



Borders Bird Report

2019

No. 36

Scottish Ornithologists' Club Borders Branch

Borders Bird Report

2019

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Front cover image: Hoopoe at St Abb's Head. May. John Walker. Back cover image: Curlew at Garvald Toll. June. Alistair Cutter.

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Introduction

General round-up

Welcome to the Borders Bird Report for 2019, the 36th Report produced by the Borders Branch of the Scottish Ornithologists' Club. The Report is based on a total of just short of 60,200 records, the vast majority of which were submitted via BirdTrack with other records from the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS), the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) and the annual Rocky Shore Count, which, this year, because of poor weather, took place between 27- and 29-Jan. Additional records came from the St Abb's Head NNR Seabird Report, the SE Scotland Raptor Study Group Report with a few records submitted directly to either the Region's recorders or to the Report editor. As far as we are aware, this is also the first year in which Borders Ringing Group records have been integrated into the Classified List and not just an adjunct to the Report.

A total of 214 species were recorded, a fairly typical tally, eg 2018 - 209 species, 2017 - 218 species, 2016 - 219 species and 2015 - 212 species. Two species were added to the Borders Bird List, bringing it up to 321 species. A male **Lesser Scaup** was reported from 3 sites in and around St Abb's Head NNR at Millar's Moss, near Dowlaw and at Mire Loch between 18-May and 10-Jul. The bird was photographed attempting copulation with a Tufted Duck. Further inland, a ringed immature **Baltic Gull** (the nominate form of Lesser Black-backed Gull, *fuscus*) was seen on 6-Feb at Gunknowe Loch (Tweedbank). The bird had been ringed in Finland in 2018 as a chick. This was the first confirmed record of a Baltic Gull for Scotland.

Other scarcities reported were 5 fly-over **Spoonbills** at St Abb's Head on 2-Jun (only the second such record for Borders, the first being in 2013); a few single **Golden Eagle** records of birds from the Dumfries & Galloway release scheme; only the second sighting of a **Black-winged Stilt**, a juvenile seen at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Fouldean) on 29-Aug; and a **Siberian Chiffchaff** (ssp. *tristis*) that was seen at Mire Loch between 6-Oct and 6-Nov which was the first report since 2004. Other scarcities reported were a **Pallas's Warbler** at Mire Loch on 21-Oct, the first record since 2013, while a **Siberian Lesser Whitethroat** (ssp. *blythi*), seen at St Abb's Head on 6-Nov, was probably only the second record for Borders, and a **Grey-headed Yellow Wagtail** (*thunbergi*), also seen at Mire Loch on 10-May, was the first reported in Borders since 1998. The **Arctic Redpoll** that was reported at the end of 2018 at The Bell (Cranshaws) continued to be periodically reported until the 2-Feb.

For further highlights through the year readers are referred to *2019 in the Borders* on p 9.

In addition to the Classified List, this year's Bird Report has, as usual, some additional articles. On p 176, Clive Hartley reports on how our inland gulleries are faring and, still with gulls, Andrew Bramhall looks at how following up the sighting of ringed gulls at Gunknowe Loch gives an interesting insight into their migration. Continuing from the article on Breeding Bird Surveys in BBR 2018, the editor looks a little deeper at the background statistics to the Borders Bird Reports and how these help readers assess their usefulness in giving some idea of trends in bird populations. Finally, two rather sad articles. The first is by David Christie who has diligently reported monthly on the comings and goings at the short-lived Greenlaw Farm Pool at Fouldean since 2013, in which he writes about its final months before it was drained early in 2020, robbing us of what had quickly become something of a hot spot in the Borders. The second is an obituary of James Lough by his friend, Andrew Mitchell. James was a long-standing and well known contributor to records in the Borders.

And lastly, just to blow our own trumpet, the Borders Bird Report 2018 team and the recorders were chuffed to get a nomination for the BTO Marsh Award for Local Ornithology. Although we didn't win the award it was nonetheless very gratifying to get as far as the nomination stage.

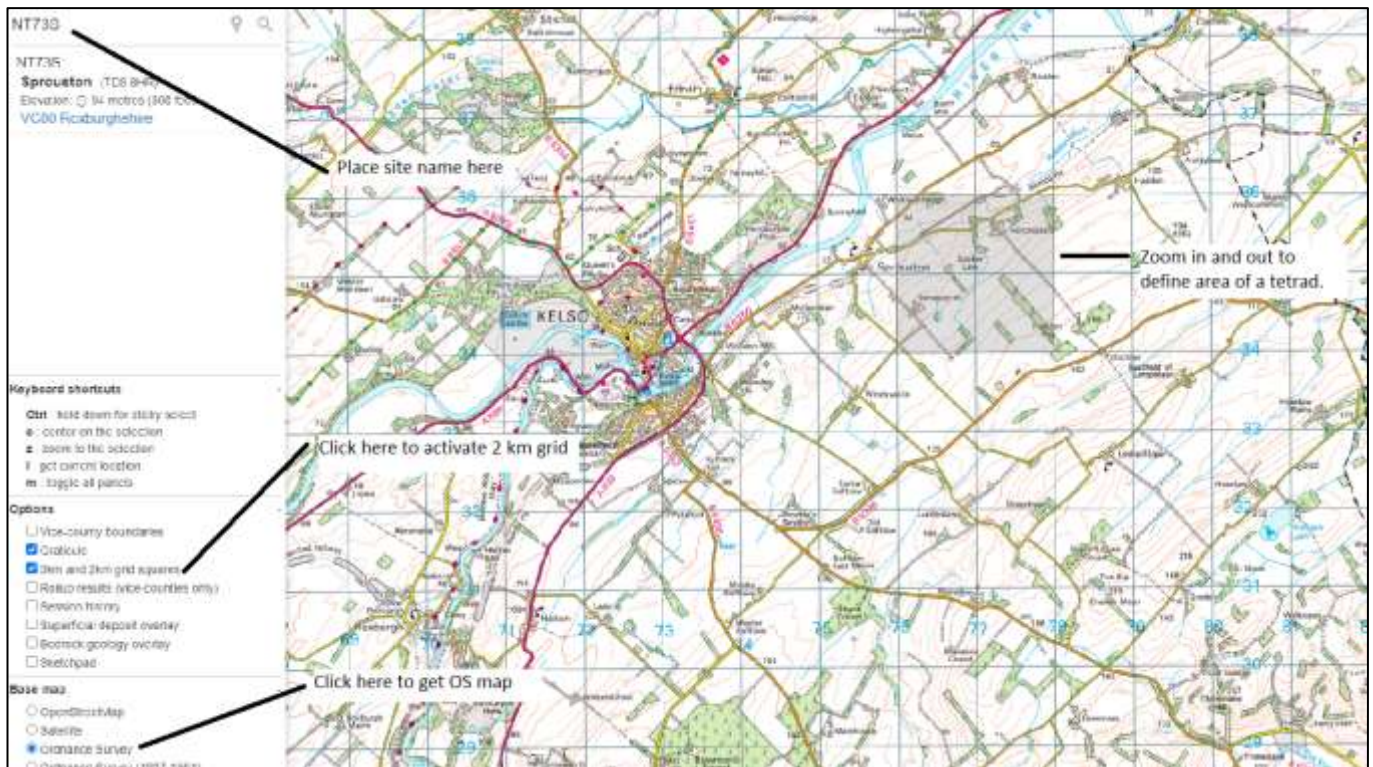
Submission and validation of records

Contributors are asked to submit their records via the BTO's BirdTrack - over 90% of records submitted in 2019 came through BirdTrack. Not only is it a means of ensuring that your records are secure and can be readily downloaded, but this method makes the job of collating data for the Bird Report very much easier. Using BirdTrack also means that you are contributing to a national database which can be used for future research.

There are a few guidelines when submitting records via BirdTrack which the Report team would be very grateful if you followed:

- give a site name which is as useful as possible, ie be as precise as is practicable; this is particularly useful if your site extends outside the boundaries of a tetrad (2 x 2 km grid square). If you are unsure where your site is in relation to the OS grid of tetrads then you might want to use the Location Search tab in BirdTrack when establishing a new site or editing an existing one, ie if you know the likely tetrad of the site then input that into the “search grid reference...”.

Alternatively, you can download the Cucaera app from www.cucaera.co.uk/grp. By zooming in and out you can see the location of tetrads. Make sure that you set the app at Previous version by clicking in the top right hand corner.



An example of a map extract from the Cucaera app.

- if your site extends outside of a tetrad then it is a good idea to give the terminal points or some locations at the approximate extremities when naming your site, eg Sprouston-Redden (Kelso).
- do not use site names that are meaningful to only you but not to others, eg “home” or “front garden”.
- please get into the habit of including breeding evidence; currently only a small fraction of records show any breeding evidence in the appropriate season.
- give the number of birds present; even a rough approximation is better than leaving this bit of information blank - you can give an idea of limits in the comments section, eg 10+, +/-20, etc.
- where possible give a complete bird list, ie all birds seen or heard rather than just the less common species.
- If you are a WeBS counter it would be easier for collation purposes to submit your records on BirdTrack and then use the facility on WeBS to automatically download those records. Refer to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFIF5NVbMKc&feature=youtu.be>

If you do not submit records by BirdTrack then you might want to send your records directly to the recorders at bordersrecorder@gmail.com. You can also ring either recorder on:

Martin Moncrieff tel: 07851 800081

David Parkinson tel: 07979 365134.

If you wish to submit records directly to the recorders, please include the following information: species name; site (see earlier guidelines on p 4), date of observation, count, your name and further comments where relevant, eg breeding evidence. If you would like a *pro forma* Excel file then please ask.

All records must be submitted by the last day in January of the succeeding year, eg records for 2020 must be submitted no later than 31-Jan 2021. Please do not leave a large number of records to be submitted at the last minute; from the recorders' point of view it is better if you submit records regularly.

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.

UK rarities are considered by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). When a species on the BBRC list is entered on BirdTrack a red button will appear alongside "Notifications" on the home page and when clicked will automatically take you to the BBRC website where the relevant form for a description can be found. Species not considered rarities by BBRC but considered rarities in Scotland are reviewed by the Scottish Birds Records Committee (a full list of those species considered by SBRC can be found on the SOC website).

Some species are classed as local rarities and require a report to be submitted to the Borders recorders. You will be lead to a validation form which you can complete if submitting records via BirdTrack. Otherwise you can request a Rarities Report emailing 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.

The following species require a local description only: Bean Goose(Taiga and Tundra), American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Surf Scoter, Ptarmigan, Capercaillie, White-billed Diver, Balearic Shearwater, Leach's Petrel, Bittern, Great White Egret, White Stork, Glossy Ibis, Spoonbill, Honey Buzzard, White-tailed Eagle, Rough-legged Buzzard, Golden Eagle, Spotted Crake, Corncrake, Crane, Avocet, American Golden Plover, Kentish Plover, Dotterel, Temminck's Stint, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope, Grey Phalarope, Long-tailed Skua, Black Guillemot, Little Tern, Roseate Tern, Sabine's Gull, Mediterranean Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Turtle Dove, Little Owl, Nightjar, Hoopoe, Bee-eater, Wryneck, Hobby, Golden Oriole, Chough, Firecrest, Penduline Tit, Willow Tit, Bearded Tit, Shore Lark, Pallas's Warbler, Chiffchaff (*Siberian-tristis*), Blyth's Reed Warbler, Marsh Warbler, Icterine Warbler, Rose-coloured Starling, Bluethroat, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Yellow Wagtail (grey-headed *thunbergi*), Richard's Pipit, Olive-backed Pipit, Water Pipit, Hawfinch, Common Rosefinch, Little Bunting, Corn Bunting.

Explanation of site names

The practice started in BBR 2015 of giving some sites a locator in brackets, eg Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) continues in this Report. This enables readers to gain some idea of the general location for many of the out-of-the-way sites in Borders.

Mindful of the problems of sometimes using the same name for two sites or more than one name for the same site, the Report team have undertaken to give every site a standardised name. The system that we have adopted automatically assigns each site a tetrad. Currently we are still attempting to keep a standardised name for sites reported at 1 km sq scale but from 2020 these names will be based on tetrads. More information will be given in the 2020 Report.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in the Report:

AON	Apparently Occupied Nest
AOS	Apparently Occupied Site
BBRC	British Birds Rarities Committee
BBR	Borders Bird Report
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey

BRG	Borders Ringing Group
br	brood
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
NNR	National Nature Reserve
PIT	Passive Integrated Transponder tag
Pr	present but no count submitted
RSC	Rocky Shore Count
SESA2	South-east Scotland Atlas, 2007-13
SOC	Scottish Ornithologists' Club
ssp.	subspecies
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 (eg 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 of records which can be ascribed to "H" is not possible to determine. Contributors are encouraged to report the highest level of breeding evidence that is practicable.

Where abbreviations above have a number before them it refers to the number of cases of evidence, eg 2P refers to 2 pairs, while NY(4) refers to 4 young in a single nest.

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 (not necessarily the same 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.

Contributors of records

Records were submitted by 228 observers (individuals and groups). Contributors with more than 500 records are shown in bold:

A: A Aldron; D Alexander; T Allen; M Anthony; M Archer; P Armstrong.

B: P Ball; J Ballantyne; S Bayne; D Belford; B Bell; D Bell; M Betts; **EL Bickmore**; C Bill; C Blackie; Borders Ringing Group (BRG); **AT Bramhall**; **R Bramhall**; M & E Breeze; T Brewis; C Brown; J Budge; J Burns; S Bush; R Butler; A Butlin.

C: E Carnell; M,D & A Carter; B Catalano; R Catalano; A Chambers; G Checkley; J Chettle; G Christer; D Christie; T Churchyard; M Cockburn; I Combe; H Connick; J Connor; N Cook; C Coombs; R Cowan; R Coyle; S Craig; G Cranshaw; M Cummings; GJ Cundall; A Cutter.

D: C Dale; P Dean; I Dobson; GW Dodds; TW Dougall; J Douglas; M Down; J Drew; R Drew; C Dudgeon; H & S Duncan; D Dunstan.

E: M Eaton; B Edwards; JL Ellis; **F Evans**; L Evans.

F: D Farr; AR Farrar.

G: M Gallico; R Gant; G Garner; N Godden; **J Gordon**; PR Gordon; **DK Graham**; L Grant; C Gray; S Gray; **CD Green**.

H: JDH Hadfield; **N Hammatt**; **C Hartley**; A Hashmi; **C Hatsell**; A Heavisides; **M Henderson**; S Henderson; AJ Highton; RD Hind; M Hogarth; M Holling; K Houston; E Hurst.

I: K Ingleby; JB Irving;

J: A Jameson; P Jeavons; M & B Jones; S Jones.

K: N Kale; A Kerr; G Kerr; B Khursheed; F Kilgour; P King; M Kinghorn; MS Kirby; K Knight.

L: IG Lairdy; DA Lake; MB Lamire; A Lawrence; E Lawson; R Lee; K Liddle; M Lindsay; D Lintott; D Long; J Long; J Lough.

M: E Macdonald; C Mackay; V MacLennan; S Malimbek; R Manning; J Maquire; JP Martin; J Mason; W & P Mason; P Massey; F Mawby; **R McBeath**; D McGarvie; J McGuire; J McKenzie; H Mckerchar; D Mckinnon; L McLeish; DB McNee; S McNeil; C McQueen; J McTague; B Meikle; D Methven; B & J Miller; SP Milligan; A Mitchell; **M Moncrieff**; R Moore; SD Morton; C Moses; **AP Mossop**; AD Mowle.

N: R Nelson; J Nicholson; P & M Noble.

O: D Orr-Ewing;

P: D Parkinson; **G Paterson**; G Penton; **M Pitt**; NR Porter; JG Powell; L Preston; M Prior.

R: C Ralph; **T Reed**; A Reid; **CK Robeson**; MB Ross; G Runciman; A Russell; C Rymer.

S: R Safford; A Sandeman; **G Scott**; M Scott; C Shaw; M Shaw; E Shilland; S Sim; A Sinclair; R Singleton; D Small; A Smith; K Smith; RS Smith; C Smout; J Spenman; M Spriggs; A Spybey; M Stamp; G Stephen; L Steward; **N Stratton**; J Strickland; R Strong; JA Sutherland; PJ Swinhoe; SWT Duns; M Symonds.

T: HM Tanner; S Taylor; C Tees; A Tharme; J Thomson; H Tooby; J Towill; S Turnbull; BA Turner.

W: J Walker; SD Ward; SJ Ward; D Warden; J Warman; **CW Watson**; R Watterson; J White; D Whitley; N Wilkinson; J Willet; M Williams; J Wilson; D Wolfenden; J Wooliams.

Y: K Youngs.

Acknowledgments

All contributors who submitted records (the foundation of any bird report) are gratefully thanked (see alphabetical list above). Thanks also to Chris Green and Gavin Paterson for covering those sections of species summaries in the Classified List shown against their names in the Contents page, as well as giving considerable and invaluable help in putting together the Report in general. Without their help this Report would have been published weeks later than was the case and with reduced accuracy.

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. Martin Moncrieff transferred records from the Borders Bird News and hide logs into BirdTrack and Tom Dougall produced the annual report of the Borders Ringing Group. Clive Hartley supplied the report on inland gulleries, Mark Holling submitted

the summary of the Rocky Shore Count and David Christie produced the article on Greenlaw Farm Pool at Foulden. Andrew Mitchell wrote the obituary on James Lough. Chris Green, Martin Moncrieff, Gavin Paterson and Malcolm Ross proof read the final draft of the Report. Photographs were submitted by Alistair Cutter, Dave Graham, Ciaran Hatsell, Dougie Methven, Lisa McLeish, Andrew Mossop, John Walker and Bob Watterson. A special thanks is also given to Tom Dougall and Alan Kerr for expediting access to the Borders Ringing Group's records on the BTO ringing site.

Thanks are also given to a group of volunteers who gave up their time to plough through lists of grid squares in order to give standardised names to 1 km squares: Chris Green, Alan Kerr, Martin Moncrieff, Andrew Mossop, Malcolm Ross, Michael Scott and Bob Watterson. Finally, Ian Andrews kindly edited the general map used in *Birds in South-east Scotland 2007-13* to tailor it for this Report.

To all of these contributors I give my thanks. Any mistakes or omissions, apologies for which are offered in advance, are entirely the fault of the editor.



General geography of Borders with significant bird watching sites shown in red.
(with thanks to Ian Andrews)

2019 in the Borders

January

The first week was dominated by high pressure centred over the British Isles, bringing mainly dry weather with weak winds. Toward the end of the second week the high drifted south allowing fronts to bring periods of rain, accompanied by strong north-westerlies. Between 17th and 24th frosty nights prevailed and a deep depression led to strong northerlies on 27th. Temperatures were about the same as the long-term average (1981-2010) but rainfall was only about 20-30% of the average. Winds were nearly always from NW-SW.

Peak counts of **Canada Geese** supported the idea that numbers of this species are increasing in the Borders. Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) had a record count of 170 on 8th, 95 were seen on the Tweed between Sprouston and Redden on 29th and, further downstream, 77 were reported from below Paxton House on 17th. The 4,000 **Pink-footed Geese** counted on 20th at Sandyknowe-Bettyfield (Smailholm) equalled the peak counts of the past two years and confirmed the status of this site for winter roosts, while the minimum count of 3,000 at East Nisbet on the 8th also showed the importance of the Teviot Haughs. The 249 **Whooper Swans** counted at Jardinefield (Whitsome) on 4th was notable.

The **Great White Egret** that was regularly reported from Oct-2018 continued to be seen around Lees Haugh (Coldstream) area. On 20th, 2 birds were seen within 50 m of each other while records of a single **Little Egret** came from various locations on the Tweed between the English border and Kelso. The first-winter **Crane** reported from 14-Nov 2018 also continued to be seen around Lees Haugh. Five **Green Sandpipers** were reported from Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 6th.

A **Black Redstart** was well watched at Burnmouth from 23rd until the end of the month, a flock of 220 **Tree Sparrows** was reported from Newmains (Reston) on 28th and 80 **Brambling** were estimated at Hunt Law N (Heriot) on 20th. The Hirsell recorded 75 **Greenfinches** on 20th and the **Arctic Redpoll** reported at the end of 2018 at The Bell (Cranshaw) along with up to 60 **Common** and about 280 **Lesser Redpolls**, continued to be reported for much of the month.



Mandarin Duck. Kelso. January. Bob Watterson.

February

Variable conditions prevailed in the first week as a succession of lows and ridges competed, bringing the bulk of the month's rain (as well as snow on 2nd) and temperatures that varied greatly between the west and the coast: -10°C at Peebles but -5°C near Paxton. On 8th-9th *Storm Eric* moved eastward and helped drag in southerly air which increased temperatures to 10°C but had little affect on wind strengths. Thereafter weather was controlled by high pressure over Europe, bringing long periods of dry, warm weather with little wind: temperatures reached an exceptional 16°C on 26th. Temperatures were about 2-3°C above the long-term average; rainfall was 50-70% of the average. Winds were largely from SW.

The 111 **Mute Swans** seen on 5th at Lees Haugh (Coldstream) was the largest February count in recent years. The first report of **Bewick's Swan** since 2011 was made on 16th, when 2 were seen at Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm). For much of the month Newmains (Reston) played host to 400-550 **Teal** and Wooden Loch's 74 **Tufted Ducks** on 6th was the largest count in the Borders since 2015. A female **Smew** was at The Hirsell between 15th and 17th.

The **Great White Egret** seen around Lees Haugh continued to be reported with some sightings further upstream at Birgham Haugh. Whether the bird reported from Bowmont Water: Belford-Elliesheugh (Hownam) on 10th was the same or another individual is not known. Similarly the **Little Egret** noted last month continued to be reported between Coldstream and Sprouston with additional reports from the area in and around the Teviot Haughs (Nisbet), where 2 were seen on 17th.

It was a good month for some of our scarcer raptors with **Golden Eagle** reported on two days, 4 records of **Goshawk** and one record each of a single **Hen Harrier** and a **Red Kite**.

The **Crane** seen in January around Lees Haugh continued to be reported.

A single **Mediterranean Gull** was at The Glack (Manor Valley) on 14th, a scarce inland occurrence. By far scarcer, in fact unique, was the sighting of a ringed immature **Baltic Gull** at Gunknowe Loch (Tweedbank) on 6th. Diligent reading of the ring number enabled the bird to be confirmed as the nominate form of Lesser Black-backed Gull *fuscus* which had been ringed as a chick in Finland in the previous July. This was the first confirmed record of Baltic Gull for Scotland.

Garvald Lodge (Dewar Burn) had a count of 26 **Ravens** on 13th. Newmains (Reston) attracted 65 **Skylarks** on 4th with 230 **Tree Sparrows** on the 2nd, accompanied by 340 **Yellowhammers**.



Robin. Darnick (Melrose). November. Lisa McLeish.

March

In the first week *Storm Freya* was pushed to the north, bringing rainfall and strong winds from the SW. Thereafter, conditions were changeable as a succession of fronts crossed the region. On 12th *Storm Gareth* also passed to the north and was responsible for northerly winds of up to 60 knots. The remainder of the month was changeable with more frontal activity and intervening ridges which brought some spring-like weather to welcome the first Chiffchaffs and Sand Martins. Temperatures were 1-2°C above average; rainfall was about 150% of the long-term average in the east but up to 200% the average in the south west. Winds were from NW-SW on 26 days.

The area in and around the Teviot Haughs (Nisbet-Wooden Loch) had exceptional counts of **Greylag Geese**, often in three figures, the highest being 472 on 25th. A **White-fronted Goose** (Greenland subspecies) was seen at Hallmanor Haugh (Manor Valley) on 27th. It was ringed at Wexford Slobs as a successfully breeding adult male in February 2017. It was later seen near the Ribble Estuary in November 2018.

The 2 **egret** species continued to be reported in much the same haunts as in previous months.

The first **Osprey** report of the year was made on 4th on the Tweed, 2 **Golden Eagles** were seen and 5 reports of **Red Kites** came from a spread of sites.

The **Crane**, present between Kelso and Coldstream on the Tweed, continued to be seen. Numbers of **Curlews** on passage at Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) reached 236 on 3rd. As far as can be determined, this is the highest count of Curlews in Borders at least since the first BBR in 1979; by 11th numbers had declined to 70.

There were 70 **Skylarks** reported at Hopehouse (Ettrick) on 10th. An early **Sand Martin** was also seen on 10th at Innerleithen and the same location, on 30th, had the first report of a **Swallow**. A number of widespread sites reported **Chiffchaffs** in numbers greater than the occasional record of singles in the winter with a maximum count of 15 at Bowmont Forest (Heiton) on 28th. A **Ring Ouzel** was noted at Holms Waterhead (Kingleldores) on 31st and the first **Wheatear** was recorded at St Abbs-Northfield on 21st. The flock of **Tree Sparrows**, in excess of 200, was still at Newmains (Reston) on 8th.

April

A succession of fronts in the first four days brought some heavy rain to coastal areas (45.1 mm on 3rd near Paxton) but rainfall was more moderate inland. Thereafter high pressure took over, bringing mainly dry conditions but a cold feel with largely south easterly winds. Mean daily maxima were slightly above the long-term average but minima were about 1°C below. Rainfall was about 20-30% below average and 75% of days had winds between NE and SE.

At 150-170, the count of **Barnacle Geese** flying over Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch on 29th and then a few minutes later at Whitsome was higher than usual for spring counts. A count of 608 was made of **Greylag Geese** at Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) on 5th. Birgham Haugh had 190 **Mute Swans** on 7th, the biggest annual peak since 2015. A count of 26 **Shelduck** at Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Moss on 26th appears to have been the highest count in recent years – part of an upward trend in inland breeding since the early 1990s. A **Quail** was reported from Gavinton-Langton Bridge (Duns) on 15th.

On 22nd a **Marsh Harrier** was seen in the east of the Region and 10 **Buzzards** were reported from Huntford (Carter Bar) on 20th.

Up to 6 **Little Ringed Plovers** were observed at a site in Roxburghshire and 63 **Snipe** were at Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 7th - the biggest count submitted for this species for the year.

Five **Sandwich Terns** at Eyemouth on 20th were the first reported this year.

The first **Cuckoo** of the year was seen at Whisgills (Newcastleton) on the relatively late date of 28th, while the first sighting of a **Swift** was made on 21st at Lees Haugh-Hirsell and the first report of **House Martins** came from 3 sites on 4th. Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) and Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) reported the first **Willow Warblers** on 11th. A **Wood Warbler** was reported on 26th at St Abbs-Northfield and the same site reported the first **Sedge Warbler** on 20th, while nearby Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) had the first **Grasshopper Warbler** on 19th. The first **Garden Warbler** was seen on 28th at Edston-Manor Bridge (Peebles), the first **Lesser Whitethroat** was recorded at St Abbs-Northfield on 22nd and the first **Whitethroat** was observed at Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) on 19th.

A very big movement of **Fieldfares** was evident on 17th when 2,000 were seen at Peat Law (Oxton). There were two sites that reported **Pied Flycatchers**: Abbey St Bathans and Mire Loch (St Abb's Head), with the latter site reporting 2 **Black Redstarts** on 18th. The first **Whinchat** was reported from Hawkshaw (Tweedsmuir) on 23rd and on 20th the first sighting of **Yellow Wagtail** was made at Tweed: Sprouston. An impressive count of 42 **Pied Wagtails** was made at Millar's Moss (St Abbs) on 2nd and the first report of **Tree Pipit** came from Thirlestane Lodge (Ettrick) on 28th.

May

Although a very variable month the overall temperatures, rainfall and sunshine were typical of the long-term average. Winds were also variable in direction with no obvious prevailing wind.

The first report of fledged **Canada Geese** was on 7th from Watch Water Reservoir and the first for **Greylag Geese** came from Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream) on 5th, while on 14th, at Kelso NE, the first recorded fledged **Mute Swans** were seen. Odd **Whooper Swans** were still being reported up to 14th from Folly Loch and Tweed: Kingsmeadows-Kailzie. On 18th a male **Lesser Scaup** was seen at Millar's Moss (St Abbs). This first for Borders was well watched and, interestingly was seen (and photographed) to attempt to copulate (unsuccessfully) with a Tufted Duck*. The last of the **Goldeneyes** were reported on 1st from The Hirsell and Alemoor Reservoir (Hawick).

St Abb's Head NNR reported a total of 11 pairs of **Gannets** on nests but unfortunately none were successful.

Reports of probable and confirmed breeding for **Little Ringed Plover** came from 3 sites.

Four **Common Terns** at Lees Haugh NE (Coldstream) on 8th were the first reports this year, despite the inland location, and the same number of **Arctic Terns** at Dunglass on 12th were also the first of the year and the only records for this month. Thirty-nine **Stock Doves** at Jardinefield (Whitsome) on 12th was the highest recorded in Borders since 2004. A **Hoopoe** visited St Abb's Head on 10th and 11th, a Hobby was recorded at Tweed: Mertoun Bridge-Mertoun House on 18th and over 1,000 **Sand Martins** were seen at Lees Weir (Coldstream) between 3rd and 7th. A single **Fieldfare** was still around at Cowieslinn road-end (Portmore) on 1st and the first **Spotted Flycatcher** was reported on 9th from Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head). A remarkable 607 **Siskins** were ringed at Peebles for the month as a whole.

* For a description of the attempted breeding of the Lesser Scaup with a Tufted Duck refer to *Scottish Birds*, 40 (1): 70-71.

June

A month dominated by cyclonic activity with about 60% of winds from between south and west. Temperatures were mainly around average, rainfall for most areas was 25-50% above average.

A single **Pink-footed Goose** tarried at Hule Moss on 9th, as did single **Whooper Swans** at Folly Loch on 7th and Yair Bridge-Raelees Wood (Caddonfoot) on 10th. The apparent growth in **Shelduck** numbers continued with a count of c. 35 on 28th at Cowdrait-Lamberton Holdings (Burnmouth), although the site perhaps suggests that these were birds on the move. The **Lesser Scaup** discovered on 18th May at Millar's Moss (St Abbs) was also seen at Mire Loch and at Harly Darlies (Dowlaw) throughout the month. Something of a scarcity in June was a **Red-throated Diver** off St Abb's Head on 9th with up to 6 **Manx Shearwaters** seen between Eyemouth-St Abb's Head on 8th and 9th. St Abb's Head also reported only the second record for Borders of **Spoonbill**, 5 seen flying north on 2nd.

A **Nightjar** was reported from the Greenlaw area on 18th.

An estimate of at least 40 **Long-tailed Tits** was made at The Hirsell on 9th, apparently the highest count in Borders since 2008.

July

More than 50% of winds came from between south and west. Temperatures tended to be 1-2°C above the long-term average and rainfall for most areas was 25-30% greater than the average (1981-2010).

An unringed **Ruddy Shelduck** (assumed to be an escape) was seen at Blount Island (Ladykirk) on 16th while the **Lesser Scaup** that arrived at Mire Loch last month continued to be seen until at least 10th.

A count of 125 **Manx Shearwaters** was made off St Abb's Head on 2nd.

An adult **Crane** was reported from the Birgham (Coldstream) area on 17th, something which, in an erratic fashion, seems to be a more common occurrence these days. The first report of southward passage of **Whimbrel** was on 9th, with a single at St Abb's Head, and a single **Ruff** was reported from Millar's Moss (St Abbs) and Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) on 29th. Further evidence of passage came in the form of 18 **Common Sandpipers** at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) on 18th.

A **Mediterranean Gull** was reported at St Abbs-Northfield on 8th and 2 individuals were seen at Eyemouth on the following day. A single **Pomarine Skua** was seen at St Abb's Head on 2nd and 4 **Arctic Skuas** were seen off St Abbs-Northfield on 28th.

The only record of **Marsh Tit** for the year was of 2 birds at Gavinton on 6th – a species that is probably more numerous than this one record suggests but is nonetheless in a parlous state. On 9th, a **Rose-coloured Starling** was seen at Eyemouth and for the month as a whole a remarkable 873 **Siskins** were ringed at Peebles.

August

Largely cyclonic with frequent periods of rainy weather. Summer-like interval between 23rd-26th brought dry weather with high temperatures. Overall temperatures were above 1981-2000 averages. Rainfall above averages by c. 75%. Sunshine averages slightly about average. Often unseasonably breezy. 60% of winds came from a westerly direction.

Greylag Goose had its highest count of the year at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) when 1,470 were counted on 17th. Sightings of a male, un-ringed **Ruddy Shelduck** were made at the same site from 17th. Whether this bird was the same individual as that observed at Blount Island (Ladykirk) last month is not known. Also on 17th, 55 **Teal** arrived at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden).

The now apparently established pattern of dispersing **Little Egrets** turning-up in August continued this year with one bird reported from Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) on 13th and 2 on 20th.

As passage continued, 12 **Knot** were at Dunglass on 18th and up to 3 **Ruff** were present at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) for much of the month, as well as a **Wood Sandpiper** at the same site on 8th and a **Greenshank** from 7th to 15th. A report of the latter species also came from Fruid Reservoir on 25th.

Other post-breeding movements, in the form of flocking **Lesser Black-backed Gulls**, were reported, among other places, from Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch, where c. 110 were following the plough on 20th. Eighty-three **Sandwich Terns** at St Abb's Head-Black Gable on 4th is the highest count reported since 2013. After an absence of any records from last year, a single **Long-tailed Skua** was reported from Eyemouth on 10th.

The final **Cuckoo** record of the year was from Leadburn Community Woodland (Leadburn) on 26th.

September

With the exception of the week 16th-23rd weather was dominated by low pressure bringing breezy westerlies and often wet conditions. The swan-song for summer corresponded to the third week when high pressure brought some high daily maxima and cold nights. Overall temperatures were near to average, rainfall in the east was up to 20% above average and up to 50% above average in the west. Winds were from a westerly direction for 75% of the month and from the south east for 25%.

A maximum count of 11 pale-bellied **Brent Geese** was made at St Abb's Head on 19th, one of three reports, while 720 **Barnacle Geese** were reported from the same site on 30th with the first sighting on 19th. Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) had a count of 1,344 **Greylag Geese** on 8th and the first autumn record for **Pink-footed Goose** was of 30 on 3rd from St Abb's Head with a maximum count of c. 4,000 from Hule Moss on 26th. Meanwhile the first record of **Whooper Swans** came in on 18th when 2 birds were seen on the Teviot Haughs at Nisbet. The **Ruddy Duck** seen last month continued to be seen at Foulden until 18th and a female **Mandarin Duck** frequented The Hirsell on 2nd. Passage of **Wigeon** got well under way with 71 seen off St Abb's Head on 18th. On the Tweed between Kelso and Coldstream a very large count of 527 **Mallard** was made and **Goldeneyes** arrived well ahead of schedule this year with the first report of a single from Haining Loch (Selkirk) on 6th with 7 birds noted offshore of St Abb's Head-Black Gable on 18th. A count of 20 **Red-breasted Mergansers** was made off St Abb's Head-Black Gable on 18th and 15 **Red-throated Divers** were off St Abbs on 29th with a single **Great Northern Diver** also off St Abb's Head on 8th. The same site reported 2 **Sooty Shearwaters** on 17th-22nd.

The first autumn sighting of **Grey Plover** was of a singleton and came from St Abbs on 19th and a single **Black-tailed Godwit** was reported on 12-13th at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden). An unusual report was of a **Knot** at Hule Moss on 14th (c. 27 km from the coast) – however, not as far inland as the bird reported at Folly Loch in 1999.

A **Sabine's Gull** was seen on the evening of 17th, close inshore off St Abbs. Other reports followed in the vicinity, down to Eyemouth on 19th. Three **Mediterranean Gulls** were also reported off St Abbs on 19th. **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** roosting at Hule Moss while on passage numbered c. 7,000 on 26th, at least equalling the estimate made there in 2010.

Numbers of skuas on passage were healthy: there were 10 records for **Great Skua** (maximum of 7 on 17th); 5 records of **Pomarine Skua** (maximum of 5 on 18th); 12 records of **Arctic Skua** (maximum of 13 on 18th) and a record of a single **Long-tailed Skua**, also on 18th. Nearly all records came from between St Abb's Head and St Abbs with one or two from off Eyemouth and one **Great Skua** spotted at Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor).

The year's final record of a **Swift** was made of a juvenile at Manderston-Buxley (Duns) on 24th.

A **Hobby** was reported from Newmains (Reston) on 26th.

The last record for **Sand Martin** was made on 28th at Heatherhope Reservoir (Hownam). Nine records of **Yellow-browed Warbler** came from Mire Loch-St Abbs area and 7 records from the Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) area. The single largest count was of 3, from Mire Loch, on 26th. **Sedge Warbler** had its last record on 26th. The only record

for **Reed Warbler** was from its usual haunt at Mire Loch and was for 9th, while a single **Barred Warbler** was recorded at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) on 23rd. Mire Loch also had the first autumn record of **Fieldfare**: a single on 25th, while the first of the **Redwings** was seen at Haining Loch (Selkirk) on 6th. Between 20 and 25 **Spotted Flycatchers** (including juveniles) were recorded at Barony Castle (Eddleston) on 8th - 17 were counted here in August, 2016. The last record of the year for this species was on 23rd at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head). A single **Pied Flycatcher** was reported from Mire Loch on 8th and 9th and two other reports were made of a female at Mire Loch and Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) on 23rd. On 26th, Mire Loch also played host to a **Black Redstart**. The last record of a **Yellow Wagtail** was on 25th, also from Mire Loch, while on 9th a passage of 120 **Pied Wagtails** was witnessed at St Abbs-Northfield. The last record for **Tree Pipit** was from Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) on 19th. A flock of 150 **Linnets** was seen during a WeBS of the Tweed Haughs between Kelso-Coldstream on 14th, c. 70 **Goldfinches** were feeding in a stubble field on 15th at Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) and another exceptional number of **Siskins** was ringed at Peebles - an aggregate total of 1,416 for the month.

October

Often windy. Rainfall totals were 30% above average in the east of the region but in the far south west were 30% below the long term average (1981-2010). Winds from a westerly direction for 66% of days and from an easterly direction for the remainder. Daily maximum temperatures were up to 1.5°C below average but daily minima in east were up to 2°C above average.

Numbers of **Pink-footed Geese** began to build-up with c. 27,000 at the under-reported West Water Reservoir on 28th, c. 11,300 at Bogbank (Coldingham Moor) on 19th and c. 10,000 at Hule Moss on 20th. Similarly, **Whooper Swan** numbers also began to swell with the highest count of 369 at Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 26th and a minimum of 130 at Whitelaw (Duns) on 27th. Four **Scaup** were reported from St Abb's Head-Black Gable on 2nd and **Goldeneye** numbers had increased to a minimum of 20 at The Hirsell by the end of the month. On 30th, 30 **Goosanders** were seen at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden), 10 **Grey Heron** were at Teviot Haughs (Crailing) on 2nd, a **Great White Egret** was spotted at Newmains (Reston) and another report came from Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) on 31st. It is not known whether this was the same bird. A **Little Egret** was recorded at Cove Harbour on 21st.

Counts of up to 3 overwintering **Green Sandpipers** came from Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) through the month with 2 birds seen on 11th at Tweed: Easter Hendersyde (Kelso).

A juvenile/1st-winter **Sabine's Gull** was reported flying south with Kittiwakes off Eyemouth on the evening of 4th while a little earlier in the day 3 **Mediterranean Gulls** were reported close inshore at the same site. An exceptional 100 or more **Little Gulls** were reported from St Abb's Head on 5th, while a reminder of the gap in our inland gull records due to the minimal reporting of West Water Reservoir was the c. 6,000 **Common Gulls** seen there on 28th. The last record of a **Sandwich Tern** was from Eyemouth on 4th, while the last for a **Common Tern** was on 12th, from Dunglass. At the same location and on the same date, a **Black Tern** was also seen, while a single **Little Auk** appeared just out from the harbour at Eyemouth on 29th.

Following on from the report of a **Hoopoe** at St Abb's Head in May, another report was made from Teviot: Heiton Mill on 9th. The first **Shorelark** report since 2014 was made at St Abb's Head on 5th, while the last record of the year for a **Swallow** was from Tower Bridge (Cockburnspath) on 20th and the final **House Martin** report came on 8th from Lamberton. **Willow Warbler** was last reported for 2019 from Peebles West on 10th and a **Wood Warbler** (also last of the year) was reported on 7th from Mire Loch. A **Siberian Chiffchaff** was reported from Mire Loch on 6th-7th and again on 30th, the first for this subspecies since 2004. A **Pallas's Warbler** was also reported from Mire Loch, on 21st. With reports of up to 4 birds, **Yellow-browed Warblers** continued to be seen at sites between Cove and St Abbs. The last record for **Garden Warbler** came from Mire Loch on 7th and the first record of a **Firecrest** since 2016 came from Coldingham Bay on 22nd. Twelve reports of **Ring Ouzels** moving down the coast were received with the final reports on 15th (3 birds at Mire Loch). A notable movement of 90 **Song Thrushes** was recorded at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) on 7th and, on the day before, 80 **Robins** were also on passage. The final **Pied Flycatcher** was seen at Mire Loch on 7th, between 5th-7th a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** was seen in and around the lighthouse garden at St Abb's Head and another report of a **Black Redstart** was made at Mire Loch on 10th. Final records for **Redstart** and **Whinchat** were made on 2nd and 6th, respectively, while **Wheatear** had its last record this year on 14th.

November

Rainfall in the east was up to 250% that of the long-term average; further west it was nearer average. Temperatures were 1-2°C below average, largely due to most of the month experiencing northerlies. The latter may have been responsible for some of the scarcer coastal sightings mentioned below.

During a WeBS at Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 18th, 5,690 **Pink-footed Geese** were counted and 4,500 arrived in a 10 minute period at Hule Moss on 17th. The Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) also had a peak count of 534 **Whooper Swans** on 14th.

Five records of **Great White Egret** were submitted from sites between Duns and Yetholm Loch at intervals throughout the month. In all likelihood these involved a single individual but we can't be entirely sure about this. Between 15th-22nd a **Little Egret** was reported in the Abbotsford-Melrose area and 3 **Water Rails** were reported from The Hirsell on 1st.

Two records of **Glaucous Gull** were received, the first since 2016: a single at Millar's Moss (St Abbs) on 3rd and a single at Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) on 13th. Adding to the single bird seen last month, was the report of 7 **Little Auks** at St Abb's Head-Black Gable on 6th.

A report of "several" **Waxwings** was received from Gunsgreen (Eyemouth) on 18th and, adding to the single record from October, was a report from Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) of a single **Shorelark** on 13th, while the **Siberian Chiffchaff** that was first reported at Mire Loch on 6th October continued to be seen at intervals until 18th. St Abb's Head-Black Gable came up with another rare subspecies on 6th when a "**Siberian Lesser Whitethroat**" (*blythi*) was reported on 6th. Although there was a report from St Abb's Head in 1982 of a bird that "displayed the characteristics" of this subspecies and another from Chirnside in 2017, no descriptions were submitted to BBRC. Pending a submission and acceptance by BBRC of a description of the bird's find, this would be the first accepted record of a Siberian Whitethroat for Borders.

Adding to the report of a **Rose-coloured Starling** in July, another sighting was reported from Maxton between 14th and 16th. An estimated minimum of 35 **Snow Buntings** was made on 9th at Dowlaw Moss (Coldingham Moor) – the biggest count since 2008.

December

Temperatures generally up to 1°C above long-term averages, particularly in the west of the region. Rainfall was about 50% of average in the east but nearer to the average in parts of the west. Winds were from the south-west quarter for 65% of the month.

Pink-footed Geese numbers appeared to decline slightly as birds depleted local food supplies and some recommenced their southward journey: 5,200 were reported still on the Teviot Haughs at Nisbet on 15th, also on 15th were 2,500 were at Sandyknowe (Smailholm) and 2,200 at Newmains (Reston) on 31st.

Records of a **Great White Egret** came from Lauder and Newbigging Birks (Jedburgh) between 14th and 23rd while records of a single **Little Egret** came from a number of sites between Coldstream and Traquair.

A **Chiffchaff** was seen at St Abbs-Northfield on 20th and a single **Blackcap** was noted at Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth GC on 1st, while another single visited Kelso between 9th-22nd. The year ended with a suitable finale when c. 5,000 **Starlings** were viewed from Eyemouth in a murmuration somewhere in the Coldingham area.

Cumulative monthly totals as follows (excluding hybrids and escapes):

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Species per month	123	126	136	148	152	140
Cumulative total species	123	137	151	172	184	186
Records submitted	4,975	3,740	5,598	7,274	7,917	6,669

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Species per month	142	146	166	160	130	121
Cumulative total species	195	199	203	213	214	214
Records submitted	4,368	3,192	5,320	3,741	3,704	3,674



**Snipe. Longformacus.
May. Andrew Mossop.**



**Barn Owl. Burnhouse Mains
(Stow). May. Alistair Cutter.**



**Redwing. Burnhouse Mains. November.
Alistair Cutter.**

Classified List

The species sequence and the names used follow the Scottish Birds Records Committee's Scottish List, which can be found in the Bird Recording menu of the SOC website at www.the-soc.org.uk.

The inclusion of a record does not mean that that record will be validated by the relevant body. Additions and corrections to previous records can be found at the end of the Classified List (see p 164).

Status definitions

Each species summary has a banner heading in which its status in Borders Region is summarised. The terms used to describe their historical abundance are given below with their definitions:

Very rare	no more than ten individuals in the past 40 years
Rare	11-30 individuals in the past 40 years
Scarce	less than four individuals per year
Very uncommon	5-50 individuals per year
Uncommon	51-100 individuals per year
Well-represented	101-300 individuals per year
Common	301-2,000 individuals per year
Abundant	over 2,000 individuals per year

The same status descriptions are used for breeding species but in reference to pairs and not individuals, eg 5-50 pairs are regarded as very uncommon.

Reference is also made to the number of tetrads in which a species was recorded during the breeding season (where relevant) and winter (where relevant) during the 2007-13 survey on which data for *Birds in South-east Scotland 2007-13* are based. In all cases population status has been based on population estimates given in *Birds in South-east Scotland 2007-13* but with, as far as possible, reference to Borders only.

To give an idea of what the number of occupied tetrads represent in the context of the Borders as a whole, the actual number of tetrads occupied in 2019 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.

Readers should be aware that species reports from the Lothian & Borders Raptor Study Group Report cover both Borders and Lothian.



**Female Stonechat.
Blackhopebyres.
April.
Alistair Cutter.**

Brent Goose*Branta bernicla*

Very uncommon, but increasingly reported, passage migrant and rare winter visitor, mostly to coast. Most are pale-bellied Svalbard birds (ssp. *hrota*) wintering at Lindisfarne. During 2008-13 found in three tetrads in winter.

Four records submitted, all of pale-bellied birds and presumably all fly-overs:

Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	M Eaton	19-Sep	11
Eyemouth	C Hartley	19-Sep	5
St Abb's Head	DK Graham	22-Sep	6
St Abb's Head-Black Gable	C Hatsell	08-Oct	1

A fairly "typical" year with 2 records and 2+ birds in 2018, 0 records in 2017, 5 records and 66 birds in 2016, 5 records and 168 birds in 2015.

Canada Goose*Branta canadensis*

Increasing, but still uncommon breeder, derived from feral populations in England or from local releases. 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 received from 53 tetrads (4%). 2018 - 65 tetrads, 2017 - 47 tetrads, 2016 - 45, 2015 - 40 tetrads.

Sites with peak counts of at least 5 and an annual aggregate count of more than 20 were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	95	100	6	6	20	18	60	150	234		160	80
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	170	84	13	24		11		15	140	160		
Watch Water Reservoir		5	40		14	6	121	34	154	64		
Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog		30	38	14	24	19				100	35	60
Westruther-Cammerlaws			100								37	
St Abbs-Northfield						88						
Scarlaw (Watch Water Reservoir)						85						
Paxton Toll House	77											
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)		11	13	11	9		12					17
St Abb's Head						50						
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	42											
Lyne Dale (West Linton)	40											
Lady Moss (Bowden)	15	15										
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)		6	12								9	
Hule Moss-Greenlaw Moor			5	5				16				
The Hirsell	5									20		
Total no. of all occupied tetrads	14	19	26	20	18	14	7	7	7	8	9	10
Aggregate count of all peak counts	503	312	339	110	142	323	309	338	979	447	259	320

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

Sites with an annual aggregate count of less than 20 were: Alemoor Reservoir (Hawick); Alton Pond (Hawick); Belses (Lilliesleaf); Blackburn Mill (Abbey St Bathans); Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose); Branxholme Easter Loch (Roberton); Coldingham Bay; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch; Edgerston (Carter Bar); Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank); Folly Loch; Gordon Community Woodland; Green Diamonds (Selkirk); Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk); Macks Mill (Gordon); Mellerstain (Gordon); Millar's Moss (St Abbs); New Belses (Ancrum); Newmains (Reston); Spurlens Rig (Portmore); St Abb's Head-Black Gable; Standhill Road (Minto); Teviot Haughs (Nisbet); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose; Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream); Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge; Waddlescairn Moor (Soutra); Waterheads (Portmore); Whitmuirhill Loch (Selkirk); Whitsome Laws-Joshua Plantation; Yetholm Loch.

Records with breeding evidence came from 12 tetrads (2018 - 12 tetrads, 2017 - 12, 2016 - 10, 2015 - 12 tetrads):

Bemersyde Moss	10-Apr	3P	MB Ross
Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)	10-Apr	P	MB Ross
Gordon Community Wood	23-Apr	ON	F Evans
Spurlens Rig (Portmore)	29-Apr	T	DB McNee
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	07-May	P	D Parkinson
Watch Water Reservoir	07-May	1br8, 1br9	M Moncrieff
Belses (Lilliesleaf)	19-May	1br7	N Stratton
Waterheads (Portmore)	24-May	P	G Paterson
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	02-Jun	1br7	M Moncrieff
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)	04-Jun	2br7	M Moncrieff
Scarlaw (Watch Water)	06-Jun	br100	M Moncrieff
Tweed: Sprouston-Redden	20-Jun	br12	T Reed

See Introduction for breeding codes.

The general seasonal pattern appears to have been:

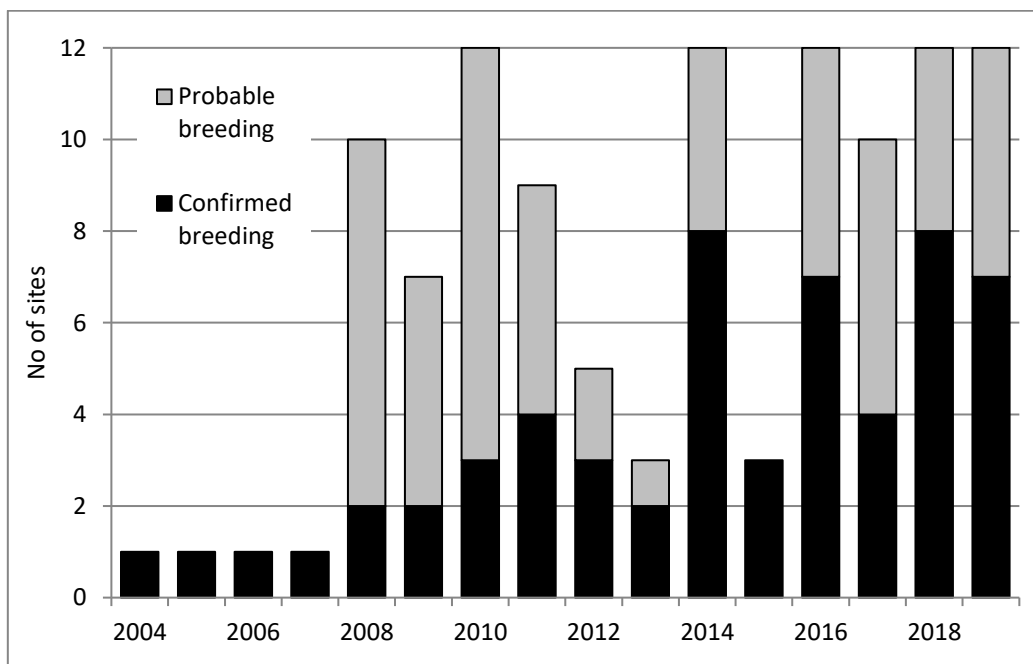
Jan-Mar: feeding and roosting sites dominated by the Tweed Haughs (Kelso-Coldstream) and Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) with lesser concentrations around Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog and Westruther-Cammerlaws. The 77 birds seen near Paxton Toll House may well have been birds that roost at Greenlaw Farm Pool.

Apr-Jun: Watch Water Reservoir continued to be the main focus of breeding with Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog possibly a secondary centre. Breeding sites, apparently under-recorded, were well dispersed. Northward moult migration was apparent at St Abbs-Northfield on 4-Jun and at St Abb's Head on 16-Jun with counts of 88 and 50, respectively.

July-Oct: Flocking in the post-breeding period was recorded mainly at Watch Water Reservoir, the Tweed Haughs (Kelso-Coldstream), Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) and Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog. These flocks often involved some of the highest counts of the year and may have involved birds moving through the region after the moult migration, as well as "local" birds.

Nov-Dec: Typically, winter counts tended to be lower with, again, the Tweed Haughs (Kelso-Coldstream) and Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog holding the largest counts.

Borders Bird Report records suggest that breeding numbers and non-breeding numbers may have reached a plateau over the past 3-4 years. However, readers are reminded that the records, like most BBR records, are incomplete.



Canada Goose: Breeding records by no. of sites, 2004-2019.

Barnacle Goose*Branta leucopsis*

Uncommon 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-footed Goose. During 2008-13 found in 20 tetrads in winter.

Forty-four records from 18 tetrads were submitted - the "best" set of records since 2008.

Northbound		
Watch Water Reservoir	21-Feb	3
Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham)	03-Mar/23-Mar	5
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	12-Mar	2*
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	31-Mar - 4-Apr	1
St Abb's Head	20-Apr	3
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch and Whitsome	29-Apr	150-170
St Abb's Head	11-May	20
St Abbs-Northfield	31-May	1
Southbound		
St Abbs-Northfield	19-Sep - 30-Sep	159+
St Abb's Head	19-Sep - 18-Nov	1,543
Hule Moss	23-Sep	18*
Brander Heugh (Dowlaw)	24-Sep	157
Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)	25-Sep - 01-Oct	488
Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)	26-Sep	50
Innerleithen	27-Sep	110
Manderston (Duns)	28-Sep	c. 200
Burnmouth-Greystonelees	30-Sep	c. 42
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	08-Oct/13-Oct	5*
Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog	12-Oct	1
Westfield (Smailholm)	18-Oct	1
Bogbank (Coldingham)	24-Nov	1

Given the close proximity of many of these sites, counts on the same days are likely to be duplicate or part-duplicate counts. It is reasonable to assume that most of these records involve fly-overs. However, those indicated by an asterisk involve birds seen on the ground. Future observers are requested to indicate whether records were of fly-overs or not. Where ranges of dates are given the counts are aggregate counts. The largest single count was 720 at St Abb's Head on 30-Sep (DK Graham).



Barnacle Goose. Mire Loch. September. Ciaran Hatsell.

Greylag Goose

Anser anser

Well-represented, increasing breeding population. 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.

Records came from 110 tetrads (9%). 2018 - 109 tetrads, 2017 - 60, 2016 - 65, 2015 - 62 tetrads. The increase in the number of occupied tetrads strongly suggests an increase in range, ie since 2015 there has been an increase in occupied tetrads of 238% while the number of records for the species has only increased by 73%.

Sites with peak counts of at least 5 and an annual aggregate count of more than 100 were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	315	435	32	19	14	24	188	1,470	1,344	710	85	26
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)		100	472	608						35	101	260
Watch Water Reservoir	28	32	80		27	213	290	16	300	118	243	
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)	214	130	162	146	58	170	71		110	47	130	
Folly Loch				43				78	150	145	177	
The Hirsell	23	29		12			41		300	150		
Norton (Lauder)												550
Lady Moss (Bowden)										96	350	
Newmains (Reston)				12						300		140
Westfield-Whitrig Bog	50	87	223							25	40	
Hule Moss-Greenlaw Moor		6	11	42	10	13	80	71	50	22	20	
Ferniehirst (Stow)		266										
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)	5	105	45				11				80	7
Bemersyde Moss			250									
Portmore Loch NW (Eddleston)											245	
Heiton												216
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	25	60					16		80			22
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	128							40			13	
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	15	22	14		16	14		50				49
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	12	200*		113								40
Kelso NW	120					11						
Cammerlaws (Westruther)											125	
Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)				44			41			31		
Lamberton										100		
Waterheads (Portmore)	100											
Whitelaw (Duns)										100		
Total no of all tetrads	21	32	39	36	33	22	19	16	17	21	25	18
Agg. count all peak counts	1,133	1,673	2,131	1,145	328	576	834	1,772	2,542	1,980	1,727	1,343

* fly-overs. However, many other records will have involved fly-overs without it being stated as such.

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

Records also came from: Alemoor Reservoir (Hawick); Alton Pond (Hawick); Annelshope (Ettrick); Belses (Lilliesleaf); Bemersyde Moss-Mertoun Bridge; Blackhopebyre (Leithen Hopes); Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose); Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond (Heiton); Branxholme Easter Loch (Roberton); Carllops S; Castledean (Greenlaw); Cockholm Br-Dickson's Wood (Stow); Courthill (Kelso); Dawyck; Dewar (Garvald); Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor); Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham); Duddy Bank (Cranshaws); Dye Water: Longformacus; Eckford-Kalemouth; Eyemouth; Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank); Fruid Reservoir; Gala Water: Torsonce (Stow); Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot); Graden (Yetholm); Green Diamonds (Selkirk); Hadden-Nottylees (Sprouston); Harcus (Eddleston); Hardiesmill Place-Stenmuir (Gordon); Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth GC; Helm End W (Broughton); Hog Hill (Lauder); Howford (Traquair); Huntershall

(Soutra); Huntford (Carter Bar); Huntlyburn House (Tweedbank); Huntly Rig (Ashkirk); Innerleithen; Kelso N; Kelso S; Kerchesters (Kelso); Kyles Hill-Polwarth Moss (Greenlaw); Larriston (Saughtree); Leadburn Community Woodland; Lilliesleaf; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk); Lyne Manor; Meikleston Hill (Eddelston); Mellerstain (Gordon); Middlestots (Duns); Newstead (Melrose); Old Nenthorn (Smailholm); Paxton Toll House; Peat Law (Oxton); Portmore House (Eddleston); Pott's Height (Buccleuch); Rumbleton S (Greenlaw); Soutra Hill (Oxton); Spottiswoode (Westruther); Springhall (Kelso); Spurlens Rig (Portmore); St Abbs-Northfield; St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch; Standhill Road (Minto); Stobswood Burn (Longformacus); Synton Loch (Ashkirk); Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh; Tima Loch NE (Craik Forest); Tushielaw Hill (Ettrick Valley); Tweed: Kelso-Teviot: Roxburgh Castle; Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge; Tweedbank; Tweedbank-Langlee; Whim (West Linton); Whiteadder Water: The Bell (Cranshaws); Whitsome Laws-Joshua Plantation; Yetholm Loch.

Records with breeding evidence came from 26 tetrads with 18 showing confirmed breeding evidence. This is the highest level of breeding evidence since 2014.

Middlestots (Duns)	08-Mar	br4	AP Mossop
Carlops S	13-Apr	3P	M Shaw
Tweed: Birgham Haugh (Coldstream)	14-Apr	1br7	B Meikle
Peat Law (Oxton)	17-Apr	A	J Gordon
Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)	19-Apr	P	R Bramhall
Hule Moss	22-Apr	A	AP Mossop
Dawyck	27-Apr	D	M Betts
Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream)	05-May	1br7	T Reed
St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch	07-May	P	G Paterson
Watch Water Reservoir	07-May	9br57	M Moncrieff
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	09-May	6br25	T Reed
Kelso NW	09-May	FL	N Stratton
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	10-May	1br2	M Moncrieff
Branxholme Easter Loch (Roberton)	11-May	ON	M Moncrieff
Newmains (Reston)	12-May	6br28	DK Graham
Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	15-May	1br2	M Moncrieff
Huntershall (Soutra)	20-May	br40	J Gordon
Lilliesleaf	20-May	3br25	MB Ross
Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	21-May	1br5, 1br6	C Hatsell
Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords)	24-May	7br35	G Paterson
The Hirsell	25-May	P	M Pitt
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	02-Jun	1br3, 1br6	C Hatsell
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)	04-Jun	2br10	M Moncrieff
Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh	06-Jun	1br5	T Reed
Spurlens Rig (Portmore)	07-Jun	P	DB McNee
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)	18-Jul	br2	T Reed

The records suggest that Greylag Goose continues to increase as a breeding species in the Borders with the main breeding sites at Watch Water Reservoir and Stantling Craig Reservoir. This however, is obviously the tip of the iceberg, with SESA2 stating that there were 120 breeding sites in the Borders in 2013.

Once again the peak count of 1,470 on 17-Aug came from Greenlaw Farm Pool, Foulden, (D Christie), presumably made up of both adults and juveniles.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Scarce winter visitor amongst grey geese flocks. Typically the Greenland race *flavirostris* is the more common in the region. Nominative European *albifrons* is scarcer. Not annual. Race given when records specify it.

A single record of one *flavirostris* ssp bird. Seen at Hallmanor Haugh (Manor Valley) on 27-Mar (D Bell). It was ringed at Wexford Slob (Ireland) as a successfully breeding adult male in February 2017. It was later seen near the Ribble Estuary without its mate in November, 2018.



Greylag Goose. Kelso. April. Dougie Methven.



Pink-footed Geese. Flying SE over the Borders near Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton). September. Tom Brewis.

Pink-footed Goose

Anser brachyrhynchus

Abundant winter visitor and passage migrant: Sep-May, peak Oct-Nov. Important roosts at West Water Reservoir, Hule Moss, Coldingham Moor, Folly Loch and Bemersyde-Westfield. During 2008-13 found in 2% of tetrads in summer and 8% in winter.

Records from 79 tetrads (6%). 2018 - 70 tetrads, 2017 - 65 tetrads, 2016 - 58 tetrads, 2015 - 50 tetrads.

While it is often problematic to team-up feeding grounds with roost sites, associations of the two have been made primarily on proximity, eg the nearby Teviot Haughs are taken as the feeding grounds for birds that mainly roost at Folly Loch. However, such assumptions may sometimes be incorrect. It may well be the case that the relationship is dynamic. Thus, the separation of roost/feeding areas in the table opposite (showing selected peak counts) is arbitrary and should be regarded with caution.

The table opposite does not include records where sightings were given as fly-overs. It is probable that some of these records were of fly-overs but with no indication of such in the records' submission. *Observers are encouraged to state if all wildfowl counts are flyovers where appropriate.*

The main roost sites and associated feeding areas during winter-spring were (in order of the size of counts):

Bemersyde-Westfield: maximum count of c. 4,000 on 20-Jan (MB Ross);

Folly Loch-Teviot Haughs: maximum count of c. 3,000 at East Nisbet on 8-Jan (R Manning);

Hule Moss: maximum count of c. 2,000 at Rumbleton E (Greenlaw) on 2-Jan (M Moncrieff);

West Water -Northern Moorfoot Hills: maximum count of 800 at Romannobridge-Whitmuir on 18-Jan (RD Hind);

East Merse: maximum count of 690 at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) on 9-Feb (D Christie). It is probable that many of these roosting birds had been feeding in north Northumberland.

Coldingham Moor: maximum count of 240 at Newmains (Reston) on 1-Jan (DK Graham).

The main roost sites and associated feeding areas during autumn-winter were (in order of maximum counts):

West Water -Northern Moorfoot Hills: maximum count of c. 27,000 on 27-Oct at West Water (AP Mossop);

Coldingham Moor: maximum count of 11,282 at Bogbank (Coldingham) on 19-Oct (DK Graham);

Hule Moss: maximum count of c. 10,000 at Hule Moss on 20-Oct (AP Mossop);

Folly Loch-Teviot Haughs: maximum count of 5,690 on 18-Nov at Teviot Haughs, Nisbet (GJ Cundall);

Bemersyde-Westfield: maximum count of c. 5,000 on 18-Oct (MB Ross);

East Merse: maximum count of 3,575 at Greenlaw Farm Pool on 2-Nov (D Christie).

Sites here collectively described as coastal may have involved some birds from the Coldingham Moor roost/feeding site and some birds that were perhaps moving through the region.

Given the likelihood of duplicate counts, as birds roosting at any one site may use a number of feeding grounds, one should be cautious when interpreting the records below, which are of peak counts during the autumn-winter period.

	West Water	Hule Moss	Bemersyde-Westfield	Coldingham Moor	Folly Loch-Teviot Haugh	East Merse	Aggregate
2010	16,650	7,750	2,228	700	2,200		29,528
2011	25,000	2,500	5,000	1,200	1,200		34,900
2012	20,250	1,450	6,000	4,700	850		33,250
2013	28,200	9,830	3,000	7,000	1,535	332	49,897
2014	32,200	7,000	5,000	7,800	3,000	1,795	56,795
2015	82,920	10,000	4,600	4,000	4,737	1,165	107,422
2016	47,000	15,900	12,000	7,670	5,826	1,149	89,545
2017	48,218	10,000	3,600	8,980	4,500	4,460	79,758
2018	(3,800)	9,000	4,800	5,600	6,032	1,600	27,032
2019	27,000	10,000	5,000	11,282	5,690	3,575	62,547

The West Water count for 2018 was from a feeding ground and not from the actual reservoir. No counts were available for the roost.

	Sites	J	F	M	A	S	O	N	D
Bemersyde-Westfield	Sandyknowe-Bettyfield (Smailholm)	4,000					2,000	3,000	2,500
	New Smailholm-Rachelfield	3,000				3			
	Westfield-Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)	10		2,000			5,000	4,000	Pr
	Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog		700	800		500	4,000	2,000	330
	Bemersyde Moss-Mertoun Bridge		300						
	Falsidehill W (Gordon)			1,500					
	Macks Mill (Gordon)			500					
	Stantling Craig Res. (Clovenfords)			13		1			
	Old Nenthorn (Smailholm)						600		
	Charterhouse Wood (Kelso)								2,000
	Tweed: Sprouston-Redden	82	115					110	
Folly Loch-Teviot Haughs	East Nisbet	3,000							
	Roxburgh Moor	2,500							
	Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	660	450	560	250		1,500	5,690	5,200
	Folly Loch		1		1		20	2,015	
	Selkirk SE			150					
	Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)			30					
	Standhill Road (Minto)			3					
	Bowhill (Selkirk)						Pr		
	Heiton							300	
	Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn)								3
	Faw Laws (Cessford)								450
West Water-Northern Moorfoot Hills	Romannobridge-Whitmuir	800							
	Romannobridge-Damside	200							
	Falahill Cottages (Heriot)			500					
	Broomlee (West Linton)			100					
	Lyne Dale (West Linton)					1000			
	West Water Reservoir						27,000	3,116	
	Whiteburn (Blythe)						Pr		
	Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)								45
	Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave								5
	Loch of the Lowes					81			
Coldingham Moor	Newmains (Reston)	240				170	400	2,400	2,200
	Lamberton		50			180		1,100	
	Bogbank (Coldingham)						11,282	1,180	
	Bunkle Wood (Preston)						100		
	Blackhill (Reston)							4,200	
Hule Moss	Rumbleton E (Greenlaw)	2,000							
	Foulshot Law (Greenlaw)	2,000							
	Bellitaw (Hume)	1,000							
	Hule Moss		700		2	4,000	10,000	4,500	
	Greenlaw S		400						
	Crawlee (Greenlaw)			5					
	Watch Water Reservoir							2	
East Mearse	Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	133	690	410	1	176	2,946	3,575	
	Jardinefield (Whitsome)					10			
	Whitsome Laws-Joshua Plantation							50	
	West Foulden								200
Coastal	St Abb's Head-Black Gable			2	236	270	256	399	138
	Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)				1	200	Pr		
	St Abbs-Northfield					167	46		41
	Brander Heugh (Dowlaw)					28		310	
	Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth GC								36
	No of roost/feeding areas	15	9	15	6	15	18	18	14
	Aggregate count of all peak counts	19,626	3,406	8,073	491	6,831	65,155	37,947	13,148

Mute Swan*Cygnus olor*

Well-represented breeder, c. 50-100 territories. 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.

Records came from 122 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 119 tetrads, 2017 - 95 tetrads, 2016 - 118, 2015 - 104 tetrads.

Counts of 5 or more came from the following sites (in order of aggregate totals for the year):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	132	111	151	190	72	72		16	104	40	18	44
Yetholm Loch	36	17	15	24	35	119	139	100	56	17	17	22
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	18	20	49	36	37	12	9		11	105	120	25
Wooden Loch (Eckford)	65	40	8	24		6			8	7	100	9
Tweedbank	12	19	22	20	18	20	17	22	28	24	17	13
Folly Loch		26	23	23		6	16	46	32	29		
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)	34	55	46								7	
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)		17	18	19			5			6	10	20
Alemoor Reservoir (Roberton)	14	9	7		9	8			5	9	6	6
Tweed: Rutherford Lodge (Maxton)	37	30										
The Hirsell	9	6		6	5		10	12	5	10		
Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog						9	5	9	6	5	6	8
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)					7	6	5	5	5	5	5	7
Eyemouth	10	5	5						8	8		
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)				5		7	7	7	7	12+		
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	9		7	12	5							
Total no of tetrads	54	57	58	51	49	40	31	29	43	37	44	43
Aggregate count of all peak counts	502	457	461	424	261	334	267	277	371	317	399	424

Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream records are based on the maximum count at any single site between Kelso and Coldstream unless the WeBS count for the whole stretch was greater. Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) and Wooden Loch (Eckford) are likely to involve duplicate counts.

Sites with at least one monthly peak count of at least 5 but with a lower aggregate annual count than those sites above were (highest peak count shown): Tweed: Kelso-Teviot: Roxburgh Castle - 26; Muirhouselaw Wood, (Maxton) - 16; Tweed: Blount Is (Ladykirk) - 14; Mellerstain (Gordon) - 12; Tweed: Green Knowes (Fishwick) - 12; Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge - 9; Hollybush (Galashiels) - 9; Innerleithen - 9; Lady Moss (Bowden) - 9; Ladyrig Pond (Heiton) - 8; Tweed: Mertoun Br-Benrig Dean (St Boswells) - 8; Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet) - 7; Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank) - 7; Cardrona Hotel - 7; Burnmouth - 6; New Greenhill (Selkirk) - 6; Newmains (Reston) - 6; Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange - 6; Selkirk SE - 5; Branxholme Easter Loch (Roberton) - 5; Duns Law - 5; Glenwhilt (Selkirk) - 5; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) - 5; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 5.

As with recent years, the seasonal pattern is one of the Tweed Haughs (Kelso-Coldstream) dominating numbers between January and May, Yetholm Loch between June and August with the Teviot Haughs the prime site between September and November. In December, the Tweed Haughs, once again, became the main site.

Evidence of confirmed breeding came from 38 tetrads. 2018 - 33 tetrads, 2017 - 33 tetrads, 2016 - 37 tetrads. A further 9 records of probable breeding (pairs) were also submitted.

Note that records submitted of "broods" or "cygnets" seen after 15-Sep are not included as breeding records since there is a likelihood that such family groups may have moved from natal sites.

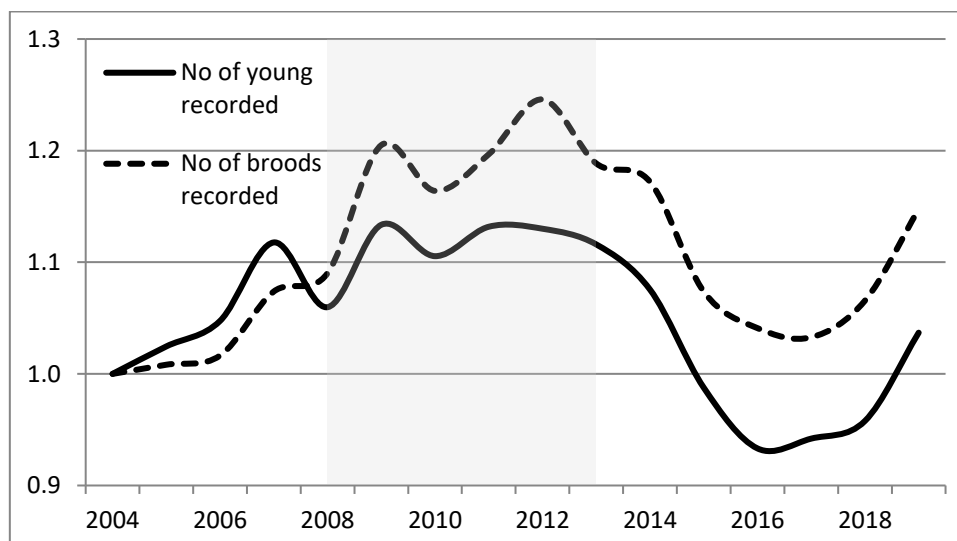
Spottiswoode (Westruther)	P	20-Mar	Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream)	br3	10-Jun
Gordon Community Woodland	P	20-Mar	Traquair House	1br6	14-Jun
Loch of the Lowes	P	07-Apr	Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)	1br6	18-Jun
Gallow Bank (Eddleston)	P	09-Apr	Branxholme Easter Loch (Roberton)	1br3	19-Jun
Westfield-Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)	ON	10-Apr	Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm)	1br1	19-Jun
Greenbrough Hill (Hownam)	ON	13-Apr	Lady Moss (Bowden)	FL	21-Jun
Tweedbank	ON	18-Apr	Eyemouth	br7	27-Jun
Tweed: Holmbank-Earl's Haugh (Coldstream)	2P	18-Apr	Bemersyde Moss	1br7	28-Jun
Macbiehill (West Linton)	P	03-May	Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh	1br2	28-Jun
Edgerston (Carter Bar)	ON	04-May	Selkirk SE	1br3	04-Jul
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	P	07-May	Tima Loch NE (Craik Forest)	1br2	14-Jul
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	P	07-May	Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)	1br3	18-Jul
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	ON	09-May	Synton Loch (Ashkirk)	1br3	20-Jul
Hangingshaw Hill (Roberton)	ON	11-May	The Hirsell	FL	21-Jul
Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank)	ON	15-May	Ale Moor Reservoir (Roberton)	1br1	28-Jul
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)	1br5	19-May	Tweed: Mertoun Br-Benrig Dean	1br6	03-Aug
Hollybush (Galashiels)	1br7	22-May	Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	1br2	08-Aug
Tweed: Kelso NE	1br9	22-May	Duns Law	1br3	13-Aug
Newmains (Reston)	2br9	22-May	Harelaw Pond-Cotfield (Lilliesleaf)	1br7	18-Aug
Yetholm Loch	br4	26-May	Innerleithen	1br7	02-Sep
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	1br2	30-May	Tweed: Kelso-Teviot: Roxburgh Castle	1br8, 1br5, 1br2	15-Sep
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	1br5	02-Jun	Springhall (Kelso)	1br4	15-Sep
Hare Moss (Selkirk)	1br1	04-Jun	Tweed: Edenmouth-Lochton	1br1	15-Sep
Tweed: Kelso S	P	08-Jun	See Introduction for breeding codes.		

The first record of fledged young was from Tweed: Kelso NE where a family group including 5 cygnets was seen on 14-May (T Reed). Last year's first fledged birds were reported on 12-May.



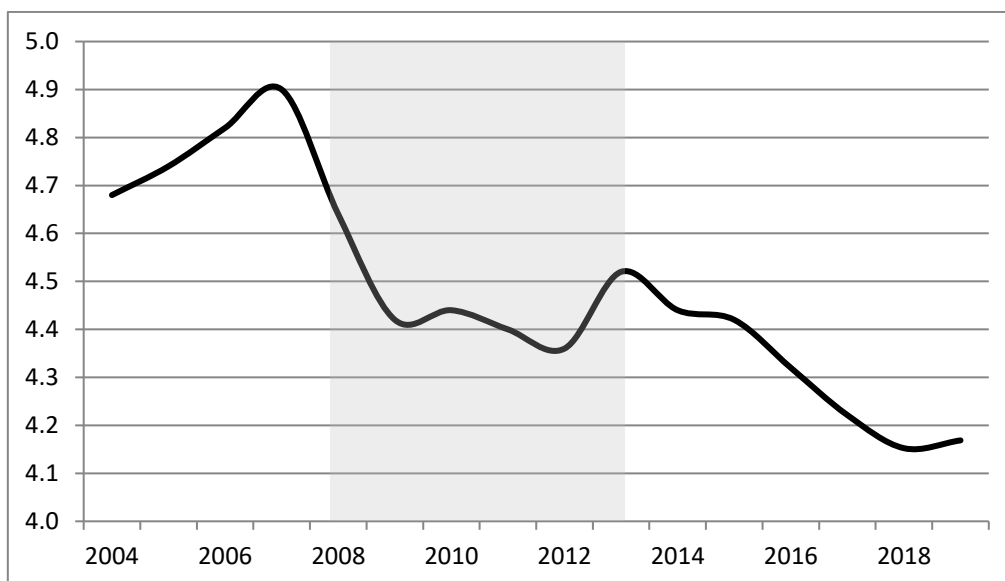
Mute Swans. Kelso. November. Dougie Methven.

Forty-seven pairs were reported and a minimum of 32 broods with a minimum of 137 fledglings. The year-by-year records show a fluctuating pattern of these variables over the past 20 years. However, a 5-year running average shows a very different picture:



Trends in breeding records for Mute Swan, running 5-year average 2000-2019.
Shaded area corresponds to the survey period for *Birds in south-east Scotland* 2007-13. 2004 = 1.

Given the incomplete nature of bird report records, there is a limit to how much we can interpret these trends. The most obvious trend is the apparently greater decrease in the number of young relative to the decrease in the number of broods since about 2014, producing a decrease in the mean brood size:



Mean brood size for Mute Swan, running 5-year average 2000-2019.
Shaded area corresponds to the survey period for *Birds in south-east Scotland* 2007-13

There has not been a dedicated count of breeding Mute Swans in Borders since the national survey of 2002 and even then the Borders' records were incomplete. A dedicated survey of Borders waterbodies, of the sort which was partly undertaken in 2014, would help to illuminate the present situation with greater confidence.

Bewick's Swan

Cygnus columbianus

Very scarce winter visitor to eastern waters Oct-Jan. Not annual.

There was a single record of 2 birds seen at Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm) during a WeBS on 16-Feb (C Moses). This is the first record since 2011.

Whooper Swan

Cygnus cygnus

Common winter visitor Oct-Apr. Notable flocks 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 came from 66 tetrads (5%). 2018 -55 tetrads, 2017 - 58 tetrads, 2016 - 59 tetrads, 2015 - 79 tetrads.

Tetrads with monthly peak counts of 5 or more and an annual aggregate count of at least 20 were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	S	O	N	D
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	62	14	77		19	369	534	424
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	123	130	100			48	30	168
Folly Loch		130	160	30			112	7
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	21					17	320	25
Jardinefield (Whitsome)	249					8	49	22
St Abb's Head-Black Gable			135				7	
Tweed: Blount Is (Ladykirk)		131						
Whitelaw (Duns)						130		
Alemoor Reservoir W (Roberton)	28		6				10	63
St Mary's Loch	6	31	39			9		5
Muirhouseslaw Wood (Maxton)	64							
Fatlips Castle (Denholm)								46
Pickmaw Moss (Selkirk)		18						20
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	29							
Tweed-Whiteadder Water (English Border)								27
Newmains (Reston)						7	12	7
Lady Moss (Bowden)	24							
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)		8	8					8
Smedheugh Pond (Selkirk)		5						18
West Water Reservoir						23		
Bogbank (Coldingham)							21	
Loch of the Lowes	9	7						5
Crossrig (Allanton)								20
Teviot: Harestanes							20	
Total no of tetrads	25	17	20	8	7	23	23	27
Aggregate count of all peak counts	642	482	607	40	30	712	1,146	920

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

Tetrads with lower annual aggregate counts but with at least one peak count of 5 or more were: Blackadder Mount (Allanton); Clearburn Loch (Buckleuch); Coldstream NW; Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor); Dunglass; Duns Castle-Hen Poo; Eckford-Kalemouth; Falsidehill W (Gordon); Glenwhilt (Selkirk); Hare Moss (Selkirk); Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm); Huntford (Carter Bar); Hutton Castle (Chirnside); Lambertton; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk); St Abbs-Northfield; Stantling Craig Reservoir E (Clovenfords); Watch Water Reservoir; Yetholm Loch.

Other tetrads with records were: Abbotsford; Brander Heugh (Dowlaw); Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor); Ettrick; Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank); Huntleyburn House (Tweedbank); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head); Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh; The Hirsle; Tweed: Kingsmeadows-Kailzie; Tweedbank; Yair Bridge-Raelees Wood (Caddonfoot).

An adult and juvenile were present at Folly Loch in early May. Records of singles came from Tweedbank, Tweed: Kingsmeadows-Kailzie, Folly Loch and Yair Bridge-Raelees Wood (Caddonfoot) from late May and at intervals up to 16-July. Whether these reports involved the same bird or different birds is not known.

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

Yetholm Loch		1		2								
Newmains (Reston)					2							
Westfield-Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)						2						
Maxton (St Boswells)					1							
St Abbs E									1			
Total no of tetrads	0	6	9	9	11	8	2	1	1	0	0	0
Aggregate count of all peak counts	0	19	35	57	34	71	5	1	1	0	0	0

These records do not include fly-overs. Fly-overs were reported from Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch on 25-Mar (single bird) and on 17-Apr (2 birds), Bemersyde Moss on 27-Apr (one bird) and at Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) on 30-Jun (2 birds).

The first record of birds returning from wintering grounds was of 10 birds at Hule Moss on 18-Feb (AP Mossop) and the last record before departure was of a single at St Abbs E on 24-Oct (R Safford).

Evidence of breeding came from 4 tetrads. 2018 - 5 tetrads, 2017 - 7 tetrads, 2016 - 7, 2015 - 2 tetrads.

Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog	16-Apr	P	B Bell
Brander Heugh (Dowlaw)	17-Jun	1br6	C Hatsell
Hule Moss	05-Jul	1br6, 1br2	AP Mossop
Folly Loch	19-Jul	1br1	M Moncrieff

See Introduction for breeding codes.

These breeding records suggest a decline in overall breeding numbers and success rates since the peak in 2017, ie 7 tetrads with breeding evidence and 51 fledged young. However, as with most records, the picture is incomplete.

Mandarin Duck

Aix galericulata

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

Records came from 7 tetrads. 2018 - 5 tetrads, 2017 - 2 tetrads, 2016 - 5 tetrads, 2015 - 4 tetrads.

January: throughout the month a singleton was reported from Tweed: Kelso. A report came from The Hirsell on 15th.

February: the same bird reported in Jan continued to be seen at Kelso.

March: the Kelso bird continued to be seen with probably the same individual reported from nearby sites, Kerchesters (Kelso) and Hadden-Nottylees (Sprouston).

April: 2 reports came from Mire Loch (St Abb's Head).

May: the Mire Loch bird was seen again toward the end of the month.

August: 3 birds were recorded at Mileknowe Pool (Ayton) on 4th.

September: a female was seen at The Hirsell on 2nd.

October: a report from Kelso on 15th.

December: a final report for the year from Kelso on 14th.

There were no records involving breeding evidence.

Although the number of occupied tetrads was relatively high when compared with recent years, it would seem that a good few of the records involved the same bird, especially for those reports in and around Kelso.

Don't forget to submit your records regularly to BirdTrack in order for the recorders to be able to evaluate and verify records in good time for preparation of the next Bird Report.

Shoveler*Anas clypeata*

Scarce, declining breeder, mostly in the eastern Borders. Very uncommon autumn passage migrant and scarce winter-spring passage migrant. During 2008-13 found in 14 tetrads in summer and 6 tetrads in winter.

Recorded in 10 tetrads. 2018 - 8 tetrads, 2017 - 9 tetrads, 2016 - 15, 2015 - 7 tetrads.

Peak monthly counts were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)			10	11				5				
Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog		1	4	2								
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)				4								
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)									4			
Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)			3									
Ale Moor Reservoir (Roberton)	2											
Yetholm Ponds			2									
The Hirsell			1									
Tweedbank-Langlee				1								
Total no of tetrads	1	1	5	4	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Aggregate count of all peak counts	2	1	20	18	0	0	0	5	4	0	0	0

Breeding records were limited to a pair at Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog on 16-Apr (B Bell) and displaying at Yetholm Ponds on 28-Mar (CD Green).

The number of tetrads and overall peak counts, although better than in 2018, were below those of 2017 and many of recent years.

Gadwall*Anas strepera*

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

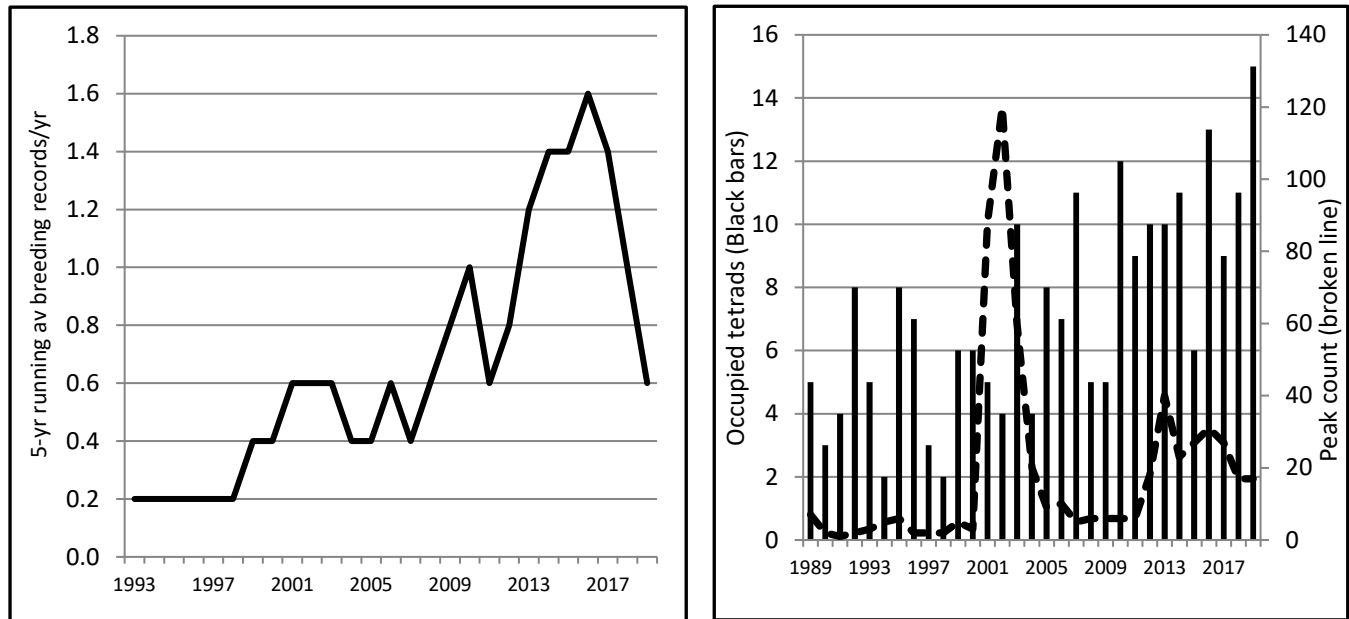
Records from 15 tetrads (1%). 2018 - 11 tetrads, 2017 - 9 tetrads, 2016 - 13 tetrads, 2015 - 6 tetrads.

Peak monthly counts per tetrad were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
The Hirsell		4	17	4	1	3					3	
Yetholm Loch	6	6	6	2	2	4	2		2			
Yetholm Pond	4	4								3	4	
Coldstream NW										1		4
Newmains (Reston)		3		2								
Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh		2		2								
Bemersyde Moss-Mertoun Bridge								2				
Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog											2	
Hollybush-Cascade (Galashiels)			2									
Lees Weir (Coldstream)					2							
Ale Moor Reservoir (Hawick)	1											
Folly Loch									1			
Hule Moss			1									
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)								1				
Tima Loch NE (Craik Forest)				1								
Total no of tetrads	3	5	5	5	3	2	1	2	2	2	3	2
Aggregate count of all peak counts	11	19	26	11	5	7	2	3	3	4	9	4

Breeding evidence was reported from three tetrads: Hollybush-Cascade (Galashiels); Yetholm Loch and The Hirsell. All evidence was probable.

Summary of recent year's records:



Gadwall trends, 1989-2019.

Wigeon

Anas penelope

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

Records came from 60 tetrads (5%). 2018 - 57 tetrads, 2017 - 67 tetrads, 2016 - 55, 2015 - 45 tetrads.

Peak counts of 10 or more and an annual aggregate count of 50 or more came from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	S	O	N	D
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	320	808	436	53	10	38	33	405
Westfield-Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)	200	300	316				300	200
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	445	86	28					
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)	117	65	25	10	11	65	13	47
Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog						100	20	180
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	55	60	50					
Dunglass	45						90	
Wooden Loch (Eckford)	59	71						
Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords)	26	42	23					31
Folly Loch	10	35			15	24	17	
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	28	52				21		
Whitmuirhill Loch (Selkirk)	15	10	40				17	10
St Abb's Head					71			
Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)			60					
Ale Moor Reservoir (Hawick)	18					15	11	15
Hollybush (Galashiels)						10	46	
Total no of tetrads	29	29	17	10	17	19	25	24
Aggregate count of all peak counts	1,487	1,640	1,036	113	193	309	619	975

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

Tetrads with some peak counts above 10 but with an aggregate annual count of less than 50 came from: Arter Brae Wood (Manor Valley); Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank); Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch; Eyemouth; Glenwhilt (Selkirk); Harelaw Pond-Cotfield (Lilliesleaf); Lady Moss (Bowden); Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk); Minto Kames (Denholm); Pease Bay; Teviot Haughs (Crailing); The Hirsell; Whiteside Plantation (Mellerstain).

There were 2 records with breeding evidence (all based on the presence of pairs): 10-Apr at Williestruther Loch, Hawick (S Henderson) and on 10-Apr at Bemersyde Moss (MB Ross).

The peak count of 808 continues the general upward trend of peak counts in recent years:

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
301	280	404	400	348	360	327	230	314	180	200	250	300	300	450	560	850	690	780	808

Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos

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

Records came from 219 tetrads (17%). 2018 - 192 tetrads, 2017 - 114 tetrads, 2016 -188, 2015 - 140 tetrads.

Tetrads with monthly peak counts of 30 or more and with an annual aggregate count of 250 or more were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	314	190	196	105	109	126	46	10	527	343	309	142
Tweed: Kelso-Teviot: Roxburgh Castle	238	120	118	95					207		41	268
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	139		150	72	95	40	119	116			109	199
The Hirsell	36	83		22			230	114	80	120	54	80
Tweed: Tweedbank-Langlee	117	120	68	37		38	124	71	62	53	80	
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge	73	64	37				85	92	52	76	88	76
Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog-Westfield			40			63	190	115		50	50	100
Folly Loch	36	35							108	216	140	33
Watch Water Res (Longformacus)	150	69								120	120	99
Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside			39	49	83	69	40	46		83		62
Yetholm Loch	60					75	155	30				56
Duns Castle-Hens Poo-Duns Wood	180	100									85	
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	81	44						144				50
Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords)		44	35			52	65		58	54		
Newstead (Melrose)									250	43		
Wooden Loch-Eckford	45	37			35	40		81		40		
Hollybush (Galashiels)								47	76	46	45	36

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

Tetrads with occasional monthly peak counts of 30 or more were (maximum count shown): Abbotsford - 75; Alemoor Reservoir (Hawick) - 57; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 87; Bogbank (Coldingham) - 81; Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose) - 74; Broadlee Loch (Roberton) - 42; Caddonlee (Clovenfords) - 55; Castledean (Greenlaw) - 44; Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch) 34; Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham) - 60; Duns Law - 120; Eckford-Kalemouth - 81; Gatehopeknowe-Holylee (Walkerburn) - 130; Gordon - 70; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) - 41; Haining Loch (Selkirk) - 53; Harelaw Pond-Cotfield (Lilliesleaf) - 32; Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm) - 42; Manderston (Duns) - 100; Mellerstain (Gordon) -67; Minto Kames (Denholm) - 30; Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) - 116; Peebles - 80; St Mary's Loch - 47; Talla Reservoir - 31; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 59; Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm) - 30; Tweed Horizons-The Holmes (Newtown St

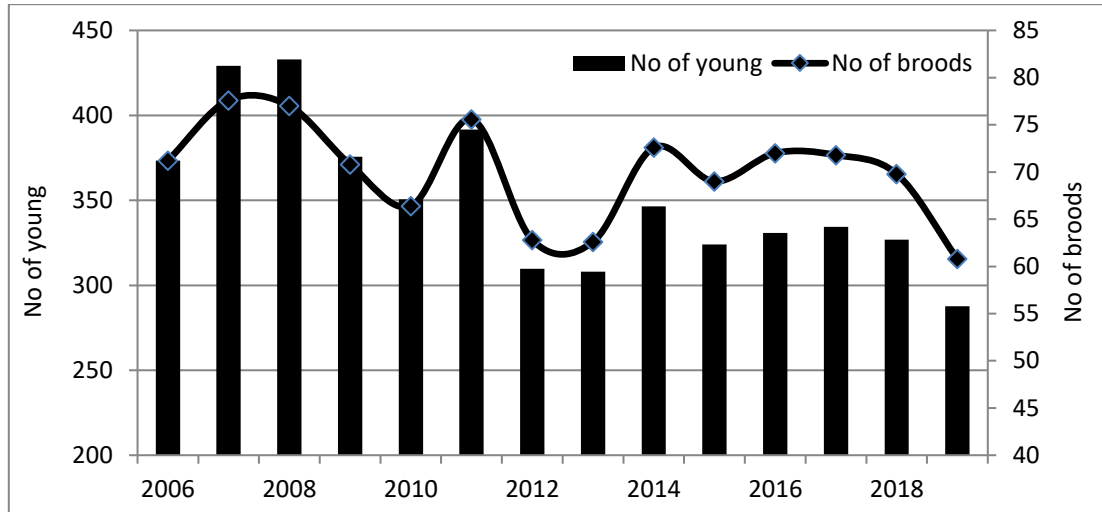
Boswells) - 48; Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge - 66; Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn) - 56; Tweed: Maxton - 157; Tweed: Mertoun Br-Benrig Dean (St Boswells) - 52; Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange - 30; Tweed: St Thomas's Island (Paxton) - 46; Tweed-Whiteadder Water (English Border) - 36.

Readers should be aware that the number of Mallards recorded makes no distinction between reared-released birds used for game and other birds. The number of birds reared and released for shoots can form a substantial proportion of counts in certain locations, eg Wooden Loch (Eckford Hall) and Manderston (Duns).

Breeding evidence was reported from 60 tetrads, of which 42 involved confirmed breeding. A minimum of 70 broods were recorded with a minimum of 331 fledglings:

Spottiswoode (Westruther)	P	20-Mar	White Law (Selkirk)	P	16-May
Gordon Community Woodland	P	20-Mar	Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	1br8	18-May
Hare Moss (Selkirk)	2P	25-Mar	Huntershall (Soutra)	FL	20-May
Yetholm Pond	2P	28-Mar	Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	3br16	21-May
Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave	P	31-Mar	Newmains (Reston)	5br31	22-May
Lauder Common	P	05-Apr	Philiphaugh Est-Old Mill Fm (Selkirk)	FL	22-May
Megget Reservoir-Cramalt	P	07-Apr	Tweed: Birgham Haugh (Coldstream)	1br15	22-May
Peat Law (Oxton)	P	17-Apr	Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)	1br4	24-May
Eckford Hall	NE	21-Apr	Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream)	10br57	28-May
Hule Moss	br4	22-Apr	Ale Moor Reservoir (Roberton)	br7	30-May
Manderston (Duns)	2br25	22-Apr	Tweedbank-Langlee	FL	31-May
Elibank (Walkerburn)	P	22-Apr	Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	2br9	02-Jun
Bemersyde Moss	T	27-Apr	The Hirsell	br3	05-Jun
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	ON	27-Apr	Scarlaw (Watch Water Reservoir)	1br7	06-Jun
Burnmouth-Partanhall	1br12	27-Apr	Gallow Bank (Eddleston)	1br4	06-Jun
Gatehopeknowe-Holylee (Walkerburn)	P	29-Apr	Glentress Burn (Blackhopebyre)	1br6	08-Jun
Big Law W (Hownam)	P	05-May	Tweed: Kelso S	1br1	08-Jun
Leithen Water-Glentress Water	FL	07-May	Tweed: Neidpath Castle (Peebles)	1br3	10-Jun
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	5br29	09-May	Harehead-Newark Castle (Yarrowford)	P	10-Jun
Peebles	FL	10-May	Tweed: Millmount (Melrose)	2br8	11-Jun
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	3br20	10-May	Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)	FL	14-Jun
Yetholm Loch	2br13	10-May	Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	1br1	17-Jun
Tweed: Elibank-Holylee	P	11-May	Tweed: Sprouston-Redden	4br18	20-Jun
Tweed: Kingmeadows-Kailzie	FL	12-May	Selkirk SE	br4	21-Jun
Tweed: Boleside (Galashiels)	br5	13-May	Yarrow Water: Gordon Arms Hotel	1br2	24-Jun
St Abbs-Northfield	FL	13-May	Sorrowlessfield (Earlston)	FL	01-Jul
Teviot Haughs (Crailing)	1br2	14-May	Abbotsford	2br8	03-Jul
Graden (Yetholm)	P	14-May	Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	br5	04-Jul
Hog Hill (Lauder)	P	15-May	Gordon Community Wood N	FL	07-Jul
Edgerston Tofts (Carter Bar)	1br1+	15-May	Peat Hill (Heriot)	1br3	14-Jul

On the basis of BBR records, the above figures appear to be part of a downward trend in breeding numbers, as illustrated by the graph below. This statement however, comes with the usual health warning concerning the skeletal nature of bird report records.



Mallard: 5-year running mean breeding records, 2002-2019.



Mallard with brood. Newton St Boswells. June. Dougie Methven.

Pintail

Anas acuta

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

Eleven records came from 7 tetrads. 2018 - 7 tetrads, 2017 - 8 tetrads, 2016 - 6, 2015, 4, 2014 - 2 tetrads.

Synton Loch (Ashkirk)	16-Feb	1	EL Bickmore
Newmains (Reston)	18-Feb	1	DK Graham
Folly Loch	20-Feb	2	CD Green
Folly Loch	01-Mar	1	M Moncrieff
Harelaw Pond-Cotfield (Lilliesleaf)	07-Mar	2	G Paterson
Blount Island (Ladykirk)	02-Jun	1	A Spybey
Folly Loch	17-Aug	1	AT Bramhall
Folly Loch	20-Aug	1	AT Bramhall
Folly Loch	31-Aug	1	CD Green
Eyemouth*	06-Oct	3	C Hartley
Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	06-Oct	1	C Hatsell

* Flying south.

A fairly typical set of records.

Teal

Anas crecca

Uncommon breeder, c.80-100 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 were from 92 tetrads (7%). 2018 - 73 tetrads, 2017 - 69 tetrads, 2016 - 64, 2015 - 61 tetrads. The 26% increase in range since 2018 may be the result of increased observer effort: the number of records increased by 23% since last year.

Monthly peak counts of 15 or more with an annual aggregate count of 50 or more came from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Newmains (Reston)	520	550	350								160	300
Hule Moss	400	300	75	21					60	200	300	220
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)		24	28	41		20	28	55	112	145	80	315
Westfield-Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)	50	100	129							50	30	150
Tweedbank-Langlee	108	56		37					20	34	61	91
Watch Water Reservoir	295	34								25	28	
The Hirsell	300	35										23
Folly Loch		70	31						34	53	62	31
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)	55	58	30						35		12	32
Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog		20								50		90
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	118	39										
Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)			30								24	73
St Mary's Loch	34	37										30
Middlestots (Duns)			61								33	
Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch)	29									19	28	
Castledean (Greenlaw)									49			25
Hollybush (Galashiels)									17	19	16	21
Bogbank (Coldingham)										70		
Whitmuirhill Loch (Selkirk)	30										16	20
Eyemouth*								35		23		
Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)							31			20		
Total no of tetrads	39	40	39	26	7	7	10	15	25	23	23	28
Aggregate count of all peak counts	2,119	1,517	1,053	246	19	48	85	130	410	806	936	1,539

Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream records are based on the maximum count at any single site between Kelso and Coldstream unless the WeBS count for the whole stretch was greater. *Fly-by sightings.

Additional tetrads with some peak counts greater than 15 but with annual aggregate counts of less than 50 were (maximum count shown): Bemersyde Moss-Mertoun Bridge - 19; Cammerlaws (Westruther) - 15; Edrom (Duns) - 34; Faldonside Loch (Tweedbank) - 18; Fruid Reservoir - 42; Harelaw Pond-Cotfield (Lilliesleaf) - 27; Millar's Moss (St Abbs) - 23; Pirn Craig-Clure Pool (Innerleithen) - 16; Redheugh-Souter (Coldingham Moor) - 15; Standhill Road

(Minto) - 20; Synton Loch (Ashkirk) - 16; Tarth Water Haughs (Blyth Bridge) - 38; Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm) - 30; West Water Reservoir - 45; Whitton Loch (Hownam) - 18; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 23; Yetholm Pond - 24.

Breeding evidence was recorded in 12 tetrads. 2018 - 7 tetrads, 2017 - 6 tetrads, 2016 - 12, 2015 - 12 tetrads. Only two records had confirmed breeding:

Spottiswoode (Westruther)	20-Mar	P	Whim (West Linton)	29-Apr	P
Yetholm Loch	28-Mar	P	Hundleshope (Manor Valley)	03-May	P
The Hirsell	14-Apr	P	Chirnsidebridge	11-May	P
Hule Moss	22-Apr	1br5	Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)	05-Jun	1br12
Tweedbank-Langlee	28-Apr	P	Blackhopebyre (Leithen Hopes)	07-Jun	P
Bemersyde Moss	28-Apr	P	Huntershall (Soutra)	10-Jun	P

The records received suggest that while breeding numbers continue on their steady decline of recent years, winter numbers (as measured by peak counts) seems to have steadied after an increase in the previous 5 years.

Pochard

Aythya ferina

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

Records came from 4 tetrads. 2018 - 14 tetrads, 2017 - 11 tetrads, 2016 - 4, 205 - 9, 2014 - 9 tetrads.

Wooden Loch (Eckford)	18-Jan	1	Folly Loch	31-Aug	1
Wooden Loch (Eckford)	06-Feb	1	Folly Loch	01-Sep	1
Wooden Loch (Eckford)	17-Feb	1	Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	09-Sep	1
Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)	03-May	4			

The poorest set of records since the Borders Bird Report began in 1979. There has not been a double-figure count since the 22 birds reported at The Hirsell in November, 2011.

Tufted Duck

Aythya fuligula

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

Records came from 67 tetrads (5%). 2018 - 57 tetrads, 2017 - 53 tetrads, 2016 - 57, 2015 - 61 tetrads.

Tetrads with monthly peak counts of 10 or more were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)			26	38	31	31	24	35			14	32
Hule Moss		20	32	25	11				16	29		67
Folly Loch		50	29	25				15	15	22	27	
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	16	10	13	14		10	30	21			13	17
Tweedbank-Langlee	20	25	12	12					17	25	17	14
Wooden Loch (Eckford)	58	74										
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)									40	54		
The Hirsell		11	14	20						22		
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)	20	11	12								11	12
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)		39	16									
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	13	35										
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)										32	10	
Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)			14	10		13						
West Water Reservoir										33		

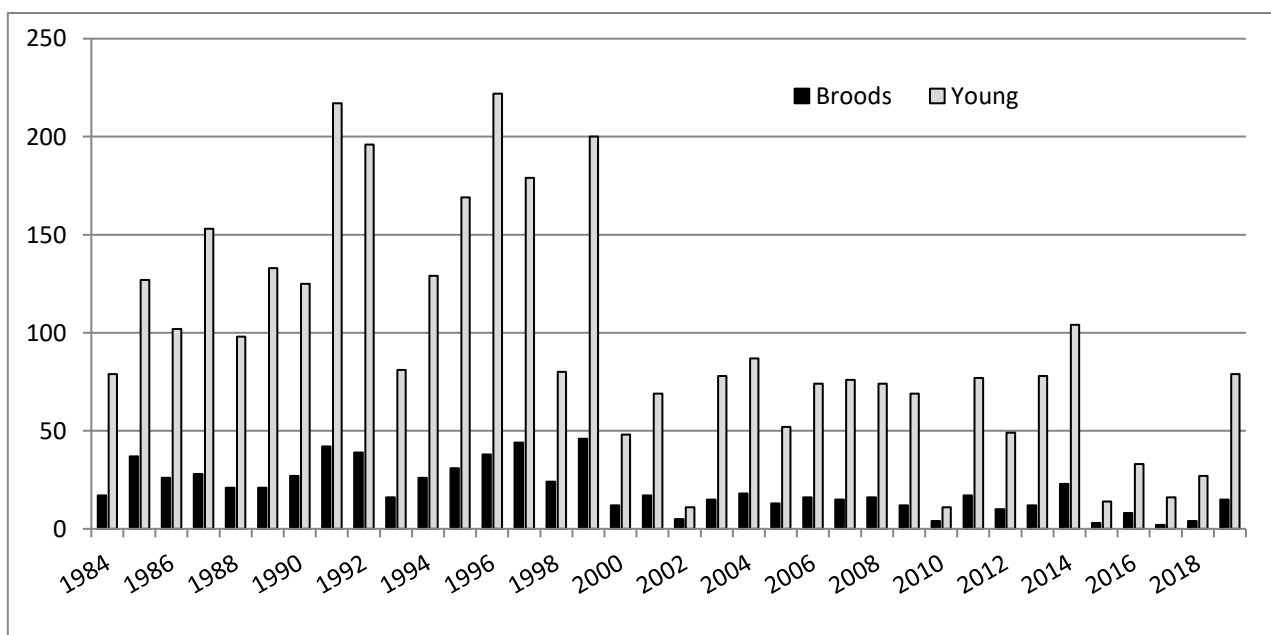
Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)			14	17								
Brander Heugh (Dowlaw)									23			
St Abbs-Northfield					17							
Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)									15			
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	14											
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)			14									
Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)				12								
Watch Water Reservoir											11	
White Law (Selkirk)					11							
Glenwhilt (Selkirk)	10											
Tweed: Ladykirk					10							
Total no of tetrads	26	28	31	26	26	26	21	14	22	26	21	18
Aggregate count of all peak counts	204	327	258	240	157	132	112	107	183	268	151	174

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

Evidence of breeding came from 21 tetrads. 2018 - 12 tetrads (2 confirmed), 2017 - 11 tetrads (one confirmed), 2016 - 27 tetrads (5 confirmed), 2015 - 26 tetrads (2 confirmed):

Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	6P	18-Mar	Green Diamonds (Selkirk)	P	28-May
Spottiswoode (Westruther)	P	20-Mar	Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh	2P	06-Jun
Watch Water Reservoir	2P	25-Mar	Newmains (Reston)	3br13	24-Jun
Yetholm Loch	2P	28-Mar	Hose Law (Heriot)	FL	02-Jul
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	P	10-Apr	Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)	1br4	10-Jul
The Hirsell	P	14-Apr	Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)	1br8	17-Jul
Hog Hill (Lauder)	P	28-Apr	Synton Loch (Ashkirk)	1br7	20-Jul
Huntershall (Soutra)	P	29-Apr	Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	3br18	29-Jul
Hare Moss (Selkirk)	P	14-May	Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	3br20	30-Jul
White Law (Selkirk)	P	16-May	Hollybush (Galashiels)	1br7	03-Aug
See Introduction for breeding codes.			Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)	1br1	13-Aug

The graph below illustrates well the dramatic decline in recorded broods and young since 1999:



Tufted Duck breeding records, 1984-2019.

The dramatic decline between 1999 and 2000 has not been explained and might not be a precise reflection of the actual breeding performance in Borders. However, the stark contrast between the period 1984-2000 and 2001-2019 is such as to suggest there has been a real, significant decline. Further information can be found in Ray Murray. *Crisis in breeding Tufted Duck in the Borders*. BBR 2011. No 27. Contributors are encouraged to give full details of breeding when submitting their records for this species.



Tufted Duck. Tweedbank. October. Lisa McLeish.

Scaup

Aythya marila

Scarce but annual passage migrant and winter visitor. Usually in singles.

Records came from 5 tetrads. 2018 - 7 tetrads, 2017 - 8 tetrads, 2016 - 8 tetrads, 2015 - 3, 2014 - 2 tetrads.

March: 2 at Newmains (Reston) on 16th (DK Graham); single at Hule Moss on 24th (AP Mossop).

August: single at St Abb's Head NNR on 27th (R Grant).

October: 4 birds at St Abb's Head-Black Gable on 2nd (C Hatsell).

November: single at Clearburn Lake (Buccleuch) on 9th and 16th (G Paterson, EL Bickmore).

December: 2 at The Hirsell on 28th (DK Graham).

Lesser Scaup

Aythya affinis

Very rare North American vagrant. First and only record, 2020.

A male bird was found by C Hatsell (St Abb's Head Warden) at Millar's Moss (St Abbs) on 18-May. It was reported at intervals from the same site until 18-Jun. On 23-Jun it was observed at Harly Darlies, Dowlaw, "paying a lot of attention to a female Tufted Duck, apparently paired" (M Holling). From the 27-Jun until its departure on 10-Jul it could be found at Mire Loch (St Abb's Head). This is a first record for Scottish Borders.

Eider*Somateria mollissima*

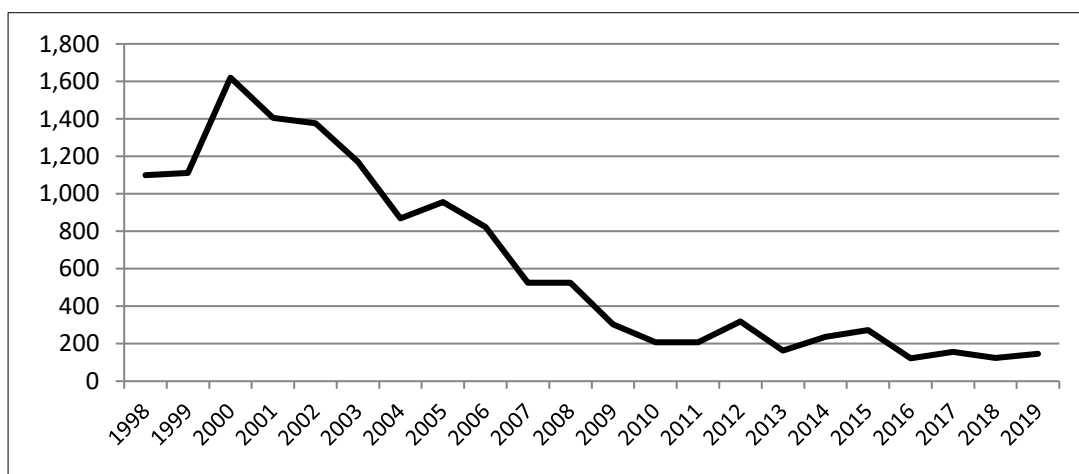
Well-represented but declining along whole coast throughout the year, formerly abundant. Rare breeder with little evidence of success. Very rare inland. During 2008-13 found in 15 tetrads in summer and 18 in winter.

Records came from between Dunglass and Burnmouth. The Rocky Shore Count (RSC) carried out between 27- and 29-Jan had a total count of 147. 2018 - 124 birds, 2017 - 157 birds, 2016 - 122, 2015 - 273, 2014 - 237 birds.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	2	1	2								6	3
Pease Bay-Redheugh	2											
Redheugh-Souter	16											
Souter-Pettico Wick	19		2					1	7	6		
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	9	1	10	8	5	2			4	9		4
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	80				1				1		83	45
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	71	30	8	2					8	40	44	60
Burnmouth-Border	38	14	11	1	3	1	5		3	8	9	6

No breeding records were received.

The graph below shows the decline of the Eider Duck along the Borders coast:



Eider: Rocky Shore Counts, 1998-2019.

Velvet Scoter*Melanitta fusca*

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

Eight records submitted with some duplicate counts likely.

July: single at Eyemouth on 9th (DK Graham).

September: 3 at St Abb's Head on 18th (N Hammatt) and a single on 19th (M Eaton).

October: a single at St Abbs on 20th (DK Graham) and 9 on the following day (R Safford).

November: all records from Eyemouth on 3rd (DK Graham), 8th and 27th (C Hartley).

Peak count and bird-days were below recent averages:

1979-83	1984-88	1989-93	1994-98	1999-03	2004-08	2009-13	2014-18	2019
2	7	10	6	9	11	10	15	9

Velvet Scoter annual peak counts (5-year averages), 1973-83 to 2014-18 compared with 2019.

Common Scoter*Melanitta nigra*

Well-represented late summer and autumn passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor to coastal areas. Rare inland.

Records numbered 39 and came from sites between Dunglass and Eyemouth and one record came from near Coldstream.

Peak monthly counts for sites were:

Eymouth	08-Jun	3
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St Abb's Head	02-Jul	47
Coldstream NW	05-Jul	1

Eymouth	10-Aug	10
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Eymouth*	19-Sep	27
St Abb's Head	22-Sep	78

* fly-by records

St Abb's Head	05-Oct	10
St Abbs E	21-Oct	17
Eymouth	26-Oct	407

Eymouth	03-Nov	41
St Abb's Head	10-Nov	28
Dunglass	17-Nov	2
Burnmouth*	27-Nov	30

Eymouth	01-Dec	19
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Bird-days are estimated as 928, which is near to the average for the period 2012-2018.

Long-tailed Duck*Clangula hyemalis*

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

An estimated 26 bird-days based on 9 records from 6 sites.

Winter-spring			
Pease Bay	3	19-Jan	DK Graham
Pease Bay	2	01-Feb	G Paterson
Coldingham Bay	1	01-Feb	G Paterson
Autumn-winter			
St Abb's Head	1	02-Oct	C Hatsell
Eymouth	1	20-Oct	M Holling
Eymouth	9	29-Oct	C Hartley
Eymouth	3	03-Nov	G Garner
Eymouth	4	16-Nov	DK Graham
Dunglass	2	07-Dec	DK Graham

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
43	2	40	41	13	25	79	82	59	37
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
81	43	72	44	75	115	31	41	68	26

Long-tailed Duck bird-days, 2000-2019.

When entering records on BirdTrack please ensure that all appropriate details are included, especially relating to any breeding evidence and details, eg number of broods and brood size.

Goldeneye

Bucephala clangula

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

Records came from 60 tetrads. 2018- 68 tetrads, 2017 - 70 tetrads, 2016 - 62, 2015 - 52 tetrads.

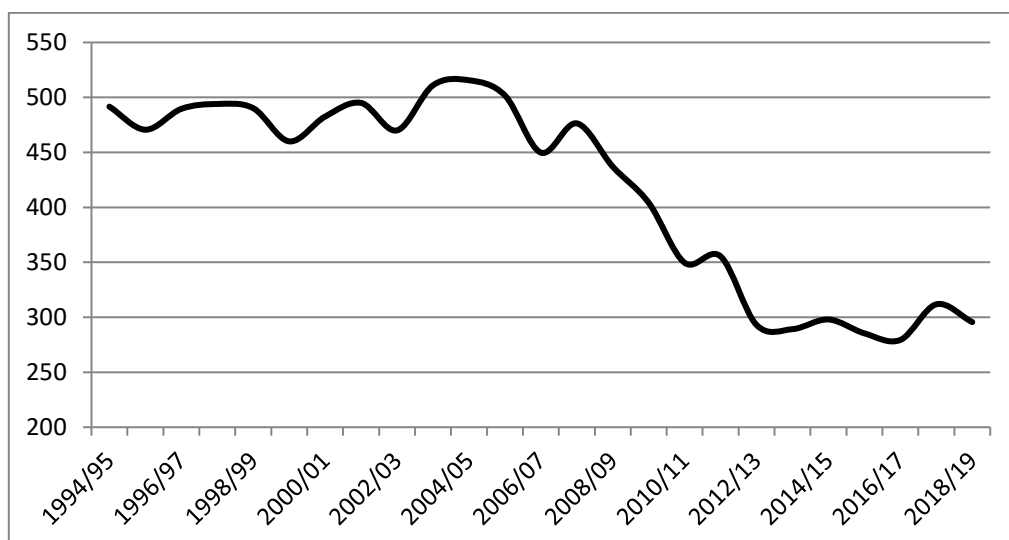
Peak monthly counts of 10 or more were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	S	O	N	D
The Hirsell		38	77				20	38	42
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	61	29	52	12				20	27
St Mary's Loch	22	19	17					23	11
Alemoor Reservoir (Hawick)	19	22	27						11
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	10	15	32						
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge		10						15	18
Hule Moss	10	17							
Redheugh-Souter	27								
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)								24	
Yetholm Loch			18						
Springhall (Kelso)									14
Hellmoor Loch (Roberton)			13						
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)		13							
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	12								
Whitton Loch (Hownam)				10					
Total no of tetrads	37	36	34	17	2	3	19	24	27
Aggregate count of all peak counts	248	229	289	50	2	9	79	168	176

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

Tetrads with peak counts below 10 were: Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose); Bowhill (Selkirk); Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch); Coldingham Loch-Mawcarr Stells; Dunglass-Pease Bay (W); Haining Loch (Selkirk); Lady Moss (Bowden); Lambertton Beach; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk); Millar's Moss (St Abbs); Pettico Wick-Coldingham; Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords); Traquair House W; Tweed: Kelso-Teviot: Roxburgh Castle; Tweed-Whiteadder Water (English Border); Watch Water Reservoir.

The aggregate count of the 20 most popular sites illustrates the decline in numbers since about the late 1990s:



Goldeneye: 5-year running average of aggregated counts of the 20 most popular sites, 1994/95-2018/19.

Smew*Mergus albellus*

Increasingly scarce winter visitor. During 2008-13 found in 6 tetrads in winter.

A well-watched immature female was seen between 15- and 17-Feb at The Hirsle (G Paterson *et al.*). This was the first record since 2016.

Goosander*Mergus merganser*

Common winter visitor (650-850 birds) in October to May. Large winter roosts of hundreds of birds, but sites vary. During 2008-13 found in 18% of tetrads in summer and 22% in winter.

Records came from 116 tetrads (9%). 2018 - 123 tetrads, 2017 - 130 tetrads, 2016 - 111, 2015 - 122 tetrads.

Monthly peak counts of 5 or more with an annual aggregate count of 15 or more came from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	50	16	29	19	27	14		11	48	28	23	15
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	18		23	25	73				64		14	18
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	28	22	43	11				8	17	30	9	34
Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside	8		8	14	29	17	16			28		16
Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge	6				16	5	12	8	15	18	13	
Tweed: Peebles	9	8	11			6	8		23	6	6	10
Abbotsford	9		11	10				9	26			
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge	16	13	25						11	6	6	7
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	5		7			16	6	5	13	6		
Teviot Haughs (Crailing-Nisbet)	11		8	5	11			7		7		
Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn)								50		5		
Manderston (Duns)												34
Tweed: Kelso-Teviot: Roxburgh Castle		8	6						5		10	
Philiphugh (Selkirk)						5	8		7			
Tweed: Ladykirk					11		8					
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)				6	5				7			
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)											16	
Innerleithen						9			6			
Total no of tetrads	52	36	51	39	38	20	16	22	24	29	30	27
Aggregate count of all peak counts	244	115	251	149	246	96	89	141	297	162	151	165

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

Sites with counts of 5 or more but with annual aggregate counts of less than 15 were (maximum count shown): Duns Wood - 14; Springwood (Kelso) - 13; Kalemouth (Eckford) - 12; Cardrona Hotel - 10; Hule Moss - 10; St Mary's Loch - 10; Yetholm Loch - 10; Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm) - 9; Traquair House W - 9; Tweed: Dryburgh Br-Monksford (Newton St Boswells) - 9; Tweed: Rink Hill (Selkirk) - 9; Bluestane Ford (Chirnside) - 8; The Hirsle - 8; Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 7; West Water Reservoir - 7; Barnes Loch (Stobs Castle) - 6; Bowdenmoor Reservoir (Bowden) - 6; Bowhill (Selkirk) - 6; Dod (Wauchope Forest) - 6; Duns Castle-Hens Poo - 6; Teviot: Denholm - 6; Teviot: Monteviot Weir - 6; Tweed: Gledswood Fm (Melrose) - 6.

Confirmed breeding records came from 15 tetrads. 2018 - 7 tetrads, 2017 - 12 tetrads, 2016 - 9, 2015 - 4 tetrads:

Tweed: Birgham Haugh (Coldstream)	14-Apr	1br5	Philiphugh (Selkirk)	13-Jun	FL
Elibank (Walkerburn)	15-May	1br8	Innerleithen	19-Jun	FL
Tweedbank	24-May	br14	Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	17-Jun	1br5
Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh	06-Jun	br12	Peebles	19-Jun	1br5
Longnewtown-Sandystones (St Boswells)	07-Jun	1br2	Newstead (Melrose)	21-Jun	FL
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	07-Jun	1br6	Lees Haugh (Coldstream)	24-Jun	br5
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	09-Jun	2br8	Walkerburn Br-Glenmead	15-Jul	1br1
See Introduction for breeding codes.			Abbotsford	17-Jul	2br19

Notwithstanding the problems of making statements about breeding records for such a mobile species, this year's records suggest a minimum of 17 broods and 93 young. Since many of the young appear to have been recorded in crèches it is difficult to attach much confidence to the counts of broods. Instead the number of young recorded is used here as an indication of breeding trends:

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Young	51	39	56	53	52	99	87	104	48	101	60	81	115	69	90	85	93	93

Readers should note that a significant number of records involve counts which include recently fledged birds. Contributors should only give counts of adults and juveniles, eg a pair with, say, a brood of 8, should be entered as a count of 2 **with** an entry made in the breeding section of BirdTrack for the 8 fledglings: 1br8. The problem, of course, lies with determining when fledglings become juveniles.

As part of a study of the effect of this species on salmon numbers, the River Tweed Commission carried out a cull of at least 36 birds. It will be interesting to see the impact on Goosander records in 2020.

Red-breasted Merganser

Mergus serrator

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

Records came from 7 tetrads. 2018 - 4 tetrads, 2017 - 5 tetrads, 2016 - 5 tetrads, 2015 - 4 tetrads.

January: on 2nd 2 birds at Dunglass and 2 at Cove Harbour (G Paterson). On 17th a total of 5 (incl. 4 male adults) were recorded at Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge (C Hartley) and a single on 19th, again, at Dunglass (DK Graham).

March: on 3rd 4 birds at Dunglass and an unspecified number at Cove Harbour on 23rd (K Youngs).

September: on 18th 20 birds were reported from St Abb's Head (C Hatsell); on 19th 3 were seen at Eyemouth (C Hartley) and a further record of 4 from St Abb's Head was made on 30th (DK Graham).

October: on 20th 5 birds were seen at St Abbs (DK Graham) and a single was seen at St Abbs E on 24th (R Safford).

December: 2 males were seen at Pease Bay on 4th (G Paterson) and a single at Dunglass on 7th (DK Graham).

The count of 20 at St Abb's Head in September is the highest recorded count for Borders to-date.

Black Grouse

Tetrao tetrix

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

Records came from 20 tetrads. 2018 - 13 tetrads, 2017 - 20 tetrads, 2016 - 14, 2015 - 19 tetrads.

Peak counts per month were:

Areas	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Ettrick Forest				2	2							
Lammermuir Hills				3	1				4		3	
Moorfoot Hills			2	10	4	3	3	4				5
Upper Tweeddale				2	2							
Total no of occupied tetrads			2	10	8	2	1	1	1		2	2
Aggregate of all peak counts	0	0	2	17	9	3	3	4	4	0	3	5

Breeding evidence came from 7 tetrads. 2018 - 3 tetrads, 2017 - 6 tetrads, 2016 - 5, 2015 - 3 tetrads:

The number of occupied tetrads and the estimated total of birds (maximum annual counts for each occupied tetrad) are shown below (grey shading = 2007-13 SE Scotland Atlas survey period):

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sites	69	24	52	48	35	24	38	27	42	38	117	118	98	17	19	19	14	20	13	20
Birds	226	111	207	139	89	42	128	65	101	119	344	506	359	105	83	86	43	49	38	41

*Note ambiguity between use of terms site and tetrad. The former was consistently used in Reports up to 2014 while tetrads were used from 2015 onward.



Black Grouse. Moorfoot Hills. Alistair Cutter.

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. During 2008-13 found in 19% of tetrads in summer and 25% in winter.

Records came from 39 tetrads (3%). 2018 - 37 tetrads, 2017 - 22 tetrads, 2016 – 42 tetrads, 2015 - 53 tetrads.

Tetrads with annual aggregate counts of monthly peaks greater than 5 were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Hule Moss-Greenlaw Moor	12	12	15	14	20	4	3	20	13	12	7	9
Watch Water Reservoir	18	9	12		2			5	13	5	15	2
Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave	1		12	12	1							24
Blackhope Water: Garvald Lodge		2	1	3								19
Long Grain (Soutra)					14	10						
Nun Rig-Harecleugh Forest (Westruther)						15						
Lauder Common		5		6	2		1					
Whiteadder Water: The Bell (Cranshaws)	14											
Huntershall (Soutra)					2	2	1	8				

Mountbenger Law (Yarrow)										8			
Causeway Grain Head (Teviothead)	1	5											1
Lee Pen (Leithen Water)				7									
Broad Law-Peat Hill (Garvald)		1	1	1			2			1			
Total no of tetrads	11	9	7	16	12	9	7	4	4	4	3	6	
Aggregate count of all peak counts	64	36	44	58+	48+	39+	9+	34	35	18	24	57	

Other occupied tetrads were: Auchope Cairns (Cheviot Burn); Blackhopebyre-Gill Burn; Broad Law-Wull Muir (Heriot); Broomy Law (Yarrowford); Brown Rig (Lauder); Cairn Law (Tall Reservoir); Dewar Burn: Dewar; Drycleuchlea (Buccleuch); Eildon Hill Mid-North (Melrose); Glentress Water: Hillside Knowe-Glentress Rig; Heriot Water: Raeshaw; Hog Hill (Lauder); Leithen Water-Glentress Water confluence; Little Crow Cleuch (Whiteadder Res); Middle Rig (Watch Water Reservoir); Peat Law (Oxton); Priesthope Hill (Innerleithen); Soutra Hill (Oxton); Tanwell (Stow); Tathieknowe-Windy Slack (Heriot); Three Brethren-Little Crib (Selkirk); Ward Law (Ettrick); White Law (Yetholm); Windy Gyle N (Hownam); Wisp Hill (Teviothead); Wrunk Law E (Longformacus).

Records of birds during Apr-Aug came from 20 tetrads and breeding evidence was reported from 14 tetrads:

Watch Water Reservoir	25-Mar	FL	Middle Rig (Watch Water Reservoir)	06-Jun	1br 3
Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave	31-Mar	br3	Broad Law (Garvald)	07-Jun	P
Lauder Common	05-Apr	P	Nun Rig-Harecleugh Forest (Westruther)	18-Jun	FL
Soutra Hill (Oxton)	12-Apr	P	Hule Moss	05-Jul	br6
Lee Pen (Leithen Water)	19-Apr	P	Auchope Cairns (Cheviot Burn)	15-Jul	S
Peat Law (Oxton)	29-May	FL	Huntershall (Soutra)	19-Jul	FL
Hog Hill (Lauder)	06-Jun	FL	Tanwell (Stow)	16-Nov	P

See Introduction for breeding codes.

Submitted records for the breeding season:

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
79	60	76	82	42	35	26	30	10	7	6	20

Red Grouse: No of occupied tetrads reported during Apr-Aug, 2008-2019.

(shading represents period of Atlas survey period)

The apparent overall decline in the range of breeding Red Grouse, as suggested by the number of occupied tetrads, may be partly a reflection of reduced observer effort in areas of grouse shooting.

Red-legged Partridge

Alectoris rufa

Formerly scarce and erratic introduced game species but now increasing in numbers. Most released in August-September for shooting, rarely breeds. During 2008-13 found in 19% of tetrads in summer and 19% in winter.

Records came from 86 tetrads (7%). 2018 - 75, 2017 - 39 tetrads, 2016 - 30 tetrads, 2015 - 40 tetrads.

Jan-Mar

Reported from 28 tetrads. The highest counts came from Dog Law E (Cranshaws) - 28; Whiteadder Water: The Bell (Cranshaws) - 25; Smiddyhill (Cranshaws) - 23; Watch Water Reservoir - 16; Hopehouse (Ettrick) - 15; Edrom (Duns) - 14; Houndslow E (Westruther) - 10; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 9; Whiteadder Water: Elba (Abbey St Bathans) - 7; Tweed: Thornielee - 7; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 7.

Apr-Aug

Reported from 48 tetrads. Highest counts were: Old Kirkhope (Ettrickbridge) - 12; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 9; Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords) - 4; Oxnam Row - 3; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 3; Shielfield (Oxton) - 3; Hog Hill (Lauder) - 3; Caddon Water: Laidlawstiel Farm - 3; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 3; Watch Water Reservoir - 3.

Sep-Dec

Reported from 28 tetrads. Highest counts were: Clerklands (Lilliesleaf) - 50; Innerleithen - 16; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 15; Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 14; Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn) - 13; Lymiecleugh (Teviothead) - 13; Little Louise Plantation (Duns) - 10; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 10; Plora Wood W (Innerleithen) - 10; Eden Water: Mellowles Bridge (Mellerstain) - 10; Watch Water Reservoir - 9; Billhope (Hermitage) - 9; Teviot: Commonbrae (Craik Forest) - 7; Gala Water: Torsonce (Stow) - 6; Megget Reservoir-Cramalt - 6; Caddon Water: Laidlawstiel Farm - 5.

Breeding evidence came from 13 tetrads. 2018 – 17 tetrads. There was one record of confirmed breeding: Garvald-Windy Slack, Heriot (FL). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Grey Partridge

Perdix perdix

Common 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 came from 44 tetrads (3%). 2018 - 37 tetrads, 2017 - 34 tetrads, 2016 – 39 tetrads, 2015 - 47 tetrads.

Tetrads with monthly peak counts of 5 or more were:

Site	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
Teviot Haughs: Crailing	16			
Tweed: Sprouston-Redden				15
Newmains (Reston)		14		
Mersington (Leitholm)				11
Lempitlaw N (Kelso)	10			
Sprouston-Whitmuirhaugh (Kelso)	10			
Barnes Loch (Stobs Castle)	9			
Eyemouth Golf Course	9			
Southfield (Stobs Castle)	8			
Swinton				8
Hadden (Sprouston)				8
Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm)				8
Tweed: Rutherford Lodge (Maxton)		6		
Jardinefield (Whitsome)				6
Tweed: Birgham Haugh (Coldstream)				6
Ploughlands (Nisbet)				6
Hoselaw Mains (Yetholm)	5			
Cockburn Law (Abbey St Bathans)				5
Total no of tetrads	22	15	3	14
Aggregate of all peak counts	94	47	5+	85+

Breeding evidence came from 8 tetrads. 2018 - 7 tetrads, 2017 - 3 tetrads. Evidence was based on pairs except where indicated: Crosshall (Eccles); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (T); Gavinton S (Duns); Howdens Plantation (Duns); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head); Newmains, Reston (7br39); Roxburgh Newtown (Kelso); Roxburgh Viaduct (Heiton).

The decline in this species, apparent in recent years, appears to be possibly levelling off.

Quail

Coturnix coturnix

Uncommon with variable numbers. Late May-August. Proven breeding rare with most records of singing males.

Twenty-five records from 7 tetrads. 2018 - 3 tetrads, 2017 - 7 tetrads, 2016 - 10 tetrads, 2015 - 29 tetrads.

Peak counts per tetrad were (in count order): Newmains (Reston) - 3; Dowlaw Moss - 2; Wull Muir (Heriot) - 2; Gavinton-Langton Bridge (Duns) - 1; Raeshaw fell E (Hownam) - 1; Huntershall (Soutra) - 1; St Abbs-Northfield - 1. Breeding evidence came from 4 tetrads: Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor); Newmains (Reston); St Abbs-Northfield; Wull Muir (Heriot).

These were similar numbers to the last three years.

Pheasant

Phasianus colchicus

Abundant and widespread resident. Many birds are 'managed' by shooting interests, in releases involving tens of thousands of birds. During 2008-13 found in 74% of tetrads in summer and 70% in winter.

Records came from 200 tetrads (16%). 2018 - 173 tetrads, 2017 - 126 tetrads, 2016 - 143, 2015 - 150 tetrads. The increase in occupied tetrads between last year and this represents an increase of 16%, less than the c. 21% increase in the number of records submitted for all species.

Jan-Mar: Found in 85 tetrads. 2018 - 65 tetrads. The largest counts came from Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 46; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 22; Pirn Craig-Clure Pool (Innerleithen) - 16; Yetholm Loch - 16; Whiteadder Water: Humbles Knowe (Preston) - 15; Smiddyhill (Cranshaws) - 13; The Hirsell - 13; Yetholm Loch - 13; Edgerston Tofts (Carter Bar) - 12; Woodheads (Greenlaw) - 11; Graden (Yetholm) - 11.

Apr-Aug: Found in 135 tetrads. 2018 - 115 tetrads. Highest counts: Torwoodlee-Craigneuk (Galashiels) - 42; Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn) - 30; Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 25; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 17; Dawyck - 13; Big Law W (Hownam) - 12; Philiphaugh N (Selkirk) - 11; Yetholm Loch - 10.

Sep-Dec: Found in 87 tetrads. 2018 - 72 tetrads. Highest counts were: The Hirsell - 200; Marchmont Sawmill (Greenlaw) - 120; Gatehopeknowe-Holylee (Walkerburn) - 105; Manderston (Duns) - 100; St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch - 83; Tweed: Stanhope - 65; Eckford-Kalemouth - 50; Folly Loch - 33; Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 26; Yarrow Water: Gordon Arms Hotel - 22; Ploughlands (Nisbet) - 20; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 20; Norton (Lauder) - 20; Tweed: Fairnillie House (Caddonfoot) - 20; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 19; Yetholm Loch - 18; Megget Reservoir-Cramalt - 18; Woodside (Monteviot) - 17; Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn) - 15; Mellerstain (Gordon) - 13; Dickson's Wood-Tanwell (Stow) - 12.

Breeding records from 27 tetrads: 8 possible; 10; probable; 9 confirmed. It is difficult to read anything into these figures given the scale of commercial releases.



Pheasant.

Manderston.

January.

Andrew Mossop.

Red-throated Diver

Gavia stellata

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

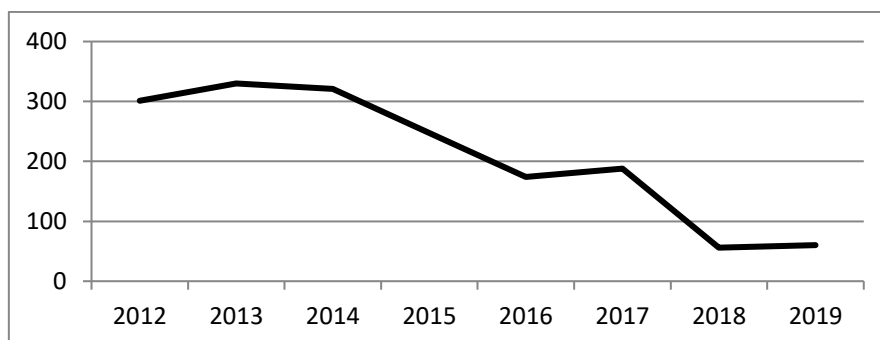
Records were from points along the whole of the Berwickshire coast with one unusual sighting from the Tweed at Paxton House.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	5	7	2		2					11	4	2
Pease Bay-Redheugh		3										
Redheugh-Souter												
Souter-Pettico Wick												
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay			1			1		Pr	6	6	3	1
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth									15	3		1
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	3		2				1		1	12	12	1
Burnmouth-Border		1								1	2	1
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge			1									

The sighting from Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge on 28-Mar (C Hartley) was the first inland sighting since 2007 when a bird was sighted on the Teviot at Nisbet.

There were approximately 193 bird-days. This is a big change from the 78 bird-days of 2018. Whether this is of any real significance or partly a reflection of the problems of estimating bird-days is not known.

As an alternative to bird-days, the graph below shows the annual aggregates of monthly peak counts over the past 8 years



Red-throated Diver: annual aggregates of monthly peak counts, 2012-2019.

Black-throated Diver

Gavia arctica

Very uncommon offshore from September to March. Rare in summer months and very rare inland.

A total of 14 records were submitted. This is the highest number since 2013. All records were of singles unless indicated:

St Abbs	19-Mar
Burnmouth-Partanhall	27-Mar
St Abb's Head	18-Sep
St Abb's Head (flying N)	22-Sep
St Abb's Head	04-Oct
Dunglass	12-Oct
Eyemouth	29-Oct

St Abb's Head	05-Nov
Eyemouth	08-Nov
Eyemouth (count of 2)	16-Nov
Pettico Wick-West Hurker (St Abb's Head)	17-Nov
Eyemouth (flying N)	27-Nov
Eyemouth	01-Dec
Eyemouth (immature)	23-Dec

Great Northern Diver*Gavia immer*

Scarce in winter-spring and uncommon in autumn-winter. Rare in summer months and very rare inland.

A total of 8 records submitted – less than the norm for recent years.

Dunglass	03-Jan	2	Eyemouth	04-Oct	2
St Abb's Head	22-Mar	Pr	St Abbs	20-Oct	2
St Abb's Head	08-Sep	1	St Abbs E	21-Oct	1
St Abb's Head	02-Oct	1	Eyemouth Golf Course	04-Dec	1

Storm Petrel*Hydrobates pelagicus*

Uncommon late summer and autumn passage migrant. Most pass offshore at night and rarely seen from shore. Only ringing has shown their constant presence. Extremely rare inland records, typically after severe storms but none recently.

Borders Ringing Group ringed a total of 12 birds on 02- and 03-Aug at Eyemouth. This was the best set of records since 2014.

Fulmar*Fulmarus glacialis*

Well-represented but declining breeder. Found 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 submitted from 14 tetrads along the Berwickshire coast. The Rocky Shore Count carried out on and around 27-Jan had a total count of 123, the lowest count since 2014.

Peak monthly counts per coastal section (incl. RSC) were:

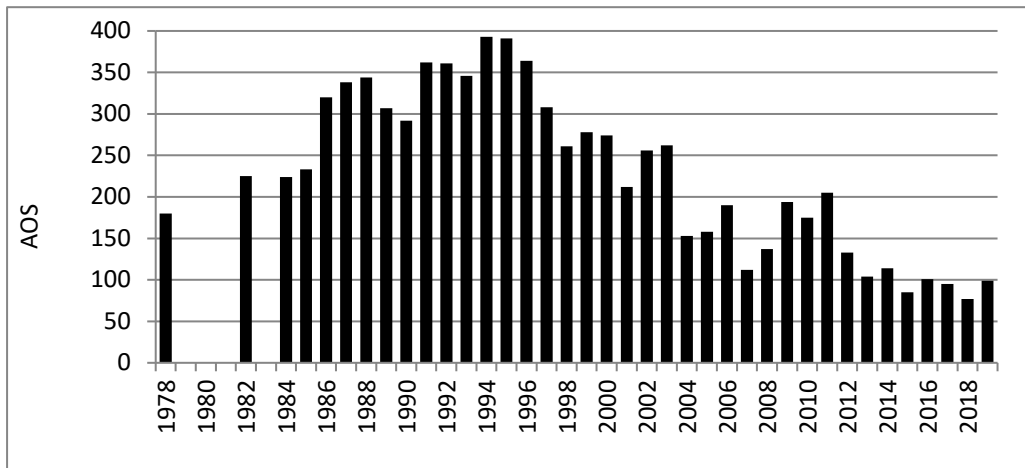
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	2	23							Pr		10	2
Pease Bay-Redheugh		1										
Redheugh-Souter						10						
Souter-Pettico Wick	21											
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay		Pr	20	10	20	35	2	Pr	2		1	
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	12								3			
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	18	25				12			Pr		11	18
Burnmouth-Border	80	Pr	Pr						Pr			3

As can be seen in the above table a great many records are submitted as “present” and without a count. Observers are encouraged to give at least some approximation of the number of birds present.

Breeding records came from 4 tetrads: Eyemouth Golf Course (N) on 21-Jan; St Abb's Head (ON-20) on 17-May; Eyemouth (ON-16) on 27-Jun; St Abbs (NY) on 16-Jul. See Introduction for breeding codes.

St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report for 2019 (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 16-, 18-, 21- and 26-Jun. Blind spots were counted from a boat on 20-Jun. Results: 99 AOS were counted, an increase of 29% on the 2018:



Fulmar: AOS at St Abb's Head NNR, 1978-2019.

No productivity monitoring carried out.

Sooty Shearwater

Puffinus griseus

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

Only 2 reports were submitted: 17-Sep, 2 birds were seen off St Abbs (C Hatsell) and on 22-Sep an unspecified number were reported from St Abb's Head (N Hammatt). Observers are encouraged to give at least some approximation of the number of birds present.

The aggregate count of 3+ is the lowest since 2012:

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
34	623	829	50	51	252	37	282	25	6
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
295	32	2	105	59	16	24	44	11	3

Sooty Shearwater: Annual aggregate counts of autumn passage, 2000-2019.

Manx Shearwater

Puffinus puffinus

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

Twenty-four records were submitted from 4 locations. Aggregate counts per month for each location were:

	M	J	J	A	S	O
St Abb's Head	4	5	137	9	71+	1
St Abbs			4		23	1
Coldingham Bay			1			
Eyemouth		6	9		6	

The earliest report was of 4 birds on 28-May at St Abb's Head (C Hatsell) and the last record was of a single bird on 21-Oct at St Abbs (R Safford).

This approximate aggregate count was 278. The downward trend appears to be continuing:

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Count	704	1029	282	490	609	437	582	310	207	2342	689	172	89	122	390	278
5-yr average					623	569	480	486	429	776	826	744	700	683	292	210

Manx Shearwater: annual aggregate counts, 2004-2019.

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

Well-represented 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 came from 99 tetrads (8%). 2018 - 90 tetrads, 2017 - 66, 2016 - 82, 2015 - 63 tetrads.

Tetrads with monthly peak counts of 5 or greater and an annual aggregate count of 10 or more were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
The Hirsell		12	12	6		10	17	26	30	8		
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge	18	11							10	16	18	16
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	16	16							5		10	10
Wooden Loch (Eckford)	5		6			6		9	5		13	7
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)					8	10	5	14		5		
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	5	9					7			18		
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)		6	5	5			7		7	8		
Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)			15				6	6		6		
Folly Loch								11	15	6		
Hare Moss (Selkirk)				12	5					5		
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)				8					9			
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)		6										7
Mellerstain (Gordon)											13	
Harelaw Pond-Cotfield (Lilliesleaf)			5					6				
Springhall (Kelso)		11										
St Mary's Loch		5									5	
Sum of all peak counts	98	123	106	61	64	57	77	90+	140+	123	96	76
Riverine sites	16	11	5	1	0	1	1	2	4	8	8	11
Standing water sites	15	26	31	18	26	16	20	14	28	25	22	17

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

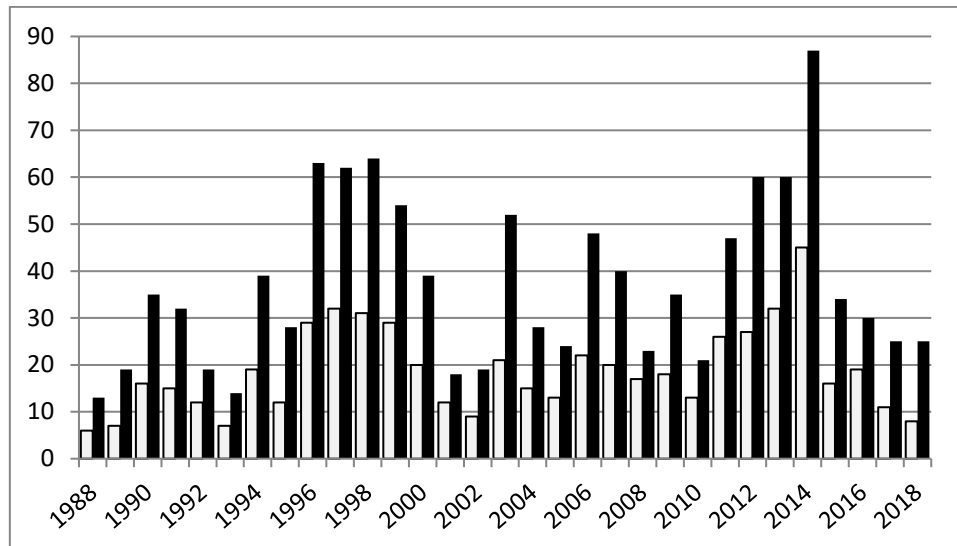
Other sites with at least one peak count of 5 but an aggregate count of less than 10 were (figures indicate peak count): Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 8; Broadlee Loch (Roberton) - 6; Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank) - 5; Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor) - 5; Eckford Mill - 5; Lady Moss (Bowden) - 5; Ladyrig Pond (Heiton) - 5; Tima Loch NE (Craik Forest) - 5; Yetholm Loch - 5.

Evidence of breeding came from 24 tetrads. 2018 - 11 tetrads, 2017 - 17, 2016 - 23, 2015 - 31, 2014 - 64 tetrads.

Gordon Community Woodland	20-Mar	P	Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)	06-Jun	FL
Spottiswoode (Westruther)	20-Mar	P	Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	07-Jun	1br2
Wooden Loch	25-Mar	T	Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)	18-Jun	1br3
Bemersyde Moss	26-Mar	S	Edgerston Tofts (Carter Bar)	19-Jun	1br2
Whitton Loch (Hownam)	09-Apr	T	Synton Loch (Ashkirk)	04-Jul	1br1
Hollybush (Galashiels)	15-Apr	ON	Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	04-Jul	1br3
Faldonside-Cauldshiels Lochs (Tweedbank)	02-May	D	Middlethird-Bellitaw (Gordon)	07-Jul	FL
Lady Moss (Bowden)	02-May	D	Harelaw Pond-Cotfield (Lilliesleaf)	18-Aug	br2
White Law (Selkirk)	16-May	T	Folly Loch	01-Sep	FL
Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch)	18-May	P	The Hirsell	02-Sep	1br1
Green Diamonds (Selkirk)	19-May	N	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	09-Sep	3br8
Hare Moss (Selkirk)	19-May	N	Bowhill (Selkirk)	17-Sep	FL
See Introduction for breeding codes.					

While the range of Little Grebe has increased dramatically since 2002 the breeding performance (as measured by reports of breeding evidence) shows a much more fluctuating pattern with perhaps only a marginal increase since 2002.

The graph below shows breeding performance since 1988.



Little Grebe: nos. of broods and young, 1988-2019.

(2008-13 was SE Scotland Atlas survey period. 2014 was survey year of a dedicated survey of waterbodies)

Great Crested Grebe

Podiceps cristatus

Scarce breeder, <3 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 6 tetrads. 2018 - 10 tetrads, 2017 - 6, 2016 - 7 tetrads).

Site	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
Stantling Craig Reservoir	1	1		
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	2	2	2	2
Ale Moor Reservoir (Hawick)		1		
Fruid Reservoir			1	
Burnmouth			1	
Total no of tetrads	4	3	3	1
Aggregate of all peak counts	3	4	4	2

Note: Stantling Craig Reservoir is covered by two tetrads.

There were 4 records with breeding evidence from 2 sites: a bird was noted visiting a nesting site at Ale Moor Reservoir and a brood of 3 was raised at Haining Loch. These records are fairly typical of the last 2 or 3 years. Breeding records were submitted by EL Bickmore, MS Kirby, A Lawrence and J Douglas.

Spoonbill

Platalea leucorodia

Very rare vagrant.

Five birds were seen flying north at St Abb's Head on the afternoon of 2-Jun (C Hatsell). This is only the second record for Borders, the first being in 2013, also a fly-over at St Abb's Head and also reported by a NNR warden.

Grey Heron

Ardea cinerea

Widespread and well-represented. Assemblies of more than ten birds are unusual. During 2008-13 found in 36% of tetrads in summer and 40% in winter.

Records came from 142 tetrads (11%). 2018 - 149, 2017 - 11 tetrads, 2016 - 140, 2015 - 130 tetrads.

Monthly peak counts of 3 or more and with an annual aggregate of more than 5 were from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	7	10	5	6	3	7	6	5	9	8	5	8
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	5	3	3	3	7		7	3	8		6	5
Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge	8	8		4	4	3	4	3	5		4	
Teviot Haughs (Crailing-Nisbet)	5								5	10	3	
Tweed: Cardrona Hotel	4	5	7				3	3				
Tweed: Kelso-Teviot: Roxburgh Castle	5			4					4			5
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	3					5		4				4
Tweed: Newstead (Melrose)							3	4	4			3
The Hirsell		6						7				
Howden (Selkirk)	4			3		5						
Tweed: Manor Bridge-Tweed Bridge (Peebles)	3								4	5		
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge	3							3	3			3
Cowdrait-Lamberton Holdings (Burnmouth)						6			3			
Teviot: Monteviot-Harestanes					7							
Wooden Loch (Eckford)								7				
Abbotsford										3		3
Burnmouth-Greystonelees										3	3	
Yetholm Loch						3						3
Total no of tetrads	51	35	42	38	50	42	32	28	44	30	28	33
Aggregate count of all peak counts	91	69	61	54	87	71	58	67	88	63	47	62

Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream records are 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 at least one peak count of 3 but with aggregate counts of less than 5 were (in peak count order): Burnmouth-Partanhall - 5; Caddonlee (Clovenfords) - 5; Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet) - 5; Tweed: Ladykirk - 5; Ale Water: Ancrum - 4; Cove Harbour - 4; Teviot: Ancrum Bridge-Timperdean - 4; Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm) - 4; Tweed: Maxton - 4; St Abbs-Northfield - 4; Cringletie (Eddleston) - 3; Dunglass-Pease Bay - 3; Green Diamonds Selkirk - 3; Hare Moss (Selkirk) - 3; Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm) - 3; Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) - 3; Portmore House (Eddleston) - 3; St Abb's Head - 3; Tweed: Rink Hill (Selkirk) - 3; Yetholm Pond - 3.

Records with breeding evidence came from 10 tetrads. 2018 - 26 tetrads, 2017 - 4 tetrads, 2016 - 7 tetrads, 2015 - 5 tetrads. Note that 2018 was the year of a BTO-organised dedicated count of heronries.

Wooden (Kelso)	26-Feb	B
Tweedbank	11-Apr	T
Nenthorn House (Kelso)	25-Apr	T
Green Diamonds (Selkirk)	13-May	ON (10)
Monteviot-Harestanes (Ancrum)	20-May	UN (7)

Chirnsidebridge-Craigswalls	24-May	FL
Old Nenthorn (Smailholm)	28-May	NY
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	12-Sep	D
West Linton-Westlands	16-Sep	FL
Burnmouth-Greystonelees	28-Sep	B

See Introduction for breeding codes.

It is difficult to make any confident statements about population and breeding trends on the basis of those records at the disposal of the Bird Report, not least because of variations in observer effort, eg heronry surveys occur in some years but not others. This is not helped by the difficulty in finding new heronries and the movement heronries due to felling of plantations. There is however, a tentative suggestion that breeding numbers are possibly increasing slightly.



Grey Heron. Murray's Cauld. July. Dougie Methven

Great White Egret

Ardea alba

Very rare visitor.

Reports of a single bird, first reported at the end of 2018, were made throughout Jan-Apr in the Coldstream area. On 20-Jan, 2 birds were seen within 50 m of each other at Lees Haugh, Coldstream (K Knight). A sighting at Bowmont Water: Belford-Elliesheugh, Hownam was made on 02-Feb (R Manning).

From 07-Oct until 23-Dec there were occasional reports of an immature bird at a variety of sites: Newmains (Reston) on 07-Oct; Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) on 31-Oct; Kelso NE on 04-Nov; Gavinton-Langton Bridge (Duns) on 04-Nov; Peelrig (Duns) on 07-Nov; Yetholm Loch on 16/25-Nov; Lauder E on 14/15-Dec; Newbigging Birks (Jedburgh) on 23-Dec.

The increasing occurrence of this species appears to be continuing.

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

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

Up to 3 Little Egrets were noted from 03-Jan to 21-Apr, mainly on the Tweed between Kelso and Coldstream but also further downstream at Upsettlington and near Paxton House. Records also came from The Hirsell, Teviot Haughs and from Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch, as well as Yetholm Loch and Yetholm Pond.

From 13-Aug until the end of the year there were periodic reports of up to 2 birds from Abbotsford Haugh, Boleside Haugh (Galashiels), Cove Harbour, Darnick (Melrose), Howford (Traquair), Kelso NE, Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head), Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream) and Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange.

The regularity of visiting birds outside of the breeding season appears now to be well-established.

Gannet*Morus bassanus*

Very rare breeder (two unsuccessful attempts at St Abb's Head). Bass Rock residents abundant offshore. Scarce in winter. Rare inland, c. 11 records, mostly juveniles in autumn.

All records came from sites between Dunglass and Burnmouth and, apart from those birds attempting breeding at St Abb's Head, are assumed to be of birds flying between Bass Rock and feeding grounds.

The peak counts per month were:

	Peak Count	Site of peak count
Jan	7	Pettico Wick-Coldingham
Feb	1	Coldingham Bay, Eyemouth
Mar	46	Blackpotts (Coldingham)
Apr	30	St Abb's Head
May	70	St Abb's Head
Jun	50	St Abb's Head

	Peak Count	Site of peak count
Jul	60	St Abb's Head
Aug	803	Eyemouth
Sep	235	Eyemouth
Oct	1,000	St Abbs E
Nov	74	Eyemouth
Dec	4	Coldingham Bay

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

A pair were observed occupying a nest at St Abb's Head on 28-May (C Hatsell).

St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report for 2019 (Liza Cole)

This year there were 11 nests built on Foul Carr but no eggs or chicks sighted. The number of birds prospecting the area continues to increase, with birds settling on Cleaver Rock and Float Carr as well as Foul Carr.

Shag*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Common breeder in variable numbers along parts of the coast. 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 submitted from sites between Dunglass and Burnmouth with an unusual record of a single bird at Folly Loch on 18-Aug (G Paterson). This is the first inland record since a bird at The Hirsell in 1996.

The Rocky Shore Count on 27-29-Jan had a total count of 113, the lowest count since 2009. 2018 - 239, 2017 - 209, 2016 - 286, 2015 - 279.

Peak monthly counts per coastal section (incl, RSC) were:

Sites (incl. RSC)	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	1	3									20	13
Pease Bay-Redheugh	1	4							5	Pr		
Redheugh-Souter	14									Pr		
Souter-Pettico Wick	20											
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	40	16	5	2	11	8	24	Pr	61	Pr	Pr	10
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth					Pr		Pr		3	3	6	3
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	15					15		Pr	13	16	7	2
Burnmouth-Border	10	1	3	1			1	Pr	7		3	5
Sum of all peak counts	101	24	8	3	12+	23	26+	*4+	89	22+	37+	33

* includes count of one at Folly Loch.

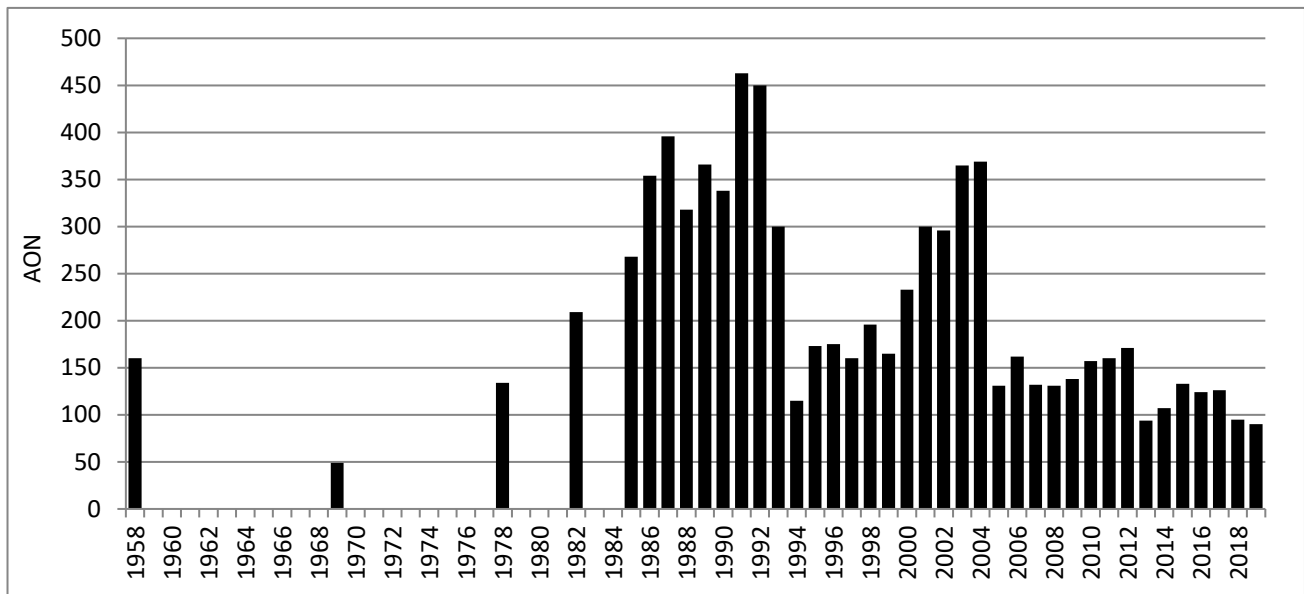
The largest count was 61 at Coldingham Bay on 30-Sep (G Paterson).

The 4 casual records of breeding were all within St Abb's Head NNR. See below.

St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report for 2019 (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 3- and 6-Jun. Blind spots were counted from a boat on 5-Jun. There were 90 Apparently Occupied Nests (AON), a 5% decrease on 2018.



Shag: whole colony counts at St Abb's Head NNR, 1958-2019.

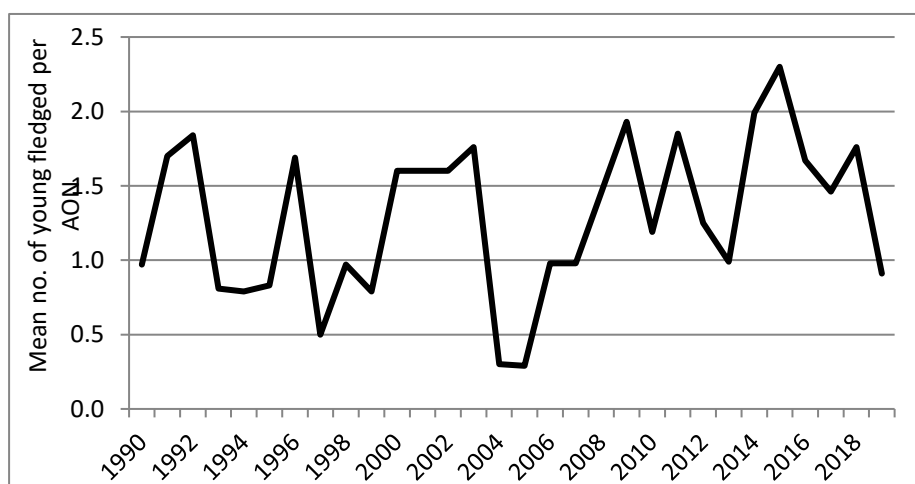
Breeding Success

An assessment of Shag breeding success was carried out using methods described in the 1990 Report and following recommendations in the Seabird Monitoring Handbook. Twenty visits were made to the 4 monitoring plots between the 28-Mar and 24-Aug. Nests were individually marked on laminated photos of the monitoring plots and the progress of each nest was recorded up to fledging.

Results

A total of 44 active nests were mapped on the plots and 37 chicks successfully fledged. The breeding success, expressed as the mean of the individual plot figures, was 0.91 young fledged per active nest; a decrease of 52% on 2018.

The productivity at the separate plots was as follows: West Hurker - 1.00; Downie's Goats - 0.47; Foul Bay - 1.18; White Heugh - 1.00.



Shag: no. of fledged birds per AON, 1990-2019.

The St Abb's Head NNR records point to a continuing decline in the number of this species.

Cormorant*Phalacrocorax carbo*

Uncommon breeder, mainly at Fast Castle stacks. 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 came from 82 tetrads. 2018 - 91 tetrads, 2017 - 63, 2016 - 89 tetrads. The Rocky Shore Count on 27-Jan had a total count of 30, part of an apparently general decline in numbers:

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
73	80	73	63	54	65	57	56	60	68	51	49	57	52

Cormorant: 5-yr running average counts for RSC, 2002-2019.

The RSC was distributed as follows:

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	6	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	7
Pease Bay-Redheugh	1	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	2
Redheugh-Souter	14	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	0
Souter-Pettico Wick	0	Burnmouth-Border	0

Monthly peak counts of 5 or more were from (including RSC):

Site	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	41	13				6			9	17	6	37
Eyemouth									11	20	9	7
Pettico Wick-Coldingham	7	6					6		12			11
Brander Heugh (Dowlaw)						10	10	14				
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge									18	6		5
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	17	7										
Tweed: St Thomas's Is (Paxton)												24
St Abbs E							20					
Yetholm Loch										8	10	
Redheugh-Souter	14											
Essenside Loch (Ashkirk)							7					
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	6											
Pickmaw Moss (Selkirk)												6
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	6											
Burnmouth											5	
Manderston (Duns)	5											
Teviot Haughs (Crailing-Nisbet)									5			
Watch Water Reservoir	5											
Sum of all peak counts	163	52	35	17	13	23	54	30	89	76	64	127
No. of inland sites	26	12	20	9	6	3	4	9	13	22	19	22
No. of coastal sites	13	5	4	3	2	3	4	3	10	2	6	6

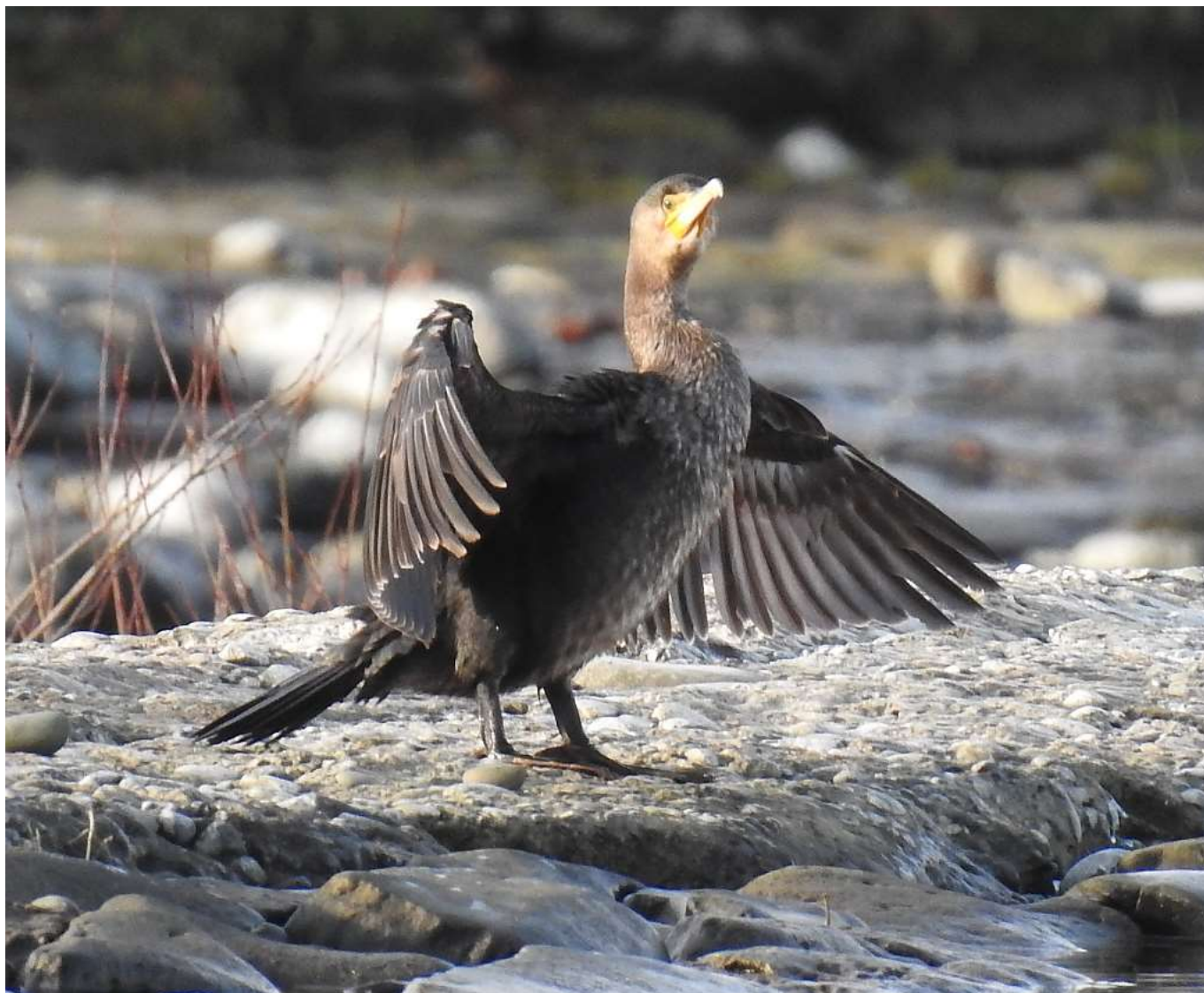
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream records are based on the maximum count at any single site between Kelso and Coldstream unless the WeBS count for the whole stretch was greater.

Evidence of breeding was limited to one tetrad: 08-Aug at Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) - recently fledged (C Hatsell).

Inland reports now make up a significant part of counts, particularly during the winter. Although some of the birds may commute between the coast and inland sites, some may well move here from outside of the region.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

A single bird reported from Watch Water Reservoir on 22-Jan (G Paterson).



Cormorant. Kelso. January. Dougie Methven.

Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

Very uncommon summer visitor but increasing. Frequent passage migrant, April-May and August-September. Has bred since 1989 and is spreading rapidly.

Sixty-one records came from 35 tetrads (3%). 2018 - 37 tetrads, 2017 - 37 tetrads, 2016 - 43 tetrads. Many records will have involved the same birds although sightings were widely distributed. Using Galashiels as a central point the broad distribution of sites was:

NE	7
SE	4
SW	10
NW	14

The first sighting of the year was on 25-Mar at Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream (B Meikle). The last record of the year was on 04-Sep from the hide log at Yetholm Loch (unknown observer due to illegible name).

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

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
15	12	7	15	1.25	2.14

Osprey Report 2019

Camera Main Nest Site

A mild spring heralded the arrival of the resident pair, The 20-year old male White SS, now in his 16th breeding season, and 'Mrs O' both arrived at the site on the same day, 06-Apr. The birds wasted no time after refurbishing the nest and were seen mating on 07-Apr with the first egg laid only 13 days later on 20-Apr, completing a full clutch of 3 by 26-Apr.



20-year old White SS resident male

Non breeders have become more of a problem at some of the nest sites with constant harassment at times causing the female to leave the eggs vulnerable and unattended as she fends off the unringed intruders.

The first chick hatched on 29-May with the ringing and fitting of 2 satellite tags carried out on 08-Jul. The first bird had its maiden flight on 25-Jul, 57 days after the first hatching.



A crowded nest

Although it was not a good year for productivity, overall, the project to date has fledged a minimum of 247 chicks with the main site fledging 38 chicks and productivity of 2.53 chicks/successful pair. The site has only failed to produce eggs on one occasion in 18 nesting attempts.

A new nest was located this year fledging 2 chicks but is assumed to be of a pair that failed to nest in their usual site for the past two years with the old nest site being just 6 km away.



FK8 migration route



Hope's overall migration route

The satellite transmitter has now failed on the 6 year old female, FK8, from the Tweed valley. It is interesting to see the different migration routes that she has flown over the years (see above), nesting in northern Scotland and migrating to Sines in Portugal each year.

Luna set off on 19-Aug and arrived 14 km north of Poole harbour on 23-Aug. Sadly, after leaving her overnight roost she hit overhead power lines breaking her wing and had to be euthanised by the local vet.

Hope set off on 5-Sep and arrived at the estuary/marshland of Somone 35 km south of Dakar in Senegal on 21-Sep. Unfortunately, her transmitter has since failed.

Tony Lightley: Osprey Co-ordinator

Golden Eagle

Aquila chysaetos

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

Four casual records were submitted between 6-Feb and 5-May from both the west and north of the Region. Three of these records were of singles and one of 2 birds. Records submitted by M Betts, G Paterson and R Singleton.

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

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
3	1	0	0	0	0

After a wet but relatively mild winter it was hoped that we would have a positive breeding season for the birds. Roxy is now in her seventh breeding season and with no chicks fledging in the past 3 seasons it was expected that 2019 might possibly produce twins. However, no eggs being laid and yet another year of failure. It may be that the un-aged male is now past his best and possibly infertile though mature and strong enough to still hold his territory. We are also aware of ongoing disturbance around the nest area by the same individual who has again been spoken to by the police. It is however, difficult to link any specific disturbance and the lack of eggs without installing a camera at the nest site as well as in the adjacent areas.

The satellite tag download information from Roy Dennis, received later in the season, indicated Roxy was using a different location to previous seasons and which was thought to be the nest site. On further inspection we found lots of moulted feathers but no new nest built up. After checking the other known nest sites, only the nest location that produced the last chick to fledge appeared to have had material added early in the breeding season but with no signs of splash, feeding activity, moulted feathers or pellets at the site.

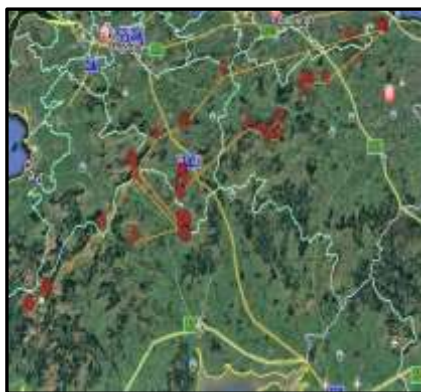
It is essential that the general area and specifically the nest site locations are kept disturbance-free as much as possible in order to give the birds a chance of breeding successfully. There is no shortage of prey items or good quality nest locations within the pair's range and disturbance looks to be the main cause of failures.

On a more positive note the 2 females, Emily (121) and Beaky (C11) and the male Edward (C09), released in 2018, are still in the region and have at various times visited the general area around the release site. Emily has ventured much further than the other two birds exploring the south from east coast to west coast. On a more disturbing note only a single bird, Scan (C17) from 3 males released in 2019, has survived. He appears to be doing well and has been interacting with Beaky with no further signs of aggression observed. Conflict occurred with one of the 2018 females (Beaky) and two of the 2019 birds at a feeding dump, where one bird was found dead and another not accounted for despite regular searches to relocate the bird. Follow the link for the SNH news release of the incident: <https://www.snhpresscentre.com/news/update-from-south-scotland-golden-eagle-project>

It is interesting to see that the movements of the birds in the first couple of years is similar to Roxy's movements shown below on the left. Note that map below shows all of southern Scotland with Solway Firth in bottom



Roxy 2011 movements



Movements of G2018 Project birds

As more birds are released it is essential that data is analysed regarding habitat use, prey availability and roosting preferences which will help to determine whether to erect artificial eyries in trees or rock faces in the near future. This hopefully will help to minimise the potential impact on the various land uses within the region. There should be strong indications of the birds' preferred areas after their second and third year. With little or no pressure from other eagles in the region, there will need to be ongoing consultation with sympathetic landowners to accommodate the potential breeding success of the released birds.

I have already started this process as a desk-based exercise to determine suitable tree nesting locations within South Scotland Forestry and Land landholdings to ensure longevity and minimum disturbance of sites should birds have a preference to use any of the forest blocks for breeding.

Updates regarding the recovery project can be found on web link www.goldeneaglessouthofscotland.co.uk



Beaky C11



Scan C17

Tony Lightley, Golden Eagle Co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders

Sparrowhawk

Accipiter nisus

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

Records from 134 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 145 tetrads, 2017 - 116, 2016 - 123 tetrads. Nearly all records were of single birds.

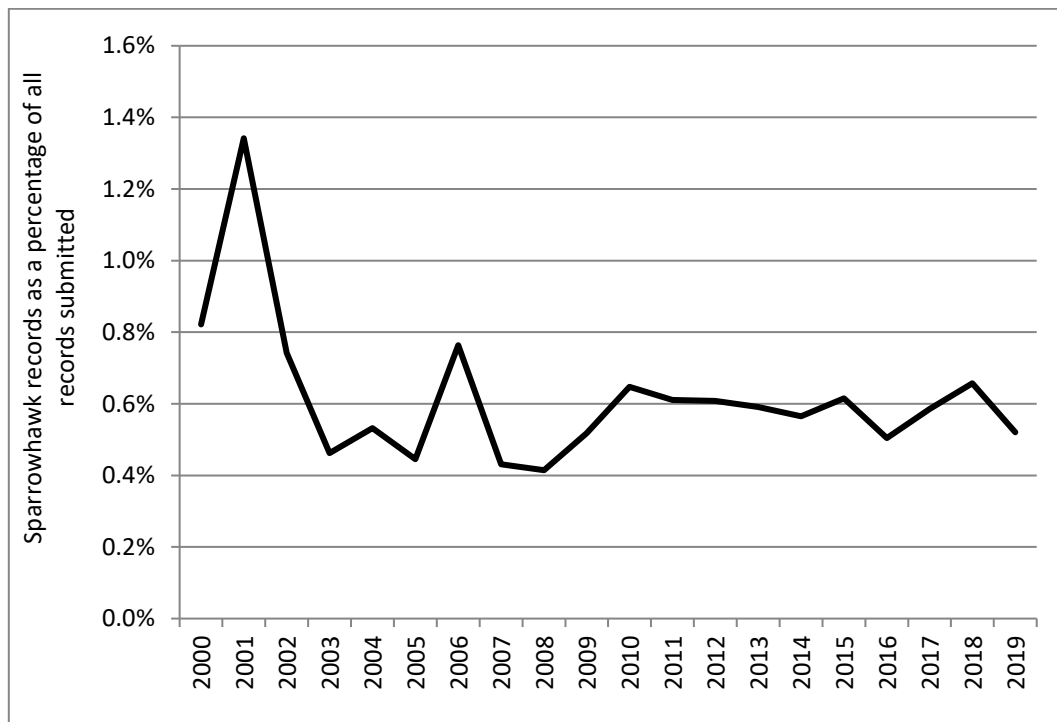
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Records	46	26	25	26	19	21	21	17	30	25	30	26
Tetrads	34	22	19	15	14	16	19	14	17	15	18	22
No of birds	46	26	25	30	20	21	23	18	30	25	30	26

Breeding records were limited to 5 tetrads with only one of these involving confirmed breeding:

Blackadder Mount (Allanton)	D	28-Jan	AP Mossop
Lauder Common	S	11-Apr	J Gordon
Manderston (Duns)	T	16-Apr	AP Mossop
Three Brethren-Little Crib (Selkirk)	P	17-May	G Paterson
Kelso NE	FF	28-May	T Reed
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	A	24-Jul	J Gordon

See Introduction for breeding codes.

Bird Report records are such that it is not possible to make any meaningful statement with respect to population trends for Sparrowhawks in Borders. As a crude indication of any trends, the number of records submitted as a percentage is given in the graph below.



Sparrowhawk: records as a percentage of all records for all species submitted, 2000-2019.

On the basis of the percentage of records submitted, the indication is one of a stable population over the past 10 years or so. Since however, the records cover all seasons and not just the breeding period and since some of the winter birds are likely to have been made up of migrants, the graph represents a rather bald statement.

Goshawk

Accipiter gentilis

Uncommon and local resident. 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.

There were 19 casual records from 19 tetrads. 2018 - 13 records from 12 tetrads, 2017 - 16 records from 12 tetrads. Records came from Cheviot Hills, Ettrick Forest, Lammermuir Hills, Lower and Middle Tweed, Moorfoot Hills and Upper Teviot. Records submitted by R Bramhall, J Chettle, G Christer, S Craig, CD Green, C Hartley, M Henderson, M Holling, M Moncrieff, AP Mossop, G Paterson, A Sandeman, N Stratton and CW Watson. All records were of single birds.

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

Summary: 36 sites occupied; 58 young fledged from 28 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 *
46	45	26	44	1.12	1.69

*A total of 46 home ranges were monitored this year; 45 sites were occupied, but this figure includes 6 sites where the nest was not found. These 6 sites are excluded from the analyses of young fledged.

A considerable amount of time and effort has gone in to obtaining the returns. In the past I have often said that due to time constraints we have difficulty monitoring all our known nest sites. As a result some sites are not being checked on an annual basis. These sites tend to be where there is long-term persecution or sites which have been regularly unoccupied. However, it is important that we do check some of these sites occasionally. Three such sites were checked this year and we found that they were occupied again.

During the past few years we have worked closely with forestry companies pointing out the importance of identifying and locating nest sites so that timber operations can be carried out without disturbance to nesting birds. At one occupied site this year we had to negotiate with the harvesters and work out a plan which was agreeable to them and to us. The birds at this site successfully fledged two chicks. Without these negotiations it is very likely that this nest site would have failed.

At another site near Jedburgh we had located the active nest over 1 km from its previous nesting area, in an area which had been scheduled to be clear-felled. Felling was re-scheduled to accommodate the nesting bird. Again, the birds at this site successfully fledged chicks.

We have located 6 new nest sites this year. One was located after a bird which was satellite tagged last year in Dumfries and Galloway settled in an area close to Kelso. A search of the woodland there and we found the one-year old bird nesting. We were able to identify its partner as also a one-year old bird. This pair went on to fledge two chicks. The two chicks have also been fitted with satellite tags by Dave Anderson.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that we had to carry out a Dynamic Risk Assessment at this nest site. A large active wasps' nest was located on the tree trunk and had to be negotiated while climbing to the Goshawk nest. It was decided that those of us on the ground would re-locate well away from the tree, while the nominated climber got on with his climbing and tried to avoid disturbing the wasps!

There has been a student from Aberdeen University working along with us throughout the nesting season. By putting out Trail Cameras at nest sites she has been trying to identify birds and their dispersal from their natal nest sites. Our fitting of Darvic rings to birds during the past few years has helped her identify individual birds at nest sites. At a rough count she has given us around 5,000 photographs to sift through. While the setting up of the cameras and the subsequent removal of them has increased our workload, the photographs obtained have undoubtedly made this worthwhile.

There are two nest sites which failed which we are unable to explain. One is certainly because of predation but the predator is not known. At the other there were no signs of predation but from the photographs on the trail cameras we saw a Pine Marten at the nest site. Could it be that both these sites have been predated by Pine Marten? It is

something we will have look out for in the future.

Two nest sites were recorded as having two chicks and at each of these nests one of the chicks was noted as having Frounce, as a result of which they and died. It is very likely that the remaining chicks would also have been infected and died. Frounce is not always obvious and it is possible that this disease is more common than we think.

This year's results are very poor. Brood sizes were low and there were several nest failures. Some of these failures were at the egg stage and some at the chick stage. One notable failure was at a nest near Jedburgh where we found three large, well feathered chicks on the nest. Heavy continuous rain is thought to have been the cause of this failure. The other possibility is that something has happened to the parent birds. There is a shooting estate not far from the nest. Persecution is a fairly obvious conclusion at another nest site which has fledged young every year since we have been monitoring it. For the last three years it has failed. Three years ago, a new gamekeeper moved on to the estate.

From the successful nests around 44 young fledged (58 last year) and just about all of these were rung with BTO rings and had Darvics fitted. Several chicks have been fitted with Satellite Tags and we are grateful to everyone who has contributed to the cost of these tags.

Detailed Results for 2019

Home Ranges

Number of nest sites monitored	46
Number of sites not occupied	1
Number of sites occupied, nest not found	6
Number of sites occupied, nest found	39
Number of sites failed	13
Number of sites fledged young	26

Brood Sizes

From the 39 nesting attempts we had an average brood size of	1.12 (1.80 last year)
From the 26 successful sites we had an average brood size of	1.69 (2.08 last year).

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

Malcolm Henderson, Goshawk co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders

Marsh Harrier

Circus aeruginosus

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

Fifteen records came from 6 tetrads. 2018 - 8 records from 7 tetrads.

Newmains (Reston) on 22-Apr (DK Graham); **Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch** on 13-May (CD Green); **Hule Moss** on 24-May, 29-May (2 birds noted), 09-Jun (AP Mossop) and 01-Sep (S Sim), 21/22-Sep, 05/12-Oct (M Hogarth); St Abbs-Northfield on 25-Aug (C Hatsell); **Yetholm Loch** on 28-Aug (A Russell – hide log) and 1-Sep (F Kilgour); **Bemersyde-Whitrig Bog** on 16-Sep (A Cutter).

If you are submitting records of Schedule 1 species on social media sites like Borders Bird News or the Borders Rare & Scarce WhatsApp group then please be circumspect about the location of any sightings. If you suspect that the sighting is near a breeding site then be suitably vague about where you saw the bird, eg "west of the Region" or "near the coast". For a list of Schedule 1 species go to: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/wildlife-and-the-law/wildlife-and-countryside-act/schedules/#:~:text=Schedule%201%20%2D%20Part%20I,Bittern>

Hen Harrier

Circus cyaneus

Scarce breeding species. Scarce passage migrant in Mar-Apr and Sep-Oct. A few have wintered in recent years.

Seven records from 7 tetrads: Coldingham Moor; Lammermuirs Hills; Liddesdale; Tweedsmuir Hills; Upper Teviot. Records submitted by G Christer, M Cummings, DK Graham, N Hammatt, G Paterson, R Singleton.

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

Summary: 9 sites occupied; 12 young fledged from 4 sites.

	Sites Occupied	Eggs Laid	Young Hatched	Young Fledged
Pentlands	0	0	0	0
Lammermuirs	0	0	0	0
Moorfoots	1	0	0	0
Tweedsmuir Hills	6	12+	11+	9
SE Borders	2	11+	6+	3
Sub-total	9	23+	17+	12
Langholm	0	0	0	0
Totals	9	23+	17+	12

The weather for the 2019 season was fairly typical of recent years, being pretty dry for much of the key period. Voles were once again thin on the ground.

Pentlands

No harriers were seen during the breeding season, apart from a single male hunting over an area of heather late on the afternoon of 20-Jun. This area is very well monitored.

Lammermuirs

There were two sightings of a female in the south of the area during May - interestingly there were the same number of sightings of Marsh Harrier - but no further sightings occurred in this intensively kept area.

Moorfoots

Perhaps surprisingly, John saw 2 immature males displaying on Raeshaw during May. Less surprisingly, there were no further sightings anywhere in the Moorfoots, which are also heavily kept.

Tweedsmuir Hills

Five sites were occupied by pairs, with 1 male displaying at a 6th site. One of those pairs were not seen after April, and may have moved to a nearby location.

Eggs were laid and young hatched at 4 sites but only 3 nests produced fledged young. At the 4th site, the female harrier was picked up dead with 3 round holes in its chest – subsequent analysis found no trace of metal. Liberal splashing in the nest suggested the presence of well-developed young.

Buccal swabs were taken of all of the Tweedsmuir ringed birds. No results have yet been received confirming the sex of the chicks.

South-East

Two sites were occupied. Five eggs were laid and 3 chicks were ringed at one (2 males and a female almost fledged), but sadly a later visit found them all dead in the nest – an avian predator was suspected. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem.

Six eggs were laid at the 2nd site in the area and 3 chicks survived to fledging, 2 males and a female. The female, Ada, was tagged by the RSPB.

There was another blank year on the Borders side at Langholm, softened slightly by 3 nests producing 14 fledged young on the Dumfries & Galloway side of the moor.

Hen Harrier LIFE/ Moorlands Project

In the 2nd year of this project with the Scottish Borders Council, 2 young male harriers were tagged, Fingal and Oscar. This nest was different from last year's location, and we are very grateful for the co-operation of the landowner and site managers.

One of the harriers that were tagged this year now features on the website: <http://ww2.rspb.org.uk/our-work/conservation/henharrierlife/>

As the 'LIFE' project has come to an end, the blog mentioned in last year's report is no longer be available.

The final tranche of funding from the SBC plus a generous donation from Peebles Wildlife Group gave us £4,575, of which £4,000 has been spent on tags. A small surplus from last year means we have £1,275 remaining, which I would hope could be topped up from group funds to buy a tag for 2020.

Roosts

Only one site was covered last winter, with a maximum of 2 harriers seen. Satellite data may give members a lead in checking for new roosts next winter.

Thanks to all who submitted records; also to local birders and the 'PAWS' scheme – ALL reports are appreciated and almost all will be followed up.

Trends

Year	Sites occupied	Pairs/ females with nests	Nests fledging young	Fledged young (minima)
2014	8	8	7	25
2015	9	9	4	13
2016	11	8	4	13
2017	7	5	3	12
2018	7	5	3	11
2019	9	7	4	12

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

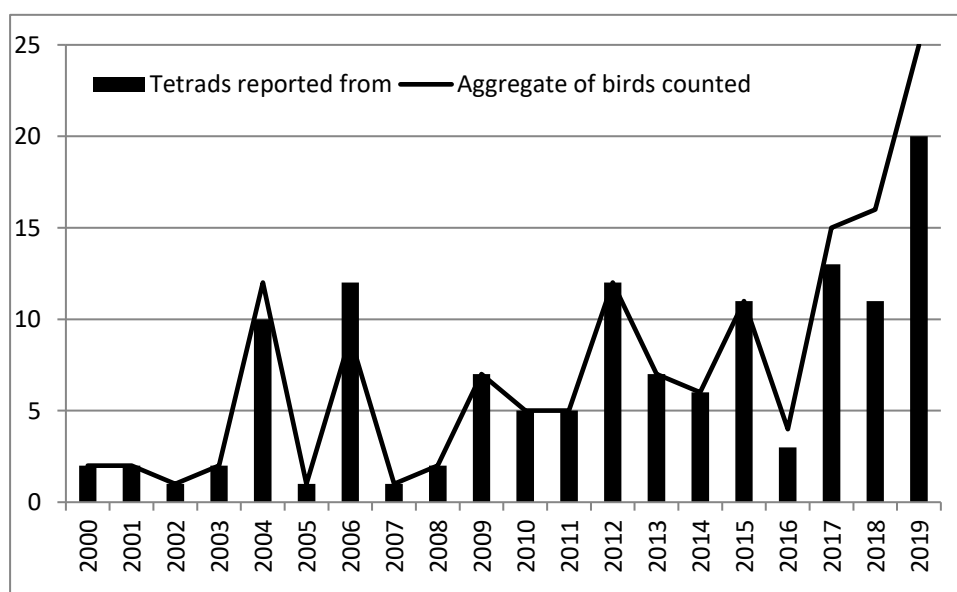
Andrew Sandeman, Hen Harrier co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders

Red Kite

Milvus milvus

Annual in small but increasing numbers since the 1990s. Ceased to breed during the mid-19th century due to persecution but recorded breeding since 2017. The likely origins of recent birds will be the Galloway, Gateshead or Crieff introductions.

A total of 23 records from 20 tetrads made up an aggregate count of 25 birds. This is part of an accelerating increase in the range and number of birds reported:



Red Kite: aggregate no. of birds reported and tetrads reported from.

Note that the aggregate number of birds in any one year will involve duplicate counting and is used here only to indicate an approximate trend.

Records for 2019 came from: Cheviots; Ettrick Forest; Lammermuir Hills; Lower Tweed. Records submitted by D Alexander; C Blackie; M Breeze; G Christer; J Connor; C Hatsell; F Kilgour; MB Lamire; R Manning; B Meikle; AP Mossop; G Paterson; K Robeson; S Sim; M Stamp; N Stratton; CW Watson.

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

Territories checked	Territories occupied	Sites with proven breeding	Minimum large young	Large young per occupied site	Large young per successful pair
3	2	2	3	n/a	n/a

Two Red Kite nest sites were monitored this year, the same two sites as last year. They were both occupied by adult pairs and both went on to fledge young.

Both pairs built new nests in small woods about 1 km from last year's nest. Because of this, some patience and several hours of searching and observations were made to locate them.

One nest was in a Scots Pine and the other was a mature Oak. They fledged one chick and two chicks, respectively and all these young were rung.

My thanks go to Kate Grimsditch, Neil Macdonald and Tony Lightley for their help in monitoring these nests.

Malcolm Henderson, Red Kite coordinator for Lothian and Borders

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.

Records from 408 tetrads (32%). 2018 - 350 tetrads, 2017 - 321 tetrads, 2016 - 236 tetrads, 2015 - 248 tetrads.

It is likely that at least part of the increase in the number of tetrads with records is a reflection of increased observer effort.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tetrads with records	94	81	104	89	102	103	109	63	82	18	74	94
Aggregate count	127	146	193	151	162	155	150	109	125	37	93	138
Peak count	8	6	6	10	6	6	9	10	5	4	4	7
Sites with peak counts	Duns Castle	Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords)	Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)	Dewar Burn: Dewar; Garvald Lodge (Dewar Burn)	Gill Burn (Blackhopebyre)	Halliburton (Greenlaw)	Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)	Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	Linthill (Eyemouth)	Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)

Other large counts were: Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn) - 7 on 01-Apr and Chapel Gill Hill (Broughton) - 7 on 25-Aug.

Evidence of breeding came from 52 tetrads:

Gala Hill (Galashiels)	14/2/19	D	Friars Croft (Yair Hill Forest)	17/5/19	P
Peat Hill (Heriot)	4/3/19	P	Waterheads (Portmore)	24/5/19	P
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	14/3/19	P	Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	24/5/19	P
Sorrowlessfield (Earlston)	20/3/19	P	Faw Mount (West Linton)	24/5/19	T
Spottiswoode (Westruther)	20/3/19	P	Carcant Lodge (Heriot)	26/5/19	P
Gordon Moss	20/3/19	P	Peat Law (Oxton)	29/5/19	P
Hadden-Nottylees (Sprouston)	23/3/19	P	Carcant (Heriot)	7/6/19	NY(3)
Bowmont Forest (Heiton)	28/3/19	D	Lady Moss (Bowden)	21/6/19	A
Penmanshiel Wood S (Grantshouse)	29/3/19	D	Gill Burn (Blackhopebyre)	21/6/19	NY(1)
St Abbs-Northfield	1/4/19	ON	Ferniehirst (Stow)	30/6/19	P
Toddle Burn (Fountainhall)	5/4/19	P	Priesthaugh E (Stobs Castle)	4/7/19	P
Megget Reservoir-Cramalt	7/4/19	P	Romannobridge-Damside	8/7/19	P
Soutra Hill (Oxton)	8/4/19	D	Logan Wood (Drumelzier)	17/7/19	FL
Lauder Common	11/4/19	D	Abbotsford	17/7/19	FL
Yarrow Water: Tinnis Stiel Wood	11/4/19	P	Clews Hill (Megget Water)	26/7/19	P
Yarrowford-Newark Castle	11/4/19	P	Thornie Cleuch (Buccleuch)	28/7/19	P
Pyat Hill E-The Skerr (Walkerburn)	22/4/19	P	Swinnie Plantation (Bonchester Bridge)	29/7/19	FL
Gordon Community Wood N	23/4/19	P	Hass (Carter Bar)	29/7/19	P
Ale Moor Reservoir S (Roberton)	27/4/19	P	Kirkton (Hawick)	29/7/19	P
Wull Muir (Heriot)	30/4/19	P	Spittal-On-Rule Bridge (Bedrule)	29/7/19	P
Big Law W (Hownam)	5/5/19	P	Cossarhill (Ettrick)	30/7/19	FL(1)
Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk)	7/5/19	P	Coomb Burn (Ettrick Head)	30/7/19	P
Tweed: Elibank-Holylee	11/5/19	P	Newstead (Melrose)	1/8/19	FL
Steilburn (Caddonfoot)	11/5/19	P	Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn)	6/8/19	FL
Hog Hill (Lauder)	15/5/19	A	Tweed: Gledswood Farm (Melrose)	27/9/19	S
Stony Knowe (Yair Hill Forest)	17/5/19	P	Manderston (Duns)	14/10/19	T

See Introduction for breeding codes.

Records of evidence of breeding supplied by: P Ball; BRG; J Chettle; F Evans; J Gordon; CD Green; C Hatsell; M Holling; MS Kirby; K Liddle; D Parkinson; G Paterson; M Pitt; MB Ross; G Scott; HM Tanner.

Despite the welcome increase of records with breeding evidence (44% over 2018), the number of tetrads with confirmed breeding actually fell.

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

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
183	125	73	99+	0.79	1.35

2019 data shows a major decrease in productivity on the 2018 season, though this is based on a significantly increased data set with data from 183 sites, cf. 35-74 during 2006-2018. Productivity of 0.79 young per territorial pair is down from 1.53 in 2018 and 1.35 young per productive pair is down from last year's figures of 2.07.

Eggs were laid at 97 sites, with 93 of those hatching and 73 sites fledged young.

The weather is believed to be a main contributor to the lower productivity in 2019. The data set is much increased for 2019, because of a big input from Andy Village.

George Smith, Buzzard co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders

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.

Thirty-seven records from 15 tetrads (1%). 2018 - 9 tetrads, 2017 - 4 tetrads, 2016 - 29 tetrads, 2015 - 15 tetrads.

All records are of single birds unless indicated otherwise.

Jan-Mar

Records from 4 tetrads. Yetholm Loch S (2), Mire Loch (St Abb's Head), West Linton S, Whitmuirhill Loch (Selkirk).

Apr-Aug

Records from 5 tetrads. Bemersyde Moss-Mertoun Bridge (4), Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog, Cardrona, Thirlestane Lodge (Ettrick), Whitmuir Hall (Selkirk).

Sep-Dec

Records from 9 tetrads. The Hirsell (3), Bemersyde Moss (2), Tweedbank-Langlee (2), Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog, Hollybush (Galashiels), Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head), Folly Loch, Duns Castle-Hen Poo, Grahamlaw (Eckford).

There were only two tetrads with breeding records: Bemersyde Moss - agitated behaviour on 27-Apr (K Smith); Yetholm Loch - on territory on 28-Mar (CD Green).

Records submitted by: P Ball; AT Bramhall; BRG; H & S Duncan; B Edwards; F Evans; J Gordon; CD Green; C Hartley; C Hatsell; K Ingleby; R Manning; P Massey; D Methven; M Moncrieff; AP Mossop; P & M Noble; G Paterson; T Reed; K Smith; HM Tanner.

Because of the relative lack of focus on this species since the death in 2016 of Ray Murray, who carried-out many dedicated surveys, the relatively sparse records that we have give us very little on which to base any statements about population trends.

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.

Records came from 97 tetrads (8%). 2018 - 95 tetrads, 2017 - 95 tetrads, 2016 - 97 tetrads, 2015 - 68 tetrads.

Monthly peak counts of 5 or more came from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
The Hirsell	18	12	8	5				8	6		14	12
Hollybush (Galashiels)	5		10	6				8	14	11	15	11
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	5			6			15	5		7	6	8
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	9		7						5	6		14
Pot Loch (Selkirk)	6	7	5			8				8		5
Tweed: Tweedbank-Langlee			6	5					5	6	6	8
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	5		6	6			5			6		
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	9			5		5						6
Yetholm Loch	5	9										6
Hare Moss (Selkirk)				6					5	5		
Mellerstain (Gordon)		10									5	
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge										8	5	
Eyemouth	6											5
Folly Loch									6	5		
Hen Poo (Duns Castle)	5							5				
Tweed: Kelso-Teviot: Roxburgh Castle	6	5								5		
Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)						7						
Ploughlands Pond (Nisbet)								7				

Newmains (Reston)			6			12						
Pirn Craig-Clure Pool (Innerleithen)			6									
Bowhill (Selkirk)									6			
Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog					5							
Total no of tetrads	31	32	42	29	27	18	23	23	29	26	24	26
Aggregate count of all peak counts	119	96	119	81	47	53	64	64	97	98	90	99

Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream records are based on the maximum count at any single site between Kelso and Coldstream unless the WeBS count for the whole stretch was greater

Some of the counts between Jun-Jul may include recently fledged birds. Contributors are reminded that counts should be of birds that are older than the recently fledged stage.

Breeding season (Apr-Sep) had records from 74 tetrads. 2018 - 55 tetrads, 2017 - 48 tetrads. Confirmed breeding was reported from 14 tetrads. 2018 - 15 tetrads.

Southdean Lodge (Carter Bar)	22-May	FL
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	28-May	1br2
Huntershall (Soutra)	10-Jun	NE
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	12-Jun	FL
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	19-Jun	FL
Pot Loch (Selkirk)	21-Jun	2br6
Newmains (Reston)	24-Jun	6br20

Carcant (Heriot)	03-Jul	FL
Yetholm Ponds	09-Jul	FL
Bemersyde Moss	15-Jul	FL
Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream)	21-Jul	1br1
Essenside Loch (Ashkirk)	28-Jul	1br5
Philiphaugh Est-Old Mill Fm (Selkirk)	15-Aug	FL
Bowhill (Selkirk)	17-Sep	FL

See Introduction for breeding codes.

The number of broods and the number of fledglings reported continues at a low level. However, many records do not include any breeding evidence. Contributors are encouraged to give as full a record of breeding status and the numbers involved as possible.



Moorhen. Tweedbank. October. Lisa McLeish.

Coot*Fulica atra*

Well-represented resident of still waters and more rarely slow-moving river margins. Some flocking in winter provide peak counts. During 2008-13 found in 7% of tetrads in summer and 5% in winter.

Records came from 47 tetrads (4%). 2018 - 46 tetrads, 2017 - 36 tetrads, 2016 - 53 tetrads, 2015 - 42 tetrads.

Monthly counts of 5 or greater were from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Hollybush (Galashiels)	15	7	12	12	11	9		25	26	31	36	14
Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	16	8	7	5	12	11	23	8	16	19	16	11
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	10	16	17	12		10			31	21	9	8
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	41	37	6	6	6	7		6		7		
Tweedbank	5	7	6	6	8	8	12	11	13	12	13	11
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)					6		36	34				
The Hirsell	15		6	8				11	6	5		12
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)							9		12	9		
Hen Poo (Duns Castle)						10		8			6	
Williestruther Loch (Hawick)	11	10										
Yetholm Loch			7		6			6				
Yetholm Pond			7									
Hare Moss (Selkirk)				6								
Manderston (Duns)			6									
Newmains (Reston)						6						
Loch Rickie (Coldingham)									5			
Whitmuirhill Loch (Selkirk)	5											
Total no of tetrads	16	20	23	22	21	17	9	13	13	13	11	12
Aggregate count of all peak counts	130	113	112	87	80	76	92	117	117	111	90	71

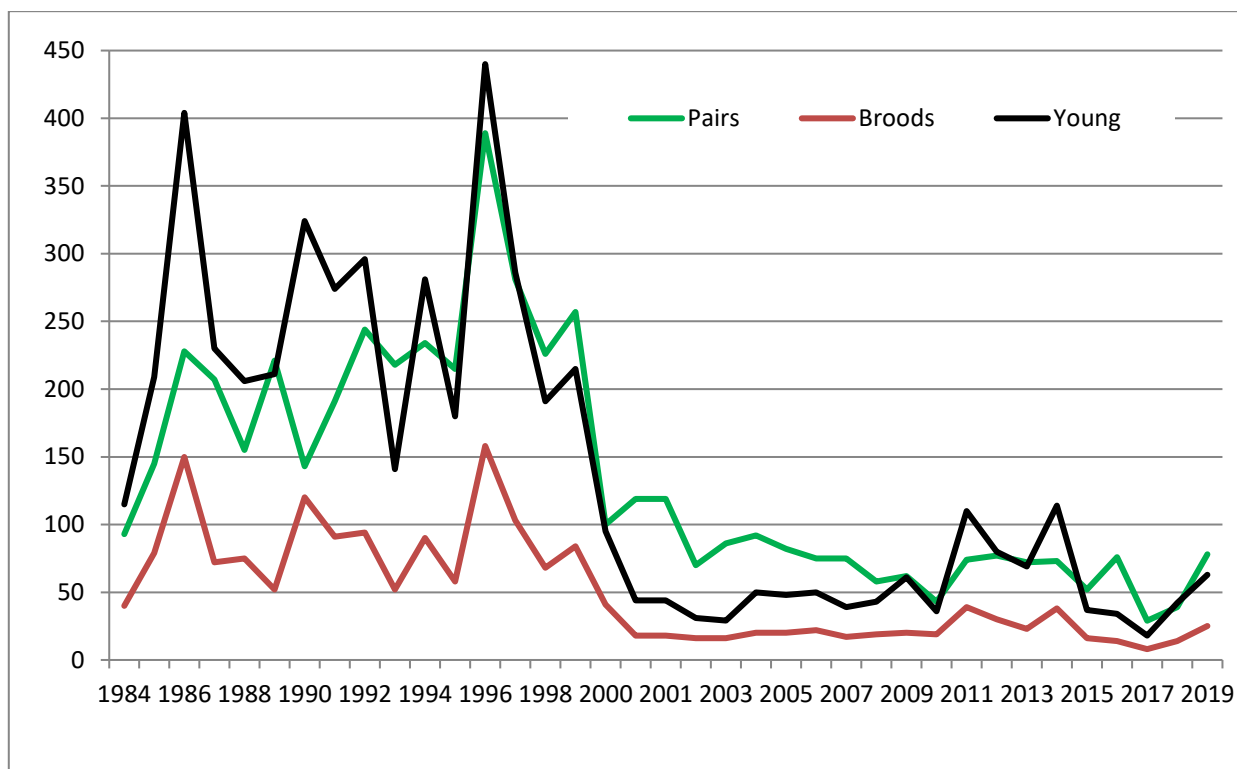
Breeding season (Mar-Aug) had records from 42 tetrads. 2018 - 34 tetrads, 2017 - 22 tetrads, 2016 - 40 tetrads, 2015 - 36 tetrads. Confirmed breeding was reported from 17 tetrads. 2018 - 10 tetrads, 2017 - 11 tetrads.

Yetholm Loch	28-Mar	ON
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	21-Apr	ON
Whim (West Linton)	29-Apr	ON
Green Diamonds (Selkirk)	29-Apr	ON
Hare Moss (Selkirk)	11-May	1br5
St Abbs	11-May	FL
Hollybush (Galashiels)	22-May	3br15
The Hirsell	25-May	NY
See Introduction for breeding codes.		

St Abbs-Northfield	29-May	FL
Tweedbank	06-Jun	2br7
Pot Loch (Selkirk)	21-Jun	FL
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	21-Jun	4br9
Newmains (Reston)	24-Jun	6br12
Synton Loch (Ashkirk)	20-Jul	1br4
Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	24-Jul	br12
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	29-Jul	1br1
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	29-Jul	3br7

Breeding records indicate that levels of breeding have reached an equilibrium since the dramatic decline in numbers of records after a peak in 1996. One suggestion for this decline is predation by otters. There is however, no conclusive proof for this.

Care should be taken when evaluating the trends depicted in the graph below, not least because the numbers of pairs are often approximated from counts without actual pairs being identified. Contributors are encouraged to give as full a report of breeding as possible.



Coot: breeding records, 1984-2019.

Common Crane

Grus grus

Scarce vagrant. Almost annual.

The 1st-winter bird that had been reported around the Tweed: Coldstream area since mid-November of the previous year continued to be seen along the Tweed between Coldstream and Banff Mill (Kelso). There was a single report of 2 birds from Lees Haugh (Coldstream) on 09-Jan (RS Smith). There were no further records of this bird after 21-Apr.

Birgham Haugh (Coldstream) reported sightings on 18-May, 17-Jul and 21-Aug (B Meikle). The 17-Jul sighting was identified as an adult. It is not known whether these later sightings were of the same bird, different birds or involved the earlier 1st-winter bird.

This is third consecutive year when records of Common Crane have been submitted.

Oystercatcher

Haematopus ostralegus

Abundant breeder. Abundant wintering population, many of which are birds from Iceland and Scandinavia, while breeding birds overwinter around Irish Sea. During 2008-13 found in 54% of tetrads in summer and 15% in winter.

Records came from 213 tetrads (17%). 2018 - 199 tetrads, 2017 - 142 tetrads, 2016 - 142 tetrads, 2015 - 135 tetrads.

The Rocky Shore Count on 27-Jan had a total of 179:

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	66	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	11
Pease Bay-Redheugh	9	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	13
Redheugh-Souter	7	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	54
Souter-Pettico Wick	2	Burnmouth-Border	17

Previous RSC counts: 2018 - 236; 2017 - 226; 2016 - 176; 2015 - 257; 2014 - 253.

Peak counts of 10 or more came from (excl. RSC counts for 27-29-Jan):

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	55	96	81	35		18	11					12
Watch Water Reservoir		72	144		13	26	35					
Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords)		57	80	51		14						
Burnmouth-Border	49	26		12					24		33	39
Teviot Haughs (Crailing-Nisbet)	11	72	40	17								
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay		19					22	19	18	29	30	
St Mary's Loch		54	24		21	15	12					
Pease Bay-Redheugh		30	16						20			18
Eyemouth-Burnmouth		10							15	20	25	
Tweed: Kelso-Teviot: Roxburgh Castle	20	16	24	10								
Howford (Traquair)			55									
Lyne Manor (Peebles)		28	27									
Cammerlaws (Westruther)			42									
Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge		42										
Caerlee Hill (Innerleithen)			40									
Philiphaugh Est-Old Mill Fm (Selkirk)			30									
Ferniehirst (Stow)			29									
Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside					12	16						
Tweed-Whiteadder Water (English Border)												26
Edston-Manor Bridge (Peebles)			24									
Megget Reservoir-Cramalt			12	12								
Total no of tetrads	39	54	93	77	88	70	38	8	8	6	10	15
Aggregate count of all peak counts	416	610	917	324	235	245	211	54	90	53	101	132

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

Further tetrads had some monthly peak counts of 10 or more but only in a single month (count shown): Dunglass-Pease Bay (W) - 22; Fruid Reservoir - 20; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 18; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 17; Torsonce-Lugate (Stow) - 16; Loch of the Lowes - 15; Fatlips Castle (Denholm) - 14; Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm) - 14; Yarrow Cottage - 14; Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange - 13; Burnhouse Mains-Kittyflat (Fountainhall) - 12; Gattonside (Melrose) - 12; Hose Law (Heriot) - 12; Tathieknowe Burn (Heriot) - 10.

April-July (breeding season)

Records came from 149 tetrads. 2018 - 156 tetrads, 2017 - 91 tetrads, 2016 - 103 tetrads.

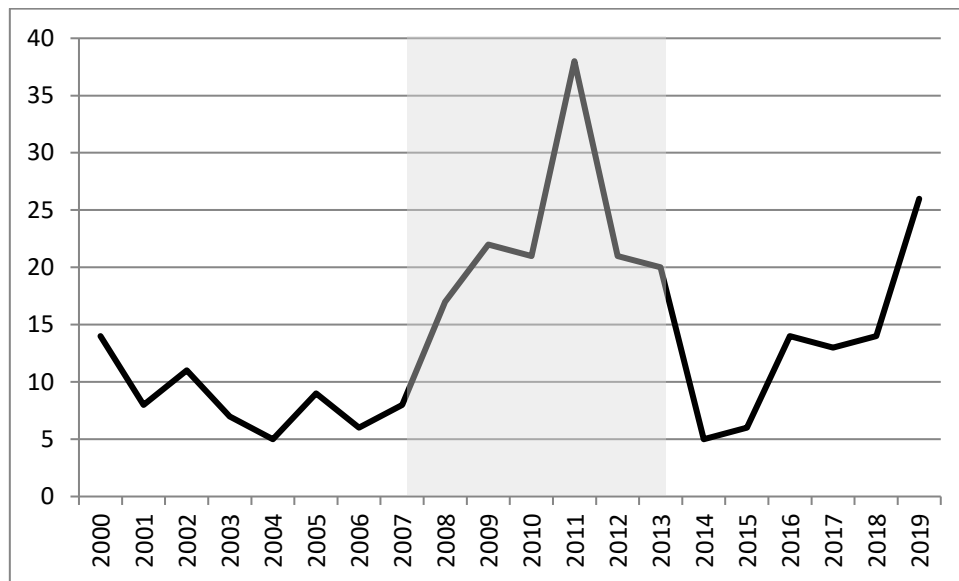
Evidence of breeding was reported from 63 tetrads. 2018 - 63 tetrads, 2017 - 24 tetrads, 2016 - 30 tetrads.

Probable breeding records: 37 records. Confirmed breeding records – 26, 2018 - 14, 2017 – 13, 2016 - 14.

Talla Reservoir	17-Jul	1br2
Megget Reservoir-Cramalt	15-Jun	NY(1)
St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch	17-Jul	1br2
Cringletie (Eddelston)	28-May	1br1
Walkerburn W	31-May	FF
Leithen Water: Colquhar	26-May	1br2
Leithen Lodge	07-Jun	1br2
Glentress Water: Glentress Rig	25-May	NY(2)
Blackhopebyre (Leithen Hopes)	29-May	NY(1)
Wolf Cleuch (Dewar)	06-Jun	NY(3)
Dewar (Garvald)	21-Jun	NY(1)
Garvald Law SE (Garvald)	04-Jun	NY(2)
Newmains (Reston)	14-Jun	1br2

Garvald Lodge (Dewar Burn)	17-Jun	NY(1)
Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)	06-Jun	NY(5)
Hose Law (Heriot)	02-Jul	1br2
Windy Slack (Garvald)	09-Jun	NY(5)
Heriot Water: Ladyside	09-Jun	4NY(8)
Priesthaugh (Teviothead)	04-Jul	1br1
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	18-May	1br2
Newstead (Melrose)	21-Jun	FL
Earlston School	13-Jun	ON
Peat Law (Oxton)	18-Jun	FL
Crailinghall S-Netherwells (Jedburgh)	09-Apr	ON
Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh	06-Jun	1br1
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	18-May	1br2

On the basis of records of confirmed breeding, there appears to be an upward trend in the level of breeding over the past 5 years:



Oystercatcher: no. of records of confirmed breeding, 2000-2019.

Shaded years = SE Scotland Atlas survey period

Of course, the above trend may, in part, be the result of increased observer effort, eg there has been a 73% increase in the overall number of submitted records since 2014.

Black-winged Stilt

Very rare vagrant.

Himantopus himantopus

A juvenile was well watched and photographed at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) on 29-Aug (R Drew, C Hartley *et al.*). This is only the second record for this species in Borders, after a bird that was seen at St Abb's Head in 1986, and only the 12th record for Scotland. Further information about the find can be found in *Scottish Birds* 40 (2): 169-170.



Lapwing with chicks. Blackhopebyres. May. Alistair Cutter.

Lapwing*Vanellus vanellus*

Abundant but declining breeding species. Many move south and west in winter and are replaced by abundant immigrants. During 2008-13 found in 39% of tetrads in summer and 17% in winter.

Records came from 134 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 128 tetrads, 2017 - 73 tetrads, 2016 - 83, 2015 - 70 tetrads.

Monthly peak counts of 10 or more with an annual aggregate count of more than 100 came from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	110	200					105	200	390			12
Westfield-Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)	300									150	100	350
Greenlaw SW-Gordon	150									400	300	41
Teviot Haughs: Crailing-Nisbet		105	152					230	85			140
Watch Water Reservoir		125	60			12	150	12				
Newmains (Reston)	110		12			28	36		24	44		30
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch								240	40			
Folly Loch	36	12							70	145		
Stantling Craig Reservoir		110	124	12		16						
Halliburton (Greenlaw)							200					
Three Cornered Wood (Carter Bar)												190
Westruther S											175	
Hose Law (Heriot)		28	24			15	87					
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	25	80										45
Newbiggin Bush (Oxnam)												150
St Mary's Loch		20	70						20			

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

Other tetrads with at least one monthly count of 10 or more but an annual aggregate count of less than 100 were (aggregate count shown): Wull Muir (Heriot) - 90; Synton Loch (Ashkirk) - 88; Hardiesmill Place-Stenmuir (Gordon) - 84; Clearburn Loch (Buckleuch) - 70; Mellerstain (Gordon) - 70; Garvald Law SE (Garvald) - 54; Hoselaw Loch (Yetholm) - 50; Old Race Course (Earlston) - 48; Edinhope Cottage (Gordon Arms Hotel) - 47; Howdens Plantation (Duns) - 45; Lyne Manor (Peebles) - 40; Blackhopebyre (Leithen Hopes) - 39; Hunthall Plantation (Duns) - 36; Tweed: Cardrona Hotel - 34; Belses (Lilliesleaf) - 33; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 30; Ferniehirst (Stow) - 28; Hule Moss - 25; Hoprig N (Cockburnspath) - 21; Dewar (Garvald) - 20; Fatlips Castle (Denholm) - 19; The Hirsell - 18; Philiphaugh Est-Old Mill Fm (Selkirk) - 17; Easter Fodderlee (Bonchester Bridge) - 14; Wester Deans-Easter Deans (Portmore) - 14; Malcolms Moss-Chesters Burn (Minto) - 14; Kirkhope-Ern Cleuch (Ettrickbridge) - 12; Nun Rig-Harecleugh Forest (Westruther) - 12; Stobswood Burn (Longformacus) - 12; Spurlens Rig (Portmore) - 11.

Mid-March - mid-July (breeding season)

Records came from 98 tetrads. 2018 - 97 tetrads, 2017 - 46 tetrads, 2016 - 62 tetrads, 2015 - 23 tetrads. Records with breeding evidence came from 24 tetrads. 2018 - 32 tetrads, 2017 - 32 tetrads, 2016 - 23 tetrads.

Lempitlaw-Hoselaw (Kelso)	13-Mar	D	Tathieknowe-Windy Slack (Heriot)	25-May	2NY(5)
Tow Ford	14-Mar	D	Heriot Water: Ladyside	25-May	2NY(5)
Duddy Bank (Cranshaws)	31-Mar	P	Tweed: Sprouston	25-May	DD
Colquhar (Leithen Water)	05-Apr	D	Garvald (Blackhope Water)	26-May	A
Leithen Lodge	05-Apr	P	Carcant Lodge (Heriot)	26-May	A
Caddonlee (Clovenfords)	08-Apr	P	Blackhope Tor-Windy Slack (Garvald)	29-May	7NY(12)
Soutra Hill (Oxton)	08-Apr	D	Peat Law (Oxton)	29-May	FL
Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)	19-Apr	D	Garvald Lodge (Dewar Burn)	04-Jun	3NY(6)
Hog Hill (Lauder)	28-Apr	A	Scarlaw (Watch Water Reservoir)	06-Jun	A
Westfield-Whitrig Bog	28-Apr	DD	Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh	06-Jun	A

Wull Muir (Heriot)	30-Apr	A	Hose Law (Heriot)	07-Jun	3br6
Black Bog (Stobs Castle)	01-May	D	Huntershall (Soutra)	10-Jun	FL
Roan (Newcastleton)	01-May	D	Heiton	14-Jun	FL
Wooplaw-Huntford (Carter Bar)	08-May	D	Newmains (Reston)	14-Jun	3br9
Graden (Yetholm)	14-May	P	Garvald Law SE (Garvald)	17-Jun	NY(3)
Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank)	16-May	D	Nun Rig-Harecleugh Forest (Westruther)	18-Jun	DD
Belses (Lilliesleaf)	19-May	DD	Tweed: Sprouston-Redden	20-Jun	A
Dewar Burn: Dewar	22-May	FL	Gill Burn (Blackhopebyre)	21-Jun	NY(2)
Tathieknowe Burn (Heriot)	22-May	A	Whitmuir Moss (Selkirk)	23-Jun	2NY(2)
Blackhopebyre (Leithen Hopes)	23-May	2br5	Glentress Water: Hillside Knowe	03-Jul	2NY(1)
Hule Moss	24-May	2br5	Hazeldean Wood (Soutra)	03-Jul	P
West Linton Golf Club	25-May	DD	St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch	17-Jul	FL

See Introduction for breeding codes.

Records with breeding and the number of occupied tetrads during the breeding season tentatively suggest an increase in the levels of breeding in recent years, a trend reflected in BBS records for Scotland as a whole and NE England. The table below is unlikely to directly reflect the trend in breeding population in the Borders but nonetheless might give an approximation.

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
68	28	49	44	58	48	49	52	44	89
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
44	44	38	37	18	23	62	46	97	98

Lapwing: occupied tetrads during breeding season (mid-Mar to mid-Jul), 2000-2019.

(shaded cells correspond to survey years for SE Scotland Atlas)

Golden Plover

Pluvialis apricaria

Common breeding species but declining. Found mainly 200-400 m. Winter birds are abundant, swollen by immigrants. During 2008-13 found in 9% of tetrads in summer and 9% in winter.

Records came from 43 tetrads (3%). 2018 - 47 tetrads, 2017 - 44 tetrads, 2016 - 39 tetrads, 2015 - 55 tetrads.

Monthly peak counts of 10 or more and an annual aggregate count of more than 100 came from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Newmains (Reston)	70			335						210		
Peat Law (Oxton)				130	30		170					
Lauder Common				280	11		25					
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet-Crailing)		12	180	40								
Belses (Lilliesleaf)		200	22									
Jardinefield (Whitsome)			210									
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch			200									
Broadlee Loch (Roberton)										200		
Wull Muir (Heriot)				180								
Soutra Hill (Oxton)				170								
Yarlside (Earlston)										120		
Edgerston Tofts (Carter Bar)		100										
Total no of tetrads	7	4	9	10	5	5	4	0	1	7	2	4
Aggregate of all peak counts	358	327	670	1225	48	13	198	0	Pr	690	51	138

Other sites with peak counts of more than 10 but with an aggregate count of less than 100 were (highest counts shown): Greenlaw SW - 80; Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream) - 80; Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond (Heiton) - 80; Cove Harbour - 75; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 60; Hardiesmill Place-Stenmuir (Gordon) - 58; Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch) - 50; Westruther S - 50; Heiton - 45; Whitton S (Morebattle) - 40; Horseupcleuch Rig (Longformacus) - 27; Broad Law (Garvald) - 25; Sorrowlessfield (Earlston) - 22; The Curr (Yetholm) - 20; Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave - 20; Haud Yauds (Dowlaw) - 15; Well Plantation (Hawick) - 15; Tanwell (Stow) - 10.

May-Aug (breeding season)

Records came from 8 tetrads. 2018 - 15 tetrads, 2017 - 6 tetrads, 2016 - 6 tetrads, 2015 - 6 tetrads. Records of with reports of breeding evidence were from only 5 tetrads:

Kettelshiel (Greenlaw)	13-Mar	S	Black Law E (Megget Reservoir)	19-Jun	DD
Peat Law (Oxton)	18-Jun	A	Chapel Gill Hill (Broughton)	21-Jun	P
See Introduction for breeding codes.			Auchope Cairns (Cheviot Burn)	15-Jul	P

The paucity of breeding records points to a continuation of the low levels of breeding compared with the recent peak of 1999-2003.

Grey Plover

Pluvialis squaterola

Scrace autumn passage migrant in coastal areas. Local movement in winter also apparent.

Five records from between Cove Harbour and St Abbs: **Jan**: single on 2nd at Pease Bay (G Paterson); single at Cove Harbour on 29th (R Singleton). **Feb**: single at Pease Bay on 10th (DK Graham). **Sep**: singles at St Abbs-Northfield on 19th (C Hatsell) and on 22nd at St Abb's Head (DK Graham). A fairly typical year.

Ringed Plover

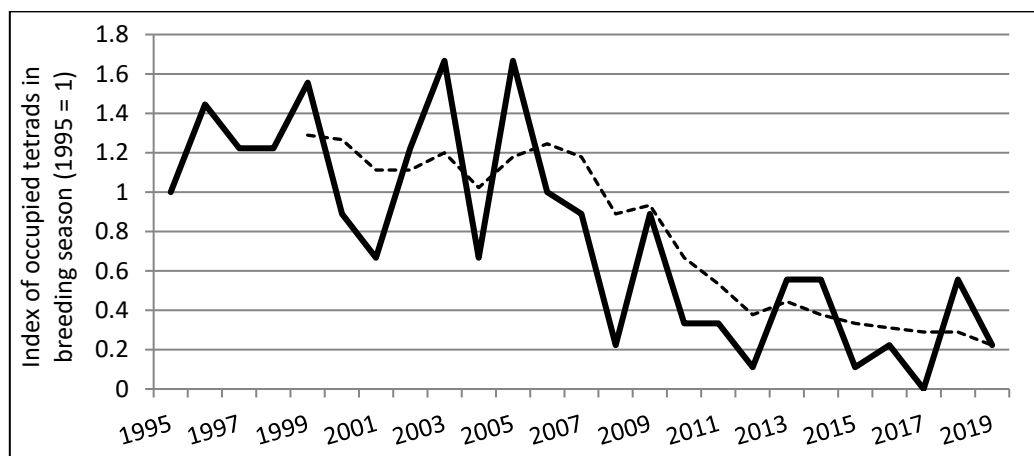
Charadrius hiaticula

Uncommon 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 from 6 tetrads. 2018 - 8 tetrads, 2017 - 3 tetrads, 2016 - 6 tetrads, 2015 - 7 tetrads.

Cove Harbour	29-Jan	7	R Singleton	Hule Moss	22-Apr	1	AP Mossop
Pease Bay	01-Feb	7	G Paterson	Fruid Reservoir	17-Jul	1	G Paterson
Pease Bay	10-Feb	5	DK Graham	St Abb's Head	26-Aug	1	C Hatsell
Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh	26-Mar	2	T Reed	Eyemouth	06-Sep	1	C Hartley

There were no records of breeding. Taking the breeding season as mid-Apr to mid-Aug, the number of occupied tetrads has decreased by about 75% since the late 1990s:



Ringed Plover: index of occupied tetrads during breeding season, 1995-2019.
(broken line is 5-yr running average)

Little Ringed Plover*Charadrius dubius*

Scarce summer visitor and breeder.

Records came from 6 tetrads. 2018 - 4 tetrads, 2017 - 2 tetrads, 2016 - 3 tetrads, 2015 - no reports. Records were from a wide geographical range (for security purposes locations are not given).

Confirmed breeding was reported from 2 tetrads, probable breeding was reported from 3 tetrads and the remaining tetrad provided no breeding evidence.

These appear to be the most promising set of records submitted to-date. Records submitted by: M Moncrieff; G Paterson; T Reed; K Robeson; S Turnbull.

Whimbrel*Numenius phaeopus*

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

Records came from 6 tetrads. 2018 - 4 tetrads, 2017 - 7 tetrads, 2016 - 7 tetrads, 2015 - 3 tetrads.

Winter-spring movements:

Eyemouth Golf Course	02-Jan	1	Newmains (Reston)	22-Apr	1
Burnmouth-Greystonelees	17-Mar	1	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	29-Apr	1
Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	21-Mar	1	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	15-May	1
St Abb's Head	20-Apr	5	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	28-May	1

Summer-autumn movements:

Eyemouth	09-Jul	1	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	24-Aug	1
St Abbs-Northfield	28-Jul	3	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	28-Aug	1
Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	28-Jul	1	Eyemouth	19-Sep	1
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	29-Jul	1	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	19-Sep	1
Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	29-Jul	1	Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	20-Sep	1
Eyemouth	10-Aug	2	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	23-Sep	1
			Eyemouth	02-Nov	1

These are one of the better sets of records submitted in recent years. Records submitted by: DK Graham; C Hartley; C Hatsell; G Paterson.

Curlew*Numenius arquata*

Common but declining breeding species. Less common 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.

Records from 129 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 132 tetrads, 2017 - 86 tetrads, 2016 - 75 tetrads, 2015 - 96 tetrads. The Rocky Shore Count on 27-29-Jan had a total of 23 (the lowest count since the RSC started in 1995):

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

Monthly peak counts of 5 or more and an annual aggregate of 50 or more came from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords)		127	236	20								
Mire Loch (St Abb's Head)	45	44	49	34				13	37	43	26	43
Caddonlee (Clovenfords)			150									
Burnmouth-Greystonelees	5		64						9	17	19	
Red Heugh (Dowlaw)		75										
Howford (Traquair)			55									
Watch Water Reservoir		7					44					
Dowlaw Moss	50											
Leithen Water: The Common				50								
Total no of tetrads	20	19	35	37	48	49	22	7	12	7	9	6
Aggregate count of all peak counts	160	301	708	221	103	188	82	26	60	65	99	49

Other tetrads with monthly peak counts of 5 or more but with annual aggregate counts of less than 50 were (with aggregate counts shown): Huntershall (Soutra) - 46; Branxholme Easter Loch (Roberton) - 33; Hallmanor Haugh (Manor Valley) - 32; St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch - 31; Dunglass - 25; Lambertton - 21; Cove Harbour - 21; Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave - 17; Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) - 17; Carcant Lodge (Heriot) - 16; Blackhopebyre (Glentress Water) - 15; Borthwick Water: Woodburn - 15; Pennymuir Bridge (Towford) - 15; Dod (Wauchope Forest) - 14; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 13; Wull Muir (Heriot) - 12; Bruntaburn Mill (Blythe) - 11; Lauder Common - 10; Carcant Wind Farm (Heriot) - 8; Hog Hill (Lauder) - 8; Newmains (Reston) - 8; Nun Rig-Harecleugh Forest (Westruther) - 8; Kirkhope-Ern Cleuch (Ettrickbridge) - 7; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) - 6; Easter Housebyers (Earlston) - 5; Harelaw Pond-Cotfield (Lilliesleaf) - 5; Leithen Lodge - 5; Waddlescairn Moor (Soutra) - 5.

Mid-March to August (breeding season)

Records came from 107 tetrads. 2018 - 62 tetrads, 2017 - 66 tetrads, 2016 - 57 tetrads, 2015 - 74 tetrads. Reports with breeding evidence came from 38 tetrads (12 possible, 19 probable and 7 confirmed):

Earlside (Stobs Castle)	26-Mar	P
Megget Reservoir-Cramalt	07-Apr	P
Lauder Common	11-Apr	D
Harlawmuir Burn (Carlops)	13-Apr	D
Peat Law (Oxton)	17-Apr	NE
Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch)	18-Apr	P(8)
Huntford (Carter Bar)	18-Apr	S
Hule Moss	22-Apr	S
Quaw Wood (Manor Valley)	03-May	P
Wormiston Burn-Loch Pots (Eddleston)	03-May	P
Berry Hills (Hownam)	05-May	S
Blackgrain Rig (Yarrow)	12-May	P
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	12-May	S
Blackhopebyre (Glentress Water)	22-May	A
Whitehope (Glentress Water)	24-May	S
Merrylaw-Commonbrae (Teviothead)	28-May	S
Rough Knowe SE (Ettrickbridge)	29-May	S
Dewar (Garvald)	29-May	2NY(1)

Lodge Plantation (Roberton)	30-May	S
Branxholme Easter Loch (Roberton)	30-May	P
Tathieknowe-Windy Slack (Heriot)	01-Jun	NY(2)
Williamhope (Yair Hill Forest)	01-Jun	S
New Smailholm-Rachelfield	01-Jun	P
Lymiecleugh (Teviothead)	04-Jun	S
Scarlaw (Watch Water)	06-Jun	A
Middle Rig (Watch Water Reservoir)	06-Jun	A
Outerside Rig (Craik)	11-Jun	S
Wull Muir (Heriot)	11-Jun	A
Heriot Water: Ladyside	15-Jun	NY(1)
Wolf Cleuch (Dewar)	17-Jun	NY(2)
Nun Rig-Harecleugh (Westruther)	18-Jun	DD
Hog Hill (Lauder)	27-Jun	A
Tanwell (Stow)	30-Jun	P
Doecleuch (Stobs Castle)	04-Jul	S
Baddingsgill Farm (West Linton)	15-Jul	P
Hose Law (Heriot)	15-Jul	1br1

Although the records with breeding evidence have declined over the past year, the general trend appears to be upward since 2014.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total occupied tetrads in breeding season	70	74	57	66	62	107
Tetrads with breeding evidence	11	12	15	17	59	38

Bar-tailed Godwit

Limosa lapponica

Uncommon autumn/winter passage migrant.

Three records from 2 tetrads, all of single birds. 12-Apr at Fancove Head (Eyemouth) and on 24-Aug and 25-Sep at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head). Records submitted by C Hartley, C Hatsell and R Manning. A typical year.

Black-tailed Godwit

Limosa limosa

Uncommon autumn passage migrant

Records from 3 tetrads and a total of 15 bird-days was a return to the more expected level of records, after 2018's 112 bird-days.

Stantling Craig Reservoir E (Clovenfords)	08-Apr	1	G Paterson
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)	05-May	1	S Turnbull
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	24-Jun	11	N Hammatt
Foulden	12-Sep	1	C Hartley
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	13-Sep	1	N Hammatt

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.

Records came from locations along the whole of the Berwickshire coast. The Rocky Shore Count on 27-Jan had a total count of 7, apparently the lowest count since the RSC began:

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
72	35	27	16	87	36	69	60	24	46
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
33	24	41	47	61	51	30	60	19	7

Turnstone: RSC counts, 2000-2019.

The monthly peak counts per coastal section were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D				
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	23		28	No records								2				
Pease Bay-Redheugh																
Redheugh-Souter																
Souter-Pettico Wick																
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	2	20											8	2	1	
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	1													5	1	
Eyemouth-Burnmouth													5			
Burnmouth-Border	21	17	11										22	8	41	24

Note: BBR 2018 gave a table showing RSC totals for 2012-2018. The counts given were mismatched with the years and should be ignored.

Knot*Calidris canutus*

Scarce autumn passage migrant and winter visitor, almost exclusive

Records came from 2 tetrads. There were no records in 2018. Dunglass: 12 on 18-Aug, 12 on 12-Oct, one on 17-Nov (DK Graham). Hule Moss single adult on 14-Sep (AP Mossop) - an unusual inland record.

Ruff*Philomachus pugnax*

Very uncommon passage migrant.

An estimated total of 54 bird-days based on sightings at 3 tetrads: 2 singles were reported from Millar's Moss and Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) on 29-Jul (C Hatsell); Greenlaw Farm Pool, Foulden (C Hartley *et al.*), where up to 3 birds were seen from 06-Aug to 10-Aug and then 2 birds until 31-Aug. A fairly typical year.

Dunlin*Calidris alpina*

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

Records from 6 tetrads. 2018 - 6 tetrads, 2017 - 6 tetrads, 2016 - 7 tetrads, 2015 - 5 tetrads.

January

5 at Dunglass on 3rd (DK Graham)

May

One at Watch Water Reservoir on 7th (M Moncrieff); one at Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 8th (S Turnbull), 1 at Dunglass on 12th (DK Graham).

June

Singles at Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 5th and 24th (S Turnbull).

July

Two at Eyemouth on 9th (DK Graham) and 3 at Fruid Reservoir on 17th (G Paterson).

September

Sixteen at St Abb's Head on 18th (DK Graham).

December

Single at Dunglass on 7th (DK Graham).

A fairly typical year.

Purple Sandpiper*Calidris maritima*

Very uncommon 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.

Records from locations between Dunglass and Burnmouth.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D				
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	12		10	No records								21				
Pease Bay-Redheugh	3	8													5	
Redheugh-Souter																
Souter-Pettico Wick																
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	25	40	19										5	2		24
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth													3			4
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	2	1												1	2	
Burnmouth-Border	6	2											1		8	5

The count of 40 at Coldingham Bay on 1-Feb (G Paterson) was the highest count since 2014. 2019 was a fairly typical year.

Woodcock*Scolopax rusticola*

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

Records from 85 tetrads (7%). 2018 - 92 tetrads, 2017 - 65 tetrads, 2016 - 36 tetrads, 2015 - 34 tetrads.

Jan-Feb

Records from 46 tetrads. 2018 - 33 tetrads, 2017 - 54 tetrads, 2016 - 32 tetrads, 2015 - 18 tetrads. Largest counts: Minto Kames (Denholm) - 6; Lempitlaw N (Kelso) - 5; Galabank (Stow) - 4; Laprig (Eccles) - 4; Galabank (Stow) - 3; Middlemoor Plantation (Hume) - 3; Crookhouse N (Morebattle) - 3.

Mar-Aug

Records from 21 tetrads. 2018 - 32 tetrads, 2017 - 8 tetrads, 2016 - 33 tetrads, 2015 - 9 tetrads. Largest counts: Newcastleton - 4; Kyles Hill N (Greenlaw) - 3.

Records of breeding came from 9 tetrads (8 with roding birds):

Philippaugh-Bowhill Estates	19-Apr	G Scott	Leithen Water: Colquhar	14-Jun	G Paterson
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	21-Apr	G Paterson	Loch Tima (Craik Forest)	15-Jun	G Paterson
Leysburnfoot (Hermitage)	13-May	R Singleton	Kyles Hill N (Greenlaw)	28-Jun	AP Mossop
Elibank Craig (Caddonfoot)	03-Jun	G Paterson	Halliburton (Greenlaw)	28-Jul	AP Mossop

Fledged bird(s) were recorded in Clerkenville (Greenlaw) on 5-Jun (J Towill).

Sep-Dec

Records from 33 tetrads. 2018 - 32 tetrads, 2017 - 28 tetrads, 2016 - 33 tetrads, 2015 - 17 tetrads. Largest counts: Whitehouse-Millfield (Smailholm) - 4; Lady Moss (Bowden) - 3; Whitehouse-Millfield (Smailholm) - 3.

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
17	4	9	27	19	20	21	4	12	14
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
8	15	11	12	14	10	2	5	9	9

Woodcock: no. of tetrads with evidence of roding and confirmed breeding.

Jack Snipe*Lymnocyptes minimus*

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

Records were from 7 tetrads. 2018 - 10 tetrads, 2017 - 3 tetrads, 2016 - 10 tetrads, 2015 - 6 tetrads.

January: 2 at Newmains (Reston) on 12th.

February: Singles at Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 6th and at Newmains (Reston) on 16th.

March: One at Malcolms Moss-Chesters Burn (Minto) on 10th and 2 at Newcastleton on 26th.

October: A single at Malcolms Moss-Chesters Burn (Minto) on 13th, 5 at Teviot Haughs on 18th and 3 at Newmains (Reston) on 27th.

November: Four at Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 3rd, 6 at Newmains (Reston) on 6th, 2 at Malcolms Moss-Chesters Burn (Minto) on 10th, 6 at Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge on 19th and one at Groundistone Height (Ashkirk) on 23rd.

December: One at Hendersyde Park (Kelso) on 2nd, 4 at Malcolms Moss-Chesters Burn (Minto) on 6th, a single at Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 8th and 2 at Newmains (Reston) on 30th.

Records submitted by C Blackie, DK Graham, C Hartley, M Henderson, R Manning, S Turnbull.

Wull Muir (Heriot)						4	5					
Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog								8				
Murder Moss (Selkirk)											8	
Blackhopebyre (Leithen Hopes)			4	3								
Lauder Common						4	3					
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)								2	4			
Groundistone Height (Ashkirk)											6	
Halliburton (Greenlaw)							6					
Huntershall (Soutra)							3	3				
Middlethird-Bellitaw (Gordon)											6	
Soutra Hill (Oxton)				3		2						
Watch Water Reservoir								3	2			
Total no. of tetrads	16	10	11	16	15	11	12	6	8	9	11	9
Aggregate count of all peak counts	23	42	54	98	15	21	25	26	42	59	92	100

Tetrads with at least one month with a count of 2 or more but an aggregate count of below 5 were: Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 4; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 4; Sprouston-Whitmuirhaugh (Kelso) - 4; Folly Loch W - 3; Galashiels N - 3; Hule Moss - 3; Redden Burn (Sprouston) - 3; Altrieve (Gordon Arms Hotel) - 2; Belses (Lilliesleaf) - 2; Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch) - 2; Hunt Law (Heriot) - 2; Kippilaw Mains (Bowden) - 2; Laprig (Eccles) - 2; White Law (Selkirk) - 2; Windy Slack (Heriot) - 2; Hoscoteshiel (Craik Forest) - 2.

Mid-Mar – Aug (breeding season)

Records came from a total of 38 tetrads. 2018 - 46 tetrads, 2017 - 32 tetrads, 2016 - 26, 2015 - 26 tetrads. All records with breeding evidence involved display (drumming or chipping) and came from 20 tetrads:

Hose Law (Heriot)	25-Feb
Bemersyde Moss	26-Feb
Stagger Knowe (Yarrow)	01-Mar
Blackhopebyre (Leithen Hopes)	25-Mar
Broad Law (Garvald)	31-Mar
Wull Muir (Heriot)	05-Apr
Soutra Hill (Oxton)	18-Apr
Newhall Forest (Traquair)	20-Apr
Hule Moss	22-Apr
Larriston (Saughtree)	03-May

Peat Law (Oxton)	10-May
Blackgrain Rig (Yarrow)	12-May
Leysburnfoot (Hermitage)	13-May
Lymiecleugh (Teviothead)	18-May
Clearburn Loch (Buccleuch)	18-May
Altrieve (Gordon Arms Hotel)	19-Jun
Tanwell (Stow)	30-Jun
Lauder Common E	30-Jun
Tima Loch (Craik Forest)	14-Jul
Auchope Cairns (Cheviot Burn)	15-Jul

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
16	25	17	14	27	44	46	44	36	44	94
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
74	105	65	57	69	41	9	6	10	21	20

Snipe: no. of tetrads with breeding evidence, 1998-2109.

(shaded cells represent SE Scotland Atlas survey period - 2008-13)

Breeding records submitted by: EL Bickmore; R Bramhall; M Cummings; J Gordon; M Henderson; M Holling; M Lindsay; AP Mossop; G Paterson; R Singleton.

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.

Records came from 80 tetrads (6%). 2018 - 58 tetrads, 2017 - 37 tetrads, 2016 - 43 tetrads, 2015 - 47 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: No records.

Apr-Aug: Records from 78 tetrads. 2018 - 57 tetrads, 2017 - 35 tetrads, 2016 - 42 tetrads, 2015 - 40 tetrads. Peak counts per tetrad greater than 3: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 18; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 13; Fruid Reservoir - 9; St Mary's Loch - 8; Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh - 8; Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream) - 7; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 6; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 6; Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose - 5; Gala Water: Stow-Watherston - 4; Tweed: Sprouston - 4; Howden (Selkirk) - 4; Carcant (Heriot) - 4; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 4; Shielfield (Oxton) - 4.

Sep-Dec: Records from 6 tetrads. 2018 - 3 tetrads, 2017 - 4 tetrads, 2016 - one tetrad, 2015 - 4 tetrads. Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 2; Newstead (Melrose) - 2; Yair Bridge-Raelees Wood (Caddonfoot) - 1; Banff Mill (Kelso) - 1; Tweed: Sprouston - 1; Burnmouth - 1.

Records with breeding evidence came from 35 tetrads with the estimated number of pairs at 36.

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
85	72	104	103	87	130	137	98	138	121
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
150	140	126	103	61	38	36	32	21	36

Common Sandpiper: estimated no. of breeding pairs based on reported breeding, 2000-2019.

(shaded cells represent SE Scotland Atlas survey period - 2008-13)

On the basis of these records there appears to be a levelling off in the decline of breeding pairs.

Green Sandpiper

Tringa ochropus

Scarce, mostly autumn passage migrant and rare but increasing winter visitor.

Records came from 19 tetrads (1%). 2018 - 18 tetrads, 2017 - 12 tetrads, 2016 - 9 tetrads, 2015 - 7 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Recorded in 10 tetrads. Peak counts: Teviot Haughs (Nisbet-Crailing) - 5; Tweed (Kelso-Coldstream) - 4; Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm) - 1.

Apr-Jul: Records from 5 tetrads. Peak counts: Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 5; Tweed (Kelso-Coldstream) - 1; Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm) - 1; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 1.

Aug-Oct: Records from 11 tetrads. Peak counts: Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 5; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) - 3; Tweed (Kelso-Coldstream) - 3; St Abbs-Northfield - 1; Mileknowe Pool (Ayton) - 1; Newmains (Reston) - 1; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 1.

Nov-Dec: Records from 6 tetrads. Peak counts: Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 4; Tweed (Kelso-Coldstream) - 1; Folly Loch - 1; Wooden Loch - 1; Norton (Lauder) - 1.

Overwintering records came from the Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) and along the Tweed between Kelso and Coldstream. Overwintering records have now become virtually annual.

Redshank

Tringa totanus

Now an uncommon breeding species. A few winter along the lower Tweed and coast, where it is well-represented. Some spring and autumn coastal passage. During 2008-13 found in 9% of tetrads in summer and 3% in winter.

Records from 48 tetrads (4%). 2018 - 50 tetrads, 2017 - 42 tetrads, 2016 - 42 tetrads, 2015 - 49 tetrads. The Rocky Shore Count on 27-29-Jan had a total count of 57:

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	26	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	5
Pease Bay-Redheugh	7	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	4
Redheugh-Souter	0	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	0
Souter-Pettico Wick	0	Burnmouth-Border	15

Monthly peak counts of 5 or more:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D		
Burnmouth-Border	70	9	26		All counts less than 5.		All counts less than 5.	All counts less than 5.	80	50	78	65		
Eyemouth-Burnmouth		41									8	12		
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	13	8	19	5								6		5
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	26													14
Watch Water Reservoir			12											
Pease Bay-Redheugh	7													
Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)				6										
Scarlaw (Watch Water Reservoir)									6					
Peat Law (Oxton)									5					
Pettico Wick-Coldingham	5													
Tweed: Paxton-Union Bridge											5			
Total no of tetrads	15	5	23	15	9	12	6	1	7	6	8	10		
Aggregate count of all peak counts	132	58	108	32	16	32	9	1	97	71	94	98		

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

Apr-Aug (breeding season)

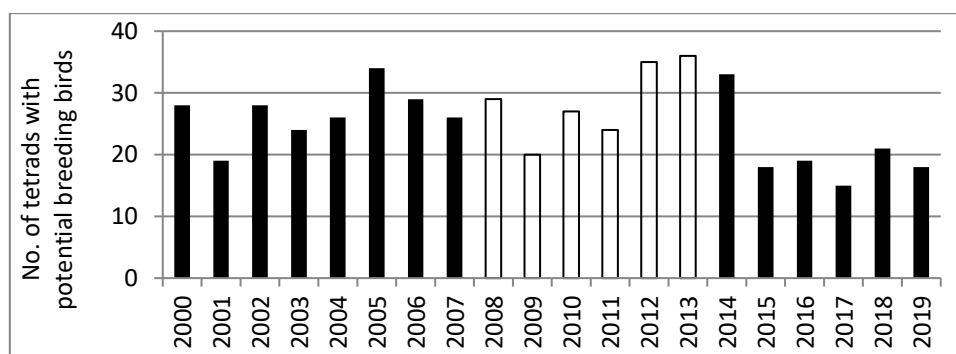
Records from 25 tetrads. 2018 - 29 tetrads, 2017 - 15 tetrads, 2016 - 23 tetrads, 2015 - 19 tetrads. Records with evidence of breeding came from 13 tetrads. 2018 - 7 tetrads, 2017 - 15 tetrads, 2016 - 23 tetrads, 2015 - 19 tetrads.

Fruid Reservoir	17-Jul	P
St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch	07-May	P
Blackhopebyre (Leithen Hopes)	07-Jun	1br2
Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)	19-Apr	P
Hose Law (Heriot)	26-Mar	D
Garvald Lodge (Dewar Burn)	04-Jun	NY(1)
See Introduction for breeding codes.		

Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)	28-Apr	P
Carcant Lodge (Heriot)	14-Jul	A
Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords)	21-Apr	P(2)
Huntershall (Soutra)	05-Jun	A
Hog Hill (Lauder)	06-Jun	A
Peat Law (Oxton)	18-Jun	A
Scarlaw (Watch Water Reservoir)	06-Jun	P(2)

Breeding records submitted by: BRG; R Bramhall; J Gordon; M Moncrieff; G Paterson; MB Ross.

BBR records suggest a notable decline in the number of tetrads occupied by birds that are potential breeders. The dataset is however, problematic in that up to 2010, sites rather than tetrads were the unit used. After some adjustments to the number of sites by converting them into the equivalent tetrads, the trend appears to be as shown below:



Redshank: estimated no. of tetrads occupied by potential breeders, 2000-2019.

Unshaded bars represent period of survey for SE Scotland Atlas 2007-13.

If we make the big assumption that the above record does reflect the breeding performance since 2000 then it would indicate that the 50% decline in population in SE Scotland between 1994 and 2013, as suggested by *Birds in South-east Scotland 2017-13*, has yet further declined in Borders. However, this assumption is, of course, based on an incomplete dataset.

Wood Sandpiper

Tringa glareola

Scarce passage migrant. Mostly seen in autumn.

A single bird was seen at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) on 16-May (DK Graham). Further sightings of a single bird were made at the same site on 06-Aug (AP Mossop, N Hammatt).

Greenshank

Tringa nebularia

Very uncommon spring and autumn passage migrant.

Records from 7 tetrads. 2018 - 13 tetrads, 2017 - 7 tetrads, 2016 - 10 tetrads, 2015 - 7 tetrads. A contrast to the large number of sightings and often high counts from a wide range of tetrads in 2018 and more in keeping with recent years generally.

Jan: Tweed: single at Birgham Haugh on 12th and 15th. This bird was also reported on 31-Dec 2018 near the same locality.

April: three at Tweedbank on 11th and a single at Newmains (Reston) on 23rd.

May: a single at Newmains (Reston) on 11th, single at Mertoun House (Maxton) on 19th and another single at Tweed: Birgham Haugh on 19th.

August: a single bird at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) from 7th to 15th and a single at Fruid Reservoir on 25th.

September: single birds at Newmains (Reston) on 2nd and 7th and a single at Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) on 25th.

Records submitted by: AT Bramhall; DK Graham; C Hartley; M Moncrieff; D Parkinson; G Paterson ; T Reed; K Robeson; S Turnbull.

Kittiwake

Rissa tridactyla

Abundant coastal breeder. Dramatic declines in breeding population since late 1980s. Occasional heavy autumn passage. Rare inland, but strays almost annual. Scarcer in winter.

Records submitted from various locations between Cove Harbour and the English Border.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)									Pr			
St Abb's Head-St Abbs	2		700	20	300	150	1,200	300	Pr	430		
Eyemouth-Burnmouth		1							40	447	Pr	
Burnmouth-Border									2		2	

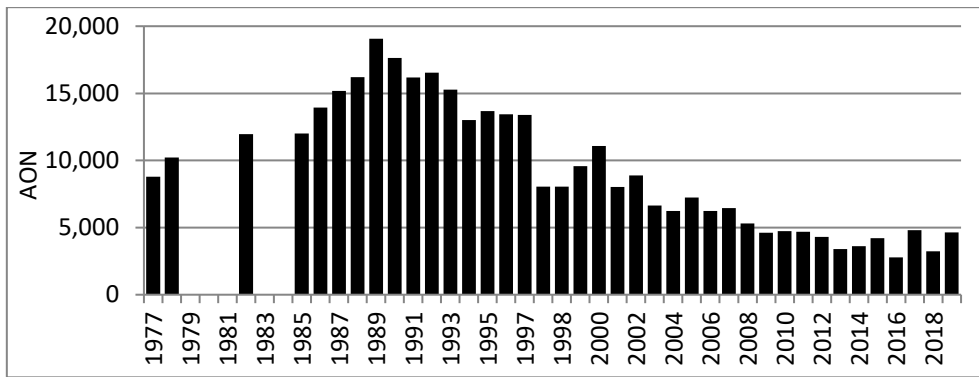
St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report for 2019 (Liza Cole)

Whole Colony Count

A count of apparently occupied nests (AONs) was carried out on 16-, 18-, 21- and 26-Jun. Blind spots were counted from a boat on 20-Jun.

Results

4,651 AON, 43% increase on 2018.



Kittiwake: apparently occupied nests (AON) at St Abb's Head NNR, 1977-2019.

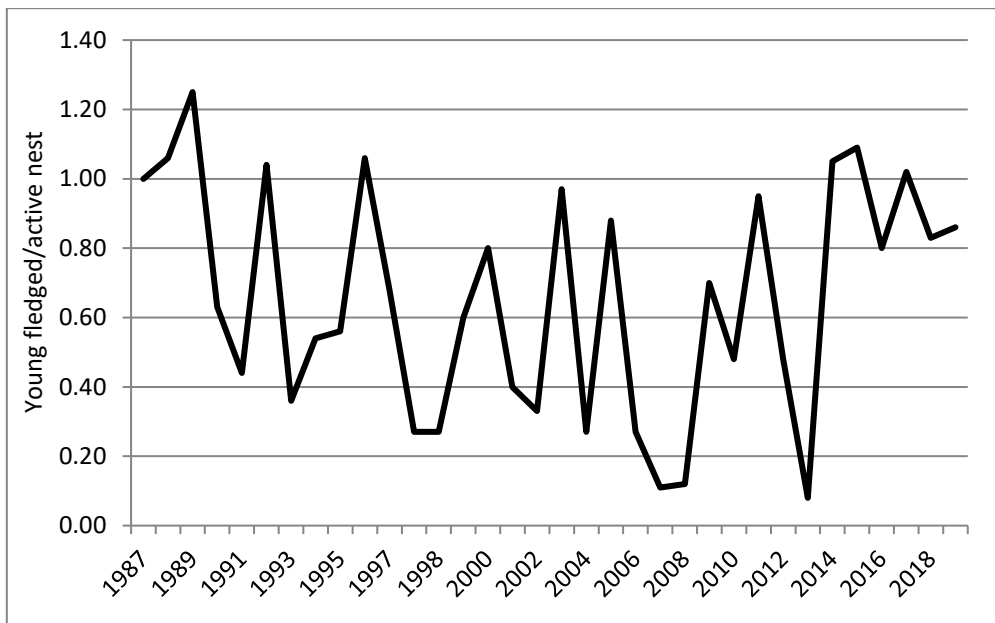
Breeding Success

An assessment of breeding success was carried out using methods described in the 1995 report following recommendations from the Seabird Monitoring Handbook. Eleven visits were made to the 3 monitoring plots between the 07-Jun and the 18-Aug. Nests were individually marked on laminated photos of the monitoring plots and the progress of each nest was recorded up to fledging.

Results

A total of 179 active nests were mapped on the plots and 155 chicks successfully fledged. The breeding success, expressed as the mean of individual plot figures, was 0.86 young fledged per AON; an increase of 4% on 2018.

The productivity at the separate plots was as follows: Hope's Heugh - 0.97; Headland Heugh - 0.85; Cleaver Gully - 0.77.



Kittiwake: productivity at St Abb's Head NNR, 1987-2019.

Sabine's Gull

Rare passage migrant to coast, mostly autumn.

Xema sabini

A single was seen on the evening of 17-Sep near Starney Bay, St Abbs (C Hatsell) and was seen again nearby on 18th (N Hammatt). On 19th there were two reports from Eyemouth of possibly the same bird (M Eaton, M Holling). On 04-Oct a juvenile/1st-winter bird was seen off Eyemouth in the early evening flying north with Kittiwakes. On 8-Nov a further sighting was made at Eyemouth with the bird being described as looking very like that which was seen on 04-Oct (both sightings by C Hartley).

Eight out of the past 20 years have now had reports of Sabine's Gull.

Black-headed Gull*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Common breeder but numbers have fallen greatly in recent years. Abundant and widespread in winter with several roosts. During 2008-13 found in 35% of tetrads in summer and 19% in winter.

Reported from 125 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 101 tetrads, 2017 - 84 tetrads, 2016 - 71 tetrads, 2015 - 72 tetrads. At a total count of 13, the Rocky Shore Count on 27-Jan was one of the lowest counts to date.

Monthly peak counts of 25 or more and an annual aggregate peak count of more than 50 came from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tweed: Tweedbank-Langlee	300	250	34	29			70		44		55	92
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	43	100	52	120	45		36		100	111	44	110
The Hirsell	600											
Hule Moss											400	
Dunglass-Pease Bay W									365			
Burnmouth-Border	36	31							78	110	85	
Waddlescairn Moor (Soutra)					85	160						
St Abbs-Northfield									205			
St Abbs	50											150
Teviot Haughs (Crailing-Nisbet)			200									
Fairslacks (Carlops)				170								
Pickmaw Moss (Selkirk)				120		46						
Yetholm Loch		120										
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange					35	41			43			
Halliburton (Greenlaw)							110					
Watch Water Reservoir							70				40	
Eyemouth-Burnmouth									44	30		27
Cammerlaws (Westruther)			100									
Lindean Hall-Sunderland Hall (Selkirk)			77									
St Abb's Head							40		31			
Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm)			71									
Greenhead (Reston)	65											
Tweed: Kelso-Teviot: Roxburgh Castle	27	36										
Total no of tetrads	33	34	48	45	36	43	31	16	27	2	18	25
Aggregate count of all peak counts	1,291	773	742	723	330	502	493	161	1,038	399	692	500

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

Other tetrads with a single peak count of 25-49 were: Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 44; Coldingham Bay - 42; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 40; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) - 40; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 40; Standhill (Lilliesleaf) - 37; Broad Law (Garvald) - 33; Logan Wood (Drumelzier) - 33; Essenside Loch (Ashkirk) - 29; Whitton Loch (Hownam) - 29; Bruntaburn Mill (Blythe) - 27; Synton Loch (Ashkirk) - 27; White Law (Selkirk) - 27; Tweed-Whiteadder Water (English Border) - 26; Duns Castle - 25; Folly Loch - 25; Heiton - 25; Millar's Moss (St Abbs) - 25; Minto Kames (Denholm) - 25; Upper Whitfield (West Linton) - 23.

During the breeding period (Apr-Aug) records came from 88 tetrads. 2018 - 81 tetrads, 2017 - 48, 2016 - 62 tetrads. Confirmed breeding came from 6 tetrads. 2018 - 10 tetrads, 2017 - zero tetrads. The tetrads with confirmed breeding were: Bemersyde Moss; Broad Law (Garvald); Halliburton (Greenlaw); Pickmaw Moss (Selkirk); Synton Loch (Ashkirk); White Law (Selkirk).

Four birds which had been colour-ringed as chicks in the Moorfoot Hills were recovered in Northern Ireland and at Loch Ryan, Dumfries & Galloway between 20- and 25-Jul, suggesting that there is a large-scale evacuation of Borders birds by the end of July. Further information is available in *Scottish Birds*, Vol. 39 (3), September 2019, p. 229.

Readers should make reference to p 176, where a summary of the 2018/19 inland gullery survey undertaken by the Borders Branch is summarised. After the abandonment of Bemersyde Moss between 2003-2005, a big decline in breeding numbers has occurred.

Little Gull

Hydrocoloeus minutus

Very uncommon passage migrant to coast, mostly between August and October. Occasional inland reports.

Five records submitted:

St Abb's Head	05-Oct	100+	AP Mossop	Dunglass	12-Oct	15	DK Graham
Eyemouth	06-Oct	1	C Hartley	St Abbs	20-Oct	2	DK Graham
				Eyemouth	08-Nov	1	C Hartley

The count of 100+ on 05-Oct was part of an influx along the east coast throughout early Oct and was the highest count of Little Gull recorded in Borders since 2003.

Mediterranean Gull

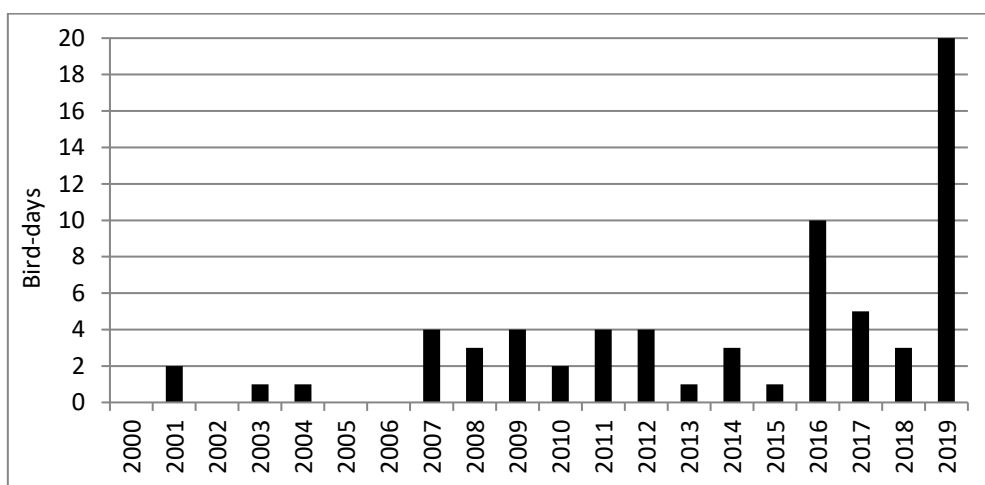
Ichthyaetus melanocephalus

A scarce-very uncommon but increasing passage migrant.

Thirteen records from locations between Cove Harbour and Burnmouth with one exceptional record from The Glack (Manor Valley). 2018 - 3 records (incl. one from Coldstream), 2017 - 4 records, 2016 - 6 records, 2015 - one record.

The Glack (Manor Valley)	14-Feb	1	G Paterson	Eyemouth	06-Oct	1	C Hartley
St Abbs-Northfield	08-Jul	1	C Hatsell	Eyemouth	20-Oct	1	C Hartley
Eyemouth	09-Jul	2	DK Graham	Eyemouth	03-Nov	2	DK Graham
St Abb's Head-Black Gable	01-Aug	1	C Hatsell	Burnmouth	27-Nov	1	G Paterson
St Abbs-Northfield	19-Sep	3	C Hatsell	Cove Harbour	04-Dec	1	G Paterson
St Abb's Head-Black Gable	30-Sep	1	C Hatsell	Eyemouth	23-Dec	2	C Hartley
Eyemouth	04-Oct	3	C Hartley				

The increasing occurrence of this species is reflected in the fact that its status prior to this year was “scarce” but is now regarded as “scarce-very uncommon”.



Mediterranean Gull: bird-days, 2000-2019.

Common Gull

Larus canus

Very uncommon 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.

Records from 99 tetrads (8%). 2018 - 92 tetrads, 2017 - 75 tetrads, 2016 - 74 tetrads, 2015 - 47 tetrads.

Monthly peak counts of at least 25 with an annual aggregate count of 150 or more came from:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
West Water Reservoir										6,000		
Blackerstone E (Abbey St Bathans)	200										450	200
Meikleston Hill (Eddelston)	475	60									100	150
Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords)	484	95	131	38							35	
Nickies Knowe (Megget Reservoir)							700					
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)	180							177	54	220		
The Glack (Manor Valley)		600										
Lurdenlaw-Lempitlaw (Kelso)												550
Hule Moss			60							50	400	
Cringletie (Eddelston)	60	250									86	
Dickson's Wood-Tanwell (Stow)											75	310
Watch Water Reservoir		148									170	
Gala Water: Torquhan (Stow)											110	190
Burnmouth-Border						50			230			
Portmore House (Eddleston)											100	150
Blackburn Mill (Abbey St Bathans)												225
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream			31						40	131		
Lauder E												200
St Mary's Loch		25	55				70	34				
Megget Reservoir-Cramalt				30	150							
Waterheads (Portmore)		180										
Yarrow Water: Gordon Arms Hotel				50	110							
St Abbs-Northfield						40	114					
Toxside Moss SW (Portmore)		150										
Total no of tetrads	28	24	29	16	12	10	15	10	15	15	22	27
Agg. count of all peak counts	2,049	1,775	760	212	290	108	977	353	392	6,621	1,805	2,265

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

Other tetrads with at least one monthly peak count of at least 25 but with annual aggregate peak counts of less than 150 were (aggregate count shown but often corresponding to a single peak count): Kingside Edge Quarry (Portmore) - 130; Rawburn (Longformacus) - 126; Howford (Traquair) - 107; Cammerlaws (Westruther) - 100; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 100; Fountain Hall-Burnhouse - 90; Gilston (Oxton) - 89; Caddonlee (Clovenfords) - 85; Caerlee Hill (Innerleithen) - 80; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 75; Whiteadder Water: Humbles Knowe (Preston) - 70; Leadburn Community Woodland - 60; Whytbank Tower (Clovenfords) - 60; Shiplaw (Eddleston) - 60; Glenormiston (Innerleithen) - 60; Whitfield (West Linton) - 57; Yetholm Loch - 55; Easter Haprew (Stobo) - 50; St Abbs E - 50; Walkerburn E - 50; Hattonkowe (Eddleston) - 50; Caddon Water: Laidlawstiel Farm - 48; Tweed-Whiteadder Water (English Border) - 45; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 42; Caddon Water: Craiglatch - 41; Innerleithen - 40; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 33; Lyne Manor - 33; Crookston North Mains (Heriot) - 29; Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge - 28; Lamberton - 25.

West Water Reservoir (West Linton) stands out as the site with by far the largest count. Unfortunately this site is under-reported. Readers with an interest in taking on the WeBS counting of this important site should contact the recorder, Martin Moncrieff (details in Introduction).

Breeding records were limited to 2 tetrads: Megget Reservoir-Cramalt, where 2 broods had a total of 10 pulli ringed and at Megget Res-Craigierig where another 2 broods had a total of 5 pulli ringed (BRG).

Information on breeding trends can be found on p 176, where a summary of the 2018/19 inland gullery survey undertaken by the Borders Branch is summarised.

Great Black-backed Gull

Larus marinus

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

Records from 49 tetrads (4%). 2018 - 47 tetrads, 2017 - 32 tetrads, 2016 - 30 tetrads, 2015 - 17 tetrads. The Rocky Shore Count on 27-29-Jan had a total count of 85. 2018 - 66, 2017 - 94, 2016 - 104, 2015 - 73 birds.

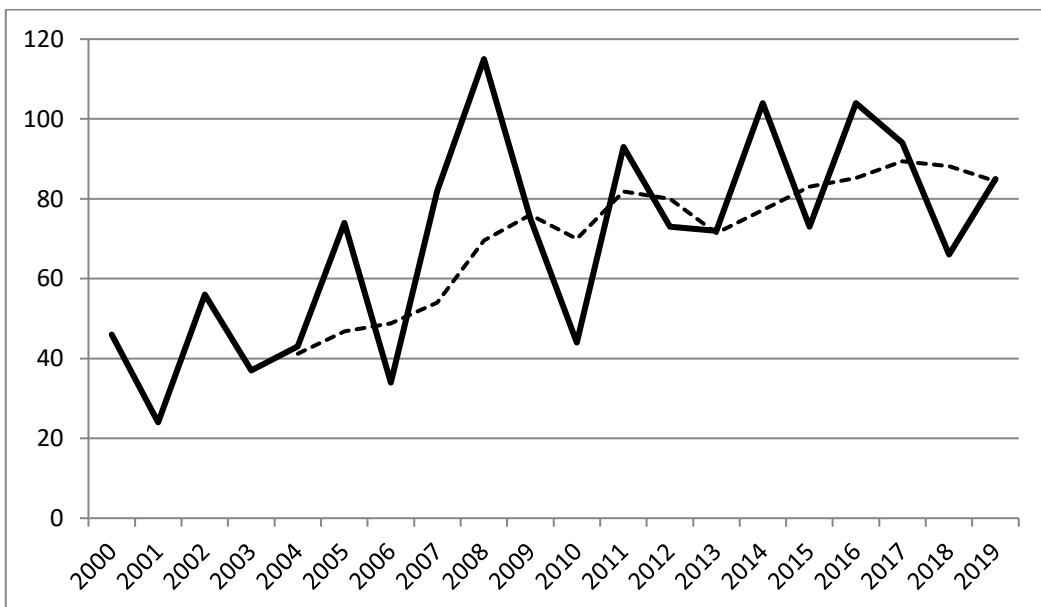
Sites with monthly peak counts of 5 or more were from:

Site	Jan-Mar	Apr-Aug	Sep-Dec
Dunglass-Pease Bay W	10		7
Redheugh-Souter	11		
Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)			5
Pettico Wick-Coldingham	35	10	8
Millar's Moss (St Abbs)	7		
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	28	6	7
Burnmouth-Border	18		15
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream			10
Total no. of coastal tetrads occupied	12	8	11
Total no. of inland tetrads occupied	16	10	9
Aggregate of all peak counts	157	36	73

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

There were no records of confirmed breeding.

RSC records suggest a growing winter population:



Great Black-backed Gull: Rocky Shore Count totals, 2000-2019.
(dotted line = 5-year running average)

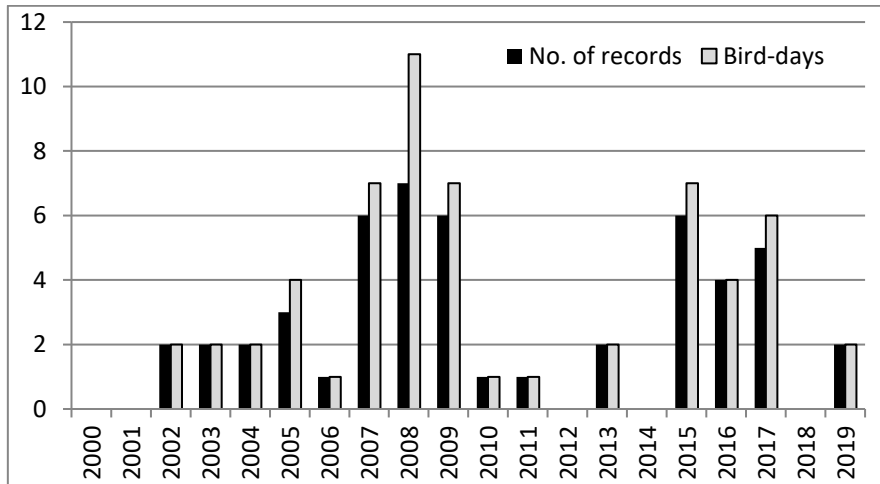
Glaucous Gull

Larus hyperboreus

Scarce winter visitor.

Two records submitted, both singles: 03-Nov at Millar's Moss (St Abbs) and 13-Nov at Brander Heugh (Dowlaw). Both records submitted by C Hatsell (St Abb's Head NNR).

A fairly typical year's records:



Glaucous Gull: no. of records and bird-days, 2000-2019.

Note: no records available for 2014.

Herring Gull

Larus argentatus

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

Records from 132 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 104 tetrads, 2017 - 96 tetrads, 2016 - 96 tetrads, 2015 - 109 tetrads. The Rocky Shore Count on 27-29-Jan had a total of 869. This is the lowest count since the RSC began. This was however, an incomplete count due to poor weather, eg part of the Pease Bay-Redheugh count had to be abandoned*.

Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	108	Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	72
Pease Bay-Redheugh	0*	Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	31
Redheugh-Souter	285	Eyemouth-Burnmouth	263
Souter-Pettico Wick	34	Burnmouth-Border	76

Five yearly averages of RSC counts:

1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2009	2010-2014	2015-2019
3,033	2,266	2,188	1,229	1,336

If you haven't tried BirdTrack yet please consider it as a way to contribute records for the Borders Bird Report. It is the most widely used way of keeping records, easy to use, secure and has the benefit that it is an easy way to retrieve your records for later analysis.

Sites with monthly peak counts of at least 20 and annual aggregate counts of at least 250 were:

Sites	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Pettico Wick-Coldingham	300	300		89	250	1,500	1,200					50
Hule Moss			40					116	25	20	150	2,500
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	263	600		42		100			30		100	36
Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden)								154	522	45	165	
Blackadder Bank (Allanton)									325		410	
Watch Water Reservoir											700	
Burnmouth-Border	90	96	99			140			110	20	44	
S Falaknowe (Coldingham Moor)									326		245	
Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)						25					500	
Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton)										470		
Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood	185		25		200	48						
Waterheads (Portmore)		350										
Broomdykes Cottages (Allanton)												350
Haud Yauds (Dowlaw)												340
Hollybush (Galashiels)			100	220								
Redheugh-Souter	285											
Chirside E									250			
Whitsome Laws-Joshua Plant'n											250	
Total no of tetrads	40	29	37	32	27	36	18	11	24	15	27	35
Aggregate count of all peak counts	1,740	1,844	542	449	644	2,010	1,258	301	1,966	658	3,051	4,071

Sites with at least one month with a count of 20 or more but an annual aggregate of less than 250 were (aggregate counts shown): Dunglass-Pease Bay (W) - 243; Coldlands-Swansfield (Auchencrow) - 225; Bunkle Edge (Preston) - 210; Charterhouse Wood (Kelso) - 200; Lamberton Moor - 170; Greenriggs (Swinton) - 160; Spurlens Rig (Portmore) - 159; Ayton Cocklaw - 130; Chirsidebridge - 120; Teviot: Roxburghe GC - 120; Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose - 120; Girnick-Rachelfield (Smailholm) - 112; Coldingham-Eyemouth - 111; Haud Yauds (Dowlaw) - 110; Blackpotts (Coldingham) - 100; Cringletie (Eddelston) - 65; Millar's Moss (St Abbs) - 59; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 55; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 53; Westruther S - 50; Graden (Yetholm) - 47; Greenlaw SW - 40; Whiteadder Water: Humbles Knowe (Preston) - 40; Souter-Pettico Wick - 34; Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream - 30; Eckford-Kalemouth - 23; Gallows Law-Greenlaw Knowle (Coldingham) - 20; West Water Reservoir - 20.

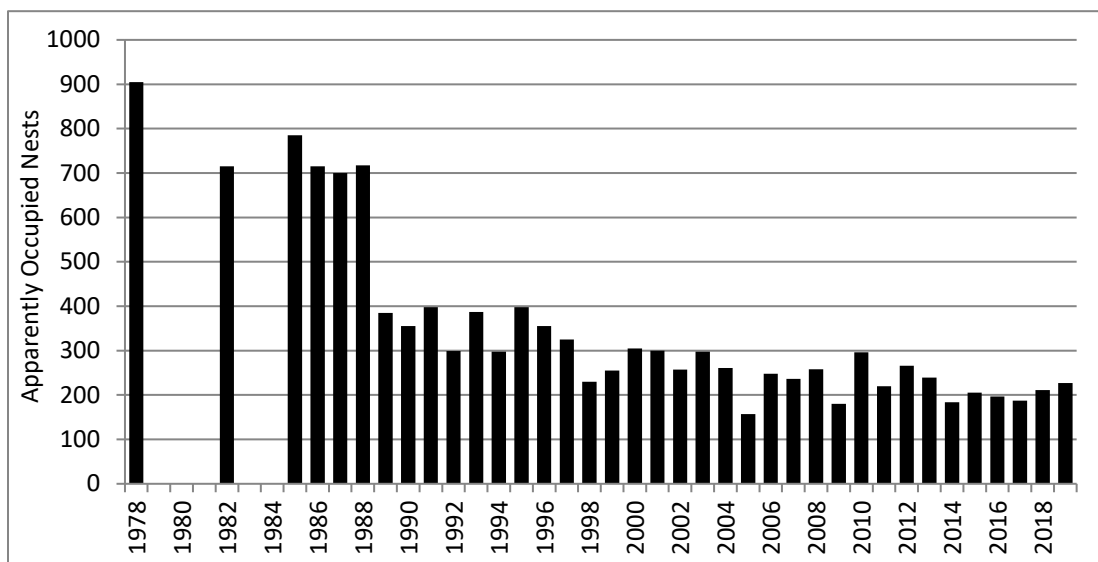
Apr-Jul (breeding season)

Records came from 70 tetrads. 2018 - 51 tetrads, 2017 - 41 tetrads, 2016 - 34 tetrads, 2015 - 44 tetrads. There were only 3 tetrads with breeding evidence reported: 08-Jun at St Abb's Head, 2NY(5); 27-Jun at Eyemouth, FL: 16-Jul at St Abbs-Northfield, FL. Records submitted by M Moncrieff, SP Milligan and C Hatsell, respectively.

St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report for 2019 (Liza Cole)

Whole Colony Count

A whole colony count of apparently occupied nests (AON) was carried out on 03-Jun and 06-Jun. Blind spots were counted from a boat on 05-Jun. There were 227 AON counted, an 8% increase on 2018.



Herring Gull: apparently occupied nest counts at St Abb's Head NNR, 1978-2019.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Larus fuscus

Scarce coastal breeder, not annual, perhaps just 2-3 pairs. Found locally inland in summer. Large roosts while on autumn passage but few in winter. During 2008-13 found in 35% of tetrads in summer and 5% in winter.

Records from 117 tetrads. 2018 - 109 tetrads, 2017 - 74 tetrads, 2016 - 73 tetrads, 2015 - 68 tetrads.

Monthly peak counts of 10 or more and an annual aggregate count of at least 100 came from:

Sites	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
Hule Moss			7,000	1,000
Loch of the Lowes		400		
Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream			46	150
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	10		110	29
Folly Loch			124	24
Bairnkine (Jedburgh)			110	
Bellitaw (Hume)			100	
Edinhope Cottage (Gordon Arms Hotel)		100		
Total no. of occupied tetrads	33	76	46	20
Aggregate peak count of all tetrads	78	1,020	8,039	1,314

Locations with monthly peak counts of at least 10 but an annual aggregate count of less than 100 came from (aggregate count shown): Eckford-Kalemouth - 92; St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch - 66; Portmore House (Eddleston) - 60; Tarth Water Haughs (Blyth Bridge) - 60; Watch Water Reservoir - 60; Westruther S - 60; Eshiels (Peebles) - 54; Leadburn Community Woodland - 50; Spurlens Rig (Portmore) - 50; Yarrow Water: Gordon Arms Hotel - 43; Houndslow E (Westruther) - 42; Stantling Craig Res (Clovenfords) - 40; Shootinglee, Newhall Forest (Traquair) - 33; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet-Crailing) - 33; Burnmouth-Border - 30; Tweed: Galafoot: Tweedbank-Lowood - 30; Cringletie (Eddleston) - 27; Rawburn (Longformacus) - 24; St Abb's Head - 20; West Water Reservoir - 20; Walkerburn Bridge-Glenmead - 14; Paul's Well (West Linton) - 13; Philiphaugh (Selkirk) - 13.

There was one record of confirmed breeding: on 12-Jul, 2 nests, each with 3 young were seen at Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth GC (J Burns).

The estimate of 7,000 birds stopping off at Hule Moss on 26-Sep while on passage (AP Mossop) is the highest reported count for Borders. A search of past records suggest that numbers reported in Apr-Jun were significantly higher than usual.



Lesser Black-backed Gull. Murray's Cauld. September. Dougie Methven.

Baltic Gull

Very rare vagrant.

Larus fuscus fuscus

A first confirmed record of a Baltic Gull was made at Tweedbank on 06-Jan when Andrew Bramhall saw and photographed a ringed immature bird which had been ringed as a large chick in Finland on 17-Jul 2018. This is the first record of this nominate form of Lesser Black-backed Gull to be accepted by SBRC. Further details can be found in *Scottish Birds*, Vol. 39 (3), September 2019, p 229 and on p 182 of this report.

Sandwich Tern

Uncommon spring passage and well-represented autumn passage with few summering birds visitor. Breeding is nearby in the Forth and on the Farne Islands. Rare inland.

Sterna sandvicensis

Thirty-one records came from locations between Dunglass and Eyemouth.

Mar-May

The first report was of 5 birds on 20-Apr at Burnmouth (F Evans). Peak counts from other locations were: 2 at Pettico Wick-West Hurker (St Abb's Head) on 21-Apr; 3 at Coldingham Bay on 2-May; 23 at Dunglass on 12-May.

Jun-Oct

Peak counts from locations with records were: undisclosed count at Coldingham Bay on 23-Jul; 24 at St Abbs-Northfield on 26-Jul; 83 at St Abb's Head-Black Gable on 4-Aug (C Hatsell); 2 at Greenheugh Point (Cockburnspath) on 20-Aug.

The last report of the year was of a single at Eyemouth on 4-Oct (C Hartley).

A fairly healthy set of records with the 83 count on 04-Aug the highest count since 2013.

Common Tern*Sterna hirundo*

Very uncommon summer visitor on coast, most frequent August-September during passage but still uncommon. Rare inland.

Eight records from 5 tetrads were submitted, one of which was well inland. In chronological order the reports were:

Lees Haugh NE (Coldstream)	08-May	4	AP Mossop
Dunglass	12-May	2	DK Graham
Newmains (Reston)	31-May	1	DK Graham
Eyemouth	24-Jun	1	M Archer

St Abb's Head	18-Jul	2	C Hartley
Eyemouth	10-Aug	4	DK Graham
Eyemouth	06-Sep	2	D Whitley
Eyemouth	19-Sep	1	M Eaton

A fairly typical year's records.

Arctic Tern*Sterna paradisaea*

Very uncommon summer coastal visitor (non-breeder), mainly August-September. Under-recorded.

Eight records from between Dunglass and St Abbs involving 5 tetrads. Records in chronological order were:

Dunglass	12-May	4	DK Graham
Coldingham Bay	23-Jul	Pr	R Strong
St Abb's Head	25-Jul	1	C Hatsell
St Abbs-Northfield	28-Jul	1	C Hatsell

St Abb's Head	29-Jul	3	C Hatsell
St Abbs-Northfield	09-Aug	1	C Hatsell
Eyemouth	10-Aug	12	DK Graham
St Abb's Head	18-Sep	3	DK Graham

A fairly typical year's records.

Note: there were 3 records in Sep, all from St Abb's Head of birds that could not be identified but were either Common or Arctic Terns.

Black Tern*Chlidonias niger*

Scarce passage migrant; not annual.

A single bird seen at Dunglass on 12-Oct (DK Graham).

Great Skua*Stercorarius skua*

Well-represented passage migrant from July to November. Almost annual. Very scarce in winter and very rare inland.

Eighteen records came from 5 tetrads between Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor) and Eyemouth. The largest counts for each site per month were:

June: St Abb's Head: 2 on 09-Jun (DK Graham) - first record of the year.

July: St Abb's Head: singles on 03- and 25-July (C Hatsell, R Strong).

August: Eyemouth: single on 20-Aug (C Hartley).

September: St Abbs-Northfield: 7 on 17-Sep (C Hatsell). St Abb's Head: 2 on 18-Sep (DK Graham). Eyemouth: one on 06-Sep (C Hartley). Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor): present on 17-Sep (N Hammatt).

October: St Abb's Head: 3 on 01-Oct (C Hatsell). St Abbs E: 2 on 21-Oct (R Safford) - last record of the year.

Apart from 2015 the estimated number of bird-days was at the lowest level this millennium.

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
63	340	190	239	179	101	38	136	62	60
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
74	99	524	213	86	15	42	34	40	27

Great Skua: estimated bird-days, 2000-2019.

Pomarine Skua

Stercorarius pomarinus

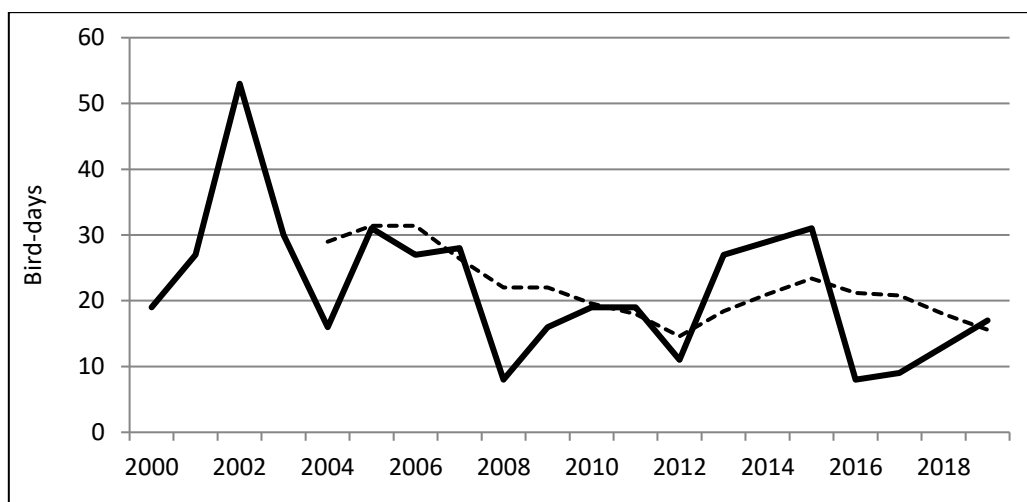
Uncommon autumn passage migrant between Jul and Nov. No inland records.

Eight records from 4 tetrads between St Abb's Head and Eyemouth. Records in chronological order were:

St Abb's Head	02-Jul	1	C Hatsell
St Abbs-Northfield	17-Sep	3	C Hatsell
St Abb's Head	18-Sep	5	DK Graham
Eyemouth	19-Sep	2	C Hartley

St Abb's Head	30-Sep	2	C Hatsell
St Abb's Head	30-Sep	1	DK Graham
St Abbs E	21-Oct	1	R Safford
Eyemouth	29-Oct	2	C Hartley

This represents 17 bird-days. Although an increase on numbers since 2015, still part of a general downward trend:



Pomarine Skua: estimated bird-days, 2000-2019.

(dotted line is 5-yr running average).

Arctic Skua

Stercorarius parasiticus

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

Eighteen records came from 3 tetrads located between St Abb's Head and Eyemouth. The largest counts for each site per month were:

St Abbs-Northfield	28-Jul	4
Eyemouth	10-Aug	2
St Abb's Head	18-Sep	13
Eyemouth	29-Sep	6

St Abbs-Northfield	17-Sep	3
Eyemouth	06-Oct	2
St Abbs	20-Oct	2
Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	16-Oct	1

There were 66 bird-days, the highest since 2014.

Long-tailed Skua

Stercorarius longicaudus

A scarce passage migrant, mostly August-October.

Three records from 2 tetrads: 10-Aug, single at Eyemouth (DK Graham); 18-Sep, single at St Abb's Head (DK Graham); 14-Oct, 2 birds (one juvenile and one adult seen separately) at Eyemouth (C Hartley).

A not untypical year.

Little Auk

Alle alle

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

Three records: 29-Oct, single at Eyemouth; 05-Nov, single at St Abb's Head, 06-Nov, 7 at St Abb's Head. All records submitted by C Hatsell.

Common Guillemot*Uria aalge*

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

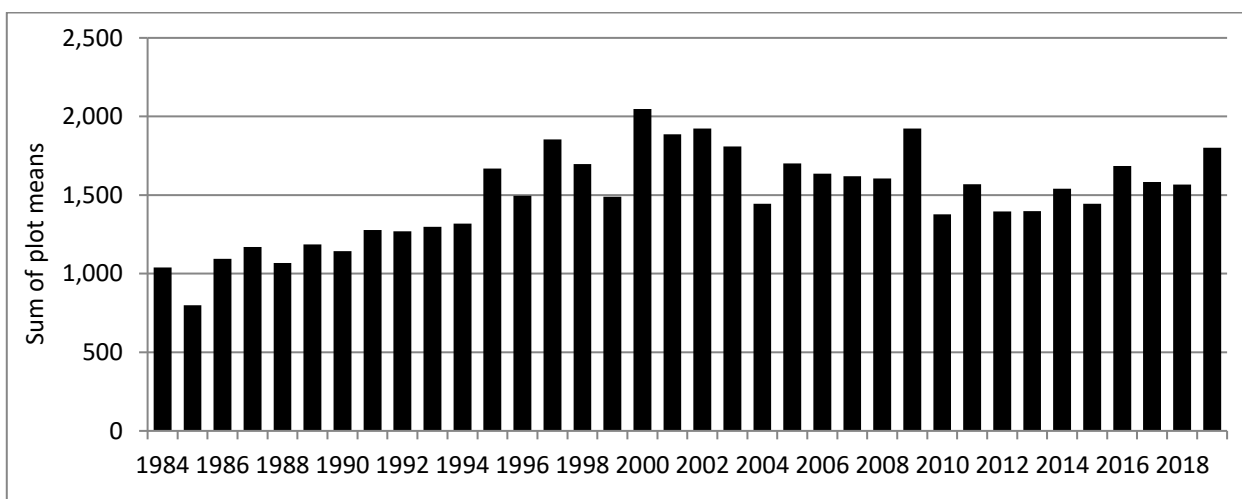
Sixty-nine records from various locations along the whole of the Berwickshire coast but with the majority of records from around St Abb's Head and Eyemouth. Ten birds were counted during the Rocky Shore Count on 27-29-Jan.

Sites (north to south)	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)			3	
Pease Bay-Redheugh				Pr
St Abb's Head NNR	20	2,000	200	Pr
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth			40	
Eyemouth-Burnmouth	10			11
Burnmouth-Border				1
Aggregate of peak counts	40+	2,020+	343+	14+

About two-thirds of submitted records had no counts, a reflection of the large numbers often present and the reason why the aggregate of peak counts row above are all minimum figures.

St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report for 2019 (Liza Cole)**Counts at Study Plots**

Ten counts of individual birds on ledges were carried out at each of the five plots between 01-20-Jun. The mean number of individuals on study plots in first three weeks of June was 1,801, a 15% increase on 2018.

**Guillemot: totals of average counts of study plots at St Abb's Head NNR, 1984-2019.****Breeding success:** no productivity monitoring done.**Razorbill***Alca torda*

Abundant, localised coastal breeder on large cliffs. Some autumn passage. During 2008-13 found in 11 tetrads in summer and 8 in winter.

Fifty-two records from various locations along the whole of the Berwickshire coast but with the majority of records from around St Abb's Head and Eyemouth.

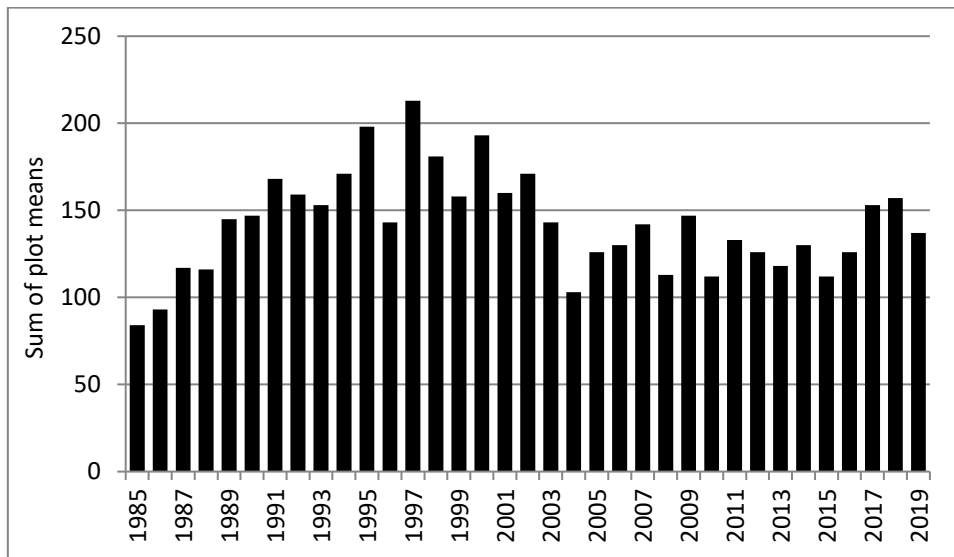
Sites (north to south)	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
Dunglass-Pease Bay (W)	2			2
Pettico Wick-Coldingham Bay	Pr	500	200	1
Coldingham Bay-Eyemouth	2	Pr	50	1
Eyemouth-Burnmouth				22
Aggregate of peak counts	5+	501+	250	26

All records with breeding evidence were from St Abb's Head NNR.

St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report for 2019 (Liza Cole)

Counts at Study Plots

Ten counts of individual birds on ledges were carried out at each of the five plots between 01-20-Jun (as for the Guillemots). The mean number of individuals on study plots in first three weeks of June was 137, a 13% decrease on 2018.



Razorbill: totals of average counts of study plots at St Abb's Head NNR, 1985-2019.

Breeding success

No productivity monitoring done.

Puffin

Fratercula arctica

Scarce coastal breeder, mostly seen off the cliffs. Confirmed breeding rare as nest sites usually inaccessible. Uncommon offshore in autumn, scarce in winter. Rare autumn movements.

Eighteen records mainly from St Abb's Head NNR. Monthly peak counts at sites were:

Sites	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
St Abb's Head		36	11	2		1	1
St Abbs-Northfield		5		1			
St Abbs E					2		
Eyemouth	1					1	1
Burnmouth						1	

All of the above sightings are assumed to have been offshore.

St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve Seabird Report for 2019 (Liza Cole)

No puffins were seen ashore this year, at any point in the season.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Casual records offshore (assumed)	70	603	65	358	159	48	126	58	8	37
St Abb's NNR onshore	58	52	51	33	38	30	28	12	13	11
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Casual records offshore (assumed)	21	77	65	98	29	40	22	1	3	53
St Abb's NNR onshore	9	7	4	2	0	4	2	0	2	0

As the table above shows, the decline in Puffin numbers onshore continues, although the record for casual sightings offshore is the highest since 2013. Note that the latter will likely involve some duplication of counts and may be partly the result of increased observer effort.

Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon

Columba livia

Common resident breeder. Some large flocks in late autumn-winter. During 2008-13 found in 37% of tetrads in summer and 37% in winter.

Records from 63 tetrads (5%). 2018 - 66 tetrads, 2017 - 43 tetrads, 2016 - 50 tetrads, 2015 - 59 tetrads. The Rocky Shore Count held on 27-29-Jan had a total count of 172. 2018 - 215, 2017 - 202, 2016 - 202, 2015 - 107.

Sites with monthly peak counts of at least 10 and an annual aggregate count of at least 100 were (incl. RSC records):

Sites	Jan-Mar	Apr-Aug	Sep-Dec
Coldingham-Eyemouth	14		250
Kelso	50	20	100
Westfield-Whitrig Bog (Smailholm)	70	50	50
Eckford-Kalemouth		50	100
Pettico Wick-Coldingham	120		
Eyemouth Golf Course	17		100
Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge	62	29	12
Teviot Haughs (Crailing)			100
Total no. of occupied tetrads	28	37	23
Aggregate of all peak counts	495	408	899

Sites with some monthly peak counts of at least 10 but aggregate counts below 100 were: Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 70; Selkirk - 35; Galashiels-Ladhope - 30; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) - 30; Dunglass-Pease Bay (W) - 28; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 28; Sprouston-Whitmuirhaugh (Kelso) - 26; Graden (Yetholm) - 25; St Abbs-Northfield - 25; Hoselaw Mains (Town Yetholm) - 21.

Records with breeding evidence came from 7 tetrads:

St Abbs	11-May	N
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	11-May	N
Abbotsford-Netherbarns	17-May	D

See Introduction for breeding codes.

Wull Muir (Heriot)	11-Jun	N
Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)	23-Jun	1br2
St Abb's Head	28-Jul	T
Kelso S	06-Sep	D

Records of this widespread species are notably sparse and are such that it is not possible to make any confident statements about trends with respect to numbers or range.

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.

Recorded in 61 tetrads (5%). 2018 - 61 tetrads, 2017 - 30 tetrads, 2016 - 26 tetrads, 2015 - 33 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Recorded in 22 tetrads. 2018 - 19 tetrads. Highest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 17; Thirlestane Lodge (Ettrick) - 8; Tushielaw-Crosslee (Ettrick Water) - 4.

Apr-Aug: Recorded in 44 tetrads. 2018 - 51 tetrads. Highest counts: Jardinefield (Whitsome) - 39; Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog - 9; Logan Wood (Drumelzier) - 7; Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose - 5; Cowieslinn road-end (Portmore) - 4; Plora Wood W (Innerleithen) - 4; Philiphaugh-Bowhill Estates (Selkirk) - 4; Annelshope (Ettrick) - 4.

Sep-Dec: Recorded in 13 tetrads. 2018 - 10 tetrads. Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 4.

The count of 39 on 12-May (J Towill) appears to have been the highest count since 63 were seen at Newmains (Reston) in 2004.

Breeding records came from 22 tetrads. 2018 - 22 tetrads, 2017 - 13 tetrads, 2016 - 7 tetrads, 2015 - 8 tetrads.

Philippaugh Est-Old Mill Fm (Selkirk)	14-Feb	P
Sorrowlessfield (Earlston)	20-Mar	S
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	14-Apr	S
Galashiels W	18-Apr	B
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	21-Apr	S
Dawyck	27-Apr	S
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	29-Apr	P
Cowieslinn road-end (Portmore)	01-May	P(2)
Manderston (Duns)	03-May	S
Plora Wood W (Innerleithen)	05-May	P
Tweed: Elibank-Holylee	11-May	P

See Introduction for breeding codes.

Bemersyde Moss	14-May	D
Lymiecleugh (Teviothead)	16-May	S
Philippaugh-Bowhill Estates (Selkirk)	23-May	D
Rhymer's Glen (Melrose)	31-May	S
Newmains (Reston)	08-Jun	2br3
Lyne Dale (West Linton)	10-Jun	T
Eckford-Kalemouth	14-Jun	D
The Hirsell	16-Jun	S
Melrose, Dingleton	24-Jun	P
Woodencleugh (Lauder)	30-Jun	S
Yarrow Water: Craig Douglas-Dryhope	26-Jul	P

On the basis of the number of occupied tetrads and the number of breeding records, there appears to be an increase in the population of Stock Dove. This, of course, comes with the usual health warning with respect to varying observer effort.

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.

Records came from 283 tetrads (22%). 2018 - 226 tetrads, 2017 - 160 tetrads, 2016 - 192, 2015 - 175 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Records from 125 tetrads. Highest counts: Hoselaw Mains (Yetholm) - 1,500; Jardinefield-Eaglehall (Whitsome) - 1,100; Mellerstain (Gordon) - 800; Manderston-Buxley (Duns) - 600; Wooden (Kelso) - 500; Purvishaugh Standing Stone (Earlston) - 400; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 400; Plora Wood W (Innerleithen) - 400; Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn) - 300.

Apr-Aug: Records from 208 tetrads. Highest counts: Tweed: Walkerburn-Juniper Bank - 670; Abbey House (Abbey St Bathans) - 350; Huntershall (Soutra) - 200; Middle Burn (Portmore) - 185; Cribbs Law N (Lauder) - 175.

Sep-Dec: Records from 114 tetrads. Highest counts: Kersquarter Cottages (Kelso) - 1,200; Sucklawridge (Kelso) - 500; Galalaw-Stodrig (Kelso) - 400; Spadislee-Bemersyde Moss - 350; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 300; Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge - 300; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 250.

Records of breeding came from 26 tetrads. 2018 - 26 tetrads, 2017 - 27 tetrads, 2016 - 14, 2015 - 11 tetrads.

Philippaugh-Bowhill Estates (Selkirk)	16-Jan	P
Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)	28-Mar	D
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	13-Apr	A
Eckford-Kalemouth	23-Apr	ON
Dawyck	26-Apr	P
Darnick (Melrose)	27-Apr	T
St Abb's Head	10-May	S
St Abbs	11-May	P
Traquair House	11-May	S
Kittlegairy Hill (Peebles)	12-May	S
Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose)	14-May	S
Selkirk Hills	30-May	D
Heiton	06-Jun	S

See Introduction for breeding codes.

Larriston (Saughtree)	10-Jun	S
Lyne Dale (West Linton)	10-Jun	ON
Ancrum West Mains-Timperdean	23-Jun	S
Drum Maw (Romannobridge)	08-Jul	T
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	13-Jul	FL
Bemersyde Moss	15-Jul	B
Baddingsill Farm (West Linton)	15-Jul	P
Brander Heugh (Dowlaw)	08-Aug	ON
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	15-Aug	ON
Tweedbank	31-Aug	B
Kelso S	05-Sep	FL
Philippaugh Est-Old Mill Fm (Selkirk)	16-Sep	1br1
West Linton-Westlands	20-Sep	ON

Breeding records suggest at least a stable population or possibly one that is growing.

Many records received had no counts. Observers are encouraged to give an estimate of the numbers present with an indication of the margin of error, as well as breeding status where relevant.

Collared Dove*Streptopelia decaocto*

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

Records came from 108 tetrads (8%). 2018 - 65 tetrads, 2017 - 40 tetrads, 2016 - 38 tetrads, 2015 - 55 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Records from 54 tetrads. 2018 - 23 tetrads. Highest counts: Choiselee (Polwarth) - 28; Greenlaw SW - 18; Roxburgh Viaduct (Heiton) - 12; Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh - 6; Tweed: Sprouston-Redden - 4; Edrom (Duns) - 4; Burnmouth-Greystonelees - 4.

Apr-Aug: Records from 53 tetrads. 2018 - 40 tetrads. Highest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 10; Gordon N - 6; Heiton - 5; Yetholm Loch - 5; Tweed: Sprouston-Redden - 4; St Abbs E - 4.

Sep-Dec: Records from 56 tetrads. 2018 - 25 tetrads. Highest counts: Choiselee (Polwarth) - 20; Heiton - 12; Sprouston-Whitmuirhaugh (Kelso) - 12; Lintlaw (Preston) - 11; Fountainhall-Pirntaton - 10; Roxburgh W - 10; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) - 8; Lauder W - 7; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 7; Burnmouth-Greystonelees - 7; Auchencrow - 6; Tweed: Sprouston-Redden - 5; Cockburnspath S - 5; Chirnside - 5; Broomdykes Cottages (Allanton) - 5; Chirnsidebridge - 4; Coldingham N - 4.

Records of breeding came from 19 tetrads. 2018 - 13 tetrads, 2017 - 6 tetrads, 2016 - 6, 2015 - 5 tetrads.

Philiphaugh-Bowhill Estates (Selkirk)	01-Jan	P	Yetholm Loch	25-Jun	D
Lyne Dale (West Linton)	02-Jan	S	Cockholm Br-Dickson's Wood (Stow)	30-Jun	S
Eckford-Kalemouth	26-Mar	D	New Mills (Lauder)	30-Jun	P
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	30-Mar	P	Pyatshaw (Lauder)	30-Jun	P
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	04-Apr	T	St Abb's Head	28-Jul	T
Newmains (Reston)	15-May	5br12	Hawick N	29-Jul	P
St Ronan's Wood (Innerleithen)	15-May	B	Denholm	29-Jul	P
Ashkirk	24-Jun	P	Hass (Carter Bar)	29-Jul	P
Selkirk SE	24-Jun	P	Kelso S	05-Sep	ON
West Linton S	25-Jun	A	See Introduction for breeding codes.		

Both counts and number of occupied tetrads were significantly up on recent years.

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.

Records from 52 tetrads (4%). 2018 - 52 tetrads, 2017 - 22 tetrads, 2016 - 48 tetrads, 2015 - 52 tetrads.

The number of possible territories was 59. The territories were: Abbey House (Abbey St Bathans); Ale Moor Reservoir (Hawick); Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Baddingsill Farm (West Linton); Bowdenmoor Reservoir (Bowden); Cardrona House; Causeway Grain Head NW (Teviothead); Cloich Observatory (Eddleston); Coldingham-Bogangreen; Colquhar (Leithen Water); Craig Hill N (Caddonfoot); Dam Head Rig (Traquair); Dawyck; Dye Water; Dunside Cottage (Longformacus); Elibank Craig (Caddonfoot); Essenside Head W (Ashkirk); Etrick Water: The Inch; Gamescleuch (Etrick); Glen House (Traquair); Glencotha-Glenhighton (Broughton); Glenlude (Traquair); Hare Moss (Selkirk); Hermitage; Huntford (Carter Bar); Innerleithen; Kneesend Plantation (Yair Hill Forest); Larriston (Saughtree); Leadburn Community Woodland; Leithen Lodge; Leithen Water-Glentress Water confluence; Leysburnfoot (Hermitage); Manor Hill Plantation (Selkirk); Middle Head (Stanhope); Mountcommon Hill (Craig Forest); Newark Hill (Selkirk); Newcastleton; Newmains (Reston); Old Kirkhope-Langhaugh (Manor Valley); Peat Law (Oxton); Pykestone Wood (Dawyck); Rashiegrain Height (Teviothead); Roan (Newcastleton); Rubers Law E (Denholm); St Mary's Loch E; Steilburn (Caddonfoot); Teviot Haughs (Nisbet); Teviot: Commonbrae (Craig Forest); Teviot: Merrylaw-Commonbrae (Teviothead); Thirlestane Lodge (Etrick); Tweed: Thorneilee-Elibank; Watch Water Reservoir; Wester Ale Moor (Hawick); Wester Deans (Eddleston); Whisgills (Newcastleton); Whitehope (Glentress Water); Wide Hope Shank (Romannobridge); Williamhope (Yair Hill Forest); Williamslee (Leithen Water Forest); Yarrow Water: Slain Mens Lea.

Thirty-one sites provided breeding evidence: 26 sites where birds singing were recorded, one site where territory was given as breeding evidence, one site with a pair, 2 sites with display as evidence and one site with fledged young. This latter site was Dye Water: Dunside Cottage (Longformacus) on 29-May (M Holling *pp.* J McCrinck).

The first report was from Whisgills (Newcastleton) on 28-Apr (C Blackie). The last report was from Leadburn Community Woodland on 26-Aug (G Paterson).

Records suggest that perhaps the population of Cuckoos in recent years has at least been stable. As ever, such statements come with a need for caution when interpreting the records.

Barn Owl

Tyto alba

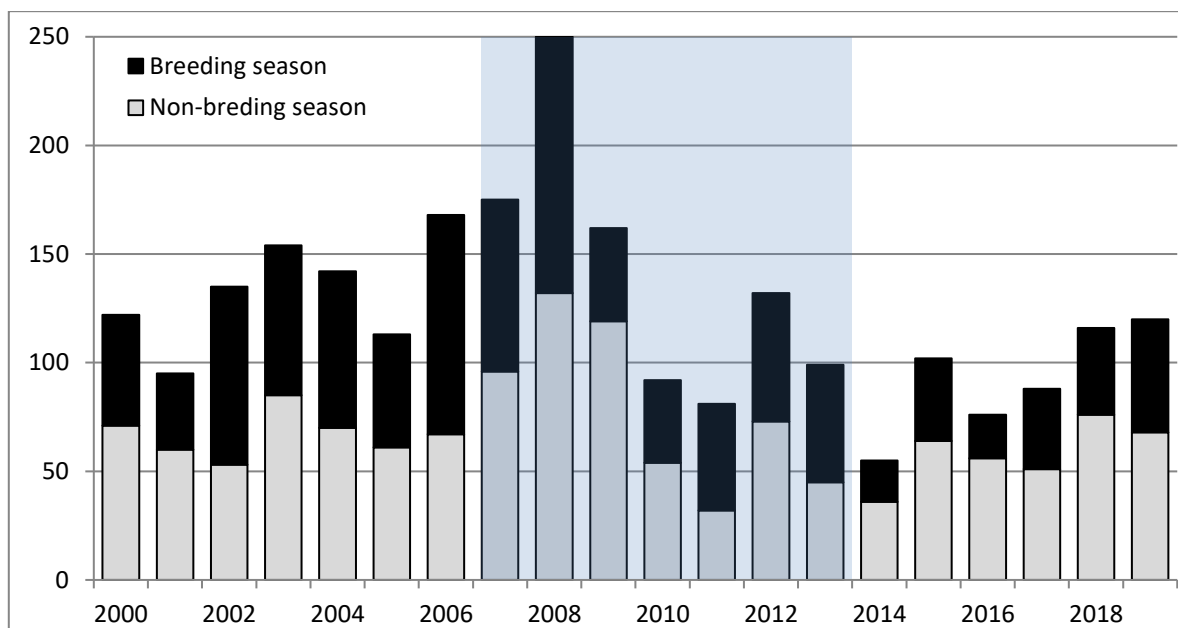
Uncommon-well-represented resident breeder. Annual populations fluctuate significantly, often in relation to vole populations and severity of winter. During 2008-13 found in 23% of tetrads in summer and 23% in winter. All records needed.

Records from 104 tetrads (8%). 2018 - 92 tetrads, 2017 - 77 tetrads, 2016 - 61 tetrads, 2015 - 100 tetrads.

Reports came from 68 tetrads during the non-breeding season (Jan-Feb and Oct-Dec). 2018 - 76 tetrads. The sites were: Addinston Pond (Oxton); Ale Moor Reservoir W (Roberton); Annelshope (Ettrick); Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Bewlie (Lilliesleaf); Blackadder Bank (Allanton); Blackhopebyre (Leithen Hopes); Bonjedward (Jedburgh); Chirside E; Chirside Hall; Choicelee (Polwarth); Clovenfords; Drycleuchlea (Buccleuch); Dunglass Wood (Coldstream); East Gordon-Rumbletonlaw; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch; Eddleston Water: (Redscarhead - Winkston Farm); Edenmouth (Kelso); Edrom (Duns); Ettrick Water: Gillmanscleuch; Ettrick Water: Warleshope Burn-Newburgh; Eyemouth; Fogorig (Greenlaw); Galalaw-Stodrig (Kelso); Glentress Water: Hillside Knowe-Glentress Rig; Gordon Moss; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden); Greenlaw SW; Greenside Cottages-Ramrig Covert (Ladykirk); Hadden-Nottylees (Sprouston); Hendersyde Park (Kelso); Heriot Mill (Fountainhall); Hyndhope (Ettrick Valley); Innerleithen; Jardinefield-Eaglehall (Whitsome); Manderston (Duns); Meikleston Hill (Eddelston); Moor Plant'n (Eckford); Newmains (Reston); Nisbet Rhodes (Duns); Peat Hill (Heriot); Philiphaugh Est-Old Mill Fm (Selkirk); Proctor's Smithy (Kelso); Ramrig-Fellow Hill (Ladykirk); Rings Plantation (Yetholm); Sandyknowe (Smailholm); Sinclair's Hill (Duns); Smailholm; Southfield (Stobs Castle); Spittal-on-Rule (Denholm); Springwood (Kelso); Stantling Craig Reservoir E (Clovenfords); Steilburn (Caddonfoot); Swinton Bridge End; Teindside Br (Teviothead); Teviot Bank (Denholm); Teviot Haughs (Nisbet); The Rink (Selkirk); Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn); Tushielaw Hill (Ettrick Valley); Tweed: Rutherford Boathouse (Maxton); Tweedbank; Walkerburn Bridge-Glenmead; Walkerburn W; Whitelaw (Duns); Whiteside Plantation (Mellerstain); Winfield Farm (Whitsome); Yetholm Loch.

Breeding season records came from 52 tetrads. 2018 - 40 tetrads. The sites were: Abbey Park (Coldingham); Ale Water: Kirklands; Allanbank (Allanton); Bemersyde; Blackadder Water: Nisbet Hill (Duns); Blackhope (Garvald Lodge); Carcant (Heriot); Causewaybank (Chirside); Clovenfords E; Cowbog (Morebattle); Cringletie (Eddelston); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch; Ettrick Water: Tushielaw Inn-Cacrabank; Gill Burn (Blackhopebyre); Haigsfield (Coldstream); Halliburton (Greenlaw); Hammerhall (Chirside); Harrietsfield (Ancrum); Hillview (Bowden); Hog Hill (Blyth Bridge); Hopehouse (Ettrick); Horndean; Horseley (Grantshouse); Horseupcleuch Rig (Longformacus); Howdens Plantation (Duns); Hurd Law E (Westruther); Hutton Hall Barns-Sunwick (Allanton); Lee Pen N (Innerleithen); Lyne Water: Hallyne; Lyne Water: Wester Haprew; Nenthorn House (Kelso); Newmains (Reston); Oxton; Press Castle (Coldingham); Spital House (Paxton); St Abbs-Northfield; Steilburn (Caddonfoot); Stow-Galabank; Swinton Bridge End; The Hirsell; Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn); Turtleton (Duns); Tushielaw-Crosslee (Ettrick Water); Tweed: Easter Hendersyde (Kelso); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose; Tweedbank; Watch Water Reservoir; Westruther N; Whiteadder Water: Clarabad (Foulden); Whiteadder Water: Kelloe Br (Allanton); Whitehope (Glentress Water); Yetholm Loch.

Reports of occupied sites was the highest since the local atlas survey period (2007-13) but still below much of the pre-Atlas period:



Barn Owl: occupied sites, 2000-2019.
Survey period of SE Scotland Atlas shaded (2007-13)

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

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	38	32	73	1.9	2.7

The number of sites checked is broadly similar to the last few years and the proportion of occupied sites with proven breeding is similar to last year. However, the proportion of checked sites which were occupied was not so good at about 47% compared with a high of 65% last year.

Breeding success was poor, but a small improvement on last year. Since the 2011 crash we have had breeding success of up to 3.2 chicks per occupied nest, and 4.2 per successful nest.

The most notable occurrence this year was a clutch of 10 eggs at the Crystal Rig windfarm, not unheard of, but pretty rare and not recorded in Lothian & Borders since the author began co-ordinating reports.

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

Alan Leitch, Barn Owl co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders.

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.

Records from 77 tetrads. 2018 - 67 tetrads, 2017 - 52 tetrads, 2016 - 48 tetrads, 2015 - 42 tetrads.

Reports from 41 tetrads during the non-breeding season (Jan-Feb and Sep-Dec). 2018 - 32 tetrads, 2017 - 36 tetrads, 2016 - 23 tetrads, 2015 - 16 tetrads. The sites were: Abbotsford-Netherbarns; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog; Bowmont Forest E; Carlenrig (Teviothead); Castledean (Greenlaw); Cauldshiels Loch (Tweedbank); Clerkenville (Greenlaw); Coldingham N; Commonbrae (Teviothead); Craig Hill N (Caddonfoot); Denholm; Dodburn-Shankfoot (Stobs Castle); Duns Castle-Hens Poo; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch; Gatehopeknowe-

Holylee (Walkerburn); Gilboa Wood (Bedrule); Greenburn Cottages (Auchencrow); Huntford (Carter Bar); Jed Water: Jedburgh W; Little Duns Law N-Duns Mill Dam; Manderston-Buxley (Duns); Marchmont House (Polwarth); Melrose, Dingleton; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head); Newmains (Reston); Oxnam Row; Philiphaugh Estate (Selkirk); Philiphaugh-Bowhill Estates (Selkirk); Press Castle (Coldingham); Sprouston-Whitmuirhaugh (Kelso); Spylaw (West Linton); Teviot Haughs (Nisbet); Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn); Todlaw (Jedburgh); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose; Tweed: Gledswood Fm (Melrose); Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn); Wester Deans-Easter Deans (Portmore); Wildcat Gate (Jedburgh); Yarrow Water: Slain Mens Lea.

Reports from 46 tetrads. 2018 - 37 tetrads, 2017 - 28 tetrads, 2016 - 22 tetrads, 2015 - 33 tetrads. The sites were: Abbey House (Abbey St Bathans); Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Blakehope-Woodpark Plantation (Caddonfoot); Cardrona Hotel; Chirnsidebridge-Craigswalls; Coldingham S; Craik; Deepsykehead (Carlops); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch; Eckford-Kalemouth; Elibank Craig (Caddonfoot); Ettrick; Ettrick Water: Tushielaw Inn-Cacrabank; Friarshawmuir (Midlem); Gallows Law-Greenlaw Knowle (Coldingham); Glenlude (Traquair); Glentress Water: Hillside Knowe-Glentress Rig; Heriot Water: Carcant Lodge; Howdens Plantation (Duns); Huntford (Carter Bar); Huntlyburn House (Tweedbank); Hyndhope (Ettrick Valley); Jed Water: Jedburgh; Kyles Hill N (Greenlaw); Leithen Water: Colquhar; Lyne Dale (West Linton); Mire Loch (St Abb's Head); Mountbenger (Yarrow); Netherby (Romannobridge); Newstead (Melrose); Old Nenthorn (Smailholm); Philiphaugh N (Selkirk); Pirnie House (Maxton); Roan (Newcastleton); Selkirk SE; St Abbs-Northfield; The Wiss E (Tushielaw); Thirlestane Lodge (Ettrick); Tima Water: Nether Dalgleish (Craik Forest); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose; Tweedbank; Weensmuir Farm (Bonchester Bridge); Westerside (Coldingham Loch); Wull Muir (Heriot); Yarrow; Yetholm Loch.

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

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
80 Boxes	28 Tawny	25	33	1.32	1.57
	(+8 Barn Owl)				

The long, wet winter once again, had a disastrous effect on vole populations at the beginning of the season with many sites failing to be occupied by any owl species. There were also notable variances in populations throughout South Scotland with some areas in Galloway having reasonable vole numbers during early spring into the summer period, whilst numbers remained relatively low throughout the year in some Borders Region forestry locations. Tawny owls do not have the same ability to bounce back in a good breeding year compared to the other owl species. 2019 has probably been one of the worst years for both occupied sites and the amount of young fledged during the breeding season. Tawny owl chicks fledging were down 43% compared to the 2017 season (77 fledged). The number of fledged Barn Owls suffered a similar fate.

The number of Tawny young fledged this year was 1.57 per successful site compared to 1.90 in 2018 and 2.14 in 2017. In 2017 the occupancy rate for Scotland was 56% of all nest sites checked, which declined to 36% in 2018. This was similar to the Lothian and Borders nest site occupancy of 35% in 2019. This is a very worrying downward trend nationally, as well as on a local level.

There was a minimum of 51 eggs laid, with an average clutch size of 2.04 per site. However, the lack of prey items severely affected the total fledging numbers which were very poor at only 1.57 per successful nest site.

After fledging, the juveniles are still dependent on the adults to supply food for 2-3 months. However, even for the small numbers recorded as fledging, with low vole populations, a number of juveniles will not survive the winter. If we consider natural juvenile and adult mortality over the year, the numbers fledging will not sustain current populations.

To sustain stable populations a greater age cohort is required to ensure more birds are available for breeding in the future and hopefully this will increase numbers. The breeding success is dependent largely upon field voles which make up over 60% of the birds' diet. Due to less frequent vole cycles, a greater number of adults have not been breeding in the past few years, resulting in a general drop in fecundity.



Juvenile Tawny Owl. St Abb's Head. Ciaran Hatsell.

Vole populations did pick up slightly in the poorer locations as the season progressed, but it was too little too late, resulting in the overall productivity being slightly lower than the previous season (1.57 compared to 1.93 in 2018 and 2.14 in 2017). It is a worrying downward trend for Tawny Owls, with Barn Owls numbers also down - both in sites occupied by adults and reduced numbers fledging.

An increasing number of boxes have not been used by any owl species for a few years now, some being occupied by Jackdaws and Stock Doves. Combined with a change in the habitat structures, they will need to be relocated to more favourable sites during the winter period. This should ensure longevity in the new locations linked to optimum hunting habitat and hopefully an increase in productivity.

Thanks to all who contributed Tawny Owl records

Tony Lightley, Tawny Owl co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders.

Little Owl

Athene noctua

Scarce resident. Not annual. Confirmed breeding very rare. More common in the east. During 2008-13 found in two tetrads in summer and three in winter.

There were no casual records of Little Owl.

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

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
5	4	0	n/a	n/a	n/a

Five Little Owl nest sites were monitored this year, four last year. The new site was reported after a bird was heard calling there. Several visits were made to the area, but no confirmed sightings were made. All these sites are in

Berwickshire.

We have no reports of confirmed breeding, or indeed adult pairs at any of the sites. We have recorded single adults at four of the sites, but it is possible that there may have been a second bird at any of these sites.

Access is still a problem at one of the sites as the farmer does not want anyone disturbing the birds.

It appears that there is a small population of Little Owls in Berwickshire but trying to establish evidence of breeding is difficult despite a considerable amount of time being spent monitoring the nesting areas.

We are still aware that there could be an issue with Barn Owls also nesting in the vicinity of Little Owls and this will be kept in mind when monitoring in the future.

All of these Little Owl sites have been monitored by Dave Warden and he has provided all the records for them. My thanks to him for all his work throughout the season. Thanks also to Kate Grimsditch who has been searching for other suitable habitats in the western areas of Berwickshire.

Malcolm Henderson, Little Owl co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders.

Long-eared Owl

Asio otus

Uncommon 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.

Only 4 records from 4 tetrads. 2018 - 9 tetrads, 2017 - 4 tetrads, 2016 - 6 tetrads, 2015 - 7 tetrads. All records in 2019 were of singles: Newmains (Reston) on 31-Jan and later on a few further occasions (DK Graham); Yarrow Water: Tinnis Stiel Wood on 02-Mar (R Bramhall); Eckford Hall on 14-Mar (CD Green pp T Wood); St Abb's Head on 13-Apr (DK Graham).

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

Sites checked	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites where young fledged	Min. no. young fledged
12	5	4	3	8

As usual, data received were merely a sample based mainly on *ad hoc* discoveries. The only regularly monitored sites were those in the Moorfoots and the Pentlands; in each of these areas there was just one confirmed breeding pair. Two other reports of calling young were also received, one from the Tweed Valley and one near Edinburgh airport.

	Possible breeding pairs	Probable breeding pairs	Confirmed breeding pairs	TOTAL
Borders	0	0	2	2
Lothian	1	0	2	3

As well as breeding reports, one of our members (Graham Anderson) has been trapping owls at night at two sites in the Pentlands. Each owl trapped has been measured and ringed. In January-February 2018 three Long-eared Owls were caught (average weight 267 g). Between October 2018 and February 2019, a further eight were caught (average weight 289 g).

Reports for 2019 received from: Graham Anderson, Keith Burgoyne, Tom Dougall, Sonja Ludwig and Martin Moss – thanks to everyone.

Mark Holling, Long-eared Owl co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders

Short-eared Owl

Asio flammeus

Very uncommon and localised 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.

Five records were submitted from 2 tetrads. 2018 - 12 records from 11 tetrads, 2017 - 5 records from 5 tetrads, 2016 - 15 records from 6 tetrads.

April: Longshaw (Heriot Water) on 10th (G Paterson). **August:** St Abb's Head on 24th (C Hatsell). **October:** St Abb's Head on 5th (DK Graham), on 15th and 31st (C Hatsell).

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

Summary: only three occupied sites (2 singles, one pair); no young reported.

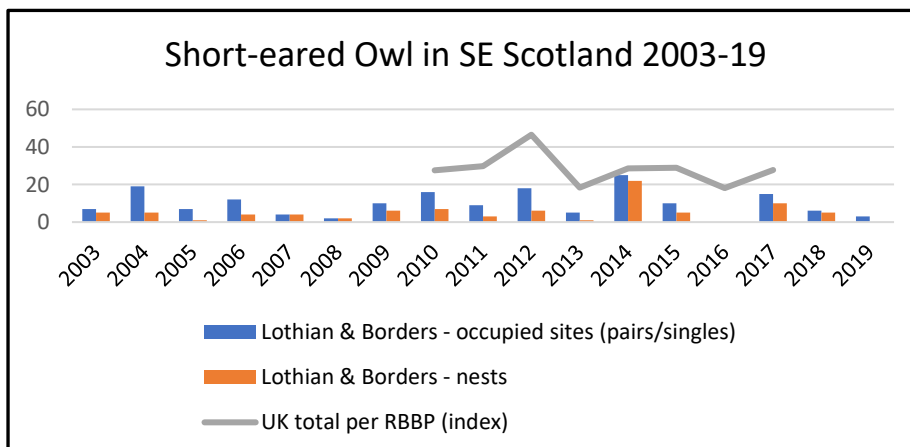
Sites checked	Sites occupied (singles)	Sites occupied (pairs)	Sites where eggs laid	Sites where young fledged	Min. no. young fledged/large young
13	2	1	0	0	0

A dreadful year (though not as bad as 2016). No birds seen in Moorfoots, Pentlands or the Borders part of the Langholm estate. In the Lammermuirs there was one territorial pair which disappeared in mid-June and two apparently single birds.

	Possible breeding pairs	Probable breeding pairs	Confirmed breeding pairs	TOTAL
Borders	0	0	2	2
Lothian	1	0	2	3

Numbers of Short-eared Owls in the area since RSG monitoring began have generally been low but show annual fluctuations, and these changes show broad correlation to the national totals as reported by the Rare Breeding Birds Panel, particularly in poor years such as 2013 and 2016 (see below, where the RBBP index is derived from the total number of pairs reported each year in the UK divided by 10, ie 10% of the UK total).

Although it was a very poor year for Short-eared Owls in SE Scotland, the situation in continental Europe was quite different. In northern Germany, there were 160 territories on the mainland, where there are usually few, but most bred in intensively managed hay meadows which were mowed early resulting in nests being destroyed. There were similar, higher than usual numbers in the northern Netherlands (mainly Friesland, where there were over 70 territories), west Flanders (Belgium) and NW Spain (100s of pairs). In all these areas there were exceptional numbers of voles *Microtus arvalis*, demonstrating that this species will go where the food is (and not breed where there is little food, as in our area in 2019).



In 2019, no nests recorded for only second time in 17 years.

Reports received from: Graham Anderson, Keith Burgoyne, Tom Dougall, Helen Riley, David Warden and Sonja Ludwig – thanks to everyone.

European information from the Short-eared-owl-network.

Mark Holling, Short-eared Owl co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders.

Nightjar*Caprimulgus europaeus*

Rare summer visitor. Formerly a very uncommon breeder that disappeared in the middle of the 20th century. Just a handful of recent records.

A bird was reported from Kyles Hill N (Greenlaw) on 18-Jun, where it "churred for about one-and-a-half minutes on the very top, near the quarry soon after 2200 hrs and again towards the moss among the pines for a similar period." (AP Mossop). This is the first record of this species since 2014.

Swift*Apus apus*

Common and widespread summer visitor. Present May-September, rare later. During 2008-13 found in 32% of tetrads in summer.

Records from 93 tetrads (7%). 2018 - 68 tetrads, 2017 - 66 tetrads, 2016 - 53 tetrads, 2015 - 53 tetrads.

The first record was a single on 21-Apr at Lees Haugh-Hirsel (K Robeson), the last being a single on 24-Sep at Manderston-Buxley, Duns (A Mossop).

Peak counts of 5 or more:

Site	Apr-May	Jun-Jul	Aug-Sep
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)		10	
Brander Heugh (Dowlaw)			5
Branxholme Easter Loch (Roberton)	12		
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch		15	
Eddleston Water: (Winkston - Chapelhill Farm)		14	
Kalemouth (Eckford)		5	
Kelso NW		30	
Kelso SE			50
Kirklands-Innerleithen N		8	
Lauder E		5	
Lees Haugh (Coldstream)	40		
Lees Haugh NE (Coldstream)	10	20	
Melrose, Dingleton		5	
Miller's Moss (St Abbs)		5	
Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)			6
Newstead (Melrose)		15	
Sprouston-Whitmuirhaugh (Kelso)	15		
St Abbs E		5	
St Abbs-Northfield		5	
St Boswells S		16	
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh		9	
Teviot: Martin's Bridge (Hawick)		6	
The Hirsel		19	
The Tongue (Hawick)		5	
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	12	14	
Tweed: Peebles	20		
Tweedbank		17	
Yair Bridge (Caddonfoot)	25		

May-July (breeding season)

Records from 89 tetrads. 2018 - 39, 2017 - 48, 2016 - 42, 2015 - 48 tetrads. Breeding records came from 5 tetrads: confirmed - 2; probable - 3: The Hirsell (NY) on 15-Jul; Newmains, Reston (FL), where there were 7 pairs; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside (N); Kelso S (D); West Linton S (T). See introduction for breeding codes.

Typically, few breeding records are received and observers are encouraged to submit these.

Kingfisher*Alcedo atthis*

Very 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.

Records from 55 tetrads (4%). 2018 - 45 tetrads, 2017 - 51 tetrads, 2016 - 22 tetrads, 2015 - 26 tetrads. Records per tetrad were as follow:

Site	Jan-Feb	Mar-Sep	Oct-Dec	Site	Jan-Feb	Mar-Sep	Oct-Dec
Abbotsford		2	1	Minto House (Denholm)	1		
Ale Water: Kirklands	1			Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's		1	1
Alemoor Reservoir S (Roberton)			1	Newstead (Melrose)		1	1
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	1	1		Peebles	1	1	1
Blackadder Water: Kimmerghame			1	Philiphugh Est-Old Mill Fm		1	
Burnmouth-Partanhall			1	St Abb's-Northfield		1	
Cardrona House			1	Teviot Haughs (Crailing-Nisbet)	1	4	2
Denholm		2		Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh		1	1
Duelly Knowes Covert (Selkirk)		1		Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm)	1		1
Earlston School		1		Teviot: Monteviot Weir			1
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch		2		The Hirsell		1	2
Eckford-Kalemouth		1		Timpendean-Ancrum West			1
Edston-Manor Bridge (Peebles)		1		Traquair House W	1		
Eyemouth			1	Tweed: Dryburgh Abbey-St		1	1
Ferniehirst (Stow)	1	1		Tweed: Galafout-Lowood Bridge	1	1	
Gala Water: Stow-Watherston		1		Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	1	2	1
Smithy Haugh (Dawyck)		2		Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream	1	1	3
Huntleyburn House (Tweedbank)			1	Tweed: Kingmeadows-Kailzie		1	
Innerleithen		2	2	Tweed: Ladykirk		1	
Kelso NW	2		2	Tweed: Manor Bridge-Tweed		1	
Kelso S		1	1	Tweed: Mertoun Br-Lessudden		1	
Meadshaw (Craig)		1		Tweed: Walkerburn-Juniper			1
Menslaws (Jedburgh)	1			Yair Bridge-Raelees Wood	1	1	

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

Mar-Sep (breeding season)

Records from 38 tetrads, the highest total in recent years (2018 - 22, 2017 - 28, 2016 - 11, 2015 - 15). Breeding records came from 7 tetrads: confirmed - 3; probable - 4: Teviot Haughs, Nisbet (FL); Tweed: Earl's Haugh-Lees Haugh, Coldstream (FF); Peebles (FF); German Hill Wood-Smithy Haugh, Dawyck (P); Denholm (P); Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh (P); Sprouston-Whitmuirhaugh, Kelso (N). The confirmed breeding was the first since 2014. See Introduction for breeding codes.

Bee-eater*Merops apiaster*

Very rare vagrant.

One at St Abbs-Northfield on 25-Jul (C Hatsell). Only the second Borders record, following 3 at Newmains on 07-Jun 2006.

Hoopoe*Upupa epops*

Rare vagrant.

Two records, representing the 37th and 38th records for the Borders. One at St Abbs Head 10- and 11-May (C Hatsell and DK Graham). One at Teviot: Heiton Mill 09-Oct (J Connor).



Two images of the **Hoopoe** seen at St Abb's Head in **May**. **Andrew Mossop** (left) and **Dave Graham** (right).

Great Spotted Woodpecker*Dendrocopus major*

Abundant breeder. A few on passage. During 2008-13 found in 50% of tetrads in summer and 47% in winter.

Records from 155 tetrads (12%). 2018 - 151 tetrads, 2017 - 104 tetrads, 2016 - 129 tetrads, 2015 - 97 tetrads.

March-August (breeding season)

Records from 100 tetrads (2018 - 87 tetrads, 2017 - 65 tetrads, 2016 - 75 tetrads, 2015 - 56 tetrads). Breeding evidence came from the following 23 tetrads (2018 -17 tetrads, 2017 – 19 tetrads, 2016 - 30, 2015 - 17 tetrads):

Abbotsford	FL	Newstead (Melrose)	FL
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	FL	Peebles	FL
Bemersyde Moss	A	Philiphaugh Estate (Selkirk)	ON
Bowden	S	Philiphaugh-Bowhill Estates (Selkirk)	FL
Dawyck	FF	Pyatshaw (Lauder)	FL
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	S	Sorrowlessfield (Earlston)	S
Elibank (Walkerburn)	S	St Abbs-Northfield	T
Floors Castle	S	St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch	S
Haining Loch (Selkirk)	NY	The Hirsell	S
Huntford (Carter Bar)	FL	Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	S
Lyne Dale (West Linton)	A	Yarrowford-Newark Castle	S
Manderston (Duns)	D	See Introduction for breeding codes.	

The highest counts were 6 at The Hirsell 06-Apr (K Robeson), 5 at Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) and 4 at Abbey St Bathans, Abbotsford, Barnhills Moor Plantation (Minto), Newstead (Melrose) and Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge.

Outside of the breeding season records were reported from 99 tetrads.

Green Woodpecker

Picus viridis

Uncommon breeding resident. Mostly in old riverine woods. During 2008-13 found in 7% of tetrads in summer and 4% in winter.

Records from 25 tetrads (2%). 2018 - 18 tetrads, 2017 - 28 tetrads, 2016 - 16 tetrads, 2015 - 13 tetrads. All records were of single birds except for 2 at Drakemire Strips (Preston) on 04-May.

Tetrads in bold (22) indicate breeding season records, Mar-Aug. 2018 - 14 tetrads, 2017 - 26 tetrads, 2016 - 10 tetrads, 2015 - 13 tetrads):

Abbey House (Abbey St Bathans)	Mellerstain (Gordon)
Abbey St Bathans-Blakerstone Moor	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)
Blakerstone E (Abbey St Bathans)	Newcastleton
Brush Wood (Abbey St Bathans)	Old Nenthorn (Smailholm)
Cardrona	Peebles
Coldingham Loch	Philiphaugh (Selkirk)
Dawyck	Plora Wood (Innerleithen)
Edin's Hall (Abbey St Bathans)	Portmore Reservoir-Portmore House
Glenormiston (Innerleithen)	Sorrowlessfield (Earlston)
Innerleithen	Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn)
Larriston (Saughtree)	Tweedbank
Lindean Hall-Sunderland Hall (Selkirk)	Whitfield (Coldingham)
Manderston (Duns)	

Possible evidence in the form of singing was from 7 tetrads: Abbey St Bathans-Blakerstone Moor; Dawyck; Elba (Abbey St Bathans); Old Nenthorn (Smailholm); Peebles; Portmore Reservoir-Portmore House; Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn).

Apparently, a fairly typical year.

Kestrel

Falco tinnunculus

Common and widespread breeder. During 2008-13 found in 45% of tetrads in summer and 56% in winter.

Records from 160 tetrads (13%). 2018 - 226 tetrads, 2017 - 125 tetrads, 2016 - 165 tetrads, 2015 - 300 tetrads. Casual records per month were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
No. Records	43	29	35	29	34	20	38	32	37	51	34	35
Aggregate Count	45	31	37	38	35	22	62	45	41	53	37	35

Records of breeding (probable and confirmed) came from 7 tetrads (2018 - 18 tetrads, 2017 - 4 tetrads, 2016 - 7 tetrads):

Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)	FL	Shielstockbraes, Morebattle	NY (5)
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	FL (4)	St Abb's Head	T
Gill Burn, Blackhopebyre	NY (5)	West Linton-Westlands	P
Newmains (Reston)	FL (2)		

See Introduction for breeding codes.

Excluding counts of fledged birds, the highest count was 3.

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

Areas	Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with proven breeding	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site
South of Tweed	5	2	2	11	5.5
Berwickshire (South/East)	2	2	2	6	3
Moorfoots	11	1	1	5	5
Pentlands	32	14	14	58	4.1
Ettrick	5	1	1	0	0
Total	55	20	20	80	

It was a very disappointing breeding season for the Kestrel, especially compared to last breeding season. This could have been due to the period of cold, wet weather at the start of the breeding season.

Even proven sites/territories failed to produce this year, and all monitored areas recorded sightings of only single adult birds within territories or pairs who displayed around nest site but where reluctant for some reason to breed.

Month	2017	2018	2019
March	110.5	63.2	147.2
April	19.1	57.7	47.4
May	46.9	19.9	78.3
June	171.9	79.9	126.3

Monthly Rainfall totals in mm for Baddinsgill in Pentland Hills (SEPA).

Month	Average	Warmest	Coldest
March	5.5	9.1	1.9
April	7.3	11.3	3.3
May	10.1	14.4	5.8
June	13	17.3	8.7

Monthly temperatures in °C for Pentland Hills 2019

There were a few adult breeding pairs who laid quite late in the season and only due to vigilant monitoring were these late breeding birds identified. In one case the eggs remained in the nest box for well over the incubation period but did eventually hatch and the chicks successfully fledged.

For several years now as part of the Kestrel colour-ring project, Graham and myself have been fitting red plastic rings to the Kestrel chicks and with the aid of the trail cameras have photographed several breeding adult birds with red plastic rings, allowing us to trace back the breeding adults to their natal nest site/box, giving us valuable information/data on the geographic movement of the juvenile Kestrels after fledging. However, it would be very helpful if other areas would utilise trail cameras to photograph the breeding adults to confirm if they are fitted with red plastic rings. This would enable us to determine how far the birds have moved since they were ringed and their rates of survival.

Thanks are due to Graham Anderson, Tom Dougall, Andrew Village, Malcolm Henderson, Kate Grimsditch, David Warden for providing breeding records.

Keith Burgoyne, Kestrel co-ordinator for Lothian and Borders

Merlin

Falco columbarius

Very uncommon breeder, 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.

Eighteen casual records from 15 (1%) tetrads. 2018 - 18 tetrads, 2017 - 12 tetrads, 2016 - 8 tetrads, 2015 - 10 tetrads.

Only non-breeding season records (Jan-Mar and Sep-Dec) are shown, although records with breeding evidence were received from the west of the Region.:

Newmains (Reston)	28-Jan, 03-Feb	DK Graham
Clovenfords E	13-Mar	R Bramhall
Hule Moss	01-Sep	S Sim
Carcant Lodge (Heriot)	09-Sep	MB Ross
Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	06-, 23- and 24-Oct	C Hatsell
Wester Deans-Easter Deans	26-Oct	TW Dougall
Brown Rig S (Stow)	27-Nov	G Paterson
Shiplaw (Eddleston)	20-Dec	G Paterson

All relate to single birds.

Other casual records from the breeding season received from R Bramhall, J Gordon, N Hammatt, P Jeavons D Orr-Ewing and M Symonds. This included one record of confirmed breeding.

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

Areas	Territories checked	Territories occupied	Territories with 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	6	1 poss. 2	1	5	5
Moorfoots	5	0	0		
South of Tweed	10 (1 new)	5 poss. 6	3	12	4
Pentlands	19	4	3	7+	2.3
Langholm Moor (Borders)	2	2	0		
TOTAL	42	12+	7	24+	

Best coverage was again in the Pentlands and the usual parts in the South of Tweed area which were covered to a similar extent as previously. In the Lammermuir Hills some old sites were monitored in the south of the old study area. Also, one in the north (Lothian) part of the hills was checked and a pair successfully raised young. This was the first we have known about for some years. The Moorfoots monitoring was again very limited to about the same level as last year again with very disappointing results.

We again received information from the Borders side of Langholm Moor, but yet again there were no successful outcomes.

Although our specific Merlin coverage is nowadays poorer than in the past we don't now seem to be turning any pairs up during monitoring of other species. There should be a national survey next season although as this is being written this seems less likely to receive funding and so will probably not happen. If so, this will be a great pity as this species could well be quietly declining across the UK without receiving the attention it deserves.

As usual, the Pentland birds were all tree nesters whereas elsewhere they all nested on the ground.

Lammermuirs

Until 2014 around 27 known old sites were monitored for occupation. Since then there has been no systematic monitoring until last year when a few traditional sites in the south were checked. Five previous sites were visited, some several times this season, but no real proof of breeding was found. A keeper reported one of these was occupied by a pair early on although this was not verified.

Another site last monitored during the study period in the northern (Lothian) part of these hills was checked and did well with 5 large young ringed and presumed fledged.

Moorfoots

Another very disappointing year. Five known sites were checked but there were no sightings at all this season. Could there still be Merlin breeding somewhere in these hills? It would be nice to have more folk monitoring this area (see Tom Dougall if interested).

Pentlands

Again this was probably the area best monitored by the group. This season a total of 19 known/suspected old sites were checked at least once during the season. In this area in contrast to other breeding areas all birds are nesting in trees using old nests or artificial platforms.

A poorer year than last. Three sites however reared young and birds at another site were clearly nesting but failed at a later stage. One of the successful pairs reared 4 young. At another site the nest was only found after fledging but at least 2 possibly 3 young fledged. Birds were seen initially on a moorland site but moved into a nearby wood and when the tree was climbed it contained only one large young with no signs of unhatched eggs or other young. 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

A total of 9 known sites were checked and pairs were located at four of these. At another of these sites only a female was seen during early visits with no signs of occupation later. One of the four sites occupied by pairs is presumed to have failed early although a female was seen briefly hunting the area late in the season.

The other three sites were successful with each fledging 4 young.

Additionally an area suspected of being a breeding site, but not confirmed before, was found occupied in late April with a pair present and presumed from behaviour to be at the egg laying stage. No sign whatsoever could be found at a later stage suggesting early failure.

Langholm Moor (Borders only)

Two occupied sites in the Borders portion of Langholm Moor were reported. Sites were mainly monitored at a distance to limit disturbance, but although eggs were laid both failed. One was deserted at the egg stage and the other was predated also at the egg stage.

Again there is a lot of uncertainty and incomplete information. Only a little Lammermuir information, which used to be the most significant area, and patchy coverage generally gives an incomplete picture. The numbers above are probably not complete except perhaps for the Pentlands area, although even here there might be a few other pairs not known about.

With thanks to contributors: Graham Anderson, Andrew Barker, Keith Burgoyne, Martin Davison, Tom Dougall, Tom Edwards, John Halliday, Sonja Ludwig, Martin Moss, Ian Poxton, Helen Riley, Andrew Sandeman, David Warden.

Alan Heavisides, Merlin co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders.

Hobby

Falco subbuteo

Scarce passage migrant, but odd records now in summer. Breeding range moving northwards in England.

Two records of singles: Tweed: Mertoun Bridge-Mertoun House (CD Green and D Methven) on 17-May and Newmains (Reston) on 26-Sep (DK Graham).

Peregrine

Falco peregrinus

Uncommon but local breeder. 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.

One hundred and forty-five casual records from 58 tetrads (5%). 2018 - 57 tetrads, 2017 - 39 tetrads, 2016 - 45 tetrads, 2015 - 60 tetrads.

Casual records per month were:

Month	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Records	9	8	17	13	9	16	11	13	23	12	9	5

Casual records included confirmed breeding from four tetrads.

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

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
160	58	35	96	1.65	2.74

This season was a little less productive than 2018 though still an improvement on the disaster that was 2015, which was one of the worst on record in this region since the early 1960's.

This year we are showing a slight increase in sites occupied by pairs in this region, rising from 57 occupied sites to 58, and 43 pairs laid eggs a decrease from 44 in 2018.

Productivity was variable, but nothing significant, young per territorial pair decreased from 1.8 to 1.65 per pair and decreased slightly from 2.78 to 2.74 young per productive pair. Eggs were laid at 43 sites, with 35 sites going on to produce fledged young.

Another four sites were occupied by singles.

Young produced in this region over the last few years has varied considerably:

2014	100+ young reared
2015	66 young reared
2016	82 young reared
2017	103 young reared
2018	103 young reared

Clutches sizes varied across the region with several 2 egg clutches in the East of the Region improving to 4 egg clutches in the west of the region

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 were recorded.

Persecution was suspected at 3 sites and details have been provided to the relevant Police force and the RSPB.

An interesting result this year was the trapping of a female from County Wicklow in Ireland that was breeding at a site near Peebles, raising 3 young. This bird was colour ringed, though the ring was not visible when being monitored.

PIT trapping Extract from Report to BTO

33 sites in Lothian, Borders, Lanarkshire and Dumfries and Galloway, were visited with a view to trapping/ PIT Tag reading. One to three sites were visited per day. We trapped / read at 31 sites. No trapping at other locations due to lack of breeding attempts. In all sites we successfully trapped at first attempt. Only 8 falcons were captured using noose trap (2males and 6 females). Thirty-four falcons were "captured" by PIT Tag reader (23 females and 11

males). At sites where both male and female are PIT tagged, we read both male and female, sometimes a week apart.

This year we encountered no second-year birds on territory.

Unringed falcons were fitted with BTO rings. There were no local movements recorded in 2019. We fitted all falcons with PIT rings.

Discussion

Total numbers of trapped birds were up on last year, though we still have a few pairs failing to breed.

Trapping falcons at the nest using the noose carpet was very efficient if one looks at the number of birds trapped to the number of traps set. The PIT ringing has taken traction and we are now recovering more birds by PIT tag than by trapping.

There was no apparent impact of trapping on falcon productivity. Persecution did affect 2 sites where we were planning to trap. Because we aimed to trap at sites that were easily accessible and which were on or adjacent to grouse moor, these may have been more susceptible to interference.

It is the intention for this study to continue indefinitely. The fitting of PIT tags to adults and young is reducing the need to trap at all sites every year.

George Smith, Peregrine co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders.



Peregrine. Hule Moss. October. Andrew Mossop.

Did you know that you can put WeBS records on BirdTrack and then, almost at the click of a mouse, enter the same records in WeBS? This will save you a great deal of time and make collating records that bit easier for the Borders Bird Report. To find out more visit the video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFIF5NVbMKc&feature=youtu.be>

Jay

Garrulus glandarius

Uncommon, possibly well-represented. Five-fold increase since 1988-94. Secretive in breeding season and therefore significantly under-recorded. During 2008-13 found in 21% of tetrads in summer and 32% in winter.

Records from 145 tetrads (11%). 2018 - 138 tetrads, 2017 - 115 tetrads, 2016 - 75 tetrads, 2015 - 116 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Records from 47 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 3) came from: Brush Wood (Abbey St Bathans) - 4; Muirhouselaw Wood (Maxton) - 4; Mellerstain (Gordon) - 3; Rule Water: Heron Wood (Bonchester Bridge) - 3.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Records from 47 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 3) came from: Newstead (Melrose) - 4; Abbotsford - 3.

No records of confirmed breeding were received (2 in 2018 and 2017, none in 2016 and 2015). There was one record of a pair from Stiel End-Glenkinnon Burn, Yair Hill (G Paterson).

Sep-Dec: Records from 90 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 3) came from: Craik - 6; Newstead (Melrose) - 5; Traquair - 5; Butterhall (Denholm) - 4; Longhope Burn (Ettrick Head) - 4; Ettrick - 3; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 3; The Hirsell - 3.

Magpie

Pica pica

Well-represented but localised resident. More than two-fold increase since 1988-94. Some dispersal in winter. During 2008-13 found in 24% of tetrads in summer and 29% in winter.

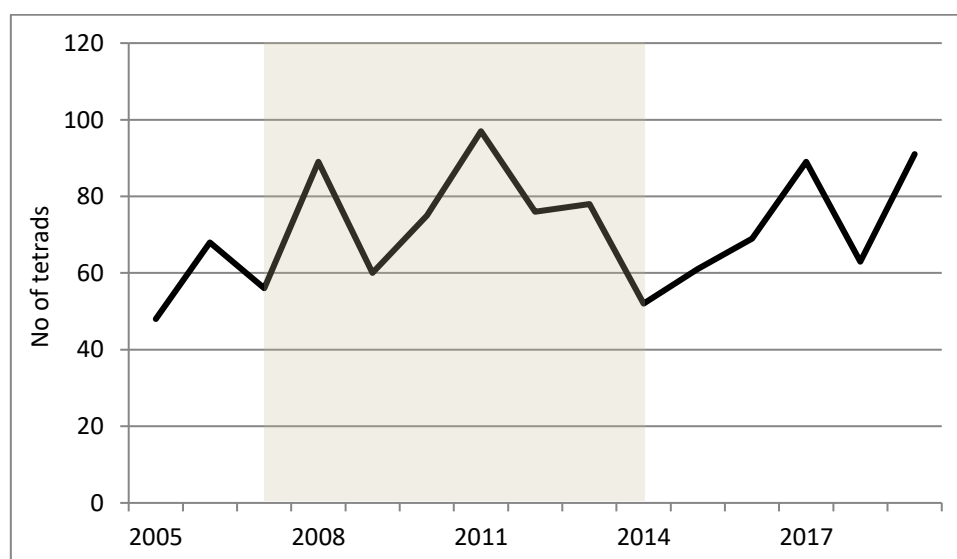
Records from 197 tetrads (15%). 2018 - 172 tetrads, 2017 - 89 tetrads, 2016 - 69 tetrads, 2015 - 101 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Records from 86 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 4) came from: Carcant (Heriot) - 7; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 7; Kingside Edge (Portmore) - 7; Greenlawdean - 6; Blackadder Mount (Allanton) - 5; Blackburn W (Abbey St Bathans) - 5; Howden (Selkirk) - 5; Synton Loch (Ashkirk) - 5; Eyemouth Golf Course - 4; Hummelknowes Moss (Hawick) - 4; Lempitlaw N (Kelso) - 4.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Records from 91 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 4) came from: Highchesters (Hawick) - 9; Wull Muir (Heriot) - 7; Wester Deans-Easter Deans (Portmore) - 6; Blackburn Mill (Abbey St Bathans) - 5; Fountainhall Fm-Symington Mains - 5; Bents Quarry (West Linton) - 4; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 4.

Breeding records were from 15 tetrads: confirmed - 4; probable - 11 tetrads. Confirmed tetrads were: Dowlaw Dam, Coldingham Moor (FL); Newmains, Reston (FL); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (FL); West Linton S (FL). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-Dec: Records from 103 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 4) came from: Burnmouth - 4; Murder Moss (Selkirk) - 4; Stenmuir (Hume) - 4; White Law (Selkirk) - 4.



Magpie: occupied tetrads Apr-Aug, 2005-2019.

Shaded area is survey period of SE Scotland Atlas, 2007-13.

Jackdaw

Coleous mondelula

Widespread and abundant resident, often forms mixed flocks with other corvids. During 2008-13 found in 63% of tetrads in summer and 61% in winter.

Records from 237 tetrads (19%). 2018 - 192 tetrads, 2017 - 136 tetrads, 2016 - 114 tetrads, 2015 - 107 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Records from 127 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 513; Kames West Mains (Leitholm) - 400; Glenwhilt (Selkirk) - 300; Tweedbank - 300; Elwartlaw (Greenlaw) - 250; Caddon Water: Laidlawstiel Farm - 180; Cardrona Hotel - 150; Jenny's Brae (Peebles) - 150; Lady Moss (Bowden) - 150; Crawlee (Greenlaw) - 140; Crosslee (Clovenfords) - 140; The Hirsell - 140; Galashiels central-Ladhope - 125; Graden (Yetholm) - 109; Earlston - 100; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 100; Waterheads (Portmure) - 100; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 95; Cammerlaws (Westruther) - 90; Girnick-Rachelfield (Smailholm) - 90; Fountainheads-Earlston Haugh - 80; St Mary's Loch E-Dryhope Haugh - 80; Tweed: Birgham Haugh (Coldstream) - 80; Marygold (Preston) - 70; St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch - 70; Walkerburn Bridge-Glenmead - 64; Abbey St Bathans - 60; Coldlands-Swansfield (Auchencrow) - 60; Stantling Craig Reservoir (Clovenfords) - 57; Yetholm Loch - 52; Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond (Heiton) - 50; Kerr's Knowe (Stobo) - 50; Plora Wood E (Walkerburn) - 50; Yetholm Loch - 50.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Records from 147 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Steilburn (Caddonfoot) - 250; Walkerburn Bridge-Glenmead - 250; Wull Muir (Heriot) - 200; Yetholm Loch - 180; St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch - 175; Pyatshaw (Lauder) - 130; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 100; Eckford-Kalemouth - 100; Saughtree (Liddell Water) - 100; Tweed: Thornielee - 100; Walkerburn W - 100; Cardrona Hotel - 90; Peebles - 80; Bairnkine (Jedburgh) - 70; Gala Water: Bowshank (Stow) - 70; Whitrig Bog (Smailholm) - 70; Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm) - 67; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 62; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 62; Leithen Water: Shaw Burn - 60; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 53; Blackhopebyre (Leithen Hopes) - 50.

Breeding records from 23 tetrads: confirmed - 9; probable - 14 tetrads. Confirmed for 2018 – 6, 2017 – 5. This year's confirmed breeding came from: Carlops N (ON); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (FF); Faughill. Bowden (NY3); St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch (NY); Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange (FF); Tweedbank (ON); West Linton N (ON); West Linton S (FL); Yarrowford (2NY7). See introduction for breeding codes.

An interesting record of probable breeding came from Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) with birds visiting probable nest sites in rabbit burrows (R Bramhall).

Sep-Dec: Records from 117 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Peebles - 500; Galashiels W - 300; Gordon Moss - 300; Teviot: Kalemouth - 300; Waterhall Plantation (Leitholm) - 250; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 200; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 180; Walkerburn Bridge-Glenmead - 160; Heathery Moss (Greenlaw) - 150; Kelso Racecourse W - 140; Castledean (Greenlaw) - 130; Newstead (Melrose) - 120; Old Kirkhope (Ettrickbridge) - 120; Tweed: Sprouston - 100; Lady Moss (Bowden) - 80; Mains Hill N (Clovenfords) - 80; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 80; Tushielaw-Crosslee (Ettrick Water) - 75; Plora Wood E (Walkerburn) - 70; Caddonlee (Clovenfords) - 60; Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh - 60; Burnmouth-Greystonelees - 55; Sewage Works (Galashiels) - 55; Wedderlie (Westruther) - 55; Yetholm Loch - 52; Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) - 50; Stenmuir (Hume) - 50; Whitlawhaugh (Hawick) - 50.

Recent years have seen a welcome increase in tetrads and high counts for Jackdaw. Increasing abundance is shown by BBS and SE Scotland Atlas 2007-13 although the recent trend in BBR may also reflect increased observer effort.

Rook

Corvus frugilegus

Widespread and abundant resident 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.

Records from 185 tetrads (14%). 2018 - 145 tetrads, 2017 - 111 tetrads, 2016 - 69 tetrads, 2015 - 89 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Records from 86 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Elwartlaw (Greenlaw) - 200; The Glack (Manor Valley) - 200; Cammerlaws (Westruther) - 200; Greenhead (Reston) - 170; Caddon Water: Laidlawstiel Farm - 150; Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream - 150; Kames West Mains (Leitholm) - 150; Sunnyside Hill (Yetholm) - 150; Rumbleton Rig (Greenlaw) - 125; Whytbank Tower (Clovenfords) - 120; Blackhouse (Auchencrow) - 100; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) -

100; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 100; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 87; Eyemouth Golf Course - 86; St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch - 80; Merlindale (Drumelzier) - 65; Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn) - 60; Ettrick Water: Stanhope Foot - 60.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Records from 111 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Bruntaburn Mill (Blythe) - 800; Blackhopebyre (Leithen Hopes) - 400; Watch Water Reservoir - 300; Hog Hill (Lauder) - 250; Coldstream-Lennel - 240; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 200; Pickie Moss (Legerwood) - 125; Gala Water: Bowshank (Stow) - 100; Caddonlee (Clovenfords) - 100; Leithen Water: Colquhar - 80; Tweed: Thornielee - 80; Dod's Corse Stone (Lauder) - 70; St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch - 70; Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn) - 70; Shielfield (Oxton) - 69; West Linton N - 60; Baddinsgill Farm (West Linton) - 60; Paul's Well (West Linton) - 52; Gala Water: Stagebank - 50; St Abb's - 50; Folly Loch W - 50.

Breeding confirmed in 17 tetrads. No other level of evidence as highest in a tetrad. 2018 - 22 tetrads, 2017 - 14 tetrads, 2016 - 28 tetrads, 2015 - 27 tetrads:

Cammerlaws (Westruther)	ON (c. 125)
Coldstream-Lennel	ON (c. 120)
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	ON (c. 15)
Eckford-Kalemouth	ON (10) NY
Gala Hill (Galashiels)	ON (8)
Foulden	ON
Selkirk NE	ON
Sorrowlessfield (Earlston)	ON
St Abbs	ON
St Abb's Head-Mire Loch	ON
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	ON (20)
Tweed: Boleside (Galashiels)	ON
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	ON FL
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	ON
Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh	ON (17)
West Linton N	NY
West Linton S	ON

See introduction for breeding codes.

The numbers in brackets indicate the number of nests where reported.

Rookeries in the Borders are not recorded as comprehensively as previously and all records are encouraged. Those at Cammerlaws (Westruther) and Coldstream-Lennel are the largest rookeries reported since 2013.

Sep-Dec: Records from 91 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Edington Hill Covert (Chirside) - 260; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 150; Tweed: Gledswood Fm (Melrose) - 150; Shielfield (Oxton) - 150; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 150; Waterhall Plantation (Leitholm) - 150; Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream - 140; Castledean (Greenlaw) - 120; Gala Water: Torsonce (Stow) - 120; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 110; Lady Moss (Bowden) - 100; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 100; Whytbank Tower (Clovenfords) - 100; Clarilawmuir, (Midlem) - 100; Sunnyside Hill (Yetholm) - 100; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 96; Whitlawhaugh (Hawick) - 80; Midshiels (Hawick) - 80; Walkerburn Bridge-Glenmead - 75; Kirklands (Ancrum) - 75; Burnmouth-Greystonelees - 70; Stenmuir (Hume) - 70; Greenlaw SW - 60; Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge - 60; Simprim S (Swinton) - 60; Hutton Castle (Chirside) - 60; Newstead (Melrose) - 56; Ferniehirst (Stow) - 55; Galalaw-Stodrig (Kelso) - 50; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 50; Westruther-Cammerlaws - 50.



Rooks. Selkirk. January. Dougie Methven.

Carrion Crow

Corvus corone

Widespread and abundant resident. During 2008-13 found in 89% of tetrads in summer and 88% in winter.

Records from 301 tetrads (24%). 2018 - 250 tetrads, 2017 - 177 tetrads, 2016 - 238 tetrads, 2015 - 142 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Records from 158 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 20) come from: Whytbank Tower (Clovenfords) - 100; Mains Hill N (Clovenfords) - 80; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 61; Waterheads (Portmore) - 60; Whitecross-Alemill (Coldingham) - 40; Pettico Wick-Coldingham - 38; Blackburn W (Abbey St Bathans) - 38; Dunglass-Pease Bay (W) - 35; Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn) - 32; Graden (Yetholm) - 28.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Records from 210 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 20) came from: Soutra Hill (Oxton) - 350; Fruid Reservoir - 130; Megget Reservoir-Cramalt - 78; Hog Hill (Lauder) - 75; Newstead (Melrose) - 73; Ettrick Pen W (Ettrick Head) - 70; Tweed: Thornielee - 50; Spurlens Rig (Portmore) - 36; Broom (Ancrum) - 30; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 29; Meikle Black Law (Dowlaw) - 27; Tweedbank - 24; Paul's Well (West Linton) - 22; Priestthaugh E (Stobs Castle) - 22; St Abb's Head-Black Gable - 20.

Breeding reported in 30 tetrads: confirmed – 18; probable – 11; possible – 1. Confirmed breeding in 2018 – 8, 2017 – 8. Confirmed breeding was from: Abbotsford (FL); Ashiestiel-Peel, Caddonfoot (FL3); Brander Heugh, Dowlaw (ON (10), NY); Crosslee Rig, Tushielaw (FL2); Dowlaw Dam, Coldingham Moor (FL); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (FL); Eckford-Kalemouth (ON); Hare Moss, Selkirk (FL); Jardinefield-Eaglehall, Whitsome (N); Lumsdaine (ON); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (ON, FL); Newstead, Melrose (FL); The Floss, Ashkirk (FL); Tweed: Birgham Haugh, Coldstream (ON); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose (ON); Tweed: Lees Haugh, Coldstream (FF); Williamhope, Yair Hill Forest (ON); Yarrow Water: Tinnis Stiel Wood (ON). See introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-Dec: Records from 122 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 20) came from: Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor) - 70; Haud Yauds (Dowlaw) - 58; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 40; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 40; Galashiels, Netherdale-Langlee - 40; Yarrow Water: Gordon Arms Hotel - 33; Mains Hill N (Clovenfords) - 30; Folly Loch W - 24. A noticeable increase in tetrads, large counts and breeding records in 2019 is presumably partly due to increased observer effort. The count of 350 at Soutra Hill, Oxton (J Gordon) is the highest in the Borders since 1,000 in 2015 at Gavinton.

Hooded Crow

Corvus cornix

Pure Hooded Crows are exceptional in winter and spring. Hybrid genes exist in the Crow population, especially in the west.

Four records of Hooded Crow (all singles): Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor) on 29-Apr (N Hammatt); Fairnieside (Ayton) on 20-Apr (F Evans); Stagebank (Heriot) on 6-Sep (G Paterson); St Abb's Head on 10-May (C Hatsell and DK Graham).

The three records within three weeks on the coast in Apr-May are likely to relate to the same individual.

A single hybrid Carrion x Hooded Crow record, one at Kingside E (Portmore) on 28-May (G Paterson). There have been five hybrid records since 2015 in the Borders, all coming from the Eddleston-Portmore area.

Raven

Corvus corax

Very uncommon resident. 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).

Casual records from 169 tetrads (13%). 2018 - 155 tetrads, 2017 - 86 tetrads, 2016 - 89 tetrads, 2015 - 78 tetrads.

Casual records per month were:

Month	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Records	47	29	35	55	37	20	24	24	33	33	21	25
Peak count	17	26	5	12	9	5	6	11	12	12	4	8

2019 saw continued increases in casual records, distribution and high counts which likely reflect the improving status of the species in the Borders. Breeding evidence came from 7 tetrads: confirmed - 1; probable - 6.

Report from South-east Scotland Raptor Study Group Report

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
61	42	26	77	1.83	2.96

We still suffer from a lack of monitoring continuity on some of the known Raven sites, mainly due to the workload of the fieldworkers carrying out work on other species. Productivity was not great for a species that can and has had large broods.

There is an opportunity for much more fieldwork to be carried out on this species and the population is still expanding. My thanks to all who supplied information.

George Smith, Raven co-ordinator for Lothian & Borders.

Waxwing

Bombicilla garrulus

Scarce and erratic winter visitor. During 2008-13 found in 6% of tetrads in winter.

Seven records from 3 tetrads. 2018 - 11 tetrads, 2017 - 6 tetrads, 2016 - 16 tetrads, 2015 2 - tetrads.

First winter period

Single at St Boswells S on 19-, 20- and 23-Jan (M Moncrieff).

Second winter period

Single at Innerleithen on 9-Nov (R Bramhall) and 'several' at Gunsgreen (Eyemouth) on 18-Nov (J McGuire). 15 at St Boswells S on 1-Dec (M Moncrieff).

Another poor year for this irruptive visitor, winter 2010/11 was the last time birds were widespread.



Raven. Burnhouse Mains (Stow). April. Alistair Cutter.

Coal Tit

Periparus ater

Abundant resident breeder. During 2008-13 found in 70% of tetrads in summer and 76% in winter.

Records from 198 tetrads (15%). 2018 - 141 tetrads, 2017 - 113 tetrads, 2016 - 111 tetrads, 2015 - 113 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Records from 97 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 20) come from: Dodburn-Shankfoot (Stobs Castle) - 20; Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond (Heiton) - 20; Abbey St Bathans - 14; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 12; Yarrowford (BRG) - 10; Philiphaugh-Bowhill Estates (Selkirk) - 9; Whiteadder Water: Elba (Abbey St Bathans) - 8; Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn) - 8; Bowhill (Selkirk) - 7; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 7; Galabank (Stow) - 6; Haining Loch (Selkirk) - 6; Tweedbank - 6.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Records from 134 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 6) came from: Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords) - 15; Kittlegairy Hill (Peebles) - 15; Dawyck - 12; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 12; Philiphaugh N (Selkirk) - 11; Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) - 9; Torwoodlee-Craigneuk (Galashiels) - 9; West Buccleuch (Craik Forest) - 9; Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords) - 8; White Law (Glentress Forest) - 8; Tan Law (Cessford) - 7; Paul's Well (West Linton) - 6; Pier Knowe-Pier Burn (Carter Bar) - 6; Tweedbank - 6; Yarrowford (BRG) - 6.

Breeding evidence came from 48 tetrads: confirmed - 16; probable - 5; possible - 27. Past confirmed records came from: 2018 - 4 tetrads; 2017 - 4 tetrads; 2016 - 3 tetrads; 2015 - 2 tetrads. This year's confirmed breeding was reported from: Brander Heugh, Dowlaw (FL); Coldingham N (FL); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (FF); Galashiels W (ON); Green Knowe Pond, Peebles (NY); Harehead-Newark Castle, Yarrowford (FL); Lauder Common E (FL); Megget Reservoir-Cramalt (FL); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (FL); Philiphaugh Estate, Selkirk (FL); Pirnie, Maxton (FL); Sorrowlessfield, Earlston (FL); Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh (FL); Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh (FL); West Linton S (FL); West Linton-Westlands (FL).

A notable increase in records of confirmed breeding probably reflecting increased observer effort with a species traditionally under-recorded.

Sep-Dec: Records from 76 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 6) came from: Yarrowford (BRG) - 11; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 7.

Marsh Tit

Poecile palustris

Scarce resident breeder, mostly in the Merse. Recent decline in northern and western limits of local range although suggestion of under-recording. During 2008-13 found in just ten tetrads in summer and 11 in winter.

Two birds at Gavinton (Duns) on 6-Jul (A Mitchell). A welcome record following no reports in 2018.

Blue Tit

Cyanistes caeruleus

Abundant resident breeder. During 2008-13 found in 64% of tetrads in summer and 69% in winter.

Records from 209 tetrads (14%). 2018 - 168 tetrads, 2017 - 140 tetrads, 2016 - 145 tetrads, 2015 - 115 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Records from 109 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) come from: Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 27; Whiteadder Water: Elba (Abbey St Bathans) - 21; Abbotsford - 19; Abbey St Bathans - 16; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 13; Mellerstain (Gordon) - 12; Yarrowford (BRG) - 12; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 11; Philiphaugh-Bowhill Estates (Selkirk) - 11; Tweed: Sprouston-Redden - 11; Dodburn-Shankfoot (Stobs Castle) - 10; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 10; Yetholm Loch - 10.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Records from 143 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) came from: Yarrowford (BRG) - 24; Abbotsford-Netherbarns - 23; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 23; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 20; Tweed: Sprouston-Redden - 13; Peebles - 12; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 10.

Breeding evidence was reported from 45 tetrads: confirmed - 27; probable - 10; possible - 8. Confirmed breeding records in 2018 - 12 tetrads, 2017 - 10 tetrads, 2016 - 9 tetrads. Confirmed breeding this year was from: Ashiestiel-Peel, Caddonfoot (FL); Cardrona GC-Cardrona Hill (NY9,8); Cardrona-Nether Horsburgh (NY5, 10); Coldingham (FL); Crook Burn, Gordon (FL); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (NY); Harehead-Newark Castle, Yarrowford (ON); Kelso SW (FL); Lamberton (FF); Lauder Common E (FL); Lyne Dale, West Linton (FL); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (FL); Newmains, Reston (BRG) (NY7, 9); Newstead, Melrose (FL); Pirnie, Maxton (FL); Selkirk SE (FL); St Boswells S (NY5, 6); Teviot Haughs, Nisbet (ON); Tweed: Birgham Haugh, Coldstream (NY); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose (FF); Tweed: Millmount, Melrose (FL); Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange (FL); Tweedbank (NY7); West Linton S (FL); Wester Deans-Easter Deans, Portmore (FF); Yarrow Water: Slain Mens Lea (FL); Yarrowford (BRG) (NY7, 8).

Sep-Dec: Records from 103 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) came from: Tweedbank - 19; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 16; Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) - 15; Yarrowford (BRG) - 14; Auchencrow (Reston) - 10; St Boswells S (BRG) - 10. As with many of our commoner birds, increased observer effort and the inclusion of BRG data is increasing the number of tetrads, peak counts and breeding records compared to previous years.

Great Tit

Parus major

Abundant resident breeder. During 2008-13 found in 61% of tetrads in summer and 62% in winter.

Records from 198 tetrads (15%). 2018 - 155 tetrads, 2017 - 120 tetrads, 2016 - 135 tetrads, 2015 - 125 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: records from 105 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) come from: The Hirsell - 30; Abbotsford - 15; Tweedbank - 13; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 11; Whiteadder Water: Elba (Abbey St Bathans) - 10.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): records from 136 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) came from: Torwoodlee-Craigneuk (Galashiels) - 15; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 13; Howden (Selkirk) - 10; Tweedbank - 10.

Breeding evidence was reported from 47 tetrads: confirmed - 23 tetrads; probable - 9; possible - 8. Confirmed in 2018 - 8 tetrads, 2017 - 5 tetrads, 2016 - 8 tetrads, 2015 - 4 tetrads. Confirmed records this year were from: Abbotsford (FL); Ashiestiel-Peel, Caddonfoot (FL); Broomlee, West Linton (FL); Burnmouth (FF); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (FL); Galashiels W (NY); Hare Moss, Selkirk (FL); Harehead-Newark Castle (Yarrowford) (FF); Howden, Selkirk (FL); Loch of the Lowes S (FL); Lyne Dale (West Linton) (FL); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) (FL); Newmains, Reston (NY10, NY1); Newstead, Melrose (FL); Philiphaugh, Selkirk (FL); Plora Wood E, Walkerburn (NY6); St Boswells S (NY4); Teviot: Lanton Mill, Denholm (FL); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose (FL); Tweed: Lees Haugh, Coldstream (FL); West Linton-Westlands (FL); Yarrow Water: General's Bridge-Harehead Hill (FL); Yarrowford NY (br8).

Sep-Dec: records from 83 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) came from: Abbotsford - 14; Yarrowford - 10.

As with Blue Tit a notable increase in records and tetrads in recent years and improved recording of breeding in 2019. To what extent this reflects observer effort is not possible to say. The count of 30 at The Hirsell on 16-Feb (K Robeson) is the highest count since 31 at Sunderland Hope in Nov 2010.

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.

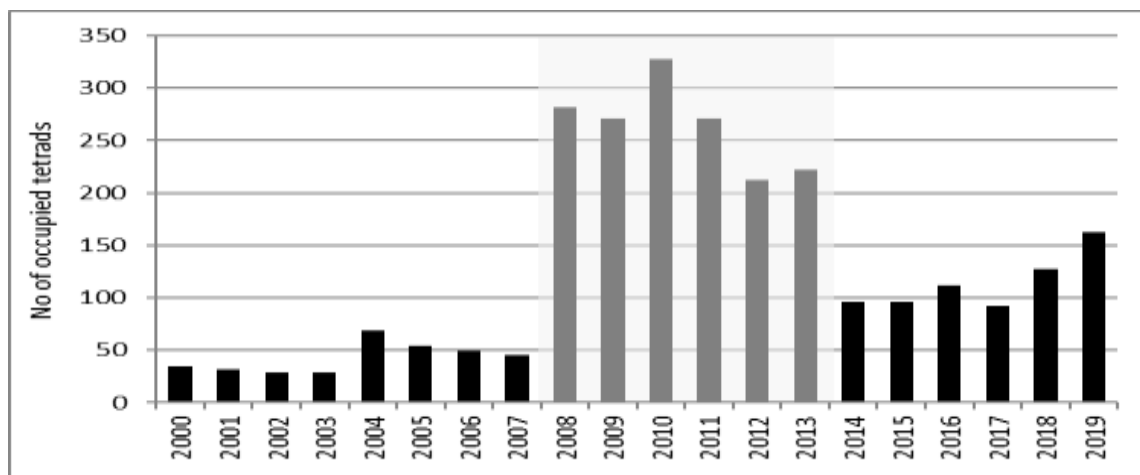
Records from 199 tetrads (16%). 2018 - 174 tetrads, 2017 - 109 tetrads, 2016 - 107 tetrads, 2015 - 110 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: records from 68 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 20) come from: Hopehouse (Ettrick) - 70; Newmains (Reston) - 65; Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn) - 37; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 25; Coldstream-Fireburnmill - 24; Smasha Hill (Hawick) - 23.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): records from 163 tetrads. There were two counts of ≥ 20 from: Seenes Law (Oxton) - 26; Whitton Loch (Hownam) - 20.

Breeding was confirmed in 11 tetrads (2018 - 1 tetrad, 2017 - 2 tetrads, 2016 - 1 tetrad): Blakelaw-Graden Moor, Yetholm (FL); Dowlaw Dam, Coldingham Moor (FF); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (FL); Huntershall, Soutra (NE); Lauder Common (NY); Newmains, Reston (FL), Rough Knowe SE, Ettrickbridge (NY2,3,5); Soutra Hill, Oxton (NY); St Abb's Head-Black Gable (FL); Watch Water Reservoir (FF); Wull Muir, Heriot (NE). A further 96 tetrads held singing or territorial birds. 2018 - 75 tetrads, 2017 - 31 tetrads.

The number of occupied tetrads in the breeding season looks to have increased since the early-2000s. Although how much of this increase is due to observer effort is difficult to discern, the Atlas survey years clearly showing the impact that observer effort can have.



Skylark: number of occupied tetrads in the breeding season 2000-2019.

Shaded bars indicate Atlas survey years.

Sep-Dec: records from 38 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 20) came from: Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth GC - 60; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 22.

Shore Lark

Eremophila alpestris

A rare passage migrant, occurring mostly in autumn, with a few in winter.

Two records of single birds on the coast, St Abb's Head on 5-Oct (C Hatsell and DK Graham) and Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) on 13-Nov (C Hatsell).

The first records since 2014 and the seventh and eighth records for the Borders.

Sand Martin

Riparia riparia

Abundant breeding species along river systems and in sandpits. Found in 709 tetrads 2008-13 breeding in 30% of them. Arrives from late March-mid April, and departs mostly August to mid-September.

Records from 109 (9%) tetrads. 2018 - 90 tetrads, 2017 - 79 tetrads, 2016 - 91 tetrads, 2015 - 67 tetrads.

Mar: records from 12 tetrads. The first record was at Innerleithen on 10-Mar (R Bramhall) with the highest count being 20 at the same site. An earlier arrival than last year when there was only a single record in March.

Apr-Jul (breeding season): records from 100 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Lees Weir (Coldstream) - 1,000; Innerleithen - 350; Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh - 300; The Hirsell - 250; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 200; Williestruther Loch (Hawick) - 155; Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange - 150; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet-Crailling) - 150; Loch of the Lowes S - 110; Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose - 80; Tweed: Sprouston-Redden - 80; Woden Law (Towford) - 70; Tweed: Walkerburn - 60; Ancrum West Mains-Timperdean - 50; Traquair House W - 50; Peebles - 50.

Reports of active burrows came from 15 tetrads (2018 - 12 tetrads, 2017 - 10 tetrads, 2016 - 15, 2015 - 13 tetrads):

Colquhar (Leithen Water)		Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	
Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)		Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream)	min 4 ON
Hog Hill (Lauder)		Tweed: Lowood (Tweedbank)	
Newton Quarry (Swinton)	at least 4	Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	
Philippaugh (Selkirk)		Tweed: Rink Hill (Selkirk)	small
St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch	2+ ON	Whiteadder Water: Gauging St-Pear Bank	
Teviot Haughs (Nisbet)		Woden Law (Towford)	
Tweed: Birgham Haugh	min 8 ON	See Introduction for breeding codes.	

There have been few breeding records and even fewer colony counts in recent years making it difficult to comment on the current breeding status in the Borders. Observers are encouraged to submit records of colonies and if possible the number of active nests. The full record of breeding evidence this year was from 17 tetrads: 9 confirmed and 8 probable.

A leucistic individual was noted on 17-Jul at Tweed: Birgham Haugh, Coldstream (B Meikle).

Aug-onwards: records from 31 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Sprouston-Whitmuirhaugh (Kelso) - 300; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 100; Folly Loch W - 70; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 70; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 60. The last record was one on 28-Sep at Heatherhope Reservoir, Hownam (J Towill).

Swallow

Hirundo rustica

Abundant 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.

Records from 227 (18%) tetrads. 2018 - 192 tetrads, 2017 - 132 tetrads, 2016 - 163 tetrads, 2015 - 120 tetrads.

Mar: A single record, the first of the year, a single at Innerleithen on 30-Mar (M Cockburn).

Apr-Aug (breeding season): records from 209 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor) - 150; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 150; Lees Haugh NE (Coldstream) - 100; Clerklands (Lilliesleaf) - 70; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 60; Annelshope (Ettrick) - 50; Tweed: Sprouston - 50; Westloch (Portmore) - 50. Breeding evidence from 35 tetrads: 16 confirmed, 15 probable and 2 possible. Confirmed records in recent years were: 2018 - 10 tetrads, 2017 - 9. Tetrads with confirmed breeding were: Carcant, Heriot (ON); Coldstream-Lennel (ON); Gill Burn, Blackhopebyre (NY5); Howden, Selkirk (FF); Huntershall, Soutra (ON); Lymiecleugh, Teviothead (ON); Meerlees, Craik Forest (FL) Ploughlands Pond Wood, Nisbet (NY5,5,1); Newmains, Reston (9 pairs, FF), Shorthope, Ettrick (FL); St Abbs-Northfield (NY); The Hirsell (UN); Tweed: Dryburgh Abbey-St Boswells GC (ON); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose (FL); West Linton S (FL); Yetholm Loch (FL). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-onwards: records from 63 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 330; Torwoodlee GC (Galashiels) - 250; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 100; Newmains (Reston) - 80; St Abbs-Northfield - 55; Crosscleuch (Loch of the Lowes) - 50.

The last record of the year was on 20-Oct at Tower Bridge, Cockburnspath (M Holling).

House Martin

Delichon urbicum

Abundant and widespread summer visitor. Mostly April-October. During 2008-13 found in 56% of tetrads in summer.

Records from 149 (12%) tetrads. 2018 - 116 tetrads, 2017 - 97 tetrads, 2016 - 113 tetrads, 2015 - 102 tetrads.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): records from 137 tetrads. The first records of the year were on 07-Apr with birds at Loch of the Lowes S (G Paterson) and Tweed: Kelso-Coldstream (K Robeson). Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Coldstream NW - 200; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 140; St Abbs-Northfield - 119; Craig Hill N (Caddonfoot) - 100.

Breeding was confirmed in 19 tetrads, 2018 - 18 tetrads, 2017 - 14 tetrads. Tetrads with confirmed breeding were: Birkenside, Earlston (ON2); Burnmouth (ON); Coldstream-Lennel (NY); Dod, Wauchope Forest (ON); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (NY); Eckford-Kalemouth (ON); Ettrick (ON); Halliburton, Greenlaw (ON); Huntford, Carter Bar (NY); Lymiecleugh, Teviothead (ON7); Manderston-Buxley, Duns (ON); St Abb's Head (NY); St Abbs-Northfield (ON); Teviot Haughs, Nisbet (ON5); The Hirsell (NY); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose (NY); West Linton S (FL); West Linton-Westlands (FL); Yetholm Loch (ON).

A leucistic bird was noted at Howpasley (Craik) on 08-Jul (A Butlin).

Sep-onwards: records from 36 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 50) came from: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 150; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 100; St Abbs-Northfield - 90; Crosscleuch (Loch of the Lowes) - 80; The Hirsell - 50; Newstead (Melrose) - 50.

The last record of the year was on 08-Oct at Lamberton (R McBeath).

Long-tailed Tit

Aegithalos caudatus

Well-represented to common resident. Forms flocks June-March. In 2008-13 found in 22% of tetrads in summer and 29% in winter.

Records from 129 (10%) tetrads. 2018 - 117 tetrads, 2017 - 83 tetrads, 2016 - 69 tetrads, 2015 - 55 tetrads.

Jan-Feb: records from 49 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) come from: Whiteadder Water: The Bell (Cranshaws) - 15; Edrom (Duns) - 12; Mellerstain (Gordon) - 12; Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn) - 12; Yetholm Loch - 12; Haining Loch (Selkirk) - 11; Black Burn (Newcastleton) - 10; Kelso SE - 10; Sprouston-Whitmuirhaugh (Kelso) - 10; Tweed: Birgham Haugh (Coldstream) - 10.

Mar-Aug (breeding season): records from 71 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) came from: The Hirsell - 40; Torwoodlee-Craigneuk (Galashiels) - 10. The count of 40 at The Hirsell is the largest since 58 at St Abb's Head in October 2008. Breeding confirmed at 8 tetrads (2018 - 6 tetrads, 2017 - 3 tetrads): Coldstream-Lennel (FF); Craig Hill N, Caddonfoot (FL); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (ON); Eckford-Kalemouth (ON); Philiphaugh Est-Old Mill Fm, Selkirk (FL); Pirnie, Maxton (FL); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose (FL); West Linton-Westlands (FL).

Sep-Dec: records from 70 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) came from: Abbotsford - 25; Galashiels central-Ladhope - 20; Duns Castle-Hen Poo - 20; Fountainhall-Pirntaton - 18; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 14; Wester Deans-Easter Deans (Portmore) - 13; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 12; Darnick (Melrose) 12; Lamberton12; Manor Water (Bellinrigg) - 12; St Abbs-Northfield - 12; Yetholm Loch - 12; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 11; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 11; Kelso NE - 11; Newstead (Melrose) - 11; Burnmouth - 10; Dry Cleugh, Rankle Burn (Buccleuch) - 10; Haining Loch (Selkirk)10; Over Dalgliesh Hope (Craik Forest) - 10; Philiphaugh Estate (Selkirk) - 10; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 10.

A comparable year to 2018 and number of records appear to have benefited from improved observer effort in the last few years.

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.

Records from 205 (16%) tetrads. 2018 - 162 tetrads, 2017 - 126 tetrads, 2016 - 137 tetrads, 2015 - 133 tetrads.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): records from 205 tetrads. 2018 – 161 tetrads, 2017- 123 tetrads, 2016 - 125 tetrads. The first record of the year was at Windywalls W (Kelso) on 9-Apr (R Manning). Counts of ≥ 5 came from 49 tetrads (2018 - 28 tetrads, 2017 - 27 tetrads). Counts of ≥ 10 came from: Stony Knowe (Yair Hill Forest) - 22; Megget Reservoir-Cramalt - 19; Priesthope Hill (Innerleithen) - 16; Wester Deans-Easter Deans (Portmore) - 16; St Abb's Head - 15; Foulshiels Hill N (Yarrowford) - 14; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 14; Hoselaw Mains (Town Yetholm) - 14; Meikle Black Law (Dowlaw) - 14; Philiphaugh N (Selkirk) - 14; St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch - 14; Glenlude (Traquair) - 13; Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords) - 12; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 11; Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) - 10; Whitmuir Hall (Selkirk) - 10.

Breeding was confirmed in 8 tetrads, (2018 - 8 tetrads, 2017 - tetrad): Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog (FF); Haining Loch SE-Selkirk GC (FL); Hare Moss, Selkirk (FF); Newmains, Reston (FL), Pirnie, Maxton (FL); St Abbs-Northfield (FL); Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh (FF); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose (FL). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-onwards: records from 17 tetrads. 2018 - 3 tetrads, 2017 - 7 tetrads, 2016 - 10 tetrads.

The last record coming from Peebles W on 10-Oct (J Wooliams).

Chiffchaff

Phylloscopus collybita

Abundant summer visitor. 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.

Records from 202 (16%) tetrads. 2018 - 137 tetrads, 2017 - 120 tetrads, 2016 - 105 tetrads, 2015 - 136 tetrads.

Jan-Feb: one at Belses (Lilliesleaf) on 23-Feb was the only record (N Stratton).

Mar-Aug (breeding season): records from 183 tetrads. 2018 - 133 tetrads, 2017 - 115 tetrads, 2016 - 114 2015 - 130 tetrads. Counts of ≥ 5 where noted from 25 tetrads (2018 - 13 tetrads, 2017 - 21 tetrads). Counts of ≥ 10 came from: Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond, Heiton (15); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (14); Fatlips Castle-Barnhills, Ancrum (10); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose (10).

Confirmed breeding came from 5 tetrads (2018 - 5 tetrads, 2017 - 1 tetrad): Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (FL), Leithen Lodge (FF), Huntford (Carter Bar) (FL), Newmains, Reston (FL), Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh (FL). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-Dec: records from 45 tetrads, a considerable increase over recent years. 2018 - 18 tetrads, 2017 - 23 tetrads, 2016 - 28 2015 - 25 tetrads. Counts of ≥ 5 came from; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 22; Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) - 13; Burnmouth - 10; Tweedbank - 7; Newstead (Melrose) - 7; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)- 5.

The count of 22 at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) is the highest reported since 24 at the same site in 2016.

There was a single Dec record with one at St Abbs-Northfield on 20-Dec (C Hatsell).

Wood Warbler

Phylloscopus sibilatrix

Now a scarce 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.

16 records from 7 tetrads represents the best year since 2010. 2018 - 3 tetrads, 2017 - 2 tetrads, 2016 - 2 tetrads, 2015 – 2 tetrads.

The first record came on 26-Apr from St Abbs-Northfield (C Hatsell). Elsewhere there were up to 3 at Plora Wood (Walkerburn), 2 at Elibank (Walkerburn), 2 at Traquair House with singles at Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) and Pykestone Wood (Dawyck).

Breeding records came from 4 tetrads: one probable and 3 possible: Dawyck (S); Elibank, Walkerburn (S); St Abbs-Northfield (S); Plora Wood (T, P, A). Records submitted by D Alexander, M Betts, R Bramhall, C Hatsell, K Ingleby and R Singleton.

The last record of the year was on 07-Oct at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (C Hatsell). This is only the second Oct report since the BBR began in 1979, the other being in 2006 when one was reported at Wooplaw Community Woodlands on 29-Oct.

Pallas's Warbler

Phylloscopus proregulus

Scarce but erratic autumn vagrant.

A single at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) on 21-Oct (R Safford) is the first since 2013.

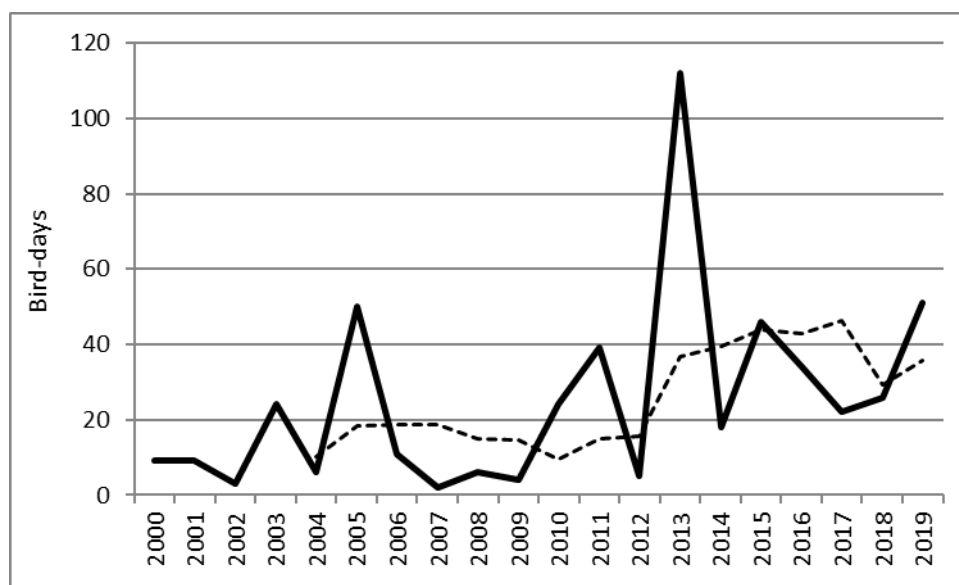
Yellow-browed Warbler

Phylloscopus inornatus

Scarce to uncommon, but annual, Siberian passage migrant.

38 records from 8 tetrads along the coast between 22-Sep to 03-Nov with a peak count of 4 at St Abbs-Northfield on 07-Oct (C Hatsell).

A total of 51 bird-days (26 in 2018, 22 in 2017, 34 in 2016 and 46 in 2015), the best since the remarkable influx of 2013.



Yellow-browed Warbler: bird-days (solid line), 2000-2019.
(broken line is 5 yr-running average)

Sedge Warbler

Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

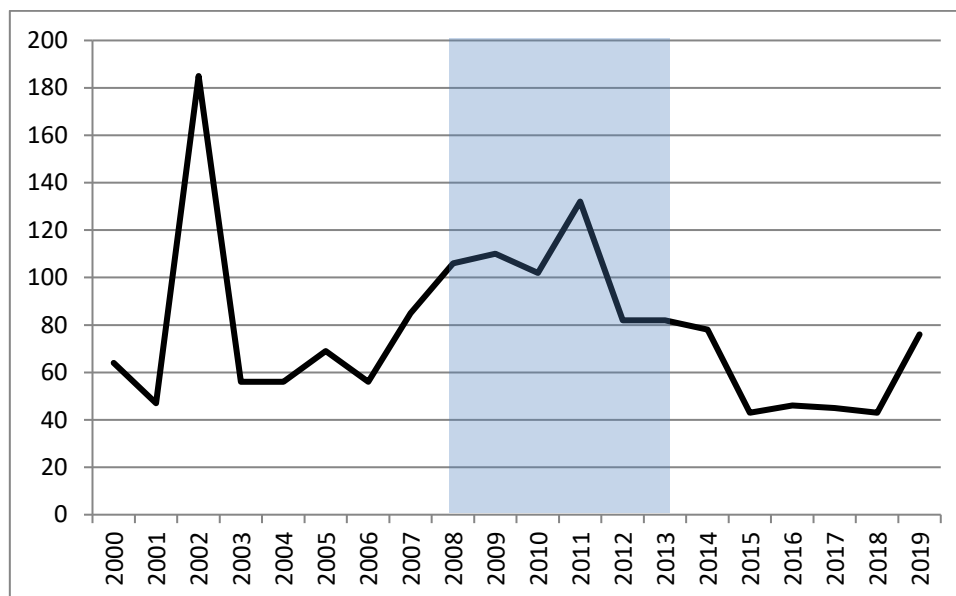
Abundant summer visitor, especially to wet areas, April-September. During 2008-13 found in 29% of tetrads in summer.

Records from 76 (6%) tetrads. 2018 - 47 tetrads, 2017 - 45 tetrads, 2016 - 46 tetrads, 2015 - 43 tetrads.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Records from 76 tetrads. The first record was on 20-Apr from St Abbs-Northfield (C Hatsell). Largest counts (≥ 5) came from: St Abb's Head-Black Gable - 15; Tweed: Kingmeadows-Kailzie - 11; Whitmuirhill Loch (Selkirk) - 11; Newmains (Reston) - 8, Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 8; New Belses (Ancrum) - 6; Whitmuir Hall (Selkirk) - 6; Bemersyde Moss-Mertoun Bridge - 5; The Hirsell - 5.

Breeding confirmed in 5 tetrads (2018 2 - tetrads, 2017 - 2 tetrads): Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond, Heiton (FF); Newmains, Reston (FL), Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (FL); Westfield-Whitrig Bog (Smailholm) (FF); Whitmuir Hall, Selkirk (NY 5 young and 5 young).

An increase in occupied tetrads following low levels in 2015-2018.



Sedge Warbler: number of breeding season tetrads occupied, 2000-2019.
(shaded area correspond to SE Scotland Atlas survey period)

Sep-onwards: Wester Deans-Easter Deans (Portmore) 1 on 7-Sep; Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog 2 on 8-Sep and the last record of the year, one on 26-Sep at Hare Moss, Selkirk (A Smith). These are the first September records since 2015.

The 62% increase between 2019 and 2018 in the number of occupied tetrads is higher than the 23% increase in all bird records and therefore perhaps indicates a significant increase in distribution above that explained simply by increased observer effort.

Reed Warbler

Acrocephalus scirpaceus

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant, and very rare breeder.

A single singing at The Hirsell on 11-May (K Robeson) was the first of the year but the only record at the site after a territory was held there last year. Up to 4 were present at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) between 14-May and 9-Sep although breeding was not confirmed. This is a welcome series of records at Mire Loch following only single records there in 2018 and 2017.

The Mire Loch at St Abb's Head continues to be the predominant site for this rare visitor with few records elsewhere. However, The Hirsell has now held singing birds in consecutive years.

Grasshopper Warbler

Locustella naevia

Very uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant April-early September. During 2008-13 found in 7% of tetrads in summer.

Records from 33 tetrads (3%). 2018 - 15 tetrads, 2017 - 10 tetrads, 2016 - 12 tetrads, 2015 - 6 tetrads.

The first record was from Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) on 19-Apr (C Hatsell) with the last records being from Longhope Burn (Ettrick Head) and Thirlestane Lodge (Ettrick) both on 26-Jul (both G Christer).

Although it is likely that most records related to singing birds this was specifically indicated to be the case in 20 tetrads, 2018 - 7 tetrads, 2017- 5 tetrads 2016 - 5 tetrads. Tetrads with singing birds were: Broadgairhill (Ettrick); Clovenfords E; Cocker Law (Kelso); Drum Maw (Romannobridge); Duns; Hartwoodmyres (Selkirk); Hopestead (Coldingham Moor); Kersquarter Cottages (Kelso); Lady Moss (Bowden); Larriston (Saughtree); Midgehope (Ettrick); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head); Peat Law (Oxton); Riskinhope (Loch of the Lowes); Soutra Hill (Oxton); Teviot

Haughs (Nisbet); Tima Water: Nether Dalgliesh (Craik Forest); Wester Deans-Easter Deans (Portmore); Windy Law Sike-Little Knowe (Roberton); Wollrig (Ashkirk).

While most records were of a single bird, 2 were recorded at: Drum Maw (Romannobridge); Leadburn Community Woodland; Soutra Hill (Oxton); Teviot Haughs (Nisbet); Wolfhope Burn (Tushielaw).

A welcome upturn in records compared to recent years for a bird that is likely to be under-recorded. This may indicate observers making an increased effort to find this often-crepuscular species. It would be helpful for observers to indicate if birds are reeling and for records of 2 or more if these are singing males or not.

Blackcap

Sylvia atricapilla

Abundant summer visitor. Very uncommon on passage April-May, well-represented in autumn from August to October. Scarce but annual in winter. During 2008-13 found in 51% of tetrads in summer and 2% in winter.

Records from 143 tetrads (11%). 2018 - 103 tetrads, 2017 - 90 tetrads, 2016 - 104 tetrads, 2015 - 88 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: singles from 3 tetrads, Peebles on 1-Jan, The Hirsell on 4-Jan and Coldingham N on 7-Feb.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): records from 138 tetrads, 2018 - 99 tetrads, 2017 - 81 tetrads, 2016 - 103 tetrads, 2015 - 78 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 5) came from: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 16; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 14; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 12; Tweedbank - 11; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 9; The Hirsell - 8; Coldstream-Lennel - 7; Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) - 7; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 6; Dawyck - 5; Eckford-Kalemouth - 5; Duelly Knowes Covert (Selkirk) - 5; Newmains (Reston) - 5; New Belses (Ancrum) - 5; Peebles - 5; Philiphaugh N (Selkirk) - 5; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 5; White Law (Glentress Forest) - 5.

Breeding was confirmed in 5 tetrads. 2018 - 4 tetrads, 2017 - 2 tetrads: Ashiestiel-Peel, Caddonfoot (FF); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (FL); Newmains, Reston (FF), Tweedbank (NY). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-Dec: records from 22 tetrads. There was only a single count of ≥ 5 which was of 16 at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) on 9-Sep. Sighting in Dec (all singles) came from Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth GC, Kelso NE and Kelso SE. The latter two tetrads may relate to the same individual.

An increase in tetrads and large counts compared to recent years may partially reflect improved observer effort. For instance, 18 tetrads have breeding season counts of ≥ 5 in 2019 compared to 2018 - 7 tetrads, 2017 - 6 tetrads and 2016 - 8 tetrads. Interestingly, the number of confirmed breeding records remained low suggesting that confirmed breeding is under-recorded and is obviously easier to miss than singing birds.

Garden Warbler

Sylvia borin

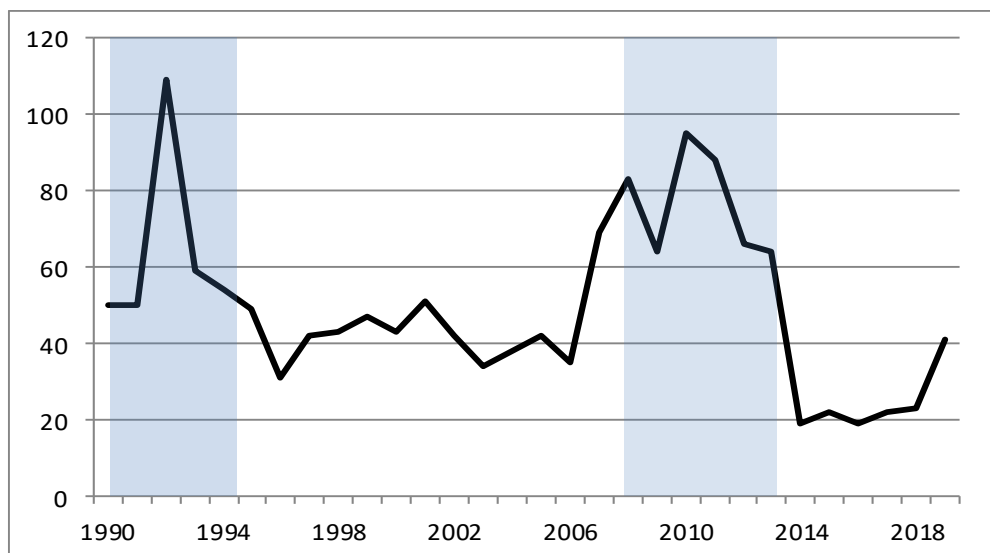
Well-represented to common summer visitor. During 2008-13 found in 24% of tetrads in summer.

Records from 41 tetrads (3%). 2018 - 24 tetrads, 2017 - 21 tetrads, 2016 - 19 tetrads, 2015 - 29 tetrads.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): the first record of the year was at Edston-Manor Bridge (Peebles) on 28-Apr (M Cockburn). Records from 41 tetrads, 2018 - 23 tetrads, 2017 - 21 tetrads, 2016 - 19 tetrads, 2015 - 22 tetrads. Occupied tetrads were: Ale Water: Belses Hill Farm; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot); Barnhills Moor Plantation (Minto); Belses (Lilliesleaf); Biliemains (Chirnside); Brander Heugh (Dowlaw); Cardrona; Dawyck; Deuchar Mill (Yarrow); Duelly Knowes Covert (Selkirk); Duns Law; Earlston School; Edston-Manor Bridge (Peebles); Gordon Community Wood N; Harehead-Newark Castle (Yarrowford); The Hirsell; Hoselaw Mains (Town Yetholm); Howden (Selkirk); Jock's Knows (Selkirk); Kelso S; Kneesend Plantation (Yair Hill Forest); Larriston (Saughtree); Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk); Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk); Manderston (Duns); Meikle Black Law (Dowlaw); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head); Morryston Cottage (Legerwood); Newstead (Melrose); Peebles; Stiel End-Glenkinnon Burn (Yair Hill); Tan Law (Cessford); Teviot Haughs (Nisbet); Teviot: Monteviot Weir; Teviothead; Traquair House; Tushielaw Hill W (Ettrick Valley); Tweed: Rink Hill (Selkirk); Tweedbank; Westerside (Coldingham Loch); Williamhope (Yair Hill Forest).

Twenty-two tetrads had breeding evidence: confirmed – 2; probable none; possible – 20. Confirmed records came from Newstead, Melrose (FL) and Larriston, Saughtree (FF). See Introduction for breeding codes. Confirmed records submitted by M Pitt and M Cummings, respectively.

An upturn in occupied breeding season tetrads in 2019, after low numbers during 2014-2018. Although still much lower than the peaks seen during Atlas years.



Garden Warbler: No. of occupied tetrads during Apr-Aug (breeding season, 1990-2019.
(shaded areas represent survey periods of local atlases).

Sep-onwards: recorded from Tweedbank on 24-Sep and from Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) on 9- and 26-Sep and 6- and 7-Oct (C Hatsell).

Barred Warbler

Sylvia nisoria

Scarce but not annual autumn passage migrant.

A single record of one at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) on 23-Sep (C Hatsell and N Hammatt). Recorded now in consecutive years after no records in 2016 and 2017.

Lesser Whitethroat

Sylvia curruca

Very uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant. Erratic sightings. Mostly on passage late April to May and August to October. During 2008-13 found in 2% of tetrads in summer.

Records from 6 tetrads. 2018 - 5 tetrads, 2017 - 5 tetrads, 2016 - 4 tetrads, 2015 - 4 tetrads.

Recorded from: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 4; Newmains (Reston) - 2; Monteviot (Anrum) - 1; Pease Bay - 1; Sprouston-Whitmuirhaugh (Kelso) - 1; St Abbs-Northfield - 1.

The first record was on 22-Apr St Abbs-Northfield (C Hatsell) with the last on 15-Oct Mire Loch, St Abb's Head (F Evans).

Breeding records: one probable (Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head, T) and 2 possible (Newmains (Reston), S and Monteviot (Anrum), S).

2019 was comparable with recent years for this uncommon summer visitor.

A later bird, on 06-Nov at St Abb's Head-Black Gable, was possibly a Siberian Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca blythi*) (C Hatsell). Pending acceptance by BBRC this would be the first accepted record for this subspecies.

Whitethroat

Sylvia communis

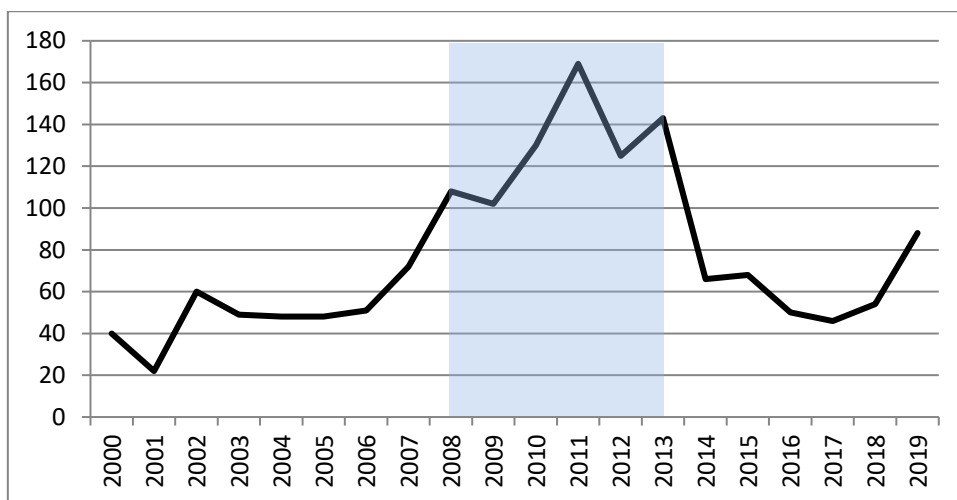
Abundant summer visitor, mostly breeding on lower ground. Very uncommon passage migrant on coast April-June and August-September. During 2008-13 found in 27% of tetrads in summer.

Records from 89 (7%) tetrads. 2018 - 55 tetrads, 2017 - 46 tetrads, 2016 - 50 tetrads, 2015 - 70 tetrads.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): records from 88 tetrads. The first record of the year was 19-Apr at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (C Hatsell). The largest counts (≥ 5) came from: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 11; Newmains (Reston) - 9, Hoselaw Mains (Yetholm) - 6; Dowlaw Dean - 5.

Breeding confirmed in 10 tetrads, 2018 - 2 tetrads, 2017 - 0 tetrads. Tetrads with confirmed breeding were: Eckford-Kalemouth (FL); Jardinefield-Eaglehall, Whitsome (FL); Lanton-Lanton Mains, Denholm (FL); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (FL); Morryston Cottage, Legerwood (FL); Newmains, Reston (FF), Newstead, Melrose (FL); St Abbs-Northfield (FF); Staerough Hill, Kirk Yetholm (FF); Westfield-Whitrig Bog, Smailholm (FF). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Excluding the Atlas years, 2019 had the highest number of occupied tetrads in the breeding season in recent years. An increase in confirmed breeding may indicate 2019 as a good year for Whitethroat.



Whitethroat: Number of occupied tetrads in the breeding season, 2000-2019.
(shaded areas represent survey periods of local atlases)

Sep-onwards: records from 4 tetrads with the last record of the year being one on 01-Oct at Dowlaw, Coldingham Moor (JDH Hadfield).

Firecrest

Regulus ignicapilla

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant. Not annual.

A single at Coldingham Bay on 22-Oct (R Safford) is the first since 2016.

Goldcrest

Regulus regulus

Abundant resident. Subject to large-scale mortality in hard winters. Abundant migrant and winter visitor, especially in autumn. During 2008-13 found in 57% of tetrads in summer and 48% in winter.

Records from 154 tetrads (12%). 2018 - 106 tetrads, 2017 - 88 tetrads, 2016 - 101 tetrads, 2015 - 74 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: records from 45 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 5) come from: Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond (Heiton) - 15; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 14; Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn) - 10.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Records from 97 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 5) came from: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 12; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 6; Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) - 6; Halliburton (Greenlaw) - 5; Philiphaugh N (Selkirk) - 5; R Tweed-Elibank Forest - 5; White Law (Glentress Forest) - 5.

Breeding evidence from 65 tetrads (2018 - 23 tetrads, 2017 - 29 tetrads) with breeding confirmed in 2 tetrads (2018 - 1 tetrad, 2017 - 3 tetrads). Tetrads with confirmed breeding were: Ettrick (FF); Rowantree Knowe, Stobs Castle (FL). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-Dec: records from 61 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 5) came from: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 32; Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) - 15; Wester Deans-Easter Deans (Portmore) - 9; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 8; Lamberton - 6; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 5.

An increase in occupied tetrads, especially those with breeding evidence and larger counts suggests that 2019 was better year for Goldcrest than 2018. Although an increase in observer effort may have contributed to this, it is compatible with the BBS figures showing a 24% increase in the BBS index in Scotland between 2018 and 2019. This species is susceptible to severe winter weather and the upturn may also reflect a recovery from the effects of heavy snowfall in early 2018.

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.

Records from 242 tetrads (19%). 2018 - 169 tetrads, 2017 - 219 tetrads, 2016 - 276 tetrads, 2015 - 259 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: records from 84 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 5) come from: Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond (Heiton) - 15; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 13; Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) - 6; Tweed: Galafoot-Lowood Bridge - 6; Tweedbank - 6.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): records from 181 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 5) came from: West Buccleuch (Craik Forest) - 20; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 17; Ale Water: Belses Hill Farm - 13; Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) - 11; Duelly Knowes Covert (Selkirk) - 9; Hare Moss (Selkirk) - 8; Philiphaugh N (Selkirk) - 8; Priesthaugh (Teviothead) - 8; Priesthope Hill (Innerleithen) - 8; Tan Law (Cessford) - 8; Torwoodlee-Craigneuk (Galashiels) - 8; Tweedbank - 8; Barnhills Moor Plantation (Minto) - 7; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 7; Larriston Rig (Liddesdale) - 7; Meikle Black Law (Dowlaw) - 7; Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge - 7; Kittlegairy Hill (Peebles) - 6; Yetholm Loch - 6; Abbotsford - 5; Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave - 5; Dod (Wauchope Forest) - 5; Long Grain (Soutra) - 5; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 5; The Hirsell - 5.

Breeding confirmed in 4 tetrads (2018 - 4 tetrads, 2017 - 3 tetrads). Tetrads with confirmed breeding were: Abbotsford-Netherbarns (FL); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (FF); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose (FF); White Meldon SW, Lyne (FF). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-Dec: records from 103 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 5) came from: Edrington Castle Mill, Paxton - 5; Mire Loch, St Abb's Head, - 5.

A notable increase in tetrads and counts between 2018 and 2019 and the comments made above regarding Goldcrest are also applicable here. In the case of Wren the BBS figures show a 21% increase in the BBS index in Scotland between 2018 and 2019.

Nuthatch

Sitta europaea

Now a common resident. First bred 1989 and spread rapidly. Now more than 1,000 pairs. During 2008-13 found in 29% of tetrads in summer and 29% in winter.

Records from 124 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 82 tetrads, 2017 - 88 tetrads, 2016 - 130 tetrads, 2015 - 137 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: records from 65 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 4) come from: Abbotsford - 9; Peebles - 7; Eckford Mill - 6; Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose) - 4; Dryburgh - 4; Lees Haugh SE (Coldstream) - 4.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): records from 74 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 4) came from: Dawyck - 10; Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose - 8; Haining Loch (Selkirk) - 8; Abbotsford - 7; Mellerstain House (Gordon) - 7; Bowland (Galashiels) - 6; The Hirsell - 5; Red Scar (Glensax) - 4; Woodside (Monteviot) - 4; Yarrowford - 4.

Breeding confirmed in 14 tetrads (2018 - 5 tetrads, 2017 - 3 tetrads). Tetrads with confirmed breeding were: Abbotsford (FL); Ashiestiel-Peel, Caddonfoot (FL); Darnick, Melrose (ON); Dawyck (FF); Howden, Selkirk (FL); Old Nenthorn, Smailholm (NY); Philiphaugh-Bowhill Estates, Selkirk (NY); Selkirk SE (NY4, 7, 8); The Floss, Ashkirk (NY2); Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange (FL); Whitmuir, Selkirk (NY4, 5, 6, 7); Whitmuir Hall, Selkirk (NY8); Yarrow Water: Slain Mens Lea (NY); Yarrowford (NY6). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-Dec: records from 50 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 4) came from: Abbotsford - 14; Tweed: Gledswood Fm (Melrose) - 8; Haining Loch SE-Selkirk GC - 8; Dawyck - 6; Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose - 5; Lees Haugh-Hirsel - 5; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 4; Bowhill (Selkirk) - 4; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 4.

An increase in the number of tetrads with confirmed breeding compared to recent years. This is partly caused by the addition this year of Borders Ringing Group records which contributed records from 6 tetrads.

Treecreeper

Certhia familiaris

Common breeding resident. During 2008-13 found in 24% of tetrads in summer and 26% in winter

Records from 98 tetrads (8%). 2018 - 92 tetrads, 2017 - 59 tetrads, 2016 - 72 tetrads, 2015 - 83 tetrads.

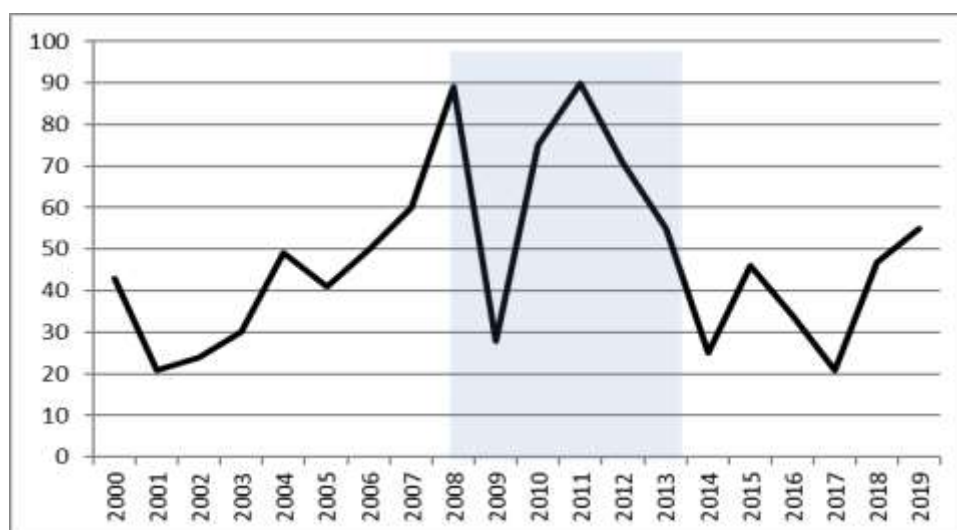
Jan-Mar: records from 40 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 3) come from: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 3; Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn) - 3.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): records from 55 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 3) came from: Bowland (Galashiels) - 3; Dawyck - 3.

Confirmed breeding reported in 4 tetrads, probable breeding in 5 and possible in 5. Probable and confirmed in 2018 - 10 tetrads, 2017 - 8 tetrads. Ashiestiel-Peel, Caddonfoot (T); Dawyck (P); Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (P); Eckford-Kalemouth (P); Faldonside-Cauldshiels Lochs, Galashiels (P); Lyne Dale, West Linton (ON); Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (B); Plora Wood E, Walkerburn (FF); St Abbs-Northfield (FF); The Hirsel (B); Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose (T). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-Dec: records from 41 tetrads. No counts of ≥ 3 were reported.

The number of tetrads occupied in the breeding season has fluctuated between 2000-2019 with a low of 21 in 2001 and a peak of 90 in 2011. Variations in winter weather are likely to contribute with the Treecreeper being susceptible to severe weather. The effect of the harsh winter of 2008-09 are apparent in the number of tetrads occupied in 2009 despite this being an Atlas year with increased observer coverage. The two subsequent winters were also relatively bad but do not seem to have impacted breeding distribution which increased in 2010 and 2011.



Treecreeper: Number of occupied tetrads in the breeding season, 2000-2019.

Shaded areas correspond to SE Scotland Atlas survey period).

Rose-coloured Starling

Sturnus roseus

Very rare autumn vagrant.

Two records, one at Eyemouth on 9-Jul (DK Graham) and one at Maxton on 14- and 17-Nov (M Moncrieff and D Parkinson).

These represent the fourth and fifth records for the Borders after records in 1979 (Eyemouth), 1983 (St Abbs Village) and 2016 (St Boswells).

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.

Records from 171 tetrads (13%). 2018 - 88 tetrads, 2017 - 90 tetrads, 2016 - 126 tetrads, 2015 - 112 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: records from 68 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 100) come from: Galashiels, Netherdale-Langlee - 1800; Buccleuch - 300; Calder (Longformacus) - 240; Harryburn House (Lauder) - 170; Graden (Yetholm) - 165; St Boswells S - 143; Parkhead Plantation (Roberton) - 140; Stantling Craig Reservoir E (Clovenfords) - 110; Greenlaw SW - 100; Stobswood Burn (Longformacus) - 100.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): records from 103 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 100) came from: Hog Hill (Lauder) - 300; Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose) - 200; Soutra Hill (Oxton) - 200; Hollybush (Galashiels) - 150; Traquair W - 120; Tanwell (Stow) - 100; Wull Muir (Heriot) - 100.

Breeding records from 20 tetrads: 16 confirmed and 4 probable (2018 - 6 tetrads, 2017 - 11 tetrads): Abbotsford-Netherbarns (FF); Eildon Mid Hill, Melrose (FF); Faldonside-Cauldshiels Lochs, Galashiels (FF); Graden, Yetholm (FF); Hog Hill, Lauder (FF); Kelso N (FF); Kelso S (FF); Lamberton (FF); Lyne Dale, West Linton (FF); Newmains, Reston (FF); Newstead, Melrose (FF); Tweed: Lees Haugh, Coldstream (FF); Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside (FF); Tweed: Sprouston-Redden: (FF); West Linton S (FF); Yarrow Water: Sundhope (FF); Eckford-Kalemouth (N); Huntershall, Soutra (A); Huntford, Carter Bar (N); Sorrowlessfield, Earlston (N). See Introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-Dec: records from 74 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 100) came from: Coldingham-Fleurs - 5,000; Tweedbank - 1,500; Westruther S - 800; Westruther-Cammerlaws - 720; Gordon Moss - 600; Hoprig N, Cockburnspath - 600; Galashiels W-Torwoodlee - 450; Blackerstone E, Abbey St Bathans - 300; Dowlaw Dam, Coldingham Moor - 300; Ettrickbridge - 300; Mire Loch, St Abb's Head - 300; Foulshot Law, Greenlaw - 200; Lady Moss, Bowden - 200; Lamberton - 200; St Boswells S - 200; Gilston, Oxton - 170; Ashiestiel-Peel, Caddonfoot - 165; Eckford-Kalemouth - 150; Galashiels W - 150; Lauder E - 130; Jardinefield, Whitsome - 120; Blackburn Mill, Abbey St Bathans - 110; Whitrig Bog, Smailholm - 110.

An increase in 2019 of confirmed breeding records, tetrads and large counts compared to recent years may be the result of increased observer effort. This is very welcome for a species typically overlooked and which has undergone long-term declines such that in 2002 it was added to the UK 'red list' of the Birds of Conservation Concern. For instance, BBS data from Scotland show a 29% fall in the BBS index between 1995 and 2018 and the 2008-13 SE Scotland Atlas shows a 28% fall in tetrads with confirmed breeding since the previous Atlas in 1988-94.

Ring Ouzel

Turdus torquatus

Uncommon 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 from 23 sites (19 tetrads, 1%). 2018 - 13 tetrads. Ten sites had evidence of breeding, with birds seen in suitable habitat at 6 others, giving a total of 16 potential breeding sites. Records from 7 sites were of birds on passage. The first record was of one bird from Tweedsmuir (R Singleton) on 31-Mar. The last records were of one bird at Dowlaw, Coldingham Moor (JD Hadfield) and 3 birds at Mire Loch, St Abb's Head (F Evans), both on 15-Oct. Atypically, records came from areas across the region, possibly showing increased coverage by recorders.

Due to the continuing decline of this species, breeding-site locations are no longer given. Instead, the number of potential breeding sites are indicated by area, in the form of river catchment or upland area.

Tweedsmuir	Moorfoots	Lammermuirs	Cheviot	Tweeddale	Ettrick Water	Liddesdale
7	2	2	2	1	1	1

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
37	29	25	10	39	20	39	28	26	36	35	34	17	23	20	16	15	16

No. of potential breeding sites reported: 2002-2019.

(shaded cells - SE Scotland Atlas survey period 2008-13)

Note that because this species has a significant number of potential breeding sites which are in the same tetrads and because of its apparent population decline, as well as the historical record dealing with sites and not tetrads, it has been decided to deal with sites as the basic unit and not tetrads.

Blackbird

Turdus merula

Abundant breeding resident. Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Light passage March-April and strong passage in October. During 2008-13 found in 79% of tetrads in summer and 71% in winter.

Records from 237 tetrads (19%). 2018 - 190 tetrads, 2017 - 194 tetrads, 2016 - 161 tetrads, 2015 - 135 tetrads.

Jan-Feb

Recorded in 78 tetrads. 2018 - 77 tetrads, 2017 - 59 tetrads, 2016 - 75 tetrads, 2015 - 64 tetrads, 2014 - 67 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) came from: Newmains (Reston) - 38; Tweedbank - 36; Melrose, Dingleton - 20; Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth GC - 20; Smailholm - 18; Cocker Law (Kelso) - 15; Selkirk SE - 15; Belses (Lilliesleaf) - 14; Yetholm Loch - 13; Preston - 12; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 12; Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream) - 11.

Mar-Aug

Recorded in 176 tetrads. 2018 - 136 tetrads, 2017 - 123 tetrads, 2016 - 128 tetrads, 2015 - 133 tetrads, 2014 - 179 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) came from: Tweedbank - 30; Old Nenthorn (Smailholm) - 30; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 29; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 22; Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream) - 18; The Hirsell - 16; Yetholm Loch - 16; Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords) - 13; Peebles - 12; Darnick (Melrose) - 12; Belses (Lilliesleaf) - 12; Longnewtown-Sandystones (St Boswells) - 11.

Breeding evidence reported from 86 tetrads: possible - 42; probable - 11; confirmed - 33. This is a substantial increase on 2018 (43 tetrads with breeding evidence). The first record of confirmed breeding was on 17-Apr at Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (CD Green).

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 108 tetrads. 2018 - 78 tetrads, 2017 - 100 tetrads, 2016 - 50 tetrads, 2015 - 57 tetrads, 2014 - 46 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) came from: Mire Loch (St Abb's Head) - 50; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 40; Tweedbank - 33; Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream) - 20; Tweed: Birgham Haugh (Coldstream) - 17; Burnmouth - 15; Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge - 13; Folly Loch W - 13; Coldstream-Lennel - 12; Kelso SW - 12; The Hirsell - 11; St Boswells-Dryburgh Abbey - 10; Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth Golf Course - 10.

The marked increase in records for this common species may possibly be because of greater observer effort, including a rise in the submission of "complete lists" to BirdTrack.

Fieldfare

Turdus pilaris

Abundant but greatly fluctuating 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.

Recorded in 128 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 115 tetrads, 2017 - 96 tetrads, 2016 - 95 tetrads, 2015 - 86 tetrads.

Jan-Feb (wintering)

Recorded in 53 tetrads. 2018 - 43 tetrads, 2017 - 33 tetrads, 2016 - 28 tetrads, 2015 - 48 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 100) came from: Pirnie House (Maxton) - 420; Hoselaw Mains (Yetholm) - 250; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 200; Hadden Rig NE (Kelso) - 150; Caldra (Longformacus) - 125; Jardinefield (Whitsome) - 110.

Mar-Apr (spring passage)

Recorded in 31 tetrads. 2018 - 33 tetrads, 2017 - 20 tetrads, 2016 - 24 tetrads, 2015 - 30 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 100) came from: Spurlens Rig (Portmore) - 2,000; Peat Law (Oxton) - 250; Thirlestane Hill (Ettrick Valley) - 200;

Bowdenmoor Res (Melrose) - 150; Yarrow Water: Sundhope - 110; Wooden (Kelso) - 100; Ancrum -100. The last record of the spring passage was of 2 birds at Cowieslinn road-end-Portmore (G Paterson) on 01-May.

Oct-Dec (autumn passage and wintering)

Recorded in 70 tetrads. 2018 – 79 tetrads, 2017 – 55 tetrads, 2016 – 53 tetrads, 2015 – 45 tetrads. The first record of the autumn passage was of one bird at Mire Loch-St Abb's Head (C Hartley) on 25-Sep. Largest counts (≥ 100) came from: Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 1,000; Manderston (Duns) - 400; Over Roxburgh - 370; Windywalls (Kelso) - 180; Roxburgh Newtown - 150; Roxburgh Mains - 140; Windywalls W (Kelso) - 140; Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose - 130; Newhall (Traquair) - 120; Broomy Law N (Yarrowford) - 110; Graden Moor (Yetholm) - 100; Annelshope (Ettrick) - 100.

Redwing

Turdus iliacus

Abundant but greatly fluctuating winter visitor and sometimes abundant autumn passage migrant in September-October. Less common on spring passage, March to early April. Rare in summer. During 2008-13 was found in 2% of tetrads in summer, 35% in winter.

Recorded in 71 tetrads (6%). 2018 - 74 tetrads, 2017 - 76 tetrads, 2016 - 69 tetrads, 2015 - 45 tetrads.

Jan-Feb (wintering): Recorded in 21 tetrads. 2018 - 25 tetrads, 2017 - 27 tetrads, 2016 - 23 tetrads, 2015 - 26 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 10) came from: Ettrickhill - 38; Whiteburn W (Abbey St Bathans) - 27; Newmains (Reston) - 18; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 17; Eckford Hall - Wooden Loch - 13.

Mar-Apr (spring passage): Recorded in 8 tetrads. 2018 - 27 tetrads, 2017 - 6 tetrads, 2016 - 11 tetrads, 2015 - 31 tetrads. The only count (≥ 10) came from Kippilaw Mains (Bowden) - 20. The last record of the spring passage was of 4 birds at St Abbs-Northfield (C Hatsell) on 24-Apr.

Oct-Dec (autumn passage and wintering): Recorded in 57 tetrads. 2018 - 60 tetrads, 2017 - 54 tetrads, 2016 - 41 tetrads, 2015 - 31 tetrads. The first record of the autumn passage was at Haining Loch-Selkirk (J Douglas) on 6-Sep. Largest counts (≥ 100) came from: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 563; Cocker Law (Kelso) - 400; Windywalls W (Kelso) - 300; Dawyck - 300; Tweed: Kelso-Sprouston - 150; Tweedhill (Union Bridge) - 134.

As with 2017 and 2018, the passage in autumn 2019 appeared to be considerably greater than in spring.

Song Thrush

Turdus philomelos

Abundant 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.

Recorded in 204 tetrads (16%). 2018 - 142 tetrads, 2017 - 95 tetrads, 2016 - 129 tetrads, 2015 - 113 tetrads.

Jan-Feb: Recorded in 49 tetrads. 2018 - 41 tetrads, 2017 - 31 tetrads, 2016 - 31 tetrads, 2015 - 25 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 6) came from: Edgerston Tofts (Carter Bar) - 8; Tweedbank - 7.

Mar-Aug: Recorded in 182 tetrads. 2018 - 121 tetrads, 2017 - 95 tetrads, 2016 - 110 tetrads, 2015 - 112 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 6) came from: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 17; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 11; Edgerston Tofts (Carter Bar) - 9; Fatlips Castle-Barnhills (Ancrum) - 9; Tweedbank - 8; Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) - 8; Bowland (Galashiels) - 7.

Breeding evidence reported from 117 tetrads: possible - 88; probable - 8; confirmed - 21. This is a significant increase on 2018 (46 tetrads with breeding evidence). The first record of confirmed breeding was on 11-Apr at Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (CD Green).

Sep-Dec: Recorded in 33 tetrads. 2018 - 29 tetrads, 2017 - 23 tetrads, 2016 - 19 tetrads, 2015 - 21 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 6) came from: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 90.

The marked increase in records for this common species (in particular breeding evidence) may possibly be because of greater observer effort, including a rise in the submission of "complete lists" with breeding evidence to BirdTrack.

Mistle Thrush

Turdus viscivorus

Abundant 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.

Recorded in 203 tetrads (16%). 2018 - 158 tetrads, 2017 - 112 tetrads, 2016 - 131 tetrads, 2015 - 106 tetrads.

Jan-Feb

Recorded in 66 tetrads. 2018 - 50 tetrads, 2017 - 30 tetrads, 2016 - 43 tetrads, 2015 - 33 tetrads. The only count (≥5) came from: Whiteadder Water: The Bell (Cranshaws) - 5.

Mar-Aug

Recorded in 123 tetrads. 2018 - 95 tetrads, 2017 - 68 tetrads, 2016 - 110 tetrads, 2015 - 112 tetrads. Largest counts (≥5) came from: Bruntaburn Wood (Westruther) - 13; Sunnyside Hill (Yetholm) - 10; Glenlude (Traquair) - 8; Edinhope Cottage (Gordon Arms Hotel) - 8; Priestthaugh E (Stobs Castle) - 6; Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) - 6; Woodside (Monteviot) - 5; Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords) - 5.

Breeding evidence reported from 52 tetrads: possible - 28; probable - 12; confirmed - 12. This is a significant increase on 2018 (30 tetrads with breeding evidence). The first record of confirmed breeding was on 27-Apr at Swinside Hall Plantation-Oxnam (N Stratton).

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 33 tetrads. 2018 - 29 tetrads, 2017 - 23 tetrads, 2016 - 19 tetrads, 2015 - 21 tetrads. Largest counts (≥5) came from: Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 12; Bowdenmoor Reservoir (Bowden) - 11; Liddell Water: Muckle Wrae Cleuch-Dead Sike - 11; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb’s Head) - 9; Whiteadder Water: Preston Bridge - 8; Haining Loch (Selkirk) - 7; The Hirsell - 6; Mountbengerhope (Gordon Arms Hotel) - 6; Lymiecleugh (Teviothead) - 6; Lambertton - 6; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 6; Crosscleuch (Loch of the Lowes) - 5; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 5; Tweed: Gledswood Farm (Melrose) - 5; Polwarth-Marchmont House - 5.

The marked increase in records for this common species (in particular breeding evidence) may possibly be because of greater observer effort, including a rise in the submission of “complete lists” with breeding evidence to BirdTrack. However, the number of occupied tetrads during the breeding season (Mar-Aug) as a percentage of all tetrads surveyed has remained approximately the same.

Spotted Flycatcher

Muscicapa striata

Common summer visitor. Scarce passage migrant, less common in spring than autumn. During 2008-13 found in 41% of tetrads in summer.

Recorded in 67 tetrads (5%). 2018 - 50 tetrads, 2017 - 32 tetrads, 2016 - 60 tetrads, 2015 - 42 tetrads.

First record was on 9-May: a single at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill - St Abb’s Head (C Hatsell).

Breeding evidence reported from 22 tetrads (possible - 9; probable - 4; confirmed - 9).

Plora Wood	15-May	S	Tweed: Dryburgh-St Boswells GC	07-Jul	P
Yarrow Water: Gordon Arms Hotel	29-May	S	Broadmeadows House (Paxton)	09-Jul	S
Tushielaw-Crosslee (Ettrick Water)	29-May	S	St Mary’s Loch-Cappercleuch	17-Jul	P
Leithen Lodge	07-Jun	S	West Linton-Westlands	21-Jul	FL
Huntford (Carter Bar)	10-Jun	ON	Talla Reservoir	26-Jul	FL
Pott’s Height (Buccleuch)	19-Jun	S	Hartwoodmyres (Selkirk)	28-Jul	S
Manderston-Buxley (Duns)	19-Jun	N	Kirkhouse (Traquair)	30-Jul	FF
Galashiels W	19-Jun	NE	Hare Moss (Selkirk)	31-Jul	NS
Commonbrae (Teviothead)	04-Jul	S	Whitmuir (Selkirk)	08-Aug	NY
Priestthaugh E (Stobs Castle)	04-Jul	S	Old Kirkhope-Langhaugh (Manor V)	10-Aug	FL
Teviot: Commonsides (Teviothead)	04-Jul	FF	Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	18-Aug	FL

See Introduction for breeding codes.

Autumn

Reports from 8 tetrads in Sep, with the latest records on 23-Sep at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill-St Abb’s Head (N Hammatt and C Hatsell). An unusually high count of 20 was recorded on 4-Sep at Barony Castle-Eddleston (V McLennan).

Robin*Erithacus rubecula*

Abundant resident and 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.

Recorded in 227 tetrads (18%). 2018 - 176 tetrads, 2017 - 161 tetrads, 2016 - 202 tetrads, 2015 - 172 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Recorded in 97 tetrads. 2018 - 88 tetrads, 2017 - 73 tetrads; 2016 - 107 tetrads; 2015 - 75 tetrads; 2014 - 77 tetrads. Largest counts: Tweedbank - 22; Mellerstain (Gordon) - 12; Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) - 10; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 9; Broomlee (West Linton) - 7; Lyne Dale (West Linton) - 7.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Recorded in 141 tetrads. 2018 - 111 tetrads, 2017 - 96 tetrads; 2016 - 123 tetrads; 2015 - 118; 2014 - 134 tetrads.

Largest counts (≥ 7): Dunlee Hill (Clovenfords) - 11; Tweedbank - 10; White Law (Glentress Forest) - 8; Kittlegairy Hill (Peebles) - 8; Barnhills Moor Plantation (Minto) - 8; Dawyck - 7; Bowland (Galashiels) - 7; Darnick (Melrose) - 7; Quixwood Moor (Abbey St Bathans) - 7.

Breeding records came from 68 tetrads: 44 possible, 8 probable and 16 confirmed. The earliest confirmed record was on 17-Apr at Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch (CD Green). A marked increase in breeding evidence.

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
276	236	304	302	334	134	118	123	96	111	141

Tetrads occupied in the breeding season 2009 - 2019.

Shaded years correspond to Atlas survey period.

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 96 tetrads. 2018 - 74 tetrads, 2017 - 84 tetrads; 2016 - 64 tetrads; 2015 - 66 tetrads.

Largest counts (≥ 7): Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 80; Tweedbank - 18; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 8; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 7; Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth GC - 7; Birgham (Coldstream) - 7.

Pied Flycatcher*Ficedula hypoleuca*

Scarce 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.

Recorded in 7 tetrads. 2018 - one tetrad, 2017 - 4 tetrads, 2016 - 5 tetrads, 2015 - 4 tetrads.

Spring passage: The only record was on 27-Apr at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill - St Abb's Head (C Hatsell).

Breeding evidence reported from 3 tetrads with a wide geographical spread (possible, eastern Borders; probable, central; confirmed in the west). This appears to be the best set of breeding records this century.

Autumn passage: Reports from 2 tetrads, with the latest record on 07-Oct at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill - St Abb's Head (F Evans).

Red-breasted Flycatcher*Ficedula parva*

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in Sep-Oct. Not annual.

Almost certainly the same single bird recorded on 3 consecutive days 05-Oct to 07-Oct at St Abb's Head (DK Graham *et al.*).



Red-breasted Flycatcher. St Abb's Head. October. Dave Graham.

Black Redstart

Phoenicurus ochruros

Scarce-very uncommon passage migrant mostly March-June and September-October. It very occasionally winters.

Fifteen records from 2 tetrads. 2018 – 9 records from 5 tetrads; 2017 - 3 records from 2 tetrads; 2016 - 4 records from 2 tetrads; 2015 - 4 records from one tetrad, 2014 - no records.

Burnmouth	23-Jan to 02-Feb	F Evans <i>et al.</i>
St Abb's Head	18-Apr to 29-Apr	C Hatsell <i>et al.</i>
St Abb's Head	12-Aug	C Hatsell
St Abb's Head	26-Sep	C Hatsell
St Abb's Head	10-Oct	A Kerr



Black Redstart. St Abb's Head. Ciaran Hatsell.

Redstart*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Well-represented, 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.

Recorded in 44 tetrads (3%). 2018 - 30 tetrads, 2017 - 29 tetrads, 2016 - 28 tetrads, 2015 - 21 tetrads.

Apr

Recorded in 3 tetrads. 2018 - 7 tetrads, 2017 - 10 tetrads, 2016 - 7 tetrads, 2015 - 5 tetrads, 2014 - 11 tetrads. The earliest record was on 18-Apr at Moorfoots South (T Dougall).

May-Jul (breeding season)

Recorded in 38 tetrads. 2018 - 26 tetrads, 2017 - 25 tetrads, 2016 - 28 tetrads, 2015 - 22 tetrads. Records with breeding evidence were submitted from 20 tetrads (11 possible; 5 probable; 4 confirmed).

In 2018 there were 12 tetrads with breeding evidence. 2017 - 19 tetrads, 2016 - 11 tetrads, 2015 - 6 tetrads, 2014 - 9 tetrads.

Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	05-May	S	Dawyck	25-May	S
Williamhope (Yair Hill Forest)	05-May	S	Torwoodlee GC (Galashiels)	27-May	S
Tweed: Elibank-Holylee	07-May	S	Tushielaw-Crosslee (Ettrick Water)	29-May	S
Steilburn (Caddonfoot)	11-May	S	Rhymer's Glen (Melrose)	31-May	FF
Craig Hill N (Caddonfoot)	12-May	S	Girnick Br-Ballmuir Plant'n (Smailholm)	01-Jun	FF
Hermitage Castle	15-May	T	Yarrow Water: Newarkmill-Foulshiels	09-Jun	S
Stiel End-Glenkinnon Burn (Yair Hill)	17-May	P	Lyne Dale (West Linton)	17-Jun	A
The Hirsell	18-May	D	Craik	27-Jun	FL
Portmore Reservoir-East Loch	22-May	S	Bemersyde Moss	28-Jun	A
Whitehope (Glentress Water)	24-May	S	Loch of the Lowes S	25-Aug	ON

Aug onwards

There were records from 9 tetrads from August onwards, the latest being of 2 birds, 06-Oct at Dowlaw - Coldingham Moor (J Hadfield).

The low number of records in Apr suggest a later than normal arrival, possibly explaining the higher tetrad record for May to Jul. The increase in breeding evidence since 2014 possibly reflects an increase in observer effort.

Whinchat*Saxicola rubetra*

Well-represented 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.

Recorded in 49 tetrads (4%). 2018 - 43 tetrads, 2017 - 22 tetrads, 2016 - 28 tetrads, 2015 - 21 tetrads.

Apr-Aug (breeding season).

Recorded in 48 tetrads. 2018 - 43 tetrads, 2017 - 22 tetrads, 2016 - 28 tetrads, 2015 - 18 tetrads, 2014 - 21. The earliest record was on 23-Apr at Hawkshaw - Tweedsmuir (J Ballantyne). Records with breeding evidence were submitted from 23 tetrads (9 possible; 9 probable; 5 confirmed).

Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave	28-Apr	P	Peat Law (Oxton)	18-Jun	A
Williamhope (Yair Hill Forest)	05-May	S	Hog Hill (Lauder)	27-Jun	A
Foulshiels Hill N (Yarrowford)	13-May	P	Huntershall (Soutra)	28-Jun	A
Sting Rig (Manor Valley)	18-May	S	Teviot: Commonbrae (Craik Forest)	04-Jul	FL
Upper Quair Water (Traquair)	28-May	S	Dollar Law SE (Megget Reservoir)	08-Jul	FF
Glen House (Traquair)	28-May	S	Tima Water: Nether Dalgleish (Craik Forest)	14-Jul	P

Hopewood Knowe (Craik)	30-May	S	West Linton Golf Club	15-Jul	A
Steilburn (Caddonfoot)	03-Jun	S	Baddingsill Farm (West Linton)	15-Jul	FL
Gill Burn (Blackhopebyre)	07-Jun	T	Wull Muir (Heriot)	21-Jul	A
Benshaw Hill (Kingleldores)	11-Jun	S	Kirkstead Burn (St Mary's Loch)	25-Jul	FL
Glencotha-Glenhighton (Broughton)	11-Jun	S	Broadgairhill (Ettrick)	30-Jul	FL
Hartwoodmyres (Selkirk)	15-Jun	S	See Introduction for breeding codes.		

In 2018, 17 tetrads had breeding evidence. 2017 - 10 tetrads, 2016 - 9 tetrads, 2015 - 5 tetrads, 2014 - 12 tetrads.

Sept onwards

There were records from 3 tetrads from September onwards, the latest on 06-Oct at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill - St Abb's Head (C Hatsell).

The increase in breeding evidence since 2014 probably reflects a sustained increase in observer effort. It should be noted that only 2 records were received from the Cheviots, with no evidence of breeding - likely to be the result of low coverage of this large area, which contains much suitable habitat.

Stonechat

Saxicola torquatus

Common 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 but signs of recovery since. During 2008-13 was found in 22% of tetrads in summer, 22% in winter.

Recorded in 67 tetrads (5%). 2018 - 50 tetrads, 2017 - 46 tetrads, 2016 - 42 tetrads, 2015 - 36 tetrads.

Jan-Feb

Recorded in 3 tetrads. 2018 - 17 tetrads, 2017 - 28 tetrads, 2016 - 25 tetrads, 2015 - 13 tetrads, 2014 - 4 tetrads. No counts exceeding 2 were recorded.

Mar-Aug (breeding season)

Recorded in 55 tetrads. 2018 - 26 tetrads, 2017 - 28 tetrads, 2016 - 25 tetrads, 2015 - 19, 2014 - 17 tetrads. Largest counts: Lymiecleugh (Teviothead) - 7; Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave- 5; Soutra Hill (Oxton) - 4; Talla Reservoir - 3; Glenlude E (Yarrow) - 3; Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) - 3. Breeding records came from 30 tetrads: 20 possible, 8 probable and 2 confirmed.

Mossilee Hill (Galashiels)	23-Apr	P	Red Brae (Oxton)	20-Jun	S
Eildon Mid Hill (Melrose)	02-May	FF	Hule Moss	22-Jun	FL
Birnie Knowe N (Buccleuch)	05-May	FL	Hog Hill (Lauder)	27-Jun	FL
Soutra Hill (Oxton)	06-May	A	Lauder Common (east)	30-Jun	FL
Glenlude (Traquair)	07-May	FF	Tanwell (Stow)	30-Jun	P
Talla Reservoir	07-May	P	Dewar (Garvald)	02-Jul	FL
Peat Law (Oxton)	10-May	A	Blackhope Tor-Windy Slack (Garvald)	03-Jul	FL
Lower Linghope Burn (Manor Valley)	18-May	P	Broomy Law (Yarrowford)	20-Jul	FL
Lauder Common	25-May	FL	Kirkstead Burn (St Mary's Loch)	25-Jul	FL
White Meldon SW (Lyne)	31-May	FL	Halliburton (Greenlaw)	28-Jul	FL
South Hill Head SW (Lyne)	31-May	FL	Rough Rig (Gordon Arms Hotel)	28-Jul	FL
Foulshiels Hill (Yarrowford)	09-Jun	A	Home Law (Buccleuch)	30-Jul	FL
Wull Muir (Heriot)	11-Jun	FL	Garvald Lodge (Dewar Burn)	06-Aug	P
Leithen Water: Shaw Burn	14-Jun	FL	Crosslee Rig (Tushielaw)	06-Aug	FF
Carcant (Heriot)	19-Jun	S	Brander Heugh (Dowlaw)	08-Aug	FL

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 23 tetrads. 2018 - 9 tetrads, 2017 - 20 tetrads, 2016 - 8 tetrads, 2015 - 11 tetrads, 2014 - 14 tetrads.

Largest counts: Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) - 6; Cakra Hill (Buccleuch) - 4; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 3; Dowlaw Moss - 3.

30 tetrads with breeding records (2018 - 14 tetrads, 2017 - 12 sites, 2016 - 10 sites) is a marked increase in breeding evidence, although worth noting that 63% of breeding evidence was submitted by two observers. No breeding evidence and few other records were submitted from the Lammermuir or Cheviot Hills. It is likely that the recovery from the population crash of 2010 is continuing, although varying observer coverage across the region means this cannot be assumed to be the case.

Wheatear

Oenanthe oenanthe

Common-abundant 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.

Recorded in 69 tetrads (5%). 2018 - 60 tetrads, 2017 - 56 tetrads, 2016 - 70 tetrads, 2015 - 76 tetrads.

Mar-Apr (including spring passage)

Recorded in 44 tetrads. Largest counts: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 24; St Abbs-Northfield - 15; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 8; Graden (Yetholm) - 8; Newmains (Reston) - 6; Lee Pen (Leithen Water) - 5.

The earliest record was on 21-Mar at St Abbs-Northfield (N Hammatt).

May-Aug (breeding season)

Recorded in 39 tetrads. Largest counts: Meggethead (Megget Reservoir) - 8; Cademuir Hill (Manor Valley) - 8; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 7; Duddy Bank (Cranshaws) - 5.

Records with breeding evidence were submitted from 18 tetrads (2 possible; 7 probable; 9 confirmed):

Red Scar (Glensax)	19-Apr	S	Glentress Burn (Blackhopebyre)	08-Jun	FL
Lee Pen (Leithen Water)	19-Apr	P	Soutra Hill (Oxton)	16-Jun	FL
Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)	19-Apr	P	Peat Law (Oxton)	18-Jun	A
Mossilee Hill (Galashiels)	23-Apr	P	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	12-Jul	FL
Wull Muir (Heriot)	30-Apr	P	Auchope Cairns (Cheviot Burn)	15-Jul	FL
Williamhope (Yair Hill Forest)	05-May	P	Megget Reservoir-Cramalt	17-Jul	FL
St Abbs	11-May	S	Kirkstead Burn (St Mary's Loch)	25-Jul	FL
Lymiecleugh (Teviothead)	16-May	P	Crosslee Rig (Tushielaw)	28-Jul	FL
Hog Hill (Lauder)	06-Jun	FL	Broadgairhill (Ettrick)	30-Jul	FL

In 2018 there were 16 tetrads with breeding evidence. 2017 - 5 tetrads, 2016 - 10 tetrads, 2015 - 6 tetrads.

Sep onwards

There were records from 8 tetrads. Largest counts (≥ 5): Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor) - 10; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 9. The latest record was on 14-Oct at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill, St Abb's Head (C Hatsell).

The overall increase in the records of this species since 2014 possibly reflects an increase in observer effort.

When submitting records for areas that are spread over two or more tetrads please give your site a name which indicates the extent of the area. For example, if your site takes in a river walk then you might give the approximate start and finish points (eg Teviot: Junction Pool-Roxburgh). If your site is a circular walk then you might want to include two or three places in the site name and add the word circular (eg Stobo-Hammer Head-Broughton Circular). The important thing is to convey an idea of the extent of the site so that tetrads can be accurately ascribed



Wheatear. St Abb's Head. Ciaran Hatsell.

Dipper

Cinclus cinclus

Well-represented resident along river system. During 2008-13 found in 34% of tetrads in summer and 32% in winter.

Recorded in 124 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 107 tetrads, 2017 - 94 tetrads, 2016 - 114 tetrads, 2015 - 90 tetrads.

Jan-Feb

Recorded in 48 tetrads. 2018 - 46 tetrads, 2017 - 40 tetrads, 2016 - 32 tetrads, 2015 - 32 tetrads, 2014 - 69 tetrads. Largest counts: Maxton - 4; Gala Water: Stow-Watherston - 3; Tweedbank-Langlee - 3.

Mar-Jul (breeding season)

Recorded in 70 tetrads. 2018 - 59 tetrads, 2017 - 46 tetrads, 2016 - 45 tetrads, 2015 - 66 tetrads, 2014 - 68 tetrads. Breeding evidence reported from 25 tetrads (possible - 2; probable - 10; confirmed - 13). 2018 - 19 tetrads, 2017 - 19 tetrads, 2016 - 21 tetrads.

Yarrowford-Newark Castle	01-Mar	P	Lamb Law (Glentress Water)	23-Apr	NY
Teviot Haughs - Nisbet	01-Mar	P	Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot)	30-Apr	NY
Pease Bay	17-Mar	B	Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	01-May	FF
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	20-Mar	B	Portmore (Eddleston Burn)	02-May	NY
Lee Pen N (Leithen Water)	23-Mar	NY	Yetholm Loch (Thirlstane Burn)	10-May	FL
Yair (Caddonfoot)	24-Mar	S	Lymiecleugh (Teviothead)	16-May	FF
Jed Water: Jedburgh	24-Mar	P	Tweed: Mertoun Br-Mertoun Ho.	18-May	N
Leithen Water: Colquhar	30-Mar	NY	Glen Ho-Traquair	28-May	FL
Leithen Lodge	30-Mar	NY	Peebles	30-May	ON
Heriot Water: Ladyside	30-Mar	NY	Earlston School (Tufford Burn)	13-Jun	S
The Hirsell (Leet Burn)	08-Apr	P	Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	24-Jun	FL
Walkerburn	10-Apr	P	Selkirk SW	29-Jul	P
Gala Water: Stow-Watherston	12-Apr	T	See Introduction for breeding codes.		

In 2018 there were 19 tetrads with breeding evidence, 2017 - 19 tetrads, 2016 - 21 tetrads.

Aug-Dec

Recorded in 53 tetrads. 2018 - 40 tetrads, 2017 - 44 tetrads, 2016 - 34 tetrads, 2015 - 35 tetrads. Largest counts: Tweed: Manor Bridge-Tweed Bridge (Peebles) -8; Tweedbank - 5; Norton (Lauder) - 4.

The valuable contribution from the BRG possibly explains the apparent overall increase in records. It is notable that no breeding records were received from the Lammermuir or Cheviot Hills.

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus

Abundant breeding resident. Forms flocks August-March. During 2008-13 was found in 47% of tetrads in summer, 41% in winter.

Recorded in 152 tetrads (12%). 2018 - 138 tetrads, 2017 - 97 tetrads, 2016 - 107 tetrads, 2015 - 95 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Recorded in 64 tetrads. 2018 - 51 tetrads, 2017 - 40 tetrads; 2016 - 49 tetrads; 2015 - 40; 2014 - 37 tetrads. Largest counts: Lamberton - 50; Newmains (Reston) - 45; Cockburnspath - 41; Selkirk SE - 40; Galashiels W - 30; Wooden (Kelso) - 30; Pease Bay - 20; West Linton S - 20.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Recorded in 103 tetrads. 2018 - 102 tetrads, 2017 - 55 tetrads, 2016 - 67 tetrads, 2015 - 64, 2014 - 64 tetrads. Largest counts: Foulden - 60; Larriston (Saughtree) - 42; Newmains (Reston) - 30; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 25; Newstead (Melrose) - 25; Abbotsford-Netherbarns - 20; Standhill (Lilliesleaf) - 20.

Breeding records came from 21 tetrads (3 probable and 18 confirmed):

Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	30-Apr	FF	Newstead (Melrose)	03-Jun	NY
Sorrowlessfield (Earlston)	12-May	N	West Linton-Westlands	12-Jun	NY
Graden (Yetholm)	14-May	B	Whitmuir (Selkirk)	13-Jun	T
Lamberton	19-May	FF	Coldingham N	14-Jun	FF
Bowden	20-May	NY	Jardinefield-Eaglehall (Whitsome)	15-Jun	NE
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	21-May	FL	Tweed: Paxton Ho-Union Bridge	02-Jul	FL
The Hirsell	25-May	FL	Kingside Edge (Portmore)	06-Jul	FL
Kelso NE	28-May	FL	Abbotsford-Netherbarns	12-Jul	FL
Eckford-Kalemouth	28-May	FL	Harelaw Pond-Cotfield (Lilliesleaf)	18-Aug	NY
Newmains (Reston)	28-May	FL	Broom (Ancrum)	18-Aug	FL
St Boswells S	01-Jun	FL	See Introduction for breeding codes.		

In 2018, breeding records came from 15 tetrads, 2017 - 18 tetrads, 2016 - 11 tetrads.

Sep-Dec: Recorded in 59 tetrads. 2018 - 47 tetrads, 2017 - 43 tetrads, 2016 - 28 tetrads, 2015 - 25 tetrads. Largest counts: Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 50; Lamberton - 50; Newstead (Melrose) - 35; Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden) - 35; Newmains (Reston) - 34; Coldingham Loch - 20; Greenlaw SE - 20; Peebles - 20; Lintlaw (Preston) - 20; St Boswells S - 20; Hermiston (Lilliesleaf) - 20; Pease Bay - 20.

This familiar species remains under-recorded, although the 2019 set of breeding records is the biggest since the Atlas period.

Tree Sparrow

Passer montanus

Common-abundant 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.

Recorded in 68 tetrads (5%). 2018 - 78 tetrads, 2017 - 64 tetrads, 2016 - 54 tetrads, 2015 - 52 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Recorded in 48 tetrads. 2018 - 44 tetrads, 2017 - 19 tetrads; 2016 - 24 tetrads; 2015 - 52. Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 240; Whitecross-Alemill (Coldingham) - 180; Blackburn W (Abbey St Bathans) - 25; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 18; Whiteadder Water: Elba (Abbey St Bathans) - 16; Hassendeanburn Fm (Hawick) - 14; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 13; Eildon-Rhymer's Stone - 10.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Recorded in 38 tetrads. 2018 - 35 tetrads, 2017 - 25 tetrads, 2016 - 21 tetrads, 2015 - 14, 2014 - 25 tetrads. Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 44; Newstead (Melrose) - 14; Elba (Abbey St Bathans) 12; Jardinefield-Eaglehall (Whitsome) - 12; Graden (Yetholm) - 11; Courthill (Kelso) - 11; Auchencrow - 10. Breeding records came from 18 tetrads (one possible, 6 probable and 11 confirmed).

Elba (Abbey St Bathans)	19-Apr	P	Eckford-Kalemouth	28-May	FL
Coldstream-Lennel	21-Apr	D	New Smailholm-Rachelfield	01-Jun	ON
Eildon-Rhymer's Stone	22-Apr	S	Newstead (Melrose)	03-Jun	NY
Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	01-May	B	Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	03-Jun	FL
Graden (Yetholm)	14-May	ON	Whitmuir (Selkirk)	13-Jun	T
Lamberton	19-May	FF	Howden (Selkirk)	14-Jun	P
St Abbs-Northfield	20-May	B	Jardinefield-Eaglehall (Whitsome)	15-Jun	FL
Bowden	22-May	NY	Chapel Mains (Earlston)	30-Jun	FF
Newmains (Reston)	25-May	NY	New Mills (Lauder)	30-Jun	FL

In 2018, breeding records came from 10 tetrads, 2017 - 11 tetrads, 2016 - 5 tetrads, 2015 - 6 tetrads.

Sep-Dec: Recorded in 31 tetrads. 2018 - 28 tetrads, 2017 - 36 tetrads, 2016 - 19 tetrads, 2015 - 11 tetrads, 2014 - 21. Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 80; Mordington Holdings (Foulden) - 50; Tweedhill (Union Bridge) - 27; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 20; Auchencrow - 20; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 19; Simprim S (Swinton) - 16; Whiteadder Water: Clarabad (Foulden) - 14; Tods Loup (Lamberton) - 12; Hadden (Sprouston) - 10. Although the number of tetrads in which this species was recorded is lower than the previous year, the 2019 set of breeding records is the largest and fullest since the Atlas period.



Tree Sparrow. Leaderfoot. October. Lisa McLeish.

Dunnock

Prunella modularis

Abundant resident; well-represented passage visitor.

Recorded in 158 tetrads (12%). 2018 - 126 tetrads, 2017 - 105 tetrads, 2016 - 149 tetrads, 2015 - 141 tetrads.

Jan-Mar

Recorded in 66 tetrads. 2018 - 62 tetrads, 2017 - 50 tetrads, 2016 - 66 tetrads, 2015 - 62 tetrads. Largest counts: Tweedbank - 11; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 5; Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge - 5.

Apr-Aug (breeding season)

Recorded in 106 tetrads. 2018 - 79 tetrads, 2017 - 62 tetrads, 2016 - 88 tetrads, 2015 - 98 tetrads.

Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 12; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 10; Tweedbank - 9; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 9; Old Nenthorn (Smailholm) - 7; Newstead (Melrose) - 7; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 6; Eckford-Kalemouth - 6; Hoselaw Mains (Town Yetholm) - 5; Shielfield (Oxton) - 5.

Breeding records came from 63 tetrads (47 possible, 9 probable and 7 confirmed).

In 2018, breeding records came from 35 tetrads, 2017 - 30 tetrads, 2016 - 15 tetrads.

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 74 tetrads. 2018 - 51 tetrads, 2017 - 57 tetrads, 2016 - 36 tetrads, 2015 - 43 tetrads.

Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 9; Newstead (Melrose) - 5; Tweedbank - 5; Teviot: Bucklands (Hawick) - 5.

The 2019 set of records is the largest since the Atlas period.

The substantial increase in breeding records is likely due to increased observer effort - 4 observers submitted 61% of all breeding evidence for this species.

Yellow Wagtail

Motacilla flava

Scarce-very uncommon 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.

Recorded in 8 tetrads. 2018 - 10 tetrads, 2017 - 9 tetrads, 2016 - 6 tetrads, 2015 - 8 tetrads, 2014 - 9 tetrads.

Of the 8 tetrad records, 3 (including one record of probable breeding) were from the Teviot valley downstream of Ancrum and 3 from Tweed downstream of Kelso (including 2 records of probable breeding). In 2018, breeding records came from 2 tetrads, 2017 - 1 tetrad.

The earliest record was on 20-Apr at Tweed: Sprouston (K Robson). The highest count was at Tweed: Sprouston-Redden - 3. The latest record was on 23-Sep at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill - St Abb's Head (N Hammett).

One record was received of Yellow Wagtail (Grey-headed - *thunbergi*) on 10-May at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill - St Abb's Head (C Hatsell). This was the first record since 1998.

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.

Recorded in 126 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 113 tetrads, 2017 - 110 tetrads, 2016 - 123 tetrads, 2015 - 99 tetrads.

Jan-Mar

Recorded in 35 tetrads. 2018 - 37 tetrads, 2017 - 41 tetrads, 2016 - 46 tetrads, 2015 - 18 tetrads.

Largest counts: Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 4; Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange - 4.

Apr-Aug (breeding season)

Recorded in 90 tetrads. 2018 - 78 tetrads, 2017 - 79 tetrads, 2016 - 88 tetrads, 2015 - 72, 2014 - 71 tetrads.

Largest counts: Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 7; West Buccleuch (Craik Forest) - 6; Hawick central - 6; Philiphaugh (Selkirk) - 5; Gala Water: Stow-Watherston - 4; Peebles - 4; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 4; Glentress Burn (Blackhopebyre) - 4; Tweed: Mertoun Br-Benrig Dean (St Boswells) - 4.

Breeding records came from 27 tetrads: 4 possible, 10 probable and 13 confirmed. The earliest record of confirmed breeding on, 05-May, was from Melrose: Dingleton (D Parkinson).

Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	20-Mar	S	Lodge Plantation (Roberton)	30-May	S
Morebattle	23-Mar	P	Peat Law (Oxton)	01-Jun	S
The Hirsell	01-Apr	P	Tweed: Sprouston-Birgham Haugh	06-Jun	FF
Gala Water: Stow-Watherston	04-Apr	P	Huntershall (Soutra)	10-Jun	FL
Colquhar (Leithen Water)	05-Apr	P	West Linton-Westlands	11-Jun	FF
Teviot Haughs: Crailing	10-Apr	P	Innerleithen	14-Jun	FF
Hopehouse (Ettrick)	13-Apr	P	Peebles	19-Jun	P
Coldstream N-Coldstream Mains	28-Apr	P	Dry Cleugh, Rankle Burn (Buccleuch)	24-Jun	P
Abbey House (Abbey St Bathans)	30-Apr	S	Teviot: Commonbrae (Craik Forest)	04-Jul	FL
Melrose: Dingleton	05-May	NE	Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside	13-Jul	FL
Lees Haugh NE (Coldstream)	11-May	FF	Yarrow Water: Gordon Arms Hotel	14-Jul	FL
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	18-May	FF	Kirkstead Burn (St Mary's Loch)	25-Jul	FL
Bowden Burn (Newtown St Boswells)	23-May	FL	Abbotsford-Netherbarns	24-Sep	FL
Whitehope (Glentress Water)	24-May	P	See introduction for breeding codes.		

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 49 tetrads. 2018 - 22 tetrads, 2017 - 37 tetrads, 2016 - 30 tetrads, 2015 - 33 tetrads.

Largest counts: Newstead (Melrose) - 9; Tweedbank - 8; Tweed: Manor Bridge-Tweed Bridge (Peebles) - 5; Tweed: Gledswood Fm (Melrose) - 4.

Pied Wagtail

Motacilla alba

Abundant summer visitor. Scarcer October-March. Variable wintering numbers. Passage in March-April and September-October. Some roosts. During 2008-13 was found in 75% of tetrads in summer, 15% in winter.

Recorded in 184 tetrads (14%). 2018 - 150 tetrads, 2017 - 137 tetrads, 2016 - 158 tetrads, 2015 - 121 tetrads.

Jan-Apr (including spring passage): Recorded in 89 tetrads. Largest counts: Millar's Moss (St Abbs) - 53; Tweedbank - 16; Tweed: Birgham Haugh (Coldstream) - 11; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 10; Teviot: Lanton Mill (Denholm) - 10.

May-Aug: Recorded in 135 tetrads. Largest counts: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 16; Newstead (Melrose) - 11; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 10.

Breeding records came from 46 tetrads: 1 possible, 9 probable and 36 confirmed. The earliest record of confirmed breeding, on 05-May, was from Lees Weir, Coldstream (AP Mossop). In 2018, breeding evidence was reported from 26 tetrads: 2017 - 21 tetrads, 2016 - 31 tetrads, 2015 - 26 tetrads, 2014 - 12 tetrads.

Sep-Dec (including autumn passage): Recorded in 51 tetrads. 2018 - 38 tetrads, 2017 - 51 tetrads, 2016 - 24 tetrads, 2015 - 30 tetrads. Largest counts: St Abbs-Northfield - 120; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 68; Greenbank Hill S (Roberton) - 40; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 31; Clockmill (Duns) - 22; Pease Bay - 22; Newstead (Melrose) - 20; Tweedbank-Langlee - 12; Tweed: Sprouston - 12; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 11; Watch Water Reservoir - 11.

The 46 tetrads with breeding evidence is twice the average of 23 submitted over the previous 5 years, although one observer did provide 44% of the 2019 records.

The spring passage appeared to extend into mid-April, with a significant count at Millar's Moss. The autumn passage also produced higher counts than recent years.

White Wagtail *M. a. alba*: records from 3 tetrads: Newmains (Reston) - 2 records; St Abb's Head - 8 records; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 1 record. All records noted between 23-Mar and 21-Apr. It is highly likely this subspecies is under-recorded.



Pied Wagtail. Selkirk. April. Dougie Methven

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.

Recorded in 155 tetrads (12%). 2018 - 143 tetrads, 2017 - 104 tetrads, 2016 - 161 tetrads, 2015 - 110 tetrads.

Jan-Apr (including spring passage)

Recorded in 62 tetrads. Largest counts: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 84; Megget Reservoir-Cramalt - 60; Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave - 43; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 21; Tweed: Sprouston - 20.

May-Aug (including autumn passage in Jul-Aug)

Recorded in 97 tetrads. Largest counts: Seenes Law (Fallago Ridge) - 110; Larriston Rig (Liddesdale) - 42; Priestthaugh (Teviothead) - 33; Raeshaw Fell E (Hownam) - 27; Dam Head Rig (Traquair) - 20; Hule Moss - 20.

Breeding records from 38 tetrads: 15 possible, 9 probable and 14 confirmed. 2018 - 25 tetrads in 2018, 2017 - 27 tetrads, 2016 - 12 tetrads, 2015 - 11 tetrads.

Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave	31-Mar	S	Lauder Common	14-Jun	NY
Colquhar (Leithen Water)	05-Apr	S	Coldingham N	14-Jun	FL
Blackhopebyre (Glentress Water)	05-Apr	S	Lyne Dale (West Linton)	17-Jun	D
Towford West (Oxnam)	09-Apr	S	The Schil (Yetholm)	18-Jun	S
Peat Law (Oxton)	17-Apr	D	Soutra Hill (Oxton)	19-Jun	NY
Lee Pen (Leithen Water)	19-Apr	P	Windy Gyle N (Hownam)	20-Jun	S
Hog Hill (Lauder)	28-Apr	NE	Rhymer's Glen (Melrose)	21-Jun	S
St Abbs	11-May	S	Eildon Mid Hill (Melrose)	21-Jun	S
Bowdenmoor Reservoir (Bowden)	12-May	P	Tanwell (Stow)	30-Jun	FF
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	18-May	S	Megget Stone	03-Jul	S
Dewar Burn: Dewar	22-May	S	Broad Law (Talla Reservoir)	03-Jul	S
Tocher Knowe (West Linton)	24-May	D	Priestthaugh E (Stobs Castle)	04-Jul	FF

Faw Mount (West Linton)	24-May	D	Hule Moss	05-Jul	FF
Whitehope (Glentress Water)	24-May	S	Dollar Law SE (Megget Reservoir)	08-Jul	D
Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	03-Jun	FF	Auchope Cairns (Cheviot Burn)	15-Jul	FF
Spittal Haugh (Romannobridge)	04-Jun	D	Broomy Law (Yarrowford)	20-Jul	T
Larriston (Saughtree)	10-Jun	S	Foulshiels Hill (Yarrowford)	20-Jul	FL
Outerside Rig (Craig)	11-Jun	FF	Kirkstead Burn (St Mary's Loch)	25-Jul	FL
Wull Muir (Heriot)	11-Jun	NE	Brander Heugh (Dowlaw)	08-Aug	FL

See Introduction for breeding codes.

Sep-Dec (including autumn passage)

Recorded in 61 tetrads. Largest counts: Wester Deans-Easter Deans (Portmore) - 55; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 52; Lauder Common (east) - 41; St Mary's Loch-Cappercleuch - 40; Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave - 40; Hule Moss - 30; Fruid Reservoir - 25; Megget Reservoir-Cramalt - 20; Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn) - 20; Jardinefield (Whitsome) - 20.

The spring passage extended well into April, with a significant count at St Abb's Head in late Mar. The autumn passage appeared to begin in mid-August. Passage-period counts were higher than 2018.

The largest counts in summer, with the exception of one count of 20, were the result of Breeding Bird Surveys, giving a picture of densities in appropriate habitat. Unfortunately, BBS data comes without breeding evidence, so does not contribute to the table above.

Tree Pipit

Anthus trivialis

Abundant, localised summer visitor in forest clearings and clearfell. Less common passage migrant April-May and September. During 2008-13 was found in 19% of tetrads in summer.

Recorded in 33 tetrads (3%). 2018 - 27 tetrads, 2017 - 14 tetrads, 2016 - 13 tetrads, 2015 - 8, 2014 - 11 tetrads.

Mar-Apr (including spring passage): Recorded in 8 tetrads, with a largest count of 4 at Thirlestane Lodge - Ettrick (G Christer) on 19-Apr. The earliest records were on 30-Mar at St Abb's Head (DK Graham, C Hatsell).

May-Aug: Recorded in 27 tetrads, with a largest count of 3 at Gordon Community Wood N (F Evans) on 18-May. Records with breeding evidence were submitted from 19 tetrads (16 possible, 3 probable).

Gordon Community Wood N	23-Apr	S	Soutra Hill (Oxton)	28-May	S
Huntford (Carter Bar)	25-Apr	S	Shorthope (Ettrick)	29-May	S
Larriston (Saughtree)	03-May	S	Midgehope (Ettrick)	29-May	S
Foulshiels Hill N (Yarrowford)	13-May	S	Crosslee Rig (Tushielaw)	29-May	S
Graden (Yetholm)	14-May	S	Meadshaw (Craig)	30-May	S
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	15-May	T	Faldonside-Cauldshiels Lochs (Galashiels)	31-May	S
Stiel End-Glenkinnon Burn (Yair Hill)	17-May	S	Portmore Res-Portmore House	05-Jun	S
Craig Hill N (Caddonfoot)	17-May	S	Broadgairhill (Ettrick)	30-Jul	P
Bowden	23-May	S	Hartleap (Tushielaw)	30-Jul	P
Eildon Mid Hill (Melrose)	23-May	S	See introduction for breeding codes.		

In 2018 there were 17 tetrads with breeding evidence. 2017 - 8 tetrads, 2016 - 7 tetrads.

Aug onwards: there were records from 4 tetrads, with a largest count of 9 at Wester Deans-Easter Deans - Portmore (BRG) on 08-Aug. The latest record was on 19-Sep at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill - St Abb's Head (M Eaton).

Rock Pipit

Anthus petrosus

Uncommon breeder along coast, found in 13 coastal tetrads. Although wintering birds swell numbers in October-March the species remains uncommon.

Recorded in 10 tetrads (1%). 2018 - 14 tetrads, 2017 - 16 tetrads, 2016 - 17 tetrads, 2015 - 17 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Recorded in 6 tetrads. 2018 - 8 tetrads, 2017 - 13 tetrads, 2016 - 17. The Rocky Shore Count on or about 27-Jan had a total count of 27. Largest counts: Dunglass - 11; Burnmouth - 8; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 6.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Recorded in 4 tetrads. 2018 - 4 tetrads, 2017 - 5 tetrads, 2016 - 8 tetrads, 2015 - 72. The only substantial count was of 7 at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) on 05-Apr. Breeding evidence came from 3 tetrads: 2 possible, 1 probable. 2018 - 2 tetrads, 2017 - 0 tetrads, 2016 - 3 tetrads, 2015 - 0 tetrads.

Sep-Dec: Recorded in 8 tetrads. 2018 - 8 tetrads, 2017 - 7 tetrads, 2016 - 7 tetrads. Largest counts: Pettico Wick-West Hurker (St Abb's Head) - 12; Burnmouth - 9; Eyemouth - 6.

One record (2 birds) was received of Rock Pipit (Scandinavian - *littoralis*) on 17-Mar at Dunglass (DK Graham).

Chaffinch

Fringilla coelebs

Abundant breeder, autumn passage migrant and winter visitor. Winter birds often occurring in large flocks, sometimes of several hundreds. Spring passage flocks are less common. During 2008-13 was found in 92% of tetrads in summer, 81% in winter.

Recorded in 286 tetrads (22%). 2018 - 229 tetrads, 2017 - 179 tetrads, 2016 - 249 tetrads, 2015 - 217 tetrads.

Jan-Mar

Recorded in 125 tetrads. 2018 - 102 tetrads, 2017 - 78 tetrads, 2016 - 102 tetrads, 2015 - 86 tetrads. Largest counts: Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 150; Newmains (Reston) - 130; Dodburn-Shankfoot (Stobs Castle) - 100; Plora Wood E (Walkerburn) - 90; Pirnie (Maxton) - 80; Clearburn Cottage (Buccleuch) - 70; Edgerston Tofts (Carter Bar) - 68; Edrington Castle Mill (Paxton) - 64; Kirkhouse (Traquair) - 60; Wooden (Kelso) - 50; Graden (Yetholm) - 45; Garvald-Windy Slack (Heriot) - 40.

Apr-Aug

 (breeding season)

Recorded in 212 tetrads. 2018 - 164 tetrads, 2017 - 103 tetrads, 2016 - 149 tetrads, 2015 - 148, 2014 - 177 tetrads. Largest counts: Bowland (Galashiels) - 41; Borthwickshiels (Hawick) - 35; Quixwood Moor (Abbey St Bathans) - 34; Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) - 32; Megget Reservoir - 25; Darnick (Melrose) - 24; Yarrowford - Broomy Law - 24; Ale Water: Belses Hill Farm; Tan Law (Cessford) - 22; Longnewtown-Sandystones (St Boswells) - 22; White Law (Glentress Forest) - 20; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 20; Talla Reservoir - 20; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 20.

Breeding records came from 83 tetrads: 51 possible, 21 probable and 11 confirmed. In 2018, breeding evidence was recorded in 50 tetrads. The earliest record of confirmed breeding, on 22-Apr, was from Eckfordhall-Wooden Loch (CD Green).

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 126 tetrads. 2018 - 91 tetrads, 2017 - 89 tetrads, 2016 - 59 tetrads, 2015 - 71 tetrads. Largest counts: Shiplaw (Eddleston) - 300; Earlside (Stobs Castle) - 250; Watch Water Reservoir - 120; Tweed: Juniperbank (Walkerburn) - 100; Hawthornside (Bonchester Bridge) - 100; Galalaw-Stodrig (Kelso) - 100; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 80; Ettrick Water: Tushielaw Inn-Cacrabank - 75; Lymiecleugh (Teviothead) - 50; Wedderlie (Westruther) - 50; Lauderhill (Lauder) - 50; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 47.

The large increase in tetrad and breeding records for this species runs contrary to the much-reported recent UK-wide decline, and is possibly the result of increased observer effort.

Brambling

Fringilla montifringilla

Well-represented passage migrant and winter visitor but numbers erratic. Some large flocks late September-April. During 2008-13 was found in 17% tetrads in winter.

Recorded in 59 tetrads (5%). 2018 - 75 tetrads, 2017 - 48 tetrads, 2016 - 48 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Recorded in 39 tetrads. 2018 - 52 tetrads, 2017 - 15 tetrads, 2016 - 27 tetrads, 2015 tetrads - 11, 2014 - 16 tetrads. Largest counts: Wooden (Kelso) - 80; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 50; Dodburn-Shankfoot (Stobs Castle) - 30; Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh - 50; Wooden (Kelso) - 80.

Apr-May: Recorded in 20 tetrads. 2018 - 10 tetrads, 2017 - 11 tetrads, 2016 - 9 tetrads, 2015 - no records, 2014 - 7 tetrads.

Largest counts: The Hirsell - 10; Newstead (Melrose) - 7. The last record was on 26-Apr at Peebles (BRG).

Sep-Oct: Recorded in 6 tetrads. 2018 - 16 tetrads, 2017 - 14 tetrads, 2016 - 5 tetrads, 2015 - 6 tetrads. No counts above 5 were recorded, the first record was on 04-Oct at St Abb's Head (DK Graham).

Nov-Dec: Recorded in 13 tetrads. 2018 - 18 tetrads, 2017 - 21 tetrads, 2016 - 13 tetrads, 2015 - 7 tetrads. Largest counts: Tushielaw Hill (Ettrick Valley) - 50; Shiplaw (Eddleston) - 40.

Bullfinch

Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Common but retiring resident. During 2008-13 was found in 31% of tetrads in summer, 47% in winter.

Recorded in 155 tetrads (12%). 2018 - 125 tetrads, 2017 - 129 tetrads, 2016 - 109 tetrads, 2015 - 107 tetrads.

Jan-Mar

Recorded in 78 tetrads. 2018 - 79 tetrads, 2017 - 64 tetrads, 2016 - 46 tetrads, 2015 - 53 tetrads. Largest counts: Tweed: Dryburgh Br-Monksford (Newton St Boswells) - 18; Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth GC - 17; Whiteadder Water: Elba (Abbey St Bathans) - 11; The Hirsell - 11; Mellerstain (Gordon) - 10; Whiteadder Reservoir Dam - 8; Horseupcleugh Rig (Longformacus) - 8; Broomy Law N (Yarrowford) - 8; Belses (Lilliesleaf) - 7.

Apr-Aug (breeding season)

Recorded in 62 tetrads. 2018 - 45 tetrads, 2017 - 58 tetrads, 2016 - 47 tetrads, 2015 - 41, 2014 - 46 tetrads.

Largest counts: The Hirsell - 10; Newstead (Melrose) - 7. Breeding records came from 19 tetrads: 1 possible, 12 probable and 6 confirmed.

Yetholm Loch	24-Mar	P	Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog	23-Jun	P
Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)	28-Mar	P	Philiphaugh Est-Old Mill Fm (Selkirk)	25-Jun	FL
Coldstream-Lennel	21-Apr	B	West Linton S	27-Jun	A
The Hirsell	29-Apr	P	Brander Heugh (Dowlaw)	30-Jun	P
Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	05-May	P	St Boswells S	14-Jul	P
Bemersyde Moss	19-May	P	Abbotsford	20-Jul	P
Eildon Mid Hill (Melrose)	23-May	S	Hass (Carter Bar)	29-Jul	FL
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	09-Jun	FL	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	19-Sep	FL
Lyne Dale (West Linton)	10-Jun	A	Darnick (Melrose)	01-Oct	UN
Newstead (Melrose)	20-Jun	FL	See Introduction for breeding codes.		

Previous breeding records: 2018 - 15 tetrads; 2017 - 20 tetrads; 2016 - 17 tetrads; 2015 - 13 tetrads.

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 82 tetrads. 2018 - 51 tetrads, 2017 - 73 tetrads, 2016 - 44 tetrads, 2015 - 54 tetrads. Largest counts: Dewar Gill: Piper of Peebles Grave - 24; Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth GC - 18; Dawyck - 12; Newstead (Melrose) - 11; Lindean Reservoir (Selkirk) - 10; Thirlestane Lodge (Ettrick) - 8; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 8; Whitmuir Hall (Selkirk) - 8 Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 7; Tweedbank - 7.

One record received was of a Northern Bullfinch (nominate *pyrrhula*) on 14-Oct at Mire Loch-Kirk Hill - St Abb's Head (A Chambers).

Greenfinch

Carduelis chloris

Abundant but declining breeding resident. Forms flocks July-March. During 2008-13 was found in 43% of tetrads in summer, 33% in winter.

Recorded in 58 tetrads (5%). 2018 - 63 tetrads, 2017 - 51 tetrads, 2016 - 55 tetrads, 2015 - 59 tetrads.

Jan-Mar

Recorded in 35 tetrads. 2018 – 45 tetrads, 2017 - 21 tetrads, 2016 - 32 tetrads, 2015 - 22 tetrads, 2014 - 34. Largest counts: The Hirsell - 75; Newmains (Reston) - 20; Philiphaugh-Bowhill Estates (Selkirk) - 12; St Boswells S - 11; Kelso NE - 10; Innerleithen - 8; Selkirk SW - 6; Cocker Law (Kelso) - 6; Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream) - 6.

Apr-Aug (breeding season)

Recorded in 33 tetrads. 2018 - 36 tetrads, 2017 - 29 tetrads, 2016 - 31 tetrads, 2015 - 38, 2014 - 93 tetrads. Largest counts: Peebles - 7; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 6; St Abb's Head - 6. Breeding records came from 17 tetrads: 10 possible, 4 probable and 3 confirmed.

Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	20-Mar	S	Kelso NE	28-May	FL
Pirn Craig-Clure Pool (Innerleithen)	23-Mar	S	Rhymer's Glen (Melrose)	31-May	S
Teviot: Kelso-Roxburgh	30-Mar	S	Lyne Dale (West Linton)	11-Jun	S
Lees Haugh-Hirsell	21-Apr	S	Jed Water: Jedburgh	15-Jun	S
Darnick (Melrose)	27-Apr	S	Philiphaugh Est-Old Mill Fm (Selkirk)	25-Jun	T
Galashiels W	07-May	B	St Abbs-Northfield	08-Jul	S
Newmains (Reston)	10-May	FL	Abbotsford	20-Jul	FL
Traquair House	11-May	S	St Abb's Head	28-Jul	T
Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	25-May	P	See introduction for breeding codes.		

In 2018, breeding evidence was recorded in 18 tetrads.

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 26 tetrads. 2018 - 16 tetrads, 2017 - 20 tetrads, 2016 - 14 tetrads, 2015 - 16 tetrads, 2014 - 31. Largest counts: The Hirsell - 24; Hawk's Ness-Eyemouth GC - 17; Philiphaugh Estate (Selkirk) - 14; Peebles - 6; Tweedbank - 6.

Considering the increase in recording in Borders over recent years it is reasonable to suggest that this species continues its decline in the region, in line with the UK-wide trend.

Twite

Carduelis flavirostris

Rare breeder found in just seven sites between 1988-94. Very uncommon but increasing winter visitor and passage migrant to hills and coast. During 2008-13 was found in 8 tetrads in summer, 20 in winter.

There were 7 records from 5 tetrads. 2018 - 4 tetrads, 2017 - 3 tetrads, 2016 - 1 tetrad, 2015 – 5 tetrads.

17-Mar	Dunglass	16	DK Graham
25-Apr	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	1	C Hatsell
14-May	Wide Hope Shank (Romannobridge)	2	JB Irving
07-Jul	Wide Hope Shank (Romannobridge)	1	JB Irving
25-Nov	St Abbs-Northfield	1	C Hatsell
15-Dec	Pettico Wick-West Hurker (St Abb's Head)	4	C Hatsell
24-Dec	Blackdean Curr (Yetholm)	1	J Towill

No breeding records submitted.

Linnnet

Carduelis cannabina

Abundant breeder in east. Can form large winter flocks. During 2008-13 was found in 53% of tetrads in summer, 17% in winter.

Recorded in 121 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 96 tetrads, 2017 - 65 tetrads, 2016 - 71 tetrads, 2015 - 62 tetrads.

Jan-Mar

Recorded in 24 tetrads. 2018 - 18 tetrads, 2017 - 10 tetrads, 2016 - 9 tetrads, 2015 - 9 tetrads, 2014 - 11. Largest counts (≥ 20): Lambertton - 50; Branxholmtown (Hawick) - 35.

Apr-Aug (breeding season)

Recorded in 97 tetrads. 2018 - 71 tetrads, 2017 - 43 tetrads, 2016 - 55 tetrads, 2015 - 44 tetrads, 2014 - 46 tetrads. Largest counts: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 200; Whitrig Bog (Smailholm) - 150; St Abbs-Northfield - 36; Tweed: Birgham Haugh (Coldstream) - 28; Wooden (Kelso) - 20. Breeding records came from 22 tetrads: 2 possible, 13 probable and 7 confirmed. In 2018, breeding evidence was recorded in 19 tetrads.

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 33 tetrads. 2018 - 24 tetrads, 2017 - 29 tetrads, 2016 - 10 tetrads, 2015 - 17 tetrads. Largest counts: Black Hill (Earlston) - 160; Lauderhill (Lauder) - 120; Earlside (Stobs Castle) - 120; Newmains (Reston) - 90; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 80; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 70; Ettrick Water: Tushielaw Inn-Cacrabank - 70; Jardinefield (Whitsome) - 60; Cove Harbour - 50; Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) - 33; Dowlaw Moss - 30; Lambertton - 30; Ferniehirst (Stow) - 25; Eyemouth - 25; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 20.

Common Redpoll

Acanthis flammea

Usually 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.

There were 16 records from 5 tetrads. 2018 - 8 tetrads, 2017 - 6 tetrads, 2016 - 4 tetrads. Highest counts per tetrad:

06-Jan	Whiteadder Water: The Bell (Cranshaws)	60	DK Graham
21-Mar	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	2	C Hatsell
21-Apr	Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)	10	DK Graham
08-Oct	Newmains (Reston)	1	DK Graham
18-Dec	Greenburn Cottages (Auchencrow)	6	J Walker

Although a scarce visitor, the identification challenge for many observers posed by the various redpoll species probably leads to a degree of under-reporting.

Lesser Redpoll

Acanthis cabaret

Abundant 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.

Recorded in 104 tetrads (8%). 2018 - 82 tetrads, 2017 - 54 tetrads, 2016 - 43 tetrads. Twenty of the records were submitted as Common/Lesser Redpoll.

Jan-Mar

Recorded in 23 tetrads. 2018 - 22 tetrads, 2017 - 16 tetrads, 2016 - 12 tetrads, 2015 - 9 tetrads. Largest counts: Whiteadder Water: The Bell (Cranshaws) - 280; Innerleithen - 17; Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream) - 11.

Apr-Aug (breeding season)

Recorded in 62 tetrads. 2018 - 63 tetrads, 2017 - 33 tetrads, 2016 - 27 tetrads, 2015 - 25 tetrads. Largest counts: Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 84; Tushielaw Hill W (Ettrick Valley) - 60; Crosscleuch (Loch of the Lowes) - 25; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 20; Swinside Hall Plantation (Oxnam) - 10.

Tweed: Gattonside-Melrose	15-Apr	P	Newmains (Reston)	08-Jun	FL
Mossilee Hill (Galashiels)	23-Apr	S	Dowlaw Dam (Coldingham Moor)	21-Jun	FL
Foulshiels Hill N (Yarrowford)	13-May	P	Hog Hill (Lauder)	27-Jun	P
Eildon Mid Hill (Melrose)	23-May	S	Wull Muir (Heriot)	29-Jun	P
Tocher Knowe (West Linton)	24-May	D	Holywell Rig E (Teviothead)	04-Jul	S
Soutra Hill (Oxton)	28-May	P	Kirkstead Burn (St Mary's Loch)	25-Jul	FL
Lymiecleugh (Teviothead)	05-Jun	S	See introduction for breeding codes.		

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 14 tetrads. 2018 - 14 tetrads, 2017 - 24 tetrads, 2016 - 7 tetrads, 2015 - 21 tetrads. Largest counts: Wester Deans-Easter Deans (Portmore) - 43; Newmains (Reston) - 19; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 12.

Arctic Redpoll

Rare winter visitor.

Acanthis hornemanni exilipes

There were 4 records from Whiteadder Water: The Bell (Cranshaws) - 06-Jan to 03-Feb (DK Graham). Presumed to be the same bird as that seen in Dec 2019 at this location.

Crossbill

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.

Loxia curvirostra

Recorded in 74 tetrads (6%). 2018 - 65 tetrads, 2017 - 36 tetrads, 2016 - 40 tetrads, 2015 - 35 tetrads.

Jan-Jun (period likely to include most breeding records)

Recorded in 51 tetrads. Largest counts: Huntlyburn House (Tweedbank) - 40; Stobs Castle - 20; Huntford (Carter Bar) - 20; Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond (Heiton) - 20; Gatehopeknowe-Holylee (Walkerburn) - 20; Woden Law (Towford) - 12; Corby Linn (Selkirk) - 12; Galabank (Stow) - 11; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 11; Torwoodlee GC (Galashiels) - 10. Breeding records came from 6 tetrads. 2018 - 5 tetrads. See Introduction for breeding codes.

07-Jan	West Linton Golf Club	P	P Ball
20-Mar	Sorrowlessfield (Earlston)	S	J Gordon
28-Mar	Bowmont Forest-Ladyrig Pond (Heiton)	P	CD Green
31-Mar	Stobswood Lees (Longformacus)	FL	AP Mossop
18-Sep	Elibank (Walkerburn)	P	M Lindsay
31-Dec	Three Brethren-Little Crib (Selkirk)	S	J Gordon

July-Dec (period likely to include irruption of continental birds)

Recorded in 36 tetrads. Largest counts: Dunglass - 34; Gamescleuch (Ettrick) - 20; Yarrowford Hall - 10. The count at Dunglass (18-Aug) may have been of continental arrivals.

This species has a variable breeding season, mainly centred on the winter months. Observers are requested to submit any breeding evidence throughout the year.

Goldfinch

Abundant breeder. Forms winter flocks July-March. During 2008-13 was found in 73% of tetrads in summer, 62% in winter.

Carduelis carduelis

Recorded in 188 tetrads (15%). 2018 - 159 tetrads, 2017 - 135 tetrads, 2016 - 120 tetrads, 2015 - 110 tetrads.

Jan-Mar

Recorded in 68 tetrads. 2018 - 57 tetrads, 2017 - 45 tetrads, 2016 - 48 tetrads, 2015 - 39 tetrads. Largest counts: St Boswells S - 61; Abbotsford - 60; West Linton S - 35; Newmains (Reston) - 35; Black Knowe Head N (Gordon Arms Hotel) - 30; Ettrick Water: Tushielaw Inn-Cacrabank - 20.

Apr-Aug (breeding season)

Recorded in 104 tetrads. 2018 - 116 tetrads, 2017 - 103 tetrads, 2016 - 149 tetrads, 2015 - 148, 2014 - 177 tetrads. Largest counts: Bemersyde Moss-Whitrig Bog - 50; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 22; Tweed: Melrose-Gattonside - 16; Yarrowford - 16. Breeding records came from 35 tetrads: 20 possible, 8 probable and 7 confirmed. In 2018, breeding evidence was recorded in 23 tetrads. The earliest record of confirmed breeding, on 30-Apr, was from Eckfordhall-Wooden Loch (CD Green).

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 78 tetrads. 2018 - 63 tetrads, 2017 - 70 tetrads, 2016 - 43 tetrads, 2015 - 53 tetrads. Largest counts: Birgham - 60; Brander Heugh (Dowlaw) - 52; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 50; Lamberton Shore - 50; West Linton S -

35; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 30; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 30; Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor) - 30; St Abbs-Northfield - 30; Whiteadder Water: Clarabad (Foulden) - 30.

Siskin

Carduelis spinus

Abundant resident and summer visitor in forestry areas. Common passage migrants with peaks October & April. Forms winter flocks of fluctuating sizes. During 2008-13 was found in 57% of tetrads in summer, 36% in winter.

Recorded in 144 tetrads (11%). 2018 - 105 tetrads, 2017 - 77 tetrads, 2016 - 66 tetrads.

Jan-Mar: Recorded in 49 tetrads. 2018 - 48 tetrads, 2017 - 37 tetrads, 2016 - 18 tetrads, 2015 - 19 tetrads. Largest counts: Gordon Community Wood N - 35; Raecleugh (Westruther) - 30; Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot) - 30; Wooden (Kelso) - 30; Peebles - 29 [BRG]; Pirn Craig-Clure Pool (Innerleithen) - 25; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 24; St Boswells S - 21; The Hirsell - 20; Abbotsford - 20; Yarrowford-Newark Castle - 20; Yarrowford - 19 [BRG]; Dodburn-Shankfoot (Stobs Castle) - 15; Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn) - 15.

Apr-Aug (breeding season): Recorded in 105 tetrads. 2018 - 64 tetrads, 2017 - 46 tetrads, 2016 - 46 tetrads, 2015 - 26 tetrads. Largest counts: Yarrowford - 77; Peebles - 66; Tweed-Hallow Burn (Tweedsmuir) - 20; Huntford (Carter Bar) - 15. Breeding evidence came from 19 tetrads: 7 possible, 8 probable, 4 confirmed.

Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch	05-Mar	P	Dawyck	11-May	P
Tweed: Newstead-Drygrange	20-Mar	S	Sorrowlessfield (Earlston)	12-May	S
Gordon Community Wood N	31-Mar	P	Soutra Hill (Oxton)	28-May	S
Abbotsford	21-Apr	B	Glenlude (Traquair)	29-May	D
Seathope Law SW (Walkerburn)	22-Apr	S	Ashiestiel-Peel (Caddonfoot)	24-Jun	FL
Elibank (Walkerburn)	22-Apr	S	West Linton S	27-Jun	T
Eildon-Rhymer's Stone	22-Apr	S	Tima Water: Nether Dalgliesh (Craik Forest)	14-Jul	FL
Selkirk Hills	05-May	S	West Linton Golf Club	15-Jul	P
Peebles W	09-May	P	Hass (Carter Bar)	29-Jul	FL
Heiton	09-May	FL	See introduction for breeding codes.		

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 37 tetrads. 2018 - 34 tetrads, 2017 - 33 tetrads, 2016 - 19 tetrads, 2015 - 20 tetrads. Largest counts: Cacara Hill (Buccleuch) - 350; Peebles - 99 [BRG]; Innerleithen - 95; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 83; Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch - 60; Thirlestane Lodge (Ettrick) - 50; St Abbs-Northfield - 35; Fruid Water: Blacklaw Cottage - 30; Traquair - 30; Thornielee Car Park (Walkerburn) - 25; Stow E - 15.

Yellowhammer

Emberiza citrinella

Abundant, mainly in the east. Forms winter flocks. During 2008-13 was found in 41% of tetrads in summer, 30% in winter.

Recorded in 130 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 100 tetrads, 2017 - 64 tetrads, 2016 - 73 tetrads, 2015 - 75 tetrads.

Jan-Mar

Recorded in 54 tetrads. 2018 - 42 tetrads, 2017 - 31 tetrads, 2016 - 26 tetrads, 2015 - 28 tetrads, 2014 - 42. Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 340; Roxburgh Barns (Kelso) - 120; Quixwood Moor (Abbey St Bathans) - 110; Coldingham N - 100; Lady Moss (Bowden) - 100; Wooden (Kelso) - 100; Ploughlands Pond Wood (Nisbet) - 50; Lees Haugh NE (Coldstream) - 50; Teviot: Nisbetmill - 48; Sandyknowe (Smailholm) - 45; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 30.

Apr-Aug

 (breeding season)

Recorded in 87 tetrads. 2018 - 63 tetrads, 2017 - 48 tetrads, 2016 - 48 tetrads, 2015 - 68 tetrads, 2014 - 67. Largest counts: Courthill (Kelso) - 37; Newmains (Reston) - 32; Wooden (Kelso) - 15; Tweed: Birgham Haugh (Coldstream) - 12; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 11; Cheeklaw (Duns) - 10; Shielfield (Oxton) - 10. Breeding evidence came from 44 tetrads: 34 possible, 6 probable, 4 confirmed. 2018 - 27 tetrads, 2017 - 25 tetrads, 2016 - 17 tetrads, 2015 - 20 tetrads.

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 44 tetrads. 2018 - 32 tetrads, 2017 - 26 tetrads, 2016 - 16 tetrads, 2015 - 18 tetrads, 2014 - 18 tetrads. Largest counts: Windywalls W (Kelso) - 80; Windywalls (Kelso) - 60; Newmains (Reston) - 42; Nisbet-Ormiston House - 40; Manorhill (Makerstoun) - 30; Lady Moss (Bowden) - 26; Whitehouse-Millfield (Smailholm) - 20. The noticeable increase in records is possibly the result of increased observer effort.



Yellowhammer. Burnhouse Mains (Stow). May. Alistair Cutter.

Reed Bunting

Emberiza schoeniclus

Abundant and local breeder in 21% of tetrads. A few passage migrants. Less abundant 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.

Recorded in 130 tetrads (10%). 2018 - 104 tetrads, 2017 - 81 tetrads, 2016 - 86 tetrads, 2015 - 75 tetrads.

Jan-Mar

Recorded in 44 tetrads. 2018 - 31 tetrads, 2017 - 22 tetrads, 2016 - 28 tetrads, 2015 - 25 tetrads. Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 54; Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream) - 11 Watch Water Reservoir - 6; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 6.

Apr-Aug (breeding season)

Recorded in 98 tetrads. 2018 - 77 tetrads, 2017 - 56 tetrads, 2016 - 77 tetrads, 2015 - 57 tetrads. Largest counts: Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 16; Courthill (Kelso) - 14; Teviot Haughs (Crailing) - 9; Teviot Haughs (Nisbet) - 8; Soutra Hill (Oxton) - 6; Tweed: Lees Haugh (Coldstream) - 6. Breeding evidence came from 49 tetrads: 31 possible, 12 probable, 6 confirmed. 2018 - 39 tetrads, 2017 - 21 tetrads, 2016 - 47 tetrads, 2015 - 22 tetrads.

Sep-Dec

Recorded in 35 tetrads. 2018 - 20 tetrads, 2017 - 19 tetrads, 2016 - 12 tetrads, 2015 - 10 tetrads. Largest counts: Newmains (Reston) - 13; Eckford-Kalemouth - 12; Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head) - 8; Watch Water Reservoir - 8.

The noticeable increase in records may be due to increased observer effort.

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

There were 9 records from 6 tetrads. 2018 - 3 tetrads, 2017 - 2 tetrads, 2016 - 1 tetrad, 2015 – no records.

06-Jan	Woden Law (Towford)	9	J Towill
29-Sep	Mire Loch-Kirk Hill (St Abb's Head)	1	C Hatsell
01-Oct	Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)	1	JDH Hadfield
12-Oct	Dowlaw (Coldingham Moor)	3	DK Graham
02-Nov	Eyemouth	1	DK Graham
06-Nov	St Abb's Head-Black Gable	1	C Hatsell
09-Nov	Dowlaw Moss	35	F Evans
27-Nov	Eyemouth	1	C Hartley
25-Dec	Crib Law N (Oxton)	3	J Wilson

This is the fullest set of records for this species since 2014.

Exotics, escapes and hybrids

Ruddy Duck

16-Jul at Tweed: Blount Island (Ladykirk). DK Graham. Single bird.

17-Aug to 18-Sep at Greenlaw Farm Pool (Foulden). D Christie *et al.* Single bird.

Both thought to be the same bird, an adult.

Although not ringed was assumed to be an escape.

Bar-headed Goose

13-Mar at Cammerlaws (Westruther). AP Mossop. Two birds. Also seen by CD Green on 20-Mar.

Helmeted Guineafowl

2-Mar at Primside Farm (Yetholm). M Moncrieff. Single bird.

Canada x Greylag Goose

23-Feb at Tweed: Paxton House-Union Bridge. C Hartley. Single bird.

28-May, 1-Dec, 2-Dec at St Abb's Head NNR. C Hatsell. Single bird.

Domestic Greylag Goose

06-Sep at Kelso S. CD Green. Two birds.

Domestic Mallard

20-Oct at Newstead (Melrose). M Pitt. Single bird.

Errata and addenda

Turnstone

BBR 2018 gave a table showing RSC totals for 2012-2018. The counts given were mismatched with the years and should be ignored.

Black-headed Gull

In 2018 breeding evidence came from 7 tetrads (3 confirmed) and not 10 confirmed as given. Sites with evidence of breeding were: North Esk Reservoir; Carcant (Heriot); Synton Moss (Ashkirk); Easter Housebyres Loch (Earlston); Whitton Loch (Hownam); Tweed: Sprouston-Redden; Hule Moss.

Cuckoo

Total occupied tetrads in 2018 should have been 52 and not 49.

Long-eared Owl

RSG report missing from 2018:

Sites/ Territories checked	Sites/ Territories occupied	Sites with proven breeding (eggs laid)	Minimum young fledged	No. of young fledged per occupied site	No. of young fledged per successful pair
21 (+)	17	15	22	1.29	1.46

There were slightly higher totals than in 2017, but huge suitable areas were not covered. Only two records originated from south of the Tweed. One study area checked for Long-eared Owls: Pentlands (Graham) with the only other RSG records from Tom and from a member of public via Alan.

I have supplemented these with records from other individuals, accounting for 7 sites.

Young were fledged from 15 sites.

	Possible breeding pairs	Probable breeding pairs	Confirmed breeding pairs	TOTAL
Borders	1	1	8	10
Lothian	0	0	7	7

Willow Warbler

The number of occupied tetrads for 2016 should read 137 and not 175 and the number of occupied tetrads from Apr-Aug should read 125 and not 137.

Meadow Pipit

The number of occupied tetrads in 2018 was given as 155. It should have been 143. Also in 2018 breeding records were from 25 tetrads and not 9.

Tree Pipit

2018: total tetrads occupied was 27 and not 29 as reported; there were 17 tetrads with breeding evidence and not 18 as reported.

Rock Pipit

Mismatch between Rock Pipit report in June's Birders Year report and in classified list, ie *littoralis* ssp. Mentioned in former but not latter.

2018: there were 2 tetrads with breeding evidence and not zero as reported.

Chaffinch

2018: a total of 229 tetrads were occupied and not 247 as reported; Jan-Mar had 102 occupied tetrads and not 110 as reported; Apr-Aug had 164 occupied tetrads and not 181 as reported; breeding evidence came from 51 tetrads and not 73 as reported; Sep-Dec had 91 occupied tetrads and not 94 as reported.

Bullfinch

2018: there were 125 tetrads occupied and not 133 as reported; Jan-Mar had 79 tetrads occupied and not 87 as reported; Apr-Aug had 45 tetrads occupied and not 41 as reported; Sep-Dec had 51 and not 43. Breeding evidence came from 15 tetrads and not 11 as reported.

Greenfinch

2018: a total of 63 tetrads were occupied and not 70 as reported; Jan-Mar had 45 tetrads occupied and not 70; Apr-Aug had 36 and not 39; Sep-Dec had 63 and not 70. Tetrads with breeding evidence were 18 and not 9.

Linnet

2018: a total of 96 tetrads were occupied and not 22; Jan-Mar had 18 occupied tetrads and not 22; Apr-Aug had 71 and not 77; Sep-Dec had 24 and not 25. Tetrads reporting breeding were 19 and not 15.

Lesser Redpoll

The total number of occupied tetrads in 2018 was 84 and not, as reported, 82.

Goldfinch

2018: a total of 159 tetrads were occupied and not, as reported, 174. Jan-Mar had 57 tetrads and not 62; Apr-Aug had 116 and not 124; breeding evidence should have been 7 tetrads with confirmed, 9 with probable and 20 with possible.

Siskin

2018: a total of 105 tetrads were occupied and not 116 as reported; Jan-Mar had 48 tetrads and not 52; Apr-Aug had 64 and not 69.

Yellowhammer

2018: total tetrads occupied was 100 and not 108; breeding records came from 27 tetrads and not 17, as reported.

Reed Bunting

2018: total occupied tetrads was 104 and not 118; Jan-Mar had 31 occupied tetrads and not 35; Apr-Aug had 77 tetrads and not 86.

Dates of first and last migrants: winter visitor dates were wrong way round, ie 1st record column should have been arrival in autumn.

The Borders Branch of the SOC now has a database based on Microsoft Excel which dates back to 2000. While the early years are less complete, records for much of the period since 2005 appear to be complete. The records are updated in the light of errors and additions as they are discovered.

Dates of first and last records of migrants

First and last records of summer visitors

Summer visitors

Species	Arrival	Departure
Garganey	nr	
Quail	15-Apr	07-Sep
Osprey	25-Mar	04-Sep
Marsh Harrier	22-Apr	12-Oct
Little Ringed Plover	10-Apr	03-Aug
Common Sandpiper	02-Apr	10-Oct
Sandwich Tern	20-Apr	04-Oct
Little Tern	nr	
Roseate Tern	nr	
Common Tern	08-May	12-Oct
Arctic Tern	12-May	18-Sep
Cuckoo	28-Apr	26-Aug
Swift	21-Apr	18-Sep
Sand Martin	10-Mar	28-Sep
Swallow	30-Mar	20-Oct
House Martin	07-Apr	08-Oct
Willow Warbler	09-Apr	10-Oct
Wood Warbler	26-Apr	07-Oct
Sedge Warbler	20-Apr	26-Sep
Reed Warbler	11-May	09-Sep
Grasshopper Warbler	09-Apr	26-Jul
Garden Warbler	28-Apr	07-Oct
Lesser Whitethroat*	22-Apr	15-Oct
Whitethroat	19-Apr	01-Oct
Ring Ouzel	31-Mar	15-Oct
Spotted Flycatcher	09-May	23-Sep
Pied Flycatcher	27-Apr	07-Oct
Redstart	18-Apr	16-Oct
Whinchat	23-Apr	06-Oct
Wheatear	21-Mar	14-Oct
Yellow Wagtail	20-Apr	23-Sep
Tree Pipit	30-Mar	19-Sep

Last and first records of winter visitors

Winter visitors

Species	Departure	Arrival
Whooper Swan**	06-May	18-Sep
Pale-bellied Brent Goose	nr	19-Sep
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	nr	
Barnacle Goose	31-May	19-Sep
Pink-footed Goose**	29-Apr	03-Sep
Tundra Bean Goose	nr	
White-fronted Goose	27-Mar	nr
Long-tailed Duck	01-Feb	02-Oct
Red-throated Diver**	12-May	15-Sep
Black-throated Diver	27-Mar	18-Sep
Great Northern Diver	22-Mar	08-Sep
Red-necked Grebe	nr	
Slavonian Grebe	nr	
Jack Snipe	26-Mar	01-Oct
Little Gull	nr	05-Oct
Glaucous Gull	nr	03-Nov
Iceland Gull	nr	
Little Auk	nr	29-Oct
Waxwing	23-Jan	09-Nov
Fieldfare	01-May	25-Sep
Redwing	24-Apr	06-Sep
Brambling	26-Apr	04-Oct
Twite**	14-May	25-Nov
Lapland Bunting	nr	
Snow Bunting	06-Jan	29-Sep

nr refers to no records submitted.

* ssp. *blythi* seen on 6-Nov. ** single bird(s) reported during summer.

Chiffchaff and Blackcap not included due to difficulty in separating over-wintering birds from immigrants.

Do you have anything that you would like to contribute to *Borders Bird Report 2020*? We are always on the look-out for relevant articles on subjects like descriptions of bird watching sites, especially where there is plenty of supporting records or perhaps you have data relating to a period of time over which you have studied the changes in the numbers of a species or group of species. Anything of local interest and relevance will be considered. Please contact Tom Brewis via tbrewis50@gmail.com.

Ringling in the Scottish Borders 2019

Tom Dougall

This is the thirty-third 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. However the 2019 online report published by BTO (see, for 2018 : Robinson, R.A., Leech, D.I. & Clark, J.A. (2019) *The Online Demography Report: Bird ringing and nest recording in Britain & Ireland in 2018*. BTO, Thetford (<http://www.bto.org/ringing-report>, created on 15-July-2019) was not available in time for publication of the 2019 Borders Bird Report, so this ringing report is based almost entirely on the efforts of Borders Ringing Group. There will be no published cumulative totals (although this will be maintained separately for Borders Ringing Group), but that for BRG has now reached almost 139,400 of 138 species (8,402 of 70 species in 2019).

Table 1 lists the species and numbers ringed in 2019 in the Borders area, excluding those deemed by BTO to be sensitive, where confidentiality is required.

2019 was another good year, following the most productive year (2017), for ringing in the Borders.

There were good numbers of chicks of wader species, Black-headed Gulls, Barn Owls and Swifts. Among the passerines, Nuthatch and Tree Sparrow continue to be productive, and Dipper chick numbers were back to a more respectable level. For the first time in many years, a brood of Pied Flycatchers was ringed. In terms of fully-grown birds, 2019 was a particularly productive year for Meadow Pipit, warbler species, Brambling, small finches and the total for Siskin pick up again to over 3,600.

Borders Ringing Group's contributions to the BTO's monitoring projects continued (Constant Effort Site at St Abb's 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 5 km. from the locality of their original ringing. Sightings of colour-ring combinations, inscribed colour-rings or neck-collars, inscribed wing-tags, and PIT (passive integrated transponder tags) 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 for 2019 will be available online at the BTO website (reference as above for 2018 at <http://www.bto.org/ringing-report>, created on 15-July-2019), and are well worth a look on a rainy Sunday afternoon! In the meantime, those detailed below are largely from Borders Ringing Group efforts.

The two Storm Petrels 2661109 and 2686944 are of interest since they involve, respectively, a bird of breeding age and a bird identified as a female – presumably there is now a small breeding colony close to the Berwickshire / Forth area. Two more Mute Swans from north-east England followed a pattern of movement into the central Borders. There is a fascinating and rare example of an Irish-bred Peregrine moving to the Borders to breed. Lapwing DB18495 may not have moved very far from its natal area, but it is one of only a very few of the near 2,700 ringed as chicks in the Borders to be reported later. The colour-ringed Bar-tailed Godwit seen in the Borders RG recording area reveals a bit about the timing of migration south from the Arctic breeding grounds.

Gulls, too, are wanderers but Andrew Bramhall's sighting of the Finland-ringed Lesser Black-backed is of particular interest since the bird was a "Baltic" Gull (*L. f. fuscus*) which should have been wintering in east Africa or passing through the eastern Mediterranean/Middle East! The demise of Black-headed Gull EG17546 reveals an inter-colony movement, although we cannot know how long it had been breeding in the Moorfoots. In addition to EY21995 (Table 2) reported from Co. Antrim on 23-Jul 2019, other Black-headed Gulls EZ20117 was reported from Belfast on 20-Jul, EY21806 was reported from Co. Down on 25-Jul, and EY21969 was reported in the Loch Ryan area of Galloway from 25-Jul to 18-Sep - an interesting cluster to the south-west of the Borders. Additionally, from reports of its colour-rings, Black-headed Gull EY21956 - ringed as a chick on 17-Jun 2017 - was seen at Seton Burn, East

Lothian from 28- Jun to 25-Sep 2018, then again from 21- to 27-Feb 2019, before heading north up the coast where it was seen at the Ugie Estuary, Peterhead on 4-May 2019, then back at Seton Burn from 15-Jul to 30-Oct 2019.

Species	Full grown	Chick	Total	Species	Full grown	Chick	Total
Mute Swan	1		1	Garden Warbler	1		1
Storm Petrel	10		10	Whitethroat	11		11
Sparrowhawk	1		1	Goldcrest	77		77
Buzzard		4	4	Wren	51		51
Water Rail	1		1	Nuthatch	12	50	62
Oystercatcher		36	36	Treecreeper	8		8
Lapwing		42	42	Starling	14		14
Curlew		9	9	Blackbird	127	6	133
Jack Snipe	2		2	Fieldfare	7		7
Common Sandpiper	7	12	19	Redwing	92		92
Redshank		1	1	Song Thrush	40		40
Black-headed Gull		153	153	Mistle Thrush		5	5
Common Gull		17	17	Spotted Flycatcher	6	2	8
Woodpigeon	9		9	Robin	121	5	126
Collared Dove	1		1	Pied Flycatcher		7	7
Barn Owl	11	49	60	Redstart	4		4
Tawny Owl	8	6	14	Stonechat	1		1
Swift	11	25	36	Dipper	6	56	62
Gt Spotted Woodpecker	4		4	House Sparrow	107	2	109
Kestrel		10	10	Tree Sparrow	22	58	80
Magpie	1		1	Dunnock	175		175
Jackdaw	1	22	23	Pied/White Wagtail	4		4
Raven		5	5	Meadow Pipit	177		177
Coal Tit	103		103	Tree Pipit	13		13
Blue Tit	391	80	471	Chaffinch	722		722
Great Tit	128	28	156	Brambling	111		111
Skylark		10	10	Bullfinch	40		40
Swallow		16	16	Greenfinch	131		131
Long-tailed Tit	48		48	Linnet	10		10
Willow Warbler	261		261	Lesser Redpoll	164		164
Chiffchaff	94		94	Redpoll sp.	5		5
Sedge Warbler	87	10	97	Goldfinch	374		374
Reed Warbler	5		5	Siskin	3,679		3,679
Grasshopper Warbler	1		1	Yellowhammer	72		72
Blackcap	54		54	Reed Bunting	52		52
				Total Birds	7,676		

Table 1. Birds ringed in the Scottish Borders, 2019 (by Borders Ringing Group).

Of the passerines, it is always pleasing to get details of a foreign recovery/control, such as Blackbird LA67833. At a personal level, Blackbird LH33613 had been ringed by me and was found dead just around the corner from my home in Edinburgh!

There is an interesting series of warbler movements, particularly that of the Blackcap moving north to Peebles in the autumn.

Very few Bramblings appeared in the British Isles during winter 2019/20, so the bird controlled in Sweden in the autumn may well have been on its way to “pastures new”.

There are the usual distant movements of Goldfinch, Siskin (see also Table 4), and Lesser Redpoll. Of particular interest is the first Siskin through the Channel Islands; and a series of movements linking Lesser Redpolls in the Borders with northern Scotland and the English Midlands, as well as another from Kent in late march, which may have been on its way north after wintering on the Continent.

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.

Table 2. Recoveries and controls.

Ring number & Finding circumstances	Age & sex	Date	Location	Dist. (km)	Orientation
Mute Swan					
ZY8642	N	24/07/15	Sunderland, Tyne & Wear		
Ring read	Imm	13/10/19	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	117	NW
Storm Petrel					
2661109	FG	30/07/11	Eyemouth		
Controlled	Ad	30/07/19	Isle of May, Fife	46	321
2698750	FG	02/08/16	Findochty, Moray		
Controlled	Ad	03/08/19	Eyemouth	209	166
2698912	FG	04/09/16	Eyemouth		
Controlled	FG	14/07/19	Eilean nan Ron, Highland	328	336
2686944	Ad, F	24/07/19	Isle of May, Fife		
Controlled	Ad	02/08/19	Eyemouth	46	140
Shag					
1499957	N	06/07/18	Fidra, East Lothian		
Found dead, fresh	Imm	11/02/19	Eyemouth	46	117
1703037	N	08/07/18	Inchkeith, Fife		
Found dead, fresh	Imm	11/02/19	Eyemouth	65	106
ZY8684	N	13/08/15	Brasside Pond, Durham		
Ring read	Imm	28/08/19	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	119	NW

Sparrowhawk					
30/06/2015	N, F	30/06/15	Barnton, Edinburgh		
Found dead	Ad, F	19/01/19	Galashiels	50	142
Peregrine					
GC74849	N, F	03/06/17	near Enniskerry, Wicklow, Ireland		
Controlled	Imm, F	26/04/19	Borders	323	
Kestrel					
EZ20043	N	15/06/19	near Morebattle		
Found injured	Juv	29/07/19	Chirnside	34	19
Oystercatcher					
FH87062	N	15/06/19	Blackhope, Moorfoot Hills		
Killed by traffic	Juv	30/06/19	near Blackhope		
Lapwing					
DB18495	N	05/07/11	Glentress, Leithen Water		
Ring read in field	Ad	23/03/19	Dryhope, Kirkstead	18	201
Bar-tailed Godwit					
DA49318 (Stavanger)	Imm	31/8, 01/09/19	Revtangen, NORWAY		
Colour-rings read in field	Imm	08, 31/10/19	Little Beach, Berwick-upon-Tweed	559	237
Great Black-backed Gull (<i>ssp. fuscus</i>)					
MA32876	N	14/07/15	Isle of May, Fife		
Colour-ring read in field	Imm	20/09/19	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	49	
Lesser Black-backed Gull					
FF00968 (Helsinki)	Juv	17/07/18	Pirkanmaa, Hame, FINLAND		
Colour-ring read in field	Imm	06/02/19	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	1,700	W
Black-headed Gull					
EG17546	N	11/06/00	Garvald, Dolphinton, Lanarkshire		
Found dead near wind turbine	Ad	01/06/19	Carcant Wetlands, Moorfoot Hills	27	74
K05861	Ad	19/04/16	Sognsvann, Oslo, NORWAY		
Colour-ring read in field	Ad	24, 25/01, 17/11/19	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	934	244

EY94482	Juv	26/08/16	Ythan Estuary, Aberdeen		
Colour-ring read, at roost	Ad	18/01/19	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	197	SSW
EZ33039	N	20/06/17	Elvanfoot, South Lanarkshire		
Colour-ring read, at roost	Imm	18/01/19	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	59	ENE
EK61422	N	14/07/17	Elvanfoot, South Lanarkshire		
Colour-ring read in field		23/11/19	Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	59	ENE
EY21995	N	03/06/18	Broad law, Moorfoot Hills		
Colour-ring read in field	Imm	23/07/19	Lisburn, Antrim, Northern Ireland	239	234
Barn Owl					
GV23350	N	06/07/19	near Paxton		
Traffic casualty, fresh	Imm	03/12/19	Houndwood	14	315
Tawny Owl					
GV23322	Ad	28/08/18	in care, Berwick-upon-Tweed		
Entered building, released. alive	Ad	19/08/19	Coldingham	16	307
Blackbird					
LA67833	Imm, F	18/11/16	Whitmuir Hall, Selkirk		
Ring read in field	Ad F	15/03/19	Alstahaug, Nordland, NORWAY	1,412	36
LH33613	Imm M	16/12/16	Nether Falla, Leadburn		
Killed by cat. One other, local to Peebles.	Ad M	10/12/19	Bruntsfield, Edinburgh	19	0
Sedge Warbler					
6713764 (Paris)	??	awaiting details	????, FRANCE		
Controlled	Ad F	14/07/19	near Whim		
S633792	Imm	22/08/18	Belvide, Staffordshire		
Controlled	Ad M	15/07/19	Garvald, Moorfoot Hills	345	351
Blackcap					
7396221 (Paris)	FG M	12/10/19	Port-Jerome-sur-Seine, FRANCE		
Controlled	Imm M	05/11/19	Peebles	726	340

Willow Warbler					
LLV107	Juv	08/08/19	near Whim		
Controlled	Juv F	20/08/19	Kilnsea, East riding of Yorkshire	322	138
Chaffinch					
V023103	Imm F	26/12/15	Peebles		
Dead, hit window. Diseased.	Ad F	22/11/19	Harehope Farm, Peebles	7	306
ACA5271	Juv F	25/08/18	near whim		
Dead, prob. disease, fresh	Imm F	12/04/19	Cowdenwood, Whim	3	270
ACA6125	Imm M	14/01/19	Garvald, Moorfoot Hills		
Found dead	Imm M	01/03/19	Bonnyrigg, Midlothian	12	340
Brambling					
AFB4152	Imm M	03/01/19	near Middleton, Midlothian		
Controlled	Imm M	19/02/19	Garvald, Moorfoot Hills	6	201
S724140	Imm M	11/04/19	Peebles		
Controlled	Ad M	22/11/19	Djaknemala, Blekinge, SWEDEN	1179	
Greenfinch					
TZ87194	Imm M	25/10/16	Glebe Farm, Salsburgh, N Lanarks.		
Diseased. 5 others, local to Peebles.	Ad M	28/05/19	Carlops	35	100
Goldfinch					
S193911	Juv	10/07/16	Peebles		
Controlled	Ad M	09/11/19	Little Livermere, Suffolk	451	146
S345254	Imm M	22/01/17	Selkirk		
Controlled	Ad M	06/04/19	Broadmeadows, near Selkirk	6	290
S878626	Ad M	16/04/17	Selkirk		
Controlled	Ad M	31/03/19	Broadmeadows, near Selkirk	6	290
AKH7918	Ad M	13/09/19	Leswalt, Stranraer, D & Galloway		
Controlled	Ad M	03/11/19	Peebles	144	58
ATH3757	Imm M	08/11/19	Peebles		
Killed by predator, fresh	Imm M	20/11/19	Kelso	48	97

Siskin					
Z829742	Ad, M	18/02/17	near Minehead, Somerset		
Controlled	Ad, M	06/04/19	Broadmeadows, near Selkirk	485	5
S958392	Juv, M	26/06/17	Drummond, Inverness, Highland		
Controlled	Ad, M	31/03/19	Broadmeadows, near Selkirk	226	160
S951233	Imm M	01/07/17	Selkirk		
Controlled	Ad M	06/04/19	Broadmeadows, near Selkirk	6	290
D479974	Imm M	11/03/18	Broadmeadows, near Selkirk		
Controlled	Ad M	02/03/19	Knaresborough, North Yorkshire	196	152
D479976	Imm M	11/03/18	Broadmeadows, near Selkirk		
Controlled	Ad M	04/05/19	Fort Augustus, Highland	206	328
AE24662 (C.I.)	Imm M	16/11/18	Alderney, CHANNEL ISLANDS		
Controlled	Imm M	09/05/19	Peebles	663	355
AAD5449	Imm M	14/03/19	Market Rasen, Lincolnshire		
Controlled	Imm M	06/04/19	Broadmeadows, near Selkirk	294	326
Lesser Redpoll					
ACA5115	Juv	12/07/18	near Whim		
Controlled	Imm	28/03/19	Orlestone, Kent	584	153
ARD3738	Imm	16/11/18	Ramsley Reservoir, Derbyshire		
Controlled	Ad M	07/09/19	near Whim	298	339
Z268939	Imm	02/12/18	Middlemuir Croft, Aberdeenshire		
Controlled	Ad M	28/10/19	near Whim	183	203
AKF7167	Imm	01/01/19	Hatfield Moor, South Yorkshire		
Controlled	Ad F, br	25/08/19	near Whim	288	330
ANE0931	Juv	12/08/19	Applecross, Highland		
Controlled	Imm	26/10/19	near Whim	243	140

	Year of ringing as chick.						
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Grampian					1		
Firth of Forth, south shore	4	4	0	1	3	4	2
Glasgow Lochs							2
Clyde	1						
Dumfries & Galloway						1	
Northumberland							1
Northern Ireland			1			1	
West Midlands		1					

Table 3. Locations of colour-ringed Black-headed Gulls in 2019 reported directly to Borders RG.

From Peebles	Location (administrative area)	To Peebles	From Peebles	Location (administrative area)	To Peebles
2	Highland	2	0	Flintshire	4
4	Grampian	0	0	Nottinghamshire	3
3	Argyll & Bute	1	0	Shropshire	2
1	Fife	0	2	Powys	1
0	West Lothian	1	1	Norfolk	1
2	North Lanarkshire	0	0	Suffolk	3
0	South Lanarkshire	1	1	Carmarthenshire	0
1	Arran	0	1	Gloucestershire	0
0	Borders	4	1	Surrey	4
1	Dumfries & Galloway	2	0	Kent	1
1	Northumberland	4	1	Devon	0
1	Durham	1	0	Channel Islands	1
1	Merseyside	0	17	Totals	16
			(+ 4 within Peebles)		

Table 4. Locations involved in the movements of Siskins to and from Peebles in 2019.

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Table 2b below has been supplied by the BTO as information additional to Table 2 above.

Ring number & Finding circumstances	Age & sex	Date	Location	Dist. (km)	Orientation
Osprey					
1262367	N	10/07/02	near Huntly, Grampian		
Freshly dead (in net or cage)	Ad	09/04/19	Yarrow Fishery, near Selkirk	213	S
1366552	N	16/06/07	Glentress Forest		
Colour ring read	Ad	18/11/19	Somone, Mbour, SENEGAL	4,730	SSW
1489170	N	04/07/17	Highland		
Colour ring read	Imm	24/05/19	near Ancrum	296	SSE
Colour ring read	Imm	14/08/19	Kielder, Northumberland	299	SSE
1484556	N	08/07/19	near Innerleithen		
Freshly dead, hit wires	Juv	28/08/19	near Sturminster Marshall, Dorset	538	S
* the dangers faced on migration are highlighted above					
Goshawk					
MA33839	N	18/06/17	Eskdalemuir, Dumfries & Galloway		
Long dead	Imm	08/04/19	near Jedburgh	50	NE
MA29986	N	06/06/18	near Peebles		
Freshly dead (predated)	Imm	26/01/19	Kirknewton, West Lothian	30	NW
Buzzard					
GH19745	N	03/06/90	near Abington, South Lanrkshire		
Freshly dead	Ad	18/03/19	Peebles	34	ENE
* ringed when the species was much scarcer; 20 months short of the species' longevity record from British & Irish ringing *					
Coot					
GR91482	Imm. M	18/01/18	Linlithgow Loch, West Lothian		
Colour-ring read	Ad	27/03/19	Bell Hill	93	E
Oystercatcher					
FH73370	Ad	16/10/15	Whiteford Sands, Swansea, Gower		
Ring read	Ad	01/06/19	St Mary's Loch	435	N

Survey of inland gulleries within the Scottish Borders, 2018-2019

Clive Hartley

Introduction

The Borders Bird Report 2018 contains the results of a survey of nesting seabirds carried out along the coastline of the Scottish Borders in early June 2018. This revealed total apparently occupied nests (AONs) of 471 Herring Gull, one Lesser Black-backed Gull and one Great Black-backed Gull in addition to 6 other species of seabird (Hartley, 2018). Roof-nesting gulls were not counted in 2018, but a count in June 2019 showed that these were limited to 15 AONs of Herring Gull in Eyemouth and 2 AONs of Herring Gull in St Abbs village.

This paper completes the picture of nesting gulls within the Scottish Borders by drawing on survey work carried out at potential inland gull colonies in 2018 and 2019. It draws on these results to establish changes in the breeding population of Black-headed and Common Gulls within the Scottish Borders compared to previous surveys.

Methodology

The inland gull survey was organised by the author, assisted by volunteer surveyors drawn from the membership of the Borders Branch of the SOC and others. It was carried out as part of Seabird Count 2015-2020 using the methodology recommended in the Seabird Monitoring Handbook for Britain and Ireland (Walsh et al, 1995). Nesting gulls were surveyed using the count unit of AONs: a well-constructed nest, attended by an adult and capable of holding eggs, or an adult apparently incubating if, for example, actual nests were obscured by vegetation. This method is considered most suitable for small ground nesting colonies which can be viewed well from a distance - now the norm within Borders. Some historic counts were based on an estimate of apparently occupied territories (AOTs) which involved taking into account the spacing of birds or pairs when viewed from a vantage point, in circumstances where actual nests or incubation could not be seen (see Appendix 1).

Most counts were made during the mid-incubation period of late May-early June, between 09.00 and 16.00 hrs BST. Counts made in early/mid-May and late June were also found to be useful. If more than one count of AONs was made over the survey period, the highest was used as the population estimate in the tables which follow. None of the counts were made in heavy rain, fog or strong wind.

In order to ensure that the current survey was as comprehensive as possible, an extensive trawl was made of the literature and of the Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) online database to identify sites used in the past. The knowledge of individual SOC Branch members was also drawn upon. In total, 73 potential sites were identified and, of these, all but 7 were surveyed during 2018 and 2019. Although North Esk Reservoir straddles the border between Lothian and Borders Region, all gulls nesting at this location have been included in the tables, with no attempt to split the nesting gulls between the two Regions. The seven sites that have not been surveyed (Appendix 1) will be covered during the 2020 breeding season, but are not expected to have a significant effect on the overall results.

Results for Black-headed Gull

Only 11 sites were occupied by breeding Black-headed Gulls during the period 2018-2019. Together they contained at least 542 AONs (Table 1). Three of the colonies (Broad Law, Carcant Back Moor and Halliburton) were not identified as occupied in previous censuses. A new site with Black-headed Gulls present was also found on Greenlaw Moor (NT7051), but unfortunately the keeper refused access. The size of the ten colonies counted ranged from 6 to 220 AONs.

Location	Grid Ref	Year	AONs
Abbotrule	NT6114	2018	6
Broad Law	NT3453	2018	167
Carcant Back Moor	NT3553	2018	6
Crooked Loch	NT3514	2019	13
Halliburton	NT6748	2019	40 (AOTs)
Hule Moss	NT7149	2018	2
Greenlaw Moor	NT7051	2019	nc
North Esk Reservoir	NT1558	2018	220
Pickmaw Moss	NT4928	2019	48
Synton Loch/Mossend	NT4821	2018	30
White Law Loch	NT5130	2019	10
Total, all occupied sites:			542

Table 1: Breeding Black-headed Gulls, 2018-19 (nc = not counted).

Table 2 compares these latest survey results with counts made during periods when fieldwork was being carried out for the Seabird Colony Register and for Seabird 2000. Numbers of Black-headed Gulls nesting in the Borders remained fairly stable in the 12 years between 1987/88 and 1999/00, possibly increasing slightly, but then underwent a massive collapse of over 15,000 AON's in the 19 years that followed. This decline was largely accounted for by Bemersyde Moss, where numbers were down from 14,575 AONs in 2000 to only 6 AONs by 2007, with no signs of recovery in the years that followed.

Survey Period:	1987-1988	1999-2000	2018-2019
No. of occupied sites	17	23	11
Total number AONs	14,719	16,214	542

Table 2: Changing numbers of Black-headed Gulls breeding in the Scottish Borders, 1987-2019.

There is evidence from the current survey that this decline is still continuing, although at a much lower rate. In 2008/13 the four largest Black-headed Gull colonies in the Scottish Borders were North Esk Reservoir (2,100 AONs in 2010), White Law Loch (450 in 2011), West Water Reservoir (390 in 2013) and Megget Reservoir (80 in 2011). Two of these sites have since been abandoned, whilst numbers of AONs had dropped to 220 at North Esk Reservoir by 2018 and to only 10 at White Law Loch by 2019.

Results for Common Gull

The Common Gull has only colonised the Scottish Borders in the last 60 years, with the first record of confirmed breeding being in 1960. Three sites were occupied by Common Gulls during the current survey: West Water Reservoir with 2 AONs on 16 May 2018, North Esk Reservoir with 2 AONs on 16 May 2018 and Megget Head with 25 AONs on 8 June 2018. In addition to this, one individual was at Fruid Reservoir on 24 May, 22 individuals at St Mary's Loch on 25 May, 301 individuals at Megget Reservoir on 8 June and 25 individuals at Talla Reservoir on 14 June 2018, which suggests there was a pool of at least 250 potential nesters/failed breeders in the south-west of the Region in excess of those known to have bred.

Table 3 compares these latest survey results with counts made during periods when fieldwork was being carried out for the Seabird Colony Register and for Seabird 2000. The first record of confirmed breeding in the Borders was in 1960. By 1987/88 some 15 AONs were located, peaking at 108 AONs by 1999/2000 and then dropping to 29 AONs during the current survey.

Survey Period:	1987-1988	1999-2000	2018-2019
No. of occupied sites	5	2	3
Total no. AONs	15 (incl. 2 AOTs)	108 (incl. 1 AOTs)	29

Table 3: Changing numbers of Common Gulls breeding in the Scottish Borders, 1987-2019.

Discussion

The failure during the first decade of this century of the exceptionally large Black-headed Gull colony at Bemersyde Moss has inevitably had a huge impact on the presence of this species within the Borders. Breeding failure and the sudden abandonment of colonies is a well-known characteristic of the bird. Whilst small colonies are considered the most transient, there are some notable examples of sudden and complete collapse of large colonies dating as far back as the late 19th century. Muirhead (1895), for example, mentions a number of colonies in Berwickshire, some very large, that had disappeared, mainly as a result of drainage, including Billie Mire to the north of Chirnside, Dogden Moss near Greenlaw, Corsbie Moss near Gordon and Redpath Bog near Earlstoun. He also highlighted the case of the Hen Poo at Duns Castle where the owner caused fires to be kept burning on the islands during the nesting period of the gulls because he disliked the great noise made by the thousands of gulls which bred there! In addition to the drainage and drying out of marshy areas, there are a variety of factors that may be involved in the abandonment of colonies, some of which relate to site of the gullery itself, others to the wider catchment within which the birds forage and others to their wintering grounds. The list includes: land use changes, including afforestation; the intensification of farming; fluctuating water levels in lochs and reservoirs; temporary destruction of vegetation cover, particularly through muir-burning; human disturbance and mammalian predation, especially by Mink; avian botulism and the use of pesticides/herbicides, particularly in terms of their impact on the availability of worms and other invertebrates which are the main food of nestlings. It remains to be seen whether the Black-headed Gull population within the Borders can recover unless there is some amelioration in these factors.

Acknowledgements

I thank the following who carried out the fieldwork and without whose help this survey would not have been possible: T Brewis, AW Brown, T Chamberlain, G Christer, RS Craig, TW Dougall, J Douglas, CD Green, A. Kerr, MK Moncrieff, AP Mossop, J Palfery, D Parkinson, G Paterson, DG Pyatt, MB Ross, M Scott, H Urquhart. My apologies to anyone who has been overlooked. My thanks also to those landowners who allowed access to their property to count nesting gulls.

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Site	Grid Ref	Species	Year last occupied	AONs in year last occupied
Acreknowe	NT4910	BHG	2000	7
Akermoor Loch	NT4021	BHG	1999	16
Bemersyde Moss	NT6134	BHG	2015	1
<i>Birney Knowes Moss *</i>	<i>NT5412</i>	<i>BHG</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>11</i>
Borthwickshiels Loch	NT4215	BHG	2005	8
Branxholme Easter	NT4311	BHG	2000	13
Branxholme Wester	NT4240	BHG	2004	1
<i>Caverton Mill Farm *</i>	<i>NT7526</i>	<i>BHG</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>8</i>
Chapelhill Moss	NT4512	BHG	2005	160
Clearburn Loch	NT3415	BHG	2004	7
Coldingham Loch	NT8968	BHG	1982	1
Craig Douglas	NT2824	BHG	1989	40
Cralaw Pond	NT6453	BHG	1995	40
Cralaw Pond	NT6453	CG	1993	1 (AOT)
<i>Dirrington Great Law *</i>	<i>NT6954</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>1985</i>	<i>2 (AOTs)</i>
Dowlaw Dam	NT8569	BHG	1985	3
Dun Law	NT3748	BHG	1986	10
Folly Loch	NT6426	BHG	2014	3
Fruid Reservoir	NT1018	BHG	2009	2
Fruid Reservoir	NT1018	CG	2016	2
Gamescleuch	NT2814	BHG	1981	40
Garvald/Blackhope Water	NT3551	BHG	1998	1
Garvald Burn	NT1150	BHG	1990	3
Girnwood Loch	NT3612	BHG	1990	46
Green Diamonds	NT4625	BHG	2008	1
Greenside Pond	NT8069	BHG	1999	90
<i>Harehope Moor *</i>	<i>NT1943</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>1983</i>	<i>1</i>
Harden Moss	NT4414	BHG	1991	50
Henlaw Cottage, nr Longformacus	NT7154	BHG	2012	10
High Chesters Moss	NT4614	BHG	2014	30
Hoselaw Loch	NT8031	BHG	1995	1
Hundleshope	NT2336	BHG	2014	8
Hutlerburn	NT4123	BHG	2012	20
Kingside Loch	NT3413	BHG	1989	4
Lilliesleaf Pond	NT5325	BHG	1988	12 (AOTs)
Loch Sike	NT4523	BHG	1989	2 (AOTs)
Lochan, north of Hartwoodmyres	NT4325	BHG	2001	2
Long Moss, Coldingham Common	NT8568	BHG	1988	4
Longformacus Pond	NT6957	BHG	1993	2
Megget Reservoir	NT1721	BHG	2016	26
<i>Mount Bog *</i>	<i>NT1042</i>	<i>BHG</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>6</i>
North Esk Reservoir	NT1558	CG	2015	3
Penmanshiel Farm	NT8067	BHG	1988	10 (AOTs)
Rawburn	NT6756	BHG	1993	50 (AOTs)

Roman Fort Pond/Moss	NT4225	BHG	2000	15 (AOTs)
Ruletownhead Pond	NT6213	BHG	2014	30
Scarlaw Moor	NT6556	CG	1988	2 (AOTs)
Shielswood Loch	NT4519	BHG	1992	1
<i>Shiphorns *</i>	<i>NT2450</i>	<i>BHG</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Shiplaw Ponds/ Sandpit *</i>	<i>NT2350</i>	<i>BHG</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2 (AOTs)</i>
Slipperfield Mount	NT1151	BHG	1999	3 (AOTs)
St Leonard's Moss	NT4810	BHG	1986	1
St Mary's Loch	NT2422	BHG	2008	3 (AOTs)
St Mary's Loch	NT2422	CG	2003	17
Stewarton & Harehope Ponds	NT2144	BHG	1999	80
Stobie Slack	NT3822	BHG	1991	20
Talla Reservoir	NT1320	BHG	1988	3
Talla Reservoir	NT1320	CG	1987	1
Tocher Lodge Moss	NT4323	BHG	2007	100 (AOTs)
Watch Water Reservoir	NT6556	CG	1991	5 (AOTs)
West Water Reservoir	NT1252	BHG	2013	390
West Water Reservoir	NT1252	CG	2014	2
White Moss, Medwyn Mains	NT1449	BHG	1993	40 (AOTs)
Whitmuir Hill Loch	NT4927	BHG	1983	10 (AOTs)
Whitrig Ponds/Bog	NT6234	BHG	1991	4
Whitton Loch	NT7419	BHG	1991	1
Williestruther Loch	NT4911	BHG	1989	1
Wooden Loch	NT7025	BHG	1989	1

Appendix 1: List of previously occupied sites. * Nil returns or no count in 2018-19 shown in *italics*.



Black-headed Gull. October. Tweed, near Paxton House. Tom Brewis.

Ringed gulls recorded at Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank

Andrew Bramhall

Tweedbank is situated between Galashiels and Melrose in a corner of Roxburghshire. A housing estate with an adjacent small industrial estate was developed and took 30 years to complete. In the last three years further development has taken place with the creation of the terminus for the partly re-opened Waverley Route railway now known as the Borders Railway.

The Tweedbank development has retained some of the original landscaped features but these were supplemented with new planting and landscaping, creating varied habitats from the former farmland. One of the features retained was a wetland area which became a man-made loch and is now a prominent central feature augmented by a large area of grassland backing on to the R Tweed.

Over the years as the loch became established the wetland birds and others have been recorded and passed to the local recorder for the Borders Bird Report. Wildfowl Counts (WeBS) and BTO BirdTrack are also used to record sightings.

The first ringed birds noted on the loch were Mute Swans and there is now a substantial list of swans that have been seen on the loch. These observations have accounted for birds ringed in the Lothians, Fife, Angus, all four Borders counties, Northumberland, and Durham. During the monitoring of the swans it was noticed that an increasing number of gulls using the loch for washing, preening, loafing, and roosting and these were scanned for marked birds.

The first gull of interest was a Black-headed Gull with yellow dyed wing tips and tail between 26-Feb and 28-Feb, seen amongst a flock of 1,200 roosting on the ice-covered loch.

As colour ringing has become a widely used method of monitoring the movement of gulls it was not surprising that some of these turned up at Tweedbank. Such sightings have included Black-headed Gulls, Common Gulls and Herring Gulls and more recently a Lesser Black-backed Gull which turned out to be a Finnish ringed bird of the nominate sub-species, *fuscus*. The roosting birds have mainly been Black-headed Gulls. The larger gull species spend part of the day washing and preening with a final visit before heading off to an upland roost site. The final wash up is after a day spent feeding on the Scottish Borders Council land fill site 1.6 km away. Up to a thousand gulls used the site and on occasions slightly more than that. The tip closed in early 2019 and very few of the larger gulls now use the loch.

In the late afternoon of 6-Feb 2019, while scanning with my telescope, I scanned a mixed flock of gulls washing and preparing to roost or fly off west to a preferred upland roost site. After noting a couple of Black-headed Gulls with colour rings, a first winter large juvenile gull with a white colour ring with black digits and letters came into view and was read as C:V61. The bird was facing away from me and I put it down to a Herring Gull and thought no more about it.

The sighting was submitted on-line and within a short space of time it generated interest as it was identified as a 1st-winter Lesser Black-backed Gull of the race *Larus fuscus fuscus*, often referred to as a Baltic Gull. A full ringing recovery report was received from the University of Helsinki accompanied by four photographs of the bird being ringed. The bird did not reappear at Gunknowe Loch. This subspecies should have been in the Middle East for the winter but there is some speculation that the odd birds may stray westwards towards Britain.

The following table shows the sightings made since monitoring started at Gunknowe Loch. Some Black-headed Gull records only involved reading the metal ring through a telescope. This requires patience, no wind, good visibility. One Black-headed Gull could have been of Belgian origin but there was a digit missing from my submission. However, it demonstrates that the colour ringed gulls using Gunknowe Loch can come from local locations to as far away as the Baltic Sea.

Species & identifier	Find Date	Ringing Date	Place	Days	Distance km
Black-headed Gull yellow dyed wing tips and tail	26-28/02/86. Filed record.	unknown	unknown		
Black-headed Gull 6165128	13/03/97 dead	13/06/93 as nestling	Froylandsvatnet, Rogoland, Norway	1,379	617
Black-headed Gull ET16782	12/04/04 dead	14/06/1996 adult	North Esk Reservoir	2,859	42
Black-headed Gull EG17546	05/12/2008 field record	11/06/00 as nestling	Garvald, Strathclyde	3,099	43
Black-headed Gull ET48354	27/06/2006 sick	13/06/2004 as nestling	Broad Law, Moorfoot Hills, Scottish Borders	713	25
Black-headed Gull 6H-6343 V553 Red	17/12/2009 field record. Plus 03/01/10 and 10/02/10.	20/06/2009 as pull.	Hirsholm, Frederikshavn, Denmark		847
Black-headed Gull ET48365	22/02/10 field record	13/04/04	Broad Law, Moorfoot Hills, Scottish Borders	2,080	25
Black-headed Gull 5189347	05/01/2013 field Record	18/09/12 as nestling	Time, Rogaland, Norway		
Black-headed Gull White 2AAX	15/01/2014 field record. Plus 04 & 24/02/14; 27/12/14; 19/01/15; 02/12/15.		Broad Law, Moorfoot Hills, Scottish Borders		
Black-headed Gull K05861 Green JOK5	13/01/2017 field record. Plus 09/12/17; 30/12/17; 10/01/18; 18/01/18; 10/02/18; 02/03/18; 09/12/19; 22/01/19; 29/01/19; 30/01/19; 01-05/02/19; 09/02/19; 19-21/11/19; 22/02/19; 29-30/02/19; 02/12/19.	19/04/2006 as adult 3cy	Sognsvann, Oslo, Norway		
Black-headed Gull EY94482 2BY1 Yellow	18/01/19 field record. Plus 18/01/19; 20/01/19; 22/01/19; 30/01/19; 04-06/02/19; 09/02/19; 30/11/19; 01-02/12/19; 20/01/20.	24/08/2016 juvenile.	Ythan, Newburgh, Aberdeenshire	894	197
Black-headed Gull Yellow 2EJO	06/02/2019 field record				
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>fuscus</i> FF00968 White C:V61	06/02/19	17/07/2018 as large chick	Orivesi Pirkanmaa, Hame, Nr. Tampere, Finland	204	1,700
Black-headed Gull EZ33039 Red2BB6	18/01/2019 field record. Plus 30/01/19.	30/06/17 as nestling	Elvanfoot, South Lanarkshire	577	59
Black-headed Gull EY21568 white 2ACS	23/07/2015 field record.	16/06/13 nestling.	Broad Law, Moorfoot Hills, Scottish Borders	767	25

Species & identifier	Find Date	Ringing Date	Place	Days	Distance km
Black-headed Gull EK61422 Red 2BR6	19/01/2017 field record. Plus 09/01/18; 06/07/19; 22/11/19; 01/12/19; 02/12/19.	14/07/17	Elvanfoot, South Lanarkshire		59
Common Gull White J78K	26/03/2013 field record.		Norway		
Herring Gull GN93721 Yellow T:578	23/11/2013 field record	11/07/2008 nestling.	Wellington Park, Montrose, Angus.	1,963	126
Herring Gull Yellow T:209	18/12/2012 field record	03/08/11	Peterhead Harbour		
Herring Gull GR46411 YellowT:389	10/12/2012 field record.	08/07/2012 nestling.	Bullers of Buchan, Grampian		
Black-headed Gull White J6Y1	23/11/2013 field record.				
Black-headed Gull EY26621 Blue 2H25	04/06/2014 field record	26/11/2003 young adult.	Bowness, Windermere, Cumbria		
Black-headed Gull	12/08/2011 field record		Broad Law, Moorfoot Hills, Scottish Borders		
Black headed Gull Yellow 2BYY	18/01/2019 field record. Plus 30/01/19.		Ythan, Aberdeenshire		
Black-headed Gull Red 2BR6	22/11/2019 plus 01-02/12/19.	30/06/2017 nestling.	Elvanfoot, South Lanarkshire	577	59



Common Sandpiper. Garvald Toll. May. Alistair Cutter.

Some background to the Borders Bird Report 2019

Tom Brewis

The following information is simply meant to help readers put the information in the Classified List for recent years and, in particular, 2019 into some sort of context.

Numbers of records submitted and occupied tetrads

Using past Bird Reports and Excel files compiled by the late Ray Murray (BBR Editor 1980-2016) it has been possible to determine the number of records and the number of occupied tetrads for most of the period of 2000-2019. Readers should be aware that some of these figures are imprecise because: (a) some are based on broad statements like, "...nearly 70,000 records" and (b) when studying the files covering 2003-14 it wasn't always apparent if they were complete. I am nonetheless reasonably confident that Figure 1 gives a fair idea of changes over the last 20 years.

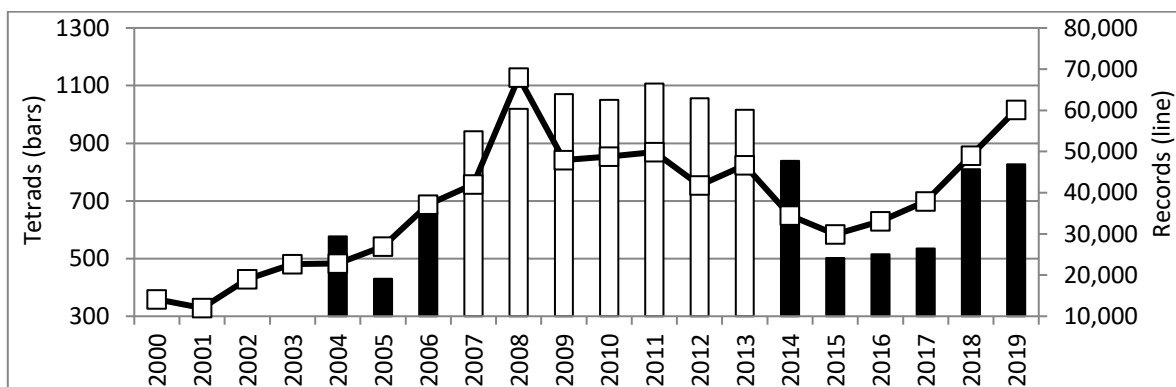


Fig 1. Numbers of records with occupied tetrads submitted to BBR, 2000-2019.

(2007-13 = SE Scotland Atlas survey period; 2000-2003: no. of occupied tetrads not available).

The main features:

- An obvious peak associated with the increased observer effort during the survey period for *Birds in South-east Scotland, 2007-13* (the local Atlas).
- The relatively large number of tetrads covered in 2014 due to a study of water bodies organised by the Borders and Lothian branches of the SOC.
- The rather sudden increase in the number of tetrads covered between 2017 and 2018, the latter being largely the result of one contributor's efforts which involved covering nearly 500 tetrads.
- A general upward trend throughout the 20 year period.

Who submits the records?

Figure 2 shows the numbers of observers submitting ten or more records. Again the survey period of the local atlas stands out.

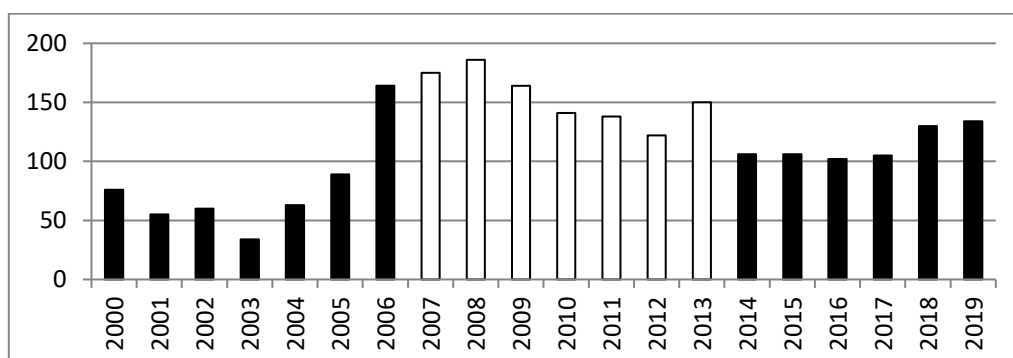


Fig 2. No. of observers submitting 10 or more records, 2000-2019.

(2007-13 = SE Scotland Atlas survey period).

If the past 5 years are typical then the 4 or 5 observers with the highest number of records are responsible for about 50% of all records. While it seems likely that all bird reports throughout Britain would have a disproportionate distribution of records among observers, the Borders may be exceptional. If so, then it may be the result of a large region with a relatively small number of very active observers contributing records. I suppose that that's stating the obvious.

Where do the records come from?

Figure 3 shows the number of records for each 10 km square as submitted for 2019.

The squares with the highest number of records tend, not surprisingly, to be either established, popular bird watching sites or locations close to where observers live (local patches). The most popular sites are found in squares:

- NT96 St Abb's Head-Burnmouth. St Abb's Head NNR has an international reputation as well as the presence of a warden(s). Over 6,500 records came from the reserve alone in 2019, ie c. 11% of the total.
- NT53 Melrose. This square takes in a section of the R Tweed between St Boswells and its confluence with Ettrick Water, the lower section of Gala Water at Galashiels and the lochs in the eastern part of Ettrick Forest. So a combination of potentially good bird watching sites and a clustering of observers in Melrose, Galashiels and St Boswells are obviously likely to produce more than the average number of records.
- NT43 Galashiels W-Elibank-Lindean is again based around a section of the R Tweed. About 76% of the records in this square were submitted by one observer who lives in that square. While this square holds sites popular with local birders, Stantling Craig Reservoir and Thornielee, for example, the small proportion of records submitted by others suggests that this square owes its prominence to sites close to the home of a single, very active observer.
- NT72 Lower Kale Water has over 90% of its records submitted by one observer, the vast majority of which come from a single site, ie Eckford Hall-Wooden Loch. So like NT43 the prominence of this square is largely the result of happenstance.

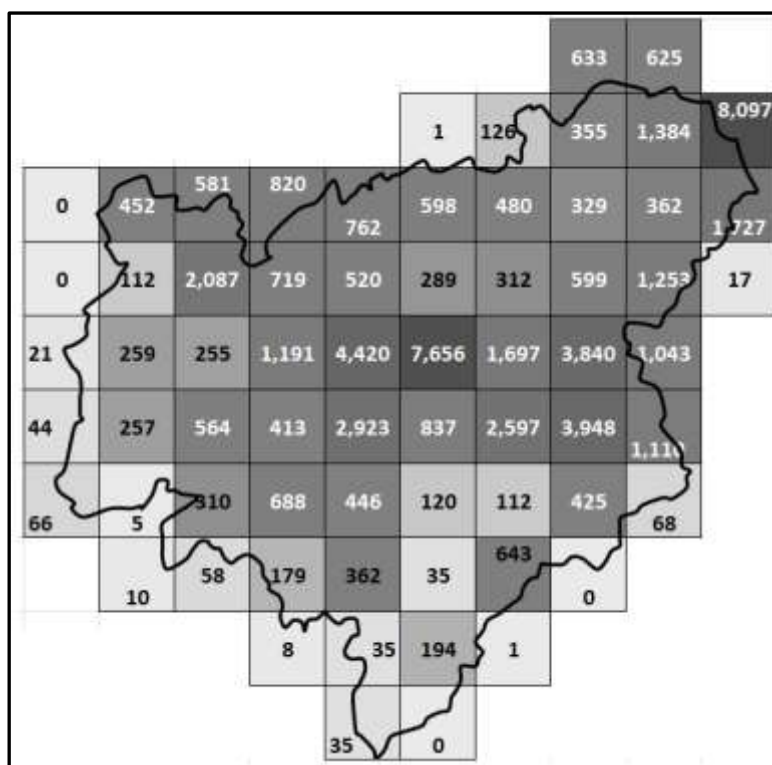


Figure 3. No. of records submitted per 10 km square, 2019.

- NT73 Tweed Haughs also takes in the lower R Teviot. These stretches of river are, unsurprisingly, focuses for many waterbirds and close to the homes of a number of observers.

Figure 4 will help readers to locate the squares shown in the accompanying maps.

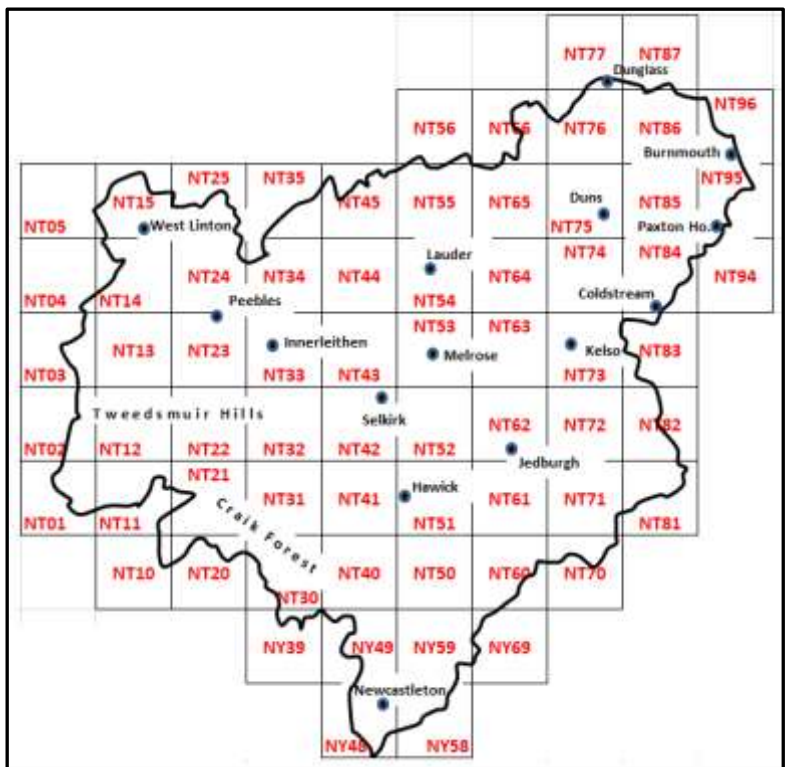


Fig 4. Grid references for 10 km squares and selected named locations.

How much of each 10 km square is actually surveyed?

Figure 5 shows the number of tetrads in each 10 km square from which records were submitted.

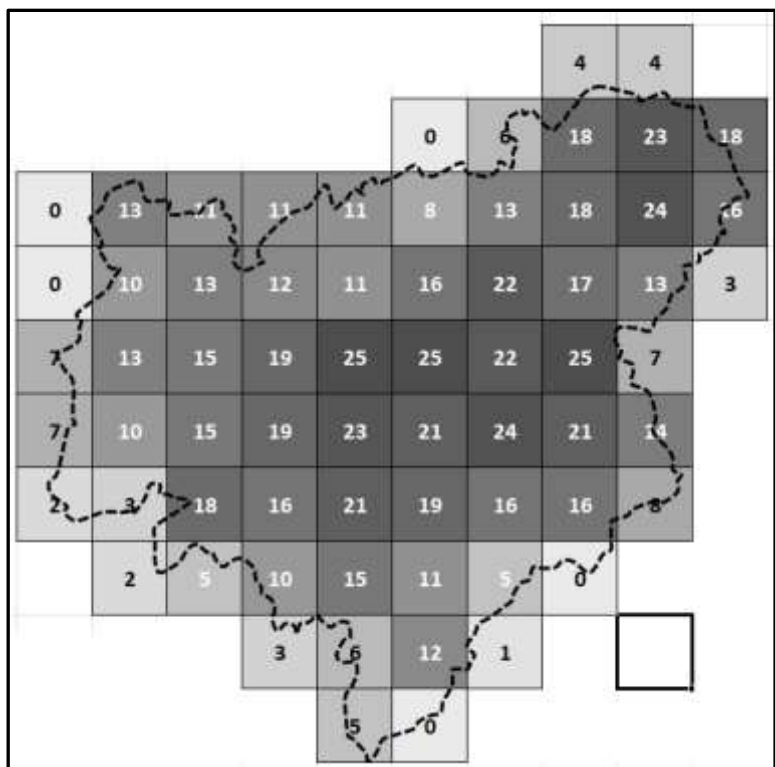


Fig 5. No. of tetrads per 10 km sq with records submitted, 2019.

Readers are reminded that a 10 km sq contains 25 tetrads. Note however, that many squares along the Borders boundary have only a few tetrads in Scottish Borders, eg NT77 only has 4 tetrads in Borders. The obvious pattern is that the peripheral locations, like the number of records, have a lower proportion of the squares actually surveyed.

How many species are recorded in each 10 km square?

Figure 6 tends to show the following features:

- the distribution of species mirrors the maps that show the number of records and the number of tetrads per 10 km square.
- of particular note are the coastal squares with about 90% of all reported species in Borders represented in NT96 St Abb’s Head-Burnmouth.
- respectable numbers in those squares that correspond to the R. Tweed, ie NT95, NT84, NT73, NT63, NT53 and NT43.
- NT62 Teviot Haughs also shows a good number of species recorded.
- relatively few species in the peripheral locations, which correspond to upland areas.

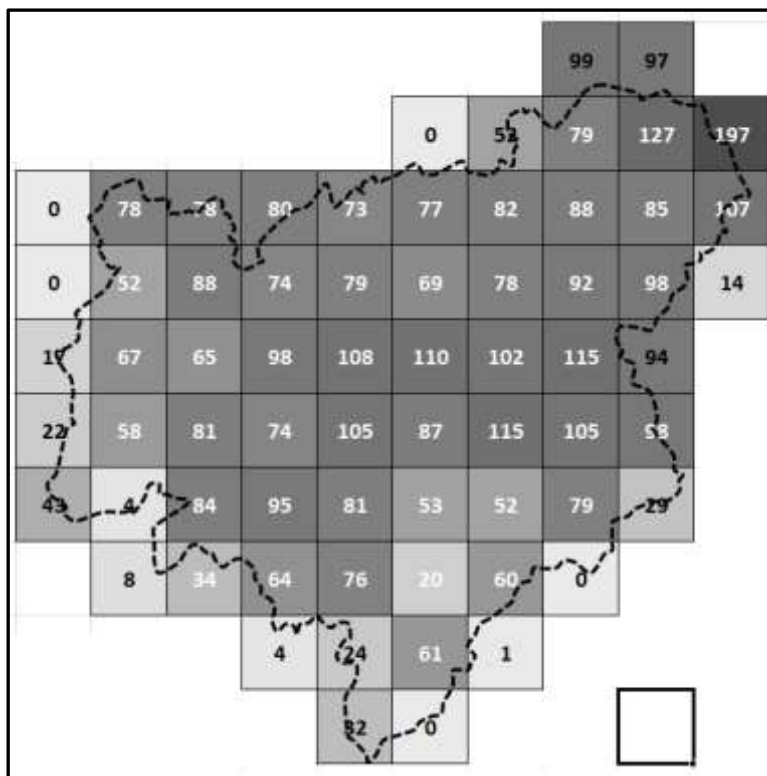


Fig. 6. No. of species per 10 km sq, 2019.

How many observers submitted records from each 10 km square?

Figure 7 tends to show the following features:

- a distribution which, unsurprisingly, correlates with the number of records and the number of tetrads per 10 km square.
- when viewed in terms of average records per observer, those squares where very active observers regularly record stand out, eg NT72 Lower Kale has an *average* of 263 records per observer, NT53 Melrose has 191 records per observer, NT43 Galashiels W-Elibank-Lindean has 170 per observer and NT96 St Abb's Head-Burnmouth has 131. By contrast, the peripheral NY48 Langholm Moor E-Newcastleton has an average of 6 records per observer.

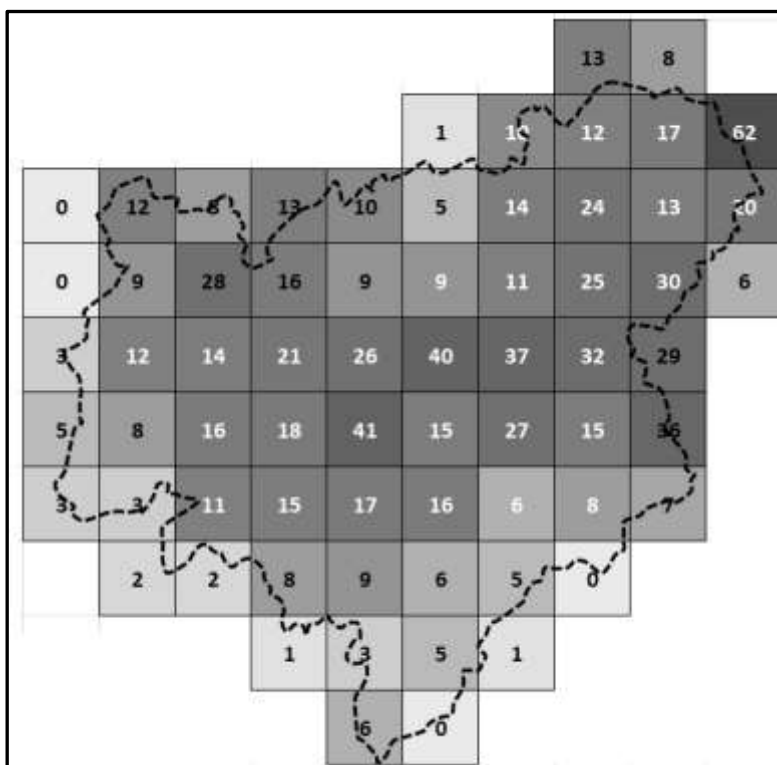


Fig. 7. No. of observers per 10 km square.

What do these maps and numbers tell us?

If a bird report is a statement of the birds recorded in a given year then all that the above does is to “fill in the gaps” to give a more complete picture. Arguably however, a bird report is enhanced greatly if some attempt is made to recognise possible trends. To this end the reader needs to know how representative the sample (which is what the records are) is of the wider bird population. Thus, for example, when the Report states an increase in the number of occupied tetrads for a given species this needs to be considered against the total number of tetrads from which records were collected. A simple example will suffice to illustrate the importance of such background information: if a species has been recorded in 100 tetrads in one year and then 120 in the next then there has been a 20% increase in the number of occupied tetrads. But if the overall number of tetrads surveyed has increased from 600 to 800 then the change in occupied tetrads expressed as a percentage of all surveyed tetrads has actually decreased by nearly 2%. This, of course, is why any attempt at statements on possible trends for some species is given with the rider of variable observer effort.

Observer effort not only varies annually but spatially – just look at the maps. While we can’t expect to reach the ideal of every tetrad being surveyed and for an equal number of times, it is important that we have some notion of how much the dataset deviates from that ideal. One very obvious deficiency in the records is the under-recording of the more peripheral locations. This, of course, would be expected but the maps do enable us to see the extent of this.

Since birds vary in their distribution according to variations in habitat so it’s useful to know how the habitat of the records’ locations compare with the mix of habitats in Borders as a whole. Table 2 shows such a variation. Although the tetrads based data for habitat is a little out of date (2007), there is unlikely to have been a great change during the 12 year interim.

Table 2 suggests that the records for 2019 when viewed overall may have under-represented upland species and over-represented farmland birds in arable areas. Again, this information helps the reader to put the Report records into some context and to assess how representative the records are.

	Acid Grassland	Arable And Horticulture	Bog	Broadleaved Woodland	Built up Areas And Gardens	Coniferous Woodland	Dwarf Shrub Heath	Freshwater	Improved Grassland	Inland Rock	Montane Habitats	Rough Grassland	Salt Water
Borders overall	22.6	23.1	1.5	3.6	0.7	16.3	10.3	0.4	14.9	0.5	1.3	4.7	0.1
2019 dataset	20.5	28.8	0.4	4.3	1.0	13.0	7.5	0.6	17.1	0.6	0.5	5.7	0.1
Variation	-2.1	5.7	-1.1	0.7	0.3	-3.4	-2.8	0.2	2.1	0.1	-0.8	1.0	0.0

Table 2. Comparison of percentage of habitat cover for all of Borders and areas covered by occupied tetrads, 2019.

(Source: Centre for Ecology and Hydrology LCM).

Summary

While no one would pretend that a county/region bird report is likely to have enough of a systematic basis to enable an accurate assessment of changing numbers and distribution of species like, for example, the Breeding Bird Survey, they do represent an opportunity to contribute to our knowledge of what is occurring in the years between more systematic surveys like tetrad atlas surveys. Information like that given above goes some way to help us evaluate Bird Report records and, of course, will be all the more valuable if observers' records are full, accurate and precise.

If readers are keen to find out more about recent trends in the Borders and SE Scotland as a whole, they are recommended to refer to *Birds in South-east Scotland, 2007-13*. Copies are available from SOC's headquarters at Aberlady or can be supplied through either the Borders Bird Report editor at tbrewis50@gmail.com.



Kestrel. Garvald Toll. November. Alistair Cutter.

Greenlaw Farm Pool , Foulden: update and requiem

David Christie

My dawn visit to my 'local' patch on the 5-Feb 2020 gave me quite a shock, as my worst fears were confirmed - the Pool was being drained. This had been 'on the cards' for a few years, following on from the death of the old farmer on whose land the pool was located. But rumours that the new owners would keep it untouched were 'pie in the sky', it seemed. So - this article is meant to complete the highs and lows of the pool covering the period Apr 2018-Dec 2019. The period prior to this was covered in my *Borders Bird Report, No 34, 2017*. This final period has not been a good one in some respects for the pool, in that, during the long dry spell in summer 2018, it nearly dried out completely. This was not good for wildfowl but for the whole of Aug 2018 it became a magnet for waders - including some rarities.

Geese

Pink-footed Goose: only once, in late Oct 2018, did numbers exceed 1,000 with the norm for that autumn just into the few hundreds. Compare this situation with autumn 2019 when numbers were far healthier, giving a very respectable single high count of 3,575 and several counts of 1,500-1,800 during October 2019. Things were getting back to - normal. Or so I thought.

Greylag Goose: numbers started to build from early Aug 2018 despite the pool getting drier. But - apart from one high count of just over 1,000 in mid-late month, the counts had been no better than 500-600. The 2019 autumn season extended more to mid Sep with good counts of over 1,200 and a maximum of 1,470.

Canada Goose: an unexceptional 2018 but numbers really took off in Jan 2019 with three separate counts of over 160 and a site record of 170. Autumn 2019 again saw a boost of a period in Oct with 140-160 seen. In previous years numbers had not exceeded 100 so - quite a change!

Barnacle Goose: always a delight to find amongst the flocks, these visited on just two occasions in Oct 2019, one count being of 4 birds.



Pink-footed Geese leaving after overnight roost on morning of 16-Oct 2017 – its heyday!

Ducks

Wigeon: Feb 2019 was the month to find them, with an exceptional 808 being just 34 short of the pool record. Numbers that month were in the 500-600 range

Teal: a poor period for Teal, only breaking 100 a few times with 145 being the highest, in Oct 2019.

Goosander: records for this species, since the announcement of the local cull, had been reported as 'sensitive' - probably not necessary but better safe than sorry. Numbers were not good, with only Mar 2019 counts regularly breaking 20. The highest single count was 31, generally not good.

Goldeneye: apart from an early April count of 33 these ducks virtually disappeared for the rest of 2018. A similar pattern to the Goosanders in 2019 with March being the only month in 2019 with good counts, the maximum being 32.

Mallard: most prolific during Aug 2019 when regularly 100+ were found building up to a maximum of 194. 2018 could only muster 75 at the most.

Shoveler: 2018 saw just a brief few weeks during late April to find this species - otherwise they were completely absent the rest of the year. March and April were the months to see them in 2019, with 10 and 11 maximum counts. and regular 7s for a few weeks.

Gadwall: only one bird was seen during the whole of the 2018/19 period – in late Apr 2018.

Shelduck: at the start of this period, Apr 2018, there were 6 birds present, reducing to 2 by the end of that month and throughout May but were gone by early June. For 2019 there were only 2 sightings – in Jun 2019.

Ruddy Shelduck: a spectacular visitor with the geese flocks, this bird stayed from late August - to late September 2019. It was a 'first' for me, outside of WWT grounds.

Swans

Whooper Swan: none at all for 2018, but then a peak of 14 in Oct 2019.

Mute Swan: flocks of up to 30 in Apr 2018, then none until Jan 2019 (few), with the best run of 2-5 during Mar 2019.

	Greylag Goose	Pink-footed Goose	Wigeon	Teal	Goosander
Aug-18	392	0	0	17	0
Sep-18	141	105	0	15	0
Oct-18	1	248	0	0	0
Nov-18	5	3	16	0	2
Dec-18	99	1	9	0	9
Jan-19	72	16	31	0	5
Feb-19	47	211	356	9	8
Mar-19	7	160	62	7	15

Average counts for selected species, Apr-18 to Mar-19.

	Greylag Goose	Pink-footed Goose	Wigeon	Teal	Goosander
Aug-18	1,076	0	0	31	0
Sep-18	624	608	0	72	3
Oct-18	1	918	0	0	2
Nov-18	19	18	95	0	10
Dec-18	245	5	45	0	24
Jan-19	315	133	320	0	28
Feb-19	435	690	808	24	22
Mar-19	32	410	216	28	43

Peak counts for selected species, Apr-18 to Mar-19.

Waders

Oystercatcher: no change - with Feb-May presence, 1-2 birds.

Lapwing: only one sighting -in May 2018.

Redshank: one of the Aug 2018 'explosion' species, with 22, followed by 15 - record figures!

Spotted Redshank: a new one for the pool with one amongst the 22 Common Redshank.

Curlew: hardly ever seen on the pool previously, 3 counts of 6 birds were recorded in Jan 2019, reducing to 2 counts of 3 birds during Feb 2019.

Dunlin: seen twice, one in late July and 3 early Aug 2018.

Snipe: recorded 5 times during Aug 2018 (1-5 birds) and another 2 in Oct 2018.

Greenshank: one of my favourite waders - with a single, twice in Aug 2018.

Black-tailed Godwit: apart from a record of 2 birds in May 2018, the sightings were all in the Aug-Sep 2018 'Golden' period: 6 occasions with a record single count of 18.

Ringed Plover: never numerous, there was just one bird in Aug 2018.

Little Ringed Plover: my first record at the pool in May 2018, then 3 times in late Aug-early Sep 2018. All records were of single birds.

Ruff: this species previously gave group figures but records throughout August-early Sep 2018 were ones or twos. They were noted 8 times. There were also 2 in Oct 2018 – and 2 in Aug 2019, my only 2019 record.

Green Sandpiper: during the dry August 2018 spell, four visits found the species at the pool – in twos and threes. The only 2019 record was also in August with three present.

Black-Winged Stilt: although not one of my records (I was on holiday!) I believe one was seen and photographed in late August 2019 - what a bird to miss!

Other Birds

Grey Heron: the dry spell (August 2018) produced 4 sightings, all but one being of single birds that invariably were only transient visitors. For 2019 there were singles twice in Aug/September.

Little Grebe: always a rare sighting here – one in Sep 2019.

So there we have it - the end of an era for me, having recorded at the pool for over six years. No more getting up pre-dawn to walk (latterly by car) the 500 metres from my home to the pool.

It appears to be a new era for the surrounding land too with recent ploughing of all the fields. We used to have sheep (one year, cows) in the fields between our house and the pool - but now the whole area is devoid of livestock. I have very much enjoyed experiencing 'my own reserve' on my doorstep - a feature found by chance after moving in - what luck! Well, nothing lasts forever it seems. I hope that other visiting birders have enjoyed their time here too.

David Christie

April 2020

Editor's note: I'm sure all readers will join with me in thanking and congratulating David on his diligent reporting over the years of this former little gem of a site.

Obituary: James D Lough

29 February 1936 – 26 March 2019



My partner worked in a factory with James in the 1990s, so we were on nodding terms. When we returned to the Borders in 2005, I began meeting James in various bird hides on a regular basis.

An intensely private man, on bumping into James in a hide he would briefly discuss what he had seen from the hide and remark on any particular or unusual sighting that had been recorded in the hide's log, and then move on.

After I started visiting the Hule Moss hide regularly and commenting in the log, James began to chat a little longer and gradually offered other, less known sites that he found to be great bird watching places and a friendship developed.

James did prefer to bird watch on his own. I recall only one occasion when James was happy to be sharing a hide. The Hule Moss hide was a rather dilapidated and small hide. So, when a friend, Andrew Mossop, and I hiked out one dark evening to hear the geese arriving, it was a surprise to find James, and a lady from Scottish National Heritage there to confirm the geese count, already in the hide. Four of us made for a cosy evening, the noise of the geese arriving however was, as ever, fantastic.

James submitted to *Birdwatching* magazine for many years reporting his bird sightings, and also to BirdTrack, the British Trust for Ornithology online bird record and data analysis site. James kept meticulous bird diaries. After I had taken over the shop, James began to bring his daily recording in and I would post them on the Border Bird News to share with other birders. When James had something special to report he would open the door and offer his notes over with a flourish letting me know there was a gem hidden in the report. Humdrum days saw a used envelope pushed through the door, sometimes with a tap on the door so James could 'flash' his jacket at the window, giggle and scoot off.

Posting James' recordings resulted in some unusual local area names, two in particular being Rotton Row and Hungry Snout, both raising several e-mail queries such that James actually drew me a wee map of their location. After a health scare last year, James's family convinced him to cut down on visiting some of the more remote bird sighting places. But on leaving Yetholm Loch at dusk one evening, he fell and was unable to rise. Unwilling to put anybody to any trouble, instead of calling for help, James wrapped himself up in his big coat (on top of his nice new waistcoat) and settled down for the night, exactly as he had when in the SAS (Special Air Service). When we found out the next day that James had spent the entire night out in the open, obviously there were a few concerned knocks on his door, which were brusquely dismissed as he was 'fine'.

James was an avid fan of, and season ticket holder to, Heart of Midlothian Football Club, and, when he was spotted wrapped in his Hearts scarf waiting for a lift to the game, usually by Jean and Johnny Jaffray, we knew there would be no bird report that night.

James spent his National Service in the Coldstream Guards, which was a surprise to him, as he had originally applied to join the Royal Scots Greys, but somehow found himself mixed in queues and when given what he thought was the wrong uniform was told in no uncertain manner that 'the Army did not make mistakes' so the Coldstream Guards it was! and later the SAS.

James could be found in the White Swan in Duns on occasion supping a couple of pints; in true James fashion he was in the hub of the crowd, but still essentially himself.

James is survived by three children and two grandchildren and will be sorely missed by friends and fellow birders, football fans and pub mates.

Andrew Mitchell

Gazetteer

The table below is designed to assist readers in locating some of the more frequently mentioned sites and locators used in the Report. It might be useful to use in conjunction with the maps on pp 8 and 186.

Name	Tetrad or 10-km square	Name	Tetrad or 10-km square
Alemoor Loch	NT31X	Leithen Water	NT24/33/34
Ancrum	NT62H	Liddesdale	NY48/58/59
Ashkirk	NT42R	Longformacus	NT65Y
Bemersyde	NT63B/63C	Lyne Water	NT14/15
Blackadder Water	NT74/75/85	Manor Water	NT23
Broughton	NT13D	Megget Reservoir	NT12/22
Burnmouth	NT96K	Melrose	NT53
Coldingham Bay	NT96D/I	Moorfoot Hills	NT24/34
Coldstream	NT84	Newcastleton	NY48Y
Craik Forest	NT30/31	North Esk Reservoir	NT15P
Duns	NT75W	Paxton House	NT95F/G
Earlston	NT53U	Peebles	NT24K
Eckford	NT72D	Portmore Loch	NT35
Eildon Hills	NT53L	Reston	NT86R/W
Ettrick Water	NT21/31/32/42	River Teviot	NT30/40/41/51/52/62
Eye Water	NT86/96	Selkirk	NT42U
Eyemouth	NT96L/96M	St Abb's Head	NT96E
Folly Loch	NT62I/62N	St Boswells	NT53V
Fruid Reservoir	NT01/02/11	St Mary's Loch	NT22
Gala Water	NT35/43/44/45	Stow	NT44
Galashiels	NT43/53	Talla Reservoir	NT12
Gordon	NT64L	Teviot Haughs	NT62
Greenlaw	NT74	The Hirsell	NT84F
Hawick	NT51C	Tweed Haughs	NT73
Hen Poo (Duns)	NT75	Tweedbank	NT53
Hoselaw Loch	NT83A	Tweedsmuir	NT02X
Hule Moss	NT74/75	Watch Water Reservoir	NT65
Innerleithen	NT33I	Wauchope Forest	NT50/60
Jedburgh	NT62K	West Linton	NT15K
Kale Water	NT70/71/72	West Water Reservoir	NT15B
Kelso	NT73H	Whitsome	NT85Q
Kingledores	NT12E	Wooden Loch	NT72C
Lammermuir Hills	NT55/56/65/66	Yarrow Water	NT22/32/42/43
Lauder	NT54I	Yetholm	NT82
Leader Water	NT53/54	Yetholm Loch	NT72

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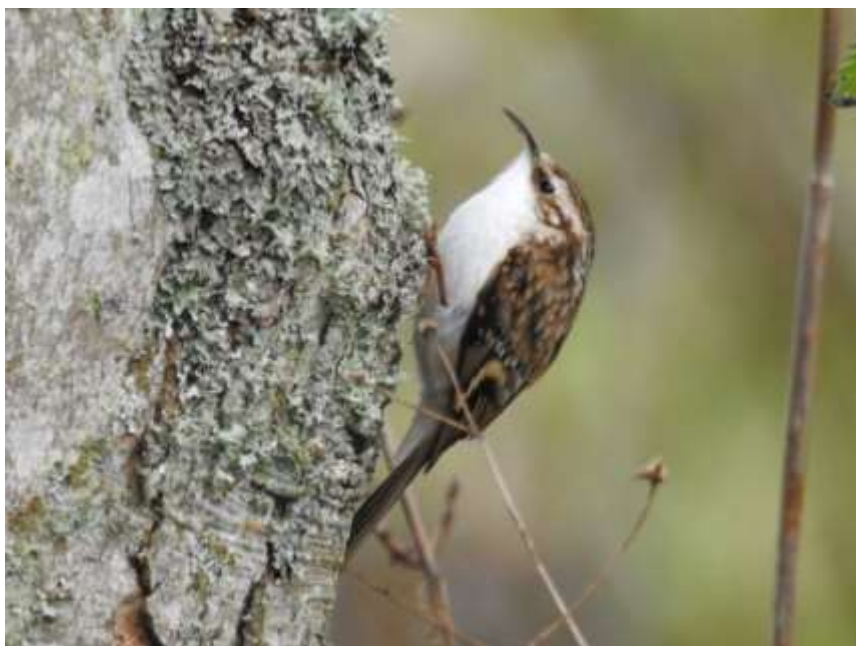
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Treecreeper. Burnhouse Mains (Stow). November. Alistair Cutter.