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## CAMBRIDGESHIRE BIRD RINGING REPORT 2012

*Michael Holdsworth*

### **The year**

Even before the 2012 CES (Constant Effort Sites) ringing season had kicked off – on 1st May as usual – most of England had received more than twice the average rainfall for April. By the end of the main four months of the breeding season – by 1st September – again more than twice the average volume of rain had fallen. Ringers found it difficult to choose days suitable for ringing, in wet, windy and often flooded conditions, and when they did get out, they found low numbers of late-arriving migrants, and recorded extremely low breeding productivity. National CES statistics would later reveal that for seven warbler species, so dependent on near-absent caterpillars and flying insects, 2012 would be their worst breeding season, producing the fewest young, since comparable records began in 1983. Particularly hard-hit were Chiffchaff (down 41% nationally on productivity indices), Blackcap (-62%), Whitethroat (-57%), Reed Warbler (-35%) and Sedge Warbler (-28%). For the latter four long-distance migrants there was the triple whammy of critically low winter rainfall in the Sahel; stormy conditions throughout their northward passage; and then the low temperatures and heavy rain of this exceptional summer. Adult overwintering and migration survival of returning Sedge Warblers, for example, was nationally 43% lower than the previous average; only 68 adult Sedges were ringed in Cambridgeshire in 2012, against 193 in 2011.

It is thus hardly surprising that the 2012 Cambridgeshire annual ringing total of 15,385 was the lowest since 2009, and way short of 2011's record 19,886. The reduction in the numbers ringed in the County closely mirrored the national experience. Nest-box pulli outcomes were pitiful: Blue Tit (down 31% on productivity nationally) managed 675 nestlings ringed (from 1050 in 2011); and Great Tit (-34%) 435 – about half of 2011's 825. Juvenile numbers of the most-ringed warblers were massively down: Chiffchaff 220 (411 in 2011); Blackcap 739 (1273); Reed Warbler 642 (1124); Sedge Warbler 417 (795). By contrast, Blackbirds, Robins and Song Thrushes, feeding on wet soil and leaf litter invertebrates, were largely unaffected: 314 juvenile Blackbirds were ringed, against 293 the previous year.

The year's total of 98 species ringed equalled 2011's record, but, as usual the mix was significantly different; after all, there are now 150 species which have been ringed in the county since my records began in 1968. Two species were added to the historical list. A brood of three Peregrines was ringed at a climbable eyrie, and won't be the last we'll see in this report. A Red-rumped Swallow, a nice County rarity in itself, previously unobserved, got pulses racing among the Upper Cam Ringing Group during a routine spring hirundine catch; this turned out to be the third ever ringed in the UK. Otherwise, seven species: Little Grebe (caught by hand, the 5th since 1968), Grey Heron (an adult in Tony Martin's duck-trap, our 14th), Canada Goose (18th), Shelduck (20th/21st), Common Sandpiper (58th), Common Tern (total now 85) and Carrion Crow (29th) got onto this year's list but not onto that of 2011.

Previous long-view analyses of Cambridgeshire ringing in Cambridgeshire Bird Reports have been broken up into five-year periods. 2012 saw the finish of the ninth such period: 2008–12. In the Report for 2002, Digby Milwright had analysed the seven five-year periods 1968–2002, and I took the opportunity in the 2007 Report (*CBR 81*) to update the long-term picture with results from 2003–07. In both cases the analysis examined simple five-year new-bird ringing totals, and my 2007 account *Trends and changes over forty years of ringing* charted the proportion ringed, as a percentage, of 16 selected non-targeted species in relation to the total general catch of 30 baseline species in each five-year period, and compared any trends to the BTO's national CBC and BBS indices.

This time around, however, this sort of analysis no longer makes any sense, in my view. There are just too many distorting factors, principally among them being the use of sound-lures by ringers – albeit in a limited and responsible manner, and outside of the core May-to-July breeding season.

Nonetheless, for the record, a table of the five-year periods is provided at the end of this report. The numbers have been sourced from previous Cambridgeshire Bird Reports. It should be pointed out that comprehensive aggregated summary statistics from the BTO's computer have only been made available since 2006. Before that, and thus for most of the table, ringing secretaries only had access to returns provided to them piecemeal by individual ringers; earlier totals will thus represent only minimum values. The main omissions will be ringing 'incursions' by out-of-county ringers and special project ringing, particularly by the RSPB, WWT or the universities. For example, substantial WWT wildfowl ringing took place at Borough Fen Decoy at least from the early 1950s, but no details of this activity were ever reported to the CBC Ringing Secretary. There are thus 345 ring-recoveries to date of Cambridgeshire Pochard on the BTO's system; yet, with none ringed since 2006, there is none showing in this table.

Bearing all these caveats in mind, it may still be of interest to reflect on this effect on the most commonly sound-lured species during the two most recent periods since 2003. It is after all only recently that MP3 files on cheap and compact players and speaker-amplifiers have replaced cumbersome loop-tape or CD systems.

	2003–07	2008–12
Meadow Pipit	82	464
Pied Wagtail	140	302
Fieldfare	76	374
Blackcap	2,862	6,214
Goldcrest	311	626
Lesser Redpoll	75	472
Reed Bunting	1,078	2,573
<b>Five-year total</b>	<b>53,412</b>	<b>79,213</b>

Overall, 2008–12 had seen just 50% more birds ringed in total than 2003–07, so that's the baseline. And for the latter two species, increased catching using artificial food, either at feeding stations or on farmland wildbird/game strips, has

also become a significant factor. For Blackcap, there is also ample evidence for considerable population growth nationally.

As an alternative view, looking back further to that first five-year period 1968–72, *when only a quarter of the 2008–12 total was ringed* (or, at least reported), it's interesting (if mainly dispiriting) to note the pattern of nearly half a century of changing fortunes for some key species.

	1968–72	2008–12
Corncrake	0	27
Kingfisher	68	95
Turtle Dove	13	8
Barn Owl	0	2,239
Green Woodpecker	0	89
Great Spotted Woodpecker	4	175
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	4	0
Grey Wagtail	0	40
Spotted Flycatcher	112	26
Willow Tit	152	0
Tree Sparrow	826	131
Bullfinch	1,117	1,161
<b>Five-year total</b>	<b>18,684</b>	<b>79,213</b>

In 2012, Cambridgeshire's 23 Green Woodpeckers ringed took us to third county nationally for this species (333 UK total).

In terms of total numbers, 2012 saw Blue Tit (1889) as usual way out ahead of all other species despite the appalling breeding season; and the other three species in the top four, Great Tit, Reed Warbler and Blackcap remained the same. Reed Warbler, however, dropped from second place in 2011 (with 1,716 ringed) to fourth this year (with 971); and its congener Sedge Warbler tumbled from fifth to eleventh (997 down to 486). In most years the top four species account for almost exactly 40% of the County total (2009, 2010, 2011: 40%, 40%, 38%); in 2012 this dropped to 34%.

The growing band of Cambridgeshire nesters spent more time in the field than ever, but had a dispiriting time. The proportion of pulli (2,468) within the total ringed dropped to 16% from the steady 19% of recent years. The main factor was the high rate of nesting failure, most marked for the nestbox tits, but equally evident for open-nesters. The weather also impacted the large-box species: Barn Owl 359 (from 603 in 2011); Kestrel 99 (158). Perhaps the only positive news came from Dunkirk, where Tony Martin ringed 213 Sand Martins in his flourishing artificial colony. He also had some good success with his waders: 12 Avocet (taking Cambridgeshire to third in the national league; UK total 75 only), 3 Oystercatcher, 36 Lapwing and 14 Redshank.

Given the miserable summer season, ringers this year have singularly failed to provide me with narrative news of any ringing highlights to leaven either the gloom or the heavy statistical burden of this report. Chris Hughes, however, managed

a memorable non-birding moment: 'when a young roe deer suddenly appeared out of the undergrowth as I was extracting a bird and stood there gazing at me in surprise and seemingly trying to work out what it had stumbled upon. It just stood there transfixed until I lifted up the bottom shelf of the net whereupon it trotted under the net only to swing round and stand staring at me, ears twitching. It then nipped off into the undergrowth. The whole episode took only a few seconds but will stay with me as a magical moment.' Chris was certainly luckier than I was at Wicken when I startled a similarly young animal which careered straight into one of my mist-nets, fortunately escaping at least without taking the whole net with it. With East Anglian deer populations growing exponentially, and particularly in the wetlands, I suspect that this will increasingly be an issue for ringers; Muntjac seem to enjoy browsing along net rides where maintenance pruning and mowing presumably guarantees a constant supply of fresh growth.

The Wicken Fen (Ringing) Group ringed its 100,000th bird in April. Since its foundation forty-five years ago in 1968, 546 WFG-ringed birds have subsequently been reported away from the Fen (80 of them abroad). Ringing sessions took place at several different sites on the Fen on 175 different days in 2012. The year total was 3,368 birds, of 58 different species. In addition to these new birds, 825 retrapped individuals had been originally ringed at the Fen in previous years; and a further 15 were controls (birds originally ringed away from the Fen).

Meadow Pipit and Goldcrest totals (both at 105 – sound-lures again) and Bearded Tit (35, up from last year's record 19) were all-time Wicken records. Two species that once were much more numerous at the Fen were caught during the year – 53 Lesser Redpolls (the record catch was 261 in 1974) and two juvenile Spotted Flycatchers (29 in 1974). An attempt to catch a female Cuckoo for the BTO's satellite tagging project was successful enough; five birds were caught in a couple of hours. But the only female among them turned out to be in poor condition and deemed to be at too low a weight to be tagged. Perhaps unsurprisingly 2012 was the first year ever that no Cuckoo was reared at Wicken – perhaps the UK's most famous site for Cuckoo studies. The only other 2012 Cuckoo was caught by Chris Hughes at Bainton. A trio of distracted sparring males hit the net, but as is often the case they all immediately escaped again, only for one to fly back into the same net a bit further along.

WFG members collaborated with Anglia Ruskin University by conducting ringing demonstrations for its MSc (Animal Behaviour) students and provided support for Hannah Rowland's PIT-tag studies of Blue and Great Tits in Madingley Wood.

BTO Constant Effort Sites projects continued at Wicken, Bainton (Chris Hughes), Paxton (Ian Dillon), and Five Arches Pit (Alan Brimmell).

### **Ringing totals for 2012**

There are three age categories in the following summary table. Pulli are birds either ringed in the nest or as not-fully-grown dependent juveniles where the place of ringing will definitely be the place of birth. Juveniles are birds in their first calendar year. Adults are birds in their second or any later calendar year. Unaged birds are fully grown flying birds where plumage characters do not allow first calendar year to be excluded (for example, a November Eurasian Tree Sparrow or Long-tailed Tit). Recoveries are reports (captures, field sightings or as found dead) of birds

away from the site of ringing, often by another ringer (a 'control'). For most species, birds caught within 5 km of their ringing site are excluded.

Recoveries may include either birds ringed in Cambridgeshire and found elsewhere, or birds ringed elsewhere and found in Cambridgeshire. Four duck species, shown in *italics*, recorded recoveries without there being any new birds of those species being ringed.

	Pulli	Juv.	Adult	Unaged	Total	<i>Recovered</i>
Mute Swan		7	120		<b>127</b>	20
Bewick's Swan		2	2		<b>4</b>	
Canada Goose			1		<b>1</b>	
Shelduck			2		<b>2</b>	
Wigeon			2		<b>2</b>	3
Gadwall			1		<b>1</b>	1
Teal		3	31		<b>34</b>	5
Mallard		7	36		<b>43</b>	10
<i>Pintail</i>						1
<i>Shoveler</i>						2
<i>Pochard</i>						3
<i>Tufted Duck</i>						3
Grey Heron			1		<b>1</b>	
Little Grebe		1			<b>1</b>	
Red Kite	2				<b>2</b>	6
Sparrowhawk		6	5		<b>11</b>	
Kestrel	99	1	1		<b>101</b>	7
Hobby			1		<b>1</b>	
Peregrine	3				<b>3</b>	
Water Rail			1		<b>1</b>	
Corncrake			1		<b>1</b>	
Moorhen			3		<b>3</b>	
Oystercatcher	3				<b>3</b>	
Avocet	12				<b>12</b>	3
Lapwing	60				<b>60</b>	
Snipe		1	4		<b>5</b>	
Woodcock		1	1		<b>2</b>	1
Common Sandpiper		1			<b>1</b>	
Green Sandpiper			1		<b>1</b>	
Redshank	14				<b>14</b>	
Black-headed Gull	1				<b>1</b>	1
Common Tern	9				<b>9</b>	1
Stock Dove	49		6		<b>55</b>	
Woodpigeon	3	1	9		<b>13</b>	
Collared Dove			11	1	<b>12</b>	
Cuckoo			6		<b>6</b>	
Barn Owl	359		25		<b>384</b>	66
Little Owl	8				<b>8</b>	1

	<b>Pulli</b>	<b>Juv.</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Unaged</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b><i>Recovered</i></b>
Tawny Owl	17	1	1		<b>19</b>	
Swift	30		4		<b>34</b>	<i>1</i>
Kingfisher		14	1		<b>15</b>	
Green Woodpecker		7	15	1	<b>23</b>	
Great Spotted Woodpecker		26	11	1	<b>38</b>	
Magpie		1	3		<b>4</b>	
Jay		3	15		<b>18</b>	
Jackdaw	51		42		<b>93</b>	<i>1</i>
Rook			7		<b>7</b>	
Carrion Crow			1		<b>1</b>	
Goldcrest		147	19	28	<b>194</b>	<i>1</i>
Firecrest		2			<b>2</b>	
Blue Tit	675	633	575	6	<b>1,889</b>	<i>18</i>
Great Tit	435	460	351	8	<b>1,254</b>	<i>5</i>
Coal Tit	16	33	18	3	<b>70</b>	
Marsh Tit	7	18	6	1	<b>32</b>	<i>1</i>
Bearded Tit		30	3	2	<b>35</b>	
Skylark	10		1		<b>11</b>	
Sand Martin	213	72	29		<b>314</b>	<i>2</i>
Swallow	127	67	110		<b>304</b>	<i>6</i>
House Martin			93		<b>93</b>	
Red-rumped Swallow			1		<b>1</b>	
Cetti's Warbler		7	6	2	<b>15</b>	<i>1</i>
Long-tailed Tit		70	143	130	<b>343</b>	<i>4</i>
Chiffchaff	4	220	94	27	<b>345</b>	<i>2</i>
Willow Warbler		208	51	4	<b>263</b>	
Blackcap	12	739	306	12	<b>1,069</b>	<i>11</i>
Garden Warbler		56	71		<b>127</b>	
Lesser Whitethroat		34	19		<b>53</b>	
Whitethroat	4	108	65		<b>177</b>	
Grasshopper Warbler		5	4	1	<b>10</b>	
Sedge Warbler	1	417	68		<b>486</b>	<i>7</i>
Reed Warbler	39	642	289	1	<b>971</b>	<i>15</i>
Nuthatch		6	3	4	<b>13</b>	
Treecreeper		34	8	4	<b>46</b>	<i>1</i>
Wren	2	224	71	14	<b>311</b>	<i>1</i>
Starling	59	83	94	2	<b>238</b>	<i>3</i>
Blackbird	12	314	426	2	<b>754</b>	<i>7</i>
Fieldfare		29	105	2	<b>136</b>	
Song Thrush	4	52	30	1	<b>87</b>	
Redwing		103	31	7	<b>141</b>	
Mistle Thrush			2		<b>2</b>	
Spotted Flycatcher		2			<b>2</b>	
Robin	41	334	128	7	<b>510</b>	<i>4</i>
Nightingale		1	18		<b>19</b>	

	<b>Pulli</b>	<b>Juv.</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Unaged</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Recovered</b>
Redstart				1	1	
Dunnock	2	208	207	22	439	
House Sparrow	6	27	73	39	145	3
Tree Sparrow			7	54	61	
Yellow Wagtail	1				1	
Grey Wagtail	3		1		4	
Pied Wagtail		17	26		43	2
Meadow Pipit	17	97	9	2	125	
Chaffinch	1	131	421	14	567	2
Brambling			2		2	
Greenfinch		261	376	4	641	8
Goldfinch	4	261	442	5	712	6
Siskin		4	2	1	7	1
Linnet		5	16		21	1
Lesser Redpoll		36	55	2	93	3
Bullfinch		86	101		187	
Yellowhammer		73	122	2	197	2
Reed Bunting	4	318	256	16	594	7
Corn Bunting	49		2		51	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,468</b>	<b>6,757</b>	<b>5,727</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>15,385</b>	<b>261</b>

### **Ring-recoveries**

This section of the report is once again derived from the new online BTO Summary of ringing recoveries.

The number of ring-recoveries reported by the public continues to fall. Once again the recoveries section is dominated by exchanges between ringers (controls). A high proportion of these are always Reed and Sedge Warblers, where some 80% of all recoveries are controls. Self-evidently this means that recovery patterns for these species are very much influenced by the distribution of ringers.

**Wigeon**

FP94090 Adult Male 13-09-2005 Dunkirk, Little Downham, near Ely: 52°27'N 0°14'E (Cambridgeshire)  
 Freshly dead (shot) 19-05-2012 Ruzitk, Oktyabr'skiy: 62°47'N 65°5'E (Tyumen) **Russia** 3,996 km ENE 6y 8m 6d

Duck-trapping is, of course, something of a Cambridgeshire tradition, ever since the seventeenth-century Dutch brought their decoys (*eende-kooi*, Dutch for duck-cage) to the fens alongside their drainage know-how. Tony Martin continues this tradition, albeit on a less industrial scale, and this is a typical recovery. 56 of the County's 101 Wigeon recoveries have been from Russia.

**Avocet**

EL81879 Nestling 04-06-2010 Dunkirk, Little Downham, near Ely: 52°27'N 0°14'E (Cambridgeshire)  
 Colour rings 30-01-2011 Orfordness: c. 52°5'N 1°34'E (Suffolk) 100 km ESE 7m 26d  
 Colour rings 28-01-2012 Orfordness: c. 52°5'N 1°34'E (Suffolk) 100 km ESE 1y 7m 24d

Avocets are ideally suited for colour-marking, and many individuals are tracked as they explore and move between well-watched colonies and wintering-grounds. Sightings of the Dunkirk Avocets have come from all over the UK, France, Belgium and Holland. Most seem to winter on the East Anglian coast, but others go to the Exe and as far south as Cadiz.

**Woodcock**

FH09453 Adult 03-01-2011 Paxton Pits Nature Reserve: 52°15'N 0°15'W (Cambridgeshire)  
 Freshly dead (shot) 19-04-2012 Lomonosovskiy: 55°40'N 37°31'E (Leningrad) **Russia** 2,497 km E 1y 3m 16d

The grid-reference provided by the Russian ringing scheme is actually in central Moscow, so the bird is unlikely to have been shot there. This is only the sixth overseas Woodcock to/from Cambridgeshire.

**Black-headed Gull**

EN74632 Adult 26-10-1985 Godmanchester: 52°19'N 0°9'W (Cambridgeshire)  
 Alive (hit glass) 05-05-2011 Site confidential (Moscow) **Russia** 2,492 km E 25y 6m 9d

Another mysterious Russian recovery! This elderly bird from the Godmanchester tip days is only the 13th Cambridgeshire BHG to/from Russia. Most returns from birds wintering here are much closer – in Scandinavia, Germany and the Low Countries.



**Caspian Gull**

PLG Adult Female 21-04-2011 Zb. Kozielno, Paczkow: 50°29'N 16°58'E (Opole) **Poland**  
 DN18798 Colour rings 28-11-2011 Milton, Cambridge: 52°14'N 0°9'E (Cambridgeshire) 1,183 km W 7m 7d

This is Cambridgeshire's first *cachinnans* return.

**Common Tern**

BLB Adult 23-04-2010 Zeebrugge: 51°20'N 3°11'E (West-Vlaanderen) **Belgium**  
 99Z30839 Long dead 29-06-2012 Perry: 52°18'N 0°19'W (Cambridgeshire) 264 km WNW 2y 2m 6d

Considering the numbers ringed in the UK and abroad, it is surprising that this is the first recent overseas recovery, possibly by a prospecting colonist. There is also one other ancient recovery of a Cambridgeshire Common Tern – to Ghana.

**Sand Martin**

L644484 Nestling Female 31-07-2011 Dunkirk, Little Downham, near Ely: 52°27'N 0°14'E (Cambridgeshire)  
 Caught by ringer 13-06-2012 near Nettleton: 53°30'N 0°21'W (Lincolnshire) 124 km NNW 10m 13d

For obvious reasons, the only pullus Sand Martins which get ringed are those, as this one, hatched in purpose-built artificial colonies which allow access to the nesting chambers (as opposed to simple artificial Sand Martin banks where the birds can burrow naturally). Even very young fledged birds caught roosting in holes have occasionally been found to have moved some distance from other colonies, so certain places of birth are rarely established.

**Cetti's Warbler**

Y113468 First-year Female 26-08-2012 Wicken Fen: c. 52°18'N 0°16'E (Cambridgeshire)  
 Caught by ringer 11-11-2012 near Marston Moretaine: 52°3'N 0°33'W (Bedfordshire) 63 km WSW 2m 16d

For some reason, almost all our Cetti's controls have been to the West. With most young birds of this highly territorial species probably dispersing elsewhere to find space it is perhaps surprising that so many otherwise apparently suitable sites remain unoccupied. It often seems to be the young females who are the pioneers.

**Blackcap**

NLA First-year Male 27-10-2012 Korverskooi: 53°06'N 4°47'E (Texel) **The Netherlands**  
 V567610 Freshly dead (cat) 19-11-2012 Cottenham: 52°17'N 0°7'E (Cambridgeshire) 328 km WSW 23d

This is a good example of the well-known movement of Blackcaps from north-west Europe, particularly Germany, to winter in the UK rather than heading south to the Mediterranean. This bird, probably caught on passage on the coast, had no doubt been hopping for a comfortable winter feeding up on British garden fat balls.

**Sedge Warbler**

FRP First-year Male 24-08-2011 Tour Aux Moutons, Donges: 47°19'N 2°4'W (Loire-Atlantique) **France**  
 6789703 Caught by ringer 12-07-2012 Wicken Fen: c. 52°18'N 0°16'E (Cambridgeshire) 579 km NNE 10m 18d  
 FRP First-year Male 31-07-2011 Tour Aux Moutons, Donges: 47°19'N 2°4'W (Loire-Atlantique) **France**  
 6689524 Caught by ringer 14-06-2012 Wicken Fen: c. 52°18'N 0°16'E (Cambridgeshire) 579 km NNE 10m 14d  
 DEW Full-grown 28-04-2012 Rieselfelder Munster: 52°2'N 7°39'E (Munster) **Germany**  
 90245332 Freshly dead (cat) 10-05-2012 Holme Fen, Peterborough: 52°30'N 0°12'W (Cambridgeshire) 537 km W 12d

The first two birds are most likely Wicken-born, intercepted on their first journey south at one of France's industrial-scale Sedge/Aquatic Warbler camps on the south-west coast. The German-ringed bird is the first-ever Cambridgeshire bird to be found this far east and may have drifted off-course in the middle of its spring passage north; April 2012 was exceptionally stormy. Historically there have been no Dutch ring-recoveries, and only seven ever from Belgium; the vast majority of controls are directly to the south: France (41), Spain (5) and Portugal (2).

**Reed Warbler**

X375724 Juvenile 02-07-2010 Church End, Woodwalton: 52°25'N 0°14'W (Cambridgeshire)  
 Caught by ringer 07-08-2010 Salreu, Aveiro: 40°44'N 8°34'W (Beira Litoral) **Portugal** 1,445 km SSW 1m 5d  
 L505084 Nestling 13-06-2011 Wicken Fen: 52°17'N 0°16'E (Cambridgeshire)  
 Caught by ringer 14-08-2012 Figueira: 40°9'N 8°52'W (Beira Litoral) **Portugal** 1,518 km SSW 1y 2m 1d

Two straightforward August controls, but only the 7th/8th to Portugal, which partly reflects the small amount of ringing done there.

**Blackbird**

LA77970	First-year Male	30-01-2011	Aldreth Road Orchard: 52°21'N 0°8'E (Cambridgeshire)
	Caught by ringer	10-03-2012	Sore Merkeskog, Utsira: 59°18'N 4°52'E (Rogaland) <b>Norway</b> 827 km NNE 1y 1m 9d
NOS	First-year	04-08-2009	Jomfruland O-Runden, Kragero: 58°52'N 9°36'E (Telemark) <b>Norway</b>
7494709	Freshly dead (cat)	20-02-2012	Histon, Cambridge: 52°15'N 0°5'E (Cambridgeshire) 946 km SW 2y 6m 16d

Continental Blackbirds wintering in Cambridgeshire are mostly from Scandinavia (Sweden, 22 exchanges, Denmark 9, Finland 7 and Norway 6).

**Tree Sparrow**

Do71027	Full-grown	01-10-2012	Kilnsea Clays: 53°36'N 0°8'E (Humberside)
	Caught by ringer	13-12-2012	near Barleycraft Gravel Pit, Bluntisham: 52°20'N 0°0'W (Cams) 142 km S 2m 12d
Y372606	Full-grown	18-10-2011	Spurn Point: 53°34'N 0°6'E (Humberside)
	Freshly dead (cat)	28-01-2012	Barnack, Peterborough: 52°38'N 0°25'W (Cambridgeshire) 110 km SSW 3m 10d

**Greenfinch**

TR24022	First-year Female	18-01-2012	Harston: c. 52°8'N 0°5'E (Cambridgeshire)
	Caught by ringer	23-03-2012	Kilnsea: 53°37'N 0°8'E (Humberside) 165 km N 2m 5d
Y402055	First-year Male	18-12-2011	Cantelupe Farm, Grantchester, Cambridge: 52°10'N 0°5'E (Cambridgeshire)
	Caught by ringer	02-04-2012	Spurn Point: 53°34'N 0°6'E (Humberside) 156 km N 3m 15d

Cambridgeshire lies almost immediately due south of the Spurn peninsula, and this grouping of two Tree Sparrows, a Greenfinch, and a Linnet were all ringed or controlled by Spurn BO, who catch many thousands of these three species as they move along the coast in spring and autumn. It is likely that a very high proportion of our wintering Tree Sparrows and Linnets come from the north of the UK. This can give a misleading impression of the County's resident population. It's just a pity that very few are ringed other than at Spurn, so their precise origin further north is not known. What we do know, from the lack of any recoveries ever, is that none crosses the North Sea or comes into the UK from northern Europe. A small proportion of the Linnets, however, will head off further south into France and Iberia.

**Goldfinch**

Y322251	First-year Female Caught by ringer	04-11-2011	Old Weston: 52°23'N 0°24'W (Cambridgeshire) Glenstockadale, Stranraer: 54°54'N 5°7'W (Dumfries & Galloway) 418 km NW 5m 1d
Y322175	First-year Female Caught by ringer	28-10-2011 22-07-2012	Old Weston: 52°23'N 0°24'W (Cambridgeshire) near Lockerbie: 55°07'N 3°23'W (Dumfries & Galloway) 362 km NNW 8m 24d
Y540585	Juvenile Female Caught by ringer	23-09-2012 08-12-2012	Druridge Links, near Widdrington: 55°15'N 1°35'W (Northumberland) Old Weston: 52°23'N 0°24'W (Cambridgeshire) 328 km SSE 2m 15d

**Siskin**

L551722	Adult Male Caught by ringer	07-02-2011 03-03-2012	Merton Grange, Gamlingay: 52°09'N 0°11'W (Cambridgeshire) near Lockerbie: 55°07'N 3°23'W (Dumfries & Galloway) 392 km NNW 1y 0m 25d
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Here is another little grouping of birds moving seasonally between gardens and feeding stations in Cambridgeshire and southern Scotland (or en route, in the case of the end-September Northumberland Goldfinch). Thus the Goldfinches on your nyjer feeder are very likely to be partial migrants; and some of these will, like Linnets, move to the near-Continent and onward South to Iberia in response to winter weather.

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Please send any comments on this report and any 2013 records to [m.holdsworth@ntlworld.com](mailto:m.holdsworth@ntlworld.com) or to 4A Cavendish Avenue, Cambridge CB1 7US.

	Ringing totals, five-year periods										Total
	68-72	73-77	78-82	83-87	88-92	93-97	98-02	03-07	08-12		
Mute Swan			2	3		21	13	50	152	241	
Bewick's Swan						14	9	11	31	65	
Whooper Swan							3	1	4	8	
Canada Goose		14		3						18	
Shelduck								16	5	21	
Wigeon							97	638	23	758	
Gadwall							8	185	8	201	
Teal			2	6				16	249	273	
Mallard	5	29	2	3	2			101	396	538	
Pintail								29	5	34	
Garganey							1	1		2	
Shoveler								5	10	15	
Tufted Duck				1					1	2	
Goldeneye								2		2	
RL Partridge	6	3	1	1		1				12	
Grey Partridge								3		3	
Shag				2	1					3	
Grey Heron			5						9	14	
Little Grebe			1	1	1				2	5	
Red Kite									27	27	
Marsh Harrier				8	1			1	14	24	
Montagu's Harrier					4					4	
Sparrowhawk				2	83	48	21	58	83	295	
Buzzard							1		5	6	
Kestrel		4	20	44	131	155	152	287	556	1,349	
Hobby					7	3		1	6	17	
Peregrine									3	3	
Water Rail		2		1		3	2	8	7	24	
Spotted Crane	1		1							1	
Corncrake								2	27	29	

	Ringing totals, five-year periods										Total
	68-72	73-77	78-82	83-87	88-92	93-97	98-02	03-07	08-12		
Moorhen	3	9	4	12	237	3			43	56	367
Coot				1	1				45	2	49
Oystercatcher						4				5	9
Avocet									3	59	62
Stone-curlew		1	1	10	2					1	15
Little Ringed Plover		2	5	33	10	1	1	1	10	9	71
Ringed Plover		1	6	20	7		5	3			42
Golden Plover				1							1
Lapwing	1	37	34	33	5	1	515	273		198	1,097
Little Stint				2							2
Dunlin			1	12	2					1	16
Ruff			4	9						2	15
Jack Snipe	1			1							5
Snipe	30	63	213	505	8	2	2	1	10	12	844
Woodcock	3	3	5	8	2	1			10	11	44
Black-tailed Godwit				9			152	71			232
Common Sandpiper			10	37	9					2	58
Green Sandpiper		1	4	11						4	20
Greenshank		2	1	3							6
Wood Sandpiper				1							1
Redshank		13	20	10	1		6	6		24	80
Turnstone					1						1
Black-headed Gull		3	1	1,755	6,344	38		7		7	8,155
Common Gull				67	184						251
Lesser BB Gull				1	64						65
Herring Gull				3	140						143
Greater BB Gull					8						8
Common Tern					24	30	13			18	85
Stock Dove			9	11	12	5	20	126		235	418
Wood Pigeon	10	22	17	62	14	29	15	34		88	291

	Ringing totals, five-year periods										Total
	68-72	73-77	78-82	83-87	88-92	93-97	98-02	03-07	08-12		
Collared Dove	5	3		9	23	37	42	103	58	280	
Turtle Dove	13	30	12	9	8	8	3	8	8	99	
Cuckoo	12	17	6	34	9	20	3	8	26	135	
Barn Owl				8	15	83	364	1,615	2,239	4,324	
Little Owl		1	4	13	7		6	17	33	81	
Tawny Owl	5	7	9	14	10	12	25	40	63	185	
Long-eared Owl	2	5			3			3		13	
Short-eared Owl		1								1	
Nightjar						2				2	
Swift	2	40	3	343	236	90	151	92	188	1,145	
Kingfisher	68	90	42	17	42	32	22	59	95	467	
Wryneck		1							2	3	
Green Woodpecker		2	3		7	14	17	41	89	173	
GS Woodpecker	4	4	6	15	26	40	54	115	175	439	
LS Woodpecker	4	6	18	14	3	1	1	1		48	
Golden Oriole					11	12	3			26	
Red-backed Shrike	1									1	
Great Grey Shrike		1								1	
Magpie		1	1	1	6	13	2	13	25	62	
Jay	8	23	22	28	27	52	25	40	79	304	
Jackdaw			3	2	26	18	6	21	146	222	
Rook		5	3	11	2	1	1	3	13	38	
Carrion Crow			10	3	3	2	1		10	29	
Goldcrest	76	146	153	171	291	230	169	311	626	2,173	
Firecrest				1	4		1	2	5	13	
Blue Tit	1,064	1,595	2,853	2,767	3,923	6,042	6,446	7,216	10,068	41,974	
Great Tit	338	514	1,214	1,385	2,003	4,673	5,092	7,734	7,845	30,798	
Coal Tit	27	27	27	53	61	176	178	181	312	1,042	
Willow Tit	152	94	55	65	45	54	9	2		476	
Marsh Tit	4	3	11	1	45	96	240	586	593	1,579	

	Ringing totals, five-year periods										Total
	68-72	73-77	78-82	83-87	88-92	93-97	98-02	03-07	08-12		
Bearded Tit	1	32	8	49	16	4			10	121	241
Skylark	7	5	3	17	12	5	145	227	72	493	
Sand Martin	1	43	44	182	287	672	572	102	601	2,504	
Swallow	1,191	1,809	843	1,489	503	319	265	1,504	1,987	9,910	
House Martin	2	335	238	440	35	4		128	109	1,291	
RR Swallow									1	1	
Cetti's Warbler		1	17	13		1		38	166	236	
Long-tailed Tit	378	506	325	397	910	1,369	937	1,176	1,993	7,991	
Wood Warbler		1				1	1			3	
Chiffchaff	261	141	156	154	501	533	431	1,005	2,423	5,605	
Willow Warbler	783	593	590	687	1,475	1,450	609	643	1,036	7,866	
Blackcap	483	558	585	679	1,274	1,312	1,157	2,319	5,270	13,637	
Garden Warbler	69	84	67	134	357	451	281	386	664	2,493	
Barred Warbler		1								1	
Lesser Whitethroat	128	203	124	137	318	305	117	239	336	1,907	
Whitethroat	132	83	90	80	467	762	261	680	1,516	4,071	
Grasshopper W	65	44	34	12	31	47	11	36	78	358	
Sedge Warbler	1,304	1,191	887	703	1,239	1,587	677	793	2,495	10,876	
Marsh Warbler		1		1						3	
Reed Warbler	1,686	2,565	2,392	2,059	2,045	2,798	2,001	2,862	6,214	24,622	
Great Reed Warbler	1									1	
Nuthatch				1	1		9	12	42	65	
Treecreeper	77	109	134	118	150	173	89	152	263	1,265	
Wren	691	906	750	903	1,700	1,522	922	1,324	1,723	10,441	
Starling	102	542	1,226	2,863	1,255	716	584	586	1,048	8,922	
Blackbird	1,202	1,417	2,091	3,101	3,384	2,121	1,076	1,860	3,388	19,640	
Fieldfare	11	73	320	548	294	9	4	76	374	1,709	
Song Thrush	1,058	1,205	951	1,189	765	450	193	424	651	6,886	
Redwing	95	262	321	241	157	90	65	373	607	2,211	
Mistle Thrush	2	4	16	29	19	8	12	10	15	115	



	Ringing totals, five-year periods										Total
	68-72	73-77	78-82	83-87	88-92	93-97	98-02	03-07	08-12		
Spotted Flycatcher	112	156	147	214	160	43	21	67	26	946	
Robin	575	806	1,024	885	1,593	1,627	986	1,521	2,567	11,584	
Nightingale	8	3	13	19	18	8	25	53	108	255	
Black Redstart					2				1	3	
Redstart	6	7	1	3	4	9	1	1	9	40	
Whinchat	1	4	1			5	1	2		14	
Stonechat						1		6	2	9	
Wheatear			1					1	2	4	
Pied Flycatcher		5		2		2				9	
Duncock	1,077	1,432	1,361	1,241	1,662	1,343	742	1,269	2,125	12,252	
House Sparrow	11	28	159	143	238	340	596	746	717	2,978	
Tree Sparrow	826	544	446	1,922	279	27		66	131	4,241	
Yellow Wagtail	3	3	4	16	6	8	53	307	55	455	
Grey Wagtail								10	40	50	
Pied Wagtail	7	72	41	186	83	17	28	140	302	876	
Tree Pipit	1									1	
Meadow Pipit	8	16	3	6	4	25	40	82	464	648	
Chaffinch	243	339	436	469	1,195	1,198	638	1,692	2,629	8,839	
Brambling	24	9	17	1	16	11	1	26	46	151	
Greenfinch	518	845	1,856	2,743	4,925	4,214	1,759	5,817	2,787	25,464	
Goldfinch	323	492	187	188	305	204	238	1,637	3,021	6,595	
Siskin	37	31	6	1	44	87	32	7	80	325	
Linnet	307	337	404	350	382	216	28	124	458	2,606	
Lesser Redpoll	642	914	454	261	75	19		75	472	2,912	
Mealy Redpoll								2	28	30	
Bullfinch	1,117	1,258	892	805	823	636	462	799	1,161	7,953	
Hawfinch					2					2	
Yellowhammer	308	219	242	291	243	253	377	649	889	3,471	
Reed Bunting	947	1,957	649	332	440	600	433	1,078	2,573	9,009	
Corn Bunting	8	41	23	1	1	5	9	2	271	360	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>18,684</b>	<b>25,054</b>	<b>25,406</b>	<b>33,960</b>	<b>43,837</b>	<b>39,674</b>	<b>30,786</b>	<b>53,412</b>	<b>79,213</b>	<b>35,0026</b>	