



2018 Report

A summary of bird ringing in south Nottinghamshire in 2018



Edited by Pete Leonard, Kev Hemsley & Jim Lennon

We are volunteers who study the birds of south Nottinghamshire. If you want to know more about bird ringing, you can either contact the BTO (01842 750050) for an explanatory leaflet or go to its website <https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing>

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Cover: Tree Sparrow (Geoff White)

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Editorial

It's been the year of DemOn, the BTO's new online database. Thanks to a huge effort by some of our members, the transition to this new way of submitting and managing data has been relatively smooth and already this allowed for quicker analysis for this year's report. It also enables us to spread the load as everyone has instant access to the data.

My thanks to Kev and Jim for all their input, and also to Tom, Mick and Phil for their contributions.

Pete Leonard, April 2019

Acknowledgements

The group would like to extend their sincere thanks to all the landowners who have permitted us to operate on their property and in particular the staff of Attenborough Nature Reserve, Michael Davies at Nottingham University, Ramsdale Park Golf Centre, Nottingham Trent University and the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust for their continued co-operation. Thanks also to all the members of the public who have reported our birds.

Lastly, many thanks to all the group members who have contributed to this report.

Contact details

For further information about South Notts Ringing Group, please contact the Group Secretary, Kevin Hemsley kjh260987@gmail.com

Website

For the latest news on our ringing activities, visit our blog:

<http://southnottsringinggroup.blogspot.com/>

Membership

Below is the list of members for 2018. Abbreviations refer to permit class (AT – A permit & trainer).

Alexander Phillips (C Restr.)	Kevin Hemsley (AT)	Peter Stanyon (T)
Alice Davidson (T)	Kirsten McEwan (T)	Phil Carter (C Restr.)
Cliff Butterworth (A)	Lewis Aaron (T)	Sarah Raymond (T)
Duncan Hooton (C Restr.)	Louise Gentle (C Restr.)	Sue Lakeman (T)
Gary Goddard (AT)	Liz White (A)	Tom Shields (C Restr.)
Geoff White (C)	Maria Scullion (T)	Trisha Horlock (T)
Iona Anderson (T)	Mick Pearson (A)	Vicki Moore (T)
Issie Connell (T)	Mick Thompson (A)	
Jim Lennon (AT)	Pete Leonard (AT)	

2018 Overview

Pete Leonard

This was the group's forty-eighth year of ringing and both our membership and activities remained relatively stable.

2018 will be remembered for the extremes in weather. The year began cold and turned colder in late February and early March when 'The Beast from the East' brought snow, delaying the onset of spring until the second half of April when it suddenly became hot and remained as such for most of the summer – a heatwave which broke a number of records.



Sparrowhawk chicks, Hucknall, 10 July 2019 (M. Pearson)

The breeding season seemed to be better for migrants than residents, though their arrival was somewhat delayed. Owls and Kestrels had an unremarkable year with prey appearing scarce. In total, 5059 birds of 70 species were ringed including 727 pulli. Of this broad range, most unusual was a Mandarin, a new species for the group.

A good collection of recoveries was received during the year with an increasing number of sight records. Three species of owl produced recoveries around the ten year mark or more and there were international exchanges with Norway, Poland and Spain. A Kingfisher travelled almost as far as it could without leaving the country and lastly, a couple of Tree Sparrow movements, although within the county, were a good distance for that species.



Mandarin, Syerston, 19 May 2018 (Jim Lennon)



Colour-ringed Grey Heron, Attenborough NR, 27 February 2018 (R. Smith)

Attenborough Nature Reserve - Constant Effort Site (CES)

Kev Hemsley

This was the fourteenth year in which the CES had been run in its current position and data from this period are presented below in Table 1.

2018 was a terrible year for CES captures, we caught significantly fewer individual adults than in any previous year. This trend was reported at many CES sites across the UK and has been linked to the effects of the severe weather experienced from the end of February and well into March known as 'the beast from the east'. It seems this had a major impact on some species, though others coped better. Resident species seemed to have a delayed start to the breeding season and warblers were held up arriving on site because of the bad weather that extended well south of the UK. Thankfully the exceptional summer that followed our CES season seemed to facilitate some good breeding to recoup the losses made early in the year.

Blackcap and Wren were recorded in their lowest ever numbers on the CES. Chiffchaff were recorded in their lowest numbers since 2007 and Dunnock and Bullfinch in their lowest numbers since 2008. Only one species showed a significant increase, that was Blackbird. For the third year running there were no captures of Garden Warbler. Just as in 2017, Reed Warbler numbers were also disappointingly low.

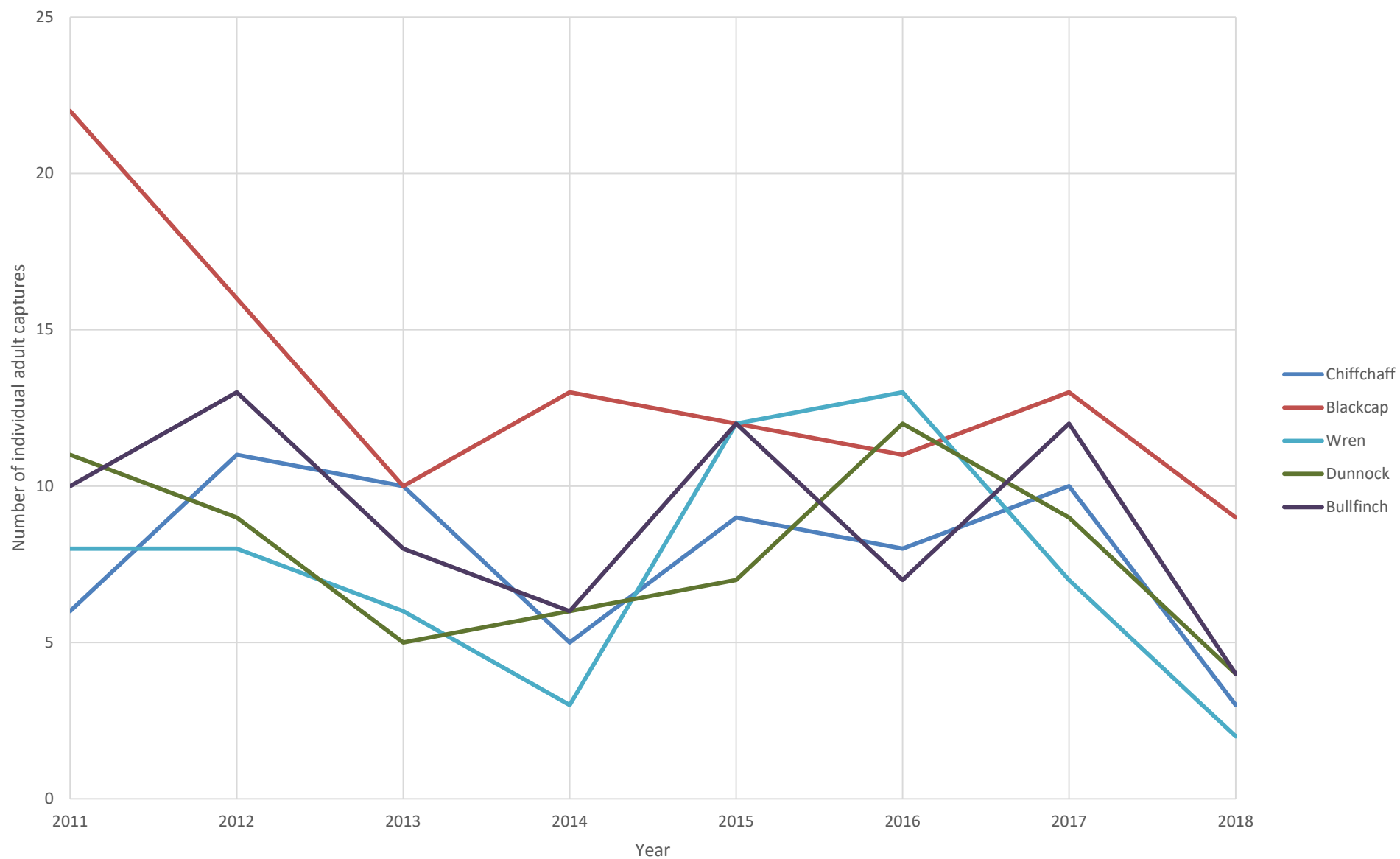
Table 1: CES Results from ANR – Total number of individual adult birds caught at standard net sites

SPECIES	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Woodpigeon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Green Woodpecker	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Great Spotted Woodpecker	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
Jay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Blue Tit	12	9	6	6	9	8	4	0	5	4	6	5	5	5
Great Tit	6	10	5	7	6	8	8	11	16	9	12	12	9	9
Coal Tit	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Willow Tit	1	5	2	0	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marsh Tit	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nuthatch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Cetti's Warbler	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	1	1	0	0
Long-Tailed Tit	11	8	4	7	5	21	5	3	7	3	4	9	1	0
Chiffchaff	8	9	3	6	9	10	6	11	10	5	9	8	10	3
Willow Warbler	6	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0
Goldcrest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0
Blackcap	23	23	14	11	14	14	22	16	10	13	12	11	13	9
Garden Warbler	18	17	9	12	10	10	8	6	6	3	3	0	0	0
Lesser Whitethroat	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whitethroat	1	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sedge Warbler	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Reed Warbler	1	0	2	3	5	2	2	4	5	4	5	7	1	1

SPECIES	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Treecreeper	3	3	4	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	4	3	5	4
Wren	7	10	8	5	5	9	8	8	6	3	12	13	7	2
Blackbird	5	5	1	4	3	4	3	8	4	3	1	10	5	9
Song Thrush	1	4	2	2	4	2	3	6	2	2	3	3	3	0
Robin	8	5	3	2	2	7	2	4	1	5	5	5	4	6
Dunnock	8	11	7	3	9	9	11	9	5	6	7	12	9	4
Chaffinch	4	3	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	1
Greenfinch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	4	0
Goldfinch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
Bullfinch	9	7	2	2	6	15	10	13	8	6	12	7	12	4
Reed Bunting	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	1	3	4	0	1	0	1
TOTALS	133	134	75	74	96	127	100	109	94	78	101	108	95	58

NB Species' current UK conservation status (red/amber/green listed) indicated by name cell colour.

Fig. 1: Selected Individual Adult Captures at ANR CES, 2011 to 2018



Attenborough Nature Reserve - tern and gull chicks

Kev Hemsley

The old Church Pond platform was out of action again this year, but a new floating platform was installed next to it. Unfortunately, although a number of terns attempted to nest, it appeared that all the eggs and chicks were predated, probably by Mink. The 'temporary' platform on Coneries Pond was still in place but moved slightly so that it could easily be viewed from the visitor centre. Black-headed Gulls did nest here but they too had all eggs and chicks predated, probably by the same Mink.

The Main Pond platform was covered over in the winter to try and prevent gulls taking it over but the cover sagged and the gulls moved in and nested on top of it. A new floating platform was installed adjacent to the old platform and thankfully neither was predated. The platforms were visited on 20 June, 12 July and again on 2 August.

The Beeston Pond platform was not visited but was viewed from the bank. It appears that no terns nested as the platform had again been taken over by Black-headed Gulls. Once again, a large number of Black-headed Gulls nested on the Clifton Pit island, but as in previous years we did not attempt to ring them due to lack of experienced manpower and the very large number of birds. A summary of numbers ringed is presented in Table 2.

Main Pond (old platform) – A good number of Black-headed Gulls nested but no terns, 36 gull chicks were ringed in total.

Main Pond (new platform) – Only terns used this new platform. When the first visit to ring chicks was made 19 chicks were ringed, 41 eggs were yet to hatch, 1 chick was found dead and 3 abandoned eggs were found. No fledged chicks were observed on the first visit. In total over all visits 28 tern chicks were ringed.

Coneries Pond – Predated, see above.

Church Pond – Predated, see above.

Beeston Pond – Platform taken over again by Black-headed Gulls, no terns nested.



Common Tern chick, Attenborough NR, 20 June 2009 (P. Leonard)

Table 2: Number of Common Tern and Black-headed Gull chicks ringed at ANR, 1995-2018

Year	Common Terns						Black-headed Gulls			
	Main Pond	Church Pond	temp. Coneries Platform	Beeston Pond	Clifton Pit Is.	Total terns	Clifton Pit Is.	Main Pond	temp. Coneries Platform	Total gulls
1995	34	10	-	0	0	44	0	0	-	0
1996	48	23	-	0	0	71	0	0	-	0
1997	0	24	-	0	0	24	0	0	-	0
1998	27	22	-	0	0	49	0	0	-	0
1999	40	3	-	0	0	43	0	0	-	0
2000	44	16	-	0	0	60	0	0	-	0
2001	33	21	-	0	0	54	0	0	-	0
2002	43	22	-	0	0	65	0	0	-	0
2003	47	26	-	0	0	73	0	0	-	0
2004	20	7	-	0	0	27	0	0	-	0
2005	23	16	-	9	0	48	0	0	-	0
2006	39	9	-	16	0	64	0	0	-	0
2007	23	8	-	14	0	45	0	0	-	0
2008	27	6	-	4	11	48	11	0	-	11
2009	26	10	-	13	0	49	28	0	-	28
2010	18	12	-	5	0	35	175	0	-	175
2011	23	8	-	12	0	43	0	0	-	0
2012	0	-	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
2013	12	-	18	7	0	37	0	0	0	0
2014	25	-	29	13	0	67	0	0	0	0
2015	6	-	8	0	0	14	0	0	0	0
2016	24	-	0	7	0	31	0	0	17	17
2017	23	-	0	0	0	23	0	8	7	15
2018	28	0	0	0	0	28	0	36	0	36

Attenborough Nature Reserve - Sand Martins

Phil Carter

The winter and early spring of 2018 were marked by periods of extreme weather. The so-called 'Beast from the East' brought c.150mm of snow on 1 March. Towards the middle of that month, cold weather with mainly northerly winds and extreme easterlies brought more snow just as the first Sand Martins returned. It's likely many of these birds would have perished. Water levels remained high across the reserve in mid-April with the first birds around the colony on c.14 April. The summer months (June, July and August) were the hottest in England since records began.

Reverting back to how things were in 2015 and 2016, the natural sand bank was not utilised in 2018. This may have been influenced by the high degree of erosion along the bank face after the winter storms (see photo) potentially making the bank face less suitable for nesting.

The number of birds seen around the reserve was significantly down on previous years. This was considered to be a nationwide issue for hirundines and thought to be due to losses on their northerly migration. This was then reflected in the number of breeding pairs which was reduced by a third from 2017 for both broods. As in 2017, the A section was largely ignored for the first brood and thus cannot be due to the leaking roof as suspected in 2017. However 11 of the 24 holes in the top two rows had eggs laid in them during the second brood period.



The heavily eroded sand bank at Attenborough NR, 18 April 2018 (Tim Sexton)

Despite the low numbers of pairs, 215 birds fledged with the highest fledging percentage to date for the colony at 77%. Prolonged periods of hot, dry weather are likely to have contributed to this success. A highlight of the year was the fledging of the 1000th bird from the colony, which attracted local television and radio coverage with good publicity for the Wildlife Trust. It's likely that at least one pair successfully raised 3 broods.

The egg failure rate was again high at 21%. Following initial discussions with Tim Birkhead in 2016, eggs that were considered as failures were removed and sent to the University of Sheffield for analysis by his colleague, Nicola Hemmings. This produced some initial results that were deemed to be 'interesting' and further analysis is planned for 2019.

In contrast to the early start to breeding in 2017, egg-laying and first fledging dates were more closely aligned with those in 2015 and 2016. See Table 4.

Table 3: Sand Martin breeding success at ANR in 2018

Estimated number of breeding pairs	28 (first brood), 39 (second brood).
Total number of eggs laid	280
Total number of fledglings	215
Mean total of eggs per nest	5.7 (total for 2 broods)
Fledging success rate	77%

Table 4: Dates of first egg-laying and fledging in ANR Sand Martin colony, 2014-18

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
First egg laid	15 May	29 April	24 April	7 April	24 April
First bird fledged	c.27 June	8 June	6 June	18-19 May	29 May-6 June

Ringling totals

Pulli: 216 (1 pullus was ringed which died before fledging).

Mist-netting: There were 3 mist-netting sessions, two in June and one in July. A total of 139 birds were caught involving 124 individuals. Of these, 61 were adults and 63 were juveniles with 27 of these having fledged from another site.

Recaptures:

- a bird ringed at Lax Hill, Rutland as a pullus on 22/05/2017, recaptured at ANR as an adult female on 12/06/2018
- a bird ringed at Browns Island, Rutland as a pullus on 12/07/2017, recaptured at ANR as an adult female on 12/06/2018
- a bird ringed at ANR as a pullus on 01/07/2017, recaptured at Lax Hill, Rutland as an adult female on 06/06/2018

These are the first birds that have been recorded moving between Attenborough and Rutland Water and it is interesting to note that they all occurred in the same year.

Attenborough Nature Reserve - Heronry & Cormorants

Mick Pearson

This was the seventh year in which the group ringed Grey Heron and Cormorant chicks on the reserve. The former is part of a wider study into Grey Herons in the Trent Valley in Nottinghamshire by SNRG and North Notts Ringing Group. Through this we hope to understand more about post-fledging dispersal, and when and where birds first breed.

Table 5: Total number of Grey Heron and Cormorant pulli ringed at Attenborough Nature Reserve, 2012-2018

Year	Grey Heron	Cormorant
2012	13	18
2013	30	18
2014	13	3
2015	38	4
2016	34	23
2017	28	5
2018	13	8

Our first visit to the Grey Heron and Cormorant colonies in 2018 didn't happen until the 18 April, almost a month later than most years. This was due to us having to make operational changes following the implementation of new Health and Safety procedures. Nevertheless we are keen for the project to continue so our first visit was also to be a test of the new way

of working. Happily, it left us feeling positive about the changes, though further visits will be needed to convince us of the continued feasibility of our study.

We found 9 occupied nests containing tiny chicks or eggs and 5 other inaccessible nests looked to be in use. Based on timings from previous years and some other evidence, we suspect a failure of early nesting attempts and that these were all re-lays. For comparison on 18 April 2017 we ringed 24 Grey Heron chicks, most of which were also large enough to be colour-ringed. We guessed that this was due to the protracted cold weather during the spring of 2018.

Readers of last year's report may remember the mention of what we believe to be our most successful Grey Heron nest to date, in tree 41. However, its fortunes changed this year, as it contained an Egyptian Goose nest with 5 eggs.

On 9 May we carried out our second visit. This was a productive session as we ringed 13 and colour-ringed 11 Grey Heron chicks. We accessed the majority of nests believed to be active, although 3 could not be reached now we are restricted to working just from the ladder. One nest still contained eggs.

We also visited the Cormorant colony and a total of 45 occupied Cormorant nests were counted: 21 on the main island, 22 on the satellite island and 2 low nests on a smaller island. We noted big differences in the stage of these nests. On the main island it was safe for us to land and we ringed and colour-ringed 5 chicks from 2 nests. Other nests checked had eggs or

tiny chicks. The satellite island contained well developed chicks, so we could not approach too close. The 2 nests on the small island contained eggs and tiny chicks.

Prior to our second visit we had discussed how the Cormorant colony was expanding and how best to identify islands the nests are on. Information found in a joint BTO report says that a Cormorant colony is: *“Defined as a group or groups of nests that are within 2km of one another. Groups in close clusters are often referred to as ‘sub-colonies’. A single nest is sufficient to be termed a colony as long as it is not within 2km of other colonies.”* Therefore at Attenborough we have 3 sub-colonies and have decided to allocate letters to the islands as a means of identification. The ‘main island’ therefore becomes sub-colony A, the ‘satellite island’ sub-colony B, and the ‘smaller island’ sub-colony C. (See Fig 2)

During our second visit we could not approach sub-colonies A or B as all nests seemed to contain large chicks. We were able approach sub-colony C and we ringed and colour-ringed 3 chicks from one nest with another nest had 4 warm eggs.

On 20 June, a visit to the tern rafts gave us an opportunity to check the Cormorants too. In sub-colony A there were chicks in 2 nests which looked an ideal size to ring, but unfortunately adjacent nests contained larger chicks which would have probably exploded if we had approached any closer. Sub-colony B was similar and sub-colony C had large chicks on the nest. So unfortunately we were not able to ring any more chicks.

Other records of interest are detailed in the ‘Recoveries’ section below.



Grey Heron chicks, Attenborough NR, 1 April 2016 (P. Stanyon)

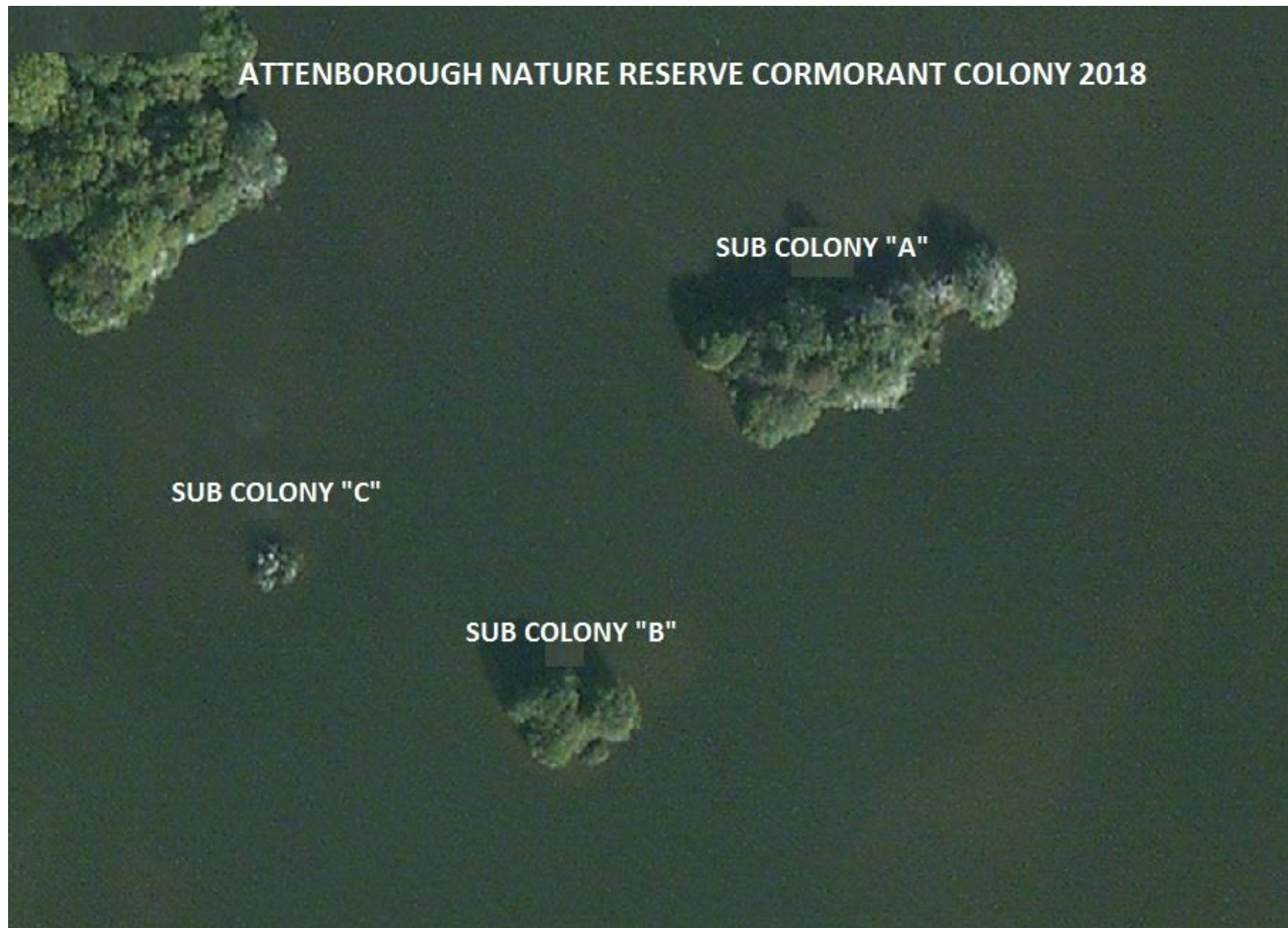


Fig. 2 aerial view of Cormorant colony at Attenborough NR, 2018 (prepared by M. Pearson)

Summer sites

In addition to the CES, the group operated two other main mist-netting sites during the summer months: the gravel pits at Holme Pierrepont and Ramsdale Park Golf Centre in Calverton.

Holme Pierrepont – *Tom Shields*

The two summer sites at Holme Pierrepont cover reedbed and scrub habitat, with the focus being on monitoring the breeding species, as well as the migrant birds that use the site as a stopover whilst on autumn passage.

Coverage was a little higher than normal, with 22 visits to the site, and even coverage between the two bases - Holme Grange reedbeds, and Blott's Pit. 1553 birds of 28 species were captured, including 1329 new individuals.



Sedge Warbler, Holme Pierrepont, 2 September 2019 (K. Hemsley)



Willow Warbler, Holme Pierrepont, 14 August 2019, (P. Leonard)

The total number of captures for selected species from 2009-2018 are presented in Table 6, whilst Table 7 shows the total number of captures divided by the number of visits for recent years, plus the average catch rate from 2013-2017, to compare with this year's catch rate.

Although not an exact science, by comparing average catch rates, it's possible to draw some conclusions from the ringing data. However, factors such as weather and daily movements of migrants can have disproportionate effects on figures.

Following a long, cold winter and a late spring, it was expected that some resident species would have suffered some losses and indeed numbers of Robin and Dunnock in particular

were much lower than average. Tit numbers were actually above average, but the better weather in late spring may have resulted in a more productive breeding season for these species. Other resident species seemed to be more stable, though all species suffered at least some decline.

Migrant birds appeared to have a relatively good season, with high totals for almost all the warblers. Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Garden Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat and Reed Warbler performed best, all with the highest totals in about ten years and both Willow and Sedge Warblers were more numerous than in any year since 2012. The only species without a notable total was Whitethroat.



Cetti's Warbler, Holme
Pierrepont, 2 September 2019
(K. Hemsley)

Cetti's Warblers continue to thrive on site, with 9 new individuals captured including several young juveniles, indicating they are continuing to enjoy local breeding success. Other highlights included a Kingfisher, 2 Great Spotted Woodpeckers (including a retrap from 2016) and 2 Grasshopper Warblers, including a juvenile bird. A Portuguese ringed Reed Warbler was also captured.

Mick Pearson continued to target water birds at night and 24 birds of 5 species were captured during the year, including (new/retrap): Eurasian Teal 8/0, Lapwing 5/0, Snipe 6/1, Woodcock 2/1, and Fieldfare 1/0. The retrapped Snipe was a bird from 2014.

Table 6: Total number of captures of selected species at Holme Pierrepont, 2008-2018

SPECIES	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Blue Tit	76	93	54	44	41	50	62	32	33	109
Great Tit	68	34	47	36	25	46	22	18	18	64
Willow Tit	12	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Long-tailed Tit	72	86	46	58	40	63	53	59	36	100
Chiffchaff	86	41	65	58	28	81	86	88	59	100
Willow Warbler	63	35	25	72	41	46	61	28	44	70
Blackcap	336	171	198	125	102	170	227	149	256	321
Garden Warbler	52	41	23	26	28	15	38	20	50	93
Lesser Whitethroat	29	24	10	21	6	20	14	13	12	24
Whitethroat	76	54	55	28	26	55	48	32	78	59
Sedge Warbler	76	50	52	36	24	10	18	7	7	32
Reed Warbler	358	179	191	188	111	112	86	121	147	291
Wren	85	43	39	34	20	53	37	36	45	50
Blackbird	45	36	19	18	25	21	24	15	29	25
Song Thrush	26	15	12	4	4	8	9	5	13	16
Robin	72	34	36	40	33	68	56	50	46	41
Dunnoch	63	40	39	36	11	21	35	36	31	25
Chaffinch	25	7	9	6	6	5	5	1	4	5
Bullfinch	46	25	26	30	28	22	13	19	53	38
Reed Bunting	103	49	64	46	25	56	26	34	23	34
TOTALS	1769	1060	1013	906	624	922	920	763	984	1497

NB Species' current UK conservation status (red/amber/green listed) indicated by name cell colour.

Table 7: Catching rates – the total number of captures of selected species divided by number of visits at Holme Pierrepont, 2013-2018

SPECIES	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2013-17 average
Blue Tit	3.4	3.6	4.1	2.3	2.1	5.0	3.1
Great Tit	2.1	3.3	1.5	1.3	1.1	2.9	1.9
Long-tailed Tit	3.3	4.5	3.5	4.2	2.3	4.5	3.6
Chiffchaff	2.3	5.8	5.7	6.3	3.7	4.5	4.8
Willow Warbler	3.4	3.3	4.1	2	2.8	3.2	3.1
Blackcap	8.5	12.1	15.1	10.6	16.0	14.6	12.5
Garden Warbler	2.3	1.1	2.5	1.4	3.1	4.2	2.1
Lesser Whitethroat	0.5	1.4	0.9	1.4	0.8	1.1	1.0
Whitethroat	2.2	3.9	3.2	2.3	4.9	2.7	3.3
Sedge Warbler	2	0.7	1.2	0.5	0.4	1.5	1.0
Reed Warbler	9.3	8	5.7	8.6	9.2	13.2	8.2
Wren	1.7	3.8	2.5	2.6	2.8	2.3	2.7
Blackbird	2.1	1.5	1.6	1.1	1.8	1.1	1.6
Song Thrush	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.7	0.5
Robin	2.8	4.9	3.7	3.6	2.9	1.9	3.6
Dunnoek	0.9	1.5	2.3	2.6	1.9	1.1	1.8
Chaffinch	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.3
Bullfinch	2.3	1.6	0.9	1.4	3.3	1.7	1.9
Reed Bunting	2.1	4	1.7	2.4	1.4	1.5	2.3

NB Species' current UK conservation status (red/amber/green listed) indicated by name cell colour.

Ramsdale Park Golf Centre, Calverton – Kev Hemsley

We continued our operations at Ramsdale in 2018. Overall, numbers were down again probably due to the maturing habitat becoming less suitable for warblers. Table 8 shows the number of individuals caught at the site. We made one less visit than in 2017 but the general trend is still showing falls. However, warbler numbers increased for all species except Chiffchaff, this was generally mirrored at our other main warbler site and was no doubt a result of the exceptionally warm and dry summer that allowed the warblers to have an excellent breeding season. Bearing this in mind it is hard to explain why Chiffchaff numbers fell to only 25% of the 2015 level when at other sites locally numbers have remained pretty constant. This reduction is also strange because the increasing height of the vegetation would generally suit Chiffchaffs more than the other warblers.

There were 5 warblers ringed in previous years that were recaptured during 2018.

Table 8: Total number of individuals caught at Ramsdale Park Golf Centre, 2015-18

SPECIES	2015	2016	2017	2018
Sparrowhawk	-	-	1	-
Swallow	1	-	-	-
Tree Pipit	1	-	-	-
Pied Wagtail	-	1	-	-
Wren	19	20	16	9
Dunnock	18	16	15	9
Robin	19	23	13	10

SPECIES	2015	2016	2017	2018
Blackbird	27	26	16	6
Song Thrush	-	2	5	4
Redwing	-	12	10	32
Reed Warbler	-	1	-	-
Lesser Whitethroat	5	3	2	3
Whitethroat	32	26	9	12
Garden Warbler	23	11	4	8
Blackcap	152	71	56	78
Chiffchaff	118	53	54	28
Willow Warbler	36	30	1	17
Goldcrest	4	1	6	5
Long-tailed Tit	13	2	24	10
Coal Tit	4	3	1	-
Blue Tit	32	18	18	24
Great Tit	6	8	9	19
Treecreeper	-	1	-	1
Jay	-	1	1	1
Chaffinch	3	3	-	1
Greenfinch	10	2	4	7
Goldfinch	25	1	11	4
Siskin	3	-	-	-
Linnet	14	16	7	8
Lesser Redpoll	22	-	2	6
Bullfinch	22	31	31	7
Reed Bunting	-	-	1	-
TOTALS	609	382	317	309

NB Species' current UK conservation status (red/amber/green listed) indicated by name cell colour.

Nest boxes

Jim Lennon

The group is responsible for collecting data from over 340 large nest boxes in south Nottinghamshire and adjacent areas (mainly Barn Owl, Tawny Owl, Little Owl and Kestrel). We also monitor some small nest boxes for passerines (mainly Blue Tit, Great Tit and Tree Sparrow) though these are currently not a priority study.

None of the larger species monitored had a particularly good year. From what we found in boxes, it appeared that prey was hard to come by – perhaps even harder than in 2017. No doubt the weather played its part. In addition, a few boxes were unchecked due to illness.

As in 2017, there was a high level of occupancy in the Barn Owl boxes, though virtually no prey was found cached and outcomes were somewhat patchy with breeding success best in the eastern Vale of Belvoir. The late, cold spring delayed breeding and brood sizes were down. Furthermore, many older adults were not found and appeared to have succumbed to the cold winter and much of the recruitment seemed to be with first-time breeders. Birds that did breed enjoyed fairly good survival rates.

Reasonable numbers of Kestrels were found breeding, though clutch sizes were down.

The number of Stock Doves ringed increased, probably for two reasons: return visits to boxes which had failed resulted in more active Stock Dove nests being found and their amber

conservation status has prompted ringers to increase effort to ring them. However, it should be noted that the effort put into ringing Stock Doves and Jackdaws is not consistent.

Table 9: Number of chicks ringed in selected large nest boxes in south Nottinghamshire, 2000-2018

SPECIES	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Kestrel	0	12	16	10	58	59	40	93	47	100	49	65	55	51	92	39	74	43	42
Stock Dove	0	11	17	14	2	7	14	12	12	15	22	11	13	22	14	22	11	8	31
Barn Owl	4	9	16	36	27	25	33	84	54	88	59	87	85	36	156	24	72	87	52
Little Owl	0	0	4	2	15	2	0	11	5	8	5	12	9	6	14	3	2	9	3
Tawny Owl	3	5	11	12	33	25	18	33	22	31	26	39	29	19	54	18	21	29	21
Jackdaw	0	0	3	5	10	16	16	7	2	20	9	13	16	21	8	11	6	2	0
TOTALS	7	37	67	79	145	134	121	240	142	262	170	227	207	155	338	117	186	178	149

NB Species' current UK conservation status (red/amber/green listed) indicated by name cell colour.

Winter sites

This section deals with the winter of 2017-2018. This was an unsettled season, with both mild and cold spells and particularly harsh weather in March. Feeding stations were operated at Nottingham Trent University's Brackenhurst Campus, near Southwell and on land owned by Nottingham University at Sutton Bonington.

Sutton Bonington – *Kev Hemsley*

This was the third winter we had operated at this site which is on University of Nottingham land adjacent to the Sutton Bonington campus. The site was baited from mid-October and operated until 8 April. We moved the feeders into the copse for this season after watching the behaviour of the birds last winter and we adjusted the net positions accordingly. Table 10 shows the number of individuals caught at the site.

This winter produced the best catch to date, no doubt a result of the new feeder and net positions but also influenced by the very cold and long winter. Notable increases were recorded for Blue Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Chaffinch and Yellowhammer. The increase in the number of Fieldfare and Redwing is probably due solely to the harsh weather forcing them to find alternative food rather than any increase in population size. Reed Bunting numbers bounced back from last winter's low. Only one Wren was caught: this is a species that is often badly affected by cold weather. The low number of Goldfinch caught was down to niger seed not being provided this winter rather than any decrease in population.

There was a large invasion of Hawfinch from the continent into the UK in the autumn of 2017 and birds were reported all over the country but it was still a surprise to find one in a net at the feeding site (see also 2017 report).

Table 10: Total number of individual birds processed at Sutton Bonington during the winter seasons of 2015-2018

SPECIES	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Great Spotted Woodpecker	0	1	2
Jay	0	0	1
Woodpigeon	0	0	3
Goldcrest	2	4	3
Blue Tit	29	18	37
Great Tit	11	17	15
Coal Tit	0	0	1
Long-tailed Tit	14	11	20
Chiffchaff	0	1	0
Wren	7	4	1
Starling	0	0	2
Blackbird	5	8	8
Fieldfare	0	1	6
Song Thrush	3	2	1
Redwing	7	2	16
Robin	7	13	14
Dunnock	17	14	15
House Sparrow	0	2	5

SPECIES	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Grey Wagtail	3	0	0
Chaffinch	16	23	54
Brambling	0	0	1
Greenfinch	39	4	6
Goldfinch	78	49	6
Linnet	1	0	0
Lesser Redpoll	13	1	2
Bullfinch	1	0	0
Hawfinch	0	0	1
Yellowhammer	29	28	103
Reed Bunting	26	13	27
TOTALS	308	216	350

Brackenhurst Campus – Jim Lennon

A few periods of harsh conditions along with spells of high pressure and settled weather enabled more productive ringing, though the increase in totals are not necessarily a sign of improved breeding. However, the supplementary feeding undoubtedly helps species such as the buntings to survive into the following breeding season. Several species were handled in more 'average' numbers and the number of Yellowhammers processed was the highest for several years. Reed Buntings also made a welcome come-back after a few lean years.

Both Blue and Great Tits were caught in good numbers though sadly it is now ten years since the last Willow Tit was handled. Redwing numbers trapped continue to rise since they have been targeted with sound lures. In contrast, Tree Sparrows have remained stubbornly scarce for the third season. Among the other birds handled, 5 Coal Tit, 8 Fieldfare and 12 Goldcrest were notable.

Table 11 lists the total number of captures per season for some selected species. These figures have been revised from previous reports to ensure reporting consistency. The date limits are 1 October to 1 May and only birds trapped at the feeding station or in Orwin's are included.

The *Fringilla papillomavirus* is still prevalent in the Chaffinch population and the figure ringed would undoubtedly be higher if we were not releasing so many infected birds. This year an infected Yellowhammer was also trapped (see photo) which is concerning. It would

appear to be more of a problem in the local populations than the migrants as the larger birds caught in Autumn tended to be the most healthy birds.

Two ringing demonstrations were held for groups of students taking environmental courses.



Yellowhammer showing symptoms of presumed papillomavirus,
Brackenhurst Campus, 15 April 2018 (T. Shields)



Brambling, Brackenhurst Campus,
21 March 2018 (J. Lennon)

Table 11: Total number of captures of selected species during winter seasons at Nottingham Trent University's Brackenhurst Campus, near Southwell from 2007-2018

SPECIES	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Blue Tit	48	38	40	79	-	69	76	51	27	31	88
Great Tit	65	57	50	97	-	111	118	67	39	37	109
Willow Tit	1	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marsh Tit	6	12	5	5	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
Long-tailed Tit	5	19	22	21	-	36	31	41	13	5	9
Wren	1	11	5	2	-	3	4	5	4	1	2
Blackbird	19	30	40	22	-	41	7	34	7	15	41
Redwing	0	4	0	11	-	1	25	25	11	11	22
Robin	3	20	25	52	-	31	21	28	18	32	33
Dunnock	9	44	31	80	-	25	38	18	21	14	28
House Sparrow	0	0	0	4	-	12	6	3	0	11	6
Tree Sparrow	7	40	8	14	-	27	18	25	2	1	1
Chaffinch	57	56	40	80	-	85	100	48	45	32	79
Brambling	0	0	0	1	-	1	1	0	0	0	1
Greenfinch	3	1	0	1	-	0	2	0	0	0	0
Goldfinch	0	7	1	6	-	0	4	7	4	1	4
Bullfinch	0	0	1	1	-	2	1	3	3	0	2
Yellowhammer	172	275	196	327	-	134	204	96	65	171	280
Reed Bunting	7	19	8	17	-	3	0	0	2	5	37
TOTALS	409	637	470	837	-	583	672	512	288	381	789

Recoveries & Controls

The following records are those that were received by the group during the calendar year of 2018. If records mentioned elsewhere in the report are not included it is usually because details were received during a different year and details will be in that report.

The codes used are as follows:

<i>Age/sex codes</i>	<i>Recovery codes</i>
1 pullus (chick/nestling)	X found dead
2 fully grown, age unknown	XF found freshly dead or dying
3J born in current calendar year, still in juvenile plumage	XL found dead (not recent)
3 born in current calendar year	R caught and released by ringer
4 born before current calendar year	RR alive and healthy, ring read in field by ringer
5 born in previous calendar year	VV alive, probably healthy, ring read by non-ringer
6 born before previous calendar year	B breeding, caught and released by ringer
7 born two calendar years ago	=M male
8 born more than two calendar years ago	=F female
M male	
F female	

Cormorant

5268867	1	23/04/15	Attenborough Nat. Res. Notts.
	VV	14/08/18	Cley-next-the-sea, Norfolk. 154km, 1209 days.
5268874	1	14/04/16	Attenborough Nat. Res. Notts.
	XL	15/08/18	Glazebury, near Leigh, Warrington. 106km, 853 days.
5280302	1	18/04/18	Attenborough Nat. Res. Notts.
	VV	09/08/18	Whisby Nature Park, Lincolnshire. 53km, 113 days.
	VV	23/08/18	Boultham Mere, Lincoln. 58km, 127 days.
5268899	1	18/04/18	Attenborough Nat. Res. Notts.
	VV	03/10/18	Cattawade, Essex. 188km, 168 days.

We continue to receive sightings of colour ringed cormorant pulli away from Attenborough NR. 5268867 has now been seen more than 20 times on the north Norfolk coast, and during May it was observed in a breeding colony at Holkham NNR.

Grey Heron

1509503	1	23/04/15	Attenborough Nat. Res. Notts.
	VV	30/03/18	nr Weldon, Corby, Northants. 59km, 1072 days.

This bird has been filmed several times at the same location with a camera trap, and is possibly breeding locally.

Egyptian Goose

1221355	4	30/04/09	Attenborough Nat. Res. Notts.
	VV	18/11/18	Attenborough Nat. Res. Notts. 0km, 3428 days.

The Britain & Ireland longevity record is 15 years. 1221355 could surpass that what with the all the free food it gets at Attenborough!

Kestrel

EX39095	1	14/06/11	near Lambley, Notts.
	XF	09/04/18	Gedling, Notts. 4km, 2491 days.

Black-headed Gull

K03070	8M	04/06/13	St Hanshaugen, Oslo, Akershus, Norway.
	RR	18/10/15	Trent Bridge, Nottingham. 1063km, 866 days.
	RR	31/12/16	Trent Bridge, Nottingham. 1063km, 1306 days.
	RR	04/10/17	Trent Bridge, Nottingham. 1063km, 1583 days.
	RR	06/10/18	Trent Bridge, Nottingham. 1063km, 1950 days.
FS06109	6	02/06/15	Przykona Reservoir, Radyczyny, Turek, Wielkopolskie, Poland.
	RR	11/11/17	Holme Pierrepont, Notts. 1339km, 275 days.

cont...

Black-headed gulls account for the highest number of recoveries for a single species of bird in Britain. K03070 highlights their fidelity to their wintering grounds. Both recoveries show how continental birds move west in winter towards the usually milder climate of areas affected by the Gulf Stream.

Barn Owl

AJ58901	6F	02/06/07	near Barnstone, Notts.
	R	01/06/18	Langar, Notts. 4km, 4017 days.
AJ60428	1F	23/06/07	near Collingham, Notts.
	B	01/06/18	near Stubton, Caythorpe, Lincs. 13km, 4013 days.
GR78767	1	03/07/16	Stathern, Leics.
	R=F	18/07/18	Pode Hole, Spalding, Lincs. 46km, 745 days.
GV11173	1	17/06/16	near Collingham, Notts.
	B=F	11/08/18	Dowsby Fen, Bourne, Lincs. 44km, 785 days.

In a year when we appear to have lost many old friends to the 'Beast of the East', it is perhaps surprising to find two 11-year-old female barn owls breeding. AJ58901 was at least two years old when it was ringed in Barnstone in 2007, it was then found breeding in Harby in 2012 and back to Barnstone in 2018.

Tawny Owl

GC71080	1	21/05/09	Muston, Leics.
	XF	13/04/18	Stathern, Melton Mowbray, Leics. 10km, 3249 days.
GV11446	1	06/05/17	Hockerwood, near Southwell, Notts.
	X	21/03/18	Hanging Houghton, Brixworth, Northants. 82km, 319 days.

Tawny owls are very sedentary, and nearly all distance movements are in their first winter when exploring to find their own home territory.

Long-eared Owl

GN82084	1	19/05/05	near Hawton, Notts.
	XF	09/03/18	A1, Long Bennington, Lincs. 6km, 4677 days.

A very interesting road casualty, not only due to the time elapsed, but also because the group rings so few.

Kingfisher

SB34867	3F	16/07/17	Holme Pierrepont, Notts.
	X	14/01/18	Studland, Dorset. 265km, 182 days.

The median dispersal distance for Kingfisher pulli is only 9km. This bird – when captured – could have already been on the move from its natal area, heading towards lowlands and the coast. A movement more than 250km is exceptional.

Sand Martin

S015438	1	16/05/17	Attenborough Nat. Res, Notts.
	R	29/07/17	Niovillas, Zaragoza, Spain. 1221km, 74 days.
S015631	1	01/07/17	Attenborough Nat. Res, Notts.
	R=M	21/06/18	Lax Hill, Rutland. 46km, 340 days.
S514165	1	22/05/17	Lax Hill, Rutland.
	R=F	12/06/18	Attenborough Nat. Res, Notts. 46km, 386 days.
S892771	1	12/07/17	Browns Island, Rutland
	R=F	12/06/18	Attenborough Nat. Res, Notts. 46km, 335 days.

British recoveries are reported on at p19. The Zaragoza bird fledged much earlier than usual, and perhaps used this advantage to migrate south quite quickly.

Reed Warbler

S585272	3J	15/07/18	Holme Pierrepont, Notts.
	R	11/08/18	Litlington, East Sussex. 254km, 27 days.
S586275	3J	21/08/18	Holme Pierrepont, Notts.
	R	27/09/18	Icklesham, East Sussex, Sussex. 256km, 37 days.

Both movements are typical of young birds fattening up on the south coast prior to crossing to mainland Europe and then heading south to Africa.

Garden Warbler

S586209	3	14/08/18	Holme Pierrepont, Notts.
	R	26/08/18	Isle of Grain, Kent. 204km, 12 days.

It is thought that Garden Warblers depart Britain through the east and south coasts on the way to their wintering grounds south of the Sahara, and this probably explains the movement of this juvenile.

Blue Tit

S485311	3J	23/09/17	Hoby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire.
	R	12/01/18	Devon Farm, near Elston, Notts. 32km, 111 days.

British Blue Tits rarely go further than a few kilometres in their first winter. This juvenile's journey of 32km is uncommon.

Tree Sparrow

VZ60804	1	12/06/17	Beckingham, near Retford, Notts.
	R=F	22/07/18	near Bestwood, Notts. 47km, 405 days.
AFB0570	2	25/10/18	Retford Sewage Works, Retford, Notts.
	R	22/07/18	near Bestwood, Notts. 35km, 55 days.

VZ60804 is the third nestling we have controlled from RSPB's Beckingham reserve. Generally, juvenile dispersal distances are low, but they are known for occasional irruptive movements.



Tree Sparrows (Geoff White)

Goldfinch

AAC0094	3M	26/11/17	Dunton, Buckinghamshire.
	R	22/10/18	Colwick, Notts. 119km, 330 days.
D842306	5	17/01/16	Shelton, Notts.
	R=M	04/12/18	Thorpe Marsh, Doncaster, South Yorks. 68km, 1052 days.

Goldfinch populations within and beyond Britain are highly migratory, as these two recoveries highlight.

Errata

The following Goldfinch recovery was listed in the 2017 report, but the recovered bird in question is now thought to have been a Greenfinch with the ring number TZ23992, ringed in 2015, so not the longevity record we had hoped for!

T723992	5M	23/05/07	Bingham, Notts.
	X	23/08/17	Barnstaple, Devon. 290km, 3745 days.