



# **Borders Bird Report**

No. 34

**2017**

**Scottish Ornithologists' Club**

**Borders Branch**

# The Borders Bird Report 2017

## No. 34

Editor: Tom Brewis

### Contents

Introduction		2
Summary of the year		8
Classified List:		16
Mute Swan to Common Crane	Tom Brewis	17
Oystercatcher to Ringed Plover	Andrew Mossop	66
Whimbrel to Short-eared Owl	Tom Brewis	71
Nightjar to Starling	Gavin Paterson	103
Dipper to Twite	Tom Brewis	123
Lesser Redpoll to Reed Bunting	Gavin Paterson	145
Exotics, escapes, hybrids	Tom Brewis	150
Errata and addenda		150
Ringing in the Scottish Borders	Tom Dougall	150
Greenlaw Farm Pool, Foulden	David Christie	157
Western Bonelli's Warbler at Mire Loch	Mark Holling	164
Black-browed Albatross at St Abbs	Dave Graham	166
Dark-eyed Junco in Melrose	David Parkinson	168
Index of species		169

October 2018

The Scottish Ornithologists' Club Borders Branch

ISSN: 0964-7422

Front cover: Sparrowhawk. St Boswells. September. (M Moncrieff). Back cover top: Western Bonelli's Warbler, Mire Loch (Ian Andrews).  
Back cover below: Wheatear. September. Nunlands, Foulden. (Tom Brewis).

## Introduction

Borders Bird Report 2017 is based on nearly 38,000 records from about 1,200 sites. Ninety-three per cent of records were submitted through BirdTrack, 3% via Borders Bird News Group, 2% came from Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) and the remainder were from Wetland Bird Surveys (WeBS), the annual Rocky Shore Count in January and some records submitted directly to either the Recorders or the Editor.

Records were submitted by 169 observers (number of records shown in shaded column):

Abercrombie, C	22	Dougall, T W	59	Lauder, A W	16	Reed, T	1,083
Arnold, R	29	Douglas, J	43	Lindsay, M	87	Reid, M A	72
Baird, A	14	Drew, R	762	Lough, J	2,265	Reynolds, E M G	26
Bale, M C	12	Eaton, M A	68	Luther, F	35	Richardson, C J	40
Ball, P	427	Evans, F	594	MacMillan, A	26	Ross, M B	119
BBS	839	Farish-Brown, J	13	Manning, S	85	Sandeman, A	45
Betts, M	260	Farr, D	43	Martin, A	96	Scott, G	599
Bickmore, E L	605	Foster, S	23	McBeath, R	52	Singleton, R	98
BirdGuides,	22	Gordon, J D	1,769	McDowall, M A	12	Smith, R	51
Bond, R	13	Graham, DK	548	McKerchar, H	28	Spriggs, M	46
Bramhall, A T	2,912	Green, C	301	McNeilly, J	25	Stratton, N D	990
Bramhall, R	40	Green, T	45	Meikle, B	118	Strowger, J	14
Brewis, T	207	Greenhow, M	25	Methven, D	839	Taylor, C	49
Brown, A W	31	Hamilton, R	14	Mitchell, A	21	Tees, C	22
Bruce, M J	22	Hartley, C	1,626	Mitchell, J	290	Towill, J	381
Chamberlain, T	21	Hayward, W R	45	Moncrieff, M	5,757	Tudge, C E	12
Chambers, A	37	Heavisides, A	23	Morton, S D	18	Turnbull, S	189
Christer, G	63	Henderson, M	857	Moses, C	57	Urquhart, H R	20
Christie, D	796	Hind, R D	26	Mossop, A	313	Ward, S D	37
Cockburn, M R	97	Holling, M	151	Nicholson, J P	46	Warden, D	22
Cook, N	10	Houston, K	132	Orr-Ewing, D C	17	Watson, C	625
Coyle, J	78	Hunter, L	56	Palmer, N W	11	Watterson, R	243
Craig, RS	145	Ibbotson, J	13	Parkinson, D	974	Welch, S	33
Crowther, N	168	Ingleby, K	51	Parrell, T M	74	White, G	17
Cutter, A	24	Kentleton, A	67	Paterson, G	6,818	Woolliams, J	41
Davison, C N	37	Kerr, A	43	Pyatt, G	412	Wrigley, P	18
		Kyle, T	58				

Contributors with 1-9 records submitted were: Addlesee, H A; Bainbridge, C A; Berryman, A; Blackie, C; Blaikie, C; Blinston, A C; Bond, C; Bradshaw, D W; Breeze, M; Brown, A; Butlin, A; Christies, D; Cole, L; Combe, I; Dougall, T; Dunstan, D; Ebbage, I; Farrar, M; Findlay, M; Forsyth, I & Z; Fraser, M & L; Garner, G; Gladstone, D; Gordon, C; Gordon, P R; Greenshield, R; Guthrie, A; Hanson, E; Hashmi, A; Hawkings, L; Hudson, A; Inglis, J; Johnson, M; Johnstone, R; Jones, B; Khursheed, B; Kirby, M S; Ludwig, S; Maguire, J; McGowan, A J; McKay, C; Mcnee, D; Mitchell, A; Newell, M A; Parish, N M; Plint, S; Ritchie, K; Robeson, K; Robinson, M; Russell, S; Scott, D; Shaw, M; Smith, R H; Speirs, A; Spence, I M; Spyeby, A; Steele, A J; Taylor, N; Thomas, A F; Waddell, J; Wood, T.

A total of 218 species were reported. This compares with 219 in 2016 and 212 in 2015. There were two additions to the Borders Bird List: two **Ring-necked Parakeets** were seen in a garden at Craigend (Stow) on 30-Jan and a **Dark-eyed Junco**, a vagrant from North America, was reported in a garden at Melrose on 31-Mar (see an account on p 171). There were a number of other interesting reports (either in themselves or as part of a trend). **Pink-footed Geese** reached the highest recorded aggregate peak count at the five most populated roost sites, currently made up of West Water, Bemersyde-Westfield, Folly Loch, Hule Moss and Coldingham Moor. **Shelduck** had, at 51, its highest total of fledged birds on record. Wintering **Teal** had their largest count at a single site on 12-Feb at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) when 867 were present (see p 157 for more information about this site).

**Goldeneye** records reached their lowest ever aggregate count for the twenty most populated sites. Meanwhile, along the coast, a **White-billed Diver** seen, in November off Eyemouth, was only the Region's third record and a **Black-browed Albatross**, off St Abbs harbour in June, was the first record since one was reported 10 km offshore in 1969 (see the report of the sighting on p 166). At St Abb's Head, the first confirmed record of breeding of a **Gannet** in Borders was made, although the chick did not survive. A **Glossy Ibis** was seen near Earlston in May – the first report in the Borders since 1902! In the same month, a report of four **Wood Sandpipers** at Paxton House beat the highest previous count of this species by two. The usual migrant hot spot at Mire Loch, St Abb's Head came up trumps with only the second record of a **Western Bonelli's Warbler** (see account of its sighting on p 166) and a **Pallas's Leaf Warbler** was seen in September (the 26th record for Borders and the first since 2007). Another warbler, a **Paddyfield Warbler**, was also seen at Mire Loch in August (only our second record, following on from the first sighting last year at the same location).

Three records notable by virtue of counts rather than the rarity of the species. In October a record-breaking count of 5,600 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** was made at Hule Moss. In January, some 5,000 (not a typo!) **Bramblings** were estimated at Acreknowe Reservoir. The 5,000 birds, part of a mixed finch flock, were estimated on the basis of diligently counting birds from pictures taken by the observer of the c. 10,000 strong flock. Prior to this report, the highest count of Bramblings was 2,000. While not equal to the estimate of 6,000 made near Lanark in 1995, this record is surely candidate for the "second highest" count ever recorded in Scotland. The third set of records concern the influx of **Hawfinches** from mid-November onward. Borders hosted up to seven **Hawfinches** at any onetime and were recorded at six sites (mainly The Hirsell), part of a near-countrywide influx from central Europe. This was the best year for numbers of Hawfinches since 2001 and the best, in terms of number of sites with sightings, since 1986.

Finally, 2017 was the first year since records began of successful breeding of Red Kites (two pairs produced a total of three fledglings).



One of the photographs taken by Martin Moncrieff to estimate Brambling numbers at Acreknowe Reservoir.

### Submission of records

The preferred option for submission of records is via BTO's BirdTrack. Those observers who have not yet used BirdTrack are encouraged to give it a try. Not only is it a means of ensuring that your records are secure but it makes collation of the data very much easier when preparing the Bird Report.

The system is now much easier to use and defining the limits of your recording site are now both easier and more precise. If you use the following link: <https://app.bto.org/birdtrack2/main/data-home.jsp> then this will take you to a map where you can define your recording area by means of drawing an outline of the site's boundaries. This avoids the problem that some observers have with sites which do not neatly fit into a grid square or tetrad. Once established, each site will be allocated a grid square and/or a tetrad. This square or tetrad will eventually identify each site for purposes of putting the Report together.

Border Bird News Yahoo Group is another method by which records can be submitted. When using this method please ensure that you give your full name, site location, dates and numbers, as well as breeding status of birds. It is also helpful to indicate whether those same records will also be submitted via BirdTrack, eg by simply putting BT at the bottom of the record.

Records can also be reported directly to either of the Border's Recorders (see below). If you chose to email either Recorder then please give your full name and as much relevant details as possible.

Regardless of the means by which you supply records it is always best if you indicate the numbers of birds present, even if it is only an approximation. This is better than simply leaving the count section empty. Similarly, during the breeding season, it will be appreciated if you indicate breeding status (see p. 6).

Please also note that the Report will be a more effective document if you submit records of all birds seen or heard, not just the more scarce ones. Many of our more common birds are certainly under-recorded, leading to a less significant dataset. It will also be greatly appreciated if contributors check that the recording sites for which they have submitted records to BirdTrack have the correct tetrad and grid square and that, where practical, contributors use the format for site names used within the Report.

### Validation of records

Although mention is made in the Report of some species which have not been validated because a "description" of the find was not submitted or because the validation process is not yet complete, these records will not be part of the Borders database until such validation is completed.

National rarities are validated by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). A Rarity Report Form can be downloaded from <https://www.bbrc.org.uk/submit-a-sighting> and a list of those birds requiring such a submission can be found at <https://www.bbrc.org.uk/main-information/species-taxa>.

Some species are classed as local rarities and require a report to be submitted to the Borders Recorders and not the BBRC. If submitting records via BirdTrack you will be automatically directed toward the route for submitting a Rarities Report. Alternatively, the Recorders can be contacted as follows:

Martin Moncrieff: Tel: 07851 800081

David Parkinson: Tel: 07979 365134

Both can also be contacted by email: [bordersrecorder@gmail.com](mailto:bordersrecorder@gmail.com)

Validation of local birds is undertaken by a group made up the following: Fran Evans, Dave Graham, Martin Moncrieff and David Parkinson.

Please try to avoid making public the precise location of Schedule 1 birds on or potentially near nesting sites.

The table below shows those species that require a local description only:

Alpine Swift	Corn Bunting	Little Tern	Rough-legged Buzzard
American Golden Plover	Corncrake	Long-tailed Skua	Sabine's Gull
American Wigeon	Cory's Shearwater	Marsh Warbler	Scottish Crossbill
Arctic Redpoll	Crane	Mediterranean Gull	Serin
Arctic Warbler	Crested Tit	Melodious Warbler	Shore Lark
Avocet	Dartford Warbler	Montagu's Harrier	Short-toed Lark
Balearic Shearwater	Dotterel	Night-heron	Spoonbill
Bean Goose (Taiga)	Dusky Warbler	Nightingale	Spotted Crake
Bean Goose (Tundra)	Firecrest	Nightjar	Stone-curlew
Bearded Tit	Glossy Ibis	Olive-backed Pipit	Subalpine Warbler
Bee-eater	Golden Eagle	Ortolan Bunting	Surf Scoter
Bittern	Golden Oriole	Pallas's Warbler	Temminck's Stint
Black Guillemot	Great Shearwater	Parrot Crossbill	Turtle Dove
Black Kite	Great White Egret	Pectoral Sandpiper	Water Pipit
Black-winged Stilt	Greenish Warbler	Penduline Tit	White Stork
Bluethroat	Green-winged Teal	Ptarmigan	White-billed Diver
Blyth's Reed Warbler	Grey Phalarope	Purple Heron	White-rumped Sandpiper
Brent Goose (Black Brant)	Hawfinch	Radde's Warbler	White-tailed Eagle
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Hobby	Red-breasted Flycatcher	White-winged Black Tern
Capercaillie	Honey-buzzard	Red-flanked Bluetail	Willow Tit
Caspian Gull	Hoopoe	Red-footed Falcon	Wilson's Petrel
Cattle Egret	Icterine Warbler	Red-necked Phalarope	Woodchat Shrike
Cetti's Warbler	Kentish Plover	Red-rumped Swallow	Woodlark
Chiffchaff (Siberian - tristis)	Leach's Petrel	Richard's Pipit	Wryneck
Chough	Lesser Scaup	Ring-billed Gull	Yellow Wagtail (Grey-headed - thunbergi)
Cirl Bunting	L. Spotted Woodpecker	Ring-necked Duck	Yellow-legged Gull
Citrine Wagtail	Little Bunting	Roseate Tern	
Common Rosefinch	Little Owl	Rose-coloured Starling	

## Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in the Report:

AON	Actively Occupied Nest
BBRC	British Birds Rarities Committee
BBR	Borders Bird Report
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey
br	brood
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
Pr	present but no count submitted
RSC	Rocky Shore Count
SOC	Scottish Ornithologists' Club
ssp.	Sub species
SUW	Southern Upland Way
WeBS	Wetland Birds Survey

Reference is frequently made to breeding evidence using BTO codes. These are given below:

*Possible breeding*

- S Singing male present (or breeding calls heard) in breeding season in suitable breeding habitat.

*Probable breeding*

- P Pair observed in suitable nesting habitat in breeding season.
- T Permanent Territory presumed through registration of territorial behaviour (song etc.) on at least two different days a week or at the same place as many individuals present on one day.
- D Courtship and display (judged to be in or near potential breeding habitat; be cautious with wildfowl).
- N Visiting probable nest site.
- A Agitated behaviour or anxiety calls from adults, suggesting probable presence of nest or young nearby.
- I Brood patch on adult examined in the hand, suggesting incubation.
- B Nest building or excavating nest-hole.

*Confirmed breeding*

- DD Distraction-Display or injury feigning.
- UN Used Nest or eggshells found (occupied or laid within period of survey).
- FL Recently fledged young (nidicolous species) or downy young (nidifugous species). Careful consideration should be given to the likely provenance of any fledged juvenile capable of significant geographical movement. Evidence of dependency on adults (e.g. feeding) is helpful. Be cautious, even if the record comes from suitable habitat.
- ON Adults entering or leaving nest-site in circumstances indicating occupied nest (including high nests or nest holes, the contents of which cannot be seen) or adults seen incubating.
- FF Adult carrying faecal sac or food for young.
- NE Nest containing eggs.
- NY Nest with young seen or heard.

Note that the BTO code of "H" (observed in suitable nesting habitat) is not included here. It is assumed that a high proportion of submitted records for a given species will, in fact, be observed in suitable nesting habitat, but because no breeding evidence has been reported, the actual number is not possible to determine. Contributors are encouraged to report the highest level of breeding evidence that is practicable.

An abbreviation such as 2br7 means two broods which total seven chicks; imm. refers to immature birds; juv. refers to juvenile. Bird-day refers to the number of days that a bird was recorded or assumed to be present. Thus, a single bird seen for a period of 12 days and two other birds seen for a day would add up to 14 bird-days. Where a percentage is given after the number of occupied tetrads it represents the proportion of all tetrads in Borders.

**Sites, squares and tetrads**

Dealing with over 38,000 records means that some confusion over location of sites is inevitable. In some cases, the same location is given different names and different grid square identifiers. To avoid this it is hoped that eventually nearly all sites will be recognised by a standardised name and the same grid square (generated after submission of records). However, this will take some time and some anomalies will be bound to occur in the interim. In the meantime, please be patient and expect the odd anomaly.

The exercise, started for BBR 2015, of placing the nearest place in brackets following the name of less well known sites continues in this Report. If you wish to locate sites on a map then you are recommended to visit <http://www.cucaera.co.uk/grp/>, an excellent facility which allows you to locate places by name, grid reference or tetrad. Alternatively you might want to visit the gazetteer on the SOC site: [www.the-soc.org.uk/site-finder](http://www.the-soc.org.uk/site-finder).

## Acknowledgements

All contributors who submitted records (the foundation of any bird report) are gratefully thanked (see table on p. 2). Thanks also to Gavin Paterson and Andrew Mossop for covering those sections of species summaries in the Classified List shown against their names in the Contents page. Without their invaluable help this Report would have been published a good many weeks later than was the case.

The BTO supplied the WeBS and BBS records, Liza Cole supplied the St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report Summary and Alan Heavisides supplied the Lothian & Borders Raptor Study Group Report. Tom Dougall produced the annual report of the Borders Ringing Group and Malcolm Ross supplied a summary of WWT Goose Counts for selected sites. Martin Moncrieff supplied me with the BirdTrack records. David Christie wrote the section on Greenlaw Farm Pool at Foulden, Mark Holling submitted the summary of the Rocky Shore Count as well as the description of the Western Bonelli's Warbler find and Dave Graham provided a description of the Black-browed Albatross sighting. David Parkinson wrote the account of the record of the Dark-eyed Junco, Martin Moncrieff, Andrew Mossop, Gavin Paterson and Malcolm Ross proof read the final version of the Report. Photographs were submitted by Ian Andrews, Tom Brewis, Alistair Cutter, Dave Graham, Bill Meikle and Martin Moncrieff. To all of these I give my thanks.



**General geography of the Borders Region**

Any mistakes or omissions, apologies for which are offered in advance, are entirely the fault of the editor.

Tom Brewis September 2018



## The year as a whole in Borders

### Jan-Mar (winter-spring)

While the size of **Mute Swan** flocks were lower than usual (max of 66 at The Hirsell on 5-Jan), the **Whooper Swan** peak count of 228 on Birgham Haugh (Coldstream) on 26-Jan almost equalled the most recent peak count of 238 at Lochton (Kelso) in 2014. On the basis of 200 birds that were aged, a higher than usual 24% of Whooper Swans were 1st-winters. A **Black Swan** was seen for most of January at Yetholm Loch.

The large 2013 roosts of **Pink-footed Geese** at Bemersyde-Whitrig were repeated this year with up to c. 4,000 throughout the period. Other large counts came from Upper Nisbet and Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden). Five **White-fronted Geese** (*albifrons*) were at Boghouse (West Linton) on 7-Jan. Once again, **Greylag Goose** peak counts were dominated by Greenlaw Farm Pool: 536 in January; 760 in February and 842 in March. **Canada Geese** showed a reduction in winter-spring numbers after the relative highs of 2015 and 2016 to peaks of 40 at Greenlaw Farm Pool on 1-Jan and 37 at Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank) on 2-Jan.

**Wigeon** counts at Greenlaw Farm Pool were similar to those high counts of 2016 with 690 in January, 676 in February and 480 in March. Whitrig Bog (Smailholm) also had a large count of 300 Wigeon on 4<sup>th</sup>. As usual, Yetholm Loch dominated **Gadwall** records with a peak count of 20 on 5-Feb. As far as can be ascertained, the count of 867 **Teal** on 12-Feb at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) was the highest count on record for the Borders, beating the previous record of 850 at Hule Moss in December, 2013. Thirteen **Shovelers** were also at Greenlaw Farm Pool on 26-Mar - the highest winter-spring count for Borders since Jan-2000. Records of **Scaup** were restricted to just two sites: the Tweed at Paxton House and on the Whiteadder at Edrom and **Long-tailed Ducks** were only recorded at three sites, with one inland sighting at Paxton House. The largest counts of **Goldeneye** since 2012 were reported, again, from Greenlaw Farm Pool, with 108 counted there on 7-Feb. The Hirsell had 95 Goldeneyes on 19-Jan which is their highest count for winter-spring since 2004.

Four **Black Grouse** lekking sites and a peak count of nine were reported from Leithen Water. A large count of 113 **Pheasants** on 25-Mar came from between Elibank and Ashiestiel Br (Caddonfoot); this is the biggest count since 2013.

Nine **Red-throated Divers** were recorded between Burnmouth and Eyemouth during the Rocky Shore Count on 15-Jan, a single **Black-throated Diver** was seen off Burnmouth on 6-Jan and a **Great Northern Diver** off St Abb's Head was also seen during the RSC on 15-Jan.

The RSC also provided a single **Sooty Shearwater** on 15-Jan at St Abb's Head – the first winter record since a count of 11 in 2002. A rather small peak count of 67 **Gannets** was made on 29-Mar at St Abb's Head and the high counts of **Cormorants** on the Tweed Haughs (68 on 24-Jan and 45 on 31-Jan) soon declined into counts of less than a dozen.

A **Bittern** was reported from Newmains (Reston) on 9-Jan and four sightings of single **Little Egrets** came from the Yetholm area, the Teviot and the Tweed Haughs. A count of 11 **Grey Herons** was made at Galashiels Sewage Works on 19-Feb. Meanwhile a remarkable 52 **Little Grebes** were seen at Mellerstain on 21-Jan.

On 11-Mar a **Red Kite** visited the Kelso area and a **Marsh Harrier** was recorded at Hule Moss on 14-Feb.

Dunion Hill (Jedburgh) had the largest count of **Golden Plover** (350 on 7-Jan) with the Whitrig Bog-Smailholm area often providing counts of up to 300. **Grey Plover** only managed one record which was from Pease Bay on 14-Jan, while **Lapwing** numbers were up to a healthy 483 at Rachelfield Pond (Smailholm) on 15-Feb. Probably the same **Common Sandpiper** that was reported last winter from the Teviot Haughs near Nisbet was reported again this year and there were reports of what appeared to be three different **Green Sandpipers** from the same area, as well as from Eye Water. There were two reports of a **Greenshank** from Burnmouth in Feb and Mar (possibly the

same bird). Eight **Woodcocks** were flushed by hounds at Nether Monynut (Abbey St Bathans) on 24-Jan and 45 **Snipe** were recorded at Malcolm's Marsh (Ancrum) – a high count but still less than half of the number seen there in the previous year.

Singles of **Razorbills** were seen throughout the period, increasing to 53 near St Abb's Head on 7-Mar, while only one record of a single **Little Auk** was reported and by 7-Mar 5,300 **Guillemots** were counted at St Abb's Head. Three separate **Mediterranean Gulls** were recorded at Newmains (Reston) and at Eyemouth Harbour in January and February. Up to three **Iceland Gulls** were reported in March between Reston and the coast and, what may have been up to three individual **Glaucous Gulls** were seen at different times in Jan and Feb between St Abb's Head and Eyemouth, as well as a single bird at Uppsettlington (Ladykirk).

On 29-Jan two **Ring-necked Parakeets**, of unknown origin, were seen at Craigend (Stow) during a BTO Garden Bird Watch. The first time this species has been reported in Borders.

A **Hooded Crow** was seen near Innerleithen on 29-Jan and a flock of 20 **Ravens** were also reported in the Cheviots at the end of Jan.

Forty **Skylarks** were seen feeding near game cover at Smailholm on 15-Feb. The first record of a **Sand Martin** was on 17-Mar at Gattonside-Melrose and the first **Swallow** was seen at Selkirk on 29-Mar. Twenty-four **Long-tailed Tits** at Folly Loch on 18-Jan appears to be the largest winter-spring count since 1996 and the first singing **Chiffchaff** was recorded at St Boswells on 15-Mar with the first record of a **Willow Warbler** on 19-Mar at Coldingham Bay. During January a **Blackcap** was reported from Ayton Castle and in March records of singletons came from Glenormiston Woodend (Innerleithen), Peebles, Stow and Fishwick (Paxton). One very notable report was of a single whitethroat sp. between 3-Jan and 22-Mar in a Chirnside garden. Photographs point strongly to **Lesser Whitethroat** (possibly Siberian ssp.). However, there was insufficient detail for positive identification.

**Waxwings** were reported from widely spread sites with a maximum count of 23.

An estimated 1,000 **Starlings** at Oxton on 19-Mar appears to be the largest for the winter-spring period since 2006, while the 63 **Blackbirds** counted at Newmains (Reston) on 27-Jan appears to be the largest winter-spring count on record for the Borders. Similarly, 29 **Robins** at Tweedbank on 2-Jan also appears to be a winter-spring record count. Records of **Stonechats** from nine sites hint at a slow recovery of this species.

The arrival of the first recorded **Wheatear** on 2-Mar at Dowlaw Road (Coldingham Moor) was the earliest since 1987 (27-Feb) while **Pied Wagtails**, as ever, were scarce in January and February but built up to a count of 50 on 20-Mar at Borders General Hospital. An exceptional 5,000 **Bramblings** and 2,000 **Chaffinches** were at Acreknowe Reservoir on 17-Jan, an estimate based on systematically counting birds from photographs. This is about double the previous highest count of 2,500 Bramblings at Whim (Leadburn) on 13-Apr 1980. There were still 1,500 birds at Acreknowe Reservoir on 28-Feb. The Chaffinch estimate is the highest since 3,000 at Kilbucho (on 26-Nov 2000). A count of 140 **Siskins** at Bonchester Bridge on 19-Mar appears to have been the highest count since 2008.

A new species for Borders was a vagrant North American **Dark-eyed Junco** (an adult in non-breeding plumage), which was seen in a garden in Dingleton (Melrose) on 31-Mar (see account on p 168).

#### **Apr-Jun (spring-summer)**

Two **Whooper Swans** were reported from Carham (Coldstream) on 19-Jun, probably over-summering birds. Another laggard was a single **Pink-footed Goose** at Millar's Moss (St Abb's Head) on 11-Jun. **Canada Goose** post-breeding assemblies appeared to be early this year with 102 counted at Watch Water Reservoir on 19-Jun.

**Shelduck** numbers at Folly Loch were healthy with 18 adults, including five pairs with a minimum of 22 fledglings on 7-Jun. Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) again counted good numbers of **Wigeon** with 86 recorded on 3-Apr and

77 **Teal** on 9-Apr. A **Pochard** at Hule Moss on 20-Apr was something of a surprise, as was a **Scaup** at Yetholm Loch on 1-Jun.

There were records of **Quail** from six Berwickshire sites at intervals throughout June.

On the 29-Jun only the second record for Borders of a **Black-browed Albatross** was made at St Abb's Head (see p 166 for an account of this sighting). The adult bird was spotted periodically outside Borders, around the North Sea coast. The last record in Borders was for 1969, again, off St Abb's Head. After 70 **Gannets** or more were observed prospecting Foul Carr at St Abb's Head in May a nest with an egg was spotted on 22-Jun. This is the first record of confirmed breeding in the Borders. Two other nests were observed but there was no evidence of egg laying. Counts of **Shag** AONs at St Abb's Head NNR produced 126, slightly more than the previous year but well down on the 10-year and 33-year means. Eighty **Cormorants** at Yetholm Loch on 10-Apr may well have been the largest count for an inland site.

Only the second record of a **Glossy Ibis** for Borders was made on 24-May at Chapel Mains (Earlston), part of a trend of increasing reports of this species in Britain as the species extends its range in Europe. Breeding evidence for **Great Crested Grebes** came from four sites: Alemoor Reservoir (Hawick); Fruid Reservoir (Tweedsmuir); Haining Loch (Selkirk) and Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) which was encouraging given the records of the past few years.

Six separate sightings of **Red Kite(s)** were made in all three months and over a wide geographical area and **Hen Harriers** were reported from the Langholm-Newcastleton area from early April onward. The first record this year of an **Osprey** was not until 4-April (at Innerleithen) but thereafter sightings were fairly frequent.

A **Corncrake** was seen at Blakelaw (Yetholm) on 13-Jun. It was heard "singing/calling while sitting on a garden fence, looking very scruffy and adjacent to a meadow with long grass, although essentially improved pasture". The last record of this species was in 2014.

Possible passage records of **Golden Plover** were few and of relatively small counts, the biggest being 150 between Eddleston-Leadburn on 7-Apr and the same numbers at Westfield (Smailholm) on 18-Apr. During the same period **Lapwing** numbers never exceeded 25 (at Whitrig Bog-Westfield on 23-Apr). The first record of **Little Ringed Plover** was on 20-May from the Teviot Haughs while records of migrating **Whimbrels** were limited to two sites in late April: Carham and Burnmouth. Other waders seemingly on the move were a **Black-tailed Godwit** at Folly Loch on 22-Apr, a **Dunlin** and 12 **Common Sandpipers** at Carham (Coldstream) on 30-Apr. Four **Wood Sandpipers** were seen at Paxton House on 10-May; prior to this record the highest count for this species had been two. Fourteen **Common Snipe** were counted at Newmains (Reston) on 5-Apr.

Three **Arctic Skua** were seen off St Abb's Head and a single **Great Skua** off Eyemouth on 29-Jun. Fifty **Razorbills** were on nests near Fast Castle on 14-May while over 2,000 **Guillemots** on nests at St Abb's Head were recorded on 17-Jun. Two **Black Terns** were seen feeding on the Tweed at Paxton House on 30-Apr but were gone by the next morning. The first record of the year for **Sandwich Tern** was on 9-Apr at Burnmouth and the first **Common Tern** was not recorded until 11-Jun at Dungleigh, while **Arctic Tern** had its first record on 23-Apr (from St Abb's Head). Four thousand and eighty-three **Kittiwake** AONs were estimated at St Abb's Head SNR in late June, while, inland, **Black-headed Gull** counts were generally disappointing with no count exceeding the 98 birds at Galashiels sewage works on 4-Jun. Four hundred and fifty **Common Gulls** were at Yetholm Loch on 8-Jun but numbers soon declined into single figures thereafter. Conversely, numbers of **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** increased through April, May and into June with numbers reaching 180 at Eddleston on 30-Jun.

The first recorded **Cuckoo** was on 29-Apr at The Ley (Leithen Water) and the first **Swift** was recorded at Paxton House on 1-May.

A hybrid **Carrión x Hooded Crow** was recorded between Eddleston and Leadburn on 24-May and six **Ravens** were seen near Jedburgh on 22-Jun.

More than 30 **Goldcrests**, probably on passage, were recorded at St Abb's Head on 2-Apr. A single **Marsh Tit** at Mire Loch, St Abb's Head on 1-May was an encouraging record for this fast-disappearing species since no records have come from this site since 2001.

The first **Sand Martins** were seen at Paxton House on 1-Apr and on the same day the first **Swallow** was recorded near Longformacus. Two weeks later the first **House Martin** arrived at Innerleithen.

Once again, Plora Wood was the nearest to a "hot spot" that Borders has to offer for **Wood Warblers** with two singing males recorded on 20-May. The first **Willow Warbler** record came from Selkirk on 2-Apr and the first singing **Blackcap** record was on 8-Apr from the Union Bridge (Tweedhill). **Garden Warbler** was first recorded at Eshiels (Cardrona) on 2-May and the first **Lesser Whitethroat** was a singing bird at Union Bridge on 8-May, while **Common Whitethroat** was first recorded at Bowden Moor Loch (Melrose) on 16-Apr. Cacara Hill (Tushielaw) reported the first **Grasshopper Warbler** on 2-May while **Sedge Warblers** arrived a few days earlier on 29-Apr at Bemersyde Moss. There was a single record of a **Reed Warbler** at Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) on 18-Jun.

The last of the departing **Redwings** was recorded near Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) on 26-Apr. The first record of a **Ring Ouzel** thought to be on territory was on 26-April in the Manor Valley.

**Pied Flycatcher** records were initially encouraging with records from 5-May onwards at three sites: Lindean (Selkirk), Innerleithen, Leaderfoot with birds heard singing at two of the sites. Unfortunately, there were no further records beyond May. A single **Black Redstart** was noted on passage at St Abb's Head on 9-May, while the first record of **Common Redstart** was on 18-Apr at Plora Woods (Innerleithen).

**Whinchats** had their first record on 2-May at Cacara Hill (Tushielaw) while **Stonechats** were already occupying the higher ground by early April.

There were a mere four records of **Yellow Wagtail**, the first record being of a pair at Springwood (Kelso) on 18-Apr. The first day of May gave us our first records of **Tree Pipits** with a single on passage seen at St Abb's Head and a singing bird at Huntford (Carter Bar).

Records of **Brambling** were still coming in until the end of April (although most of these were of a single(s) at Ashiestiel, Caddonfoot). A notable flock of 70 **Lesser Redpolls** was reported from Gordon Community Woodland on 20-May.

### **Jul-Sep (summer-autumn)**

**Mute Swan** counts at Yetholm Loch reached a maximum of 168 by 1-Aug, a figure not untypical for recent years. However, a maximum count of 40 at the Hirsell on 2-Jul was well above July-September numbers for recent years. Records of single **Whooper Swans** between Paxton and Wark (Coldstream) were made in each month as well as one from Fruid Reservoir. The first reports of autumn **Pink-footed Geese** was of c. 400 at Blackhill (Reston) and 48 flying south over Ashiestiel-Peel on 15-Sep. At Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden), monthly peaks for **Greylag Goose** were 678, 1,825 and 1,840 for July, August and September, respectively. Two **Bar-headed Geese** (presumed escapes) were reported from Watch Water from 11-Jul to 8-Aug. The usual large roosts of **Canada Geese** were reported from Watch Water with 170 there on 4-Aug.

**Wigeon** numbers were beginning to build up toward the end of September with 94 at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) on 27-Sep and, similarly, **Gadwall** numbers increased as summer turned to autumn with numbers reaching 27 at Yetholm Loch on 19-Sep. Reports of **Teal** from Hule Moss suggested numbers which were well below those of recent years, the biggest counts coming from Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) with 74 on 21-Sep. Limited **Pintail** movement was evident on 16th and 19-Sep with three birds reported at St Abbs Village and a

single off St Abb's Head. Ten **Shovelers** were counted at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) on 17-Sep, most of the birds having been there since April. In September **Pochards** were seen at Folly Loch, Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) and Eckford Hall (Nisbet) but amounted to no more than four bird-days in total. Three **Scaup** were reported on passage off St Abb's Head on 17-Sep and 12 **Eider Ducks** were also there on 28-Jul with the same location reporting 81 **Common Scoters** on 17-Sep and 14 **Velvet Scoters** between St Abbs Village and Eyemouth on 16-Sep. The first reported **Goldeneye** sighting came from Hirsell on 20-Sep with another reported from Haining Loch (Selkirk) on 25th. Numbers of **Goosanders** built up to a maximum of 52 at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) on 27-Sep.

Reports of **Quail** continued with birds heard at three sites in July: Gavinton (Duns); Kittyflat (Stow) and Newmains (Reston). Fifty **Red Grouse** were counted at Watch Water Reservoir on 17-Aug but there was only a single record of a **Black Grouse** (a cock from Fruid Reservoir on 3-Aug).

A single **Red-throated Diver** was seen off Eyemouth on 24-Jul with numbers building up to a maximum of 33 off St Abbs Village on 16-Sep. A **Black-throated Diver** was seen off St Abb's Head on 17-Sep while a **Great Northern Diver** was seen between St Abb's Head and St Abbs Village between 16th and 17-Sep.

An early **Sooty Shearwater** was seen off Eyemouth on 8-Jul and a passage of 38 was counted on 17-Sep at St Abb's Head. The aggregate count of **Manx Shearwaters** for this period was low compared with some recent years – 120 with a peak count of 56 off St Abb's Head on 17-Sep. A single **Balearic Shearwater** was seen off St Abb's Head on the same day. On the 7-Jul a chick was noted in one of the three **Gannet** nests at St Abb's Head (see p 10). Unfortunately the chick did not fledge and all three nests were abandoned by 19-July.

Up to two **Little Egrets** were seen at various locations between Coldstream and Paxton House for much of August and September. **Little Grebes** appeared to fare well with 30 counted at Hirsell Lake on 6-Sep and 19 at Paxton House on 5-Sep.

Three sightings of a **Red Kite** were made in the Selkirk-Cardrona-Ettrickbridge area, all probably of the same bird. A **Marsh Harrier** was reported in the Lammermuirs in August and three reports of **Hen Harriers** came from the Ettrick Forest area. Individual **Ospreys** were still being reported up to 11-Sep.

Two **Cranes** of unknown provenance were reported from the Hume area on 2-Jul, the first records of this species since 2014.

The first record of southward movement of **Whimbrel** was not until 16-Jul with two birds seen at Dunglass (Cockburnspath), while a **Black-tailed Godwit** was reported at Whitrig Bog-Westfield on 30-Aug. A single report of an unspecified number of **Turnstones** was made on 19-Sep at St Abbs Village and at nearby St Abb's Head, three **Knot** were seen on 23-Jul. All of the **Ruff** records were from Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden); the first record was of two on 31-Aug with a peak of 17 on 24-Sep and a decline to three by the end of the month. An early **Purple Sandpiper** was seen at Eyemouth on 22-Jul and a **Greenshank** was noted at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) on 7-Jul, a count bettered by four at Birgham Haugh on 17-Sep. Thirty-one **Snipe** were at Newmains (Reston) on 30-Sep.

Four sightings of **Pomarine Skua** at Eyemouth, St Abbs Village and St Abb's Head were made between 15-Jul and 17-Sep while 13 **Arctic Skuas** at St Abbs Village on 16-Jul was the highest number recorded since 2014. A single **Long-tailed Skua** was seen at St Abbs Village on 16-Sep and 19 **Great Skuas** were recorded off St Abb's Head on 17-Jul.

A **Black Tern** was seen on passage on 15-Jul at Eyemouth and a minimum of seventy **Sandwich Terns** at Linkim Shore (St Abbs Village) on 25-Jul was the biggest count since 2011. At the same location two **Mediterranean Gulls**

were seen on 25-Jul and the return of **Common Gulls** at Paxton House was relatively early with 133 seen on 2-Aug.

The last record of a **Cuckoo** was of a juvenile at Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank) on 15-Aug and a **Little Owl** was reported from The Merse on 3-Jul. There was confirmation of breeding for a pair of **Long-eared Owls** in eastern Berwickshire also on 3-Jul and an unusually high three records of **Nightjar** (last recorded in 2012) were submitted: 1-2 birds in the Monynut Valley on 12-Jul and a single which was caught in a pheasant rearing pen but released unharmed at Westruther on 15-Jul. The last record of a **Swift** was from near Yair (Caddonfoot) on 12-Sep.

The first record involving confirmed breeding for **Jays** was of fledged young and came from near Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) on 8-Jul.

Passage of **Yellow-browed Warblers** was first noted on 19-Sep and, as usual, most came from in and around St Abb's Head, although there was also a record of two or more birds from Lower Burnmouth. On 19-Sep only the second sighting for the Borders of a **Western Bonelli's Warbler** was made at Mire Loch (St Abb's Head). The bird showed well until 24th and was described as a text book example (see p 166 for an account of this find). Coastal movements of **Chiffchaff** were at a peak by the end of September with 17 recorded at Mire Loch on 30th. Another warbler rarity was discovered on 28-Sep when only the second record for Borders of a **Paddyfield Warbler** was made, again, at Mire Loch. It is of note that the first record of this species was only last year and at the same location.

Single records of both **Redwing** and **Fieldfare** were made by 24-Sep and 25 **Song Thrushes** were counted on passage at St Abb's Head on 30-Sep while 53 **Mistle Thrushes** were seen at Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) on 9-Sep.

**Tree Pipits** (with only two records) were last reported on 24-Aug (at Newmains, Reston) and post-breeding flocks of **Meadow Pipits** were widely reported in September with the highest count of 87 coming from Greenlaw Moor on 26th. Post-breeding flocks of **Chaffinches**, accompanied by a similar number of **Linnets**, were also evident with over 150 estimated at Williestruther Loch (Hawick) on 4-Sep. A movement of at least 20 **Lesser Redpolls** was seen at St Abb's Head on 30-Sep, 40 **Crossbills** were seen at Yetholm Loch on 19-Sep and over 50 **Reed Buntings** were recorded at Watch Water Reservoir (Longformacus) on 1-Jul.

### **Oct-Dec (autumn-winter)**

As usual, the greatest number of wintering **Mute Swans** were to be found at Yetholm Loch with a count of 165 on 25-Oct. However, a count of 136 on the Tweed between Kelso and Coldstream on 10-Dec indicates that numbers were also high there. The first record of **Whooper Swans** arriving was on 2-Oct at Teviot Haughs (Nisbet). The highest count during this period was of 328 at Folly Loch on 18-Nov, the highest since 1969 when 377 were counted in the Ednam-Eccles area. Another exceptional count of **Pink-footed Geese** was made at West Water on 18-Oct when 48,218 were counted in a roost. After the record count of 2015, this appears to have been the highest count since 2006-07 when, according to WeBS records, an incomplete count of 56,900 was made. Overall, this appears to have been the most successful year for the population of roosting birds. A record 2,640 **Barnacle Geese** were seen flying south at Dunglass on 18-Oct. **Gadwall**, **Teal** and **Mallard** numbers were fairly typical for this time of year and, as with 2016, there was only a single record of a **Pintail** (at Greenlaw Farm Pool on 3-Oct). The minimum of 112 **Eider Ducks** counted at Eyemouth Bay on 21-Dec was the highest count since 2013 but only a single **Long-tailed Duck** was reported (on 11-Nov from Dunglass). Three **Velvet Scoters** were seen at Dunglass on 8-Oct.

Peak counts of **Pheasant** were apparently at their highest since 2011 with the highest of approximately 240 between Walkerburn and Elibank on 19-Oct.

Only the third record for the Region of a **White-billed Diver** was reported from Eyemouth Harbour on 10-Nov.

Shearwater reports were limited to a mere single **Manx Shearwater** at St Abb's Head on 12-Nov while a handful of **Gannet** reports could only peak at six. Although made up of two flying groups, the total of 131 **Cormorants** flying up the Teviot at Denholm on 11-Dec would seem to be the highest recorded count in Borders by some margin.

Reports of 1-2 **Little Egrets** were made regularly along the Tweed and Teviot between Paxton House and Nisbet. In all likelihood the number of individuals involved was unlikely to be more than three or so. Unusually large assemblies of **Grey Herons** were reported from the Teviot Haughs and Tweed Haughs (Kelso-Coldstream) with 19 on 14-Oct and 14 on 19-Nov, respectively. While not as high as the count of 52 in January, the 38 **Little Grebes** at Mellerstain on 12-Oct was still a much higher than usual count and the 63 sites with records is also above the usual number.

A single **Red Kite** was reported from the Walkerburn area in November and two records of **Goshawks** came from north of Peebles and from the upper Tweed.

One thousand **Golden Plovers** were estimated at Westfield Ponds (Smailholm) on 15-Oct and 800 at Old Greenlaw on 30-Oct. These order of numbers have not been reported since 2003 when over 2,000 birds were reported from Folly Loch. Similarly, the 1,000 estimate of **Lapwings** and the 550 at the same sites as above on 18-Nov and 30-Oct, respectively, were well above numbers recorded in most recent years. Among other waders, **Turnstones** were reported throughout Oct-Dec from Lower Burnmouth (max of 22 on 14-Oct), up to six **Ruff** were seen in and around the Greenlaw area in October, the near-annual report of **Grey Phalarope** was made on 12-Nov from St Abb's Head and the over-wintering **Common Sandpiper** reported last year continued to be seen regularly along the Teviot in the Nisbet area. The limited number of **Green Sandpiper** sightings are usually of singles, making the five birds seen on Teviot Haughs on 4-Nov and the same number on the Tweed Haughs on 19-Nov all the more exceptional and has only been exceeded by a dozen birds seen in 1995 at Folly Loch and eight flying south at St Abb's Head in 2004. Four **Greenshanks** were reported on the Tweed Haughs (Kelso-Coldstream) on 8-Oct but there were no reports outside of this date. Malcolm's Moss (Ancrum) continued as the hot-spot for **Snipe** with 39 reported on 29-Oct.

Skua records were limited to four **Pomarine skuas** at Dunglass on 8-Oct and singles of **Great Skua** off St Abb's Head on 29-Oct and 12-Nov.

Auks were few and far between: a single record of two **Little Auks** off St Abb's Head on 12-Nov and a maximum of five **Guillemots** in the Eyemouth-Burnmouth coastal stretch (10-Nov and 1-Dec).

**Lesser Black-backed Gulls** on passage, again formed large roosts at Hule Moss with a peak count of 5,600 on 11-Oct. This is the largest count reported to-date. Meanwhile a sizeable count of 822 **Herring Gulls** was made at Langlee Rubbish Tip (Tweedbank) on 28-Dec.

Two adult **Short-eared Owls** were reported from the Tweedsmuir Hills on 14-Oct.

No less than four **Kingfishers** were present along the Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 2-Oct and another four were seen at Paxton House on 29-Oct. Throughout Oct-Dec up to three **Green Woodpeckers** were regularly seen and heard in the Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) area.

Five hundred **Jackdaws** leaving an overnight roost at Lowood Estate (Tweedbank) on 2-Dec represents a significantly large count, although **Rook** counts for the region were low relative to some counts in recent years. While the 30 **Ravens** seen near Liddesdale on 1-Nov do not quite match the 34 seen between Jedburgh and the Cheviots in Dec-2015, it still stands as the second highest count for Borders.

Throughout the period the numbers of **Skylarks** along the Teviot Haughs at Nisbet grew to a maximum of c. 200 on 28-Dec. The latest record for **Sand Martin** was on 3-Oct at Eckford Hall and Yetholm Loch and the final record for **Swallows** was on 25-Oct at Kelso. The last **House Martin** record was for 8-Oct at Birgham (Coldstream).

A **Pallas's Warbler** seen at Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) on 19-Oct was the first record since 2013 when two birds were also reported from Mire Loch. This year's bird represents the twenty fourth record for Borders. Six records of **Yellow-browed Warblers** were submitted from 1-Oct to 23-Oct, all involving either one or two birds and all seen at Mire Loch (St Abb's Head). The last **Willow Warbler** was reported at Stobo on 15-Oct, reports of single **Blackcaps** continued through to the end of the year and there was only one record of a **Lesser Whitethroat** – a single at St Abb's Head on 19-Oct.

Approximately 450 **Starlings** were seen at Nether Falla (Portmore) on 14-Oct and c. 400 were near Greenlaw on 30-Oct.

The last record of a **Ring Ouzel** was on 10-Nov from Newmains (Reston). Over 100 **Blackbirds** were seen on passage at Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) on 24-Oct and some large flocks of **Fieldfares** were reported, the largest being 300-500 at Lady Moss (Bowden) on 18-Nov. Over 30 **Song Thrushes** were recorded on passage at St Abb's Head on 20-Oct and over 600 **Redwings** were at the Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 22-Oct.

The last report of a **Spotted Flycatcher** was on 23-Oct at St Abb's Head while a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** put in one of its occasional visits (this time to Burnmouth) on 19-Oct. The last accepted record for this species was in Oct-2013. Another occasional passage migrant, the **Black Redstart**, visited Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) on 9-Oct. The final record for **Wheatear** came from the upper Kale Water on 22-Oct.

Approximately 40 **Pied Wagtails** were recorded (presumably on passage) on the Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 2-Oct.

Another case of birds on the move was recorded at St Abb's Head with more than 200 **Bramblings** seen on 19-Oct. The life-line of a stubble field near Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick) attracted over 1,500 **Chaffinches** on 8-Dec and the invasion of Britain by **Hawfinches** from central and eastern Europe was first noted on 16-Nov and continued beyond the end of the year with the highest count of at least six made at the Hirsell. The first accepted record since 2008 of a **Common Rosefinch** was made at St Abb's Head on 21-Oct while an encouraging estimate of 70 **Greenfinches** at Manderston (Duns) on 1-Oct equalled the high count at Eckford Sandpit in 2013. The count of 80 **Twite** at Lauder Common on 24-Dec is the highest since 200 were counted at Cockburnspath in 2009. A single **Snow Bunting** was recorded at St Abb's Head on 11-Nov.

Cumulative monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Species per month	135	123	132	139	144	138	143	117	144	131	125	120
Cumulative total	135	146	159	177	190	198	204	204	211	214	218	218
Records submitted	3,284	2,726	4,208	4,282	3,392	2,892	2,194	1,713	3,021	3,490	3,449	3,392



## Classified List

The list that follows is in the sequence that prevailed at the time of the actual observations, ie the British List as published by the British Ornithologist's Union in their 8<sup>th</sup> Edition. Although, at the time of writing, the British List is based on the 9<sup>th</sup> Edition, which adopts the IOC World Bird List (version 7.3), this will not be used for the Borders Bird Report until publication of the 2018 Report.

The headings given for each species outline the occurrence of that species both spatially and seasonally, as well as making reference to trends in some cases. Most headings also show the percentage of occupied tetrads for that species during 2007-13 is based on data collected during the survey work for the SE Scotland Atlas and is used here to indicate the true range of species.

Terms such as *common*, *scarce*, etc are not defined numerically but are intended to simply give a notion of the relative level of occurrence in the Borders.

The majority of records summarised are based on tetrads (4 km<sup>2</sup>) but many passerines have levels of occurrence based on sites which, for convenience, are defined as one km squares. This is an approximate way to take into consideration the often smaller territories of passerines. However, such distinctions are inevitably arbitrary.

To give an idea of what the number of tetrads represent in the context of the Borders as a whole, the actual number of tetrads as a percentage of all 1,280 tetrads that make up the Borders is given. The deficit between the percentage of all tetrads occupied during this year and the percentage occupation during the SE Scotland Atlas survey period gives a good idea of how this Bird Report, like any other, is only an approximation of the status of bird populations in the Borders Region. Readers should bear this mind when statements about trends are made on the basis of BBR records, past and present.



**Juvenile Stonechat. Burnhouse Mains (Stow). August. Alistair Cutter.**

## Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Common breeder. River sites often less successful than still-water sites. Many moulting non-breeders on lower Tweed, Berwick-Paxton. During 2008-13 found in 17% of tetrads in summer and 18% in winter.

Eight hundred and fifty-two records from 95 tetrads (7%). 2016: 882 records from 118 tetrads; 2015: 501 records from 104 tetrads. Counts of five and more came from the following sites:

Peak counts of five or more	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Alemoor Reservoir (Hawick)	6	11							6			
Bemersyde Moss		6	5									
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)									12	5		
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	9											
Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham)	6											
Eyemouth	7											
Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank)	7	6							12		5	
Folly Loch	36	<b>40</b>	47	30		10	9	5				
Green Diamonds (Selkirk)												8
Gunknowe Loch (Tweedbank)	40	26	26	23	23	17	25	31	21	22	17	20
Harelaw Pond (Lilliesleaf)									6			
Hen Poo (Duns)									5	5	5	
The Hirsell	<b>66</b>	35	18	21	<b>30</b>	55	40		14		17	
Hollybush (Galashiels)									5			
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)			5									52
Hule Moss	8	9	6									
Lady Moss (Bowden)	10											
Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)											11	10
Lindean Loch (Selkirk)	5					7				7		
Mellerstain (Gordon)	7											
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)												8
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)			5						8			
Newmains (Reston)					14							
Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)										6	6	
Portmore Loch (Eddleston)											5	
Roxburghe Hotel						6						
Shiplaw (Eddleston)		5										
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)		30		<b>46</b>					18	57	56	51
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh		20	7		12				26		9	
Teviot: Rulemouth (Denholm)									7			
Tweed: Innerleithen										6		
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	41		<b>52</b>	29	26			6	18	61	63	136
Tweed: Ladykirk							5	5	13			12
Tweed: Paxton House		10	6	5	6		5		12	10	5	5
Tweed: Union Bridge (Tweedhill)	5		9	9					6	9		6
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)									5			
Wooden Loch (Nisbet)									5	7	15	25
Yetholm Loch	37	17	13	13	16	<b>152</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>No. of tetrads with records</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Aggregate of peak counts (all tetrads)</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>713</b>

*Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream data is based on the maximum count at any single site between Kelso and Coldstream unless the WeBS count for the whole stretch was greater.*

Highest monthly counts are in bold.

Sites with peak counts of less than five were: Alerigg (St Boswells); Allanton Bridge (Chirnside); Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Barnes Loch (Hawick); Blue Stane Ford (Chirnside); Bowdenmoor Reservoir (Melrose); Bowhill (Selkirk); Branxholme Easter Loch (Hawick); Burnmouth-Border; Chiefswood (Melrose); Clearburn Loch (Ettrick); Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth; Coldingham Loch; Dawyck (Peebles); Doorpool (Bonchester Bridge); Ettrick Water (Selkirk); Eyemouth; Fruid Reservoir; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden); Haining Loch (Selkirk); Hallmanor Loch (Manor Valley); Hare Moss (Selkirk); Heatherhope Reservoir (Hownam); Heiton (Kelso); Kerss Wood and Loch

(Ancrum); Letham (Carter Bar); Loch Eddy (Traquair); Manderston (Duns); Mellerstain (Gordon); Peebles; Pot Loch (Selkirk); Satchells (Ashkirk); Shielswood Loch (Hawick); Shiplaw (Eddleston); Smedheugh Pond (Selkirk); ; Southfield (Hawick); Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords); Synton Loch (Ashkirk); Synton Parkhead (Ashkirk); The Hass (Carter Bar); Thornielee Pond (Clovenfords); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose; Tweed: Thornielee; Tweed: Walkerburn; Watch Water Reservoir (Longformacus); White Law Loch (Selkirk); Whitmuir Hall Loch (Selkirk); Whitrig Bog (Smailholm); Whitton Loch (Hownam).

Evidence of confirmed breeding came from 33 sites (37 in 2016). First report of fledged birds on 15-May at Newmains, Reston (D Graham):

Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	28-April	ON	Yetholm Loch	18-Jun	1br3
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	04-May	ON	Eyemouth	18-Jun	br12
Tweed : Banff Mill-Lochton	10-May	ON	Pot Loch (Selkirk)	22-Jun	1br2
Gunknowe Loch (Tweedbank)	13-May	ON	Holly Bush Farm Pond (Galashiels)	25-Jun	1br3
Newmains (Reston)	15-May	2br10	Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)	05-Jul	1br4
Folly Loch	18-May	ON	Town Yetholm	16-Jul	1br6
Allanton Bridge (Chirside)	21-May	ON	Heatherhope Reservoir (Hownam)	27-Jul	1br2
Birgham Haugh (Coldstream)	22-May	br6	Tweed: Ladykirk	29-Jul	1br3
Whitrig Bog-Westfield (Smailholm)	31-May	1br4	Whitton Loch (Hownam)	01-Aug	1br8
Green Diamond (Selkirk)	01-Jun	1br4	Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	15-Aug	1br5
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	01-Jun	1br6	Kelso	18-Aug	1br7
Nisbet	05-Jun	1br3	River Tweed/Whiteadder (West)	02-Sep	1br3
The Hirsell	12-Jun	1br3	Kalemouth (Nisbet)	17-Sep	1br5
Blue Stane Ford (Chirside)	15-Jun	FL	Wooden Loch (Nisbet)	01-Oct	br6
Manderston (Duns)	17-Jun	1br8	Mellerstain (Gordon)	02-Nov	1br2
Bemersyde Moss	18-Jun	1br4	Portmore Loch (Eddleston)	07-Nov	1br3
See Introduction for breeding codes.			Synton Parkhead (Ashkirk)	08-Nov	1br2

A total of 61 pairs were reported from 58 sites. The number of broods was estimated as 28 and the total of young recorded was 115. These figures suggest that the status of breeding Mute Swans is fairly stable. For comparison, breeding data for the past ten years is shown below:

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Pairs</b>	63	74	47	60	68	57	67	30	54	61
<b>Broods</b>	34	35	25	29	29	27	33	13	25	28
<b>Young</b>	134	161	101	137	110	126	138	51	106	115
<b>MBS*</b>	3.9	4.6	4	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.2	3.9	4.2	4.1

\* mean brood size.

The years 2008-2013 (shaded) coincide with the SE Scotland Atlas surveying period; figures for that period may well partly reflect the greater observer effort associated with the Atlas.

### Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Well-represented winter visitor Oct-Apr. c.200-250 birds present in most winters on Teviot and Tweed Haughs. Occasional birds in summer, probably injured. During 2008-13 found in 2% tetrads in summer and 8% in winter.

Records from 58 tetrads (5%). Recent records were 2016: from 59 tetrads; 2015: from 79 tetrads.

Jan-Apr records from 24 tetrads (37 in 2016). Highest counts per tetrad:

Smedheugh Pond (Selkirk)	01-Jan	4	Cappercleuch (St Mary's Loch)	29-Jan	6
Folly Loch	03-Jan	55	Gavinton (Duns)	30-Jan	2
Loch of the Lowes	03-Jan	7	Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)	05-Feb	11
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)	04-Jan	4	Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	09-Feb	61
Pickmaw Moss (Selkirk)	04-Jan	4	Whitmuir Hall Loch (Selkirk)	12-Feb	10
Hule Moss	08-Jan	7	Sprouston (Kelso)	15-Feb	130
Tweed: Paxton House	08-Jan	4	Birgham (Coldstream)	01-Mar	182

Ale Moor Reservoir (Hawick)	17-Jan	11	Dykegatehead (Whitsome)	04-Mar	45
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	22-Jan	6	Winfield (Paxton)	08-Mar	5
Helmburn (Ettrickbridge)	23-Jan	1	Kerss Wood and Loch (Ancrum)	15-Mar	12
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	24-Jan	21	Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	21-Mar	1
Clearburn Loch (Hawick)	27-Jan	7	Faughill Moor Loch (Melrose)	02-Apr	3

Records of singletons in all months between May and September came from Folly Loch, Fruid Reservoir, Huntford (Carter Bar), Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge and Tweed: Coldstream. A record of two birds came from Birgham Haugh (Coldstream) on 19-Jun (B Meikle).

Oct-Dec records from 32 tetrads (33 in 2016). Highest counts per tetrad:

Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	02-Oct	1	Hule Moss	30-Oct	6
Yetholm Loch	03-Oct	5	Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords)	30-Oct	2
Jardinefield Farm (Whitsome)	04-Oct	8	Eckford (Nisbet)	02-Nov	40
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	05-Oct	18	Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank)	03-Nov	5
St Mary's Loch	08-Oct	5	Redden Haugh (Kelso)	04-Nov	24
White Law Loch (Selkirk)	08-Oct	1	Satchells (Ashkirk)	10-Nov	1
Duns Castle Pond	11-Oct	3	Loch Of The Lowes	11-Nov	5
Tweed: Paxton House	12-Oct	2	Lady Moss (Selkirk)	18-Nov	20
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	20-Oct	2	Wooden Mill (Kelso)	25-Nov	20
Dowlaw (Coldingham)	21-Oct	20	Tweed: Coldstream	05-Dec	63
South Laws (Whitsome)	22-Oct	16	Birgham (Coldstream)	09-Dec	84
Hilton (Whitsome)	23-Oct	65	Kale Water (Morebattle)	09-Dec	28
Whitelaw (Duns)	28-Oct	44	Hendersyde (Kelso)	09-Dec	1
Folly Loch	29-Oct	80	Lindean Loch (Selkirk)	12-Dec	2
Sinclair's Hill (Duns)	29-Oct	72	Sprouston (Kelso)	16-Dec	10
Newmains (Reston)	29-Oct	11	Smedheugh Pond (Selkirk)	25-Dec	8

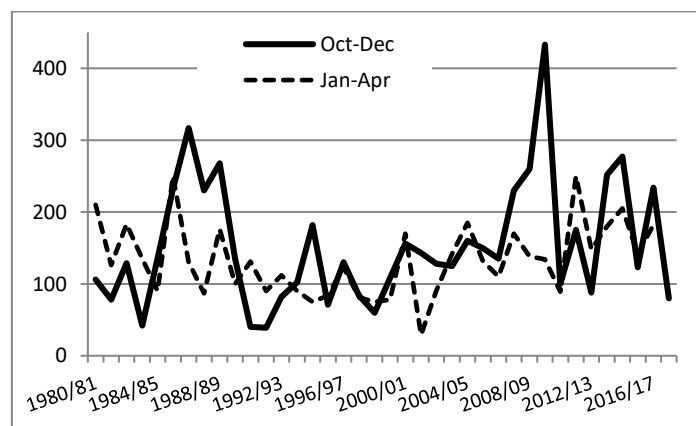
There is obviously an element of duplicate counting in the tables above, given the proximity of many tetrads and the mobility of Whooper Swans.

During the period Jan-Apr 18% of birds that were aged were 1<sup>st</sup> winter birds, ie 43 of 231 birds.

During the period Oct-Dec 18% of birds that were aged were 1<sup>st</sup> winter birds, ie 181 of 1,008 birds.

The latest record in spring, other than the over-summering bird(s), was on 13-Apr when seven birds were seen on the Teviot Haughs: Nisbet (M Henderson). The earliest record in the autumn was of five birds seen at Yetholm Loch on 3-Oct (J Lough).

Although peak counts at any one site involve a degree of randomness, the general trend since the early 1990s shows an increase in numbers, a trend which has been reflected in census surveys for both Borders and Lothian and corresponds to increases in the Icelandic breeding population:



Peak counts for Oct-Dec and following Jan-Apr periods.

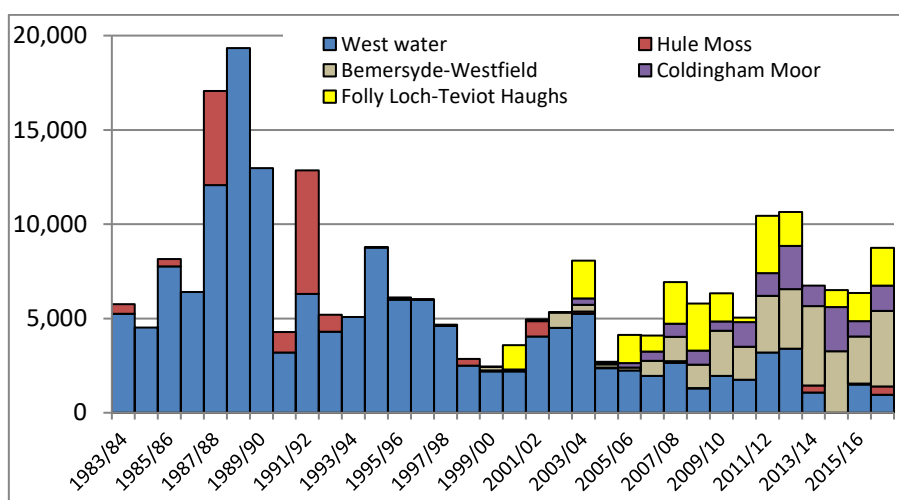


Roxburgh Moor	169						
St Abb's Head	108		1			420	
Tweed Haughs	100					275	160
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose						1	170
Tweed: Kelso-Roxburgh Castle						135	
Tweed: Paxton House			3				
Yetholm Loch							2

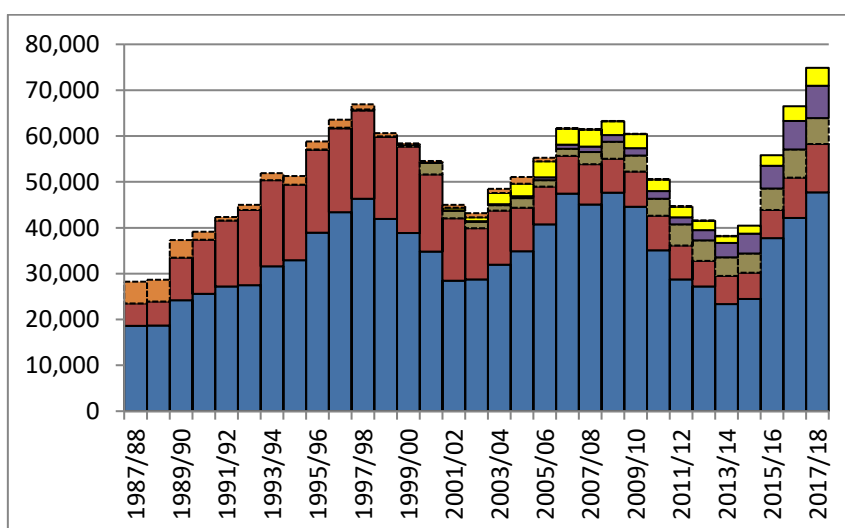
The winter-spring counts appear to be in-line with recent trends: declining counts at West Water and Hule Moss while counts are showing increases at Coldingham Moor, Bemersyde-Westfield and at Folly Loch-Teviot Haughs.

The autumn-winter counts continue to show the prime importance of West Water and Hule Moss as autumn roosts but also continue to show the steady growth of secondary roost sites such as Coldingham Moor, Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden), Folly Loch-Teviot Haughs and Bemersyde-Westfield. Coldingham Moor had a record count of 8,980, as did Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) with 4,460. The latter is omitted from the five year average graph below because records only began in Oct-2013.

When interpreting the graphs below note that not all sites have been consistently counted.



**Peak counts of main roosts: winter-spring (Jan-Apr).**



**Five year average peak counts for main roost sites: autumn-winter.**

(Same key as above with orange =Hoselaw Loch, Yetholm).

The graph above suggests that 2017 might have had the largest aggregate population count for autumn since records began.

### White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Scarce winter visitor amongst grey geese flocks. Typically the Greenland race *flavirostris* is the more common in the region. The nominate European *albifrons* is a more scarce vagrant. Not annual. Race given when specified.

Only two records received: five Eurasian (*albifrons*) ssp. at Boghouse (West Linton) on 7-Jan (K Ingleby) and a record with no count and no information about race from Eyemouth on 4-Feb (A Berryman).

### Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Uncommon but quickly increasing breeder (c.75-125 pr), birds spreading rapidly from Lothian and other introductions. Icelandic population is becoming an uncommon winter visitor with perhaps less than 500 present each winter. During 2008-13 found in 12% of tetrads in summer and 10% in winter.

Peak counts of a minimum of five came from (with peak for each month in bold):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Ale Moor (Hawick)					10							
Bemersyde-Westfield	60	75		68						15	18	74
Bow Covert (Stow)	24											
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)						25	39					
Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)			35						130			
Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton)								48				
Ferniehirst (Stow)												60
Folly Loch	5	7	5							200	200	
Gattonside-Lauder												38
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	<b>536</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>362</b>	13	12	<b>678</b>	<b>1,825</b>	<b>1,840</b>	240	110	14
Greenlaw Moor-Hule Moss						5			47	53	80	
The Hirsell		5							200	460	230	160
Huntford (Carter Bar)	40											
Lady Moss (Selkirk)												52
Lindean Res. (Selkirk)										20		
Macks Mill (Gordon)										10		
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)			17		18	12	29					
Newmains (Reston)					26							
Stantling Craig Res. (Clovenfords)	280	9	12		<b>119</b>		158		400	<b>570</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>350</b>
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)										43	40	
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream									50			
Tweed: Kelso-Roxburgh Castle								13	19			70
Tweed: Paxton House	80											
Watch Water Res. (Longformacus)			55	70	58	<b>170</b>	156		43	243	6	14
White Law Loch (Selkirk)											80	9
<b>Total of tetrads with records</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>

Sites with counts below five were: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Carlops (West Linton); Chapel Mains (Earlston); Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank); Heriot (Gala Water); Hundleshope Ponds (Manor Valley); Mire Loch (St Abb's Head); Newbiggins Walls (Lauder); Smedheugh Pond (Selkirk); St Abb's Head; Synton Loch (Ashkirk); Tweedbank; Whitelaw (Duns); Yetholm Loch.

In order of count size the chief roosting/feeding sites were (see table above for peak counts):

#### Jan-Apr:

Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden); Stantling Craig Res. (Clovenfords); Bemersyde-Westfield.

#### May-July:

Watch Water Res. (Longformacus); Stantling Craig Reservoir; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden).

#### Aug-Dec:

Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden); Stantling Craig Reservoir; The Hirsell; Folly Loch; Greenlaw Moor-Hule Moss; Bemersyde-Westfield.

Records with breeding evidence came from 13 tetrads with eight showing confirmed breeding (best evidence shown):

Newbiggins Walls (Lauder)	13-Mar	A Sandeman	P
Northfield (St Abbs)	28-Mar	F Evans	P
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	06-Apr	D Parkinson	P
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	18-Apr	D Parkinson	P
Teviot: Roxburgh Castle-Roxburgh	09-May	T Reed	NY
Tweed : Kelso-Coldstream	10-May	M Moncrieff	1br3
Greenlaw Moor/Hule Moss	11-May	M Moncrieff	1br4
Newmains (Reston)	15-May	D Graham	br6; br8; br6
Stantling Craig Res. Galashiels)	18-May	A Bramhall	br80
Eckford Hall (Nisbet)	27-May	C Green	P
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	11-Jun	M Moncrieff	br12
The Hirsell	12-Jun	D Parkinson	br3
Watch Water Reservoir (Longformacus)	13-Jun	C Hartley	br61

See Introduction for breeding codes.

Although difficult to confidently make statements on the basis of Bird Report records only, breeding levels appear to have stabilised at 8-17 tetrads reporting confirmed breeding in the post-Atlas period (2014-2017). Although not high, these figures are significantly greater than those of the pre-Atlas period, when less than five tetrads with records suggesting breeding was the norm. Records suggest c. 35 pairs but the greater observer effort during the Atlas survey period (2008-13) might indicate that twice this number is likely.



**Greylag Geese. The Hirsell. September. Tom Brewis.**



### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Increasing, but still scarce breeder, derived from feral populations in England or from local releases. Most breed in Lammermuirs, so perhaps local releases for shooting. Moulting migration passes through in May-June and August-September. During 2008-13 found in 5% of tetrads in summer and 5% in winter.

Records from 47 (4%) tetrads. 2016: 45 tetrads; 2015: 40 tetrads.

Peak counts of a minimum of five came from (with peak count for each month in bold):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Bemersyde-Westfield	35	20	<b>29</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>					5	<b>102</b>	<b>110</b>
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)		<b>30</b>										8
Eckford Hall (Nisbet)							9					
Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank)	37										14	21
Folly Loch			7									
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	<b>40</b>	8	10	8	22	32			23	<b>94</b>		
Harelaw Pond (Lilliesleaf)			6									
The Hirsell		5							31		22	
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)			13									
Lady Moss (Selkirk)			5									
Leadburn Community Woodland						20						
Lempitlaw (Kelso)										20		
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)				6			8					
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	30						13		19	57		70
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Br.				5				11				
Watch Water Res (Longformacus)			21		99	<b>102</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>65</b>	39		
White Law Loch (Selkirk)			6									
<b>Total tetrads with records</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>

Sites with counts below five were: Alemoor Reservoir (Hawick); Bowdenmoor Reservoir (Melrose); Carlops (West Linton); Eckford Hall (Nisbet); Gala Water (Stow); Gordon Community Woodland; Holydean (St Boswells); Innerleithen ; Lowood Bridge (Tweedbank); Megget Reservoir; New Belses (Anrum); St Abb's Head; Tweedaleburn (Gladhouse Res.); Tweedbank; Williestruther Loch (Hawick); ; Yetholm Loch.

In order of count size the chief roosting/feeding sites were (see above table for peak counts):

**Jan-Apr:** Bemersyde-Westfield; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden).

**May-Jul:** Watch Water Res (Longformacus); Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden).

**Aug-Dec:** Watch Water Res (Longformacus); Bemersyde-Westfield; Tweed (Kelso-Coldstream); Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden); Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank).

Records with breeding evidence came from ten tetrads with only three showing confirmed breeding (best evidence shown):

Gordon Community Woodland	23-Apr	F Evans	ON
Whitrig Bog	25-Apr	D Parkinson	P
Bowdenmoor Res. (Melrose)	26-Apr	D Parkinson	P
Lindean Res. (Selkirk)	03-May	D Parkinson	P
Megget Reservoir	04-May	RS Craig	P
New Belses (Anrum)	17-May	ND Stratton	1br2
Folly Loch	19-May	A Bramhall	P
Tweeddaleburn (Portmore)	24-May	N Crowther	P
Watch Water Res. (Longformacus)	13-Jun	C Hartley	br33
Bemersyde Moss	18-Jun	M Moncrieff	br8

On the basis of records received 2017 appears to have been a fairly typical year for breeding when compared with post-Atlas years.

### **Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis***

Passage migrant in variable numbers in late September-early October as Svalbard/Solway birds overfly area. Rarer during spring passage in May. Small numbers can winter with Pink-feet. During 2008-13 found in 20 tetrads in winter.

Only three sightings during winter-spring (Jan-Apr): 25-Mar West Water Reservoir – 1; 6-May Newmains (Reston) – 80; 8-May Eddleston – 1.

Twenty sightings in autumn-winter (Sep-Dec). Largest counts of the 12 sites were:

Langton (Duns)	21-Sep	2
Tweedbank	02-Oct	50
Dunglass	08-Oct	2,640
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	08-Oct	380
Newmains (Reston)	08-Oct	175
West Water Reservoir	08-Oct	30
Hule Moss	09-Oct	2
Doorpool (Bonchester Bridge)	14-Oct	20
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	14-Oct	1
Hule Moss	23-Oct	4
Folly Loch	29-Oct	8
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	27-Nov	1

Dunglass sighting of 2,640 over-flying birds was from D Graham and Mire Loch sighting of 380 birds from F Evans. The count of 2,640 is exceptional. Previous Bird Reports do not mention counts remotely that large. As far as can be ascertained, the highest previous counts were of 1,500 flying NW at Spottiswoode Loch (Westruther) in May 2008 and 1,000 flying N at Coldstream in May 1998.



**Barnacle Geese. Newmains. December. Dave Graham.**

## Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Rare (5-10 pr) breeder on coast near Dunglass or on inland waters. Scarce along coast, most common on moult migration During 2008-13 found in 3% of tetrads in summer and 1% in winter.

Records came from 18 tetrads. In 2016 records also came from 18 tetrads; in 2015 from 13 and in 2014 from 16. Peak counts at sites were:

Sites	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N
Bemersyde-Westfield	2	2	2	4	2				1	
Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)		2		1						
Folly Loch	4	4	1	6	18	1	1		1	1
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)		1	2	8	6					
Hule Moss		2	2	7	12	8				
Innerleithen		2								
Kerss Wood and Loch (Ancrum)		1								
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)		1								
Minto Kaimes (Denholm)			2							
Nether Falla (Portmore)		4	2							
Pease Bay	1									
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)			2	2						
Yetholm Loch		1	2	2						
Gordon Woodland				1						
Eyemouth							10			
Dunglass								1		
<b>No of tetrads with records</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

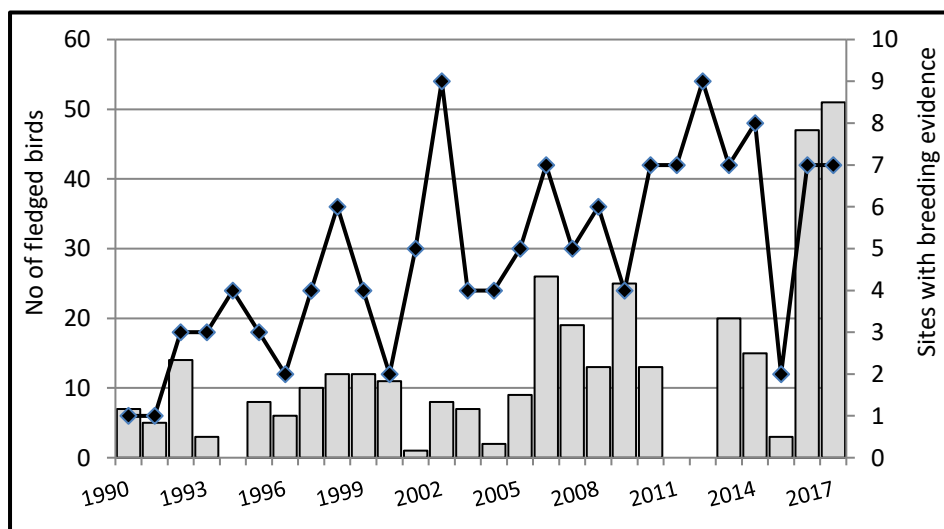
As far as is known all counts are of adults.

The latest record submitted was for one bird on 12-Nov at Folly Loch (E Bickmore).

Evidence of breeding came from seven sites with about 51 young reported (the highest number so far recorded). However, subsequent records from the same sites often suggested mortalities in excess of 50%.

Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)	02-Mar	F Evans	2	P
Nether Falla (Portmore)	02-Apr	T Dougall	2	P
Bemersyde Moss	22-Apr	A Bramhall	2	N
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	29-May	D Christie	5	br4
Whitrig Bog-Westfield (Smailholm)	31-May	M Moncrieff	1	br11
Folly Loch	07-Jun	M Moncrieff	18	5br30
Hule Moss	19-Jun	M Moncrieff	2	br6

Since the first record of breeding at Whitton Loch (Hownam) in 1990 there has been a steady growth in the number of fledged birds reported, as well as an increase in the number of sites reporting breeding. Whether this reflects dispersal of breeding birds from the coast (largely in Lothian) is not known:



**Breeding trends: 1990-2017**  
(columns = fledged birds; line = sites with breeding evidence).

### Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

Introduced. Rare and elusive resident breeder along Eye Water and Whiteadder. During 2008-13 found in 1% of tetrads in summer but <1% in winter.

Birds were reported from two sites: a pair on Monynut Water, near Abbey St Bathans on 30-Mar (R Watterson) and a single bird from Ayton on 7-Apr (D Graham) and 30-Apr (F Evans). It is not known whether the latter was of the same individual or of two separate birds.

The bird at Monynut Water hints at further dispersal up the Whiteadder catchment.

### Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Very scarce breeding species in the Ettrick Forest (formerly 10-20 pairs, now <5 pairs with no confirmed breeding since dedicated survey in 1999). Common winter visitor and autumn passage migrant to coast. During 2008-13 found in 2% of tetrads in summer and 7% in winter.

Records from 67 (5%) tetrads. Fifty-five tetrads in 2016 and 45 tetrads in 2015.

The Rocky Shore Count (15-Jan) recorded 40 between Red Heugh and Souter and three between Pease Bay and Red Heugh.

The pre-eminent sites were Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) and Bemersyde-Westfield with smaller but significant aggregations at Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream, Folly Loch, Acreknowe Res (Hawick), Mellerstain (Gordon) and Faldonside-Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank).

Sites with peak counts of ten or more (in order of aggregated peak counts) were (monthly peak counts in bold):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	A	S	O	N	D
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	<b>690</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>94</b>	185	<b>466</b>	<b>290</b>
Bemersyde-Westfield	470	200	224	58			2	<b>250</b>	400	20
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	110		60				4		88	97
Folly Loch	61	41	38				20	29	62	1
Acreknowe Res. (Hawick)		12							56	153
Mellerstain (Gordon)								35	170	
Faldonside/Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	24	1	2	2			6	35	36	98
Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)	40	39	40				12	31	3	
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)	63						10	45		
Whitmuir Hall Loch (Selkirk)	40	25	40							
Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)			62						34	
Tweed: Kelso-Roxburgh Castle	7									84
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)			5						34	46
Dunglass	68							15		
St Abb's Head							78			
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	32		36					10		
Stantling Craig Res. (Clovenfords)	3						1	11	30	24
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)								26	10	25
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	23	19						10	2	
Ale Moor Reservoir (Hawick)	15	12	2				2		15	
Eckford Hall (Nisbet)										43
Red Heugh (Coldingham Moor)	40									
Hule Moss	23						14	2		
St Abbs Village							34			
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	5	5	4			<b>2</b>		14		
The Hirsell	6	11	1				7		3	1
Yetholm Loch							4	6	16	1
Harelaw Pond (Lilliesleaf)	8							14		
Eyemouth							20			
Wooden Loch (Nisbet)							2	18		
<b>Aggregated peak counts (all sites)</b>	<b>1,743</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>998</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>1,449</b>	<b>901</b>

Sites with peak counts below ten were: Abbotsford-Lowood; Barnes Loch (Hawick); Broadlee Loch (Teviothead); Broughton Brewery Floods; Essenside (Ashkirk); Ettrick Water (Selkirk); Faughill Moor (Selkirk); Fruid Reservoir; Gordon Woodland; Hare Moss (Selkirk); Kerss Wood and Loch (Ancrum); Newmains (Reston); Pease Bay-

Redheugh; Philiphaugh (Selkirk); Portmore Reservoir; Smedheugh Pond (Selkirk); Teviot Haughs (Nisbet); Tweed: Paxton House; Tweed: Paxton House; Watch Water Res. (Longformacus); Whitton Loch (Hownam).

Beyond two pairs being reported from Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) and a pair at Bemersyde-Westfield there were no reports of breeding.

The exceptional counts of 848 at Greenlaw Farm Pool and of 850 at Whitrig Bog in 2016 were not equalled this year. The highest count was 690 at Greenlaw Farm Pool on 1-Jan (D Christie).

### Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor, mostly August-September. Scarce, but increasingly regular breeder, in very small numbers on eastern waters. During 2008-13 found in 1% of tetrads in summer and 1% in winter.

Records from nine tetrads (<1%). 2016 had records from 13 tetrads; 2015 from six tetrads; 2014 from 11 tetrads.

Monthly peak counts:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	1	1		2	2	1	8	2	1	1		
The Hirsell				4								
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)											4	8
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)										2		
Newmains (Reston)		1		2								
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream					2							
Tweed: Paxton						5						
Yetholm Loch	7	20	12	3	4	15	14	19	27	20	20	11
Yetholm Pond		4	8							2		2
<b>Aggregate of peak counts</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>

Overall, a fairly typical year compared with recent years with the main site throughout the year at Yetholm Loch. However, this was the first year since 2011 with no confirmed breeding. There were only three sites with reports of pairs: Yetholm Loch; The Hirsell and Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden).

### Teal *Anas crecca*

Uncommon breeder, c.100-150 pr, mostly on fringes of upland areas. Common winter visitor and passage migrant. During 2008-13 found in 8% of tetrads in summer and 15% in winter.

Records from 69 (6%) tetrads. There were records from 64 tetrads in 2016 and 61 tetrads in 2015.

Monthly peak counts of main sites (in order of aggregated peak counts):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	52	867	168	77	20	5	11	34	74	88	36	620
Hule Moss	800	56	15	34	9	5	18	4	59	450	251	120
Newmains (Reston)		410									310	380
Bemersyde-Westfield	150	150	67	22			7	1	5	50	400	23
Folly Loch	58	61	39	8	3	4		1	29	56	100	73
The Hirsell	228	100	19	10		1			5		37	17
Watch Water Res. (Longformacus)			4	2							180	78
Galashiels sewage works	52	52	45	12						18	30	44
Stantling Craig Res. (Clovenfords)	32	14			2					3	80	106
Dowlaw Dam	40	47	34	16					7	10	82	
Hundleshope (Manor Valley)		100	80	6							25	
Bogbank (Coldingham Moor)											210	
Whitmuir Hall Loch (Selkirk)	60	1	6								19	85
Hollybush (Galashiels)		5							13	8	24	81
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	15									3	38	62
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	24	12								9	7	27
Yetholm Pond	35	20	12							6		6
<b>Aggregate count of all peaks</b>	<b>1,780</b>	<b>1,952</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>1,910</b>	<b>1,965</b>

Other sites with records (in order of aggregated counts): Minto Kaimes (Ancrum); Yetholm Loch; Broom (Ancrum); Gunknowe Loch (Tweedbank); Spylaw Dam (Heiton); Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge; Duns Castle Pond; Borthwickshiels Loch (Hawick); Faldonside-Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank); Lugate (Stow); Williestruther Loch (Hawick); Mire Loch (St Abb's Head); Wooden Loch (Nisbet); Alerigg (St Boswells); Teviot Haughs (Nisbet); Harelaw Pond (Lilliesleaf); St Abb's Head; Whitton Loch (Hownam); Acreknowe Res. (Hawick); Broadlee Loch (Teviothead); Lindean Res. (Selkirk); Faughill Moor (Selkirk); Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet); Eckford Hall (Nisbet); Alemoor Res. (Hawick); Kaimes (West Linton); Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm); Smedheugh Pond (Selkirk); Barnes Loch (Hawick); White Law Loch (Selkirk); Portmore Loch; St Mary's Loch; Burnmouth; The Ley (Innerleithen); Branxholme Easter Loch (Hawick); Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch); Eddleston-Leadburn; Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose; Pot Loch (Selkirk); Synton Loch (Ashkirk); Bowden Moor Loch (Melrose); Kerss Wood and Loch (Ancrum); Philiphaugh (Selkirk); Saughtree (Hermitage); Carlops; Cavers Wood (Hawick).

Breeding evidence came from only six tetrads with only of record of confirmed breeding.

Galashiels Sewage Works	Apr-17	A Bramhall	D (copulating pr)
Bemersyde Moss	Apr-17	D Parkinson	P
Hundleshope (Manor Valley)	Apr-17	D Parkinson	P
Alemoor Res. (Hawick)	May-17	G Scott	P
Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords)	May-17	A Bramhall	P
The Ley (Leithen Water)	Jun-17	T Dougall	br2 (min)

The count of 867 at Greenlaw Farm Pool on 12-Feb (D Christie) was, as far as can be determined, the highest count so far reported in Borders.

SE Scotland Atlas (2007-13) suggests a significant decrease in the number of breeding pairs.



**1<sup>st</sup> winter male Long-tailed Duck. Millar's Moss (St Abbs). January. Martin Moncrieff.**

### Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Abundant and widespread breeder (1,500-2,000 pr). Several large moult assemblies in late summer. Large but declining winter counts are thought to include immigrants. During 2008-13 found in 59% of tetrads in summer and 47% in winter.

Records from 114 (9%) tetrads. Records from 188 tetrads in 2016 and 140 tetrads in 2015.

Sites with the highest aggregated counts (largest monthly peaks in bold):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Sum of peaks
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	<b>227</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>57</b>	34				166	<b>239</b>	235	<b>350</b>	<b>1,605</b>
Yetholm Loch	160	30	20	14	15	98	189	106	91	96	72	58	<b>949</b>
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)		10	34	27	<b>78</b>	<b>106</b>	130	<b>158</b>	<b>189</b>	17			<b>749</b>
Duns Castle	188	81	54	31					111	74	100	87	<b>726</b>
Tweedbank		44	24	25	21	83	145	114	103	58	64		<b>681</b>
Bemersyde-Westfield	209	40			10	25	<b>213</b>	72		100			<b>669</b>
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Br.	53	33	29	16	27	32	30	50	149	93	80	68	<b>660</b>
Folly Loch	54	45	33	17	15	40	68	15	104	97	104	52	<b>644</b>
Watch Water Res. (Longformacus)											<b>310</b>	195	<b>505</b>
The Hirsell	35	23	22	18	18	40	177		50		58	45	<b>486</b>
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	82		64		20			50	50		31	116	<b>413</b>
Ferniehirst-Lugate (Stow)										120	10	160	<b>290</b>
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)		13		11	12	10	18	45		130	14	22	<b>275</b>
Tweed: Mertoun to Benrig Dean	43	48	26	13		32			54	28		29	<b>273</b>
Hule Moss	29		20	12	15	25	38	10	30	60	22		<b>261</b>
Acreknowe Res. (Hawick)		21								29	71	113	<b>234</b>
Bowdenmoor Res. (Melrose)	16	16						19	51	44	45	19	<b>210</b>
Wooden Loch (Nisbet)									113	97			<b>210</b>
Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge	88		13							11		95	<b>207</b>
Hollybush (Galashiels)			11				96		49	23			<b>179</b>
Stantling Craig Res. (Clovenfords)	37	10			10					26	50	35	<b>168</b>
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)			17							85	25	37	<b>164</b>
Abbotsford	43	27	18	15								56	<b>159</b>
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh				55								104	<b>159</b>
Lindean Res. (Selkirk)	24	12					17			18	22	62	<b>155</b>
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)			10				32	53	44			16	<b>155</b>
Tweed: Peebles-Lyne Bridge										26	50	63	<b>139</b>
Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank)									65	31	38		<b>134</b>
Yetholm Pond	65	11	16							21		21	<b>134</b>
Tweed: Peebles	48			11					10		15	36	<b>120</b>
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	7	9	8	5	5	29	3		21	12	5	10	<b>114</b>
Tweed: Mertoun-Dryburgh	26		20				23				29		<b>98</b>
Eckford Hall (Nisbet)											52	45	<b>97</b>
Tweed: Walkerburn		52	35										<b>87</b>
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	18		20									35	<b>73</b>
Sum of all peak counts per month	1,706	726	669	335	327	534	1,204	818	1,555	1,844	1,681	2,177	

*Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream data is based on the maximum count at any single site between Kelso and Coldstream unless the WeBS count for the whole stretch was greater.*

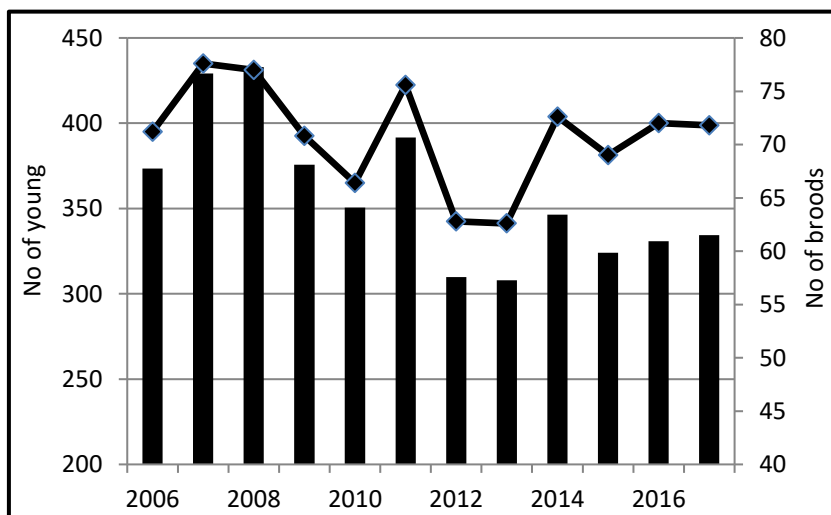
Other sites with ten or more birds but with lower aggregated counts (shown in order of aggregated count) were: Portmore Loch – 50; Upsettlington (Ladykirk) – 50; White Law Loch (Selkirk) – 30; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) – 46; Tweed: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) – 29; Bowhill (Selkirk) – 34; Spittal on Rule (Denholm) – 38; Tweed: Eshiels-Cardrona – 36; Doorpool (Bonchester Bridge) – 50; Harelaw Pond (Lilliesleaf) – 25; Tweed: Makerstoun (Kelso) – 50; Mellerstain (Gordon) – 44; Tweed: Norham-Union Br – 28; West Water Res. – 42; Broadlee Loch (Hawick) – 40; Eddleston (Peebles) – 40; Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) – 26; Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor) – 27; Lady Moss (Selkirk) – 25; Saughtree (Hermitage) – 35; Ettrick Water (Selkirk) – 19; Whitton Loch (Hownam) – 31; Alerigg (St Boswells) – 28; Pease Bay-Red Heugh – 26; Barnes Loch (Hawick) – 24; Bogbank (Coldingham Moor) – 24; St Abb's Head – 14; Lowood Pond (Tweedbank) – 22; Megget Reservoir – 20; Philiphaugh (Selkirk) – 20;

Slipperfield Loch (West Linton) – 20; St Mary's Loch – 10; Newmains (Reston) – 15; Shielfield (Oxton) – 14; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) – 14; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) – 13; Gordon Community Woodland – 13; Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet) – 13; Yair Bridge (Caddonfoot) – 13; Deanfoot (Ancrum) – 12; Gala Policies – 12; Haining Loch (Selkirk) – 12; Ale Moor Res. (Hawick) – 10; Ladyrig Pond (Heiton) – 10; Synton Loch (Ashkirk) – 10. Figures after sites represent peak count for the year.

Breeding evidence was reported from 52 sites of which 19 had evidence only in the form of pairs. *Readers are encouraged to submit full records of any breeding evidence encountered.* There were approximately 43 broods reported with an approximate total of c. 214 young.

West Linton (Lyne Water)	04-Jan	P	Holly Bush (Galashiels)	18-May	1br5; 1br7; 1br7
Lowood Bridge (Langlee)	16-Jan	br1	Stantling Craigs Res (Galashiels)	18-May	1br5
Philiphough (Selkirk)	19-Jan	P	Leaderfoot	20-May	FL
Selkirk	20-Feb	P(3)	Spotts Burn Pond (Lauder)	21-May	1br6; br2
Long Philip Burn (Ettrick Water)	02-Mar	P	Tweedbank	22-May	1br7
Dryburgh-Bemersyde	12-Mar	P	Milkhall Pond (Leadburn)	02-Jun	FL
Sorrowlessfield (Earlston)	12-Mar	P	Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	03-Jun	P
Clintmains (St Boswells)	18-Mar	P	Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)	07-Jun	1br4
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	18-Mar	P	Tweed: Union Bridge	11-Jun	br16
Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)	18-Mar	P	Tweed: Mertoun to Benrig Dean	14-Jun	1br3; 1br5
Abbotsford-Tweedbank-Lowood	19-Mar	P	Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	15-Jun	1br5; 1br1
Hare Moss (Selkirk)	20-Mar	P	Gunknowe Loch (Tweedbank)	15-Jun	1br2; 1br6
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	06-Apr	P	Branxholme Easter Loch (Hawick)	17-Jun	br4
Oxenrig (Coldstream)	10-Apr	N	Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	17-Jun	FL
Kaimend (Hawick)	11-Apr	1br8	Manderston (Duns)	17-Jun	1br4; 1br8
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	17-Apr	P	Tweed: Ashiestiel-Peel	21-Jun	1br3; 1br6; 1br8
Innerleithen	18-Apr	P	Tweed: Paxton House	21-Jun	br12
Gordon Community Woodland	23-Apr	FL	The Hirsell	02-Jul	br2+
Peebles	28-Apr	br10	Folly Loch	05-Jul	1br5
Tweed: Eshiels-Cardrona	01-May	1br2	Kalemouth (Nisbet)	05-Jul	1br2; 1br5
Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	05-May	1br11; 1br3	Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)	05-Jul	1br8
Lamberton	09-May	P	St Thomas Island (Ladykirk)	19-Jul	br7
Cardrona	10-May	br4	Uppsettlington (Ladykirk)	31-Jul	1br3
Watch Water Res	11-May	P	Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	03-Sep	FL
Gala Sewage Works	14-May	1br8	Newcastleton	17-Sep	T
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	18-May	P	Bowhill (Selkirk)	29-Sep	P

Productivity has apparently slowly increased over the past four years, as suggested by the five-year averages for number of broods and number of young. This is after a decrease over the period 2006-2012. The sample however, is obviously small and this should be taken into account when interpreting the data:



**Five-year averages for productivity reports for Mallard.**  
(Line = no. of broods; bar = no. of young).



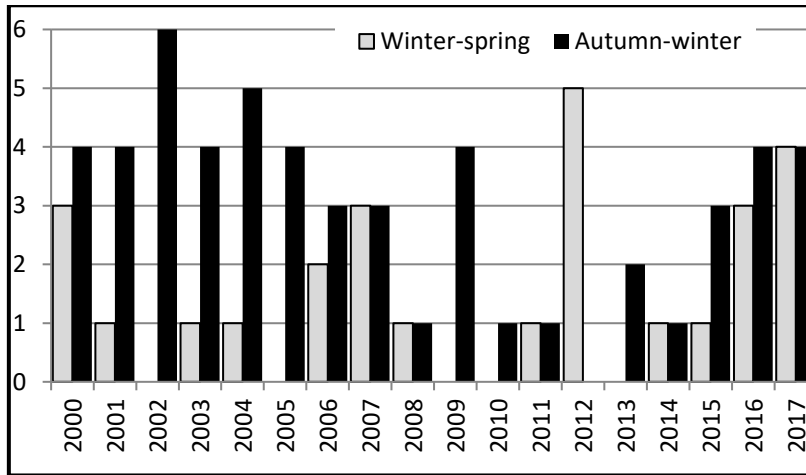
**Pintail *Anas acuta***

Uncommon, but annual, winter visitor, September to April, peaking October-November. Has bred twice, in 1901 and 2008. During 2008-13 found in 7 tetrads in summer and four in winter.

Records from nine sites. Records from six sites in 2016, four sites in 2015 and two sites in 2014.

Winter-spring (six birds)		
The Hirsel	1-14 Feb	2
Newmains (Reston)	19-Feb-10-Mar	1
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	07-May	2
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	18-May	1
Autumn-winter (seven birds)		
St Abbs village & Eyemouth	16-Sep	3
St Abb's Head	19-Sep	1
Folly Loch	25-Sep	2
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	03-Oct	1

To what extent these records involve duplicate counting is not known.



No. of occupied tetrads: 2000-2017.

**Garganey *Anas querquedula***

Rare, mostly spring, passage migrant, often as pairs.

A single bird was seen at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) between 15- 18 May (D Christie). Since 1978 there has been a total of 34 birds recorded in the period Jan-Jun and seven in the period Jul-Dec. This year's bird was the first record since 2014.



Garganey. Woodlands Pool (Foulden). May. Dave Graham.

### Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Former very scarce breeder, mostly in the eastern Borders. Autumn passage peaks September-November but few January-March. Return mostly March-April. During 2008-13 found in 14 tetrads in summer and six in winter.

Records from nine tetrads which is about typical for the past ten years.

Monthly peak counts for each site were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
The Hirsle	3			1								
Hule Moss	2	5	4	8	6	2		2				
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	1	1	13	7			1	7	10	6	1	
Yetholm Loch	1					2						
Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)			1									
Bemersyde-Westfield				2	1	1			3	4	7	
Birgham Haugh (Coldstream)										7		
<b>Sum of peak counts</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>No of sites</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

The count of seven at Birgham Haugh (Coldstream) was a minimum value.

Numbers were generally the highest they have been since 2014. There was no evidence of breeding other than the pair at Whitrig Bog (Bemersyde-Westfield) on 3-Apr.

### Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Now extinct as a breeder, numbers having collapsed since the early 2000s. Also declining winter visitor, arriving October-November, leaving Mar-Apr. During 2008-13 found in 10 tetrads in summer and 20 in winter.

Records came from 11 tetrads. In 2016 records were from four tetrads, in 2015 from nine and in 2014 from nine tetrads.

Winter-spring. Records from four sites: Whitrig Bog (Bemersyde-Westfield) – 1; Paxton House – 2; Yetholm Loch – 1; Hule Moss – 1. The last record of this period was on 20-Apr at Hule Moss.

No over-summering birds reported.

Autumn-winter. Records from eight sites: Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) – 1; Wooden Loch (Nisbet) – 1; Folly Loch – 3; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) – 1; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) – 2; Bowhill (Selkirk) – 1; Yetholm Loch – 1; Portmore Loch – 2. The first record of this period was on 1-Sep at Folly Loch.

### Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Increasingly less common breeder, including the lower reaches of the Tweed. Common winter visitor, peaking November-December. During 2008-13 found in 9% of tetrads in summer and 6% in winter.

Records came from 53 tetrads, cf. 57 tetrads in 2016 and 61 tetrads in 2015.

Counts of five or more (in order of annual aggregate counts with highest monthly counts in bold):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Site agg.
Hule Moss	<b>23</b>	9	<b>35</b>	17	11	10	10	11	24	33	42	11	<b>236</b>
Folly Loch	15	<b>51</b>	26	13		<b>47</b>	16		25	6	11		<b>210</b>
Portmore Reservoir	5									<b>65</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>168</b>
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)			17			34	<b>47</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>27</b>		6		<b>165</b>
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	21	29	33	19					10	13			<b>125</b>
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)			7	<b>32</b>	20		34	6	5	13			<b>117</b>
The Hirsle	13	11	19	12		5					22	20	<b>102</b>
Tweedbank	26	27	8							10	10	16	<b>97</b>
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	8	20	12	8	<b>23</b>							8	<b>79</b>
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	6	9	13							11	17	14	<b>70</b>
Yetholm Loch	7	11	12	19			15						<b>64</b>
Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)					13	10	7		19	6			<b>55</b>
Watch Water Res (Longformacus)				8	5	5		5	5		22		<b>50</b>
Ploughlands Pond		38	7										<b>45</b>
Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)				17	11					13			<b>41</b>
Hollybush (Galashiels)	11		6				8				10		<b>35</b>

Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)					17	8	5						30
Wooden Loch (Nisbet)									7	11		11	29
Whitmuir Hall Loch (Selkirk)		9	19										28
Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick)										10	14		24
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream										24			24
Paxton House						13			6				19
Kerss Wood and Loch (Anrum)			18										18
Whitton Loch (Hownam)										17			17
Faldonside/Cauldshiels Lochs (Tw'bank)				2					10	5			17
Stantling Craig Res (Galashiels)	5											9	14
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)			7									6	13
Smedheugh Pond (Selkirk)			8										8
Hen Poo (Duns)				7									7
Lady Moss (Selkirk)										6			6
Barnes Loch (Hawick)										6			6
Faughill Moor (Melrose)	5												5
White Law Loch (Selkirk)									5				5
<b>Monthly aggregates of peak counts &gt;4</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>159</b>	
<b>No of sites with birds present</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	

The highest count was of 65 at Portmore Reservoir on 29-Oct (K Ingleby).

Breeding evidence came from only 11 sites (of which only one was confirmed):

Tweedbank	24-Mar	P	Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	05-May	P
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	10-Apr	P	The Hirsell	20-May	P
Watch Water Res (Longformacus)	14-Apr	D	Spotts Burn Pond (Lauder)	21-May	P(2)
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	17-Apr	P	Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	16-Aug	br16
Yetholm Loch	18-Apr	P	West Water Reservoir	08-Oct	P(2)
Lindean Res (Selkirk)	20-Apr	P	See Introduction for breeding codes.		

There were 27 sites with breeding records in 2016 and 24 in 2015.

Reports of breeding birds continue to be significantly lower than they were in the 1990s.

## Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, annual, but usually singles.

Records from eight tetrads. There were records from eight tetrads in 2016, three in 2015 and two in 2014.

**January:** Edrom (Duns), 23<sup>rd</sup>. Two females. **February:** Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge, 5th-28<sup>th</sup>. Two incl. 1st winter male. **March:** Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge, 1st-4<sup>th</sup>. One 1st winter male. **June:** Yetholm Loch, 1<sup>st</sup>. One. **August:** Paxton House, 1<sup>st</sup>. One. **September:** Tweed: Kelso, 10<sup>th</sup>. One. Mire Loch (St Abb's Head), 17th-23<sup>rd</sup>. 1-3. **October:** Green Diamonds (Selkirk), 5th, 8th, 13th, 18<sup>th</sup>. 1-3 (two females. Whitton Loch, Hownam), 8<sup>th</sup>. One. Mire Loch (St Abb's Head), 19th-28<sup>th</sup>. One. **November:** Hule Moss, 9<sup>th</sup>. One.



Female Scaups with possible immature. October. Green Diamonds (Selkirk). Martin Moncrieff

### Eider Duck *Somateria mollissima*

Becoming scarcer along whole coast throughout the year; formerly abundant. Rare breeder with little evidence of success. Very rare inland. During 2008-13 found in 15 tetrads in summer and 18 in winter.

One hundred and fifty-seven counted during Rocky Shore Count on 15-Jan:

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	4	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	25
Pease Bay-Redheugh	8	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	56
Redheugh-Souter	10	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	19
Souter-Pettico Wick	15	Burnmouth-Border	20

RSC for recent years: 2016 – 122; 2015 – 273; 2014 – 237. Including the RSC, records came from 13 tetrads. The highest count during the Jan-Mar period was of 85+ at Coldingham Bay (F Evans).

Records in **summer (Apr-Aug)** came from only four tetrads (peak counts shown): Eyemouth, four on 7-May; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor), one on 14-May; four off Burnmouth on 11-Jun and 12 of St Abb's Head on 28-Jul. There was no evidence of breeding.

**Autumn-winter** records came from only five tetrads (peak counts shown): present at St Abbs on 19-Sep; present at Coldingham on 24-Sep; six at St Abb's Head on 27-Sep; five at Burnmouth on 6-Oct; 112+ at Eyemouth Bay on 21-Dec.

Generally, the reports received suggest a fairly typical year.

### Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Scarce winter visitor and autumn passage migrant to coast. Rare inland.

Ten records from six tetrads with c. 40 bird-days in winter-spring and one bird-day in autumn-winter:

Winter-spring		
Paxton House	14-Jan	1
Coldingham Bay	15-Jan	1
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	15-Jan	1
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	25-Jan	1
Pease Bay	05-Feb	11
Dunglass	18-Feb	14
Pease Bay	18-Feb	8
Dunglass	11-Mar	2
Pease Bay	11-Mar	1
Autumn-winter		
Dunglass	11-Nov	1

Fairly typical numbers compared with the last ten years or so, although the low number of bird-days for autumn-winter is the lowest since 2001, when there was no passage recorded.

### Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Uncommon late summer and autumn passage migrant and scarce winter visitor to coastal areas. Very rare inland.

Twenty-four records from six tetrads (27 records from nine tetrads in 2016, 25 records from seven tetrads in 2015).

Dunglass	2-Jan	1
Jan-Mar bird-days (min)		<b>1</b>
Watch Water (Longformacus)	18-Apr	1
St Abb's Head	29-Apr	17
Dunglass	11-Jun	125
St Abbs	29-Jun	75
Eyemouth	29-Jun	6
Apr-Jun bird-days		<b>224</b>
St Abb's Head	01-Jul	7
Eyemouth	15-Jul	46
St Abbs	16-Jul	50
Dunglass	16-Jul	28
Eyemouth	22-Jul	1

Eyemouth	24-Jul	9
St Abbs	16-Sep	32
Eyemouth	16-Sep	11
St Abb's Head	17-Sep	81
St Abb's Head	19-Sep	54
St Abb's Head	23-Sep	Pr
Jul-Sep bird-days		<b>319</b>
Dunglass	04-Nov	1
St Abb's Head	12-Nov	5
Dunglass	18-Nov	14
St Abb's Head	02-Dec	34
Portmore Reservoir	04-Dec	1
Oct-Dec bird-days		<b>55</b>

### Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Scarce autumn (August-December) passage migrant to coast. Very occasional in spring. Two inland records.

Five records from three sites. There were five records from four sites in 2016, six records from three sites in 2015 and 11 records from five sites in 2014.

St Abbs	16-Sep	14	St Abb's Head	17-Sep	6
Eyemouth	16-Sep	13	Dunglass	08-Oct	3
			St Abb's Head	02-Dec	1

Reports and counts vary greatly in number from year to year, perhaps the result, in part, of an under-watched coastline.

### Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Well-represented but declining winter visitor, October-May, peaking in March. Occasionally summers. Bred near Gordon 1999. During 2008-13 found in 3% of tetrads in summer and 11% in winter.

Three hundred and fifty-eight records from 70 tetrads (7%). In 2016 records came from 62 tetrads and in 2015 from 52 tetrads.

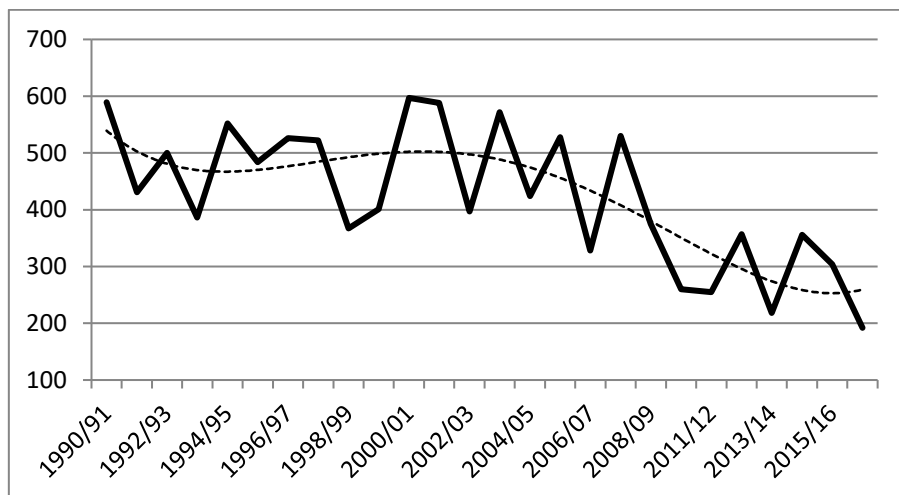
Records from 43 tetrads (3%) Jan-May. Peak counts per site were:

Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	07-Feb	108	Bowhill (Selkirk)	09-Jan	6
The Hirsell	19-Jan	95	White Law Loch (Selkirk)	12-Feb	6
Paxton House	10-Jan	46	Branxholme Easter Loch (Hawick)	17-Jan	5
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)	03-Mar	45	Peebles-Eddleston	06-May	5
Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)	04-Jan	32	Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	13-Mar	4
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	05-Jan	32	Kerss Wood and Loch (Anrum)	15-Mar	4
Yetholm Loch	15-Feb	25	Loch Eddy (Traquair)	02-Jan	3
Tweed: Uppsettlington	21-Jan	24	Harelaw Pond (Lilliesleaf)	24-Jan	3
Tweed: Lennel	05-Jan	22	Pease Bay-Redheugh	15-Jan	2
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	28-Feb	19	Stantling Craig Res (Galashiels)	18-Jan	2
Hule Moss	08-Jan	18	Lindean Res (Selkirk)	24-Jan	2
Alemoor Reservoir (Hawick)	28-Feb	17	Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)	09-Feb	2
Red Heugh (Coldingham Moor)	15-Jan	16	Whitmuir Hall Loch (Selkirk)	12-Feb	2
Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	10-Feb	13	Coldingham Loch	07-Mar	2
St Abb's Head	07-Mar	12	St Mary's Loch	12-Mar	2
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	25-Mar	11	Hollybush (Galashiels)	12-Mar	2
Portmore Reservoir	08-Jan	10	Tweed: Lowood Bridge (Langlee)	16-Jan	1
Folly Loch	09-Feb	10	Tweed: Kelso	16-Jan	1
Lady Moss (Selkirk)	12-Mar	10	Helmburn (Ettrickbridge)	23-Jan	1
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	14-Mar	8	Ettrick Water (Selkirk)	25-Jan	1
Dunglass	02-Jan	7	Burnmouth	29-Jan	1
			Bemersyde Moss	27-Feb	1

The count of 108 at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) was the highest count for this site to date and the highest in Borders since 2014. The last record of spring was on 2-May at Haining Loch (Selkirk) with a count of six (G Scott). The first record of autumn was on 20-Sep of a single female at The Hirsell (A Mossop). From Sep-Dec records came from 33 tetrads (3%):

Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	10-Dec	73	Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	18-Nov	4
Tweed: Union Bridge-Paxton House	14-Nov	43	Headshaw Loch (Ashkirk)	20-Oct	3
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	23-Dec	41	Folly Loch	31-Oct	3
Portmore Res	04-Dec	35	Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank)	05-Dec	3
The Hirsell	29-Nov	28	Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	22-Dec	3
Hule Moss	02-Nov	14	Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords)	27-Oct	2
Ladykirk House (Uppsettlington)	19-Dec	10	Shielswood Loch (Ashkirk)	29-Oct	2
St Abb's Head	29-Oct	9	Alemoor Reservoir (Hawick)	05-Nov	2
Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	13-Nov	8	Tweed: Melrose	17-Nov	2
Yetholm Loch	03-Dec	8	Horndean Burn Mouth (Ladykirk)	19-Nov	2
St Mary's Loch	08-Nov	7	Coldingham Bay	03-Dec	2
White Law Loch (Selkirk)	18-Nov	7	Abbotsford	10-Dec	2
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	10-Dec	7	Hen Poo (Duns)	27-Oct	1
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)	23-Nov	6	Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	28-Oct	1
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	01-Dec	6	Harelaw Pond (Lilliesleaf)	29-Oct	1
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	08-Dec	6	Watch Water Res (Longformacus)	15-Nov	1
			Lady Moss (Selkirk)	18-Nov	1

Based on peak counts of the 20 most popular WeBS sites in Borders there appears to be a general decline in the number of Goldeneyes visiting the Borders. This is part of a wider trend and thought to be partly the result of more birds over-wintering in their breeding grounds in the Baltic area:



Aggregated annual peak counts of Goldeneye for the twenty most popular WeBS sites: 1990/91-2016/17.

### Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Uncommon passage migrant to coast, September-March. Former rare breeder but no recent evidence of even summering birds. During 2008-13 found in 5 tetrads in summer and 11 in winter.

Six records from five tetrads. Ten records from five tetrads in 2016 and records from four tetrads in 2015. Slightly fewer records than in recent years with lower counts.

Dunglass	02-Jan	2	Redheugh (Coldingham)	19-Mar	1
Pease Bay	05-Feb	1	Eyemouth	16-May	2
Burnmouth	25-Feb	1	Eyemouth Bay	05-Dec	1

### Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Abundant winter visitor (650-850 birds) in October to May. Large winter roosts of hundreds of birds, but sites vary. c.200 breeding females, recently spread to northern hills. During 2008-13 found in 18% of tetrads in summer and 22% in winter.

Seven hundred and twenty-seven records from 130 (10%) tetrads. There were 567 records from 111 tetrads in 2016 and four hundred and eighty-seven records from 122 tetrads in 2015. Counts of five or more came from the following sites (shown in order of annual aggregated count with each monthly peak in bold):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Sum of peaks
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	21		18	9	<b>51</b>				24	42	<b>99</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>355</b>
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>33</b>					5	<b>52</b>	<b>57</b>	58	43	<b>316</b>
Tweed: Paxton Ho.-Union Br.	18	11	11	<b>39</b>	23			<b>17</b>	16	13	16	25	<b>189</b>
Abbotsford	13		5	8		9	<b>29</b>		10	10	6	14	<b>104</b>
Tweed: Peebles	14	12		6	11				11	5	9	9	<b>77</b>
Tweed: Uppsettlington	12						15		5			34	<b>66</b>
The Hirsell		18	5								17	24	<b>64</b>
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	6		11					9	12		11	11	<b>60</b>
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)									17	17	18		<b>52</b>
Yetholm Loch	19	13	8								7		<b>47</b>
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh		6		24						8			<b>38</b>
Tweedbank	22								12				<b>34</b>
Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	13									5	14		<b>32</b>
Tweedbank				6	5					17			<b>28</b>
Tweed: Mertoun-Benrig Dean							12		15				<b>27</b>
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)			10									14	<b>24</b>
Teviot: Denholm									15		6		<b>21</b>
Tweed-Ettrick Water confluence						<b>20</b>							<b>20</b>
Tweed: Cardrona		5						8	6				<b>19</b>
Tweed: Lennel	9								10				<b>19</b>
Stantling Craig Res (Selkirk)									11	6			<b>17</b>
Teviot: Hawick									7	8			<b>15</b>
Tweed: Dryburgh							8				5		<b>13</b>
Ettrick Water(Selkirk)					6							5	<b>11</b>
Tweed: Walkerburn											10		<b>10</b>
Hule Moss									9				<b>9</b>
Innerleithen				9									<b>9</b>
Tweed: Eshiels-Cardrona			9										<b>9</b>
Alerigg (St Boswells)		8											<b>8</b>
Burnmouth					8								<b>8</b>
Hen Poo (Duns)		8											<b>8</b>
Ettrick Water: Tushielaw										7			<b>7</b>
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	6												<b>6</b>
Long Philip Burn (Ettrick Water)			5										<b>5</b>
Spittal on Rule			5										<b>5</b>
Tweed: Ashiestiel-Peel				5									<b>5</b>
Tweed: Mertoun-Dryburgh		5											<b>5</b>
<b>Sum of all peak counts</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>350</b>	
<b>Total no. of occupied sites</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>32</b>	

As usual, stretches along the Rivers Tweed and Teviot dominated reports with notable standing water sites at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden), The Hirsell and Yetholm Loch, particularly in the winter period.

Sites with peak counts never greater than four were: Bemersyde Moss; Borthwick Water: Outside; Cademuir Woods (Manor Valley); Clearburn Loch (Hawick); Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth; Coldingham Loch; Dam Head Rig (Traquair); Darnick (Melrose); Dawyck (Peebles); Eckford Hall (Nisbet); Eddleston Water; Eddleston-Leadburn; Ettrick Water: Weatherhouse (Selkirk); Eyemouth; Faughill Moor Loch (Melrose); Ferniehurst (Stow); Fruid Reservoir; Haining Loch (Selkirk); Holylee-Scawd Law-Walkerburn; Jedburgh; Kalemouth; Kirktonfield (Manor





Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)						1						
Hownam										4		
Kimmerghame Heugh (Duns)				2								
Langlee Mains (Galashiels)				2								
Long Grain (Oxton)						1						
Nr Heriot			Pr									
Shielfield (Oxton)					7							
Sprouston-Redden (Kelso)	2											
Stantling Craig Res (Galashiels)	3		2		4				1		7	
Thornielee (Walkerburn)					2							
Torsonce (Stow)									7			
Town Yetholm Pond			1									
Upper Tarras Water (Langholm)						2						
Walkerburn		3	3	2	2	2				26	30	3
Watch Water Res (Longformacus)							2	3			2	
Whitelaw (Duns)	2			2								
Whitmuir (Selkirk)		22			2							
Williamhope (Yarrowford)				2								1
Wooden Loch (Nisbet)									3	4		
Woodside (Ancrum)											7	
<b>Sum of peak counts</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>No of tetrads</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>

There were no reports of confirmed breeding.

### Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Common breeding resident of heather moorland. Especially numerous in northern hills where moors are actively managed for shoots. Hard-weather movements can drive birds into unusual habitats in severe winter conditions. During 2008-13 found in 19% of tetrads in summer and 25% in winter.

Records from 22 (2%) tetrads (42 tetrads in 2016 and 53 tetrads in 2015). Peak counts for all sites (max monthly count in bold):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Bowbeat Hill (Eddleston)					5							
Broad Law (Heriot Water)			8									
Crib Law (Oxton)			Pr									
Dam Head Rig (Traquair)						1						
Dewar Burn (Blackhopebyre)		20	3	1								
Dun Rig (Glensax Burn)											2	
Eildon Mid Hill				1								
Elibank Craig (Walkerburn)				1								
Greenlaw Moor	<b>25</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	4	<b>7</b>	13	17	20	6	<b>26</b>
Heriot				Pr						1		
Holylee-Scawd Law-Walkerburn			4									
Kirkhope Law (Cardrona Forest)									Pr		5	
Lammer Law (Oxton)					5							
Lauder Common												6
Maidens Paps (Wauchope Forest)												3
Medwin Water (Garvald)	7											
Raeshaw Fell (Hownam)				1								
Saughtree Fell (Liddesdale)								4				
Three Brethren (Yarrowford)				6								
Waddelscairn Moor (Oxton)						<b>10</b>						
Watch Water Res (Longformacus)			5	7	3	3	2	<b>50</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>	7
West Water Reservoir		2										
<b>Sum of peak counts</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>No of tetrads</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

The table above obviously reflects not only the distribution of the species but also the frequency of visits to sites by observers, eg Greenlaw Moor and Watch Water are obviously counted regularly.

Evidence of breeding was reported from eight tetrads although there was only one record of confirmed breeding:

Medwin Water (Garvald)	07-Jan	P	Raeshaw Fell (Hownam)	19-Apr	D
Dewar Burn (Blackhopebyre)	01-Mar	P	Heriot	20-Apr	D
Broad Law (Heriot Water)	01-Mar	D	Watch Water Res (Longformacus)	11-May	1br8
Holylee-Scawd Law-Walkerburn	09-Mar	P	Lammer Law (Oxton)	12-May	P
See Introduction for breeding codes					

The overall number of records and their geographical spread were much lower this year than in previous years. There were seven tetrads during Apr-Aug which recorded two or more birds.



**Red Grouse. Raeshaw estate (Heriot). March. Alistair Cutter.**

## Black Grouse

### *Tetrao tetrix*

Uncommon and local resident on hill fringes, especially in Ettrick-Moorfoot area. ALL RECORDS NEEDED. During 2008-13 found in 11% of tetrads in summer and 5% in winter.

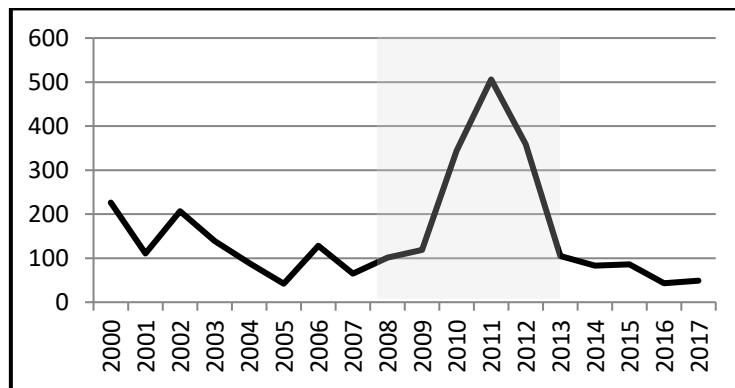
Thirty-two records came from 20 sites. In 2016 records came from 14 tetrads and in 2015 from 19 tetrads.

	No. tetrads with records	Sites with highest counts
<b>Jan-Mar</b>	5	Leithen Valley - 9; Peniestone Knowe (Ettrick) - 4; Broad Law (Heriot Water) - 3; Ashiestiel-Peel - 1; Garvald Lodge (Dewar Burn) - pr.
<b>Apr-Jun</b>	15	Common Knowe (Leithen Water) - 6; Eastloch (Portmore) - 5; The Peeble Rig (Leithen Water) - 3; The Ley (Leithen Water) - 3+; Woolhope Bank (Leithen Water) - 2; Colquhar (Leithen Water) - 2; Tweeddaleburn (Portmore) - 2; Stanhope Burn (Tweedsmuir) - 2; Megget Reservoir - 2; Hog Hill (Portmore) - 2; Dunslair Hope (Leithen Water) - 1; Cunning Burn (Leithen Water) - 1; Blackhopebyre (Leithen Water) - 1; Thirlestanehope (Ettrick) - 1; Black Cleuch (Glenrath Burn. Manor Valley).
<b>Jul-Sep</b>	1	Fruid (3-Aug) - 1.
<b>Oct-Dec</b>	0	

Peak counts for males and females:

Site	Males	Females	Not known	Total
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	1			1
Black Cleuch (Glenrath Burn, Manor Valley)			1	1
Blackhopebyre (Leithen Water)	4			4
Broad Law (Heriot Water)	1	2		3
Colquhar (Leithen Water)			2	2
Common Knowe (Leithen Water)	9			9
Cunning Burn (Leithen Water)			1	1
Dunslair Hope (Leithen Water)			1	1
East Loch (Portmore)			5	5
Fruid	1			1
Nr Heriot			Pr	Pr
Hog Hill (Portmore)	1	1		2
Megget Reservoir			2	2
Peniestone Knowe (Ettrick)	4			4
Stanhope Burn (Tweedsmuir)	2			2
The Ley (Leithen Water)		3		3
The Peeble Rig (Leithen Water)			3	3
Thirlestanehope (Ettrick)		1		1
Tweeddaleburn (Portmore)			2	2
Woolhope Bank (Leithen Water)			2	2
	<b>23</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19+</b>	<b>49+</b>

Given the concentration of records from the Leithen Water valley, it seems likely that some of these records are partly duplicated. The general downward trend in the population of Black Grouse appears to continue:



Sum of annual peak counts per site: 2000-2016 (shaded area = SE Scotland Atlas survey period).

Lekking was recorded from two sites (both from Leithen Water): Blackhopebyre on 15-Mar (N Crowther) and 23-Mar (L Hunter) and at Common Knowe on 12-Mar (A Cutter).

Other evidence of breeding was:

Hog Hill (Portmore)	31-May	R Singleton	NY
The Ley (Leithen Water)	20-Jun	T Dougall	1br2
Broad Law (Heriot Water)	01-Mar	N Crowther	D
Stanhope Burn (Tweedsmuir)	03-May	A Heavisides	D

See Introduction for explanation of breeding codes.

### Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Widespread but declining resident of arable farmland. Spreads into hill areas in summer. Reported in 36% of tetrads in early 1990s, but declining and during 2008-13 found in 13% of tetrads in summer and 13% in winter.

Records from 34 (3%) tetrads (39 tetrads in 2016 and 47 tetrads in 2015). Peak counts for sites were:



Ferniehirst (Stow)									12		20	
Folly Loch	39	32	10	4	4			7	63	36	19	
Gradon (Yetholm)					4							
Heiton (Kelso)									4			
The Hirsell	6	4		4						13		
Innerleithen				4								
Jardinefield (Whitsome)							5					
Kirkcleuch (Roberton)								28				
Knows Dean Plantation (Galashiels)					8							
Mellerstain (Gordon)									12			
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)						4						
Monteviot (Ancrum)											90	
Nisbet										4		
Philippaugh (Selkirk)									12			
Shielfield (Oxton)					6							
Slipperfield Loch (West Linton)	20											
St Abb's Head	10											
Stantling Craig Res (Galashiels)									25	19		
Stobo (Peebles)				4								
Traquair Forest								14	85		50	
Tweed: Banff Mill-Lochton										7		
Tweed: Kelso											7	
Tweed: Union Bridge	4				4							
Tweeddaleburn (Portmore)					5							
Walkerburn		113	106		25				240			
Watch Water Reservoir (East)				5							5	
Whitmuir (Selkirk)		7			5							
Woden Law (Hownam)					8							
Yetholm Loch								7	31	4		
<b>Total no of occupied tetrads</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Sum of all peak counts</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>270</b>

Confirmed breeding came from only two tetrads: Whitmuir Estate on 19-May (NE) and Leadburn Community Woodland on 22-Jun (FL). See Introduction for explanation of breeding codes.

This is very likely an under-recorded species and the distribution suggested by the above table may be distorted by frequency of visits to particular sites by observers.

### Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Present offshore August-May. Rare in summer. Passage during September-October while small numbers winter in sheltered bays. Very rare on inland waters.

Records came from eight sites (nine in 2016). Monthly peak counts:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Totals
Coldingham Bay	1											2	3
Dunglass	3	15	9						6	19	7		59
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	9	1					1		11			2	24
Pease Bay	2	4	7								4		17
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	1												1
Redheugh (Coldingham Moor)			4										4
St Abbs		1							33				34
St Abb's Head									22	4	2	18	46
<b>No of sites with records</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Sum of peak counts</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>188</b>
<b>Average of monthly peaks, 2012-17</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>260</b>

**Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica***

Present offshore in very small numbers September to March. Rare in summer months and very rare inland.

A fairly typical year with six records (all of singles): 6-Jan, Burnmouth (M Moncrieff); 12-Feb, St Abbs (D Graham); 16-Sep, St Abbs (D Graham); 16-Sep, Eyemouth (R Drew); 17-Sep, St Abb's Head (D Graham); 4-Nov, Dunglass (D Graham).

**Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer***

Present offshore in very small numbers September to March. Rare in summer months and extremely rare inland.

A typical year with 12 records (four from winter-spring and eight from autumn-winter):

**Jan:** St Abb's Head (15<sup>th</sup>). **Feb:** Pease Bay (5<sup>th</sup>); St Abbs (12<sup>th</sup>); Dunglass (18<sup>th</sup>).

**Sep:** St Abbs (16<sup>th</sup>); St Abb's Head (17<sup>th</sup>). **Oct:** St Abb's Head (28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>). **Nov:** Dunglass (4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>); St Abb's Head (12<sup>th</sup>). **Dec:** St Abb's Head (2<sup>nd</sup>).

**White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii***

Rare visitor – two previous records

A single bird seen off Eyemouth Harbour on 10-Nov was close inshore and gave good views (C Hartley). This is only the third record for Borders; previous records were made in Nov-2007 at St Abb's Head and in Apr-2015 at Dunglass.

**Black-browed Albatross *Thalassarche melanophrys***

Very rare vagrant. Only one previous record.

An adult bird which had been reported periodically from different countries bordering the North Sea was seen off St Abbs harbour on 29-Jun (D Graham). See p 168 for account. The only previous record dates back to 1969, when a bird was seen 10 km off St Abb's Head.

**Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis***

Uncommon breeder with 1,146 pairs in 2000, spread along much of coastline. Scarce in winter, few large movements in recent years. Rare inland, c.12 records. During 2008-13 found in 14 tetrads in summer and 17 in winter.

Records were received from locations along the whole of the Berwickshire coast, from Dunglass to Lamberton. Peak counts per site per month were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Burnmouth-Border	118	6				20						
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	9											
Dowlaw Dean	41				3							
Dunglass	25											
Dunglass-Pease Bay	43					2						
Eyemouth	42	31	13			10	3					5
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	28					10						
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	48											
Souter-Pettico Wick	107											
St Abbs	9		10			1						
St Abb's Head	4	Pr	68	Pr	Pr	10	Pr					
Coldingham Loch			60									
<b>Sum of peak counts</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>No of sites with records</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

Counts in bold refer to records involving apparently occupied sites (AOS).

Records suggest a marginal decline since 2015. This is borne out by the data below from St Abb's Head SNR.

**St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report Summary for 2017 (Liza Cole):**

Whole colony count

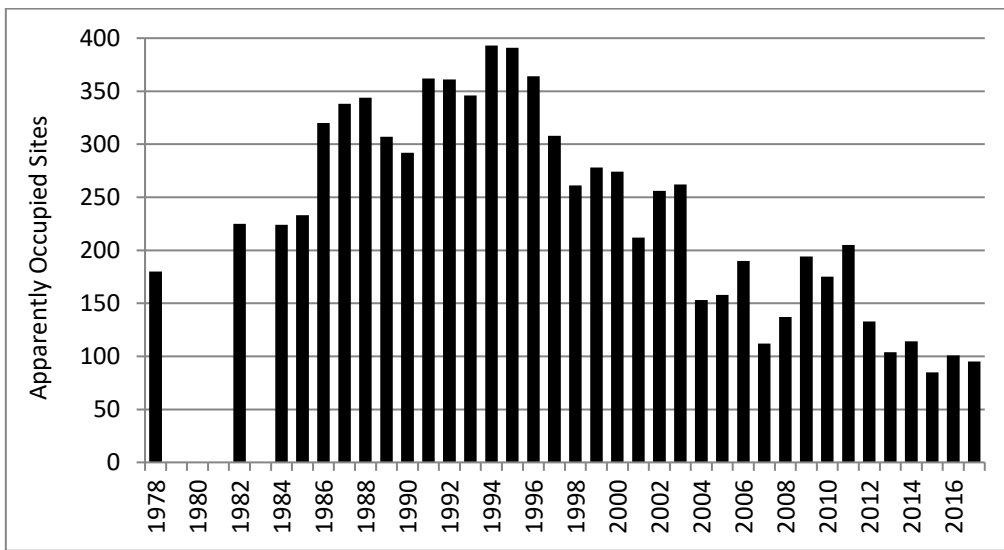
A count of apparently occupied sites (AOS ie a site with a bird sitting tightly on a reasonably horizontal area judged large enough to hold an egg) was carried out from land on 25th, 26th and 28th June and 3rd and 5th July. Inclement weather prevented us from counting blind spots from a boat so the number was estimated using last year's figures for land and sea counts.

Results

95 AOS were counted, a decrease of 6% on the 2016 (including estimated sea counts).

Breeding Success

No formal productivity monitoring done, but only three chicks fledged from the whole colony (no boat counts).



**AOS for Fulmar at St Abb's Head SNR: 1978-2017.**

**Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus***

Scarce autumn passage migrant, mostly mid-Aug to mid-Oct.

Six records from three sites:

St Abb's Head	15-Jan	1	D Graham	St Abb's Head	17-Sep	38	D Graham
Eyemouth	24-Jul	1	D Graham	St Abb's Head	18-Sep	2	T Brewis
Eyemouth	16-Sep	1	R Drew	Coldingham	24-Sep	1	C Taylor

The aggregate count of 44 is the highest since 2014 but well below the peak years at intervals between 2001-10 when counts of 250 to over 800 occurred.

**Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauritanicus***

Rare, but possibly overlooked, autumn passage migrant.

A single bird was seen from St Abb's Head on 17-Sep (D Graham). This is the first record since 2014.

**Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus***

Offshore passage migrant in variable numbers. Scarce April-May with largest movements July-October. Rare November and December.

Ten records from three sites:

St Abb's Head	01-Jul	32	Eyemouth	24-Jul	6
Eyemouth	15-Jul	1	St Abbs	16-Sep	1
St Abbs	16-Jul	1	St Abb's Head	17-Sep	56
Eyemouth	22-Jul	13	St Abb's Head	12-Nov	1
St Abb's Head	23-Jul	8			

Another poor year with the aggregated count of 122 well below recent years although higher than the count of 89 in 2016. All records submitted by either D Graham or F Evans.

### **Gannet *Morus bassanus***

Bass Rock birds abundant offshore. Scarce in winter. Singles have summered very rarely on the St Abb's cliffs. Rare inland, c.11 records, mostly juveniles in autumn.

As usual, all records were of birds seen offshore, flying to and from Bass Rock. Monthly peak counts were as follows:

	Peak count	Site of peak count		Peak count	Site of peak count
<b>Jan</b>	4	Burnmouth	<b>Jul</b>	4	St Abb's Head
<b>Feb</b>	4	St Abb's Head	<b>Aug</b>	Pr	Burnmouth
<b>Mar</b>	67	St Abb's Head	<b>Sep</b>	>1,000	Eyemouth
<b>Apr</b>	Pr	St Abb's Head	<b>Oct</b>	2	Burnmouth
<b>May</b>	35	St Abb's Head	<b>Nov</b>	6	Burnmouth
<b>Jun</b>	7	Eyemouth	<b>Dec</b>	2	Burnmouth

As the table suggests, there is little consistency or system to offshore counts of this species.

#### ***St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report Summary for 2017 (Liza Cole):***

This year we had the first ever record of a Gannet laying an egg and hatching a chick at St Abb's Head. In mid-May up to 70 birds were recorded prospecting Foul Carr. Three pairs settled and remained *in situ* until early July. Unfortunately, because of the location of the birds, it was only possible to confirm that one was sitting on a nest. However, because the other two pairs remained *in situ* for the nearly two months, it was assumed that they too were sitting on nests. On 22-Jun an egg was spotted in the nest and on 7-Jul a chick was seen. The chick was last seen on 18-Jul, when the other two nesting sites had been deserted, and on 19-Jul the third (visible) nest was deserted also. Up to 50 birds were seen to prospect Foul Carr and Cleaver Rock in mid-June and mid-July so it will be interesting to see how many birds return and attempt to breed next year.



**Gannet with chick. St Abb's Head. July. Zander Salmond.**



### Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Scarce breeder at Fast Castle stacks: 30-50 pairs may nest annually. Widespread on coast but often seen on rivers and large lochs, mostly September-April. During 2008-13 found in 5% of tetrads in summer and 12% in winter.

Records from 63 tetrads (89 tetrads in 2016). Rocky Shore Count on 15-Jan had a total count of 26, lower than the low count of 32 in 2016:

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	1	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	13
Pease Bay-Redheugh	0	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	0
Redheugh-Souter	3	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	5
Souter-Pettico Wick	0	Burnmouth-Border	4

Sites with counts of more than two (incl. RSC):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)		9										
Broom (Ancrum)	3											3
Burnmouth-Border	4											
Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)					34							
Dunglass	12											
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	5							7				
Faldonside Loch-Cauldshiels Loch (Selkirk)	8	5	4									
Green Stane (Dowlaw)	3											
Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank												4
Haining Loch (Selkirk)			4		3							
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)												4
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	13											
Portmore Reservoir	4									4	8	4
Redheugh-Souter	3											
Stantling Craig Res (Galashiels)												35
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)								9			40	36
Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm)											26	131
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	68	7	5	4						9	37	48
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Br	11		8	32	18	11	21	5	17	15	23	15
Tweed: Uppsettlington									5			70
Watch Water Res (Longformacus)			7	6								
Yetholm Loch	9	9	8	80					5	10	9	7
<b>Sum of all peak counts</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>370</b>
<b>No of inland sites</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>No of coastal sites</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

There was only one record of confirmed breeding: ten nests at Dowlaw with a bird incubating on 14-May (C Hartley). There were records of immature birds accompanying adults from Tweed: Union Bridge.

These are among the worst records for breeding evidence to date. Whether this reflects an actual decline in breeding activity or is a reflection of observer effort is not known.

### Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

A single *sinensis* ssp. was reported from Stantling Craig Res (Galashiels) on 23-Dec (G Paterson).

### Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Common breeder in variable numbers along parts of the coast, max 600 pairs but fewer recently. Autumn movements into Forth occur in September-October. Rare inland. During 2008-13 found in 15 tetrads in summer and 17 in winter.

Records were received from sites along the length of the coast. The Rocky Shore Count on 15-Jan totalled 209:

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	0	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	155
Pease Bay-Redheugh	0	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	10
Redheugh-Souter	7	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	29
Souter-Pettico Wick	6	Burnmouth-Border	2

Sites with monthly peak counts of five or more (incl RSC):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	23											
Pease Bay-Redheugh												
Redheugh-Souter	7											
Souter-Pettico Wick	6		11		17							
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	155	15		Pr	12	26	120		98			140
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	10	5										
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	29		15				5	4				
Burnmouth-Border												
<b>Sum of all peak counts</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2+</b>	<b>34+</b>	<b>32+</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>101+</b>	<b>6+</b>	<b>4+</b>	<b>142+</b>

The above table reflects the under-watched nature of most of the coastline.

Evidence of breeding came from three sites: Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor), 14-May (ON); St Abb's Head, 28-Jul (NY) and St Abbs, 18-Sep (FL), cf. four sites with breeding evidence in 2016.

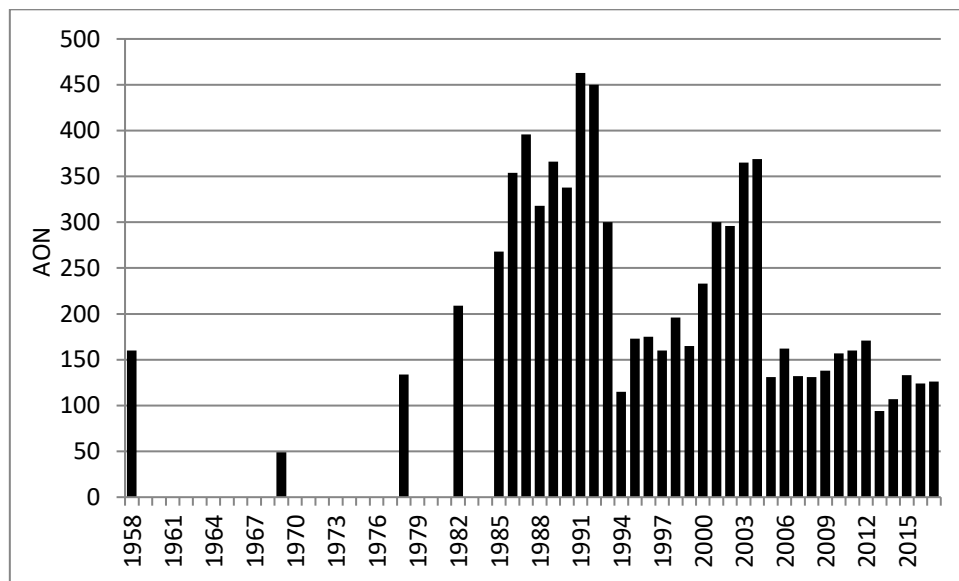
### ***St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report Summary for 2017 (Liza Cole):***

#### Whole Colony Count

A count of apparently occupied nests (AON - ie a well-built nest capable of holding eggs with at least one bird in attendance) was carried out on 7-, 8- and 15-Jun. Blind spots were counted from a boat on 13-Jun.

#### Results

126 Apparently Occupied Nests (AON), 2% increase on 2016.



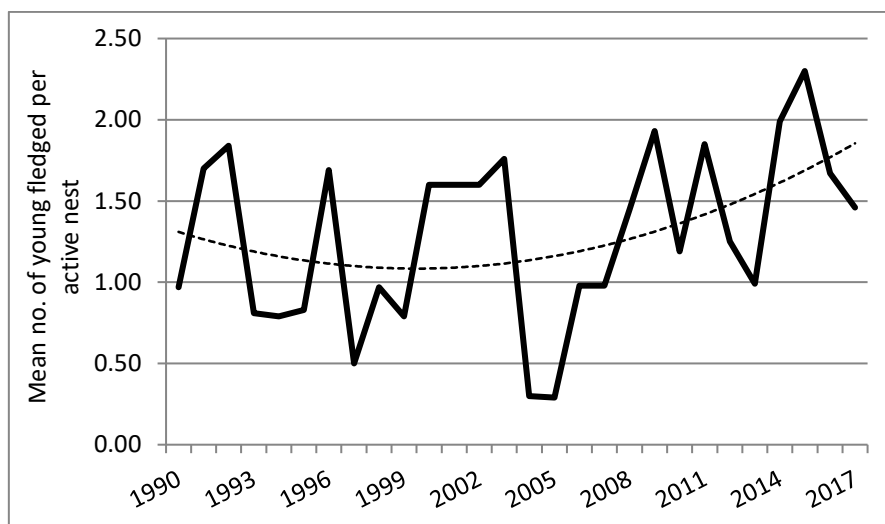
**AON for Shag at St Abb's Head SNR: 1958-2017.**

#### Breeding Success

An assessment of Shag breeding success was carried out using methods described in the 1990 report and following recommendations in the Seabird Monitoring Handbook. Nests were individually mapped on monitoring plots and 19 visits were made to the 4 monitoring plots between the 2-Apr and 27-Aug to record the progress of each nest up to fledging.

#### Results

A total of 53 active nests were mapped on the plots and 67 chicks successfully fledged. The breeding success, expressed as the mean of the individual plot figures, was 1.46 young fledged per active nest: a decrease of 22% on 2016.



Productivity of Shag at St Abb's Head SNR: 1990-2017.

### Bittern *Botaurus stellata*

A rare, mostly winter vagrant.

Two records (the first since 2014): single at Newmains (Reston), 9-Jan (D Graham) and a single at Yetholm Loch, 25-Oct (J Lough).

### Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Scarce but increasing vagrant to Borders. Records may peak in late summer as English colonies disperse.

Records came from 19 (1%) tetrads. Given the mobility of the species many of the records from the different tetrads will have involved the same individual(s).

Sites	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	1			1
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	1	1	1	2
Yetholm	1	1		
Attonburn (Yetholm)	1			
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)		1		
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge		2	2	2
Tweed: Norham		1	2	1
Broadmeadows (Paxton)				1
Tweed: Makerstoun				1
Coldingham Loch				1
Tweed: Newstead (Melrose)				1

Sightings continue to increase but how many birds are involved is not possible to state with any confidence.

### Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Widespread and common. 350-380 pairs estimated in about 40 colonies in 2000. Assemblies of more than ten birds are unusual. During 2008-13 found in 36% of tetrads in summer and 40% in winter.

Records from 111 tetrads (2016: 140 tetrads; 2015: 130 tetrads). Monthly peak counts of three or more came from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Abbotsford	3			3			6			4	5	3
Ancrum		5										
Blaeberry Wood (Peebles)			22	5								
Boggyhall Wood (Nisbet)						8						
Cardrona								3	3			
Cardrona Forest											3	
Cheeklaw (Duns)						5						

Clovenfords			4									
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	3											
Eckford Hall (Nisbet)												4
Ettrick Water (Selkirk)	3											3
Gala Sewage Works		11			3			3				
Hare Moss (Selkirk)	3											
The Hirsell									5			
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)												3
Leahaugh (Newcastleton)		3										
Malcolms Moss (Ancrum)			3									
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)								4	3	19	5	3
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh		8		6								5
Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge										4		6
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	3							3			5	5
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	15		7	4	4		3		6	13	17	14
Tweed: Manor Bridge-Lyne Bridge		6										3
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange												3
Tweed: Paxton Ho.-Union Bridge					7		3	5	4	4	4	
Tweed: Peebles											4	
Tweed: Union Br.-Norham Br.							3					
Tweed: Upsettlington									4			
Tweedbank	9			3					9	5		
Walkerburn		4										
Yetholm Loch	4	4							3			
<b>No of occupied tetrads</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Sum of all peak counts</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>84</b>

Sites with peak counts of less than three: Alemoor Res (Hawick); Alerigg (St Boswells); Allanton (Chirnside); Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Ayton; Bemersyde Moss; Bewlie Farm (Lilliesleaf); Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose); Branxholme Easter Loch (Hawick); Burnmouth; Caddonlee (Clovenfords); Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank); Coldingham; Cove Harbour; Craigend (Stow); Craiglatch (Clovenfords); Darnick (Melrose); Duns Castle; Eyemouth Ferniehurst (Stow); Folly Loch; Foulden; Fruid Reservoir; Glen Cleugh (Abbey St Bathans); Gordon Community Woodland; Green Diamond (Selkirk); Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden); Haining Loch (Selkirk); Hallyards (Manor Valley); Hare Moss (Selkirk); Harehead (Yarrow Water); Heiton (Kelso); Heriot; Hollybush (Galashiels); Hownam-Heatherhope Reservoir; Hundleshope (Manor Valley); Jedburgh; Keress Wood and Loch (Ancrum); Laidlawstiel Farm (Clovenfords); Lairhope (Craik Forest); Lambertton Holdings; Leaderfoot; Leithen Water (Innerleithen); Lindean Res (Selkirk); Long Grain (Oxton); Mellerstain (Gordon); Melrose; Millar's Moss (St Abbs); Milton (Peebles); Mire Loch (St Abb's Head); New Belses Farm (Lilliesleaf); Newtown St Boswells; Northfield (St Abbs); Paxton; Pease Bay-Redheugh; Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay; Philhope (Craik); Philiphaugh (Selkirk); ; Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet); Portmore Reservoir; Redden Burn-Hadden (Kelso); Redpath (Earlston); Scotsmill (Peebles); Shielfield (Oxton); Siller Holes (West Linton); Spylaw Dam (Kelso); St Abbs; St Abb's Head; Talla Reservoir; Thornielee (Walkerburn); Traquair (Walkerburn); Tweed: St Boswells; Tweed: Clinthill; Tweed: Dryburgh; Tweed: Eshiels-Cardrona; Tweed: Langlee; Tweed: Mertoun-Benrig Dean; Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange; Tweed: The Holmes (St Boswells); Tweedbank; Upper Tarras Water (Langholm); Watch Water Res (Longformacus); West Linton-Lynedale; White Law Loch (Selkirk); Whitrig Bog (Smailholm); Whitrig Bog-Westfield (Smailholm); Woden Law (Hownam); Yetholm (Romany Marsh); Yetholm Pond.

Confirmed breeding from only four sites:

Boggyhall Wood (Nisbet)	25-Jun	ON	M Ross	Caddonlee (Clovenfords)	14-Jun	FL	A Bramhall
Blaeberry Wood (Peebles)	07-Apr	FL	SOC Borders	Tweedbank	21-Jun	FL	A Bramhall

See Introduction for explanation of breeding codes.

These are the poorest breeding records since 1997. Whether the paucity of reported colonies is a reflection of a declining breeding population or of reduced observer effort is not known. A more coordinated and larger scale survey, organised by the local branch and under the auspices of the BTO, is being undertaken in 2018. It will be interesting to see what the results are.

## Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

Rare vagrant.

A single bird was seen visiting a loch near Chapel Mains (Earlston) on 24-May (S Plint). As far as can be ascertained this is the first record of this species for Borders since an immature bird was shot on the Tweed near Kelso in Nov-1902!

## Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Well-represented breeding resident. Autumn assemblies. Wintering on rivers now annual. Most return to breeding waters from late February. Rare on coast in winter. During 2008-13 found in 8% of tetrads in summer and 9% in winter.

Records from 66 (5%) tetrads (2016: 82 tetrads; 2015: 63 tetrads). Peak monthly counts (highest in bold) greater than singles were):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Abbotsford	5											2
Ale Moor Res (Hawick)		4	3									
Barnes Loch (Hawick)									10			
Bemersyde Moss						2	2	3	3		3	
Bowden Moor Res (Melrose)					2							
Bowhill (Selkirk)									8	6	2	
Broom (Anrum)	2											
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)						2	2	5	7			4
Duns Castle			6						2	6	2	
Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank)		5	8	6					7	6	9	
Folly Loch								2	7	4		
Girnwood Loch (Craig Forest)									2			
Green Diamond (Selkirk)						2			3	5		
Haining Loch (Selkirk)		2	4	3						2		2
Hare Moss (Selkirk)			4	2	2			2				
Harelaw Pond (Lilliesleaf)										2		
Headshaw Loch (Selkirk)										11		
Heatherhope Res (Hownam)												2
The Hirsell	3	9	15	7	3	8	10		30	18	8	
Hollybush (Galashiels)	2		4	4	4		2					
Lady Moss (Melrose)	2								2	3		4
Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)							3		2			
Lindean Res (Selkirk)		4		3	2	2	2		7	7		
Loch Eddy (Traquair)	5											
Loch of the Lowes	2											
Mellerstain (Gordon)	52									38	34	
Middlethird (Gordon)					2		2					
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	2					2						
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)		4	4	6	4		2	7	8	5		
Newmains (Reston)						5						
Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)				2	2	2	2		10	5	10	
Pot Loch (Selkirk)											4	
Shielswood Loch (Ashkirk)									5	4		
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)											3	
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)									4	6		
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)									2	5	4	8
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh		6										
Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood												3
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose												2
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	7		4							5	11	23
Tweed: Ladykirk House									6			4
Tweed: Mertoun-Benrigg Dean			2									
Tweed: Paxton Ho.-Union Br.	10	8	2	2			8	10	19	14	11	5
Tweed: Peebles	5	2									3	2
Tweed: Upsettlington	4								4	5		17
West Water Reservoir										2		
White Law Loch (Selkirk)		2							6	2	3	
Whitton Loch (Hownam)										2		
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	4	8	4	6					6	6	9	7

Wooden Loch (Nisbet)									4	8		4
Yetholm Loch			4	4	2			4		2		2
Yetholm Pond		2	2							2		
<b>Sum of all peak counts</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>Riverine sites</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Standing water sites</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>

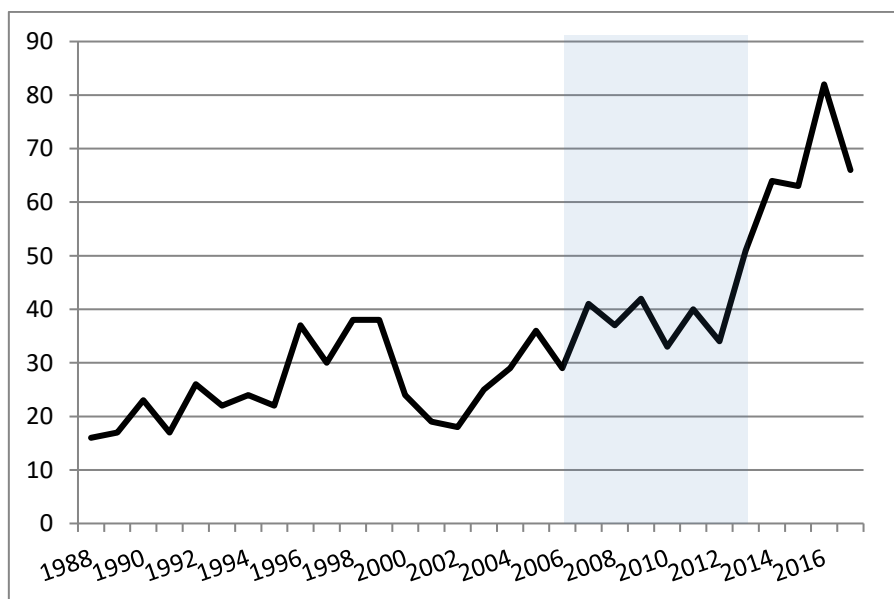
Sites with peak counts of only one came from: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Broadlee Loch (Hawick); Cabby Burn (Allanton); Cardrona; Denholm; Ettrick Water (Selkirk); Gala Sewage Works; Gordon Community Woodland; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden); Lowood Pond (Tweedbank); Neidpath Castle (Peebles); New Belses (Lilliesleaf); Portmore Reservoir; St Mary's Loch; Swinside Hall Plantation (Jedburgh); Teviot: Ormiston Mains; Tweed: Innerleithen; Tweed: Peebles-Lyne Station; Tweedbank.

Evidence of breeding came from 17 sites (23 in 2016, 31 in 2015 and 64 in 2014):

Haining Loch (Selkirk)	19-Feb	G Scott	P
Bemersyde Moss	18-Mar	J Gordon	S
Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank)	19-Mar	J Gordon	D
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	06-Apr	D Parkinson	T
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	18-Apr	D Parkinson	P
Hare Moss (Selkirk)	19-Apr	A Kentleton	P
Yetholm Loch	24-Apr	J Lough	P
Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)	10-May	M Moncrieff	1br2
Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	17-May	D Parkinson	P
Hollybush (Galashiels)	18-May	A Bramhall	P
Gordon Community Woodland	28-May	F Evans	ON
Newmains (Reston)	12-Jun	D Graham	1br3
The Hirsell	02-Jul	C Hartley	5br9
Tweed: Paxton	16-Jul	J Lough	P
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	28-Jul	N Crowther	P
Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)	12-Sep	T Brewis	br4
Bowhill (Selkirk)	29-Sep	G Scott	1br3; 1br1

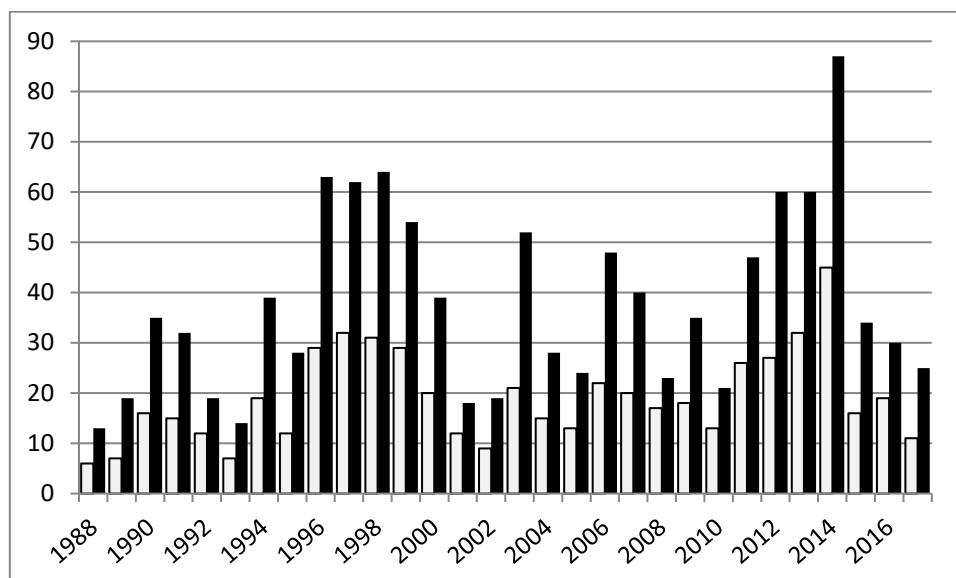
See Introduction for breeding codes.

In any one year the set of records for any species is incomplete and Little Grebe is no exception. Over the past 30 years however, while the number of occupied sites recorded has shown a strong increase, records of broods has shown a greater fluctuation with a hint of a possible decline in the past three years. Any interpretation of the historical record is further complicated by the greater observer effort associated with the recent Atlas survey period (2008-13).



**No. of occupied sites for Little Grebe: 1988-2017.**

(Shaded area represents SE Scotland Atlas survey period).



**No. of broods (grey column) and young (black column) recorded for Little Grebe: 1988-2016.**

The peak of 2011-13 probably result of greater observer effort during local Atlas survey period.

### Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Scarce breeder, <2 pairs annually; usually poor success. Present mid-March to late August. A few passage birds September-October on coast. Rare in winter. During 2008-13 found in 15 tetrads in summer and 2 in winter.

Records came from six sites (2016: seven tetrads).

Sites	Jan-Mar	Apr-Aug	Sep-Dec
Ale Moor Reservoir (Hawick)	2	2	1
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	2	2	1
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)		2	
Fruid Reservoir		1	
Hendersyde (Kelso)			1
Kale Water (Morebattle)			1
<b>No of occupied sites</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Sum of peak counts</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>

Breeding evidence from four sites, two with confirmed status:

Fruid Reservoir	04-May	R Craig	B
Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords)	06-May	M Lindsay	P
Ale Moor Res (Hawick)	09-May	G Scott	ON
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	13-Jun	A Kentleton	1br4

Now the third consecutive year with confirmed breeding at Ale Moor Reservoir and the second consecutive year for Haining Loch. Confirmed breeding prior to 2015 last recorded in 2009.

### Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Annual in small but increasing numbers since the 1990s. Ceased to breed during the mid-19th century due to persecution. The likely origins of recent birds will be the Galloway, Gateshead or Crieff introductions.

Fourteen records from 13 sites, the highest number of sites and records reported for BBR. All records, with the exception of one, were of single birds and all records came from the west of Coldstream. Many of these records will very likely involve the same individual wandering the higher ground of the west and of unknown provenance.

**Red Kite Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Mike Thornton)**

Territories Checked	Territories	Sites with proven breeding	Minimum large young	Large young per occupied site	Large young per successful pair
2	2	2	3	1.5	1.5

Two pairs in the Scottish Borders were monitored this year, **both of which were successful, producing two and one fledglings, respectively**. It was also reported that one (two?) other pairs had attempted to breed in the Lammermuirs, but had 'disappeared'.

Although Red Kites have been recorded annually in the RSG area since the 1980s, these are the first breeding records of Red Kite in the RSG area in recent times. The origin of these breeding birds is uncertain, with dispersal from the Gateshead and Callander release sites most likely.

Fewer sighting records were reported this year, with singles reported from the Lammermuirs on the 8- Apr and West Lothian during the second half of June. Kites were also reported near Broughton and over Edinburgh.

With the increase in the number of reported birds, and the establishment of this small breeding population, we are likely to see a range expansion of this species in our RSG area in the future.

*Mike Thornton, Red Kite co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders.*

**Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus***

Increasingly and now annual passage migrant, usually April-May and August-September. May have summered in recent years.

Two records of singles. Hule Moss, 14-Feb and Watch Water Reservoir (Longformacus) on 17-Aug. Both records from J Lough.

**Hen Harrier *Circus cyanus***

Very rare breeding species due to persecution. Scarce passage migrant in Mar-Apr and Sep-Oct. A few have wintered of late.

Nine records from the following areas: one from Moorfoots; three from Tweedsmuir Hills; four from the south-west; one from the Merse.

Records from: R Bramhall; M Henderson; G Paterson; C Richardson; M Ross; A Sandeman and SOC Borders Branch field excursion.

**Hen Harrier Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Andrew Sandeman)**

Note: following refers to both Borders and Lothian.

Summary: seven sites occupied; 12 young fledged from three sites.

Summary Table	Sites Occupied	Eggs Laid	Young Hatched	Young Fledged
Pentlands	0	0	0	0
Lammermuirs	0	0	0	0
Moorfoots	0	0	0	0
Tweedsmuir Hills	4	17	7+	5
SE Borders	1	5	4+	2
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>22+</b>	<b>11+</b>	<b>7</b>
Langholm	2	6+	6	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>28+</b>	<b>17+</b>	<b>12</b>



The weather flattered to deceive, with an exceptionally dry April giving way to an increasingly wet spring, including the crucial period when young chicks were in the nest. At least there were more voles about this year, and clutch sizes reflect this.

#### Pentlands

During March, both a male and a female were seen hunting just a few miles apart, but sadly that was it, until Graham saw a lone female in August.

#### Lammermuirs

The 2017 season was even worse (if possible), with just one female seen near Wedderslie on the 24-Mar. The 'dark side' have made this area a black hole for harriers and other raptors which take grouse.

#### Moorfoots

A pair was reported displaying near Garvald Lodge on the 8-Mar, but I'm not satisfied with this record and have excluded it. Otherwise, 1 female was reported in the Moorfoots in late March. The situation here is similar to the Lammermuirs.

#### Tweedsmuir Hills

Things got off to a bad start, with no harriers to be seen at our most reliable site, after many years of continuous occupation. Very late information from the landowner suggested that harriers *may* have bred at a far corner of the estate.

Elsewhere, three eggs and two tiny chicks were foxed, and a second site failed early, with a fox seen close by. Another nest with 6 eggs also failed, possibly due to the very wet weather.

The season was rescued by our final nest converting six eggs to five fledged young, which were ringed at c. 21 days. One 'dud' egg was sent for analysis.

#### South-East

Five eggs were laid at a new site in the far South-east, and this resulted in two male chicks fledging. Marc and Manu were also tagged by the RSPB.

Malcolm saw one other male in a different part of this area during April.

The Borders side of Langholm, had one nest fail pre-laying, but a second nest hatched six and fledged five young.

#### Hen Harrier LIFE Project etc.

The money available is enabling more harriers to be tagged, and even when they are tagged elsewhere, useful information is being generated when birds come to our area. A special thanks to Stephen Murphy of Natural England is due here.

#### Roosts

To the best of my knowledge, only two harriers were seen in our area (at the same site) during the winter of 2016-17. Numbers were lower in some other areas of Scotland.

Trends:

Year	Sites occupied	Pr/ females with nests	Nests fledging young	Fledged young (minimum)
2017	7	5	3	12
2016	11	8	4	13
2015	9	9	4	13
2014	8	8	7	25
2013	3	3	2	6
2012	4	3	1	3
2011	4	2	2	8

NB. Data included from the Borders side of Langholm since 2014.

### **Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis***

Very scarce and local resident, probably 40-50 pairs present. Some dispersal in August-September. Absent in some areas due to persecution During 2008-13 found in 8% of tetrads in summer and 4% in winter.

Sixteen records from 12 tetrads. Three records from Moorfoot Hills; one from Ettrick Forest; ten from the upper Tweed Valley, one from the mid-Tweed Valley and one from the Cheviot Hills.

Records included confirmed breeding at one site. Records submitted by: A Bramhall; N Stratton; K Ingleby; G Paterson; M Newell; M Bale; R Drew; J Gordon; B Khursheed.

***Goshawk Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Malcolm Henderson)***

Summary: 36 sites occupied; 48 young fledged from 22 sites.

Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with successful breeding	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site *	No. of young fledged per successful pair
48	36	22	48	1.33	2.18

A total of 48 home ranges were monitored this year. One of these was a new site near Hawick which was found during a pre-felling check of the woodland. The wood was subsequently clear-felled after the young had fledged from the nest. The positive side of this is that the forestry company managing the forest made a thorough search and not only did they report finding the nest, but they delayed the felling until after the young had fledged.

This is in contrast to one of our oldest and very well-known Goshawk nest sites near Jedburgh. The forester on this occasion said he had checked the woodland to be felled but did not see the nest. I was informed that felling had started and found them felling trees next to the occupied nest. Felling was suspended but due to the disturbance that had already taken place, the nesting attempt failed.

As a result of some hard work and thorough searching by the Forestry Commission some nest sites on their land were found this year having been missing for some time.

It was disappointing that several good nest sites outwith commercial forests were not occupied. Although persecution is an ongoing problem, this did not appear to be the issue at these nest sites. The reason for these nest sites being unoccupied is not known.

A lot of hard work has gone into monitoring this year and my thanks go to all those who have provided information.

**Detailed results for 2017**

**Home Ranges**

Number of nest sites monitored	48
Number of sites not occupied	12
Number of sites occupied, nest not found	5
Number of sites occupied, nest found	30
Number of sites failed	8
Number of sites fledged young	22

**Brood Sizes**

From the 30 nesting attempts we had an average brood size of 1.6 (1.40 last year).

From the 22 successful sites we had an average brood size of 2.18 (1.84 last year).

This year's results can only be described as average but certainly an improvement on last year's results which were poor. From the successful nests 48 young fledged (35 last year) and just about all of these were rung with BTO rings and had Darvics fitted.

This is the second year that some of the young had satellite tags fitted and these have shown some interesting movements of the young birds. Our thanks go to all those who have contributed to the cost of these tags.

In addition to the movements of the young, the tags have also shown up one definite incident of persecution. This incident is currently under investigation.

*Malcolm Henderson, Goshawk co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders.*

## Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Common and abundant. Found in 30% of tetrads. Some autumn passage. During 2008-13 found in 27% of tetrads in summer and 30% in winter.

Two hundred and twenty-two records from 116 (9%) tetrads (2016: 167 records from 123 tetrads).

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Tot
<b>Records</b>	14	15	14	22	14	9	12	12	23	37	23	27	<b>222</b>
<b>Tetrads</b>	11	15	10	12	12	4	9	12	20	24	20	19	<b>116</b>
<b>No of birds</b>	14	16	14	22	14	9	12	12	23	37	24	27	<b>224</b>

Two records of confirmed breeding from Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) area (both records from G Paterson). However, might refer to same pair.

### *Sparrowhawk Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Mike Thornton)*

Territories Checked	Territories Occupied	Sites with proven breeding	Minimum large young	Mean large young per occupied site	Mean large young per successful pair
12	11	9	31	2.8	3.4

Although a number of Edinburgh study sites were monitored this year, survey effort within the Edinburgh study area was low and therefore a direct comparison with previous years is not possible.

A total of 12 home ranges were checked for occupancy within the RSG area, of which 11 home ranges were occupied. Two sites failed to produce eggs and nine sites produced eggs and large young. This equates to an 82% breeding success.

The minimum number of large young produced was 31, which equates to an average of at least 3.4 large young per laying pair.

A total of four broods, including 20 chicks (eight males and 12 females) were colour ringed this year. Since the Edinburgh colour-ringing project started in 2012, we have ringed a total of 164 nestlings from 36 broods. From this sample, we have received a total of 21 recoveries or re-sighting records (12.8 % of ringed sample) and recorded a median dispersal distance of 3.8 km (max = 18.5 km) for males and 8.5 km (max = 33.4 km) for females.

Additional Sparrowhawk breeding records would be welcome in future years.



A brood of four Sparrowhawks with adult female. I. Todd.

## Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Common resident breeding species. Minimum 1,000 pairs, perhaps twice that. Most records Feb-Apr and Sep. During 2008-13 found in 86% of tetrads in summer and 86% in winter.

One thousand and ninety records from 321 tetrads (25%). In 2016 726 records came from 236 tetrads.

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
No of tetrads with records	49	39	57	48	48	42	51	34	42	56	48	43
Aggregate count	91	74	103	88	81	61	83	64	70	101	75	71
Sites with highest monthly counts:												
Eddleston Water (Peebles)	4											
Ladyrig (Heiton)	4											
Sprouston-Redden (Kelso)	4											
Hundleshope (Manor Valley)		5										
Paxton			6									
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh				5								
Corse Law (Abbey St Bathans)					5							
Bushelhill-Glen Cleugh (Abbey St Bathans)						5						
Yetholm Loch							4					
Galashiels-Gorebridge								5				
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)									5			
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)										7		
Capper Law (St Mary's Loch)											5	
Eckford (Nisbet)											5	
Broom (Ancrum)												5

Nineteen records with breeding evidence (14 in 2016):

Dryburgh-Bemersyde	12-Mar	J Gordon	P	Toxside Moss (Portmore)	24-May	N Crowther	D
Black Hill (Earlston)	18-Mar	J Gordon	D	Leadburn Community Woodland	22-Jun	N Crowther	D
Gattonside-Melrose	19-Mar	J Gordon	D	Posso (Manor Valley)	07-Jul	A Heavisides	FL
Bowhill (Selkirk)	30-Mar	G Scott	P	Abbotsford	07-Jul	N Crowther	D
Oxenrig (Coldstream)	10-Apr	G White	T	Williamhope (Yarrowford)	16-Jul	G Paterson	FL
Heriot	18-Apr	K Houston	D	Melrose-Chesterhall (Eildon Hills)	19-Jul	J Nicholson	P
West Linton-Cloich Forest	22-Apr	P Ball	T	Elibank Law (Traquair Forest)	23-Jul	G Paterson	FL
Gordon Community Woodland	23-Apr	F Evans	P	St Abb's Head	28-Jul	N Crowther	D
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	30-Apr	G Paterson	P	Faw Mount (West Linton)	24-Aug	P Ball	FL
Megget Reservoir	08-May	A Heavisides	T	See Introduction for breeding codes.			

### Buzzard Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (George Smith)

Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with proven breeding (minimum)	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site	No. of young fledged per successful pair
56 (45)	53 (43)	49 (48)	81+ (92+)	1.53 (1.24)	2.07 (2.48)

In 2017, 56 out of a known 160 sites were checked, with 53 occupied by pairs and three (two) more by singles. (2016 figures are in brackets).

Eggs were laid at 49 sites, with 42 of those hatching and 39 sites fledging young.

Using the more casual records from BBR observers and records from the Raptor Study Group, it is difficult to see an obvious trend in breeding in the past few years.

## Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

Rare breeder (<2 pairs) with a handful of reports of wandering immatures annually.

There were no casual records submitted.

### **Golden Eagle Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Tony Lightley):**

2016 saw the first chick fledge within the group area after three seasons of laying eggs and expectations were for more chicks to fledge during the 2017 breeding season. We were hopeful for two chicks to fledge but were still delighted with a single chick fledging from the site. Roxy is now a mature seven year old bird and hopefully we may see twins fledging in 2018 as the surrounding habitat is rich in prey species.

After yet another wet winter we had a mild spring which turned into a poor summer. However, the single chick survived and was fitted with a satellite transmitter to follow the bird after it leaves the natal area.

At the time of writing Roxy's satellite tag is still producing a strong signal helping to identify the nest location which avoids any disturbance during nest building, through to late incubation stages and following a closer inspection of the site a couple of weeks later, will hopefully reveal a successful hatching.

Once again Roxy selected a different location to eventually build the nest which is the fourth separate location in the past four years.

No disturbance visits to the site were made during the egg laying, incubation and early chick rearing period to ensure zero disturbance from raptor workers. The chick was rung and satellite tagged in early July with the help of Dave Anderson and Malcolm Henderson and the tag kindly donated through Ruth Tingay and we were not disappointed. A very large mature chick, free from down, standing on the edge of the huge historic nest site.

With the chick being satellite tagged we looked forward to monitoring the movements of the bird and use of surrounding habitats post fledging. As a new breeding season loomed closer the bird eventually left the natal area around the end of the first week in January. We anticipated interesting movements as we followed the bird's travels through the border regions and further afield in the years to come.

The bird's movements indicated a diverse range of habitats and potential prey items within a 20 sq km hunting area covered in a single day.

However, the excitement was short lived, just like the chicks life and soon turned to dismay as the satellite tag information indicated that the bird was dead. The tag stopped transmitting for three days from its last known location in the Pentland Hills and resumed transmitting again five miles (eight kilometres) north-east of Craighead on the Fife coast, drifting out to sea. It is now part of a police investigation.

Now that the funding has been secured for the South Scotland Golden Eagle Recovery Project and recruitment of staff is underway I'm sure we all look forward to exciting and productive times ahead in the Border regions when Eagles will once again be seen soaring in the skies.



The last six days of the young Golden Eagle up to 21-Jan 2018.

Updates regarding the recovery project can be found on web link [www.goldeneaglessouthofscotland.co.uk](http://www.goldeneaglessouthofscotland.co.uk)  
At the present time Roxy's tag is still transmitting and movements can be viewed on the Highland Foundation for Wildlife web site. <http://www.roydennis.org/animals/raptors/golden-eagle/>

### **Osprey *Pandion haliaetus***

Scarce but increasingly frequent passage migrant April-May and August-September. Has bred since 1989 and is spreading rapidly.

Seventy-eight records from 37 (3%) tetrads (2016: 43 tetrads). Many of the records will have involved duplicate counts of the same bird. About 60% of all sightings were made within close proximity to the Tweed. The first sighting was on 4-Apr at Innerleithen (A Bramhall) and the last sighting was on 11-Sep at Watch Water Res (Longformacus) (C Hartley). There were no records of breeding submitted.

#### **Osprey Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Tony Lightley)**

Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with proven breeding	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site	No. of young fledged per successful pair
14	11	9	18	1.64	2

#### Camera Main Nest Site

After a mild spring female Blue AS6 returned back at the nest site on 11-Apr with the resident male White SS arriving on the 15th. All seemed well but then the season produced unexpected drama. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> an unringed pair turned up at the nest and tried to take it over. However, the mature 18 year old SS stood his ground and retained possession of the nest as well as the female. All seemed to be going well when last year's female Blue FS2 also returned to the nest on 18-May. With the choice of two females we expected chicks this year as the male copulated with both females many times. Despite his enthusiasm no eggs were laid and FS2 moved on.

There have been no chicks fledged from this site for the past four years with the nest failing twice with chicks and with eggs last year. We can only hope for a productive season in 2018. Overall the project to date has fledged a minimum of 222 chicks.

There have also been news of another two nest sites, one of which is reported to have fledged two chicks but these sites remain unconfirmed and are not included in any data returns. There are still lots of good quality sites unoccupied and further expansion of platforms is required to pull in more nesting pairs as there appears to be a good number of non-breeding birds each year in the area.

The good news came again from the backup nest which proved successful again fledging two chicks, PY1 and PY2 which were both fitted with satellite tags. There were also mixed fortunes for the chicks on their migration.

**PY1** a female, started her migration on 26-Aug and arrived in the Portsmouth area on the evening of the 29<sup>th</sup>. It left this location and flew directly across the Bay of Biscay to northern Spain, a distance of 525 miles (845 km) in just under 18 hours, ie an average speed of about 29 mph (47 kph).

**PY2**, a male, migrated across the North sea on 19-Aug with a direct flight of 484 miles to Sahlenburg, North West Germany before flying down to the Geneva area in Switzerland at Lac de Joux. The bird was found dead on 25-Sep and it is thought that it was killed during the night by an Eagle Owl and the remains scavenged on the ground. The satellite tag was recovered by Wendy Strahm, co-ordinator for the Osprey reintroduction project in Switzerland.

### PY1 & PY2 Migration routes:



**PY1 Spanish-Portugese Border**



**PY2 Switzerland**



**FK8 Migration**



**Reservoir at Sines**

**PX1** a female rung in 2016, again from the backup nest, and featured in the TV programme 'The River' hosted by Jeremy Paxman, remains in the same location in Burkina Faso fishing large lagoons which are part of the Morila gold mine complex near Sanso. It is hoped the bird will return as a two year old, possibly in 2018. The bird also fishes the nearby small rivers on a regular basis but occupies a relatively small area which must be quite rich in fish species.

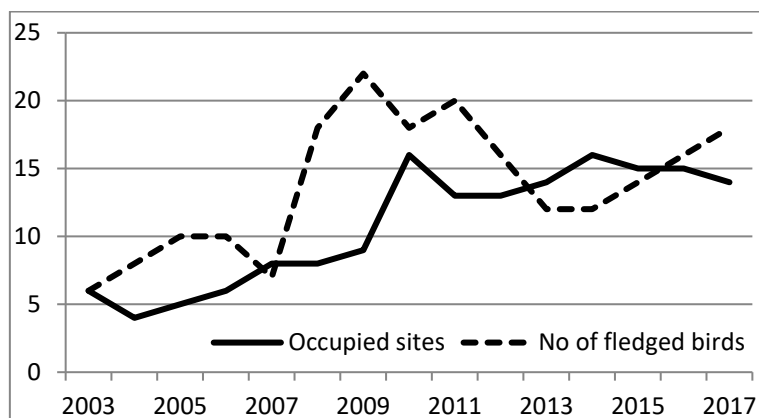
**FK8**, the 5 year old female from the Tweed valley set off on migration from Sines in West Portugal at 11.45 am on 15-Apr and after hitting strong headwinds in the Bay of Biscay and a quick stopover in Brittany France, eventually arrived at Forsinard in North Scotland at 8.45 am on the 30th, a distance of 3,900 km.

The return journey of 3,500 km commenced 12-Aug at 9.51 and made her way down to Exmouth leaving on the 21<sup>st</sup> at 7.43 crossing the channel and arriving in France at 14.23. Onwards across the Bay of Biscay to Northern Spain and making her way to the wintering grounds at Barragem de Garvel, Sines arriving 26-Aug at 18.40.

We look forward to the 2018 season to see where the bird will eventually choose to breed, as she splits her time equally between Forsinard and the Dornoch area.

Ospreys can be seen displaying in April /early May whilst June to early July are key times for fish deliveries to occupied nest sites so please pass on any sightings of birds displaying or carrying fish as soon as possible to assist us to try and locate new sites.

As the graph below shows there has been an encouraging upward trend in site occupancy and numbers of fledged young.



Site occupancy and number of fledged young for Osprey: 2003-2017.

### Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Scarce and secretive resident of basin mires. May move away in winter. Surveys suggest larger hidden population than once thought. Scarce passage migrant April and September-November. During 2008-13 found in 4% of tetrads in summer and 1% in winter.

Twenty-three records from four tetrads (2016: 29 tetrads). This represents the poorest set of records since at least 2002 and probably earlier. Since Ray Murray's death the number of reports has plummeted. So a big thank you to those who have made submissions.

Unless otherwise indicated, all counts are of single birds.

**Jan-Mar** (four tetrads):

Bemersyde Moss; The Hirsell; St Abb's Head; Yetholm Loch.

**Apr-Aug (breeding season)** (three tetrads):

Bemersyde Moss - 2; Yetholm Loch - 2; St Abb's Head.

**Sep-Dec** (three tetrads):

The Hirsell; St Abb's Head; Yetholm Loch.

Readers are encouraged to look (or listen) out for this species. All records will be gratefully received.

### Corncrake *Crex crex*

A rare summer visitor and passage migrant. Former widespread breeder with last disappearing in the 1970s-1980s.

A single bird was heard and then seen perched on a garden fence at Blakelaw (Yetholm) on 13-Jun (M Findlay). Adjacent to the garden was a field of long grass. The last record was Aug-2014.

### Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Common resident of waterside habitats. Groups of >10 birds occur in hard weather at favoured sites. During 2008-13 found in 20% of tetrads in summer and 18% in winter.

Five hundred and sixty-eight records from 95 (8%) tetrads (2016: 538 records from 97 tetrads). Monthly peak counts of five or more:

Counts of five or more:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J*	A	S	O	N	D
Bemersyde Moss			7	5					5			
Bowhill (Selkirk)									6	5		
Cardrona Hotel (Peebles)					5							
Duns Castle Pond	6	8								7	7	8
Duns Mill Dam			6									
Galashiels Sewage Works	7	7							6	5	7	9
Haining Loch (Selkirk)		6										
Hare Moss (Selkirk)				5				6				
The Hirsell	9	9	7	5							7	
Manderston (Duns)			5									
Mellerstain (Gordon)	10									10	8	





Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)		6										
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	14	17	16	7					6	13	9	17
Wooden Loch (Eckford)									18	25	42	26
Yetholm Loch	24	13	9	12	6							
Yetholm Pond			8									
<b>Total no of all tetrads</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Aggregate of all peak counts</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>64</b>

\* Counts include fledged young. Same may apply to other sites during Jul-Sep.

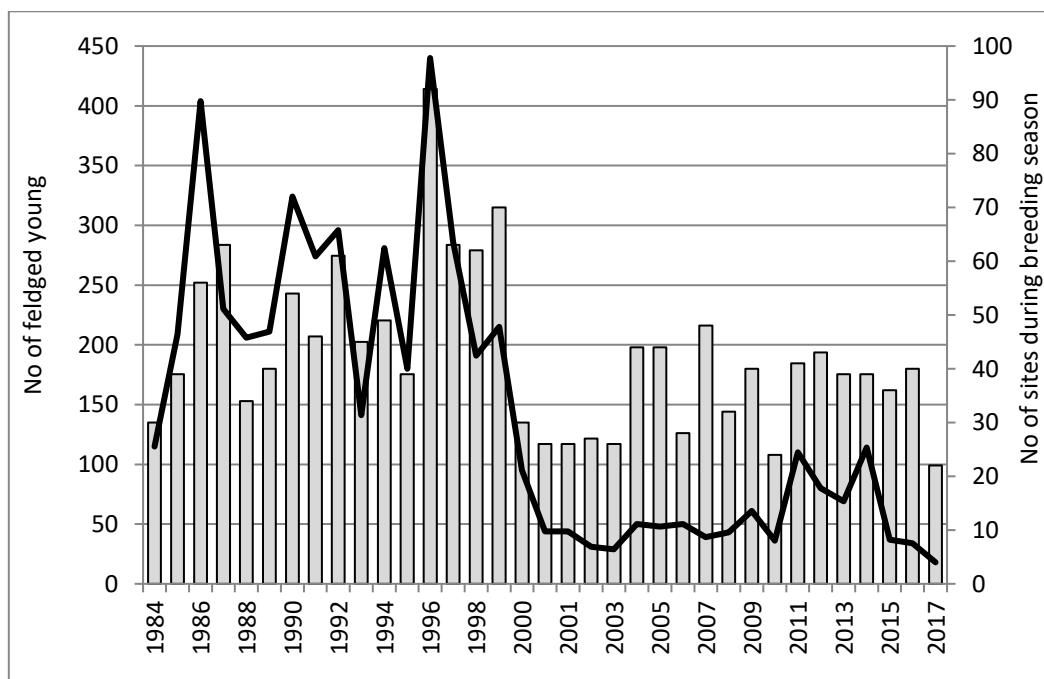
Sites with peak counts of five or less: Bemersyde Moss; Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank); Chapel Mains Pond (Earlston); Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor); Essenside Loch (Ashkirk); Green Diamond (Selkirk); Haining Loch (Selkirk); Hare Moss (Selkirk); Harelaw (Lilliesleaf); Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm); Keress Wood and Loch (Ancrum); Lady Moss (Melrose); Lindean Res (Selkirk); Mellerstain (Gordon); Minto Kaimies (Ancrum); Newcastleton; Newmains (Reston); Portmore Loch; Spotts Burn Pond (Lauder); Synton Loch (Selkirk); Tweedbank; Whitmuir Hall Loch (Selkirk).

Breeding (Mar-Aug): Records came from 22 tetrads with eleven tetrads with confirmed breeding.

25-Mar	Ale Moor Res (Hawick)	D	24-May	Tweedbank	NYbr3
16-Apr	Bowdenmoor Loch (Melrose)	ON	25-May	Chapel Mains (Earlston)	ON
22-Apr	Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)	ON	01-Jun	Hare Moss (Selkirk)	1br3
22-Apr	Bemersyde Moss	A	12-Jun	Hirsel	P
23-Apr	Hollybush (Galashiels)	ON	12-Jun	Newmains (Reston)	2br7
24-Apr	Duns Castle Lake	P	30-Jul	Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	FL
28-Apr	Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	ON(3)	15-Aug	Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	2br3
04-May	Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	FL	See Introduction for breeding codes		

The first confirmed breeding record was on 16-Apr when a bird on nest was reported from Bowdenmoor Loch (Melrose) (E Bickmore). The first record of fledged young was on 4-May at Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) (A Kerr).

On the basis of records from past Bird Reports, breeding levels for Coots continue to decline. This year's figures represent the lowest since BBR began in 1984 and are part of a declining pattern that began in the late 1990s. The dataset is however, based, of course, on an incomplete picture (less than 3% of all tetrads providing the records). Readers are encouraged to submit all sightings of this species with as much detail on breeding as possible.



**Reported no. of young (line) and reported no. of breeding season sites (column): 1984-2017.**

Note that the smaller peak between 2008-2014 corresponds to the SE Scotland Atlas survey period and the Waterbodies Survey.

## Common Crane *Grus grus*

Scarce vagrant. Almost annual.

Two birds, possibly a pair, were seen in the Merse on 20, 24, 26-Jun and on 2-Jul (N Stratton, D Graham). First sighting since a flyover in 2014. This species has now been reported in 18 years since 1984.



Common Crane. The Merse. June. Dave Graham.

## Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Common summer visitor. Arrival mid-Feb, mostly gone by July. A few birds on coast through the year. During 2008-13 found in 54% of tetrads in summer and 15% in winter.

Seven hundred and sixty one records from 142 tetrads (11%)

A total of 226 were counted on the Rocky Shore Count on 15-Jan. Exactly the same number were recorded last year though with different but similar numbers in each section.

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	22	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	15
Pease Bay-Redheugh	69	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	49
Redheugh-Souter	17	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	30
Souter-Pettico Wick	3	Burnmouth-Border	21

Between Feb-July the greatest accounts occur inland usually occurring above Coldstream. Those counts ten and above excluding RSC data are shown below:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick)			35									
Blackhope Byers (Glentress Water)			14									
Burnmouth	47		25					15	17	35		39
Cardrona		12				15						
Clinthill (St Boswells)		35	25									
Dunglass	45				11							
Hen Poo (Duns)		10										
Eckford Hall								10				
Edston Floods (Peebles)			52									
Ettrick Water (Selkirk)		37	46	37	14							

Eyemouth									36		18	
Hule Moss			15									
Hundleshope (Manor Valley)			10									
Innerleithen		22	53									
Kelso	32	52	24									
Langhaugh (Manor Valley)			33									
Manor Bridge		18	19									
Manor Valley - Horse Hope Craig				14								
Melrose	10											
Newstead-Drygrange			14									
Paxton					11							
Sprouston-Redden (Kelso)	23		34	36	13						12	
St Mary's Loch			50		18							
Stanhope (Broughton)			105									
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)							12					
Tweedbank					18							
Tweed: Uppsettlington	11		14									
Watch Water (Longformacus)			110	62	24	21	105	35				
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)		41										
<b>Coastal tetrads</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Inland tetrads</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

Sites with peak counts of less than ten were: Abbotsford, Allanton, Ashiestiel, Barnhills (Minto), Bemersyde Moss, Birgham Haugh, Blackhopebyre (Glentress), Borders General Hospital, Burnmouth, Cardrona, Carlops, Castle Craig (Blyth Bridge), Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch), Clovenfords, Coldingham Bay, Coldingham Loch, Dowlaw, Earlston High School, Eddleston, Ettrick Water, Folly Loch, Foulden, Fruid Reservoir, Gala Sewage Works Pond, Graden (Yetholm), Harelaw pond (Lilliesleaf), Hawkshaw Burn (Ettrick), Heiton, Hendersyde, Heriot, Hoselaw Loch, Howford (Ettrick), Hundleshope (Manor Valley), Huntford (Carter Bar), Innerleithen, Kerss Wood and Loch (Ancrum), Kimmerghame Heugh (Duns), Kirk Yetholm, Kirkhope (Ettrickbridge), Kidston Mill (Eddleston Water), Leadburn Community Woodland, Leaderfoot, Lindean Reservoir, Linkim Shore (St Abbs), Little King Seat (West Linton), Megget Reservoir, Millar's Moss (St Abbs), Nether Falla (Portmure), New Belses Farm (Lilliesleaf), Newbiggins Walls (Lauder), Newburgh (Ettrick), Newmains (Reston), Nisbet, Peebles, Putton Mill (Duns), Rhymer's Glen (Melrose), Springhall (Hendersyde), St. Boswells Green, Stow, Talla Reservoir, Town Yetholm Pond, Tweed : Union Bridge, Tweed: Cardrona-Eshiels, Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose, Tweed: Mertoun - Benrig Dean, Walkerburn, West Linton, Cloich Forest, West Linton: Lyne Water, Whitmuir Hall Loch (Selkirk), Whitrig Bog, Yetholm Loch.

Apr-Jul (breeding season):

Records came from 91 tetrads (103 tetrads in 2016). Evidence of breeding was reported from 24 tetrads (30 in 2016):

06-Apr	Kelso	P	05-Jun	Peebles-Eddleston	P
18-Apr	Cardrona	P	03-Jun	Teviot: Nisbet	FL
26-Apr	Hundleshope (Manor Valley)	P	06-Jun	Heriot Station	FL
04-May	Talla Reservoir	P	06-Jun	Newmains (Reston)	FL
07-May	Gala Sewage Works Pond	T	11-Jun	Tweed: Union Bridge	P
10-May	Cardrona Hotel	NE	14-Jun	Tweed: Mertoun-Benrig Dean	FL
18-May	Stantling Craigs Res (Clovenfords)	DD	22-Jun	Leadburn Community Woodland	S
19-May	Whitmuir Estate (Selkirk)	FL	03-Jul	Birgham	FL
20-May	Tweed: Gattonside- Melrose	ON	07-Jul	Abbotsford	D
20-May	Leaderfoot	P	07-Jul	St Boswells	FL
20-May	Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	FL	12-Jul	Lyne Water (West Linton)	DD
21-May	Tweedbank	ON	28-Jul	St Abb's Head	N

SE Scotland Atlas 2007-13 states that winter and breeding populations may have declined by 10% since the early 1990s.

### Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Scarce visitor to high ground March-July. Formerly possibly 400-500prs. Uncommon on lower ground January-April and August-December. During 2008-13 found in 9% of tetrads in summer and 9% in winter.

Ninety-three records from 44 (3%) tetrads (69 records from 39 tetrads in 2016)

Jan-April records (19 tetrads):

Sites	J	F	M	A
Bemersyde-Westfield	300			
Broad Law (Upper Tweeddale)	1			
Byreclough (Longformacus)		11		
Carcant (Heriot)				200
Dunion Hill (Jedburgh)	350			
Coldstream	100			
Eddleston-Leadburn				150
Folly Loch				24
Greenlaw Moor			2	
Hawthornside (Bonchester Bridge)			80	
Hundleshope Heights (Manor Valley)			12	
Leadburn (nr)				13
Lylestone Hill (Lauderdale)			24	
New Smailholm (Smailholm)	100			
Old Kirkhope (Manor Valley)			16	
Pykestone Hill (Manor Valley)		22		
Stobswood (Longformacus)		11		
Thorlieshope (Liddesdale)	25			
West Linton - Cloich Forest			2	

Breeding evidence came from only two tetrads: Lammer Law South (12-May) – D; Hule Moss (16-Jun) – S.

See Introduction for explanation of breeding codes.

Records with no breeding evidence from May to Aug came from Angelrow (Greenlaw), Cakra Hill (Ettrick), Jardinefield (Whitsome) and Waddelscairn (Oxton).

Sept-Dec records (22 tetrads):

	S	O	N	D
Bemersyde - Westfield	520	1,000		
Birneyknowe (Tushielaw)				50
Broadmeadows (Yarrow Water)				22
Coldstream	23			6
Fishwick (Paxton)			67	
Greenlaw	2	300		300
Heiton		220		
Highlee Hill (Chesters)		6		
Lady Moss (Bowden)				75
Lauder Common				40
Leadburn (Portmore)			1	
Lempitlaw (Kelso)		250		
Middlesknowes (Oxnam)		5		
New Smailholm (Smailholm)		600		
Newmains (Reston)			370	
Old Greenlaw (Greenlaw)		800		
Pennymuir (Oxnam)		5		
Proctor's Smithy (Kelso)		150		
Smailholm		600		
Spylaw (Portmore)			1	
Teviot Haughs		340	21	
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream				6

Recent Atlas work and BTO dedicated surveys point to a significant decrease in the breeding population since the early 1990s.

### Grey Plover *Pluvialis squaterola*

A very uncommon autumn passage migrant in coastal areas.

Four records of singles from one tetrad, possibly the same bird at Pease Bay on 14-Jan, 5-Feb, 18-Feb, and 11-Mar (D Graham). 2016 had five records from three tetrads; 2015 had records from three tetrads.



Grey Plover. Pease Bay. January. Dave Graham.

### Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Common but declining breeding species. Many arrive mid-February to March, leaving in July with most departing by October. Small numbers overwinter. During 2008-13 found in 39% of tetrads in summer and 17% in winter.

Three hundred and seventeen records from 73 tetrads (5%) (360 from 83 tetrads in 2016).

Peak counts of ten or more	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Ashiestiel		45										
Bemersyde- Westfield	260	300	110	25				50	180	300	1,000	
Birgham Haugh		50					16		100			
Blackhope Byers (Glentress Water)			17									
Cardrona		11										
Kitleyknowe (Carlops)					11							
Denholm Hill									45			
Doorpool (Bonchester Bridge)										60		
Dronshiel (Dirrington Gt Law)		200										
Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords)												18
Easter Fodderlee (Bonchester Br)										80		
Eddleston		90	60									
Edenmouth (Kelso)										115		
Falla Hill (Middleton)		30										
Folly Loch	110	254	60						56	18	73	110
Foulshot Law (Greenlaw)										400		
Gordon Hospital										50		
Graden (Yetholm)											70	
Greenlaw										400		350

Gunknowe Loch (Tweedbank)	110											
Hule Moss		30						400				
Hundleshope (Manor Valley)			67	12						65		
Kerss Wood and Loch (Ancrum)			21									
Lady Moss (Bowden)											16	
Lempitlaw (Kelso)	30								30			
Lylestone Hill (Lauderdale)			30									
Nether Falla (Portmore)								44	70			
Netherwells (Jedburgh)	40											
Newmains (Reston)	30	240		22		22				30	32	
Old Greenlaw (Greenlaw)									550			
Peebles		14	50									
Pennymuir (Oxnam)									50			
Rachelfield Pond (Smailholm)		483										
Rutherford (Roxburgh)						25						
Shielstockbraes (Morebattle)			120									
Spittal Burn (Skirling)	170											
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)			25		12	93				50	40	
Teviot : Nisbet								24	300	80		
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream									115		26	
Upper Nisbet (Nisbet)						90						
Watch Water Reservoir			10	11			73	270				
West Water Reservoir										87		
Yetholm Loch		55										

Tetrads with peak counts below ten were Abbotrule (Bonchester Bridge), Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick), Cademuir (Manor Valley), Broad Law (Moorfoots), Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank), Edrom, Ettrick, Selkirk, Fellside (Southdean), Greenlaw Pond (Foulden), Hartsgarth (Newcastleton), Hawthornside (Bonchester Bridge), Hollybush Farm Pond (Galashiels), Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm), Little King Seat (West Water), Lymiecleugh (Teviothead), Maidenhall (Dryburgh), Hallyards (Manor Valley), Megget Reservoir, Foulshiels (Yarrowford), New Belses (Ancrum), Newlands (Hassendean), Heriot, Old Kirkhope (Manor Valley), Philhope (Craik), Piper's Grave (Glentress), Tweed: Uppsettlington, Shielfield (Oxton), St Mary's Loch, Three Brethren, Towford (Hownam), Tweed : Banff Mill – Lochton, Tweeddaleburn (Portmore), Tweed: Union Bridge, Wardlaw (Ettrick Water), West Linton - Cloich Forest, Whitmuir Estate (Selkirk).

**Breeding (mid-March-mid-July):** One hundred and thirty nine records from 46 tetrads (62 tetrads in 2016). Records involving breeding evidence came from 32 tetrads (23 tetrads in 2016):

01-Mar	Broad Law (Heriot Water)	N Crowther	D	06-May	Stantling Craig Reservoir	M Lindsay	P
05-Mar	West Linton-Cloich Forest	P Ball	A	06-May	Mobile-NT4229	G Scott	A
07-Mar	Fellside	M Henderson	D	13-May	Megget Reservoir	R Craig	FL
10-Mar	Lymiecleugh farm	A Mossop	D	17-May	Nisbet Bridge	M Henderson	A
26-Mar	Piper's Grave (Glentress)	R Bramhall	P	19-May	Whitmuir Estate	D Parkinson	FL
06-Apr	Folly Loch	A Bramhall	P	21-May	Kitleyknowe (Carlops)	M Shaw	FL
10-Apr	Watch Water Reservoir (East)	C Hartley	T	21-May	Netherwells (Oxnam)	M Henderson	A
10-Apr	Watch Water Reservoir (West)	C Hartley	T	24-May	Tweeddaleburn (Portmore)	N Crowther	D
10-Apr	Towford	M Henderson	D	25-May	Little King Seat (West Water)	J Palfery	P
18-Apr	Heriot	K Houston	D	13-Jun	Blackhopebyre (Leithen Water)	L Hawkings	FL
25-Apr	Bemersyde Moss	D Parkinson	P	14-Jun	Newlands	M Henderson	A
26-Apr	Hartsgarth (Newcastleton)	M Henderson	D	18-Jun	Whitrig Bog/Westfield	M Moncrieff	FL
26-Apr	Hundleshope (Manor Valley)	D Parkinson	D	03-Jul	Birgham	D Graham	FL
30-Apr	Edrom (Chirside)	A Mossop	P	21-Apr	Graden (Yetholm)	Not known	D
01-May	Hawthornside (Bonchester Bridge)	M Henderson	D	18-May	Towford (Hownam)	M Henderson	A
04-May	St Mary's Loch	R Craig	FL	06-Jun	Newmains (Reston)	D Graham	FL

See introduction for breeding codes.

SE Scotland Atlas (2007-13), using Timed Tetrad Visit encounter rates, indicated a 75% reduction in breeding numbers since the early 1990s. However, occupied tetrads do hint at a small improvement since the low point of 2014.

### **Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius***

Rare summer visitor and breeder.

Records came from two sites, one less than in 2016. The sites were on the Teviot (D Graham, M Moncrieff, D Parkinson) and another site to the north (M Moncrieff). Agitated behaviour was seen at the Teviot site.

No records were submitted for 2015, although 2014 records of three sites suggest that the population could be greater than suggested by so few records and readers are encouraged to look out for and submit all sightings of this species. The likely breeding population is however, no more than a half dozen pairs or so.



**Little Ringed Plover. June. Martin Moncrieff.**

### **Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula***

Rare breeder on river shingles, upland lochs and coast. Uncommon passage migrant to coasts. During 2008-13 found in 15 tetrads in summer and four in winter.

Records received from only three tetrads (six in 2016). No confirmed breeding.

The sites were Greenlaw Farm Pool, Foulden (D Christie), Teviot : Nisbet (M Lindsay), Tweed: Birgham (D Graham).

Records show a continued decline: 20-32 pairs in the 1980s, c. 10-15 pairs by 2013. Again readers are strongly encouraged to report any sightings.

### **Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus***

Very uncommon spring and uncommon autumn passage migrant, mostly along coastal areas. Wintering exceptional.

Seven records from seven tetrads:

Watch Water Res (Longformacus)	17-Jul	2	J Lough	Coldingham	13-Jul	1	F Evans
Dunglass	16-Jul	2	D Graham	St Abb's Head	23-Jul	1	D Graham
Carham (Coldstream)	30-Apr	1	D Graham	Burnmouth	23-Apr	1	D Graham
				Eyemouth	27-Dec	1	D Graham



### ***Curlew *Numenius arquata****

Common but declining breeding species. Scarce in winter. Inland only from early March-June/July. Uncommon passage migrant in coastal areas. During 2008-13 found in 51% of tetrads in summer and 4% in winter.

Two hundred and fifty-seven records from 86 tetrads (7%). 2016: 221 records from 75 tetrads; 2015: 267 records from 96 tetrads.

Only twenty-six counted during the Rocky Shore Count on 15-Feb (184 in 2016, 58 in 2015):

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	3	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	1
Pease Bay-Redheugh	7	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	5
Redheugh-Souter	2	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	1
Souter-Pettico Wick	3	Burnmouth-Border	4

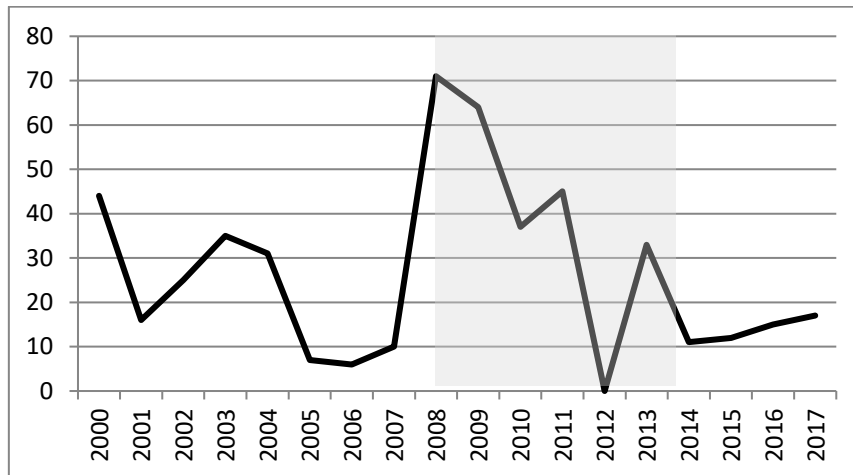
Main site showing monthly peak counts (breeding season shaded):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick)		17										
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)				2	4							
Blackhaugh (Clovenfords)			6									
Blackhopebyre (Leithen Valley)			6	Pr								
Burnmouth-Border	4	Pr	2						2	5		5
Carlops (West Linton)				Pr	9							
Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch)					2	2						
Cloich (Eddleston)					3							
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	5								5	18	2	
Crooked Jock (West Linton)						4						
Dunglass	43											
Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords)					4							
Elibank Craig (Walkerburn)				4								
Hallmanor (Manor Valley)			64									
Hilton-Jardinefield (Whitsome)									14	9		
Hule Moss				2			4					
Hundleshope Ponds (Manor Valley)		2	3	3								
Innerleithen			100	Pr								
Kirkhope (Ettrickbridge)			64									
Lylestone Hill (Lauderdale)			5									
Lyne Manor (Peebles)			21									
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	40											3
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	56							24	34	30	Pr	45
Nether Falla (Portmore)			6									
Paxton House												8
Pease Bay-Redheugh	7											
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay		Pr	27	3								
Philhope (Craik)					6							
Sandyknowe (Smailholm)			9									
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)			20		2		4					
Three Brethren (Yarrowford)				2		3						
Wardlaw (Tushielaw)				2	4							
Watch Water (Longformacus)			16	3	6	7	5	32	8			
West Linton-Cloich Forest			2	4								
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)		18	20									
Woden Law (Hownam)					4							
<b>Inland tetrads (all records)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Coastal tetrads (all records)</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Aggregate of all peak counts</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>61</b>

Breeding season (mid-Mar to Aug) records came from 66 tetrads. Specific reports involving breeding evidence came from 17 tetrads:

25-May	Little King Seat (West Linton)	S	J Palfery	02-May	Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch)	A	M Henderson
10-Mar	Lymiecleugh (Teviothead)	S	A Mossop	03-May	Stanhope (Drumelzier)	D	A Heavisides
15-Mar	Blackhopebyer (Leithen Valley)	D	N Crowther	04-May	Fruid Reservoir	P	R Craig
18-Mar	Huntford (Carter Bar)	S	C Watson	10-May	Green Knowe (Romannobridge)	N	P Ball
23-Mar	Hawthornside (Bonchester Bridge)	D	M Henderson	11-May	Wide Hope Shank (Lyne Water)	D	BBS
30-Mar	Foulshiels (Yarrowford)	P	G Scott	12-May	Berryfell (Hawick)	A	M Henderson
17-Apr	Wardlaw (Tushielaw)	A	M Henderson	24-May	Tweedaleburn (Portmore)	S	N Crowther
26-Apr	Hartsgarth (Newcastleton)	P	M Henderson	28-May	Carlops-Kitleyknowe	FL	M Shaw
See Introduction for breeding codes.				20-Jun	Upper Tarras Water (Langholm)	S	C Richardson

On the basis of past BBR records, there are signs of a degree of stability in the range of breeding birds. However, the database is obviously incomplete and should be regarded with caution. Records from the SE Scotland Atlas give some indication of the actual number of sites with breeding evidence:



**Number of sites with evidence of breeding reported: 2000-2017.**

Shaded area represents SE Scotland Atlas period.

### Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Uncommon autumn passage migrant.

Records from only three sites: 22-Aug, Folly Loch; Whitrig Bog-Westfield, 30-Aug; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden), 21-30 Sep. This represent 13 bird-days, below the 27 bird-days for 2016 but above the average for the past ten years or so.

### Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Uncommon coastal winter visitor, August-May. Rare on passage to inland areas. During 2008-13 found in four tetrads in summer and eight in winter.

Thirty counted during the Rocky Shore Count on 15-Jan (2016 - 60; 2015 - 51; 2014 - 60; 2013 - 47; 2012 - 41):

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	0	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	19
Pease Bay-Redheugh	0	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	11
Redheugh-Souter	0	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	0
Souter-Pettico Wick	0	Burnmouth-Border	30

Thirty-five records from four tetrads. Peak counts (Including RSC):

North to south:	J	F	M	S	O	N	D
Dunglass	8	23	10				
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	19			Pr			
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	11				4		19
Burnmouth	31	22	24		22	5	9
<b>No of tetrads with counts</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Aggregate of all peak counts</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>28</b>

The last record in spring was on 29-Mar at Burnmouth (M Moncrieff) and the first record of autumn was on 19-Sep at St Abbs (S Morton).

**Knot *Calidris canutus***

Scarce autumn passage migrant and winter visitor, almost exclusively seen in coastal areas.

Single record: three birds on 23-Jul at St Abb's Head (D Graham). Poorest year since 2006.

**Ruff *Philomachus pugnax***

Scarce passage migrant.

Nineteen records from three tetrads:

Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) reported two birds on 31-Aug (earliest record for Borders this year). This had increased to 17 by 24-Sep (D Christie) and declined to three by 30-Sep.

Hule Moss had a single bird on 9-Oct (A Mossop).

Old Greenlaw-Foulshot Law (Greenlaw) had up to six birds between 25 and 30-Oct (F Evans, J Lough and J Towill).

**Dunlin *Calidris alpina***

Very scarce moorland breeder found in 2% of tetrads, perhaps 20-40 pairs. Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor, mostly to coast. During 2008-13 found in 15 tetrads in summer and four in winter.

Twelve records from six sites.

Dunglass: 02-Jan – 5; 5-Feb – 5; 18-Feb – 4; 11-Mar – 3; 19-Mar -1; 16-Jul – 2.

Carham (Coldstream): 30-April – 1.

Eyemouth: 15-Jul – 6.

Hule Moss: 30-Aug – 1.

Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden): 31-Aug – 1; 4-Sep – 1.

St Abb's Head: 2-Dec – 10.

A not-untypical year but lacking the large counts of birds on passage off St Abb's Head that have characterised the last two years.

**Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima***

Winter visitor to rocky coast. Present August-May in very small and decreasing numbers. All records needed. During 2008-13 found in ten tetrads in winter.

Ten records from five tetrads:

Dunglass	02-Jan	2
Coldingham Bay	15-Jan	2
Dunglass	05-Feb	9
Pease Bay	05-Feb	7
Burnmouth	10-Feb	2
Dunglass	18-Feb	2
Pease Bay	11-Mar	10
Dunglass	11-Mar	5

Eyemouth	22-Jul	6
Coldingham Bay	03-Dec	1

All records from D Graham except that from Burnmouth (R Drew).

The very early record of 22-Jul is unusual. The last time a July record was submitted was for four birds seen at St Abb's Head on 24-Jul 2003 and, before that, two birds were seen at St Abbs on 22-Jul 1994.

No records from RSC, *cf.* 2016 had seven and 2015 had 26.

**Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius***

Extremely scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

A single bird was seen at St Abb's Head on 12-Nov (D Graham).

### Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Common summer visitor along rivers. Very rare in winter, mostly early April to late August. During 2008-13 found in 25% of tetrads in summer.

One hundred and ten records from 37 tetrads. 2016 – 43 tetrads; 2015 – 47 tetrads.

	No. tetrads with records	Sites with highest counts (singles unless otherwise indicated)
<b>Jan-Mar</b>	1	Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)
<b>Apr-Jul (breeding season)</b>	35	Carham (Coldstream)-12; Talla Reservoir-8; Fruid Reservoir-5; Watch Water (Longformacus)-4; Selkirk-4; St Mary's Loch-3; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh-3; Leaderfoot-3; Abbotsford-3; Glenormiston Woodend (Cardrona)-2; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet Bridge)-2; Cacrabank (Tushielaw)-2; Kelso: Sprouston-Redden-2; Tweedbank-2; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)-2; Todheugh (Chirnside)-2; Lees Haugh (Coldstream)-2; Roxburgh Hotel-2; Linkim Shore (Coldingham)-2; Ayton; Melrose; Kimmerghame Heugh (Duns); Tweed: Paxton House; Posso (Manor Valley); Stanhope Foot (Tushielaw); Kelso: Sprouston-Banff Mill; Hule Moss; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulден); Cardrona; Lanton (Jedburgh); Tweed: Mertoun-Benrig Dean; Middletoun (Fountainhall); Carlops; Melrose; Ettrickhaugh.
<b>Aug-Dec</b>	5	Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)-2; Birgham (Coldstream)-2; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulден); Teviot: Denholm; Coldingham.

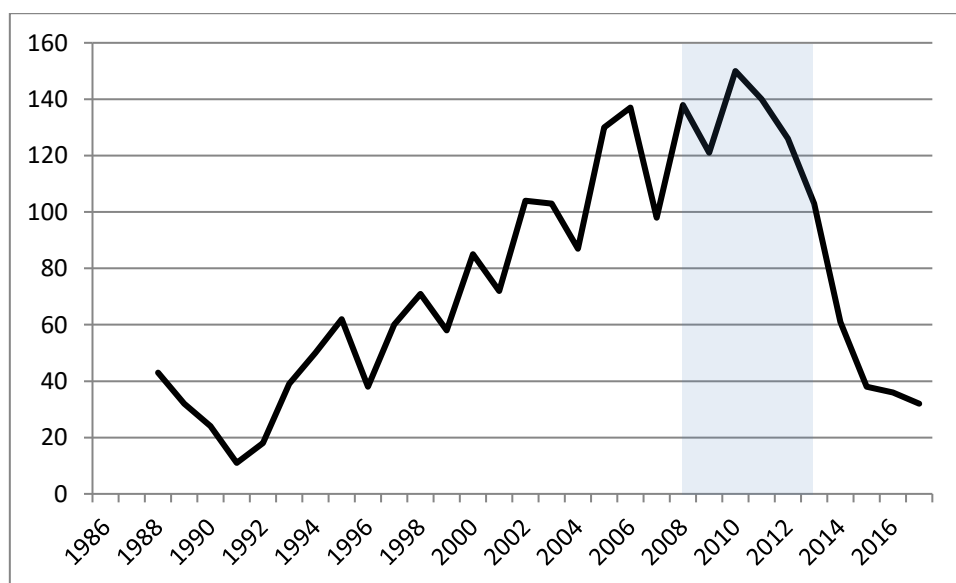
The single bird noted last year overwintering along the Teviot Haughs was again reported: 29-Jan (M Henderson). The count of 12 at Carham (Coldstream) on 30-Apr was the highest since 2006 at Melrose.

Excepting the overwintering bird on the Teviot Haughs, the first record was from Kelso: Sprouston-Redden on 13-Apr (T Reed). The last record away from the Teviot Haughs (where the now-resident bird was seen right up to the end of the year (M Henderson) was on 6-Oct at Birgham (Coldstream) – B Meikle.

Breeding (Apr-mid Jul):

Records came from 35 tetrads. 2016 – 42 tetrads; 2015 – 42 tetrads; 2014 – 42 tetrads; 2013 (Atlas survey period) – 76 tetrads. Assumed pairs were present in 19 tetrads (see table above), possibly making up c. 32 pairs.

Estimating the number of breeding pairs is difficult, especially come July, when birds begin to disperse. The graph below gives as much insight into observer effort (there were dedicated counts in Manor Valley and Leithen Valley just before the Atlas period) as perhaps the actual changes in population. The local SE Scotland Atlas 2007-13 suggests that the population of Borders and Lothian has reduced about 15% since 1994.



Number of assumed pairs reported: 1986-2017.



Common Sandpiper. Middletoun (Stow). July. Alistair Cutter.

### Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon, mostly autumn passage migrant and very rare winter visitor.

Fifty records from 12 tetrads. 2016 – nine tetrads; 2015 – seven tetrads.

Kelso: Sprouston-Redden	26-Jan	2
Teviot Haughs: Nisbet	29-Jan	1
Teviot Haughs: Nisbet	28-Feb	1
Teviot Haughs: Nisbet	01-Mar	4
Victoria Jubilee Br (Ayton)	02-Mar	1
Ayton	14-Apr	1
Carham (Coldstream)	30-Apr	1
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	08-Jul	1
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	5-8 Aug	1
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	23-Aug	1
Teviot Haughs: Nisbet	01-Sep	1
Hendersyde (Kelso)	17-Sep	1
Teviot Haughs: Nisbet	02-30 Oct	2
Hendersyde (Kelso)	10-Oct	1
Teviot Haughs: Nisbet	01-30 Nov	5
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	19-Nov	5
Birgham (Coldstream)	19-Nov	2
Hendersyde (Kelso)	19-Nov	1
Teviot Haughs: Nisbet	03-31 Dec	4
Edenmouth (Kelso)	09-Dec	2
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	10-Dec	2



Newmains (Reston)											3		<b>3</b>
Pease Bay-Redheugh	28												<b>28</b>
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	7												<b>7</b>
Redheugh-Souter	6												<b>6</b>
Spotts Burn Pond (Lauder)													<b>0</b>
Sprouston-Redden (Kelso)			11										<b>11</b>
St Abbs									1				<b>1</b>
St Abb's Head			1										<b>1</b>
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)					3		1						<b>4</b>
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)				1	2	1				4	1		<b>9</b>
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	10	1	12	10					1		8	20	<b>62</b>
Tweed: Peebles			1										<b>1</b>
Tweed: Union Bridge-Border								2	9	2	7	6	<b>26</b>
Tweed: Uppsettlington	3		1									7	<b>11</b>
Tweed: Walkerburn			1	1									<b>2</b>
Tweedaleburn (Portmore)					1								<b>1</b>
Watch Water (Longformacus)			8	3	3	1							<b>15</b>
Whitrig Bog-Westfield						1							<b>1</b>
<b>Coastal tetrads</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>Inland tetrads</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	
<b>Aggregate of all peak counts</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>657</b>

#### Breeding (Apr-Aug):

Records came from 15 tetrads during the breeding season (23 in 2016, 19 in 2015, 17 in 2014). Records with specific reference to breeding evidence came from (see Introduction for breeding codes):

Watch Water (Longformacus)	10-Apr	D (COPULATING)	C Hartley
Hundleshope Ponds (Manor Valley)	26-Apr	P	D Parkinson
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	02-May	D (COPULATING)	M Moncrieff
Spotts Burn Pond (Lauder)	21-May	T	SOC Borders

Readers are encouraged to submit all records of Redshanks, especially involving any breeding evidence.

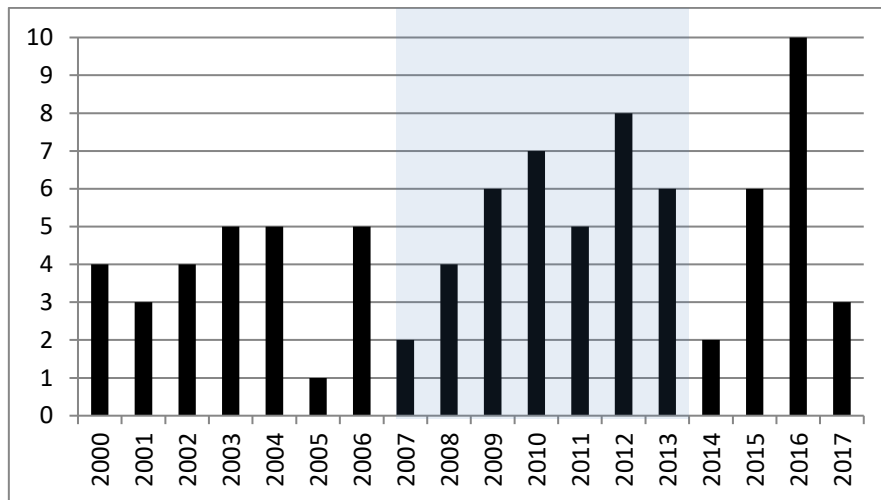
### Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Much overlooked. During 2008-13 found in 15 tetrads in winter.

Thirteen records from three tetrads. 2016 – ten tetrads; 2015 – six tetrads.

Newmains (Reston)	04-Jan	D Graham	1
Malcolms Moss (Ancrum)	03-Feb	M Henderson	3
Newmains (Reston)	19-Feb	D Graham	1
Newmains (Reston)	23-Mar	D Graham	1
Newmains (Reston)	12-Oct	D Graham	1
Malcolms Moss (Ancrum)	15-Oct	M Henderson	1
Malcolms Moss (Ancrum)	29-Oct	M Henderson	3
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	30-Oct	S Turnbull	1
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	01-Nov	S Turnbull	2
Newmains (Reston)	02-Nov	D Graham	2
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	19-Nov	S Turnbull	2
Malcolms Moss (Ancrum)	19-Nov	M Henderson	1
Newmains (Reston)	24-Nov	D Graham	1

Given the elusive nature of the species the number of annual reports and the number of sites occupied fluctuates. The graph below however, does seem to suggest a degree of stability over the past 18 years.



Number of sites occupied: 2000-2017.

### Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Scarce breeding species. Roding display March-July. Occasionally strong late autumn passage. Variable numbers winter, including immigrants from northern Europe. During 2008-13 found in 6% of tetrads in summer and 29% in winter.

Eighty-five records from 65 tetrads (5%). 2016 – 88 records from 36 tetrads; 2015 – 34 tetrads.

Tetrads with peak counts of two or more were:

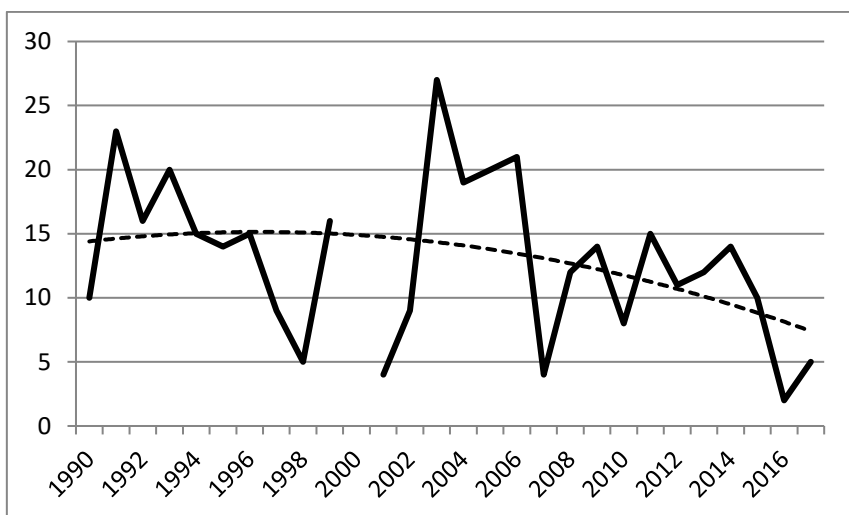
Sites	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jul	Aug-Dec	
Birkenside (Jedburgh)	2	All records of single birds.		
Dunion Hill (Jedburgh)	2			
Jardinefield (Whitsome)	2			
Nether Monynut (Abbey St Bathans)	8			
Netherwells (Jedburgh)	2			
Newmains (Reston)	3			
Oxnam	2			
Rutherford Burnside (Roxburgh)	4			
Wooplaw (Carter Bar)	2			
Bemersyde				2
Birneyknowe (Hawick)				2
Lymiecleugh (Teviothead)				2
Sunnyside (Hawick)				2
Whitslade (Hawick)				2
<b>Total of all tetrad peaks</b>	<b>38</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>No of occupied tetrads</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>28</b>	

Records of roding birds came from five tetrads:

Huntford (Carter Bar)	13-May	C Watson
Yair Hill Forest (Caddonfoot)	30-May	G Paterson
Elibank Craig (Walkerburn)	02-Jun	G Paterson
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	07-Jun	G Paterson
Philiphaugh (Selkirk)	20-Jun	G Scott

The majority of records were of single birds. While it is difficult to draw any conclusions about breeding trends from the BBR data available they do go some way to support the evidence from recent national dedicated counts of roding birds pointing to a 19% decline in site occupancy between 2003 and 2013:





Sites with roding birds: 1990-2017. No records in 2000.

The apparent trend shown above is partly complicated by the fact that the 2003 peak is probably an artefact since it was the year of a dedicated survey of roding Woodcocks. However, since 2013 was also the year of a dedicated survey, the 55% decline in Borders between 2003 and 2013 may well be a realistic reflection of actual trends, particularly since southern Scotland generally registered the biggest declines nationally.

### **Snipe *Gallinago gallinago***

Local breeding species, mostly in hilly areas. Large aggregations sometimes in winter. Slight spring passage. During 2008-13 found in 26% of tetrads in summer and 19% in winter.

One hundred and twenty-eight records from 70 tetrads. 2016 – 36 tetrads; 2015 – 55 tetrads.

Sites with peak counts of two or more were:

	Jan-Mid Mar	Mid Mar-Aug (breeding season)	Sep-Dec
Bessie's Burn (Smailholm)	2		
Birneyknowe (Bonchester Bridge)			2
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)			2
Cow Hill Plantation (Longformacus)		4	
Faughill Moor (Melrose)	2		
Foulden			5
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)		4	4
Hen Law (Longformacus)		2	
Highlee Hill (Bonchester Bridge)	4		
Hope Burn (Leithen Valley)		4	
Hule Moss	2	7	4
Hundleshope (Manor Valley)	6	10	
Kitleyknowe (Carlops)		3	
Lammer Law (Oxton)		2	
Lightfield (Gordon)			2
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	4		
Lucky Dip (West Linton)		2	
Malcolms Moss (Ancrum)	45	8	39
Mervinslaw (Jedburgh)	3		
Middlesknowes (Jedburgh)			3
Muirfield (Ashkirk)			15
Newhouse Kip (Ettrickbridge)		4	
Newmains (Reston)	4	14	31
Over Whitton (Hownam)	2		

Pennymuir (Hownam)			3
Piper of Peebles Grave (Leithen Valley)		7	
Riddell (Lilliesleaf)			5
Ruecastle (Jedburgh)	2		
Saughtree Fell (Wauchope Forest)			2
Slaidhill (Teviothead)			2
Stobs Castle (Hawick)			2
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)			16
Tweed: Sprouston-Redden	2		
Tweed: Upsettlington	2		
Wells Stables (Denholm)			2
Whitton Loch (Hownam)			2
Wooplaw (Carter Bar)			2
Wrunk Law (Longformacus)		2	
<b>Aggregate count of all sites</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>155</b>
<b>Total of all tetrads</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>31</b>

Other sites with only counts of singles were: Adderston Lee (Hawick); Ashiestiel Hill (Caddonfoot); Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Berryfell (Stobs Castle); Black Law (Jedburgh); Bleak Law (Hownam); Carter Bar; Dolphinston (Jedburgh); Doorpool (Bonchester Bridge); Drycleuchlea (Buccleuch); Dunglass Common (Abbey St Bathans); Earlside (Hawick); Falla (Jedburgh); Falside (Bonchester Bridge); Galashiels Sewage Works; Hawkshaw Burn Dam (Fruid Res); Horsburgh Hope Head (Peebles); Lamblairknowe (Carter Bar); Leadburn Community Woodland; Long Grain (Oxton); Lylestone Hill (Lauderdale); Mossilee Hill (Galashiels); Muirhouselaw (Maxton); Newcastleton; Philhope (Craik); Rutherford Burnside (Roxburgh); Spital Tower (Denholm); Swinnie Plantation (Bonchester Bridge); Thirlestane Burn (Ettrick); Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream; Tweed: Union Bridge; Watch Water Res. (Longformacus); West Linton-Cloich Forest; Whitmuir (Selkirk); Wide Hope Shank (Lyne Water).

#### Breeding (mid Mar-Aug)

Forty-four records from 32 tetrads (2016: 46 records from 26 tetrads; 2015: 26 tetrads; 2014: 36 tetrads; 2013: 69 tetrads; 2012: 57 tetrads). Records with breeding evidence reported were from ten sites:

Piper of Peebles Grave (Leithen Valley)	26-Mar	R Bramhall	D	Lammer Law (Oxton)	12-May	J Nicholson	D
West Linton-Cloich Forest	22-Apr	P Ball	D	Ashiestiel Hill (Caddonfoot)	02-Jun	G Paterson	D
Thirlestane Burn (Ettrick)	02-May	M Henderson	D	Watch Water Reservoir	13-Jun	C Hartley	A
Drycleuchlea (Buccleuch)	05-May	M Henderson	D	Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	20-Jun	G Paterson	D
Kitleyknowe (Carlops)	11-May	M Shaw	D	Lucky Dip (West Linton)	01-Aug	P Ball	FL

See Introduction for breeding codes.

### Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Uncommon autumn passage migrant between Jul and Nov. No inland records.

Five records from four sites, representing nine bird-days. 2016: eight bird-days; 2015: 31 bird-days.

Eyemouth	15-Jul	D Graham	1	Eyemouth	22-Jul	D Graham	1
St Abbs	16-Jul	F Evans	1	St Abb's Head	17-Sep	D Graham	2
				Dunglass	08-Oct	D Graham	4

### Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

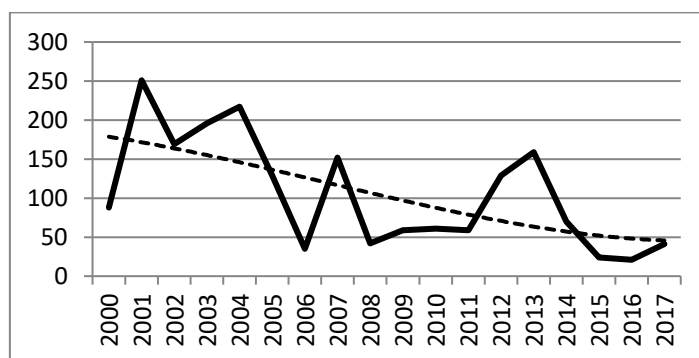
Scarce on passage April-June, common July-November. Rare in winter. A few inland records.

Thirteen records from Dunglass, St Abb's Head, St Abbs and Eyemouth.

Eyemouth	29-Jun	D Graham	3
St Abbs village	29-Jun		1
St Abb's Head	01-Jul		2
Eyemouth	15-Jul		1

St Abb's Head	16-Jul	F Evans	13
Eyemouth	22-Jul	D Graham	3
Eyemouth	24-Jul		1
Eyemouth	26-Jul		3
Eyemouth	15-Sep		2
Eyemouth	16-Sep		R Drew
St Abb's Head	17-Sep	D Graham	9
St Abbs	19-Sep	S Morton	Pr
Dunglass	24-Sep	D Graham	1

On the basis of bird-days estimated from BBR records between 2000 and 2017, there is a downward trend in the number of birds seen offshore during passage. However, given the small number of records the data has limited statistical significance.



Estimated bird-days: 2000-2017.

### Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

A very scarce passage migrant, mostly August-October.

A single sighting at St Abb's Head (D Graham) on 16-Sep. A not-untypical year:

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
0	21	0	30*	1	2	1	8	1	1	3	0	5	5	0	0	3	1

Number of birds reported: 2000-2017. \* includes count of 24 in 3 hrs at Eyemouth.

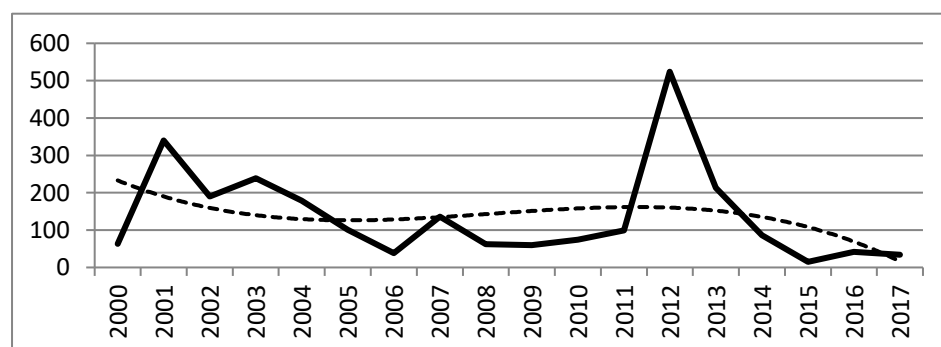
### Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Passage migrant, scarce April-June, common July-November. Almost annual. Rare in winter and very rare inland.

Eight records from St Abb's Head, St Abbs and Eyemouth, representing 34 bird-days.

Eyemouth	29-Jun	D Graham	3	Eyemouth	16-Sep	R Drew	2
St Abb's Head	23-Jul	D Graham	3	St Abb's Head	17-Sep	D Graham	19
Eyemouth	24-Jul	A Bramhall	2	St Abb's Head	29-Oct	D Graham	1
St Abbs	16-Sep	D Graham	3	St Abb's Head	12-Nov	D Graham	1

Although the numbers are not as low as in 2015, they suggest a decline in the passage of Great Skuas.

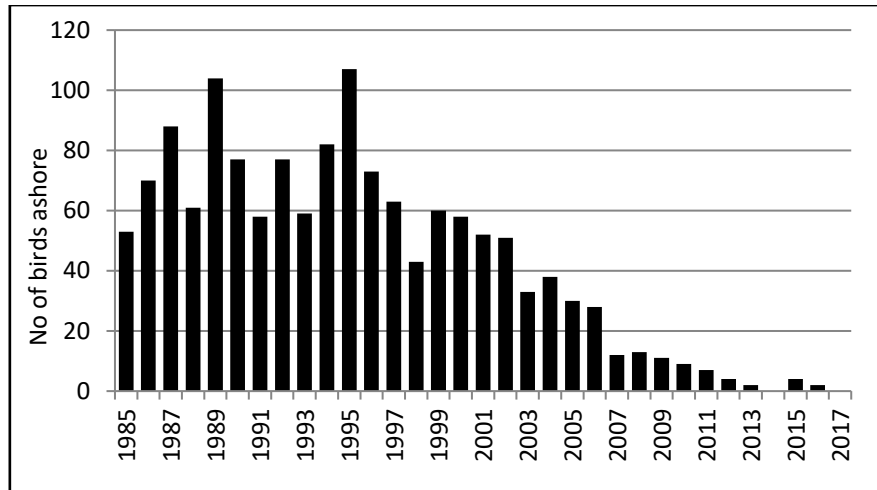


No of bird-days: 2000-2017.

### ***Puffin *Fratercula arctica****

Scarce coastal breeder, mostly seen off the cliffs. Rarely proved to breed as nest sites usually inaccessible. Uncommon offshore in autumn, scarce in winter. Rare autumn movements.

Only one record of a single bird: at St Abb's Head on 29-Apr. To what extent this is a reflection of reduced numbers of Puffins and to which extent the result of reduced seawatching is difficult to know. However, the annual count from St Abb's Head SNR produced a count of zero. The graph below shows the decline in counts for the Reserve:



**Counts of Puffins ashore at St Abb's Head SNR: 1985-2017.**

### ***Razorbill *Alca torda****

Common coastal breeding species, 3,533 birds bred in 2000, two-thirds at St Abb's Head. Some autumn passage. During 2008-13 found in 11 tetrads in summer and 8 in winter.

Thirty-one records. First record on 16-Jan from Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay during the Rocky Shore Count. Last record was on 29-Sep at Eyemouth. Peak counts per month were:

Sites (north to south)	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
Dowlaw					50				
Coldingham Loch			2						
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	5								
St Abb's Head	2	43	Pr	Pr	Pr	30	Pr		
Coldingham									2
Eyemouth	1	1				2			1
Burnmouth	2	3							

#### ***St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report Summary for 2017 (Liza Cole):***

##### Counts at Monitoring Plots

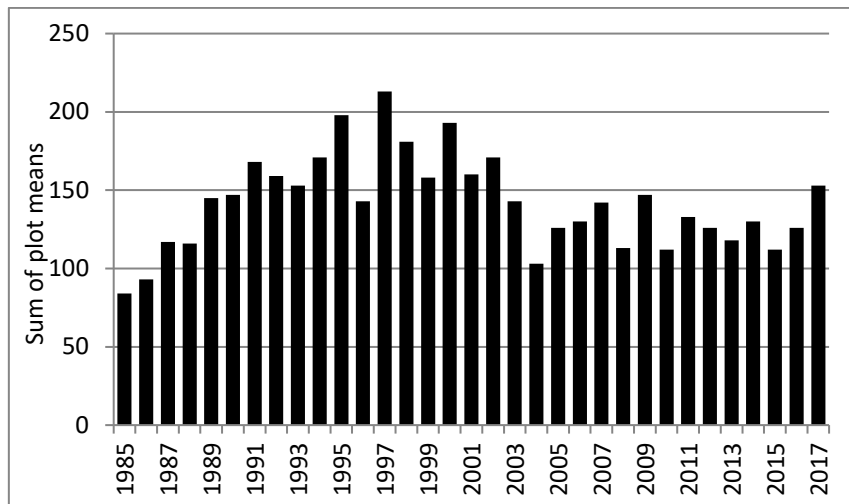
Nine counts of individual birds on ledges were carried out at each of the five plots between 1st & 20th June (as for the guillemots).

##### Results

The mean number of individuals on study plots in first three weeks of June is 153, an 21% increase on 2016.

##### Breeding success

No monitoring of breeding success of razorbills took place this year.



Sums of sample plot means: 1985-2017.

### Little Auk *Alle alle*

Scarce and erratic winter vagrant, typically seen passing offshore. Occasional 'wrecks'.

Only two records: a single bird at Eyemouth on 6-Feb (A Bramhall) and two birds on 12-Nov at St Abb's Head (D Graham).

### Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Localised coastal breeder on large cliffs. Some movements in autumn, few in winter.

Peak counts were:

Site (north to south)	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
Dunglass	3			
Dowlaw		202		
Coldingham Loch	56			
St Abb's Head	5,300	2,000	1	
St Abbs	450			
Coldingham			1	
Eymouth-Burnmouth	2		4	5
Burnmouth	250			
The Hirsell			1	
<b>Aggregate of peak counts</b>	<b>6,061</b>	<b>2,202</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>

The inland sighting at The Hirsell was made on 15-Sep (A Mossop); the highest count of 5,300 at St Abb's Head was made on 7-Mar (C Hartley).

### ***St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report Summary for 2017 (Liza Cole):***

#### Counts at Monitoring Plots

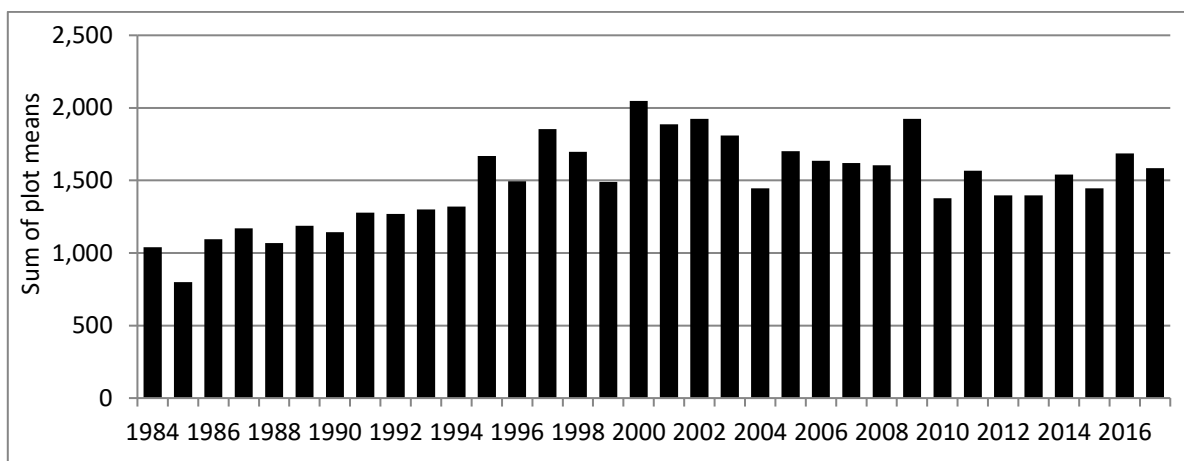
Nine counts of individual birds on ledges were carried out at each of the five plots between 1- & 20-Jun.

#### Results

The mean number of individuals on study plots in first three weeks of June is 1,584, a 6% decrease on 2016.

#### Breeding success

An assessment of breeding success of guillemots was carried out for the third time this year. This was broadly following the method from the Seabird Monitoring Handbook with amendments suggested by Mike Harris (Co-author of the handbook) and Mark Newell (Isle of May). The protocol is described in the 2017 report. Approximately 50 Apparently Occupied Sites (AOS) were individually marked on photographs of each of the 2 monitoring plots selected, and 42 visits were made to observe progress at each AOS between 9<sup>th</sup> May and 15<sup>th</sup> July.



Sums of sample plot means: 1984-2017.

### Results

A total of 138 active nest sites were monitored, of which 112 chicks successfully fledged. The breeding success, expressed as the mean of the individual plot figures, was 0.81 young fledged per active site.

### Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Scarce passage migrant; not annual.

Two birds spent a day (30-Apr) hawking on the Tweed at Paxton House (T Brewis) and a single was seen at Eyemouth on 15-Jul (D Graham). These are the first sightings since Sep-2011 when two reports of singles were made. Since 1984 there have been 41 reports of this species.

### Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon summer visitor on coast, most frequent August-September during passage. Very scarce inland.

Only four records (2016: eight records; 2015: five; 2014: three). The single bird at Watch Water Reservoir is unusual, being so far inland.

Dunglass	11-Jun	4	D Graham
Watch Water Res (Longformacus)	19-Jun	1	J Lough
St Abbs Head	01-Jul	3	D Graham
Eyemouth	15-Jul	4	D Graham

### Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Uncommon summer visitor, breeding nearby in the Forth and on the Farne Islands. Present March-October with best numbers during autumn passage. Rare inland.

Seventeen records (24 in 2016) from between Dunglass and Burnmouth. Peak counts per site (shown from north to south):

Sites	Mar-Apr	May-Jun	Jul-Aug	Sep-Oct
Dunglass	2			
St Abb's Head		1		26
St Abbs			4	
Coldingham Bay				8
Linkim Shore			70+	
Eyemouth		1	14	4
Burnmouth	1		20+	

First record was on 9-Apr at Burnmouth (F Evans) and the last record was on 24-Sep at Coldingham Bay (C Taylor)

### Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Uncommon summer coastal visitor, mainly August-September. Under-recorded.

Four records. There were eight records in 2016 and three in 2015. Mainly from St Abb's Head.

St Abb's Head	23-Apr	2	D Graham
St Abb's Head	09-Jun	Pr	S Foster
St Abb's Head	01-Jul	2	D Graham
Eyemouth	15-Jul	12	D Graham

A Common/Arctic Tern was reported from St Abb's Head on 19-Sep (M Eaton).

### Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Abundant coastal breeder, 19,000 pairs in 2000 but population probably dropped to 20% of that in 2014. Occasional heavy autumn passage. Rare inland, but strays almost annual. Scarce in winter.

Thirty-three records (45 in 2016). All records from between Dowlaw and Burnmouth.

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)					5							
St Abb's Head		Pr	4	Pr	Pr	500	300		350			
St Abbs		5			Pr				Pr			
Coldingham Bay									Pr			
Eyemouth						80					11	
Fancove Hd (Eyemouth-Burnmouth)						40						
Burnmouth		18										

In addition to the main breeding site at St Abb's Head (see below), confirmed breeding was also reported from Dowlaw, from near Eyemouth Golf Club and Fancove Head.

The first record was on 7-Mar at St Abb's Head (C Hartley) and the last record was on 10-Nov at Eyemouth Harbour (C Hartley).

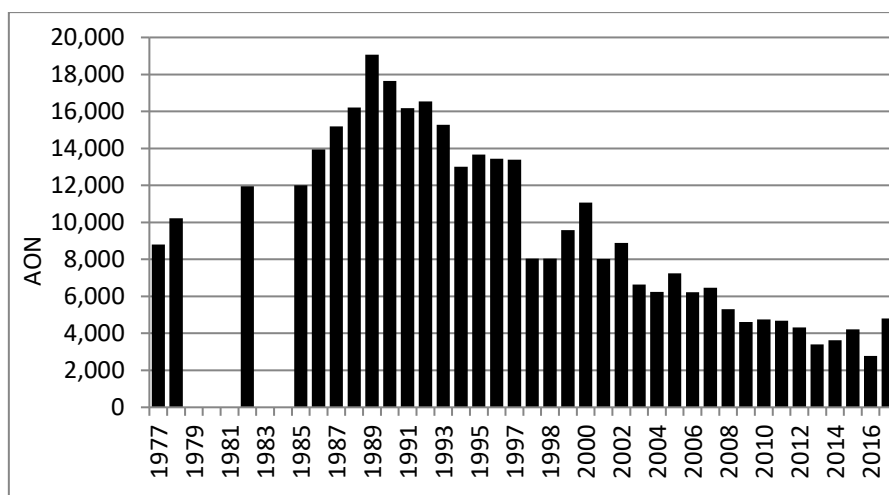
#### ***St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report Summary for 2017 (Liza Cole):***

##### Whole Colony Count

A count of apparently occupied nests (AONs) was carried out on 25th, 26th and 28th June and 3rd and 5th July. Inclement weather prevented us from counting blind spots from a boat so the number was estimated using last year's figures for land and sea counts.

##### Results

4,803 AON, 73% increase on 2016 (including estimated sea count).



**Kittiwake AONs for St Abb's Head Nature Reserve: 1977-2017.**





Counts of less than 25 came from: Burnmouth-Border; Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick); Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Baddingsgill Reservoir (West Linton); Blackhopebyre (Leithen Valley); Carlops; Duns Castle; Eckford (Nisbet); Eyemouth; Eyemouth-Burnmouth; Fruid Reservoir; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden); Hallmanor (Manor Valley); Heiton (Kelso); Heriot (Borthwick Hall); The Hirsell; Holly Bush (Galashiels); Kale Water; Kerss Wood and Loch (Ancrum); Leaderfoot; Lindean Res (Selkirk); Megget Reservoir; Nisbet; Peebles; Philhope (Craik); Portmore Loch; Rachelfield (Smailholm); Smedheugh Pond (Selkirk); Town Yetholm Pond; Tweed Bridge (Sunderland Hall); Tweed: Clinthill; Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange; Tweed: Uppsettlington; Tweedaleburn (Portmore); Watch Water (Longformacus).

Breeding: records during the period Apr-Aug came from 48 tetrads (62 in 2016). No records of confirmed breeding were submitted. This sorry state of affairs is presumably a reflection of observer effort but may also suggest dramatic failure at a number of breeding sites. Thus, there were no records submitted from North Esk Reservoir which held over 400 nests in 2016 or from Pickmaw Moss (Selkirk) which held 68 nests. However, Folly Loch and Holly Bush (Galashiels), which held a total of at least 22 nests last year, had no nests this year. Hopefully, the coordinated count of possible breeding sites that is taking place in 2018/19 will provide us with a clearer picture of the situation.

### Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

A scarce but increasing passage migrant.

Four records from three sites, part of a modest but general upward trend of records in recent years: six in 2016; one in 2015; two in 2014 and one in 2013.

Newmains (Reston)	04-Jan	D Graham	1
Newmains (Reston)	14-Jan	D Graham	1
Eyemouth harbour	05-Feb	R Smith	1
Linkim Shore (Coldingham)	25-Jul	J Ibbotson	2

### Common Gull *Larus canus*

Very scarce and local breeder on hill lochs. Abundant passage migrant with several large roosts. Common and widespread in winter. During 2008-13 found in 15% of tetrads in summer and 28% in winter.

Two hundred and twenty-five records from 75 tetrads (2016: 74 tetrads; 2017: 47 tetrads). Counts of 50 more came from (including RSC counts):

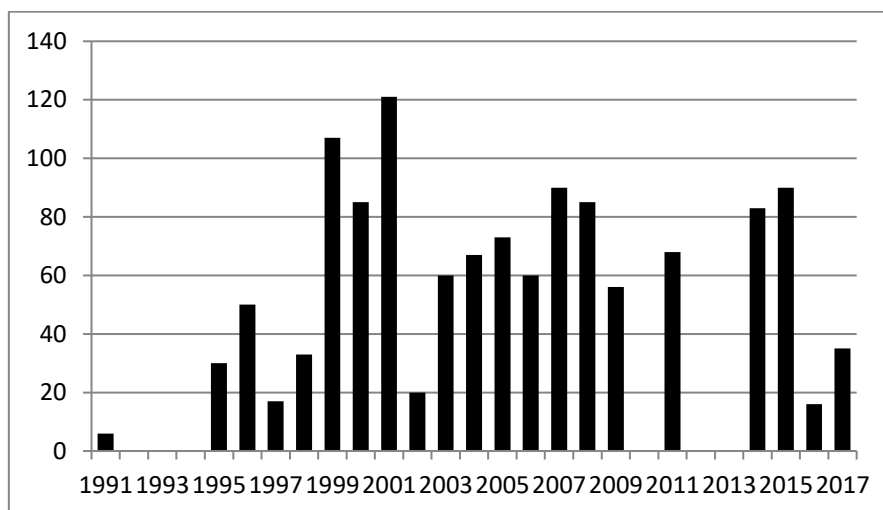
Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Burnmouth			58									
Clovenfords			50									
Eddleston		150										
Gattonside-Lauder (SUW)												50
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)			105	68					50	390		
Hule Moss										120	1,800	
Hundleshope (Manor Valley)		50									400	
Kirkstead (St Mary's Loch)					82							
Lugate (Stow)												200
Lyne Manor (Peebles)		200										
Megget Reservoir					430	155						
Peebles		250									77	
St Abb's Head			55									
Tower Burn (Manor Valley)			50									
Tweed: Paxton Ho-Union Br								133	145	150		
Watch Water Reservoir			81	70								236
West Water Reservoir										4,470		
Yetholm Loch	80	170	163	60	450					250	70	185
<b>Total no of tetrads</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Aggregate of all peak counts</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>1,081</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>5,403</b>	<b>2,418</b>	<b>792</b>

The largest count of 4,470 was on 8-Oct at West Water Reservoir (A Brown). Hule Moss held 1,800 birds on 9-Nov (J Lough).

Sites with peak counts below 50 were: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Bemersyde Moss; Cardrona Forest; Carlops; Craig Douglas (Gordon Arms Hotel); Dunglass-Pease Bay (W) (RSC); Duns Castle; East Reston Mill (Reston); Eckford (Nisbet); Eyemouth harbour; Ferniehirst (Stow); Fruid Reservoir; Haining Loch (Selkirk); The Hirsell; Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm); Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk); Lyne Dale (West Linton); Peebles; Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay (RSC); Philiphaugh (Selkirk); Portmore Reservoir; Selkirk; St Abbs; Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords); Talla Reservoir; Teviot; Roxburgh-Kelso; Thornielee-Elibank (Walkerburn); Town Yetholm Pond; Tweed Haughs (Nisbet); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose; Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream; Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange; Tweed: Sunderland Hall (Selkirk); Tweed: Uppsettlington; Tweedbank; Walkerburn; West Linton-Cloich Forest; White Law (Eddleston); Whitmuir (Selkirk); Whitrig Bog (Smailholm).

#### Breeding

Between Apr-Aug records came from 22 tetrads (31 in 2016). However, only one site had any evidence of breeding submitted: Cramalt (Megget Reservoir). Three separate records were received (S Craig, A Heavisides) with 35 nests with eggs recorded on 22-May (S Craig). Megget Reservoir has been the main breeding site since the 1990s; breeding was first recorded in Borders in 1980 at West Water Reservoir. The following graph is based on past BBR records:



**Numbers of breeding pairs of Common Gulls at Megget Reservoir: 1991-2016.**

Note: in some years reports are described as pairs and in other years are described as nests. The years 2010, 2012 and 2013 did not have any counts and 2016 only had a part-count.

### Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Scarce coastal breeder, not annual, perhaps just 2-3 pairs. Found locally inland in summer. Few in winter, mostly March-October. During 2008-13 found in 35% of tetrads in summer and 5% in winter.

Two hundred and forty-five records from 74 (6%) tetrads (2016: 73 tetrads; 2015: 68 tetrads). The count of 5,600 in October was the highest count so far recorded in Borders. Peak counts of ten or more came from:

Sites	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)		23	38	
Castlehill (Manor Valley)		40		
Eddleston		180		
Folly Loch			81	
Hawick			10	
Hule Moss		20	23	5,600
Ladymoss (Melrose)		10		
Member Burn (Tweed's Well)		53		
Peebles-Eddleston		50		
St Abb's Head			20	

Teviot Haughs: Nisbet				44
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream				54
Watch Water Reservoir		19		
Whitmuir (Selkirk)	31			
Yetholm Loch	10	150	25	
<b>Total no of tetrads</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Aggregate of all peak counts</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>5,771</b>

Peak counts of less than ten came from: Blackhopebyre (Leithen Valley); Brotherstone Moor (Smailholm); Burnmouth; Cardrona; Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank); Cheeklaw (Duns); Clintmains (St Boswells); Dam Head Rig (Traquair); Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor); Drum Maw (West Linton); Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords); Duns Castle; Eckford Hall (Nisbet); Eyemouth; Glenrathope (Manor Valley); Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden); Heriot; Hollybush (Galashiels); Hoselaw Mains (Yetholm); Hundleshope (Manor Valley); Innerleithen; Jedburgh; Lindean Res (Selkirk); Long Grain (Oxton); Lyne Dale (West Linton); Megget Reservoir; Millar's Moss (St Abbs); Millennium Farm (Portmore); Nether Falla (Portmore); New Belses (Lilliesleaf); Newmains (Reston); Peebles; Philiphaugh (Selkirk); Posso Craig (Manor Valley); Selkirk; St Abbs; Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords); Tower Burn Marsh (Manor Valley); Tweed: Dryburgh; Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose; Tweed: Mertoun-Benrig Dean; Tweed: Mertoun-Benrig Dean; Tweed: Paxton Ho-Union Br; Tweedbank; Walkerburn; White Law Loch (Selkirk); Whitrig Bog (Smailholm); Williamhope (Yarrowford)); Williestruther Loch (Hawick).

Breeding:

Records involving evidence of breeding were restricted to one: a pair at Gunknowe Loch (Tweedbank) which remained in the immediate area for much of the summer (A Bramhall).

### Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Common breeder on coast. Breeds on coast cliffs but feeds widely inland during summer. Few significantly large roosts but good numbers attend rubbish dumps. During 2008-13 found in 22% of tetrads in summer and 25% in winter.

Three hundred and ninety records from 96 tetrads (7%). 2016: 96 tetrads; 2015: 109 tetrads.

Rocky Shore Count on 15-Jan had a total of 969 birds.

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	32	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	129
Pease Bay-Redheugh	111	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	109
Redheugh-Souter	466	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	21
Souter-Pettico Wick	31	Burnmouth-Border	70

Totals for recent RSCs:

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
1,781	1,283	993	1,220	917	2,500	969

Sites with counts of 20 or more (excluding Rocky Shore Count) were:

Sites	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jul	Aug-Dec
Abbotsford-Lowood	55		
Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick)			400+
Ballmuir Plantation (Smailholm)	66		
Blaikie Heugh (Eyemouth)		45	
Brotherstone Moor (Smailholm)	200		
Burnmouth	103	68	
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	370		
Coldingham Loch	36		
Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)		130	
Dowlaw Moss (Coldingham Moor)		24	
Dunglass	280		
Eyemouth	130	80	30
Folly Loch			27
Gattonside-Lauder (SUW)			60

Girthgate (Stow)			170
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)		56	195
Housebyres (Langlee)			350
Hule Moss			350
Lindean Res (Selkirk)	21		22
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)		80	
Peebles-Eddleston		30	
Redheugh-Souter	466		
St Abbs	235	120	
St Abb's Head	180		
St Boswells	65		
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange			45
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge	29		270
Tweed: Uppsettlington			25
Tweedbank	822		
Watch Water Reservoir		40	
Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)		23	200
Yetholm Loch		26	
<b>Total no of tetrads</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Aggregate for all monthly peak counts</b>	<b>3,172</b>	<b>916</b>	<b>2,756</b>

#### Breeding:

Records during the breeding season (Apr-Jul) came from 41 tetrads. Records with evidence of breeding came from five sites:

Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)	ON (12)	14-May	C Hartley
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	ON	17-Jun	J Mitchell
St Abbs	ON	17-Jun	J Mitchell
Blaikie Heugh (Eyemouth)	ON	18-Jun	J Mitchell
St Abb's Head (see below)	N	28-Jul	N Crowther

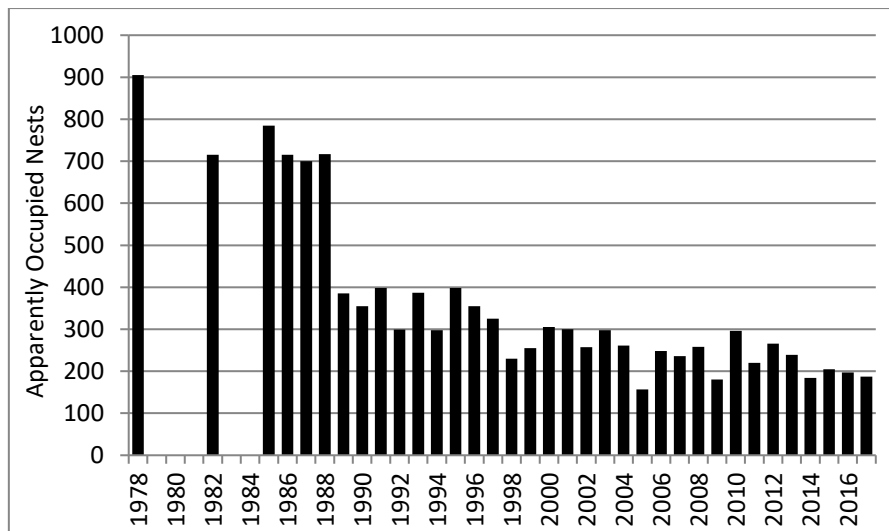
#### ***St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report Summary for 2017 (Liza Cole):***

##### Whole Colony Count

A whole colony count of apparently occupied nests (AON) was carried out on 7-, 8- and 15-Jun. Blind spots were counted from a boat on 13-Jun.

##### Results

187 AON, 5% decrease on 2016.



**AON for Herring Gull at St Abb's SNR: 1978-2017.**

### Iceland Gull *Larus gaucoides*

Scarce winter or early spring visitor.

Records from four sites:

Newmains (Reston)	5-9-Mar	1	D Graham
Newmains (Reston)	10-Mar	3	D Graham
Pease Bay	11-Mar	1	D Graham
Fast Castle	12-Mar	1	D Graham
Coldingham	12-Mar	Pr	BirdGuides
Newmains (Reston)	26-Mar	1	D Graham



Juvenile Iceland Gull. Newmains. March. Dave Graham.

### Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Scarce winter visitor.

Six records from five sites:

Tweed: Upsettlington	14-Jan	1*	J Towill
Linkim Shore (Coldingham)	15-Jan	1	F Evans
St Abb's Head	15-Jan	1	D Graham
Reston	29-Jan	Pr	BirdGuides
St Abbs	12-Feb	1	D Graham
St Abb's Head	02-Dec	1	D Graham
* 2nd winter			

### Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Has bred since 1999-2000. 1-2 pairs present along Berwickshire coast. Feed widely inland during winter, feeding on spent salmon, roosting at the large reservoirs. During 2008-13 found in 4% of tetrads in summer and 9% in winter.

One hundred and thirty-one records from 32 tetrads (2016: 30 tetrads). Rocky Shore Count on 15-Jan recorded 94 birds:

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	13	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	39
Pease Bay-Redheugh	2	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	2
Redheugh-Souter	6	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	12
Souter-Pettico Wick	12	Burnmouth-Border	8

All sites (incl. RSC)	Jan-Feb	Mar-Apr	May-Jun	Jul-Aug	Sep-Oct	Nov-Dec
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	1					1
Burnmouth	9	6	2	1	26	1
Burnmouth-Border	8					
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	13					
Eyemouth	9	6	1	1	1	4
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)			2		1	1
Hundleshope Ponds (Manor Valley)	1					
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)		4			8	
Nisbet			4			1
Pease Bay-Redheugh	2					
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	39		2	1	1	2
Red Heugh-Souter	6		3			
Roberton (Hawick)	8					
Shielfield (Oxton)			2			
Souter-Pettico Wick	12	1				
St Abbs	20	2		1	1	
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)	1					1
Thornielee Craigs (Walkerburn)	1					
Tweed: Paxton Ho-Union Br	1				2	3
Tweedbank	1					1
Watch Water Reservoir (Longformacus)		1	2	1		
Whitmuir (Selkirk)	1					
Whitrig Bog-Westfield (Smailholm)	1					1
Williamhope (Yarrowford)		1				
Hule Moss						20
West Water Reservoir					21	
Nether Falla (Portmore)					3	
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream						9
Yetholm Loch						5
Walkerburn						1
Lauder Common						1
Tweed: Mertoun-Benrig Dean						1
<b>Inland tetrads (&gt;5 km from coastline)</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Coastal tetrads</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Aggregate of peak counts</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>53</b>

No records of breeding were submitted.

### Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Common resident breeder. Some large flocks in late autumn-winter, often on farms and along the coast. During 2008-13 found in 37% of tetrads in summer and 37% in winter.

One hundred and seventy-five records from 43 (3%) tetrads. 2016 had records from 50 tetrads. Rocky Shore Count on 15-Jan recorded a total of 202 birds, exactly the same number as in the 2016 count:

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	0	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	74
Pease Bay-Redheugh	54	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	48
Redheugh-Souter	16	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	5
Souter-Pettico Wick	5	Burnmouth-Border	0

Sites with monthly peak counts of five or more:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Bemersyde-Whitrigbog	100	14	68		10							
Cheeklaw (Duns)					21	10						
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	48					5						
Eckford Hall (Nisbet)									25			

Graden (Yetholm)						21						
Hoselaw Mains (Yetholm)					9	15						
Pease Bay-Redheugh	54											
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	74	16	35				20		20			
Philiphaugh (Selkirk)	9											25
Red Heugh-Souter	16				5	6						
Selkirk	20	16	17	12	18							27
Shielfield (Oxton)					19	9						
Souter-Pettico Wick	5											
Tweed: Paxton Ho-Union Br								18	88			
Tweedbank			6	10				12	11	16	10	
<b>Total no of tetrads</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Aggregate of all peak counts</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>61</b>

Only two sites had reports with breeding evidence: Tweedbank (N) on 4-May (A Bramhall) and from St Abb's Head (T) on 20-May (N Crowther). See Introduction for explanation of breeding codes.

Feral Pigeons are greatly under-recorded, especially with respect to breeding evidence. Readers are encouraged to submit records of this species.

### Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Uncommon and local breeder. Small winter flocks. Very much under-recorded. During 2008-13 found in 19% of tetrads in summer and 9% in winter.

Eighty seven records from 30 tetrads (2%). 2016: 47 records from 26 tetrads; 2015: 49 records from 33 tetrads.

Peak counts per site were:

Sites	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	2	2	1	2
Ayton		1		
Bemersyde Moss		1		
Bowden (St Boswells)				2+
Cardrona Hill		1		
Clovenfords			1	
Courhope Burn (Eddleston)		1		
Eckford				2
Foulden				2
Fountainhall (Stow)			1	
Galashiels		1		
Gattonside-Melrose	2	Pr	5	Pr
Hilton (Whitsome)		1		
The Hirsell		1	1	
Innerleithen	2			
Jardinefield (Whitsome)	1			
Lowood (Melrose)		1		
Melrose	2	2		
Newcastleton Tollbar			4	
Newmains (Reston)		4		
Peebles-Eddleston		1		
Plora (Innerleithen)		2		
St Abb's Head		1		
Torwoodlee Golf Course (Galashiels)		1		
Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge	1			
Tweed: Union Bridge		2		2
Tweed: Upsettlington	2			
Walkerburn	7	4	1	1
West Linton-Cloich Forest	1	1		
West Linton-Lyne Dale	1	2	1	
<b>No of tetrads</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Aggregate of monthly peaks</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12+</b>

Records of breeding came from 13 sites: one confirmed; four probable and eight possible:

West Linton-Cloich Forest	05-Mar	P Ball	S	Courhope Burn (Eddleston)	10-May	P Ball	D
Gattonside-Melrose	19-Mar	J Gordon	S	Newmains (Reston)	10-May	D Graham	1br2
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	24-Mar	G Paterson	S	Torwoodlee Golf Course (Galashiels)	12-May	M Lindsay	S
Cardrona Hill	07-May	R Bramhall	S	West Linton-Lyne Dale	14-May	P Ball	S
Galashiels	07-May	M Lindsay	S	Melrose	16-Jun	D Parkinson	P
Tweed: Union Bridge	08-May	C Hartley	P	The Hirsell	02-Jul	C Hartley	S
See Introduction for breeding codes				Newcastleton Tollbar	17-Sep	T Parrell	T

This represented the largest set of breeding records since 2013.

### Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Abundant breeder. Some big winter flocks. During 2008-13 found in 85% of tetrads in summer and 69% in winter. Often under-recorded.

Eight hundred and eighty-five records from 160 (13%) tetrads (2016: 775 records from 192 tetrads; 2015: records from 175 tetrads).

	Tetrads with records	Aggregate of peak counts	Highest count	Location of highest count
Jan	35	194	47	The Hirsell
Feb	28	1138	350	Walkerburn
Mar	53	2335	830	Walkerburn
Apr	48	673	250	Walkerburn
May	52	406	40	Millar's Moss (St Abbs)
Jun	38	206	29	White Law (Eddleston)
Jul	37	92	22	Tweed: Union Bridge
Aug	24	220	150	Walkerburn
Sep	38	490	60	Clovenfords
Oct	38	274	60	Whitrig-Westfield (Smailholm)
Nov	35	1630	600	Chesters Grange (Ancrum)
Dec	49	4328	3,000+	Nisbet

About a third of all records received had no indication of counts and sometimes with comments suggesting large numbers but with no estimates given. Readers are encouraged to submit all sighting of this species accompanied by relevant details on numbers and breeding status.

Breeding:

Twenty seven tetrads with breeding evidence (2016: 14 tetrads; 2015: 11 tetrads):

Tweedbank	27-Mar	B	A Bramhall	Little King Seat (West Linton)	25-May	S	J Palfery
Harewood Glen (Selkirk)	30-Mar	P	G Scott	Stonypath (West Linton)	25-May	S	J Palfery
Oxenrig (Coldstream)	10-Apr	T	G White	The Hirsell	12-Jun	P	D Parkinson
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	18-Apr	P	D Parkinson	Coldingham Bay	17-Jun	S	J Mitchell
Galashiels sewage works	23-Apr	S	A Bramhall	Eyemouth	17-Jun	S	J Mitchell
Bemersyde Moss	25-Apr	P	D Parkinson	Leadburn Comm. Woodland	22-Jun	P	N Crowther
Dawyck	29-Apr	S	M Betts	Tweed: Paxton Ho-Border	05-Jul	S	C Hartley
Tweed: Union Bridge	08-May	S	C Hartley	Foulden	11-Jul	B	C Hartley
Halmyre Deans (West Linton)	10-May	N	P Ball	Lindean Loch (Selkirk)	30-Jul	D	E Bickmore
Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	17-May	T	D Parkinson	Eckford Hall (Nisbet)	04-Aug	ON	C Green
Whitmuir (Selkirk)	19-May	P	D Parkinson	Huntford (Carter Bar)	13-Aug	ON	C Watson
Leaderfoot (Melrose)	20-May	P	D Parkinson	West Linton-Lyne Dale	21-Aug	FL	P Ball
Tweeddaleburn Wood (Portmore)	24-May	T	N Crowther	Faldonside Loch	09-Sep	ON	D Parkinson
Baddingsgill (West Linton)	25-May	S	J Palfery	See Introduction for breeding codes.			



### Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Uncommon breeder in urban settings. Some autumn flocks and dispersal. During 2008-13 found in 25% of tetrads in summer and 18% in winter.

One hundred and twenty-two records from 40 tetrads (4%). 2016: 90 records from 38 tetrads; 2015: records from 55 tetrads. Peak counts per tetrad:

Sites	Jan-Mar	Apr-Aug	Sep-Dec
Acreknowe Res (Hawick)			2
Bemersyde-Whitrigbog	5		
Bowhill (Selkirk)		2	
Dunglass	Pr		2
Eckford (Nisbet)		4	3
Ettrickhaugh		Pr	
Eyemouth		3	
Foulden		2	10
Galashiels			6
Gattonside-Melrose	Pr		Pr
Graden (Yetholm)		2	
Harelaw Pond (Lilliesleaf)			2
Heiton (Kelso)		Pr	
Hirsel			1
Hoselaw Mains (Yetholm)		1	
Jedburgh		Pr	
Kirk Yetholm		Pr	
Lower Burnmouth	2	3	2
Maxton (St Boswells)		3	
Mellerstain (Gordon)			1
Melrose	2		
Minto (Ancrium)			4
Muirhouselaw (St Boswells)		3	
Newmains (Reston)		14	
Newstead-Drygrange (Melrose)	Pr		Pr
Nisbet	6		13
Peebles	1	1	
Ploughlands (Nisbet)		2	4
Ruecastle (Jedburgh)	2		
Selkirk	2	1	
St Abb's Head			Pr
St Boswells	2	2	1
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh		3	
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	4		4
Tweed: Norham		2	
Tweed: Union Bridge		1	
Tweedbank	2	2	2
West Linton	2		Pr
West Linton-Cloich Forest	2	1	
Woodhead (Ancrium)		2	
<b>Total no of tetrads</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Aggregate of all peak counts per tetrad</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>65</b>

Breeding evidence came from six tetrads (2016: three tetrads; 2015: 2015: five tetrads; 2014: four tetrads). Between Apr-Aug (see table above) there were 17 sites with records of two or more birds. Some of these may have involved pairs.

West Linton-Cloich Forest	05-Mar	P	P Ball	Foulden	13-Jun	S	C Hartley
Bowhill (Selkirk)	02-Apr	P	G Scott	Eckford (Nisbet)	13-Jun	ON	C Green
Tweed: Union Bridge	08-May	S	C Hartley	Newmains (Reston)	15-Jul	7br10	D Graham

See Introduction for breeding codes.

**Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus***

Uncommon summer visitor to hills and coast. Mostly late April-July with a few juveniles to late September. One winter record. During 2008-13 found in 20% of tetrads in summer.

Forty-five records from 22 (2%) tetrads. 2016: 58 records from 48 tetrads; 2015: records from 52 tetrads. Records were received from the following sites: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); The Bell (Cranshaws); Braidshawrig (Westruther); Bushelhill (Abbey St Bathans); Cardon Hill (Tweedsmuir); Cardrona Forest; Castle Hill (Manor Water); Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank); Chirnside; Craik; Eden Water (Gordon); Gavinton (Duns); Glenrath Height (Manor Water); Innerleithen; Kelso; Leithen Water; Newmains (Reston); Raeshaw (Heriot Water); Rubers Law (Bonchester Bridge); Stewarton (Eddleston); Watch Water Reservoir (East); Watch Water Reservoir (West); West Linton.

An estimated 23 territories reported. This is the lowest number of territories estimated since 2001 and well below the 93 for 2013 during the final breeding season of the SE Scotland Atlas 2017-2013. However, if we take into consideration the greater observer effort associated with the Atlas period then the decline appears to be less dramatic.

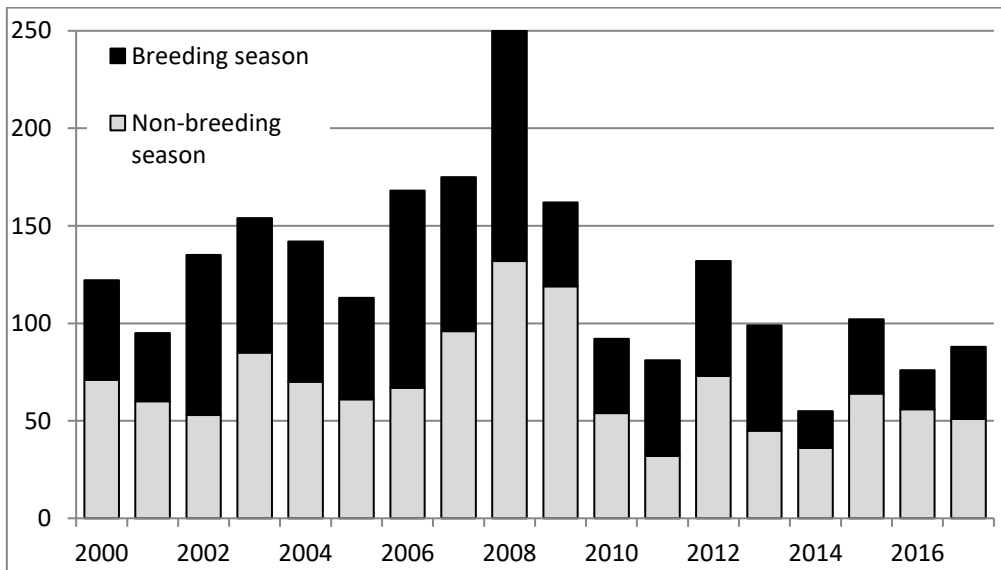
The first record was on 29-Apr at The Ley, Leithen Water (TW Douglass) and the last record was on 15-Aug at Cauldshiels Loch, Tweedbank (M Moncrieff).

**Barn Owl *Tyto alba***

Uncommon resident breeder. All records needed. Annual populations fluctuate significantly, often in relation to vole populations and severity of winter. During 2008-13 found in 23% of tetrads in summer and 23% in winter.

One hundred and five records from 77 tetrads (6%). 2016: 120 records from 61 tetrads; 2015: 435 records from 100 tetrads.

Barn Owls were reported at 51 sites in the non-breeding season (Jan-Feb and Oct-Dec). The number of occupied sites reported in recent years are:



**Territories reported: 2000-2017.**

Records came from the following sites: Reston; Broomilees (Tweedbank); Lochurd Fm (Blyth Bridge); Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Lees (Coldstream); Chirnside-Ayton; Bettyfield (Smailholm); Birneyknowe (Bonchester Bridge); Blackadder Mains (Allanton); Charterhall House (Greenlaw); Charterhouse Plantation (Kelso); Clearburn Cottage (Buccleuch); Coldingham; Crosslee (Tushielaw); Crossrig (Allanton); Denholm Mill; East Gordon; Elwartlaw (Greenlaw); Fellow Hills (Whitsome); Fogorig (Greenlaw); Fountainhall (Stow); Galalaw (Kelso); Gilmanscleuch (Ettrickbridge); Greenside Cottages (Uppsettlington); Harcarsehill (Swinton); Hilton (Whitsome); Hopehouse (Tushielaw); Hummelknowes (Hawick); Ladykirk (Uppsettlington); Leadburn Community Woodland; Lylestane (Oxton); Lymiecleugh (Teviothead); Manderston (Duns); Marl-leas Plantation (Whitsome); Mount Pleasant (Duns); Clovenfords-Mains Hill; Old Greenlaw; Newcastleton-Little Whithaugh; Rubers Law (Bonchester Bridge); Saughtree (Liddesdale); Selkirk ; Selkirk Golf Course; Singliehill End (Ettrickbridge); Crookston South Mains (Stow);

Stainrigg (Leitholm); Swinton Quarry; Synton (Ashkirk); Upsettlington; West Fishwick (Paxton); Whitelaw (Duns); Winfield Farm (Paxton).

Breeding season records came from 37 sites: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Birgham (Coldstream); Blackadder Mains (Allanton); Burnhouse Mains (Stow); Caddonfoot; Cairnscross (Reston); Carcant (Heriot); Charterhall House (Greenlaw); Clockmill (Duns); Clovenfords; Dykegatehead (Allanton); Earlston; Eden Hall (Kelso); Faldonsidemoor (Portmore); Fellow Hills (Whitsome); Gavinton (Duns); Glenlude (Yarrow); Greenlawdean (Greenlaw); Henlaw (Longformacus); Huntford (Carter Bar); Innerleithen; Jardinefield (Greenlaw); Ladykirk (Uppsettlington); Langholm-Newcastleton; Lanton Mains (Ancrum); Lempitlaw (Kelso); Middlestotts (Duns); Middletoun-Nethertoun (Stow); Muirton (Longformacus); Newmains (Reston); Noblehall Farm (Romannobridge); Oxtou (north); Peebles; Polwarth (Duns); Roberton (Hawick); West Fishwick (Paxton); Yetholm Loch.

Records with confirmed breeding came from seven sites.

***Barn Owl Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Alan Leitch)***

Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with proven breeding	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site	No. of young fledged per successful pair
81	44	42	137	3.1	3.4

The number of sites checked is slightly up on last year, but the number of occupied sites is the same. However, the proportion of occupied sites with proven breeding is almost 100%, considerably better than in recent years. Breeding success was also good, although not the best ever recorded. A minimum of 137 young were fledged from 40 successful sites.

What is interesting is that, looking over the past 15 years or so, there are five peaks in breeding success, corresponding to an approximately three yearly cycle, presumably in line with vole numbers.

To summarise, breeding success looks to be as expected, allowing for the ups and downs of a normal Barn Owl/vole cycle. The population level is much lower now than prior to 2009, but does appear to be slowly increasing again.

Thanks are due to Tom Dougall, Malcolm Henderson, Alan Kerr, Tony Lightley, Mike McDowall, Eve Schulte and David Warden, for providing records.

**Little Owl *Athene noctua***

Rare and enigmatic resident. Proof of breeding very rare and no consistent pattern to records, other than commoner in the east. Not annual. During 2008-13 found in two tetrads in summer and three in winter.

A single record: from west of Coldstream on 3-Jul (D Graham).

**Tawny Owl *Strix aluco***

Common resident. Many reports in autumn during the dispersal of juveniles. During 2008-13 found in 28% of tetrads in summer and 17% in winter.

One hundred and sixty records from 52 tetrads. 2016: 96 records from 48 tetrads; 2015 records from 44 tetrads.

Non-breeding (Jan-Feb and Sep-Dec): 51 birds from 36 sites (45 birds from 232 sites in 2016 and 19 birds from 16 sites in 2015). Nearly all records were of singles except where indicated: Alerigg (Lilliesleaf); Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) 3; Ashybank (Denholm); Barns (Peebles); Bettyfield (Smailholm); Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank); Coldingham; Craik (Teviothead); Denholm Mill; Eckford (Nisbet); Fulton Tower (Bonchester Bridge); Galashiels; Galashiels (west) 2; Hermitage (Newcastleton); The Hirsell; Hummelknowes (Hawick); Huntford (Carter Bar); Jardinefield (Whitsome); Jedburgh; Lintalee (Jedburgh); Makerstoun (Kelso) 2; Melrose; Moorshot Plantation (Greenlaw); Neidpath (Peebles); Newcastleton Tollbar; Paxton 3; Paxton House 2; Peebles; Philiphaugh (Selkirk) 2;

Roxburgh Moor; Spittal-on-Rule (Denholm); Thornielee (Walkerburn); West Water Reservoir 2; Westfield (Smailholm); Whitmuir (Selkirk) 3; Yetholm Loch.

Breeding season (Mar-Aug): 37 birds from 28 sites (2016 had 27 birds from 22 sites and 2015 had 39 birds from 33 sites). Nearly all records were of singles except where indicated: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) 3; Blakerstone Moor (Abbey St Bathans); Burnhouse Mains (Stow) 2; Carcant (Heriot) 2; Eastloch (Portmore); Eckford (Nisbet); Elibank Craig (Caddonfoot); Gattonside-Melrose; The Hirsle; Huntford (Carter Bar); Kirk Yetholm; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk); Longmuir Rig-Mean Burn (Oxton) 2; Melrose; Old Melrose; Paxton House 2; Philiphaugh (Selkirk); Riccarton Junction (Liddesdale); Selkirk; St Abb's Head; Thirlestane Tower (Ettrick) 2; Thornielee (Walkerburn); Tweedbank 2; Tweedhill (Paxton) 3; Upper Monynut (Abbey St Bathans) 2; Upsettlington; Yair Hill Forest (Caddonfoot); Yetholm Loch.

Records of confirmed breeding were: Burnhouse Mains (Stow), 10-Jun (1br2) (A Cutter); Longmuir Rig-Mean Burn (Oxton), 10-Jun (br1) (A Cutter) and Carcant (Heriot), 12-Jun (NE) (M Ross).

**Erratum: 2015 Report stated that 58 birds were reported from 37 tetrads. This should have been 39 birds from 33 sites.**

***Tawny Owl Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Tony Lightley)***

Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with proven breeding	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site	No. of young fledged per successful pair
140 Boxes FES 115 Private 25	44 Tawny +17 Barn Owls	36	77	1.75	2.14

With the winter very similar to the previous year expectations were low for a good breeding season however late winter and early spring were dry and mild and vole numbers were very high indicating a potential good breeding season at long last for owl species. A total of 140 boxes were checked with 115 of these being mainly paired boxes on Forestry Enterprise Scotland (FES) land holdings and a further 25 boxes on private land holdings.

A combined total of 44 sites were occupied by Tawny Owls with an even split between FES and private ground. A further 17 sites on FES ground were occupied by Barn Owls which at last showed recovery in numbers compared to the past poor breeding seasons.

A high percentage of nest boxes that were occupied went on to be successful with 40 sites producing eggs and 36 nest sites fledging 77 young. Three of the sites produced 4 fledged chicks and a further 9 sites fledged broods of 3 with the remainder of the sites disappointingly fledging only one or two as the vole population in some areas started to reduce.

The mean number of young fledged this year of 2.14 is similar to a 2014 high of 2.2 chicks / successful pair when numbers rose from previously poor seasons due to wet winters and poor spring vole numbers.

Predation on juvenile owls and older breeding owls, particularly by Goshawks in FES forests has been shown to be one of the main influences which impacts on the potential for new territories and an increase in breeding pairs. The number of breeding pairs appears to be consistent with very few of the offspring increasing the overall breeding population. This is evident from the number of rung birds appearing in the diet and nest site remains of Goshawks.

A further study of Pine Marten numbers in the Tweed Valley will resume in January 2017 and trail cameras will be used to monitor a proportion of nest boxes which fail on a regular basis in Pine Marten territories to identify possible nest predation.

A number of boxes on FES land have been moved after the 2017 breeding season to areas where both the habitat is suitable and linked to calling birds in the autumn / winter period.



**Brood of four Tawny Owls.**

As usual a percentage of the boxes were occupied by other species including Barn Owl, Squirrel, Jackdaw, Goosander, Stock Dove and passerines utilising the boxes.

### **Long-eared Owl *Asio otus***

Very scarce and local breeder, only reported from 4% of tetrads but very much under-recorded. Some passage on coast, mostly October-November. During 2008-13 found in 3% of tetrads in summer and 4% in winter.

Casual records came from four sites. 2016: six sites; 2015: five sites.

Carlops-Kitleyknowe	18-May	1br4	M Shaw	Rowantree Law (Stow)	20-Jun	1br2	A Cutter
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	15-Jun	FL	G Paterson	Newmains (Reston)	03-Jul	1br3	D Graham

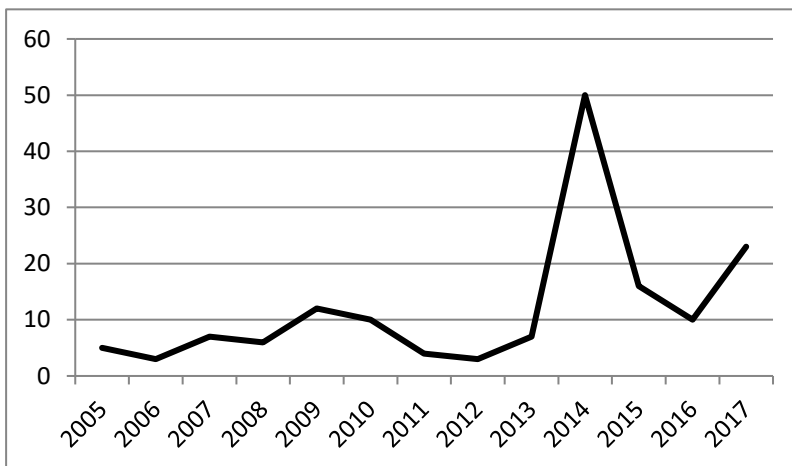
### **Long-eared Owl Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Mark Holling)**

Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with proven breeding	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site	No. of young fledged per successful pair
<b>16 (+)</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.6</b>

This year was a better year than 2016, similar to 2014, but it included data from several new sites. Records were received from 13 sites, and ten broods fledged.

There was only one study area: Pentlands. Only other RSG records received were from Tom\_Dougall, but I have supplemented these with records from the SOC, accounting for five sites.

	Possible breeding pairs	Probable breeding pairs	Confirmed breeding pairs	TOTAL
<b>Borders</b>	1	0	3	4
<b>Lothian</b>	1	0	8	9



Minimum young fledged: 2005-2017.



Long-eared Owl. Newmains (Reston). June. Dave Graham.

### Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Uncommon in hill areas; scarce in lower areas. Recorded breeding from 19% of tetrads. Breeding and wintering numbers vary with vole fluctuations. Some autumn passage on coast. During 2008-13 found in 4% of tetrads in summer and 2% in winter.

Non-breeding season (Jan-Feb and Sep-Dec) had records from two sites: one at Lamberton Moor on 16-Jan (R McBeath); two at Brad Moss (Fruid Reservoir) on 14-Oct (G Pyatt).

Breeding season (Mar-Aug) had records from three sites: one at Drycleuchlea (Buccleuch) on 15-Apr (M Henderson); one at Carcant (Heriot) on 12-May (M Ross) and two at Broad Law (Moorfoots on 19-Mat (A Cutter). None of these records reported evidence of breeding. Eleven additional records were supplied via Mark Holling which involved six sites with confirmed breeding: four from the Moorfoot Hills and four from the Cheviots. These records are included in the following Report.

#### Short-eared Owl Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Mark Holling)

Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with proven breeding	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site	No. of young fledged per successful pair
Not given	15	10	23	1.53	2.55

After an exceptionally poor 2016, 2017 was perhaps the best since monitoring began in 2003, and certainly since 2012.

Records were received from 15 sites, and nine broods fledged. Numbers were boosted by five pairs in the Borders part of Langholm; there were three pairs in the Moorfoots.

Most notably, there was a nesting pair in Lothian (Pentlands) which appears to have had two successful broods, based on our observations and an independent one which came via the SOC Lothian recorder.

	Single birds	Possible breeding pairs	Probable breeding pairs	Confirmed breeding pairs	TOTAL pairs
<b>Borders</b>	4	0	1	8	9
<b>Lothian</b>	0	0	0	1	1

	Sites occupied	Sites with clutches laid	Sites with fledged young	Min young fledged	Min young/nest
<b>2003</b>	7	5	4	9	2.25
<b>2004</b>	19	5	4	11	3.33
<b>2005</b>	7	1	1	1	1.00
<b>2006</b>	12	4	1	10	2.67
<b>2007</b>	5	4	3	7	3.50
<b>2008</b>	2	2	2	7	3.50
<b>2009</b>	10	6	6	9	1.67
<b>2010</b>	16	7	4	8	2.20
<b>2011</b>	16	2	2	8	2.20
<b>2012</b>	18	6	5	5	1.66
<b>2013</b>	5	1	1	-	-
<b>2014</b>	10	5	5	14	1.40
<b>2015</b>	17	10	5	13	1.30
<b>2016</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>2017</b>		15	10	23	1.53

Based on records from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group.

### Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Very rare summer visitor. Formerly a very uncommon breeder that disappeared in the middle of the 20th century. Just a handful of recent records.

Three records, the first since 2014. Singles at two locations in the Monynut Forest on 12-Jul (JP Nicolson) and one at Westruther on 15-Jul (D Long).

### Swift *Apus apus*

Common & widespread summer visitor seen in 34% of tetrads, but probably breeding in just 11% of tetrads, mostly in buildings. Present May-September, rare later. During 2008-13 found in 32% of tetrads in summer.

One hundred and sixty-seven records from 66 tetrads. 2016 and 2015 both had 137 records from 53 tetrads.

The first record was on 1-May at Paxton House (J Inglis); last on 17-Sep at Innerleithen (A Bramhall).

Peak counts of five or more:

Site	Apr-May	Jun-Jul	Aug-Sep
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)		8	
Cardrona	14		
Duns	20		
Eyemouth	8	11	
Folly Loch		80	
Gattonside-Melrose	5		
Graden (Yetholm)		6	
Hule Moss		1,135	
Innerleithen	12		12
Jardinefield (Whitsome)		15	
Jedburgh	6		
Kelso	24		
Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)		6	
Lamberton Beach	5		
Leaderfoot	10		
Melrose	15		
Millar's Moss Reservoir		5	
Newcastleton	8		
Newmains (Reston)	5	14	
Nisbet		10	
Norham Bridge		30	
Elibank (Walkerburn)		7	
Thornielee (Walkerburn)		12	
Paxton		125	
River Tweed/Chain Bridge		36	
St Abbs		6	
St Boswells		9	5
Tweedbank	29	15	
Tweed: Upsettlington	35		
Yetholm Loch		165	
<b>No of tetrads</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Aggregate of peak counts</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>1695</b>	<b>17</b>

Sites with peak counts below five were: Abbotrule (Bonchester Bridge); Birgham (Coldstream); Bushelhill (Abbey St Bathans); Cauldsiels Loch (Tweedbank); Clinthill (St Boswells); Coldstream; Eckford Hall (Kelso); Foulden East Newton; Galashiels; Green Diamonds (Selkirk); Heiton (Kelso); The Hirsell; Hoselaw Mains (Yetholm); Kelso to Roxburgh; Lauder; Leadburn Community Woodland; Lindean Reservoir; Mire Loch (St Abb's Head); New Belses Farm (Lilliesleaf); Newcastleton; Newmains (Reston); Newmill (Hawick); Newtown St Boswells; Nisbet; Ayton; Faldonside (Tweedbank); Peebles; Tweed: Howden Pot (Caddonfoot); Tweed (Paxton House); Shielfield (Oxton); St Abbs; St Abb's Head; The Valley (Selkirk); Tweedaleburn (Gladhouse); West Linton.

Breeding season (May-Jul): records from 48 tetrads (42 in 2016; 50 in 2015), sites with confirmed breeding shown in bold:



Abbotrule (Bonchester Bridge)	Graden (Yetholm)	Newmill (Hawick)
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	Heiton (Kelso)	Newton St Boswells
Ayton	Hirsel	Nisbet
Birgham (Coldstream)	Hule Moss	Paxton House
Bushelhill (Abbey St Bathans)	Innerleithen	<b>Peebles</b>
Cardrona	Jardinefield (Whitsome)	St Abb's Head
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	<b>Jedburgh</b>	St Abbs
Clinthill (St Boswells)	Kelso	St Boswells
Coldstream	Ladyrig Pond (Kelso)	Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh
Duns	Lamberton Beach	The Valley (Selkirk)
Eyemouth	Leadburn Community Woodland	Tweed: Upsettlington
Faldonside (Tweedbank)	Leaderfoot	Tweeddale Burn
Folly Loch	Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	Tweedbank
Gala Sewage Works	Melrose	<b>West Linton</b>
Galashiels	<b>Newcastleton</b>	Yetholm Loch
Gattonside-Melrose	<b>Newmains (Reston)</b>	

The only count of breeding numbers was of seven pairs which bred at Newmains (Reston).

An interesting observation was that of a Sparrowhawk taking a Swift on the wing on 10-May at Eyemouth (D Scott).

### **Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis***

Rather uncommon resident of riverine habitats found in 3% of tetrads. Occasionally seen on coast in winter. During 2008-13 found in 4% of tetrads in summer and 5% in winter.

One hundred and ninety-three records from 51 tetrads. A large increase in records and tetrads this year compared to seventy-two records from 22 tetrads in 2016 and ninety-two records from 26 tetrads in 2015.

Site	Jan-Feb	Mar-Sep	Oct-Dec
Abbotsford	1	1	2
Allanton (Chirnside)		1	
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	1	1	1
Barnhills (Ancrum)			1
Birgham (Coldstream)			1
Bowdenmoor Reservoir (Melrose)			1
Burnmouth		1	1
Cockburn Mill Ford (Preston)		1	
Coldstream		1	
Denholm Mill (Denholm)		1	1
Ettrick Water ( Selkirk)	1	1	1
Eyemouth Golf Course		1	
Faldonside (Tweedbank)	1		
Fountainhall (Stow)		1	
Gattonside-Melrose		1	1
Hare Moss (Selkirk)			1
Headshaw Loch (Selkirk)			1
The Hirsel		2	2
Howford (Ettrickbridge)		1	
Innerleithen		1	
Kelso	1	1	2
Lanton (Jedburgh)		1	
Leaderfoot		1	
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)			1
Meeting of Yarrow and Ettrick Waters (Selkirk)			1
Mellerstain (Gordon)			1

Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)		1	
Newcastleton		1	
Newtown St Boswells		1	
Ormiston (Nisbet)			1
Peebles	1	1	2
Philiphaugh (Selkirk)			1
Reston		1	
Spittal on Rule (Denholm)	1		
Synton (Ashkirk)			1
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)			4
Tweed Kelso to Coldstream	1		2
Tweed: Mertoun Mill to Benrig Dean (St Boswells)		1	
Tweed: Paxton House	1	3	4
Tweed: Paxton House		1	
Tweed: Roxburgh Castle to Kelso			1
Tweed: Union Bridge		1	1
Tweed: Upsettlington		1	1
Tweedbank		1	2
Walkerburn			1
Yetholm Loch	1		
<b>No of tetrads</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Breeding (Mar-Sep): Widespread in breeding season (see table above) but no records of confirmed breeding received.



Kingfisher. Fountainhall (Stow). June. Alistair Cutter.

### Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Uncommon breeding resident in 8% of tetrads, mostly in old riverine woods. During 2008-13 found in 7% of tetrads in summer and 4% in winter.

Sixty-eight records from 28 tetrads compares well with 20 records in 2016, although 35 records in 2017 came from a single well-watched site, Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot). All records were of single birds except for a record of three from Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) and two birds at Abbey St Bathans and Bushelhill (Abbey St Bathans).

Sites in bold indicate breeding season (Mar-Aug) records (26 sites compared to 10 in 2016).

<b>Abbey St Bathans</b>	<b>Elba (Abbey St Bathans)</b>	<b>Paxton House</b>
<b>Abbotsford</b>	<b>Glenormiston Wood</b>	<b>Peebles</b>
<b>Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) (two territories)</b>	<b>Greenlaw Moor/Hule Moss</b>	<b>Rachelfield (Smailholm)</b>
<b>Bushelhill (Abbey St Bathans)</b>	<b>Huntford (Carter Bar)</b>	<b>Sorrowlessfield (Earlston)</b>
<b>Cardrona</b>	<b>Innerleithen</b>	<b>Stobo Castle</b>
<b>Cardrona Forest</b>	<b>Lyne Station (Peebles)</b>	<b>Todheugh (Chirnside)</b>
<b>Cauldshiels Loch</b>	<b>Melrose</b>	Tweed West Newbiggin
<b>Chesterfield Caravan Park (Cockburnspath)</b>	<b>Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)</b>	<b>Watch Water Reservoir</b>
<b>Dawyck</b>	<b>Clovenfords</b>	Yetholm Loch
<b>Duns</b>		

### Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopus major*

Common breeder in 25% of tetrads. A few on passage. During 2008-13 found in 50% of tetrads in summer and 47% in winter.

Four hundred and thirty-two records from 104 tetrads. An increase from 256 records in 2015 but this was largely due to intensive recording at Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) for the first time which contributed 152 records in 2017.

Breeding season (Mar-Aug): records came from 65 tetrads (75 in 2016; 67 in 2015).

Abbotsford	Foulden East Newton	New Belses Farm (Lilliesleaf)
<b>Angelrow (Greenlaw)</b>	Gattonside-Melrose	Paxton House
<b>Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)</b>	Glenternie Wood (Manor Valley)	Peebles
Ballmuir Plantation ( Smailholm)	Gordon Community Woodland	<b>Redpath (Melrose)</b>
Bemersyde Moss	Graden (Yetholm)	Sprouston-Redden (Kelso)
<b>Birkenside (Earlston)</b>	Green Diamonds (Selkirk)	St Mary's Loch
Bowdenmoor Reservoir (Melrose)	Greenlaw Moor-Hule Moss	<b>Stow</b>
Broadmeadows (Yarrow)	<b>Haining Loch (Selkirk)</b>	Teviot Bridge Kelso
<b>Burncastle (Lauder)</b>	<b>Halmyre Deans (West Linton)</b>	The Hardens ( Duns)
<b>Caddonfoot</b>	The Hirsell	Town Yetholm Pond
Caddonfoot	Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)	Traquair
Cardrona	<b>Huntford (Carter Bar)</b>	<b>Tweed: Mertoun Mill to Benrig Dean</b>
<b>Courhope Burn (Eddleston)</b>	<b>Innerleithen</b>	Tweed: Union Bridge
Craik Forest	Jardinefield (Whitsome)	Tweedbank
<b>Dawyck</b>	Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)	Walkerburn
Dryburgh - Bemersyde	<b>Leadburn Community Woodland</b>	Watch Water Reservoir
<b>Eckford Hall (Nisbet)</b>	<b>Leaderfoot</b>	<b>West Linton</b>
Edston Toll (Lyne Station)	Lindean Loch (Selkirk)	Whin Wood (Manor Valley)
Elibank (Walkerburn)	Millar's Moss Reservoir	<b>Whitmuir Farm (Selkirk)</b>
Etrick Water (Selkirk)	Neidpath Gorge	Yetholm Loch
Folly Loch	Netherraw (Newcastleton)	

Records which included breeding evidence came from 19 tetrads (shown above in bold, 30 in 2016).

Outside of the breeding season (Jan-Feb and Aug-Dec), records came from 68 tetrads (61 in 2016)

The highest counts were four at Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) on 1-Feb and 2-Feb and at Whitmuir Farm (Selkirk) on 14-Feb.

### **Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus***

Common and widespread breeder noted in 63% of tetrads, possibly 900-1,000 pr. Some large counts August-September with limited passage near coast. During 2008-13 found in 45% of tetrads in summer and 56% in winter.

Three hundred and forty records from 125 tetrads. Up from 245 records in 2016 (165 tetrads). Casual records per month were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
<b>Records</b>	39	16	21	14	21	24	21	28	32	45	42	37
<b>Birds</b>	42	19	27	14	22	21	23	39	34	55	45	39

Records of breeding evidence came from 4 tetrads:

Eckford Hall (Nisbet)	C Green	N	Makerstoun (Kelso)	C Blaikie	FL (4)
Tweed: Upsettlington	R McBeath	A	Newmains (Reston)	DK Graham	FL (3)

See Introduction for breeding codes. Numbers in brackets indicate the number of fledged young.

Most records where of one or two birds . Other than breeding records the only count of three or more was of three at Walkerburn on 09-Mar.

***Kestrel Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Alan Leitch). Note: following refers to both Borders and Lothian.***

Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with proven breeding	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site	No. of young fledged per successful pair
49	31	21	85	2.7	5

Site occupation levels were up this year, although not quite up to 2015 levels. This appeared to be in all areas surveyed. A minimum of 85 young were fledged from 17 successful pairs.

Fledging success was also very high in those pairs that were successful. However, a significant proportion of



**Kestrel with Frog. Burnhouse Mains (Stow). August. Alistair Cutter.**

occupied sites did not have a proven breeding attempt, and of those that did a large number were unsuccessful.

As I mentioned last year, it may be a while before any real long term trends become apparent from the high level of yearly variation. However, the impression is of an increasing population with good breeding success. It is possible that the high proportion of unsuccessful sites within those occupied is due to recent occupation by young breeders. It might be possible to sort this out from the data, but would take more time than I have available at the moment.

### **Merlin *Falco columbarius***

Uncommon breeder, perhaps 40-50prs annually, best known in northern hills. Widespread but scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, mostly to coast. During 2008-13 found in 6% of tetrads in summer and 3% in winter.

Fourteen casual records from 12 tetrads (12 records in 2016) with no casual records of breeding:

winter-spring			
Newmains	04-Jan	D Graham	1
Winfield (Paxton)	31-Jan	J Lough	1
Blackhopebyre (Glentress Water)	08-Mar	N Crowther	1
Muttonhall (St Mary's Loch)	22-Mar	M Henderson	1
breeding season (Apr-Jul)			
Langholm/Newcastleton area	02-Apr	M Henderson	2
Innerleithen area	23-Apr	R Bramhall	1
Upper Tweeddale area	04-May	RS Craig	1
Manor Valley	03-Jun	G Pyatt	1
autumn-winter			
Faw Mount (West Linton)	24-Aug	P Ball	1
Blackhopebyre (Glentress Water)	27-Aug	D Mcnee	1
Hule Moss	09-Oct	A Mossop	1
Town Yetholm	28-Nov	JD Lough	1
Portmore Loch	26-Dec	R Singleton	1

***Merlin Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (Alan Heavisides). Note: following refers to both Borders and Lothian.***

Over the years we have seen evidence that bad weather at the wrong time can influence the outcome of Merlin breeding attempts. This year the early part of the season was settled with little rain. This changed dramatically particularly during the period when young were in the nests. Seems as if very small young can be sheltered by the adults but larger young can be vulnerable and even large near to fledging birds can suffer in prolonged rain. A period of near torrential rain for about 24 hours resulted in at least one brood of young, which were scattered near to the nest, perishing presumably due to exposure.

Coverage was very good in the Pentlands and also reasonably good in parts of the South of Tweed area. Again the Lammermuir Hills were not monitored by group members so there is unfortunately quite a big hole in our knowledge. The Moorfoots monitoring was limited and about the same as last year.

For the second time we have had detailed records from the Borders side of Langholm Moor. Thanks to Sonia Ludwig. Although the birds concerned were again unsuccessful it is understood that other Langholm pairs succeeded.

News from over the border in Kielder is that after a good year last year only one brood managed to fledge young. The atrocious wet weather had an adverse impact there as well.

Overall very few of the Merlins located were successful this season. Only 4 nests known to have fledged is surely the lowest number we have recorded.

#### Lammermuirs

Until 2014 around 27 known old sites were monitored for occupation. Since then there has been no systematic monitoring and unfortunately this year there are no breeding records from other sources. The results and discussion of the 30 year study appeared in British Birds in March 2017 and a more discursive account also looking at the effects of the changes was published in Scottish Birds

#### Moorfoots

Only 4 known sites and surrounding areas were monitored this year. There was however no sign of breeding except at an alternative site close to one of these where 2 fledged young were seen at the very early date of 7<sup>th</sup> June. Normally fledged young are not seen before the end of the month.

Additionally, a female was seen on 5<sup>th</sup> July at a location where birds had been reported calling but no further information was available.

A late record of a bird seen, and other third party reports of Merlins heard calling, from a possible area on the edge of the Moorfoots was intriguing. Worth following up next year.

### Pentlands

Again this was the area best monitored by the group. Considerable effort was made to check a total of 25 known/suspected old sites. In this area in contrast to other breeding areas all birds are nesting in trees using old nests or artificial platforms.

After last year's good results this proved disappointing. Only two located nests successfully fledged three young each. A third nest was shot out with a shotgun when the female was incubating her eggs. This was a shocking outcome and the police and SSPCA have been involved and at least one individual has been interviewed.

Three other sites did have pairs on territory but did not appear to go on to nest or presumably possibly failed very early. One previously used nest was occupied by a Long-eared Owl.

Single birds were seen at or hunting near three other sites but again nothing seemed to come of this.

It is a long time since we had confirmed ground nesting in these hills and there is still potential for some further regular monitoring in this area.

### South of Tweed

At least eleven known or likely sites checked. Only four of these of these were confirmed occupied by pairs and single birds were seen at another two with early observations suggesting possible breeding attempts.

The four pairs were each confirmed to have laid five eggs. Two of these were thought to have been successful each rearing four young. Two others hatched young but one was foxed and the other brood of four were found dead near the nest following prolonged heavy rain and presumed died of exposure.

No records of tree nesting were received again from this area of the Borders.

### Langholm Moor (Borders only)

Two occupied sites in the Borders portion of Langholm Moor were reported. One nest was found as an empty scrape and assessed as failed during laying or early incubation. The other had four eggs which hatched but these were predated by a mammal. It was reported that 4 other pairs on the D & G side were successful.

Again there is a lot of uncertainty and incomplete information this season. No Lammermuirs information and patchy coverage gives an incomplete picture. Numbers below are generally not very meaningful except for Pentlands area.

Areas	Territories checked	Territories occupied	Territories known to have had live young when last visited and/or known to have fledged	Minimum number of young last seen alive in nest and/or seen to have fledged	Number of young per successful territory
Lammermuirs	not managed by group				
Moorfoots	4	1	1	2 (+?)	2+
South of Tweed	11	4	2	8	4
Pentlands	25	6	2	6	3
Langholm (Borders)	3	2	0		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	

### **Hobby *Falco subbuteo***

Very scarce passage migrant, but odd records now in summer. Note that breeding range moving northwards in England and an addition to the breeding avifauna. In 2015.

A single record of one at Newmains (Reston) on 23-May (DK Graham). Number of records each year since 2000:

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
3	1	3	1	0	2	3	1	2	0	5	3	2	1	4	3	2	1

### Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Scarce but local breeder, 50-55 pairs and increasing. Persecuted in some areas. Casual records widespread outwith breeding season, mostly September-March. During 2008-13 found in 10% of tetrads in summer and 10% in winter.

Sixty-seven casual records from 39 tetrads (3%), 70 records from 45 tetrads in 2016. Casual records per month were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
<b>Records</b>	14	0	6	9	21	2	2	2	6	6	6	3



Peregrine. St Abb's Head. September. Dave Graham.

***Peregrine Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (George Smith). Note: following refers to both Borders and Lothian.***

Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with successful breeding	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site	No. of young fledged per successful pair
158	57	37	103	1.8	2.78

This season was a little more productive than 2016 and a major improvement on the disaster of 2015, which was one of the worst on record for this region since the early 1960s. This year we are showing an increase in sites occupied by pairs in this region, rising from 51 occupied sites to 58, and 44 pairs laid eggs also an increase from 42 in 2016. Another three sites were occupied by singles.

Productivity increased from 1.6 to 1.81 young per territorial pair and increased from 2.6 to 2.78 young per productive pair. Eggs were hatched at 38 sites, with 37 sites going on to produce fledged young.

Young produced in this region over the last 3 years has varied considerably:

2014: 100+ young reared  
 2015: 66 young reared  
 2016: 82 young reared  
 2017: 103 young reared

Clutch sizes returned to a more average level this year, and no cracked eggs were found in nests.

The PIT (passive integrated transponder) tagging project continues with the assistance of Mike McGrady this year, and Malcolm Henderson providing a lot of encouragement and welcome support in the south of the region.

The results of the trapping/PIT tagging study are not complete for this season, but in general there was reasonable stability in the adult birds, very few losses being recorded. The usually productive site at the public site at Falls of Clyde is still strangely vacant. One female from East Lothian which was robbed of chicks in 2016, turned up at an adjacent site this year and fledged 4 young. We have a site in South west Borders which is experiencing an unnaturally high level of adult turnover. Persecution is suspected, and the falconry community looks to be the main cause of this persecution.

Persecution was suspected at 3 sites and details have been provided to the relevant Police force and the RSPB.

We have 3 new urban sites this year, one of which managed to rear at least one young, but the site was not identified until the young had fledged. There may have been more chicks than the one that was seen.

### **Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri***

Vagrant naturalised species

Two birds were reported at Craigend (Stow) on 29-Mar as part of the BTO's Garden Bird Report scheme. Observer unknown. These birds represent the first record submitted for Borders. It is not known whether the birds were escapes or naturalised.

### **Magpie *Pica pica***

Uncommon and local breeder with curious distribution along the northern hills, the coast and Cheviot fringes. Increasingly common. Some dispersal into central areas in winter. During 2008-13 found in 24% of tetrads in summer and 29% in winter.

Two hundred and thirty-six records from 89 (7%) tetrads, 182 records in 2016 from 69 tetrads.

#### **Jan-Mar:**

Records from 40 tetrads. Largest counts came from: Eyemouth - 4 and Pilmuir (Hawick) - 4.

#### **Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 27 tetrads. Largest counts came from: St Abb's Head - 6 and Gordon - 6.

No records of confirmed breeding.

**Sep-Dec:** Records from 62 tetrads. Largest counts came from: Eyemouth - 11; Jedburgh - 6; Borthaugh (Hawick)- 5; Burnmouth - 4; Thirlestane - 4; Whiteburn (Abbey St Bathans) - 4.

### **Jay *Garrulus glandarius***

Very scarce but increasing breeder found in only 5% of tetrads in 1988-94. During 2008-13 found in 21% of tetrads in summer and 32% in winter.

Two hundred and eighty records from 115 (9%) tetrads. A significant increase from 165 records from 75 tetrads in 2016.

#### **Jan-Mar:**

Records from 25 tetrads. Largest counts came from; Harden (Hawick) - 4; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 3; Tweed: Upsettlington - 3.

#### **Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 34 tetrads. Largest counts came from; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 6; Menzion (Talla Reservoir) - 4;

Hunthill (Jedburgh) - 3; Walkerburn - 3.

Two records of confirmed breeding with a family of six reported from Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) on 8-Jul and 2 fledged young seen at Elibank (Walkerburn) on 24-Jul.



**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 66 tetrads. Largest counts came from Paxton - 6; The Hirsell - 4; Minto House - 4; Tweed: Peebles - 4; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 3; Folly Loch - 3; Howden Hill (Selkirk) - 3; Minto House (Ancrum) - 3; South Riccalton (Cheviot Hills) - 3; Tweed: Union Chain Bridge - 3; Tweed: Upsettlington - 3.

**Jackdaw *Corvus monedula***

Widespread and common resident, often forms mixed flocks with other corvids. During 2008-13 found in 63% of tetrads in summer and 61% in winter.

Six hundred and ninety-five records from 136 (11%) tetrads (514 records from 114 tetrads in 2016).

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 66 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 50$ ) came from: Eddleston Water: Cringletie - 300; Tweedbank - 300; Lady Moss (Selkirk) - 200; Kelso - 250; Galashiels - 140; Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick) - 100; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 82; Yetholm Loch - 70; Broad Law (Heriot Water) - 60; Selkirk - 50.

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 68 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 50$ ) came from: Walkerburn - 180; River Tweed: Union Bridge - 150; Innerleithen - 100; Lindean Loch (Selkirk) - 100.

Confirmed breeding reported from five tetrads (eight in 2016): Ashiestiel (Caddonfoot) (FL); Eckford Hall (Nisbet) (ON); The Hirsell (ON); Leaderfoot (ON); Tweedbank (NY). Probable breeding reported from a further 14 tetrads (three in 2016). See introduction for breeding codes.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 95 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 50$ ) came from: Walkerburn - 350; Yetholm Loch - 350; Galashiels - 250; Ferniehirst (Stow) - 150; Whitmuir (West Linton) - 110; The Hirsell - 100; Hundleshope (Manor Valley) - 100; Haswellsykes (Lyne Station) - 50; Philiphaugh (Selkirk) - 50; Wark (Coldstream) - 50.

**Rook *Corvus frugilegus***

Abundant resident breeder present in 69% of tetrads but breeding in just 36% of tetrads. Forms large autumn-winter flocks for feeding and roosting. During 2008-13 found in 58% of tetrads in summer and 60% in winter.

Five hundred and three records from 111 (9%) tetrads (392 records from 69 tetrads 2016).

**Jan-Feb:**

Records from 42 tetrads. Largest counts ( $> 50$ ) came from: Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick) - 200; Lyne Manor (Peebles) - 90; Manor Bridge-Lyne Bridge (Peebles) - 90; Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 81; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 70; Folly Loch - 65; Carham-Sprouston (Kelso) - 50.

**Mar-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 70 tetrads. Largest counts ( $> 50$ ) came from: Graden (Yetholm) - 166; St Abb's Head - 80; Foulden - 76; Lymiecleugh Farm (Teviothead) - 60; Harestanes (Ancrum) - 50.

Breeding evidence came from 14 tetrads (28 in 2016):

Dunglass and Bilsdean	ON
Eccles Village	ON (5 and 20)
Eckford Hall	ON
Gattonside (Melrose)	ON
Glenmayne (Galashiels)	ON (c. 32)
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	ON
Lymiecleugh Farm (Teviothead)	B
Newstead-Drygrange (Melrose)	B
Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge	ON (1+)
Redpath (Scott's View)	B
Tweed: Union Bridge	ON
Tweed: Paxton House	ON
Tweedbank	ON
Lyne Dale (West Linton)	ON (13)

See introduction for breeding codes.

With many records in previous years having been contributed by the late Ray Murray there was relatively low coverage of rookeries in 2017. Observers are encouraged to submit records of breeding sites and ideally the number of occupied nests.

#### Sep-Dec:

Records from 71 tetrads. Largest counts (>50) came from: Sprouston-Redden (Kelso) - 250; Yetholm Loch - 250; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 200; Gradon (Yetholm) - 166; Hundleshope Farm (Manor Valley) - 100; Shielfield (Oxton) - 87; Ferniehirst (Stow) - 80; Tweed: Union Bridge - 80; Philiphaugh (Selkirk) - 50; West Linton - 50.

### Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Abundant and widespread resident found in 90% of tetrads. During 2008-13 found in 89% of tetrads in summer and 88% in winter.

Nine hundred and eight records from 177 (14%) tetrads (827 records from 238 tetrads in 2016).

#### Jan-Mar:

Records from 72 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 20$ ) came from: Red Heugh-Souter (Coldingham Moor)- 58; Pease Bay-Red Heugh - 40; Eyemouth-Burnmouth - 24; Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay - 23; Elibank (Traquair Forest) - 22.

#### Apr-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 99 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 20$ ) came from: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 70; Pease Bay - 30; Bemersyde Moss - 25.

Confirmed breeding reported from 8 tetrads (9 in 2016): Ashiestiel, Caddonfoot (NY); Boghouse (West Linton) (ON); Eckford Hall, Nisbet (FL); Leadburn Community Woodland (FL); Lindean Reservoir, Selkirk (ON); Upsettlington (NY); Tweed: Union Bridge (ON); Tweedbank (ON, 3). Probable breeding reported from a further 14 tetrads (nine in 2016). See introduction for breeding codes.

#### Sep-Dec:

Records from 90 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 20$ ) came from: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 100; Philiphaugh (Selkirk) - 26; Tweedbank - 21.

There was a note of a Carrion Crow taking a Common Frog from a garden pond on 15-Apr in Tweedbank (A Bramhall).

### Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

Hybrid genes exist in the Crow population, especially in the west. Pure Hooded Crows are exceptional in winter and spring.

Two records; Innerleithen on 29-Jan (R Watterson) and Heiton (Roxburgh) on 18-Apr (N Stratton).

In addition, a Carrion x Hooded Crow hybrid was reported north of Eddleston on 24-May (G Paterson). In 2016 there was a single record of a hybrid bird at Portmore close to the hybrid sighting above.

### Raven *Corvus*

Rather scarce resident. Very low levels in 1980s but increasing. Mostly found in hilly areas but a few pairs on coast. Winter breeder, few confirmed records. Some winter roosts developing. During 2008-13 found in 29% of tetrads in summer and 38% in winter (just 4% in 1988-94).

One hundred and seventy-four records from 83 (6%) tetrads (156 records from 89 in 2016).

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Records	21	12	24	17	9	6	7	7	26	15	19	11
Peak count	20	4	6	2	3	6	9	6	5	2	30	12

**Raven Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report 2017 (George Smith). Note: following refers to both Borders and Lothian.**

Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with proven breeding	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site	No. of young fledged per successful pair
45	41	32	82	2.0	3

The slow build-up of the Raven population continues, with 108 known sites now in Lothian and Borders.

Unfortunately, the level of coverage dropped, 'only' 45 out of 108 known sites were checked in 2017, as opposed to 63/105 the previous year. As ever more observers would be useful to cover an expanding list of sites. Pairs occupied 41 sites, with no singles recorded. Eggs were laid at 32 sites, with 4 clutches hatching, and 27 broods fledged.

Productivity dropped slightly for the second year running. 82 young fledged (103 in 2016) from 27 successful sites, giving 2.0 per occupied site (2.39 in 2016), and 3.0 per successful pair against 3.21 in 2016.

### Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Abundant resident. Subject to large-scale mortality in hard winters. Abundant migrant & winter visitor, especially in autumn. During 2008-13 found in 57% of tetrads in summer and 48% in winter.

Three hundred and fifty-seven records from 88 sites (243 records from 101 sites in 2016).

#### Jan-Mar:

Records from 42 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: St Abb's Head – 15 on 26 Mar; Tweed: Mertoun- Benrig Dean - 5.

#### Apr-Aug:

Records from 29 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: St Abb's Head – 30 on 2 Apr; Peat Hill (Eddleston) - 8; White Law (Eddleston) - 7; Cardrona Forest - 6; Eckford Hall (Nisbet) - 6; West Linton - 5.

Breeding evidence came from 29 sites, a welcome increase from seven in 2016 and eight in 2015. Breeding was confirmed in 3 tetrads: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) (FL); Eckford Hall (FL); Elibank (FL). The other 26 tetrads had evidence of probable breeding (mostly S and T). See introduction for breeding codes.

#### Sep-Dec:

Records from 54 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: St Abb's Head 23 on 25-Sep; Maidens Paps- Shank End (Wauchope Forest) - 15; Upsettlington - 10; Lymiecleugh Farm (Teviothead) -10; Ladykirk House - 6; Newcastleton - 6; Dunglass - 5.

### Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Abundant resident breeder. During 2008-13 found in 64% of tetrads in summer and 69% in winter.

Eight hundred and twelve records from 140 sites (661 records from 145 sites in 2016).

#### Jan-Mar:

Records from 71 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Tweedbank - 29; Kelso- Roxburgh - 17; Sprouston-Redden (Kelso) - 15; Abbotsford - 13; The Hirsell - 13; Dunglass - 12; Bemersyde- Whitrigbog - 10; Selkirk - 10;

#### Apr-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 87 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) 16; Tweed: Union Bridge 11; Tweedbank 11; Kelso- Roxburgh 10.

Records of confirmed breeding came from 10 sites (nine in 2016): Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) (FL); Birgham (Coldstream) (NE); Burnmouth Harbour (FL); Carlops (FL); Eccles (NY); Eckford Hall (Nisbet) (FL); Gattonside-Melrose (FL); Lindean Reservoir, Selkirk(ON); Peebles (FL); Tweedbank (ON). See introduction for breeding codes. Evidence of probable breeding came from a further eight tetrads (five in 2016).

#### Sep-Dec:

Records from 87 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Tweed: Peebles - 20; Sprouston-Redden (Kelso) - 17; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 14; St Abb's Head - 14.

### Great Tit *Parus major*

Common resident breeder. During 2008-13 found in 61% of tetrads in summer and 62% in winter.

Six hundred and sixty-three records from 120 sites (460 records from 135 tetrads in 2016).

**Jan-Mar:** Records from 60 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Tweedbank - 16; Kelso-Roxburgh - 14; Tweed: Union Bridge - 11; Abbotsford – 10; Hen Poo ( Duns) -10.

#### Apr-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 60 sites with the largest count being nine at Dawyck.

Records of confirmed breeding came from five tetrads (eight in 2016): Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) (FL); Carlops (FL); Eckford Hall, Nisbet (FL); Huntford, Carter Bar (ON); Tweedbank (FL). See introduction for breeding codes. Evidence of probable breeding came from a further ten tetrads (four in 2016).

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 64 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Tweedbank - 13; Abbotsford - 11; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 11; Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge - 11.

**Coal Tit *Periparus ater***

Abundant resident breeder. During 2008-13 found in 70% of tetrads in summer and 76% in winter.

Five hundred and eighteen records from 113 sites (335 records from 111 sites in 2016).

**Jan-Mar:**

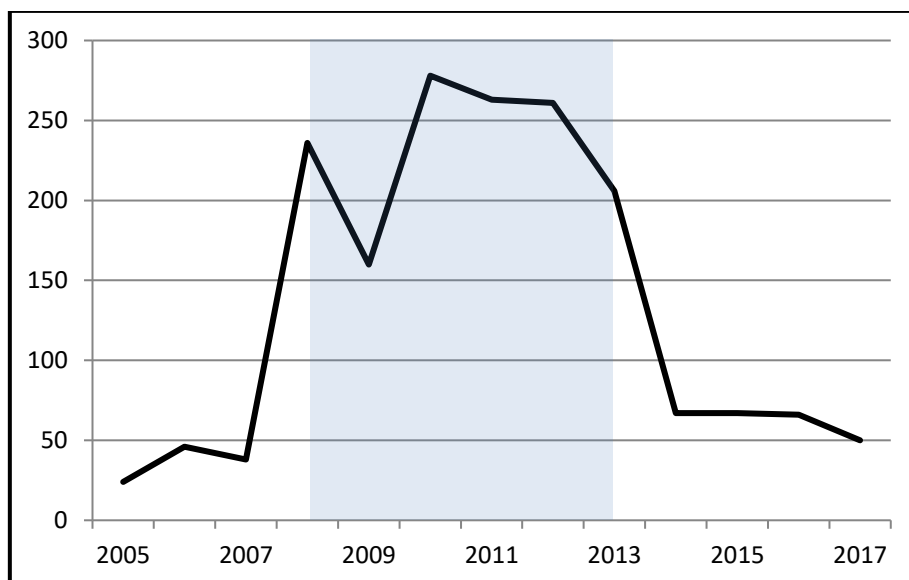
Records from 56 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 6$ ) came from: Bonchester Bridge - 20; Glentress (Peebles) - 10; Ballmuir Plantation (Smailholm) - 6; Bowhill Estate (Selkirk) - 6.

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 50 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 6$ ) came from: White Law (Eddleston) - 9; Craik Forest - 7; Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords) - 6; Peat Hill (Eddleston) - 6.

Records of confirmed breeding came from four tetrads (three in 2016): Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) (FL); Carlops (FL); Eckford Hall (Nisbet) (FL); Tweedbank (FF). See introduction for breeding codes. Evidence of probable breeding came from a further six tetrads (three in 2016).

Establishing any long term trend in breeding population is handicapped by only a very short time in which records of occupied sites has been collected – there appears to be only a skeletal record before 2005. For the record, the number of occupied sites during the breeding season since then has been:



**No. of occupied sites during breeding season: 2005-17**

(Shaded area is SE Scotland Atlas survey period)

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 83 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 6$ ) came from: Dawyck - 22; Woodside (Ancrum) - 10; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 10; St Abb's Head - 7.

**Marsh Tit *Pocile palustris***

Now extremely scarce resident breeder formerly found in 4% of tetrads, mostly in the Merse. Recent huge decline in northern and western limits of local range. During 2008-13 found in just 10 tetrads in summer and 11 in winter.

A single at St Abb's Head on 1-May (R Drew) was the only record for 2017. Four records from two sites were received in 2016. This species appears to be near extinction in Borders while just across the English border on the Whiteadder and the R Till regular records are submitted for the spring.

### Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Abundant breeder. Mostly absent during winter months except in coastal areas. Return from late January-February with departure and passage September-October. During 2008-13 found in 76% of tetrads in summer and 28% in winter.

Two hundred and seventy-five records from 109 (9%) tetrads (234 records from 107 tetrads in 2016).

#### Jan-Mar:

Records from 17 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 20$ ) came from: Whitmuir Farm (Selkirk) - 200; Bessie's Burn (Smailholm) - 40.

#### Apr-Aug:

Records from 92 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 20$ ) came from: Kale Water (Cheviot Hills) - 28; Lamberton - 24. Confirmed breeding was reported from Newmains (FL) and St Abb's Head (FL) with an impressive 14 singing males reported at the former site. See introduction for breeding codes. Singing or territorial males were reported from a further 31 tetrads.

#### Sep-Dec:

Records from 26 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 20$ ) came from: Teviot Haughs - 200; Burnmouth - 175; Newmains - 80; St Abb's Head - 28; Old Greenlaw (Greenlaw) - 20.

Purely on the basis of occupied tetrads, Skylark populations appear to be doing well in the Borders. The four years prior to the SE Scotland Atlas survey (2008-13), had an average number of occupied tetrads in the breeding season of 54, while in the four breeding seasons since the end of the Atlas survey period the average has been 99.

### Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Common breeding species along river systems and in sandpits. Found in 709 tetrads 2008-13 with breeding in 30% of them. Arrives from late March-mid April, and departs mostly August to mid-September.

Three hundred and four records from 79 (6%) tetrads (255 records from 91 tetrads in 2016).

#### March:

There were ten records from seven tetrads. The earliest record was a single at Gattonside-Melrose on 17-Mar (J Gordon) with the highest count being 15 at Sprouston-Redden (Kelso) on 30-Mar.

#### Apr-Jul (breeding season):

Records from 77 tetrads (81 in 2016). Largest counts ( $\geq 50$ ) came from: Paxton – over 1,000; Yetholm Loch – over 1,000; Nisbet - 200; Sprouston-Redden (Kelso) - 200; Longformacus - 60; Hule Moss - 60; Walkerburn - 55; Kelso to Roxburgh - 54; Peebles - 50; Tweed: Whiteadder - 50; Gattonside-Melrose - 50.

Counts of active nest burrows came from ten tetrads (15 in 2016):

Cardrona	1+	Peebles	1+
Carlops	1+	Teviot: Nisbet	80
Gattonside-Melrose	1+	Todheugh (Chirnside)	1+
Innerleithen	1+	Towford (Hownam)	30
Kershope Forest	3	Watch Water Reservoir	1+

In addition, c. 60 young were recorded being fed in reeds at Yetholm Loch on 19-Jul.

A minimum of 121 active borrows were recorded (min. of 983 in 2016 and 791 in 2015). Observers are encouraged to submit records of Sand Martin colonies including counts of active burrows if possible.

The latest record was received for 3-Oct at Yetholm Loch.

### Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Common and widespread summer visitor found feeding in 82% of tetrads 2008-13. Most arrive early April to early May and depart late August to late Sep. Late birds sometimes to November.

Four hundred and seventy-six records from 132 (10%) tetrads (505 records from 163 tetrads in 2016).

#### Mar:

A single bird at Selkirk on 29-Mar was the first of the year (D Methven).

#### Apr-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 125 tetrads (190 in 2016, 188 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 50$ ) came from: Paxton 194; St Boswells 120; Kirklands (Ancrum) 80; Gattonside-Melrose 50; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) 50.

Records of occupied nests came from nine tetrads (seven in 2016): Chapel Mains Pond (Earlston); Foulden; The Hirsell; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk); Muirhouselaw Farm (St Boswells); Newmains (Reston); Tweed: Union Bridge;

West Linton; Whitmuir Estate (Selkirk). At Newmains it was noted that 11 nests fledged 28 young. At West Linton young were still being fed in the nest on 16-Aug.

**Sep and later:**

Records from 46 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 50$ ) came from: St Boswells - 120; Kirkcleuch (Roberton) - 120; Watch Water Reservoir - 58; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 50. The last record of the year was a single at Kelso on 25-Oct (F Evans).

### House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Common and widespread summer visitor. Mostly April-October. During 2008-13 found in 56% of tetrads in summer.

Two hundred and seventy-eight records from 97 (8%) tetrads (270 records from 113 tetrads in 2016).

**Mar-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 88 tetrads (113 in 2016, 101 in 2015). The first record was on 15-Apr at Innerleithen (A Bramhall). Largest counts ( $\geq 50$ ) came from: Paxton - 143; Kittlegairy (Peebles) - 115; Gattonside-Melrose - 100; St Abb's Head - 70; Hule Moss - 66; Hownam-Heatherhope Reservoir (Cheviot Hills) - 50.

Nesting birds were reported from 12 tetrads (17 in 2016):

Bow Farm (Stow)	Gattonside-Melrose	Saughtree Grain (Wauchope Forest)
Chapel Mains Pond (Earlston)	Holly Bush Farm (Faldonside, Tweedbank)	Shankend (Wauchope Forest)
Eyemouth	Huntford (Carter Bar)	West Linton
Gala Sewage Works Pond	Lamberton	Whitmuir Estate (Selkirk)

**Sep and later:**

Records from 27 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 50$ ) came from: Duns - 200; Lower Burnmouth - 50. The last record of the year was on 8-Oct at Birgham (Coldstream) (B Meikle).

### Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Uncommon resident. Forms flocks June-March. In 2008-13 found in 22% of tetrads in summer and 29% in winter.

Two hundred and sixty records from 83 (6%) tetrads (148 records from 69 tetrads in 2016).

**Jan-Feb:**

Records from 24 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Folly Loch - 24; Tweed: Mertoun-Benrigg Dean - 20; Philiphaugh (Selkirk) - 12; St Boswells - 11; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 11; Hermitage - 10; Nisbet - 10.

**Mar-Aug: (breeding season):**

Records from 37 sites (36 sites in 2016, 32 in 2015, 41 in 2014, 42 in 2013). Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 25; Dawyck Botanic Garden - 10.

Breeding: fledged young were recorded at Eckford Hall (Nisbet), Huntford (Carter Bar) and Tweedbank. In total, there were 19 sites where possible breeding took place. This is the lowest reported since 2001.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 59 sites. Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: The Hirsell - 25; Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose) - 17; Scotsmill (Peebles) - 15; Elibank (Walkerburn) - 14; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 13; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 12; Wardlaw (Ettrick) - 12; Abbotsford - 12; Coldingham - 12; Newcastleton - 10; Tweed: Union Bridge - 10; Eckford Hall - 10; Roxburgh to Kelso - 10; Minto (Denholm) - 10.

### Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

Very scarce, Siberian passage migrant.

A single at St Abb's Head on 19-Oct (K Ingleby). The 26<sup>th</sup> record for the Borders and the first since 2007.

### Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Scarce, but annual, Siberian passage migrant.

Fifteen records from the coast between 19-Sep and 23-Oct. Recorded at St Abb's Head on ten dates with a peak of four birds on 30-Sep. Single records from Coldingham Loch (2 birds), Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) and Lower Burnmouth (2+).

The bird-day total (no. of birds multiplied by the no. of days recorded) was 22 compared to 34 for 2016 and 46 for 2016.

### Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli*

Very scarce autumn vagrant.

One at St Abb's Heads from 19-Sep to 24-Sep (M Eaton and M Holling), representing the second Borders record after one at the same site in Sep 2006. See account on page 164.

### Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Now a rare summer visitor, formerly found breeding in 16% of tetrads, but now less than a handful of sites. Few records after singing stops in July. Few seen on passage. During 2008-13 found in 24 tetrads in summer.

Records from two sites (singles unless stated): Plora Wood singing on 06-May, 19-May (R Bramhall) and two on 20-May (D Graham); singing at St Marys Loch on 02-June (A Bramhall).

### Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Abundant summer visitor formerly found breeding in 21% of tetrads. Uncommon passage migrant in spring, more common in autumn. A few sometimes remain in winter. During 2008-13 found in 55% of tetrads in summer and 12 tetrads in winter.

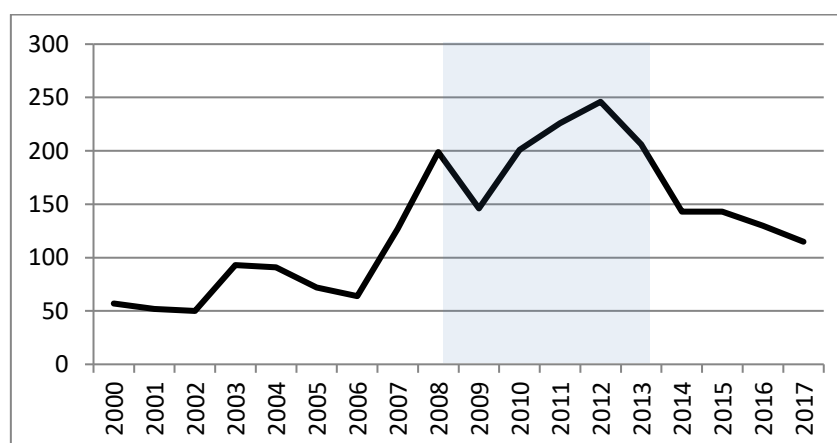
Four hundred and forty-eight records from 120 sites (425 records from 105 tetrads in 2016).

#### Jan-Feb:

No records in 2017 (two records from two sites in 2016).

#### Mar-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 115 sites (114 in 2016, 130 in 2015). Counts of five or more came from 21 tetrads with the largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) coming from: St Abb's Head - 17; Folly Loch - 16; Tweed: Union Bridge - 15; Selkirk - 10; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 10; Newmains (Reston) - 10; Sprouston-Redden (Kelso) - 10. The count at Newmains was noted as of ten singing birds. Numbers of singing birds not always reported, especially for higher counts.



No. of occupied sites during breeding season: 2000-2017.

(shaded area is SE Scotland survey period).

#### Sep-Dec:

Records from 23 sites (28 in 2016, 25 in 2015). Counts of five or more came from five tetrads with the largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) coming from: St Abb's Head - 17; Lower Burnmouth - 10. There were no records in Nov with a single record of one bird on 6-Dec at Innerleithen (A Bramhall).

### Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Abundant summer visitor. Common passage migrant in coastal areas, especially in the autumn. Passage numbers peak April and September. During 2008-13 found in 90% of tetrads in summer.

Three hundred and ten records from 126 sites (375 records from 175 sites in 2016).

#### Apr-Aug (breeding season):

Records came for 123 sites (137 in 2016, 124 in 2015, 161 in 2014). The first record was at Selkirk on 2-Apr (D Methven). Counts of five or more came from 27 tetrads with the largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) coming from: West Linton to Cloich Forest - 20; Selkirk - 17; Kelso to Roxburgh - 14; Lindean Reservoir - 14; Cloich (Eddleston) - 14; St Abb's Head - 13; Sprouston-Redden Kelso - 13; Courhope Burn (Eddleston) - 10.

Records with breeding evidence came from only 13 sites (30 in 2016) although, presumably, many observers were alerted to the presence of birds by their singing. Unfortunately, there has not been a consistent record of the full number of reported sites with birds during the breeding season.

**September onwards (singles unless stated):**

Records from seven sites (ten in 2016): St Abb's Head 5; Lindean Reservoir 3; Upsettlington 2; Gala Sewage Works Pond; Tweed: Union Bridge; Kelso; Newcastleton. The last record of the year was of two at Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) on 5-Oct (M Moncrieff).

### **Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla***

Common summer visitor. Scarce on passage April-May, more common in autumn from August to October. Very scarce but annual in winter. During 2008-13 found in 51% of tetrads in summer and 2% in winter.

Two hundred and thirty-two records from 90 sites (214 records from 104 sites in 2016).

**Jan-Mar:**

Singles at Kelso on 16-Jan (D Dunstan); Hoselaw Loch on 3-Mar (T Reed); Huntford (Carter Bar) on 6-Mar (C Watson); Peebles on 13-Mar (J Woolliams).

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 81 sites (103 in 2016, 78 in 2015, 91 in 2014). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: Tweedbank - 8; Paxton - 8; St Abb's Head - 6; Kelso to Roxburgh - 5; West Linton - 5; Leaderfoot - 5.

Of the 81 sites occupied there were 51 with reports of breeding evidence (only 28 in 2016). As with Willow Warbler, it seems likely that in most cases observers would have been alerted by singing of the bird's presence

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 11 sites (13 in 2016), singles unless stated: St Abb's Head - 5; Huntford (Carter Bar) - 2; Lennel (Coldstream) - 2; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Eckford Hall (Nisbet); Gala Sewage Works Pond; Lower Burnmouth; Peebles; Nisbet; The Hirsell; Tweed: Union Bridge. Dec records came from The Hirsell and Peebles.

### **Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin***

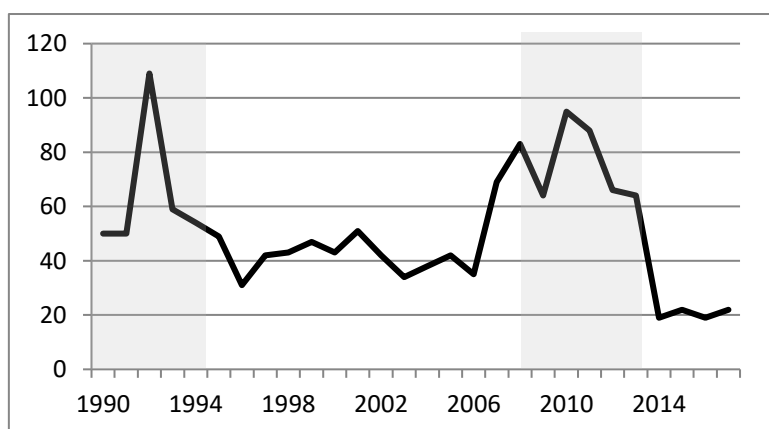
Uncommon summer visitor. Rather scarce on passage in spring during May and June. Occasionally more common in the autumn, August-October. During 2008-13 found in 24% of tetrads in summer.

Thirty-three records from 21 (2%) tetrads (41 records from 19 sites in 2016, 29 sites in 2015).

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

The first record of the year was on 1-May at Innerleithen (A Bramhall). Records came from 22 sites (19 sites in 2016): Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Boleside (Galashiels); Cheeklaw (Duns); Dawyck; Eckford Hall (Nisbet); Eshiels- Cardrona; Ettrickhaugh; Foulden; Gala Sewage Works Pond; Gattonside-Melrose; Gordon Community Woodland; Innerleithen; Kitson Mill (Eddleston Water); Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk); New Belses Farm (Ancrum); Selkirk; Sheriffmuir (Peebles); The Hirsell; Tweed: Cardrona-Eshiels; Tweed: Union Bridge; Williamlaw Wood (Galashiels). The last record of the year was at Gala Sewage Works Pond on 10-Jul (A Bramhall).

On the basis of occupied sites, it appears that the breeding population in Borders may be only about half that of the period 1995-2007:



**No. of occupied sites: 1990-2017.**

(Shaded areas correspond to both local Atlas periods).



### Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Very scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Mostly on passage late April to May and August to October. During 2008-13 found in 2% of tetrads in summer.

Nine records from five sites (13 records from four sites in 2016): Chirnside; Eaglehall (Whitsome); Hume (Kelso); St Abb's Head; Tweed: Union Bridge.

The first record of the year was an exceptional winter record on 5-Jan at Chirnside, possibly a Siberian Lesser Whitethroat (*S. c. blythi*) (M and L Fraser). However, there was insufficient evidence to make a positive identification.

The first record of spring was on 14-May at St Abb's Head (D Graham) and the last records was on 19-Oct also at St Abb's Head (A Mossop). All records were of single birds.

### Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Common summer visitor, mostly breeding on lower ground. Scarce passage migrant on coast April-June and August-September. During 2008-13 found in 27% of tetrads in summer.

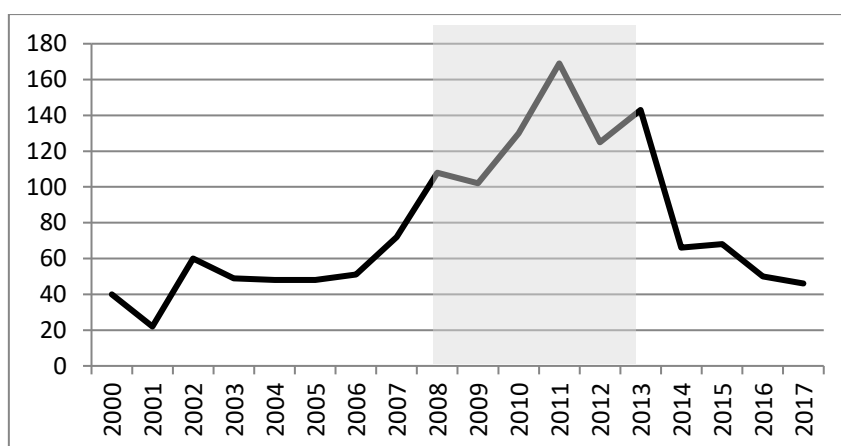
Eighty-eight records from 46 sites (79 records from 50 sites in 2016).

#### April-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 46 sites (50 sites in 2016 and 68 in 2015). The first record was on 16-Apr at Bowdenmoor Reservoir, Melrose (E Bickmore). The largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) were from: Newmains (Reston) - 11; New Belses (Lilliesleaf) - 10; Lambertton - 8; St Abb's Head - 7; Hoselaw Mains (Yetholm) - 7.

Breeding evidence came from 29 sites (15 sites in 2016). No confirmed breeding reported.

On the basis of occupied sites, recent years appear to have experienced a stable breeding population:



**No. of occupied sites Apr-Aug: 2000-2017.**

(Note distortion due to SE Scotland Atlas survey period (2008-13).)

#### September onward:

A single record of one at St Abb's Head on 30-Sep (W Hayward).

### Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Scarce summer visitor & passage migrant April-early September. During 2008-13 found in 7% of tetrads in summer.

Seventeen records from ten sites (14 records from 12 sites in 2016).

#### April – August (breeding season):

The first record was at Bowdenmoor Reservoir (Melrose) on 27-Apr (EL Bickmore).

Elsewhere recorded at: *two sites near Tushielaw, Ettrick Water (singing at both), Bogbank (Romannobridge), Burnhouse (Stow), Fireburn Mill (Coldstream)*, Huntford (Carter Bar), Kirk Yetholm, Newmains (Reston) and Paxton. All were of singles except for 2 at Bogbank (Romannobridge). Most records are likely to relate to singing birds but this was only noted at the five sites indicated in italics above.

Using a combination of Bird Reports, tetrad counts and BBS records, SE Scotland Atlas states that the breeding population is likely to have been stable over the past 20 years or so.

The last record of the year was on 29-Jul at Burnhouse, Stow (A Cutter).



Juvenile Grasshopper Warbler. Burnhouse (Stow). July. Alistair Cutter.

### Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Common summer visitor to wet areas, April-September. During 2008-13 found in 29% of tetrads in summer.

One hundred and eleven records from 45 sites (109 records from 46 sites in 2016).

#### April-August (breeding season):

The first record was from Bemersyde Moss on 29-Apr (M Lindsay). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) were from: Allanton (Chirnside) - 19; Newmains (Reston) - 8; St Abb's Head - 7; Shielfield (Oxton) -5 ; Whiteadder Water: Bluestone Ford -5.

Breeding evidence was reported from 22 tetrads (18 in 2016) with breeding being confirmed at Hare Moss (Ashkirk) and Newmains (Reston).

The number of occupied sites reported has shown a marginal decrease in the past three years after an increase between 2006-14:

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
64	47	185	56	56	69	56	85	106	110	102	132	82	82	78	43	46	45

The last record of the year was on 20-Aug at Yetholm Loch (T Reed).

### Paddyfield Warbler

Rare vagrant.

A single at St Abb's Head on 29-Aug (M Holling) is the second record for the Borders following the first which was reported only last year at the same site on 5-Jun. At time of writing record not accepted by BBRC.

**Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus***

Very scarce spring & autumn passage migrant, and rare breeder. Last proved breeding 2016.

A single record of a juvenile at Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) on 18-Jun (A Kerr) may indicate breeding there but in the absence of any further records from the site, breeding may have been elsewhere including out of the region.

**Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus***

Very scarce and erratic winter visitor. Not annual. During 2008-13 found in 6% of tetrads in winter.

Seven records from six tetrads (56 records from 16 tetrads in 2016). A relatively poor year.

**Jan-May:** All records were in this period (none in 2016): Peebles - 23; Reston - 10; Tweedbank - 4; Birgham (Coldstream) - 3; Broomlands (Kelso) - 3; Lempitlaw (Kelso) - 2. The last record was of four at Tweedbank on 14-Feb.

**Nuthatch *Sitta europaea***

Now a common resident. First bred 1989 and spread rapidly. Perhaps now more than 1,000 pairs. During 2008-13 found in 29% of tetrads in summer and 29% in winter.

Five hundred and forty-eight records from 88 sites (350 records from 130 sites in 2016). An increase in records from 2016 largely due to intensive recording at Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) which contributed 214 records. However, the lowest number of occupied sites since 2005, possibly reflecting a tendency not to report a species which is now less novel than a few years ago.

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 48 sites (69 sites in 2016, 68 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 4$ ) came from: Abbotsford (Tweedbank)- 11; Dawyck - 6; Gattonside-Melrose - 5; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 4; Gala Policies Woodland (Galashiels) - 4; Tweedbank 4.

**Apr-Jul:**

Records from 43 sites (60 sites in 2016, 75 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 4$ ) came from: Teviot (Harestanes) - 6; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 5; Dawyck - 5; Cardrona - 4; Tweed: Union Bridge - 4.

Records with breeding evidence from 25 sites (24 sites in 2016). Breeding confirmed at: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot), Philiphaugh Estate (Selkirk) and Tweedbank (fledglings in each case).

**Aug-Dec:**

Records from 40 sites (58 sites in 2016, 45 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 4$ ) came from: Tweedbank - 8; Gattonside-Melrose - 6; Abbotsford (Tweedbank) - 5; Dawyck - 5; Newcastleton - 5; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 4.

**Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris***

Scarce breeding resident. During 2008-13 found in 24% of tetrads in summer and 26% in winter.

Two hundred and eighty-three records from 59 sites (130 records from 72 sites in 2016). An increase in records from 2016 largely due to intensive recording at Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) which contributed 137 records.

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 35 sites (34 sites in 2016). Largest counts ( $\geq 3$ ) came from: Gattonside-Melrose - 4; Duns Castle - 3; Ettrick (Selkirk) - 3; Folly Loch - 3. Counts of two from a further ten sites.

**Apr-Aug:**

Records from 21 sites (34 sites in 2016). Largest counts ( $\geq 3$ ) came from: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 3; Innerleithen - 3. Counts of two from a further seven sites.

Breeding evidence (probable and possible) came from: Ashiestiel, Caddonfoot (FL); Dawyck (N); Elibank, Walkerburn (P); Gattonside-Melrose (P); Haining Loch, Selkirk (N); Huntford, Carters Bar (P); Melrose (NE – abandoned); Tweedbank (NE). See Introduction for breeding codes.

The table below shows that this year's number of reported sites during the breeding season was the lowest since 2001:

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
43	21	24	30	49	41	50	60	89	28	75	90	71	55	25	46	34	21

**No. of occupied sites Apr-Aug: 2000-2017.**

(Shaded cells represent SE Scotland Atlas survey period).

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 31 sites (21 sites in 2016). Largest counts ( $\geq 3$ ) came from: Dawyck - 3. Counts of two from a further seven sites.

**Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes***

Abundant and widespread resident. Some passage in autumn. During 2008-13 found in 88% of tetrads in summer and 80% in winter.

Eight hundred and twenty-four records from 219 sites (745 records from 279 sites in 2016). Over 20% reduction in number of occupied sites reported. It's not known what the significance of such a large decrease is, particularly since there was an increase in the number of sites with breeding evidence.

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 69 sites (105 sites in 2016). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: Tweedbank - 15; Ettrick Water (Selkirk) - 12; Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge - 9; Eyemouth-Burnmouth - 5; Kelso - Roxburgh - 5; St Abb's Head - 5.

**Apr-Aug:**

Records from 103 sites (171 sites in 2016, 170 in 2015, 161 in 2014). Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Cloich (Eddleston) - 22; St Abb's Head - 14; Craik Forest - 12; Ettrick Water (Selkirk) - 11; Tweed: Union Bridge - 10; Innerleithen - 10; Lyne Dale (West Linton) - 10; Allanton (Chirnside) - 10.

Records with breeding evidence came from 53 sites (33 sites in 2016). Confirmed breeding at Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Eckford Hall (Nisbet) and Huntford, Carters Bar (FL in each case). See introduction for breeding codes.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 54 sites (78 in 2016). Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Tweedbank - 17; St Abb's Head - 13; Tweed: Galafoot - Lowood Bridge - 11; Tweed: Upsettlington - 11.

**Starling *Sturnus vulgaris***

Abundant and widespread resident. Flocks form from late May. A common passage and winter visitor September-March. Occasional large roosts. During 2008-13 found in 56% of tetrads in summer and 42% in winter.

Four hundred and twenty-five from 90 (7%) tetrads (360 records from 126 tetrads).

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 37 tetrads (55 tetrads in 2016, 45 in 2015, 29 in 2014). Largest counts ( $\geq 100$ ) came from: Oxton - 1000; Whitrig Bog (Smailholm) - 300; Rachelfield (Smailholm) - 300; Lady Moss (Bowden) - 150; Black Hill (Longformacus) - 100; Stobswood (Longformacus) - 100.

**Apr-Aug:**

Records from 52 tetrads (70 tetrads in 2016, 73 in 2015, 193 in 2014). Largest counts came from: Jardinefield (Whitsome) - 100; Crooked Jock (West Linton) - 80; Stobs Military Camp (Hawick) - 55.

Confirmed breeding from 11 sites; Dunglass-Bilsdean (FF); Foulden (FF); Gattonside-Melrose (FF); Hollybush Pond (Galashiels) (FF); Huntford (Carter's Bar) (NY & FL); Lambertton (FL); Lyne Dale (West Linton) (ON & FL); Newmains (Reston) (6 pairs bred raising 16 young); Tweedbank (NY & FL, two families with others still to fledge); Tweed: Upsettlington (NY); Whitmuir Estate (Selkirk) (FL). See introduction for breeding codes.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 41 tetrads. Largest counts ( $\geq 100$ ) came from: Nether Falla (Portmore) - 450; Greenlaw - 400; Whitrig Bog (Smailholm) - 300; Lady Moss (Bowden) - 300; Clovenfords - 200; Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick) - 180; Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 130; Wardlaw (Ettrick) - 100.

**Dipper *Cinclus cinclus***

Well-represented resident along river system. During 2008-13 found in 34% of tetrads in summer and 32% in winter.

Three hundred and twenty records from 94 tetrads (7%). 2016: 114 tetrads; 2015: 90 tetrads.

**Jan-Feb:**

Recorded in 40 tetrads (32 in 2016; 32 in 2015; 69 in 2014). The largest counts were: Tweed: Peebles-Old Manor Br - 6; Abbotsford - 5; Tweed: Clinthill - 4; Selkirk - 4; Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose - 4; Tweed: Abbotsford-Lowood - 3; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 3; Walkerburn - 3; Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange - 3; Muttonhall (Yarrow Water) - 3. Counts of two came from: Castlelaw (Coldstream); Dunglass; Hallyards Bridge (Manor Valley); Kirklands (Ancrum); Teviot: Nisbet; Tweed: The Holmes (St Boswells); Yarrow Water: Foulshiels.

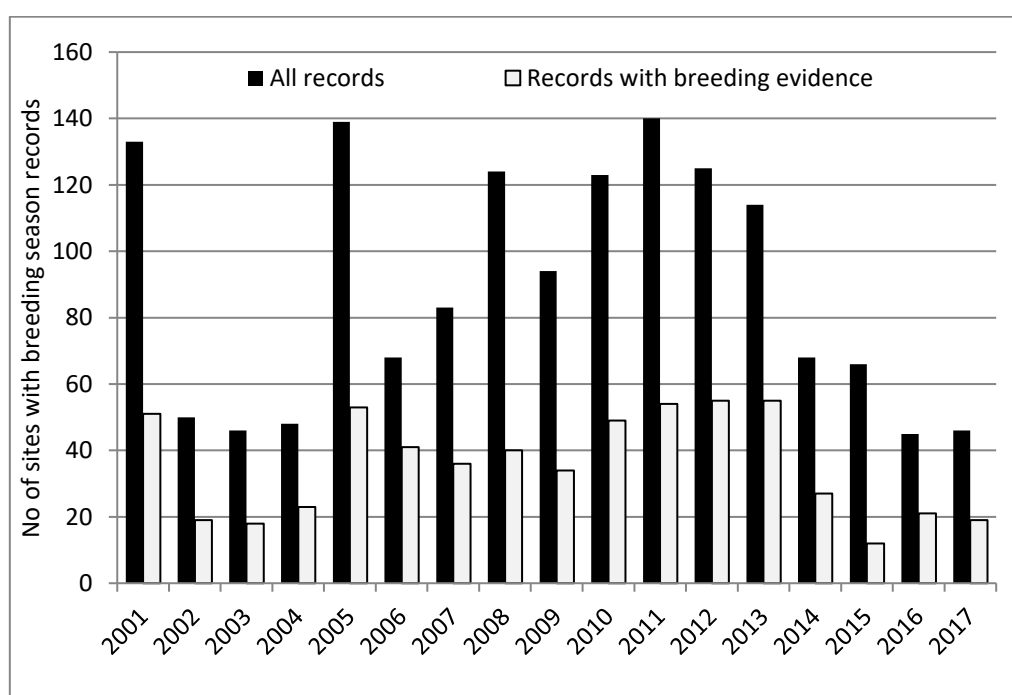
**Mar-Jul (breeding season):**

Recorded in 46 tetrads (2016: 45 tetrads; 2015: 66 tetrads; 2014: 68 tetrads). Largest counts were: Leithen Water (Innerleithen) - 3; Tweedbank -3; Shielfield (Oxton) - 3; West Linton - 3. Counts of two came from: Leithen Water (Hunters Knowe); Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Selkirk; Yair Bridge (Caddonfoot); Peebles; Hallyards Bridge (Manor Valley); Tweed: The Holmes (St Boswells).

Records with breeding evidence came from 19 tetrads (2016: 21 tetrads):

Peebles south	02-Jan	S	Tweed: Clintmains	18-Mar	P
Yarrow Water (Foulshiels)	03-Jan	P	Muttonhall (Yarrow Water)	22-Mar	T
Medwin Water (West Linton)	07-Jan	S	Kirklands (Ancrum)	28-Mar	ON
Kelso	15-Jan	S	Selkirk	18-Apr	P
Abbotsford	02-Feb	S	Peebles	23-Apr	NY
Stanhope (Drumelzier)	05-Feb	S	Tweedbank	03-May	ON
Gorrenberry (Hermitage)	06-Feb	S	Upper Tarras Water (Langholm)	20-Jun	T
Walker Burn ( Walkerburn)	09-Mar	S	Lymiecleugh (Teviothead)	20-Oct	S
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	12-Mar	P	Teviot Haughs (Nisbet	04-Nov	T
See Introduction for breeding codes.			Tweed: Melrose	10-Dec	P

It is difficult to make any confident statements about trends in the number of sites with breeding birds, largely because of an apparently fluctuating observer effort – particularly noticeable with the SE Scotland Atlas 2008-13 survey period. There is however, a tentative indication of a reduction in the range of breeding birds:



**No. of sites with records with and without breeding evidence during the breeding season: 2001-2017.**

(Note distortion associated with SE Scotland Atlas 2008-13).

**Aug-Dec:**

Recorded in 44 tetrads (34 in 2016; 35 in 2015). Largest counts: Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose - 5; Tweed: Peebles-Old Manor Br - 5; Tweedbank - 4; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 4; Abbotsford - 4; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 3; Walkerburn - 3; Tweed: Mertoun-Berrig Dean - 3; Yarrow and Ettrick Waters confluence - 3; Selkirk - 3; Philiphaugh (Selkirk) - 3. Counts of two were made at: Neidpath Castle (Peebles); Newcastleton Tollbar ; Torwoodlee Golf Course (Galashiels); Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream; Teviot: Denholm; Blackadder Water: Greenlaw; Galashiels; Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange; Heather Hope (Hownam).

### Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Very scarce summer visitor to hill cleughs. Numbers declining. Passage birds late Mar-May and Sep-Nov. Rare in winter. During 2008-13 found in 7% of tetrads in summer.

Records came from 20 sites, of which 16 were either possible or confirmed breeding sites (lowest since 2008) and four were where passage was observed. 2016 had records from a total of 22 sites, of which 20 were potential breeding sites.

As usual, the greater number of records came from the Manor Valley but with fewer than normal records from the Leithen Valley.

Piper of Peebles Grave (Leithen Valley)	26-Mar	R Bramhall	1	S
Bench Cleuch (Manor Valley)	09-Apr	G Pyatt	2	
Worms Cleuch (Manor Valley)	09-Apr	G Pyatt	1	
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	09-Apr & 19-Oct	K Ingleby	1	
Posso Craig (Manor Valley)	13-Apr	A Heavisides	1	
Langhaugh Hill (Manor Valley)	24 & 26-Apr	G Pyatt	1	
Glenrathope (Manor Valley)	26-Apr	D Parkinson	2	S
Manor Valley - Langhaugh Hill	26-Apr	Moncrieff, M	4	P
Polmood Burn (Tweedsmuir)	03-May	A Heavisides	2	S
Stan Hope (Drumelzier)	03-May	A Heavisides	3	S
Glenrath Heights (Manor Valley)	19-May	A Heavisides	3	P
Ling Hope (Manor Valley)	01-Apr & 29-May	G Pyatt	2	NE (4)
Mill Burn (Manor Valley)	03-Jun	G Pyatt	2	A
Hundles Hope (Manor Valley)	04-Jun	G Pyatt	2	FF
Posso (Manor Valley)	07-Jul	A Heavisides	5	FL
Wardlaw (Ettrick)	18-Sep	G Christer	1	
Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)	21-Oct	D Graham	1	
Wide Hope Shank (Lyne Water)	11-May	BBS	1	
St Abb's Head	20 to 23-Oct	Various	7	
Newmains (Reston)	06 to 10-Nov	D Graham	1	

See Introduction for breeding codes.

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
27	-	37	29	25	10	39	-	10	28	26	36	35	34	17	23	20	16

#### No. of potential breeding sites reported: 2000-2017.

(SE Scotland Atlas survey period 2008-13 shaded)

**Erratum: BBR 2016 stated that the number of potential breeding sites reported was 22. It should have read 20 sites.**

### Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Abundant breeding resident. Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Very light passage March-April and strong passage in October. During 2008-13 found in 79% of tetrads in summer and 71% in winter.

Nine hundred and forty-five records from 194 tetrads (15%). 2016: 161 tetrads; 2015: 135 tetrads.

#### Jan-Feb:

Recorded in 59 tetrads (75 in 2016; 64 in 2015; 67 in 2014). Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 63; Tweedbank - 53; Sunderland Hall (Selkirk) - 40; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 26; Gala Policies - 25; Whitmuir (Selkirk) - 17; Bemersyde Moss - 15; Selkirk - 15; The Hirsell - 13; Tweed: Carham-Sprouston - 12; Whitrig Bog (Smailholm) - 12; Yetholm Loch - 11.

#### Mar-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 123 tetrads (128 in 2016; 133 in 2015; 179 in 2014). Largest counts: Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 35; Tweedbank - 32; Tweed: Sprouston-Redden - 21; Walkerburn - 11; Lyne Dale (West Linton) - 11; Cheeklaw (Duns) - 11; New Belses (Lilliesleaf) - 10.

Breeding evidence was reported from 46 tetrads. The first record of confirmed breeding was on 26-Mar at Eckford Hall (Nisbet) - C Green.

The post-Atlas period (since 2014) appears to have a stable number of occupied tetrads occupied.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from an exceptional 100 tetrads (50 in 2016; 57 in 2015; 46 in 2014). Largest counts: Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) - 100+; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 50; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 40; Tweedbank - 31; Dawyck (Peebles) - 30; Wooden Loch (Eckford) - 20; Tweed: Sprouston-Redden - 19; Tweed: Kelso-Sprouston - 18; Tweedhill (Paxton) - 18; Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank) - 17; Laidlawstiel Farm (Clovenfords) - 14; Burnmouth-Partanhall - 14; The Hirsell - 11; Lymiecleugh (Teviothead) - 10; Philiphaugh Pond (Selkirk) - 10; Arter Brae Wood (Manor Valley) - 10; Eyemouth Harbour - 10; Selkirk Hills - 10; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 10.

**Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris***

Common winter visitor and passage migrant from late September to mid-May. Rare May-September. Very rare breeder. During 2008-13 found in 56% of tetrads in winter.

One hundred and eighty-four records from 96 tetrads (7%). 2016: 95 tetrads; 2015: 86 tetrads.

**Jan-Feb (wintering):**

Records from 33 tetrads (2016: 28 tetrads; 2015: 48 tetrads; 2014: 34 tetrads; 2013: 41 tetrads). Largest counts: Black Knowe Head (Tushielaw) - 250; Burnside Farm (Roxburgh) - 130; Portmore Reservoir -130; Branxholme Easter Loch (Hawick) - 100; Edrom (Duns) - 100; Ladyrig (Heiton) - 80; Lady Moss (Melrose) - 78; Lempitlaw (Kelso) - 70; Whitrig Bog-Westfield - 63; Tweed: Kelso - 60.

**Mar-Apr (spring passage):**

Records from 20 tetrads (2016: 24 tetrads; 2015: 30 tetrads). Largest counts: Jardinefield (Whitsome) - 250; Lymiecleugh (Teviothead) - 100; Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm) - 80; Eaglehall (Whitsome) - 70; Kaimes (West Linton) - 50; Gordon Community Woodland - 50; Melrose - 50; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 40; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 40; Lyne Dale (West Linton) - 40. Generally smaller counts than in recent years.

**May-Sep (summering):**

A record of five birds at Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords) on 5-May and another of two birds at Newcastleton Tollbar on 26-Sep were very likely late and early birds, respectively than over-summering birds.

**Oct-Dec (autumn passage and wintering):**

Records from 55 tetrads (2016: 53 tetrads; 2015: 45 tetrads). Largest counts: Lady Moss (Melrose) - 300+; Chirnside - 250; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 250; Lennel (Coldstream) - 200; Lyne (Peebles) -150; Millar's Moss (St Abbs) - 150; Wardlaw (Ettrick) - 130; Newmains (Reston) - 120; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 120; Hassendean (Hawick) - 100.

Although showing significant annual fluctuation, the number of occupied tetrads seems stable overall.

**Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos***

Common breeder. Largely abandons the area after September. Occasionally strong autumn passage. A few November-January, mostly near coast. During 2008-13 was found in 73% of tetrads in summer and 30% in winter.

Four hundred and forty records from 95 tetrads (7%). 2016: 129 tetrads; 2015: 113 tetrads.

**Jan-Feb:**

Records from 31 tetrads (31 in 2016; 25 in 2015). Largest counts: Tweedbank - 5; Folly Loch - 5; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 5; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) -4; Yetholm Loch - 4; The Hirsell - 4; Slipperfield Mount (West Linton) - 3; Selkirk - 3; Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay -3.

**Mar-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 95 tetrads (110 in 2016; 112 in 2015; 120 in 2014), ie a small but steady decrease since the survey period for the SE Scotland Atlas. Largest counts: West Linton-Cloich Forest - 9; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 8; Tweed: Union Bridge - 8; Dawyck (Peebles) - 6; White Law (Eddleston) - 6; Tweed: Sprouston-Redden - 5; Corse Law (Abbey St Bathans) - 5; Knows Dean Plantation (Galashiels) -5; Tweedbank -5; Darnick (Melrose) - 5; Selkirk - 5; Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm) - 4; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 4; Birgham (Coldstream) - 4; Eckford Hall (Nisbet) - 4; Woden Law (Kale Water) - 4; The Hirsell - 4; Yetholm Loch - 4.

Records with breeding evidence came from 46 tetrads (15 confirmed and 31 probable). The first record of confirmed breeding was on 4-Apr at Lennel, Coldstream (A Mossop).

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 23 tetrads (19 in 2016; 21 in 2015). Largest counts: St Abb's Head - 30+; Ashiestiel-Peel - 5; Dawyck (Peebles) - 4; Tweedbank - 3; Haining Loch (Selkirk) - 3.

## Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Well-represented winter visitor but sometimes abundant autumn passage migrant in September-October. Scarce on spring passage March to early April. Rare in summer. During 2008-13 was found in 2% of tetrads in summer, 35% in winter.

One hundred and ninety-six records from 76 tetrads. 2016: 69 tetrads; 2015: 45 tetrads.

### Jan-Feb (wintering):

Records from 27 tetrads (23 in 2016; 26 in 2015; 20 in 2014). Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 140; Yetholm Loch - 64; Sunderland Hall (Selkirk) - 50; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 45; Abbotsford - 30; Crossrig (Whitsome) - 30; Lempitlaw (Kelso) - 30; Peebles - 30; Bowhill (Selkirk) - 22; Gala Policies - 24; Galashiels -22; Bemersyde-Whitrig Bog - 20.

### Mar-Apr (spring passage):

Records came from six tetrads (11 in 2016; eight in 2015). The highest counts per tetrad were: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 180; Bemersyde-Whitrig Bog - 38; West Linton-Cloich Forest - 3; Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm) - 2; Tweed: Sprouston-Redden - 2; Ashiestiel Hill (Caddonfoot) - 1.

The last record of this period was on 26-Apr from Ashiestiel Hill, Caddonfoot (G Paterson).

### Oct-Dec (autumn passage and wintering):

The first record of this period was of one bird on 24-Sep at Eyemouth (G Garner). Records came from 54 tetrads (41 in 2016; 31 in 2015). Largest counts: Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 600; St Abb's Head - 500; Bowhill Estate - 330; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 300; Eckford Hall (Nisbet) - 200; Whitrig Bog-Westfield (Smailholm) - 200; The Hirsell - 120; Manderston (Duns) - 100; Chapelhill (Hawick) - 80; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 80; Lady Moss (Melrose) - 50; Spylaw (Leadburn) - 50; South Riccalton (Carter Bar) - 30; Folly Loch - 30.

Unlike 2016, when records suggested a greater passage in spring, 2017 appeared to have a greater passage in autumn.

## Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Common breeding resident. Forms large flocks in late summer, but generally smaller flocks in winter. Few flocks in spring. During 2008-13 was found in 51% of tetrads in summer, 50% in winter.

Three hundred and fifty records from 112 tetrads (9%). 2016: 131 tetrads; 2015: 106 tetrads.

### Jan-Feb:

Records from 30 tetrads (43 in 2016; 33 in 2015; 36 in 2014). Largest counts: Selkirk - 4; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 4; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 3; Blackhopebyre (Leithen Valley) - 3.

### Mar-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 68 tetrads (66 in 2016; 58 in 2015; 67 in 2014). Largest counts: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 33; Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank) - 20+; Huntford (Carter Bar) - 8; Todrig (Greenlaw) - 8; Thornielee (Walkerburn) - 6; Ashiestiel Hill (Caddonfoot) - 5; Elibank (Walkerburn) - 5; Knows Dean Plantation (Galashiels) - 4; Cardrona Forest - 4; Walkerburn - 4; Bowhill (Selkirk) - 3; Fruid Reservoir - 3; Dam Head Rig (Traquair) - 3.

Confirmed breeding was reported from five tetrads (five in 2016 and nine in 2015); probable breeding was reported from 12 tetrads and possible breeding was reported from ten tetrads:

Bowhill (Selkirk)	24-Apr	FL	Whitmuir (Selkirk)	19-May	A
Fruid Reservoir	04-May	FF	Elibank (Walkerburn)	24-May	P
Foulshiels (Yarrowford)	06-May	FL	Cardrona Forest	28-May	T
Tweedaleburn Strip (Portmore)	24-May	FF	Eddleston-Leadburn	02-Nov	P
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	20-Jun	FL	The Hirsell	28-Feb	S
Melrose (Holy Trinity)	08-Mar	S	Broad Law (Carcant)	01-Mar	S
Thornielee-Elibank (Walkerburn)	09-Mar	P	Blackhopebyre (Leithen Valley)	01-Mar	S
Brotherstone Moor (Earlston)	18-Mar	P	West Linton-Cloich Forest	05-Mar	S
Philiphugh (Selkirk)	02-Apr	T	Lymiecleugh (Teviothead)	10-Mar	S
Huntford (Carter Bar)	03-Apr	T	Tweed: Galaford-Lowood Bridge	12-Mar	S
Dawyck (Peebles)	29-Apr	D	Courhope Burn (Drove Road)	10-May	S
Yarrowford	02-May	P	Watch Water Reservoir (West)	11-May	S
Lyne Dale (West Linton)	14-May	T	Watch Water Reservoir (East)	11-May	S
See Introduction for breeding codes.			Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	22-Dec	S



2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
26	25	55	62	77	77	71	10	-	163	156	152	161	146	67	58	66	68

**No. of occupied tetrads during breeding season: 2000-2017.**

(Shaded cells correspond to SE Scotland Atlas survey period).

**Sep-Dec:**

Records came from 57 tetrads (47 in 2016; 39 in 2015). Largest counts: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 53; Watch Water Reservoir (Longformacus) - 42; Walkerburn - 30; St Abb's Head - 10; Neidpath Castle (Peebles) - 10; Nether Falla (Portmore) - 9; Haining Loch (Selkirk) - 6; Craiglatch (Clovenfords) - 5; Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 5; Wooden Loch (Eckford) - 5; Dawyck (Peebles) -5. The count of 53 at Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) on 9-Sep (G Paterson) appears to have been the highest count since 1997 when 95 were reported from Hule Moss on 11-Oct.

**Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata***

Well-represented summer visitor. Scarce passage migrant, less common in spring than autumn. During 2008-13 was found in 41% of tetrads in summer.

Eighty-six records from 32 tetrads (2%). Sixty tetrads in 2016; 42 tetrads in 2015. Over half of the records received came from Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot).

First record was on 12-May: a single at Ashiestiel-Peel, Caddonfoot (G Paterson). The largest counts were: Bonchester Bridge – 5+; St Abb's Head - 5; Carlops - 5; Rhymer's Stone (Melrose) - 4; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 3; Elibank (Walkerburn) -3; Uppsettlington (Ladykirk) - 3; Lyne Dale (West Linton) - 3.

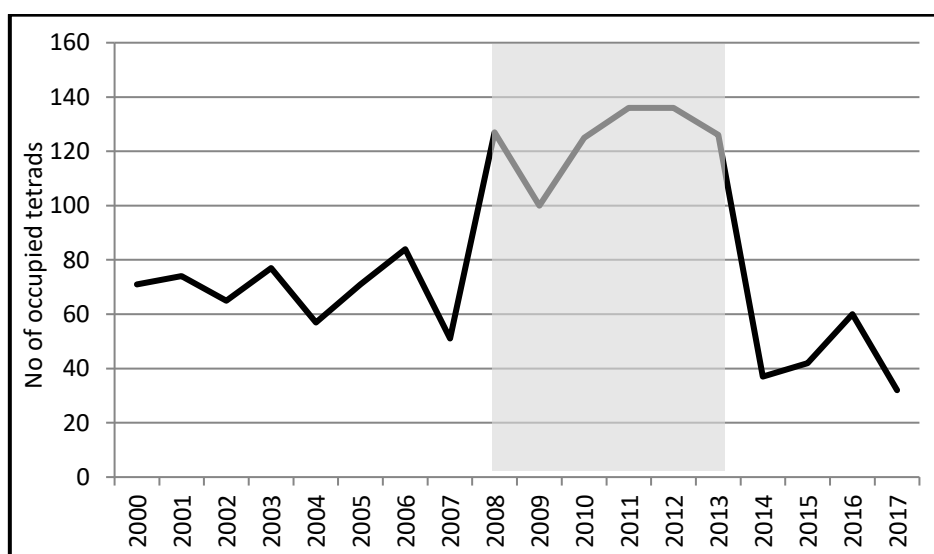
Confirmed breeding from eight tetrads, probable breeding from five tetrads and one tetrad with possible breeding. 2016 had 15 tetrads with confirmed or probable breeding:

Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	14-May	P	Crooked Jock (West Linton)	26-Jun	T
Manor Schoolhouse	17-May	N	Kitson Mill (Eddleston Water)	30-Jun	FL
Oxenrig (Coldstream)	19-May	B	Carlops	18-Jul	FL
Buxley (Duns)	21-May	S	Rhymer's Stone (Melrose)	19-Jul	FL
Cardrona Forest	28-May	P	Elibank (Caddonfoot)	23-Jul	FL
Ashiestiel-Walkerburn	07-Jun	FF	Uppsettlington (Ladykirk)	10-Aug	FL
Bonchester Bridge	15-Jun	ON	Lyne Dale (West Linton )	21-Aug	FL

**Autumn:**

Five tetrads reported sightings in Sep-Oct with the latest record on 23-Oct from Mire Loch, St Abb's Head (R Drew). This appears to be the latest record for a Spotted Flycatcher since 27-Oct 1985 when a single bird was reported from Burnmouth.

Although obviously a limited sample, the record of occupied tetrads since 2000 hint at a decline in the range of this species:



**No. of occupied tetrads: 2000-2017.**

(Shaded area represents period of SE Scotland Atlas survey).

**Robin *Erithacus rubecula***

Abundant resident. Common winter visitor, with passage birds arriving in September and departing in March. During 2008-13 found in 83% of tetrads in summer, 78% in winter.

Eight hundred and sixty records from 161 tetrads. 2016: 202 tetrads; 2015: 172 tetrads.

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 73 tetrads (107 in 2016; 75 in 2015 and 77 in 2014). Largest counts: Tweedbank - 29; Tweed: Union Bridge - 13; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 11; Sprouston-Redden (Kelso) - 11; Selkirk - 10; St Abb's Head - 10; Hadden (Sprouston) - 10; The Hirsell - 8; Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge - 8.

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 96 tetrads (123 in 2016; 118 in 2015; 134 in 2014). Largest counts: White Law (Eddleston) - 18; Knows Dean Plantation (Galashiels) - 15; Peat Hill (Eddleston) - 15; Tweedbank - 11; Craik Forest - 10; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 10; Tweed: Union Bridge - 8; Paxton House - 8.

Confirmed breeding came from only six tetrads. Readers are encouraged to submit any breeding evidence when reporting this species.

Tetrads have only been consistently used since 2009 in order to give some idea of the range of this species. Given the greater observer effort associated with the SE Scotland Atlas (2009-13) it is not possible yet to determine any significant trend:

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
276	236	304	302	334	134	118	123	96

Occupied tetrads 2009-2017. Shaded years correspond to Atlas survey period.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 84 tetrads (64 in 2016; 66 in 2015). Largest counts: Tweedbank - 33; St Abb's Head - 20; Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 12; The Hirsell - 10; Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge - 9.

**Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva***

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in Sep-Oct. Not annual.

A single bird recorded on 19-Oct at Burnmouth (A Mossop).

**Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca***

Rare summer visitor, formerly found in less than 5% of tetrads, now virtually extinct as a breeder. Scarce passage migrant in spring, occasionally more frequent in autumn, September-early October.

Six records from four sites. 2016: six sites; 2015: five sites; 2014: two sites). All 2017 records were of single birds and, with the exception of the Plora Wood records, involved singing birds. However, there has not been any confirmed breeding since 2015.

Lindean Mill (Selkirk)	05-May	M Fraser
Cardrona Hill	07-May	R Bramhall
Plora Wood (Innerleithen)	07-19-May	R Watterson, R Bramhall
Leaderfoot (Melrose)	16-20-May	D Parkinson

**Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros***

Scarce passage migrant mostly March-June and September-October. It very occasionally winters.

Three records from two sites (2016 had four records from two sites; 2015 had four records from one site and 2014 had no records).

Lower Burnmouth	06-Mar	F Evans
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	09-Apr	D Graham
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	09-Oct	J Ibbotson

### Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Uncommon but widespread summer visitor. Arrivals and passage migrants mid-April to May, return migration September-October. During 2008-13 was found in 21% of tetrads in summer.

Fifty-three records from 29 tetrads (28 tetrads in 2016; 21 tetrads in 2015).

#### April:

Records from ten tetrads (seven in 2016; five in 2015 and 11 in 2014). Records were: Cardrona Hill - 4; Glenormiston Woodend (Cardrona) - 3; Plora Wood (Walkerburn); Glenkinnon Burn (Caddonfoot); Innerleithen; Hirsell Lake; Mouth Bridge (Duns); Dawyck (Peebles); Bemersyde Moss; The Whin (Galashiels). All singles except where otherwise indicated.

#### May-Jul (breeding season):

Records from 25 tetrads (28 tetrads in 2016; 22 tetrads in 2015). Largest counts: Hilton (Whitsome) -3; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 3.

Records with breeding evidence (seven confirmed and 12 singing) came from:

Hilton (Whitsome)	21-May	FF	F Evans
Ashiestiel-Walkerburn	07-Jun	FF	A Sandeman
Gate Hope (Walkerburn)	11-Jun	FF	R Singleton
Toxside Moss (Leadburn)	14-Jun	FF	K Ingleby
Glenormiston (Cardrona)	23-Jun	FL	M Cockburn
Foulden (Chirnside)	11-Jul	FL	C Hartley
Yair Hill Forest (Caddonfoot)	16-Jul	FL	G Paterson
Plora Wood (Walkerburn)	18-Apr	S	SOC Borders
Innerleithen	23-Apr	S	R Bramhall
Mouth Bridge (Duns)	23-Apr	S	J Towill
Dawyck (Peebles)	27-Apr	S	M Betts
Bemersyde Moss	29-Apr	S	M Lindsay
The Whin (Galashiels)	30-Apr	S	M Lindsay
Fellow Hills (Whitsome)	03-May	S	J Towill
Harden Burn (Hawick)	09-May	S	G Scott
Elibank (Walkerburn)	10-May	S	G Paterson
The Hirsell	20-May	S	C Hartley
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	27-May	S	G Paterson
Yetholm Loch	01-Jun	S	J Lough

See Introduction for breeding codes.

In 2016 there were 11 sites with breeding evidence; in 2015 there were six sites and in 2014 there were nine.

#### August onward:

Two records which were both from St Abb's Head: two birds on 29-Sep (D Graham) and a single on 30-Sep (R Drew).

### Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Uncommon summer visitor to hill valleys. Scarce passage migrant on coast, from late April to May and August to October. During 2008-13 was found in 24% of tetrads in summer.

Twenty-seven records from 22 sites (28 sites in 2016 and 21 in 2015).

#### Apr-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 22 sites (28 in 2016; 18 in 2015 and 23 in 2014). Largest counts: Woden Law (Hownam) - 7; Heatherhope Burn (Hownam) - 6; Upper Tarras Water (Langholm) - 5; Borthwick Water (Craik) - 5; Dam Head Rig (Traquair); Heatherhope Reservoir (Hownam) - 4. The earliest record was on 28-May at Woden Law (Hownam).

Breeding evidence came from ten sites (nine in 2016; five in 2015 and 12 in 2014):

Tweedbank	10-May	S	A Bramhall
Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)	14-May	A	C Hartley
Courhope (Eddleston)	14-Jun	S	P Ball
Ashiestiel Hill (Caddonfoot)	15-Jun	P	G Paterson
Birkscairn Hill (Glensax Burn)	17-Jun	S	M Cockburn

Upper Tarras Water (Langholm)	20-Jun	P	C Richardson
Borthwick Water (Craik)	30-Jun	FL	G Scott
Green Knowe (Romannobridge)	14-Jul	T	P Ball
Heatherhope Reservoir (Hownam)	27-Jul	FL	J Towill
Burnhouse (Stow)	02-Aug	NY	A Cutter

See Introduction for breeding codes.

**Sep onwards:**

One record of a singleton at St Abb's Head on 28-Sep (C Hartley).

The number of occupied tetrads continues to be about half of that found in the 1990s.



Whinchat. Piper's Grave. May. Alistair Cutter.

**Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus***

Largely resident with some of population wintering along coast but in mild winters many birds remain inland. Much of summer population found in hills. High mortality in severe winters. Absent in 1980s, recolonised 1990s and 2000s. Population crash 2010. During 2008-13 was found in 22% of tetrads in summer, 22% in winter.

Seventy—six records from 46 tetrads (42 in 2016; 36 in 2015).

**Jan-Feb:**

Records from four tetrads (10 in 2016; 13 in 2015; four in 2014): Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth - 7; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 2; Greenlaw Moor - 1; Eyemouth - 1.

**Mar-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 28 tetrads (25 in 2016; 19 in 2015; 17 in 2014). Largest counts: Woden Law (Hownam) - 6; Siccar Point - 5; Upper Tarras Water (Langholm) -4; Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) - 4; Posso (Manor Valley) - 3; Hag Law (Romannobridge) - 3.



**Stonechat. Lower Tweed. June. Martin Moncrieff.**

Records with breeding evidence came from 12 sites (ten in 2016):

Lucken Head (Yarrowford)	23-Apr	S	G Paterson
Windydoors (Clovenfords)	06-May	P	M Lindsay
Hag Law (Romannobridge)	10-May	P	P Ball
Watch Water (Longformacus)	11-May	P	R Watterson
Eildon Mid Hill	17-May	P	D Parkinson
Linkim Shore (Coldingham)	17-Jun	P	J Mitchell
Siccar Point	19-Jun	FL	J Mitchell
Ashiestiel Hill (Caddonfoot)	20-Jun	P	G Paterson
Blackerstone (Abbey St Bathans)	02-Jul	A	R McBeath
Posso (Manor Valley)	07-Jul	FL	A Heavisides
Upper Tarras Water (Langholm)	09-Jul	NY	C Richardson
Burnhouse (Stow)	02-Aug	FL	A Cutter

See Introduction for breeding codes.

#### **Sep-Dec:**

Records from 20 tetrads (eight in 2016; 11 in 2015; 14 in 2014). Largest counts: Three Brethren (Selkirk) - 4; St Abb's Head - 3; Edgerston Tofts (Carter Bar) - 2; Hule Moss - 2; Watch Water Reservoir (East) - 2; Portmore Loch - 2; Saughtree Fell (Liddesdale) - 2; Broadlee Loch (Borthwick Water) - 2; Glengaber (Yarrow) - 2; Meadshaw (Craik Forest) - 2; Hardens (Duns) - 2.

Based on the number of occupied tetrads, there appears to be a revival in population after the crash in 2009/10:

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
105	41	30	29	16	17	19	25	28

#### **Occupied tetrads (Mar-Aug): 2009-2017.**

Shaded cells correspond to SE Scotland Atlas survey period.

### Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Uncommon summer visitor, mostly to hill areas. Passage migrant, most common in spring, late March-May, but scarcer August-October. During 2008-13 was found in 40% of tetrads in summer.

Eighty-seven records from 56 sites (70 sites in 2016; 76 in 2015).

#### Mar:

Records from eight sites (two in 2016; seven in 2015; four in 2014). First record was of a single bird on 2-Mar at Dowlaw, Coldingham Moor (F Evans). Largest counts (singles unless otherwise stated): St Abb's Head - 2; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor); Carcant (Heriot Water); Leithen Valley; Byrecleugh (Longformacus); Horseupcleugh (Longformacus); Cademuir (Manor Valley).

#### Apr-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 44 sites (56 in 2016; 42 in 2015; 61 in 2014). Largest counts: St Abb's Head - 22; Games Hope (Talla Res) - 10; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 9; Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank) - 8; Manderston (Duns) - 7; Edrom (Duns) - 7; Glenrathope (Manor Valley) - 6; Cauldshiels Hill (Tweedbank) - 6; Abbey St Bathans - 5; Upper Tarras Water (Langholm) - 4; Langhaugh Hill (Manor Valley) - 3; Megget Reservoir - 3; Talla Reservoir - 3; Fruid Reservoir - 3; Woden Law (Howden) - 3; Hutton (Paxton) - 3.

Records with breeding evidence came from five sites (ten sites in 2016):

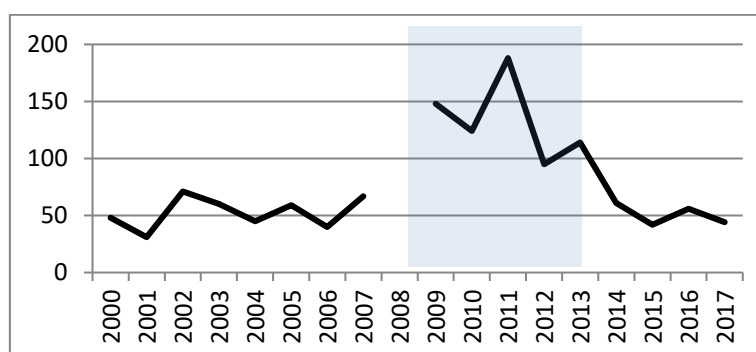
Glenrathope (Manor Valley)	26-Apr	P	D Parkinson
Cauldshiels Hill (Tweedbank)	27-Apr	P	H McKerchar
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)	06-May	A	M Lindsay
Upper Tarras Water (Langholm)	20-Jun	P	C Richardson
Green Knowe (Romannobridge)	14-Jul	P	P Ball

#### Sep onwards:

Records from five sites ( six in 2016; ten in 2015; 12 in 2014). Largest counts: Teviot Haughs: Nisbet - 71; St Abb's Head - 8; Eyemouth - 1; Ingraston (West Linton) - 1; Pennymuir (Hownam) - 1.

The last record was on 22-Oct at Ingraston and at Pennymuir. The count of 71 on 13-Oct at Teviot Haughs (A Mossop) was the highest count since that of 90+ on 21-Sep 1999 at St Abb's Head.

Based on the number of occupied tetrads in the breeding season and supported by the findings of the SE Scotland Atlas, the breeding population seems to be fairly stable. In the graph below the Atlas survey period distorts the overall trend due to greater observer effort.



Occupied tetrads during the breeding season: 2000-2017.

### Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Common resident; well-represented passage visitor.

Five hundred and ten records from 105 sites (149 sites in 2016; 141 in 2015; 129 in 2014).

**Jan-Mar:** Records from 50 sites (66 in 2016; 62 in 2015). Largest counts: Folly Loch - 11; Tweedbank - 11; Burnmouth: Partanhall - 9; Burnmouth-Border (RSC) - 5; St Abb's Head - 5; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 4; Bonchester Bridge - 4; Selkirk - 4.

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):** Records from 62 sites (88 in 2016; 98 in 2015). Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 14; Tweedbank - 7; St Abb's Head - 7; Oxenrig (Coldstream) - 6; St Boswells - 4. Records with breeding evidence came from 30 tetrads (15 in 2016):

Hare Moss (Selkirk)	03-May	FL	M Moncrieff	West Linton-Cloich Forest	05-Mar	S	P Ball
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	20-May	FF	F Evans	Holylee-Scawd Law-Walkerburn	09-Mar	S	J Gordon
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	07-Jul	FL	M Moncrieff	Thornielee-Elibank	09-Mar	S	J Gordon
Elibank Law (Walkerburn)	18-Jul	FL	G Paterson	Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	12-Mar	S	J Gordon
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	29-Jul	FL	G Paterson	Eildon	12-Mar	S	J Gordon
Gattonside-Melrose	17-Mar	D	J Gordon	Dryburgh-Bemersyde	12-Mar	S	J Gordon
Huntford (Carter Bar)	18-Mar	P	C Watson	St Boswells	18-Mar	S	J Gordon
Tweedbank	19-Mar	B	A Bramhall	Redpath-Scott's View (Melrose)	18-Mar	S	J Gordon
Oxenrig (Coldstream)	10-Apr	D	G White	Black Hill (Earlston)	18-Mar	S	J Gordon
Dawyck (Peebles)	13-May	P	M Betts	Bemersyde Moss	18-Mar	S	J Gordon
Lyne Dale (West Linton)	14-May	T	P Ball	Cardrona Hotel	10-May	S	S Welch
Tweeddale Burn Wood (Portmore)	24-May	P	N Crowther	Little King Seat (West Linton)	25-May	S	J Palfery
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	09-Jun	B	A Kentleton	The Hirsell	12-Jun	S	D Parkinson
Newburgh (Tushielaw)	19-Feb	S	A Baird	Newmains (Reston)	15-Jun	S	D Graham
See Introduction for breeding codes.				Upsettlington (Ladykirk)	31-Jul	S	M Reid

### Sep-Dec:

Records from 57 tetrads (36 in 2016; 43 in 2015). Largest counts: Tweedbank - 16; St Abb's Head - 9; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 5; Barnhills Farm (Ancrum) - 4; Tweed: Peebles - 4.

## House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Common breeding resident. Forms flocks August-March. During 2008-13 was found in 47% of tetrads in summer, 41% in winter.

Three hundred and forty-five records from 97 sites (107 sites in 2016; 95 sites in 2015).

### Jan-Mar:

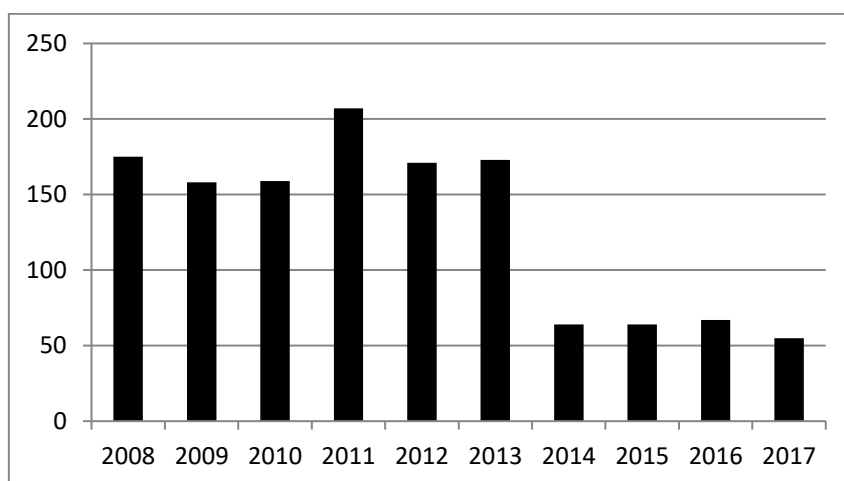
Records from 40 sites (49 in 2016, 40 in 2015 and 37 in 2014). Largest counts: Tweedbank - 31; Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay - 25; St Boswells - 24; Kelso - 21; Tweedbank - 18; Dunglass - 16; Lower Burnmouth - 15+; Birgham (Coldstream) -15.

### Apr-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 55 sites (67 in 2016, 64 in 2015 and 64 in 2014). Largest counts: Foulden (Chirnside) - 66; Tweedbank - 40; Walkerburn - 30; Oxenrig (Coldstream) - 20; Darnick (Melrose) - 18; Newmains (Reston) - 16; Norham east (Ladykirk) - 15; Cheeklaw (Duns) -12; Nisbet -12; St Boswells - 12; West Linton SW - 10; Lamberton - 10; Eyemouth - 10; Shielfield (Oxton) - 10.

Breeding evidence came from only 18 sites (five confirmed, 13 probable), cf 11 in 2016. Contributors are asked to include all observations and to give numbers and details of breeding evidence.

Insufficient records are submitted to make any confident statements about breeding trends – a problem compounded by the fact that records of the number of sites occupied during the period Apr-Aug have only been reported since 2008. The period 2008-2013 coincides with the SE Scotland Atlas survey period during which observer effort was far greater than the period since:



No. of occupied sites during breeding season (Apr-Aug): 2008-2017.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 43 sites (28 sites in 2016, 25 sites in 2015). Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 45; Burnmouth (Cowdrait) - 22; Birgham (Coldstream) - 20; West Linton SE - 20; Nisbet - 20; West Linton SW - 20; Newcastleton Tollbar - 16; Foulden (Chirnside) - 12; The Hirsell - 12; St Boswells -1 2; Eckford Hall (Nisbet) -12.

**Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus***

Uncommon resident, mostly in the east. Seems to have increased in numbers of late. Forms winter flocks. During 2008-13 was found in 19% of tetrads in summer, 17% in winter.

One hundred and forty-nine records from 64 sites (54 sites in 2016 and 52 in 2015).

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 19 sites (24 sites in 2016, 27 sites in 2015). Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 260; Whitmuir (Selkirk) - 36; Broom (Ancrum) - 35; Jardinefield (Whitsome) - 19; Nisbet - 14; Lumsdaine S (Coldingham Moor) - 12; Melrose - 10.

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 25 sites (21 sites in 2016, 14 sites in 2015 and 25 sites in 2014). Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 42; Ploughlands (Nisbet) - 32; Nisbet Hill - 20; Tweed: Paxton House-Border - 14; Cheeklaw (Duns) - 10; Oxenrig (Coldstream) - 8.

Breeding evidence came from 11 sites (five in 2016, six in 2015):

Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	12-Mar	J Gordon	P
Gattonside-Melrose	17-Mar	J Gordon	P
Tweedbank	27-Mar	A Bramhall	B
Oxenrig (Coldstream)	10-Apr	G White	T
Foulden (Chirnside)	10-Apr	C Hartley	P
Tweedhill (Paxton)	20-May	D Warden	FL
Allanton Bridge (Chirnside)	21-May	F Evans	FL
Hilton (Whitsome)	21-May	F Evans	FF
Eckford Hall (Nisbet)	14-Jun	C Green	FL
Bonchester Bridge	15-Jun	M Bruce	FL
Newmains (Reston)	15-Jun	D Graham	P(21)

Based on the number of occupied sites during the breeding season and taking into consideration the distortion created by the greater observer effort during the two SE Scotland Atlas survey periods (1990-1994 and 2008-2013), there appears to be a sustained increase in the number of breeding birds:

1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
10	6	16	8	11	7	5	5	14	13	2	5	4	4
2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
6	9	14	14	30	32	50	82	83	40	25	14	21	25

**No. of occupied sites during breeding season (Apr-Aug): 1990-2017.**

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 36 sites (19 sites in 2016, 11 in 2015 and 21 in 2014). Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 190; Tweedhill (Paxton) - 28; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 20; St Abb's Head - 20; Crookedshaws (Yetholm) - 14; Ploughlands (Nisbet) - 12; Broom (Ancrum) - 12; Chesters Grange (Ancrum) - 10.

**Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava***

Scarce summer (Apr-Aug) visitor, breeding along the Tweed and Teviot. Scarce passage migrant to coast April-May and August-September. During 2008-13 was found in 27 tetrads in summer.

Nine records from nine tetrads (2016: six tetrads; 2015: eight tetrads; 2014: nine tetrads). The majority of records were from the Tweed Haughs:

Springwood (Kelso)	18-Apr	M Greenhow	2
Carham (Coldstream)	30-Apr	D Graham	4
St Thomas's Island (Fishwick)	08-May	C Hartley	1



Tweed : Banff Mill - Lochton	10-May	M Moncrieff	2
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	23-Jul	F Evans	1
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	30-Jul	F Evans	1
Paxton House	16-Aug	J Lough	1
Birgham (Coldstream)	17-Sep	N Stratton	2
Homebank-Earl's Haugh (Coldstream)	17-Sep	N Stratton	1

The only record with breeding evidence was a pair at Springwood (Kelso). It is assumed that those locations where sightings were made between 18-Apr and 16-Aug were possible breeding sites (shaded in above table). The number of possible breeding sites reported appears to have declined slightly in recent years although the trend is distorted by two consecutive dedicated surveys in 2002 and 2003, as well as the SE Scotland Atlas (2008-13):

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
8	3	13	12	9	10	9	12	9	7	8	10	3	11	9	8	6	7

### Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Common breeder along water courses. Very few present through winter. Scarce but widespread passage migrant March-May and September-October. During 2008-13 was found in 41% of tetrads in summer, 10% in winter.

Three hundred and twenty-five records from 110 (9%) tetrads (123 tetrads in 2016; 99 in 2015).

#### Jan-Mar:

Records from 41 tetrads (46 tetrads in 2016, 18 in 2015). Largest counts: Tweed: Manor Br-Tweed Br (Peebles) - 6; Tweed: Carham-Sprouston - 5; Gattonside-Melrose - 5; Tweed: Abbotsford-Lowwood - 5; Ettrick Water: Selkirk - 4; Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange - 3.

#### Apr-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 70 tetrads (88 tetrads in 2016, 72 in 2015, 71 in 2014). Largest counts: Nisbet - 8; Coldstream - 7; Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose - 5; Saughtree (Liddesdale) - 5; Knows Dean Plantation (Galashiels) - 4; Ettrick Water: Selkirk - 4; Cardrona Forest - 4.

Records with breeding evidence came from 17 tetrads (20 in 2016, 26 in 2015 and 49+ in 2014):

Birgham Haugh (Coldstream)	05-Mar	C Hartley	S
Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge	12-Mar	A Bramhall	P
Wardlaw (Ettrick)	17-Apr	M Henderson	P
Greenlaw	05-May	F Evans	FF
Tweed: Union Bridge	08-May	C Hartley	A
Cardrona Hotel	10-May	S Welch	FF
Peebles	11-May	M Betts	FF
Kalemouth	17-May	M Henderson	FL
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	18-May	J Gordon	FL
Leaderfoot	20-May	D Parkinson	P
Walkerburn	22-May	G Paterson	P
Cardrona Forest	28-May	K Ingleby	T
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	04-Jun	D Parkinson	NY
Todheugh (Chirnside)	09-Jun	F Evans	P
Dawyck (Peebles)	19-Jun	M Betts	FL
Lyne Dale (West Linton)	28-Jun	G Ball	FL
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	06-Jul	Paterson, G	FL

See Introduction for breeding codes.

The decline in number of occupied breeding tetrads supports BBS evidence of a possible small decrease in the breeding population.

#### Sep-Dec:

Records from 37 tetrads (30 tetrads in 2016, 33 in 2015). Largest counts: Tweed: Paxton House-Border - 5; Teviot: Denholm - 5; Neidpath Castle (Peebles) - 4; Tweed: Mertoun-Benrig Dean - 4; Tweedbank - 4; Teviot: Rulemouth - 4; Nether Falla (Portmore) - 4; Teviot: Nisbet - 3.

### Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Abundant summer visitor. Scarcer October-March. Variable wintering numbers. Passage in March and September-October. Some roosts. During 2008-13 was found in 75% of tetrads in summer, 15% in winter.

Four hundred and sixty-six records from 137 (11%) tetrads (158 tetrads in 2016 and 121 in 2015).

#### Jan-Mar:

Records from 43 tetrads (47 tetrads in 2016, 33 in 2015). Largest counts: Borders General Hospital (Melrose) - 50; Galashiels sewage works - 18; Newmains (Reston) - 14; St Abb's Head - 8; Spittal-on-Rule (Denholm) - 6; Manor Br-Tweed Br (Peebles) - 4; Burnmouth: Partanhall - 4; Lymiecleugh (Teviothead) - 4; Gattonside-Melrose - 4.

#### Apr-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 96 tetrads (132 tetrads in 2016, 100 tetrads in 2015, 150 in 2014). Largest counts: Teviot Haughs: Crailing -25; Folly Loch - 19; Borders General Hospital (Melrose) - 19; Tweed : Banff Mill-Lochton - 19; St Abb's Head - 14; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 11; Watch Water Reservoir (Longformacus) - 10; Whitrig Bog-Westfield (Smailholm) - 8; Whiteburn (Abbey St Bathans) - 7; Saughtree (Liddesdale) - 7; Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick) - 5; Philhope (Craik) - 5; Eyemouth -5.

Records with breeding evidence came from 21 tetrads, of which 11 were of confirmed breeding. In 2016 there were 31 tetrads with reports of breeding, of which 23 were of confirmed breeding. In 2015 there were 12 records of confirmed breeding.

Holylee-Scawd Law-Walkerburn	P	Lamberton	P
Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)	P	Newmains (Reston)	FL
Watch Water Res (Longformacus)	P	Teviot Haughs: Nisbet	FF
Peebles	P	Manor Schoolhouse	N
Lyne Dale (West Linton)	P	Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	FL
Cardrona Hotel	P	Huntford (Carter Bar)	FL
Tweedbank	FF	Walkerburn	FL
Stantling Craigs Res (Clovenfords)	A	Tweed: Union Bridge	FL
Tweedale Burn Wood (Portmore)	P	Posso (Manor Valley)	FL
Burnmouth	FF	Upper Tarras Water (Langholm)	FL
See Introduction for breeding codes.		St Abb's Head	FL

The first record with confirmed breeding was on 13-May at Tweedbank (A Bramhall).

#### Sep-Dec:

Records from 51 tetrads (24 tetrads in 2016 and 30 in 2015). The reason(s) for the large increase in number of occupied tetrads reported is not known. Largest counts: Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 40; Teviot: Denholm - 36; Bemersyde Moss - 35; Galashiels sewage works - 30; Birgham (Coldstream) - 23; Teviot: Rulemouth - 23; Borders General Hospital (Melrose) - 20; The Hirsell - 20; Hopehouse (Ettrick) -15; Nether Falla (Portmore) - 12; Whitrig Bog-Westfield (Smailholm) - 12; Coldstream - 11. All of these larger counts occurred in Sep and early Oct, suggesting a larger passage than the last two years.

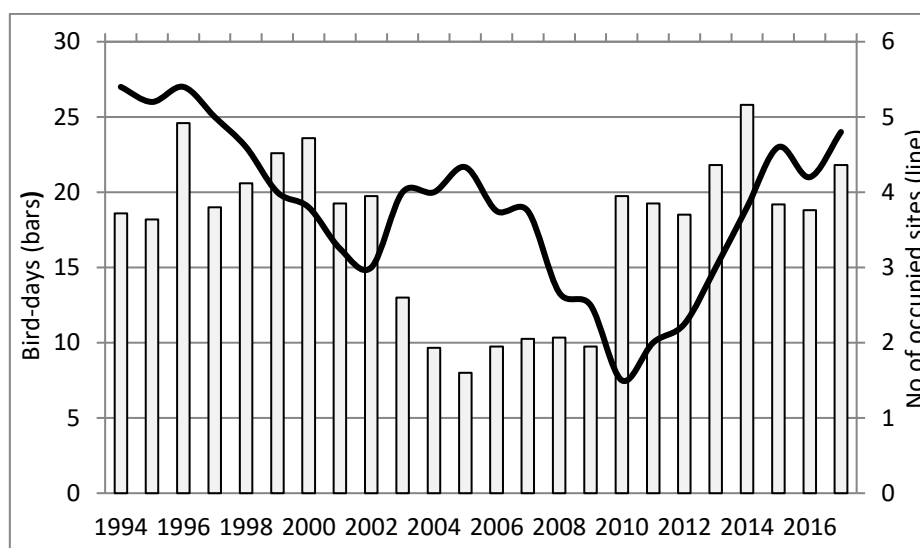
### White Wagtail *M. a. alba*

Scarce passage migrant March-April and September, mostly to coast. Has summered.

Seven records from five tetrads:

Lower Burnmouth	24-Mar	1	F Evans	Dunglass	09-Apr	5	D Graham
Newmains (Reston)	26-Mar	2	D Graham	St Abb's Head	09-Apr	1	R Drew
Newmains	27-Mar	2	D Graham	St Abb's Head	23-Apr	2	R Drew
				Carham (Coldstream)	30-Apr	5	D Graham

It seems likely that this sub-species is greatly under-recorded since it is easily confused with Pied Wagtail. Interpretation of records needs therefore to be approached with caution:



White Wagtail annual no. of sites and bird-days for spring period: 5-yr average for 1994-2017.

### Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Scarce and local summer visitor in forest clearings and clearfell. Rather scarce passage migrant April-May and September. During 2008-13 was found in 19% of tetrads in summer.

Twenty-three records from 14 (1%) sites (24 records from 13 sites in 2016, eight sites in 2015 and 11 sites in 2014). All records of singles except where indicated otherwise:

#### May:

Gordon Woodland - 5; Cardrona Forest - 4; Fruid Reservoir - 3; St Abb's Head - 2; Alemoor Res (Hawick) - 2; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 2; Huntford (Carter Bar); Woden Law (Hownam).

#### June:

Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 5; Toxside Moss (Portmore) Courhope Burn (Romannobridge); Glentress (Peebles); Borthwick Water.

#### July:

Glenkinnon Burn (Caddonfoot).

#### Aug:

Newmains (Reston)

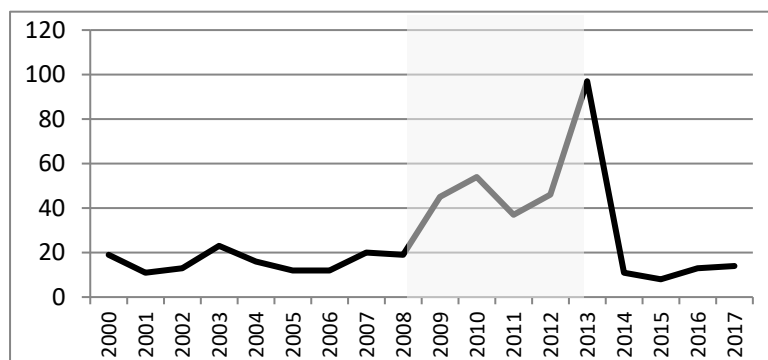
The first reports were on 1-May, from St Abb's Head (R Drew) and Huntford, Carter Bar (C Watson). The last report was 24-Aug at Newmains, Reston (D Graham).

Records with breeding evidence came from eight sites (seven in 2016):

Huntford (Carter Bar)	S	01-May	C Watson	Cardrona Forest	T	28-May	K Ingleby
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	S	07-May	G Paterson	Toxside Moss (Portmore)	FF	14-Jun	K Ingleby
Alemoor Res (Hawick)	A	09-May	G Scott	Courhope Burn (Romannobridge)	D	14-Jun	P Ball
Gordon Community Woodland	S	12-May	F Evans	Borthwick Water	D	30-Jun	G Scott

See Introduction for breeding codes.

BBS records for an extended area of SE Scotland and the forthcoming SE Scotland Atlas suggest an increase in population while reports of occupied sites suggests an overall small decline since 2000-2007:



#### No. of occupied sites: 2000-2007.

(Atlas survey period shaded. Note distortion due to greater observer effort).

However, with such a limited number of records the significance of any apparent trends is limited.

### Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Abundant summer visitor to hill areas. Common passage migrant March-April and September-October. Very few winter. During 2008-13 was found in 75% of tetrads in summer, 20% in winter.

Two hundred and forty-five records from 104 (8%) tetrads (161 tetrads in 2016, 110 tetrads in 2015).

#### Jan-mid-Mar:

Records from 12 tetrads (17 tetrads in 2016, eight in 2015). Largest counts: Hundleshope Ponds (Manor Valley) - 15; Eyemouth-Burnmouth - 7; Faughill Moor (Melrose) - 4; Whitrig Bog-Westfield (Smailholm) - 4; St Abb's Head - 3. As with the two three years, relatively few reports for the winter-spring.

#### Mid-Mar-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 81 tetrads (103 tetrads in 2016, 94 in 2015 and 112 in 2014). Largest counts: Woden Law (Hownam) - 97; Barns (Hawick) - 84; Long Grain (Oxton) - 57; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 45; Watch Water Res. - 40; Greenlaw Moor - 30; Catmoss (Greenlaw) - 28; St Abb's Head - 25; Dam Head Rig (Traquair) - 23; Wide Hope Shank (Lyne Water) - 22; Leadburn Community Woodland - 20; Posso (Manor Valley) - 20; Dormount Hope (Hownam) - 19; Glenkinnon Burn (Caddonfoot) - 18.

Records with breeding evidence came from 27 tetrads (12 tetrads in 2016) although only three tetrads reported confirmed breeding:

Brotherstone Moor (Smailholm)	S	18-Mar	J Gordon	Blaikie Heugh (Eyemouth)	D	31-May	J Nicholson
West Linton-Cloich Forest	D	22-Apr	P Ball	Eildon Hill North	P	03-Jun	D Parkinson
Watch Water Res.	N	23-Apr	A Mossop	Hag Law (Romannobridge)	N	14-Jun	P Ball
Glenrathope (Manor Valley)	P	26-Apr	D Parkinson	Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	S	17-Jun	J Mitchell
Langhaugh Hill (Manor Valley)	P	26-Apr	D Parkinson	Killiedraught Bay (Eyemouth)	S	17-Jun	J Mitchell
Swinchy Cleuch (Manor Valley)	P	26-Apr	D Parkinson	Agate Point (Eyemouth)	S	18-Jun	J Mitchell
Foulshiels Hill (Yarrowford)	P	04-May	G Scott	Eyemouth	S	18-Jun	J Mitchell
Rough Knowe (Yarrow)	T	11-May	G Scott	Pease Bay (Cockburnspath)	S	19-Jun	J Mitchell
Watch Water Reservoir (West)	S	11-May	C Hartley	Upper Tarras Water (Langholm)	S	20-Jun	C Richardson
Lammer Law South (Oxton)	P	12-May	J Nicholson	Leadburn Comm. Woodland	FF	22-Jun	N Crowther
Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)	S	14-May	C Hartley	Crooked Jock (West Linton)	T	26-Jun	P Ball
Lamberton	P	29-May	A Kerr	Posso (Manor Valley)	FL	07-Jul	A Heavisides
Cockmuir (Leadburn)	P	30-May	J Nicholson	Green Knowe (Romannobridge)	N	18-Jul	P Ball
See Introduction for breeding codes				St Abb's Head	FL	28-Jul	N Crowther

#### Sep-Dec:

Records from 32 tetrads (27 tetrads in 2016, 28 in 2015). Largest counts: Greenlaw Moor - 87; Burnmouth - 70; St Abb's Head - 50; Watch Water Res - 34; Nether Falla (Portmore) - 25; Tweed Haughs: Nisbet - 23; Newmains (Reston) - 21; Hule Moss - 16.

BBS records for an extended area of SE Scotland suggests that the breeding population is stable.

### Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Common breeder along coast, found in 13 coastal tetrads (103 records in 2014). Wintering birds from Britain and Scandinavia present October-March in small flocks along the shore.

Sixty-two records from 16 tetrads (65 records from 17 tetrads in 2016, 50 records from 17 tetrads in 2015 and 103 records but unknown tetrads in 2014).

#### Jan-Mar:

Records from 13 tetrads (17 tetrads in 2016). Rocky Shore Count on 15-Jan had a total count of 45. Largest counts: Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay (RSC) - 22; Pease Bay-Redheugh (RSC) - 14; Lower Burnmouth - 7; Dunglass - 6.

#### Apr-Jul (breeding season):

Records from five tetrads (eight tetrads in 2016). Largest counts per tetrad were: Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 3; Burnmouth: Partanhall - 3; St Abb's Head - 3; Eyemouth Golf Club - 1; Siccar Point - 1.

There were no records of breeding activity reported.

**Aug-Dec:**

Records came from seven tetrads (seven in 2016). Peak counts per tetrad were: Burnmouth - 14; St Abb's Head - 7; Burnmouth: Cowdrait - 5; Dunglass - 5; Eyemouth Harbour and Golf Course - 3; Coldingham Bay - 1; Coldingham- pr.

No records of sub-species *littoralis*.

There are insufficient records with which to make any statements about trends in population.

**Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla***

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Some large flocks late September-April. During 2008-13 was found in 17% tetrads in winter.

One hundred and thirty-one records from 48 (4%) tetrads (96 records from 48 tetrads in 2016).

**Winter-spring (Jan-Mar):**

Records from 15 tetrads (27 tetrads in 2016, 11 tetrads in 2015, 16 in 2014, 34 in 2013, 16 in 2012, 32 in 2011). Largest counts: Acreknowe Reservoir (Selkirk) - 5,000; Ballmuir Plantation (Smailholm) - 50; Whitmuir (Selkirk) - 17; Ashiestiel Hill (Caddonfoot) - 14; Westfield (Smailholm) - 6.

While three-figure counts are not unusual and four-figure counts occasional, eg 2,000 in 1987 at Portmore and 2,000 at nearby Leadburn in 1994, the estimate of 5,000 at Acreknowe Reservoir on 17-Jan (M Moncrieff) is the highest known count in Borders by some margin. The 5,000 estimated Bramblings were part of a mixed finch flock that was estimated at c. 10,000 birds. Martin's estimate was based on a series of overlapping photographs from which he diligently counted all birds present (see p. 3. The flock stayed in the area for about seven weeks, gradually reducing to c. 500 Bramblings.

**Spring (Apr-May):**

Records came from 11 tetrads (nine tetrads in 2016, no records in 2015, seven tetrads in 2014). Largest counts: Lempitlaw (Kelso) - c. 100; Marlside Hill (Lilliesleaf) - 25; Innerleithen - 15; Peebles - 6; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 4.

The last record for spring was on 29-Apr at Ashiestiel-Peel, Caddonfoot (G Paterson).

**Autumn (Sep-Oct):**

There were no records from Sep. The earliest record was of two birds on 9-Oct from Mire Loch, St Abb's Head (J Ibbotson). Records came from 14 tetrads (five tetrads in 2016, six in 2015 and two in 2014). Largest counts: Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) - c. 200; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 20; Dunhog Moss (Ashkirk) - 20; Salenside (Ashkirk) - 13; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 8.

**Winter (Nov-Dec):**

Records from 21 tetrads (13 tetrads in 2016, seven in 2015, seven in 2014). Largest counts: Melrose - 50; Hopehouse (Ettrick) - 20; Laidlawstiel Farm (Clovenfords) - 13; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 10; Moorshot Plantation (Greenlaw) - 5; Jedburgh - 4.

**Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs***

Abundant breeder. Common autumn passage migrant and winter visitor, occurring in large flocks, sometimes of several hundreds. Spring passage flocks are much scarcer. During 2008-13 was found in 92% of tetrads in summer, 81% in winter.

Nine hundred and sixty-six records from 179 (14%) tetrads (249 tetrads in 2016, 217 in 2015).

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 78 tetrads (102 tetrads in 2016, 86 in 2015, 97 in 2014). Largest counts: Acreknowe Reservoir (Selkirk) - 2,000+; Nether Falla (Portmore) - 300; Shiplaw (Portmore) - 220; Ashkirk (Selkirk) - 100; Walkerburn - 80; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 100; Tweedbank - 63; Bonchester Bridge - 60; Attonburn (Morebattle) - 50; Ashiestiel Hill (Caddonfoot) - 45; Newmains (Reston) - 41; Whitmuir (Selkirk) - 41.

The record of 2,000+ at Acreknowe Reservoir (part of a mixed flock – see above under Brambling) is the highest count since 26-Nov 2000 when 3,000 were estimated at Kilbucho (Broughton).

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 103 tetrads (149 tetrads in 2016, 148 in 2015, 177 in 2014). Largest counts: Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 41; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 31; Cloich (Eddleston) - 27; Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords) - 24; Whiteburn (Abbey St Bathans) - 24; Kirklands (Innerleithen) - 23; White Law (Eddleston) - 22; Sprouston-Redden (Kelso) - 18; Tweedbank - 16; Blanterne (Chirnside) - 15; Craik Forest - 15.

Records with breeding evidence came from 49 tetrads with only two reporting confirmed breeding (26 tetrads with breeding evidence in 2016).

BBS records for an extended area of SE Scotland suggests some stability in the breeding population.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 89 tetrads (59 tetrads in 2016, 71 in 2015, 75 in 2014). Largest counts: Acreknowe Reservoir (Selkirk) - 1,500+; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - c. 300; Walkerburn - c. 200; Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 200+; Redpath-Scott's View (Melrose) - 200; Whitmuir (Selkirk) - 120; Elba (Preston) - 80; Newmains (Reston) - 80; Salenside (Ashkirk) - c. 50; Elibank (Thornielee) - c. 50; Nisbet - 28.

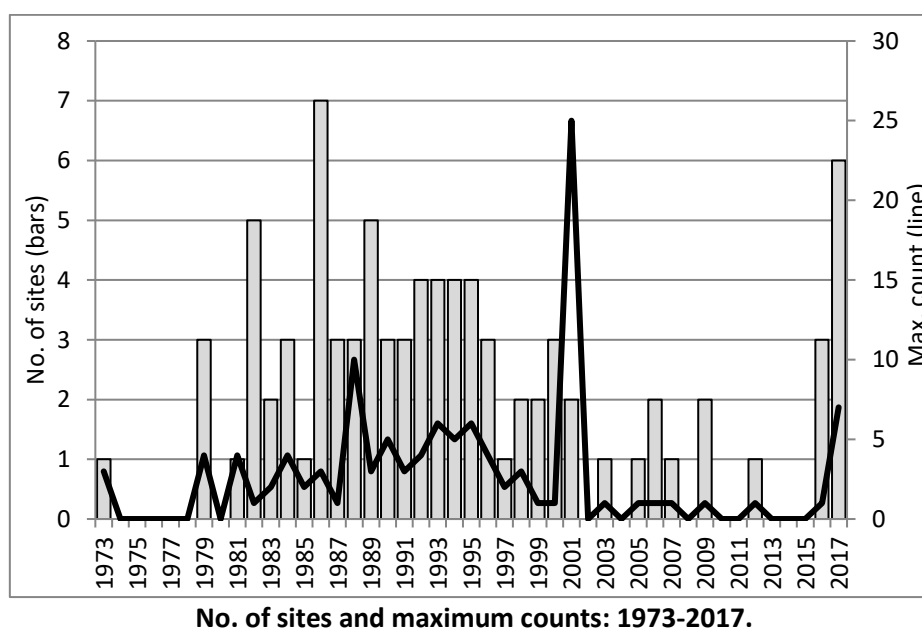
**Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes***

Rare resident and migrant, not annual. During 2008-13 was found in two tetrads in summer, one in winter.

Fifteen records from six tetrads (three records from three tetrads in 2016). All records were from 16-Nov onward and were part of a nationwide influx from central and eastern Europe.

Haining Loch (Selkirk)	26-Nov	4	G Scott
	04-Dec	1	J Douglas
Harestanes (Ankrum)	15-Dec	1	Not known
The Hirsell	25-Nov	7	D Graham
	26-Nov	5	D Graham
	26-Nov	3	J Towill
	27-Nov	2	M Moncrieff
	30-Nov	1	A Bramhall
	02-Dec	4	A Mossop
	03-Dec	6	A Mossop
	16-Dec	6	D Graham
Nisbet	16-Nov	1	T Brewis
Dryburgh Abbey	19-Nov	2	H Addelese
Philphaugh Estate (Selkirk)	19-Dec	1	G Scott

It is difficult to be confident about comparing this year with previous years. According to the database however, 2017 seems to have been the best year in terms of the maximum number of birds seen at any one site since 2001 when an exceptional 25 were reported at Yarrowford on 7-Jan. In terms of the number of sites where sightings were made, it was the best year since 1986 when birds were recorded at seven sites:





Hawfinch. The Hirsel. November. Dave Graham.

**Common Rosefinch *Erythrina erythrina***

Rare migrant.

A single bird reported from St Abb's Head on 21-Oct (D Graham). This is the eleventh record since 1978. The last accepted record was from the same location in 2008.



Common Rosefinch. St Abb's Head. October. Dave Graham.



**Bullfinch. Birgham. May. Bill Meikle.**

### **Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula***

Common but retiring resident. During 2008-13 was found in 31% of tetrads in summer, 47% in winter.

Five hundred and thirty-seven records from 129 tetrads (266 records from 109 tetrads in 2016 and from 107 tetrads in 2015). The near-doubling of records was partly down to greater observer effort in the Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) area.

#### **Jan-Mar:**

Records from 64 tetrads (46 tetrads in 2016, 46 in 2015, 53 in 2014). Largest counts: Hollybush Farm (Galashiels) - 11; Whitmuir (Selkirk) - 11; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 11; Blount Island (Norham) - 8; Gallows Law (Chirnside) - 8; Tweedbank - 7; Paxton House - 6; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 6; Cramalt Burn (Megget Res) -6; Lyne Dale (West Linton) - 6.

#### **Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 58 tetrads ( 47 tetrads in 2016, 41 in 2015, 46 in 2014). Largest counts: Craigerne (Peebles) - 25; Gallows Law (Chirnside) - 11; New Belses (Lilliesleaf) - 8; Tweedbank - 8; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 4; Ettrick Water (Selkirk) - 4; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 4; Huntford (Carter Bar) - 4; Graden (Yetholm) - 4; Easterknowe Farm (Manor Valley) - 4; Newmains (Reston) - 4; Denholm-Garthsides - 4; Paxton - 4; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 4.

Records with breeding evidence came from 20 tetrads (17 in 2016):

18-Feb	Eckford Hall (Nisbet)	P	C Green	18-May	Gattonside-Melrose	FF	J Gordon
09-Mar	Holylee-Scawd Law-Walkerburn	S	J Gordon	04-Jun	Ashiestiel Hill (Caddonfoot)	P	G Paterson
16-Mar	Yetholm	P	A Mossop	14-Jun	Courhope (Romannobridge)	P	P Ball
02-Apr	Hermitage (Newcastelton)	P	M Henderson	22-Jun	Newmains (Reston)	FL	D Graham
19-Apr	Tweedbank	P	A Bramhall	25-Jun	Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	FL	G Paterson
20-Apr	Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	P	D Parkinson	12-Jul	Lyne Water (West Linton)	FL	P Ball
26-Apr	Eccles (Kelso)	N	B Meikle	27-Jul	Huntford (Carter Bar)	FL	C Watson
10-May	Cardrona Hotel	P	S Welch	10-Aug	Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton)	FL	T Brewis
14-May	Upsettlington (Ladykirk)	P	R McBeath	25-Sep	Haining Loch (Tweedbank)	P	G Scott
18-May	Birgham (Coldstream)	B	B Meikle	19-Dec	Philiphugh Estate (Selkirk)	P	G Scott



On the basis of occupied tetrads there appears to have been a slight increase in the breeding population in recent years:

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
22	27	-	27	36	27	48	37	100	70	91	102	96	90	46	41	47	58

**No. of occupied tetrads during breeding season: 2000-2017.**

(Shaded cells correspond to SE Scotland Atlas survey period).

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 73 tetrads (44 tetrads in 2016, 54 in 2015). The 66% increase in occupied tetrads may be the result of increased observer effort; alternatively, it may reflect a greater winter population following-on from the greater number of tetrads during the breeding season. Largest counts: Teviot Haughs: Nisbet - 15; Gallows Law (Chirnside) - 14; Craigend Farm (Stow) - 14; Eyemouth Harbour Road - 12; Whiteadder Water: Elba - 11; Tweedbank - 10; Eildon Mid Hill - 10; Peebles - 9; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 9; Chesters Grange (Ancrum) - 8; Thirlestane Lodge (Ettrick) - 8; The Haining (Selkirk) - 8; Denholm - 7; Lindean Loch (Selkirk) - 7.

**Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris***

Common breeding resident. Forms flocks July-March. During 2008-13 was found in 43% of tetrads in summer, 33% in winter.

One hundred and sixty-two records from 51 tetrads (55 tetrads in 2016, 59 in 2015).

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 21 tetrads (32 tetrads in 2016, 22 in 2015, 34 in 2014). Largest counts: Melrose: Viewbank - 10; Tweedbank - 8; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 7; Ettrick Water: Selkirk - 7; St Boswells - 6; Birgham (Coldstream) - 4; Heiton (Kelso) - 3; Melrose: Holy Trinity - 3.

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 29 tetrads (31 tetrads in 2016, 38 in 2015, 93 in 2014). Largest counts: Todrig (Greenlaw) - 10; Philiphaugh (Selkirk) - 6; Newmains (Reston) - 6; Tweedbank - 6; Darnick (Melrose) - 4; Craigend-Stow - 3; Kelso: Sprouston-Redden - 3.

Records with breeding evidence came from 12 tetrads (ten in 2016). As with 2015 and 2016, no reports of confirmed breeding:

09-Mar	Gattonside-Melrose	S	J Gordon	09-Apr	Lyne Dale (West Linton)	S	P Ball
12-Mar	Newstead-Drygrange	S	J Gordon	08-May	Tweed: Union Bridge	S	C Hartley
18-Mar	Redpath-Scott's View (Melrose)	S	J Gordon	31-May	Burnmouth (North)	P	J Nicholson
24-Mar	Tweedbank	P	A Bramhall	15-Jun	Newmains (Reston)	P	D Graham
02-Apr	Philiphaugh (Selkirk)	P	G Scott	02-Jul	The Hirsell	S	C Hartley
07-Apr	Bowhill (Selkirk)	P	G Scott	28-Jul	St Abb's Head	S	N Crowther

See Introduction for breeding codes.

No evidence to suggest a bounce back from the population decline associated with *Trichomonosis*.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 20 tetrads (14 tetrads in 2016, 16 in 2015, 31 in 2014). Largest counts: Manderston (Duns) - c. 70; Tweed: Union Bridge - 17; Gattonside-Melrose - 15; St Boswells - 8; Tweedbank - 5; Ettrick Water: Selkirk - 4; Burnmouth (Partanhall) - 3; The Hirsell - 3. The count of 70 at Manderston (A Mossop), which is the biggest count reported since 80 were seen at Tweedbank in 2004, was of a single flock in a corn field partly cut.

**Linnet *Carduelis cannabina***

Common breeder in east. Can form large winter flocks. During 2008-13 was found in 53% of tetrads in summer, 17% in winter.

One hundred and forty-four records from 65 (5%) tetrads (2016: 124 records from 71 tetrads and records from 62 tetrads in 2015).

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from ten tetrads (nine tetrads in 2016, nine in 2015 and 11 in 2014). Largest counts: Ladykirk (Upsettlington) - c. 100; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 80; Nether Falla (Portmore) - 25; St Abb's Head - 10.

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 43 tetrads (55 tetrads in 2016, 44 in 2015 and 46 in 2014). Largest counts: Jardinefield (Whitsome) - 120; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Todrig (Greenlaw) - 50; Innerleithen - 40; St Abb's Head - 20; Saughtree (Liddesdale) - 12; Kelso: Sprouston-Redden - 10; Lamberton - 10.

Records with evidence of breeding came from ten tetrads (six in 2016):

13-Mar	Gattonside-Melrose	S	J Gordon	03-Jun	Eildon Hill North	P	D Parkinson
18-Mar	Clintmains (St Boswells)	S	J Gordon	11-Jun	Tweed: Union Bridge	S	C Hartley
29-May	Lamberton	P	A Kerr	15-Jun	Newmains (Reston)	P	D Graham
30-May	Cockmuir (Portmore)	P	J Nicholson	27-Jul	Huntford (Carter Bar)	FL	C Watson
31-May	Blaikie Heugh (Eyemouth)	P	J Nicholson	28-Jul	St Abb's Head	P	N Crowther

See Introduction for breeding codes.

There is no indication of any significant change in the breeding population in the last three years.

#### Sep-Dec:

Records from 29 tetrads (ten tetrads in 2016, 17 in 2015). Largest counts: Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 150+; Coldstream - 100; Mount Pleasant (Duns) - c. 100; Black Hill (Earlston) - 100+; Nether Falla (Portmore) - c. 90; Hutlerburn (Ettrickbridge) - 80; Teviot Haughs: Nisbet - c. 80; Hopehouse (Ettrick) - 60; Whitrig Bog-Westfield (Smailholm) - c. 40; Duns Castle Loch - c. 35; Gattonside-Melrose - c. 20.

### Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Rare breeder found in just seven sites between 1988-94. Very scarce but increasing winter visitor and passage migrant to hills and coast. During 2008-13 was found in 8 tetrads in summer, 20 in winter.

Three records from three tetrads (same in 2016 and, on the basis of occupied tetrads, part of a decrease in the number of birds reported. The count of 80 at Lauder Common was the highest since 2007 when 200 were seen at Cockburnspath. The last record of confirmed breeding was in 2007.

10-Jul	Wide Hope Shank (Lyne Water)	1	BBS
11-Nov	Dunglass	22	D Graham
24-Dec	Lauder Common	80	J Gordon

### Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

Common but local breeder. Autumn passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers, mostly October-November. During 2008-13 was found in 41% of tetrads in summer, 18% in winter.

One hundred and forty-seven records from 54 (4%) tetrads (68 records from 43 tetrads in 2016).

#### Jan-Mar:

Records from 16 tetrads (12 in 2016 and nine in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: Meigle Hill (Galashiels) - 30; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 29; Whitmuir Farm (Selkirk) - 20; Yetholm Loch - 15; Melrose - 10; Bowdenmoor Reservoir (Melrose)- 8; Eckford Hall - 6; Heiton (Roxburgh) - 5.

#### Apr-Aug (breeding season):

Records from 33 tetrads (27 in 2016, 25 in 2015, 37 in 2014). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: Gordon Community Woodland - 70; Elibank (Walkerburn) - 15; Cardrona Forest - 12; Nether Falla (Portmore) - 10; Hopehouse, Ettrick - 6.

Records of probable or confirmed breeding came from six tetrads (five in 2016 and none in 2015):

09-Apr	West Linton Lyne Dale	D	P Ball
22-Apr	West Linton to Cloich Forest	D	P Ball
10-May	Halmyre Deans (Romannobridge)	P	P Ball
10-May and 14-Jun	Courhope Burn (Eddleston)	P	P Ball
28-May	Cardrona Forest	T	K Ingleby
16-Jul	Elibank (Walkerburn)	P	G Paterson

See introduction for breeding codes.

#### Sep-Dec:

Records from 24 tetrads (7 in 2016 and 21 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: Melrose - 50; Whitmuir (Lamancha)- 40; Thirlestane Lodge, Ettrick - 25; Heiton (Roxburgh) - 20; St. Abbs Head - 20; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 15; Newmains (Reston) - 14; Yetholm Loch - 13; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 5; Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm) - 5.



**Lesser Redpoll. Burnhouse Mains (Stow). January. Alistair Cutter.**

### **Common (Mealy Redpoll) *Carduelis flammæa***

Usually very scarce autumn and winter visitor, typically amongst flocks of Lesser Redpoll. Almost annual. During 2008-13 was found in one tetrad in summer, 16 in winter.

Six records from six tetrads (seven records from four tetrads in 2016, none in 2015). Records were: Glen (Innerleithen) 70 on 2-Jan; Gordon Community Woodland four on 20-Apr; Watch Water Reservoir two on 20-Aug; singles at Peebles 10-Feb; Cardrona 3-Jan; Melrose 6-Jan to 9-Jan.

The count of 70 at Glen (Innerleithen) (MR Cockburn) is the highest recorded in the Borders. The previous highest being 50 at Old Cambus (Cockburnspath) on 15-Nov 1984.

### **Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra***

Resident breeder. Breeds in extremely variable numbers, totally dependent on cone crop. Dispersing May-September when birds from elsewhere sometimes arrive in area. During 2008-13 was found in 27% of tetrads in summer, 32% in winter.

Ninety-nine records from thirty-six (3%) tetrads (66 records from 40 tetrads in 2016).

#### **Jan-Mar:**

Records from 20 tetrads (9 in 2016 and 14 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: Mervinslaw (Bonchester Bridge) - 15; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 11; Bowhill Forest (Philiphaugh) - 8; Dykeraw Plantation (Wauchope Forest) - 8; Eildon Hills (Melrose) - 6; Young Plantation (Selkirk) - 6.

#### **Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 14 tetrads (20 in 2016 and 14 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: Leithen Water (Innerleithen) - 14; Cloich (Eddleston) - 7; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 6; Elibank (Walkerburn) - 6; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 5.

Records of probable or confirmed breeding came from three tetrads (five in 2016 and none in 2015):

05-Mar	West Linton to Cloich Forest	A	P Ball
03-Apr	St Ronan's Wood (Innerleithen)	D	MR Cockburn
10-May	Huntford (Carter Bar)	P	C Watson

See introduction for breeding codes.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 12 tetrads (16 in 2016 and 7 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: Yetholm Loch - 40; Huntford (Carter Bar) - 30; Portmore Loch - 27; Yair Forest (Caddonfoot) - 10; Thirlstane Lodge, Ettrick - 8; Minchmoor, Traquair - 6; Hardens Hill (Duns) - 6; Elibank (Walkerburn) - 5.

### Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Common breeder. Forms winter flocks July-March. During 2008-13 was found in 73% of tetrads in summer, 62% in winter. (346 records in 2014).

Six hundred and sixty-two records from 135 (11%) tetrads (410 records from 120 tetrads in 2016).

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 45 tetrads (48 in 2016 and 39 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 30; Tweed: Union Bridge - 22; Galashiels - 15; Tweed: Dryburgh - 15; Melrose - 13; Nisbet - 12; Maidenhall (St Boswells) - 12; Nether Falla (Portmore) - 10; St Abb's Head - 10.

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 82 tetrads (83 in 2016 and 70 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Ancrum - 45; Eckford Hall - 20; Jardinefield (Whitsome) - 15; Todrig (Ashkirk) - 15; Whiteburn (Abbey St Bathans) - 12; Cove Harbour (Cockburnspath) - 10.

Records of probable or confirmed breeding came from 12 tetrads (10 in 2016):

10 April	Oxenrig (Coldstream)	T	G White
19 April	Tweedbank	N	AT Bramhall
21 April	Gradon (Yetholm)	P	Not known
26 April	Huntford (Carter Bar)	P	C Watson
03 May	Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	P	D Parkinson
10 May	Cardrona	P	S Welch
18 May	Gattonside-Melrose	P	JD Gordon
19 May	Whitmuir Estate (Selkirk)	P	D Parkinson
24 May	Tweeddaleburn Cottage (Portmore)	P	N Crowther
20 June	Newmains (Reston)	FL(3+br)	D Graham
26 June	Crooked Jock (West Linton)	D	P Ball
06 July	Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	FL(br2)	G Paterson

See introduction for breeding codes.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 70 tetrads (43 in 2016 and 53 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Kirkcleuch (Roberton) - 50; Logan Craig (Drumelzier) - 50; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 45; Jardinefield (Whitsome) - 45; Foulden - 40; Teviot Haughs - 40; Philiphaugh - 36; Kelso - 31; Tollbar (Newcastleton) - 30; Hare Moss (Selkirk) - 25; White Law Loch (Selkirk) - 25; Millar's Moss (St Abb's Head) - 23; Newmains (Reston) - 22; Tweedbank - 22; River Tweed: Whiteadder - 20; The Hirsell - 17; Acreknowe Reservoir (Hawick) - 15; St Boswells - 15; Nisbet Bridge - 13; Roxburgh - Kelso via Teviot - 13; Stantlingcraig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 12; Wooplaw (Galashiels) - 12.

Compared to 2016, an increase in tetrads with records in Sep-Dec from 43 to 70 and an increase in tetrads with counts  $\geq 10$  from 14 to 22 may indicate improved breeding success in 2017.

### Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Common resident & summer visitor in forestry areas. Common passage migrants with peaks October & April. Forms winter flocks. During 2008-13 was found in 57% of tetrads in summer, 36% in winter.

Three hundred and ninety-four records from 77 (6%) tetrads (175 records from 66 tetrads in 2016). An increase in records from 2016 largely due to intensive recording at Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) which contributed 168 records.

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 37 tetrads (18 in 2016 and 19 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Bonchester Bridge - 140; Tweed: Dryburgh - 70; Ploughlands (Nisbet) - 50; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 40; Galashiels - 30; Eckford Hall - 30; Peebles - 25; Tweedbank - 22; Faldonside/Cauldshiels Loch - 20; Duns - 15; Melrose - 12; Bowden (Melrose) - 10; Cardrona - 10. More widespread and with higher counts than the same period in 2016 when only two sites had count of  $\geq 10$ .

**Apr-Aug:**

Records from 46 tetrads (42 in 2016 and 26 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 10$ ) came from: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 15; Peat Hill (Eddleston) - 10.

Records of probable or confirmed breeding came from 14 tetrads (seven tetrads in 2016, two in 2015):

09-Feb	Lyne Dale (West Linton)	D	P Ball	10-May	Courhope Burn (Romannobridge)	P	P Ball
03-Mar	Eckford Hall (Nisbet)	P	C Green	18-May	Gattonside-Melrose	P	J Gordon
05-Mar	West Linton-Cloich Forest	D	P Ball	28-May	Cardrona Forest	T	K Ingleby
12-Mar	Dryburgh-Bemersyde	P	J Gordon	31-May	Huntford (Carter Bar)	FL	C Watson
18-Mar	Redpath-Scott's View (Melrose)	P	J Gordon	17-Sep	Newcastleton Tollbar	T	T Parrell
10-Apr	Oxenrig Farm	P	G White	21-Nov	Melrose	P	D Parkinson
05-May	Lyne Water (West Linton)	D	P Ball	27-Dec	Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	P	G Paterson

See Introduction for breeding codes.

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 33 tetrads (19 in 2016 and 20 in 2015). Largest counts ( $> 10$ ) came from: Bowhill Estate (Philippaugh) - 50; Peebles - 50; Teviot Haughs - 40; Hopecarton Burn (Drumelzier) - 30; Mire Loch (St Abbs Head) - 30; Williamhope (Yarrowford) - 25; Roxburgh - Kelso via Teviot - 25; Ettrick Water (Selkirk) - 15; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 12; Tollbar (Newcastleton) - 10.

**Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis***

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, October-March. Scarcer January-March. During 2008-13 was found in 3 tetrads in summer, 37 in winter.

Two records (one in 2016): singles at Cramult Burn (Megget Reservoir) on 27-Jan (M Henderson) and St Abb's Head on 11-Nov (M Moncrieff).

**Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus***

Now a very rare winter visitor. A little more frequent in early 1990s.

A single record of five at Burnmouth on 30-Dec (D Graham).

**Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis***

Very rare vagrant.

One in Melrose on 31-Mar (I & Z Forsyth) is the first for the Borders. See p 168 for an account of the find.

**Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella***

Abundant but declining breeder, mainly in the east. Forms winter flocks. During 2008-13 was found in 41% of tetrads in summer, 30% in winter.

Two hundred twenty-eight records from 64 (5%) tetrads (206 records from 73 tetrads in 2016, 75 in 2015).

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 31 tetrads (26 in 2016, 28 in 2015, 42 in 2014). Largest counts ( $> 10$ ) came from: Newmains (Reston) - 320; Jardinefield (Whitsome) - 200; Lady Moss - 40; Crailing - 20; Whitmuir Farm (Selkirk) - 19; Ladyrig (Heiton) - 16.

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 48 tetrads (48 in 2016, 68 in 2015, 67 in 2014). No counts of  $\geq 10$ , the largest being nine at Shielfield (Lauder) with counts of eight from Graden (Yetholm), Newmains (Reston) and Ploughlands (Nisbet).

Breeding records came from 25 tetrads (17 in 2016, 20 in 2015):

Eildon	12-Mar	J Gordon	S	Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	12-May	G Paterson	S
Burncastle (Lauder)	13-Mar	A Sandeman	S	Gattonside-Melrose	18-May	J Gordon	S
Black Hill (Earlston)	18-Mar	J Gordon	S	Folly Loch	19-May	A Bramhall	S
Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)	18-Mar	J Gordon	S	Chaple Mains (Earlston)	25-May	A Bramhall	P
Newstead-Drygrange	18-Mar	J Gordon	P	Whitrig Bog-Westfield	31-May	M Moncrieff	FF
Innerleithen	25-Mar	R Bramhall	S	Teviot: Nisbet	03-Jun	D Parkinson	S
West Linton-Cloich Forest	22-Apr	P Ball	T	Tweed: Union Bridge	11-Jun	C Hartley	S
Halmyre Deans (Romannobridge)	10-May	P Ball	T	Linkim Shore (St Abbs)	17-Jun	J Mitchell	S
Drum Maw (Romannobridge)	10-May	P Ball	T	Foulden (Chirnside)	06-Jul	C Hartley	S
Romannobridge	10-May	P Ball	T	Rhymer's Stone (Melrose)	19-Jul	J Nicholson	S
The Whin (Galashiels)	10-May	M Lindsay	S	Chesterhall (Melrose)	19-Jul	J Nicholson	S
Gordon Moss	11-May	M Lindsay	S	Uppsettlington (Ladykirk)	31-Jul	M Reid	S
See Introduction for breeding codes.				Tweed: Paxton Ho.-Border	02-Sep	C Hartley	FF

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 26 tetrads (16 in 2016, 18 in 2015, 18 in 2014). Largest counts (>10) came from: Newmains 240; Paxton 42; Teviot Haughs 40; Muirhouselaw 28; Sprouston/Redden Circular - 16; St Abbs Head - 15; Kelso - Sprouston by railway - 13; Redpath-Scott's View (Melrose) - 10.

**Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus***

Scarce & local breeder in 21% of tetrads. A few passage migrants. Scarce in winter, especially inland. Usually small numbers in mixed finch/bunting flocks. During 2008-13 was found in 46% of tetrads in summer, 22% in winter.

One hundred and ninety-four records from 81 (6%) tetrads (230 records from 86 tetrads in 2016, 74 tetrads in 2014).

**Jan-Mar:**

Records from 22 tetrads (28 in 2016, 25 in 2015, 24 in 2014). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: Newmains (Reston) - 70; Jardinefield (Whitsome) 45; Whitmuir Farm (Selkirk) 16; Meigle Hill (Galashiels)- 7.

**Apr-Aug (breeding season):**

Records from 56 tetrads (77 in 2016, 57 in 2015, 89 in 2014). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: Watch Water Reservoir - 51; Allanton - 14; Newmains (Reston) - 7; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 6; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 5.

Records with breeding evidence came from 21 tetrads (47 in 2016, 22 in 2015):

02-Mar	Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)	P	19-May	Siller Holes (West Linton)	S
02-Apr	Bemersyde Moss	P	21-May	Winfield Airfield (Whitsome)	S
15-Apr	Drycleuchlea (Buccleuch)	P	25-May	Chaple Mains Pond (Galashiels)	T
18-Apr	Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	P	03-Jun	Teviot: Nisbet	T
22-Apr	West Linton-Cloich Forest	T	17-Jun	Killiedraught Bay (Eyemouth)	S
03-May	Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	P	20-Jun	Ashiestiel Hill (Caddonfoot)	S
04-May	Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	S	22-Jun	Leadburn Community Woodland	P
10-May	Halmyre Deans (Romannobridge)	S	02-Jul	The Hirsell	S
14-May	Gala Sewage Works	S	05-Jul	Tweed: Union Bridge	S
19-May	Folly Loch	S	05-Jul	Tweed: Paxton Ho.-Border	S
See Introduction for breeding codes.			17-Jul	Watch Water Res.	P

**Sep-Dec:**

Records from 19 tetrads (12 in 2016 and 10 in 2015). Largest counts ( $\geq 5$ ) came from: Newmains (Reston) - 28; Teviot Haughs - 24; (Tollbar) Newcastleton - 10; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 10; Burnmouth - 10; St Abbs Head - 7.

## Exotics, escapes, hybrids, etc

**Black Swan.** Single reported from 4-Jan to 10-May from Yetholm Loch. Also reported from Birgham Haugh (Coldstream) on 24-Feb.

**Greylag x domestic goose.** Single on 8-Apr on the Tweed near the Border.

**Bar-headed Goose.** Two apparently paired birds seen 1-July to 10-Aug at Watch Water Reservoir (Longformacus).

## Errata and addenda

(see Classified List for further details)

### Pink-footed Goose

Stated in BBR 2016 that highest count prior to 12,000 at Bemersyde-Whitrig Bog was of 5,000 in 2008. This should have read, highest previous count was of 6,800 in 2007.

### Shelduck

BBR 2016 reported 11 tetrads with breeding evidence. This should have been seven sites.

### Cormorant

BBR 2016 stated that the RSC was of 26 birds. This should have read 32 birds.

### Rose-coloured Starling (juv).

A record at Oxenrig (Coldstream) on 21-30 Sep 2016 was omitted. To be added to the St Boswells bird that was reported.

### Ring Ouzel

BBR 2016 stated that the number of potential breeding sites reported was 22. It should have read 20 sites.

### Siberian Stonechat.

Incorrectly stated in BBR 2016 that 2016 was the first record. First was Oct 1991 at St Abb's Head.

## Ringling in the Scottish Borders, 2017.

Tom Dougall

This is the thirty-first report on the birds ringed annually in the Scottish Borders, and Northumberland north of the River Tweed. This report, as with its predecessor, is in the new format, as outlined in the 2012 report - the report is now based on the wealth of information available publicly on the BTO website at Robinson, R.A., Leech, D.I. & Clark, J.A.(2018) The Online Demography Report: Bird ringing and nest recording in Britain & Ireland in 2017. BTO, Thetford (<http://www.bto.org/ringing-report>, created on 7-September-2018). This will provide a more realistic picture of ringing activities in the region by all ringers, not just the few who supplied information to me to help compile the report. It will also present a more comprehensive summary of recoveries and controls of ringed birds with a Borders connection, since in previous reports it was comprised mainly from information of Borders Ringing Group – ringed birds. There will be no published cumulative totals (although this will be maintained separately for Borders Ringing Group), but that for BRG has now exceeded 124,100 of 138 species (8,507 in 2017).

## Ringling

Table 1 lists the species and numbers ringed in 2017 in the Borders area, excluding those deemed by BTO to be sensitive, where confidentiality is required.

Species	Nestling	Full-grown	Total	Species	Nestling	Full-grown	Total
Mallard	1	0	1	Whitethroat	0	9	9
Sparrowhawk	0	3	3	Goldcrest	0	79	79
Buzzard	4	0	4	Wren	0	79	79
Oystercatcher	46	0	46	Nuthatch	39	16	55
Lapwing	36	0	36	Treecreeper	0	15	15
Curlew	23	0	23	Starling	0	12	12
Jack Snipe	0	1	1	Ring Ouzel	0	1	1
Snipe	2	0	2	Blackbird	8	205	213
Common Sandpiper	7	6	13	Fieldfare	0	4	4
Redshank	3	0	3	Redwing	0	66	66
Black-headed Gull	81	0	81	Song Thrush	0	72	72
Woodpigeon	2	9	11	Mistle Thrush	0	2	2
Collared Dove	0	1	1	Spotted Flycatcher	5	0	5
Barn Owl	23	0	23	Robin	0	184	184
Tawny Owl	51	3	54	Whinchat	0	1	1
Swift	7	9	16	Stonechat	0	2	2
Kingfisher	0	1	1	Wheatear	0	1	1
Great Sp. Woodpecker	0	5	5	Dipper	29	9	38
Kestrel	5	0	5	House Sparrow	0	219	219
Jay	0	1	1	Tree Sparrow	11	98	109
Jackdaw	0	1	1	Dunnock	5	185	190
Coal Tit	8	141	149	Grey Wagtail	0	2	2
Blue Tit	37	441	478	Pied/White Wagtail	8	22	30
Great Tit	18	144	162	Meadow Pipit	0	325	325
Skylark	0	6	6	Chaffinch	0	973	973
Swallow	44	3	47	Brambling	0	21	21
House Martin	0	1	1	Bullfinch	0	44	44
Long-tailed Tit	0	76	76	Greenfinch	0	165	165
Willow Warbler	0	119	119	Linnet	0	36	36
Chiffchaff	0	80	80	Lesser Redpoll	0	354	354
Sedge Warbler	0	32	32	Redpoll (Common/Lesser)	0	24	24
Reed Warbler	0	2	2	Goldfinch	0	491	491
Blackcap	0	26	26	Siskin	0	5,195	5,195
Garden Warbler	0	2	2	Yellowhammer	0	41	41
Lesser Whitethroat	0	1	1	Reed Bunting	0	64	64
				<b>Totals</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>10,130</b>	<b>10,633</b>

**Table 1 : Birds ringed in the Scottish Borders, 2017.**

2017 was the most productive year so far for ringing in the Borders, with the highest annual total, although no new species were added to the cumulative list.

Over half the total was provided by Siskin (5,195, of which 3,913 were from one garden in Peebles), with another bountiful year to follow that of 2016. Other finch species, as well as thrushes and tits, had a good year.

On the debit side, the steady decline continued in the number of Dipper chicks ringed to its lowest ever, even though effort remained roughly the same. 2017 marks the final year of Meadow Pipit ringing at a site near Leadburn due to biosecurity restrictions, so it was perhaps fitting to end the project with a control.



Borders Ringing Group's contributions to the BTO's monitoring projects continued (Constant Effort Site at St. Abbs Head; and adult survival estimates for Common Sandpiper, Dipper, Chaffinch and Siskin).

### Recoveries and Controls

"Recoveries" are ringed birds that have been found dead or alive and reported to the Ringing Unit at the BTO "Controls" are ringed birds that are caught alive and released by ringers, the birds having moved more than 5km. from the locality of their original ringing. Sightings of colour-ring combinations, inscribed colour-rings or neck-collars, inscribed wing-tags, and PIT and satellite-tags are assuming increasing importance in the reporting of ringed birds, as are reports of inscriptions on ordinary rings, read by patient observers with very good optics (see Table 2 for some examples), so please keep your eyes peeled!

County summaries of recoveries are now available online at the BTO website (reference as above at <http://www.bto.org/ringing-report>, created on 7-September-2018), and are well worth a look on a rainy Sunday afternoon!

In Table 2 the following codes are used :- F = female, M = male, Ad = adult, FG = fully-grown (immature or adult), Imm = immature, Juv = juvenile, and N = nestling. Where known, the straight-line distance and orientation between the localities of initial ringing and subsequent finding are given.

Ring number & Finding circumstances	Age & sex	Date	Location	Distance (km)	Orientation (degrees or compass)
<b>Mute Swan</b>					
<b>ZZ2151</b>	N	23.08.03	Stintyknowes Loch, Hawick		
Unknown, only ring found	Ad	26.10.2017	near Hawick		
<b>ZZ3027</b>	Imm F	22.08.04	Hadston Lake, Northumberland		
Found dead (within week), hit wires	Ad F	01.01.17	River Teviot, Denholm	71	287
<b>W00836</b>	imm M	30.07.00	Berwick-upon-Tweed		
Ring read in field	Ad M	05.03.03	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	52	WSW
Ring read, breeding	Ad M	2003 - 2016	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank		
Killed by car	Ad M	11.02.17	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank		
<b>W36958</b>	N, M	16.08.14	Craiglockhart Pond, Edinburgh		
Ring read in field	Ad M	08.04.17	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	47	SE
<b>XY2078</b>	Ad F	28.02.16	Queen Elizabeth II Country Park, Northumberland		
Ring read in field	Ad F	07.04.17	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	90	WNW
<b>W38211</b>	N	13.09.14	Duddingston Loch, Edinburgh		
Ring read in field	Imm	2015 & 2016	Musselburgh, East Lothian		
Ring read in field	Ad	27.07.17	Berwick-upon-Tweed		
<b>Z96775</b>	N, F	29.08.04	Traquair House, Innerleithen		
Ring read in field	Ad, F	01.02.17	Loch Eddy, Innerleithen		
<b>Whooper Swan</b>					
<b>A8438</b>	Ad. F	14.08.08	Anavatn, Jokuldalsheidi, <b>ICELAND</b>		
Ring read in field	Ad. F.	2009 - 2011	Dumfries & Gall., Cumbria, N Yorks, Lancs.		
Ring read in field	Ad. F.	06.03.11	near Howden, near Folly Loch, Ancrum		
Ring read in field	Ad. F.	22.02 & 04.03.17	Folly Loch, Ancrum		

Storm Petrel					
<b>2698924</b>	FG	05.09.16	Eyemouth		
Controlled	FG	29.07.17	Portknockie, Moray	209	348
Shag					
<b>1246805</b>	Ad F	19.06.88	Isle of May, Fife		
Unknown, only ring found	Ad F	07.02.17	Burnmouth	50	SE
<b>1485366 &amp; 1492072</b>	N & N	01 & 06.06.17	Freshly dead Eyemouth 09/04 & 15/02 St Abbs	46 & 41	SE
Kestrel					
<b>EY21963</b>	N	22.06.17	Garvald, Moorfoot Hills		
Alive, traffic casualty, care of vet	Imm	24.07.17	Hawick	41	158
<b>EW59192</b>	N	08.07.16	Lamaload Reservoir, Rainow, Cheshire		
Freshly dead	Imm	12.01.17	Larriston Farm, Newcastleton	223	N
Peregrine					
<b>GN61962</b>	N	05.06.04	Daviot Quarry, Highland		
Transponder reading, at nest	Ad F	29.04.17	Scottish Borders		
<b>GC02969</b>	N. M	26.05.07	Scottish Borders		
Transponder reading at nest	Ad M	27.04.17	near Jedburgh		
Oystercatcher					
<b>FP82965</b>	Imm	05.09.09	Waterfoot, Annan		
Freshly dead	Ad	19.03.17	Oxton	94	NNE
Black-headed Gull					
<b>ET99555</b>	N	12.06.10	Broad Law, Moorfoot Hills		
Ring read in field	Ad	23.09.17	Strathclyde Park, Hamilton, South Lanarkshire	62	272
<b>ET99970</b>	N	02.07.11	Broad Law, Moorfoot Hills		
Ring read in field	Ad	03.09.17	River Almond, Cramond, Edinburgh	29	328
<b>EY21530</b>	N	16.06.13	Broad Law, Moorfoot Hills		
Colour-ring read in field	Ad	28.02.17	Figgate Pond, Edinburgh	22	346
Colour-ring read in field	Ad	20.01.17	Ishoj, Kobenhavn, <b>DENMARK</b>	963	92
<b>EY21682</b>	N	29.06.13	Broad Law, Moorfoot Hills		
<b>EY21732</b>	N	14.06.14	Broad Law, Moorfoot Hills		
Colour-ring read in field	Ad	16.09.17	East Wemyss, Fife	43	359
Colour-ring read in field	Imm	02.01.17	Catlewellan Forest Park Lake, Down	251	SW
Colour-ring read in field	Imm	26.06.17	Lurgan Park Lake, Lurgan, Armagh	254	WSW
Colour-ring read in field	Imm	02.04.17	Slimbridge WWT Reserve, Gloucestershire	451	S
<b>K05861 Stavanger</b>	Ad M	19.04 - 09.06.16	Sognsvann, Oslo, <b>NORWAY</b>		
Colour-ring read in field	Imm M	13.01.17	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	934	244
Colour-ring read in field	Imm M	19.12.17	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank		
Colour-ring J8C2 Stavanger	Juv	27.06.17	Stavanger, <b>NORWAY</b>		
Lesser Black-backed Gull					
<b>GJ84710</b>	N	22.06.01	St Serf's Island, Loch Leven, Kinross		
Freshly dead - hit wires	Ad	23.07.17	Bowanhill, Teviothead, Hawick	98	SSE
Woodpigeon					
<b>FH01307</b>			local to Peebles, ringed as FG F, 14.05.12, found dead 07.10.17		

Tawny Owl					
<b>GC09882</b>			local to Heriot, ringed as juv 17.05.14, found dead 25.11.17		
Swift					
<b>SB99205</b>	Ad	21.07.08	The Hirsell, Coldstream		
Retrapped	Ad	24.07.17 (also 21.07.09 & 22.07.15)	The Hirsell, Coldstream		
<b>SB99271</b>	N	20.07.11	The Hirsell, Coldstream		
Retrapped	Ad	24.07.17 (also 04.08.12 & 22.07.15)	The Hirsell, Coldstream		
Swallow					
<b>D480168</b>	N	08.08.17	near Blackhopebyre, Moorfoot Hills		
Controlled	Imm	19.08.17	Icklesham, East Sussex	586	155
Meadow Pipit					
<b>D480436</b>	Juv	02.09.17	Nether Falla, near Leadburn		
Controlled	Imm	18.10.17	Silt Fen Farm, Norfolk	424	147
Dipper					
<b>RT78178</b>	Imm F	24.04.10	Leithen Water		
Retrapped (most recent of several)	Ad F	01.07.17	Leithen Water		
Dunnock					
<b>TT53491</b>			local to Peebles, ringed as juv 26/08/16, found dead 17/02.		
			2 local to Peebles and 1 local to Whitmuir Hall		
Blackbird					
<b>LB38370</b>	Ad M	04.11.15	Windwick, South Ronaldsay, Orkney		
Freshly dead (killed by traffic)	Ad M	15.01.17	St Boswells	355	S
Sedge Warbler					
<b>7816285 Paris</b>	Imm	18.08.15	Reserve Naturelle de l'etang des Landes, Creuse, FRANCE		
Controlled	Ad F	30.07.17	St Abbs Head	1127	345
Blackcap					
<b>T243400</b>	Imm M	17.10.04	Beachy Head, East Sussex		
Long dead, corpse found.	Ad M	12.04.17	Selkirk	578	NNW
Willow Warbler					
<b>HKB479</b>	Ad	20.04.15	Portland Bill, Dorset		
Controlled	Ad	21.08.17	Whitmuir Hall, Selkirk	558	358
Chiffchaff					
<b>JHB879</b>	Juv	30.07.16	Buxley, Duns		
Freshly dead	Imm	12.04.17	Hvide-Sande, Ringkobing, DENMARK	651	E
<b>HYE851</b>	Juv	16.08.17	Garvald, Moorfoot Hills		
Controlled	Imm	17.10.17	Chilling, Warsash, Hampshire	561	168
<b>HYE648</b>	Imm	29.09.17	Peebles		
Controlled	Imm	08.10.17	Hengitsbury Head, Bournemouth, Dorset	557	171
Blue Tit					
<b>V786648</b>	Juv	10.07.10	Peebles		
Retrapped (most recent of several)	Ad	01.12.17	Peebles		
Great Tit					
<b>L761145</b>	Imm	05.09.11	Peebles		
Retrapped (most recent of several)	Ad	31.08.17	Peebles		

Nuthatch					
<b>VZ89602</b>	N	30.05.17	Selkirk		
Dying, hit glass	Imm	03.08.17	Press Castle, Coldingham	56	46
Jay					
<b>DB18455</b>	Ad M		local to Whitmuir Hall, ringed 12/09, found dead 03/10.		
Starling					
<b>KH21977</b>	Imm F	25.06.15	Ventes Ragas, Silutes, <b>LITHUANIA</b>		
Found dead	Ad F	02.01.17	Heiton	1490	W
			1 local to St Abbs, 3 local to Peebles		
Chaffinch					
<b>S195183</b>	imm M	12.12.16	Peebles		
Killed by cat	Imm M	14.05.17	Innerleithen	9	117
Greenfinch					
			1 local to Nether Falla, 1 local to Peebles		
Siskin					
<b>S259309</b>	Ad F	08.05.16	Selkirk		
Controlled	Ad F	02.05.17	Bolderwood Hill & Farm, Hampshire	525	S
<b>S259360</b>	Imm M	22.05.16	Selkirk		
Controlled	Ad M	28.02.17	Sway, New Forest, Hampshire	535	S
<b>S020526</b>	Imm M	07.03.17	Thetford, Norfolk		
Sick / injured, released on recovery, same day	Imm M	21.03.17	Tweedbank	423	NNW
Lesser Redpoll					
<b>BC84706 Arnhem</b>	Ad M	17.04.15	Zwannenwater, Noord-Holland, <b>NL</b> .		
Controlled, breeding	Ad F	18.07.17	Garvald, Moorfoot Hills	598	303
<b>S259417</b>	Ad M	22.05.16	Selkirk		
Controlled	Ad M	21.08.17	Whitmuir Hall, Selkirk	4	91
Reed Bunting					
<b>L630065</b>	FG M	27.02.11	Newmains, Reston		
Retrapped	Ad M	22.01 & 02.12.17	Newmains, Reston		

Mute Swan W00836 was at least 17 years old when it was chased into traffic by a rival male. Where had Whooper Swan A8438 been between 2011 and 2017? Certainly not at the well-watched Folly Loch!

Kestrel EY21963 showed rapid dispersal from its natal site, while EW59192 made a wrong decision to head north for its first, and only, winter.

Presumably Oystercatcher FP82965 had only recently returned from its winter quarters for the breeding season, which it wasn't to see, unfortunately.

Sightings of ringed Black-headed Gulls are fairly widespread (see also Table 3 for additional birds from the Moorfoots colony), with two of particular interest – a Borders-bred bird in mid-winter in Denmark, and a Norwegian-bred bird (J8C2) showing fairly quick dispersal across the North Sea from its natal area.

Both Swift retraps reported are of fairly old birds – take a moment to marvel at how many kilometres they must have flown over the years.

Dipper RT78178 may not have moved far in her lifetime along the Leithen Water (she was not seen in 2018), but at eight years old she had lasted well for the species, and had reared a good number of broods.

There was a good selection of warbler species movements reported in 2017, and the apparent increase in the breeding Chiffchaff population was mirrored here.

Great Tit L761145 and Blue Tit V786648 had reached good ages. The movement of Nuthatch VZ89602 may indicate that the species' population is still expanding in the region.

Once again there is a fine selection of movements of Siskins and Lesser Redpolls over the length of the country (see also Tables 4 and 5 for summaries involving Peebles, where there were also 1434 retrap events for Siskins over the year).

Reed Bunting L630065 was at least seven and a half years old when handled in December 2017 (the national longevity record for the species in the British Isles currently stands at 9 years, 11 months and 18 days).

Location in 2017	Year of ringing as chick.				
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Firth of Forth, Fife shore		1			
Firth of Forth, Lothian shore	3	1		1	
Edinburgh lochs	1				
Linlithgow Loch		1			
Stirling University Loch					1
Glasgow lochs	1				
Solway Firth, Dumfries & Galloway shore	1				
Solway Firth, Cumbria shore	1				
Northern Ireland lochs			1		

**Table 3 : Locations of colour-ringed Black-headed Gulls in 2017, reported directly to Borders RG.**

From Peebles	Location (local government area)	To Peebles	Total	From Peebles	Location (local government area)	To Peebles	Total
1	Shetland (Fair Isle)	0	1	1	Greater Manchester	1	2
9	Highland	3	12	1	Cheshire	0	1
2	Moray	0	2	1	North Wales	1	2
2	Grampian	1	3	0	Staffordshire	2	2
1	Argyll & Bute	3	4	0	Derbyshire	1	1
0	Fife	1	1	0	West Midlands	1	1
1	Central Scotland	0	1	0	Norfolk	4	4
1	West Lothian	2	3	0	Suffolk	4	4
3	North Lanarkshire	0	3	0	Gloucestershire	1	1
10	Borders	5	15	0	Essex	1	1
1	Dumfries & Galloway	1	2	2	Surrey	1	3
3	Northumberland	4	7	0	Devon	1	1
1	Cumbria	1	2	0	BELGIUM	3	3
1	Durham	0	1	42	<b>Totals</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>85</b>
1	North Yorkshire	1	2		within Peebles		5
					<b>Total</b>		<b>90</b>

**Table 4 : Locations involved in the movements of Siskins to and from Peebles in 2017.**

### Acknowledgements

As always, the co-operation and interest of landowners, tenants and their agents is much appreciated. The following observers and ringers are thanked for supplying details of their ringing activities and findings, and help in the field:- Graham Anderson, Maurice Aungier, Andrew Bramhall, Keith Burgoyne, Jim Burns, Willie Edmond, Mike Fraser, David Grieve, Rich Howells, Tony Lightley, Iain Livingstone, Sarah Long, Lothian & Borders Raptor Study Group, Lothian Ringing Group and James Silvey. Thanks, also, to all the reporters of colour-ring sightings, too many to mention individually.

Tom Dougall, 38 Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh EH10 4JL

## Greenlaw Farm Pool, Foulden, Nr Berwick

David Christie

The rather confusingly named Greenlaw Farm Pool (3½ acres/1.4 ha) is my 'home patch', a site which has recently become something of a hot-spot for local birders. Having discovered this pool just 500 m from my new home in late July 2013, I at first revelled in finding an amazing twelve species of wader in just two months before it dawned on me, come October, to start counting regularly. I soon found large numbers of geese using the pool as an overnight roost and my regular attendances were thereafter at dawn. The pool is ideally suited for a roost site as it is open on three sides, there being a belt of woodland 45 m from its east side. Being 7 km from the coast, 3 km from the Tweed and one km from the Whiteadder there is likely to be some to-ing and thro-ing.

Fortunately, disturbance is very rare, the local dog-walkers preferring to use the recreation ground back by the main road. Only once were the birds disturbed - by two teenagers who had come to the pool to see the sun rise over the water!

Viewing is at 100 m, from a corner of the farm outbuildings (see Photo 1). This is ideal for scoping and seemingly no problem for the birds, with the geese sometimes coming quite close when feeding. There is a gated track here but it would be very unwise to venture any closer.

The pool is not that easy to locate as it doesn't show on OS maps since it only developed as a "permanent" feature in the past ten years or so, resulting from some subsidence which may have been related to failure of field drainage. The pool however, can be seen on Google Earth view, and directions are simple. Driving along the Duns-Berwick A6105 road, you should look out for Kerrigan Way (on the south side) which is about a kilometre east of the village, the turning being almost at a traffic island – the only one for miles (a relic of a previous school being located here). Once in Kerrigan Way the advisable thing to do is to park before the road swings round to the left, with the recreation ground on your right. Straight ahead is the private road to walk the 200 m to the farm.



**Photo 1. Greenlaw Farm looking south. The viewing point is at the corner of the furthest building on the left, by the bar gate.** The photograph was taken in August 2013 - the viewing by the farm buildings remains the same but the cut grass, gardens and general tidiness these days has long gone.



**Location of Greenlaw Farm Pool, Foulden.**

Scale: length of grid sq is 1 km.

As mentioned, dawn is the best time to view birds on the pool and, along with dusk, the only time to catch the geese, Goosanders and some of the ducks that leave early.

## Geese

**Pink-footed Geese** take the honour of having the highest count with 5,120 on 2-Nov 2014. In fact, there were a total of 5,880 geese, ducks and swans on the pool that morning – my all-time record. The “pinkfeet” numbers peak in Oct-Nov each year with highs of 2,680 in Nov-2015, 3,710 in Nov-2016 and 4,460 in Oct-2017. The actual time of arrival is probably the result of a combination of factors which include breeding success and prevailing weather conditions both in Greenland and Iceland and en route. Quite possibly many of the birds that arrive in the early part of October are still part of those flocks moving south (although much depends on overall numbers and weather). Since dawn sees “pinkfeet” heading out toward the south east and returning at dawn from the same direction, it is reasonable to assume that the feeding ground is in the fields along the north Northumberland coastal plain.

The arrival and departure of so many birds from such a small pool is quite a spectacle although such departures are not always to the liking of those local residents that like a lie-in.

**Greylag Geese** highs are in September with 1,129 in 2014, 1,805 in 2015, 1,722 in 2016 and a record high of 1,840 in 2017. However, numbers, as with most water bodies in Borders, begin to increase noticeably in July-August as post-breeding aggregations develop. To some extent the “greylags”, like the “pinkfeet”, appear to make their way toward the feeding grounds of the north Northumberland coastline at dusk. However, there is often a more complex series of local flyways for this species with the situation complicated by a number of smaller roost sites nearby. Given the sedentary nature of the species, one assumes that many of the roosting birds at Greenlaw Farm Pool are birds from SE Scotland but there is quite possibly some that are from further north in Scotland. Whether any “natural” Icelandic birds are found here is not known.

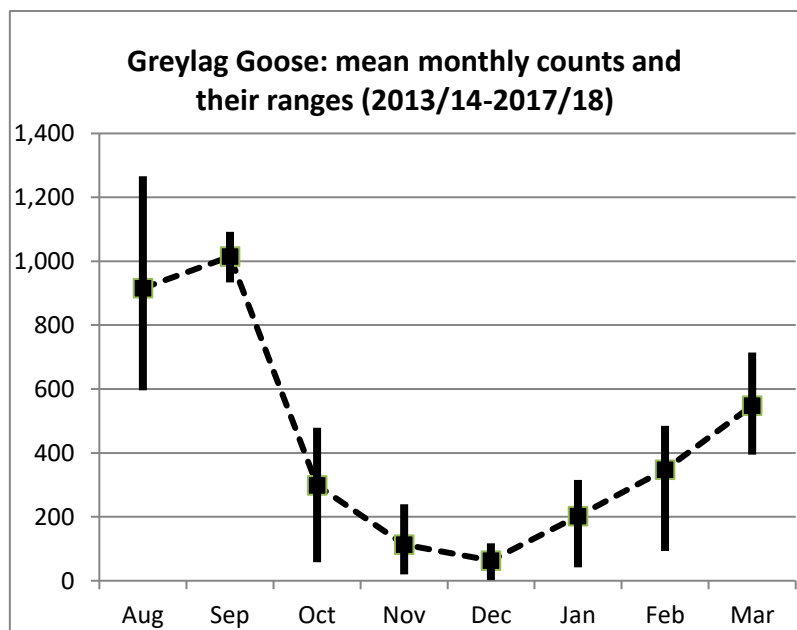
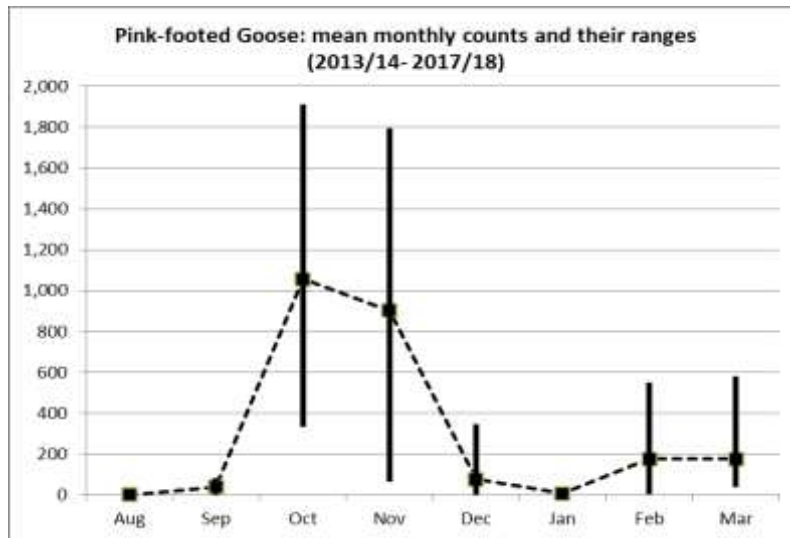
**Canada Geese** also usually have their highest numbers in September; 2016 provided the highest count so far of 98. The odd *Barnacle Goose* also turns up in autumn.

Both “pinkfeet” and “greylags”, at times, leave the roost pool only to feed in the adjacent fields.

## Ducks

**Wigeon** and **Teal** are the most numerous ducks from December to March. Wigeon highs were 220 in Dec-2013, 280 in Jan-2015, 815 in Feb-2016, 842 (pool record) in Dec-2016 and 466 in Nov-2017.

Teal have taken the accolade of highest duck species count, just beating the Wigeon, totalling 867 in Feb-2017. This appears to be the highest single count for this species recorded in the Borders Region. Highs were 320 in Dec-2014, 367 in Dec-2015, 778 in Nov-2016 and 620 in Dec-2017.

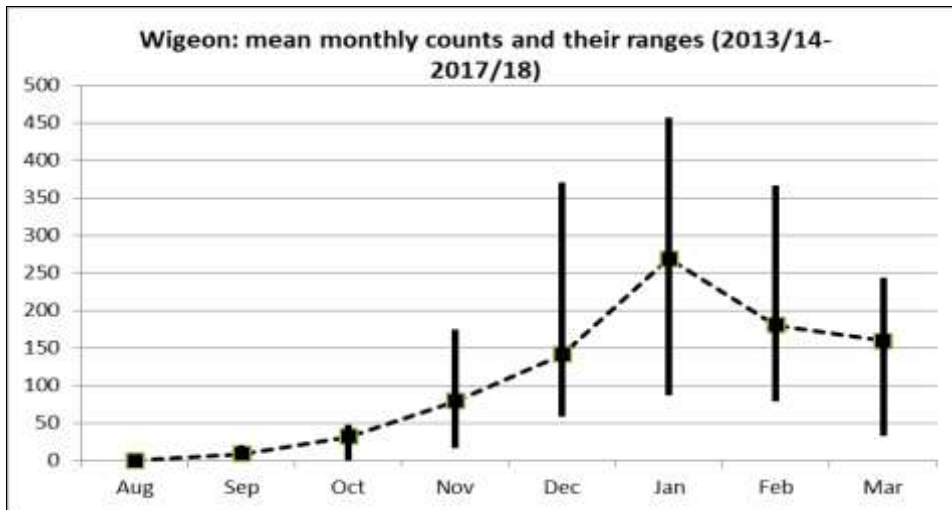


The most regular duck species is the **Goosander** with an overnight roost of generally 30-60 birds but on 29-Oct 2014 there were a staggering 358 – the site record by far. Other highs were 155 in Dec-2014, 202 in Dec-2015 but in the last two years 82 in Oct-2016 was the best that could be had. The close proximity of the Whiteadder (1 km) and the Tweed (3 km) is, presumably, a factor in their nightly roost on the pool.

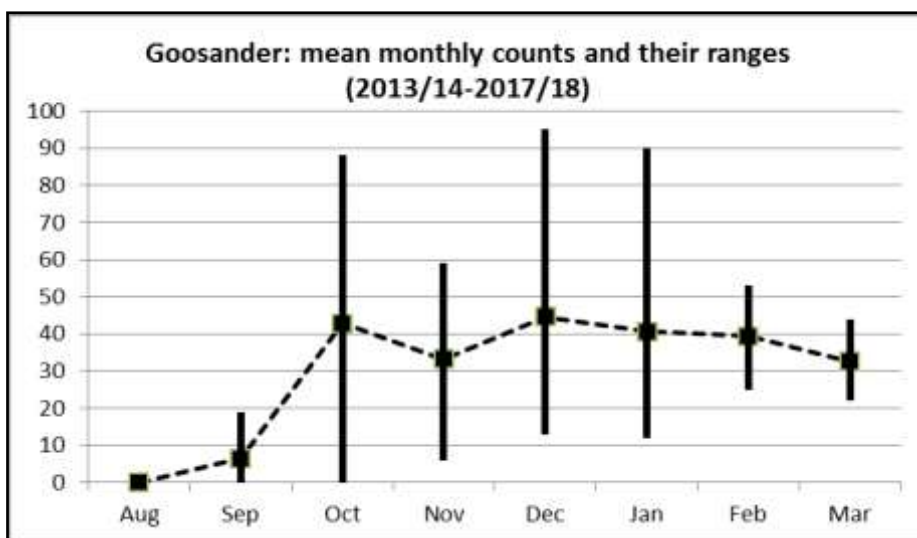
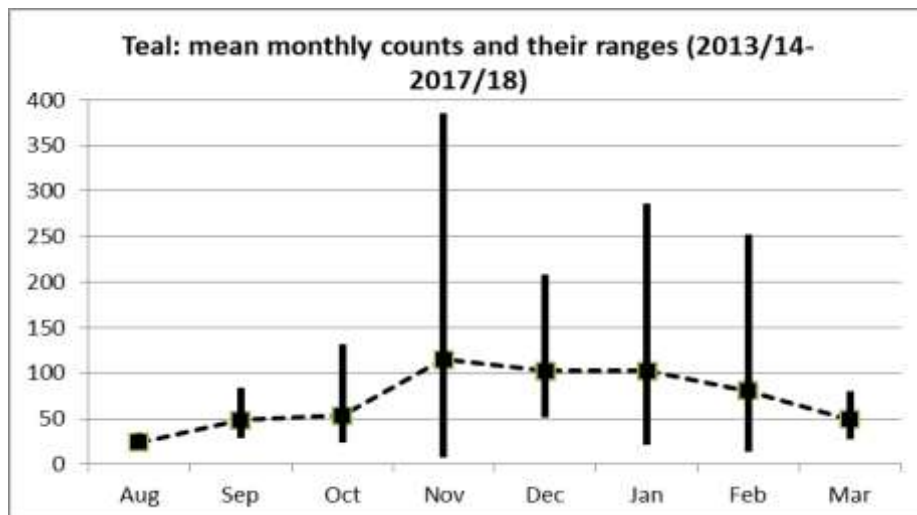
**Goldeneyes** are sometimes with the Goosanders but are more sporadic in occurrence, usually in very small numbers until Feb-2016 when regular appearances during that month culminated in a high of 26. This regularity continued into March with a maximum of 22. Similarly, Feb-2017 brought another good influx with a site record of 108. The March high was 38 but again there were good numbers all month. Dec-2017 saw a 'one-off' high of 41. Initially they did not dive but in later winters when the water level was high diving was quite common.

**Mallards** at the pool are the most numerous duck in summer with virtually none in mid-winter - other nearby, more sheltered pools in Foulden may be more inviting? Maxima are all in August: 277 in 2014 (site record), 270 in 2015 and 264 in 2016. 2017 could only muster 189.





**Tufted Ducks** are irregular with three months of absence the norm, usually in mid-winter. A site record is 28 in May-2015, with annual highs usually between 17-20.



**Shoveler** is a fairly regular species except for mid-winter, usually up to three birds are present but with a site record of 13 in Mar-2017, and a high of ten in September of the same year.

**Gadwall** has been more in evidence in the last two years with a pair or single most regular in spring-summer.

**Shelduck** starts to appear from March, sometimes up to four birds but on one occasion there were eight (May-2017) and six (Jun-2017). Breeding was a big surprise when on 29-May 2016 eleven chicks appeared which, to my even greater surprise, were present for the next few months - all surviving to adulthood! The odds against this were great as Foxes and predatory gulls were regularly seen. On the same day in May-2017, a family of four young appeared but were quickly reduced to just the one and that was gone in a few weeks. Despite the presence of birds in the spring no breeding has been observed in 2018.

**Pintail** is a very occasional delight, being seen in Apr-2016 (2), Jun-2016(1) and May-2017 (1).

**Garganey** has been seen in May-2014 (3) and May-2017 (1).

That leaves the rarity. A long-staying **American Wigeon** was seen from 10-Jan to 13-Apr 2014 and, a personal rarity, was my one and only **Pochard** on 2-Jun 2014.

A more recent rarity found (not by myself but by Clive Hartley) was a **Green-Winged Teal** in Jan-2018.



Photo 2. Early morning view of the pool in October.

## Swans

**Whooper Swans** arrive from October each year with highs ranging between 22-39. **Mute Swans** are in smaller numbers with six in Nov-2013 being the highest count to 2017 then a flock of up to 32 being present throughout Feb-2018.

## Waders

The 12 species of wader seen in the first two months of the survey period (Autumn 2013) account for all species seen over the four years – with just one addition.

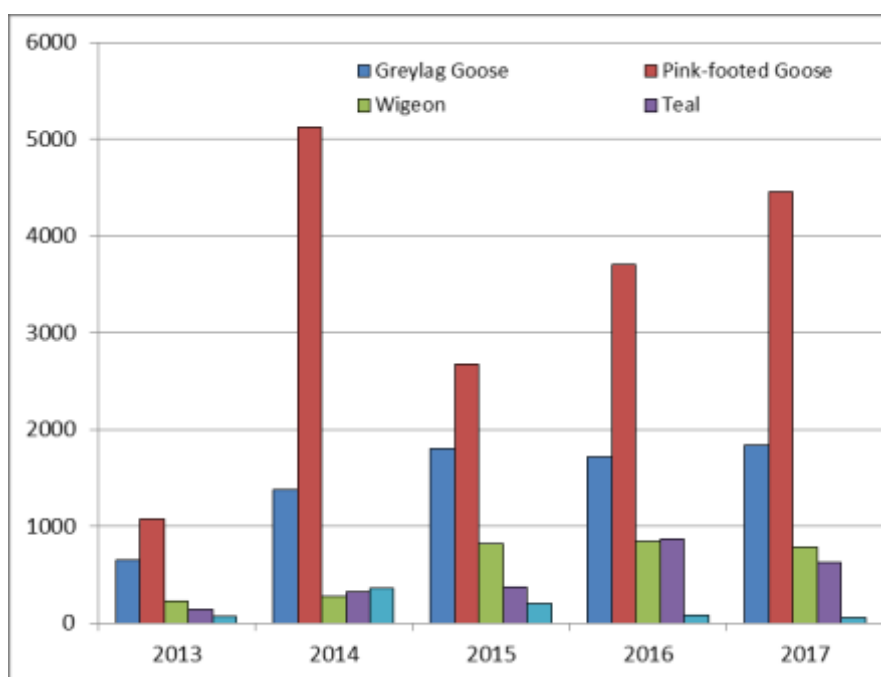
**Oystercatcher:** this species is constantly present from Feb-May onward each year.

**Lapwing:** usually single birds accounting for fifteen sightings at any time of year.

**Redshank:** not the most common wader on the pool with twelve sightings in total, seen in most months.

**Curlew:** surprisingly rare, with just three sightings, two in Aug/Sep and one in Mar.

**Common Sandpiper:** one was with a Green Sandpiper on 29-Jul 2013, the day I discovered the Pool. Fifteen sightings in total , again in August and May most years.



Maximum counts for selected geese and ducks.

**Dunlin:** ten sightings in all. Seen July-Oct.

**Snipe:** quite rare here until Aug/Sep 2017 when groups of up to four were seen around an 'overflow' pond adjacent to the main pool. They spent their time moving between the pond and the pool. Only two singles seen prior to the above date then a further five sightings .

**Greenshank:** always a thrill to see this elegant bird - with seven sightings in spring and August.

**Black-tailed Godwit:** 12 sightings , with groups of six and five but also single birds , all in Aug/Sep.

**Ringed Plover:** only four sightings, three of probably the same bird in Aug/Sep 2013, then two birds in April 2017.

**Ruff:** the "Star Wader" of the pool with forty eight sightings , all in Aug/Sep, bar one (Apr). Unlike other wader species seen at the pool , these were mostly in groups with a site record of twenty three on 31-Aug 2014.

**Green Sandpiper:** the first wader found on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2013, this species was pretty rare for me yet was seen on a total of six occasions , in the months of August and May.

**Wood Sandpiper:** found by Dave Graham in May 2016 , and located there by myself just the day before I was due to go on holiday. This is the extra species not seen in my first autumn.

An update on the wader numbers may be of note as, during August 2018 there appeared to be a wader 'explosion' with, at one time, over 30 birds present, mainly Redshank (25) with Green Sandpipers, Snipe , Ruff, Ringed Plover and a rare Spotted Redshank, as well as a first Little Ringed Plover (Clive Hartley).

### Other birds

**Grey Heron** is an infrequent visitor , mainly in August – with only eleven sightings for the whole of the four years. They have become more frequent during 2018.

**Little Grebe** has appeared twice: in Apr-2016 and Jun-2017, with **Great Crested Grebe** making an appearance just the once, in Sep-2014. **Cormorant** is another once-only sighting, in Feb-2017.

### Hirundines/Passerines

The site is not particularly rich in these species –except for the **Swallows** that gather on the wires alongside the farm road in late autumn. They also nest in the outbuildings right by the viewing spot. **House Martins** join them at times - from the nearby houses in Cheviot Park, including my dwelling. Generally the hedges here are full of noisy

*House Sparrows* with a few *Tree Sparrows* among them . *Great Spotted Woodpeckers* can be found in the mature trees along the road with the occasional *Nuthatch*. *Linnets* nest nearby and *Goldfinches* are common but summer migrants are rare – being the odd *Willow Warbler* and *Chiffchaff*. *Pied Wagtails* are common by the pool – but it has only been recently that I have found a *Grey Wagtail* (by that overflow pond) and also my first *Stonechat* here. Despite early morning callings of *Tawny Owls* they have been distant and unseen.

## Mammals

*Foxes* are the main mammal to be found , often wandering past the assembled birds but not setting them up – just causing them to shift position warily. *Badgers* were seen at times (we had one in our garden regularly) but not recently. *Hares* can be seen in early spring. I have never seen a *Roe Deer* here surprisingly, in view of the closeness of the wood – and the time of day (dawn). *Bats* are around the buildings early morning.

The pool is now a WeBS site – and I often ponder on this as, before moving to the Borders ,my wife and I lived near Stirling and our WeBS count there was the Carron Valley Reservoir which was a huge expanse of water, which required a long walk along forest roads and invariably produced very little! Generally, we were lucky to see more than a few dozen ducks , the very occasional diver was the prize - as was the Great Grey Shrike found a few times along the track. The contrast with Foulden is stark: a pool around the corner with near-constant interest!

Unfortunately the future for the site is uncertain as the elderly farmer who owned the Pool died two years ago and everything has been left ‘in limbo’. The farm doesn’t appear to have come up for sale and the fields at the pool still contain sheep - the cows in the field along the lane were a new feature for one season. Very recently, some of the surrounding fields have been sprayed with weed killer so may well turn to a different use. What has mostly changed is the appearance of the farm which used to be neatly kept – with flower borders and cut grass - and the weeds contained. Recently I have been experiencing some high grass intruding into my scope-view so that’s one thing to affect viewing. A double garage is near completion (at the time of writing) on the corner of the cottage opposite the farm - just 10 m from the viewing spot.

One can only hope that the pool will continue to provide roosting and feeding for the birds – and good viewing for the birders.

David Christie  
August 2018.

If you would like to submit a short outline of your patch to future Border Bird Reports or any relevant article then please get in touch with Tom Brewis: [tbrewis@btinternet.com](mailto:tbrewis@btinternet.com).

## Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli* at St Abbs Head, 19-24 September 2017

### Mark Holling

As part of my work as Secretary of the Rare Breeding Birds Panel, I have regular meetings with the Chairman of the Panel, Mark Eaton. Mark is also a keen birder who works for the RSPB and is based in Northumberland. We prefer to hold our face to face meetings in the field, watching birds. With, as usual, much to talk about, we had arranged a meeting for Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September.

On that day the winds were seemingly not conducive for autumn migration. We had decided to try our luck at St Abb's Head, which is about equidistant from our respective homes. We planned to take a slow walk around the head, starting at the NTS car park, working our way along the coast, taking in some sea watching (which had been good over the previous few days) and finishing by doing a circuit around Mire Loch. The weather was fine, mainly sunny, dry and cool with light westerly winds (force 1–2) and there was little indication of passage at all, with one Yellow-browed Warbler heard near the village and a few Chiffchaffs and Goldcrests the only species noted by the time we reached the loch.

On arrival at Mire Loch, we had just begun searching the trees and bushes in the SW corner of the loch, near the boathouse, when we simultaneously noticed a small green passerine, clearly a warbler, in the birches by the path. This was at around 1pm.

A few seconds after we both independently noticed the bird there was silence while we computed the fact that this was something really quite different; we both then spoke out "do you see that" or something similar, followed by MAE saying he thought it was a Bonelli's Warbler. I also realised that that was what it must be; excitement mounted rapidly! The bird was active and often not visible as it blended in so well with the sunlit green foliage. We tried to take in what we could, and we both also took a few photos to try and capture something of what we were seeing. We strained to hear a call, knowing that it was that which would clinch the ID as being either Western or the even rarer Eastern Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus orientalis* (these two species were split a few years ago). We had both seen both species on the continent, but neither of us had seen either in Britain and it had been around 20 years since either of us had seen Western, so whatever the conclusion, this was going to be something very special for us.

We stayed with the bird, taking turns to try to put the news out. Regulars to St Abb's will know this is difficult as it is a well-known black hole for phone reception. MAE wandered off to find a bar on the phone so he could alert the national news networks while I kept watch, then I went off to the same place (near the dam, by the way) to ring Fran Evans – the nearest birder I knew to the site and someone who I hoped would pass on the news to other Borders birders. Unfortunately, she was out, but I left a garbled message and was pleased to know that she picked it up some time afterwards and was able to get along later that afternoon. At that stage we were reporting the bird as a Bonelli's Warbler species, but while I was away phoning, Mark heard the bird's Greenfinch-like call and was then convinced it was actually a Western. We had to go off again to put that update out!

We then waited around until other observers arrived so we could help put them onto the bird. We'd already seen two Lothian birders, Neville Crowther and Tom Delaney, by the loch, so we dragged them from their lunch on the dam and they had brief views of the bird. John Nadin was the first to arrive on the scene having picked up the message on the national grapevine – he was fortuitously passing that way on his way from seeing Jim Steele in Northumberland, back to his home in Fife. He instantly supported our identification. Further photos were taken, some of reasonable quality, and I captured a short piece of video, but other, better, pictures were taken by others on subsequent dates and some of those taken by Ian Andrews are used to illustrate this paper.

By the time we left the site it was already well after 3pm and we hadn't had lunch nor discussed much work! These two imperatives meant that we had to get moving; we got to St Abb's village in time for a celebratory glass of beer and a cake in the café. This will be forever one of our most memorable 'working' days!

The bird obliged by staying for several more days and thus allowed many more birders, both local and from further afield, to see it. It could be elusive at times, disappearing off into the leaves, but I believe patient observers were rewarded with good views. The last sightings were on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September.

All but one of the previous Scottish records of Western Bonelli's Warbler have been on islands. The single Scottish mainland record was also in Borders and also at St Abbs, when a bird was present at the Mire Loch from 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

The following description was taken from our submission to BBRC.

Our first impression was of a strikingly pale, open-faced *Phylloscopus* warbler with lime-green fringing forming a bright panel across the wing-coverts and secondaries, and on the outer tail feathers, and silvery-white underparts, leaving little doubt that the bird was one of the two Bonelli's species. The bird was feeding in amongst birch leaves on a tall birch at the edge of the wooded strip by the loch, the tree was in the sun and the bird blended in with the dappled leaves in sun/shade, sometimes appearing quite washed-out, sometimes showing more colour. The lime-green colour could be strikingly bright when caught in the sun.

The upperparts were a pale grey-green, lighter than other *Phylloscopus* species. Its face was relatively plain with a prominent black eye and topped by a relatively faint, paler supercilium (not always visible, but sometimes more prominent depending on light and angle). At times (and in some photos) a slightly darker lower edge to the ear coverts was discernible. Although hard to see in the field, some photos show a paler lime-green rump. As mentioned, the wings had striking lime fringing to nearly all feathers except the primaries, most obviously forming a bright panel on the secondaries of the closed wing. Where visible (e.g. primary tips, exposed tertials) the base colour of the wing feathers was a dark grey-brown. There was a small flash of lime-yellow on the bend of the wing, and a dark allula is visible in some photos. The underparts were almost pure white, appearing very bright, almost silvery, when in the sun. The long, sharp-looking bill was flesh/horn-coloured (although slightly darker along the culmen), as were the legs (slightly darker at the rear) and feet.

We saw the bird about five times over a 2-hour period, for 5-10 minutes each time; it must have been working a circuit because it returned to the same birch and neighbouring trees regularly. The white underparts made it obvious at times, compared to one or more much browner-toned Chiffchaffs which fed nearby. Given the bright plumage, we suspected the bird was more likely to be a Western Bonelli's, a fact confirmed by MAE when he heard the bird call on one occasion whilst MH was away in search of mobile phone reception: it gave three repeated notes, very loud and distinct, best described as a short disyllabic "hoo-eet" with a low first note slurring into an ascending second note, curiously reminiscent of a Greenfinch (maybe like a Willow Warbler-Greenfinch combination!). Apparently it was also heard to call by other observers on subsequent dates.

The bird was forever mobile, often hidden by the dappled vegetation, but the combination of the white underside, lime-green on wings and tail, and large black eye made the ID obvious once it came into view.

For a photograph of this bird please refer to back cover of the Report.

Mark Holling  
September 2018

## **Black-browed Albatross *Thalassarche melanophrys* off St Abbs on 29th June 2017**

**Dave Graham**

On the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup> the weather was hideous. It had rained all night with a strong NE wind. While looking at my phone I had noticed the Black-Browed Albatross that had been at Bempton Cliffs the day before had been seen flying past Whitburn, Tyne & Wear early morning. As the weather had curtailed my work I decided to try seawatching from Eyemouth in the hope that it might be seen further up the coast. I started at 9.00am from Divers car park, St Abbs from my van, as the weather was so bad. Loads of Gannets were passing N close-in; I also had 3 Bonxie and 3 Arctic Skua. I gave up after 3 hours and went back home. When at home I got a text from Kris Gibb to say the bird had just passed the Farne Islands. "Typical", I thought, "I should have stuck it out longer". I went back out to St Abbs village, down next to the harbour, just in case the bird carried on up the coast. I started seawatching again from 1.00 pm. Still a lot of Gannets passing close N and another Arctic Skua N and lots of Fulmar. After watching for about an hour and a half I began to think the bird had past or moved further out to sea. Just as I was about to give up my phone started to ring. It was Kris Gibb, saying the Albatross had just passed Eyemouth north. I quickly hung up and started scanning with scope again. About 10 minutes passed then, just when I thought I had missed it, the bird came into view. It appeared from behind a wave really close in just beyond rocks next to the harbour wall. I was amazed at the size of the bird when it banked over the wave. I was able to compare it closely with Gannets in the same field of view. The wing span was immense, huge bill, thick neck and big head with black eye and short eyestripe clearly visible. I watched the bird for c. 3 minutes as it dipped, banked and towered over the waves, disappearing at times. It became difficult to view as it went further round the coast heading round towards St Abb's Head. As it disappeared I phoned out the news to Kris and a text to Angus Murray. The bird was then later seen off Dunbar and then lastly off Seacliff near North Berwick. It was amazing that the bird was tracked up the coast, the fact it was so close in certainly helped with this. The weather helped further and the wind slowed it down as well.

### **Size and structure**

Huge, dwarfed Gannet and bigger wingspan looked at least a foot wider. The wings were narrow and pointed. The body and neck looked very chunky and heavy. The head was big and the bill huge. It had a shortish tail appearing slightly rounded at times.

### **Bare Parts**

Eyes looked blackish. The bill was huge, pale orangey-yellow in colour with rounded upper mandible tip. Couldn't make out leg colour.

### **Upperparts**

The upper wings were dark blackish in colour. The mantle and back looked blackish but maybe slightly paler than wings. Upper neck was white. The rump was white as were the upper-tail coverts. The upper tail was dark blackish.

### **Underparts**

The underwings were white with broad blackish border especially wider at front of wing. Primaries were mainly all darkish. Neck, belly, flanks and under tail coverts all immaculate clean white. Tail dark greyish.

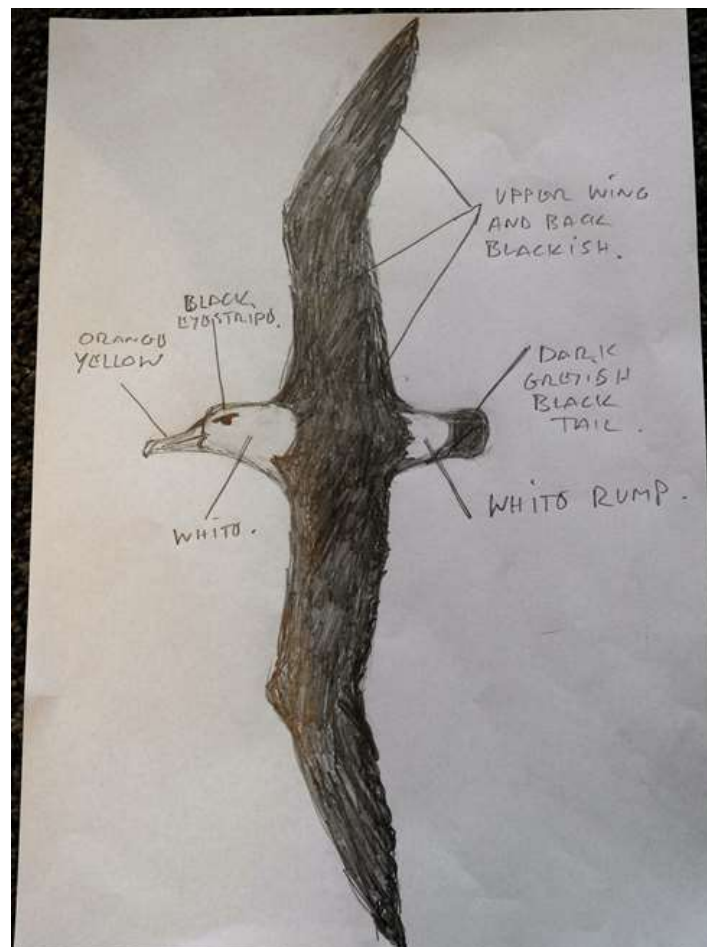
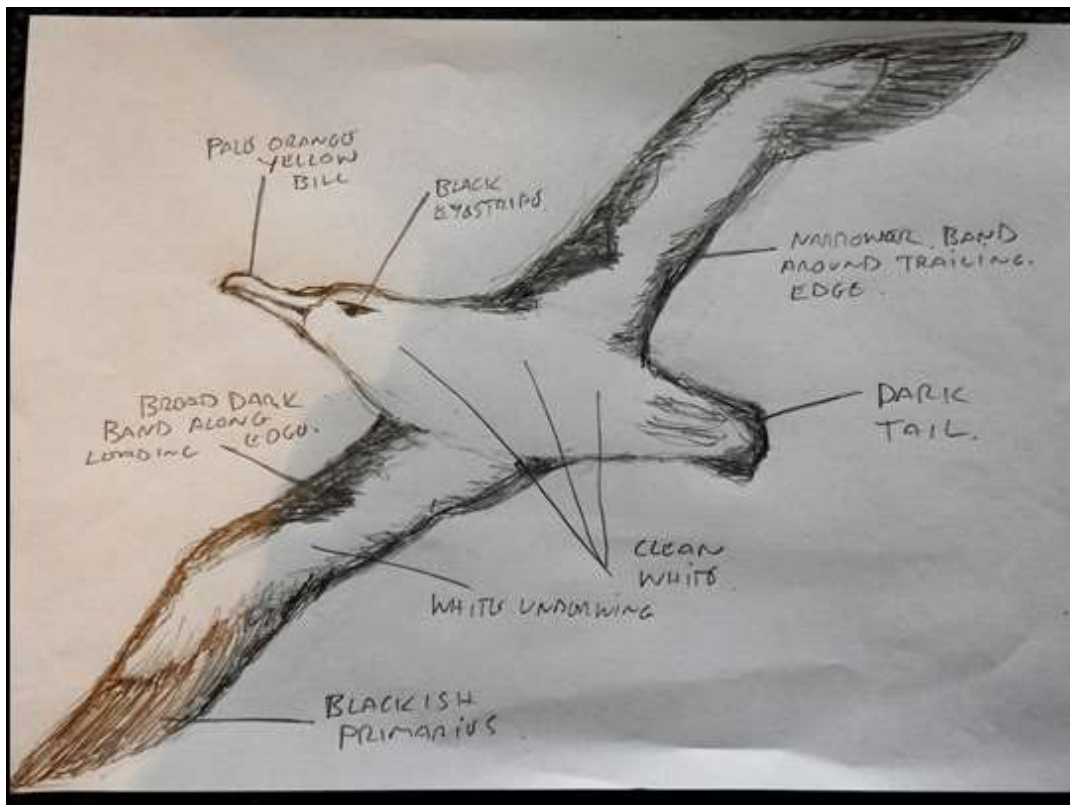
### **Head**

The head looked flattish and was clean white in colour. The nape and neck were also clean white. It had a short black eye stripe which really stood out. This and the black eye made the bird look as if it was wearing black eyeshadow.

### **Behaviour**

The flight resembled a Fulmar's at times. The bird barely flapped its wings as it glided past. It mainly held wings straight banked over and arched up with just the occasional flap. Wings occasionally held bowed as it skimmed over waves. It mainly stayed low too the sea as it passed by.

Accompanying sketches to support BBRC submission:



Dave Graham  
September 2018



## Dark-eyed Junco in Melrose, March-April 2017 – first record for Borders

David Parkinson

The Dark-eyed Junco, a native of eastern North America, is a very rare visitor to the British Isles with only 40 previous British records, the last being to the Point of Ayre, Isle of Man on 3 April 2016, a first for the island.

You can imagine my surprise when I received an email from Andrew Bramhall alerting me to a report of a strange bird in a garden no more than 400 m from my house.

I immediately made my way to the house and was greeted by Ian and Zena Forsyth the owners. They showed me their rear garden which faces open countryside with the Eildon Hills beyond and has Dingleton Burn running through the bottom of it. They had first noticed the unusual bird feeding on the ground along with other species on 31 March and, despite searching the field guide they owned, were unable to identify it. They described its behaviour as "hopping around on the lawn and jerking its tail".

On 1 April, the unidentified bird was still frequenting their garden so they telephoned Andrew who suggested that they take photos and email them to him. The bird did not return to their garden on the following day and a thorough search of the neighbourhood by me, Andrew and his son Richard could not locate it. So, only Ian and Zena were lucky enough to see the bird, but at least we had their photographs, from which Richard Bramhall suggested the bird was a Dark-eyed Junco.

The lack of brown on the head and back suggests that the Melrose bird was a male of the race *Junco h. hyemalis* and is most likely to have overshot its breeding range due to adverse weather conditions while flying north along the eastern seaboard of North America.

This is the first record of this species in the Scottish Borders and the 13<sup>th</sup> record for Scotland.

The report was accepted by the BBRC on the basis of two photographs, one of which is shown below:



## Index for Classified List

Arctic Skua	81	Diver:	Great Black-backed	92
Arctic Tern	86	Black-throated	Herring	90
Albatross:		Great Northern	Iceland	92
Black-browed	45	Red-throated	Lesser Black-backed	89
		White-billed	Mediterranean	88
Balearic Shearwater	46	Dove:		
Bar-headed Goose	150	Collared	Harrier:	
Barn Owl	97	Rock	Hen	55
Barnacle Goose	25	Stock	Marsh	55
Bittern	50	Dunlin	Hawfinch	141
Black Grouse	41	Dunnock	Hen Harrier	55
Black Redstart	129		Herring Gull	90
Black Swan	150	Eider	Hobby	109
Black Tern	85		Hooded Crow	113
Blackbird	125	Feral Pigeon	House Martin	117
Black-browed Albatross	45	Fieldfare	House Sparrow	134
Blackcap	119	Fulmar		
Black-headed Gull	87		Iceland Gull	92
Black-tailed Godwit	73	Gadwall		
Black-throated Diver	45	Gannet	Jack Snipe	78
Blue Tit	114	Garden Warbler	Jackdaw	112
Brambling	140	Garganey	Jay	111
Bullfinch	143	Glaucous Gull	Kestrel	107
Bunting:		Glossy Ibis	Kingfisher	104
Lapland	148	Goldcrest	Kittiwake	86
Reed	149	Golden Plover	Knot	74
Snow	148	Goldeneye		
Buzzard:		Goldfinch	Lapland Bunting	148
Common	59	Goose:	Lapwing	69
		Bar-headed	Lesser Black-backed Gull	89
Canada Goose	24	Barnacle	Lesser Redpoll	145
Carrion Crow	113	Canada	Lesser Whitethroat	120
Chaffinch	140	Greylag	Linnet	144
Chiffchaff	118	Pink-footed	Little Auk	84
Coal Tit	115	White-fronted	Little Egret	50
Collared Dove	96	Goosander	Little Grebe	52
Common Crossbill	146	Goshawk	Little Owl	98
Common Gull	88	Grasshopper Warbler	Little Ringed Plover	71
Common Redpoll	146	Great Black-backed Gull	Long-eared Owl	100
Common Redpoll (Mealy)	146	Great Crested Grebe	Long-tailed Duck	35
Common Rosefinch	142	Great Northern Diver	Long-tailed Skua	82
Common Sandpiper	75	Great Skua	Long-tailed Tit	117
Common Scoter	35	Great Spotted		
Common Tern	85	Woodpecker	Magpie	111
Coot	64	Great Tit	Mallard	30
Cormorant	48	Green Sandpiper	Mandarin Duck	27
Cormorant (Continental)	48	Green Woodpecker	Manx Shearwater	46
Corncrake	63	Greenfinch	Marsh Harrier	55
Crane	66	Greenshank	Marsh Tit	115
Crossbill	146	Grey Heron	Meadow Pipit	139
Cuckoo	97	Grey Partridge	Mealy Redpoll	146
Curlew	72	Grey Phalarope	Mediterranean Gull	88
		Grey Plover	Merlin	108
		Grey Wagtail	Mistle Thrush	127
		Greylag Goose	Moorhen	63
		Guillemot	Mute Swan	17
		Gull:		
		Black-headed	Nightjar	103
		Common	Nuthatch	122
		Glaucous		
Dark-eyed Junco	148		Osprey	61
Dipper	123			

Oystercatcher	66	Shelduck	26	Western Bonelli's	
Paddyfield Warbler	121	Short-eared Owl	102	Warbler	118
Pallas's Warbler	117	Shoveler	33	Wheatear	133
Parakeet:		Siskin	147	Whimbrel	71
Ring-necked	111	Skua:		Whinchat	130
Peregrine	110	Arctic	81	White Wagtail (alba)	137
Pheasant	43	Great	82	White-billed Diver	45
Pied Flycatcher	129	Long-tailed	82	White-fronted Goose	22
Pied Wagtail	137	Pomarine	81	Whitethroat	120
Pied/White Wagtail	137	Skylark	116	Whooper Swan	18
Pink-footed Goose	20	Snipe	80	Wigeon	27
Pintail	32	Snow Bunting	148	Willow Warbler	118
Plover:		Song Thrush	126	Woodpecker:	
Golden	68	Sooty Shearwater	46	Great Spotted	106
Grey	69	Sparrowhawk	58	Green	106
Little Ringed	71	Spotted Flycatcher	128	Wood Sandpiper	77
Ringed	71	Starling	123	Wood Warbler	118
Pochard	33	Stock Dove	94	Woodcock	79
Pomarine Skua	81	Stonechat	131	Woodpigeon	95
Puffin	83	Swallow	116	Wren	123
Purple Sandpiper	74	Swan:		Yellow Wagtail	135
Quail	39	Black	150	Yellow-browed Warbler	117
Raven	113	Mute	17	Yellowhammer	148
Razorbill	83	Whooper	18		
Red Grouse	40	Swift	103		
Red Kite	54	Tawny Owl	98		
Red-breasted Flycatcher	129	Teal	28		
Red-breasted Merganser	37	Tern:			
Red-legged Partridge	39	Arctic	85		
Redshank	77	Black	85		
Redstart	130	Common	85		
Red-throated Diver	44	Sandwich	85		
Redwing	127	Tit:			
Reed Bunting	149	Blue	114		
Reed Warbler	122	Coal	115		
Ring Ouzel	125	Great	114		
Ring-necked Parakeet	111	Long-tailed	117		
Ringed Plover	71	Marsh	115		
Robin	129	Tree Pipit	138		
Rock Dove	93	Tree Sparrow	135		
Rock Pipit	139	Treecreeper	122		
Rook	112	Tufted Duck	33		
Ruff	74	Turnstone	73		
Sand Martin	116	Twite	145		
Sandpiper:		Velvet Scoter	36		
Common	75	Warbler:			
Green	76	Garden	119		
Purple	74	Grasshopper	120		
Wood	77	Paddyfield	121		
Sandwich Tern	85	Pallas's	117		
Scaup	34	Reed	122		
Sedge Warbler	121	Sedge	121		
Shag	48	Western Bonelli's	118		
Shearwater:		Willow	118		
Balearic	46	Wood Warbler	118		
Manx	46	Water Rail	63		
Sooty	46	Waxwing	122		