

AVON BIRD REPORT

2010

AVON ORNITHOLOGICAL GROUP

September 2011

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Front cover: Cuckoo (G. Thoburn).

Rear cover: Map of the Avon area computer generated by S. Godden, Dept. of Geography, University of Bristol.

Text drawings by R.M. Andrews, P. Baber, M. Bailey, J.P. Martin and B.E. Slade.

Editorial

Like all other creatures on earth birds live in their local environment, and the health of this environment has a profound influence on their well-being. The two main papers in this edition discuss this aspect of their lives in some detail. First, the Estuary. Here it seemed that many of us have a good picture of what goes on above the surface of the water, but have only an incomplete and rather hazy idea of what goes on below the surface. To address this we asked Dr Rupert Perkins of the Marine Biosciences Department in the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences, University of Cardiff to give us a brief account of this aspect of the Estuary; see page 133. You will see there that he has recorded a big drop in fish catches during the past five years, at least in some of the upper parts of the Estuary. This reduction has been mirrored in lower counts especially for the waders on Severnside and other sites in the upper Estuary as noted in both last year's Report and on page 75 of this issue. Dr Perkins suggests that at least one reason for this could be the "clean up" of the upper reaches of the Severn taking place in Gloucestershire and to the north as part of the EU Water Framework Directive. He points out that he has no conclusive proof for the drop of the fish stocks or of the waders, more work is needed here but it does give a pointer for further investigation.

The second main paper is the remaining part of Rupert Higgins' account of the wildfowl at CVL, the first part appeared in last year's Report. After a detailed discussion of the environmental aspects the author comes to the conclusion that the lake is in good health with generally speaking numbers increasing for most wildfowl species. He does say that there could be some changes which would improve the situation further.

One aspect of our bird-life that has not been given its proper place in past Reports is subspecies. This is particularly so for *arctica* Dunlin for which there is just one published record even though a few have been recorded mainly on the coast in late May or early June. And so John Martin's paper is timely. If you have any new or old records of this subspecies you are asked to send details to the Recorder, we hope to publish an up to date list in the 2011 **Report**.

Between 1931 and 1947 Howard Davis, the first bird recorder for the Avon area, in his day job farmed some land at Little Stoke, north of Bristol, which is now under a housing estate. He recorded first arrival dates for the common migrants of the time, and these are discussed in a paper by Hugh Boyd and Richard Bland. The figures are compared with current values to try to answer the question: is climate change having much effect of our birds. No clear-cut conclusions are forthcoming. We end as usual with some papers relating to on-going surveys including the BBS and ringing reports, there were no

new species in 2010 and so no resulting paper. But Richard Bland's preliminary account of the severe cold in December is timely, no doubt there will be a more considered account in next year's Report when all of the winter's records have been logged and considered.

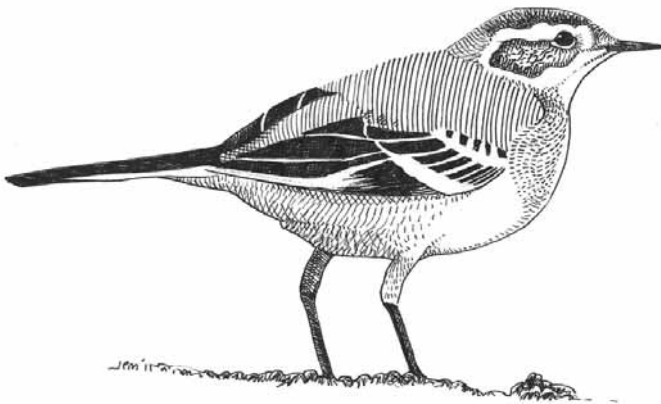
In last year's editorial we noted that access to two important sites, Avonmouth Sewage Works and Steep Holm, is much restricted at the moment. This has not changed over the past year. But there is one site where improvements have been made which as I write this is already producing some interesting records. A new earth seawall has been constructed on the bank of the R. Yeo (Cl-Y) at Tutshill's Ear which is a loop in the river from ST377664 to ST376661. It is designed to stop a storm surge flowing from the mouth of the river and inundating the land between Kingston Seymour and Nailsea. (In the big storm of mid-December 1981 much of this area was under several feet of water). The material for this bank was dug locally so forming a new pool roughly rectangular in shape and with a surface area of about two hectares, it lies directly in front of the new earth bank and at the moment we are calling it Tutshill's Ear Pool. Advice was sought from Natural England, and it was decided to break the old outer wall and so a fairly large area of salt marsh is slowly forming as the area floods at high tide. The old farmland vegetation is now dying off due to the flooding, and in time new salt water plants will take over. It is expected that a number of interesting records will flow from this development in the future – so a good piece of news for a change.

As usual I must end by proposing many votes of thanks to all those who have helped in the production of this Report. First of course to the authors of the papers discussed above, they took many hours to research and write, and they add greatly to the value of the Report. The members of the editorial and recorders committees also spent many long hours producing their sections. Rupert Higgins as usual wrote the Review of the Year, as well as his part of the systematic list and the paper referred to above, also Andy Davis and Keith Vinicombe helped considerably with the editing etc. Photographs have greatly added to the content of this Report during the past few years, and we are grateful for all those photographers who submitted pictures. If you have any that you think might be suitable for future publication do please send them to me. As last year our photographic editor, Rich Andrews, has organised the current selection into a coherent and pleasing whole and we thank him for this. Many hours were also expended in front of computer screens getting the records into a good electronic shape - mainly by Richard Bland, Steve Hale (for the BOC) and John Martin – again sincere thanks are in order; the new system is working reasonably well now and it makes the editor's work much easier and less error prone. Our

technical editor Richard Mielcarek probably put more hours into the Report than any other including writing sections, general organisation and electronic expertise. But finally our most sincere thanks goes to all those observers who submitted records, the

Report could not exist without them! Of course we realise that the Report is not perfect, and so if anyone has any suggestions for improvement could they please pass them on to me; my e-mail address is given on the inside front cover.

Harvey Rose (Editor)



Citrine Wagtail by John Martin

From the Recorder

The past year, 2010, will not be remembered for its large selection of rarities but it did have its moments. Three birds were found that troubled the British Birds Rarities Committee (all of them accepted): a first-winter drake Lesser Scaup at CVL in March and April; a young Glossy Ibis in ditches at Avonmouth in September, and a Citrine Wagtail at CVL also in September. Once CVL had broken its duck (sorry) with Lesser Scaup, after the 2008 individual finally found its way there via BL and BG, further records seemed likely. Returning birds often make it hard to quantify numbers of rare ducks but this year's first-winter was clearly a new individual. The Glossy Ibis was an unexpected find for a startled Water Vole surveyor in an under-watched part of Avonmouth. Part of another large influx (22) of this species into southwest England at the time, this young bird had been ringed in Spain and delighted many observers with its tameness during a ten-day stay. The wagtail was an excellent find in the evening's pre-roost gathering of wagtails at Herriott's Pool. Finally, shortly before going to press we heard that the *Fregetta* petrel, either a Black-bellied or White-bellied Storm-petrel, at Severn Beach on Nov. 25th 2009 has now been accepted by BBRC and BOURC as the first British record. A full account will appear in the next Report.

Local rarities were not as numerous as in 2009 with 88 records assessed (76 of them accepted). With the removal of various now regular species from the 'description species' list this fall in overall numbers was to be expected. So Red-breasted Merganser, Scaup, Red-crested Pochard, Storm-petrel (inland records still require supporting notes or photographs), Little Tern, Osprey, Marsh Harrier and Firecrest no longer contribute to the total, although all of course remain good birds to find in the area. Non submission of rarity records remains an issue, although the total number of good records lost is considered to be small and probably does not affect the overall picture of the status of any species in our area. The main species affected last year were Hen Harrier and Goshawk. It is easy to mistake a large female Sparrowhawk for the latter, yet Goshawk is also probably somewhat under-recorded. Without some kind of documentation it is impossible to sort out the valid records from the rest. The lack of documentation for what are in some cases likely to be good records of this species is particularly disappointing. Observers are urged to read KEV's excellent article on Goshawk identification in the 2004 edition of this Report. It would be good if we could obtain better documentation for this species, which now at last seems to have a toe-hold in our area.

For most species we really do not need extensive documentation at all, and in many cases a single photograph or a few short lines of description is perfectly sufficient. Posting such photographs on other websites is acceptable as documentation, although in some of these cases other details about the sighting are not clear, including such basic data as who found the bird. Rather than harping on in this vein I should highlight the fact that almost 90% of submitted records were accepted and thank all contributors for their generally high standards of documentation.

No more species have been removed from the list of species requiring a description this year, although one subspecies, *arctica* Dunlin, has been added (see article on page 149). In general we need documentation for most of the scarce subspecies that might be recorded in the area.

Sharp eyed readers may notice the absence of Turtle Dove for the first time in the history of this Report. This is not an accidental omission but a sad reflection of the national and local decline that this species has undergone. It has been no more than a scarce migrant with us for a number of years and the last proved breeding was as long ago as 1983, though singing birds in suitable habitat suggest this might have continued into the early 1990s. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Willow Tit and Tree Sparrow are other species teetering on the brink of local extinction. These losses are sad though to some extent offset by increases in other species. It is easy to become blasé about birds such as Little Egret, Mediterranean Gull and Marsh Harrier, all of which have increased greatly in recent decades. Keep the records coming in – we need them to continue the documentation of these and many other fascinating fluctuations in our area's birdlife.

I should welcome Matt Plenty to the recorder's committee – Matt is an experienced birder who hails from the Northeast and has (for some reason!) settled on OPS as his local patch where he has already made some excellent finds. He will begin his duties with scrutiny of 2011 rarities. I must again close by thanking everyone who has helped over the year, in particular Richard Andrews, Richard Bland, Andy Davis, Steve Hale, Rupert Higgins, Brian Lancaster, Richard Mielcarek and Harvey Rose plus all the section writers and the hundreds of observers who sent in records of common species (in many ways more significant than the rarities).

John Martin

Review of 2010

R.J. Higgins

The year began and ended with spells of cold weather, which were both exceptionally hard by recent standards. Both produced some influxes and movements, for instance forcing enormous numbers of thrushes into urban areas. Increased mortality in the first winter, combined with poor breeding seasons in both 2008 and 2009, meant that populations of many resident birds were low. Several species, however, enjoyed a good breeding season in 2010 and were able to make up the losses; several migrant species also enjoyed a good breeding season. Spring passage of waders was notably poor, but more were present in the autumn when low water levels at CVL also produced record numbers of wildfowl. The year was very poor for rarities with, for example, a total absence of Nearctic waders for the first time since 2000. To add to the frustration most of the rare birds recorded were seen by the finders only, although a confiding Glossy Ibis, a good sequence of Lapland Bunting sightings and a large influx of Waxwing late in the year provided some compensation.

First Winter Period

The cold weather that was to have such an influence on the year's birds began in earnest in December 2009 and snow fell on Jan. 6th, remaining until 15th. Thereafter winds were generally northerly, producing cold, overcast conditions.

The weather, as would be expected, had a marked impact on wildfowl, causing influxes of some species, dispersal of others and the almost complete disappearance of some. The most numerous of the species that moved into the area was Wigeon, which was present in twice the numbers seen the previous winter, with an exceptional 2,400 on Severnside. There were also reasonable numbers of Bewick's Swan, Brent and White-fronted Geese, Scaup and Goldeneye and a welcome, if small, influx of Smew. A series of records of Barnacle Goose, including a movement detected over Bristol, was intriguing, but probably related to feral birds. As the reservoirs froze there were records of Great Crested and Little Grebes, Moorhen, Water Rail and Coot from unusual sites, concentrated in the period Jan. 3rd to 9th. For the remainder of the winter the absence of the two grebe species, in particular, from the reservoirs was striking, but ducks such as Pochard were surprisingly rapid in their return.

The inclement weather also influenced wader records. Cold weather movements of Lapwing were detected on Jan. 6th and there seemed to be a small influx of Woodcock, peaking around 9th. During and after the snowfall there was a sharp decline in the numbers of Lapwing and Snipe. An exceptional count of 1,700 Knot on Weston-s-Mare beach on 26th may have been related to the freeze. Most estuarine waders were probably relatively unaffected with, for example, no evidence of an influx from the

east of Dunlin, which had an average winter. Curlew were slightly more numerous, against the trend of recent years, but the winter was particularly poor for Black-tailed Godwit and Turnstone. As with several waders, numbers of these two species at Severnside are particularly worrying. Although some sites saw poor numbers of Redshank there were exceptional counts at CI-Y and the Axe Estuary in the south-west of the area. Seabirds are not often a feature of the first two months of the year, but flocks of Gannet and Kittiwake were seen in late February.

Short-eared Owl was very scarce, but Hen Harrier was seen at CI-Y and Severnside,

The first few days of the year produced some good counts of declining farmland birds, these included 180 Stock Dove at Bleadon Level; 1,000 Linnet, 200 Yellowhammer and 200 Corn Bunting at Marshfield; and 100 Yellowhammer at Compton Dando. As the snow fell there were visible movements of Wood Pigeon, Skylark and Fieldfare, and for urban dwellers the influx of Fieldfare and Redwing into the cities was particularly striking. There was marked evidence of an impact on some of the species that might be expected to be particularly sensitive to the cold spell. Chiffchaff, Firecrest and Black Redstart were reasonably numerous in January but virtually nonexistent in February, Stonechat showed a progressive decline from December 2009 to February, and Water Pipit were scarce. Reflecting long-term trends rather than weather induced fluctuations were continued declines in Starling and Greenfinch. Amongst the migrant finches Siskin numbers were reasonable but Brambling was rare. There was a good sequence of records of Crossbill from the south of the area.

The cold weather, as has been the case in recent years, produced disappointing results in terms of rare and scarce birds and it is hardly surprising that the Cattle Egret disappeared from CVL on Jan. 3rd. As the snow came there were records of Waxwing on 6th and 7th and a Shorelark on 8th. A Ring-billed Gull was found at CVL on 16th and another Nearctic species, Green-winged Teal, appeared at the Axe Estuary the next day, with another record at OPS on 27th. A Ferruginous Duck returned to CVL on Feb. 4th and a Slavonian Grebe was found off Portishead on 21st.

Spring

Northerly winds continued to dominate until March 17th, when there was a brief interlude of south-westerlies before north-easterlies returned and continued almost unabated until Mid-May. The end of this month then saw westerly airflows.

The period saw few noteworthy records of wildfowl. Exceptions included a flock of 54 Dark-bellied Brent Geese at Severnside on March 21st and an

extended but small passage of Common Scoter throughout April. The first Garganey was seen on April 10th, but numbers were very low, and the Long-tailed Duck recorded in 2009 returned to CVL from its cold weather refuge on the Somerset Levels on 21st.

The spring upsurge in Red Kite records seen in recent years continued in 2010, with a peak in sightings around April 9th. Marsh Harriers were recorded between March 8th and May 4th, and Ospreys on several dates in April.

Spring passage of many wader species, including Ringed Plover, Sanderling, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit and Whimbrel, was strikingly poor. In so far as these species showed any peak in numbers, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit and Whimbrel were most numerous in the last ten days of April, and Ringed Plover and Sanderling around May 23rd to 24th. Little Ringed Plover and Common Sandpiper both appeared in the last two days of March and the latter bucked the trend with a good showing, peaking around April 21st.

The spring seabird passage mirrored that of the waders in many ways. There were, for example, only two records of Common Tern and no records of Little Gull from the coast and no Great Skuas at all. Numbers of Pomarine and Arctic Skuas, Kittiwake, Little, Black and Arctic Terns were all low. What passage there was began with a movement of Kittiwake in mid-March, and Little Gull proved an exception to some extent, with a good sequence of records at CVL peaking around April 8th. The end of April saw the largest movement of Arctic Skua and Sandwich Tern and the spring's only Pomarine Skua and Little Tern. The weak passage of Arctic Tern then peaked in early May.

The northerly air flows meant that the spring passerine passage was slow to get underway. Although the first Chiffchaff was seen on March 6th and the first Sand Martin on 11th it was not until 17th, when winds moved to the south west, that there were any marked movements. Over the next two days there were large influxes of Chiffchaff and Sand Martin, first records of Wheatear and Ring Ouzel, and large passages of Blackbird, Redwing and Meadow Pipit. For the rest of the month there were first records of Swallow, House Martin, Redstart and Blackcap, but no large influxes. April continued this trend, although Willow Warbler became widespread between 2nd and 4th, followed by first records, successively, of Tree Pipit, Whitethroat, Lesser Whitethroat, Reed Warbler, Yellow Wagtail, Cuckoo, Swift and Grasshopper Warbler. The mass arrival of summer migrants often occurs in mid-April but in 2010 it was delayed until the last ten days of the month, which saw large movements of Swift, Sand Martin, House Martin, Blackcap, Whitethroat, Lesser Whitethroat, Grasshopper Warbler, Wheatear, Whinchat, Pied Flycatcher, Yellow Wagtail and Tree Pipit, and the first records of Spotted Flycatcher and Nightingale. The less common species showed a variety of trends, but the overall picture was of a poor season.

Whinchat numbers improved slightly, but remained low, and the spring was a disappointing one for Redstart, Pied Flycatcher, Tree Pipit and, in particular, Yellow Wagtail. This depressing picture is probably the result of a combination of long term population declines and weather conditions, which both delayed arrivals and lacked wet weather to force migrants down. By contrast, Grasshopper Warbler was present in good numbers, and the passage of Ring Ouzel was reasonable.

The spring was poor for rare and scarce species, probably due to the same combination of weather conditions mentioned in the previous paragraph. It is of note that March was, for once, the best of the three months and that of the nine records listed here only two involve overshooting summer visitors. A Crane was an exciting find at Severnside on March 2nd and the same observer also found a Black Kite here on 18th. The latter was almost certainly the individual that overwintered in Wales. Early spring can be a good season for scarce wildfowl and 2010 produced a Lesser Scaup, at CVL from 7th onwards, and a Pale-bellied Brent Goose with the flock of Dark-bellied Brent Geese at Severnside on 23rd. Bearded Tits appeared at CVL on 3rd and Weston STW on April 10th. A hint of spring was provided by a Hoopoe at Thornbury on March 28th, but a Shore Lark at BG on April 24th was less seasonal, although its confiding behaviour made it popular with photographers. The best record of the spring was also the only occurrence of a rarity in May, a Tawny Pipit at Weston STW on 3rd.

Breeding

The weather through most of the breeding season was cool and dry, although there were spells of hot weather at the beginning and end of June, and some rain at the end of the season, in mid-July. The effects of the preceding cold winter and poor breeding seasons in the last two years were evident in several species.

The dry weather led to falling water levels at CVL, and very poor seasons for Little and Great Crested Grebes. Few Tufted Duck broods were seen here, but they had a reasonable season elsewhere and most other breeding ducks were at broadly average levels. The main exception was Shelduck, which had its best year of the decade. Mandarin Duck bred at Chipping Sodbury Golf Course. Grey Heron was clearly affected by the cold winter, with significant drops in nest numbers at both main heronries.

The fortunes of raptors were very mixed. The year was the worst for Kestrel and Hobby since 1995 and 1996, respectively, and Sparrowhawk showed evidence of a decline, but Buzzard numbers seemed stable and the year was the best on record for Peregrine. Barn Owls enjoyed good productivity, but there was further evidence of a decline in the Tawny Owl population, whilst Little Owl appears stable at a very low level.

There was no further decline in the Lapwing population, which is a fraction of what it was in the

recent past, and Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover and Little Ringed Plover bred in small numbers.

The response of passerines to the cold winter varied. Goldcrest and Long-tailed Tit showed no real evidence of a decline but there was a drop in numbers of Wren, Blackbird, Robin, Stonechat, Pied Wagtail and, markedly, Grey Wagtail, although it appears that Wren productivity was high. Both Blue and Great Tit also appeared to have a good breeding season. Most migrants, by contrast, bred in good numbers, with encouraging evidence from Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Lesser Whitethroat, Whitethroat and Sedge Warbler. On the whole there was little sign of real improvement amongst those species whose population declines have been a cause for concern in recent years. Collared Dove, Rook, Willow Warbler, Starling and Greenfinch were all at low levels, whilst Cuckoo, Swift, Mistle Thrush, Spotted Flycatcher and House Sparrow showed at best a slight improvement from a very low level. Amongst the group of birds particularly associated with farmland, populations of Skylark, Yellowhammer and Corn Bunting appear stable but Grey Partridge is virtually extinct, with the majority of records now involving deliberate releases. Increases seen in recent years in some species, notably Great Spotted Woodpecker, Raven and Goldcrest, continued.

There were some records involving rare breeding species. Two pairs of Long-eared Owl bred, and at least three Nightjars churred at the traditional site. Willow Tit were recorded again in Lower Woods, although without proof of breeding, and a pair of Black Redstart and two pairs of Yellow Wagtail bred. Surprisingly, in view of the winter weather, the increase in the Cettis Warbler population continued.

Summer

The weather conditions throughout were largely settled and dry, with an absence of strong winds or significant rainfall, although the latter part of July saw some rain.

With no strong westerly winds there was an almost total absence of seabird records, normally a feature of the summer. After 84 Manx Shearwater on May 29th there were no records at all of this species, Gannet or Storm Petrel and only one of Fulmar throughout the period.

The period was generally quiet in terms of rare birds, but did produce the most extraordinary record of the year, a male white-spotted Bluethroat photographed in pampas grass in an urban garden at Staple Hill on June 19th. More to be expected, but of note nonetheless, was a Honey Buzzard over CVL on June 1st.

Autumn

The weather through the early part of the autumn was largely settled and dry, dominated by light westerly wind flows and with just one significant wet spell, in late autumn. October began and ended with

southerly winds, but in the middle of the month a period of northerlies brought unusually early frosts.

The settled and dry weather over much of the summer allowed good growth of water weed at CVL and this, combined with the low water levels, produced an exceptional autumn for water fowl, which peaked at a record number in excess of 13,000 in October. These included a record 2,420 Tufted Duck, an autumn record of 3,500 Teal and a good total, by recent standards, of 445 Wigeon. However, many of the species present in high numbers at CVL, including Gadwall and Shoveler, were scarce at BL. Several recent years have seen poor counts at this site, but this might just be a consequence of birds favouring CVL whilst feeding conditions are optimal here. Arrivals of migrant species began in June, with the first Teal on 26th, followed in July by the first Garganey on 13th and Wigeon on 30th, and continued with the first Pintail on Sept. 3rd, Goosander on 16th and the return of the regular Red-breasted Merganser on 24th. Several of the less common species were seen in good quantity, including Red-crested Pochard, with a party of seven at CVL on Sept. 26th, Black-necked Grebe, which peaked here at six in October, and Scaup, which arrived at several sites between 3rd and 17th. The northerly winds in the middle of the month produced the season's first migrant swans, Whooper on 16th and Bewick's on 23rd.

As with the rest of the year the autumn was poor for seabirds, with a very weak skua passage involving only Arctic Kittiwake appearing on one day only and a dearth of tern records from the coast. CVL, however, witnessed a better passage with a peak of Black Tern records on Sept. 5th and a good sequence of Little Gull records in October.

Late August and early September produced four records of Osprey and one of Honey Buzzard, whilst later in the season there were three sightings of Hen Harrier in October.

Wader passage was much better than in the Spring, partly due to low water levels at the reservoirs. The exceptional occurrence was the long sequence of Greenshank records at BL, reaching an impressive peak of 44 on Aug. 23rd. The end of August also saw peaks in the passage of Knot, Ruff, Spotted Redshank, Black-tailed Godwit, Green and Wood Sandpipers, all but the first appearing in reasonable numbers at the reservoirs. Although the passage of Little Stint also peaked at this time it was the worst on record, but a species often associated with Little Stint, Curlew Sandpiper, appeared in good numbers from late August onwards, reaching maxima on Sept. 12th and Oct. 20th. There was a particularly good sequence of records from RPD but its almost total absence from Severnside is symptomatic of a general decline in waders here. Later in the season there was a good passage of Grey Plover peaking on Oct. 23rd and two days later an exceptional 625 Redshank on the Axe Estuary was the largest flock ever seen in our area.

The first clear sign of autumn passerine passage was provided by a coastal Yellow Wagtail on July 14th, followed by a Wheatear on 23rd. Redstart was first seen on Aug. 1st, with the first Tree Pipit on 8th and Whinchat on 15th. The last few days of the month saw the height of the Swallow, Redstart, Yellow Wagtail and Wheatear passages. In September there was a pronounced movement of Sand Martin and Whinchat around 6th and 7th, and the main passage of House Martin was around 17th. The next week then saw the last records of Lesser Whitethroat, Whitethroat, Grasshopper Warbler and Swift, with Sedge and Reed Warblers following in the first two days of October. Fieldfare first appeared on 3rd, followed by Redwing on the late date of 7th, presumably delayed by the southerly winds. The winds then changed briefly to northerlies and there were maxima in counts of Pied Wagtail, Chaffinch and Siskin between 9th and 17th, and the period between the 10th and 12th produced the autumn's only Ring Ouzel and Hawfinch records, as well as the first Brambling. The year's last Whinchat was seen on 15th and the last Redstart on the next day. Following the return to southerly airstreams the last significant event of the season was around 21st and 22nd, when there were visible migration sightings of Tree Sparrow, Corn Bunting and Snow Bunting, as well as a major influx of Fieldfare, a peak in Brambling passage and the year's last Swallow. The final summer passerine of the year, a Wheatear, was seen on Nov. 10th. In terms of numbers the passage of most species was around average, but a significant gathering of Yellow Wagtail on Severnside contributed to a good autumn for this species, whilst Whinchat and Stonechat were both decidedly scarce.

The autumn was not a classic for rare and scarce birds, with a disappointing lack of notable waders at the reservoirs despite low water levels here. In fact, it was not until the very end of August that any scarce birds appeared, a Wryneck at Severnside on 30th. The rarest bird of the season was a very brief Citrine Wagtail, the second record both for the lake and for the area, on the evening of Sept. 7th, and equally frustrating were two White Storks seen briefly over Severnside on 12th. CVL produced perhaps the most significant series of records, involving a total of four Ferruginous Duck, probably the most seen in north western Europe in living memory. They were joined from 13th by a Ring-necked Duck and, despite the lack of strong winds, two Grey Phalaropes from 15th. The autumn's most obliging rarity was a Glossy Ibis that frequented pools and rhines in the Hoar Gout area of Avonmouth from 17th. A Wryneck was somewhat bizarrely trapped in a greenhouse at Nempnett Thrubwell on 26th and, more routinely, a fly-over Richard's Pipit was seen near OPS on 30th. BL is the favourite local site for Red-necked Phalarope and one was found here on Oct. 4th. The middle of the month then produced a flurry of activity as northerly winds set in. There was an exceptional influx of Lapland Bunting, thought to originate from Greenland rather than the more usual north-eastern area, into Britain in the autumn and this reached our area during this period, with at least ten recorded

from 11th to 20th, all on the coast. In the same period there were a Wood Lark over Severnside on 15th, two Greenland Whitefronted Geese past OPS on 17th and the arrival of two Firecrests. The remainder of the month was quiet, with the best birds a Spoonbill at CVL on 24th and a Great Grey Shrike, also enjoying a good autumn nationally, at CI-Y on 30th.

Second Winter Period

The most significant gales of the year were in early November, peaking on 12th as a deep depression swept over the area. The weather then changed abruptly as northerly winds produced an exceptional snow fall on 27th. The snow remained throughout most of December and virtually every night was frosty.

The cold weather had a marked influence on wildfowl numbers and distribution, although late Garganey records at CVL on Nov. 9th and 12th hardly provided a taste of what was to come. Pochard were numerous here until the lake froze, a consequence of good summer weed growth. As the freeze set in there were more Bewick's and Whooper Swans, and White-fronted Geese than have been seen in recent winters. Wigeon were four times more numerous than they were in December 2009 and there was a small influx of Smew, beginning with one at CVL on Nov. 8th, reaching a peak here of four on 29th, and records at Severnside on 28th and Dec. 27th. Accompanying the Smew were small numbers of Red-breasted Merganser between Nov. 12th and 17th and CVL saw its best count of Goosander for ten years. Ice cover at the reservoirs forced a dispersal of many wildfowl and there were unusual records of many species in late November, and from Dec. 11th to 28th. By the end of the year the lakes were virtually devoid of grebes, as they had been in January and the freezing of CVL may have been partly responsible for an Avon record count of 457 Cormorant at BG on Dec. 9th. Another exceptional count, that of 862 Shelduck at Sand Bay on 30th might not have been weather related, but part of a trend towards high counts in the south-western part of our area, whilst numbers decline on the upper Estuary.

The high winds around Nov. 12th produced some seabird records. The year's only petrel was unfortunately a Leach's found dead at Emerson's Green on 7th, and one or two Great Skuas accompanied Little Gulls and Kittiwakes on 11th and 12th. Three Great Northern Divers appeared at the same time, and twelve Common Scoter were seen from Anchor Head.

Hen Harriers were unusually widespread in southern England during this period, and there were many records of one along the coast from Nov. 14th, probably involving the same individual. An unseasonal Marsh Harrier was seen at OPS on Dec. 1st.

The cold weather forced the departure of many Lapwing, Golden Plover, Snipe and Jack Snipe but as in the first winter period there seemed to be a small influx of Woodcock, peaking around Dec. 10th, neither Green nor Common Sandpiper appeared to be affected, and there were several records of Ruff during the month. Dunlin numbers were average on the coast but the decline in Severnside's waders was reflected in a poor showing of Turnstone.

The response of many passerines to the conditions was marked. There were large Redwing movements from Nov. 20th to 22nd and evidence of an influx into the area in the first few days of December, when Fieldfare also moved. A particular feature of the period was the enormous numbers of both species invading gardens in urban areas, and large flocks were also seen on the coast. There was also evidence of an influx of Skylark into our area, with an exceptional record of 2,000 at Marshfield on 17th. Dispersing Kingfishers were seen in unusual sites around 6th and 7th, and there was evidence of a population decline in this species, as well as in Goldcrest and Stonechat. Blackcap, however, continued to frequent many gardens and eleven Black Redstarts were recorded. Numbers of migrant finches are probably more affected by seed crops than by cold weather, and the winter was fairly good for Brambling and Siskin, but poor for Lesser Redpoll.

There were various records of scarce birds in the period, but few can be linked to the cold weather. A Cattle Egret at CVL on Nov. 5th is certainly not a record one would associate with freezing weather, neither was the Spoonbill seen at OPS on Dec. 2nd. The storms between Nov. 10th and 12th produced a Grey Phalarope at Cl-Y and a Little Auk at Severnside, with a Slavonian Grebe at CVL at the same time. The appearance of a Red-necked Grebe during cold weather is to be expected but the location, Sea Mills on 28th, was exceptional. Another Slavonian Grebe appeared, at BG, on Dec. 15th and the disappearance of all three Firecrests recorded in the previous month can also probably be attributed to cold weather. Snow Buntings at Cl-Y on Nov. 28th and CVL on Dec. 4th certainly fitted the scene but a Dartford Warbler at Uphill on 12th, which had probably been forced from one of the few remaining Somerset sites for this species, did not. Lapland Buntings from the autumn influx were seen at Cl-Y and Weston STW. At CVL Green-winged Teal on Dec. 17th and Ring-billed Gull on 29th were fairly routine for this site. The Waxwing influx into the area started on the early date of Oct. 26th, but the mass arrival began from Nov. 25th with a peak in records just before Christmas, when several flocks were present in north-western Bristol, where they washed down rowan berries with beakfuls of snow taken from house roofs and gutters to the delight of birders and non-birders alike.

Weather Report for 2010

R.L. Bland

The annual average temperature in 2010 was cooler than 2009, and close to the long-term average of 13.6°C. It was also the driest year since 1978. It began with a cold winter, the coldest since 1979, and continued with an average spring, a wet, warm summer, an average autumn, and the coldest December since 1916, the sixth coldest since 1853.

Rainfall was exceptional in August. Overall rainfall was 747mm compared with the average since 1853 of 894mm. The data is taken from the Times weather reports until 2010, and for 2010 from the Bristol weather website at www.afour.demon.co.uk. Rainfall data is from my rain gauge in Clifton.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Av. Max °C	13.8	14.3	15.0	14.3	14.4	14.7	14.5	13.7	14.6	14.2
Ten year av. °C	13.8	14.0	14.2	14.2	14.2	14.4	14.4	14.3	14.3	14.3
Rainfall mm	832	1058	758	945	896	952	1107	1150	986	747
Ten year av. mm	995	995	963	954	956	974	997	1005	993	943

Table 1. Decadal average mean maximum temperature and rainfall

Seasons

Winter (December 2009 to February) The average temperature for this period was 5.3°C, the coldest since 1962/63. Rainfall at 59mm per month was below average. There were 51 frost nights (October to May), the last on May 4th. Also there were 35 nights cold enough to create ice, and 16 days with lying snow including, unusually, six before Christmas 2009. The coldest spells, with maximum temperature below 5°C, were the nine days from Dec. 17th to 25th, 2009, and the 13 days from Jan. 1st to 13th.

Spring (March to May) The average temperature was 14.3°C, a little above the long term average of 12.9°C. Rainfall at 38mm per month was drier than average, and the driest since 1990.

Summer (June to August) The average temperature was 22.8°C, warmer than 2009, but it was the third wet summer in a row, and August was the wettest since 1992.

Autumn (September to November) The average temperature was 14.8°C which is about normal, and September was unusually dry.

Seasonal Comparisons To put the 2010 seasonal average temperatures into perspective, Table 2 shows the seasonal extremes, with their year, the average since 1853, and the difference between 2010 and the long term average. Table 3 gives similar data for rainfall.

	2010	Min (year)	Max (year)	Av. since 1853	Difference
Winter	5.8	2.5 (1917)	10.6 (1920)	7.5	-1.7
Spring	14.3	10.4 (1887)	16.6 (1893)	12.9	1.4
Summer	22.8	18.0 (1883)	23.9 (1976)	20.2	1.6
Autumn	14.8	10.6 (1915)	16.8 (1959)	13.9	0.9
Annual	13.9	12.1 (1892)	15.6 (1921)	13.6	0.3

Table 2 2010 seasonal average temperature in degrees compared with the minimum, maximum and average since 1853, and the difference between 2010 and the average since 1853.

	2010	Min (year)	Max (year)	Av. since 1853	Difference
Winter	59	21 (1964)	154 (1995)	78	-19
Spring	38	17 (1893)	107 (1981)	60	-22
Summer	94	11 (1995)	140 (1879)	73	21
Autumn	71	26 (1978)	173 (1935)	87	-16
Annual	62	29 (1864)	104 (1882)	75	-13

Table 3 2010 seasonal average monthly rainfall in mm compared with the maximum, minimum and average since 1853, and the difference between 2010 and the average since 1853.

Monthly deviation from the average since 1853

Temperature Both January and December were very much colder than normal.

Rainfall Nine months were below average, but August was much wetter than normal.

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Temp	-44	-12	6	20	5	14	8	18	28	5	-15	-57
Rain	-29	-2	-8	-58	-42	-40	25	85	-49	-19	12	-80

Table 4 2010 - Monthly percentage deviation from the monthly norm

Monthly summary 2010

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Av.
Temp °C	4.4	6.7	10.6	15.2	17.1	21.9	22.4	24.1	23.1	14.8	8.7	3.4	14.4
Rain mm	60	59	55	24	36	37	87	157	40	77	97	18	62

Table 5 2010 - Average temperature and total rainfall for each month

January The first two weeks were exceptionally cold, with frost every night. Snow fell on 6th and stayed until 15th. Winds were easterly around a high pressure system. The rest of the month was generally sunless, with northerly winds and temperatures around 8°C.

February Generally dominated by high pressure, low temperatures, sunless days and northerly winds, but there were only seven frost nights.

March The first ten days saw high pressure, bright sun, north-east winds and frosts, and temperatures around 8°C. Temperatures rose from 12th briefly reaching 14°C on 17th as winds switched to the south and west, but only a little rain fell.

April Dominated by high pressure, north-east winds, and sunshine, averaging 6.9 hours a day, greater than the long term average for June. Temperatures were around 14°C, but peaked at 20°C on 28th.

May The pattern of dry sunny days continued - there were only five sunless days during the month, and north winds dominated until 12th when westerlies took over. The warmest spell of the year was from May 20th to 26th when the temperature reached 26°C for two days.

June Began with a hot sunny spell from 4th to 6th, but it was much cooler with north winds until 20th. It was another unusually dry month, such that total annual rainfall was 90mm below normal by the end of June. The last ten days were hot, dry and sunny with southerly winds.

July The fine warm dry spell continued for the first ten days, and then a much needed wet spell followed on the 12th and culminated with 36mm of rain on 23rd. The final week was dry. It was a remarkably sunless month, with only 60% of normal hours of sunshine.

August There were only six sunless days, but temperatures were around 24°C, and there was a very wet spell from 19th to 28th when 101mm of rain fell.

September A dry month with above average temperatures and mostly westerly winds.

October The first ten days were warm, and dry with southerly winds, which then shifted to the north as high pressure took over and temperatures fell. The first night frost was on 17th, followed by four others. Temperatures rose under the influence of southerly winds in the last ten days.

November The first twelve days were wet and windy, with a small storm on 12th associated with a deep depression. On 21st the winds shifted to the north, high pressure built up over Iceland, temperatures fell abruptly, and on 27th snow fell, the first November snow since 1952.

December A wholly exceptional cold month, with an average temperature that was the coldest since 1916, and the sixth coldest since 1853. There were 23 frost nights and 19 days with snow cover.

Weather Extremes

The table below gives figures for extreme annual events over the past decade, enabling the weather events of 2010 to be put into perspective. There seems to be no pattern in these figures, except for the number of days with no sun increased from

around 50 to around 100. It is also interesting to note that, contrary to common perception, two days in every three have no rain at all. The number of snow days and frost days in 2010 is unprecedented in recent years.

		2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010	Data for 2010
Hottest day	°C	30	26	32	28	30	35	27	28	28	26	May 23
Coldest day	°C	2	0	1	3	0	0	2	2	-1	-5	Dec. 20
Wettest day	mm	55	60	45	45	47	39	40	35	36	36	July 23
Sunniest day	hr	14	14.9	15.1	13.9	14.8	14.7	14.1	14.9	14.7	15.6	June 17
Longest dry period	days					14	22	24	16	20	24	April 5-29
Longest wet period	days					7	11	8	8	8	7	March 29-April 4
Frost, nights	days	46	14	49	30	32	33	25	44	42	76	
Snow	days	0	0	0	6	2	2	2	1	19	33	
Storms	days					1	3	6	4	1	1	
Hotter than 25°C	days	15	3	22	13	14	27	1	7	5	3	
Colder than 5°C	days	34	17	25	15	26	39	18	14	37	60	
More than 10hrs sun	days	45	30	42	19	38	36	45	29	49	46	
No sun	days	62	78	56	90	89	107	99	95	95	106	
No rain	days			263	231	248	234	238	228	265	269	

Table 6 Extreme annual events over the past decade

Bird Surveys

The data from a number of different bird surveys, both local and national, have been used in compiling the Systematic List.

There are a number of local surveys which monitor populations. They use different techniques, operate at different times of the year, and vary in the quantity of the information recorded, but they provide valuable information on population change, especially for the common species.

BBS

The BTO **B**reeding **B**ird **S**urvey which begun in 1994. Surveyors are birdwatchers who are able to recognise all the species by sight and song. They walk 2km within a square kilometre, early in the morning when bird activity is at its greatest and record all birds seen or heard. Two recording visits are made, one between April 1st and May 15th and a second at least four weeks later and before the end of June. Results in one year are compared with the same results by the same observer in the same square the previous year to give a measure of change. The method of survey does not count shy, nocturnal or rare species that are known to nest or possibly nest within the Avon region.

In 2010, 194 one-km squares were visited and a total of 66,977 birds was counted by 125 observers at a rate of 126 birds per hour. The data are used in four ways. A population estimate derived from the counts is given for the commonest species. A distribution figure is given which is the percentage of the squares in which a species was observed. The percentage change in the counts from the previous year is given in a status chart. An index for common species, set at 100 for 1994, shows the change over time. Figures for 2001 are not available because Foot and Mouth disease prevented an effective survey.

CABS

The **C**lifton **A**rea **B**ird **S**urvey. This is a local weekly survey of ST 5673 begun in 1994. In 2010 weekly counts taking 58 hours were made, 7,058 birds of 42 species were counted at a rate of 121 birds per hour. For common species the percentage change from the previous year is given.

WGS

The **W**inter **G**arden **S**urvey. This local survey began in 1973/4, and involves counts of birds using gardens between October and March. In 2009/10, 33 gardens participated over 823 recording-weeks counting some 35,277 birds of 51 species. Percentage changes in numbers present are recorded in the status chart.

Atlas

The BTO Bird Atlas 2007-11. It is based on four surveys that were made in each of the 400 tetrads of the BTO Avon region; the region has 17 10-km squares (hectads) and two hectads ST26 (Steep

Holm) and ST37 (Poet's Walk Clevedon) which have a tiny land area. The surveys were almost all of two hours, two in the winter, two in the summer, and counted every bird seen or heard.

For many species the Atlas distribution is compared with the same information from the Winter Atlas 1981-84 and the Breeding Atlas 1988-91. The Winter Atlas 1981-84 included a tetrad survey in which observers built up a species list over three winters, which tends to create a larger distribution for uncommon and elusive species than the present Atlas. As this survey used timed counts, it is possible to compare the rate-per-hour at which species were seen with the same figure from the present atlas, and this is done for the some species. The Breeding Atlas 1988-91 required observers to make two one-hour visits to each tetrad, but no counts were made, so that the distribution figures are lower for most species than those obtained by the present Atlas.

WeBS

The Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) is a national project which monitors all non-breeding waterbirds in the UK. It provides the principal data on which the conservation of these birds, and of their wetland habitats, is based. The species accounts in the systematic list give the WeBS status for those waterbirds whose Avon area populations are of International or National Importance.

The criteria for International Importance for ducks, gulls etc. differ slightly from those for the waders. For the first group a site is by definition of International Importance for a particular species of wildfowl (that is any waterbird except waders) if it regularly holds for at least part of the year either 20000 individuals or at least 1% of the estimated total population in North-west Europe. So for example the Severn Estuary is currently second in International Importance for Lesser Black-backed Gull somewhat behind Morecombe Bay which is first. For the waders the definition is the same except that the term 'north-west Europe' is replaced by the term 'East Atlantic Flyway'. Birds using this flyway mainly winter on or near the west coast of Africa and the lower western parts of Europe, and move north to breed in the northern parts of North America, Northern Europe or the extreme north-western parts of Asia. For example the Severn Estuary is of International Importance for Dunlin as it holds in winter at least 1% (in fact recently it was about 4%) of the East Atlantic flyway population during the winter.

For National Importance the criteria is the same for all waterbirds. A site is of National Importance if it holds 1% or more of the estimated total British population. So for example CVL is of National Importance for Great Crested Grebe, the British 1% count is currently 159, and CVL regularly holds three times this.

Submission of Records

Records submitted to the BOC, including those emailed for use on their Sightings webpage at <http://www.boc-bristol.org.uk/>, are used to inform the monthly bulletin and are compiled on a spreadsheet by Steve Hale and passed to the recorder. This is recommended as the best way to submit records. Records can also be sent directly to the recorder, John Martin, either by post to 34 Cranmoor Green, Pilning, Bristol, BS35 4QF, or, preferably, by e-mail to avonbirdrecorder@googlemail.com. Ideally records should be submitted as an Excel spreadsheet and should state the species, the number of individuals, the date seen and the site (with grid reference if possible). Records submitted to BirdTrack are also available to us (being regularly downloaded by Richard Bland) as are WeBS counts and other BTO surveys. All records are kept - they are stored by Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre (BRERC) in Bristol so they are properly archived and can be used for conservation and scientific enquiries, sometimes of considerable importance to the bird-life of the area.

We welcome records of every observation of the following: Bewick's Swan, all geese and ducks, Red-legged and Grey Partridge, Fulmar, Manx Shearwater, Gannet, Bittern, Little Egret, all raptors, Quail, Water Rail, all waders, Kittiwake, Little, Mediterranean, Yellow-legged, and Great Black-backed Gulls, all terns, Ring-necked Parakeet, Cuckoo, all owls, Nightjar, Kingfisher, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Firecrest, Marsh Tit, Sand Martin, Cetti's, Wood, Dartford and Grasshopper

Warblers, Dipper, Ring Ouzel, Spotted Flycatcher, Nightingale, Black Redstart, Redstart, Whinchat, Stonechat, Wheatear, Pied Flycatcher, Tree Sparrow, Yellow and Grey Wagtail, Tree, Rock and Water Pipits, Brambling, Siskin, Lesser Redpoll, Crossbill, and Snow, Reed, and Corn Buntings.

For the common birds we would like the following records;

- Breeding season records, and evidence of breeding, for all species with the code **B** in the list below.
- All **first** and **last** sightings of summer and winter visitors, indicated by **D** in the list below.
- All records of passage or cold-weather movements, including rates per hour, for any species.
- Size and site of all roosts at any time of year.
- Feeding flocks at any time of year that exceed the value **F** in the list below.
- All records of Blackcaps and Chiffchaff in winter, and Black-headed Gulls and Common Gulls in summer (indicated by **S** or **W** in column B).
- All records of unusual activity, including early or late song, display, or aggression, unusual plumage, birds at unusual sites, or unusually early or late breeding.
- All regular counts, such as monthly maxima or bird-days, from well-watched sites including gardens.
- All records of birds that have obviously or probably escaped from captivity, or which are considered to be hybrids.

	B	D	F		B	D	F
Mute Swan	B		10	Swallow		D	20
Pheasant			10	House Martin	B	D	20
Cormorant	B		5	Long-tailed Tit			15
Grey Heron	B		5	Chiffchaff	W	D	
Little Grebe	B		5	Willow Warbler	B	D	
Great Crested Grebe	B		5	Blackcap	W	D	
Moorhen	B		10	Garden Warbler	B	D	
Coot	B		10	Lesser Whitethroat	B	D	
Black-headed Gull	S		50	Whitethroat	B	D	
Common Gull	S		20	Sedge Warbler	B	D	
Lesser Black-backed Gull	B		30	Reed Warbler	B	D	
Herring Gull	B		30	Nuthatch	B		
Feral Pigeon			50	Treecreeper	B		
Stock Dove	B		10	Starling			100
Woodpigeon			50	Fieldfare		D	20
Collared Dove			20	Redwing		D	20
Swift	B	D	10	Mistle Thrush	B		10
Green Woodpecker	B			House Sparrow			20
Great Spotted Woodpecker	B			Pied Wagtail	B		10
Magpie			10	Meadow Pipit	B		10
Jay	B		10	Chaffinch			20
Jackdaw			50	Greenfinch			20
Rook			50	Goldfinch	B		20
Carrion Crow			50	Linnet	B		20
Goldcrest	B			Bullfinch	B		
Skylark			20	Yellowhammer	B		10

Species for which descriptions are required

For the locally rare species and subspecies set out below we require a description that confirms the plumage, and other details noted in arriving at the identification.

Whooper Swan	Spotted Crane	Chough
Bean Goose	Corn Crane	Hooded Crow
Pink-footed Goose	Crane	Willow Tit
American Wigeon	Stone Curlew	Bearded Tit
Green-winged Teal	Kentish Plover	Short-toed Lark
Ring-necked Duck	Dotterel	Woodlark
Ferruginous Duck	American Golden Plover	Shore Lark
Common Eider inland	Temminck's Stint	Red-rumped Swallow
Long-tailed Duck	White-rumped Sandpiper	Greenish Warbler
Surf Scoter	Purple Sandpiper inland	Pallas's Warbler
Velvet Scoter	Pectoral Sandpiper	Yellow-browed Warbler
Quail*	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Radde's Warbler
Red-throated Diver	Red-necked Phalarope	Dusky Warbler
Black-throated Diver	Grey Phalarope	Wood Warbler in autumn
Great Northern Diver	Pomarine Skua	Barred Warbler
White-billed Diver	Arctic Skua inland	Dartford Warbler
Fulmar inland	Long-tailed Skua	Subalpine Warbler
Cory's Shearwater	Great Skua inland	Icterine Warbler
Great Shearwater	Sabine's Gull	Melodious Warbler
Sooty Shearwater	Ring-billed Gull	Aquatic Warbler
Manx Shearwater inland	Caspian Gull	Marsh Warbler
Balearic Shearwater	Iceland/Kumlien's Gull	Waxwing
Wilson's Storm-petrel	Glaucous Gull	Rose-coloured Starling
Storm-petrel inland	White-winged Black Tern	Bluethroat
Leach's Storm-petrel	Roseate Tern	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Shag	Guillemot inland	Richard's Pipit
Black-crowned Night Heron	Razorbill	Tawny Pipit
Cattle Egret	Black Guillemot	Red-throated Pipit
Great Egret	Little Auk	Serin
Purple Heron	Puffin	Twite
White Stork	Turtle Dove	Common Redpoll
Spoonbill	Long-eared Owl	Arctic Redpoll
Red-necked Grebe	Nightjar*	Parrot Crossbill
Slavonian Grebe	Alpine Swift	Common Rosefinch
Honey-buzzard	Bee-eater	Hawfinch
Black Kite	Hoopoe	Lapland Bunting
Hen Harrier	Wryneck	Cirl Bunting
Montagu's Harrier	Golden Oriole	Ortolan Bunting
Goshawk	Red-backed Shrike	Rustic Bunting
Rough-legged Buzzard	Great Grey Shrike	Little Bunting
Red-footed Falcon	Woodchat Shrike	

* sight records of non-singing birds away from established breeding areas

Subspecies

We also require descriptions for claims of locally rare subspecies – this applies to any subspecies which is not normally recorded in Avon. As a guide the list below shows the 'recognisable' rare subspecies that have been seen in the Avon area

Greenland White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*
 Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*
 Arctic Dunlin *Calidris alpina arctica*
 'Continental' Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa limosa*
 Baltic Gull *Larus fuscus fuscus*
 'Nordic' Jackdaw *Monedula monedula monedula*
 Scandinavian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita abietinus*
 Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*
 Greenland Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa*
 Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava flava*
 Grey-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava thunbergi*
 Scandinavian Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

As well as the species and subspecies listed on the previous page, we also require descriptions for;

- all 'British Birds' rarities (see the BBRC website <http://www.bbrc.org.uk> for a list of such species and details of how to submit these – the ideal is to submit to BBRC and send a copy to the county recorder), and

- out-of-season migrants (for example a Whimbrel in January, or a Goosander in July). The table below lists the earliest and latest recorded dates for regular migrants.

We also reserve the right to ask for supporting notes in the event of queries regarding any record.

Record earliest and latest dates for Migrants in the Avon area		
Summer migrants	Earliest	Latest
Garganey	4 Mar '69	13 Dec '92
Hobby	30 Mar '90	29 Oct '98
Little Ringed Plover	14 Mar '10	18 Oct '76
Whimbrel	26 Mar '86	19 Nov '97
Black Tern	2 Apr '82	23 Nov '86
Common Tern	1 Apr '00	28 Nov '82
Cuckoo	20 Mar '83	23 Sep '83
Swift	8 Apr '01	15 Nov '74
Sand Martin	23 Feb '08	18 Nov '76
Swallow	7 Mar '78	16 Dec '70
House Martin	4 Mar '97	28 Nov '70
Wood Warbler	31 Mar '68	18 Sep '77
Willow Warbler	9 Mar '72	25 Oct '81
Garden Warbler	20 Mar '03	21 Nov '93
Lesser Whitethroat	3 Apr '57	22 Nov '98
Whitethroat	31 Mar '68	22 Nov '87
Grasshopper Warbler	28 Mar '97	28 Oct '73
Sedge Warbler	30 Mar '67	28 Oct '86
Reed Warbler	3 Apr '01	16 Nov '09
Ring Ouzel	15 Mar '67	20 Nov '86
Spotted Flycatcher	16 Apr '83	27 Oct '87
Nightingale	7 Apr '61	12 Sep '77
Redstart	20 Mar '94	12 Nov '72
Whinchat	19 Mar '74	12 Nov '67
Wheatear	28 Feb '98	29 Nov '98
Pied Flycatcher	30 Mar '02	14 Oct '06
Yellow Wagtail	15 Mar '70	2 Dec '03
White Wagtail	1 Mar '07	22 Nov '97
Tree Pipit	16 Mar '92	24 Oct. '71
Winter migrants		
Fieldfare	29 Aug '94	8 May '82
Redwing	7 Aug '79	29 Apr '67
Brambling	3 Aug '68	30 May '86

Status Comments

The table below defines the status words used in the Systematic List.

Status	Level of abundance	Breeding Numbers
Very rare	Five or fewer birds recorded in the Avon area	As per level of abundance
Rare	Less than annual; many years pass between sightings	
Very Scarce	Less than annual, but typically recorded every two or three years	
Scarce	Very small numbers noted virtually every year	
Uncommon	Low numbers every year	10 - 99
Fairly common	Occurs in reasonable numbers in suitable habitat	100 - 999
Common	Regularly occurs in good numbers in most suitable habitats	1000 - 9999
Abundant	Large numbers in all suitable habitats	10000 +

Resident A species whose population is largely sedentary, and occurs throughout the year (but may be augmented by passage migrants and/or winter visitors).

Summer Visitor A species that occurs in the Avon area during the late spring and/or summer, after migrating from its wintering areas. Most species that are summer/winter visitors also occur in Avon as passage migrants en route to/from other areas.

Winter Visitor A species that occurs in the Avon area during the winter months after migrating from its breeding areas in other parts of Britain or abroad. These include species that do not occur during the summer (e.g. Fieldfare), or that already have a separate resident population in the Avon area (e.g. Starling).

Passage migrant A species that appears in the Avon area whilst on spring and/or autumn migration to or from its breeding/wintering ranges. Some species have protracted spring and autumn passage

periods that can appear to 'overlap' in mid-summer (in most cases this is likely to involve immature birds or failed breeders). Some species are more numerous on spring passage than in autumn (or vice-versa). In such cases, an indication of abundance is given for both seasons.

Introduced A species with a self-supporting population derived from escapes from captivity or deliberately released individuals (BOU Group C).

Vagrant A species away from its normal range not usually seen in the Avon area.

Storm/Wind-blown visitor Used with seabirds that typically occur in Avon waters after having been blown up the Bristol Channel (and often from much further afield) as a result of strong winds. Season(s) of occurrence are also given.

Irruptive A species that occurs, sometimes in large numbers, irregularly, and often due to a crop or similar failure.

Status Tables

Reports for 1991 onwards have presented a database monitoring the progress of the common wildfowl and wader species in the Avon area. For each species under consideration, their main (and regularly watched) sites in the Avon area are chosen (for some only one site is considered). A status table presents a period average – an 'Avon index' – which is used to monitor progress.

For the wildfowl the period average used is the average of the three highest monthly counts for the season in question, and is called '**the average maximum count**'; for a short season (e.g. moult) the average of the two highest counts is used.

For the waders the average of the monthly maximum counts for the season in question is given, and is called '**the average count**'. For species with more than one site, an overall 'Avon average' is also provided. For some less common wader species the average of the maximum monthly counts for the year is given.

For most seabirds, seaduck and 'coastal' waders, a brief indication of abundance inland is usually given.

In the tables of maximum monthly counts a blank means that no count was submitted.

Conservation status and migration dates

Where appropriate there is a statement of recent population change locally and in the UK.

For the commonest breeding species there are two tables. The upper one gives the percentage population change since the previous year as recorded by up to four of the surveys defined on page 16. The lower one gives the BBS index for the past decade, the BBS distribution in 2010, and, for a few species, a population estimate derived from the BBS survey. This is more precise information about current conservation status than the widely used "traffic light" system.

For migrant species the average first arrival dates, last departure dates, and total time spent, over the past forty years, are given, with the total variation in range, and the trend. The main reason for this choice is that recording has been more precise during this forty year period than previously, there has been almost daily observations of key sites by able birders.

Bird-days This is the cumulative daily totals for a given period, so for example 25 on day 1, followed by 100 on day 3 and 30 on day 7 gives 155 bird-days for the seven day period.

Contributors of Records

AOG wishes to thank the following observers for submitting records, also please accept our apologies and inform the editor if you have submitted records and your name is not on this list.

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Information and images from the following websites were used to help confirm and expand some records:

Birdwatching at Oldbury Power Station – www.phazelwood.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/OPS.htm
 Clevedon & Portishead Birds – www.clevedon-portisheadbirds.com
 CVL Birding (CVLWeb) – www.cvlbirding.co.uk
 Birding South Gloss – www.thebirdsofsouthgloucestershire.co.uk
 Severnside Birds (SBweb) – www.severnsidebirds.co.uk
 Weston Birds and Moths – www.birdlist.co.uk

SYSTEMATIC LIST

The systematic list follows the order given by Prof. H.K. Voous with several major adjustments made by the British Ornithological Union. The nomenclature follows that of the BOU as given on their web site at www.bou.org.uk using the “British (English) Vernacular Name” and “Scientific Name” lists.

Some frequently occurring place name abbreviations are as follows:

ASW	Avonmouth Sewage Disposal Works and its surroundings
BG	Barrow Gurney Reservoirs
BL	Blagdon Lake
CI-Y	Severn shore and environs between Clevedon and mouth of the River Yeo (Clevedon Bay), and including Blake’s Pool and the tidal part of the Yeo
CVL	Chew Valley Lake
OPS	Oldbury-on-Severn Nuclear Power Station and environs
PW	Portbury Wharf and the remainder of St. George’s Wharf
RPD	Royal Portbury Dock (the dock area only)
Severnside	The Severn shore and environs from Aust to Chittening Warth inclusive
Weston STW	Weston-s-Mare Sewage Treatment Works and environs

BBRC When attached to a record implies that the British Birds Rarities Committee has accepted the record.

Initials are given only when descriptions have been submitted, or in special circumstances, and are in alphabetical order based on surname.

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor*

Fairly common resident; most winter in Bristol City Docks or in a roving flock around the R. Axe on the Avon/Somerset border. Summer moulting flocks occur at CVL and several other sites.

WeBS status: the Severn Estuary is tenth in the list of sites of International Importance

2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
105	110	82	98	70	80	85	72	85	80
Bristol City Docks winter - maximum count (Ten-year average is 87)									
2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
98	97	101	126	117	115	98	107	115	125
CVL moult - average of the maximum counts for July and August (Ten-year average is 110)									

The number wintering in Bristol City Docks was still slightly below the long term average whereas the CVL moult count increased for the fourth year running and was again above the average for the last decade.

The long-term trend is upward with Atlas data showing a small increase in the wintering distribution, and a significant increase in breeding distribution.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 88 tetrads in 1984 and 99 in 2010, a change of +13%.
- Atlas data: recorded in breeding season from 43 tetrads in 1992 and 87 in 2010, a change of +102%.
- Atlas data: the winter count (604) was 33% higher than the breeding season count (453).

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
CI-Y	3	4	18	12	5	4	14	11	8	2	13	
Weston STW	6	32	11	21	25	12	12	25	38	23	37	7
Bristol Docks	80	72	59	35	27	22	24	21	23	14	21	64
Portishead Marina	33	27	25		28	21	24	24	19	13	10	22
Kenn Moor	6			19		2	2					
Tickenham Moor		30	35	36					2			2
Backwell Lake	39	18		15	18		18	15	17		33	37
BG	2	5	4	5	6	7	7	15	21	10	9	11
CVL	40	47	50	65	79	140	120	130	125	115	130	65
BL	4	6	10	10	11	24	20	18	27	30	29	4

Mute Swan at other sites Reported from a further 64 sites (*cf.* 50 in 2009) but the only counts over twelve were 30 at Axe Est. on Jan. 10th, 42 on Bleadon Levels on Sept. 25th and 29 at Nailsea Pond on Nov. 29th.

Breeding An average year with breeding confirmed at the following sites (number of cygnets in brackets): Backwell Lake (two nests, seven cygnets), Pulteney Bridge, Bath (six), Priory Park, Bath (seven), BL (seven), Bristol - Hotwells (nest with six eggs abandoned and later two cygnets seen), Capricorn Wharf (two) and Redcliffe Bridge (two), Cl-Y (four), Chew Magna Res. (four although none survived), CVL (eleven broods, 47 cygnets), R. Avon, Keynsham (six), Portishead Marine Lake (three), Orchard Pools (five), Avon Country Park, Saltford (six), Severn Beach (five), PW (six), and Weston STW (six).

1991/2000 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
119	96	120	74	128	144	121	123	121	88	120

Number of cygnets (Ten-year average is 113)

Ringling recoveries Colour-ringed birds seen at CVL during 2010 were Orange J98 (ringed as a second calendar year in May 2004 on the R. Severn in Worcester and seen later that year at Holme Lacey near Hereford) and Orange L5V (ringed as a cygnet in Salisbury on Sept. 18th, 2007 and seen in 2009 east of Dorchester on the R. Frome on Jan. 21st, south of Salisbury on April 22nd and on the R. Frome west of Dorchester on Sept. 22nd). In addition a number carrying green darvic rings had been released at CVL by the RSPCA following their rescue from various sites and subsequent rehabilitation.

BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus columbianus*

Uncommon and declining winter visitor and autumn passage migrant.

WeBS status: the Severn Estuary is fifth in the list of sites of International Importance

Two consecutive winters with better numbers.

First winter period

Gordano Valley – ten on Jan. 9th.

	2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
Min. Number	43	18	27	47	47	18	11	7	6	41
Bird-days	120	18	908	687	180+	131	11	8	10	156

Winter counts and bird-days

Second winter period

OPS – six adults flew to NE on Dec. 18th having earlier been seen flying past Northwick Warth;

Aust Warth – five on Dec. 26th;

New Passage – two flew downriver on Dec. 31st;

Leap Valley, Downend – an immature in flight to NW on Dec. 19th;

Saltford – one on Dec. 8th;

R. Avon, Keynsham - ten in flight on Nov. 22nd;

CVL – an adult arrived on Oct. 23rd and was seen intermittently until Nov. 1st. A pair of adults with a juvenile then arrived on Nov. 13th and remained until Dec. 27th; both adults carrying white darvic rings, and called Tinkie (TVX) and Winkie (BCL), were first seen at Slimbridge WWT in December 2001 and visited BL each year between 2003 and 2006. A further five adults arrived on Dec. 12th and all remained until Dec. 27th with three still present on 28th and two again on 31st;

BL – an adult, known as 'Blagdon', from Nov. 2nd to 4th and on 7th, and the two adults with a juvenile, from CVL, on 14th. Three adults, possibly part of the CVL group, on Dec. 29th and 30th with five on 31st.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

Very scarce winter visitor.

Description species

Recorded for the fourth consecutive winter, although no records in the first half of 2010.

1992/93	95/96	97/98	99/00	00/01	04/05	05/06	07/08	08/09	2009/10
2	6	1	1	1	2	2	1	8	3+

Winters and number of individuals seen in last 20 years

Second winter period

Northwick Warth – two adults flew low to SW at 10.00hrs on Oct. 16th, having been seen a few minutes earlier passing OPS (JPM *et al.*);

CVL – an adult from Nov. 14th until 25th (MJ, RMI *et al.*).

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons albifrons*European White-front - *Uncommon and declining winter visitor and passage migrant.*

WeBS status: the Severn Estuary is first in the list of sites of National Importance

An excellent year with good numbers in both winter periods.

First winter period

OPS – 18 on March 12th;

Aust Warth – twelve on Feb. 6th;

BL – an adult first seen on Feb. 12th was last seen on 20th;

CVL – the adult from BL visited for a few hours on Feb. 15th.

2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
8	2+	22	2	7+	28	8	3	8	31

Number of individuals each winter

Second winter period

OPS – two flew to NE on Dec. 19th;

Aust Warth – seven flew to E at 09.15hrs on Dec. 27th;

Northwick Warth – ten on Nov. 7th;

CI-Y – an adult and a first-winter seen on Dec. 23rd and 29th, and into 2011.

Greenland White-front *A.a. flavirostris*

Very rare with records in November 1993 and December 1964.

Two adults at OPS at 0917 on Oct. 17th (MP); they flew down river and then back up again.

This is the first record of this subspecies since a first-winter was seen briefly at BL in November 1993. The only other local record was of one at CVL with a European Whitefront in December 1964.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

Uncommon introduced resident and former summer moult migrant.

Excellent numbers with some good sized flocks by local standards. As is the case nowadays none lingered; up until 2005 there was a resident flock at CVL and breeding occurred locally in 2001, 2002 and 2004.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Sites	7	9	10	6	5	9	11	7	12	10
No. individuals	48	15	45	16	11	32	74	33	27	80

Sites and numbers each year

The details are as follows (all were single birds unless otherwise stated):

OPS – 14 on May 29th and one on Dec. 7th;

Northwick Warth/New Passage – seven on Feb. 18th (also seen at Severn Beach on 21st) and six on 25th, one on April 7th and 15 on Nov. 17th ;

PW – four on April 9th and one on May 20th;

CI-Y – Jan.9th, 15th and 17th, two on March 24th and one on April 15th;

Weston STW/Axe Est. – Jan. 17th and five on Nov. 9th;

Leyhill Arboretum fishing pond – five on May 2nd and two on July 4th;

Bathampton Meadows – Jan. 9th to 30th;

Backwell Pool – Dec. 30th;

CVL – March 23rd, five on April 11th (described as 'wild and flighty' and flew off to NW) and three on 22nd;

BL – March 4th and 7th, eight on April 10th and one on May 12th.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*

Uncommon introduced resident; very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. It is often difficult to establish the origin of many with certainty, although wild birds have undoubtedly occurred.

An excellent year with some record sized flocks seen.

It is tempting to suggest that the large winter flocks at OPS, Severnside and Westbury-on-Trym might have involved wild birds but the 56 at the first in late May are perhaps more likely to be connected with the large feral population further up the Estuary in Gloucestershire. Details as follows;

OPS – 35 on March 6th, 56 on May 29th and 80 which floated downstream in freezing fog before flying back upriver in the morning on Dec. 7th;

Northwick Warth – two on April 12th;

Severn Beach – 25 on Jan. 25th flew to N and also seen at Northwick and Aust;

PW – one on May 17th with two on 20th;

Axe Est. – one on Feb. 21st and March 1st;

Westbury-on-Trym – 50 flew over, fast to SSW, on Jan. 6th, calling loudly. The flight path was in the direction of the Fleet in Dorset, where a party of 50+ Barnacle Geese arrived a couple of days later.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Sites	0	5	1	0	1	4	0	1	2	6
Numbers	0	8	1	0	1	8	0	1	2	250

Sightings away from CVL/BL

The feral flock that commutes between CVL and BL continued to increase in size.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
	13	17	21	14	12	11	11	17	19	20

Maximum count from CVL/BL

Monthly maxima of feral birds at CVL and BL

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
CVL	19	20	11	8	7	4	6	7			17	17
BL	19	1			2	1		4	6	18	18	18

Breeding Two pairs bred at CVL on Herriott's Pool (four goslings on June 3rd with two still present on July 5th).

BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla*

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *B. b. bernicla*.

Uncommon coastal passage migrant and winter visitor. Very scarce inland.

An average year and no inland records.

First winter period (single birds unless stated otherwise)

Severn Beach – Feb. 26th, two on March 5th with three on 13th and 54 on 21st, April 18th with six on 27th ;

Northwick Warth – March 5th;

Chittingen Warth – April 18th;

PW – 41 on Jan. 19th was a site record count;

Portishead – Jan. 15th and 16th;

CI-Y – Jan. 2nd;

Sand Bay – March 5th;

Axe Est. – two on March 3rd and 5th.

	2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
	136	42	48	79	226	127	147	38	226	144

Total winter bird-days (Ten-year average is 121)

Second winter period (single birds unless stated otherwise)

Littleton Warth – Nov. 26th;

PW – flew to N on Oct. 11th;

CI-Y – two on Oct. 24th.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
8	2	1	2	0	0	2	0	1	0

Brent Goose numbers at inland sites

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Description sub-species

Recorded for the fifth consecutive winter.

One at Severn Beach on the morning of March 23rd, amongst a flock of 54 dark-bellied birds (JPM *et al.*).

1994/95	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
1	1	3	1	2	19

Number of individuals in winters when seen

EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Very scarce visitor either from the UK feral population or direct escapes from captivity

One record, the first since 2007, of one at Batheaston Nature Reserve from Sept. 1st until Oct. 15th, with presumably the same bird at nearby Batheaston Weir on Oct. 31st.

1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
4	2*	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1*	0	0	1	1	0	0	1

Numbers each year (* treated as escapes)

RUDDY SHELDUCK *Tadorna ferruginea*

Formally scarce, now very scarce, visitor of unknown origin. Between 1987 and 2003 moulting birds were annual at CVL.

Two records, the first since 2005.

OPS – two in flight upriver on Jan. 8th (PJH);

Swineford – one in a field on April 15th (GH).

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
1	3 + 1*	2 + 1*	4	2 + 1*	0	0	0	0	3

Numbers each year

(Birds considered to be escapes are marked *. Others are of unknown origin; the possibility of them being wild could not be ruled out)

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

Fairly common resident; most migrate to moult. Uncommon inland (except at CVL). Uncommon breeder – has declined in the last five decades.

WeBS: the Estuary is seventh in the list of sites of International Importance for 2007/08.

Atlas data shows a decrease in wintering distribution but an increase in breeding distribution.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 40 tetrads in 1984 and 22 in 2010, a change of -45%.
- Atlas data: recorded in breeding season from 21 tetrads in 1992 and 40 in 2010, a change of +90%.
- Atlas data: the winter count (1129) was substantially higher than in the breeding season (295).

During 2010 there were poor numbers in the upper Severn Estuary but it was a good breeding season.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	15	15	40	64	43	50		2	3		15	8
Littleton Warth	5	38	49	21	26	19			2		6	
Severn Beach/NW	30	40	131	126	101	70	40	30	4			10
CI-Y	85	120	110	140	40	52	25	20	110	300	280	120
Sand Bay	160	75	135	17	12	4		1			250	862
Axe Est./Weston STW	49	26	45	33	44	12	9	18	64	200	355	
CVL	12	10	21	18	21	26	18	4	1	2	3	2

Recorded at a further 20 sites (17 in 2008 and twelve in 2009).

First winter period and spring The numbers north of the Avon were well below the ten-year average of 103 whilst those to the south were average (although the numbers at CI-Y were above average).

	2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
North of R. Avon	60	89	195	116	90	104	117	130	90	40
South of R. Avon	303	542	434	470	360	650	415	630	500	479

Highest winter count at a single site (October - February)

2000/01 (68)	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
	110	87	152	203	105	147	120	90	142

CI-Y. Average of the three highest counts (October - February), brackets refer to incomplete counts during the F&M outbreak

Breeding An excellent year with 162 juveniles seen on the coast, consisting of eleven at OPS, 24 at Littleton Warth and 52 on Severnside (so 87 to the north of the Avon) plus 34 from four broods at RPD/PW, 33 at CI-Y and ten at Weston STW (so 87 to the south). Also bred inland at CVL (three broods of 22 young, of which 19 fledged) and BG.

1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
102	(83)	70	154	144	123	162	116	181	163	186

Avon area - Total number of young (Average of last ten years is 138)

Autumn and second winter period Numbers north of the Avon were almost non-existent whilst good numbers to the south, including a massive 862 in Sand Bay on Dec. 30th.

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*

Uncommon introduced resident, occasional breeder.

Another very good year with a widespread series of records from twelve sites, breeding was again confirmed in the region with a record of a brood of eight from Chipping Sodbury Golf Course (CSGC).

Although there have been ten or fewer ringing recoveries of this species within Britain or Ireland an adult male ringed at Slimbridge WWT (Gloucs) on Nov. 23rd, 2009 was seen at Kingsgate Park, near Yate on Oct. 6th, when the ring was read in the field.

The records for 2010 are as follows:

RPD – one on April 15th;

Weston Moor – one on March 17th, and a male on Dec. 11th;

Walton Moor – male on Dec. 4th;

Backwell Lake – male on March 4th;

Heneage Court – ten on Oct. 21st; the best count of the year

Kingsgate Park, near Yate – male on Jan. 18th, one on Feb 2nd, and a male on Oct. 6th and 13th;

CSGC – male on March 28th, nine (female and eight young) on June 20th, still present on June 27th (but only seven young), and six (the female and five young) on July 14th and 21st;

Marshfield – female on April 16th;

Keynsham – male on Oct. 24th;

Swineford – male on Dec. 30th;

Hanham – male and female on Jan. 30th;

CVL – four males and two females on Nov. 22nd, a record count for this site.

2009 additional record of one at Tortworth on March 1st.

1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
12	19	14	10	17	11	1	1	5	13	13	2	5	3	6	22	19	20	42	39

Numbers each year

WIGEON *Anas penelope*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; rare in summer.

WeBS: There are four sites of International Importance followed by 19 of National Importance, the Estuary is seventh on this second list.

Year	Severnside	CVL	BL	Av.
2000/01 – 2009/10	635	76	118	276
2008/09	683	46	70	266
2009/10	1233	92	59	461

Average of the three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (September to March)

Wigeon can't

The January maximum count of 4605, which is the sum of the counts for this month given in the table below, is almost double last year's figure of 2460. As these maxima do not take into account the fact that birds move between sites and so may be counted more than once, the actual numbers present in each January were probably well below these figures. This was due in no small part to the high numbers on Severnside which was almost certainly linked to the freezing conditions that affected a large part of the country at this time. The December count calculated in the same way was 6451, nearly four times greater than last year's (2009) total of 1700. The hard weather in December undoubtedly played a significant part in this exceptionally high figure with many sites recording high counts. The count of 441 at CVL on Oct. 21st was the highest at this site since January 1997; the trend of maximum counts occurring in January has altered in recent years with peaks now occurring at this site in late October and early November, and this year continued this pattern. Numbers continue to decline at BL with the September to March average being the lowest for ten years, but this decline has been more than compensated by the recent high counts on Severnside.

Main Sites The table below gives the maximum monthly counts for the main sites. The last of the winter were a female at Weston STW on April 25th and one at Avonmouth Docks on 30th, whilst a female with a damaged wing summered at BL. The first returning individuals were a male and a female at CVL on July 30th.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	:	July	Aug.	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	403	294	177	2				22	90	250	2100
Littleton Warth	850	370	124	2				20	148	190	260
Severnside	2400	300	235	2			10	50	260	750	2200
PW	212	180	85	8				3	80	100	81
CI-Y	235	140	110					16	105	285	925
Axe Est/Weston STW	300	92	20	1			4	5	64	32	482
BG	52							13	15	5	235
CVL	95	10	29			2	6	81	441	190	155
BL	58	53	33	4			10	23	4	103	273

Other sites Records involving low counts were received from a further eight sites with those exceeding 20 as follows:

Avon Country Park, near Keynsham – 30 on Jan. 8th;

Sea Mills (R. Avon) – 300 on Dec. 23rd, then 150 on 26th falling to 50 on 28th, clearly cold weather movements;

Keynsham (R. Avon) – 28 on Jan. 10th, 27 on 11th, 25 on 13th, and 50 on 28th, with 73 on Dec. 28th.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*

Until 1915 a rare winter visitor, then none until 1937. Now a fairly common resident, winter visitor and late summer/autumn moult visitor, most numerous in autumn. First bred at CVL in 1958 with eleven broods in 1961, now uncommon as a breeding species.

WeBS: CVL is currently 22nd in National Importance for this species.

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2000/01 – 2009/10	58	42	50
2008/09	38	14	26
2009/10	94	21	58
Average of three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (October to March)			
Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2001 – 2010	229	137	183
2009	290	48	169
2010	290	38	164
Average of the two highest monthly maxima in the moult period (July to September)			

Overall the tables show that counts were close to average.

Main sites The table below gives the monthly maxima at the well watched sites. A fairly average summer by recent standards, the number moulting at BL continues to decline with the lowest average for more than 20 years here, this is, however, offset locally by greater numbers continuing to use CVL.

The winter period status table numbers reflect high numbers at CVL in the autumn of 2009, this increase was maintained in 2010. Numbers using BL in the winter continued to fall well below the ten-year average (this site no longer meets the qualifying criteria as a site of National Importance for this species).

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	2				33							4
Sevenside	10	10	18	5	3		4	6	6	14	20	8
ASW/Hoar Gout	28	18		1						14	37	38
Avonmouth Docks	45	34	30							11	12	16
PW		15	8	2		3	17		30	23	19	32
Weston STW	32	18		3	3	2		3	9	14	32	58
Backwell Lake	4	7									8	9
BG	6			2		2			2	2	4	60
CVL	5	10	20	30	115	185	90	255	325	375	195	45
BL	3	16	5	4	1	2	15	69	7	19	8	19

Recorded at a further six sites as follows:

CI-Y – two on Feb. 18th, and one on Dec. 28th;

Kingsgate Pool – two on Dec. 21st;

Keynsham (R. Avon) – two on Dec. 20th, three on 21st and 26th rising to five on 28th;

Saltford Ponds – one on Dec. 11th;

Chew Magna Res. – five on Dec. 21st, and one on 22nd;

Litton Resrs. – 19 on Jan. 23rd, and six on Dec. 21st.

Breeding Recorded at two sites with two broods at PW (six and nine young) and one at CVL with seven young.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Broods	4	1	3	2	4	4	1	3	5	1

Number of broods at CVL

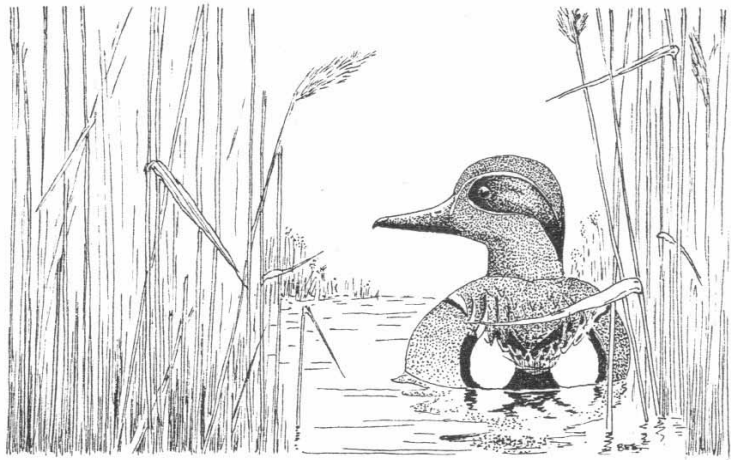
TEAL *Anas crecca*

Common winter visitor and autumn passage migrant to the coast and reservoirs, present in small numbers elsewhere. A few usually over-summer at CVL; bred at BL up to 1939, and near Clevedon in 1952.

WeBS: the Estuary is currently second in the sites of National Importance.

Year	Sevenside	CVL	BL	Av.
2000/01 – 2009/10	265	850	419	511
2008/09	287	242	73	214
2009/10	173	1222	56	484

Average of the three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (August to March)



Teal main sites The attractiveness of BL as a wintering site continues its recent decline and, whilst CVL appears to be significant due to the high average monthly maxima of 1222, (the count of 3500 in October is the highest ever recorded at this site), numbers in the early part 2010 were substantially lower than those of late 2009. Fluctuations at CVL can be linked to changing water levels as low levels at this site in late autumn and early winter clearly favour this species. Whilst small numbers are often present throughout the summer at CVL as in 2010, late spring records also included two at CI-Y on May 10th, two at CVL on 18th and one on the Axe Estuary on 31st. Away from CVL the first to return was at BG on June 26th. The cold weather in January and December resulted in records from some more unusual sites e.g. records from Winford Brook occurring on Jan. 7th and Dec. 25th. The monthly maxima for the main sites are given in the table below.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	250	120	65	12				11	4	8	193	110
Littleton Warth	105	130	30	14				11	130	281	143	22
Severnside	150	58	170	12				115	265	235	80	140
ASW	23	8									28	2
Avonmouth Docks	70	108	80							17	48	55
P W	240	200	220	40			1			100	160	110
CI-Y	110	35	80	45	2				12	47	100	190
Axe Est.	1000	55	80	23	2			5	75	100	70	360
Weston STW	117	16	19	28				7	13	1	18	19
BG	93	19	12	15		1		2	22	35	22	47
CVL	235	45	15	6	2	15	40	400	2255	3500	2475	735
BL	54	10	16	6			2	119	343	465	818	270
Chew Magna Res	40	31	23						2	3	33	126

Other sites Records were received from 18 other sites with counts exceeding ten at the following:

Weston Moor – 100 on Jan 7th, 100 on 29th, and 28 on Dec. 8th;

Congresbury Moor – 16 on March 8th;

River Axe – 40 on Dec. 12th.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL *Anas carolensis*

Rare Nearctic vagrant

Three records: A male was present on the Axe Estuary in mid-January being noted on 17th, 30th and 31st (PAB), this was the 14th Avon area record, the last bring a male at the same site in March 2007. Another male, or possibly the same, was present at OPS on Jan. 27th (DS), and the third record of the year was a male at CVL on Dec. 17th (RJH *et al.*).

This excellent series of Avon area records (14th, 15th and 16th) is the highest number recorded in a year since this species was accorded full species status in January 2001.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Until 1900's a sparse breeder, numbers increased with the creation of BL in 1905 and then CVL in 1952. Now a common and widespread resident, autumn passage migrant and winter visitor. Fairly common breeder (by far our commonest breeding duck).

WeBS: Although the Estuary was formally a site of National Importance, Britain no longer has any sites of National Importance.

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2001/01 – 2009/10	501	223	362
2008/09	378	67	223
2009/10	583	139	361
Average of three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (November to March)			
Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2000-2010	850	428	639
2009	1103	273	688
2010	1150	667	909
Average of the two highest monthly maxima in the moult period (July to September)			

Main sites In late summer numbers were significantly higher than in recent years at both major sites resulting in the highest monthly maxima for ten years. Nationally this species has shown a long term (1981/82 to 2006/07) decline of approximately 34% and a ten-year downward trend of 21%, this however has not been reflected

within our region. Winter numbers were also substantially higher no doubt due to the adverse weather affecting many parts of the country. The breeding population remains at a healthy level, although this is not mirrored nationally. The main table below lists the monthly maxima for the main sites.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	87	79	23	22	25	82	124	30	124	112	184	120
Littleton Warth	9	10	5	8	6	43	48	92	77	86	58	22
Severnside	70	90	75	70	20	88	85	120	97	80	4	3
*Sea Mills	47	40		15	16	20	38	40	34	50	35	50
CI-Y	30	10	40	20	30	65	80	140	110	185	165	265
Weston STW	27	26	21	18	58	111	169	226	195	44	42	16
CVL	525	420	380	240	290	525	865	1200	1100	1170	900	660
BL	123	49	28	44	10	130	259	670	664	365	348	145
Chew Magna Res	37	7	12		11	18	46		5	4	46	74

*This is the stretch of the River Avon from the Cumberland Basin to Sea Mills including the Horseshoe Bend.

Other sites Records were received for a further 47 sites and counts over 40 from sites not included in the table were as follows:

Thornbury Pill – 63 on July 6th;

Portishead Boating Lake – 76 on Feb. 27th, and 120 on Dec. 5th;

Weston and Clapton Moors – 150 on Jan. 29th, 300 on Sept. 18th, and 100 on Dec. 11th;

Keynsham (R. Avon) – 49 on Dec. 12th;

Keynsham Memorial Park – 195 on Dec. 21st;

Saltford Ponds – 54 on Dec. 11th;

Royal Park, Bath – 85 on Dec. 26th;

Bath Spa University – 82 on Sept. 23rd, 76 on Nov. 23rd, 97 on 29th, and 40 on Dec. 12th;

Litton Resrs. – 45 on Dec. 21st.

Breeding At CVL there was a drop in the number of broods from last year's high, back to the more typical figure shown below.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Broods	19	11	29	16	17	22	29	21	38	24
Young	101	67	154	93	93	100	176	130	213	115

CVL - Numbers of broods and young

Elsewhere records were received of 50 broods and 238 young, similar to 2009 (42 broods and 224 young); this includes 14 broods and 72 young at BL. At CVL a leucistic individual was noted with six normal plumaged juveniles.

Ringling recoveries In 2010 the following reports were recovered from our recording area: a first-year female ringed on Sept. 22nd, 2008 at Slimbridge WWT (Glos) was shot near Clutton on Nov. 11th, and another first-year female ringed on Jan. 1st, 2010, again at Slimbridge WWT, was shot at Wickwar on Oct. 10th.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

Uncommon autumn passage migrant and winter visitor; most occur at CVL in autumn. Wintering birds leave from mid-February to early April with autumn arrivals usually appearing in mid-September.

WeBS: the Estuary is currently eleventh in International Importance for this species although they mostly occur outside the Avon area.

CVL is the principal site for this species and it continues to remain scarce elsewhere. The last to depart in spring were all noted on April 18th, a male at CI-Y and four at Severn Beach. Returning individuals in the autumn were first noted at CVL, seven on Sept. 3rd; these arrival and departure dates are fairly typical for this species.

The tables below show maximum counts at CVL and monthly maxima at other regular sites.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
36	50	70	31	140	53	60	29	70	65

CVL - Annual maximum counts

Pintail con't

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites										
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	:	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sevenside		1		4			5		7	1
OPS	1						2			8
CVL	22	8	4			1	14	65	45	35
BL		1						2	5	8

Records were also received from the following four sites:

Avonmouth Docks – one on Feb. 11th and 15th, and two on April 13th;

Cl-Y – four on Jan. 2nd, and a male from March 28th to April 18th;

Sand Point – one on Oct. 15th and 17th;

BG – one on Dec. 22nd.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
36	67	70	47	140	77	60	29	70	65

Avon area - maximum single count

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

Scarce spring passage migrant and summer visitor, uncommon autumn passage migrant at CVL and BL, scarce elsewhere. Has bred.

Migration dates: Forty year average first date April 9th. Forty year average last date Oct. 3rd.

The first in the spring were two at CVL on April 10th, very close to the forty year average first date of April 9th, however this was a poor spring for this species. Return passage started at CVL in July with a juvenile on the 13th but tailed off during August (traditionally this is the peak month at CVL) before picking up again in September, apart from CVL it was recorded at four other sites. The last of the year was a very late male noted on two dates at CVL in November.

Spring and summer The records are as follows:

PW – male on May 4th and 7th;

CVL – two on April 10th, and a male on 24th.

Autumn The records are as follows:

OPS – juvenile on Sept. 18th and 20th;

BG – female from Sept. 4th to 8th;

BL – one on Sept. 6th;

CVL – juvenile on July 13th, a female on 16th and 17th, a juvenile on 18th and 19th, two on 21st, one on 25th and two on 28th. Two on Aug. 2nd, and three on 22nd. Five on Sept.1st, two on 3rd, three on 14th, four on 16th, three on 17th, two on 18th, one on 19th, 21st and 22nd, and three on 23rd. One juvenile remained from September until Oct. 2nd, and finally there was a late male on Nov. 9th and 12th.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
4	3	5	1	8	5	2	2	4	5

CVL - maximum single count

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

Fairly common (but generally local) winter visitor and autumn passage migrant; usually common at CVL and BL in autumn/early winter. Scarce in summer; has bred at CVL with 40 pairs in 1959, has also bred at BL.

WeBS: CVL no longer qualifies as a site of International Importance but does remain as a site of National Importance being ranked first, BL is fifteenth, the Estuary is now recognised as fifth in International Importance.

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2000/01 – 2009/10	261	48	155
2008/09	125	113	119
2009/10	159	71	115

Average of three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (November to February)

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2001-10	356	147	252
2009	418	61	239
2010	525	29	277

Average of the two highest monthly maxima in the moult period (August to October)

Main sites The winter period status tables above show an improvement at CVL but a decline at BL compared with last year, whereas numbers in late summer improved significantly at CVL but declined even further at BL. Peaks at CVL in autumn coincide with the movement to their wintering areas in France and Spain, October is now typically the month for peak counts at this site. CVL also retains its attraction for this species during late summer with the average moult period count being the highest in the last ten years, this improvement is not reflected at BL where the serious decline in the last three summers continues.

The table below lists the monthly maxima at the main sites.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
ASW	28	5								12	12	4
OPS	9	3	31		1						2	2
PW	12	6	3	2					1	1	7	16
Backwell Lake	60	8	6							15	20	45
Severnside								6	12	16	40	2
CI-Y	44	5	2	2							2	18
Weston STW	20	4	4	9				4	7	3	12	12
BG	13	14	5	2	2			12	35	17	23	52
CVL	20	75	50	10	5	10	5	50	430	620	395	125
BL	85	28	101	4				16	17	40	152	310

Other sites Reports were received from eight other sites however only one of these held more than ten birds.

Congresbury (R.Axe) – 16 on Dec. 1st.

Breeding The usual pair at CVL looked settled and display took place however they failed to raise any young – the only record.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD *Netta rufina*

Scarce visitor, most often in autumn. True status as a continental visitor obscured by feral birds and escapes.

2010 was an exceptional year exceeding the previous record set in 2009, a new Avon area high count was also set with the flock of nine at BG in December, this eclipsed the flock of seven at CVL in January 2009 and another flock of seven in September this year. The records are as follows:

BG – eight (five males, three females) on Dec. 21st rising to nine when an additional male joined the flock the following day, two males and three females were still present on the 23rd, with four males and two females on 24th through to the year end;

CVL – a female on Jan. 23rd, and another from June 7th until July 11th, an eclipse male on July 21st, one on Sept. 12th, five males and two females on 26th (see photograph opposite page 32), a first-winter male intermittently from Oct. 27th until Nov. 4th and a male from 7th to 15th;

BL – one first-winter male from Oct. 17th to 24th.

The now large feral population at the Cotswold Water Park (there were record numbers here in the 2008/09 winter) must account for many of our records, and the high count at BG in December most probably related to dispersal from CWP which was frozen at the time. However, continental visitors probably still occur. It is worth noting that numbers have increased in France since the late 1980's and that the core winter range has shifted to a region north of the Alps, therefore the probability of wild birds occurring in the UK is now greater.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
1	5	1	5	6	0	6	5	19	23

Avon area - Maximum number of individuals per year

POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

Fairly common winter visitor and autumn passage migrant. Uncommon in summer; scarce breeder at CVL, has bred at BL.

WeBS: CVL is currently fifth in the list of sites of National Importance, and the Severn estuary is tenth.

Although this species has been declining nationally, numbers at the three principal sites continued to buck this trend showing an improvement compared with the ten-year average for the Avon area – nationally it has declined by 46% during this period. The weather in early to mid-summer, sunny with light winds, allowed good water weed growth at CVL which was very beneficial for this species.

A female with a blue nasal saddle marked C1B was seen at CVL June 5th, this bird had been marked earlier in the year on May 10th at Lac de Grand Lieu which is south west of Nantes in France.

Year	CVL	BL	BG	Av.
2000/01 – 2009/10	620	180	84	295
2008/09	515	172	192	293
2009/10	798	189	103	363

Pochard - average of the three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (September to March)

Main sites The table below summarises the main counts.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
ASW/Hoar Gout	4										6	10
Portishead	9	11										3
RPD	16	13	5	1		3					2	3
Weston STW	52	70	9	2	1	2	2	1	2	30	50	16
Backwell Lake	5	9									2	12
BG	166	30	12	1		1	7	32	25	185	108	125
CVL	515	445	165	20	42	85	75	100	340	820	1305	590
BL	154	168	71	16	9	14	43	48	2	165	317	130
Chew Magna Res	6	11	8		1						4	8

Other sites Records were received from eight other sites, the only counts to exceed ten were:

CI-Y- 50 in flight moving from the Estuary inland on Oct. 24th and eleven on Dec. 23rd;

Litton Resrs. – 39 on Dec. 12th.

Breeding Although present at several sites during the relevant season the only site where breeding took place was CVL with two broods totalling eight young, a fairly average year.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of broods	1	6	3	2	1	4	6	2	2	2
No. of young	3	14	9	9	4	14	35	9	4	8

CVL - Breeding success

RING-NECKED DUCK *Aythya collaris*

Scarce Nearctic vagrant.

Description species

One record: an adult drake was at CVL on Sept.13th (RMi, DM *et al.*), it remained until Dec. 5th having attained full plumage by the middle of November.

Most records in the last decade relate to a regular male that toured various sites between 1998 and February 2008; with a second male noted in the summers of 2001, 2002 and 2003. New arrivals have subsequently been seen in 2005 (a group of three, two of which remained into 2006) and 2008 (eight at CVL), another male was noted in 2009 being seen at both BL and CVL.

2009 additional record – A male was noted at BL from Oct. 4th to 30th (NRM), and again on Dec 12th.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK *Aythya nyroca*

Formerly rare vagrant but now Scarce as recorded annually since 2000 and possibly bred in 2006.

Description species

The adult male, thought to have been the bird probably hatched at CVL in 2006, was first noted here again on Feb. 4th (RMi *et al.*) and remained intermittently until Dec. 15th. Two first-year males arrived here in September, the first on 12th (many observers) remaining until Oct. 11th, and the second on 23rd (MJ, RMi *et al.*) remaining until Nov.22nd. A female was discovered on Oct. 25th (RMi *et al.*), and it was present up to Nov. 8th. Photographs of the adult male and one of the first-year males are opposite page 32.

The account of this species given in the **2008 Report** included details of sightings at CVL in the period 2003 to 2007. An article by A.H. Davis and K.E. Vinicombe in the February 2011 edition of **British Birds** provides full details of all local sightings in the period 2000 - 2010, including the probable nesting attempts at CVL in 2003 and 2004, and suggesting that the juvenile male present here in autumn 2006 was probably raised at the lake. The research for this article revealed the following additional sightings from CVL which have not previously been published in this Report:

2000 – the female remained until July 10th, not 8th (BBRC).

2003 – the pair were seen together on the additional dates of June 16th and 23rd.

2006 – the pair were also seen on June 11th and July 2nd, and the female on 20th.

2007 – there is an additional record of the pair on Feb. 8th.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Common resident, winter visitor and double passage migrant. Now a scarce breeder, in the 1950s and 1960s good numbers (up to 80) used to breed at CVL.

WeBS: CVL is currently tenth in the list of sites of National Importance.

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2000/01 – 2009/10	888	303	596
2008/09	785	489	637
2009/10	1097	470	783

Average of the three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (October to March)

Year	CVL	BL	Av.
2001/2010	869	576	723
2009	890	434	662
2010	1133	677	905

Average of the two highest monthly maxima in the moult period (July to September)

Main sites The largest single count was for CVL in October, at 2420 this count was almost a thousand up on last year's high figure of 1480, and the large numbers at both CVL and BL buck the national trend which has shown an overall decline of 13% during the last ten years. The record counts at CVL were due to low water levels and low fish fry levels (this had the reverse effect on Great Crested Grebe numbers). BL remains just below the qualifying criteria to be classified as a site of National Importance for this species. The summer moult counts at both principal sites were most encouraging.

The table below gives the monthly maxima at the main sites.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec.
OPS	2	4	4	9	8	6	22	11	10	1		10
ASW		13		2			6			12	16	84
PW	31	35	26	35		26	14		8	8	13	11
Weston STW	33	45	29	24	10	4	3	3	5	7	21	18
Backwell Lake	15	15		8	3						6	14
BG	80	61	65	39	18	35	371	352	138	80	115	155
CVL	326	465	470	420	80	170	270	340	1925	2420	1780	450
BL	108	171	236	194	23	101	440	914	131	283	177	89
Chew Magna Res	24	10	14			10	18	16	2	15	22	39

Recorded at 17 sites, the only double figure counts were as follows:

Tortworth Park – ten on April 4th, 13 on May 2nd, and 32 on Oct. 3rd;

CI-Y – 15 at the mouth of the Kenn on Oct. 24th (see Pochard);

Bristol Bridge – 15 on Nov. 11th;

Keynsham (R. Avon) – 33 on Dec. 26th, and 60 on 28th;

Litton Resrs. - 31 on Jan. 3rd, 35 on Feb. 8th and 59 on Dec. 21st.

Breeding 2010 was an extremely poor season at CVL where there was only one brood of seven young, none of which survived. Elsewhere breeding was recorded at OPS (two broods, 14 young), PW (one brood, eight young) and at Lady Farm, Chelwood (three broods, twelve young).

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of sites	(1)	6	6	4	5	6	4	5	4	4
No. of broods	(7)	12	11	8	6	20	4	8	9	7
No. of young	(27)	72	72	42	25	115	16	55	29	41

Avon area breeding success for the last decade

SCAUP *Aythya marila*

Between 1860 and 1910 common to abundant on coast around Weston-s-Mare. Now Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, but has occurred in most months. Most frequent at the reservoirs.

Yet another good year for this species, it now appears to be well established as a regular winter visitor to CVL and BL with multiple arrivals at both sites. This increase in records is probably a reflection of the improved fortunes of this species at a national level where it has shown a 60% increase since 2000. The last of the winter period was a male at BG in early May noted up to the 8th. The first to return was also a male at Weston STW on Oct. 3rd.

First winter period

Weston STW – a male on Jan. 29th;

BG – male from May 2nd to 8th;

CVL - male intermittently from Jan. 5th to 17th, a female from Feb. 1st to 5th; and a male from March 8th to 20th;

BL – a male on Jan. 1st, two on 20th, and one from 21st to April 21st.

Second winter period

Severnside – a male on Dec. 12th;

Weston STW – male from Oct. 3rd to 16th;

BG – male and female on Oct. 12th, and a female on 13th;

CVL – a male Oct. 9th to 11th, two juveniles on Nov. 4th, one juvenile male on 14th, a female on 18th and 19th, a pair on 20th, four (pair plus two first-winter males) on 23rd joined by a third first-winter male on 25th and 26th, three (female and two first-winter males) on 27th, and a male on 29th. In December a first-winter male on 1st and 2nd, four (male, two females, and a first-winter male) on 3rd, male on Dec. 1st, and from 4th to 7th, two on 11th and 15th with a first-winter male still present from 19th to 21st;

BL – three males on Oct. 17th and then intermittently until Nov. 10th, up to two males until 18th, one remaining until Dec. 19th, A female on Nov. 2nd and finally a female on 30th and 31st.

Year	2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
No. seen	14	7	4	8	8	6	9	24	23	18

Number of individuals seen each year (July – June)

LESSER SCAUP *Aythya affinis*

Rare Nearctic vagrant

One record: a first-winter male at CVL from March 7th to April 8th (RMA, GJ *et al.*), see photograph opposite page 33. [BBRC]

This is the sixth Avon area record following two at BL in 2000, two again at BL in 2007 and a mobile individual recorded at three sites in 2008. Although this species is still considered by the BBRC there have now been 150 accepted records since the first in 1987.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*

Scarce winter visitor; individuals at the reservoirs may stay for several months.

Description species

Two records at CVL: the female from 2009 was seen on Jan. 2nd (DN), and again from April 21st to May 9th (AHD, RMI, KEV *et al.*). In early January CVL had frozen and during the intervening period it was presumed to have moved to Noah's Lake on the Somerset Levels where it remained until mid-April before returning to CVL.

The table below for the last decade shows that one record per year is now normal.

Year	2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
No. seen	3	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1

Avon area - Number of individuals seen each year (July – June)

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*

Uncommon spring, summer and autumn passage migrant; scarce winter visitor; normally a few inland records each year, mainly at CVL.

Another below average year, nationally this species has declined by 37% in the last ten years, however it is difficult to see any overall trend in our recording area. The first of the year were at Severn Beach on March 30th closely followed by sightings at Clevedon (Ladye Bay) and Weston-s-Mare (Anchor Head) on the 31st. The last of the year was again on the coast, at Cl-Y on Dec. 7th.

The records are as follows:

Severnside – three on March 30th, a male on April 12th, a male on 17th, joined by a female on 18th, the female was still present on 20th, and 25th, two females on Nov. 11th and one female on 12th;

Clevedon (Ladye Bay) – two on March 31st;

Cl-Y – one on Oct. 18th and one on Dec. 7th;

Sand Point – five on May 1st;

Weston-s-Mare (Anchor Head) – six on March 31st, and twelve on Nov. 11th, the highest count of the year;

BG – one female/first-winter on Nov. 7th;

Monkswood Res. – four males on June 29th;

CVL – three males on July 13th, a female on 24th, two females/immature on Sept. 22nd, and again on Nov. 17th;

BL – eleven (four males and seven females) on July 25th.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
34	143	26	58	129	145	85	75	53	59

Avon area - Total number of individuals

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

Before 1900 a very rare winter visitor, now a fairly common winter visitor and spring passage migrant; numbers peak in late March and early April. Scarce away from the main reservoirs, and scarce/very scarce in summer although bred at CVL in 2008.

The status tables shows fairly constant winter populations at CVL over the last 10 years, with recent increases at BG and BL, this has not been the case at a national level where the ten-year trend has shown a decrease of 39%, although generally over the last twenty years numbers have increased at CVL.

Year	CVL	BL	BG	Total
2000/01 – 2009/10	81	20	13	114
2008/09	70	36	18	124
2009/10	88	36	17	141

Average of the three highest monthly maxima in the winter period (October – February)

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
126	80	100	85	178	175	162	170	105	135

Highest count at CVL in period March - May

Main sites Counts at all three main sites given below suggest a slight improvement during the last two years, there was also a widespread series of records at a number of other coastal and inland locations.

A pair was noted displaying at CVL in April and one of the two females that remained into the summer was noted showing agitated behaviour in May, however there was no further evidence of breeding.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
BG	21	16	15	4						2	5	23
CVL	80	120	135	5	2	2			3	55	85	77
BL	24	55	22	6						6	14	14

Other sites Recorded at a further nine sites as follows:

Severn Beach – two on Dec. 9th, and three on 27th;

Sea Mills – two on Dec. 22nd, and one on 26th;

Cl-Y – one on Dec. 23rd;

Weston-s-Mare Marine Lake – two on Jan. 10th;

Uphill Boating Lake – one on Nov. 13th and 25th;

Weston STW – two on Nov. 9th and 22nd;

Backwell Lake – one on Feb. 7th;

Keynsham (R. Avon) – one on Dec. 12th;

Chew Magna Res. – one on Dec. 15th.

SMEW *Mergellus albellus*

Scarce winter visitor (almost always in single figures and usually only redheads) – numbers may increase in cold weather. Very rare in the Estuary.

After two blank years, there was a good series of records in 2010 with unusually three on the coast. Most of these were weather related. The details are as follows:

First winter period (all records involved redheads)

Axe Estuary – one on Jan. 17th extremely unusual here;

BG – one on Jan. 16th and 17th;

CVL – three on Jan. 15th, two on 16th, three on 17th, two on 18th, one 20th to 24th, two on 25th, three on 26th, one on 28th, two on 29th then one on most dates to Feb. 7th, one 10th to 26th, and two on March 13th;

BL – one on Feb. 20th and on March 13th.

Second winter period

Severnside – a redhead on Nov. 28th and a juvenile on Dec. 27th. These are only the fourth and fifth records at this site in the last ten years following two records in 2003, and one in 2006;

BG – male on Dec. 31st;

CVL – a redhead on Nov. 8th, four (male, female, first-winter male and female) on 29th, three (male, first-winter male and female) Dec. 1st, male on 4th to 7th, redhead on 8th, first-winter male on 9th, first-winter female on 10th, first-winter male on 15th, first-winter female on 17th with a redhead on 19th.

The table below shows the annual maximum count at CVL for the 2000/01 to 2009/10 winters: There was a maximum of four in the first part of the winter 2010/11 although the freezing conditions in December reduced this number to one in the latter part of the month.

2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
11	5	9	8	2	2	4	0	0	3
CVL total numbers									

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Most records in recent years are of a regularly returning individual at CVL.

A male has now been seen for the last 31 winters (although we have no proof that the same individual was involved in each winter).

First winter period

CVL – the male from 2009 last noted on March 5th.

Second winter period

Severnside – a female/immature on Nov. 12th;

PW – female/immature on Nov. 12th (see Severnside);

BG – male from Dec. 21st to 24th probably the individual from CVL;

CVL – a female on Sept. 24th. The regular male, in eclipse plumage, arrived on Oct. 19th. On Nov. 15th there were two males in eclipse and on 17th there were three (two immatures plus the regular male). The male remained until the year end apart from a short excursion to BG (see above) but was joined on Dec. 18th by a redhead;

BL – one on Sept. 24th and 25th.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

Fairly common winter visitor to CVL; now increasingly recorded from other sites, but still uncommon away from CVL. Very scarce in the Estuary.

The CVL status table below shows the 2009/10 winter count was significantly below the ten-year average of 36.

2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
26	65	25	55	27	22	24	54	32	26
CVL - Average of two highest monthly maxima in the winter period (December to February)									

However, the highest count for the calendar year 2010, at 95, was the largest for the last ten years but significantly lower than the record count of 283 in February 1996. A notable high count was recorded at OPS when 19 were present on Dec. 2nd. Undoubtedly the widespread series of records away from the more traditional sites in January and December can be attributed to the harsh weather conditions.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
75	55	57	52	17	28	43	65	21	95

CVL - Annual maximum counts

The last in spring was one at BG on April 2nd and the first to return was a male at CVL on Sept. 16th. Most unusually for this species there were two records, both of seven redheads, at CVL on July 16th and 18th.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	:	July	:	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
CI-Y	15	12	5								9
Backwell Lake	4	4	3							2	6
BG	32	12	6	1				1		2	9
CVL	19	18	3	4		7		1	1	17	95
BL	14	14	8							7	28

This species tends to use the larger reservoirs as roosting sites, often returning at dusk having spent the day on the rivers in the region, this may result in some duplication as individuals may be noted at one site during the day before returning to BG, CVL or BL at night.

Elsewhere recorded from a further 14 sites as follows:

Shepperdine – one on Jan. 16th;

OPS – one on Jan. 16th and 17th, 19 on Dec. 2nd, and nine on 30th;

Severnside – five on Nov. 14th, and two on Dec. 27th;

Sea Mills – one on Dec. 15th, two on 19th, 22nd and 23rd, and one on 26th;

PW – one on Feb. 27th, one on Dec. 19th, 21st and 27th;

River Axe – one on Jan. 3rd, six on 5th and 10th;

Bishopston – two on Dec. 23rd;

Eastville Park Lake – two on Dec. 19th;

Hanham (R. Avon) – two on Jan. 2nd and 5th;

Keynsham (R. Chew) – four on Jan.7th, and five on the 8th;

Keynsham (R. Avon) – two on Jan. 2nd and 6th, six on 7th, two on 10th and 11th, three on 13th, two on Dec. 12th, one on 19th and 21st, five on 23rd, and eleven on 28th;

Bath – two on Dec. 31st;

Swineford (R.Avon) – one on Dec. 30th;



RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Once common introduced winter visitor at CVL and BL; scarce elsewhere. Now being regularly culled by order of Defra.

WeBS – CVL was fourth in the list of sites of National Importance although recent culls must surely affect this position.

Regular culling, both locally and across the country, has reduced the population considerably; before the cull began counts of 700 were regular at CVL. Defra undertook further culling in 2010 so few birds now remain in our area. Nationally the cull began in 2005, since that time, from a peak population of 4,400 there are now estimated to be just 200 left (September 2010), and an extension to the cull has been granted. This species is now at the same level of abundance in Britain as it was 35 years ago.

The table below gives the Ruddy Duck monthly maxima for all sites.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
ASW	1	3								1	1	
BG	11	15	15	9					1	4		16
CVL	10	6	2			1	2	3	3	3	7	1
BL	2	3	4	5	3	1	1	2	2	2	6	2

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

Locally fairly common breeding resident but large numbers released for 'sporting' purposes.

- Winter Atlas Data: recorded in 35 tetrads in 1984 and 45 in 2010, a 29% change
- Breeding Atlas Data: recorded in 13 tetrads in 1984 and 40 in 2010, a 154% change.

Counts were generally on the low side especially in the latter part of the year, there were only 14 reports of coveys of more than six. As usual most records came either from the Marshfield area or from several sites around Bath.

First winter period (January – March) Reported from eight sites as last year. At Marshfield up to 60 were noted in January and 13 in February, also there were 40 south of Tormarton on Jan. 1st and 35 at Midsummer Norton on March 7th. All other counts were of one or two and in SG.

Breeding season (April – June) Noted at 26 sites but no reports of nests or young were received. Counts of four or more came from Garston Farm near Marshfield, Hinton Charterhouse, Marshfield, Midford, Midsummer Norton (nine on May 23rd), Park Farm, Rushmead Lane (nine on April 18th), and White Cross (West Harptree).

Autumn and second winter period (July – December) Only noted at seven sites again as last year but counts were generally very low. The only coveys of four or more were at Marshfield (five on July 16th, 40 on Oct. 5th and 15 on Nov. 11th), and at Saltford up to eight on three dates in December.

Year	2000	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of sites - SG	1	6	1	3	n/a	6+	1	7	3	2
No. of sites - NS	5	4	0	0	4	4	2	2	1	4
No. of sites - BA	9	10	8	14	8	12	19	12	18	17

Number of sites away from ST77

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

Uncommon, local and declining breeding resident. Small numbers may be released for 'sporting' purposes.

- Winter Atlas Data: recorded in 58 tetrads in 1984 and 12 in 2010, a -79% change.
- Breeding Atlas Data: recorded in 19 tetrads in 1992 and 4 in 2010, again a -79% change.

Apart from some sightings of released birds in the Portbury area in late autumn there were only ten records, none of which came from BA and only one from SG away from the Marshfield area. In 2009 there were records from nine sites, in 2010 from only five.

A covey of up to 23 seen in Portbury village in November had apparently been hand reared and it is hard to exclude the possibility that at least some other records might have included released birds. However, two pairs made up from birds released in 2009 did breed away from the hand-rearing site, and so a small wild breeding population may still exist.

All records are given below. Observers are encouraged to submit all records of this species, with six figure grid references, in order that its declining status can be monitored. Local knowledge about the release of birds would also be most useful.

SG, Marshfield area

Single birds on May 2nd and 9th, June 5th and 6th with three on July 21st;

Other SG records

Tormorton – one at Newhouse Farm on June 18th;

NS

Clapton-in-Gordano – six on Feb. 1st and two on 7th;

CI-Y – a covey of six was seen on the edge of Blake's Pool on Sept. 10th;

Portbury (Caswell Lane area; see above) – one on Oct. 18th, then 14 on Nov. 10th and 30 on 13th. It is assumed that most of these came from the hand-rearing site mentioned above as it was vandalised in early November.

Year	2000	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of records received	46	24	16	12	15	18	10	8	16	9*
No. of sites - SG	5	6	3	1	2	5	2	3	1	1
No. of sites - NS	2	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	3	2*
No. of sites - BA	3	3	4	1	1	1	1	1	2	0

Number of records and sites away from Marshfield area, * implies that feral birds are excluded

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

Scarce summer visitor, and presumed breeder, to the north-east of the area. Rare passage migrant.

Descriptions required for all sight records of non-singing birds and all records away from the Marshfield area.

A spring migrant was noted on Puxton Moor on June 1st. Apart from this all records came from the Marshfield area between May 27th and Aug. 22nd, with two late records in October. This is typical for the Avon area at the present time. The maximum count was ten on July 18th which is the same as in 2009 and slightly above average for the past decade.

Below is summarised the records for the main sites in the Marshfield area.

Downs Road – one on June 23rd and 24th, three on 27th, then one on Aug. 22nd and two on Oct. 4th;

Downthorns Farm – two on July 3rd and 11th with one on 23rd;

Middledown Lane – one on June 2nd;

Rushmead Lane – two on July 9th;

Shirehall Lane – three on Oct. 18th a late record but see below;

West Littleton – single birds on May 27th and June 9th.

1991/00 Av. 12??	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
	4	4	2	16	5	5+	3	5	10	10

Number of singing males each year

2008 Two noted at Marshfield on Dec. 9th is the first winter record for the Avon area. According to BWP a few birds overwinter in north-west Europe in most winters.

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

Fairly common but under recorded. Very large numbers are released for 'sporting' purposes.

- Winter Atlas Data: recorded in 181 tetrads in 1984 and 227 in 2010, a 25% change.
- Breeding Atlas data: recorded in 195 tetrads in 1992 and 291 in 2010, a 49% change.

Widely recorded in small numbers with a few flocks noted. Records came from at least 45 sites, in most cases counts were in low single figures. Only five counts of ten or more were received as follows (nine in 2009), in date order they were: Marshfield, 60 on Jan. 5th, Portishead (western edge), 13 of Feb. 17th, Hinton Charterhouse, 26 on April 7th, Walton Moor, ten on April 13th and Walton Bay, up to 22 (all males) on several dates in December.

Breeding The only report was that three territories were being held at Weston STW.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
100	nc	92	85	90	97	107	112	102	93	99

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS Distribution 58%)

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant to the larger reservoirs and the Estuary, sometimes staying for considerable lengths of time on the reservoirs.

Apart from a long-staying individual from 2009, only three were reported, appearing during storms in early November:

Severnside – one flew down channel past Severn Beach on Nov. 12th (JPM *et al.*);

CVL – two on Nov. 12th (RS) with one remaining next day (RMi *et al.*);

BL - one remained from 2009 until Jan. 1st at least.

Divers in the Avon area

	2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
Red-throated		1				1		2	1	1
Black-throated	1		2							
Pacific										1
Great Northern	4		3		1	1	5	3	5	2
Diver sp.	1		2	2	1	1		3	1	3

Winter totals for divers

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*

Uncommon visitor, less common in winter. Usually storm-driven, but occasionally occurs in calm conditions in mid-summer. Rare inland.

For the third year in succession a lack of stormy weather in mid-summer resulted in a distinctly poor year for several seabirds, including this species. All records are included in the table below:

	Feb		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	
	26	28	30	29	14	15	24	14	15
Severnside					1	7	1	1	1
RPD									
Ladye Bay				4					
Sand Point									
Anchor Head	2	1	6				2		

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus*

Uncommon summer/autumn visitor, usually storm-driven, although large feeding flocks have occurred in calm anti-cyclonic conditions in mid-summer. Seldom recorded NE of the Second Severn Crossing. Rare inland.

Calm weather through much of the year resulted in the worst showing for this species since 2005, with a notable absence of records in the mid-summer period, which has produced large numbers in recent years. The only noteworthy record is of one at OPS on Sept. 15th (PJH); this species is rarely seen upstream of the Second Severn Crossing. One picked up at Calne, Wilts. and released at Severn Beach on Oct. 4th is not included in the table below, which otherwise shows all 2010 records:

	April		May	Sept		
	24	30	29	14	15	19
OPS					1	
Severnside	1			5	2	1
Portishead					1	
Ladye Bay CI-Y						
Anchor Head		4	84		1	

LEACH'S PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

Scarce storm-driven visitor to the Estuary SW of the Second Severn Crossing mainly in autumn and winter. Usually in ones or twos but large numbers have occurred in wrecks. Very rare inland.

A dead bird was found at an industrial site in Emerson's Green on Nov. 7th, following strong south-westerly winds (DPa). This was the only petrel reported in 2010.

GANNET *Morus bassanus*

Uncommon storm-driven visitor, mainly in spring and summer. Rare inland.

Strong winds in late February produced some exceptional early records, but otherwise numbers of this species, as of other seabirds, were very low, with none reported from inland sites. The table shows all records in 2010:

	Feb	March			April	May		Sept	Nov
	26	18	30	31	25	1	3	15	12
Severnside								1	1
Ladye Bay		4	1						
Sand Point						5			
Anchor Head	115			2	15		2		

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Fairly common resident and winter visitor, especially to the main reservoirs; breeds in small numbers on Steep Holm. Two races occur:

P. c. carbo - previously dominated all records and probably still accounts for all breeding birds.

P.c. sinensis - now fairly common amongst non-breeding birds.

UK ten-year change up 14%.

The latter part of 2010 saw good numbers of Cormorant at all of the major reservoirs; the count of 457 at BG on Dec. 9th (PM) was an Avon area record; otherwise the highest count here was 260. The mobility of this species is also illustrated by fluctuations at CVL: the highest count of 253 was made here on Nov. 16th, but the WeBS count on 13th produced only 128. As in 2009 numbers at this site were high because low water levels concentrated the fish into a smaller area, it also exposed quite a lot of mud and so provided some attractive roost sites.

1998/07 Av	2008	2009	2010
140	168	197	203

CVL January to December average maximum counts

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	24	3	4	5	5	4	6	10	6	4	4	4
Littleton	3	1		2						2	1	
Sevenside	2		1	1	2		2	2	2			
Cl-Y		1	3	1	2		3	11	1	2	2	2
Weston STW	28	4	3	6	2	3	1		1	3	5	2
R. Avon at Keynsham	7	5		3		2						22
R. Avon at Saltford									12	6	5	108
Kenn Moor	10	9	6	3	2	3	2	5	5	4	5	16
BG	86		21	12	10	11	11	32	43	25	25	457
CVL	120	185	150	16	15	16	25	90	105	250	253	35
BL	11	154	27	10		7	44	30	34	10	193	282
Batheaston	18	10		6		3	2	3	10	13	12	9
Loxton			7						10	12	7	

Virtually daily counting at Saltford revealed the pattern of dispersal in December as CVL and BL froze. Only six were present on 3rd, rising to 32 on 19th and then 108 on 23rd, when the count of 22 was made at Keynsham, before falling back to 20 on 26th.

Other sites Recorded from a wide range of sites, normally in small numbers and often as over-flying birds. The highest counts were all in December, probably the result of movements away from frozen reservoirs and subsequent return as the that set in: 46 at Litton Resrs. on 21st, 27 over the Downs, Bristol on 12th, 14 at Chew Magna Res. on 31st and ten at RPD on 25th.

Breeding Unfortunately no count was received from Steep Holm.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Scarce visitor, mainly in autumn and winter (rare inland); sometimes storm-driven.

Only one acceptable record, involving three birds, was received:

Sand Point – three juveniles on Sept. 9th (PAB).

Tubenoses, Gannet and Shag in the Avon area

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Fulmar	61	130	87	139	16	272	79	62	40	26
Cory's Shearwater	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manx Shearwater	98	586	1230	1920	40	1600	1216	1680	380	100
Storm Petrel	2	9/12	2	8	0	28	27	25	1	0
Leach's Storm Petrel	1	5/9	0	2	2	115	2	1	24	1
Gannet	19	134+	102	152	46	570	195	172	57	267
Shag	1	2	1	3	5	3	2	5	2	3

Seabirds – Annual bird-day totals

BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris*

Scarce winter visitor; mainly to CVL. Bred in 1997, and now occasionally recorded in the summer months.

Reports have usually been restricted to CVL. In 2009 it was recorded at three other sites, and in 2010 again at three other sites, this is probably a reflection both of successful breeding on the Somerset Levels to the south of our region and of cold weather induced dispersal.

Weston STW – single birds on Jan. 11th and Nov. 24th;

Backwell Lake – single birds seen on several dates between Jan. 16th and Feb. 14th (see photograph opposite page 49), and on Dec. 24th;

CVL – in the first winter period many reports of up to three through January and February, and the last report of one on March 27th, in the second winter period one on the early date of Oct. 27th, followed by two on Nov. 14th, four on 28th and Dec. 13th and many reports of ones and twos between then and the year end;

BL – one on Dec. 30th, presumably one of the birds from CVL.

CATTLE EGRET *Bubulcus ibis*

Rare vagrant.

One of the five birds recorded in 2009 remained into 2010 and another individual was recorded:

CVL – the individual from 2009 remained until Jan. 3rd (see photograph opposite page 49), and one was seen in a field close to the lake on Nov. 5th (RMI).

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta*

Scarce resident, and scarce visitor mainly from late summer to winter. In line with the national trend, numbers have increased dramatically during the last few years.

Although the downward trend in numbers at CI-Y and environs continued, several other sites including OPS, Littleton Warth, Sand Bay, CVL and Backwell Lake reported record counts. Low water levels at the reservoirs attracted good number here.

Recorded from a total of 32 sites (cf. 17 in 2003, 20 in 2004, 23 in 2005, 26 in 2006, 17 in 2007, 24 in 2008 and 38 in 2009). The first table below gives the maximum count at the main Avon area site, CI-Y, and the second gives the monthly maxima at the main sites.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
15	7	13	15	27	39	31	32	24	21

CI-Y and environs. Maximum count

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	1	7	1		3		1	2	3	3	8	1
Littleton Warth			1					1	3	3	2	
Severnside	2	1	2	3	2	2	3	5	6	2	3	1
RPD/PW			1	1			1	2	3	2	1	1
CI-Y and environs	8	17	14	4	2	5	18	19	21	16	6	4
Sand Bay							1	9	7	4		
Axe Est	3	2	2	4	1	3	8	5	6	3	2	2
BG	2		2		1	2	1	2	4	3		1
CVL	1	1	4	1	1	3	9	11	18	23	18	1
BL			1				3	1	1	1	10	6
Backwell Lake		2	3								5	2

Other sites Reported in small numbers from the levels and moors of North Somerset. Noted elsewhere in the region as follows:

Falfield – two on Nov. 2nd;

Hoar Gout and environs– single birds on several dates from Aug. 2nd to 15th and on Sept. 8th;

R. Frome near Iron Acton – two on Nov. 30th and one on Dec. 12th;

Leap Valley, Downend – single birds on Feb. 27th and Dec. 5th;

Whiteladies Road, Bristol – one over here on June 21st was probably the most unusual sighting of this species in 2010;

Stony Littleton – one on May 21st;

Lower Failand – one on Jan. 28th;

Batheaston NR – two on April 24th and one on July 5th;

Chew Magna Res. and environs – single birds on several dates from Jan. 21st to March 15th, with two on March 4th, and from Nov. 16th to the year end, with two on Dec. 16th;

Wellow – one on Feb. 5th;

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

Fairly common resident; uncommon as a breeding species.

BBS distribution 29%.

UK 25-yr change 19% increase. Local ten-yr change 38% increase.

The status table shows another good year at CVL, due to low water levels producing good feeding conditions, and a slight improvement in the Sea Mills area. The second table gives the monthly maxima at the main sites.

	1999/08 Av.	2009	2010
CVL	18	28	32
Sea Mills	18	8	12

Maximum counts

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	4	2	2	2	2	6	5	3	6	7	5	4
Sevenside	2	2	5	2		2	3	3	2	3	2	1
CI-Y	1	2	2	1	2	3	4	3	8	3	3	1
Axe Est./Weston STW	1			4	5	3	5	3	3	4	3	2
R. Avon (Sea Mills)	3		4			2	1	1	4	2	12	10
Sandford									5	3	2	5
BG	5	3	1	3	3	6	7	7	10	5	4	5
CVL	3	7	4	2	4	10	8	21	32	13	21	20
BL	3	6	6	6	4	4	6	12	14	14	13	14

Other non-breeding records Recorded from a wide scatter of other sites, often as single birds in flight. The maximum counts not in the table above were ten on the R. Avon at Hanham on March 6th and at Newton Park Lake on May 4th and five at Winterbourne on June 6th.

Breeding Counts at our two biggest heronries, Cleeve Heronry and CVL, show declines of 11% and 21% respectively, doubtless the result of increased mortality during freezing winter weather. Despite this the BBS index shows a 6% increase since 2009. The table below shows the number of occupied nests recorded at known heronries in our region:

	Grid Ref	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Weston STW	ST313571								4		
Widcombe Manor	ST761633									2	
Dodington Lakes	ST753802									3	
Newton Park	ST692640	6	7	5			8	4		2	
Hanham Wood	ST641703		7		0		12	16			
Eastwood Farm	ST635713	12	16	25	25	25	25	25	34	25	25
Prior Park, Bath	ST634761						1	1	2	1	1
Denny Island, CVL	ST575607	43	31	33	29	29	25	36	51	39	30
Easter Compton	ST560811	6	8	8	7	8	0	0	0	0	0
Paradise Bottom	ST546748	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pill	ST530739					5	5	5		7	6
Cleeve Wood	ST462662	49	45	52	45	45	33	48	42	45	40
Clevedon Court Farm	ST4271	1	nc								
Uphill Grange Wood	ST320582	Nc	2	3			4	8	4	4	
Total		118	116	126	106	104	113	143	137	128	102

Occupied nests

WHITE STORK *Ciconia ciconia*

Rare vagrant. True status confused by the likelihood of escapes from captivity.

One record: two flew south over Northwick Warth on Sept. 12th (BL). Two had been present on the Somerset/Dorset border at the start of the month.

There are seven previous records of White Stork from our area; three Danish-ringed immatures at Combe Down in September 1971; one (probably one of the above birds) at Keynsham in September 1972; one at Paulton in August 1973; three over Knowle, Bristol in April 1993; one over CVL in May 2000; one at Weston STW in July 2005; and one on Bleadon Level in March 2006.

GLOSSY IBIS *Egretta garzetta*
Very rare vagrant.

One record: a Spanish-ringed immature was present in ditches near Hoar Gout from Sept. 17th to 26th (PQ *et al.*) [BBRC]. It was watched at close range, frequently feeding on molluscs, see photograph opposite.

There are four previous records from our area – from CVL in November 2007, September 2009 (two records, one involving four birds) and Severnside in October 2009.

SPOONBILL *Platalea leucorodia*
Scarce passage migrant.

Two were recorded in 2010:

CVL – an adult was seen in flight over the lake and briefly in Stratford Bay on Oct. 24th, before leaving W (see BL entry below) (JC *et al.*);

BL – an adult (seen earlier at CVL) was watched flying high W past the fishing lodge on Oct. 24th (RMA, NRM). The first site record;

OPS – a first-winter was seen in flight over the Estuary on Dec. 2nd (AJB).

This brings the total of Avon area records since 1920 to 31. The most recent were a series of four sightings in April and May 2006, a single bird in August 2007, one at OPS and Severnside in September 2008 and in 2010 at OPS (two), CI-Y and CVL in April, August and September.

Scarce wetland birds in the Avon area

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Bittern	6	5	3	3	3	3	1	3	6	11
Cattle Egret					1		1		6	1
Purple Heron	1								1	
Glossy Ibis							1		6	1
White Stork					1	1				2
Spoonbill						1	1	1	4	2
Spotted Crake	2		2	1	1		1	2	1	
Annual totals										

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Fairly common breeding resident, but occurs widely in rhynes and small to medium-sized pools. Numbers peak in late summer at the reservoirs before dispersing. Very scarce in the Estuary.

CVL is currently ranked fourth in Great Britain for this species. (The Wetlands Bird Survey 2007/08).

BBS distribution 4%.

UK 25-yr change down 76%.

1999/08 Av	2009	2010
68	135	123

CVL - January to December average maximum counts

The annual maximum at CVL was well down on the record 180 counted here in September 2009 but still very high, probably due to a combination of good waterweed growth here in settled mid-summer weather and low water levels.

Totals were down on 2009 at every single site in the table below, perhaps due to increased mortality in freezing weather early in the year. The weather conditions were certainly responsible for the very low counts in both January and December.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Severnside	2		4	1	2	1		1	2		1	1
PW	2	6	4	3	5	4	14	8	15			3
Axe Est./Weston STW	4	6	3	6	4	14	17	24	18	12	7	
Tortworth Lake			6	4	1		1			4		
ASW/Hoar Gout	3	1		1	1			5		4	1	1
BG	18	16	11	1			4	12	19	25	20	17
CVL	4	5	15	1	5	20	45	100	150	120	85	3
BL	13	3	2				10	9	11	4	5	2

Other sites Reported from a further 22 sites (*cf.* eleven in 2006, ten in 2007, 15 in 2008, 23 in 2009). There were records from the R. Avon at Saltford, Keynsham, Hanham and Bath. Evidence of weather-induced dispersal was provided in the first winter period by records of three at Keynsham on Jan. 3rd, one on the New Cut on 10th, and in the second winter period by records of one at Sea Mills on Nov. 22nd, two on the New Cut on 23rd, five at Keynsham on Dec. 19th and one in Bristol Docks on 30th. At Saltford the maximum in November was one, but numbers rose to ten by 23rd, before falling away to five on 29th. The highest counts not in the table and not mentioned above were of eleven at Litton Resrs. on Dec. 21st, nine at Chew Magna Res. on Sept. 1st, seven on Weston Moor on Jan. 7th and four on the Blind Yeo on March 18th, at Three Brooks LNR on Nov. 28th and at Yate on Oct. 8th.

Breeding A poor run of breeding seasons at CVL culminated in complete failure in 2010, due to a combination of low water levels and predation by pike. However, there were two migrant juveniles on July 2nd. Breeding is under-reported but it was verified at four sites away from CVL (*cf.* eight in 2007, six in 2008 and four in 2009) as follows:

PW – six broods produced;

Weston STW – three broods totalling seven young;

Chew Magna Resr. – two broods totalling four young;

BL – a juvenile seen on Aug. 14th.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Broods	10	6	2	9	2	6	6	3	3	0
Young	12+	9	2	13+	3	10	9+	4	5	0

CVL. Broods and young

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Fairly common breeding resident, but occurs commonly at the reservoirs, particularly during the autumn moult/passage. Scarce elsewhere, including the Estuary.

CVL is currently ranked fourth in Great Britain for this species (The Wetland Bird Survey 2007/08).

After high counts at CVL in each of the last three years 2010 saw a sharp fall here, probably the result of poor numbers of fish fry (*cf.* the record count of Tufted Duck). Cold weather in both winter periods forced a rapid exodus followed by a gradual return: only three were present during the WeBS count on Jan. 15th, but the total rose to 39 by 29th.

1999/08 Av	2009	2010
463	565	355

CVL. January to December average maximum counts

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
BG	20	19	27	34	41	27	45	60	58	45	18	20
CVL	39	70	100	85	105	245	270	440	305	320	305	7
BL	4	16	12	33	6	51	13	24	28	76	80	8

Recorded from a wider scatter of sites than usual, partly due to cold weather dispersal as follows:

Severnside – one on Jan. 9th and 25th, two on Feb. 7th and single birds on 26th and April 18th;

PW – on the pools, one on May 22nd and two on Oct. 11th;

CI-Y – two on Dec. 7th;

Anchor Head – an unusual record of four on April 25th;

Weston STW – single birds on Jan. 5th, April 15th and Sept. 11th;

Great Crested Grebe *con't*

Tortworth – single birds on March 7th and July 4th;

ASW – one on April 22nd and four on May 27th;

Bristol Docks – one off Poole's Wharf on Jan 1st, where seen in November 2009, and another (or the same) between March 4th and 27th, ranging along the Docks;

Chew Magna Resr. – far more records than usual here, with many records of single birds between March and December, and two on March 9th, May 14th, June 3rd, July 21st, Aug. 6th and Sept. 23rd;

Litton Resrs. – single birds on Feb. 8th and April 3rd

Breeding A very poor year at CVL, probably because of low water levels. The two young failed to survive although here was a migrant juvenile on June 22nd (a typical record). Not reported from elsewhere.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Broods	24	5	2	6	0	20	38	20	8	1
Young	28	6	4	9	0	43	62+	26+	12	2

CVL. Great Crested Grebe broods and young

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegana*

Very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor; records away from the main reservoirs are very rare.

The cold weather in late November produced an exceptional record from the tidal River Avon:

Sea Mills – one on Nov. 28th drifted past the observer and upstream towards the Avon Gorge (MRO).

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Almost always at freshwater sites and rare in the Estuary.

After two blank years the cold weather in 2010 produced three records, two in the first winter period and one in the second, making this the best year for this species since 2000:

Portishead/PW – one drifted from PW to the mouth of Portishead Marina on Feb. 21st (JPM *et al.*), see photograph opposite page 137;

BG – one on Dec. 15th (CJS *et al.*);

CVL – one on Nov. 10th (RMi *et al.*).

BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis*

Scarce passage migrant; wintered for the first time in 1998/99 and becoming increasingly frequent in the winter. Almost always at freshwater sites and rare in the Estuary. Has bred.

A mid-summer pair and an excellent sequence of autumn records at CVL, but the showing elsewhere was poor:

CVL – two on June 22nd. The autumn passage began with one on Sept. 6th, rising to three on 15th and four on 23rd, then five on Oct. 8th and six on 20th and then declining to three from 29th to Nov. 23rd, when two were present, with one remaining until Dec. 18th. They were recorded virtually every day throughout this period.

BL – one on Sept. 4th, an immature from Oct. 23rd to Nov. 4th and one from 13th to 18th. The dates suggest that all of these records could relate to birds moving to and from CVL.

Scarce Grebes in the Avon area

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Red-necked		1		1		1				1
Slavonian	1		1	1	1	1	2	1		3
Black-necked	25	11	5	9	6	14	9	10	8	8

Annual totals

HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*

Very scarce passage migrant.

Two records: one to E at Herriott's Bridge, CVL on June 1st at 15.45hrs (AHD), another at Weston STW on Aug. 22nd at 11.00hrs (PAB).

Since the turn of the century only recorded in the Avon area in 2000 and 2008 with four and three bird-days, respectively.

BLACK KITE *Milvus migrans**Very rare passage migrant*

One record: one being mobbed by Carrion Crows at Severn Beach on March 18th as it flew low over the salt marsh, it alighted briefly on drift wood then flew to E (KB, SH).

It is highly probable that this was the same individual that frequented the Red Kite feeding station at Gigrin Farm, Rhayader, Powys from Jan. 3rd to March 17th. There was debate about the subspecific identification of the Gigrin bird, with some observers suggesting that it belonged to the eastern race *lineatus* ('Black-eared Kite'), although it lacked some features typical of this form such as an obvious pale area at the base of the underside of the primaries. Winter records of Black Kite in Britain are very rare but not unprecedented.

There have been two previous records for the Avon area and both were in the Gordano Valley in August 1983 and May 1994.

RED KITE *Milvus milvus**Uncommon passage migrant and increasingly frequent visitor.*

Another excellent year and the best to date in the Avon area. Most were in the period March to June, recorded at 47 sites (*cf.* 35 in 2009), 16 in SG, 25 in BA & NS and six in Bristol. During the year there was a total of 70 bird-days (*cf.* 62 in 2009), recorded in every month except November.

Records refer to single birds unless stated otherwise.

January – the first record of the year at Winscombe on 3rd, then at Clevedon on 6th, Shepperdine on 11th, to NE at Easton, Bristol on 16th and over the Gordano Valley the next day, also noted at this locality on 23rd and 24th;

February – at Compton Dando on 12th and over the M5 near Rudgeway on 15th;

March – Shirehill Farm on 6th, at CVL on 13th and two on 26th, at New Passage on 15th and Bradley Stoke the next day, two at Siston on 27th and Thornbury the next day, at Pilning on 31st;

April – at CVL on 5th, Walton Down on 8th, widely reported the following day in NS at BG, Kenn Moor, Sand Bay and two at Clevedon, also noted at Clevedon on 12th and 18th, four over Court Wood, Siston, to S at Northwick Warth and later over Pilning on 10th, at Yate the next day. On 13th to N at Lulsgate at 14.30hrs, high to E at Keynsham, then at Saltford and to N at Claverton Down, Bath. At PW on 16th, Compton Martin on 18th and to N at Portishead the following day;

May – Shirehill Farm on 2nd, to N at Lansdown on 4th, Cl-Y on 8th, St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol on 10th, Horton Court on 12th, at Tickenham on 15th and to NE at BL on 22nd at 16.40hrs. A series of sightings on 25th were probably of the same individual, to NW over Bishopston, Bristol at 11.50hrs, then at Henbury, Bristol, Filton and over the M5 at Almondsbury at 14.30hrs. The next day one to W across the estuary at Severn Beach at 07.00hrs, also at Westerleigh Common, Doynton, Lower Littleton and Chew Magna. At Bishopston and to SE at Portbury on 31st;

June – to NE at Wraxall at 11.30hrs, possibly the same individual over Clifton Down, Bristol late afternoon on 5th. The following day at Shirehill Farm and Westerleigh Common, also noted at Westerleigh Common on 9th. At Stoke Bishop, Bristol, Portishead and Banwell on 15th, near Aust Warth and one flew from Compton Dando to Keynsham on 16th, to N at Lulsgate the next day;

July – at Thornbury on 20th;

August – Shirehill Farm on 9th;

September – at Gaunts Earthcott on 7th and Marshfield on 21st;

October – Twerton, Bath on 7th and Redwood Farm near BG on 31st;

December – at Clevedon on 10th and Thornbury on 25th.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus**Uncommon visitor and passage migrant, has wintered at CVL.*

An average year in the Avon area with a total of 14 bird-days (*cf.* 29 in 2008 and 51 in 2009), the preceding two years were the best to date due to an increase in winter records. Most reports were from CVL with a total of eight bird-days, noted here on five dates in April.

The details are as follows, records refer to single female or immature birds unless stated otherwise, and give sites and dates when present:

First half-year

Severnside – during April at Severn Beach one on 11th and one to NE on 16th, another to NE on May 4th;

CVL – the first of the year to E at Stratford Bay on March 8th, noted during April on 6th, a second calendar year male on 22nd, 24th, to N along East Shore on 25th and 28th;

Marsh Harrier second half-year

Shepperdine – a male on Dec. 1st;

OPS – Aug.15th;

CI-Y – to NE on Oct 12th at 15.00hrs, seen later at Aust Warth;

Sevenside – to NE at Aust Warth on Oct. 12th at 16.40hrs, seen earlier at CI-Y;

CVL – a male to S at Herons Green Pool on Sept. 4th and to S on Oct. 1st.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, mainly to the coast.

A good year with a total of 16 bird-days (*cf.* one in 2009) and the best since 1990. All records, with the exception of two January sightings, were in the last quarter of the year. The details are as follows, records refer to single female or immature birds unless stated otherwise, and give sites and dates when present:

First half-year

January – to N at CI-Y on 17th, possibly the same individual later in the day at Northwick Warth at 16.00hrs (HER).

Second half-year

October - at Aust Warth on 13th (PB), Marshfield / Shirehill Farm on 17th and 18th (JB *et al.*), at Blake's Pool, CI-Y on 30th (SS);

November – at Marshfield / Shirehill Farm on 14th and 15th (AHD, GJ);

December - a male to SW at Northwick Warth on 10th (RB), to S at OPS on 14th (DS), at PW on 19th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd (CJS *et al.*), to NE at Chittingen Warth on 24th at 11.00hrs seen later the same day at Aust Warth, at New Passage two days later (PDB, BL), at CI-Y on 28th (SS).

GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis*

Very scarce visitor and resident.

Despite a relatively healthy population nearby in The Forest of Dean and Lower Wye Valley this species remains a very scarce visitor and resident in the Avon area.

Recorded from a site in SG but breeding was unconfirmed. Since 2008 a pair has been regularly reported at this locality. At present it is not the committee's intention to publish full details but further information such as evidence of breeding success would be welcomed as this species is monitored nationally by the Rare Breeding Birds Panel (Eds).

Disappointingly, two other reports in SG during the year were not supported with descriptions – see KEV's article in the 2004 Report for a review of the identification of this species.

Scarce Raptors in the Avon Area

Year	1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	2000
Honey Buzzard	1	0	0	2	2	0	1	3	0	4
Black Kite	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red Kite	0	1	2	2	1	3	6	1	2	5
Marsh Harrier	9	6	1	8	2	4	2	16	4	8
Hen Harrier	50	2	1	0	4	1	4	1	2	2
Montagu's Harrier	1	0	0	4	1	1	0	0	0	0
Goshawk	0	0	0	0	1	0	5	2	8	9
Osprey	2	5	2	22	8	5	4	7	2	14
Red-footed Falcon	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Honey Buzzard	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	2
Black Kite	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Red Kite	1	4	6	3	17	11	24	31	62	70
Marsh Harrier	7	4	15	2	11	8	6	29	52	14
Hen Harrier	1	6	7	3	3	3	4	14	1	16
Montagu's Harrier	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	0
Goshawk	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	3*	0*	0*
Osprey	7	4	3	4	10	6	12	13	14	13

Bird-day totals for the last 20 years

* Bird-day totals exclude records from the SG site

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

Fairly common breeding resident, possibly also an uncommon passage migrant.

Another average year with 491 records received, the spread across the year was reasonably even, most in April during the display period.

The table below shows the distribution of records for 2010 and the previous five years:

Monthly distribution of records													
Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2005	43	37	49	51	38	24	38	45	63	58	38	49	533
2006	60	46	57	71	47	30	51	53	46	44	41	31	577
2007	42	44	48	69	30	47	44	32	22	34	35	35	482
2008	48	41	49	49	43	37	33	59	33	39	34	37	502
2009	39	33	43	29	36	28	20	37	45	18	22	17	367
2010	50	22	29	70	35	37	39	35	48	40	38	48	491

Breeding The assessment of the number breeding in 2010 was less than the preceding year and the lowest since 1996, possibly an early indication of a decline. The SG total was similar to 2009 but had fallen from the 2008 peak. The totals were 14 in SG, 29 in BA & NS and eight in and around Bristol.

	1991-00 Av	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
SG	10	8	7	12	16	10	16	11	24	13	14
BA & NS	32	30	32	37	30	29	36	34	35	32	29
Bristol	13	17	13	13	6	13	11	10	9	10	8
Total	55	55	52	62	52	52	63	55	68	55	51

Breeding sites

Just one pair was found around CVL (*cf.* three in the previous four years) but not all of the sites were checked, two juveniles were noted here in August.

Steep Holm One on April 5th.

Prey species reported Few reports but notes referred to a Collared Dove, Great Tit and Blackbird.

Ringling recovery A male founded freshly dead on wire netting at Clutton on March 21st had been ringed in its second year at Cam Valley, Cameley on Aug. 16th, 2009.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

Fairly common breeding resident, possibly also an uncommon passage migrant, the population has steadily increased since the late 1980s, now regularly seen over suburban areas.

Another average year, overall breeding success appeared to be lower than in the preceding couple of years. Records received totalled 821, the lowest since 2002, many of these were in the display period from March to June but few were reported from August to October. Despite the generally low assessment of breeding sites in BA & NS, the overall population has probably stabilised and this year three more territories were found in RJP's study area.

Monthly distribution of records													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2005	84	81	121	111	79	65	55	78	54	60	72	90	950
2006	98	67	110	155	81	89	56	57	69	44	49	32	907
2007	75	83	154	164	89	102	62	66	52	88	52	55	1042
2008	88	113	114	110	104	85	55	60	67	42	39	63	940
2009	76	59	90	145	102	91	48	66	78	51	32	47	885
2010	86	51	101	121	88	90	55	29	35	36	50	79	821

Breeding RJP's study area, which covers some 75km² of Failand and Gordano, had an average year, 103 pairs held territories, three more than in 2009 and this was a record number. Of these, 60 nests were successful and 87 young fledged.

The table set out below gives an assessment of the number of breeding sites in the Avon area in 2010 and the previous nine years as well as the ten year average from 1991 to 2000. Included are the results of RJP's studies

in the Failand/Gordano area, and an estimate of numbers in the southern 60km² of ST66 based on JH's survey work from 1991 to 2004.

Year	1991-00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
SG	12	28	27	29	44	25	49	39	45	46	47
BA & NS	112	165	169	174	196	196	206	213	202	211	172
Bristol	2	8	8	9	12	16	14	12	9	8	11
RJP's Study Area											
Active nest sites	52	83	84	84	85	88	90	92	97	99	103
Chicks fledged	52	83	51	66	107	92	50	80	47	73	87
Successful nests	32	56	38	40	60	56	37	52	33	47	60
Brood success ratio	1.63	1.48	1.34	1.65	1.78	1.64	1.35	1.54	1.42	1.55	1.43
Buzzard breeding sites											

At CVL, five nests were found (*cf.* five in 2007 and 2008, nine in 2009).

Large groups/counts Most counts in double figures were noted in the first half of the year from Feb. 6th to May 18th and then on one date in October. Ten at West Littleton on Feb. 6th and Weston Moor on March 21st, 22 at The Marles near Thornbury on April 8th and eleven at Wrington on May 8th. At CVL during March, eleven on 21st and 28th, 20 on 24th and 15 on 27th, in April 18 on 4th and 14 on 27th, 13 on May 7th. The largest count was in the second half of the year, 53 were seen feeding on invertebrates in fields at Priston Mill on Oct. 23rd. The previous largest counts in the Avon area were all in the Flax Bourton / Wraxall area during October 2004 with 58 on 17th, 60 the next day and 54 on 21st.

Steep Holm A single record, one on Aug. 28th.

Bristol Often noted over suburban areas on the periphery of the city, records elsewhere were as follows. To N over Easton on Jan. 24th, Arnos Vale on March 9th, in May over Temple Quay on 4th and high to SE at Royal York Crescent, Clifton on 8th. At Bristol Bridge on Dec. 17th.

Other notes Pale morphs at Sand Point on Oct. 24th and during December at CI-Y on 12th and PW on 28th.

Ringling recovery One found freshly dead at Charterhouse, Somerset on March 13th had been ringed as an adult at Blagdon on May 13th in 2000.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

Scarce passage migrant; most records are from the reservoirs.

Another good year, most were reported during April, then in the last couple of weeks of August and the first week of September at CVL and BL, all records refer to single individuals.

CVL – The first records of the year were in April to NE on 2nd, to N two days later and to E on 8th. In August a juvenile low to S on 20th and on 30th. The last of the year was on Sept. 7th and 8th, this individual roosted overnight on Denny Island.

BL – A satellite tagged individual on April 12th and 13th, see *Other notes*, and Aug. 28th.

Elsewhere – In April at BG on 24th, to N at Weston STW two days later, this was the second record for this site. A satellite tagged individual, high to N over west Bristol on April 6th, see *Other notes*.

Other notes The reports from west Bristol on April 6th and BL on April 12th and 13th, were of satellite tagged individuals named 'Talisman' and 'Nimrod' respectively and their full life histories and migration details can be found on the Highland Foundation for Wildlife's website at www.roydennis.org.

'Talisman', a male that was ringed as a chick on the Black Isle, Highland, Scotland on July 13th in 1999, was caught and tagged at Forres, Moray, Scotland on July 19th in 2009. This bird wintered on the coast of Guinea Bissau, West Africa and commenced his northward migration on March 17th at about 11.00hrs. On April 6th at 06.00hrs he was in flight over Brittany but stopped briefly about an hour later, possibly to fish. 'Talisman' continued northward crossing the English Channel coast at Cap Frehel at 11.00hrs, four hours later he was over Weymouth Bay, Dorset, then to the north passing Wincanton Somerset, west Bristol and crossing the Severn Estuary near Lydney Gloucestershire at 17.00hrs. The journey continued along the Welsh Marches and he arrived at a roost site near Oswestry, Shropshire at 19.00hrs having flown 780 kilometres in the day. He finally arrived at his nest site near Forres on April 9th at midday.

'Nimrod', a male that was ringed as a chick near Rothes, Moray, Scotland on July 5th in 2001, was caught and tagged nearby at Findhorn Bay on Sept. 1st in 2008. This bird wintered on the coast of Guinea Bissau, West Africa and commenced his northward migration on March 21st at 11.00hrs. On April 11th he was to the east of St. Malo, France and during the morning was grounded by inclement weather, later that day he moved to the Cherbourg Peninsula and roosted on a small estuary to the south of Le Passous. The following day at 06.00hrs

he was already in flight and by 11.00hrs was 30 kilometres south of Portland Bill, Dorset, he arrived at BL at about 19.00hrs and roosted overnight. Early on April 13th he left BL and the northward migration route took him over Usk and Crickhowell, Monmouthshire, through Mid and North Wales reaching the inner estuary of the River Conway near Caerhun at 19.00hrs having flown 229 kilometres in the day. He finally arrived at his nest site near Forres on April 17th at about 16.30hrs having crossed the Scottish border at 08.00hrs.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

Fairly common breeding resident.

A poor year for this species with breeding activity noted at only 75 sites the lowest since 1995 when only 74 sites were either confirmed or suspected. The number of records received was likewise rather poor and the lowest since 2006.

The table below gives the monthly total of reports for 2010 and the previous five years. Although records were quite evenly spread across the year many were in April and June, few in September and October.

Monthly distribution of records													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2005	43	54	57	56	62	54	42	45	48	47	47	59	614
2006	76	53	60	60	57	43	42	27	28	44	47	37	574
2007	57	36	50	53	71	65	43	43	44	72	56	68	658
2008	67	81	74	76	65	70	64	49	45	54	47	62	754
2009	45	35	62	81	48	91	50	60	55	55	35	50	667
2010	48	50	42	71	59	111	38	40	35	36	40	44	614

The table below gives the years when the total number of records received exceeded 700:

	1984	1985	1988	1989	1993	1994	2008
Total records received	738	720	750	736	721	723	754

Breeding A poor year in the Avon area, noted in the breeding season at 75 sites, in the preceding four years it was present at 90+ sites (*cf.* 108 in 2006, 100 in 2007, 103 in 2008 and 90 in 2009). The distribution of records was 22 in SG, 45 in BA & NS and eight in *Bristol*, this was the lowest number in BA & NS since 1994 when reported at 44 sites. However, the *Bristol* number was the best since 2003. Nest boxes were used at the following locations, two at Weston STW and one at Langford, two juveniles were ringed at one of the former and four juveniles at the latter.

At CVL two pairs were present but their breeding success was unknown another pair was located nearby at Sutton Hill.

In *Bristol* present for the third successive year at 'A' Bond warehouse, Hotwells, four juveniles fledged, this site was also used in 2005. Hollow trees were used at Stoke Park and Brislington, three and two juveniles fledged respectively from these sites.

	1991-00 Av	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
SG	23	22	21	19	24	17	29	25	36	31	22
BA & NS	54	58	49	79	57	60	72	68	63	53	45
Bristol	9	7	9	11	5	5	7	7	4	6	8
Total	86	87	79	109	86	82	108	100	103	90	75

Breeding sites

Ringed recoveries A sick or injured juvenile at Green Ore, Somerset on Aug. 8th and a freshly dead juvenile, hit by a plane, at Lulsgate on Sept. 3rd, both were ringed as nestlings at Wyndhurst Farm, Lower Langford on June 11th. A freshly dead juvenile at Burley Gate, Hereford & Worcester on Dec. 1st was ringed six months earlier at Upton Cheyney on June 16th.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor; most are recorded on the coast; scarce inland.

An average year for this species in the Avon area with a total of 84 bird-days (*cf.* 84 in 2009). During the year there were 31 bird-days in the first half year and 53 in the second half. Most were in January, February, October, November and December with 10, 9, 14, 10 and 26 days, respectively. As usual most of the records were from Severnside with 47 bird-days, 22 in the first half year and 25 in the second half year, 18 of these in December.

The details are as follows, records refer to single females or immatures unless stated otherwise, and give sites and dates when present:

First half-year

OPS – March 22nd;

Severnside – reported on 22 dates from Jan. 3rd to April 20th, males were seen on seven dates, probably the same individual, a male and female on April 3rd;

Portishead – Jan. 29th;

CI-Y – Jan 30th (a poor showing for this site);

Sand Point/Sand Bay – March 26th;

Axe Estuary/Weston STW – March 10th.

Second half-year

OPS – Nov.12th;

Littleton Warth – October 10th;

Severnside – reported on 24 dates from Sept. 25th to Dec. 29th, one date in September, four in October, two in November and 17 in December, a male was seen on Nov. 27th and 28th and on twelve dates in December and two males on Dec. 27th;

PW – a male on Dec. 24th;

CI-Y – noted on 13 dates from Sept. 27th to Dec. 14th, one in September, four in October, November and December, a male and female present on Oct. 17th and two seen on Dec. 5th and 7th;

Sand Point/Sand Bay – Oct. 24th and 25th, and Nov. 23rd;

Axe Estuary/Weston STW – Oct. 24th and Dec. 11th.

Inland - First half-year

At Marshfield on Jan. 5th and Feb. 6th, in January a male at Kenn Moor on 19th and at Lower Woods on 24th.

Inland - Second half-year

At Weston Moor on Sept. 18th, at Marshfield on Oct. 11th, Nov. 14th and 18th.

Year	1991-00 Av.	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Avon area	55	60	70	107	127	101	93	76	143	84	84
Severnside	20	34	32	59	98	53	57	69	93	65	47

Bird-days per year

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

Uncommon passage migrant and scarce breeding summer visitor.

A poor year in the Avon area, the overall number of records received was low and breeding activity was the lowest since 1996 when there were just five confirmed and suspected sites.

Arrival First recorded in April at PW on 13th and 26th, elsewhere during the month at Portbury Village on 20th, at CI-Y on 23rd, at CVL on 25th and 27th, at Sand Point on 27th and at Aust Village the next day.

The earliest arrival dates in the preceding five years were all in April: 21st in 2005, 14th in 2006, 26th in 2007, 17th in 2008 and 19th in 2009.

Breeding Confirmed at just one site in BA

BA – one site was located and one young fledged.

Breeding was suspected at a further five sites one in SG and three in NS and one in BA.

	1991-00 Av	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
SG	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1
NS	2	3	2	2	4	4	4	6	3	6	3
BA	4	8	6	6	4	5	4	4	5	5	2
Total	8	13	9	10	10	10	10	12	10	13	6

Breeding status both confirmed and suspected

Other sightings From April 13th to Oct. 14th reported from a total of 31 localities, 12 in SG, 18 in BA & NS, and one in Bristol over Montrose Avenue, Redland on July 29th.

Number of localities per month where birds were observed (including CVL)

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
SG	1	1	3	3	4	2	1
Bristol	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
BA & NS	5	6	10	5	1	9	1
Total	6	7	13	9	5	11	2

CVL Regularly reported at this site with one or two often seen, three on Aug. 28th and four on 31st. First report was on April 25th, six days later than in 2009, then again two days later, noted on 16 dates in May, eight in June, seven in July, eight in August and eleven in September. The last record of the year was on Sept. 24th, 19 days earlier than in 2009.

Departure There were two reports in October, the late records were as follows:

SG – OPS on Oct. 14th;

NS – Weston STW on Sept. 23rd and at Sand Point two days later, CI-Y on Oct. 8th;

BA – CVL on Sept. 23rd and 24th.

The latest dates for the Avon area, all in October, were as follows: 14th (Nailsea 1979, Severnside 2007), 15th (Severnside 2007), 16th (Severnside 2004 and 2007), 17th (Severnside 2007), 19th (CI-Y 1998, Severnside 2007), 21st (Iron Acton 1995), 29th (Backwell 1998), and Nov. 11th (Dundry 2005).

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

Uncommon resident, winter visitor and breeder.

Breeding An excellent year and the best to date, 26 chicks fledged successfully, the previous 'best year' was 2002 when 25 fledged.

In the Avon Gorge a pair nested successfully on the Clifton/Durdham Down side and five chicks fledged (*cf.* five in 2008 and one in 2009), while being ringed they were filmed for the BBC's Spingwatch series. Five also fledged in 2008, this is a large number and the most to date. Last bred on the Leigh Woods side of the Avon Gorge in 1996 and 2005.

Year	1991-00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of juveniles fledged	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	5	1	5

Breeding success in the Avon Gorge

On Steep Holm there was no record of breeding but one was noted here on April 5th and two on Oct. 24th.

St. John's Church, Bath was used for the fifth consecutive year, four chicks fledged (*cf.* two in 2008 and one in 2009), while being ringed they were filmed for the BBC's Inside Out West series. The male had fledged from this site in 2007 and was colour ringed 'AA'. In 2008 he returned as a non breeder and the following year paired with an unringed female, DNA tests revealed that he had mated with his mother. It is probable that the same female was present in 2010.

Wick Quarry Four young were reported to have fledged (*cf.* two in 2008 and 2009).

Undisclosed sites.

SG Present at three sites (*cf.* three in 2009 and two fledged), all were on man-made structures, One was used for the fifth consecutive year and two chicks fledged successful. There was a third chick in this nest but on fledging it fell breaking its pelvis and was subsequently destroyed. Frequent at the other two sites but there was no evidence of breeding success.

NS Located at four sites (*cf.* four in 2009 and two fledged), six juveniles fledged, three sites each produced two juveniles but there was no evidence of breeding success at the fourth site.

BA Reported from one site (*cf.* one site in 2008 and 2009 but failed to breed in both years) four chicks were ringed on May 16th, subsequently three fledged successfully.

Bristol away from the Avon Gorge Noted at one site (*cf.* one in 2009 and two fledged) and two fledged successfully.

Year	1991-00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of sites occupied	4.1	6	13	8	9	14	15	12	11	13	13
No. of birds fledged	7.7	11	25	13	17	13	13	21	20	11	26
No. of successful nests	3.2	4	10	5	8	8	7	9	7	6	9

Breeding success

Peregrine non-breeding records

OPS, Severnside and CI-Y – One or two frequent throughout the year at these well-watched sites.

Possibly under recorded at the other coastal sites, the table below gives the monthly maxima at the main sites.

Monthly bird-days for other coastal sites, CVL and BL													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Littleton Warth			1					1		2		1	5
RPD/PW	1	3		3		1	1				1		10
Portishead												1	1
Sand Point/Sand Bay			1	1						1			3
Weston STW				1			2	2			1	1	7
CVL	1		2	1	1		2	2	8	7	12	17	53
BL		1	1	2	1					2			7

Inland (excluding CVL & BL) Single birds unless stated otherwise:

First half-year

Bristol In January over St. Philip's Causeway on 14th, College Green the next day and New Cut near the City Centre on 23rd, in February at St. Philip's on five dates from 1st to 23rd, with two on the former date, at Trooper's Hill, St. George on 5th. During March to S at Whitchurch on 15th and over Redland on 29th and April 25th. At Temple Quay on April 19th and in May at Castle Green on 9th and Fishponds on 22nd, over Whiteladies Road on June 21st;

Bath away from St. John's Church At Smallcombe on May 1st;

SG At Chipping Sodbury on March 22nd, Winterbourne on May 5th and Filton Airfield on June 14th;

NS At Wrington on Jan. 25th, two on Feb. 15th and March 25th, at BG on Jan. 28th. During February at Lulsgate on 5th and Backwell Lake on 12th and 13th. Over Dundry on March 10th and June 6th;

BA At Keynsham on June 2nd and 18th.

Second half-year

Bristol In July to SW at Whitchurch on 7th, over Hotwells on 16th and 18th, at Bristol Bridge the next day. Reported at Christ Church Clifton on Sept. 8th, 30th and Oct. 12th, in October two over Whitchurch on 12th and two over Southville two days later. During November at Temple Meads on 3rd, Clifton on 28th and Redland the following day. In December perched on the spire at Stapleton Church on 5th and over Redland on 14th;

Bath away from St. John's Church At Claverton Down on Nov. 2nd;

SG No inland reports were received for the second half-year;

NS At Wrington on July 10th and Dec. 17th, BG on July 31st, two on Aug. 30th and Dec. 21st. Two over Dundry on Aug. 15th, at Yatton on Oct 11th and Dec. 28th, nearby at Puxton on Oct. 27th. At Abbot's Leigh on Nov 2nd and Dec. 17th, at Kenn on Nov. 17th and 23rd;

BA At Cladown on Nov. 12th, during December at Compton Dando on 11th, over Chew Magna Res. on 22nd and at Keynsham the same day.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

Uncommon winter visitor, scarce in summer, and very scarce as a breeding species.

A below average year with reports received from around 18 sites, probably a consequence of hard winter weather, which did, however, produce some unusual records, with suggestions of some movement around Jan. 9th and again in late November and early December. The highest count at CVL was eight in February (*cf.* 15 in 2009), a consequence of low water levels here as well as inclement weather.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
15	18	16	14	16	24	23	23	20	18

Number of sites reported from each year

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	1	2	1								1	
Severnside		4								3	3	1
PW	2	1	1	1					2	3	1	1
Backwell Lake	2	4	1									3
CVL	8	8	10	3	2	4	2	2	12	6	5	11

Breeding As usual only suspected at CVL, where pairs were present at four sites around the lake and two juveniles were seen on Aug. 11th. No records were received from any other site between April 3rd and Aug. 11th.

1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
1	2	0	2	3	4	6	3	4	2	2	5	2	4	5	3	0	2	6	4

CVL – nest sites

Other records Recorded from other sites as follows:

Portishead – two in the saltmarsh on Feb. 27th;

Sand Bay – one on March 2nd and 4th;

Weston STW – four, an unusually high count, on Jan. 9th, two on Oct. 24th and Nov. 6th;

Marshfield – one on Jan. 9th, the first ever recorded in this area;

Yate – one on Nov. 18th;

Abbeywood – one on Feb. 26th;

Emerson's Green – single birds on Jan. 1st and on several dates between Dec. 11th and 24th;

Leap Valley, Downend – single birds on Jan. 1st and 9th, Feb. 13th and 20th, and Nov. 7th;

BL – two on Jan. 23rd, followed by singles on Feb. 5th, 12th and 14th and March 5th and 19th;

Saltford – single birds on Nov. 23rd, Dec. 1st and from 23rd to 27th;

Keynsham – one on Dec. 21st;

Yatton – one on March 22nd and two on Dec. 26th;

Congresbury – one on Nov. 8th and 16th;

CI-Y – two on Jan. 1st and March 1st, two on Aug. 26th and one on Dec. 5th;

Gordano Valley – one on Jan. 10th;

Batheaston – single birds on Jan. 3rd and Nov. 30th;

Bathampton – one on Feb. 5th was the first record for the site.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

Fairly common breeding resident. Seen in large numbers at the reservoirs in late summer/autumn.

Population change in England 1996-2006; up 10%.

Counts at both CVL and BL were down on 2009, despite the low water levels, which aid counting. It is likely that the hard 2009/10 winter caused higher than usual mortality. The low counts at BL over the last five years are a particular cause for concern. The tables give the maximum counts at the main reservoirs over the past decade, and the monthly maxima at all main sites for 2010.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
CVL	165	105	245	125	80	90	55	70	180	125
BL	129	75	132	46	105	82	30	21	38	33

Maximum counts at CVL and BL (the highest counts are often not in the same month at both sites)

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	1	1	3	3	1	2	3	4	1	7	10	3
RPD	15	25								25	28	16
Emerson's Green	6	8	2	1	4			9	8	5	6	6
Backwell Lake	12	11			4	4	11				11	
Saltford									12	14	37	47
R Avon, Keynsham	43	36									24	34
CVL	20	15	15	5	1	10	65	125	100	90	65	20
BL	9	11	11	6		1	11	33	31	4	2	8
Weston STW	6	10	4	10	4	4	14	6	15	6	14	9

Recorded from a further 19 sites (*cf.* 41 in 2009 and 55 in 2008), another possible indication of decline. The outstanding counts were from Avon Country Park, where 51 were recorded on Jan. 2nd and 41 on Feb. 21st. Combined with the counts from Keynsham and Saltford these suggest that the R. Avon may be our prime site for this species. Other double figure counts were noted as follows: 31 at Nailsea West End on Nov. 29th; 20 at Bristol Zoo on Jan. 24th; and ten at Chew Magna Res. on both March 23rd and Nov. 26th.

Moorhen Breeding Breeding occurred at CVL and BL but there are no details. Elsewhere recorded at twelve other sites (*cf.* ten in 2009) as follows: OPS; Weston STW (six juveniles); Chipping Sodbury Golf Course; Abbey Wood (one brood); Warmley Forest Park (one brood); Sneed Park (two juveniles); Abbots Leigh (two young); Keynsham Memorial Park; Backwell Lake (two broods totalling seven young); Eastville Park (occupied nest); and Winford Brook (two broods).

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
216	nc	201	173	261	245	308	318	327	227	255

BBS Index 1994 = 100 (BBS distribution = 23%)

COOT *Fulcia atra*

Fairly common and widespread breeding resident, abundant in the autumn at the main reservoirs.

WeBS status: CVL is currently eighth and BL twelfth in the list of sites of National Importance.

Avon BBS distribution 10%.

Calm sunny weather in early and mid-summer allowed good growths of water weed at CVL and this attracted high numbers here (*cf.* Gadwall and Pochard); although the peak count was not outstandingly high, good numbers were sustained for longer than usual. This maybe in part accounts for the low numbers at BL, where water levels dropped earlier than at CVL. However, the decline at BL since 2005 is marked and may be a cause for concern. Elsewhere BG attracted good numbers in the second half of the year. The tables below give details of the maximum counts.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
CVL	2360	3715	3285	3335	2210	2360	2095	2020	3050	2880
BL	2846	1740	1990	2080	3151	1400	2323	1403	970	678

Maximum counts at CVL and BL (the highest counts are often not in the same month at both sites)

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS		2	2		2	7	3	3	3	1		
PW	6	46	25		3	2	13		30	33		33
Weston STW	80	46	24	15	22	46	76	73	73	51	70	73
Tortworth		25	18	19	12		10			21	1	
Backwell Lake	20	23			11	15	21	36	38	24	49	42
BG	73	40	41	28	22	100	271		390	305	235	270
Chew Magna Resr.	17	18	19		4		10		19	8	7	20
CVL	236	330	325	245	325	1090	2070	2880	2610	2705	2330	225
BL	134	147	108	129	29	453	678	364	340	112	26	158

Other records Recorded from a further twelve sites (*cf.* 23 in 2009 and 35 in 2008). Counts of ten or over were received from: Nailsea West End, 42 on Nov. 29th; Eastville Park, Orchard Pools, 20 on Jan. 5th, ten on April 4th and Newton Park, ten on April 18th. There was some evidence of dispersal in hard weather during each winter period: five at Bristol Bridge on Jan. 5th and six on R. Avon at Keynsham on 6th; and two at Bristol Bridge on Dec. 21st and eight on the foreshore at RPD and three at Sea Mills, both on 26th.

Breeding Bred at Backwell Lake (three broods), CVL (22 broods), Prior Park (one brood), Tortworth (seven broods, eleven juveniles), Weston STW (seven broods, 18 juveniles), Chew Magna Resr. (four broods, 26 juveniles), Chipping Sodbury Golf Course, OPS (six juveniles), Leyhill (brood of two) and Batheaston NR.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of nests	110	88	116	121	n/c	112	91	96	67	n/c
No. of broods	53	50	41	44	4	34	41	28	27	22
No. of young	119	110	91	102	9	70	91+	61	77+	46

No. of nests, broods and young at CVL

COMMON CRANE *Grus grus*

Rare vagrant.

One record: one flew upriver past Aust Warth on March 2nd (KB).

This is the fifth Avon area record and the fourth since 2000; the previous records are: one over Clevedon in March 1971; two over Severn Beach in January 2000; five at Tortworth in February 2003; and one over OPS in May 2008.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce breeding species. Scarce inland.

YEAR	Sevenside	CI-Y	Sand Bay	Axe Est.	Total
1990/91 - 1999/00 Av.	41	14	24	76	155
2000/01 - 2007/08 Av.	79	26	16	80	201
2008/09	79	30	22	78	209
2009/10	83	35	13	68	199

August to February average counts

As last year the status table above shows only minor changes over the past few years, flocks appear to move between sites but the overall counts are remarkably constant. This did not change during the 2010/11 autumn and winter period. The table below gives the monthly maxima at the main sites. The only other records received were for Steep Holm with two on April 25th (only a few records were received from this site in 2010), BG with one between Oct. 23rd and 27th, and BL with five on July 12th, two on 19th, four on 23rd and three on 24th.

Monthly maxima at main sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	9	12	13	4	10	1	1	11		1	2	3
Littleton Warth	10	8	8	6	5	5		2			2	1
Sevenside	126	120	51	54	39	18	32	50	60	70	64	150
Sea Mills (R. Avon)		2	2	2								
PW/RPD/Avonmouth Docks	3	52	5	20	5	2	10	11		2	40	
CI-Y	23	30	18	22	13	15	10	32	34	31	36	28
Sand Bay	11	10	10	18	2		3	45			105	110
Axe Est.	85	52	28	5	2	4		85	170	200	170	
CVL			1	1		1	3	2				

Breeding Nesting activity was noted at three sites (five in 2008 and three in 2009), the details are as follows:

Avonmouth Docks – ten nests were recorded although several of these were repeats where pairs relaid after losing first clutches, success was low and only two chicks were seen;

PW – as in 2009 there was one nest, it produced four chicks at least one of which survived to the flying stage;

CI-Y – as usual two or three pairs were present during the breeding season but no further evidence was forthcoming.

AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Uncommon winter visitor/ passage migrant. Rare inland.

There was a better showing than in 2009 involving some slightly larger counts, but numbers remain low when compared with some other sites in south-west England. For example several three-figure counts were recorded at the Parrett Estuary in Somerset in 2010. The details are as follows; the table below gives the total numbers seen in each year of the last decade and the average for the decade before that.

Sevenside – three at Northwick Warth on March 23rd;

CI-Y – six on Oct. 8th seen roosting with a group of Black-headed Gulls;

Axe Estuary – one on Jan. 16th with two on the following day;

CVL – four in Stratford Bay on Nov. 17th, equalling the site record set by the first occurrence here on Nov. 20th 1972.

1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
4	11	12	9	6	14	4	8	15	8	15

Total number of individuals per year

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

Uncommon passage migrant, generally more numerous in autumn. Scarce as a breeding species.

Migration dates: Forty year average first date April 7th. Forty year average last date Sept. 17th.

Noted at eight sites, two more than in 2009. Definite breeding activity was recorded by just one pair at one site where nests and young have been seen in the recent past. Present between March 29th and Oct. 2nd (both at CVL), and there were two counts of six, one in July and one in September, which is unusual. The details are as follows.

OPS – two on April 11th and 12th;

Hoar Gout – one on July 14th;

Sevenside – single birds on Northwick Warth from April 11th to 13th and on 16th;

Little Ringed Plover *con't*
PW – two at Portishead Marina on April 1st, and a juvenile on the Warth from July 17th to 20th;
CI-Y – one at Dowlais Farm on Sept. 5th with a group of Knot and Curlew Sandpiper;
BG – first seen on March 29th, then two on several dates up to April 21st, and one on 25th and on May 1st. Single birds on June 4th, July 3rd, 18th and 21st, and Aug. 30th. On April 19th a female was sitting on a nest and on May 21st a pair and one juvenile were seen. On June 4th the female was sitting on a new nest which failed;
CVL – single birds on March 29th, April 22nd (female), and June 16th, then two juveniles on 22nd and single birds again on July 7th, 13th and 21st. During August one was noted on most days up to 16th with three on 5th and an adult on 13th, two occurred on Sept. 1st, one on 4th, six on 19th (the highest count here since April 1997), and finally a juvenile on Oct. 2nd, a late last date;
BL – three on April 24th, one on April 25th, then in July noted from 12th to 21st with three on 12th, six on 14th, two on 18th and three on 21st, two remaining until Aug. 1st, and again two on Sept. 15th.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*
Uncommon winter visitor, and fairly common passage migrant (most numerous in autumn). Small numbers occur inland on passage. Scarce breeder.
Two races: *hiaticula* breeding Canada and N W Europe and *tundrae* breeding N Scandinavia to Siberia. Most occurring in Avon are *hiaticula* but a few *tundrae* may occur.
WeBS status: In 2007/08 the Estuary was 14th in National Importance for passage (there are six sites of International Importance).

YEAR	OPS		Sevenside		CI-Y		Total
1990/91 – 1999/00 Av.	23	183	16	329	20	107	619
2000/01 – 2007/08 Av.	12	47	17	276	13	109	432
2008/09	3	119	7	203	10	240	562
2009/10	5	33	9	30	14	185	248

Winter (Oct. to Feb.) and following Autumn passage (Aug. and Sept.) average counts

In Avon this species is usually seen in quite large numbers on passage but in 2010 both passages were particularly weak especially at the more north-eastern sites of OPS and Sevenside. The status table Avon total of 248 given above is the lowest recorded since this method of monitoring movements was begun 20 years ago. Wintering numbers are always much smaller and these showed a similar decline. The counts of 200 on Jan. 24th and 180 on Nov.17th on Weston Beach probably involved flocks displaced from other parts of the Estuary by the cold weather. As is often the case the largest spring passage counts were in late May, in 2010 the best was 90 at Severn Beach on 23rd with 65 still present here on 26th. Apart from two sightings in late June none were seen after this until July 17th. The second table summarises the fortnightly or monthly counts at the main sites. Otherwise one was on the R. Avon on Sept. 30th, and four were at BG on May 2nd with two here on 9th.

Fortnightly or monthly maxima at regularly counted sites																
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		May		Jun	Jul	Aug		Sep		Oct	Nov	Dec
				1–15	16–30	1–15	16–31			1–15	16–31	1–15	16–30			
OPS	10	1	5	4	3	15				20	50	16	5	1	3	4
Littleton Warth			1							8				5		
Sevenside		10	5	9	16	13	90		1	40	20	20	6	1	2	15
PW			8		8		6	1	22	34	250		52	45	30	4
CI-Y	7	7	4	6	80	4	22	2	9	120	220	150	21	17	4	24
Sand Bay						15			4	60	37	21	40	20		
Axe E./Weston STW	200	23	6							6	10	35	50	3	180	
CVL						1	2		2	6	12	3	16	3		
BL										1	36	7				

Breeding As in 2008 and 2009 nesting was only recorded in Avonmouth Docks. In 2010 ten nests were found (nine in 2007, eight in 2008 and four or five in 2009) six of which were successful producing 13 chicks, all were given BTO and colour rings.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*
Fairly common winter visitor and scarce passage migrant (usually more numerous in autumn).

1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
1304	(992)	2025	2020	3310	1475	2460	3336	1790	1966	1591

Total for the year of the maximum monthly counts for all main sites

It should be noted as with a number of other tables in this Report, Wigeon for example, that these figures are given for yearly comparison only and do not accurately count the numbers present. What is a 'main site' in one year may not be in another, and no attempt has been made to count duplication where, for example, flocks may have been at one site early in a month and another later.

Apart from the Marshfield area counts were on the low side as is shown in the status table above. This was especially so in December, probably most birds left the area during the cold weather. Counts of 34 at the Axe Estuary on March 1st and 70 at Sand Bay on 2nd probably involved flocks moving north. Present up to May 8th and from Aug. 8th (both at CI-Y), the table below gives the monthly maxima at the main sites. Other counts over ten included: in January at Doynton (eleven) and Stanton Prior (15), in February at Pennsylvania (35) and Acton Turnville (80), in October at Cold Ashton (25) and Bristol International Airport (20), in November at Kingswood (40), and in December at Langford (18).

Monthly maxima at regularly watched sites											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	:	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	11								10	1	
Sevenside				1					1		2
CI-Y	16	1			1		1	5	9	1	4
Sand Bay			70						2		
Axe Est.	80	30	34	1					2		4
CVL		1							17	2	
Marshfield area	300	35	50	150					300	300	
Lansdown									350		
Saltford										11	5

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant. Scarce inland on passage.

YEAR	Sevenside	CI-Y	Total
1990/91 - 1999/00 Av.	11	34	45
2000/01 - 2007/08 Av.	9	24	33
2008/09	5	18	23
2009/10	3	25	28

September to March average counts

There was a slight improvement on 2009 with some good counts in late autumn. Noted up to May 31st (at Sand Bay) and from Aug.18th (also at Sand Bay) with as usual most seen at CI-Y. In 2009 the corresponding dates were May 15th and Aug. 9th. The highest numbers were noted in the OPS/Littleton Warth area from mid-October to mid-November, the count of 62 was for Oct. 23rd and is the best here since 1993. The table summarises the counts at the coastal sites. There were also three records from CVL: one on March 27th (an unusual date here), two on Oct. 8th and one on 20th.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites										
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	:	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS				1				62	55	
Littleton Warth								25	19	
Sevenside			1	7	2		2	20	1	
PW							4	2		
CI-Y	33	38	28	1	2		8	26	57	37
Sand Bay	20				1		1	5	3	14
Axe Est.	1						1	1		

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

Fairly common and widespread winter visitor and passage migrant; can become common in some winters. Uncommon breeding resident/summer visitor.

WeBS status: In 2007/08 the Estuary was tenth in National Importance (there are five sites of International Importance).

Year	Sevenside	CI-Y	CVL	Total
1990/91 - 1999/00 Av.	344	280	413	1037
2000/01 - 2007/08 Av.	268	303	213	784
2008/09	262	680	347	1289
2009/10	183	211	139	533

August to February average counts

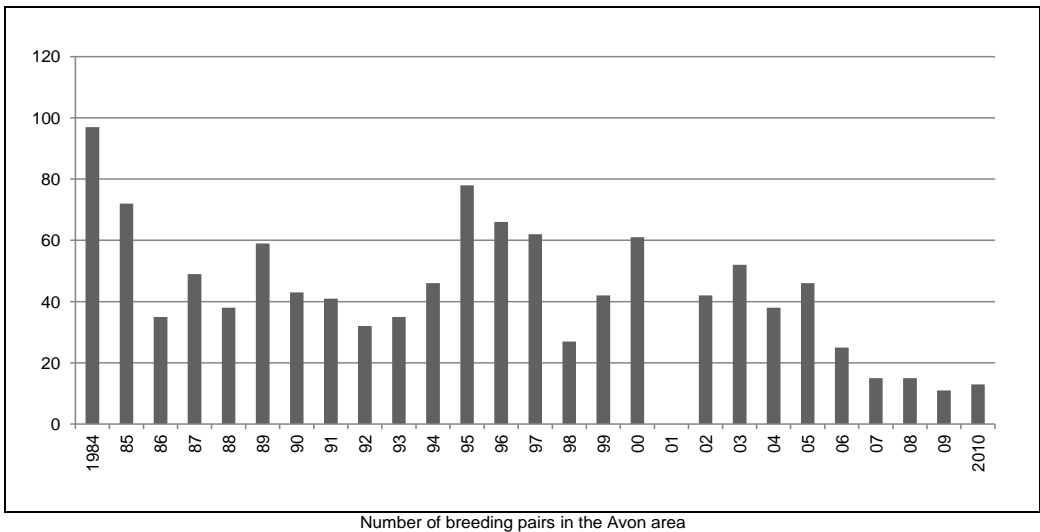
The 2009/10 status table total above was well down, one reason may have been that birds left the area in the cold weather, and figures available so far suggest that the 2010/11 winter was similar. This is borne out by the 2010 counts for January and December as follows. About 3710 were present in January, this compares with 4840 on 2008 and 7760 in 2009. In December the figure was 3950 which is similar to that in 2009 (3450), a month which also saw some very cold weather. As is now usual quite small numbers were reported outside the winter periods and breeding was again poor; see below.

Lapwing con't

The main table below summarises the counts from the well-watched sites. The largest flocks in the first-winter period were at the Axe Estuary area, 1100 on Feb. 16th being the highest count. In the second period the highest count was 730 at OPS on Dec. 22nd. Non-tabulated counts of 30 or more included in January: Pilning 210, Bathampton Meadows 44, Keynsham 31, Leap Valley (Downend) 620 moving SW after overnight snow on 6th, and Redland (Bristol) 30 (passing over); in February: Charfield 110; in October: near Junction 18 of the M4 150 and Newbridge (Bath) 110, and in December: Easter Compton 32, Henbury (Bristol) 30, Iwood 58, Redhill 57, Wrington 30 and Churchill 36.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	900	250	6	6	11	1	8	4		265	600	730
Littleton Warth	45				1					210	145	250
Severnside	700	50	3	1						56	120	600
R. Avon, Sea Mills	80	100	1			8	10		14	58	50	150
PW	125	96				1	1			16	150	100
CI-Y	170	210	10	5	12	50	42	1	2	160	550	600
Axe Est./Weston STW	1000	1100	20	2	9	5				165	240	275
Saltford										3	210	160
BG	140	25	1	2		2			1	8	37	95
CVL	55	150			2	65	62	65	70	290	240	710
BL	140				1	36	18	29	28	132	300	185

Breeding In 2010 nesting activity was at about the same level as in the previous three years. The graph below shows the number of breeding pairs since 1984, the first few entries are probably underestimates as breeding was quite common then. In 1982 a BTO Wet Meadows Survey found 149 pairs in the Avon area (and 45 Redshank and 17 Snipe!).



As in 2009 chicks were seen at just one site – Dowlais Farm at CI-Y. Some nesting activity was noted at four new sites, so there is some hope of an improvement. All breeding season records are listed below, in most cases we have not included records of the presence of a single bird.

OPS – up to six were present between April and June and some display flights were reported;

Littleton Warth – a male was displaying but no female was seen;

CI-Y, Dowlais Farm – up to ten were noted in April and three pairs were displaying, at the end of the month four small chicks were seen near the main scrape;

Weston STW – up to nine were seen and some display was noted but no nests were found;

Rangeworthy – a pair was present in May being mobbed by corvids;

Horton – one pair was present in May;

Elberton – one pair was present in late April and May;

White Cross, near West Harptree – three pairs were present in late April;

Weston Moor – one pair was holding a territory in early May.

KNOT *Calidris canutus*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant, mostly in autumn. Scarce inland.

Two races, *islandica* (nearctic) and *canutus* (Siberian), occur in NW Europe. Recent research suggests that virtually all occurring in the UK are from the first race *islandica*, and so this will also hold for the Avon area.

Webs status: In 2007/08 the Estuary was 14th in the list of sites of International Importance.

1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
598	(94)	542	386	411	1520	172	595	293	462	2133
Total for the year of the maximum monthly counts for coastal sites										

Quite large flocks of this species occur in the Estuary mainly on the Welsh side and sometimes in the Steart reserve, but not often in the Avon area. In 2010 a flock of 1700 was noted on Weston Beach on Jan. 26th (GW), it had probably been displaced (possibly by the weather) from another site in the Estuary. The last count over 1000 in the Avon area was at Sand Bay in January 1971. Excluding this count the records were normal as is shown in the status table above (the figure of 2133 includes the count of 1700 from Weston Beach). There was a small movement in the first ten days of March, then very few until late August, the table below summarises the coastal counts. Single birds were also seen inland at the reservoirs as follows: at CVL on Sept. 9th and 10th, Oct. 28th and 29th, and Nov. 8th, and at BL on Aug. 31st and from Nov. 17th to 19th.

Monthly maxima at coastal sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	:	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS/Littleton Warth	1	2	1		1					1	1	
Sevenside		3	140	3	2			1	2	25	1	19
PW/Avonmouth Docks			40						10	1		
CI-Y	17	12	18			1		15	10	8	45	8
Sand Bay	10		13		5			1	3			
Axe Est./Weston Beach	1700		1						9	3		1

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

Uncommon passage migrant, more often in spring than in autumn; very scarce winter visitor. Scarce inland.

Apart from a few counts in late May and a couple in double figures from the western coastal area, 2010 was a below average year for this species. There were no records for March, June, October or November, but the maximum count of 24 at Severn Beach on May 24th was above average; see table below. Also note that the December records were unusual, especially at CVL. Probably in response to the freezing conditions there were a number of inland reports in the UK at this time, and the Avon records are likely to have formed part of this movement. The details are as follows:

OPS – five on May 12th;

Sevenside – one on April 22nd, two on May 16th, five on 23rd, 24 on 24th and eight on 26th, and three on Aug. 23rd and 24th;

CI-Y – one on May 20th, eight on 26th, two on Aug. 13th, four on 22nd and two on 26th;

Sand Bay – one on May 2nd and two on 22nd then twelve on Aug. 25th and four on 26th;

Axe Estuary – four on Jan. 3rd, five on 17th, eight on 24th with some remaining until six were seen on Feb. 21st, then 16 on Dec. 9th and one on 27th, see comment above;

CVL – an adult on July 17th and one on Dec. 4th, see comment above;

BL – one on July 17th (probably the same as above) and another on Oct. 9th.

1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
16	19	12	4	19	9	12	33	15	9	24
Maximum single Sevenside spring passage count										

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

Passage migrant; very scarce in spring, uncommon in autumn, although may be quite numerous in some years. Rare in winter.

In the Avon area 2010 was one of the worst years on record for this species continuing the poor run of sightings over the past decade; see the graph in the 2009 **Report**. The total of the monthly maxima was 13 which compares with 15 in 2009 but this total was 64 in 2001. Noted only from Aug. 28th to Oct. 31st, and all sightings were of single individuals except for four counts of two at CVL; the details are as follows:

Sevenside – Aug. 28th, Sept. 28th and Oct 16th;

PW – Sept. 8th and 28th, and Oct. 17th, 22nd and 30th;

Little Stint *con't*

CI-Y – Sept. 12th, 26th and Oct. 31st;

CVL – two from Sept. 22nd to 24th and on Oct. 9th, with single birds on Sept. 3rd and Oct. 28th and 29th;

BL – Aug. 26th and 31st, Sept. 25th and Oct. 6th.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*

Passage migrant; scarce in spring, uncommon in autumn. As with Little Stint, some autumns can be lean whilst others can record sizeable flocks. Very rare in winter.

WeBS status: In 2007/08 the Estuary was the second most important site.

Compared with the previous species 2010 was a good year for this species in the Avon area, in fact the best since 1993; see the graph in the 2009 **Report**. The total of the monthly maxima was 95 which compares with 20 in 2008 and nine in 2009, but there were no records outside the extended autumn period from Aug. 26th to Nov. 20th. The main details are summarised below; note that several counts were in double figures.

OPS – twelve on Sept. 12th and four on Oct. 14th with one on 16th;

Sevenside – single birds on Sept. 4th and 12th, and on Oct. 1st and 10th – a very poor showing at this site;

PW – one on Aug. 28th with five on 29th, then twelve on Sept. 7th dropping to four by the end of the month. In October there were seven on 7th dropping to three on 17th, then twelve again on 20th with two still present on 30th, and finally one on Nov. 20th;

CI-Y – one on Aug. 26th and 27th with two on 28th, five on Sept. 2nd rising to eight on 12th, two on 23rd, then single birds on five dates until Oct. 20th except for a flock of eleven on 7th;

Sand Bay – one on Aug 28th, two on 29th, four on Sept. 5th, five on 7th, then single birds until three on 25th;

Axe Est. – one on Sept. 24th;

CVL – one on Sept. 3rd, eight on 9th, nine on 22nd, and two on Oct. 12th;

BL – 13 on Aug. 31st.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima*

Scarce winter visitor; has declined during the past 15 years, but is now showing some signs of recovery. Very rare inland.

Description required for inland records.

The records for 2010 were very similar to those of the past few years. Noted on the coast at four sites up to May 17th and from Nov. 10th, although there were only single records from two of these which probably involved individuals from the two main sites. The details are as follows:

Sevenside – one at Severn Beach on Dec. 13th, 25 years ago this was the main Avon area site;

Battery Point, Portishead – four in January and February, three in March, five in April and on May 3rd with two still present on 17th, then two on Nov. 10th, three on 12th and five on 26th with three throughout December;

Birnbeck Island, Weston-s-Mare – seven from January to April 4th, the last spring sighting here, then seven again from Nov. 12th into 2011;

Axe Estuary – one on Jan 30th.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; uncommon in mid-summer. Small numbers occur inland on passage.

C. a. alpina breeding N Scandinavia to Siberia - mainly occurs as a winter visitor,

C. a. schinzii breeding N W Europe - mainly seen on passage,

WeBS status: In 2007/08 the Estuary was ninth in International Importance, it was fifth in 2004/05.

YEAR	OPS		Sevenside		CI-Y		Total	
1990/91 – 1999/00 Av.	934	289	2330	429	2506	147	5770	865
2000/01 – 2007/08 Av.	658	27	1965	482	1279	228	3902	737
2008/09	620	178	1242	130	1768	280	3630	588
2009/10	388	31	1700	37	2174	230	4262	298

Winter (Oct. to Feb.): Autumn passage (Aug. to Sept.) average counts

The winter period counts were fairly normal but those for both passages were generally poor to very poor. The status table above shows that the 2009/10 winter was reasonably good, but there were no high counts, the best being 4000 at CI-Y on March 1st. Information available so far suggests that the 2010/11 winter will be less productive. On the other hand the passage numbers were of considerable concern as were those for Ringed Plover. In spring all counts were below 100 except for two in the third week of April at CI-Y. In autumn counts in the south-western part of the Estuary were normal but those in the north-east were low with all counts below 50 continuing a recent trend. The second table summarises all counts, note that some late autumn reservoir counts were unusually high.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	900	320	30	1	5			12	50	800	800	1200
Littleton Warth	600	900	175					5		400	700	600
Severnside	2400	1000	350	40	80		10	48	35	550	1500	1000
R. Avon, Sea Mills	3	35	6								5	20
PW/Avonmouth Docks	1000	800	250	26	33	1	150	100	600	1100	1400	900
CI-Y	2650	1600	4000	170	65	5	55	210	250	700	1500	1850
Sand Bay	1300	550	270		50	2	5	200	150	35	85	250
Axe Est.	2600	1010	71	4					40	10	500	1000
BG				1	3			1				
CVL			1	7	2			4	6	5	122	49
BL							1	5	3	2	45	38

Arctica Dunlin *C. a. arctica*

Breeding N E Greenland - probably a regular migrant in very small numbers, mainly in late spring.

There were two records in May at Severn Beach: at least two were seen on 23rd in a flock of 66 Dunlin, and four were seen on 26th in a flock of 22 Dunlin [JPM].

An account of the status of this subspecies in the Avon area is given on page 149.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

Uncommon autumn passage migrant; scarce in winter and on spring passage.

Birds were more widespread and numerous than in past two years although no records were broken, see the table below. Two were noted in the first winter period, none were reported on spring passage, the autumn passage started on Aug. 8th and continued until early November, and there were some records during the cold weather in December. The details are as follows:

Severnside – one at Aust Warth on Aug. 31st, as last year there was only a single sighting at this site;

R. Avon at Sea Mills – a male on Dec. 26th, the tenth record for this site;

PW – one on Sept. 28th;

CI-Y – a male on Oct. 2nd and 7th, and two on Dec. 2nd with three on 3rd at the Dowlais Farm site;

Sand Bay – six on the evening tide on Sept. 18th;

Weston STW – one on March 1st, then another on Aug. 18th with two on 30th, three (one male and two females) on Sept. 5th with one remaining until 11th;

CVL – one on Feb. 5th, then single birds noted on many dates from Aug. 8th to Nov. 21st with two on Oct. 28th and Nov. 1st, the table on page 75 gives more details;

BL – single birds from Aug. 22nd to 30th, and on Oct. 9th and 10th.

1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
43	47	26	26	10	35	11	35	3	12	29
Total for the year of the maximum monthly counts										

JACK SNIFE *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant; probably overlooked.

WeBS status: In 2007/08 the Estuary was the ninth most important site.

Counts were about average in the first winter period but down in the second. This was especially so in December, birds may have left the area in the cold weather or perhaps were more difficult to find. Present until mid-April, the last were single birds at CVL on 13th and Congresbury Moor on 14th, and from Oct. 2nd with one on Northwick Warth.

Monthly maximum counts from the main sites are given in the table overleaf.

The non-tabulated reports, all of single individuals, were as follows: In January at Keynsham (on 19th) and Westerleigh (on 27th), in March at two sites in Keynsham (on 7th and 8th) and at West Littleton (also on 8th), in November on Congresbury Moor (on 16th), and in December at Ebbdown Farm (on 5th) and Shire Valley (on 21st) both in ST77.

Jack Snipe con't

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites								
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	:	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS/Littleton Warth	1		1				1	
Sevenside	5	2	2			2	3	1
PW	3	1	1			1	2	2
CI-Y	2	1	1			1	2	1
Axe Est./Weston STW	3			1		1	3	1
BG	1	1	2					
CVL	1			1		2	3	

SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; has undergone a decline in the last decade. Rare breeder.

Two races: *gallinago* (palearctic) and *faeroeensis* (breeding N Isles and Iceland). Most in Avon are from the race *gallinago* but an unknown, but probably very small, number of *faeroeensis* may also occur.

WeBS status: In 2007/08 the Estuary was the fourth most important site.

YEAR	OPS	Sevenside	CI-Y	Total
1990/91 - 1999/00 Av.	>21	15	18	54+
2000/01 - 2007/08 Av.	43	15	14	72
2008/09	20	21	29	70
2009/10	8	15	18	41

November to February average counts

Counts in the first winter period were a bit low whilst those in the second were well down. The status table counts for the 2009/10 winter which refer to coastal sites were low, and those for 2010/11 are likely to be lower still.

A few inland sites did have some reasonable numbers with 165 at the Axe Estuary on Jan.1st and 100 on Clapton Moor on 29th, but these were not repeated in the second winter period. Noted up to April 27th (Weston STW) and from July 12th (CVL), the table gives the monthly maxima at the well-watched sites.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	:	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	17	10	4					2			
Littleton Warth			1				3		7	6	1
Sevenside	8	35	12	3			8	1	3		2
ASW/Hour Gout		5	4					2		16	6
R. Avon, Sea Mills	1	2	1						5	9	4
PW	78	47	20	2					12	18	52
CI-Y	20	11	6	1			2		2	12	12
Sand Bay			9					1		2	
Axe Est./Weston STW	165			2			1	7	2	7	1
Batheaston NR	1	3	1	3				2	6		
Leap Valley, Downend	1		1								3
Gordano Valley*	100			3				2		48	
Kenn Moor			26	9							
CVL	3		6	1		1	4	9	11	14	6
BL	6	6	10	1			2	5	2	20	1

* incl. Clapton Moor

Counts of five or more were also noted at Yate in January, West Littleton and Inglestone Common in March, Bristol International Airport in October, and Wrington in December.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

Uncommon winter visitor, but almost certainly overlooked. Has bred in the past.

Many more were reported in the two winter periods than usual probably because in the cold weather birds became more visible, although a real increase cannot be ruled out. A total of 89 bird-days was recorded during the year, this compares with 43 in 2009 which also had a cold winter and an average of about 21 over the previous decade. Noted up to March 21st (at Weston Airfield and CVL) and from Oct. 26th (in a Yatton garden), although most of the records were for January and December. The details are as follows.

First-winter period, records refer to single birds in January unless stated otherwise OPS on 9th: Severnside on 4th and 9th: PW on 8th, 9th (three), 16th (three), 30th (four) and Feb. 4th (three), Gordano Valley (including Weston Big Wood) on 3rd, 9th (three), 10th and 17th, Kingston Seymour (including CI-Y) 9th (three), 31st and Feb. 18th, Weston STW on 7th, Weston Airfield on March 21st, Charfield on Feb. 14th, Wooscombe Bottom on 5th, Old Down on Feb.10th, Marshfield on 10th (two), Lower Woods on 24th, Flax Bourton on 7th, Dundry on 18th and Feb.16th, Kenn Moor on 18th, Feb. 20th and March 11th, CVL on 17th and March 21st, and BL on 29th.

Second-winter period One at Yatton on Oct. 26th (as noted above), one at Folly Farm on Nov. 14th and one at BL on 25th and 28th, otherwise all records refer to single birds (unless stated otherwise) in December: OPS two on 19th and three on 26th, Severnside on 8th, 10th, 11th, 19th, 22nd, 24th, 26th, and 27th, Hallen on 10th and 21st, Easter Compton including Cribbs Causeway on 10th, R. Avon at Sea Mills on 26th, PW on 1st, 7th, 26th (two) and 31st, Maplefield on 6th, Tunley on 9th, Burnett on 7th (two), Compton Dando on 11th, Saltford on 26th, Downend, Leap Valley on 24th and Blackhorse also on 24th, Bristol, St Andrews in a garden on 3rd, Westbury-on-Trym on 7th and Montpelier on 27th, Bath (Victoria Park) on 19th (two), Weston-in-Gordano on 31st, Kenn Moor on 13th (three), Cleve on 4th, and CVL on 3rd.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

Limosa l. islandica (breeding N Isles and Iceland) - *Uncommon passage migrant; generally more numerous in autumn. Scarce in winter.*

Limosa l. limosa (breeding W Europe and east) - *Rare visitor, definite records in June and July only.*

The species is classed as 'Near Threatened' by BirdLife International due to a decline of >25% in 15 years, although *islandica* continued to increase in Britain until 2004/05 and has since been stable since then.

There has been a notable fall in the sightings of this species over the past few years. In 2003 the Avon coastal monthly maxima total reached a high point of over 1000 (see the graph in last year's **Report**), in 2010 it was 91 and the decline has been fairly uniform during this period. This fall is most noticeable for Severnside where counts in three figures have been recorded in the recent past, in 2010 no count was over seven. The table below gives the monthly maxima at all sites, note that there were no records for February and the highest count was 23 at CVL on Aug. 22nd.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites

	Jan	:	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	1		4		10				14	2		
Severnside	1		6	3		3	2	7	3	6	2	6
PW	1					2	3	5	2			
CI-Y	1		1	1				7	3	1		4
Sand Bay	1							2	1			
Axe Estuary	2							3		1		4
CVL					1	10	6	23	10	2	1	
BL							1	4	4	1		1

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*

Passage migrant in varying numbers - usually uncommon, but can occur in good numbers on spring passage, often coinciding with easterly winds. Scarce in winter and inland.

Apart from a single count of 65 on April 19th at Northwick Warth the spring passage was virtually non-existent but a few more than usual were noted in the autumn and second winter periods. Overall the total of the monthly maxima at 175 was slightly up on those of 2008 and 2009 but well down on the figure of 1300+ for 2007; see the graph given in last year's **Report**.

The coastal counts are tabulated below. There was only one inland record: two seen and heard in flight over a garden in Whitchurch (on the southern outskirts of Bristol) in thick fog on Oct. 7th were clearly disoriented by the conditions (GS).

Monthly maxima at regularly counted coastal sites

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	:	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS				1			1	23	2		2
Littleton Warth								1	3	1	
Severnside		5	1	65	2			3		1	8
PW/Avonmouth Docks		1			4		1	4	3	2	7
CI-Y	3		2	4			1	10	3	1	
Sand Bay				1				8	1		
Axe Estuary	2							2	1	1	

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

Passage migrant, uncommon in autumn, but fairly common in spring. Scarce summer visitor and very rare in winter. Uncommon inland on passage.

Two races: *phaeopus* (breeding Iceland, Europe and east) and *hudsonicus* (breeding Canada). All Avon records are for the race *phaeopus*. There is one record of *hudsonicus* for the Welsh side of the Severn Estuary.

WeBS status: In 2007/08 the Estuary was the fifth most important site, in 2002/3 it was first.

Migration dates: Forty year average first date April 12th. Forty year average last date Oct. 3rd.

YEAR	OPS	Severnside	CI-Y	Total
1991 - 2000 Av.	30	29	79	138
2001 - 2008 Av.	24	52	64	140
2009	15	40	51	106
2010	4	26	40	70

April and May average counts

The trend of lower counts noted in the past few years seemed to accelerate in 2010. The status table above shows a fall at all sites and this was typical for all other areas. There were only two counts in excess of 40: at Sand Bay with 43 on April 27th and at CI-Y with 46 on 29th, last year the two highest counts were 72 and 62 also for the last week of April.

First noted on April 11th (eleven on Severnside) and the last spring passage record was for May 26th (five at Weston STW). As usual a few were noted in summer but none between May 26th and June 16th, and there was a small autumn passage. The last was seen from Sand Point on Oct. 7th – a late last date although occasionally single birds have been seen in winter, for instance in 1986 and 1999.

The table summarises the counts at the main sites.

Maxima at main sites									
	Apr		May		Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
	11-20	21-30	1-10	11-31					
OPS	3			4		3	1		
Littleton Warth	21						1		
Severnside	31	21	20	4		3	3	4	
PW	8	9	10	4	3	3	1		
CI-Y	18	46	34	8	1	2	6	1	
Sand Bay	28	43	20	12	1	2	4	1	1
Axe Est.			5	5			1		
CVL		8		1		4	1	1	

The only non-tabulated records were of two by the R. Avon at Sea Mills on April 21st and six at BG on Aug. 26th.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant, uncommon in summer. A very rare breeder. Uncommon inland.

WeBS status: In 2007/08 the Estuary was eighth in National Importance (there are two of International Importance).

On a world scale this species is described as "Near threatened".

YEAR	OPS	S-side	CI-Y	Axe E.	Total
1990/91 - 1999/00 Av.	589	178	154	69	990
2000/01 - 2007/08 Av.	228	173	156	65	622
2008/09	160	134	155	28	477
2009/10	333	149	150	25	657

August to February average counts

The status table shows an improvement in the 2009/10 autumn/winter period compared with that of a year before, this is mainly due to better counts from OPS, and it seems likely that this will continue into the 2010/11 period. But in general counts are down on those of a decade ago.

The table below summarises the coastal and near coastal counts.

Inland counts included two at Tunley Hill in February, three at both Saltford and Nailsea in December, two at CVL in March and single birds here in April, June, August and December, and one at BL in September with seven in December.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	355	440	240	300	20	2	425	200	245	150	700	300
Littleton Warth	140	96	315	2	1	1	1	30	14	260	22	280
Severnside	90	100	100	81	5	110	140	190	205	200	90	90
R. Avon, Sea Mills		6	4	1							3	1
PW/Avonmouth Docks	8	27	28	27	3	55	76	70	80	70	190	26
CI-Y	155	120	125	70	10	110	130	85	200	123	130	145
Sand Bay	15	85	125	60	3	60	12	140	185	80	34	56
Axe Est.	87	73	70	2	2			6			37	

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos*

Uncommon passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

	1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Spring	67	(38)	65	65	65	57	29	38	93	65	88
Autumn	187	138	160	166	178	136	139	141	184	186	197

Totals for the year of the maximum monthly counts at the coastal and reservoir sites for spring and autumn passage

The improvement noted since 2008 continued into 2010 with strong spring and autumn passages, the latter extending into September more than is normally the case.

Noted at four sites during the winter periods, as usual most were seen on the R. Avon in the Sea Mills area normally up to three but six were noted on March 7th. The spring passage lasted from March 30th (at Stup Pill) until May 23rd (at CVL). Most were seen in the last ten days of April when counts in double figures were recorded on several days at CVL, the best being 18 on 21st. But the best count was 24 at BG on 22nd. The autumn passage started on June 18th (at CVL) and lasted until late October, that is as noted above it lasted longer than usual. The highest single count, 15 at BG, was for Sept. 4th.

The table below summarises the main counts. Non-tabulated sightings included four by the R. Avon at Keynsham on April 30th, single birds at Sand Bay on Aug. 7th, 22nd and 28th, one seen near Bath on Sept. 30th, and one at Rownham Hill on Dec. 10th and 31st.

Fortnightly or monthly maxima at regularly counted sites

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		May	Jun	Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct	Nov	Dec
				1-15	16-30			1-15	16-31	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30			
OPS					3			1	3	2		7				
Littleton Warth									2			2				
Severnside			1	1	6		13	8	10	2	6	7	1			
R. Avon*	2	3	6	1	5			3	1	1	2	1	3	3	3	
PW					3		1	2	7	1	5	2				
CI-Y				1	2	3	5	12	9	8	8	9	2	1	1	1
Axe Est./Weston STW	1				3	2			6	3	2	5	1			
BG				3	24	6	5	5	10	3	7	15	3	1		
CVL				3	18	4	2	5	6	9	6	9	2	2		
BL				1	7	4		11	9	3	4	4	7	2	1	1

R. Avon* includes the river bank at Sea Mills and the New Cut (Southville).

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon passage migrant; more numerous in autumn. Scarce winter visitor.

1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
90	100	110	124	70	76	76	51	63	94	110

Total for the year of the maximum monthly counts for coastal and reservoir sites

There has been a noticeable improvement during the past three years as is shown in the status table above. In 2010 good numbers at the reservoirs in autumn provided the majority of the records, at CVL counts were in double figures on most days from Aug. 5th to Sept. 8th. On the other hand counts at the coastal sites were generally on the low side, access problems at ASW will have affected the counts at this site.

Present up to April 14th and from June 22nd (both at CVL), the table below lists the monthly maxima at the main sites.

Green Sandpiper con't

Non-tabulated sightings, all but one of single individuals, were as follows: In January at Yatton on 8th and Kenn Moor on 14th, in September at Chelvey on 21st, in October at BG on 2nd, and in December at Warmley on 8th, Congresbury Moor on 27th, with two at Chew Magna Res. on Nov. 26th.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	:	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sevenside			1				1	2		2		
ASW/Hoar Gout		1				1	1	1	1			
Over/Pilning		1	1							3		
CI-Y			1			1	2	3	1	1	1	
Axe Est./Weston STW	3							1				
CVL	1	2	2	1		1	3	16	11	5	8	3
BL						1	1	11	13	2	1	2

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*

Scarce autumn passage migrant and winter visitor, very scarce in spring.

Counts on the coast were similar to those of 2009 but there was an improved showing at the reservoirs during the autumn passage due probably to the low water levels, although no count was above four. Again none were seen on spring passage. The details are as follows:

OPS – single birds on Feb. 27th and Oct. 2nd;

Sevenside – three on Sept. 5th and one on 30th;

R. Avon at Sea Mills – one on Nov. 10th;

PW – one on Aug. 31st;

CI-Y – as usual one noted in both winter periods up to April 21st and from Oct. 16th although two were seen on Nov. 28th;

Axe Estuary/Weston STW – single birds on Jan. 12th and 17th, April 13th and Oct. 10th;

CVL – an adult on Aug. 12th, then one or two juveniles noted from 21st to Sept. 3rd with three on Aug. 21st and 22nd, and four on 26th, see table on page 75;

BL – one on Aug. 28th, two on 29th, and one again until Sept. 6th.

The table below gives an estimate of the total of the maximum counts for birds on passage at the main coastal and reservoir sites over the past 20 years. One or two birds began wintering in the Avon area in 1996, and so in some years it was not clear whether a particular individual was on passage or beginning/ending its winter stay.

	1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Spring	1	2	0	0	0	4	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Autumn	35	7	12	5	10	7	10	4	11	6	2	3	4	3	4	6	3	3	2	12

Spring and autumn passage, total of the maximum counts

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

Uncommon passage migrant; more numerous in autumn than in spring. Scarce in winter.

	1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
CI-Y	13	9	10	8	5	3	4	3	4	4	6
CVL	9	5	4	23	4	5	1	2	1	7	10

Maximum single counts for the year at CI-Y and CVL

Coastal counts were in line with those of the recent past and the CVL sightings were only slightly better. But there was an unprecedented and prolonged series of records at BL with some staying for many weeks and a maximum count of 44, the highest count at this site although 40 were recorded here in September 1980.

As usual one was present at Sea Mills in both winter periods, there was a tiny spring passage between April 22nd and 29th with no count over one, and the autumn passage involving at least 70 individuals lasted from July 12th to Nov. 21st (both at CVL). Except for BL the highest autumn counts were for the first week of September and there was a reasonable showing from then until late October. At BL one was seen on Aug. 5th, four on 8th, then 33 on 16th rising to 44 on 21st with 29 still present on the last day of the month. In September there were 15 on 4th, 17 on 7th, 14 on 11th, eight on 18th and six on 24th, and the last was seen on Oct. 18th.

Apart from these records and those tabulated below one was at Sand Bay on Aug. 30th, and there were three October records: three at Marshfield (Rushmead Lane field) on 10th, one at Yate (Kingsgate Pool) on 13th and another at BG also on 10th.

Fortnightly or monthly maxima at regularly counted sites													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	:	Jul	Aug		Sep		Oct	Nov	Dec
							1 – 15	16 – 31	1 - 15	16 - 30			
OPS/Littleton Warth								1		1			
Sevenside				1			1	2	4	2	1	1	
R. Avon, Sea Mills	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
PW				1				1					
CI-Y				1			1		6	1	2		
Weston STW								3	4	1	2		
CVL						1	1	3	10	4	6	2	
BL							8	44	15	8	3		

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

Passage migrant, very scarce in spring and scarce in autumn, most frequent at CVL.

After an exceptional series of records last year the sightings in 2010 were at a more normal level with probably four occurring, one on the coast and three inland; see the graph in the 2009 **Report**. The details are as follows.

Sevenside – one at Northwick Warth on Aug. 26th, the second consecutive year that one was seen here;

CVL – one on Aug. 22nd;

BL – single birds on Aug. 19th and 20th, and from Sept. 5th to 9th.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor; uncommon in summer, very scarce breeder. Uncommon inland.

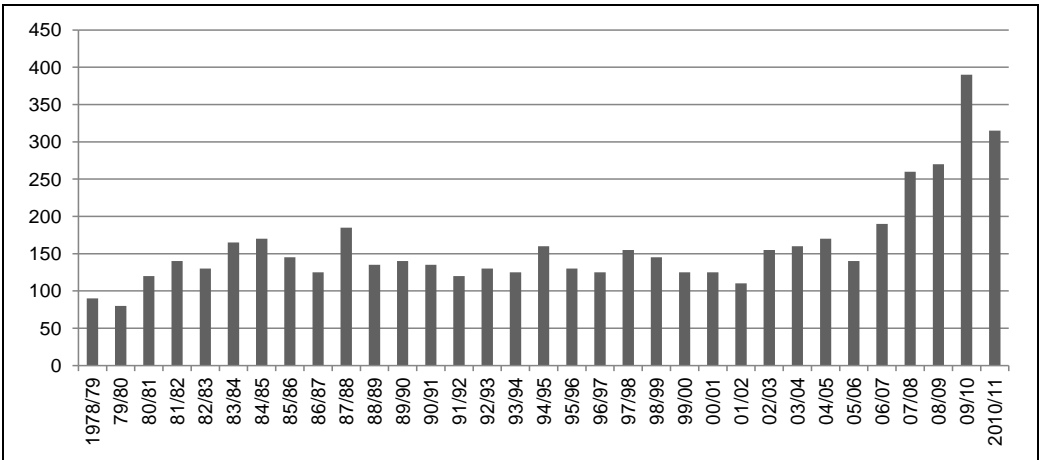
Two races: *totanus* (breeding Europe to east) and *robusta* (breeding Iceland). It is assumed that most in Avon are from the race *totanus*, but an unknown proportion of *robusta* almost certainly occur.

WeBS status: In 2007/08 the Estuary was fifteenth in National Importance (there are eleven sites of International Importance).

YEAR	OPS	Sea Mills	CI-Y	Axe E.	Total
1990/91 – 1999/00 Av.	57	81	109	167	414
2000/01 - 2007/08 Av.	33	97	125	218	473
2008/09	85	85	173	233	576
2009/10	40	79	214	168	501

August to February average counts

In 2010 this species showed a mixed picture. Except for one site, CI-Y, counts were down in the 2009/10 autumn/winter period, and this is likely to continue into the 2010/11 period. On the other hand the Axe Estuary recorded a count of 300 in early March but the best here was 625 on Oct. 25th. This is the highest single count in the Avon area for at least the last 30 years. Quite large flocks have also been seen regularly at the high tide roosts at CI-Y where counts in excess of 300 are not uncommon (good feeding conditions in the Yeo Estuary area may be one explanation). The graph below giving the maximum single CI-Y winter count illustrates the increase in the sightings at this site. Note that there was also a count of 520 in late October 2007 just outside the winter period.



Maximum single winter period count at CI-Y

Redshank can't

The main table below summarises the counts from the coast and reservoir sites. Four further inland records were received, they were two at Newton St. Loe on May 9th (see below), 16 to NW over Leap Valley, Downend on Aug. 30th, and single birds at the "Honda" pool at Avonmouth and Rownham Hill in December.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	22	30	34	3			3	15		22	54	25
Littleton Warth	40	70	66	23			1	2	6	120	85	90
Sevenside	70	60	85	18			40	75	150	110	80	125
Sea Mills, R. Avon	50	72	32	75			11	52	97	70	70	17
PW	95	110	82	55	1	60	110	200	300	150	88	69
CI-Y	180	140	240	190	2	6	60	160	310	290	300	315
Sand Bay	90									12	2	3
Axe Est.	200	140	300	120	3	17	225	425	400	625	255	22
BG				1			1					
CVL				1		3	1	1	2			1
BL							4	5		3		

Breeding As in 2008 and 2009 breeding activity was noted at CI-Y mainly near the Dowlais Farm scrape. Display was noted but no evidence of a successful nest was received. The record mentioned above from Newton St. Loe may possibly have related to a breeding attempt.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*

Fairly common winter visitor/passage migrant. Scarce mid-summer and inland

YEAR	OPS	Sevenside	CI-Y	Total
1990/91 - 1999/00 Av.	63	142	29	234
2000/01 - 2007/08 Av.	47	130	26	203
2008/09	39	135	33	207
2009/10	28	88	31	147

August to February average counts

As with many other wader species counts in the 2009/10 autumn/winter period were uniformly down, the status table total, at 147, is the lowest for the past twenty years. And it was the Sevenside counts that lead the way, a site that is experiencing a major decline at the present time; see page 75. Also as in 2009 there was a two-month gap, from May 26th to July 21st when no birds were reported anywhere in the Avon area. The table below summarises all counts.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	:	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	30	40	8					12		17	38	10
Littleton Warth	12	26						10	1	25	3	
Sevenside	100	70	140	110	25		10	70	110	15	140	110
PW	32	5		30			1	50	40	60	10	
CI-Y	32	24	28	17			2	22	33	34	34	40
CVL								4	2			

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus*

Rare passage migrant

Description species

One record: a juvenile at BL on Oct. 4th and 5th (AHD, RMI, MPe *et al.*).

This species has been recorded in eight of the last 50 years mostly at the reservoirs, four times at BL. But the two most recent records were coastal at Wick St. Lawrence in October 2002, and Weston STW in August 2008.

GREY PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Scarce, wind driven visitor, usually in autumn, very rare at other times. The majority of records are inland.

Description species

Two records involving three birds: two first-winters at CVL from Sept. 15th until 20th (RJH *et al.*), and an adult on the R. Yeo at CI-Y on Nov. 10th brought in by the high tide (HER). Four were noted in 2009 but three per year is about the average for past 25 years; see the graph in last year's **Report**.

Autumn Migration at Chew Valley Lake

Water levels at the lake were again on the low side for most of the autumn period providing good feeding conditions for the waders. Even so numbers were fairly low compared with some other years when the water level was also low, for instance in 2005 and 2009; see table below.

1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
543	286	178	786	281	834	211	134	108	569	505

Excluding Lapwing, total of all wader maximum ten-day counts at CVL between July 1st and Oct. 28th

As in previous reports the table below gives the maximum count for each species in each ten-day period from July 1st to Oct. 28th.

	Jul			Aug			Sep			Oct		
	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-9	10-19	20-29	30-8	9-18	19-28	29-8	9-18	19-28
Garganey	0	1	2	2	1	3	5	4	3	0	1	0
Oystercatcher		3		2	2							
Little Ringed Plover	1	1	1	3	1		2		6	1		
Ringed Plover				2	9	12	3	3	11	16	2	1
Golden Plover												17
Grey Plover										2		1
Lapwing	29	62	51	60	65	25	35	50	70	90	140	290
Knot								1				1
Sanderling		1										
Little Stint							1		2		2	1
Curlew Sandpiper							1	8	9		2	
Dunlin				1	1	4	3	6	4	5	2	3
Ruff				1	1	1	1	1		1	1	2
Jack Snipe												2
Snipe		1		2	4	1	8	6	9	11	3	1
Black-tailed Godwit	1	6	3	2	14	23	3	1	10		2	2
Whimbrel		4				1		1				
Curlew						1						
Common Sandpiper	5	8	6	9	6	6	9	4	2	2	8	
Green Sandpiper	1	1	2	12	13	16	11	9	8	5	8	5
Spotted Redshank					1	4	2					
Greenshank	1				3	2	10	6	4	6	1	
Wood Sandpiper						1						
Redshank	1		1	1	1		1	2				
Turnstone						4	2					
Grey Phalarope								2	2			

Maximum count in each ten day period

Autumn Wader Migration on the Coast

Using the same ten-day counting method as for CVL above, the table below delineates the autumn coastal wader migration at two of the best-watched coastal sites – Severnside (SS) and CI-Y. This is the fourth year this table has been published, and so some comparison of the records for the different years is now possible. During the period counts at Severnside have declined dramatically whilst those at CI-Y have improved, the reason(s) for this change are unclear; more human disturbance and/or a change in the intertidal vegetation affecting the roost sites have been suggested. Another suggestion is hinted at in the paper by R Perkins on page 133. He notes that the general 'clean-up' of the R. Severn is having a marked detrimental effect on the invertebrate populations in the Severn mud by reducing the nutrient levels, and this is probably affecting wader numbers as it is affecting the fish populations. This is shown in the first table below which gives the totals of all counts presented in the main table for the two sites involved.

	2007	08	09	2010
Severnside	4216	3005	1858	1828
CI-Y	1934	1823	2983	3102

Totals of the maximum ten-day counts for Severnside and CI-Y as given in the main table below

In 2010 compared with August the September counts were stronger than usual, although as in 2009 the Common Sandpiper passage was at its height in late July.

		Jul			Aug			Sep			Oct		
		1-10	11-20	21-30	31-9	10-19	20-29	30-8	9-18	19-28	29-8	9-18	19-28
Little Ringed Plover	CI-Y							1					
Ringed Plover	SS		1			40		20	1	6		1	
	CI-Y			9	80	120	210	150	70	21	17		
Golden Plover	SS											1	
	CI-Y				1					5			
Grey Plover	SS									2	20		
	CI-Y									8	11	6	26
Knot	SS						1	1	1	2	25	1	
	CI-Y						15	12	10	3	8	2	
Sanderling	SS						3						
	CI-Y					2	4						
Little Stint	SS									1		1	
	CI-Y									1			
Curlew Sandpiper	SS							1	1		1	1	
	CI-Y						1	5	8	2	11	1	1
Dunlin	SS		9	10		48		18	8	35	400	500	550
	CI-Y		34	55	45	70	210	200	250	120	280	180	700
Ruff	SS							1					
	CI-Y										1		
Black-tailed Godwit	SS			2		5	7	1	2	3	6		
	CI-Y					4	7	3	3				1
Bar-tailed Godwit	SS								3	2			
	CI-Y							1	10	1	1	1	3
Whimbrel	SS		1	3		1	3	4	1				
	CI-Y		3	2	6	5	2	1	1				
Common Sandpiper	SS	8	10	9	2	6	4	4	7	1			
	CI-Y	4	12	9	8	5	4	8	9	2		1	
Green Sandpiper	SS			1		2	1					2	1
	CI-Y		1	2	3	3	1	1				1	
Spotted Redshank	SS							3			1		
	CI-Y											1	1
Greenshank	SS					2	2	4		2			1
	CI-Y				1	1		6	2	1	2	1	1
Wood Sandpiper	SS						1						

Maximum count in each ten day period

POMARINE SKUA *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Scarce spring passage migrant and storm-driven autumn/winter visitor. Very rare inland.

Description species

A poor year with just one record.

Severn Beach - two pale-morphs drifted high to SW at 07.55hrs on April 28th (PDB).

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Uncommon spring passage migrant and storm-driven visitor (mainly spring or autumn). Rare inland (mainly at CVL).

Descriptions required for inland records

A poor year, the worst in the last decade, with only 17 seen.

Spring passage The first was noted on March 30th at Severn Beach. In April there was one at Ladye Bay on 23rd, two at Anchor Head on 25th, two at Severn beach on 28th and five here on 30th. Two were at Sand Pt. on May 1st and the last were two at OPS on 15th.

Autumn passage Dire with just two records of single birds; downchannel at Sand Pt. on Aug. 23rd and a juvenile to NE at Severn Beach on Nov. 11th.

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua*

Scarce spring passage migrant and storm-driven visitor. Rare inland.

Descriptions required for inland records

A poor year, the worst in the last decade, with just three records of single birds, which could all refer to a single individual, in November, as follows;

OPS – 12th;

Severn Beach – the afternoon of 11th, with the same or another, the following morning.

Skuas in the Avon area

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Pomarine Skua	1	0	0	59	4	3	13	3	17	2
Arctic Skua	34+	45+	54	65	23	50+	51	37	47	17
Long-tailed Skua		1						1		
Great Skua	11+	16+	16	26	10	26+	13	4	14	3
Skua sp.	3	1	1	58	11	6	7		5	

Total number of skuas for the last ten years

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*

Usually a storm-driven visitor; uncommon, but large flocks sometimes occur in the Estuary. Also occurs in anticyclonic conditions in early spring as a presumed migrant. Scarce inland, usually only at CVL.

A poor year, recorded on only eleven dates (23 in 2008, 33 in 2009).

Spring passage Only recorded on four dates (all at Severn Beach unless otherwise stated); Feb. 26th (40, with 40 also at Weston-s-Mare and 22 at Sand Pt.) and 28th (40 at Weston-s-Mare), March 13th (175 flying upriver in the evening) and 15th (35 in the evening).

Autumn passage The only record was of three upchannel at Sand Pt. in the afternoon of Aug. 23rd.

Winter records Strong south westerly winds in November resulted in 62 at Severn Beach by late afternoon on 11th with 30 at Battery Pt. and a single adult at Severn Beach the next morning.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Av. of 3 highest counts	53	317	303	263	166	416	88	170	233	92
No. of dates recorded	27	36	22	30	29	22	27	23	19	5

Sevenside – data over last ten years

Inland records Only recorded at CVL, with an adult on March 21st and a first-winter on Sept. 15th and 16th.

Ringling recovery An adult found freshly dead at Weston-s-Mare on Aug. 25th had been ringed as a nestling on Gugh in the Scilly Isles on July 13th, 1999.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Abundant winter visitor and passage migrant; small numbers of non-breeding birds remain throughout the summer. Huge winter roost at CVL.

WeBS status: CVL is second in the list of sites of International Importance for 2007/08.

Although our commonest wintering gull, Atlas data shows that it is not as widespread as it was in the past.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 379 tetrads in 1984 and 287 in 2010, a change of -24%.

At RPD a dawn count on Jan. 11th revealed 6,190 moving inland; at the Avon Gorge on Dec. 27th at least 5,000 were counted flying upriver between 08.00 and 08.30hrs. The only other four-figure counts were 1,500 at ASW on Jan. 1st, 1,500 at OPS on Jan. 24th (with 1,400 here on Feb. 27th and 1,200 on Sept. 22nd), 1,000 at Sea Mills on Feb. 28th, commuting between the R. Avon and flooded fields at Ham Green, and an accurate roost count of 1,642 at BL on Nov. 13th.

There were some good counts from OPS, Sea Mills and BL as shown in the table below:

Black-headed Gull con't

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	1500	1400	260	6	46	104	700	400	1200	335	220	37
Littleton Warth	23	45	70				250	190	950	700	110	300
Sevenside	200		110		17		300	500		100	98	
CI-Y	300	240	140	1	2	70	600	500	350	545	380	179
Sand Bay	400	675	125			150	550	610	200	850	110	60
Axe Estuary	50	23	35			45		350	350	250	37	
Weston STW	60	71	30	14		12	454	613	729	250	155	184
Sea Mills	120	1000	150				35	87	170	40	100	200
R. Avon, Keynsham	120											
Leap Valley, Downend	110	8	4				1	15	5	20	14	115
BL	370	2000	48	4	1	5	178	454	114	600	1642	108

The first juveniles of the summer were three at Weston STW and two at CVL on June 29th, with five at CVL on July 2nd and three at OPS next day.

Other records The following colour morphs were noted: a partial albino at RPD on March 8th, a leucistic individual at New Passage on Nov. 28th and an albino at BG on Dec. 15th. A colour-ringed bird (white PJJ), seen at BG on Dec. 22nd, 2009, had been ringed as an adult male in Gentofte, Denmark in March 2005. It was at BG in January 2006 and subsequently in Solna, Sweden in March 2010.

LITTLE GULL *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Uncommon passage migrant; scarce in winter.

A good year at CVL but poor elsewhere.

Spring passage There was a strong spring passage at least at CVL, with the first record here (an adult) on Feb. 28th, the last, seven (five adults, a second-summer and a first-summer) on April 25th and flocks of 25 on both April 6th and 10th. The only other spring record was three at BL on March 26th.

Autumn passage Autumn passage was also largely confined to CVL and took place between Aug. 26th and Nov. 10th; elsewhere there were a juvenile at New Passage on Sept. 19th, an adult at BG on Nov. 7th and an adult and a first-winter at Severn Beach on 12th.

CVL summary										
	February	March	April	:	August	September	October	November		
No. of days recorded	1	6	8		2	10	12	7		
Maximum count	1	3	25		2	1	6	3		
	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Av. of 3 highest counts Jan - Jun	1	1	13	2	2	5	3	6	3	19
Av. of 3 highest counts Jul - Dec	1	15	1	3	1	2	5	1	3	5

CVL – average counts

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

Uncommon, but increasing winter visitor and passage migrant.

Although reported from a good spread of sites, numbers were poor by recent standards as is shown by the second table below. The first table shows the monthly maxima from the nine main sites.

Monthly maxima at main sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	1						2	2				
Sevenside						1	4	2	1	1	1	
RPD		4	1			1			1		3	
Portbury Wharf								1		1	1	1
Portishead area	2	1	2					1	1	1	1	1
Weston STW							1	2	2		1	
Sea Mills	1	2	1					1			1	1
BG	1	1	1							1	4	
CVL	3	4	4	1		1	3	2	1	2	2	1

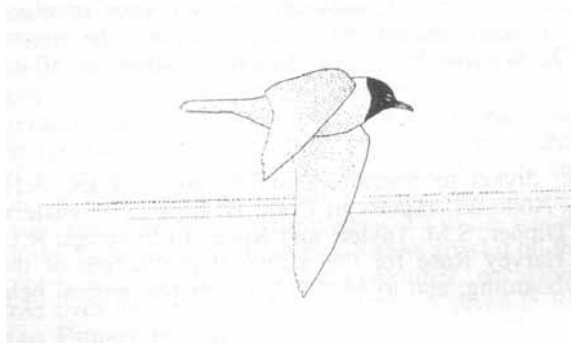
Also recorded from an additional twelve sites, with one on Feb. 27th the only record from BL. At Caswell Lane, Portbury one was feeding in ploughed fields on Oct. 20th and 22nd, with two here from Nov. 1st to 13th.

An unusual record was of an adult at Fishpool Hill, Brentry on Nov. 13th feeding with Black-headed Gulls.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of sites	16	14	16	17	14	17	23	23	20	21
Max count	n/a	n/a	8	5	11	6	8	7	6	4

Number of sites and maximum single counts in last 10 years

Observers are encouraged to continue to report all sightings of this species.



COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; scarce in summer. Largest flocks are usually on upland or flooded fields and are often thinly spread elsewhere. Huge (c18,000) winter roost at CVL.

WeBS status: CVL is fifth in the list of sites of National Importance for 2007/08.

Atlas data shows that this species is not as widespread as it was in the past:

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 267 tetrads in 1984 and 165 in 2010, a change of -38%.

The table below shows the maximum counts from the main sites excluding CVL.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	50	100	80	4			3	6	26	1	10	10
Sevenside			5	30				1		2	15	8
BL	19	244	193							2	72	1000

The only records between May 16th (two at Axe Est.) and July 10th (one at OPS) were from CVL on June 7th (one) and 22nd (two).

Reported from a total of 34 sites (37 in 2009), most of which were of single or double-figure counts. The only three-figure counts not included above were as follows;

Marshfield – 400 on Feb. 6th, with 300 on 13th and 100 on Oct. 23rd;

Norton Malreward – 150 on Nov. 28th.

Other records Records from unusual urban locations, presumably as a result of hard weather, included one at Horfield Common on Jan. 12th, and an adult at the bottom of Novers Hill, Bedminster on Dec. 2nd. One was foraging under bird feeders in a Portishead garden on Dec. 19th.

RING-BILLED GULL *Larus delawarensis*

Scarce Nearctic vagrant. Most records are from CVL; occasionally in winter, but nowadays one or two are expected to appear in the gull roost during spring passage in February or March. Very rare on the coast, and in summer.

Description species.

An average year with three records (two birds) from CVL in both winters.

CVL – an adult stood on the ice at Herriotts Pool late afternoon on Jan. 16th (RMA *et al.*) with presumably the same bird again on the main lake on 19th (MJ, RMI). An adult, again stood on the ice at Herriotts Pool on Dec. 29th (AHD, RMI *et al.*).

Rare gulls in the Avon area

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Sabine's Gull	2+			2	1		1			
Laughing Gull						1				
Franklin's Gull								1		
Ring-billed Gull	2	2	3+	3+			2+	3+	2+	2
Caspian Gull		2		1		2	1	1		
Iceland Gull		3	1		1	3+	1	2		
Kumlien's Gull		1	1	1	1	1				
Glaucous Gull	1	2				1		1		

Total number of rare gulls for the last ten years

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

Western race *L. f. graellsii*:

Common winter visitor, passage migrant and breeding resident. In addition to the colony on Steep Holm, there are large urban colonies in Bristol and Bath and smaller colonies in other towns.

WeBS status: the Estuary is second and CVL is fourth in the list of sites of International Importance for 2007/08.

Atlas data shows a slight decline in the winter distribution and a massive increase in the breeding season.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 190 tetrads in 1984 and 171 in 2010, a change of -10%.
- Atlas data: recorded in breeding season from 71 tetrads in 1992 and 228 in 2010, a change of +221%.

The table below shows the maximum counts from the main sites excluding CVL.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	7	300	59	35	25	100	7	10	8	5	200	3
Littleton Warth	7		1	2	1	2		9	1	2	2	4
CI-Y	3	25	18	15	12	4	6				4	
Axe Estuary	4	2	9	10	7	20		6	20	19	8	
Weston STW		11		102	26	26	23	32	27	2	5	2
Sea Mills	2	2		4		3	1			5	1	2
Leap Valley, Downend	27	7	5	16	4	5	6	12	1	3	10	8
BL	2	4	638	75		4	3	6	68	22	47	2

Recorded from a further 54 sites although the only three figure count away from CVL not included in the table above was of 100 at Iron Acton on April 10th.

Breeding Good numbers of juveniles noted on Herriott's Pool, CVL at dusk on June 22nd (300), July 2nd (400) and 13th (450). Breeding pairs at local urban colonies were as follows (2009 figures in brackets); Bristol 1690, Bath 697 (668), Yate 213, Keynsham 21 (6), and Midsomer Norton 9 (14).

Ringed recovery One at BL on Oct. 22nd (black 2.BB2) had been ringed on Guernsey in May 2009.

Scandinavian race *L. f. intermedius*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; annual at CVL. Probably overlooked, particularly in non-adult plumage.

Recorded only at CVL, with adults on March 9th, 24th (two) and 30th (a small, dark, long-winged individual), Aug. 26th, Sept. 3rd and Oct. 8th and 30th (two).

1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
4	9	5	2	5	0	0	5	10	5	1	6	5	9	11	7	7	4	8	9

Number of individuals seen each year

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

Western race *L. a. argentatus*.

Common winter visitor, passage migrant and breeding resident; largest numbers occur near the coast, or around Bristol and Bath. In addition to the colony on Steep Holm, there are large urban colonies in Bristol and Bath, and smaller colonies in other towns.

WeBS status: the Estuary is 15th and CVL is 16th in the list of sites of International Importance for 2007/08

Atlas data shows a small increase in the winter distribution and a massive increase in the breeding season.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 191 tetrads in 1984 and 235 in 2010, a change of +23%.

- Atlas data: recorded in breeding season from 38 tetrads in 1992 and 174 in 2010, a change of +358%.

The table below shows the maximum counts from the main sites excluding CVL.

Monthly maxima at regularly counted sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	100	100	29	35	25	120	2	20	10		7	4
Littleton Warth	17	1	2		12			16	2	7	6	49
CI-Y	35	40	30	80	20	35	10	15	8	13	15	6
Axe Estuary	6	2	17	4	35	17		5	8	6	17	
Weston STW	40	174	195	222	137	43	28	52	29	3	53	31
Leap Valley, Downend	29	9	8	11	2	2	3	20	6	6	20	53
BL	5	1	18	9		2	1	1	35	189	21	1

Reported from a further 43 sites, although the highest count was only 50 at Chittening Warth on March 2nd when birds were hunting voles pushed out by a very high tide.

Breeding There were 805 breeding pairs in Bristol, 282 in Bath (289 in 2009), two in Midsomer Norton, three pairs in Keynsham and 72 in Yate. No counts received from Steep Holm.

Other records On March 31st a mixed flock of about 3000 Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls were moving to W past Anchor Head in a gale.

Scandinavian race *L. a. argentatus*

Scarce winter visitor; probably overlooked.

An average year, the only records were:

CVL - a third-year on Jan. 23rd and 30th;

BG – one on Sept. 26th.

1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
1	4	1	2	0	1	0	0	4	3	1	2	8+	1	0	4	3	10	1	2

Number of individuals seen each year

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis*

Uncommon passage migrant, summer visitor and winter visitor; most occur in the autumn at CVL, but now increasingly recorded elsewhere.

An average year, but only CVL and BL recorded more than one together (the counts for CVL in the table below have been estimated using the ages quoted by observers).

Estimated monthly totals at regular sites												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CVL	3	1	2	1	2	2	9	9	4	2	4	
BL			1	2			2		1	2	1	

Recorded from eight other sites: New Passage (third-summer on April 24th and a juvenile on July 8th), CI-Y (Jan. 24th and 30th), Sand Bay (an adult on Sept. 7th and 8th), Anchor Head (March 31st), Sea Mills (Dec. 19th), Bristol, Floating Harbour (Aug. 5th), BG (unaged birds on Jan. 15th, Aug. 11th, Sept. 26th, and Dec. 10th with an adult on Oct. 27th) and Bath (an adult on the top level of the multi-storey car park on Nov. 13th).

At CVL on Aug. 15th a juvenile was persistently begging from an adult.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of sites	4	6	9	5	7	7	11	11	9	10
Max count	n/a	15	n/a	9	9	5	4	5	6	9

Number of sites and maximum count at any one site

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

Uncommon breeding resident - breeds in small numbers on Steep Holm. Generally uncommon elsewhere (perhaps surprisingly so); seldom recorded inland away from the reservoirs.

Again the reservoirs produced the majority of the records, particularly at CVL in the autumn.

Great Black-backed Gull - monthly maxima at regular sites

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OPS	4	3	2	3	2	4	7	6	3	2	3	3
Littleton Warth	1		2									1
Severnside	2					2			1	1	2	2
CI-Y	2	3	4	2	1	2	3	1	3	5	1	
Sand Bay	2		3	3			1		1	2		1
Axe Est.	1								1	1	1	
R. Avon, Sea Mills		2		5						1		3
BG	2	2	2	3	2		3	2	2	3	2	4
CVL	4	2	12	10	8	8	9	19	15	9	8	5
BL	2	3	4	5	2	2	3	3	8	6	3	2

Occasional records came from a further eight sites – only two of which were inland; Bristol Harbour, one on Feb. 28th and Chew Magna Res. a first-winter on Jan. 26th and Feb. 2nd.

Breeding There were no reports from either Steep Holm or Denny Island in the Bristol Channel.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of sites	9	12	12	13	12	15	20	17	15	18
Max count	7	6	5	22	18	11	10	9	21	19
Steep Holm pairs	29	30	10	13	9	10	11	n/a	13	n/a

At CVL a first-winter on Nov. 20th had a large swathe of black from the bill, through the eye, and around the nape on both sides of the head.

Ringling recovery An adult found freshly dead at Weston-s-Mare on Aug. 29th had been ringed as a nestling on Denny Island in the Bristol Channel on July 5th, 2003.

LITTLE TERN *Sternula albifrons*

Scarce passage migrant; generally the scarcest of the five 'common' terns.

A poor year with just three records, as follows:

OPS – a juvenile on Sept. 12th;

CVL – two on April 25th and a juvenile on Sept. 15th.

Although in the past the majority of records were from the coast, this has not been the case for the last two years, see table below;

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Coastal	6	2	9	5	1	19	2	14	3	1
Inland	2	0	6	1	0	7	2	1	4	3

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

Uncommon passage migrant; most frequent in the autumn when occasional influxes occur. Most records are from CVL.

American Black Tern *C. n. surinamensis* - Very rare with one record in October 1999.

Migration dates: Forty year average first date April 25th. Forty year average last date Oct. 11th.

A good autumn passage.

Spring passage A poor year, only seen at CVL, with four on April 25th, two on May 22nd and 24th, and one on 26th.

Autumn passage A good autumn passage started dramatically on Sept. 5th with 73 at CVL, 14 at BG and one at New Passage. There were still 18 at CVL the next day, with 33 here on 7th and 23 on 8th, when there were also three at Northwick Warth and one at Aust Warth. The numbers at CVL remained in double figures until the 13th, with one or two being present until the 23rd when seven arrived here and four at BG. The final sighting was of a juvenile at CVL on Oct. 6th and 7th.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Av. of 3 highest counts Apr - Jun	6	1	3	2	2	1	2	5	3	2
Av. of 3 highest counts Jul - Oct	90	13	36	70	31	30	13	10	10	43
No of days recorded (total for year)	40	12	25	46	17	42	15	14	17	24

Average counts at CVL

The graph opposite page 80 gives a historical overview of passage at CVL.

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*

Uncommon passage migrant – most are recorded on the coast.

Reasonable numbers seen with records in both spring and autumn.

Spring passage The first record was on April 25th with two upchannel at Anchor Head and six downchannel at Ladye Bay, Clevedon. There were then eleven on April 28th at Severn Beach in the evening and one at CVL the next day.

There were two at CVL on June 10th.

Autumn passage One flew to W at Sand Pt. on Aug. 21st and there were two adults at CVL on Sept. 12th.

Unusual Terns in the Avon area

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Little Tern	6+	2+	16	6	1	26	4	15	7	3
White-winged Black Tern		1			1					
Sandwich Tern	23+	20	86	13	6	21	4	35	15	23
Roseate Tern	1									

Total number of unusual terns for the past ten years.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

Passage migrant, a few birds occur throughout the summer - generally uncommon, but large flocks have been recorded in some years.

Migration dates: Forty year average first date April 12th. Forty year average last date Oct. 4th.

Excellent numbers inland but a very poor year on the coast.

The first in spring was one at CVL on April 17th, with the last in autumn being two at the same site on Sept. 29th. The tables below show that CVL had an exceptional year in terms of both flock size and the numbers of days present. The highest day count here was an exceptional 152 on Sept. 22nd, a flock of 139 in the morning moved on to be followed by another 13 in the evening - the previous site day record was c100.

There were also high numbers passing through at the reservoirs in late August, with a flock of 98 counted at BL in the morning of 26th and 62 at CVL on 22nd (a flock of 23 were briefly joined by another 39).

Unusually a pair was seen displaying at CVL on July 2nd.

Summary for CVL						
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
No. of days recorded	5	6	9	15	12	14
Maximum count	51	2	4	4	62	152

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Av. of 3 highest counts Apr - Jun	33	11	28	3	11	20	5	17	5	23
Av. of 3 highest counts Jul - Nov	24	37	24	37	9	35	6	38	38	80
No. days recorded (total for year)	51	43	35	27	32	44	53	61	44	61

Average counts at CVL

Only eleven records away from CVL with only three from the coast, as follows:

Severn Beach – one on Sept. 15th was the only record from Severnside;

Sand Pt. – one on April 25th;

Anchor Head – one on May 3rd.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

Usually an uncommon passage migrant, but can occasionally occur in large flocks in the Estuary under favourable conditions in spring; otherwise generally in smaller numbers than Common Tern. Often appears after westerly gales.

Another poor year, see table below, with again most records from CVL.

Arctic Tern con't

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Max count for year	200	66	280	1000	1000+	80	45	43	13	25
Av. of 3 highest counts	125	60	123	580	378	44	33	42	9	16
No. days recorded during year	33	13	15	19	14	19	32+	26	25	19

Annual details for Avon

The table below shows the recent poor numbers on Severnside;

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
48	59	105	580	373	41*	22	18	5	5*

Average of three highest counts for Severnside (* only recorded on two dates)

On the Estuary the only records were as follows:

OPS – three downriver on Aug. 23rd;

Severn Beach – 14 on May 4th and two on Sept. 15th;

RPD – a juvenile on Sept. 28th was the last record of the autumn;

Ladye Bay, Clevedon – one on April 23rd was the first record of the spring;

Sand Bay – two on May 1st.

CVL The table below sets out all records at CVL:

Apr	May			July		August			September			
25th	2nd	6th	29th	26th	30th	3rd	11th	14th	5th	6th	7th	16th
2	9	1	7	4	1	4	7	1	3	2	2	1

The only other records were of two at BG on April 30th and one at BL on Aug. 16th.

COMMON/ARCTIC TERN *Sterna hirundo/paradisaea*

Unidentified records were as follows, including some good numbers on the coast:

Severn Beach – eight in the morning and 71 in the evening of April 13th (the first terns of the spring), two on 17th, 80 on 24th and one on 26th with 25 on May 9th;

Ladye Bay, Clevedon – 50 on April 14th, drifting over towards the Welsh side of the Channel;

Anchor Head – one on April 25th with two on May 3rd;

CVL – 28 on Sept. 12th;

Bishopston – unusual inland record of five to SW in drizzle on Sept. 13th.

Spring Coastal Tern passage

The following table estimates the annual spring passage of terns up the Bristol Channel.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Common	574	80	223	37	142	120	291	561	3	2
Arctic	476	179	388	1982	1134	136	131	201	21	0
'Commic'	758	46	973	2775	208	849	485	606	138	240
Total	1808	305	1584	4794	1484	1105	907	1368	162	242

Total of the highest count from a coastal site for each day in April and May

Autumn passage at CVL

	Jul			Aug			Sep			Oct		
	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-9	10-19	20-29	30-8	9-18	19-28	29-8	9-18	19-28
Little Gull						2	1	1	1	1	1	6
Black Tern							73	10	7	1		
Common Tern	4	3	3	3	17	63	25	4	153	2		
Arctic Tern			4	4	7		25	1				

Maximum count in each ten day period

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*

Scarce storm-driven visitor throughout the year; no inland records prior to 2008.

Descriptions required for inland records

Three records, all from Severnside in September: single birds at Severn Beach on 14th and 15th and off Cake Pill, Aust Warth on 22nd.

LITTLE AUK *Alle alle*

Very scarce storm-driven visitor, usually at Severnside. Very rare inland.

Description species

One accepted record, from Severn Beach on Nov. 12th (*per* SBWeb) – see photograph opposite page 81.

Auks in the Avon area

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Guillemot	6	10	8	8	1	11	4	3	37	3
Razorbill	2	2		1	1	2				
Guillemot/Razorbill	25	16	3				1			
Little Auk	1	1				2	1		1	1
Puffin		2								

Total number of unusual auks for the past ten years.

FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia var*

Introduced, common resident, mostly found in urban areas.

Atlas data shows a decline in the winter distribution but an improvement in the breeding season.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 208 tetrads in 1984 and 137 in 2010, a change of -34%.
- Atlas data: recorded in the breeding season from 97 tetrads in 1992 and 131 in 2010, a 35% increase.

BBS data showed a slight increase in 2010. The increase in breeding population that started in 2000, and peaked in 2004 before starting to decline, with a rapid drop in 2008, now seems to have stabilised, with the current population at roughly the same level as it was in the mid 1990s. The same pattern is shown by the breeding distribution, which peaked at 49% of tetrads in 2004, and was still at 47% in 2007, before dropping to 37% in 2008 where it has remained.

1995	96	97	98	99	00	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
229	256	268	265	239	325	385	371	432	331	307	306	208	209	222

BBS Index 1994 = 100 BBS distribution 37%

The CABS index shows a regular decline, although there was a slight recovery in 2010.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	2009	2010
52	38	39	39	35	31	23	18	20	15	24

CABS Index, based on 100 in 1994

WGS data showed a fall in the percentage of gardens used in the 2009/10 winter although an increase in the numbers present.

In 2010 the only three figure flocks noted were in Bath on Oct. 24th, with 160 at Southgate and 120 at London Road.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

Fairly common but declining breeding resident.

Population change in England 1996-2006: down 2%.

BBS distribution 26%

Widespread in small numbers.

Atlas data shows a significant contraction in the winter distribution but a small increase in the breeding season, although the numbers recorded in both seasons were similar.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 231 tetrads in 1984 and 100 in 2010, a change of -57%.
- Atlas data: recorded in the breeding season from 115 tetrads in 1992 and 132 in 2010, a + 15% change.

Stock Dove can't

- Atlas data: the number recorded in winter (582) was similar to that in the breeding season (504).

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
11	16	22	17	30	33	90	73	64	73

Number of sites in Avon

Flocks A number of good sized flocks were noted as follows: 180 at Bleadon Levels on Jan. 1st with 26 nearby at Weston STW on Feb. 20th and 21 here on March 31st, 70 in the Marshfield area on March 7th with 23 here on 27th, 35 at OPS on Aug. 8th with 45 here on Nov. 27th and 40 on Dec. 8th, 29 at Saltford on Oct. 2nd, 26 at Portbury on Oct. 26th with 19 here on Nov. 7th and 15 on 14th.

Possible migrants included 56 at Littleton Warth on Oct. 9th (although 30 here on Nov. 13th), 30 to N at Cl-Y on Nov. 10th, and 23 to W at R. Axe on Jan. 10th.

Breeding Three records of potential breeding were the only evidence received: at Weston STW a pair in a nest box on April 24th and June 1st; at CVL a pair in Villice Bay and a singing male along Stratford Lane. Observers are again encouraged to submit all breeding records (*Ede*s).

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*

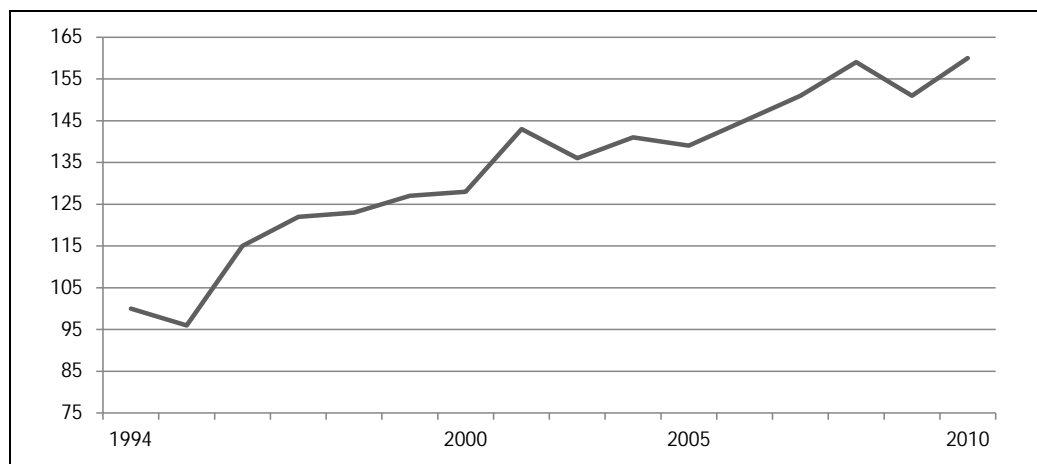
Abundant breeding resident.

Atlas data shows little change in the almost universal distribution in both winter and the breeding season, although the numbers recorded in winter were double those in the summer.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 392 tetrads in 1984 and 401 in 2010, a change of +2%.
- Atlas data: recorded in the breeding season from 385 tetrads in 1992 and 398 in 2010, a +3% change.
- Atlas data: the number recorded in winter (23,449) was double that in the breeding season (11,440).

In the 2009/10 winter WGS recorded them in 100% of participating gardens, the same as the 2008/09 winter, although numbers were 22% higher. CABS data for 2010 showed an increase of 27% over 2009.

BBS data currently shows a relatively stable position, the index having increased steadily since the start in 1994; its most spectacular increase has been in urban and suburban areas, presumably taking full advantage of the increase in garden feeding.



BBS Index 1994 = 100 (BBS distribution 99%, BBS population estimate 18,700 breeding pairs)

January to May Large flocks were noted as follows: 110 moving to SW at Leap Valley, Downend on Jan. 3rd, 100 at OPS on Jan. 3rd with 350 here on Feb. 13th and 194 on March 4th, 1050 heading to W at R. Axe on Jan. 10th, 500 at Queen Charlton on Feb. 4th, 150 going to roost at CVL on 6th, 200 at Pilning on 18th and 350 near Pill on April 18th. At Sand Pt. 113 on Jan. 2nd were thought to be migrating.

Breeding The only evidence of breeding received was a fledged juvenile on June 4th from a nest in a Pittosporum tree in a Clifton garden, four nests that produced at least ten young at Leap Valley, Downend (with first young noted on July 11th and a second brood on Sept. 18th) and five pairs recorded at Weston STW on June 1st.

Migrants BOC migration watches on Oct. 17th recorded 41 at Aust Warth, 70 at New Passage, 370 at Battery Pt., Portishead and 112 at Clevedon. At New Passage 490 flew to S in two flocks on Oct. 30th while 3,600 headed to W or SW here on Nov. 7th, the same day that 600 flew to W in two flocks at Severn Beach. The next day 500 flew to SE at Severn Beach.

November and December The only three figure counts were as follows: 320 at Leap Valley, Downend on Nov. 7th, at Weston STW 400 on maize stubble on Nov. 29th and 900 on Dec. 8th, whilst on 26th some 600 were recorded on Marksby Plain, 250 at Corston and 300 at Stanton Wick.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

Common breeding resident.

Atlas data shows an increased distribution in both winter and the breeding season, although the numbers recorded in both seasons were similar.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 260 tetrads in 1984 and 298 in 2010, a change of +15%.
- Atlas data: recorded in the breeding season from 205 tetrads in 1992 and 311 in 2010, a +52% change.
- Atlas data: the number recorded in winter (1827) was similar to that in the breeding season (1733).

WGS recorded them in 77% of participating gardens in the 2009/10 winter (78% in 2008/09) but numbers were reduced by 14%. CABS for 2010 showed a 9% increase over 2009.

BBS data shows a downward trend since a peak in 2003 as the table below shows.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
221	nc	248	274	262	224	228	203	182	163	155

BBS Index 1994 = 100 (BBS distribution 69%, BBS population estimate 2750 breeding pairs)

The only double-figure counts received were ten at New Passage on March 28th, 29 at Wrington on Sept. 23rd with 26 here on Oct. 23rd and 20 at Saltford on Dec. 19th with 30 here on 23rd.

Breeding At least one pair bred at Leap Valley, Downend was the only evidence received.

Migration watches at New Passage in October showed some evidence of movement with five to NE on 15th, eleven on 16th and two on 17th.

RING-NECKED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri*

Status uncertain, some records may refer to wanderers from the substantial home counties feral population.

After a blank year in 2009 a total of six records were received, all of single birds, as follows:

OPS – Nov. 14th;

Thornbury – Nov. 24th, possibly same as above;

Cribbs Causeway – Sept. 21st by the Harvester pub;

Temple Quay – July 26th;

Eastville Park – Nov. 13th;

Kingswood – flying over houses on the evening of May 23rd.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

Uncommon and declining (since early 1980s) spring migrant and breeding summer visitor. Very scarce after July.

Nationally it is Amber Listed (moderate decline) but the latest data meet the Red Listing criteria (rapid decline).

Population change in England 1996 - 2006: down 46%.

Migration dates: Forty year average first date April 12th. Forty year average last date Aug. 27th.

2010 was a good year by recent standards, as is shown by the table below.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of bird-days	38	66	93	74	97	75	100	74	43	93
No. of records	32	58	87	69	78	63	98	70	43	73

Total bird-days and records

First noted at CVL on April 13th (cf. 6th in 2005, 12th in 2006, 11th in 2007, 13th in 2008 and 12th in 2009).

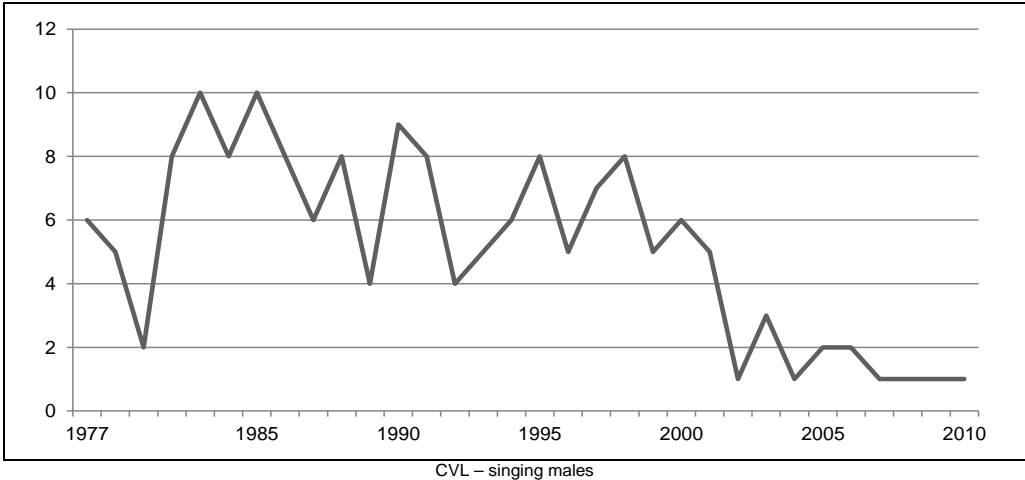
Regular records throughout the breeding season were received from Burrington Coombe, CVL, Dolebury Warren, OPS and Weston STW. Juveniles were seen at OPS, on June 27th, and at CVL, from Aug. 12th to 16th, the last record of the year.

Cuckoo can't

	April	May	June	July	August
Bird-days	21 (10)	46 (18)	20 (13)	1 (0)	5 (0)
Records	11 (10)	38 (18)	18 (13)	1 (0)	5 (0)
Sites	7 (9)	16 (9)	14 (8)	1 (0)	1 (0)

Month-by-month breakdown of 2010 bird-days, records and sites (2009 in brackets)

The graph below shows how the numbers of singing males at CVL just abruptly dropped at the turn of the century. Atlas data confirms the massive decline; it was recorded from 100 tetrads in 1992 but only 18 in 2010, an 82% reduction.



BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

Breeding resident, uncommon after long-term decline, but slowly recovering locally in recent years and benefitting from conservation effort in several areas.

An average year by recent standards, see table below, with the majority of records coming from the breeding season.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of records	24	65	88	93	94	119	91	115	137	95
No. of sites	20	30	35	38	43	44	26	35	41	42

Number of records and sites per year

Breeding A good breeding season:

SG – six nesting pairs fledged at least eleven young,

NS – three nesting pairs fledged six young

BA – twelve nesting pairs fledged at least 30 young.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
SG	0	0	0	2 (4+)	0	0	0	0	0	6 (11)
NS	0	2 (6)	3 (11)	6 (17+)	8 (17)	1 (4)	2 (10)	2 (7)	4 (5)	3 (6)
BA	0	0	2 (6)	4 (5+)	14 (32)*	4 (6)*	1 (5)	2 (5)	15 (38)*	12 (27)

Numbers of breeding pairs (and number of fledged young in brackets)
* includes block data from Cam Valley, part of which may be from Somerset

Ringling recovery A nestling ringed at CVL on July 5th, 2009 was found, long dead, at Lansdown on April 21st.

Corpses Dead birds were found at OPS on April 5th and at Westerleigh on Dec. 22nd (the latter a road-kill).

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

Introduced in the 19th century. Fairly common breeding resident but declining.

UK 25-yr change: - 46%.
BBS distribution: 3%

2010 was similar to 2009 in the number of records and sites with no sign of improvement as shown below.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of records	94	141	126	128	114	147	134	139	87	91
No. of sites	39	47	58	48	48	49	46	66	49	48
Total number of records and sites per year										

Atlas data shows a massive decline in the winter distribution over the last 25 years.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 123 tetrads in 1984 and 20 in 2010, a change of -84%.
- Atlas data: recorded in the breeding season from 43 tetrads in 1992 and 38 in 2010, a change of -12%.

Birds were only recorded regularly at Congresbury, OPS, PW and Wrington.

Breeding Some welcome evidence of breeding success from BG (juvenile seen on July 3rd with others heard calling), Littleton-on-Severn (young heard on June 30th), and PW (juvenile seen on July 6th). Pairs were also reported to have bred at Clutton and Tormarton whilst two pairs were seen at Dundry on June 1st.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

Fairly common breeding resident.

UK 25-yr change: - 25%.

The number of records received and sites were well down on 2009 as is shown in the table below.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of records	124	145	125	227	220	235	293	213	276	206
No. of sites	50	55	54	66	89	57	95	81	111	79
Total number of records and sites per year										

Breeding Juveniles were recorded from the following nine sites: BL (two ringed), Burrington Combe (calling), East End, Nailsea (calling), East Harptree (calling), Kenn Moor (two), Lower Langford (two calling), Nempnett Thrubwell (one food-begging), Wrington (calling) and Yatton (two in a nest box).

Counts The highest count was again from Wrington with six recorded on April 17th and twelve on Nov. 23rd. Six were calling in Goblin Combe on March 26th.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Very rare in summer, bred successfully in 1991.

Description species

A good year with two records of successful breeding, the first since 1991.

A pair bred in NS, with an adult with two juveniles seen on June 10th and 13th, whilst in BA an adult and two juveniles were seen on Aug. 2nd.

In addition one was noted at Acton Turville at dusk on Dec. 4th (MC).

1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
23+*	15+	2	2	2	7	14	3	1	3	2	3	3	0	0	2	1	2	1	7*
Number of individuals (* includes successful breeding)																			

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant, mainly on the coast.

A poor year, see table below. The first winter period was particularly disappointing.

	2005	06	07	08	09	2010
Bird-days	105	100	100	260	105	67
Records	56	79	102	186	100	48

The last record of the first winter period came from Uphill on April 8th and the first to return was at the same site on Oct. 2nd, an injured individual taken into care. There were no summer or inland records.

First winter period (single birds unless otherwise stated):

Aust Warth – Jan. 1st (two), 4th, 23rd, 24th, 25th (two) and 31st, Feb. 1st, 2nd and 5th (two) and March 2nd (two) and 5th;

Severn Beach – Jan. 28th;

PW – Jan. 31st;

Short-eared Owl can't

Uphill – April 8th;

Weston STW – April 4th.

Second winter period (single birds unless otherwise stated):

Aust Warth/Northwick Warth – Oct. 7th (two), 9th, 11th, 12th, and 13th with a gap then until Nov. 13th and 14th and a further gap until Dec. 14th (two), 15th, 18th (two), 19th, 21st, 22nd (two), 28th (four), 30th (two) and 31st (three);

Chittingen Warth – Nov. 10th and Dec. 30th;

Cl-Y – Oct. 7th (three), 14th, 18th and 30th (two), Nov. 1st, 7th, 10th, 18th and 28th (two), Dec. 13th and 14th;

Uphill – Oct. 2nd, an injured bird taken to Secret World;

Weston STW – Dec. 11th.

Monthly breakdown									
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	:	Oct	Nov	Dec	2010 (2009)
Records	8	3	2	2		10	8	15	48 (100)
Bird-days	10	4	3	2		14	9	25	67 (105)
Max. count	2	2	2	1		3	2	4	4 (6)

Bird-days = the sum of the maximum daily counts for each site

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Scarce passage migrant and occasional breeding summer visitor.

Description required for sight records away from the Mendips

A good year, see table below.

Churring males were present at the regular site of Burrington Ham from May 13th, with up to three in June and July.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Churring males	0	0	0	3	1	2	3	1	3	3
No. of reports	0	1	0	6	1	8	5	3	4	3

SWIFT *Apus apus*

Common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

Population change in England 1996 - 2006: - 25%.

Migration dates: Forty year average first date April 20th. Forty year average last date Sept. 20th.

Atlas data shows only minimal change in the breeding distribution from 1992 whilst BBS data suggests the decline since 2003 has now possibly stabilised.

- Atlas data: recorded in the breeding season from 257 tetrads in 1992 and 246 in 2010, a -4% change.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
112	nc	96	125	115	85	75	80	61	66	65

Avon BBS Index 1994 = 100 (BBS distribution 52%. BBS population estimate 2000 pairs)

Arrival The first was at CVL on April 17th and at BG and Keynsham the following day. The next were 35 at CVL on 21st; the following evening the first eight arrived on territory over Montrose Avenue, Redland with 22 here on 23rd by which time reports were widespread. By 25th there were 300 at CVL and on 29th there were at least 1500 here brought down by heavy rain.

Summer flocks The peak counts all came from CVL with 5000 on May 2nd, 1000 on 3rd, 4000 on 7th and 9th, 1000 on 11th and 14th, June 1st and 10th, and 1500 on 14th. Summer flocks are in response to prolonged cold wet weather when the birds cannot find food over the towns and countryside. Such large concentrations relate not to passage birds but to all the birds from Bristol, Bath, Radstock, and other towns and villages, congregating over the lake. These counts were calculated as follows: the lake was divided up into a number of wedge shaped areas of known size, counts were made in a number of these from which a total for the whole lake was extrapolated.

Breeding The only information came from the Montrose Avenue, Redland area where, although numbers present were well above the long-term average, it is suspected that all the nests failed.

Departure The last double-figure count was on Aug. 27th (twelve at CVL) and there was a slow trickle until Sept. 8th. The last was one at Middle Hope on 22nd.

An individual with white outer undertail coverts was photographed at CVL on May 3rd.

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

Fairly common breeding resident, distributed in small numbers on waters throughout the area.

Population change in England 1996 - 2006: + 24%.

An excellent year, with reports from a record 96 sites.

Year.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of sites	36	52	n/c	56	86	74	80	95	75	96

Number of sites each year

During the first winter period, January saw 34 records from 23 sites (*cf.* 23 sites in 2004, 30 in 2005, 31 in 2006, 33 in 2007, 26 in 2008 and 19 in 2009) but this reduced in February (14 records from ten sites) and March (13 records from ten sites).

Breeding Records for the period April to June came from 31 sites (*cf.* 17 in 2004, 13 in 2005, 16 in 2006, 23 in 2007, 40 in 2008 and 25 in 2009). Juveniles were seen at Congresbury, Compton Dando, R. Chew, Bathampton Weir (where three pairs reportedly raised eight young) and Camely (one caught and ringed on Aug. 14th).

Post-breeding dispersal as usual created a rise in the number of records, with these peaking in both September and December, the latter probably a result of the cold weather (*eg.* one was recorded in the City Docks on Dec. 6th and another at Malago Greenway, Bedminster on 9th). However, the number of sites in this period was a poor 48 (*cf.* 36 in 2004, 67 in 2005, 50 in 2006, 53 in 2007, 55 in 2008 and 58 in 2009).

Regular reports came from BL, CVL, CI-Y, Keynsham, RPD (where four were seen on Nov. 1st), Saltford (four on Dec. 17th), Weston STW (four on Sept. 2nd) and Winford Brook (where two were seen squabbling high in the air in a presumed territorial dispute on Dec. 10th).

HOOPOE *Upapa epops*

Very scarce spring migrant, rare in autumn

Description species

One spring record: one at Kingston, near Thornbury, photographed in a rural garden on March 28th (JI).

1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
1	2	2	1+	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	2	1

Number of individuals each year

WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla*

Scarce autumn passage migrant. Very rare in spring.

Description species

An average year (see table below) with two autumn records:

Northwick Warth – one, caught near the Grebe Pool and ringed on Aug. 30th (ED), was seen in the field later in the day by several observers and reported again on Sept. 3rd – see photograph opposite page 97;

Nempnett Thrubwell – one found trapped in a greenhouse on Sept. 26th (JM).

1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
0	0	0	0	2	0	3	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	3	1	7	3	2

Number of individuals

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Fairly common breeding resident, increasing nationally and probably locally.

Atlas data shows an increase in distribution, particularly in the breeding season.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 190 tetrads in 1984 and 229 in 2010, a change of +21%.
- Atlas data: recorded in the breeding season from 152 tetrads in 1992 and 256 in 2010, a +68% change.

However the BBS index below shows little in the way of increase in numbers in the breeding season since 1994 whilst the percentage of BBS tetrads recording the species has fluctuated from 44% to 57% in the last decade.

	2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Index	108	nc	99	95	107	118	113	92	124	121	105
Dist %	51	nc	44	47	47	56	54	46	57	55	46

Avon BBS Index 1994 = 100

Green Woodpecker *con't*

The WGS data also shows no real change over the last ten winters with, again, the data regularly fluctuating.

2010 continued the trend of the last four years. Both the number of records and the number of sites more than doubled between 2006 and 2007 but both have remained fairly constant since then.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of records	137	165	323	236	333	231	529	524	453	458
No. of sites	63	75	127	103	127	93	235	227	209	197

Number of records and sites each year

Breeding There were 202 records from 131 sites during April, May and June (*cf.* 77 records from 57 sites in 2006, 220 from 132 sites in 2007, 241 from 130 sites in 2008 and 191 from 121 sites in 2009), distributed as follows:

	2004	05	06	07	08	09	2010
April	26	61	30	67	63	47	71
May	17	53	21	54	67	65	53
June	6	36	14	58	53	52	35

Number of sites records received from during the breeding season

At CVL there were six singing males (*cf.* five in 2006, six in 2007, seven in 2008 and five in 2009). The only records of actual breeding were from a Banwell garden (one juvenile), Goblin Combe (one), Nailsea Park (two) and OPS (one).

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*

Fairly common breeding resident increasing both nationally and locally.

Population change in England 1996 - 2006: + 92%.

Atlas data shows a significant increase in distribution particularly in the breeding season.

- Atlas data: recorded in winter from 174 tetrads in 1984 and 231 in 2010, a change of +33%.
- Atlas data: recorded in the breeding season from 76 tetrads in 1992 and 224 in 2010, a + 195% change.

This breeding increase is confirmed by the BBS index below which shows an increase of 78% since 1994.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	2009	2010
89	nc	99	113	103	126	139	170	170	113	178

Avon BBS Index 1994 = 100 (BBS distribution 47%)

WGS data showed a massive annual increase in the 2009/10 winter (+189%) and an increase over the last decade of 1200%.

There was also a large increase in the number of records received in 2010, almost back to the level seen in 2007, as is shown by the table below.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of records	113	226	172	149	339	193	415	372	317	402
No. of sites	53	66	76	77	173	80	191	172	181	182

Total number of records and sites per year

Breeding Drumming was only reported from four sites (*cf.* seven in 2004, 14 in 2005, 19 in 2006, 28 in 2007, 23 in 2008 and 13 in 2009) and then only until April 24th. Eight were counted at Weston Woods (ST36G) on April 11th whilst at CVL there were nine pairs (*cf.* six in 2005, seven in 2006, 10 in 2007, seven in 2008 and 13 in 2009). Breeding was recorded from a Banwell garden (one juvenile), Compton Dando (young in nest), Congresbury (active nest), East End, Nailsea (two juveniles), Easton-in-Gordano (a juvenile killed by a cat), East Wood, Portishead (one juvenile), Kenn Moor (active nest), Leap Valley, Downend (one juvenile) and Portbury (one juvenile).

A long dead corpse was found on Steep Holm on Aug. 30th whilst one flew out across the saltmarsh at New Passage on Oct. 24th.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos minor*

Scarce, declining and elusive breeding resident. Last breeding record was in 2003. Red Listed because of rapid national decline.

Three records, which is about average (see table below), all in the first quarter of the year.

Clevedon, Swiss Valley – one seen on Jan. 27th;

Bath, Bushy Norwood – a pair seen on Feb. 14th;

Bathampton Woods – one heard briefly on March 16th.

Year	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
No. of bird-days	10+	16+	20+	3	7	3	3	2	10	4
No. of individuals	5	11	9	3	7	2	3	1	3	4

Total number of bird-days and individuals

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*

Very scarce winter visitor.

One record: one at CI-Y on Oct. 30th (JW *et al.*).

Always a rare bird in our area, the 1990s produced only two, so the six in the first decade of the 21st century represented an upturn in its fortunes as is shown below.

1990	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	1

Annual records 1990-2010

MAGPIE *Pica pica*

Common breeding resident.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	-10	0	29	-22	-3

The Atlas survey counted them in virtually every tetrad in both seasons. The winter counts suggested a 23% increase over the past 25 years since the First Winter Atlas, and this is consistent with the BTO national figure of an 18% increase over the same period. National evidence suggests a roughly stable population since 1990. The local BBS figures peaked in 1995 and again in 2003, and there has been a small decline since 2006. In the winter they were present as usual in every garden participating in the WGS, although in slightly lower numbers.

Large groups Flocks of ten or more were recorded on 17 occasions, all but three outside the breeding season. The largest, 35, was at Trooper's Hill, Bristol on Nov.13th.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	2009	2010
112	na	115	122	109	110	113	108	99	96	95

Avon BBS Index, 1994=100 (BBS Distribution 93%, BBS Avon population estimate 3500 pairs)

JAY *Garrulus glandarius*

Fairly common breeding resident.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	-21	-9	42	10	4

In winter the Atlas survey found them present in 63% of tetrads, a small increase over 25 years, and 600 were counted at a rate 30% greater than that in the Winter Atlas 25 years ago. They are more elusive in the breeding season, but were found in 50% of tetrads, and nearly 400 were counted. BBS found them in 42% of squares *cf* 29% in 1994, and the BBS counts suggest a 50% increase over the same period. WGS recorded them in lower numbers in the winter of 2009/10, although in a greater number of gardens. There has been a 10% increase in garden use over the past decade.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
105	na	144	191	169	126	128	165	143	161	152

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 42%)

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*

Common breeding resident; uncommon passage migrant.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	-15	-6	-15	-17	43

The Atlas survey found them in 95% of tetrads, and the winter count was just over 15,000 which confirms the BBS population estimate. This was a 6% increase over the 25 years since the First Winter Atlas, which is at variance with the national estimate of a 46% growth over this period. The local BBS results reveal an essentially

stable population. They were as usual present in about 60% of gardens during the 2009/10 winter, although in slightly reduced numbers.

On Oct.17th, during migration watches on the coast, 550 were seen flying SW at OPS, and 1140 flying south at Cl-Y, but at New Passage 310 were heading NE, and at Sand Point 30 were travelling west. Roosting flocks of up to 550 were seen at OPS, Keynsham, CVL, and Wrington. Also 350 were seen on a newly cut silage field on Kenn Moor on Aug. 3rd.

A partially leucistic bird was noted at Pill on Jan. 14th, and another with very mottled plumage was regular around the Clifton Suspension Bridge during the year.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
84	na	90	89	85	91	93	97	106	104	98

Jackdaw BBS index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 85%, BBS Avon population estimate 8800 pairs)

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*

Common breeding resident.

BBS England 95-08 change, down 3%, local, down 48%.

The winter Atlas survey counted almost 11,000 in 75% of the tetrads which represented a decline of 19% in distribution, and 50% in numbers, during the 25 years since the First Winter Atlas. There was a complete Rookery survey in the 2010 breeding season (for full details see page 153). This counted 5300 nests, a decline of 13% since 2005, and of 33% since 2000, and supports the results of the BBS survey in the past decade and its population estimate. The total is close to that recorded by the first modern rookery survey in 1972/3, which may have been a low point for this species in the 20th century. The cause of this change is unclear, although nationally a decline began in 2000. The largest flock was 900 at Clandown, near Radstock, on Nov.12th, and 500 were seen near Long Ashton on Feb. 11th.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
145	na	94	73	82	95	76	78	79	82	62

Avon BBS Index1994=100 (BBS distribution 43%, BBS population estimate 5400 pairs)

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*

Common breeding resident.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	-9	-2	24	-22	18

The Atlas survey counted them in virtually every tetrad. In winter the sum of the counts was just under 10,000, suggesting that the BBS population estimate is a little high. The rate was 22% greater than 25 years ago in the First Winter Atlas, and this is in line with the national pattern of growth over the same period. However, the local BBS results show a more or less stable population over the past decade.

In the 2009/10 winter they are present as usual in 60% of gardens, although numbers were slightly down. There was a flock of 114 at Compton Dando on Jan. 26th, 100 at Weston STW on Feb. 21st and 113 here on May 29th, and 120 at Cl-Y on July 8th. On Dec. 18th two were recorded "snow-bathing", repeatedly plunging into the snow and lying on their sides, flapping their wings, as if in water.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	2009	2010
125	na	125	111	115	130	127	123	119	131	129

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 99 %, BBS Avon population estimate 8900 pairs)

RAVEN *Corvus corax*

Uncommon breeding resident, and possibly an uncommon passage migrant.

BBS distribution 18%.

BBS England 98-08 change down 9%.

The Atlas survey results suggest that there are around 100 pairs in the region, and their presence was recorded in winter either by counts or roving records in 45% of the tetrads. BBS counted 66 in 35 of the one-km squares covered (18%) and the table below shows the steadily increasing percentage in the past decade. Two pairs reared young around CVL, and there were breeding records from at least eight other sites. A flock of 50 was recorded at Shirehill Farm, near Marshfield, on Oct. 4th, the largest flock yet recorded in Avon.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
1	na	5	4	4	9	10	12	10	16	18

BBS distribution; percentage of one-km squares in which Raven were recorded.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*

Fairly Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. The population suffers badly in harsh winters.

	BBS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	11	-24	14

Atlas surveys were done before the population fall in the 2008/09 winter, and represent a peak which may not be reached again for some years. It is too early to say how much further damage was done by the 2010/11 winter, the coldest in Bristol since 1916. The fact that both BBS and the CVL survey showed no further fall in the breeding population despite the cold of the 2009/10 winter is encouraging. But in this winter period only 9% of gardens held them compared with 47% the previous winter.

	2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
BBS	112	na	135	172	156	156	94	144	119	56	63
CVL	19	6	14	13	6	10	15	12	18	4	4

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 28%) and number of singing males recorded around CVL by KEV.

FIRECREST *Regulus ignicapilla*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

This species is now a regular winter visitor in small numbers to several sites. All sightings are listed below, and were all of single birds. In January in Weston Woods on 1st, and on 23rd, and in Leigh Woods on 24th, and again on Feb. 7th. In East Wood, Portishead from Feb. 2nd to 14th, on 20th and on March 1st, and at PW on 15th. In Clifton on March 4th and in Arnos Vale Cemetery on 9th.

In October one was found at Sand Point on 16th, and at Wain's Hill, Cl-Y, on 18th. In November one was in Blaise Woods on 6th, at Sand Point on 15th, and at PW on 19th. There were no records after the snow that fell on 27th.

Winter	2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
No. seen	8	10	6	13	7	2	10	10	19	18

Number of individuals seen each winter, October to March

BLUE TIT *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Abundant breeding resident.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	22	13	14	-33	0

The Atlas survey found them in virtually every tetrad, and the winter counts suggested a population unchanged over the past 25 years. Nationally there has been a 5% increase over the same period. In the 2009/10 winter they were present in every garden in slightly increased numbers, but there has been little change over the past decade. The local BBS revealed a peak in 2005, which is similar to the national picture, and there were poor breeding seasons in both 2007 and 2008, but the 2009 breeding season was a good one as numbers rose in 2010. Overall the population has been stable since 1994.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
93	na	110	108	112	114	102	94	84	86	99

Avon BBS index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 98%, BBS Avon population estimate 42,300 pairs)

GREAT TIT *Parus major*

Abundant breeding resident.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	20	17	35	17	39

They were universally distributed in the Atlas survey, and the winter counts suggested a population unchanged over the past 25 years, although the national figure shows a 36% increase over this period.

In the 2009/10 winter there was a 20% increase in numbers using gardens, part of the pattern of increase over the past decade. This increase was also shown by the local BBS figures, which are in contrast to those for Blue Tit. The 2009 breeding season seems to have been a particularly good one.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
113	na	127	134	145	141	154	140	147	142	159

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS Distribution 97%, BBS Avon population estimate 33,500 pairs)

COAL TIT *Periparus ater*

Fairly Common breeding resident, probably also a passage migrant.

	WGS	CABS
% Change	-16	43

The Atlas survey found them in 48% of tetrads in winter, and in 35% in summer. This probably reflects a real difference between winter foraging localities and summer breeding areas. National figures show a 15% increase over 25 years, and the Atlas winter counts suggested a 23% increase. They were present in 90% of WGS gardens, although in slightly lower numbers than the previous winter. BBS found them in 32% of squares, an increase on the 22% recorded in 1994. Too few are counted to enable a reliable population index to be constructed.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
na	30	34	34	31	25	29	24	29	32

Proportion of BBS squares in which it was recorded.

WILLOW TIT *Parus montanus*

Apparently a very scarce resident.

Two records: two seen in Lower Woods on June 13th and July 25th (BL).

The previous three records, in 2004, 2005 and 2009, were also from this area so it is probably an elusive low density resident here, although heavily outnumbered by Marsh Tit.

The table below shows the number of records over the past 20 years with an average of about one per year.

1990	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
5	0	2	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	2

Annual records 1990-2010

MARSH TIT *Poecile palustris*

Uncommon breeding resident.

BBS distribution 5%.

BBS England 95-08 change, down 21%.

In the Atlas survey they were recorded, in the course of both seasons over three years, in 117 tetrads (29%), but, as it is both elusive and sedentary, and has been seen in 241 tetrads since 1982, this may represent only half its present real distribution. There are 34 tetrads in which it was observed in 1982 but has not been recorded since, so that there clearly has been a decline. In the breeding season it was only found in 26 tetrads, compared with 39 in the last breeding Atlas in 1992, despite the fact that each tetrad had four hours of survey compared with two in 1992. But it is also striking that this Atlas recorded it in 18 tetrads where there had been no previous record. Since 1998 there have been individual records from 209 one-km squares, within 136 tetrads.

During 2010 records came from 45 one-km squares, ten of them new since 1998, 22 of them in the breeding season. It is surprising that, after twelve years it can still be recorded from new sites which included Bathampton Wood, Bodkin Hazel Wood, Cameley, Congesbury, Marksby Plain, and Yatton.

	2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Total squares	21	20	52	26	58	37	35	36	30	35	45
New squares	14	13	23	6	29	27	9	13	6	22	10

Annual total of one-km squares and new squares in which this species was seen

BEARDED TIT *Panurus biarmicus*

Very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, the majority recorded from the extensive reed beds at CVL.

Description species

Two records: at least two seen with possibly more present judging by their calls at Sutton Wick, CVL on March 3rd (RJH), also a male was seen and photographed in the small reed bed at Weston STW on April 10th – the first record for the site (PAB, MSP).

During the past decade a few have been recorded at CVL with three in March 2003, and single birds in November 2002, several further dates in 2003 and April 2006. There was also one on Severnside in March 2004.

SHORE LARK *Eremophila alpestris**Rare winter visitor and passage migrant, exceptional inland.*

Description species

Two records: two watched feeding on the saltmarsh at OPS on Jan. 8th (DS), and a confiding individual at BG on April 24th remained until the late morning of 25th (SD *et al.*), see photograph opposite.

This species has been recorded in Avon in ten of the last 50 years. The only records in the last decade were for Severnside in January and February 2004. The BG record was only the second inland record for Avon, the first was at CVL from Feb. 3rd to March 10th, 1963.

WOODLARK *Lullula arborea**Very scarce late autumn migrant.*

Description species

One record: one flew over, calling, at Northwick Warth on Oct. 15th (KB).

This species has been recorded in 22 of the last 50 years, less so recently. During the last decade it was recorded in October 2001, November 2003 (two records including a party of six), October 2006 (four) and November 2007.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis**Declining but still common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

	BBS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	-3	-51	-19

The Atlas survey recorded this species in 33% of tetrads in winter, a decline of 41% in the 25 years since the last winter Atlas, this is very similar to the decline recorded for England as a whole of 39% over the same period. In the breeding season it was found in 54% of tetrads, similar to the BBS figure of 42% and only slightly down on the 1992 figure. In winter a total of 1600 was counted, compared with 1100 in the summer when they are probably less numerous but more obvious. These figures fit fairly well with the BBS breeding population estimate of 4400 pairs. Locally, BBS suggests a fall of 28% since 1994, but a pretty stable population over the past decade.

The onset of snow on Jan. 6th saw records of flocks of 500 heading south over Dundry, 120 over Keynsham, 40 in an hour over Pilning, 35 over Weston STW and 12 over Henbury. The subsequent thaw on 16th brought records of birds returning NE from OPS, Easton (Bristol), BL and Sand Point. The November snowfall (from 27th to Dec. 9th) saw no similar reaction, but the new cold spell starting on Dec. 17th led to reports of flocks of 2000 at Marshfield, 700 at Corston, 200 at Saltford, 120 at Weston STW, 50 at Severn Beach, and 40 at Sea Mills. The thaw at the end of the month saw three reports of small numbers again returning NE.

Breeding Song was reported from Feb. 21st and BBS recorded them as usual in 42% of squares visited and at a rate that has not altered over the past five years. There were 14 territories at Weston STW but only one recorded by KEV around CVL. However, the highest densities are on the Cotswolds, this area provided 24 of the 73 tetrads from which records came. The Estuary saltmarsh now seems to support very few.

Autumn migration watch Very small numbers were recorded mostly moving NE into light winds during migration watches throughout October. High pressure had the result that most migration must have taken place at great height and so was unobservable.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
79	na	57	61	65	82	74	76	75	75	72

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 42%, BBS Avon population estimate 4450 pairs)

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia**Fairly common passage migrant; local and uncommon breeding summer visitor.*

England 1995-08 up 11%

Arrival and departure data

40 year average first date March 14th, range 50 days. 1966-1988 average March 19th, 1989-2010 average March 9th

40 year average last date Oct. 6th, range 55 days, trend stable since 1984.

40 year average time spent 206 days, range 20 days, trend falling by 15 days 1970-87, then rising by 17 days 1987-1997, stable around 210 days since.

Arrival and passage A flock of twelve was seen at CVL on March 11th, close to the recent average first date, followed by one on 14th, four on 15th, and six on 16th at both CVL and PW. Also 100 were counted on 19th, 180 on 20th and 300 on 24th, with 100 on April 2nd, falling to 50 on 9th. A second wave swept through between April 20th and 25th, with 200 at CVL on 25th, and passage ended around May 7th.

Sand Martin breeding Seven pairs bred in the nesting wall at BG and five birds were reported around nest holes on the banks of the Avon at Keynsham in June, but there were no reports from Batheaston or Somerdale.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Feeder Rd., Bristol									2	
Floating Hbr., Bristol									?	
BG		1+						3	3	7
Somerdale	14	11	6	14	14				?	
R. Avon, Keynsham	2	2	1	1			5	1+	2	?
Batheaston	5	?	2	?		3/4	2	1	?	
Midford Brook	5									
Woollard				?						
Total	26	14+	9	15	14	3/4	7	5+	7	7

Occupied nests (? means birds present but no clear signs of nesting)

Autumn passage and departure One at CVL on June 17th was the first returning migrant and six heading west at OPS on July 3rd were recorded as a most unusual sighting. A total of 30 was seen at CVL on 13th and 40 on 16th, and similar numbers were reported irregularly through July and August. Passage peaked on Sept. 6th and 7th when up to 250 were seen at CVL. The last considerable flock was 30 here on 11th, and then ones or twos for the rest of the month, and into October. The last was seen at New Passage on 11th, the latest date since 2002.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*

Common passage migrant and common breeder.

England 95-08 up 29% Local change: up 50%.

Arrival and departure data

40 year average first date March 24th, range 30 days, but March 21st for the past decade.

40 year average last date Nov. 4th, range 40 days, no trend.

40 year average time spent 224 days, range 20 days, trend rising from 213 to 232 since 1976.

Arrival Four were seen at CVL on March 21st, and one on the same day in the Avon Gorge, spot on the recent average first date. Small numbers were widespread to 28th, but on the 30th some 400 were seen at BL and 250 at CVL, rising to 750 on 31st and 1000 on April 2nd. Far fewer were recorded between the 4th and the 13th, but 250 were present at CVL on the 14th, and smaller numbers were noted at many sites until a new wave on 29th. On May 2nd, a cold wet day, 1500 were present at CVL, 450 at BG and 55 at Weston STW. Small numbers on passage continued to be recorded to May 17th.

Breeding The Atlas survey recorded them in 89% of tetrads, an increase of 14% since the last breeding atlas, and counted over 5000. BBS recorded them in 73% of squares and in similar numbers to the previous year. The population has increased substantially since 1994, and by more than the national figure.

Autumn passage and departure A total of 100 at OPS on Aug. 8th was the first sign of passage, and 100 were recorded at Sand Point on 16th, although travelling north. Also 250 were at CVL on 25th and 500 at OPS on Sept. 1st, 400 were seen at Aust on 8th and 230 flew south in thirty minutes at Weston STW on 18th. On 23rd 1725 were recorded here flying SW and 1000 were at CVL on 27th, passage peaked over the following five days. Numbers in the rest of October were far lower, and often recorded moving NE into the wind. The last was at Sand Point on Oct. 22nd, two weeks earlier than the average last date.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
149	na	114	104	158	149	161	229	156	176	173

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 73%, BBS Avon population estimate 9200 pairs)

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum*

Common passage migrant and breeder.

England 1995-08 down 8%. Local change: down 41%.

Arrival and departure data

40 year average first date March 28th, range 30 days, but average March 25th from 1985-2009.

40 year average last date Oct 31st, range 40 days, but average Oct. 28th 1985-2009.

40 year average time spent 219 days, range 10 days, trend stable since 1978.

Arrival Single birds were seen at Portishead and CVL on March 24th, four days earlier than the long term average, but the same as the ten-year one. The next was one at BL on 29th and small numbers were seen almost daily throughout April at a variety of sites. There were 500 at CVL on 29th and 100 at BG on 30th. The last substantial counts were 150 at BG and 100 at CVL on May 2nd.

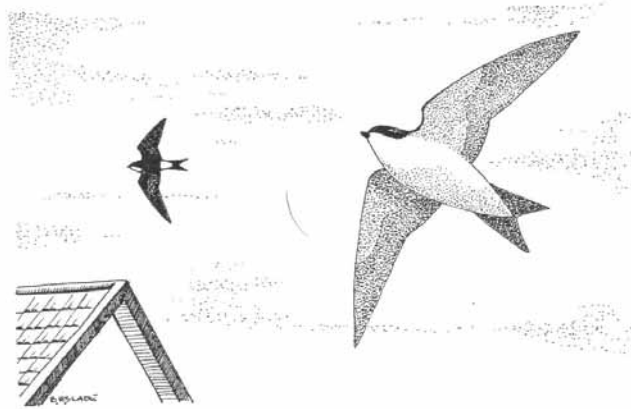
Breeding The Atlas survey found them in 67% of tetrads, a small increase on the 59% found in 1992, which is likely to be the consequence of doubling the survey time, as the national BBS has recorded an 8% decline. BBS

recorded them in 38% of squares, compared with 49% in 1994, and the counts suggested a 50% fall since 1994. The Atlas survey counted 3700. At Sea Mills there were 19 nests (*cf* 10 in 2009) also eleven at Poole's Wharf, and eight at Portbury, a low number. There were no other colony counts.

Post-breeding and departure The first passage record came on Aug. 13th when 100 were gathering on wires at Banwell and 60 were at Sand Point on 15th. On 24th there were 500 at CVL, 750 the next day and 1000 on 26th. 800 were recorded from four sites on Sept. 4th and over 1000 on 5th. A third wave, totalling 3400, came through between 15th and 19th, and 1000 were present on 26th. Smaller numbers were seen for the rest of the month, but there were final counts of 500 at CVL on Oct. 2nd and 1000 on 3rd, with large numbers at BL on the same day. There were just two more records after that, one at Saltford on 12th and one at New Passage on 13th. This was two weeks earlier than the recent average last date.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
85	na	69	78	79	69	62	102	70	50	50

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 38%, BBS Avon population estimate 3380 pairs)



CETTI'S WARBLER *Cettia cetti*

Uncommon resident. First definitely bred in 1995.

BBS distribution 3% BBS England 97-07 change, up%.

The expansion continues.

CVL There were 31 singing males around the lake, the highest total yet. It was noted that none were heard after Dec.12th, and it remains to be seen how well they survived the exceptional weather in December.

Elsewhere The Atlas survey recorded them in 15 tetrads during the breeding season, and adding in roving records the cumulative total during the three years was 46 tetrads (12%). In the breeding season a total of 41 singing males was recorded from the following sites in alphabetical order: ASW, BL, Chittingen Warth, CVL, Hoar Gout, Portbury Hundred, PW, RPD, Sand Bay, Severn Beach, Walborough, Weston STW, Wick Warth, Worle, Yeo Estuary (CI-Y). In addition, outside the breeding season, there were regular records from Backwell Lake, and individual records from New Passage, GVRs, where one was ringed, and Northwick Warth.

	1995	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
CVL singing males	1	2	4	8	12	10	12	14	18	15	17	22	21	21	28	31
Other singing males						3	2	4	3	7	14	14	21	32	33	41
Sites						3	2	4	3	5	13	10	8	18	19	17

Singing males at CVL, and breeding season singing males from other sites.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus*

Common breeding resident.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	-30	22	-6	61	10

Remarkably this species has suffered no decline after two successive cold winters, although the impact of the cold December weather in 2010 remains unknown. The Atlas survey recorded them in virtually every tetrad.

Winter counts were more than double those recorded in the summer. BBS recorded them in 54% of squares, *cf* 43% in 1994, and in the greatest numbers since then. They were present in 90% of WGS gardens in the winter of 2009/10, although in smaller numbers than the previous winter. Numbers peaked in mid-February, which, although less cold than early January, came at the end of a very cold fortnight. It is likely that adaptation to feeding on garden fatballs has been a significant factor in their good over-winter survival. There were five counts of 15 or more in January and February, five June to September, seven in October, and five in November and December, suggesting another good breeding season.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
104	na	119	115	125	102	95	135	146	141	163

Long-tailed Tit BBS index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 54%)

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Scarce or very scarce autumn visitor; rare in winter.

Description species

One record: one trapped at Gordano Valley Ringing Station on Nov. 14th (LFR), see photograph opposite page 112. This is about average for the past twenty years as the table below shows.

1990	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	2	2	5	0	1

Annual records 1990-2010

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Uncommon spring passage migrant. Rare on autumn passage. Last bred in 1996.

Descriptions required for autumn records

UK 95-08 change: down 61%.

Migration dates:

Forty year average arrival date April 21st range 20 days, no trend.

There were eight spring (and no autumn) records of single birds which is in line with recent trends for this species. The dates and sites were as follows. On April 22nd in the unlikely setting of St Werburgh's (Bristol), which was a normal first date; on 24th at PW and another on Weston airfield; on 28th in Clevedon; on May 1st at Backwell Hill; on 5th at East Wood, Portishead; on 8th at Bradley Stoke; and finally in Worle Woods on 9th.

	2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Spring	12	3	10	8	9	8	10	5	3	7	8

Passage totals

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*

P. c. collybita Common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor. Also an uncommon winter visitor, and therefore possibly an uncommon resident.

BBS England 95-08 change, up 45% , local down 16%.

First Winter In January about 17 individuals were recorded from twelve sites including four gardens, in one of which they were regular. There was a single record in February of three at Chew Stoke STW, which possibly implies that the cold snap of the first two weeks in January killed most of the over-wintering birds.

Spring passage The first March record was of one at Sand Point on 6th, followed by singing males at Keynsham STW on 7th, at BL on 11th and CVL on 12th. On 13th three were seen with one on 17th, then on 18th passage proper got under way with eleven at BG, seven at PW, and five individuals at five other sites. Numbers built up over the rest of the month, 150 being recorded at eleven sites on 24th.

Breeding 2010 was clearly a good breeding season as BBS numbers were well up, reaching the highest level since 2004. The Atlas survey recorded them in 94% of tetrads, and around the perimeter of CVL 57 singing males were recorded, the highest number yet.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
98	na	110	144	165	102	85	115	129	115	131

Avon BBS index 1994=100 (BBS Distribution 87%, BBS Avon population estimate 9300 pairs)

An unidentified chiffchaff with an unusual song including some elements reminiscent of Iberian Chiffchaff, was present at CVL from June 14th until July 7th.

Autumn passage There were ten at OPS on Aug. 2nd, 20 at Sand Point on 7th, 25 at OPS on 21st and 24th and 30 were recorded on Steep Holm on 30th. Passage was fairly constant through September; GVRs ringed 24 on 5th, 37 on 12th, eight on 18th and 21 on 25th. Ten were recorded at Salford on Oct. 2nd and there were almost daily records to 18th, four at Sand Point on 22nd, and four more individuals to the end of the month.

Second Winter In November there were reports of 29 from 15 sites, and in December 18 were recorded from six sites, including six at Saltford on 28th.

1999/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
117	100	83	129	222	193	237	117	94	56	46

Chiffchaff winter bird-days

Siberian Chiffchaff. *P. c. tristis*

Scarce or very scarce late autumn migrant and winter visitor, rare in spring.

Description subspecies

2009 extra record: one heard and watched at close range at Avonmouth on Dec. 17th (DS).

The table below gives the number of accepted records of this subspecies seen in the last 20 years.

1990	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	3	0

Annual records 1990-2010

Eastern Chiffchaff. *P.c. abietinus/tristis*

One record: the individual from 2009 was seen again at BG on Jan. 7th and 8th (CJS).

Eastern Chiffchaffs are scarce autumn migrants and winter visitors in our area, the table below lists the numbers seen in Avon during the last twenty years. Many of these records probably relate to *tristis*, they were either not seen quite well enough, not heard calling, or not showing all the classic features of this subspecies. The table below excludes those definite *tristis* individuals listed in the table above.

1990	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
0	1	5	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	2	3	2	1	1	1

Annual records 1990-2010

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Common passage migrant and declining breeding summer visitor.

BBS England 95-08 change, down 30%, local, down 70%.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date March 26th, range 25 days, but average March 23rd in past decade.

Forty year average last date Sept. 24th, range 30 days, trend stable.

Forty year average time spent 183 days, range 40 days, 185 days since 1985.

The Atlas survey, including roving records, recorded its presence in 60% of tetrads, only slightly less than the 66% in 1992, but in 26% of the tetrads they were only recorded as migrants, that is in April or early May, so they were breeding in only 34%, a figure that is very similar to the BBS distribution of 31%.

In 2010 BBS numbers fell, and they have declined by 74% since 1994.

Arrival The first confirmed spring arrival was seen on March 21st at BG, a normal date, and on 24th there were five at PW, four at CVL and two at Aust STW. Passage peaked between April 2nd and 4th when records of 106 were received from nine different sites. There were 40 at Middle Hope on April 22nd.

None bred around CVL compared with three pairs in 2009. The maximum of pairs breeding here was 27 in 1979 and 1986.

Departure Up to ten were recorded at OPS and other coastal sites during August, although there were 15 on Aug. 30th at OPS, and the last few noted were all ringed by GVRs, six on Sept. 5th, one on 12th and the last on 18th, a week earlier than the ten-year average.

	2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
BBS index	97	na	51	30	57	35	49	45	42	42	36
Ringing Total	202	182	222	234	220	270	299	209	39	86	101

Avon BBS index 1994=100 and ringing totals (BBS distribution 31%)

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*

Common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor. It is now also a fairly common winter visitor, most frequently recorded in gardens.

	BBS	CABS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	28	17	1	51

The Atlas survey counted them in 335 tetrads and roving recorders found them in a further 28, so that they are present in 91% of tetrads. In winter they were counted in 45 tetrads and recorded in a further 169, so that they are certainly present in more than half the tetrads and this may understate the true position. BBS found them in 82% of squares, up from 70% in 1994 and they were counted in greater numbers than ever before. Nationally their population has grown by 87% in the past 25 years.

Winter 2009/10 WGS recorded them in 81% of gardens, the same as last year, and numbers were 14% higher. The pattern of reports was normal with a very slow build up from mid-October, and then a peak around New Year. Numbers remained very high through the January cold spell, and only fell off a little throughout the rest of the winter. In January there were records from 62 garden sites across the region, with reports of up to four present at a time. In February the reports came from 40 gardens and in March from 30. Birds that had been wintering in a Redland garden remained until April 6th, and one was present in a Whitchurch garden on 7th.

Spring arrival and breeding season The first probable summer migrants were seen on March 28th when there were three singing males at CVL, two at BL, three at PW and one at Keynsham STW, all sites where none had been recorded in the previous week, and on 30th three were seen at Middle Hope. Twelve were at BL on April 4th, and counts grew rapidly after that. On 10th about 60 were recorded from 13 widespread sites and there were 20 at Sand Point on 22nd which was probably the peak of passage. In the breeding season 47 territories were recorded around CVL, just below the 2009 record. Nationally the provisional Constant Effort Survey figures suggest a good breeding season.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
135	na	158	142	152	152	128	144	130	142	170

Avon BBS index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 82%, BBS Avon population estimate 10,400 pairs)

Autumn passage During August up to 20 were recorded at coastal sites. Passage was heavy and steady during September. GVRs ringed 30 on 5th, 43 on 12th, 46 on 18th, 69 on 22nd many of which were up to 50% heavier than normal, and clearly ready for a long journey, and 52 on 25th. Ones or twos were recorded during October. Possibly wintering birds were noted in Henleaze on Oct. 5th and in Redland on 8th, 11th and 12th.

Second winter period In November 25 bird-days were recorded from 16 gardens and in December there was a very rapid build up, with 60 reported in the first snow-bound ten days, 90 in the second ten days, and 82 in the last, from a total of 60 gardens.

2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
0.49	0.58	0.52	0.43	0.45	0.64	0.37	0.46	0.51	0.58

Blackcap average numbers per garden per week

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

Fairly common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

BBS England 95-08 change, down 19%, local, down 50%.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date April 14th, range 30 days, trend stable.

Forty year average last date Sept. 26th, range 60 days, trend stable.

Forty year average time spent 164 days, range 60 days, trend stable.

The Atlas survey recorded the species in 60 tetrads, a 19% decline on the last breeding atlas, and in line with the national figures. BBS recorded them in 10% of squares compared with 26% in 1994, but the numbers counted are too few to create a meaningful index.

Three were heard on April 18th at Chilcombe Bottom, (the same as the 25 year average date), one on 19th at East Wood, Portishead, and one at Cold Ashton on 20th. Single birds were widespread over the next few days.

In the breeding season a record 40 singing males were found around CVL, 28 were counted in 19 squares by the BBS, and individual records came from twelve other sites.

Most passage records were in August. GVRs ringed ten on the 1st and 12th, and there were two records on Sept. 3rd. GVRs also ringed one on Sept. 22nd, which would be a normal last date. However there was an exceptional record of one at New Passage on Oct. 22nd (JPM). This is the latest last date since 1975.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Fairly common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

BBS England 95-08 change, down 3%, local, up 30%.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date April 20th, range 20 days, but average April 16th since 2000.

Forty year average last date Sept. 28th, range 40 days, but average Sept. 22nd since 2000.

Forty year average time spent 161 days, range 40 days, stable since 1990.

The Atlas survey found them in 96 tetrads and counted 180 during the formal survey. However, roving records added another 90 tetrads, a total distribution of 46% which is much closer to the true situation. They were found in 19% of BBS squares, the same figure as in 1994, but numbers counted are too small to create a reliable population index. Nationally the population has been rising since a nadir in 1998.

The first was seen at Severn Beach on April 10th, and two were on the coast the next day. This date is the earliest since 1974, and is part of a trend over the past decade to earlier dates. Reports were widespread from 16th. BBS counted 87, more than usual, and nationally there was evidence from provisional Constant Effort Survey results that 2010 was a good breeding season. There just two around CVL. Ten were recorded at Sand Bay on Aug. 7th, but only small numbers were seen subsequently on the coast. The last was seen at OPS on Sept. 18th. This is ten days earlier than the 40 year average, but part of a trend to earlier departures during the past decade.

Winter records The individual that over-wintered in a Brislington garden in December 2009 was also seen on Jan. 5th, but not subsequently (PF).

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

BBS England 95-08 change, up 18%, local down 29%.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date April 14th, range 20 days, but average April 10th since 2000.

Forty year average last date Sept. 25th, range 30 days, trend stable.

Forty year average time spent 164 days, range 40 days, but 170 days since 1985.

A good year.

The Atlas survey found them in 237 tetrads (57%) and subsequent roving records increased this to 307 tetrads (77%) which is probably close to the real distribution. The BBS found them in 55% of squares, and the counts were the best since 2002. Nationally they have increased by 93% over the past 25 years, although the population level is still well below what it was prior to the 1967 crash. 2009 was clearly a good breeding season nationally, as was winter survival.

Arrival On April 7th one was seen at St Phillips in Bristol and another at PW. This is a week earlier than the 40 year average, and part of a trend to earlier dates that began in 1994. There were two records on 10th, one on 11th and two on 12th, and passage was in full swing by 17th. It peaked on 24th when 14 were seen at OPS and eleven at PW. There were 24 at OPS on May 1st, but most subsequent records were from breeding sites rather than the coast.

Breeding There were ten singing males around CVL, the best figure since 15 in 1977. Weston STW had 18 territories, one more than in 2009. They were found at ten sites within the city of Bristol, including St Phillips.

Autumn There was a regular passage through August; 15 were at Severn Beach on 9th, also at Sand Point on 21st and 13 at Chittening Warth on 22nd. Numbers recorded fell after that, although there were eight at Severn Beach on Sept. 8th. The last was seen at Salford on 25th. This date is the same as the 40 year average, there has been no trend in departure dates over the years.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
137	na	158	104	126	133	128	127	104	125	137

Avon BBS Index 1994=100(BBS distribution 55%, BBS Avon population estimate 3200 pairs)

DARTFORD WARBLER *Sylvia undata*

Formerly rare, now a scarce visitor. Has bred.

Description species.

One record: one at Uphill on Dec. 12th, at the height of the cold spell (RSC).

The cold winter of 2008/09 saw the loss of the recently established population just across the border on Mendip, presumably the source of most of our recent records. A second cold winter in 2009/10 further reduced the Somerset population so this species might now revert to its previous status of rare visitor, at least for a while.

1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
0	1	1	0	1	2*	6*	2	2	3	0	1	2	1	9	5	0	2	2	1

Dartford Warbler total annual records; * indicates a breeding record.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*

Uncommon passage migrant; scarce breeding summer visitor.

England 1995-08, down 23%.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date: April 15th, range 20 days, no trend.

Forty year average last date Sept 19th, range 40 days, no trend.

The Atlas survey counts found them in just nine tetrads, but roving records increased this to 48. Almost all of these were migrants which may be heard almost anywhere in April. Just three were counted at one site by BBS.

Spring Passage The first was heard at Severn Beach on April 2nd, the earliest record ever here, and the second earliest recorded. It is two weeks earlier than the 40 year average, and eleven days earlier than the ten year average. It was not a chance event as the next was one at Chittingen Warth on 3rd, and there was one at CVL on 7th. Small numbers were reported subsequently. On 23rd there were five in song at Lower Knole Farm (ST58) and five at four other sites. On 25th ten were reported from six sites, and there were smaller numbers to the end of the month. Passage continued for the first two weeks of May.

Breeding season At Lower Knole Farm there were four probable breeding pairs, and there was one at Lower Woods. At Prospect Stile three were heard on June 30th and there were four on July 9th when one was seen carrying food to young. One was present at Congrove Wood between April 30th and June 30th.

Autumn GVRs ringed a total of eight on Aug. 12th, 16th and Sept. 12th, 18th and 25th, the latter the last autumn record. Exceptionally there were at least four individuals at CVL between Aug 28th and Sept 7th including three on 28th. One other bird was ringed at Northwick Warth on Aug 30th. The last date is close to the long term average.

	Avg 1991/00	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Spring	18	13	20	6	39	37	47	32	29	67	74
Breeding season		2	1	1	2	2	7	11	4	6	6
Autumn	11	38	24	12	6	29	6	3	6	7	16

Spring and autumn passage bird days and breeding season territories.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Fairly common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

BBS distribution 12%.

BBS England 95-08 change, down 6%.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date April 13th, range 24 days, but average April 8th since 2000.

Forty year average last date Sept. 28th, range 30 days, trend stable.

Forty year average time spent 168 days, range 40 days, but 172 days over past decade.

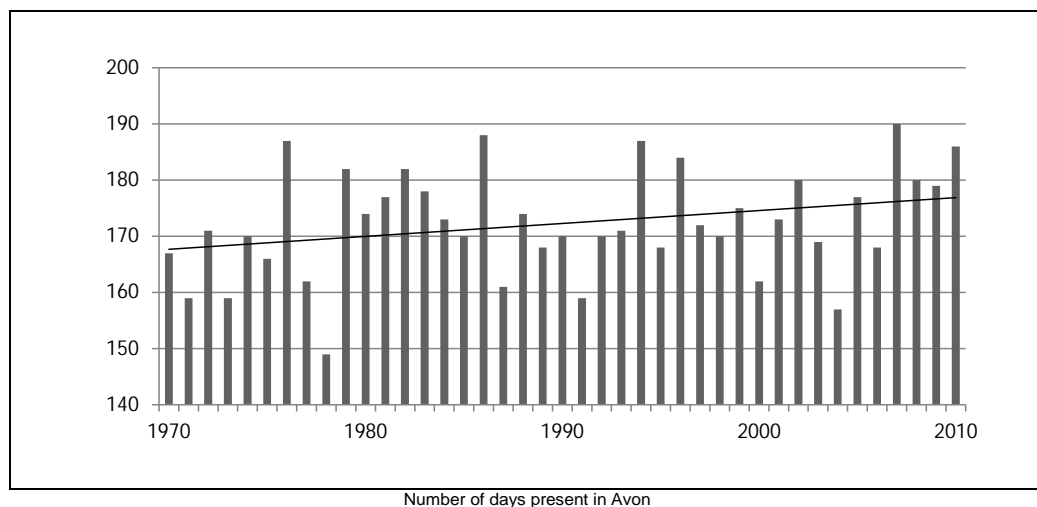
The Atlas survey counts found them in 58 tetrads and roving records added a further 41. BBS recorded them in 11% of squares an increase on the 7% in which they were found in 1994, but too few are counted to enable a population index to be constructed. Nationally there has been a 6% decline in the past decade.

Spring The first was recorded on April 8th at Weston STW. This date is the same as the ten-year average, which has been gradually becoming earlier since 1992. Five were seen at three sites on 10th. There were small numbers seen daily with 17 on 19th at five sites, and similar numbers over the following week.

Breeding There were 41 territories around CVL equalling the record of 2008 and 34 at Weston STW, six on the Strawberry Line near Yatton and six at Portbury Hundred.

Autumn Passage seems to have peaked in mid-August; GVRs ringed one on 12th, seven on 16th, one on Sept. 5th, three on 12th and one on 22nd. The last records were from New Passage and CVL on Oct. 2nd, a single individual at each. This is four days later than the ten-year average, which has been becoming later since 1996.

The graph below shows the difference, in number of days, between arrival and departure dates since 1970, that is the number of days present in our region. The trend line gives an increase of just ten days, which compares with the increase of 40 days by Reed Warbler over the same period. The arrival dates have tended to fluctuate by over three weeks during the last forty years, although there has been a slight trend to earlier dates in the past twenty years. This pattern is confirmed by the first and last capture dates from CVRS.



REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Fairly common passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

BBS distribution 12%.

BBS England 95-08 change, up 22%, local, up 90%

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date April 18th, range 30 days, trend continuous fall in date since 1972, and last decade average date is April 8th.

Forty year average last date Sept. 28th, range 50 days, and average of last decade Oct. 2nd

Forty year average time spent 164 days, range 50 days, trend continuous increase since 1975, and average 77 days over past decade.

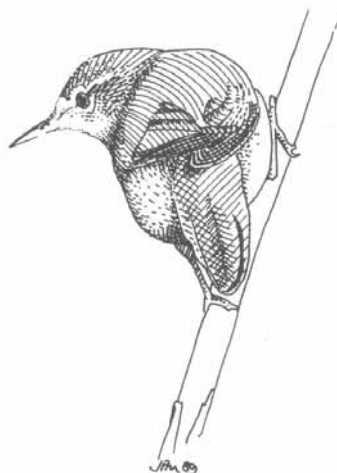
The Atlas survey counts recorded them in 63 tetrads, and roving records reported them from a further 31, which probably accurately reflects their present distribution. BBS found them in 10% of squares, which compares with just 3% in 1994. Nationally they have increased by 51% in the past 25 years.

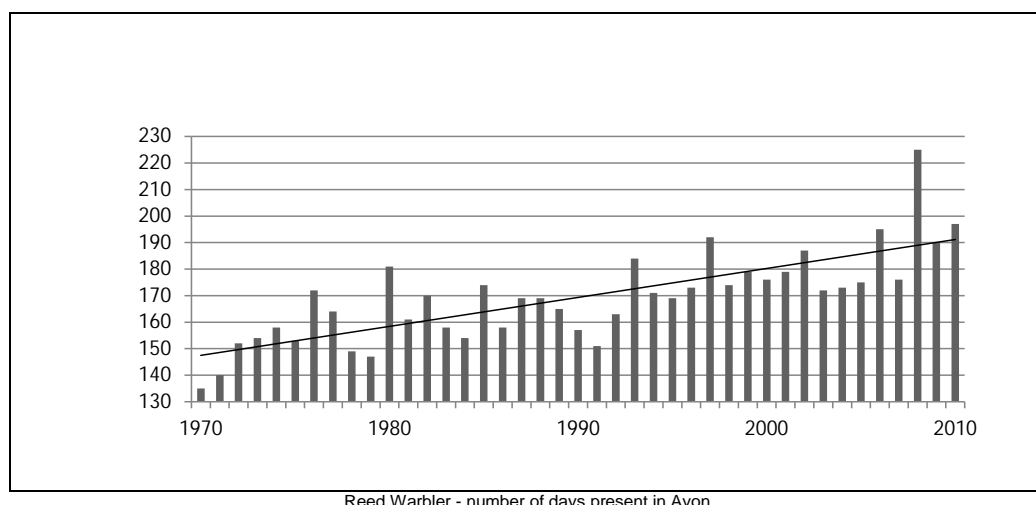
Arrival The first was heard on April 4th at CVL. This is four days earlier than the ten-year average, which has been falling steadily since 1992. The next was heard on 6th and there were three recorded on 9th. Twelve were at Blake's Pools on 21st and 30 at CVL on 25th.

Breeding There were 22 territories at Weston STW, 15 NW of Pill on the Avon saltmarsh, 15 on wasteland at Lawrence Weston and eleven at Lower Knole Farm. At CVL 70 nests were found of which 28 failed and 128 juveniles were ringed. There was an unusual record of four juveniles still being fed on Sept. 3rd at Chittingen Warth.

Autumn passage GVRs ringed ten on Aug. 1st, two on 12th, seven on 16th, and 20 were recorded at BL on 25th. In September GVRs ringed one on the 5th, three on 12th, one on 18th and 22nd, and two on 25th. The last was seen at New Passage on Oct. 2nd. This date is the same as the ten-year average, and four days later than the forty year average.

The graph overleaf shows the difference, in number of days, between arrival and departure dates over the past forty years. Arrival has become markedly earlier by two weeks, and departure later by three weeks, so that total time present has increased by over 40 days. This is in very marked contrast with the Sedge Warbler, and indeed is greater than the change in any other passerine migrant. This pattern is confirmed by the first and last capture dates from CVRS.





Warblers at CVL

	2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Sedge Warbler	16	7	18	4	7	11	11	7	41	20	41
Garden Warbler	20	28	26	17	15	14	28	27	29	37	40
Blackcap	29	29	40	32	23	23	31	35	45	49	47
Chiffchaff	34	18	35	35	29	25	30	38	38	45	57
Willow Warbler	9	5	0	2	6	6	0	7	9	3	0

Singing males within the perimeter of CVL counted by KEV using a standardised method

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*

Scarce irruptive winter visitor. Erratic locally with a big influx in winter 2004/05.

A substantial irruption occurred late in the year.

First winter period Two were seen on Jan. 6th in Clifton and 20 at Shirehampton on 7th.

Second winter period There was a significant irruption totalling 1692 bird-days, but this was small compared to 2004/05 as can be seen from the second table below. On Oct. 26th twelve were noted in flight at Canford (PM). One was at Portishead on Nov. 15th, but the real influx began on Nov. 25th when two were seen at Kingswood, and a total of eight at two sites on 27th. On 28th nine were seen at Bathampton.

In December 1773 bird-days were recorded from a total of at least 56 sites spread across the whole region. In the first ten days 44 were recorded from eight sites; from 11th to 20th 409 were recorded from 36 widespread sites, and in the last ten days 1207 were recorded from 34 sites. The peak was just before Christmas. The largest single flock was 112 at Horfield on 28th, where they were present almost daily from 15th to 31st. They were also present at two locations in Weston-s-Mare from 10th to 27th.

	1st	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th	14th	15th	17th	18th
Number	7	4	20	20	2	1	38	37	67	55	51	34	22
Sites	2	1	3	2	2	1	5	5	4	8	6	4	1
Max. flock									60				
	19th	20th	21st	22nd	23rd	24th	25th	26th	27th	28th	29th	30th	31st
Number	47	59	169	82	169	251	67	36	84	168	140	57	86
Sites	7	6	6	5	12	10	6	6	4	4	6	1	3
Max. flock			77		45	91				112	100		

Distribution in December

	1981/82	88/89	95/96	98/99	00/01	02/03	04/05	05/06	08/09	2009/10
Bird days	6	1	c75	3	c107	c42	10874	1	c70	22
Max. flock	3	1	5	1	6	2	377	1	14	20

Previous winters in which Waxwings were seen in Avon

NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

Fairly common breeding resident. Scarce away from established sites.

BBS distribution 18%.

BBS England 95-08 change, up 56%.

The Atlas survey has revealed that this species is much more widespread than previously thought. By including the winter and summer counts and all roving records, it has been recorded in 199 tetrads (50%). As the species is largely sedentary, and, when it is not calling, very elusive, this distribution is probably accurate. It is confirmed by the fact that, since 1998, individual records have come from 182 tetrads and from 296 one-km squares. Because it is elusive, it was only found in 18% of BBS squares, and too few are seen to enable a population index to be created. Nationally it has been increasing steadily since 1970.

In 2010 records came from 83 one-km squares, 31 of them new since 1998. They were also present in winter in 10% of WGS gardens, the provision of garden feeding is probably assisting over-winter survival.

	2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Total squares	25	21	59	69	80	87	34	54	42	65	83
New squares	14	12	22	27	28	26	9	13	6	22	31

Total number of one-km squares in which this species was reported.

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris*

Fairly Common breeding resident; possibly an uncommon passage migrant.

BBS Distribution 9%.

BBS England 95-08 change, down 13%.

Since 1998 this species has been found in 170 tetrads and 248 one-km squares, and this year it was recorded in 57 of them, 13 of which were new. The Atlas survey, including both winter and summer counts and roving records, found them in 183 tetrads. In other words it is a very widespread species, but extremely elusive. It was recorded in just 9% of BBS squares, and too few are counted to create a population index, although nationally it has probably declined by 19% over the past 25 years.

	2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Total squares	18	19	35	49	26	61	26	41	36	44	57
New squares	12	7	16	28	13	27	11	14	10	14	13

Annual total of one-km squares in which this species was reported

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Abundant breeding resident. Probably the commonest breeding bird in the region.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	-5	-6	0	-35%	14

The Atlas survey found this species in every tetrad in both winter and summer. Nationally there has been a 25% increase in the past 25 years, but BBS in 2010 showed small decline for the second year, following two successive cold winters. The impact of the cold December in 2010 is as yet unclear, although CABS recorded good numbers in the first two months of 2011. Nationally, based on provisional Constant Effort Survey figures, the breeding season was a good one, but local results from CABS suggested it was not as good as 2009. Song started late on March 14th, and was effectively continuous until Nov. 28th, when snow put an end to it for the rest of the year.

	2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
BBS Index	112	na	124	115	115	117	92	103	97	89	83
Steep Holm territories	nc	9	25	nc	9	19	16	18	28	28	nc

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 97%, BBS Avon population estimate 46,600 pairs)

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

Still abundant breeding resident, declining rapidly; passage migrant and winter visitor.

	WGS	BBS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	-41	-5	-72	15

The Atlas survey found this species in 92% of tetrads, but in only 77% in the breeding season, compared with 84% in 1992, despite a doubling of the survey time. Roving records filled in most of the gaps, but numbers remain very low in some areas. The winter survey counted 46,000, compared with fewer than 7000 in the breeding season. The winter rate suggested a decline of 44% on the numbers 25 years earlier in the first Winter Atlas. Clearly a substantial proportion of wintering birds are migrants. The national breeding season decline over the same period is 79%.

Starling can't

In the 2009/10 winter they were present in 68% of WGS gardens and in the lowest numbers yet recorded, representing a 70% drop since 1975 when the survey began. Numbers peaked during the January cold spell. BBS recorded them in 62% of squares, the lowest figure since 1994 when it was 87%, and the like-for like counts showed a fall of 8.5% on 2009.

There were winter roosts of 5000 at Yate, 3000 at the old jetty in Avonmouth, and 1500 at Inglestone Common. Feeding flocks of 2000 were recorded on Jan. 21st at OPS on fields spread with manure.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
78	na	80	71	61	60	60	59	39	37	32

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 62%, BBS Avon population estimate 8500 pairs)

2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
4.7	3.9	4.8	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.0	4.5	3.9	2.4

WGS - average number per garden per week in winter

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus*

Uncommon breeding resident, present locally on suitable streams and rivers.

UK 25-yr change: down 15%. Ten-yr local change: stable.

The Atlas survey recorded this species in a total of 29 tetrads, 19 in the breeding season, and ten in winter only. The distribution, scattered along the minor streams of the region, is essentially similar to that of the two previous Atlases, although individual sightings since 1994 have been noted from 41 tetrads. There is no strong evidence of a decline. They can breed on very small streams, often without easy public access, and hence records almost certainly understate their numbers. They have bred on 21 of the streams of the region.

In 2010 breeding was proved at six sites, three north of the Avon at Combe Dingle on the R. Trym, Wick on the R. Boyd, and Willsbridge on the Siston Brook, and three south of it on Winford Brook, on the R. Chew at Compton Dando, and the R. Wellow at Radstock. They were present in the breeding season at a further six sites, on the tiny Broadmead Brook north of Marshfield, at Snuff Mills on the R. Frome in Bristol, where they used to be regular, at a second site on the Boyd south of Wick, on the Chew at Publow and Woollard, and on the R. Yeo at Wrington.

They were seen at nine sites in winter, four of them different from the breeding season, including Pensford, the R. Frome at Bromley Heath beneath the M4, Rickford, which has been a breeding site in the past where one was reported dead in October, and on the R. Avon at Saltford in November before the cold weather struck.

	2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Bird-days	72	39	29	38	56	51	89	77	84	173	201
Localities	12	11	12	13	14	10	13	12	8	9	18

Avon area - total bird-days and number of reported sites

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*

Scarce passage migrant, very scarce in autumn, mostly on or near the coast.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date: April 1st, range 30 days, with no long term trend.

Forty year average last date Oct. 20th, but many years have no observation.

The best spring passage since 2007.

The first was recorded at Aust on March 18th, the earliest record since 2003, and one was seen at PW on 19th, staying to the 21st. It was also recorded at Chittening Warth on 24th and Middle Hope on 30th. There was then a long gap, until one at Uphill on April 19th, and finally two at Sand Point on 23rd.

In the autumn one was seen at New Passage on Oct. 10th and another at Aust Cliff the following day.

	1990/99 Av.	2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Spring	13	11	2	3	5	3	3	10	20	2	4	9
Autumn	1	1	2	1	2	1	19	1	0	2	4	2

Spring and autumn passage, total bird-days

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Abundant resident, passage status uncertain.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	0	-9	3	3	23

The Atlas survey found this species in every tetrad, and counted 9000 in winter and almost 8000 in the summer. The winter count implied a 38% population increase on that recorded in the First Winter Atlas, although nationally the increase over this period has been just 5%. During the January cold snap 14 were recorded in a garden at Lawrence Weston and ten at another in Top Sutton. In the 2009/10 winter WGS numbers in gardens did not alter overall but there was a very sharp peak, 40% above the winter average, during the cold spell in January, and this spell may have caused some losses. On March 12th 15 arrived in a Dundry garden and on 17th there was visible migration at Sand Point.

BBS counts were down for the second year, and the 2010 breeding season was poor. Nationally, preliminary Constant Effort Survey results show a decline of 21% in productivity, possibly caused by the dry early summer. The first fledgling was not reported until May 1st, suggesting that first broods were lost, and in Redland the first fledgling was not seen until 31st. Song was recorded in spring from Feb. 23rd and CABS recorded it on 29% of visits, between April 4th and June 27th.

The cold snap from Nov. 28th produced some high counts: 34 on the west bank of the Avon by RPD on Nov. 29th and 36 here on Dec. 7th; 27 on Nov. 29th at Bucklands Pool; 30 on 30th by the Avon at Pill, and 36 here on Dec. 7th; and 30 at PW on Dec. 20th.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
151	na	174	165	164	161	155	164	156	151	142

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 100%, BBS Avon population estimate 37,400 pairs)

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; can occur in large numbers in hard winters.

Migration dates:

Forty year average arrival date Oct. 3rd range 60 days, but Oct. 8th in past decade.

Forty year average last date April 13th, range 40 days, average April 15th in past decade.

Forty year average time spent 192 days, range 50 days, but only 176 in past decade.

The Atlas survey found this species in 75% of tetrads during four winters, and counted over 13,000 at a rate that implied a fall of 27% in the population since the First Winter Atlas. However, numbers seem to depend on the winter weather and can vary very abruptly with cold weather movements.

First half-winter In the 2009/10 winter WGS gardens recorded their presence in 74% of gardens, the highest proportion ever, and in numbers that were also the highest ever. Most were present during the January cold snap, and they disappeared abruptly as soon as it ended. It is likely that the entire local population became concentrated in urban areas between Jan. 2nd and 10th. The onset of snow on Jan. 6th led to a record of 1200 to SW at Leap Valley, Downend. In March 500 were at Marshfield on 8th, and flocks of 150 and 140 were seen on 16th and 17th. After that only small numbers were seen, the last, eight, at OPS on 28th, the earliest departure date since 2001.

Second half-year The first arrivals appeared on Oct. 3rd when 40 were seen over Yate, a normal first date, and 20 were at Marshfield on 5th. Only small numbers were recorded until 21st when 545 were seen flying SW at Cl-Y and 100 were at CVL, and 150 were at Sand Point on 22nd. There were regular reports of small flocks in the rest of October and early November, then 400 were seen at Marshfield on 20th. After the snow fell 'uncountable numbers' were seen at Cl-Y on Dec. 3rd and 500 at Rushmead Farm on 5th and at Cl-Y on 7th. Fresh snow on 17th led to 500 flying over at OPS on 19th, 380 at Saltford on 21st, 300 at Stowey on 22nd, 600 gorging on Sea Buckthorn at Weston-super-Mare on 28th, and thousands reported in the City of Bristol on 29th.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

Common breeding resident, which declined in the 1980s. Status as a passage migrant and winter visitor uncertain.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 95-08	England 95-08
% Change	79	10	36	12	25

The Atlas survey found this species in 80% of tetrads in the winter and 88% in the summer, and roving records subsequently filled most of the gaps. Counts were similar in both seasons at just over 1000, and at rates that were similar to those in the First Winter Atlas, which is in line with the national figure of a fall of 5% over the same period. In the 2009/10 winter they were present in 74% of WGS gardens and in numbers that were substantially higher than the previous winter. They were present from mid-December to mid-February in double the normal numbers.

The 7% increase in BBS numbers in 2010 suggests that, despite the second cold winter, they survived well, although provisional national Constant Effort Survey results suggest that they had a poor breeding season. Song was recorded by CABS from Jan. 24th to July 4th. A total of 27 pairs bred around the perimeter of CVL, as in 2009. Song was first recorded at Clifton on Nov. 7th, and again on the 14th and 21st and on 19th there were

records of song from three sites, which came shortly after a ten-day spell of unusually warm weather from Oct. 27th to Nov. 5th. Much colder weather began on Nov. 21st putting an end to song until the New Year.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
142	na	169	148	160	158	139	145	163	145	156

Song Thrush BBS index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 89%, BBS Avon population estimate 6250 pairs)

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Can occur in large numbers in hard winters.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date Sept. 30th, range 25 days, but Sept. 27th over past decade.

Forty year average last date April 9th, range 30 days, but April 4th over past decade.

Forty year average time spent 191 days, range 30, no trend.

The Atlas survey recorded this species in 90% of tetrads and counted over 16,000, at a rate well below that recorded in the First Winter Atlas, but higher than that in most recent winters.

First half-winter In the 2009/10 winter WGS recorded them in 74% of gardens, the highest since the 1995/96 winter, and in the highest numbers since 2004/05. There was a massive spike in the numbers in early January, the average per garden increasing abruptly from around two per garden to over five, and they then vanished as soon as the thaw began. On Jan. 7th some 500 were seen at Dundry flying to S, but there were no other records of unusual flocks or movements. In March overnight movement was recorded on 11th, a flock of 135 on the 7th at Dundry, and 100 at two sites on 18th indicated the height of the passage. The last record was of two at CVL on 24th, the earliest last date since 2005.

Second half-year The first were three flying S at Leap Valley, Downend, followed by five at Brentry on Oct. 7th the latest since 2003, and a week later than normal. Small numbers were widespread through the rest of the month. On 17th 150 were seen at Northwick Warth on migration watch travelling NE.

Daytime temperatures began to fall abruptly from Nov 20th, when hundreds were heard migrating at night over Dundry and on 22nd 200 were seen there flying SW. At Saltford on 23rd 580 were counted, with 800 on 30th. 1000 were estimated on Dec. 1st at Yatton, and 'uncountable numbers' at Cl-Y on 3rd. An overnight thaw on Dec. 10th resulted in a series of records from Dundry of birds travelling W, 500 on 10th, 1000 on the 11th, 300 on the 12th, 2000 on the 13th and 500 on the 14th. Over 1000 were seen at Saltford on 21st and 22nd, and 4000 Fieldfares and Redwings were feeding on apples at Chew Valley Fruit Farm, Bishop Sutton on 24th.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

Uncommon breeding resident, passage migrant and probable winter visitor.

BBS England 95-08 change, down 25%, local, down 56%.

The Atlas survey recorded this species in around 40% of tetrads in both seasons, counting 400 in winter and 350 in the summer. The winter rate was half that in the First Winter Atlas, and this is virtually the same as the 48% decline recorded nationally in the same 25 year period.

BBS recorded them in just 26% of squares, compared with 42% in 1994, and the numbers reported were the same as in 2009 but 60% down on 1994. The causes of this continuing decline are unclear, although because they sing early, and are then silent through the rest of the breeding season, they are not well recorded by BBS.

On Aug. 20th 20 were seen apparently going to roost at Cameley, and on 21st 34 were recorded at Chilcombe Bottom. These were the only flocks greater than eight recorded.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
71	na	73	83	56	62	50	48	52	40	40

Avon BBS index 1994=100 (BBS Distribution 26%)

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

Uncommon passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

BBS distribution 1%. BBS England 98-08 change, down 48%, local down 33%

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date May 2nd, range 25 days, trend later by seven days 1972-1993, earlier by 5 days since.

Forty year average last date Sept 25th, range 45 days, trend later by 15 days 1988 to present.

Forty year average time spent 148 days, range 60, falling by ten days 1970-1988 and rising by 20 days since.

This species is now scarce as a migrant and the breeding population shows signs of further decline.

The first was an early migrant at Weston STW on April 24th, after which no more were noted until May 11th. There were then 18 records of 32 individuals to the end of the month. Coastal migrants at Middle Hope, PW, Sand Point and Severnside accounted for just five of these records - single birds apart from two at Sand Point

on 22nd. The other May records came from eleven inland sites and no doubt included breeders as well as migrants. Notable was a total of four at three sites on Wrington Hill on 24th and six at Shire Valley, Marshfield on 30th.

In June and July there were 15 records from just eleven sites (18 from 14 sites in 2009). Six were still at Shire Valley in late June and three juveniles were here on Aug. 2nd. Breeding was proved from just two other sites (although likely at several others).

The 20 August records came from eleven sites and included a mixture of breeders (such as a late brood being fed at Wrington on 30th) and migrants (for example at coastal sites and in a Bristol garden) with most migrants in the last two weeks of the month. In September there were single birds at Sand Point on 1st and 9th, and up to three at CVL from 3rd to 9th. At least two lingered into early October at New Passage on 2nd and 5th and, the last, at CVL on 6th.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
160	151	222	128	108	109	58	98	97	100
Total bird-days									

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

Abundant breeding resident and passage migrant.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 98-08	England 98-08
%Change	5	-15	-5	-4	25

The Atlas survey recorded this species in every tetrad, but the winter counts imply an increase in the population since 1984 of 165%. BBS counts were sharply down this year, presumably a consequence of the cold winter and a poor breeding season in 2009. 2010 may have been another poor breeding season as CABS recorded below average autumn and winter numbers for a second year and further declines might be expected next year after the second consecutive hard winter. Song was noted on 86% of CABS visits, but was broken by a seven week rest during July and August.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
121	na	128	134	134	128	128	138	140	143	121
Avon BBS index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 99%, BBS Avon population estimate 35,200 pairs)										

NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Scarce breeding summer migrant; Scarce/very scarce passage migrant.

England 10 yr change down 53%. local down 80%.

40 yr average arrival date April 12th. There has been no trend in this date, but the number of records in recent years has been small.

The first was a migrant singing at Northwick Warth on April 22nd. Later, one was singing along the Strawberry Line near Yatton on May 24th. Otherwise the only records came from the Lower Woods – Inglestone Common – Horwood Farm area. Recorded here between May 8th and June 16th, and CB found three pairs in late May. Three nests were located: one hatched three young from five eggs but they were predated when just over a week old, this pair tried a second brood but the outcome was unknown; one nest contained two well-grown fledglings but the whole nest had been removed when inspected later (sadly, human intervention was suspected); the third nest successfully fledged four young.

1989/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
13	7	5	2	3	11	8	6	5	3	3
Estimate of total numbers of pairs attempting to breed										

BLUETHROAT *Luscinia svecica*

Very rare vagrant.

Description species.

One record: a singing male of the white-spotted race *cyaneacula*, photographed amongst pampas-grass (*Cortaderia* sp.) in a small courtyard garden at Staple Hill on June 19th (JF). One of the images from JF's camera, evidently taken with a high magnification digital zoom lens, is reproduced opposite page 81.

Although the race *cyaneacula* breeds closest to southern England (e.g. Holland and northern France) it is usually an early migrant with most British records in March and April. The Arctic breeding nominate race passes through later in spring, typically from mid-May onwards. Small numbers of this species are traded, but a wild origin seems more likely, despite the unusual nature of the record.

Bluethroat con't

There have been five previous records in our area as follows: a first-winter male trapped at CVL in September 1968, another first-winter male trapped at BL in August 1971, a first-winter in a garden at Clevedon in October 1985, one at PW in May 1988, and a Red-spotted (*svecica*) male at Marshfield in May 1998.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant. Rare in summer; has bred recently.

A good year with successful proved breeding at a new site.

In the first winter period single birds were in the Battery Point area of Portishead from Jan. 3rd to March 10th; in an Ashton Vale garden on at least Jan. 3rd; at Anchor Head on 6th and 11th; at Worle on 11th (having been first seen on Dec. 11th, 2009); Somerdale from 19th to 27th; Clevedon on 27th and Yatton on 27th and 30th. Seven wintering individuals is a good total for the Avon area, although it is interesting to note that only one was present into February.

Four seen in March are likely to have been migrants as follows: at Hotwells on 2nd and 9th; at Portishead Marina on 13th; at Aust Services on 23rd and 24th; and at OPS on 27th. Later in spring, one was at Sand Point from April 16th to 19th, and another at OPS on 21st.

Birds were present at Avonmouth Docks from June 21st to Aug. 12th. Breeding was proved on June 24th when an adult was seen carrying food to young. Next day a fledged juvenile was being fed by both adults. They were seen on and off through July but on Aug. 12th two adults were seen with a newly fledged juvenile from a second brood. This species may have bred in our area in 1986 and 1994, did so unsuccessfully in 2007 and successfully in 2008 (although the fledged juveniles died) and was present at the 2007-08 breeding site in summer 2009. For further details see the paper by LFR in the 2008 edition of this **Report**.

The first of the autumn was at Portishead on Nov. 9th. This was followed by single birds at New Passage on 19th; Cl-Y on 21st, and a fine adult male, at Woodford Lodge, CVL from 22nd, which stayed into 2011 although it moved to Chew Stoke STW during the cold spell from Dec. 16th onwards. On Nov. 27th single birds were at Cl-Y (remaining until Dec. 3rd) and OPS (until 12th). Further December sightings came from: Wraxall on 7th; Severn Beach from 14th into 2011; the breeding site at Avonmouth Docks on 17th; Sea Mills on 19th and Portishead Marina on 25th (also remaining into the New Year).

1991/00 Av.	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
27	80	17	25	24+	16	12	33	45	111	88
Total bird-days										

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Uncommon passage migrant and very scarce summer visitor.

BBS England 98-08 change, down 10%.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date April 8th, with a range of 25 days, and no trend over time.

Forty year average last date Oct. 13th, with a range of 35 days, and no trend over time.

Total time spent averaged 189 days, with a range of 60 days, and no trend.

A poor spring but an average autumn by recent standards.

Spring passage The first was an early arrival at Weston STW on March 27th, the third earliest date ever, followed by one at the Malago Greenway, Bedminster on 31st. There were then six records from April 6th to 9th including two at Westerleigh Common on 6th and three at the Yeo Estuary on 7th. Ten more April records between 16th and 28th included two at CVL on 21st. The only May records were of a female in a Clevedon garden on 7th and another at Sand Point on 22nd. The total of 24 in spring from 16 sites, seven of them inland, was below average.

Spring migrants								
Date	Mar 21-31	Apr 1-10	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-10	May 11-20	May 21-31	June 1-10
Bird-days	2	10	3	8	1	0	1	0
Max count	1	3	1	2	1	0	1	0

Autumn passage The first was trapped at GVRs on Aug. 1st. The next were two at New Passage on Aug. 15th after which birds were reported on most days to the end of the month including two at Sand Point on 19th, Northwick Warth on 23rd and Sand Point again on 31st. Regular sightings continued into early September with records from four different sites on 8th but none after 10th (one at Cl-Y). The last was a late female type near the Yeo Estuary on Oct. 16th. The autumn total of 29 from twelve sites, half of them inland, was about average for recent years.

Autumn migrants											
Date	Aug 1-10	Aug 11-20	Aug 21-30	Sep 1-10	Sep 11-20	Sep 21-30	Oct 1-10	Oct 11-20			
Bird-days	1	10	11	9	0	0	0	1			
Max count	1	2	2	2	0	0	0	1			
	1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Spring	18	25	37	26	49	34	65	18	26	28	24
Autumn	30	21	27	35	30	26	36	16	20	17	29
Total bird-days recorded on spring and autumn passage											

Total bird-days recorded on spring and autumn passage

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

Uncommon passage migrant, usually more numerous in autumn. Formerly bred, now rare in mid-summer.

BBS England 98-08 change: down 43%.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date April 19, range in recent years ten days, no trend.

Forty year average last date Oct 15th, range 42 days. A slight trend to earlier last dates since 1989.

Average time spent 178, range 30 days, no trend.

A slightly better spring but the autumn passage was below average.

Spring The first were on April 22nd when one was at Chittening Warth and four at Middle Hope. There was then a rush of twelve records from nine sites over the next four days, mainly involving one or two but with three at Northwick Warth on 24th and at Chittening Warth the next day. A further eight records followed, from five sites, between May 3rd and 9th again mostly of one's or two's but with four at CI-Y on 7th. A final straggler was at PW on 31st. The spring total of 37, from ten coastal and three inland sites, was slightly up on recent years.

Spring migrants					
Date	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-10	May 11-20	May 21-31
Bird-days	0	23	14	0	1
Max count	0	4	4	0	1

Autumn The first was at New Passage on Aug.15th. Records were more regular from 22nd (three at CI-Y) to the end of the month (three at Sand Point). Passage peaked at the start of September although birds were noted regularly throughout the month. Unusually the highest counts came from inland sites with an excellent series from CVL peaking at six from 9th to 11th and collectively accounting for over half the total for the month. There were also four at Marshfield on 1st, Chipping Sodbury Common on 9th and, on the coast, at Aust Warth on 8th. A few remained into the first week of October at Severnside and CVL with five at the former site on 2nd. The last was at Northwick Warth on 15th. The autumn total of 92 was on the low side compared with recent years, and even this is perhaps inflated by the regularly-recorded group at CVL. Autumn records came from 13 sites, four of them inland.

Autumn migrants											
Date	Aug 11-20	Aug 21-30	Sep 1-10	Sep 11-20	Sep 21-30	Oct 1-10	Oct 11-20	Oct 21-31			
Bird-days	3	10	41	16	9	12	1	0			
Max count	1	3	6	6	3	5	1	0			
	1991/00 Av.	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Spring	47	50	22	45	46	41	48	31	24	18	37
Autumn	105	121	180	188	71	90	138	33	127	88	92

Total bird-days recorded on spring and autumn passage

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquatus*

Uncommon winter visitor, passage migrant and scarce breeding species.

England ten-year change: up 184%. Local ten-year change: has begun to breed again.

The hard winters have had a significant impact on this species: the breeding population was reduced to just two pairs and the wintering population was also greatly diminished.

First winter period In the first two months it was recorded from 15 sites, only four of them inland. Three at Marshfield on Jan. 1st was the highest count with records of two at a further five sites. These records perhaps involved 22 individuals, well down on last year's estimate of 51 and well down on the 50 estimated for November and December 2009. Perhaps significantly there were 18 records in January but only six in February, with five of the latter from the same site, PW, and the other on 27th at Weston STW possibly involving a migrant. Thus it appears most of January's birds either moved out of our area or perished in the freezing conditions.

Stonechat spring passage Four at Aust Warth on March 4th and 5th were certainly migrants (none had been seen at this well-watched site for two months). In the rest of the month one or two were at CI-Y, Dunkerton Hill, Hengrove, Kenn Moor and the Sand Point-Sand Bay area, mostly on just a single date and again presumably mostly migrants. Further presumed migrants were then at Walborough on April 12th, and Kenn Moor (three) and Northwick Warth on 24th.

Breeding During the May/June season recorded from just two sites: Poplar Farm and Sand Point where three on June 26th was the only suggestion of successful breeding.

Autumn passage The first to return was at PW on July 30th with no more until one at CI-Y on Aug. 30th. In September there were four records from 18th of one or two at CVL, OPS and PW. October produced a mere nine records, from seven sites (Lansdown the only one inland), with a maximum of three at Aust Warth on 14th and a total of roughly 16 individuals. The total of about 23 migrants from late July through to October was well down on recent years – for example 112 were estimated in September and October 2009.

Second winter period There were 15 records in November, of one or two at eight sites (two inland) involving perhaps 15 individuals. Some of these were probably migrants as there were only two records of a single bird at PW in December.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Jan. – Feb.	30	25	38	44	48	57	44	55	51	22
Breeding pairs	5	3	3	8	11	12	7	15	2	2
Nov. – Dec.	47	58	40	45	62	55	63	69	50	16

Estimated number of individuals present in the two winter periods and total breeding pairs

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Fairly common passage migrant, mainly on the coast and at traditional inland sites.

BBS England 98-08 change, down 8%.

Migration dates;

Forty year average first date March 11th, range 24 days. The trend became later to 1988, earlier to 2000 and later since.

Forty years average last date Nov. 1st, range 40 days. Trend later by ten days since 1979.

Forty year average time spent 235 days, range 30 days, no trend.

A poor spring and a slightly below average autumn passage.

Spring passage The sum of all reported bird-days for the spring was 296, the lowest since 2002. The first sightings were on March 17th when one was at Chittening Warth and two were at Sand Point – a later arrival than in the previous three years. They were regular to the end of the month with up to four at twelve sites, plus nine at Marshfield on 27th. Birds were even more widespread in April. Passage peaked in the last third of the month with eight at CI-Y on 22nd, nine at Weston STW, 13 at both PW and Sand Point on 23rd, and 16 at Chittening Warth on 25th. Up to four were regular through to mid-May followed by a late flurry of five at CI-Y and three at Northwick Warth on 25th and the last, two, at Walborough on 31st. The table below smooths out weather-related big days, and shows a late March peak and a second larger one in late April. Whether the early passage was mainly British breeders with Greenland/Iceland birds coming through later is uncertain, but the latter are common migrants with us, albeit hard to identify with certainty in the field. A number of later records were attributed to this subspecies.

Spring migrants								
Date	Mar 11-20	Mar 21-31	Apr 1-10	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-10	May 11-20	May 21-31
Bird-days	14	46	22	47	120	30	7	10
Max count	4	9	4	6	16	4	3	5

Autumn passage Totalled 482, slightly fewer than last year. The first to return was at New Passage on July 23rd followed by one at RPD on 26th. The bulk of the passage was from early August to mid-October and is summarised in the table below. The peak was in late August and early September with a suggestion of a secondary peak in early October. Records were widespread with most from coastal and traditional inland sites as usual. Notable counts were: ten at both OPS and Northwick Warth on Aug. 23rd; twelve at the latter and nine at nearby Severn Beach on 27th; 15 at CI-Y and 14 at Sand Point on Sept. 1st; 10 at Northwick Warth on 8th, at CI-Y on 10th and 12th, and at Middle Hope on 22nd. After Oct. 20th there were single birds at CI-Y and Sand Point on 21st, CI-Y on 27th and 30th with the last here on Nov. 10th.

Autumn migrants (main passage period)								
Date	Aug 1-10	Aug 11-20	Aug 21-31	Sep 1-10	Sep 11-20	Sep 21-30	Oct 1-10	Oct 11-20
Bird-days	21	34	114	103	73	42	67	21
Max count	5	8	12	15	10	10	6	5

[illegible]**PIED FLYCATCHER** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Uncommon passage migrant, scarce in autumn, and rare summer visitor; bred in 1988.

UK 1998-2008 change, down 45%.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date April 14th, range 25 days, trend earlier by ten days 1976-2002, then later.

Another poor spring and below average autumn for this declining species.

The first of spring were on April 19th when one was in a Nailsea garden and another at Weston Woods. On April 22nd there were single birds at Middle Hope, Portbury Dock and a male at Stoke Lodge, Bristol and next day there were two at Wain's Hill, Cl-Y. One at East Harptree on May 4th was the last of the spring.

In the autumn one was in a Leigh Woods garden on July 28th with another garden bird was noted at Redland on 31st. The last of the year was on Walton Common on Aug. 8th.

[illegible]

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

Abundant breeding resident.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 98-08	England 98-08
% Change	7	0	139	-15	17

The Atlas survey recorded this species in virtually every tetrad in both winter and summer, and the winter counts suggested a population increase of 50% since 1984.

2009 was a good breeding season, reflected in the WGS counts, and CABS figures for the spring and autumn of 2010 were the highest since the survey began in 1994, although BBS did not record a change. Song was recorded by CABS from January to the end of June.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
131	nc	159	169	150	155	157	146	127	133	132

Avon BBS index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 90%, BBS Avon population estimate 19,400 pairs)

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

Still abundant but declining breeding resident.

	WGS	BBS	Local 98-08	England 98-08
% Change	-34	-3	-13	-13

The Atlas winter survey recorded this species in 78% of tetrads, 16% fewer than in the Winter Atlas in 1984, and the winter counts suggested a 32% fall in population since 1984. Nevertheless it remains a very common species, and in the breeding season had the fourth highest counts. However, BBS recorded a small fall in 2010 and the WGS recorded its presence in only 52% of gardens with an average of only 1.5 birds per garden/week, both figures the lowest since the survey began in 1973.

2010 seems to have been a good breeding season, and several sites recorded more than in recent years, so that the picture is not entirely gloomy. A flock of at least 100 was recorded at Woodspring Priory on Aug. 27th, and four sites recorded flocks of between 30 and 50.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
116	na	147	176	159	164	152	149	130	130	126

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 68%, BBS Avon population estimate 41,000 pairs)

1990/91-1999/00 Av.	2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
5.7	3.5	3.2	3.9	4.0	4.1	3.7	2.9	3.4	2.4	1.6

WGS - average numbers per garden per week in winter.

Very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Now probably extinct as a breeding bird.

BBS England 98-08 change up 32%.

The poor run shows no sign of ending. The only report this year was of eight migrants moving to SW at CI-Y on Oct. 21st (DN).

[illegible]

M. f. flavissima. Uncommon passage migrant and very scarce summer visitor.

UK 25-yr change: down 74%.

Arrival and departure data

40 year average first date April 6th, range 15 days, trend later by ten days 1970-1991, stable since.

40 year average last date Oct. 9th, range 30 days, no trend.

40 year average time spent 191 days, range 10 days, trend erratic fall by 10 days 1970-2008

A poor spring was followed by a good autumn passage by recent standards.

Spring The first was at Chittening Warth on April 11th with further records at BG, OPS and PW (four) on 15th. One or two were then noted regularly at a scatter of sites from 17th to May 6th with higher counts of three at Severn Beach on 17th, seven at OPS on 21st and four at Sand Point on 27th. After this there were just three more: at Littleton Warth on May 15th; Chittening Warth on 25th and BG on June 5th. Other locations were: Cl-Y; Northwick Warth; Tormarton; and Weston STW. The total spring passage of about 42 was better than last year but still the second worst ever, see table at end of the species account.

Spring records						
Date	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-10	May 11-20	May 21-31	June 1-10
Bird-days	12	21	6	1	1	1
Max count	4	7	2	1	1	1

Breeding season Breeding was proved again. Two pairs were taking food to young in the Tormarton area on June 18th.

Autumn The first autumn arrivals were single birds at New Passage on July 14th, Marshfield on 16th (a potential breeding site) and Aust Warth on 19th, plus two at Cl-Y on 22nd and one at Sand Bay on 28th. Birds were again scarce in early August with just one at OPS on 8th. Three at Weston STW on 12th signalled the start of the main passage. Numbers were most impressive at New Passage and Northwick Warth with five on Aug. 15th building up to seven on 21st, twelve on 22nd, 15 on 25th, peaking at 37 next day with 35 remaining on 29th, still 25 on Sept. 4th and 9th after which numbers rapidly fell with five on 11th, seven on 12th, and the last, two, on 16th. The birds here mainly fed amongst cattle on the salt marsh but also foraged on the foreshore at times. They accounted for 82% of the autumn bird-day total, regular records of the flock somewhat inflating the autumn's total. Nonetheless high numbers were present elsewhere on the Estuary at this time, for example over 100 were at Slimbridge WWT in Gloucestershire, perhaps reflecting a good breeding season as the great majority were first winters. Elsewhere the highest count was ten at Sand Point on Aug. 31st with eight in the same area on Sept. 4th but four or less at other sites. At CVL some lingered into early October with three on 3rd. The last of the year was at BL on 8th.

Apart from the sites mentioned above also recorded in the autumn at BG, Chittening Warth, Keynsham, Littleton Warth and Weston STW.

Autumn migrants								
Date	Jul 11-20	Jul 21-31	Aug 1-10	Aug 11-20	Aug 21-30	Sep 1-10	Sep 11-20	Sep 21-30
Bird-days	3	3	1	25	197	138	27	5
Max count	1	2	1	7	37	25	7	3

The autumn total of 404 was the highest in recent years, see table below.

[illegible]

CITRINE WAGTAIL *Motacilla citreola*

Very rare vagrant, one previous record.

A BBRC species

One record: a first-winter watched around the margins of Herriott's Pool, CVL in the pre-roost wagtail gathering on Sept. 7th (RJH, KEV) [BBRC]. This is the second record for our area, the previous one, also a first-winter at CVL, was on Sept. 15th, 1996.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Fairly common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

UK 1998-2008 change: up 20%. Local ten-yr change: down 50%

Winter and migrants Widely reported in both winter periods, with records coming from at least 47 sites across the area including reservoirs, streams and rivers, sewage works, gardens, and town and city centres. The vast majority of winter records related to one or two birds, five at CVL on Dec. 11th being the largest winter count.

Numbers during autumn migration were somewhat down on last year, probably representing a real decrease in numbers. Four were at Middle Hope on Sept. 17th but otherwise no more than three were recorded anywhere in September and no more than two reported on autumn counts of visible migration. Six at BG on Oct. 31st was the highest at this time.

Breeding Reports of breeding came from at least 24 atlas tetrads, well down on the 39 reported last year and no doubt due to the hard winter. None bred at CVL this year, for example, presumably for this reason (KEV).

WHITE/PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*

Pied Wagtail *M.a yarrelli*

Common breeding resident, winter visitor, and passage migrant.

UK 25-yr change: down 5%. Local ten-yr change: down 31%.

Winter 2009/10 PJH counted 278 coming in from N to roost at OPS on the afternoon of Jan. 24th and gathering on the roofs here. The observer considered that, allowing for birds arriving from other directions, the roost probably held over 500 at this time. Other notable counts early in the year were of 200 at Keynsham STW on Jan. 28th and 75 at Chew Stoke STW on 12th.

Spring migration At Littleton Warth there were 31 on March 6th and 11th. The only record of visible migration was of four over Sand Point on 17th (reflecting a lack of records rather than a lack of birds).

Breeding season Widely reported in the breeding season.

Autumn migration and second winter period The first post breeding gathering was 42 at New Passage in showery conditions on July 14th, followed by 14 at PW and 23 at RPD on Aug. 10th. Visible migration was noticed at various coastal sites from Sept. 30th to Oct. 31st, the highest counts were: 59 to NE at Littleton Warth in three hours and 25 to NE over New Passage in two hours on Oct. 9th; 38 to NE at Littleton Warth in one hour and 20 to NE at New Passage in four hours next day; 20 over New Passage in 130 minutes on 13th and 33 over Aust Warth in 105 minutes on 17th. At least 150 were at a pre-roost gathering at Herriott's Pool, CVL on the late afternoon of Oct. 23rd – of 80 seen well all but one were definitely Pied, the other was a first-winter that could have been either Pied or White (JPM). The highest counts in the last two months of the year were: 30 at Severn Beach on Nov. 1st; 57 going to roost at Bath University on 3rd; 60 at PW on Nov. 19th; and 30 at Heron's Green Bay, CVL on Dec. 31st.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
91	na	110	110	101	120	72	97	110	90	87

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 30%)

White Wagtail *M. a. alba*

Uncommon passage migrant.

Forty year average first date March 27th. Forty year average last date Sept. 29th.

Both passages were again poor as can be seen from the second table below.

Spring passage The first were three at BG on April 3rd, a site that accounted for most of this year's rather thin spring passage. Numbers here built up to five by 5th with one or two on scattered dates to the last on May 9th plus three on May 1st. Elsewhere there were single birds at CVL and Middle Hope on April 6th, two at Northwick Warth on 11th, eight at CVL on 19th with six on 22nd.

White Wagtail spring records						
Date	Mar 21-31	Apr 1-10	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-10	May 11-20
Bird-days	0	13	11	9	6	0
Max count	0	5	8	6	3	0

Autumn passage The first of the autumn was an early bird with ten *yarellii* at South Bristol Crematorium on Aug. 6th. Single birds were then at CVL on Sept. 4th, 8th and 11th, and at BG on 8th.

	1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Spring	57	67	63	na	na	na	67	144	81	51	34	46	29	64	81	34	43	64	67	39
Autumn	14	25+	21	11	na	na	12	7	2	7	2	4	11	74	24	9	7	15+	6	5
bird-days																				

RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus richardi*

Very scarce autumn migrant, exceptional in winter.

Description species

One record: one flew over OPS, calling, on Sept. 30th (AB).

This brings the all-time total for our area to about 26, the last being in 2009.

	1991	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
	0	0	1	4	1	3/4	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	5	0	0	0	1	1
individuals, all in autumn except for one in spring 1995 and one in winter 2004/05																				

TAWNY PIPIT *Anthus campestris*

Very rare vagrant, three previous records, all in autumn.

Description species

One record: one frequented a fallow field at Weston STW on the evening of May 3rd where it was mainly seen in flight, although it was calling repeatedly (BL, MSP).

The previous records were of single birds at Woodspring Bay on the early date of July 29th, 1971; CVL in October 1982; and Axe Estuary in October 1993.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

Uncommon passage migrant and very scarce breeder.

England 1998-2008 change: down 30%.

Arrival and departure data

40 year average first date April 3rd, range 20 days, trend fall by 19 days 1974-94, stable since.

40 year average last date Sept. 30th, range 50 days, no trend.

40 year average time spent 180 days, range 15 days, no trend.

Another poor spring but an above average autumn by recent standards.

Spring records						
Date	Mar 21-31	Apr 1-10	Apr 11-20	Apr 21-30	May 1-10	May 11-20
Bird-days	0	5	3	23	2	0
Max count	0	1	2	12	1	0

Spring The first was one at Middle Hope on April 3rd, followed by six more records of one or two between 5th and 18th at Bedminster, Middle Hope, Sand Bay, St Thomas's Head and Wain's Hill (CI-Y). After two at Wain's Hill on 23rd, the big day was 24th with twelve at Sand Point, three at OPS and single birds at Mangotsfield and Northwick Warth. Thereafter there were only five more records of one or two in the CI-Y and Sand Point areas with the last over Wain's Hill on May 6th.

Breeding There were no summer records from potential breeding sites this year.

Autumn records						
Date	Aug 1-10	Aug 11-20	Aug 21-30	Sep 1-10	Sep 11-20	Sep 21-30
Bird-days	8	3	12	8	4	0
Max count	4	2	4	2	3	0

Autumn The first of the autumn were at New Passage, Walton Common and Walton Moor on Aug. 8th, followed by one at Gordano Valley NNR and four at Severn Beach the next day. There were just six more

records to the end of the month, all from either OPS, Sand Point or Severnside, with peaks of three at Northwick Warth (Severnside) on 30th and four at Sand Point next day. There were eight more records in September involving one or two at Bishopston, Middle Hope, OPS, Sand Point, Severnside and Weston STW with the last of the year, three, over Sand Point on 13th.

	2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
Spring	54	25	68	24	61	111	55	48	25	33
Autumn	6	12	22	14	37	30	25	23	12	35

Tree Pipit passage: total individuals

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Uncommon breeding species, mainly on the coast.

BBS distribution 4%.

England 1998-2008 change: down 6%.

2009/10 Winter Counts in January were modest with 50 at Chew Stoke STW on 12th but otherwise the only double figure counts reported were of ten at OPS, Severnside and Weston STW. February counts included 40 by the R. Avon at Keynsham on 6th, 20 at OPS on 20th and 50 on the coast at Portishead on 27th which might have been early migrants.

Spring Numbers picked up in March as follows: 20 at CI-Y on 1st; 25 at Sand Point on 3rd; 25 at PW on 8th; 85 grounded at Sand Point on 17th; 30 new in at Northwick Warth on 23rd and a similar number at PW next day; 20 at Sand Point on 28th and 40 at Middle Hope on 30th. Passage continued through much of April and reported counts included: 28 at Weston STW on 2nd; 35 at Northwick Warth next day; 35 at OPS on 10th and 20 at Marshfield on 18th. On March 6th, 30 at BG were probably migrants. By mid-month passage was underway with 16 to NW at Keynsham on 17th, and an influx of 250 to Northwick Warth and 100 to Littleton Warth next day. On 20th, 110 moved to NE over New Passage in 75 minutes and 42 were noted at North Weston/Portbury Ditch. Next day saw the spring peak at Weston STW of 46. Passage continued through until at least mid-April with 35 at Elm Farm, Burnett on 1st, 45 to NE over Severn Beach in an hour on 15th, and 40 at OPS on 17th.

Breeding From May to July small numbers were reported along the coast at OPS, Littleton Warth, Severnside and Weston STW. They were also reported from inland sites at Marshfield and Wilmington at this time.

Autumn passage The few August reports probably involved breeders and their offspring rather than migrants and included 15 at New Passage on 17th. Passage picked up in mid-September with 81 to W over Middle Hope on 13th and 39 to SW at CVL on 16th. The last third of the month saw higher numbers with 80 at Northwick Warth on 21st, 70 at Middle Hope next day, 60 at CI-Y on 27th, 60 over Sand Point on 28th and a report of 450 to SW in two hours at New Passage on 30th. October was the peak month starting with 150 at Marshfield on 2nd then 200 here on 4th; 200 at BL on 8th; 100 at Northwick Warth on 19th and 63 at CI-Y on 24th. Visible migration counts in the month included 175 to SW in two hours at New Passage on 6th and 100 to SW over CI-Y on 21st. A further 14 records of between 20 and 60 during the month came from CI-Y, Littleton Warth, Northwick Warth, New Passage, OPS, RPD and Weston STW.

2009/10 winter In November there were good numbers at CVL with 75 on 20th but otherwise between 20 and 26 at CI-Y, Littleton Warth and Severn Beach were the highest reported counts. December records included 100 at Marshfield on 19th and 50 at Chew Stoke STW on 24th but otherwise all counts were below 20.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*

A.p.petrosus - Uncommon breeding resident on the coast. Fairly common and more widespread as a coastal passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce inland on spring or autumn passage.

A.p.littoralis Wintering birds are assumed to include an unknown proportion of this subspecies, some of which become identifiable in spring.

First winter period and spring passage Present at the usual coastal wintering sites in the first three months with peak counts: an exceptional 50 at Axe Estuary on Jan. 1st (PB); 26 at Portishead seafront (flushed into view by a big tide) on Feb. 4th; 25 at Sand Bay on March 2nd; six at RPD; four at Littleton Warth; four at CI-Y; three at Chittening Warth; two at OPS and two at Severn Beach. Wintering birds had mostly departed by the end of March and the last two were seen at Weston STW on 31st. None were noted wintering in Bristol again this year.

An inland migrant was at BG on March 28th.

Breeding In the Portishead area at least four pairs were present including at least one at the marina – low numbers for this site. Two pairs were present on Steep Holm this year. Breeding was proved at Sand Point. Two were at RPD in mid-April but breeding was not reported. Also noted in the breeding season at CI-Y.

Rock Pipit autumn and winter Outside the breeding areas three were at Chittening Warth on Sept. 3rd, which like records from PW, CI-Y and RPD in late August and September, perhaps involved dispersal of local breeders. Numbers increased during October with up to six at Portishead; five at CI-Y; and up to four at six other coastal sites. With birds settled on their wintering grounds in the last two months there were lower numbers than usual with maxima of just four at CI-Y, three at OPS, and single birds at Severn Beach and Littleton Warth. Inland one was at CVL on Oct. 8th and 11th; and two at BG on 12th and 17th.

WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant to CVL, Scarce on the coast.

Only one was seen at CVL in the freezing conditions at the start of the year with a presumed migrant in March. The autumn was only marginally better here and none was seen after mid-December in another very cold winter. Coastal numbers were also down on recent years in both winter periods. Again the cold weather was probably at least partly to blame.

Inland At CVL one was reported on Jan. 2nd and 17th, and again on five dates in February to 22nd. One was then present on March 25th and 27th.

Autumn numbers at CVL were only slightly better with the first two on Oct. 19th, a peak of three on 23rd and then one or two fairly regularly (eleven dates) to the last of the year on Dec. 11th. The only other inland record was of one at BL on Nov. 6th.

Coastal sites Few records at the start of the year with one at Severn Beach on Jan. 30th, Feb. 6th and March 7th; one at Sand Bay on 2nd and another at Littleton Warth on 7th.

In the autumn the first was at PW on Oct. 14th and 15th, it or another was here on Nov. 6th and 22nd. Elsewhere one was at Severn Beach on Oct. 30th, two at the Yeo Estuary next day and two at CI-Y on Nov. 28th. In December one at OPS on 7th was only the fourth record for the site (PJH), and one was also at Weston STW on 11th.

	2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
CVL max	3	7	11	17	17	6	5	7	6	20
Coastal	3	4	4	3	11	6	6	7	7	5
Other inland				1				1		

Maximum counts at CVL and estimated number of individuals at coastal and other inland sites each winter

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*

Abundant breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 98-08	England 98-08
% Change	-10	0	0	-27	9

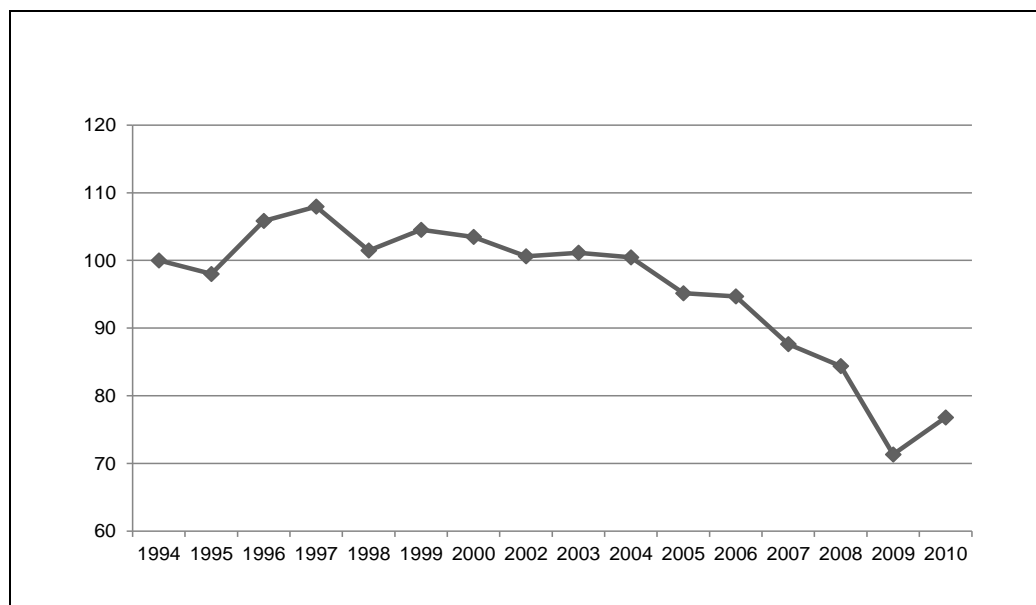
Winter flocks in the first two months included 200 at Compton Dando on Jan. 23rd, 120 at Uphill on 1st and counts of 30 to 70 at four other sites. The first recorded song was in Cotham on Jan. 16th, over three weeks earlier than the average for Clifton, from 1948 to 2000, of Feb. 8th.

The Atlas survey recorded them in every tetrad in both winter and summer, the winter counts suggested that the winter population was double that in the breeding season, but showed a decline of about 20% since 1984. For the second winter running WGS showed a fall in the numbers present, but as BBS showed no change this was probably caused by fewer migrants rather than any further fall in the resident population.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
98	na	93	85	91	87	85	80	75	65	65

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 97%, BBS Avon population estimate 11900 pairs)

BBS like for like data, which is slightly different from the index which uses changes in the rate per hour, shows that the species has been remarkably stable in the period 1994 to 2006, since then there has been a decline, with a slight increase in the last year. It is thought that *Trichomonosis*, a disease due to parasites, affects Chaffinches as well as Greenfinches. Indeed the date of the start of the decline, 2006, fits the start of the disease.



BBS data since 1994 when the initial figure was set at 100

At least 52 to SW over New Passage in two hours on Sept. 30th heralded an excellent October for diurnal migration. On 9th, 1880 moved to NE over Littleton Warth in three hours from 07.40hrs and 1450 to NE over New Passage in two hours from 07.30hrs. Next day 1020 passed to NE over Littleton Warth in one hour but only 860 in the same direction over New Passage in 200 minutes. 2850 moved NE over New Passage in two hours on 11th with a further 710 in 150 minutes on 12th. On 14th 935 were counted passing over Middle Hope and an exceptional 3690 reported over New Passage (MH) with a further 660 to NE in 90 minutes here the next day. Oct. 17th was the co-ordinated dawn migration watch and as luck would have it was almost calm with clear skies and much reduced passage. Those birds on the move were often high and easily missed and including 215 over Wain's Hill in 195 minutes, 160 mainly to NE over New Passage in three hours, 150 mostly to W over Sand Point in 220 minutes, 110 mainly to NE over Battery Point in four hours and 70 over Aust Warth in 105 minutes. Later in the month 1530 were counted to SW over Cl-Y on 21st and there were three more counts of 120 to 180 over New Passage to the month's end. The movement continued into mid-November with a steady passage to SW over Littleton Warth on 13th, the birds too high to be counted accurately.

This heavy passage resulted in better numbers at the end of the year with flocks of 200 at Marshfield on Nov. 13th, 250 at OPS on 14th, 150 at Wrrington on 28th, 350 at Elm Farm, Burnett on Dec. 7th and flocks of between 100 and 150 at three other sites.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Migration dates:

Forty year average first date Oct. 9th, range 40 days, no trend.

Forty year average last date April 18th, range 40 days, trend later by 20 days 1970-86, and earlier since by 15 days.

Forty year average time spent 186 days, range 15, trend later by seven days to 1986, earlier by twelve days since.

Only modest numbers reported, very few in the first winter period but some more in gardens than usual.

Winter 2009/10 Tiny numbers were present at the start of the year: one in a Stoke Bishop garden on Jan. 2nd; one in a Bishopston garden from Jan. 13th to March 25th; one at Weston STW on Jan. 10th; three at Marshfield on 17th and two here on March 21st; and one at Aztec West, Filton on Jan. 23rd. Three migrants were at Sand Point on March 9th and the last of the spring was here on April 17th.

Autumn migrants The first were four at CVL and two over New Passage on Oct. 10th. A steady trickle of visible migrants was then regularly recorded from coastal sites until at least Nov. 13th. Considering the large numbers of Chaffinches on the move at this time, counts of this species were modest with none exceeding five apart from 13 reported over New Passage on Oct. 22nd. Around 63 were logged in total from: Battery Point, Portishead; Keynsham (one over on Nov. 13th); Littleton Warth; Middle Hope; New Passage and Wain's Hill, Cl-Y. Grounded migrants at this time were noted in small numbers with up to four at CVL, Clifton, Leigh Woods, PW, Stowey Quarry and Weston STW plus an exceptional 21 in a Henleaze garden on Oct. 26th.

Brambling second winter period The steady arrival of migrants resulted in some reasonable flocks at the end of the year with twelve on Clifton Downs on Nov. 13th; ten at Marshfield next day increasing to 30 by Dec. 23rd; 34 at Wrington on Dec. 12th; 50 at Campbell's Farm, Lawrence Weston on 17th; and regular reports from a Henleaze garden in December peaking at 29 on 31st. Small numbers were widespread at this time with fewer than ten reported from a further 23 sites.

1988/89-97/98 Av.	1999/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	2008/9
405	140	18	109	103	270	20	3065	25	246	242
Total bird-days October-March										

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*

Common breeding resident, passage migrant, and winter visitor.

	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 98-08	England 98-08
% Change	-20	-24	-24	-42	0

Winter flocks The largest counts were from winter roosts with 100 at Bath University on Jan. 2nd and, in the second winter period, 60 at Kingsweston, Bristol on Nov. 14th. Otherwise the largest gathering was 50 at CI-Y on Oct. 30th.

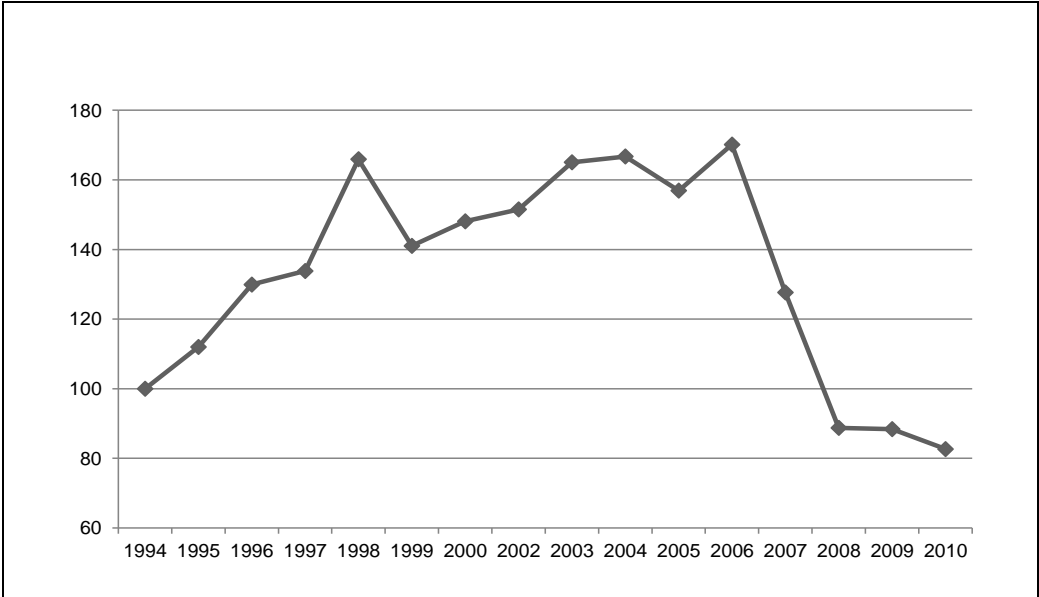
The Atlas survey found them in 82% of tetrads in winter and 91% in the summer, but the winter counts suggested a small population fall since 1984. However, the WGS showed a further sharp fall, back to a level last seen in the 1995/96 winter, and BBS confirmed that the breeding population is now below that of 1994. This may be related to a second hard winter, and/or a poor breeding season in 2009, but it is clear that the parasitic disease is still killing birds. The chart below, based on BBS like for like data, shows the effect of *Trichomonosis*, the species was increasing in numbers until the date of the start of the disease in 2006.

CABS recorded song first on Feb. 27th, but it was only recorded on six other occasions, probably because the local population is now too low.

Autumn movements Visible migration was noted between Oct. 9th and 24th as follows: 30 moved to NE over New Passage in two hours on 11th; 55 to NE in 150 minutes here next morning and 35 in 90 minutes on 16th. On 17th the highest count came from Wain's Hill, CI-Y with 62 over in 195 minutes, and 15 to 45 at each of the other four watch points on this morning; 30 moved to SW over CI-Y on 21st.

2009 additional record: A roost of 250 was at Castle Park on Feb. 16th.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
127	na	151	160	166	157	173	128	82	83	63
Avon BBS Index 1994 (BBS distribution 84%, BBS Avon population estimate 7300 pairs)										



BBS data since 1994 when the initial figure was set at 100

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Common breeding resident, partial migrant, many leaving in winter for France and Iberia.

	WGS	BBS	Local 98-08	England 98-08
% Change	-2	1	98	48

In January there were 80 in the Gordano Valley on 17th; 40 at Brislington and Keynsham on 13th and 35 in a Lawrence Weston garden on 7th with many reports of 25 or less. There were fewer reports and smaller numbers in February with peaks of 35 at Bentry on 12th and 25 at CVL on 6th.

Spring migration began with five to E over Sand Point on March 9th, 50 were at Sand Point on 28th and 15 to W at Middle Hope on 30th. Passage peaked in mid-April with 144 over Wain's Hill, CI-Y in two hours and 43 to NE at Severn Beach in two hours on April 12th; 50 to NE at RPD next day; 100 to NE at Sand Bay on 14th, and 45 to W at Sand Bay on 28th which was the last recorded diurnal movement of the spring.

The Atlas winter survey found them in 81% of tetrads, a 48% increase since 1984, and counts suggested a 290% increase in the population. In the summer they were present in 87% of tetrads, a 58% increase in distribution on 1992. It was present in 77% of WGS gardens in the 2009/10 winter, although in slightly smaller numbers than the previous winter, but still ten times as many as twenty years ago.

Five were noted taking road salt at Bath University Depot on June 2nd (DF).

Late summer flocks included 30 at Kenn Moor on July 24th and 80 at CI-Y on 29th. Flocks were widely reported in August with peak counts of 250 at OPS on 21st; 150 at CI-Y on 28th and flocks of 20 to 60 at four other sites. The highest September counts were 150 at Northwick Warth on 21st and 120 at Weston STW on 4th plus 30 to 80 at six other sites.

Visible migration in autumn as usual involved smaller numbers than in spring. It began with 22 over New Passage on Sept. 30th and continued through October to at least 24th, although with no count exceeding 20. October flocks included 100 at BL on 8th; 90 at Littleton on 9th and 20 to 60 at seven other sites.

The only November flocks to exceed 20 were 25 near Pill on 9th and 40 at Portishead on 29th. Also 40 were at Bentry on Dec. 6th and 30 at Weston Moor on 8th but thereafter no more than 13 were reported to the end of the year – perhaps having moved out of the area to avoid the cold.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
110	na	110	122	123	147	173	150	200	215	217

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS Distribution 76%, BBS Avon population estimate 8300 pairs)

1990/91-1999/2000 Av	2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
0.3	0.7	1.0	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.8	3.1	2.6	2.6

WGS - Average numbers per garden per week.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant in varying numbers, sometimes common; scarce breeding species.

BBS England 98-08 change: up 9%.

Modest numbers in the first winter period and a light spring passage were followed by very few summer records. A better second winter period then heralded the best autumn passage for a number of years.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
157	28	48	38	3	2	1	5	16	1130	177	220

Monthly bird-day totals

Winter 2009/10 A reasonable winter. In January the largest flocks were 64 at Wrington Warren on 28th; 40 at Corporation Woods, Congresbury on 27th and 30 at Weston Moor on 23rd plus one to ten at nine other sites. Far fewer remained in February with up to twelve at seven sites.

Spring Coastal migrants from March 2nd (over Sand Point) followed by eight more records to the end of the month from five sites, of one to three apart from 13 at Sand Point on 3rd. Inland March records of up to ten came from five sites including just one garden. In April up to five were noted at three inland sites to 14th, then small numbers of coastal migrants at three sites from mid-month plus 29 over Sand Point on 29th. In May there was one at North Stoke on 2nd and two over Northwick Warth on 6th.

Summer In June a coastal migrant was at Sand Point on 2nd and one to SW over Keynsham on 16th. One at Wrington Warren on July 7th was the only summer record from a likely breeding site this year.

Siskin autumn passage The first were five over PW on Aug. 5th, the only records for the month. In September there were five at CVL on 19th then up to four at three coastal sites to the end of the month. These heralded an excellent visible passage in October, the highest counts including: 40 at BG on 7th; 54 over Littleton Warth in three hours on 9th; 54 over New Passage in 190 minutes on 10th; 80 here next day; 300 over Wain's Hill, CI-Y on 13th; 45 over OPS and 40 over both PW and Sand Point next day; 67 over New Passage in 90 minutes on 15th and 35 here on 22nd. Smaller numbers were reported from a further 15 sites.

Winter Better numbers were present in the second winter period after the good autumn passage with November records from 17 sites including 32 at Wrington on 13th and 24 at West End, Nailsea on 29th. They remained widespread (17 sites) in December with 50 at Portishead at the end of the month; 30 at CVL on 9th; 25 at Wrington on 6th and at RPD on 27th.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*

Common breeding resident, passage migrant, and winter visitor.

BBS England 98-08 change, down 24%, local, down 9%.

During January and February the largest gathering was an impressive 1000 at Rushmead Farm, Marshfield, on Jan. 2nd with other large flocks at Easton-in-Gordano (150) and Compton Dando (100) plus flocks of 22 to 80 at six other sites. In March up to 100 were at both Avening Green and Weston STW with 30 to 40 noted at three other sites. There were still 250 at Rushmead Farm on April 11th, the largest flock of the month. Also in April, 110 were counted at Weston STW on 2nd and reports of 20 to 60 came from six further sites.

Spring migrants 24 over Wain's Hill, CI-Y in two hours on April 12th and 14 to NE over RPD next day were the only reports, but they are likely to be less well reported at this time than the more numerous and conspicuous Goldfinch.

Late summer flocks included 60 at CI-Y on June 24th increasing to 80 by 30th. In July there were up to 110 at Weston STW, 90 at Littleton Warth and 65 at CI-Y. In August 120 were on oilseed rape stubble at Lower Langford on 25th and similar numbers to July at CI-Y and Weston STW. Numbers increased in September with up to 260 at Weston STW, 100 at OPS and CI-Y and 85 at New Passage. Visible migration was underway by the end of the month and continued through much of October but could only be described as a trickle with timed counts of no more than 14. Grounded birds appeared scarcer during the month with a maximum count of 70 at CI-Y. Early November saw 300 at BL, 145 at CI-Y and 72 at Elm Farm, Burnett. Numbers at the last site increased to 150 in December when there were also up to 100 at BL and PW plus 40 to 60 at five other sites.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
70	na	64	54	58	62	49	46	73	44	48

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 31%, BBS Avon population estimate 3300 pairs)

LESSER REDPOLL *Carduelis cabaret*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; scarce in summer. Records received as 'Redpoll' are included in this account, and so a few may actually refer to Common Redpolls.

England 25-yr change, down 97%.

First winter period January and February records amounted to 68 bird-days from twelve sites with 20 at Weston Moor on Feb. 2nd and ten at Gatcombe Farm, Long Ashton on Jan. 10th the only double figure counts.

Spring Passage The only March records were of migrants at Sand Point on 9th, 17th (three) and 28th. Migration continued as a trickle through April with one or two at eight sites, seven of them coastal, apart from an exceptional (for this year) 22 over Wain's Hill, CI-Y in a two hour dawn migration watch on 12th (HT). The last of the spring was over Northwick Warth on May 6th, the only record for the month.

Autumn passage The first of the autumn was one over New Passage on Aug. 22nd. In September there were five records at four sites from 12th – single birds apart from three on Severnside on 26th. Passage picked up slightly with 31 records during October, at least half of them of visible migrants although no count of 'fly-overs' exceeded four. Grounded birds in October included twelve at CVL on 11th and eleven at RPD on 24th.

Second winter period In November there were just five records from three sites of one or two apart from ten at GVRs on 14th. December records were even sparser with just one at New Passage and five at Walton Common on 12th, and eight at Thornbury Golf Course on 29th. A total of 29 bird-days was recorded in November and December.

2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
300	526	159	481	51	578	33	101	237	102

Winter bird-day totals November to February

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

Regular but erratic visitor and passage migrant, whose numbers vary very sharply from year to year.

A good year with regular records from the Mendips.

Widely reported from the woodlands on the Mendip fringes in the first two months of the year with records from: Barley Wood, Wrington (one); Cleeve Hill (one); Corporation Woods, Congresbury (four); Dolebury Warren (twelve); Preston Wood, Wrington (one); Upper Langford (eight); Woolmers (King's and Urchin's Wood) (four); Wrington Hill (one) and Wrington Warren (16) (all SFY). Elsewhere five flew over OPS on Feb. 11th. In March there were two at Wrington Warren on 9th. Three were still at King's Wood, Cleeve on April 14th and a pair was at Failand on 20th with two here again on May 3rd.

Movement was also noted at this time with one over Warmley on March 4th, one high to S over CVL on 21st, one over Thornbury on 27th, another over CVL on April 10th and one to N over Pilning at 06.35hrs on 20th.

On May 24th a flock was heard at Wrington Warren after an absence of two months. One was over Prior's Wood, Portbury on June 30th, one in a Whitchurch garden, perched, calling in a tree and eventually flew off to SE, on July 4th (GS) and another over Coombe Dingle on 27th with twelve more over here on Aug. 3rd.

In September records came from Dolebury Warren and Wrington Warren. October records were of birds on the move: four to NE over New Passage on 11th; one over Kingston Seymour and one to N over Shiplate Slait on 12th; four over Wain's Hill, CI-Y on 13th and one over Northwick Warth on 30th.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
12	100	100	4	130	1	0	90	47	96

Total annual bird-days

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Fairly common breeding resident.

BBS Distribution 34%

BBS England 1998-2008 change up 3%, local up 60%

	WBC	WGS	BBS	CABS	Local 10	England 25 year
% Change	27	0	-19	-60	-29	-3

Very few counts are made by BBS and so the index fluctuates wildly, but there has been very little apparent change in the population since 1994. Atlas recorders in the summer found them in 44% of tetrads, compared with 32% in the 1992 Atlas, but less than the 59% in which they were found in winter. This probably demonstrates how more elusive they are in summer rather than any change in their population. The largest number reported was ten at OPS on four dates also on two dates at PW, all in the winter months

Although generally considered resident, two moved into a light NE breeze over New Passage on Oct. 15th (with three others circling high over but returning to cover) while on 17th the BOC's visible migration watch recorded birds moving over Aust Warth (two); New Passage (five) and Wain's Hill, CI-Y (one) – most to NE.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	2009
100	118	136	162	133	147	104	104	123	100

Avon BBS Index 1994 = 100 (BBS distribution 31%)

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Scarce to rare winter visitor and passage migrant, formerly bred.

Description species

The large counts of the 2008/09 winter were not repeated in 2009/10. There were only two records: one moved to NE over New Passage at 07.30hrs on Oct. 11th (BL) with another to NE here the next day at 07.50hrs (BL, JPM). Both were recorded during sizeable movements of visible migrants.

Year	2001/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
No. seen	0	1	1	0	23	2	1	36	0

Number of individuals seen (July to June)

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Scarce winter visitor formerly more numerous.

An average showing for this declining species.

Snow Bunting can't

Two were reported at CI-Y on Feb. 6th. In the autumn two were also at CI-Y on Oct. 21st and another was here on Nov. 28th. Inland, one was at CVL on Dec. 4th (PD).

1989/90-99/00 Av.	2000/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	2009/10
7	4	0	0	18	11	0	0	1	0	5-6
Total individuals										

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus*

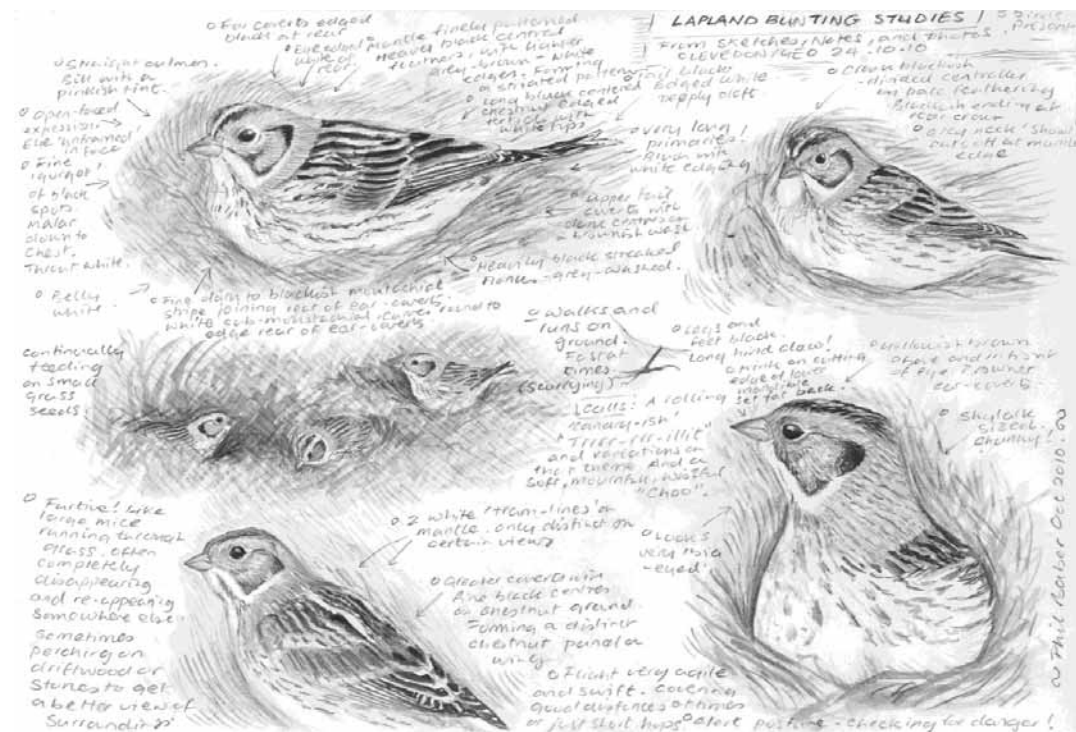
Vary scarce autumn migrant and very rare winter visitor, mainly on the coast.

Description species.

A record influx coinciding with a large autumn arrival in Britain, especially in the Northwest.

The first was one at CI-Y on Oct. 11th (TR). On Oct. 13th there were two at OPS (DS); a different two nearby at Oldbury-on-Severn (RM, DS); and one at Cake Pill, Aust (NC, JF). Three were at CI-Y from Oct. 16th (GJ *et al.*) to 24th with four on at least 20th (RMA). There were then no further reports until December when two were at CI-Y on 12th (HT) and another at Weston STW on 23rd (PB, MSP).

The Clevedon birds were rather confiding and watched by many observers during their stay (see photograph opposite page 112 and sketches by Phil Baber, below).

**YELLOWHAMMER** *Emberiza citrinella*

Common but declining breeding resident, uncommon passage migrant.

BBS England 98-08 change, down 14%, local, down 8%.

First winter period The largest flocks early in the year were 200 at Marshfield and 100 at Compton Dando on Jan. 2nd and 72 at Chewton Keynsham on Feb. 8th, but only single figure groups were noted away from these three sites. Several records of up to three at Severn Beach at this time were unusual by recent standards.

Spring Three presumed spring migrants were at Sea Mills, where unusual, on April 10th and another to NE over Sand Bay on 14th. One was at CVL on April 29th.

Autumn A better showing on the coast than in recent years. Noted on the move in October as follows: seven at OPS on 16th included six 'fly-overs'; one over Aust Warth with other migrants on 17th; two over New Passage on 22nd, one on 24th, then at least four on 30th; also three to SW over Littleton Warth on 27th.

Second winter period The largest flocks reported were 39 at Compton Dando on Dec. 11th; 20 at Beeks Farm, Marshfield on Oct. 28th; and twelve at Keynsham on Nov. 14th. Present in a Nailsea garden in both winter periods with a peak of five on Dec. 7th. One at Weston STW on Dec. 29th was the first for this well-watched site.

2000	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
78	na	66	52	54	58	58	64	79	60	64

Avon BBS Index 1994=100 (BBS distribution 28%, BBS Avon population estimate 1800 pairs)

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Uncommon breeding resident, and passage migrant.

BBS England 98-08 change, up 39%, local, up 10%.

A stable population.

Early in the year the highest counts were: 54 at Weston STW on Feb. 20th; 17 at CVL on Jan. 10th; 13 at PW on Feb. 15th; twelve at RPD on 13th and up to ten regularly in a Fishponds garden in January.

BBS counted 55 in 7% of the squares visited. There were 36 singing males at CVL and 30 territories at Weston STW. Small numbers were reported in summer from 14 other sites.

Autumn Five were at Sand Point on Sept. 28th increasing to 20 on Oct. 7th. Some moving with other migrants included eight to ENE over Littleton Warth in three hours on Oct. 9th and smaller numbers over New Passage and Wain's Hill, CI-Y on four more dates to 22nd.

In the last two months there were 37 at PW on Dec. 28th; 22 at OPS on 26th; up to 20 at Weston STW in November; and between ten and twelve at four other sites. Wintering birds returned to a Fishponds garden from Nov. 27th (up to three).

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	2010
24	36	29	20	13	31	32	31	30	36

CVL total singing males

CORN BUNTING *Miliaria calandra*

Local and uncommon breeding resident; confined to arable areas in the east of the region. Rare elsewhere as a passage migrant/winter visitor.

BBS distribution 2%. Winter population about 90.

BBS England 98-08 change, down 4%. Local ten-yr change, up 250%.

Encouragingly large flocks in the core area in both winter periods.

First winter period The winter flock at Marshfield was estimated at 200 on Jan. 2nd and 160 on March 2nd. The only record elsewhere was of one at Weston Moor on Jan. 16th.

One was at Northwick Warth on April 10th.

In the Cotswold stronghold BBS counted 23 in five squares, somewhat down on last year, although not all were necessarily singing males. A further nine were at an additional site in the same general area. These records might well equate to about 32 singing males but with incomplete coverage of the key areas, last year's estimate of around 40 pairs, is still probably reasonable, although again many records were imprecise about the exact site, and whether singing was heard or not.

Single migrants were noted over CI-Y on Oct. 13th and 21st.

The Marshfield flock again numbered 200 on Nov. 15th, with 100 reported here in December. Whether this now regular flock includes individuals from outside our breeding area is uncertain.

2001	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	2009	2010
11	21	18	18	23	12	na	na	40	32

Estimated total of singing males

Migration Summary

The average arrival date of the following 29 summer migrant species over the past forty years is April 10th, but this year the average was four days earlier, on April 6th. The average departure date over forty years is Oct. 5th, and in 2010 it was Oct. 7th. These changes may reflect both more intensive recording, and the fact that the forty year average March-April temperature was 11.4°C, whereas in 2010 it was 12.2°C. Also it is common for a degree difference in temperature to cause a roughly five day difference in the timing of natural events.

Migrant first arrival and last departure dates for 2010					
Summer migrants	Arrival	Average*	Departure	Average*	Comments
Sand Martin	March 11th	March 14th	Oct.11th	Oct. 6th	
Wheatear	March 17th	March 11th	Nov. 10th	Nov. 1st	
Swallow	March 17th	March 24th	Oct. 22nd	Nov. 4th	Early departure
Ring Ouzel	March 18th	April 1st	Oct. 11th	Oct. 20th	4th earliest since 1966
Willow Warbler	March 21st	March 26th	Sept.18th	Sept. 24th	
House Martin	March 24th	March 28th	Oct. 13th	Oct. 31st	Early departure
Whimbrel	March 24th	April 12th	Nov. 10th	Oct. 3rd	Earliest arrival ever, late departure
Redstart	March 27th	April 8th	Oct. 16th	Oct. 13th	3rd earliest since 1966
Little Ringed Plover	March 29th	April 6th	Oct. 2nd	Sept. 17th	Latest departure since 1996
White Wagtail	April 2nd	March 27th	Sept. 8th	Sept. 28th	Early departure
Grasshopper Warbler	April 2nd	April 15th	Sept. 25th	Sept. 19th	Early arrival
Tree Pipit	April 3rd	April 3rd	Sept. 13th	Sept. 30th	Early departure
Reed Warbler	April 4th	April 18th	Oct. 2nd	Sept. 28th	Early arrival
Whitethroat	April 7th	April 14th	Sept. 25th	Sept. 25th	
Sedge Warbler	April 8th	April 13th	Oct. 2nd	Sept. 28th	
Garganey	April 10th	April 9th	Nov. 11th	Oct.4th	3rd latest departure
Lesser Whitethroat	April 10th	April 20th	Sept. 18th	Sept. 28th	Equal earliest date ever
Yellow Wagtail	April 11th	April 6th	Oct. 8th	Oct. 13th	
Common Tern	April 13th	April 11th	Sept. 29th	Oct. 6th	
Cuckoo	April 13th	April 12th	Sept.12th	Aug. 25th	Late departure
Hobby	April 13th	April 24th	Oct. 14th	Oct. 2nd	3rd earliest date
Swift	April 17th	April 20th	Sept. 5th	Sept. 20th	
Garden Warbler	April 18th	April 14th	Oct. 22nd	Sept. 26th	Second latest date ever
Pied Flycatcher	April 19th	April 14th	Aug. 8th	na	
Whinchat	April 22nd	April 19th	Oct. 15th	Oct. 15th	
Wood Warbler	April 22nd	April 21st	na	na	
Nightingale	April 22nd	April 23rd	NA	na	
Spotted Flycatcher	April 24th	May 2nd	Oct. 6th	Sept. 25th	
Black Tern	April 25th	April 25th	Oct. 7th	Oct. 10th	
Winter migrants	departure	arrival			
Redwing	March 24th	April 9th	Oct. 2nd	Sept. 30th	Early departure
Fieldfare	March 28th	April 13th	Oct. 3rd	Oct. 3rd	Early departure
Brambling	April 17th	April 18th	Oct. 10th	Oct. 9th	

NB. Species are listed in the order in which they first arrived in 2010

* average of the last 40 years – see individual species account for more details

Spring Passerine Migration

March and May temperatures were very close to the long term average, but April was 1.4°C warmer, and unusually dry. Thus spring temperatures overall were just 0.5°C above the long term average. Given the conditions it is surprising that average arrival dates were earlier than the long term average.

High pressure, cold north-east winds and frost dominated the weather in March from 2nd to 14th, ensuring that almost no summer visitors arrived at this time. Then on 15th westerly winds around high pressure over Europe became dominant, with temperatures reaching 14°C on the 18th. This brought in the first wave of Wheatears and Chiffchaffs. Cooler, wetter and windier conditions dominated from 24th, with strong winds and cold NW airstream for the last two days. April began with cool S and SW winds, but Sand Martin, Swallow and Willow

Warbler all had an initial peak in the first five days, and then winds switched to the NE until 17th, and held back most species. It became warmer from 18th and winds became southerly from 23rd. Waves of warblers and hirundines swept through. April 24th was probably the peak of warbler passage, and the last few days of the month was the peak for hirundines. The first twelve days of May were dominated by NE winds around a high pressure system over Iceland, and this helped ensure that passage for some species was prolonged into the second half of May.

Eight passerine and near passerine species arrived an average of four days later than the long-term average date and fourteen arrived an average of 7.6 days early. Five species were exceptionally early, Hobby, Whimbrel, Ring Ouzel, Redstart and Lesser Whitethroat. Also note that four species had very late last dates, they were Garganey, Little Ringed Plover, Whimbrel and Garden Warbler.

The table below summarises the spring migration for some species of note.

	Mar 1-15	Mar 16-31	Apr 1-15	Apr 16-30	May 1-15	May 16-31
Wood Warbler	0	0	0	5	5	0
Ring Ouzel	0	5	0	3	0	0
Spotted Flycatcher	0	0	0	1	5	25
Redstart	0	2	10	16	1	1
Whinchat	0	0	0	23	17	1
Wheatear	0	66	30	184	40	14
Pied Flycatcher	0	0	0	7	1	0
Tree Pipit	0	0	6	26	2	0

Total numbers recorded in each period

ESCAPED AND RELEASED BIRDS

CHINESE (SWAN) GOOSE *Anser cygnoides*

Asia

Bristol Docks – the long-term resident bird, 'Grumpy' died at the end of August and was written up in the Evening Post.

BAR-HEADED GOOSE *Anser indicus*

Asia

BL – adult on March 21st;

Weston Moor – five in flight on Aug. 3rd are probably linked to a group of up to three that have been seen intermittently in the Gordano Valley since mid 2009, some of which show hybrid influence. The reports from Portishead and PW in the 2009 Report also probably relate to this group which are thought to wander from a nearby collection.

MUSCOVY DUCK *Cairina moschata*

Central & South America

Bristol Docks – adult with three juveniles on July 7th, although all the juveniles had gone by 17th. The only other report was one on Oct. 16th;

Backwell Lake – one on Feb. 13th;

Portishead Marina – one on March 28th.

WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL *Anas bahamensis*

Central and South America

R. Avon, Keynsham – one on Jan. 6th and Dec. 12th.

WOOD DUCK *Aix sponsa*

N. America

Backwell Lake – the 'wing-clipped' pair from 2009 were reported until at least March 6th, with records of the male again from Nov. 21st;

Portishead Boating Lake – one on Feb. 13th.

GREAT BUSTARD *Otis tarda*

Eurasia

Weston STW – a wing-tagged individual from the re-introduction scheme, seen to fly in from the Somerset side of the R. Axe on Jan. 11th.

CALIFORNIA QUAIL *Callipepla californica*

North America

High Littleton – a female on June 12th.

SENEGAL PARROT *Poicephalus senegalus*

Africa

Victoria Park, Bedminster – the adult from 2009 seen again on Jan. 15th.

COCKATIEL *Nymphicus hollandicus*

Australia

Weston STW – one on May 3rd.

CONURE sp

Bath, Langton Street Bridge – one on Oct. 17th.

HYBRIDS

It should be noted that the parentages reported in this section are what seemed to the observer(s) to be most likely.

CHINESE (SWAN) GOOSE x ? *Anser cygnoides* x ?

Bristol Docks – one present until March 3rd.

CANADA x GREYLAG GOOSE *Branta canadensis* x *Anser anser*

Backwell Lake – one, similar to a Swan Goose, on May 4th;

BL – one on Jan. 14th and Sept. 4th.

A nearly white goose, possibly of this parentage, has been regular in the CVL/BL flock for a few years now.

BARNACLE x CANADA GOOSE *Branta leucopsis* x *Branta canadensis*

CVL – one, like a Canada but with the head patterning of a Barnacle, on June 25th;

BL – one on Aug. 22nd, Sept. 4th, 18th, 19th and 25th, Oct. 9th, Nov. 20th and Dec. 5th.

CVL – male thought to be this combination on May 31st (see photograph opposite page 137).

[illegible]

The Severn Estuary Foodweb: a personal overview by a birding biologist

Dr Rupert Perkins (University of Cardiff)

The Severn Estuary, of high conservation importance and part of the Natura 2000 network, is one of the largest estuarine systems in Britain; indeed it has the second largest tidal range of any estuary in the world, at around 14 m, coming in a close second to the Bay of Fundy in Canada. Its catchment is potentially the largest of any estuary in Britain, expanding well up into the Midlands and West Wales (IMCORE). It is a dynamic estuary, being so macrotidal; it is a comparatively high energy system for a coastal site where mudflats build up from the accretion of muds and sands. This was demonstrated to the author on his first few visits to the Severn, having previously worked on the much smaller and sheltered Eden estuary in Scotland. Having moved to Cardiff and keen to start my research on the Severn mudflats, I visited the Newport Wetlands area and soon found some interesting sites, up to a meter deep with fine clay sediments, ideal for my work on how biological processes mediate coastal sediment erosion. Or so I thought. Returning to the same site the following morning, loaded with sampling equipment, I found the entire inlet devoid of any muddy sediment at all. A single high tide had eroded the soft sediment away, presumably to deposit it elsewhere in the Severn. Back up on the Eden, I had been lulled into the false security that mudflats could be relied upon to stay put in roughly the same location for years, let alone over a single tidal cycle!

This dynamic nature of the Severn is both a blessing and a curse to the birdwatcher. Vast areas of mudflat are simply too dynamic to hold the invertebrates at a density large enough to provide feeding grounds for waders and wildfowl, yet the areas that are stable enough, in sheltered inlets and bays, or at the upper reaches of the Estuary, to hold muddy areas, saltmarsh and adjacent wet grazing meadows can be fantastic. To watch the flocks of Dunlin, Redshank, Curlew and Grey Plover amongst feeding Shelduck and Wigeon is a highlight for any birdwatcher. However, this short report is not about the birds, it's about the other forms of life in the Estuary, including what the birds are feeding on, as well as those they share this food source with, the fish. This interaction of a wide range of species is the food web of which birds are but one part, and it starts with microscopic algae.

All food webs start with the organisms known as the primary producers, in nearly all cases these are the species that photosynthesise using sunlight. In an estuary, these primary producers are principally microscopic algae (microalgae) living on the mud surface (Admiraal, 1984). There are other primary producers; the macroalgae we know better as seaweeds and the seagrasses such as *Zostera* species are highly important, being a food source in some areas for wildfowl such as Geese and duck. But it's the microalgae that really kick-start the

estuary food web. Look down a microscope at the surface of a mudflat and you'll find hundreds, thousands, perhaps millions of microalgae up to 200 microns long, mostly 10 – 60 microns long (see photographs at end of this article). Species such as *Gyrosigma*, *Pleurosigma*, *Nitzschia* and *Navicula*, to name but a very few of the thousands of species, are diatoms living within the surface layers of the mudflats. Diatoms are single celled organisms which are utterly amazing. Within this single cell is an actively photosynthesising organism which not only helps support the food web of the estuary by producing sugars for other organisms and bacteria to feed upon, not only play their role in stabilising sediments and aiding formation of saltmarshes to defend our coasts from the seas buffeting, but also migrate.

Following complex stimuli of light and tidal cycle, these single celled microalgae move up and down in the surface mudflat over distances of less than a few millimetres. During tidal emersion, they form a noticeable brownish biofilm on the mud surface. Watch carefully and this biofilm gradually disappears if the sunlight gets too strong or the tide starts to come back in. The cells have migrated back down into the mud. These algae are migrating up and down throughout every tidal cycle every day of the year. But how do they move through the mud? Research has shown that one product of their photosynthesis is a complex mixture of sugars, one component of which forms a sticky polymer which is exuded from the diatom cell. The diatom can then glide up and down through this sticky matrix, literally pulling itself along through its sticky polymer. This is part of the brown biofilm on the mud, a matrix of cells, clay and sticky polymer. In some sheltered places, this biofilm can get so thick that it literally forms a skin on the mud surface (see photograph at end of article). This sticky polymer is highly important in an estuary, it's composed of sugars and hence is a wonderful food source, along with the diatoms themselves which are grazed by a wide range of invertebrates, fish and probably birds as well. The algae and their polymer, along with other organic foods washed into the estuary from surrounding saltmarsh and other sources, forms the start of the estuary foodweb that ultimately finishes with the birds that we all enjoy watching on passage and wintering on the Severn mudflats. But the importance of this sticky polymer doesn't stop there. It helps stick the clay sediment particles together at the mudflat surface, increasing the mudflats resistance to erosion (e.g. Perkins et al. 2004). In sheltered areas this can facilitate succession from mudflat to saltmarsh which once established buffers wave energy to become a natural form of coastal defence, far cheaper than concrete sea walls and at the heart of managed realignment of the coast, now favoured policy in many sheltered coastal areas. So our single celled diatoms not only help feed our

estuary, they also help stabilise it and provide us with saltmarsh for coastal defence and important roosting and feeding areas for our waders and wildfowl.

But what is eating the diatoms and their sugars? This is an area well known to many birdwatchers and fishermen alike. Firstly, the lesser known bacteria feast upon the sugars, contributing to the biotic soup of the mudflat surface layer, as well as mediating many nutrient processes such as nitrification, denitrification and ammonification and playing important roles in nutrient storage in, and release from, the sediment. Then there is the wealth of invertebrates feeding on this nutrient rich, sugar rich soup along with grazing on the diatoms themselves. Mudshrimps such as *Corophium*, the mudsnails *Hydrobia* and plentiful worms, including predatory ragworms (*Hediste*, originally *Nereis diversicolor*) and lugworms (*Arenicola*). When you watch an Avocet or a Shelduck scything its bill through the sediment surface, it's sieving out *Corophium* and *Hydrobia* which in turn have been feeding on the diatoms and their sticky sugars. Likewise for the Curlew, selecting the larger prey items and probing down to take the lugworms and ragworms, or the Dunlin visually picking off the smaller worms and mudshrimps at the surface, owe their food supply to the microalgae and bacteria that have helped start the food web. In some sheltered sites, these invertebrates can be at huge densities of 1000s per square metre. But where the sediment is turned over frequently by strong tidal currents, lower densities exist, making the feeding areas of less value to birds and fish alike.

The Severn Estuary is therefore a patchwork of rich feeding areas and poorer areas depending upon how stable the mudflat is and hence how permanent it is. The more permanent muddy areas enable the microalgae to build up in density to form the biofilms described above. In turn the invertebrates increase in numbers and the area becomes rich feeding for birds and fish. This is all in balance, the birds for example play a key role in controlling the balance between the grazing invertebrates and their algal food. Over winter wading birds may take up to 50% of the invertebrate biomass of an estuary. Its no wonder our estuaries are such incredibly important feeding sites for passage and over wintering birds.

But it's not just the birds feasting on the estuaries invertebrates and algae. Estuaries are important feeding grounds and nursery grounds for coastal fish. As part of our teaching within the Marine Geography degree scheme at Cardiff University, we annually take out students to trawl for fish. Using the knowledge of the late Glynn Jones, the skipper of the Leah James, we have trawled the area offshore from Newport and Barry in South Wales to monitor changes in fish catch. There are sadly no trawlers still working this area of the Severn, with recreational angling for Dover Sole and Sea Bass being the remaining dominant fishing activities. However we have caught a wide range of species, notably including several species of ray, which are declining around British coasts. In most trawls one or two

juvenile Thornback or Small-eyed ray is caught, with sometimes a larger Thornback coming up in the net (see photograph at end of article).

It has been noticeable, however, that the fish catch and fish sizes have been declining over the years we have fished these sites. In my first year in 2006, over 50 fish per trawl was possible and the number of shrimps, mainly the Brown Shrimp (*Crangon crangon*), could be over a 1000 in a single trawl. Recently 10 fish or 30 prawns is a good catch. The range of species remains the same, Bib, Dab, Poor Cod, Plaice, Common and Sand Sole are all still caught, along with smaller numbers of species such as Cod. The intriguingly named Montague's Seasnail is also occasionally caught (a fish, not a snail) and very rarely an Allis Shad, a protected species which can still be found in the Severn and its feeding rivers. We also catch occasional eels, the above mentioned rays and very rarely a Lesser-spotted Catshark, which we are apparently no longer supposed to call Dogfish. Amongst the prawns, swimming crabs and hermit crabs are still caught, but fewer and fewer each year. The fish are nearly all juveniles, mostly less than 20 cm in length, such as the Plaice in the photograph at the end of this article. We have analysed the fish catch, taking into account our fishing efforts as the number of trawls at each site on both flood and ebb tides and monitored the fish catch per unit effort (CPUE). In all cases, we are seeing potential declines in CPUE for species caught on the Welsh side of the estuary, illustrated here for Bib, Dab, Poor Cod and the two species of Sole, our most commonly caught species (table below). However, this may not be true for the Severn as a whole, catch in the saltmarsh channels in the Bridgewater Bay area is apparently still very good (personal information from CEFAS), although I have not seen historical data.

This leads us onto the question, why might fish catch be declining in the Severn Estuary? This is something we urgently need to find out. There are many possible theories. Possibly the loss of saltmarsh and the saltmarsh channels which act as feeding areas for many fish, has meant that the fish have moved, possibly emigrating to the English side of the Estuary. This would be worrying as predicted sea level rise will only increase saltmarsh loss and potentially increase the dynamic erosion processes of the mudflats, decreasing feeding areas for fish and birds. Alternatively maybe it's the EU Water Framework Directive and other policies which have cleaned up our rivers and coastal waters to such an extent that we might now be starving our estuaries. I have no patience for the argument that this is more natural and how it would have been before mans intervention provided these nutrients in the first place. It would only be more natural if the extent of saltmarsh, wet grassland and the mudflats themselves were as before mans intervention, providing larger feeding areas the birds would need if estuaries became less productive through reduced anthropogenic nutrient inputs. As yet we don't really know what's happening in the Severn, a worrying thought if we intend to try and understand the estuarine foodweb before we potentially impact it

massively by placing a barrage across it in years to come. Although here's a controversial thought, maybe a barrage would stabilise those mudflats, reduce coastal erosion and help store nutrients?

Perhaps we could see a barrage increasing the quality of feeding areas in the Severn Estuary even though the overall area would be reduced by as much as 76% (Underwood, 2010)?

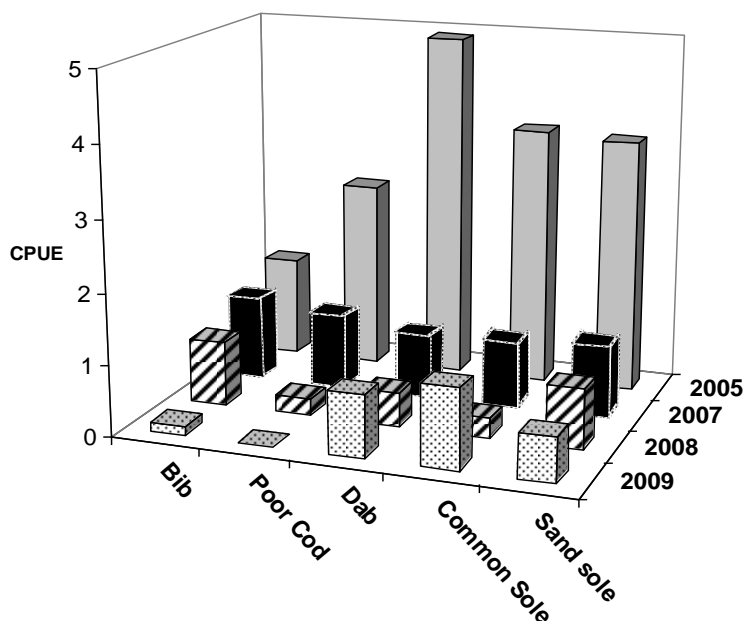


Table. Annual Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) for the five most frequently caught fish species using trawling between 2005 and 2009. All five species showed a significant decline in CPUE (Kruskal-Wallis test, $p < 0.05$). No data were available for 2006 due to poor weather and an accident in which the beam trawl nets were lost.

Appendix 1 Fish caught in the Severn Estuary during trawling between 2006 and 2009

Catsharks (Scyliorhinidae)

Lesser spotted catshark (*Scyliorhinus canicula*)

Skates and Rays (Raidae)

Thornback ray (*Raja clavata*)

Spotted ray (*Raja montagui*)

Small-eyed Ray (*Raja microocellata*)

Eels (Anguilliformes)

European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*)

Conger Eel (*Conger conger*)

Herring-like fishes (Clupeomorpha)

Sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*)

Cod-like fish (Gadiformes)

Cod (*Gadus morhua*)

Haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*)

Bib (*Trisopterus luscus*)

Poor Cod (*Trisopterus minutus*)

Whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*)

Blue whiting (*Micromessistius potassou*)

Gurnards (Triglidae)

Red gurnard (*Aspitrigla cucculus*)

Grey Gurnard (*Eutrigla gurnardus*)

Five-Bearded Rockling (*Ciliata mustela*)

Poachers (Agonidae)

Pogge (*Agonus cataphractus*)

Snailfishes (Cyclopteridae)

Montagu's seasnail (*Liparis montagui*)

Blenny-like fish (Blennioidei)

Topknot blenny (*Parablennius gattorugine*)

Norwegian bullhead (*Micrenophrys lilljeborgii*)

Gobies (Gobiidae)

Goby sp. (*Gobius* sp.)

Dragonets (Callionymoidae)

Common Dragonet (*Callionymus lyra*)

Flatfish (Pleuronectiformes)

Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*)

Dab (*Limanda limanda*)

Flounder (*Placichthys flesus*)

Flounder/Plaice hybrid

Turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*)

Common sole (*Solea solea*)

Sand sole (*Solea lascaris*)

For an excellent overview of benthic invertebrates found in the Severn Estuary, the reader should download: Mettam, C. *et al.* 1994. Benthic macrofauna and sediments in the Severn Estuary *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society*: **51**: 71-81.

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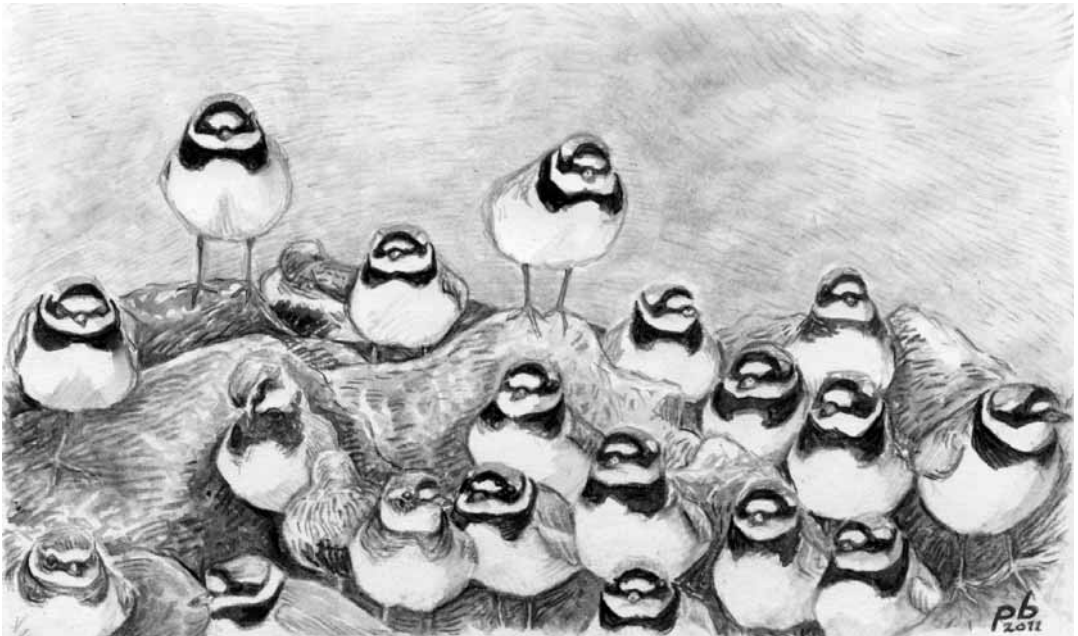
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IMCORE is the Innovative Management for Europe's Changing Coastal Resource, an EU INTERREG IVB North West Europe funded project lead by the Coastal & Marine Resources Centre (CMRC), ERI, University College Cork, Ireland. Cardiff University is one of the 17 partners on the project.



Ringed Plovers and Dunlin roosting at Severn Beach by Phil Baber

Wildfowl Numbers at Chew Valley Lake, 1960-2010

Part 2 – Diving Ducks, Grebes, Cormorant, Moorhen and Coot

R. J. Higgins

INTRODUCTION

Chew Valley Lake (CVL) was described in an article in the 2009 edition of this Report (Higgins 2009). It is the only site wholly within Avon that has international nature conservation designations for bird interest. Of the species considered here, the lake is of national importance for Pochard, Tufted Duck, Little Grebe, Great Crested Grebe and Coot. In some years Cormorant numbers exceed the threshold for national importance and, in the recent past, CVL has also been nationally important for Smew and Goosander, although current counts of these species are below the threshold.

The wildfowl at CVL have been counted since the lake was first flooded. This paper summarises trends in the populations of the regularly occurring diving ducks, grebes, Cormorant, Moorhen and Coot, following on from an account of the swans, geese and diving ducks published in the 2009 Avon Bird Report (Higgins 2009).

METHODS

The methodology follows that used in the 2009 paper. The only difference is that several of the species considered here were not covered by WeBS in its early decades: Coot was added in 1980/81, Great Crested Grebe in 1982/83, Little Grebe in 1985/86, Cormorant in 1986/87 and Moorhen not until 1990/91. For the period prior to 1966 it has been possible to extract some data from the Bristol Bird Reports for 1954 to 1966 but coverage in that period was patchy (for example, there are no published records of Moorhen from CVL in the entire period). After 1966, and before the relevant species were covered by WeBS, unpublished counts carried out by Keith Vinicombe have been used.

The counts provide monthly maxima for each species. For every year a mean peak has been calculated by averaging the maxima in the three months during which each species was most numerous; this method is comparable to that used in this Report for producing an annual index. For presentation in the graphs below, five year means have been used, giving a total of ten means over the fifty year period under consideration, each calculated from 15 monthly counts.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

The trends in numbers shown for each species are presented and described in this section. Possible explanations for the trends are explored in the Discussion section below.

POCHARD

Aythya ferina

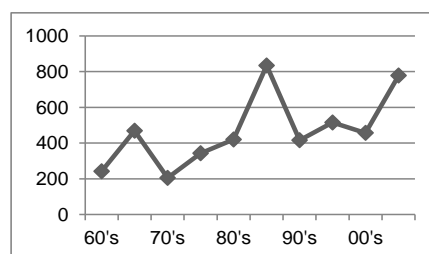


Figure 1: Average Pochard maxima, 1960-2010

The trend in Pochard numbers at CVL is erratically upwards, with wide fluctuations obscuring any long term changes. The marked peak between 1985 and 1990 was due to exceptional numbers in 1988/89 when a record count of 2,450 was made in November. In contrast, the maximum count eight winters earlier was only 89, in January. These fluctuations are a response to changes in the supply and accessibility of submerged vegetation both at CVL and at other waters, in particular BG. The latter site has, on occasion, been partially drained for summer engineering works resulting in a significant growth of ruderal plants on the exposed mud. When the reservoirs are then reflooded large concentrations of Pochards occur. These birds feed at BG at night but roost at CVL during the day; this accounts for the high CVL counts in, for example, the winter of 1988/89. In recent years an increase in the submerged macrophyte population at CVL has allowed consistently larger flocks to develop, although fluctuations still occur.

The seasonality of records has changed slightly: between 1960 and 2000, the peak usually occurred in November; since then, December has generally been the best month for this species. This contrasts with a more marked trend towards earlier maxima seen in several dabbling ducks (Higgins 2009). Generally, the main influx of Pochard occurs somewhat later than that of most ducks, in October or November, and there is then a gradual decline through January and February, although rapidly rising water levels can accelerate this.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

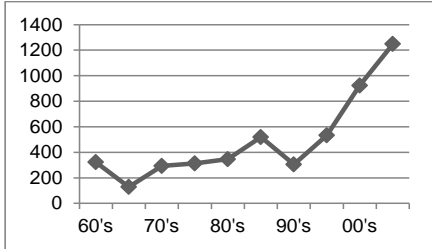


Figure 2: Average Tufted Duck maxima, 1960-2010

Few species have undergone such a drastic change in fortunes at CVL as Tufted Duck. During the 1960s, annual maxima were typically around 500, but they then fell slightly in the mid 1970s, only to recover later in the decade to remain at a reasonably steady level until 1997/98, when 750 became a more typical maximum. From 2001/02, when the annual maximum first reached 1,000, the increase has been marked. Peak numbers have remained in excess of 1,000 in every year since then. The highest count was 2,115 in October 2005 outside the period under review.

These high counts have generally occurred in the period September to October, although, in some years, large flocks have remained into January in some years. This pattern is entirely different from that seen in previous decades, when maxima were recorded either in mid-winter or, more often, in March or April, during a pronounced spring passage. The autumn peak in the 1960s was frequently a little over 100, and in September 1970 only 35 Tufted Duck were counted. The spring passage is still evident except when large numbers remain through the late winter, masking any increase. Numbers then decline through late spring before an influx in June and July. Then there is often a fall in August, before a huge influx in September.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephalus clangula*

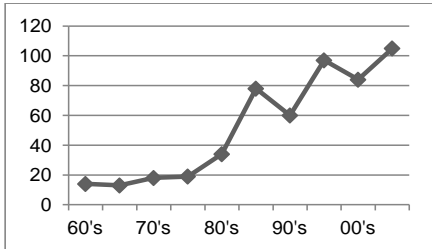


Figure 3: Average Goldeneye maxima, 1960-2010

Goldeneye numbers remained at a fairly static, and low, level between 1960/61 and 1981/82. Only once during this period, in April 1963, were forty recorded and in both 1968/69 and 1969/70 the annual maximum was twelve (in December in both years). A new record count of 53 was made in March 1983 and the first three figure count was recorded in April

1988. More recently, maxima of 170 have occurred in both 2004/05 and 2007/08.

The seasonal pattern of occurrence of this species is very different from that of other wildfowl species at CVL. There is a gradual arrival throughout the late autumn and winter and peaks are reached in March. As recently as the 1990s, substantial numbers lingered into May, but departure is now significantly earlier. The April count is now always considerably lower than that in the previous month and Goldeneye are rarely present in May.

SMEW *Mergus albellus*

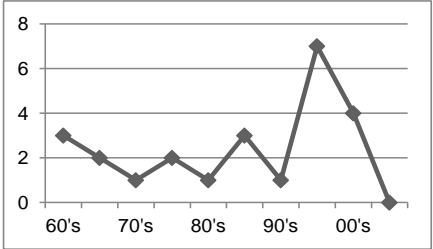


Figure 4: Average Smew maxima, 1960-2010

Smew is the least numerous of the species considered here but, although its appearances have always been irregular enough to rate as a winter highlight, over some periods CVL has ranked as one of the major sites for Smew in Britain. Smew was the most numerous species of sawbill at CVL in the lake's early years, reflecting the extreme scarcity of Goosanders then, but there was a gradual decline through the 1960s and early 1970s, although this was masked by variations from year to year. Numbers fluctuated at a low level throughout the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, with the mean peak in none of these years exceeding five. The maximum WeBS count throughout this period was eight in February 1961 and, in the winters of 1968/69, 1972/73, 1973/74, 1980/81 and 1981/82, WeBS did not record this species at all here. The late 1990s then saw a sharp upturn, with 14 being counted in February 1997 and 15 in January 1999. Numbers then fell gradually, but Smew remained annual until 2004/05, which was the start of a sequence of five winters that produced only one record.

The seasonality of records has changed little. It is rare for the first Smew to occur before December and numbers peak in the first three months of the year, after which it is rarely recorded.

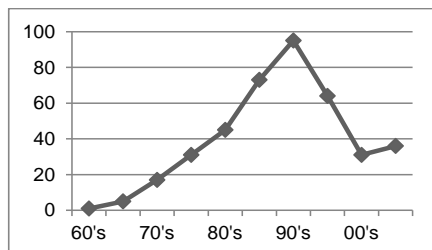
GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

Figure 5: Average Goosander maxima, 1960-2010

The fortunes of Goosander at CVL have changed markedly, with a steady increase from a very low start followed by a steady and equally steep decline and then a slight recovery. It was extremely scarce at CVL throughout the lake's first decade and the first double figure count was not made until January 1969. They remained scarce, however, and the maximum in 1972/73 was only eight. Thereafter there was a rapid rise, with 50 being counted in December 1973, followed by a plateau in numbers until another sudden rise from the mid 1980s. The maximum exceeded 100 for the first time in January 1987 and peaked at 208 in December 1995, with a remarkable non-WeBS count of 283 on 3rd February 1996, coinciding with a period of freezing weather. The fall from this peak was rapid and the maximum count during the next winter was only 80. A gradual decline then followed, with the recent nadir for this species at CVL reached in 2005/06 when the maximum was only 16. A partial recovery then followed, and several subsequent winters have seen peaks of around fifty.

Goosanders usually begin to arrive at the lake in late September and October, with peaks occurring in the period December to February followed by a rapid exodus in the spring. There is some suggestion of a change in this pattern, since maxima in the early decades tended to occur in January and February, whilst most recent maxima have been in December. The behaviour of Goosanders at CVL differs from that of other duck species. Whilst some birds feed at the lake throughout the day, either in deep water or at the mouths of the River Chew and Hollow Brook, significant numbers often roost at the lake, having fed during the day on surrounding rivers.

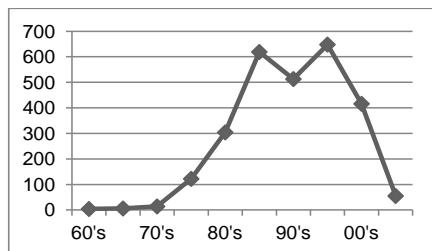
RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Figure 6: Average Ruddy Duck maxima, 1960-2010

CVL has played an important role in the chequered history of this species in Britain. The first wild breeding in Europe occurred here when the then Wildfowl Trust supplemented a small escaped population with deliberate introductions. Small numbers continued to breed at CVL, but it was as a wintering site that the site became important. Through the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s virtually the whole British population bred on the meres of the north-west Midlands before gathering at Blithfield Reservoir, Staffordshire, in the autumn and then moving to CVL for the winter. During this period the rapid growth in counts at CVL matched the rise in the British population almost exactly. The largest ever WeBS counts, both 915, were made in December in 1995 and 1996. Subsequently, although the British population continued to grow, the birds became more adventurous, both breeding and wintering in a wider range of sites, and numbers wintering at CVL fell slightly. They remained at a high level, however, until DEFRA began its cull. This was intended to protect the White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephalus* population in southern Spain, although the assertions that it was British birds that appeared in Spain, and that hybridisation threatened the population, both remained unproven. Relatively few Ruddy Ducks were shot at CVL because Bristol Water plc, in contrast to other site owners, imposed restrictions in order to protect other wildfowl species. Nonetheless, there was a steep decline in numbers, as shown by Figure 6, and the species is now rare at the lake.

When Ruddy Duck was numerous at CVL it showed a consistent pattern of occurrence. Small numbers were present throughout the year but there was a rapid influx in late October and early November and by the late winter Ruddy Duck was usually the most abundant wildfowl species at the lake. There would then follow an equally rapid departure in late February.

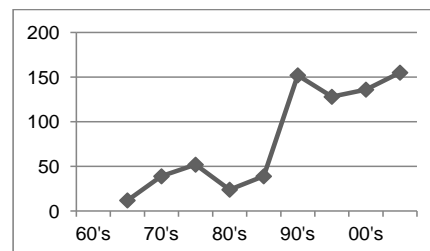
CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Figure 7: Average Cormorant maxima, 1965-2010

Cormorant has become much more numerous at CVL since the 1960s. No reliable data are available for the first half of that decade but the very few records published in the Proceedings of the Bristol Naturalists Society suggest that it was rare and irregular then. During the late 1960s, the average annual maximum remained fairly constant at around 15, but numbers rose markedly in the early 1970s, and peaks of 40 or more became typical for the rest of the decade. Numbers then fell in the 1980s but

rose in the 1990s, when counts of over 100 became typical. Although there was a slight decline in the late 1990s, the highest WeBS count of 275 was made in November 2001 and annual maxima since then have rarely been below 150.

In the early part of the period under consideration, the much lower maxima were often in January or February. Numbers now tend to peak in the late autumn and early winter, and the seven highest counts have all been made in November. Numbers of Cormorant at CVL show much greater diurnal variation than those of any other waterfowl species. Many simply use the lake as a roost and are present only in the early morning and late afternoon (unless feeding conditions are exceptional). Numbers in the middle of the day are often only a fraction of the maximum.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybatus ruficollis*

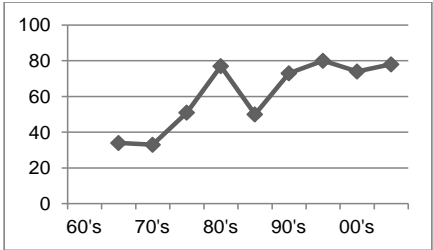


Figure 8: Average Little Grebe maxima, 1965-2010

Counts of Little Grebes showed a gradual increase in the 1970s and, after a period of relative stability, they have shown signs of a further increase. Few counts from the period before 1965 are available, but the Proceedings of the BNS mention totals of 36 in October 1958 and 97 in September 1961. These were presumably considered exceptional. Annual maxima increased slightly from the late 1960s to the late 1980s, but usually remained around 50. The first count of 100 was made in September 1991 and, after a second three figure count in August 1995, the next three years also saw maxima in excess of 100. Peak counts then dropped slightly, but a record 180 was recorded in September 2009. This appears to have been the largest count ever made at an inland site in Great Britain and it contrasts markedly with the count of eight made in September 1973.

The seasonal pattern of counts has changed little. Numbers are low in the spring and early summer, although they can be hard to count then as they remain concealed in vegetation. There is then a steady influx through July and August, when rafts of Little Grebes amongst amphibious bistort *Persicaria amphibian* in the bays on the western side of the lake, are one of the characteristic sights of CVL. Numbers then decline gradually through the winter, unless freezing conditions force a rapid departure.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE
Podiceps cristatus

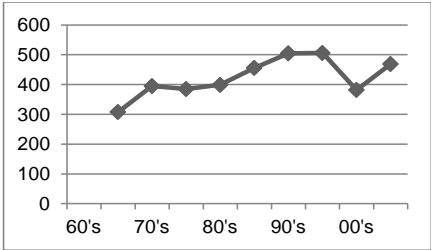


Figure 9: Average Great Crested Grebe maxima, 1960-2010

Reliable data for Great Crested Grebes are not available before 1966 but there seems to have been a significant increase over the lake's early years, followed by a further increase in the 1980s and some marked fluctuations but little clear trend since then. Published maxima for the late 1950s and early 1960s are all below 60, and the only published count for CVL in the 1960/61 winter is of 13, in May. There was then an apparent sharp increase, with counts of 157 made in March 1965 and 183 in July 1965. By the end of that decade, maxima were in excess of 500. They have stayed at about this level since then, but the period 2002 to 2006 saw annual maxima consistently below 350. The recovery from these comparatively low counts has been marked, however, with each year between 2007 and 2009 seeing maxima exceeding 660. The count of 690 in August 2008 equals the record maximum of October 2000.

Unless the lake freezes, significant numbers of Great Crested Grebe are present at CVL throughout the year, with the annual maxima present in the August to October period. The influx of this species starts earlier than that of most waterfowl species. Flocks begin to build through June presumably as early breeders and non-breeders from other sites in southern England gather to moult. The timing of the decline in the flock varies, presumably in response to fluctuations in the fish populations, starting as early as late August in some years but being delayed until late October in others. Numbers then decline through the winter, but only if the lake freezes do they dwindle markedly.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

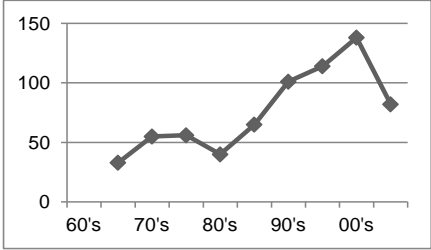


Figure 10: Average Moorhen maxima, 1965-2010

There are no published counts for Moorhen from the lake's early years. The data collected since counts of this species were first made in the mid-1960s suggest a largely upwards trend. A count of 50 was not made until October 1969, but every year since then has seen an annual maximum of at least 50. A total of 142 in October 1975 was the first count in excess of 100 and it was not until the 1990s that maxima of over 100 became the norm. The highest count is 245, made in September 2003. There was then a decline in the years between 2005 and 2008, when no count of over 100 was made, before a recovery to 180 was noted in September 2009.

In several years during the late 1960s numbers peaked in April, when they are now often very scarce. More recently, maxima have mostly occurred between August and October, with some trend towards peaks occurring towards the end of this period. There is a marked exodus in early to mid-winter, especially if the lake's margins freeze or if water levels rise rapidly.

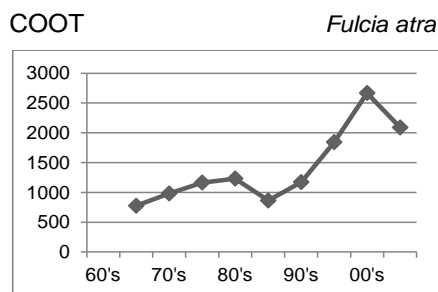


Figure 11: Average Coot maxima, 1965-2010

The few published counts of Coots in CVL's early years show that large numbers were present immediately after the lake was flooded. Maxima in each of the years between 1955 and 1959 were over 1,000, with 2,000 recorded in February 1956. Numbers remained high in the early 1960s, with a record 4,000 on 21st February 1960 and 2,700 in December 1962. Later in the decade, however, there was a dramatic fall. The maximum count in 1967/68, for example, was only 720 and although there was some recovery in the early 1970s, there was a similar maximum of 760 in 1973/74. Since then every year has seen Coot numbers exceed 1,000, with the exception of 1986/87, which is the poorest year on record, with a maximum count of only 460. The first count of over 2,000 since 1962 was made in August 1993, and since 1996/97 maxima of this size have been the norm. Four of the five years from 2000/01 to 2004/05 saw peaks exceed 3,000 and, although there was a slight decline in the later part of the decade, this figure was reached again in 2009/10. The highest in modern times is 3,715 in October 2002.

There have been slight changes in the seasonality of Coot maxima. Until 1968 they typically occurred in January but then settled into a pattern where they consistently occurred in July and August. Since 2000/01, however, peak counts have been made in September and October in five of the years.

TOTAL NUMBERS

The totals described above have been combined to identify any trend in the total number of waterfowl using CVL. This has been done by creating a five-yearly mean of the average maxima for each species, calculated as for the graphs above: it is not based on the total present in any one month. Introduced species were excluded from this calculation, since trends in their populations are a consequence of population changes following the establishment of the various species in the UK, rather than a reflection of ecological and other trends at CVL, and because the fortunes of these species are not of relevance to any consideration of nature conservation value. The figure below shows the trend in overall numbers of waterfowl:

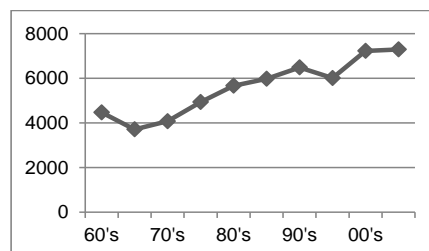


Figure 12: Average maxima of waterfowl, 1960-2010

These figures show that, following a decline in numbers during the late 1960s, there has been an almost steady increase in waterfowl numbers at CVL. The lake supported twice as many birds in the period 2005-10 as it did in the period 1965-70.

One drawback with basing conclusions entirely on absolute numbers, as above, is that changes in the abundance of a numerous species may mask opposite changes in several less numerous species. For example, at CVL Coot is so numerous that an increase in its numbers might mask declines in species such as Gadwall and Shoveler, giving a misleading impression of increasing nature conservation value. In order to overcome this problem, an index has been created for each species by calculating the mean of all annual maxima for each species and assigning the value 100 to this mean. Fluctuations from this index were then calculated for each five-year period. An average of the indices for all species was then calculated for each five-year period, as shown in the figure below:

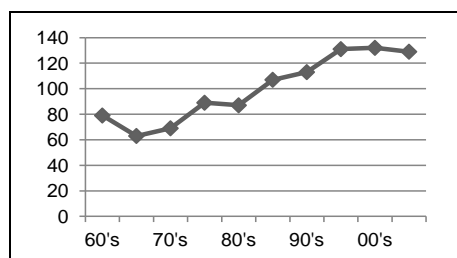


Figure 13: Average waterfowl indices, 1960 to 2010

The pattern shown by the mean of indices is in fact rather similar to that shown by the changes in overall numbers, except that the increase has flattened out since 1995 to 2000, but similarly at a level of twice the figure for 1965 to 1970.

DISCUSSION

The 2009 paper (Higgins 2009) considered various potential explanations for changes in waterfowl populations at CVL, whilst acknowledging that data on several of potential factors are either absent or incomplete. The importance of these factors in influencing both the individual species considered here and the overall waterfowl population is considered below.

NATIONAL POPULATION TRENDS

It is possible that the trends seen at CVL simply mirror international and national population trends. The 2009 paper concluded that this was not the case for most species considered there. Neither is it true for most of the species considered in this paper. For example, the national population of Tufted Duck increased by around 50% between 1965 and 1973, a period when numbers at CVL were at best stable, but have increased only slightly in recent years, whilst CVL maxima have more than doubled. However, it is interesting to note that the increase at CVL has coincided with a population crash since 2001/02 at Loughs Neagh and Beg (Northern Ireland) where numbers peaked at 29,393 in December 1989 (Calbrade *et al.* 2010).

There is some equivalence between the national and CVL trends of four species, although in each case the changes experienced at CVL are more extreme than those seen nationally, suggesting that localised factors may be more important than national ones. The four species are: Smew, whose national population has declined significantly in recent years; Goosander, which became more numerous until the mid-1990s and has since become substantially less common; Little Grebe, which has showed a steady but slight increase since it was first considered by WeBS in 1985/86; and Great Crested Grebe, which also rose between 1982/83 (when it was first covered by WeBS) and 2000, followed by a suggestion of a slight decline (Calbrade *et al.* 2010).

PERSECUTION

This factor was not considered in the 2009 paper, but two species considered in this paper have suffered deliberate persecution at CVL.

The level of persecution suffered by the first of these species, Cormorant, is relatively minor. As a result of perceived damage suffered by the sports fishery at the lake, a programme of scaring, reinforced by lethal shootings, was carried out under licence from Defra during the 1990s. The number killed was very small and the upward trend described above

suggests that this activity had little effect on the lake's population.

The second species, Ruddy Duck, has been the subject of a much more intensive, widespread and sustained programme of shooting aimed at the eradication, as far as possible, of the species in Britain. This has been carried out by Defra as a consequence of concerns that individuals leaving Britain might either breed with or out-compete the threatened White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala* in Spain. Defra claim to have killed 80 Ruddy Ducks at CVL and 203 at BL between 2006 and 2009 (2009 Avon Bird Report). These numbers clearly cannot account entirely for the decline described above and many birds using CVL must be amongst the 6,000 Ruddy Duck shot elsewhere in the country.

The Ruddy Duck cull may also be implicated in the decline in Smew at CVL. When the cull was first proposed local ornithologists and conservation organisations argued that Smew may be vulnerable to either incidental killing or disturbance, a consequence of the superficial similarity between females and immatures of this species to Ruddy Duck as well as their tendency to favour the same parts of the lake. The steep decline in Smew, as predicted, coincided with the onset of the culling programme, although no causal link can be proved.

INTRODUCED SPECIES

The only introduced species considered in this paper is Ruddy Duck. Until the cull commenced it showed the steep increase followed by a leveling off that would be expected of an introduction.

BREEDING SUCCESS

It was concluded in the 2009 paper that there is little, if any, correlation between breeding success at the lake and overall numbers outside of the breeding season of any species considered here. Of these species, six - Pochard, Tufted Duck, Little Grebe, Great Crested Grebe, Moorhen and Coot - breed regularly at CVL, and, until 2008, Ruddy Duck did so fairly regularly. Unfortunately data relating to Moorhen broods are absent, but personal observation and anecdotal evidence suggest that it has become much less numerous as a breeding species, probably due to the spread of reedbeds at the expense of more open vegetation, without any fall in the annual maxima. It is likely that its decrease as a breeding species has been almost as dramatic as that of Little Grebe. As recently as the late 1990s as many as 30 pairs of Little Grebes bred at CVL but, in recent years breeding has occurred, if at all, only on Herons Green Pool. Nevertheless, the size of the late summer flock has increased over the same period. Nesting attempts by Great Crested Grebes vary greatly depending on water levels, years with high levels being favoured, and there is no correlation between breeding success and peak counts.

These species provide some evidence that breeding success does not influence overall numbers of non-breeding birds, but the clearest evidence for this is provided by Tufted Duck. In 1971, for example, KEV recorded 61 broods, but the autumn maximum was only 400. By contrast only one brood was recorded in 2005 but the autumn maximum was 2,115.

WATER LEVELS

Water level was identified in the 2009 paper as the single most important factor determining wildfowl numbers at CVL. The importance of water level is much less marked for the species considered in this paper than it is for surface-feeding ducks, such as Teal. The only species showing a clear correlation is Cormorant, which also favours low water levels, probably for two reasons. Firstly, when the lake holds less water, fish are more concentrated and, therefore, presumably easier to catch. Secondly, low water levels expose mud banks that Cormorant use as roosts, particularly on Denny Island.

ECOLOGICAL FACTORS

Ecological relationships between bird populations and those of plants, fish, invertebrates, which are in turn influenced by physical factors, such as water chemistry and weather, are key in determining the population sizes of all species of waterfowl at the lake. CVL is a relatively young ecosystem and it is inevitable that there will have been marked changes in its ecology during the period under consideration. Unfortunately, there is little or no quantitative information on most of these factors and much of what follows must therefore be unverifiable speculation.

Changes in the growth of aquatic macrophytes at the lake may be at least in part responsible for some of the more striking changes in wildfowl numbers discussed above. The 2009 paper described the striking increase in both the extent of aquatic vegetation at CVL and in the diversity of plant species involved. The two species considered here that might be expected to show the greatest correlation with vegetation abundance are Pochard and Coot, both of which are predominantly herbivorous. The former species has experienced an irregular growth in population levels, with a low in the early 1970s and a dramatic peak reached in the late 1980s. Although numbers since then have not reached this high level, averages have been at least twice those seen in the 1970s. Coot numbers were very high in the lake's early years, for reaching 4,000 in 1960, before a decline was followed by a dramatic increase, with averages rising from around 750 to a peak of over 2,500 in the early 2000s.

The conclusion that increased vegetation growth since the early 1970s has benefited herbivorous species seems reasonably clear. Figure 13 shows the changes in the summed indices (calculated as for Figure 12 above) for the four most clearly herbivorous wildfowl species at CVL: Mute Swan, Gadwall, Pochard and Coot.

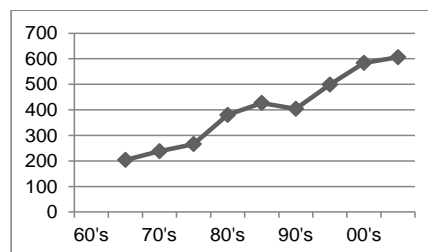


Figure 13: Average indices of Mute Swan, Gadwall, Pochard and Coot, 1960 to 2009

Comparison of this figure with Figure 12 above shows a more consistent and larger increase in numbers of herbivorous species compared to the increase in waterfowl in general, suggesting that increased macrophyte growth has had a marked effect on their numbers.

Another ecological trend that is worthy of exploration is the inter-relationship between populations of fish, aquatic invertebrates and waterfowl. In 2001/02 Bristol Water plc fisheries staff commented that there had been a dramatic fall in the visible populations of fry and immature coarse fish and that this had allowed a dramatic increase in populations of aquatic invertebrates, particularly lesser water boatmen (*Corixa spp.*). At the same time, populations of fish-feeding wildfowl, notably Great Crested Grebe, fell, whilst those of invertebrate-feeding wildfowl, notably Tufted Duck, rose. A similar negative correlation has been noted between roach populations and Tufted Duck, although in this case breeding success rather than non-breeding numbers, has been shown at Loughs Neagh and Beg in Northern Ireland (Maclean *et al.* 2002).

The negative correlation between Tufted Duck and Great Crested Grebe was commented upon in several subsequent editions of this Report and the relationship seemed strong until 2006. In that year large shoals of young coarse fish were obvious at many places on the lake. As would have been predicted, Great Crested Grebe counts rose markedly, from maxima below 350 to above 660. An equivalent fall in Tufted Duck numbers was not seen, however, although the maximum count in 2005 was not exceeded until 2010 (a record 2,420 on 11th October). Figure 14 shows the close inverse relationship between counts of the two species until 2006/07, followed by a much less clear relationship since.

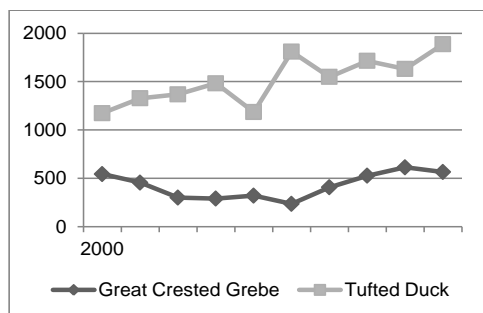


Figure 14: Annual average maxima of Tufted Duck and Great Crested Grebe, 2000 to 2009

It is possible that the increase in aquatic vegetation has enabled high populations of invertebrates to co-exist with high fish populations by providing shelter from predation. This would benefit Tufted Duck and explain the recent co-incidence of high counts of this species and Great Crested Grebe.

DISTURBANCE

The 2009 paper described the gradual increase in recreational pressure at CVL, and compared trends in actual dabbling duck numbers against an expectation that they would decline in the face of increasing disturbance. The conclusion was that virtually no declines were seen. The one exception being the loss of the remnant Wigeon flock after Woodford Bank was opened up to public use. The lack of a more general decline in waterfowl is thought to be due to two main factors: firstly, that recreational pressures are concentrated in the northern, deeper parts of the lake that are relatively unattractive to dabbling duck; and secondly, as a consequence of declining persecution (note that duck shooting occurred at CVL until 1964) many wildfowl species have become less wary and are therefore able to use disturbed areas from which they would previously have been excluded.

It might be expected that some of the species considered in this paper would be more sensitive to disturbance, not least because several use the deeper waters at the northern end of the lake where recreational activities are concentrated. Furthermore, fish-feeding species are restricted to feeding in daylight hours and cannot take advantage of undisturbed nights to feed, as most herbivorous species can. Perhaps the key species in this respect are Great Crested Grebe, Tufted Duck, Goldeneye and Goosander.

As seen above, numbers of Great Crested Grebe have increased since the 1960s, with fluctuations being largely attributable to changes in fish populations. Observations show that this species is relatively tolerant of disturbance and responds to high levels of activity, particularly from sailing boats, by swimming to the southern end of the lake. It is unlikely that disturbance has had a significant effect on numbers of this species.

Tufted Duck numbers have also demonstrated resilience towards disturbance by increasing markedly over the period. Observations show, however, that they are easily disturbed by boats, but that generally they fly to the southern end of the lake, or to Herons Green Bay, and spend the remainder of the day there. However, on a few occasions there has also been disturbance in these locations, either because low water levels reduce the area of undisturbed water available, or because of activities beyond the lake's boundaries such as hot air ballooning and shooting. On these occasions, disturbance has been more severe and has probably led to at least temporary declines in numbers.

Observations show that Goldeneye are much more wary, readily taking flight at the approach of a boat. As with Tufted Duck, numbers of this species have risen appreciably and it is therefore unlikely that increased levels of disturbance have had any long-term effect. It is perhaps relevant that, in February and March, when Goldeneye numbers peak, water levels are almost invariably high and refuge areas therefore large.

The last species, Goosander, inevitably favours areas used by large numbers of coarse fish, which are likely to be attractive to pike anglers in particular. It has been noted in recent years that groups of Goosander often congregate at the mouth of Hollow Brook and disappear from the lake once the winter pike-fishing season begins in February. However, as discussed above the fortunes of this species at CVL mirror, in an exaggerated manner, national trends. It is therefore unlikely that disturbance levels are responsible for these fluctuations. There is some evidence, however, that the February pike fishing season has contributed to an earlier departure of Goosander from the lake, although it is also conceivable that climatic factors may be responsible for this.

Taking all waterfowl species into consideration, the conclusion of the 2009 paper that disturbance has so far had no detectable adverse effect. However, there remains a danger that increased recreational pressure may damage the lake's ornithological interest. If this is to be avoided it is important that areas free from disturbance are retained, especially during periods when large numbers of birds are present. In this context it would be useful to extend refuge areas when water levels are low, since at these times bird numbers tend to be very high and existing refuge areas shrink or even disappear as the water recedes.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The conclusion of the 2009 paper was that climate change has as yet had little or no adverse impact on numbers of any waterfowl species at CVL, with the exception of Bewick's Swan. It might be expected that this paper would reveal more impact. Firstly, Little Grebe and Moorhen in particular use small pools and the margins of larger waters and are weakly migratory. They might therefore be expected to react favourably to a warming climate. Secondly,

species such as Goldeneye, Smew and Goosander have a predominantly northern or eastern winter distribution, peak in late winter and are often associated with cold winter. Their populations might be expected to fall as a consequence of a warming climate.

Little Grebe and Moorhen have both shown a trend towards higher numbers at CVL, consistent with the prediction made above. National data do provide partial support for the hypothesis that the increases can be attributed to climate change. WeBS data show a slight but steady increase in Little Grebe numbers; Moorhen has not been included in WeBS for long enough to provide conclusions regarding trends, but BBS data suggest an increase in this species. However, as is often the case, it is impossible to attribute conclusively these changes to climate change. It is equally likely that the increase in these species at the lake is a consequence of the gradual increase in marginal vegetation and invertebrate populations.

The three species for which a decline could be predicted reveal contradictory trends. Goldeneye numbers have risen substantially, so are presumably unaffected by climate change. It seems very likely, however, that the earlier departure of Goldeneye seen in recent years is a consequence of climate change. Goosander numbers have fallen substantially following an earlier, and equally spectacular, rise. This mirrors a national trend and WeBS data also reveal a shift northwards in wintering distribution, which is attributed to climate change (Calbrade *et al.* 2010). The decline in Smew numbers may also be due to climate change. Both national (Calbrade *et al.* 2010) and international (Nilsson 2008) analyses suggest a north-eastwards shift in the distribution, which would produce a decline in their numbers at CVL, close to the species' south-western limit. However, as noted above, the dramatic fall in Smew at CVL may also be linked to the Ruddy Duck cull.

TIMING OF MAXIMA

One of the most striking conclusions of the 2009 paper was that the peak time for waterfowl at CVL has shifted markedly, from mid and late winter to the autumn. This trend was seen across several species and was attributed to changes in vegetation, with the open shoreline of the lake's early years providing good mid-winter feeding, which was lost as reedbeds spread, whilst increased growth of submerged plants improved feeding conditions in the autumn. Of the species considered in this paper, only Coot might be expected to be affected by the first change, whilst several species might benefit from the latter.

The changes shown by Coot have been similar, but not identical, to those shown by several dabbling ducks. The change from mid-winter to autumn maxima occurred earlier in Coot, in about 1968 rather than gradually through the 1980s, and there has been more recently a shift towards maxima occurring later in the autumn. The reasons for these

differences are not clear, but it is likely that increased submerged vegetation has allowed Coot flocks to persist longer in the autumn in recent years.

Amongst the species that might be expected to benefit from the improvement in autumn feeding conditions the most dramatic change is shown by Tufted Duck. Autumn was previously the worst time of year for this species at CVL, but now sees large maxima substantially in excess of anything recorded in previous decades. This fits the hypothesis well: although vegetation does not form a large part of Tufted Duck's diet many of the invertebrates upon which it does rely benefit from this improved food resource, and shelter from predation by fish that increased vegetation provides.

Other species do not show such a clear link. Pochard maxima have typically continued to occur in mid-winter, despite its reliance on submerged vegetation. The major influx into Britain does not occur until November, however (Holt *et al.* 2009), and it is therefore unlikely that maxima at CVL will occur in the autumn. Migratory patterns also explain the absence of an autumn peak in species such as Goldeneye, which might otherwise be expected to exploit large invertebrate populations in late summer.

Figure 15 illustrates the change in the seasonality of peak waterfowl counts at CVL:

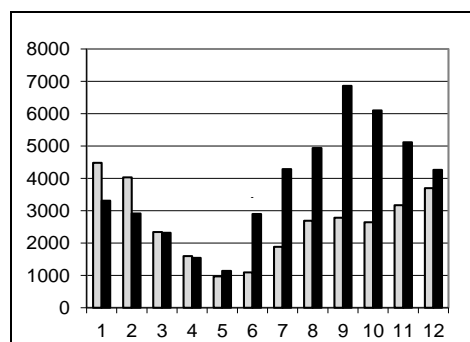


Figure 15: Average total monthly waterfowl counts, January to December (1 to 12), 1966-71 (grey) and 2005-09 (black).

The figure reveals that January and February, the peak months in the 1960s, now see the 8th and 9th highest counts respectively. Conversely, September and October now produce the highest counts, but were ranked 5th and 6th in the 1960s. It also provides further evidence of the increased value of the lake for waterfowl. Only in four months does the average maximum in 1966 to 1971 exceed that in 2005 to 2009, and in only two of these months is the difference significant.

THE FUTURE

Any attempt to forecast future trends in waterfowl numbers at CVL is almost certainly doomed to failure. Analysis of the multiple factors affecting the

different species, both at the site and in the wider environment, and production of even tentative forecasts, would require complex modeling well beyond the resources available.

It does, however, seem entirely possible that the lake can continue to be a nationally important site for waterfowl, providing that certain safeguards remain in place. The most important of these are measures to control both recreational pressure and water nutrient levels.

It has been shown that waterfowl have coped much better with increased disturbance than would have been predicted in the 1960s. Refuge areas on the lake are clearly vital to many species, and a case can be made for extending some of these. If sufficient refuge areas are available, there is no reason why CVL should not continue to be both an important focus for several recreational activities and an important site for birds.

Nutrient levels in the water have a less obvious, but probably more important, effect on bird populations. Wilson, in 1975, concluded that "*Chew has not been able to mature successfully because of the nutrient problems it has experienced*". This lack of maturity was reflected in a lack of submerged macrophyte vegetation, large algal blooms and oxygen depletion low in the water column in summer (Wilson *et al.* 1975). This work did not consider bird populations, but it is notable that Wilson's gloomy prognosis coincided with a nadir in the lake's waterfowl populations. Increases in nutrient levels are strongly implicated in the catastrophic declines in diving ducks in Northern Ireland.

Since the 1970s, levels of nutrients, the most important of which are phosphates, have fallen significantly at CVL. This is probably due to provision of mains sewerage to villages upstream of the lake and a reduction in agricultural fertiliser use, not least because prices of agrochemicals have risen substantially. It cannot be assumed that continued improvement is inevitable, however, and either increased human population in the catchment area or changes in agricultural practice may reverse the positive trends that have been seen. This would be to the detriment of the lake's birds and other wildlife, recreational users and water consumers and should be resisted by decision makers at all levels.

Wider factors are harder to predict. Many waterfowl species have experienced large population increases in northern Europe in recent decades but, like other migratory birds, they are vulnerable to threats across many countries and regions. In the case of CVL's waterfowl these are largely in areas to the north and east of us, but some key species such as Shoveler may be affected by changes in regions to the south as well. Potential threats across the ranges of all species include increased persecution, habitat loss, increased predation, pollution and introduction of non-native species (which can also have beneficial impacts if a new food source is provided). Prediction of any of these trends is close

to impossible, highlighting the vulnerability of migratory birds in a changing world.

Although it has been concluded that climate change has to date had little detectable effect on CVL's waterfowl populations, most workers in the field predict that changes will accelerate. Future decades might therefore see significant changes to the lake's bird populations. The experience of the last two years shows that simplistic predictions along the lines of "winter weather will become less severe" are not necessarily accurate. Waterfowl may well be affected by less obvious factors, such as the decline in Norway Lemming (*Lemmus lemmus*) and subsequent changes in the behaviour of predators such as Long-tailed Skua (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) that has been implicated in the decline of several species of wader (eg Kausrud, 2008). The nature and scale of any such impacts on the lake's bird populations defy prediction.

One difference between the period of the lake's infancy and the current time is the much greater importance now given to nature conservation. CVL now has a range of designations and statutory oversight that would have been unthinkable in the 1950s. It is to be hoped that Bristol Water plc continue their substantial efforts to conserve and enhance the lake's biodiversity, overseen and guided by Natural England. Ongoing monitoring of the kind of which WeBS has been an exemplar will be a key to informing conservation efforts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper is entirely dependent on the dedication of my predecessors in the arduous task of counting wildfowl at CVL, particularly the late Bernard King, Roy Curber and Keith Vinicombe. The last-named also provided much additional information and commented on a draft of this paper, as did Antony Merritt and Dawn Lawrence. Richard Mielcarek rendered the graphs presentable.

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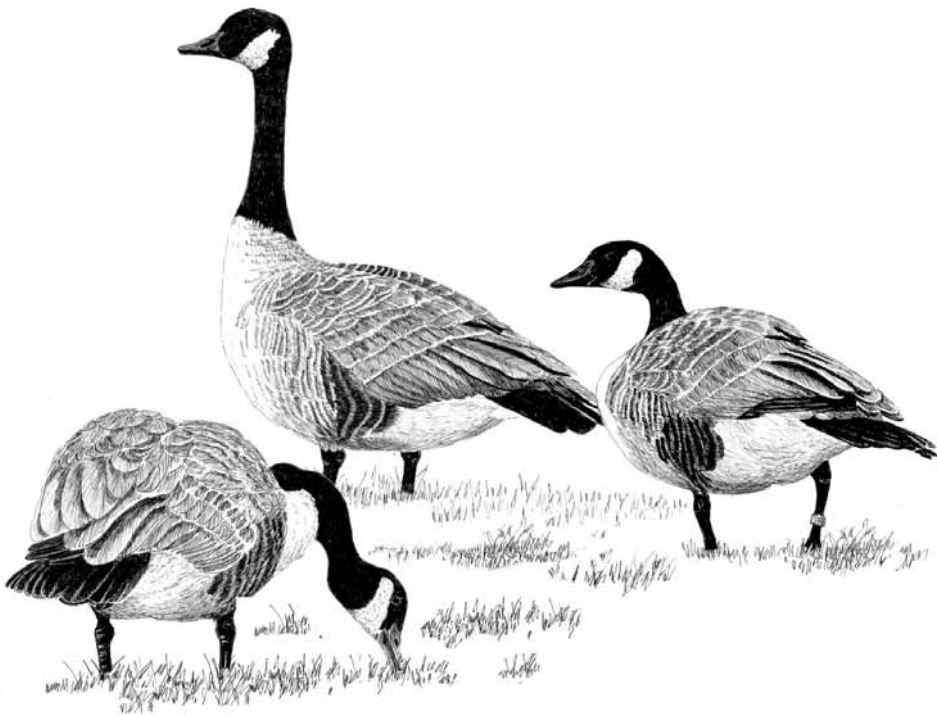
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Canada Geese by Mike Bailey

Dunlin of the race *arctica* in Avon – status and identification

J P Martin

Introduction

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* is the staple small shorebird along our coast: present for much of the year, sometimes in four-figure flocks, it can often be taken for granted by coastal birders but it always catches the eye when in its handsome breeding plumage. The species shows considerable geographical variation across its wide Holarctic breeding range. The identification and status in Avon of the race *arctica* is discussed.

Three races of Dunlin occur regularly in the British Isles. The majority of wintering birds are of the nominate race *alpina*, which breeds from northern Fenno-Scandia and Russia east to the Kolmya River (Hardy and Minton, 1980; Cramp & Simmons, 1983). Significant numbers of *alpina* remain into May. The race *schinzii* breeds from south-east Greenland and Iceland to north-west Europe including the north and west of Britain. This race passes through Britain in good numbers in spring (April to May) and autumn, and a small number may winter, perhaps especially in the south-west (Ferns, 1979). Most *schinzii* however winter in north-west Africa, further south than most *alpina*. The race *arctica* breeds in north-east Greenland and also winters in West Africa. Given the latitude of their breeding grounds it is not surprising that they are quite late migrants mainly passing through in May (Ferns, 1979) with many staging in north-east Iceland in late May (Hallgrimsson, 2010).

Meltofte (2004) estimated the breeding population of *arctica* to be just 7000-15000 pairs compared with 270,000 pairs of *schinzii* in Iceland alone (Thorup, 2005), so numbers of *arctica* passing through Britain can be expected to be relatively small.

Identification

Identifying Dunlin to race needs some care but it is most likely to be successful in spring when birds are in fresh breeding plumage. Even in spring the races vary to the extent that it is only possible to be reasonably confident about better marked examples showing the right combination of features and many

are best left unassigned. Returning birds in worn summer plumage are much more difficult. All races are variable and the sexes differ somewhat - males generally having shorter bills and greyer hindnecks than females. Again, individual variation means it would be unwise to sex all but the most obvious individuals in the field.

The features of the three regular British races are summarised in the table below, based mainly on Chandler (2009).

The race *alpina* is the largest, longest-billed of the three, with rich chestnut fringes above and a large black belly patch. It moults 4-6 weeks later than either *arctica* or *schinzii* attaining summer plumage from mid-April to late May (mid-March to late April in the other two races). Any *alpina* still present in May would be very fresh and bright.

The race *arctica* is the smallest and has the shortest bill, but there is almost complete overlap in bill length with *schinzii*. The upperparts of *arctica* tend to show narrower and less rufous fringes than either of the other two regular British races and often have a cold greyish appearance recalling some summer plumage Sanderling. Breast streaking is particularly fine in *arctica* so that the neck and head look whiter (often more buff tinged in *schinzii*, especially the cheeks). The black belly patch is small and often invaded by whitish fringes. Variation in *schinzii* means it can show some of these features but a bird that is small, greyish toned above with a short bill and a small belly patch plus fine breast streaking on a white background and whitish finely streaked cheeks should be *arctica*. Such birds often stand out in flocks of *alpina* and *schinzii* once you have got your eye in. First-summer birds that have not gained much breeding plumage are a possibly pitfall as they may show mainly grey upperparts with just a scatter of black-centred warm-fringed feathers that present an overall greyish appearance. They often have a mottled black belly too, but their lack of breeding plumage should be apparent if views are reasonable.

Race	Bill (mm)	Mantle/scapular fringes	Breast streaking	Belly patch
<i>arctica</i>	Short - 23 – 32	Narrow (black centres more extensive), grey and cinnamon or buffish	Fine, faint, white background	Small
<i>schinzii</i>	Short - 23 – 36.3	Broad, yellowish-red; narrow grey terminal fringes	Moderate to heavy, spotted near belly patch often with buff ground colour	Small
<i>alpina</i>	Long - 27.7 – 36.3	Rich chestnut; wide grey terminal fringes when fresh	Heavy; separated from belly patch by white band	Large

Careful scrutiny of spring flocks of Dunlin to gain familiarity with *alpina* and especially *schinzii* is key to locating the scarcer *arctica* in their midst. Photographing suspected *arctica* would be most useful in rendering the identification more solid.

Avon records

There were various pioneering studies of Dunlin migration in the late 1970s, a number of them looking at sites around the Severn Estuary prompted in part by the threat of a tidal barrage at the time. Ferns (1979) provides data from of some of these showing that *arctica* were passing through both the east and west coasts of Britain, including the Severn Estuary where a number were trapped at Collister Pill. The Collister Pill Dunlin were also seen to fly across to the Avon side of the Estuary, especially during canon netting operations (Dr. Peter Ferns pers comm.). Dr. Nigel Clarke (pers comm.) also worked on Dunlin on the Estuary from 1978 to 1981, describing Severn Beach as a key site at the time. Although the original data is not easily available Dr. Clarke trapped several thousand Dunlin on the Estuary including a (small) percentage of *arctica*. Thus it is clear that small numbers of *arctica* were occurring on the Avon coast amongst the spring Dunlin passage at this time, although specific records are lacking.

The next reference to *arctica* locally is in the 1997 edition of this Report: 'six in breeding plumage at CI-Y on June 1st were thought to belong to the race *arctica* – small size, short bills, slightly orangey-brown upperparts and small black belly patch not extending onto the lower breast.' The date is typical and the features consistent with *arctica*, although one could quibble about the colour of the upperparts, as described.

In 2004 this Report summarised the status of Dunlin in the area describing *arctica* as a rare spring passage migrant possibly overlooked, although it did not list any records for that year. Variations on this theme continued to the 2009 Report, although no more records have been published.

The following is a partial list of records from the past 20 years including 2011.

Arctica Dunlin records in Avon

Severn Beach (all JPM)

May 16th, 2008, one in a flock of 60;
May 20th, 2008, two in a flock of 140 (see photographs opposite page 137);
June 2nd, 2008, one in a flock of 23;
May 23rd, 2010, at least two in a flock of 66;
May 26th, 2010, four in a flock of 25;
May 15th, 2011, one in a flock of 22;
May 22nd, 2011, one in a flock of ten;

CI-Y (all HER)

June 3rd, 1993, five on their own;
June 1st, 1997, six as noted above;
June 1st, 2004, two in a flock of twelve;
June 2nd, 2011, at least one in a flock of 44;

CVL (RMA)

May 14th, 2011, one on the dam in a flock of 15, see photograph opposite page 137.

Discussion

Dunlin of the race *arctica* evidently occur regularly in small numbers in late spring in Avon, mainly on the Estuary, but they could occur anywhere with migrant Dunlin flocks. They represent a small minority of birds at this time but the records above must underestimate the real numbers passing through – others must have been overlooked as views of spring Dunlin flocks are not always ideal. In addition these records only include birds showing the full set of *arctica* features, less typical birds would have gone unrecorded. The race is rare in world terms and it is worth trying to better document their passage through the county by giving all spring Dunlin flocks close scrutiny whenever possible.

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Little Stoke Summer Migrant Records from 1931 to 1947 compared with dates derived from Local Sources

H Boyd and R L Bland

In *The Farmer and the Goose with the Golden Eyes* Martin Davis described the life and work of his father H H Davis who died in 1974. Howard Davis began regular Bird Notes in the Proceedings of the BNS in 1936, and wrote "*The Birds of the Bristol region*" in 1947, summarising all ornithological records for the region to that date. He was also notable for introducing Peter Scott to the site at Slimbridge which Peter subsequently developed into the Wildfowl Trust. His farm at Little Stoke is now a part of the suburb of Bradley Stoke.

In the book Martin Davis prints a record of summer migrant arrivals at Little Stoke kept by his father between 1931 and 1947. These dates can be compared with local dates for the same species recorded by the Somerset Ornithological Society, and in the Bristol Naturalists' Society Proceedings for the same years. These sources provide dates for 15 species over the 17 year period. The average arrival date for all species in all years is April 11th. The same species recorded at Little Stoke gave an overall average of April 20th. All species were between three days and a fortnight later on average, except for Wheatear which, oddly, was 19 days later. Martin Davis notes that his father's records were made in the course of his daily work about the farm without the use of binoculars. Many of the local dates were derived from Somerset records probably from the coast, so that the differences in timing are unsurprising.

The earliest Little Stoke average date for the 15 species is April 16th in 1944, the latest, April 23rd in 1941, and there is a rather modest correlation with April temperature. The local sources have the earliest as April 8th (in 1945) and the latest April 15th (in 1937), with a very similar correlation with April temperature.

An interesting comparison can also be made between the earliest arrival records for the Bristol region in the last seventeen years (1993-2009) and these earlier records. Of the 15 species, Turtle Dove is now only very occasionally recorded, and both Blackcap and Chiffchaff over-winter regularly, so that summer arrivals can no longer be recorded separately. The average for the twelve species still regularly seen was April 7th compared with the 12th for the same species in the 1930s. The difference of 5 days might be put down to climate change but for the fact that the average March/April maximum temperature in the 1930s was 11.85°C, and in the past seventeen years it was 11.81°C. The real cause of the difference is probably the fact that today there is a daily watch kept on the coast and at CVL, and first arrivals are less likely to be missed.

Examination of the individual species in arrival order

Wheatear The average arrival date from local sources was March 14th, although in 1932 one was seen on Feb. 13th. They did not arrive at Little Stoke until April 4th (earliest March 24th). In recent years the average has been March 9th and the earliest Feb. 28th. It is also clear today that the migration of this species takes place in a series of at least three waves, and lasts from early March to the end of May.

Chiffchaff Average arrival date March 16th, earliest March 7th, and at Little Stoke March 24th (earliest March 15th). Today a few birds are regularly recorded from the start of March, but large numbers are not usually recorded before mid March.

Willow Warbler Average arrival March 28th (earliest March 18th) and at Little Stoke April 8th (earliest March 26th). Today the average is March 23rd, earliest March 17th. It is also clear that there are waves of migrants moving through right through April.

Swallow Average March 29th, earliest March 21st. At Little Stoke the average was April 10th (earliest April 4th). Today the average is March 20th and the earliest March 13th, but the peak passage is often around April 20th, and strong passage is often recorded into early May.

Blackcap Average April 5th, earliest March 24th (which today would be regarded as an over-wintering bird) and at Little Stoke average April 18th, earliest April 2nd. Today birds are present from the beginning of April, and there are often several peaks during the month.

Cuckoo Average April 10th, earliest March 31st. At Little Stoke the average was April 22nd, the earliest April 14th. Today the average is April 12th, the earliest April 6th, but the population has fallen sharply since 1993.

Yellow Wagtail Average April 10th, earliest April 2nd. At Little Stoke average April 16th, earliest April 8th. Today it is much less common but the average arrival date is April 6th and the earliest is March 28th.

Redstart Average April 12th, earliest March 31st. At Little Stoke the average was April 17th, the earliest the 7th. Today it no longer breeds in the region but the average is April 4th and the earliest March 20th. Passage peak is usually mid April.

Tree Pipit Average April 13th, earliest April 5th. At Little Stoke average April 27th, earliest April 11th. Today it is much less common, and no longer breeds in the region. The recent average, however, is April 2nd, earliest March 26th. The Little Stoke birds were probably arriving to breed rather than being on passage.

Whitethroat Average April 15th, earliest April 7th. At Little Stoke the average was April 19th, earliest April 12th. In recent years the average has been April 11th, the earliest April 4th. The main passage however is during the last ten days of April.

Lesser Whitethroat Average April 20th, earliest April 3rd. At Little Stoke the average was April 25th, the earliest April 15th. In recent years the average has been April 19th, the earliest April 11th. It is not a species that is much recorded on passage on the coast, as the first arrivals are often birds singing in hedges to establish their territories. It is striking how little fluctuation there has been over time in recorded arrival dates.

Whinchat Average arrival April 23rd, earliest April 7th. At Little Stoke the average was April 27th, earliest April 15th. In recent years it was April 20th, earliest April 14th. The species used to breed in the region, but only in small numbers, and today passage is usually between April 20th and May 10th.

Swift Average arrival April 26th, earliest April 15th. At Little Stoke the average was May 3rd, earliest April 21st. In recent years the average is April 17th, earliest April 8th. However these dates are usually from CVL which was constructed after the war. Little Stoke dates are likely to have been breeding birds returning to their traditional nest sites.

Turtle Dove Average arrival April 30th, earliest April 23rd. At Little Stoke average was May 8th and earliest April 4th, an exceptional date. Between 1993 and 2002 there were regular reports with an average date of May 4th, but since then there have only been occasional sightings.

Spotted Flycatcher Average May 6th, earliest April 30th. At Little Stoke the average was May 11th, earliest May 1st. These sightings may well have been of birds taking up territory rather than on passage. In recent years the average has been May 2nd and the earliest April 21st. This species is also now much reduced in numbers.

Conclusion

There has been no significant change in arrival dates of summer migrants in the past 80 years. Differences between modern dates and those of the thirties are the result of changes in observation, and the differences between Little Stoke and the earliest local dates at the time probably relate to the differences between coastal and inland sites, and between birds arriving to breed, rather than those on passage. This is a distinction that is always difficult to draw. Passage for most species occurs over a long period of time, and often occurs in waves, perhaps controlled by weather conditions. The first arrival date is a largely arbitrary measure, affected by chance and observer related factors.

Avon Rookery Survey, 2010

R L Bland

A complete Avon area rookery survey was undertaken in 2010, as has been done every five years since 1975. ST69 was not included on this occasion. It should be noted that rookery counting is not an exact science. New rookeries are created and old ones abandoned every year, and ensuring that all new ones are discovered is not easy, although virtually every 2005 site was checked. All counts in every survey represent the minimum number. The overall results and comparisons with past surveys are shown in Tables 1 and 2. In the south edge of the region each ten-km square on the Mendip edge has been combined with the ten-km square immediately to the north because the habitat is similar and small areas exaggerate density values.

A total of 4914 nests was recorded at an average density of 3.8 nests per km² which represents a 34% fall in numbers since 2000, and a 15% fall since 2005. This is in line with the change in numbers recorded by BBS in the same period, and the total is very close to the count in the 1972/3 survey, when Rook numbers may have been at a twentieth century nadir. The cause of this decline is unclear, as winter temperatures were mild until 2008, but dry summers may have had a greater influence on juvenile survival, and the summers of 2002-2006 all had well below average rainfall, although the last three years have had wet summers. Rooks are quite long-lived and do not normally breed until their third year, so that the impact of weather on survival takes time to show.

The number of rookeries found was 240 of which 70 (29%) were new since 2005. The average nest count was 20 but the new rookeries had an average of 10.3, compared with an average of 24.6 in the ones that existed in 2005. 115 of the rookeries that existed in 2005 disappeared, and they had held 1422 nests, an average of 12.4. Five of the rookery

sites date back to 1933, six to 1945, and the average rookery age is 17.2 years. Chart 1 shows the number of rookeries originating in each five-year period since 1975.

As noted above the average density over the whole region was 3.8 nests per km² but the variation between the densest area, ST77 on the Cotswolds, with an average of 6.3, and the least, ST47 with 2.1, is considerable. Table 2 shows the variation in density by ten km square since 1972/3, and the percentage change that this represents. The table shows that there has been considerable density change over the past 27 years. Northern areas have declined, some southern areas increased, as have the urbanised ST57 and ST67. ST77 appears to have had a small change, but was almost certainly undercounted in the early years. However, it has lost over 800 nests since its peak in 1985, which accounts for over a quarter of the overall change recorded since then, and ST75 and ST76 have not always been well covered. The largest rookery is now that around the Clifton College sports fields in ST57 which had 117 nests in 2010. The large rookery nearby in Ashton Court, that held 130 nests in 2000, has now vanished. Why such changes occur remains mysterious, although woodland clearance work in Ashton Court may have driven the Rooks to find an alternative site. Rooks are very dependent upon earthworm density to feed their young, and differing land use will affect this.

I am very grateful to the efforts of the following observers upon whom the whole burden lay. ST35, 36 Trevor Riddle; ST 45, 55 Nigel Milborne; ST 46 Stuart Young; ST56 Richard Mielcarek; ST58 Brian Lancaster; ST65, 75 Martin Hunt; ST66 Paul Farmer; ST67 Geoff Suter; ST68 Dave Stoddard; ST 76 David Turner; ST77 Charles Stapleton; ST78 David Trump.

Square	1972/3	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	Area
35/36	510	590	478	430	449	545	606	392	254	98
45/46	370	394	516	646	610	599	797	685	642	123
47	25	62	51	49	42	75	63	145	150	70
55/56	398	927	811	900	983	1130	945	778	600	134
57	100	181	199	233	200	225	299	267	222	100
58/59	467	369	386	534	545	649	689	324	287	64
65	280	66	364	289	186	238	315	257	206	57
66	342	338	680	621	438	527	586	524	452	100
67	113	344	306	238	75	175	419	366	270	100
68	721	659	595	597	478	307	322	373	487	100
75/76	550	778	1020	954	776	681	783	683	459	136
77	610	759	1170	1497	1236	1214	941	566	627	100
78/88	650	852	818	843	728	591	640	407	258	113
Total	5136	6319	7394	7831	6746	6956	7405	5767	4914	1295

Table1 Total nests counted by 10km squares

Density	1972/3	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	% change 1972-2010
35/36	5.2	6.0	4.9	4.4	4.6	5.6	6.2	4.0	2.6	-50
45/46	3.0	3.2	4.2	5.3	5.0	4.9	6.5	5.6	5.2	74
47	0.4	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.6	1.1	0.9	2.1	2.1	500
55/56	3.0	6.9	6.1	6.7	7.3	8.4	7.1	5.8	4.5	51
57	1.0	1.8	2.0	2.3	2.0	2.3	3.0	2.7	2.2	122
58/59	7.3	5.8	6.0	8.3	8.5	10.1	10.8	5.1	4.5	-39
65	4.9	1.2	6.4	5.1	3.3	4.2	5.5	4.5	3.6	-26
66	3.4	3.4	6.8	6.2	4.4	5.3	5.9	5.2	4.5	32
67	1.1	3.4	3.1	2.4	0.8	1.8	4.2	3.7	2.7	139
68	7.2	6.6	6.0	6.0	4.8	3.1	3.2	3.7	4.9	-32
75/76	4.0	5.7	7.5	7.0	5.7	5.0	5.8	5.0	3.4	-17
77	6.1	7.6	11.7	15.0	12.4	12.1	9.4	5.7	6.3	3
78/88	5.8	7.5	7.2	7.5	6.4	5.2	5.7	3.6	2.3	-60
Total	4.0	4.9	5.7	6.0	5.2	5.4	5.7	4.5	3.8	-4
% change		23	17	6	-14	3	6	-22	-15	

Table 2 - density in nests/km²

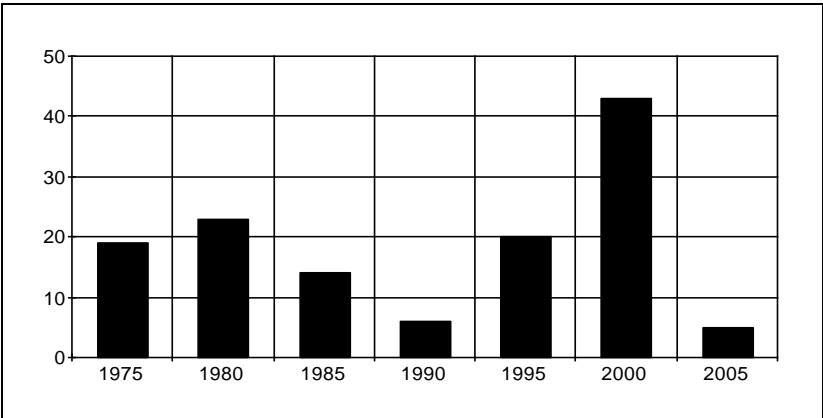


Chart 1 Total number of the 2010 rookeries originating in each quinquennium.

Impact of the Coldest December since 1916 on Birds using Gardens

R L Bland

December 2010 had a mean maximum average temperature of 3.4°C which was the coldest December since 1916 (2.0°C). In the nineteenth century there were colder Decembers in 1870, 1874, 1878, and the coldest of all in 1890 at 0.7°C. There have been colder winter months, in 1895, 1917, 1929, 1940, 1947 and 1963, but these were all in January or February when days are longer. The coincidence of the shortest days of the year and frozen ground and lakes must have posed unusual survival problems for many species. It will not be clear until the results of BBS and other surveys in 2011 are known just how much damage was done to the common bird populations, but the results from the local Winter Garden Survey (WGS), which has run since 1975, give a good impression of the immediate impact.

The Weather

Frosts began on Nov. 24th, lakes began to freeze over, and snow fell on 27th. It had almost cleared by Dec. 6th, when a further heavier snowfall occurred, and snow then lay until 10th. Most nights were frosty and on 17th further snow fell, and remained until 28th. The coldest day was 20th, with a maximum of **minus 3°C**. Bristol docks and both CVL and BL were almost completely iced over. The last time that significant snow fell before Christmas was in 1952. The first week of January was cold, but frost free, the second had an average maximum temperature of 9.9°C, and from 18th to the end of the month there were nine frost nights, an average maximum of 4.9°C, and a maximum of 1°C on 28th and 29th.

Garden Survey Results

In the average winter numbers recorded by the WGS build to a peak in the first week of January, although there are winters when there is a second peak if a cold snap occurs in February. This winter very sharp peak counts came in Week 51, beginning on Dec. 17th, which was also the coldest week of the winter, and the fourth coldest winter week since 1980. The average number of birds recorded per garden was 21% greater than the average (since 1999) for that week. One significant reason for a peak in late December/early January is that this is the period with the shortest days, and an index combining day length and temperature shows a very clear correlation with total numbers. Table 1 overleaf compares the normal total bird numbers per week for the period from the third week of November to the end of January (Week 47 to Week 4 in the following year) over the period from 1999 to 2010 compared with those for the same seven week period in 2010/11, and also shows the average weekly maximum temperatures over the same ranges. It demonstrates the degree to which the exceptional cold in December led to sharp increases in total numbers, and that there was a linear

correlation between the difference in temperature and the difference in average numbers per garden.

However, not all species showed an increase. Blue Tit, Great Tit, Coal Tit, Carrion Crow, Magpie, Wood Pigeon and Collared Dove showed no change over the cold period. The pattern of Blackcap and Chaffinch arrival and numbers was similar to that for the previous winter. Wren, Dunnock and Robin numbers were lower overall than in the previous winter, but there was no change in numbers recorded over the course of the winter. Greenfinch numbers were 48% below those of the previous winter, and declined steadily from December onwards. Their population has been damaged by a parasitic disease.

The most striking response to the cold was the appearance of Brambling from Week 51, beginning on Dec. 17th. They are exceptional garden visitors this far west. Their numbers stayed high to the end of January, and then slowly declined. The thrushes all showed a marked response to the cold. Blackbird numbers increased by 70% during December, and peaked in the cold snap at the end of January. Song Thrush numbers tripled in the first fortnight of December.

They then, unusually, remained in gardens to the end of January. Redwing numbers peaked at a level seven times the winter average for the last two weeks of December, and numbers were 45% higher than in the previous winter. They almost vanished from gardens from the end of January. Fieldfare also showed an abrupt sevenfold increase which came in the last week of December and the first week of January. It is probable that most of the local Avon area population of Redwing and Fieldfare came into urban areas, and managed to survive here.

Green Woodpeckers appeared in a number of gardens in December, and Long-tailed Tits were present in the largest numbers ever, peaking at the end of January at a level two-thirds higher than the winter average. Over the past few years they have begun to use fat balls and peanuts. Jay numbers peaked in the week beginning Nov. 27th, when the snow first fell, and stayed high for the next month. Goldfinch also peaked with the first snow, and then again from Dec. 19th. House Sparrow peaked in the week beginning Dec. 10th and declined steadily thereafter, implying some population loss. Starling numbers showed a 77% increase on the previous winter. They peaked at double the winter average in Week 49, beginning Dec. 3rd and again in Week 4 of Jan. 22nd coinciding with the coldest week in January.

All in all these changes demonstrate the importance of urban gardens for bird survival in cold spells.

Week number		47	48	49	50	51	52	1	2	3	4
Bird Total	2010/11	39	47	45	43	55	51	45	40	42	46
	Av. 1999/2010	40	42	42	44	45	45	46	46	44	44
	Difference	-1.2	5.0	3.5	-1.6	9.4	6.9	-1.3	-6.2	-1.8	1.9
Av. Temp °C	2010/11	6.9	1.3	2.4	6.1	-0.1	5.4	6.1	9.9	7.9	5.1
	Av. 1999/2010	10.0	10.1	9.3	7.5	6.7	7.1	6.7	7.4	8.7	7.5
	Difference	-3.2	-8.8	-6.8	-1.4	-6.9	-1.7	-0.5	2.5	-0.9	-2.4

Table 1 The difference between the average total number of birds per garden in Weeks 47 in 2010 to Week 4 in 2011 compared with the differences in temperature over the same period

BTO Avon Atlas, 2007-11

R L Bland

As soon as the BTO announced its plans for the New Atlas we decided to do a total tetrad survey of the region in both winter and summer. We did a tetrad survey during the Winter Atlas, 1981-84, and a local breeding season atlas during the Breeding Atlas 1988-91. However, the fieldwork adopted for the New Atlas was different from the previous two. The present atlas is based on two two-hour surveys in winter and the same in the breeding season. The last Breeding Atlas was based on two one-hour breeding season surveys, and our Winter Tetrad Atlas was based on asking observers to create a species list for each tetrad that they were responsible for during the three winters of the survey.

Furthermore the present Atlas has had the benefit of hundreds of additional roving records, many of them coming from bird-track observers. The BTO databases from the BBS, and from nest record cards, ringers records and WeBS have also been included in the totals. This has provided a far more accurate distribution picture than previously. Added to this the two-hour tetrad surveys counted all birds seen and heard which has given excellent figures for the density of common species. These densities, calculated as a rate per hour, have been compared with those obtained from the BBS surveys in the region since 1994, and for most species there is close agreement.

The overall results are that 495 observers have submitted well over 120,000 records. Every tetrad has been surveyed in both seasons. In the winter 376,600 birds were counted with an average of 35.7 species a tetrad. In the summer 204,300 were counted with an average of 36.2 species per tetrad. However, in addition to this almost every tetrad has

had additional roving records which have ensured that the distribution of the more elusive species, such as Sparrowhawk and Treecreeper, is properly recorded. These have added to the winter figures that now stand at 42.7 species a tetrad and in the summer 45.0. These figures can be compared with the Breeding Atlas results which showed an average of 29 species per tetrad.

The survey also requested breeding evidence for all species in each ten km square, and so far we have recorded 94 non-breeding species, 104 species have been proved to breed, a further ten that probably breed, and four that possibly breed.

The survey has recorded huge changes in a number of species, although, because of the data from BBS, there are few surprises. Collating records over four seasons makes some species appear more widespread than they really are. For resident species combining winter and summer distribution also suggests the real limits of distribution. Mute Swans, for instance, have been recorded in 144 tetrads, compared with 56 in 1992. Canada Geese, found in just 8 tetrads in 1992 were recorded in 95 in the breeding season this time. Buzzards were recorded in virtually every tetrad in the region. Ravens were not recorded in the last breeding atlas, and this time were present in 182 tetrads in the breeding season. Obviously Little Egret and Cetti's Warbler were also new species. There were also losses. Cuckoo recorded a 92% fall, Lapwing, Tree Sparrow, and Spotted Flycatcher fell by over 80%, Marsh Tit by 74%.

Once the survey ends in July 2012 the full results will be published, together with the basic data from the previous tetrad atlases.

The Breeding Birds of the Avon Region, 2010

J. Tully and R.L. Bland

Introduction

This Avon Region Report includes data from the four local authority areas, Bath & North East Somerset [BA], Bristol [BR], North Somerset [NS] and South Gloucestershire [SG], as well as a section of Somerset [SO] which is north of the OS line ST50 and east of the line ST80. This latter area is about 350 sq km. The Report has only been possible due to the skill and dedication of many members of the British Trust for Ornithology, Bristol Ornithological Club and the Bristol Naturalists' Society.

Method

The method used is that of the British Trust for Ornithology's Breeding Bird Survey (BBS). The surveyors are birdwatchers who are able to recognise all of the species by sight and song. They walk two kms within a square kilometre, early in the morning when activity is at its greatest and record all birds seen or heard. Two recording visits are made, one between April 1st and May 15th and a second at least four weeks later and before the end of June. The survey method does not count shy, nocturnal or rare species that are known to nest or possibly nest within the Avon region.

Results

In 2010 the 125 surveyors spent over 530 hours counting 66,977 birds of 106 species to establish the numbers and distribution of breeding species of the Avon Region. They visited 194 square kilometres that is 11.5% of the total area. The distribution of the coverage was 37 sq km in BA, 42 in BR, 48 in NS,

46 in SG and 21 in SO. No new species were added to the Avon BBS list this year.

Table 1 below summarises the counts and percentage distribution of each species. The method of this survey does not accurately count the number of pairs breeding. However, if they are in the area in reasonable numbers during the spring then they are likely to breed. This method avoids the need to cause disturbance by inspecting the nests. It contains three types of birds – definite breeders with no mark in the table, possible breeders marked with an asterisk * and non-breeders marked with two asterisks **. Barnacle Goose, Ringed Plover, Barn Owl, Long-eared Owl, Nightjar, Yellow Wagtail, Dipper and Black Redstart need to be added as definite breeders. Possible nesters not recorded in the survey were Water Rail and Nightingale.

The total of 98 breeding species and six possibles is a measure of the biodiversity of breeding bird species in the Avon region during 2010.

Historic data 1994-2010

The historic BBS data for Avon continues to grow with 916,809 birds counted in over 6500 hours in the field by a collective team of about 210 birdwatchers. A total of 142 species have been recorded in the counts, excluding those of a suspected or certain domestic origin. We should be counting our MILLIONTH bird in the 2012 breeding season!

A large amount of data is available to anyone carrying out local or regional studies and we welcome requests for information.

Species	Count	Dist. %	Species	Count	Dist. %
Mute Swan	212	14	Tree Pipit	11	1
Greylag Goose**	1	1	Meadow Pipit	54	5
Canada Goose	123	10	Rock Pipit	8	1
Shelduck	155	7	Grey Wagtail	15	5
Mandarin Duck	2	1	Pied Wagtail	140	30
Gadwall	4	2	Wren	3189	97
Teal**	6	1	Dunnock	1162	90
Mallard	1007	50	Robin	2487	99
Pochard	6	1	Redstart	2	1
Tufted Duck	54	3	Whinchat**	4	1
Ruddy Duck*	1	1	Stonechat	14	3
Red-legged Partridge	92	10	Wheatear**	19	6
Grey Partridge	3	1	Blackbird	5025	100
Quail*	2	1	Song Thrush	964	89
Pheasant	681	58	Mistle Thrush	91	26
Little Grebe	2	1	Cetti's Warbler	15	3
Great Crested Grebe	53	3	Grasshopper Warbler*	3	1
Cormorant	74	17	Sedge Warbler	125	11
Little Egret**	6	3	Reed Warbler	151	10
Grey Heron	112	29	Blackcap	1068	82
Red Kite**	1	1	Garden Warbler	28	10

Sparrowhawk	23	11	Lesser Whitethroat	87	19
Buzzard	222	51	Whitethroat	490	55
Kestrel	61	21	Chiffchaff	1237	87
Hobby	2	1	Willow Warbler	150	31
Peregrine	6	3	Goldcrest	106	28
Moorhen	150	23	Spotted Flycatcher	1	1
Coot	130	10	Long-tailed Tit	466	54
Oystercatcher	14	3	Blue Tit	2590	98
Lapwing	15	4	Great Tit	1939	97
Whimbrel**	8	2	Coal Tit	161	32
Curlew**	24	3	Marsh Tit	12	5
Common Sandpiper**	5	1	Nuthatch	115	18
Redshank*	15	1	Treecreeper	38	9
Black-headed Gull**	10	3	Jay	184	42
Common Gull**	2	1	Magpie	1636	93
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1746	64	Jackdaw	4038	85
Herring Gull	2099	63	Rook	1922	43
Great Black-backed Gull	13	1	Carrion Crow	4490	99
Feral Pigeon	1458	37	Raven	66	18
Stock Dove	196	26	Starling	2772	62
Woodpigeon	6766	99	House Sparrow	3653	68
Collared Dove	923	69	Chaffinch	2166	97
Turtle Dove**	1	1	Greenfinch	1001	84
Cuckoo	9	3	Goldfinch	1267	76
Little Owl	5	3	Siskin*	1	1
Tawny Owl	6	3	Linnet	479	31
Swift	826	52	Bullfinch	161	34
Kingfisher	8	4	Yellowhammer	321	28
Green Woodpecker	210	46	Reed Bunting	55	7
Great Spotted Woodpecker	215	47	Corn Bunting	29	3
Skylark	721	42			
Sand Martin	9	1	TOTAL	66977	
Swallow	1762	73	Time [mins]	32166	
House Martin	512	38	Birds per hour	125	

Table 1

Highest counts		Count	BA	BR	NS	SG
1	Woodpigeon [1]	6766	1	1	2	1
2	Blackbird [2]	5025	2	2	3	4
3	Carrion Crow [3]	4490	4	5	5	2
4	Jackdaw [4]	4038	3	9	10	3
5	House Sparrow [5]	3653	9	4	1	13
6	Wren [6]	3189	5	6	6	7
7	Starling [7]	2772	11	7	4	11
8	Blue Tit [10]	2590	8	11	8	5
9	Robin [8]	2487	6	12	7	9
10	Chaffinch [11]	2166	7	20	12	8
11	Herring Gull [12]	2099	-	13	-	-
12	Great Tit [15]	1939	10	14	11	12
13	Rook [9]	1922	14	-	13	6
14	Swallow [14]	1762	18	-	9	10
15	Lesser Black-backed Gull [13]	1746	-	8	15	20=
16	Magpie [16]	1636	19	10	16	15
17	Feral Pigeon [17]	1458	-	3	-	-
18	Goldfinch [19]	1267	16	-	14	20=
19	Chiffchaff [-]	1237	13	-	17	14
20	Dunnock [20]	1162	12	18	20=	18

Table 2a

Table 2a above lists the 20 commonest species in the Avon region with their relative positions in the four administrative districts. Table 2b overleaf uses the same data but presents it in percentage terms. The figures in brackets give the positions in 2009.

Percentage distribution	Avon	BA	BR	NS	SG
1= Blackbird [100%]	100%	100	100	100	100
1= Woodpigeon [100%]	100%	100	100	100	98
3= Carrion Crow [100%]	99%	100	98	100	98
3= Robin [99%]	99%	100	98	98	100
5= Blue Tit [98%]	98%	100	98	98	100
5= Great Tit [95%]	98%	100	98	96	96
5= Wren [97%]	98%	100	95	96	98
8 Chaffinch [93%]	97%	100	88	98	100
9 Magpie [92%]	94%	95	100	96	89
10 Dunnock [92%]	93%	97	90	88	85
11 Song Thrush [84%]	90%	97	74	92	87
12 Chiffchaff [88%]	88%	95	74	85	93
13= Greenfinch [87%]	87%	89	90	81	80
13= Jackdaw [86%]	87%	86	79	83	89
15 Blackcap [79%]	85%	89	76	88	78
16 Goldfinch [77%]	80%	84	71	79	67
17 Swallow [73%]	73%	86	24	73	96
18 Collared Dove [68%]	72%	59	83	65	70
19 House Sparrow [68%]	71%	65	86	65	65
20 Lesser Black-backed Gull [63%]	68%	54	86	56	57

Table 2b

Table 3 below gives the percentage changes between 2009 and 2010, and between 2000 and 2010, for the commonest species

These changes are based on 171 squares that were covered in 2009 and 2010 by the same observer. In the last year, 16 of the 25 species below increased, seven decreased and two remained unchanged. Over the medium term (ten years), ten species have increased and 15 decreased. The most notable medium term increases are Herring Gull at 138%

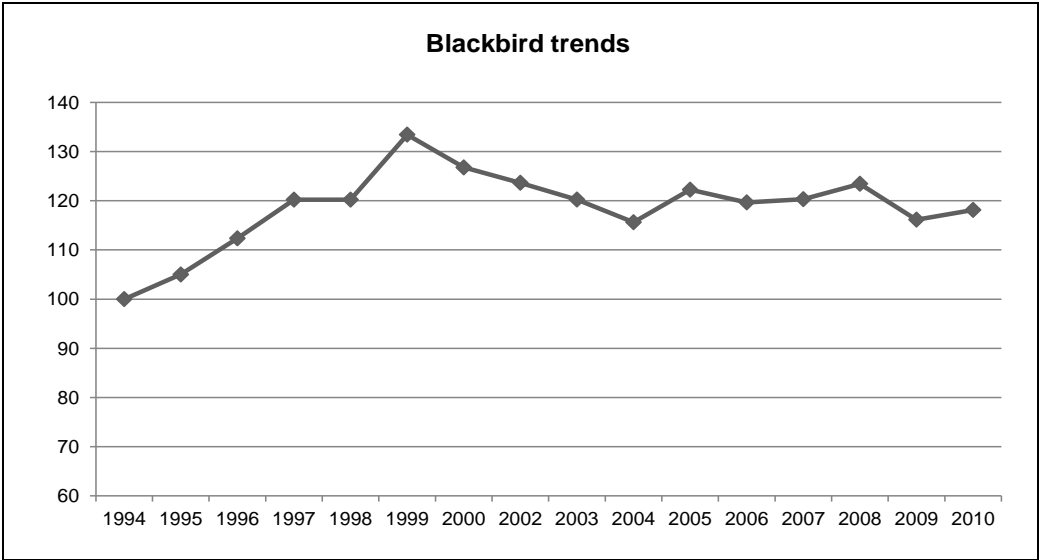
and Goldfinch at 36% offset by Starling decreasing 60% and Greenfinch by 44%.

The relative cold winter seems to have had no effect on some of the smaller birds like Wren and the good 2009 breeding season may have also contributed to the increases of Blue and Great Tit. Migrants such as Swift, Blackcap and Chiffchaff may also have benefited for the same reason.

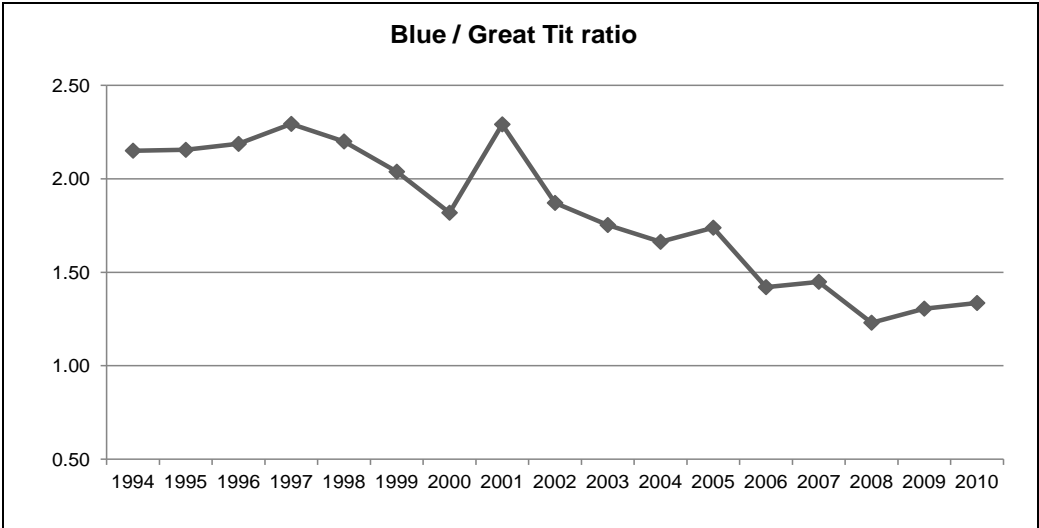
Species	2009/10	2000/10		2009/10	2000/10
Mallard	-6	-18	Blackcap	12	23
Lesser Black-backed Gull	-1	2	Chiffchaff	8	15
Herring Gull	24	138	Blue Tit	18	-2
Feral Pigeon	10	-28	Great Tit	12	10
Woodpigeon	6	26	Magpie	11	-15
Collared Dove	0	-13	Jackdaw	8	8
Swift	8	-38	Carrion Crow	-5	-6
Skylark	-4	-11	Starling	-4	-60
Wren	0	-18	House Sparrow	8	18
Dunnock	8	-3	Chaffinch	8	-24
Robin	-4	10	Greenfinch	-6	-44
Blackbird	2	-5	Goldfinch	1	36
Song Thrush	7	-4			

Table 3

Comments on recent trends for selected species



After an initial increase in the period 1994-1999, the Blackbird has been remarkably stable over the 10 years 2000 to 2010. It is quite reassuring that as a medium sized common bird that covers so many habitats it is able to maintain constant numbers.



There has been a steady decline in the ratio of Blue and Great Tits counted on our surveys. Note that the 2001 ratio is out of line, as it was the year of Foot and Mouth disease and the only counts were made in the urban and suburban habitats of Bristol. Is there going to be a future year when the Great Tit out numbers the Blue Tit and the ratio is less than one?

Avon's breeding populations – 2010

We have estimated the breeding populations of the common species within the four local authority districts. The figures are contained in the table below. Together with all the other breeding species, we estimate a total of 395,000 breeding pairs in the Avon area.

Breeding pairs in Avon	BA	BR	NS	SG	Total
Wren	13000	8400	11000	14000	46400
Blue Tit	9000	6300	11000	16000	42300
Blackbird	10000	5600	10000	11800	37400
House Sparrow	7000	9000	13000	7500	36500
Robin	10000	5700	9500	10000	35200
Great Tit	7000	5500	10000	11000	33500
Dunnoek	6000	2500	4500	6400	19400
Woodpigeon	5300	3000	3700	6700	18700
Chaffinch	3800	1000	3100	4000	11900
Blackcap	2300	1400	2700	4000	10400
Chiffchaff	2700	800	2200	3600	9300
Swallow	1600	-	4000	3600	9200
Carrion Crow	2000	1200	1700	4000	8900
Jackdaw	2800	1100	1500	3400	8800
Starling	1400	1600	2900	2600	8500
Goldfinch	2300	600	2700	2500	8100
Greenfinch	1800	1200	2000	2300	7300
Song Thrush	1800	600	1750	2100	6250
Rook	1000	-	1400	3000	5400
Skylark	1300	-	750	2400	4450
Magpie	700	900	900	1000	3500
House Martin	1100	80	1200	1000	3380
Linnet	1200	-	800	1300	3300
Whitethroat	800	-	900	1500	3200
Collared Dove	450	600	800	900	2750
Swift	900	200	400	500	2000
Yellowhammer	800	-	-	1000	1800
Total for the Avon Region					387830

Avon Ringing Report, 2010

M. Bailey and E. Drewitt.

The year 2010 was a remarkable one for bird ringing across the UK with over one million birds ringed in total, a record for one calendar year! A total of 6798 birds were ringed in the Avon region, close to the four year average of 6672. As in previous years, the types of birds caught only reflect a certain proportion of the population as a whole in the region. This is not only due to the difficulty and/or interest in catching representative samples of the larger common birds; corvids, ducks and pigeons, but also because over half of the birds (56%) were caught at CVL. Thus the top twenty list given in Table 1, with Reed Warblers again holding the number one spot, is highly influenced by the birds caught within the nature reserve at Chew. On the other hand the increase in the numbers of many of our summer migrants is thought to be a genuine indication of adult survival during the winter of 2009/10 followed by a reasonably productive breeding season. Greenfinch

numbers continued to decrease due to the highly contagious protozoan *Trichomonas* infection. Peregrines had a good breeding season and broods ringed contained mainly four chicks and in the case of the Avon Gorge pair, five! Young Ravens hatched in the Avon Gorge nest were ringed for the very first time. Kestrels chicks were also ringed on Bleadon Levels. Also young Ringed Plovers were additionally colour ringed at Avonmouth to help monitor their movements around the Estuary post-fledging.

Of the 651 recoveries of ringed birds reported to the BTO for the Avon area, 572 (88%) were from Pete Rock's ringing study of urban gulls. A few examples of longevity and life histories with multiple sightings of 'his boys' are given in Table 2. Ringed rarities included Wryneck and Yellow-browed Warbler while a Yellow Wagtail was a welcome highlight at CVL.

Species Totals

Table 1 below shows the top 20 species ringed in the Avon area in 2010 (2009 positions shown in brackets), and the percentage change in the ringing total between 2009 and 2010. *Note that some year-to-year changes were definitely affected by ringing effort, weather conditions and catching opportunities.*

Pos.	Species	2010	%	Pos.	Species	2010	%
1(1)	Reed Warbler	1179	+9	11(9)	Goldfinch	160	-29
2(2)	Blue Tit	790	-2	12(16)	Lesser B-b Gull	144	+62
3(3)	Great Tit	556	-22	13(19)	Blackbird	140	+82
4(5)	Blackcap	507	+19	14(13)	Long-tailed Tit	126	-14
5(4)	Chiffchaff	457	+5	15(12)	Robin	123	-16
6(8)	Swallow	383	+58	16(23)	Bullfinch	116	+100
7(7)	Sedge Warbler	296	+17	17(14)	Wren	108	-2
8(20)	Sand Martin	258	+239	18(18)	Reed Bunting	104	+21
9(6)	Greenfinch	203	-32	19(17)	Willow Warbler	99	+15
10(10)	Chaffinch	175	-4	20(11)	Canada Goose	94	-42

Notable Recoveries received from the BTO since the publication of the 2009 Report

The records listed below in Table 2 are of interest for their distance travelled and longevity. The local recapture of birds at the same site or between ringers within Avon have been omitted.

Conventions:

Age: P = pullus (nestling), 1y = juvenile / first year, Ad = adult. U = Age unknown, M = Male, F = Female, Recovery Codes: +F = shot or killed, R = controlled (caught and released), VV = ring number read in field, X = found dead or dying.

Ring No.	Age/sex Code	Date ringed Date rec'd	Place ringed Place recovered	Distance (Km)	Duration Years
Mute Swan					
Z21130	1y	12-10-2007	Abbey Wood MOD, Harry Stoke		
	R	04-07-2010	Winterbourne	5	2.8
Z60287	Ad F	23-09-2001	Barrow Gurney Reservoir		
	X	06-04-2010	M5, Clevedon. (Long dead)	12	?

Canada Goose

5254363	Ad	24-06-2008	Chew Valley Lake		
	+F	15-01-2010	Exminster, Devon	93	1.6
5259116	Ad	29-06-2010	Chew Valley Lake		
	X	26-01-2010	Blagdon.	53	0.5
5251847	Ad	27-06-2006	Chew Valley Lake		
	+F	11-05-2010	Poltimore, Devon	86	3.9
5243731	Ad	30-06-2009	Chew Valley Lake		
	X	09-09-2010	Shobrooke, Crediton, Devon	92	1.2
5243713	Ad	30-06-2009	Chew Valley Lake		
	+F	20-09-2010	Clifton, Bristol	15	1.2
5243579	Ad	28-06-2005	Chew Valley Lake		
	+F	09-10-2010	Hardway, Bruton	28	5.3
5254368	Ad	24-06-2008	Chew Valley Lake		
	R	21-12-2010	Cosmeston lake, Penarth, Wales	41	2.5

Mallard

GC62814	1y F	22-09-2008	Slimbridge, Gloucestershire		
	+F	04-11-2010	Hill Farm, near Clutton	46	2.1
GR04543	1y F	01-01-2010	Slimbridge, Gloucestershire		
	+F	10-10-2010	Wickwar	17	0.7

Cormorant

5248282	P	27-06-2009	Puffin Island, Anglesey		
	VV	03-05-2010	Chew Valley Lake	243	0.9

Sparrowhawk

DK54368	2y M	16-08-2009	Cam Valley, Cameley		
	X	21-03-2010	Clutton, Bath	3	0.6

Buzzard

GF68351	Ad	13-05-2000	Blagdon		
	X	13-03-2010	Charterhouse, Mendip Hills	3	9.8

Kestrel

EX37225	P	11-06-2010	Wyndhurst Farm, Lower Langford		
	X	03-09-2010	Bristol Airport (Hit by plane)	8	0.3
EX37226	P	11-06-2010	Wyndhurst Farm, Lower Langford		
	X	12-08-2010	Green Ore, Mendip	16	0.2
EX37229	Ad F	16-06-2010	Upton Cheyney		
	X	01-12-2010	Burley Gate, Hereford & Worcester	79	0.5

Kittiwake

ET74297	P	13-07-1999	Gugh Island, Scilly Isles		
	X	25-08-2010	Weston-Super-Mare	287	11.1

Black headed Gull

EW55247	P	24-06-2009	Farmoor Reservoir, Oxfordshire		
	VV	05-06-2010	Chew Valley Lake	100	0.9

Lesser Black-backed Gull

The following were among the oldest recovered in Avon.

GF17234	P	23-06-1993	Bristol		
	VV	29-10-1993	Figueira da Foz, Portugal	1346	0.4
	VV	17-08-1994	Matozinhos, near Porto, Portugal	1233	1.2
	Then seen in nearly all winters at Matozinhos, near Porto, Portugal				
	VV	21-09-2010	Matozinhos, near Porto, Portugal	1233	17.1
GF17407	P	02-07-1993	Bristol		
	VV	23-10-2003	Portimao, (Algarve) Portugal	1659	10.3
	Then 4 more winter sightings at Portimao, (Algarve) Portugal				
	VV	23-10-2010	Portimao, (Algarve) Portugal	1659	17.3

GH67436	P	29-06-1991	Bristol		
	VV	26-10-1994	Figueira da Foz, Portugal	1346	3.3
	VV	27-09-2004	Caparica, near Lisbon, Portugal	1517	13.3
	VV	03-11-2006	Figueira da Foz, Portugal	1346	15.4
	VV	30-10-2010	Malaga, Spain	1644	19.3
GH67491	P	29-06-1991	Bristol		
	VV	13-07-1995	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos	49	4.1
	R	07-02-2009	Wingmore Farm, Stoke Orchard, Glos	64	17.7
	VV	04-12-2010	Malaga: Spain	1646	19.5

The following birds moved the greatest distance within Britain & Ireland (more than 100km):

FR59921	Ad	20-02-2010	Pitsea Landfill Site, Essex		
	VV	24-11-2010	Shortwood Landfill Site, Avon	205	0.8
GC13254	P	29-06-2006	Bath:		
	VV	25-08-2009	Silverdale, Staffordshire	182	3.1
	VV	21-10-2010	Carsington Reservoir, Derbyshire	192	4.3
GC13354	P	21-06-2007	Bristol		
	VV	04-01-2010	Seaforth, Merseyside	226	2.6
GC48120	P	15-07-2008	Bristol		
	VV	17-08-2009	Costa da Caparica, Portugal	1516	1.1
	VV	11-06-2010	Minsmere, Suffolk	302	1.9
GR19019	P	06-07-2010	Bath		
	VV	27-11-2010	Rainham Tip, Greater London	177	0.4

The following birds were found abroad and reported in 2010

GC13411	P	06-07-2007	Bath		
	VV	26-10-2007	Costa da Caparica, Portugal	1515	0.3
	VV	04-12-2009	Quarteira, (Algarve) Portugal	1655	2.4
	VV	07-04-2010	Chouet Landfill, Guernsey, C.I.	210	2.7
GC48395	P	23-06-2010	Bath:		
	VV	16-08-2010	Chouet Landfill, Guernsey, C.I.	210	0.1
GC48398	P	23-06-2010	Bath		
	VV	28-08-2010	off Carino, (At Sea) Bay of Biscay	940	0.2
GF85481	P	24-06-1999	Bristol		
	VV	26-01-2000	Casas Del Castanar, Spain	1288	0.6
	VV	25-05-2000	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos	47	0.9
	VV	22-08-2003	Calne Sand Pits, Wiltshire	42	4.2
	VV	05-11-2006	Colmenar Viejo, Madrid, Spain	1204	7.4
	VV	01-11-2007	Colmenar Viejo, Madrid, Spain	1204	8.4
	VV	25-01-2009	Colmenar Viejo, Madrid, Spain	1204	9.6
	VV	05-03-2009	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, (Glos.	48	9.8
	VV	13-08-2009	Ardley Quarry, Oxfordshire	109	10.2
	VV	15-11-2009	Colmenar Viejo, Madrid, Spain	1204	10.4
	VV	04-03-2010	Chouet Landfill, Guernsey, C.I.	217	10.7
	VV	19-04-2010	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	10.9
	VV	31-10-2010	Colmenar Viejo, Madrid, Spain	1204	11.3
GN31756	P	06-07-2001	Bath		
	VV	13-10-2002	Vila Nove de Gaia, Portugal	1235	1.2
	VV	19-03-2003	Moliets, Landes, France	840	1.7
	VV	17-09-2010	Rocquaine Bay, Guernsey, C.I.	218	9.1
GN49048	P	02-07-2002	Bristol		
	VV	16-01-2010	Bocabarranco, Telde, Canary Islands	2815	7.5
GN49229	P	28-06-2003	Bristol		
	VV	18-11-2004	Nazare, (Estremadura) Portugal	1409	1.3
	VV	04-03-2010	Chouet Landfill, Guernsey, C.I.	217	6.7
	VV	07-05-2010	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted:(Glos.)	48	6.9
GN75405	P	25-06-2005	Bristol		
	VV	01-09-2005	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	0.2
	VV	19-10-2010	Vazon Bay, Guernsey, C.I.	221	5.3

Herring Gull

The following birds were among the oldest reported in 2010:

GF85071	P	04-07-1997	Bristol: 51°27'N 2°35'W (Avon)		
	VV	30-01-1998	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	0.5
	VV	03-12-2003	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	6.4
	VV	05-04-2005	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	7.8
	VV	13-12-2007	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	10.4
	VV	21-02-2010	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	12.6
GF85299	P	30-06-1998	Bristol: 51°27'N 2°35'W (Avon)		
	VV	01-08-2001	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	3.1
	VV	05-11-2007	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	9.4
	VV	13-09-2010	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	12.1
GN21025	U	30-06-1999	Bristol: 51°27'N 2°35'W (Avon)		
	VV	03-12-2001	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	2.4
	VV	08-11-2004	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	5.4
	VV	06-11-2007	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	8.4
	VV	09-10-2008	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	9.3
	VV	10-10-2009	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	10.3
	VV	02-12-2010	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	11.5
GN31587	U	21-06-2001	Bristol: 51°27'N 2°35'W (Avon)		
	VV	02-01-2002	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	0.5
	VV	02-12-2010	Gloucester Tip, Hempsted, Glos.	48	9.5

The following bird was found abroad and reported in 2010

GC48145	P	23-06-2009	Bristol		
	VV	03-04-2010	L'ere, Guernsey, Channel Islands	223	0.8

Great Black-backed Gull

MA09126	P	05-07-2003	Denny Island, Bristol Channel, Gwent		
	X	29-08-2010	Uphill, nr Weston Super Mare	26	7.1

Barn Owl

GN08500	P	05-07-2009	Chew Valley Lake		
	X	21-04-2010	Lansdown, Bath (long dead)	21	< 1.2

Blue Tit

V935974	1y	10-10-2009	Gorran Haven, Cornwall		
	X	10-10-2010	Cam Valley, Cameley (hit window)	197	1.0

Sand Martin

T555232	1y M	30-07-2005	Chew Valley Lake		
	R	26-06-2010	River Ely, Pendoylan, Glamorgan	52	4.9

Swallow

X224370	P	20-05-2009	Reservoir Farm, Barrow Gurney		
	X	16-05-2010	Dundry, Bristol	3	1.0

Long-tailed Tit

CLC140	U	05-03-2009	Chew Valley Lake		
	X	04-01-2010	Nettlebridge, Somerset (hit window)	13	0.8

Chiffchaff

CLY960	1y F	19-07-2009	Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire		
	R	12-08-2010	Chew Valley Lake	37	1.1
DLC103	1y	22-09-2010	Chew Valley Lake		
	R	02-10-2010	Fish Lake Meadows, Romsey, Hants	88	0.1

Sedge Warbler

L058112	1y	22-08-2010	Chew Valley Lake		
	R	24-08-2010	Pett Level, Sussex	235	(2 days)

X022619	1y R	22-08-2010 02-09-2010	Orfordness, Suffolk New Passage, Redwick	296	(11 days)
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Reed Warbler

L056813	1y R	02-07-2010 29-07-2010	Chew Valley Lake Pett Level, Sussex	235	0.1
L498203	1y R	07-08-2010 07-09-2010	Pitsea Marshes, Basildon, Essex Chew Valley Lake	219	0.1
V698412	Ad R	14-07-2008 22-07-2010	Walton in Gordano Leighton Moss, Lancashire	302	0.1
V874147	Ad M R	27-07-2008 03-05-2010	Llyn Ystumlllyn, Gwynedd Chew Valley Lake	208	1.8

Blackbird

CW57790	1y by cat	08-10-2009 07-02-2010	Bainton Gravel Pits, Cambs. Downend, Bristol	194	0.3
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Pied/White Wagtail

X297066	1y F R	16-10-2008 21-02-2010	Weymouth: Dorset	83	2.3
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Greenfinch

	1y M X	27-09-2009 19-11-2010	Chew Valley Lake Dundry, Bristol	10	1.1
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Reed Bunting

X814450	1y M R	17-10-2009 19-11-2010	New Passage, Redwick Corsham Lake, Wiltshire	37	1.1
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Systematic List of Birds Ringed in 2010

Species annual ringing totals for the period 2006 to 2010 are given in Table 3 below, together with the average number of birds ringed annually for the period 2006-2009 in the last column.

Species	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	4YA
Mute Swan	9	6	7	2	0	6
Canada Goose	174	51	69	162	94	114
Mallard	0	4	6	3	19	3
Tufted Duck	0	0	0	0	1	<1
Grey Heron	0	0	0	0	1	<1
Sparrowhawk	1	3	4	1	2	2
Buzzard	1	1	0	0	0	1
Peregrine	0	2	4	3	13	2
Kestrel	0	10	1	0	12	3
Water Rail	3	4	4	2	0	3
Moorhen	1	3	5	6	13	4
Coot	0	0	0	4	11	1
Oystercatcher	0	0	0	0	1	<1
Ringed Plover	0	5	0	0	13	1
Lapwing	3	0	0	0	0	1
Snipe	0	1	0	0	0	<1
Lesser Black-backed Gull	131	66	114	89	144	100
Herring Gull	45	16	20	21	31	26
Stock Dove	2	4	0	0	0	2

Wood Pigeon	0	0	3	3	5	2
Barn Owl	11	32	17	9	15	17
Tawny Owl	0	13	0	0	2	3
Nightjar	3	4	0	0	2	2
Swift	0	2	0	2	0	1
Kingfisher	6	2	10	21	12	10
Wryneck	0	0	0	0	1	<1
Green Woodpecker	1	1	1	1	0	1
Great Spotted Woodpecker	10	13	16	14	11	13
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	0	0	1	0	0	<1
Magpie	2	1	3	1	3	2
Jay	5	2	1	4	2	3
Jackdaw	8	9	6	0	1	6
Rook	0	3	0	0	0	1
Carrion Crow	0	2	0	0	0	1
Raven	0	4	0	3	2	2
Goldcrest	31	39	74	3	24	37
Firecrest	2	1	2	0	0	1
Blue Tit	593	637	608	810	796	662
Great Tit	589	748	670	710	557	679
Coal Tit	39	28	40	54	42	40
Marsh Tit	1	4	12	3	3	5
Skylark	0	0	1	0	0	<1
Sand Martin	150	19	35	76	258	70
Swallow	934	787	847	242	383	703
House Martin	90	30	39	65	3	56
Cetti's Warbler	14	28	41	68	41	38
Long-tailed Tit	84	162	138	146	126	133
Yellow-browed Warbler	0	0	2	0	1	1
Wood Warbler	0	0	2	0	0	1
Chiffchaff	331	388	415	435	461	392
Willow Warbler	299	209	39	86	101	158
Blackcap	1,192	682	379	426	509	670
Garden Warbler	88	46	35	54	50	56
Lesser Whitethroat	24	10	20	16	6	18
Whitethroat	47	21	27	21	28	29
Grasshopper Warbler	12	8	8	1	10	7
Sedge Warbler	473	171	97	253	299	249
Reed Warbler	691	734	884	1,086	1,180	849
Nuthatch	1	0	8	4	4	3
Treecreeper	12	15	18	14	39	15
Wren	83	101	168	110	113	116
Starling	19	43	81	25	27	42
Blackbird	60	83	120	77	142	85
Fieldfare	1	27	6	2	4	9
Song Thrush	5	76	54	42	30	44
Redwing			10	14	28	6
Mistle Thrush	26	37	1	4	0	17

Spotted Flycatcher	0	0	5	0	1	1
Robin	112	150	159	146	125	142
Redstart	0	1	0	0	1	<1
Stonechat	1	3	0	0	0	1
Wheatear	0	0	3	0	0	1
Dunnock	49	78	153	91	110	93
House Sparrow	63	20	5	5	60	23
Tree Sparrow	0	1	0	0	0	<1
Yellow Wagtail	0	0	0	0	1	<1
Grey Wagtail	10	0	5	1	1	4
Pied Wagtail	0	15	124	0	48	35
Tree Pipit	1	2	0	0	1	1
Meadow Pipit	17	2	37	3	0	15
Chaffinch	239	216	168	183	175	202
Brambling	2	0	47	0	3	12
Greenfinch	425	472	289	300	203	372
Goldfinch	27	79	129	226	167	115
Siskin	37	11	285	55	0	97
Linnet	0	0	3	0	0	1
Redpoll (Lesser / Common)	0	18	123	6	6	37
Bullfinch	29	44	44	58	116	44
Yellowhammer	0	0	0	1	0	<1
Reed Bunting	32	61	54	86	104	58
TOTAL	7,351	6,571	6,806	6,359	6,798	6,772

Gazetteer

R.L. Bland

All sites mentioned in the Systematic List are given below, in alphabetical order. Each site has a four figure map reference (in the 100-km square ST), showing the one-km square in which it stands and a two letter code showing the Unitary Authority in which it lies: BA for Bath and North East Somerset, BR for Bristol, NS for North Somerset and SG for South Gloucestershire. Sites around the edge of Chew Valley Lake have CVL placed after them, and those that are part of Bristol but outside the Unitary Authority area have Bristol after them. Sites that are abbreviated in the text have the abbreviation placed after them in brackets.

Abbey Wood, Bristol	6178	SG	Chittening Warth	5382	SG
Abbots Leigh	5373	NS	Churchill	4459	NS
Almondsbury	6084	SG	Clapton Moor Reserve	4573	NS
Alveston	6388	SG	Claverham	4466	NS
Anchor Head	3062	NS	Claverton	7864	BA
Arnos Vale	6071	BR	Cleeve Wood Reserve	4666	NS
Ashton Park	5572	NS	Clevedon	4071	NS
Aust	5789	SG	Clevedon-Yeo (Cl-Y)	3868	NS
Aust Cliff	5689	SG	Clifton Down, Bristol	5673	BR
Aust Warth	5689	SG	Clutton	6259	BA
Avon Gorge	5673	BR	Compton Dando	6464	BA
Avon Wildlife Park	6768	BA	Denny Island, CVL	5760	BA
Avonmouth Docks	5178	BR	Dolebury Warren Reserve	4558	NS
Avonmouth Sewage Wks (ASW)	5379	BR	Downend, Bristol	6577	BR
Axe Estuary	3159	NS	Doynton	7274	SG
Backwell Lake	4769	NS	Dundry	5566	NS
Badocks Wood, Bristol	5777	BR	Dunkerton	7159	BA
Banwell	3958	NS	Durdham Down, Bristol	5674	BR
Barrow Gurney Res. (BG)	5368	NS	Dyers Common	5583	SG
Barrow Hill	5167	NS	East Harptree	5655	BA
Bath	7564	BA	Easton-in-Gordano	5175	NS
Bath University	7764	BA	Emerson's Green, Bristol	6776	SG
Bathampton	7766	BA	Englishcombe	7162	BA
Bathampton Meadows	7766	BA	Failand	5773	NS
Batheaston Reserve	7867	BA	Falfield	6893	SG
Bathford	7966	BA	Farmborough	6660	BA
Bedminster	5871	BR	Felton Common	5265	NS
Bishop Sutton	5859	BA	Filton, Bristol	6079	SG
Bishopston, Bristol	5875	BR	Fishponds, Bristol	6376	BR
Blackberry Hill, Bristol	6177	BR	Flax Bourton	5069	NS
Blagdon Lake (BL)	5060	NS	Folly Farm Reserve	6060	BA
Blaise Woods	5678	BR	Frampton Cotterell	6682	SG
Bleadon Hill	3657	NS	Frome Valley	6377	BR
Blind Yeo	3969	NS	Goblin Combe Reserve	4765	NS
Bloomfield, Bath	7463	BA	Gordano Valley	4473	NS
Brandon Hill, Bristol	5772	BR	Hall End	7086	SG
Brentry	5879	BR	Hallatrow	6357	BA
Brislington, Bristol	6270	BR	Hanham	6472	SG
Bucklands Pool	4769	NS	Happerton Farm	5274	NS
Burledge Hill Reserve	5858	BA	Hawkesbury Upton	7687	SG
Burnett	6665	BA	Haydon Hill	6953	BA
Burrington	4759	NS	Henbury, Bristol	5678	BR
Butcombe	5161	NS	Hengrove Park, Bristol	6069	BR
Cadbury Camp	4572	NS	Henleaze, Bristol	5876	BR
Cameley	6157	BA	Hicks Gate	6369	BA
Camerton	6857	BA	High Littleton	6458	BA
Castle Green, Bristol	5973	BR	Hinton Blewitt	5956	BA
Chapel Pill	5376	NS	Hinton Charterhouse	7758	BA
Charfield	7292	SG	Hoar Gout	5380	BR
Charlton Field	6366	BA	Horfield, Bristol	5977	BR
Charmy Down	7670	SG	Horton	7584	SG
Chelvey	4867	NS	Horwood Farm	7387	SG
Chelwood	6861	BA	Hotwells, Bristol	5772	BR
Chew Magna Res.	5663	BA	Hunstrete Lake	6462	BA
Chew Stoke	5661	NS	Hursley Hill, Whitchurch	6165	BA
Chew Valley Lake (CVL)	5760	BA	Iford	7959	BA

Inglestone Common	7688	SG	Severn Beach	5384	SG
Iron Acton	6883	SG	Severnside	5383	SG
Jubbs Wood	5174	NS	Shepperdine	6295	SG
Kendleshire	6679	SG	Shirehampton	5376	BR
Kenn	4169	NS	Shirehill Farm	7876	SG
Kenn Moor	4368	NS	Siston	6674	SG
Kewstoke	3364	NS	Sneyd Park, Bristol	5575	BR
Keynsham	6568	BA	Snuff Mills, Bristol	6276	BR
Kingsgate Park, Yate	7181	SG	St Andrews Park, Bristol	5975	BR
Kingston Seymour	4066	BA	St Annes, Bristol	6272	BR
Ladye Bay	4072	NS	St. Phillips Marsh, Bristol	6072	BR
Langford	4560	NS	Stanton Drew	5963	NS
Lansdown	7268	BA	Stanton Prior	6762	BA
Leap Valley, Downend	6577	BR	Stantonbury Hill	6763	BA
Littleton Warth	5890	SG	Steep Holm	2360	NS
Locking	3659	NS	Stockwood Reserve	6269	BR
Longwell Green	6571	BA	Stoke Bishop, Bristol	5676	BR
Lower Knole Farm	5884	SG	Stowey	5959	BA
Lower Littleton	5563	BA	Stup Pill	5282	BR
Lower Woods	7487	SG	Sutton Hill	5958	BA
Lulsgate	5065	NS	Swineford	6968	BA
Marksbury	6662	BA	The Niatts	5985	SG
Marshfield	7873	SG	Thornbury	6490	SG
Middle Hope	3366	NS	Tickenham	4571	NS
Midford	7660	BA	Timsbury	6658	BA
Midsomer Norton	6655	BA	Tormarton	7778	SG
Montpelier	5974	BR	Totterdown	6071	BR
Moorgrove Wood	5578	SG	Tunley	6959	BA
Nailsea	4770	NS	Tyntesfield	5171	NS
New Passage	5486	SG	Tytherington	6788	SG
Newbridge, Bath	7165	BA	Ubley	5358	NS
Northwick Warth	5587	SG	University of West of England	6277	BR
Oldbury Power Station (OPS)	6094	SG	Uphill	3259	NS
Orchard Pool	5485	SG	Walborough	3157	NS
Over	5982	SG	Walton Common Reserve	4273	NS
Oxbow Reserve, Bath	7766	BA	Warmley	6773	SG
Parks Farm, Tormarton	7879	SG	Welton Vale	6755	BA
Paulton	6556	BA	West Harptree	5656	BA
Pill	5276	NS	West Littleton	7675	SG
Pilning	5585	SG	Westerleigh	7080	SG
Portbury	4975	NS	Weston Moor Reserve	4473	NS
Portbury Wharf (PW)	4877	NS	Weston STW	3157	NS
Portishead	4676	NS	Weston-s-Mare	3261	NS
Prior Park, Bath	7663	BA	Whitchurch	6167	BR
Publow	6264	BA	Wick	7072	SG
Puxton Moor Reserve	4063	NS	Wick Warth	3566	NS
Redhill	4963	NS	Wickwar	7288	SG
Redland, Bristol	5875	BR	Willsbridge Reserve	6670	SG
Redwick	5585	SG	Winford	5465	NS
Regil	5363	NS	Woodspring Bay	3566	NS
Rickford	4959	NS	Woollard	6364	BA
Rowberrow	4658	NS	Wooscombe Bottom	6365	BA
Royal Portbury Dock (RPD)	5077	NS	Worlebury Hill	3162	NS
Saltford	6867	BA	Wroughton	4762	NS
Sand Bay	3365	NS	Yate	7182	SG
Sand Point	3165	NS	Yatton	4365	NS
Sea Mills, Bristol	5576	BR	Yeo Estuary	3666	NS

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Canada Goose	26	Greylag Goose	25
Carrión Crow	94	Guillemot	85
Cattle Egret	46	Hawfinch	125
Cetti's Warbler	99	Hen Harrier	52
Chaffinch	120	Herring Gull	80
Chiffchaff	100	Hobby	56
Citrine Wagtail	117	Honey Buzzard	50
Coal Tit	96	Hoopoe	91
Collared Dove	87	House Martin	98
Crossbill	125	House Sparrow	115
Common Crane	60	Jack Snipe	67
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