
| Grey Heron | 1 | G Spotted W'pecker | 1 | Wren | 8 |
| Red Kite | 1 | <i>Kestrel</i> | 26 | Dipper | 4 |
| <i>Marsh Harrier</i> | 2 | Hobby | 1 | Blackbird | 39 |
| Goshawk | 3 | Peregrine | 1 | Song Thrush | 8 |
| Buzzard | 12 | Jackdaw | 17 | Sp Flycatcher | 8 |
| Moorhen | 5 | Raven | 1 | Robin | 8 |
| Coot | 5 | Blue Tit | 162 | <i>Pied Flycatcher</i> | 88 |
| <i>Oystercatcher</i> | 9 | Great Tit | 135 | <i>Redstart</i> | 8 |
| Lapwing | 8 | Coal Tit | 2 | <i>Dunnock</i> | 6 |
| <i>Ringed Plover</i> | 1 | <i>Swallow</i> | 109 | House Sparrow | 21 |
| <i>Little Tern</i> | 3 | Cetti's Warbler | 1 | Tree Sparrow | 14 |
| <i>Black-headed Gull</i> | 15 | Long-tailed Tit | 4 | <i>Grey Wagtail</i> | 5 |
| <i>Stock Dove</i> | 28 | Wood Warbler | 5 | Pied Wagtail | 1 |
| Woodpigeon | 12 | Chiffchaff | 1 | Chaffinch | 6 |
| Collared Dove | 6 | <i>Willow Warbler</i> | 2 | Goldfinch | 2 |
| <i>Barn Owl</i> | 126 | Blackcap | 1 | <i>Reed Bunting</i> | 1 |
| | | | | TOTAL | 966 |

One of the more unusual sightings this year was this Oystercatcher nesting on an abandoned structure on the banks of the Manchester Ship Canal at Frodsham (Photo: D Norman):



Pied Flycatchers at Prion had a record-breaking year in 2014; the number of fledged young was 215 compared to the previous record of 176 in 1994. Nesting started early, with the first egg date of 24 April equaling the record set in 2011, and 35 clutches were raised (Photo: P Coffey).



WOOLSTON EYES RINGING REPORT 2014

Michael Miles

**Michael Miles on behalf of the ringing team (Jason Atkinson, Mike Baron, John Blundell, Kieran Foster, Chris Piner, Margaret Rawlins and David Riley)*

Ringling operations in 2014 were carried out in two areas of the Reserve: the east end of No. 1 bed and the centre of No.3 bed. It has been widely reported that 2014 was a bumper breeding season for many species and Woolston appears to be no exception. The grand total of 6,777 birds of 58 species newly-ringed across the Reserve was a 41% increase on the 4,802 birds of 48 species ringed in 2013. This total is exceeded only by the 7,025 new birds ringed in 2003, a year which included the ringling of 1,586 Greenfinches. Excluding this single species, 2014 was the best year since ringling started in 1980. Ringling effort calculated as the “number of ringling sessions”, was about 20% higher than in 2013. This increase relates partly to the impact of weather and partly to more availability of ringers.

The total of 58 species ringed represented a return to “the norm” after a very poor year in 2013. The commissioning of the duck trap on No.3 bed produced five species not ringed in 2013. The only species that can be considered a “miss” is Brambling, not ringed for the first time since 2005. It is not surprising that in such a good year for breeding success a number of species were ringed in record numbers and these are referred to in the paragraphs below.

The commissioning of the Fixed Duck Trap on No.3 bed, facilitated by some helpful reshaping during the management work on the bed, resulted in the ringling of 45 Teals and 28 Mallards, both record numbers for a single year.



Management works and duck trap (Photo: M Baron)

It also became clear that the Teals did not become “trap shy” as a good proportion of them were captured more than once which will allow the collection of information such as changes in weight as they approached the start of their spring migration back to their breeding grounds in northern Russia. It seems likely that the trap will have the capacity to catch over 100 Teals in a

full year and may well generate a similar number of retraps. In recent years about 600 Teals have been ringed annually in the U.K. and less than 50 retrapped so we can look forward to Woolston becoming a leading contributor to the U.K. totals for this species.



Kieran Foster entering the duck trap to round up the catch (Photo: M Baron)

As well as the above two species, the trap produced Woolston's first Tufted Duck. Diving ducks such as Tufted Ducks and Pochards are far less likely to "come ashore" and enter the trap to feed than dabbling ducks such as Teals and Mallards and thoughts are already turning to the design of a trap that can be entered by swimming. After a blank year in 2013 Water Rail, Moorhen and Coot figured in catches, a welcome secondary success for the duck trap.

It was a good year for raptor ringing at Woolston. Two Buzzard chicks were ringed in a nest on No.3 bed, the first of this species to be ringed at Woolston. After several poor years seven Sparrowhawks were ringed, the highest total since 2007. These seven were evenly divided between No.1 bed with four and No.3 bed with three and, although catches of this species are somewhat opportunistic, the high proportion of juveniles would imply successful local breeding.

Waders were represented by a Lapwing, three Green Sandpipers and a Snipe. The Green Sandpipers were another welcome side effect of the arrival of the duck trap, the groundworks for which have created a narrow channel through the reed bed across which a net can be placed when weather conditions allow. This net was deployed on five occasions and made just 15 captures but these included a Kingfisher, three Green Sandpipers, two House Martins and two Grey Wagtails, all species caught in very small numbers at Woolston.

Catching Stock Doves at Woolston is a relatively recent occurrence, the first having been caught as recently as 2006. The five ringed in 2014 might now be described as typical. The great majority are caught under the feeders on No.3 bed in the months between May and July and the reasons for this pattern are not yet understood. Woodpigeon is a common bird at Woolston and the ringing total of just seven in no way reflects this. These large muscular birds rarely "stick" if they enter a net. Great Spotted Woodpeckers and corvids were caught in typical numbers.

After just 47 in 2013, Goldcrests were present in significantly higher numbers and 131 new birds were ringed. Just two of these were ringed before the start of September and, whilst some of the other 129 will be locally fledged, many will be winter migrants from the continent. This winter influx varies from year to year depending on food availability on the breeding grounds. For the second year running no Firecrests were ringed.

Tits had a good year with productivity high in the boxes on No.3 bed. Blue Tits fared particularly well with the 382 ringed, well above the ten year average of 280. Great Tits (287) and Willow Tits (35) were ringed in line with their respective ten year averages of 271 and 35. For the latter, it is an indication that the population at Woolston is stable.

Hirundines were caught in good numbers and the 653 Swallows ringed was the highest total since 2007. A good sized stable roost formed on No.3 bed coinciding with calm and settled weather making for very benign ringing conditions.

It was a very good year for warblers with 2,446 new birds ringed of ten species compared with 1,727 in 2013 and a ten year average of 2,121. After two blank years eight Cetti's Warblers were ringed, all in the usual reed bed area of No.3 bed and all between 14th September and 1st November. All eight birds were aged as juveniles and these are known to make long distance post-fledging dispersal movements. At least one bird (not necessarily one of the ringed birds) has spent the winter on No.3 bed and we hope that the time is close when we can add this species to the list of Woolston's breeding birds. Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs were ringed in record numbers. In contrast only 154 new Willow Warblers were ringed, the same as in 2013 and below the ten year average of 218. Suitable breeding habitat for this species is now essentially restricted to No.1 bed and even there it is declining. The total of 185 Sedge Warblers ringed was the highest since 2003 but catches of Reed Warblers, though higher than 2013, were in line with the 10 year average. Grasshopper Warbler and Lesser Whitethroat hang on as ringed species at Woolston. The three Grasshopper Warblers were all caught on No.3 bed and the two Lesser Whitethroats on No.1 bed.

Part of the improvement in breeding success derives from a return to "the norm" with respect to the start of the breeding season. The following table of "first juvenile capture" dates indicates that the breeding season for most species started about three weeks earlier than in 2013.

| | 2014 | 2013 |
|----------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Species</i> | <i>1st Date</i> | <i>1st Date</i> |
| Chiffchaff | 31 May | 22 June |
| Blackcap | 08 June | 30 June |
| Whitethroat | 21 June | 22 June |
| Reed Warbler | 14 June | 07 July |

As spring vegetation developed faster than in 2013, the resident ground feeders appeared to have more success with early broods and again the breeding season started between two and four weeks earlier than in 2013 as the following table demonstrates:

| | 2014 | 2013 |
|----------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Species</i> | <i>1st Date</i> | <i>1st Date</i> |
| Robin | 3 May | 1 June |
| Wren | 14 June | 30 June |
| Dunnock | 31 May | 22 June |
| Bullfinch | 31 May | 30 June |

Wrens were ringed in the greatest numbers since 2010, Dunnocks since 2009 and Robins since 2002. The 83 new Blackbirds ringed was a return to the ten year average after just 54 in 2013.

House Sparrows are to be found in small flocks around the edge of the reserve but are rarely encountered in the centre of the beds. The one ringed on No.1 bed is the first since 2010.

The second winter period saw a remarkable influx of Redwings and the total of 153 new birds ringed eclipsed the previous best of 55 in the year 2000. In part this success results from the use of a new audio lure originally recorded in Latvia. Why this lure should be more effective than previous ones is unknown, but is perhaps because the Latvian lure is of a flock that encourages others to join it.

No.1 bed is the preferred habitat for transitory migrants and this year two Redstarts were ringed and Woolston's first Spotted Flycatcher since 2009. There was a strong autumn passage of Meadow Pipits across No.1 bed and a record 109 new birds were ringed. The only Tree Pipit of the year was also ringed on this bed. The pipit passage over No.3 bed has always been much lighter than is the case with No.1 but the failure to catch any at all was a disappointment.

Our understanding of the incidence of Grey Wagtails at Woolston has been changed by the adoption of another new audio lure, this time supplied by a fellow ringer in Lancashire. In the 34 years to 2013 just 12 Grey Wagtails had been ringed at Woolston but the use of the new lure has demonstrated the existence of a light autumn passage, presumably of birds flying reasonably high. As a result the cumulative ringing total was nearly doubled with ten new birds ringed.

Returning to the theme of high productivity, finches appeared to have fared well. The 401 new Chaffinches ringed was the second highest total ever, exceeded only by 2002, and the 758 Greenfinches were exceeded only by the "freak" year of 2003. The winter of 2013/2014 was not a "Brambling winter" and none were ringed. After a blank year in 2013 just two Linnets were ringed and the 77 Lesser Redpolls ringed was in line with the ten year average although this somewhat irruptive species can fluctuate widely in the numbers present at Woolston. After a relatively poor year in 2013, numbers of Bullfinches ringed returned to the ten year average. Catches of Reed Buntings also recovered but there were very different results when comparing the two beds, as the following table indicates:

| <i>Bed</i> | <i>2014</i> | <i>2013</i> | <i>2012</i> |
|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| No.1 | 85 | 42 | 64 |
| No.3 | 32 | 24 | 74 |

In view of the recovery in numbers on No.1 bed and increased ringing effort, the results from No.3 bed are puzzling. It may be that the management work, which is very positive when looking at the "big picture", has reduced the available breeding habitat for this species.

As might be expected in a record year of ringing there were a number of individual species milestones. In descending order these were the 13,000th Greenfinch, 12,000th Swallow, 10,000th Reed Warbler, 9000th Blackcap, 5000th Sedge Warbler, 4,000th Robin, 700th Meadow Pipit, 300th Jay, 100th Sparrowhawk and last and probably best the 700th Willow Tit. Two new species were ringed in 2014, Tufted Duck and Buzzard, bringing the cumulative total of species ringed at Woolston to 106.

Woolston Eyes Ringing Totals 2014

| SPECIES | No.1 | No.3 | Reserve Total 2014 | Grand Total 1980-2014 |
|----------------------|------|------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Mallard | | 28 | 28 | 63 |
| Teal | | 45 | 45 | 69 |
| Tufted Duck | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Buzzard | | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Sparrowhawk | 4 | 3 | 7 | 105 |
| Kestrel | 1 | | 1 | 34 |
| Water Rail | | 2 | 2 | 88 |
| Moorhen | | 14 | 14 | 244 |
| Coot | | 1 | 1 | 24 |
| Lapwing | | 1 | 1 | 64 |
| Green Sandpiper | | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| Snipe | | 1 | 1 | 55 |
| Stock Dove | | 5 | 5 | 29 |
| Woodpigeon | | 7 | 7 | 109 |
| Tawny Owl | | 1 | 1 | 15 |
| Kingfisher | | 1 | 1 | 85 |
| G Spotted Woodpecker | 6 | 15 | 21 | 284 |
| Magpie | 1 | 5 | 6 | 131 |
| Jay | 3 | 13 | 16 | 314 |
| Goldcrest | 92 | 39 | 131 | 1706 |
| Blue Tit | 167 | 215 | 382 | 9515 |
| Great Tit | 97 | 190 | 287 | 5915 |
| Coal Tit | 6 | 2 | 8 | 112 |
| Willow Tit | 16 | 19 | 35 | 716 |
| Sand Martin | 8 | 27 | 35 | 1146 |
| Swallow | 82 | 571 | 653 | 12636 |
| House Martin | | 2 | 2 | 83 |
| Cetti's Warbler | | 8 | 8 | 19 |
| Long-tailed Tit | 55 | 79 | 134 | 3601 |
| Chiffchaff | 333 | 217 | 550 | 6775 |
| Willow Warbler | 126 | 28 | 154 | 7614 |
| Blackcap | 334 | 526 | 860 | 9628 |
| Garden Warbler | 24 | 14 | 38 | 841 |
| Lesser Whitethroat | 2 | | 2 | 250 |
| Whitethroat | 57 | 76 | 133 | 4860 |
| Grasshopper Warbler | | 3 | 3 | 189 |
| Sedge Warbler | 71 | 114 | 185 | 5066 |
| Reed Warbler | 165 | 356 | 521 | 10017 |
| Treecreeper | 4 | 5 | 9 | 185 |
| Wren | 55 | 118 | 173 | 5598 |
| Blackbird | 29 | 54 | 83 | 2548 |
| Song Thrush | 10 | 36 | 46 | 1181 |
| Redwing | 62 | 91 | 153 | 482 |

| SPECIES | No.1 | No.3 | Reserve Total | Grand Total |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | | 2014 | 1980-2014 |
| Spotted Flycatcher | 1 | | 1 | 6 |
| Redstart | 2 | | 2 | 27 |
| Dunnock | 22 | 92 | 114 | 3616 |
| House Sparrow | 1 | | 1 | 25 |
| Tree Pipit | 1 | | 1 | 26 |
| Meadow Pipit | 109 | | 109 | 755 |
| Grey Wagtail | 5 | 5 | 10 | 22 |
| Chaffinch | 77 | 324 | 401 | 4725 |
| Greenfinch | 246 | 512 | 758 | 13027 |
| Goldfinch | 9 | 7 | 16 | 685 |
| Linnet | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1100 |
| Lesser Redpoll | 42 | 35 | 77 | 1836 |
| Bullfinch | 56 | 136 | 192 | 2524 |
| Reed Bunting | 85 | 32 | 117 | 6760 |
| Others (48 species) | | | | 2036 |
| Total | 2557 | 4220 | 6777 | 133798 |



A male Teal caught in the duck trap (Photo: M Baron)

RINGING AT PANDY, NEAR GLYN CEIRIOG, 2014

Nicola Edmonds

With less extreme weather to hamper the birds or my efforts, the year overall was reasonably productive. Totals for nest records were not only up on the previous year, but with 130 nests from 20 species (cf. 119 nests, 20 species in 2013), this year's was the highest since taking over the site from the late Andy Madden in 2005. The ringing totals are also slowly creeping towards Andy's, with 509 birds ringed (492 pulli and 17 full-grown) bringing the grand total to 8811. In his last two years Andy also spent a week mist-netting in his host's garden in October, as well as mist-netting during his two-week annual stay, pushing his annual total towards and beyond the 600 mark. Without doing any mist-netting, my yearly totals are certainly respectable and hopefully Andy would be pleased! There were no new species this year, but there were a few milestones he would also approve of: the 200th Jackdaw, 200th Blackbird, 700th Swallow and 2000th Great Tit, taking the totals past the 1500th full-grown bird and 7000th pullus to be ringed to date.

Pied Flycatchers – a sign of recovery?

Last year there were only seven pairs of Pied Flycatcher recorded in the nest boxes, having taken a hit from terrible breeding seasons in the previous two years. This year there was a glimmer of hope – albeit a tiny one – as the 11 pairs recorded are a sign of a slow recovery. Between them 69 eggs were laid, 62 young hatched, and 60 fledged, an overall success rate of 87% (egg/fledge) – slightly lower than in 2013 (89.6% egg/fledge). Twenty adults were trapped, of which 11 were already ringed.

Three of the females trapped were non-group. All were originally ringed as pulli: one, ringed in Shropshire in 2010, had been caught at Pandy in 2012 and again in 2014; another was originally ringed in 2012 in Northumberland, 244km away, and the third was ringed in 2013 in Denbighshire. The males were all local birds, except one which was found dead on the road; it was squashed so one key digit of the ring number was unreadable, but judging from the series it was unlikely to be a group bird.

This year there was another case of polygyny, where one male was recorded at two boxes within one subsite. They were so close, in fact, it seemed he may have also been tending a third box located between the two – but once trapped that male turned out to be a different bird after all. It is very interesting though how tolerant Pied Flycatchers are of neighbouring pairs, especially when their feeding grounds overlap so greatly. Last time polygyny was recorded at Pandy, in 2010, the two nests were over 500m apart and in two different habitats (woodland/river by fields) and were a week apart in timing. This year there was only a four-day difference, and no doubt the male was lucky that he did not have to leave his territory to tend two broods at once, unlike the male from 2010.

Mixed fortunes for tits

Nest counts for both the Blue and Great Tits were up this year, yet their success rates still remain quite low. Six of the 12 Blue Tit nests recorded were in natural sites or extra boxes with the remainder in the main numbered stock. Uptake by Blue Tits is still low compared to Great Tits which were actually at an all-time high (32 nests), with only 2010 coming anywhere close (31 nests). Twenty-nine of the 32 Great Tit nests were in the main numbered boxes.

However this booming start was short lived, as only 187 of the 225 Great Tit eggs hatched, and only 134 young fledged, the overall success rate being a disappointing 59.6% (egg/fledge), with only 2012 being worse at 24%. Weather may yet again be the culprit, with heavy rain and high

winds recorded on at least two visits in May, one early (during incubation) and another just as chicks were reaching their most demanding. Blue Tits did scarcely better, despite starting out later, laying 77 eggs, with 65 hatching and 48 young fledging – an overall success rate of 62.3% (about average for them). Last year, with calm settled conditions throughout much of May and June, both species managed percentage success rates in the low 70s.

Best of the rest

Some birds are recorded in the same nest sites every year, in particular the Dippers and Jackdaws. All three Dipper sites were active this year, with four nests recorded, though one failed at egg stage with a second attempt a few weeks later. Overall 11 young were ringed and fledged. Jackdaws continued to do well, with eight nests recorded at their usual site plus one further up the valley. This contained at least two well-grown young (alas too well-grown to catch and ring) but was remarkable for being the lowest nest I have ever seen for a jackdaw – barely a metre from the ground! From the usual site 25 were ringed and 28 fledged, a 100% success this year.

Swallows are also amongst those that return to the same nests year after year. This year broke all records, with 23 nests recorded and 85 pulli ringed (cf. 20 nests and 73 pulli in 2013), which can be attributed to both access to more sites, and having help to reach more difficult nests than ever before. The sites where Andy regularly recorded Swallows actually have fewer nests now due to changes in usage of the buildings they prefer, but the new sites have several nests that are not easy to reach unassisted!

Being able to reach and access nests meant a good number of House Sparrow broods have been recorded this year, a relatively new endeavour largely focused on one farm with a decent-sized colony in occupation; seven nests were accessible, with 21 eggs laid, 20 hatched and 19 young fledged. Three more nests were recorded at two other locations in the valley, adding another 12 eggs and 10 young hatching and fledging. The overall success rate was 87.9% and a tidy 18 young were ringed in total. A single adult male was also trapped on a nest whilst tending young – quite by accident – he shot up my sleeve whilst I was checking the nest!

Spotted Flycatchers finally had a reasonable year, with six nests fledging 15 young (success rate of 65% egg/fledge) but still nowhere near what Andy used to record, and many of the nest sites that had been occupied in the past remain unused. Redstart numbers were also reasonable, with four nests fledging 16 young (76.2% success), and the two Song Thrush nests did even better, fledging all eight young that hatched. One of these chicks had horsehair embedded into and around the soft flanges of its beak, but this was easily removed and a later check found the chick had recovered without issue – something which would have been unlikely had the hair been left. Hair and other materials are often seen around beaks or legs, or even swallowed (often in the tits), and the outcome is normally not a happy one, so this Song Thrush was very, very lucky.

Not all the birds did so well. There were three Grey Wagtail nests, fledging only five young in total, a Robin nest which only fledged one of its four chicks, and a Goldfinch nest that failed completely at young stage. However, not wanting to end the year on a down note, the nest boxes also housed a single Nuthatch nest which fledged all its six young, an inaccessible Pied Wagtail nest was presumed to have fledged all its young, and both Woodpigeon and Stock Dove nests fledged two young each. Overall, 2014 really was a reasonably good year.

Acknowledgements

I extend my continued appreciation to all landowners for allowing me access to their land, ladders, and locked sheds, and also to Leah who again – with more of a head for heights than me – provided valuable assistance in reaching the most difficult nests.

Ringing totals at Pandy, 2014

| Species | 2014 | | | Grand total | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Adult | Pullus | Total | Adult | Pullus | Total |
| <i>Kestrel</i> | | | | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| <i>Curlew</i> | | | | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| <i>Stock Dove</i> | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 24 | 26 |
| Woodpigeon | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Tawny Owl | | | | 0 | 26 | 26 |
| Swift | | | | 1 | 7 | 8 |
| Great Spotted Woodpecker | | | | 10 | 0 | 10 |
| Magpie | | | | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Jackdaw | | 25 | 25 | 0 | 222 | 222 |
| Goldcrest | | | | 28 | 0 | 28 |
| Blue Tit | 1 | 48 | 49 | 473 | 1040 | 1513 |
| Great Tit | 6 | 155 | 161 | 236 | 1773 | 2009 |
| Coal Tit | | | | 43 | 13 | 56 |
| Marsh Tit | | | | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Skylark | | | | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| <i>Swallow</i> | 0 | 85 | 85 | 3 | 706 | 709 |
| <i>House Martin</i> | | | | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Long-tailed Tit | | | | 25 | 0 | 25 |
| Wood Warbler | | | | 0 | 10 | 10 |
| Chiffchaff | | | | 6 | 6 | 12 |
| <i>Willow Warbler</i> | | | | 41 | 111 | 152 |
| Blackcap | | | | 5 | 12 | 17 |
| Garden Warbler | | | | 10 | 67 | 77 |
| Lesser Whitethroat | | | | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| <i>Whitethroat</i> | | | | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Nuthatch | 0 | 6 | 6 | 27 | 69 | 96 |
| Treecreeper | | | | 3 | 6 | 9 |
| Wren | | | | 27 | 56 | 83 |
| Dipper | 0 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 170 | 182 |
| Blackbird | 0 | 13 | 13 | 23 | 181 | 204 |
| Song Thrush | 0 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 99 | 108 |
| <i>Mistle Thrush</i> | | | | 3 | 10 | 13 |
| Spotted Flycatcher | 0 | 15 | 15 | 0 | 232 | 232 |
| Robin | 0 | 1 | 1 | 37 | 150 | 187 |
| <i>Pied Flycatcher</i> | 9 | 61 | 70 | 258 | 1500 | 1758 |
| <i>Redstart</i> | 0 | 20 | 20 | 1 | 149 | 150 |
| <i>Whinchat</i> | | | | 0 | 63 | 63 |
| <i>Duncock</i> | 0 | | 0 | 28 | 58 | 86 |
| House Sparrow | 1 | 26 | 27 | 2 | 36 | 38 |
| <i>Grey Wagtail</i> | 0 | 10 | 10 | 11 | 163 | 174 |
| Pied Wagtail | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 73 | 75 |
| <i>Meadow Pipit</i> | | | | 0 | 13 | 13 |
| Chaffinch | | 6 | 6 | 135 | 153 | 288 |
| Greenfinch | | | | 32 | 8 | 40 |
| Goldfinch | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 27 | 29 |
| Siskin | | | | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Linnet | | | | 0 | 7 | 7 |
| <i>Bullfinch</i> | | | | 7 | 28 | 35 |
| Yellowhammer | | | | 2 | 16 | 18 |
| TOTALS | 17 | 492 | 509 | 1500 | 7295 | 8811 |

UK Birds of Conservation Concern are indicated as **Red List** and *Amber List*. In 2014 three species (47 birds) of red list and five species (187 birds) of amber list birds were ringed – 47% of the total ringed.

GLYN ARTHUR 2014

Bob Harris

Posting of nesting bird reports to the BTO on-line forum seemed to indicate a very early breeding season in a whole range of species. Blackbirds had already been seen with fledged young, as had Woodpigeon, Collared Dove and Mallard, and Great Tits recorded at Wytham Woods in Oxford were having their earliest nesting season since 1968. For me, nothing was happening at home but there was an eagerness to get out to Glyn Arthur to determine what was happening there.

My exploratory visit for the year was on 12 April. The first thing noticeable was several very large trees, both beech and oak, that had been felled by the severe winds of February. Several of my boxes had suffered and one was sent to its maker when a falling tree had taken it right off. Five new boxes were erected to replace those that had served their purpose and another twenty had running repairs – with predominantly new lids and fronts. Chiffchaffs were in and singing, as were Blackcaps, but it was too early for Willow Warbler or other spring migrants. On site a Woodpigeon was already sitting on two eggs, and 36 boxes were showing signs of nest-building activity. On the south slope five boxes already had eggs, three with one egg, one with two and one (box 114, Blue Tit) with six, cold and covered (meaning the clutch was not yet complete).

The full ‘proper’ nest box check took place two weeks later (27 April). It was a little chilly to start (jumper but no coat) and the temperature climbed to a seasonally warmish 13⁰C by early afternoon. Activity had certainly been swift over the last two weeks. In all 19 birds were incubating (ten Blue Tit, eight Great Tit and one Coal Tit). Elsewhere another 52 tit nests had eggs with a full range of nests with one egg right up to eleven eggs. Another nine boxes all showed signs of building activity. As a comparison, for the same week last year there were only six attempts at nest building, N1-N3, with no eggs.

For Pied Flycatcher, this weekend some birds were on site with four potential pairs counted and at some sites males alarm-calling. There were few singing males so the full extent of site occupancy wasn’t possible to assess. In boxes, there was evidence of thirteen possible flycatcher nests. Conspicuous by their absence were Redstarts. Usually by now they would have been on site and visible but none were seen. Disappointingly on this visit, the Woodpigeon nest had been predated and the Blue Tit in box 114 was found dead on twelve eggs – she had used sheep’s wool in the lining of the nest, which had then got caught around her leg so badly she was effectively shackled to the nest. It was a sad start to the year.

The visit on 4 May was a quick and efficient affair needing nothing other than walking the site and checking all the boxes. Seventy boxes in total were occupied: 24 Blue Tit, 12 Great Tit, two Coal Tit, 13 unidentified tit species, one Redstart and 15 Pied Flycatcher. In addition another three pairs of Pied Flycatcher were nesting in natural holes within the alders along the stream. Only two females were lifted off eggs – one was a new bird, and the other was an adult returning to breed from last year.

During the next week the weather started to change so the visit on 10 May was a quick in and out affair as winds were blustery, up to 40mph, and showers were frequent, sharp and heavy. It was just a case of doing the essentials and leaving the birds in peace. Only the known Pied Flycatchers were checked and those boxes known to contain advanced clutches to check for hatching. Only one female was lifted – a brief period when it was dry and the sun shone – and she was found to be a bird ringed as a pullus at Prion in 2010. Another female was found dead on eight eggs in what appeared to just be loss of life as there were no signs of a struggle or attempted predation. Box 79 contained eight Blue Tit chicks big enough for ringing but it was

considered inappropriate to remove them from a warm and dry nest to ring them given the weather conditions outside.

The following weekend (17 May) was the first very warm day of the year with the temperature rising to 20°C. A slight breeze helped prevent it becoming too hot, and also helped mask my approach to the boxes. Somewhat scarce last year, a single Cuckoo was on-site and calling for most of the day. In all seven female flycatchers were lifted off eggs today; all were new bar two, an adult that had bred in 2012, 2013 and this year, and a bird originally ringed as a pullus at Prion in 2012. One male was taken under peculiar circumstances. On approaching the box I hadn't plugged the hole as I was expecting it to be empty. Looking through the top there was the male sat in the bottom of the box. I managed to get a hand in and capture it whereby it was ringed, weighed, photographed and put back. Even more bizarre was that, checking the following week, the bird was still 'sat' in the box – all perfectly healthy and happy!

Elsewhere the first brood of Blue Tits were about to fledge. This too was somewhat unusual as normally Great Tits get chicks away before Blue Tits. In all, 85 nests were active (34 Blue Tit, 16 Great Tit, 2 Coal Tit, another eight unidentified tit species, 24 Pied Flycatchers and one Redstart).

The inclement weather returned for the following weekend with rain forecast later in the day. Fortunately the floodgates opened just as I was heading back to the car after a day of concentrating on the flycatchers. In the end nine females were caught or lifted, four being previous Glyn Arthur birds and all the rest new, and one male, a returning adult from last year. The brood of five Redstart chicks were ringed this visit as were one of the broods of Coal Tit that were half grown.

The mindset for the following visit on 31 May was to try and capture as many male Pied Flycatchers as possible. However, on examination some of the clutches had not yet converted to broods and in others the chicks were so young that the nests were all passed over until next week. Eight adult males were trapped, four new and four retraps, and one new female. Of the retrapped males, one was a pullus from Prion ringed last year, one was an adult ringed in 2012 at Glyn Arthur (and caught in 2013 and this year), one was an adult ringed in 2011 that had been back every year since, and the last, X062920, was a bird ringed as a pullus in 2010 at a site near Llanarmon-Yn-Ial (approximately 10 kilometres away) that had been caught at Glyn Arthur every year from 2012. Interestingly this last bird was polygamous, having paired up with a new female in box 36 (raising five young) and an older female from last year in box 17 (raising seven young), with the boxes being less than 100 metres apart.

The final visit was on the 8 June when another five males and one female were caught – all but one returning adults from last year. In addition the last 58 Pied Flycatcher chicks were ringed.

Pied Flycatcher yearly comparisons

| Year | Nests | Adults caught | Pulli fledged | First egg |
|------|-------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| 2012 | 21 | 22 | 108 | 4 May |
| 2013 | 16 | 8 | 92 | 7 May |
| 2014 | 22 | 27 | 129 | 2 May |

The table above indicates just how influential the cold weather at the start of 2013 was on the seasonal outcome, not only in the number of eggs laid (and therefore chicks raised) but also on my ability to catch the adults.

Other box-nesting species are now no longer ringed automatically as, being reasonably sedentary with no winter ringing, there is no value to be gained from doing so. I do however still religiously record all breeding attempts and outcomes. These results are submitted as nest

records, while Pied Flycatcher data is submitted as a Retrapping Adults for Survival (RAS) project. The performance of Blue and Great Tits over the last three years are shown below:

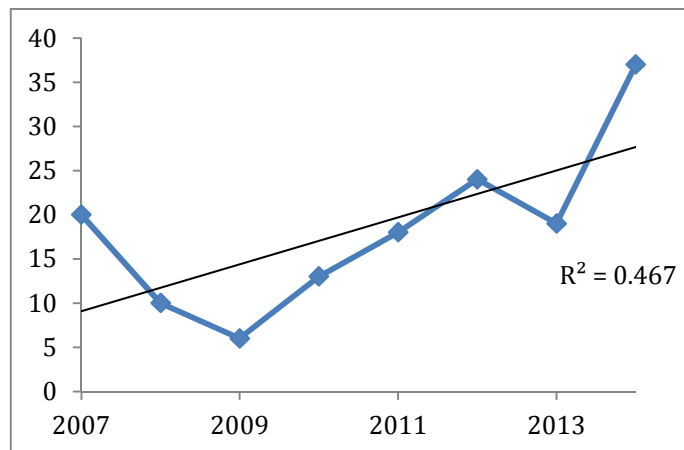
Blue Tit and Great Tit yearly comparisons

| | Species | Nests | Pulli fledged | First egg |
|------|-----------|-------|---------------|-----------|
| 2012 | Blue Tit | 24 | 168 | 9 Apr |
| | Great Tit | 12 | 77 | 11 Apr |
| 2013 | Blue Tit | 19 | 141 | 26 Apr |
| | Great Tit | 16 | 98 | 23 Mar* |
| 2014 | Blue Tit | 37 | 296 | 11 Apr |
| | Great Tit | 16 | 110 | 9 Apr |

*An unusually early date – the next laying date was 30 April.

Irrespective of the cold winter of 2013, the number of Great Tit pairs appeared to have ‘peaked’ with approximately 15 boxes occupied per year and somewhere around 100 chicks fledged. Although Blue Tit numbers dipped a little in 2013, their general trend appears to be upwards. Not only do they appear to be expanding, as demonstrated by the number of nests, but figures also show that the actual yield per box has increased from seven chicks per box per year to now eight per box.

Number of boxes used by Blue Tit per year



It will be interesting to see whether this trend persists next year, and to then determine what effect this increase in Blue Tit numbers and box use is having, if any, on the population of Pied Flycatchers on site.

My thanks and appreciation to Peter Williams and his family for permission to access their land to enable this study to continue.

BIRD-RINGING AND OBSERVATIONS AT SHOTTON 2014

Peter Coffey*

** Peter Coffey on behalf of the Shotton team: John Birch, Rob Cockbain, Graham Thomason, Paul Triggs, John Parkinson and Richard Birch who assiduously log birds recorded on the reserve and ring species where possible.*

The tern colony

A separate report into the development, decline, and subsequent recovery, of Common Tern breeding at Shotton is provided in this Annual Report (pp 12-18). In 2014, terns were first seen on 4 May when several small groups circled high over the colony for a short time before flying off. But it was not until 30 May that large numbers arrived and started landing on the islands. The colony rapidly grew to 400+ birds over the next week and birds were settling down to breed. The birds were left undisturbed until chicks were hatching but that, unfortunately, meant that a count of nests was not carried out. Calculations were made testing various assumptions about the total number of eggs and a range of average clutch sizes recorded in previous years; in the final analysis, the number of first-laid nests, estimated at 224±20, was relatively insensitive to the assumptions. Additional clutches would be laid later in the season where early clutches/broods had failed or where late arrivals started breeding.

Ringling Common Tern chicks started on 6 July but a heavy thunderstorm led to the abandonment of ringing at the half-way point. Chicks in the second half were ringed on 9 July and the total after the first round was 350 chicks ringed. Further visits on 20 July, 9 and 23 August raised the total to 494 chicks. Recovery of 101 dead chicks, some of them ringed, suggests that 445 chicks fledged successfully – a very welcome return to form for the colony.

A second striking feature of the season was the number, and success, of Black-headed Gulls breeding on the islands. Gulls had been observed sitting on metal supports around the islands from early March and activity intensified in early May. Some breeding was anticipated but the number of chicks ringed – 124 – was a surprise. Breeding was concentrated on islands two and three. There were no immediate signs that their presence had an adverse impact on the terns but the situation will need careful monitoring.

Oystercatchers nesting on island 3 hatched two chicks; one survived and was ringed.

Ringling Highlights

The total number of birds ringed in 2014 was 799 birds. Excluding Common Tern and Black-headed Gull and Oystercatcher chicks, 180 newly-ringed birds of 18 species were caught. Goldfinch was the most numerous capture: 57 birds were caught, 37 in March and the remainder between April and July. Totals for all species are shown in table 1 below. The highlight was the capture of six Cetti's Warblers; the presence of male, female and juvenile birds proved successful breeding on the reserve for the first time. The unmistakable, and insistent, sound of the male Cetti's Warbler was recorded on the first visit of the year, 2 March. The female was a non-group bird ringed as a juvenile in 2012 at Dyfi-Aber Leri Nature Reserve, near Borth, Ceredigion.

Four Shotton-ringed birds reported from elsewhere are worthy of note. A Great Spotted Woodpecker moved 43km to Shropshire, an exceptionally long distance for this species; a Chaffinch moved 117 km to Cumbria and a Greenfinch moved 89 km to south Shropshire. The most notable report was a Black-headed Gull chick ringed in July that, sadly, was shot in Portugal in December. (See "Selected controls and recoveries" pp 26-36 for more details)

Table 1: New birds ringed at Shotton 2014 (excluding terns and gulls)

| Species | Totals | Species | Totals |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Great Spotted Woodpecker | 1 | Sedge Warbler | 3 |
| Blue Tit | 9 | Reed Warbler | 11 |
| Great Tit | 3 | Wren | 3 |
| Cetti's Warbler | 6 | Robin | 7 |
| Chiffchaff | 18 | Duncock | 3 |
| Willow Warbler | 4 | Chaffinch | 15 |
| Blackcap | 27 | Greenfinch | 8 |
| Garden Warbler | 1 | Goldfinch | 57 |
| Whitethroat | 1 | Reed Bunting | 3 |
| | | Totals (18 species) | 180 |

Sightings at Shotton

Many other species are recorded at Shotton but not ringed (see Table 2). A flock of 280 Pink-footed Geese flew over the reserve on 2 March, flying north. Canada Geese are ever-present, with a maximum count of 24 birds in June. A pair of Mute Swans hatched three chicks but their development was slow and two chicks died. Shelduck was recorded on three occasions in April/May, with a maximum count of three. Counts of Gadwall were low in the early months but built up from late July to a peak of 37 on 19 October. Teal were present from September onwards, the maximum count being 14 on 28 September. Seven Goldeneye were present on 2 March and a solitary female was reported until 20 April. Mallard and Tufted Duck are present in good numbers (maxima of 35 and 24 respectively) for most of the year. Both species bred.

Cormorant, Little Egret and Grey Heron are regular visitors and Great Crested Grebe was reported twice, on 2 March and 14 December. Little Grebe were calling from March onwards and two pairs were observed on 6 June. One pair bred successfully, raising three chicks.

Sparrowhawk, Buzzard and Kestrel are resident at Shotton, although the latter is not regularly logged over the main reserve. A pair of Sparrowhawks nested in trees close to the tern islands and the female was observed taking chicks from the islands. The only unusual raptor sighting was a female/immature Marsh Harrier on 20 April flying over the Range Pools.

Water Rail was seen (or heard) in March and then from 21 September through to 2 December. Coot numbers built up from 22 on 27 July to a peak of 40 which was maintained throughout September. Both Coot and Moorhen bred successfully. Six species of wader were recorded on the reserve. Up to four Oystercatchers were seen displaying during April and one pair later bred on the tern islands. Small flocks of Lapwing flying over the reserve were recorded on two days: 20+ on 19 October and fifteen on 2 November. A Whimbrel was calling on 4 May and a second flew over the reserve on 11 May. Solitary Curlews flew over the reserve on 9 March, 19 and 26 October and three flew over on 16 December. Two Common Sandpipers were recorded on 29 June and one on 6 July. Green Sandpipers were observed on three occasions: 6 July, 21 September and 16 November.

The tern colony was visited by two adult Sandwich Terns on 20 July. Other gull species recorded include an adult Mediterranean Gull on 8 June. Small movements of Lesser Black-backed Gulls and Herring Gulls flew over the reserve in April.

Woodpigeon is ever-present at Shotton but noticeable movements were recorded in November, peaking at 60+. Stock Dove was recorded on two dates in July and three Collared Doves were seen on 6 April. A Cuckoo flew across the pools on 11 May, the same day that Swifts first appeared. Kingfisher was reported on six occasions: on 9 March two were seen but solitary birds were seen on the remaining sightings between July and October. Jay, Magpie and Carrion

Crow live on the reserve and parties of Jackdaw are occasionally observed flying over. Ravens were observed flying over the reserve, usually single birds but on 4 May two flew over.

Table 2: Additional species recorded but not ringed at Shotton, 2014

| Species | Species | Species |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Mute Swan | Lapwing | Goldcrest |
| Pink-footed Goose | Whimbrel | Skylark |
| Canada Goose | Curlew | Sand Martin |
| Shelduck | Common Sandpiper | Swallow |
| Gadwall | Green Sandpiper | House Martin |
| Teal | Sandwich Tern | Long-tailed Tit |
| Mallard | Mediterranean Gull | Starling |
| Shoveler | Lesser Black-backed Gull | Blackbird |
| Tufted Duck | Herring Gull | Fieldfare |
| Goldeneye | Stock Dove | Song Thrush |
| Cormorant | Woodpigeon | Redwing |
| Little Egret | Collared Dove | Mistle Thrush |
| Grey Heron | Swift | Grey Wagtail |
| Little Grebe | Kingfisher | Pied Wagtail |
| Marsh Harrier | Kestrel | Meadow Pipit |
| Sparrowhawk | Magpie | Bullfinch |
| Buzzard | Jay | Linnet |
| Water Rail | Jackdaw | Redpoll |
| Moorhen | Crow | Siskin |
| Coot | Raven | |

Goldcrests were seen/heard from late September through to the end of the year. Skylarks were reported in small numbers during their autumn passage in September. Swallows were recorded regularly between 13 April and 21 September, with a maximum of 50 seen on 13 July. House Martins were first reported on 20 April and were only seen in groups of less than ten birds.

No Grasshopper Warbler or Lesser Whitethroat was reported and only one Garden Warbler, on 27 April. A Starling roost developed in October, with 5000 + birds reported on 19 October. Thrushes were well represented in the autumn: 37 Fieldfare flew south over the reserve on 2 November and small numbers of Redwing were seen from 26 October to the end of the year. Single Mistle Thrushes were seen on 20 April and 16 November and the only Song Thrush record was on 21 December.

Grey and Pied Wagtails were present in small numbers in the second half of the year and a small roost of Grey Wagtails formed in the reedbed in late November/December with up to 12 birds seen leaving on 14 December.

Seven species of finch were recorded but there were no Brambling. Four species seen but not ringed include Bullfinch (two sightings on 3 and 24 August), Linnet (single birds on 24 August and 14 September), Lesser Redpoll (single birds on 2 March, 6 April, 28 September, 2 and 23 November) and Siskin (19 October).

Acknowledgement

Our ringing activity at Shotton benefits from the continued support and understanding of Tata Steel UK, in particular the work of Steve Hughes and his colleagues.

BIRD-RINGING AT FRODSHAM MARSH, 2014

Peter Coffey

Wind farm development

Preliminary works for the wind farm gathered momentum during 2014 and provided a timely reminder of the need to obtain good quality monitoring of birds in the area through ringing. As the development progresses it will be interesting to assess how different groups of birds react; the potential impacts on raptors, waders and small passerines are vastly different.

Extensive earth-moving started on bed 3 in September, after the breeding season, as part of the scheme to create new wader pools. The existing pools again proved to be unsuitable for catching this year so a choice of pools, hopefully designed in a way that will facilitate wader catching in all seasons, is a tantalising prospect.

Work on bed 4 was more low-key, involving installation of boreholes to sample and monitor ground conditions at locations where turbines are to be erected. One of the boreholes is sited less than 40m from the main ringing glade (4x18m nets) but activity at the borehole did not have a measureable effect on bird activity.

Ringling in 2014

The total number of birds caught this year at Frodsham, 841, was higher than any total since ringing became focussed on bed 4. The high total is, in part, a reflection of an extended season – in previous years ringing occurred between late July and 30 September but this year ringing continued up to 11 November. Sixteen visits were made, with catches varying between 18 and 122 birds! The total ringing effort was 8634 hours x net length (hr-m) This equates to one bird every 10.3 hr-m, far more productive than recent years (with rates between 12.4 and 22.2 hr-m in 2010-13), reflecting the benign breeding and ringing conditions in 2014.



Four pulli were ringed: a Meadow Pipit aged as 1J (it had left the nest but not moved far), was caught on 15 May and three Marsh Harrier chicks (two female and one male) were ringed on 2 July, all three going on to fledge successfully. The adult male had two females; the other nest was not found but at least two young fledged from it.

Marsh Harrier chicks (Photo: D Norman)

The remaining 837 birds were mist-netted on bed 4. Family commitments at the end of July/first week in August and two weeks in late September reduced ringing so only 559 birds were caught in eleven visits up to the end of September. In that period, warblers and Goldcrests accounted for only 67% of the catch, compared to an average of 79% between 2010-13.



Cetti's Warbler (Photo: Peter Coffey)

Few warblers were caught after 1 October: twelve Chiffchaffs and four Reed Warblers. However, two species previously classified as “warblers” but now in separate taxonomic groups were caught after 1 October: ten Goldcrests were added to the four caught in September and the first ever Cetti's Warbler, a first-year female, was caught on 16 October. Male Cetti's Warblers have been heard singing during the breeding season at Frodsham for some years and wandering birds are most often

encountered at other MRG sites in October-

December. Ringing for the first time in

October, and after recent rain had left some standing water and damp patches in the previously dry net glades, this bird was a welcome but not unexpected surprise.

The largest catch, 122 birds, was on 8 August when just six nets were open in nearly perfect conditions – overcast with the lightest of breezes. The catch included 28 Whitethroat, 24 Reed Warbler, 15 Willow Warbler, 14 Chiffchaff, 7 Sedge Warbler, 4 Blackcap and 1 Lesser Whitethroat. The Whitethroat numbers caught that morning were particularly interesting, representing 80% of the total for the season.

Warbler totals for three of the five years (2010-14) have been below 400 birds and species totals vary between years. In 2014 a total of 388 warblers were caught. Chiffchaff numbers recovered from 39 last year to 90, whilst Willow Warblers showed a modest increase from 18 to 25. Blackcap numbers doubled from 27 to 54, equalling the highest total recorded (in 2012), whilst Whitethroat increased from 26 to 35 but are still well below the average of 83 caught between 2010-12. Relatively high Sedge Warbler numbers have been a feature of this site but this year the total fell from 56 to 44, the lowest recorded on bed no 4 and in sharp contrast to 126 caught in 2010. It also contrasts with Sedge Warbler counts at other Mersey Valley sites, Oxmoor and Woolston both recording their highest totals for some time. Reed Warbler was the most abundant warbler, as it has been for four of the last five years; 137 were caught, compared to 120 last year and the five-year average of 145.

Several warblers were caught in small numbers, if at all. Only one Garden Warbler and two Lesser Whitethroats were caught and Grasshopper Warbler was absent again. For the latter, it may be a reflection of the abandonment of a glade where all previous Grasshopper Warblers were caught because it was bisected by the track cleared last year. There is still plenty of suitable habitat.

The late ringing sessions in October and November saw a switch from warblers to finches and buntings. Reed Bunting movement is usually observed from late September and throughout October. Numbers in previous years have varied between 7 and 74 birds, often dictated by weather conditions in the last week of September. This year 147 birds were caught: 1 in July, 48 in September, 87 in October and 11 in November. It included a first-year male ringed at Oxmoor on 23 September and then caught at Frodsham on 2 October.

Goldfinch and Linnet flocks are regular features at Frodsham but have been caught in small numbers in previous years: 35 Goldfinch and two Linnet. This year twelve Goldfinches were caught, together with 28 Linnets. A new glade for two 12m nets was created in a relatively open setting after observing a small flock of Linnet moving through the area; it paid handsome dividends, catching not only the Linnets but also 11 of the Goldfinches, 11 of the Reed Buntings and ten Chiffchaff in a total of 76 birds in four ringing sessions. The opportunity to examine

ageing and sexing characteristics for Linnet was particularly welcome, not having had that number of birds since catching roosting Linnets at Rocksavage in February 1991!

Chaffinch numbers were also up, with 11 birds caught compared to an average of two between 2010-13. Finches and buntings made up 24.6% of this year's catch compared to 7.1% in previous years.

Other species caught in greater numbers include Wren and Robin. Seventy-one Wrens were caught, 31 of them after 1 October, including several unringed adults. One of the surprises of the season was the number of Robins (36) compared to the average 12 per year in the previous four years. Most (28) were caught before the end of September. Only two were retrapped and one bird on 30th September had a muscle score of 3 suggesting that it was migrating.

Unexpected woodland species turning up in the nets included Treecreeper and Great Spotted Woodpecker. For both species this was the second bird to be caught and demonstrates how, during autumn dispersal from their natal areas, birds may wander through a range of habitats.

Finally, spare a thought for that most common of birds, the Blackbird. The sandy substrate of bed 4 is not suited to earthworms and although Blackbirds are found on the adjacent farmland, they seldom stray onto it. Only four have been caught in the five years 2010-14. The most recent, caught on the last visit of the year, was a very dark-plumaged female Blackbird with a wing measurement of 129.5mm.

Three recoveries reported in 2014 included a Chiffchaff, ringed in September 2010 and found freshly dead in Skelmersdale in May 2014. It would have made four return migratory journeys in that time and moved considerably further than the 26 kilometres between Frodsham and Skelmersdale. A Reed Warbler ringed in August 2012 was found freshly dead in Portugal in April 2014 and a Reed Bunting ringed in September 2011 was controlled in February 2014 in Northamptonshire.



A typical glade in 2014: the proposed habitat management will reduce invasive scrub.

Birds caught at Frodsham Marsh in 2014

| Species | New Birds | | Controls / Retraps** | Total |
|----------------------------|------------|----------|-------------------------|------------|
| | Full grown | Pullus | | |
| Marsh Harrier | | 3 | | 3 |
| Great Spotted Woodpecker | 1 | | | 1 |
| Goldcrest | 14 | | | 14 |
| Blue Tit | 34 | | 2 | 36 |
| Great Tit | 24 | | | 24 |
| Cetti's Warbler | 1 | | | 1 |
| Long-tailed Tit | 25 | | 6 | 31 |
| Chiffchaff | 90 | | | 90 |
| Willow Warbler | 25 | | | 25 |
| Blackcap | 54 | | | 54 |
| Garden Warbler | 1 | | | 1 |
| Lesser Whitethroat | 2 | | | 2 |
| Whitethroat | 35 | | | 35 |
| Sedge Warbler | 44 | | | 44 |
| Reed Warbler | 135 | | 2 | 137 |
| Treecreeper | 1 | | | 1 |
| Wren | 66 | | 5 | 71 |
| Blackbird | 1 | | | 1 |
| Song Thrush | 1 | | | 1 |
| Robin | 36 | | | 36 |
| Dunnock | 2 | | | 2 |
| Meadow Pipit | | 1 | | 1 |
| Chaffinch | 11 | | | 11 |
| Goldfinch | 12 | | | 12 |
| Linnet | 28 | | | 28 |
| Reed Bunting | 146 | | 1 | 147 |
| | | | | |
| Totals (26 species) | 789 | 4 | 16 | 809 |

** Controls/retraps excludes 32 retraps of birds ringed in 2014 at Frodsham Marsh and retrapped later in the season.

Acknowledgements

Access to and continued ringing at Frodsham marsh would not be possible without the support and cooperation of the Peel Group (Manchester Ship Canal Company/Peel Energy), Frodsham and District Wildfowlers and Frodsham Marsh Farm. Thank you all.

GROUP MEMBERS IN 2014

In 2014 the group had 43 ringers (25 A permit holders, 16 C permit holders and 2 trainees). Anna Davies and Mike Baron progressed from trainee to C permit holder and Dave Harazny joined the group as a trainee and progressed to C permit holder for nest-box pulli.

MRG Patron: F Bairlein **MRG Officers:** Chairman – D Norman; Treasurer – P Coffey; Records Secretary – R Harris; Membership Secretary – K Foster ; Health and Safety Advisor – A Hitchmough; Group Archivist – A Ormond.

List of members

| <i>Full members</i> | | <i>Full members (cont)</i> | |
|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| J Atkinson | Cheadle | L Warvill | Liverpool |
| M Baron | Glan Conwy | M Whiteside | Burwardsley |
| S Binney | Higher Bebington | C J Williams | Hoylake |
| J E Birch | Shotton | L Williams | Thingwall, Wirral |
| J Blundell | Bolton | B W Wright | Broxton |
| R P Cockbain | Hale | | |
| P Coffey | Little Sutton | <i>Trainees</i> | |
| D P Cross | West Kirby | C Piner | Preston |
| A Davies | Salford | E Reilly | Bylchau, Denbighshire |
| A Duncalf | Northwich | | |
| R Eades | Parkgate | <i>Country Members</i> | |
| N Edmonds | Pensby | C Batty | Poulton-le-Fylde |
| J Elliott | Heswall | C Benson | Co. Galway, Eire |
| D Faulkner | Pantymwyn | D Bowman | Lymm |
| K Foster | St Helens | T Bradshaw | Meols |
| A Garner | Sandiway | J Clarke | Warrington |
| P Guest | Warrington | T Cleeves | Huddersfield |
| D Harazny | Northwich | A Davis | Atherton |
| R Harris | Whixall, Shrops | P Fearon | Crosby |
| J Hill | Chowley, Cheshire | Z Houghton | Sandbach |
| A Hitchmough | West Kirby | A Jones | St Albans |
| R Leigh | Higher Marston | H Jones | Mellor, Lancs |
| A M McCreary | Tarvin | T Lowe | Liverpool |
| K McNiffe | Eastham | C Lynch | Anglesey |
| S Menzie | Liverpool | P Morgan | Cardiff |
| M R Miles | Alderley Edge | B Murray | New Romney, Kent |
| H Nichols | Meols, Wirral | D Okill | Shetland |
| D Norman | Sutton Weaver | S Piner | Preston |
| A Ormond | Bidston | L Ryan | Montrose |
| H Pulsford | Great Warford | J Stein | Norway |
| M Rawlins | Oldham | R Taylor | Huddersfield |
| R D Riley | Great Sankey | P Thompson | Wilmslow |
| A Robinson | Llwynmawr | T Westhead | Chorley |
| E Samuels | Bromborough | H Williams | Devon |
| K Simcock | Huntington | | |
| P Slater | Speke | <i>Honorary Member</i> | |
| G E Thomason | Widnes | I G Main | Cheltenham |
| P Triggs | Llanbedr DC | | |

Merseyside Ringing Group maintained links with national organisations, including Bob Harris on BTO Council, David Norman on BTO Ringing Committee and the Rare Breeding Birds Panel and Chris Batty on the British Birds Rarities Committee. Group members also contributed to local conservation organisations including Mersey Estuary Conservation Group, Woolston Eyes Conservation Group, Cheshire Wildlife Trust and Dee Estuary Conservation Group.