

## **Wicken Fen Group**

### **Reedbed CES Results 2012**

We successfully completed the twelfth CES session on 1 September.  
Very many thanks to all those who got involved through the summer.

#### **Results**

See the separate tables, in the same format, for 2011 and 2012. This year we caught 273 different individual birds (almost equal numbers by age: 137 adults, and 136 juveniles) in 305 captures from 540 feet of net open for eight hours over twelve sessions.

#### **The year**

Summer 2012 was exceptionally cold and wet. Many ringing groups failed to complete all their CES sessions. Although we did manage all twelve of ours, several sessions were severely affected by the weather, and particularly by wind.

#### **Analysis**

With 2012 being such an extreme year, initial comparisons of our first two years CES-ing won't tell us much, but I'd highlight the following.

##### *1. Sedge Warblers were very scarce*

Only 48 different adults were captured on the whole Fen, against 118 in 2011. There were, however, more sessions last year, but that probably doesn't quite account for the difference. There were only six returning adults this year, against 16 in 2011, despite the higher total ringed in the previous year (2011 - 279) as opposed to 220 in 2010 (again, whole Fen figures).

##### *2. The poor weather significantly affected breeding success and productivity.*

Overall, the 2012 total of 273 individuals was two-thirds that of 2011 (415). If Sedge Warblers are excluded, the number of adult birds was about the same (128 against 137 in 2011); this difference might just have been down to the catchability (wind/weather) variation.

By contrast, juvenile numbers were down 45%, from 246 to 136.

3. *Insectivorous warblers suffered the most: Juveniles 2012/2011*

Sedge Warbler	9/28
Reed Warbler	47/76
Whitethroat	5/24
Blackcap	28/44
Chiffchaff	19/25
Willow Warbler	5/10

4. *Ground feeders fared better*

Wren	18/17
Dunnock	6/4
Robin	13/13

No Blackbirds were caught in the CES this year and just one Song Thrush, though neither species breed regularly at the Reedbed (so far in 2012 we've caught only six and five individuals of each species respectively, probably migrants). Both species have elsewhere apparently had a good year in these soggy conditions.

5. *Casual species*

Cuckoo, Tawny Owl, Green Woodpecker and Chaffinch were new species for the CES in 2012.

2011 species Woodcock, Blackbird, Long-tailed Tit, Bearded Tit and Goldfinch evaded capture this year.

6. *Repeaters*

Welcome back to three Reed Warblers, two Wrens, and one each of Kingfisher, Cetti's, Whitethroat, Chiffchaff and Reed Bunting who rejoined us in 2012 for their second annual CES capture.

Michael Holdsworth

15 September 2012

