

*A SUMMARY OF BIRD RINGING AT BAINTON, CAMBS*

*2010*



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***SUMMARY OF RINGING AT BAINTON - 2010***

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*Cover photo:*

*Cuckoo by evolution, hand by Chris Hughes – Bainton 12 June 2010*

## ***TERMINOLOGY***

Readers may appreciate an explanation of the abbreviations used in this report

### **BTO**

The British Trust for Ornithology

### **CES**

Constant Effort Site

### **PROCESSED**

The processing of a bird for ringing, retrap or control

### **RINGED**

The application of a ring to a bird's leg. Data such as age, sex, wing length, weight etc are also obtained

### **RETRAP**

A bird caught by a ringer at the same site where it was originally ringed or, if sites are close together, a bird caught within 5km of where it was first ringed

### **CONTROL**

A bird caught by a ringer more than 5km away from the site where it was originally ringed

### **RECOVERY**

A bird caught as in control above or a bird found by a third party eg reported by a member of the public

### **WALK BACK**

My phrase to describe the first net clearance of the day. This is always after I've finished putting up all the nets and I reverse the route to ensure I check all the nets as I return to the ringing base. More often than not, there are few birds caught on this round.

### **RINGING BASE**

Birds are brought back to my car for processing

## ***INTRODUCTION***

The background to ringing at Bainton was described in the 2009 summary but, for new readers, Bainton is one of around 120 sites in the UK ringed as part of the British Trust for Ornithology's (BTO) Constant Effort Site study (CES). Mist nets are sited in the same positions year on year and 12 visits made at roughly 10 day intervals between late April/early May and late August/early September each year to measure survival rates, breeding success and population levels of 25 of our more common bird species. The data from Bainton, together with that from other CES sites across the country, together with some impressive computer modelling at the BTO provides an excellent picture of how birds are faring. The CES scheme has been running for 28 years and 2010 saw 20 years of CES ringing at Bainton, making it one of the longest running sites in the scheme.

## ***THE 2010 SEASON***

1150 birds were processed in the year, the highest total since 2006 and indicative of an improved breeding season for many species. Details of birds caught are shown in the table below. Some highlights include:

**17 March** – 2 Goldcrests ringed, a species absent across much of the country over the winter months.

**22 April** – female Great Spotted and Green Woodpeckers ringed.

**1 May** – 3 Nightingales ringed, Blackcap controlled and Linnets being caught.

**13 May** – Blackbird ringed in 2005 and Garden Warbler from 2007 retrapped.

**24 May** – first juveniles of the year ringed – Dunnock, Robin and Willow Warbler and more Linnets ringed. A Reed Warbler from 2004 and Great Spotted Woodpecker from 2007 retrapped.

**5 June** – more juveniles caught – Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Chaffinch and Greenfinch plus first retrap of a Nightingale ringed here in 2008.

**12 June** – lots of juvenile tits around. First juvenile Wren, Lesser Whitethroat and Long tailed Tits ringed. Cuckoo, one of only four ringed in the county in 2010 and a Cetti's Warbler ringed, only the second to be caught here. Very recently fledged Nightingale ringed – short stumpy russet coloured tail. 3 extremely noisy juvenile Great Spotted Woodpeckers caught in the same net.

**27 June** – first juvenile Reed Warblers ringed plus another Great Spotted Woodpecker, the first juvenile Grasshopper Warbler since 2007 and the first ever juvenile Cetti's Warbler.

**17 July** – first juvenile Song Thrush and Bullfinch of the year ringed, another juvenile Cetti's Warbler, 3 juvenile Linnets and the juvenile Nightingale ringed in June retrapped.

**30 July** – first juvenile Garden Warblers and Reed Bunting ringed plus a juvenile male Green Woodpecker, a juvenile Nightingale and the juvenile from 27 June retrapped again – and growing well. 2 male and 1 female Goldfinch ringed – the first caught since 2007.

**11 August** – juvenile Nightingale ringed and already laying down fat ready for the journey south. And 6 juvenile Blackbirds.

**15 August** – juvenile Kingfisher and Treecreeper ringed.

**1 Sept** – a late Nightingale ringed (the latest ever here was one on 2 Sept 1996), another male Cetti's Warbler, the first Spotted Flycatcher for 8 years (a juvenile) and lots of warblers stocking up on berries, including 16 Blackcaps.

**18 September** – more juveniles caught including Whitethroat, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Goldcrest and Coal Tit.

### ***BIRDS CAUGHT IN 2010***

<b>Species</b>	<b>Ringed</b>	<b>Retraps/Controls</b>	<b>Total</b>
Cuckoo	1	0	1
Kingfisher	1	0	1
Green Woodpecker	2	1	3
Gt SpWoodpecker	5	2	7
Wren	36	13	49
Dunnock	37	28	65
Robin	49	7	56
Nightingale	9	18	27
Blackbird	34	21	55
Song Thrush	18	20	38
Cetti's Warbler	4	0	4
Grasshopper W'ler	1	0	1
Sedge Warbler	6	9	15
Reed Warbler	85	21	106
Lesser Whitethroat	16	1	17
Whitethroat	31	7	38
Garden Warbler	33	11	44
Blackcap	121	21	142
Chiffchaff	59	25	84
Willow Warbler	44	11	55
Goldcrest	4	0	4
Spotted Flycatcher	1	0	1
Long tailed Tit	30	16	46
Coal Tit	3	2	5
Blue Tit	71	12	83
Great Tit	47	17	64
Treecreeper	11	0	11
Jay	1	0	1
Chaffinch	22	2	24
Greenfinch	3	0	3
Goldfinch	3	0	3
Linnet	19	1	20
Bullfinch	40	24	64
Reed Bunting	10	3	13
<b>Totals</b>	<b>857</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>1150</b>

As ever, the figures between years ebbed and flowed. The harsh winter certainly had some impact on our resident species although both Blue and Great Tits did well. Our summer migrants fared pretty well too with good numbers of Reed Warblers around. As well as the 'bread and butter' species there was the enough excitement to keep me on my toes with a superb Cuckoo, a very welcome juvenile Spotted Flycatcher (only the second in 8 years and an autumn bird on migration), a feisty adult female Jay (the first since 2005) and an unexpected surge in Linnet numbers. In fact I processed almost as many Linnets in 2010 as I had in the previous 8 years in total. Pride of place though must go to the 4 Cetti's Warblers (2 males, 2 juveniles) all caught in exactly the same place in the same net in the reedbed as the female caught back in 2003. I'd heard the distinctive blast of Cetti's song but nowhere near the reedbed so I was pleased and surprised to catch even one. Even better, one of the juveniles found its way over to Wales where it was caught in the nets of the Pembrokeshire Ringing Group on a couple of occasions in November.

Probably the most pleasing bird was Nightingale ring number X688977. This bird was ringed on 12 June when it had only just fledged. It was a tiny bird, far too small to take any biometrics, with a yellow gape and russet tail feathers just beginning to emerge out of the sheaths. I was delighted to retrap it on 17 and 30 July, when it had grown considerably and developed into a stunning young bird. For anyone who has not seen a Nightingale close up, they really are most elegant, with subtle brown plumage and a wonderful russet red tail. And they can sing a bit too!

## ***RECOVERIES AND CONTROLS***

The following is a selection of recoveries or controls of birds either originally ringed at Bainton or ringed elsewhere and caught by me here. These were either ringed or controlled in 2010 or reported by the BTO in that year.

### **Garden Warbler**

Ring number R050338 – ringed as an adult male on 15 June 2006 and found alive inside a building at Great Ashford, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk on 25 July 2010. The bird was alive and well when it was released – 96km and 1501 days since it was first ringed at Bainton. At 5+ years this bird was a good age for a Garden Warbler

### **Blackbird**

Ring number CW57767 – ringed as an adult female on 9 August 2009 and found dead at Tallington, Stamford, Lincs on 15 July 2010 – 3km and 340 days

### **Reed Warbler**

Ring number R890196 – ringed as an adult male on 11 June 2004 and controlled at Pett Levels, Sussex on 13 August 2010 – 206km and 2254 days since it was first ringed. This bird was at least 7 years old when controlled in Sussex on migration, having been retrapped at Bainton by me on 24 May and 12 June 2010 as a breeding male. It had previously been retrapped here on 7 June 2005 and 19 July 2006, again as a breeding male so it seems to prefer Bainton despite going AWOL for a year or two.

Ring number X348573 – ringed as a juvenile on 31 July 2009 and controlled at Walberswick, Suffolk on 8 August 2009 - 141km and just 8 days after being ringed at Bainton.

Ring number L296311 – ringed as a juvenile on 15 August 2010 and controlled at Icklesham, Sussex on 28 August 2010 – 206km and 13 days after being ringed.

Ring number X146504 – ringed as an adult on 8 August 2009 at Icklesham, Sussex and controlled at Bainton on 5 June 2010 as a breeding male – 206km and 301 days.

### **Cetti's Warbler**

Ring number L296082 – ringed as a juvenile on 27 June 2010 and controlled at Kilpaison Marsh, Rhoscrowther, Pembrokeshire on 21 and 28 November 2010 – 337km and 154 days. This represents the longest movement to date, within the UK, of a British ringed Cetti's Warbler.

### **Blackcap**

Ring number BLB11237701 (Bruxelles) – ringed as an unaged male at Hamme Sint Anna, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium on 16 September 2009 and controlled at Bainton on 8 October 2009 – 354km and 22 days. Was it passing through or one of the near continent Blackcaps overwintering in Britain?

Ring number X742288 – ringed as a juvenile male on 13 September 2009 at Icklesham, Sussex and controlled at Bainton as a breeding male on 1 May 2010 – 206km and 230 days.

### **Long tailed Tit**

Ring number BHX821 – ringed as a juvenile on 1 June 2007 and controlled at Ferry Meadows, Cambs on 3 May 2010 – 11km and 1067 days. The bird was retrapped at Bainton on 3 dates in 2007.

## **Blue Tit**

Ring number X689000 – ringed as a juvenile on 12 June 2010 and found headless at Ashton, Stamford, Lincs on 5 September 2010 – 2km and 85 days.

Ring number L296127 – ringed as a juvenile on 27 June 2010 and found dead at the same address in Ashton as X689000 on 20 November 2010 – 2km and 146 days.

## ***PLANS FOR 2011***

2011 will be the 21<sup>st</sup> year of CES ringing at Bainton. Work is still progressing on producing a report on the ‘first 20 years’ at this site!

## ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS***

Once again my sincere thanks to all the land owners and agents (Lafarge Aggregates, Bainton Fisheries, National Grid and Langdyke Trust) for permission to ring at this wonderful site. In particular, my thanks to Ian Wakeford (Bainton Fisheries) and Stuart Irons and Richard Astle (Langdyke Trust).

Individual reports on ringing sessions are sent to the Peterborough Bird Club (Brian Stone) to ensure the records are retained for posterity and I’m grateful to Brian for our Email discussions on items of interest!

Langdyke Trust members attended a ringing session with me during the year and had the experience, under supervision, of handling and releasing ringed birds, including the almost mythical Nightingale. They seemed to enjoy it. Equally, as always, it was a pleasure to see so many fishermen, who have now become ‘regular’ visitors to the ringing ‘station’ at the back of my car, showing such an interest in the birds caught. They keep me fully up to date with ‘what’s around’ and I make a particular point of wandering over to show them some of the more unusual species caught.

So, I’m grateful to everyone who takes such an interest in my hobby and it is really encouraging to meet so many people who so obviously care deeply for the environment.

Last but by no means least my personal thanks to Andy and Helen Nutt for all their hard work and encouragement over my many years’ ringing at this site. It’s always a pleasure to see them.

*Chris Hughes  
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