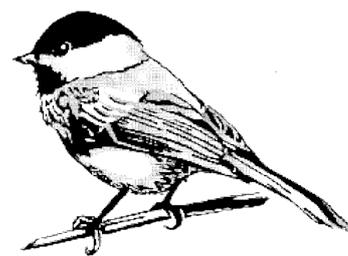


# TWITTER



Treswell Wood - Information To Tell Every Recorder

**March 1999 Treswell Wood IPM Group**  
(Integrated Population Monitoring)

All projects by permission of NWT

**Project leaders:**

**CBC** Margaret Price

**Nest Records** Chris du Feu

**Ringling** John McMeeking

**1999/1 - Number 21**

## Common Bird Census 1998

Details of the BTO analysis have arrived a little earlier than usual. Fiona Sanderson of the BTO, who has taken over the woodland CBC work from Andy Wilson writes:

*Many thanks to all the team for carrying out another CBC on your plot last year. Your survey was completed to the usual very high standard and will be a valuable addition to the CBC dataset. ... In 1997 a number of small passerines showed the decreases expected following the poor breeding season of 1996 and the severe weather of January 1997, particularly woodland birds such as Robin and Marsh Tit. The Song Thrush also continued to decline. However, several birds of conservation concern, including the Tree Sparrow and Green Woodpecker, showed an apparent increase in numbers.*

*Both Wren and Robin were up on your plot in 1998 after the lows of the last two years. This is a trend we are now finding across the country on CBC woodland plots. Chaffinch also showed a marked increase on 1997 numbers. Unfortunately Song Thrush numbers halved. However, of the warblers, Blackcap and Chiffchaff did particularly well last year. We are most grateful for your continued support and hard work. We hope that you will be able to continue coverage of you plot in 1999. Best wishes for the new year.*

Margaret Price adds:

*My guesstimate that Robins, Blackbirds and Wrens were fewer in 1998 than 1997 proved to be sadly wrong, particularly in the case of Wrens which jumped from 50 in 1997 to 82 in 1998. How they arrive at their figures is a mystery! In future I shall give up any attempt to estimate the numbers of those birds which are thick on the ground. As a consolation, I was right about Song Thrushes and Willow Warblers down from 8 to 4 and 10 to 8 respectively. Blue Tits and Dunnocks remained about the same. The poor survival of Blue Tit fledgelings in 1998 reported in Twitter 20 could result in a drop in breeding pairs in 1999. We will see.*

The full table of CBC numbers is given on page 2, together with comparisons with previous years. We have only given percentage changes where the numbers of territories recorded in both years is 10 or more. It is interesting to note the, only small, decline in Blue and Great Tit numbers and compare it with the drastic crash in the numbers of young fledged (see Twitter 18)

## EURING Age codes for bird ringing.

For the benefit of non-ringers, a note of explanation of the esoteric age codes is in order (or, more probably, long overdue). These are the codes used in the tables of captures and reports of recaptures etc. The system is this: **Even** numbered codes indicate some uncertainty about age. **Odd** numbered codes indicate a bird whose calendar year of birth is known for certain. From the table below it can be seen that increasing age codes show higher ages. Note also that age codes for each individual bird will change at the year end and also during the late summer moult when plumage is renewed completely.

### Certain age codes

- 1 Nestling
- 3 Hatched during current calendar year
- 5 Hatched during previous calendar year

### Exact age unknown

- 2 Fully grown, year of hatching unknown
- 4 Hatched before current calendar year
- 6 Hatched before previous calendar year.

Example. A 'fluffy' juvenile Blue Tit caught in August will be aged 3, but the same bird caught in the following January will become a 5. In the following summer it moults its last juvenile outer wing feathers and we can no longer distinguish it from birds from earlier years. It becomes a 4. In the next January it will become a 6, reverting to 4 again during the late summer moult.

## CBC Territories 1976-1998

Species	Averages						% change	
	76-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	1996	1997	1998	97 to 98
Mallard	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	p	~
Sparrowhawk	0	0.4	0.4	0.8	1	1	p	x
Kestrel	0.6	0.2	0	0	0	0	p	x
Red-legged Partridge	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	~
Grey Partridge	2.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	~
Pheasant	8.2	4.7	8	6.4	10	5	5	x
Moorhen	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.4	0	0	0	~
Woodcock	2	1.8	0.8	0.2	1	1	p	x
Stock Dove	0.6	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	~
Woodpigeon	0	1	0.25	0	nc	0	nc	x
Collared Dove	0.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	~
Turtle Dove	7.6	1.4	0.2	0	0	0	p	x
Cuckoo	5	2.4	1.4	0.4	1	1	p	x
Tawny Owl	1.4	2.6	1.8	1.2	1	2	p	x
Great Spotted Woodpecker	1.6	3.6	2.4	2.4	3	2	2	x
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	0	0.8	0.2	0	0	0	p	x
Swallow	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	~
Wren	59.4	55.8	69	71.8	67	50	82	+64%
Dunnock	27.2	23.8	22.2	13.4	14	12	12	0%
Robin	58.4	60.4	46.6	48	42	36	47	+31%
Blackbird	35	29	28.4	20.2	25	20	24	+20%
Song Thrush	29.6	23.6	16.8	7.2	3	8	4	x
Mistle Thrush	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.6	1	0	1	x
Lesser Whitethroat	0.4	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	~
Whitethroat	5.6	1.6	1.8	0	0	1	0	x
Garden Warbler	15	15.4	9.4	4.4	6	6	8	x
Blackcap	15.4	12.4	20.4	20.6	19	17	30	+76%
Chiffchaff	14.8	8.2	8.6	15.8	10	17	23	+35%
Willow Warbler	27.6	44	31.4	18.2	8	10	8	x
Goldcrest	0.2	0.6	0.4	0	0	0	p	x
Spotted Flycatcher	1.6	3	1.8	0.2	0	0	0	~
Long-tailed Tit	3.4	3	3.6	4.8	8	3	4	x
Marsh Tit	1.6	0.5	1	2.2	5	4	4	x
Willow Tit	3	1.8	2.4	2.8	4	3	1	x
Coal Tit	2	2.6	2	6.2	7	7	7	x
Blue Tit	32.8	60.2	67.2	59.2	83	74	72	-3%
Great Tit	13.4	26.8	36.8	31.8	35	37	32	-14%
Nuthatch	0	0.4	0.4	1	1	2	p	x
Treecreeper	2	1.8	4	3.4	2	4	3	x
Jay	3.2	3.6	2.4	1.4	1	1	1	x
Crow	1	0	0.2	0.2	0	1	1	x
Starling	5.2	4.8	1	0	0	0	0	~
House Sparrow	1.2	0	0	0	0	0	p	x
Tree Sparrow	21	10.8	0	0	0	0	0	~
Chaffinch	33.4	38.4	39	39	36	24	34	+42%
Greenfinch	1.4	0.8	0.2	0.2	1	1	2	x
Linnet	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	~
Redpoll	3.6	0.4	0	0	0	0	0	~
Bullfinch	5.4	3.2	3	1.4	0	1	p	x
Yellowhammer	1.8	1.4	0.4	0.4	0	0	p	x
Reed Bunting	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	~
<b>Total territories</b>	<b>457.4</b>	<b>457.0</b>	<b>437.6</b>	<b>386.2</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>+16%</b>

### Footnotes:

nc = not counted.

x = fewer than 10 territories recorded in either year,

p = present but territory not confirmed.

~ = no territories in 1996 or 1997.

## Noteworthy Captures

**Species**                      **Age/sex** **Ring**                      **Date**                      **Grid**  
**Wren**                              **5**                      **8Y3305**                      **14/3/99**                      **D03**

Wrens are generally very sedentary and this one is no exception. We first trapped it a mere 50m away from today's position in July 1998 when it was still fully in its juvenile plumage. Is it a bird which has simply not travelled during its youth, or is it one which has wandered more widely as a juvenile and returned to settle in one of the places it reconnoitred during its formative months?

**Song Thrush**                      **5**                      **RX57633**                      **7/2/99**                      **G04**

Song Thrushes in the wood have always behaved rather like summer visitors, with very few captures in the winter months - see below. We suspect that some may 'migrate' into surrounding villages (though this suspicion is based on one recovery and hearsay). Certainly captures during the winter are much lower than at other times and any winter Song Thrush is special. This one may have stayed with us over the winter, having been ringed on 29/11/98 in D09. (It might also have 'migrated' locally briefly and returned!) It is only the fourth Song Thrush we have caught twice within a winter, once in the last quarter of one year and once in the first quarter of the next. For the record, the others were CH19187 (5/10/74 and 29/3/75), CH19394 (8/11/75 and 1/2/76) and RX57566 (31/12/93 and 20/3/94). Of these four birds, all except RX57566 moved considerable distances within the wood between captures, further than we would expect of birds in the breeding season.

**Captures of Song Thrush by month - all captures 1972-1998 inclusive.**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Adult</b> (4, 5, 6)	11	48	131	219	306	311	73	42	29	15	7	5
<b>Juvenile</b> (3)	.	.	.	.	17	84	49	37	27	20	16	7
<b>Age unknown</b> (2)	.	.	.	.	.	1	2	.	3	16	8	6
<b>Totals</b>	11	48	131	219	323	396	124	79	59	51	33	18
<b>Totals as %</b>	0.7%	3.2%	8.8%	14.7%	21.6%	26.5%	8.3%	5.3%	4.0%	3.4%	2.2%	1.2%

**Blackbird**                      **6♂**                      **RH94531**                      **31/1/99**                      **D09**

An infrequent member of our catch. This bird has always been caught in Nightingale Ride, having been caught there in the springs of 1994 (as a first breeding season bird), 1995 and 1996 but not seen again until today, nearly three years later.

**Robin**                              **6**                      **K463140**                      **31/1/99**                      **D08**

One of our first colour-ringed birds (Left, Pink) and also one on which we have noted its mite load twice. In September 1998 it had a score of 4 and today it was 19.5. (The mite load is measured by giving each flight feather on one wing a 'score' ranging from 0, no mites visible, to 3 for a very heavy infestation. There are 19 feathers on the wing giving a maximum possible score of 57.) A good autumn for mites or a bad one for Robins?

**Chiffchaff**                      **4**                      **8Y3482**                      **2/1/99**                      **R-1**

Our second ever over-wintering bird and just three weeks after our first (see Twitter 20 for the first). It was also the 'first' of our summer migrants to be caught - (28/3/99 in P00). Is it really a winter visitor which has not yet left, or a really early summer visitor, or a resident, or what?

**Goldcrest**                      **6♀**                      **9G4050**                      **21/2/99**                      **N02**

It has been a good winter for Goldcrest captures and, in addition to high numbers, we have enjoyed some second-winter recaptures. This bird was ringed in March 1998 in P00 and, almost a year later, recaptured in the same part of the wood. Do they have favoured wintering areas?

**Willow Tit**                      **6**                      **J522587**                      **14/2/99**                      **Q02 Feeders**

An old friend, ringed as a juvenile in I03 in July 1995 and recaptured 16 times since then. Like many of our juvenile Willow Tits, this bird was originally captured in one part of the wood and has been recaptured subsequently as an adult only in the other part of the wood. All captures after the first have been in blocks A, B or C. This is typical behaviour for our Willow Tits.

**Blue Tit**                              **6M**                      **K181745**                      **2/1/99**                      **Q02 Feeders**

A respectably old Blue Tit, one of our 1995 nestbox-bred birds. It is, like many, a commuter between the feeders and its normal home range near the pond (K03). Its previous capture was on 23/12/98 roosting in a box in K03, two years to the day since we last found it roosting in the same box.

**Blue Tit**                              **6**                      **K463923**                      **14/2/99**                      **Q02 Feeders**

Many of the birds trapped at the feeders are regulars. This one, on the other hand, was caught at the feeders regularly during winter 1996/97 and once in autumn 1997 but was not caught anywhere since then. Curiously, a second formerly regular Blue Tit was caught at the feeders on the same day, after an absence of over a year.

**Blue Tit                      6                      K720484                      27/2/99                      O01 Roosting**

A 1997 nestling which has been a regular at the feeders and seems to live somewhere in Block B. This is the second successive time he has been found roosting in the same box. Typically we will find one or two birds roosting in the same place as on a previous roost-box round, but on this occasion most of the dozen or so birds we found were still in the same boxes.

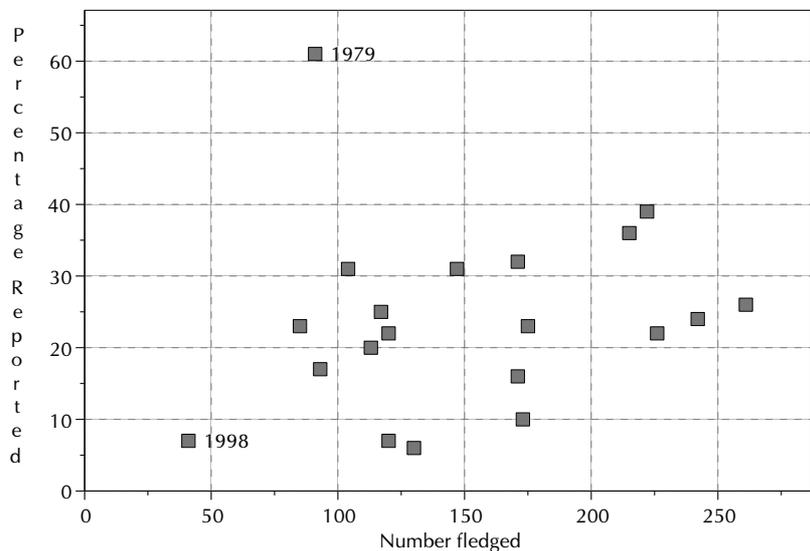
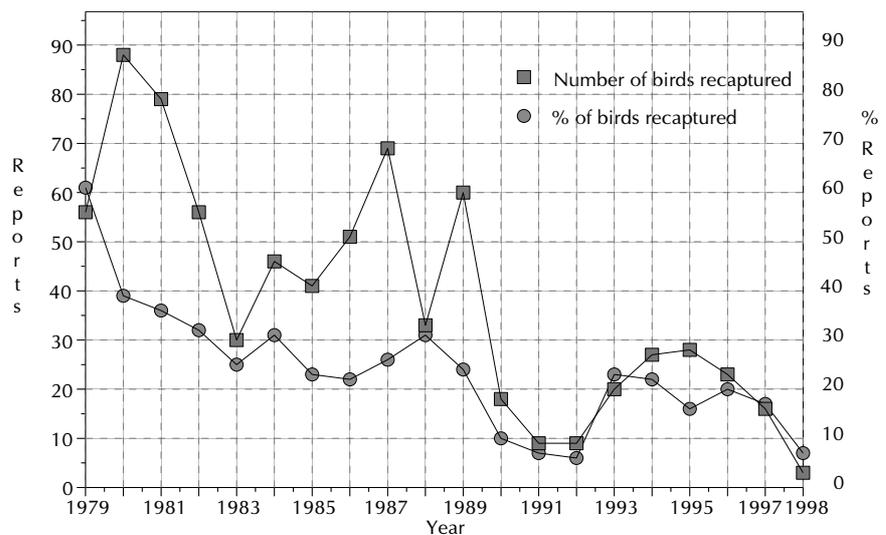
**Blue Tit                      5                      N645053                      21/2/99                      Q02 Feeders**

Normally the recapture of one of our last-year's nestlings is a fairly common event. This year, however, such captures are very rare - this bird is only the third of our 1998 nestling-ringed Blue Tits to be recaptured. This is partly a result of the low numbers which fledged and partly because of a low recapture rate (which may be caused by post-fledging mortality or high emigration). We may trap a few more of the nestlings in the next months and this would raise recapture rate to more typical levels. The graphs below illustrate the history of the reports of nestling-ringed Blue Tits. (A 'report' means any report of a bird after it has fledged, whether that be a recapture within the wood, or elsewhere, or a recovery of a dead bird.) The data below are only for birds reared in the main set of boxes - any birds ringed in Dormouse boxes, for instance, are excluded so total numbers are lower than in previous reports of numbers ringed and retrapped. The graphs of numbers recaptured and percentage recaptured seem to tell slightly different stories. In the very early years, high percentages of retraps were to be expected because the boxes allowed the Tit population to expand and so there would be places in the wood for our own birds to settle. As the populations increased, pressure drove more and more of them elsewhere or else juvenile mortality increased (or both) so recapture rates declined. Why there was such a trough in both numbers and percentages during the early 1990s we do not know. The spectacular peak of 61% recaptures in 1979 can only have been a result of high post-fledging survival, chance and the first-year effect when populations were low. The graph relating percentage of birds reported to number fledged is interesting. There is a significant correlation (excluding the outlying 1979 point) showing that in years of high numbers fledging, a larger proportion of young are reported. Does this mean that high numbers fledging (a good year) generally go with good post-fledging survival?

**Reports of nestling-ringed Blue Tits****Blue Tit Nestlings 1979 - 1998**

Year	Fl	R	%R
1979	91	56	61
1980	222	88	39
1981	215	79	36
1982	171	56	32
1983	117	30	25
1984	147	46	31
1985	175	41	23
1986	226	51	22
1987	261	69	26
1988	104	33	31
1989	242	60	24
1990	173	18	10
1991	120	9	7
1992	130	9	6
1993	85	20	23
1994	120	27	22
1995	171	28	16
1996	113	23	20
1997	93	16	17
1998	41	3	7

Fl - number fledged  
R - number reported  
%R - percentage reported



**Great Tit**                      **6♀**            **K463031**            **2/1/99**            **Q02 Feeders**

This is the 25<sup>th</sup> capture of this bird, together with a few same-day retrap events and some sight records by Ulli. She was ringed as a juvenile on 10/9/95 in P01. Thereafter, she has been retrapped and seen only in the eastern half of block F and, of course, often at the feeders.

**Great Tit**                      **5♀**            **N305900**            **14/2/99**            **Q02 Feeders**

Is this the Egon Ronay of the Great Tit world? First captured at the feeders (Q02) in late December 1998 and then recaptured at pheasant feeders in the south of the wood (F04) a month later. Now back at the car park feeders.

**Great Tit**                      **5♀**            **K720619**            **31/1/99**            **Q02 Feeders**

This bird was ringed in Nightingale Ride just over 2 hours before being recaptured in the far north of the wood. The Great Tit influx seems to have started earlier this year. Is it a bird which had just arrived in the wood and was passing through when we first captured it, or is it one which has arrived and has settled in the south but is commuting to the feeders?

**Nuthatch**                      **4♀**            **VR78858**            **24/1/99**            **J03**

Our most-frequently captured Nuthatch - this is its 13<sup>th</sup> capture since ringing as a juvenile on 20/7/97. Most of her captures have been at the feeders. She is likely to have bred in the wood in 1998 (having been captured with two juveniles in June) and when not at the feeders she is found in the centre part of the wood.

**Chaffinch**                      **6♂**            **J522816**            **21/2/99**            **N02**

We have noted before how Chaffinches often reappear after an absence of a year or two. This one ringed in March 1995, now a respectable age, has not been retrapped since February 1996. It knows about the feeders and seems to rove at least all around block C. Where else does it spend its time?

**Controls and recoveries****Great Tit**                      **5♀**            **NN445132**            **14/3/99**            **F06**

One of a pair ringed by Dave Fogg at Cottam Power Station on 24/1/99. We retrapped it at the feeders on 28/3/99.

**Treswell Wood IPM Group**

We wonder whether it would be useful to have occasional meetings of any people involved with the bird recording work in the wood. Such events could be anything - dinners like Neil has arranged in the past, business meetings where we plan forthcoming work, outside speakers to encourage us, working groups to examine and analyse data or a mixture of these things or anything else which would be useful in advancing the work of the group. Neil (01427-612933) would be very pleased to have your suggestions.

**Robin sight records**

We have managed a little better so far this year in observing our colour ringed Robins. All sight records are welcome - Tony Kennedy and the bird ringers have recording forms if you would like some. (But do not let lack of a form prevent you from recording any observations.) Tony has been observing the Robin that feeds regularly at the huts near the main cross roads. It often comes well within naked-eye range and, naturally, it is unringed!

If you do see a colour-ringed Robin, make a note of its colour-ring combination and where and when you saw it. The colours used are Black, White, Red, Yellow, Green, Pink and Blue. There are either one or two rings on one leg and the metal BTO ring on the other. Typical combinations may be, for example, Left leg - White over Black, or Right leg - Red.

**Nest Recording**

All the ornithological recording we do has to be approved by NWT. The agreement we have with them is that we do not do any active searching for bird nests (for obvious reasons, and excluding nests in boxes!). However, whilst on other survey work, we often find nests accidentally. In such cases it is a good thing to revisit and record the progress of the nests and complete BTO Nest Record Cards. If there are young to be ringed, let the ringers know. Chris has a supply of the cards if you need any (and copies of the BTO instruction book and Nest Record News). We would also like to know of any nests whose histories you have followed in order to include them on the computerised Treswell Wood nest record database.

The BTO would also be pleased to receive cards for any nest which you find. Every card is welcome, even for nests in gardens (in fact nests in gardens often have more complete and useful histories than those of nests in 'wild' habitats). If you want to complete just one or two cards for garden birds, but do not want the labour of sending cards to the BTO etc., Chris will be happy to accept such cards and include them with the group's collection.

## CES News

Dawn Balmer has sent enough copies of CES News for us all to have one. Ask Chris for a copy.

### 10 Week Summary January - March 1999

Interval 1, Visits 1393, 1399, 1390, 1392, 1394, 1391, 1395

	New			Recaptures			Total
	Adult	Birds	Birds	Adult	Birds	Birds	
Wren	1	1	.	.	5	.	7
Dunnock	.	1	.	2	1	.	4
Robin	.	3	.	2	5	.	10
Blackbird	1	3	.	1	.	.	5
Song Thrush	.	.	.	.	1	.	1
Chiffchaff	1	.	.	.	.	.	1
Goldcrest	4	5	.	3	3	.	15
Long-tailed Tit	5	.	.	1	.	.	6
Marsh Tit	.	.	.	2	.	.	2
Willow Tit	.	.	.	1	1	.	2
Coal Tit	1	1	.	.	1	.	3
Blue Tit	.	3	.	2	4	.	9
Great Tit	3	4	.	8	1	.	16
Treecreeper	.	1	.	1	1	.	3
Chaffinch	.	1	.	1	.	.	2
Bullfinch	.	2	.	.	.	.	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>88</b>

### Treswell Wood Standard Site Totals in 10-week Periods - 1978-1999

Year	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1978	101	131	243	223	131	829
1979	97	115	180	91	123	606
1980	86	102	211	147	170	716
1981	102	110	288	188	177	865
1982	66	113	142	89	110	520
1983	82	140	143	185	128	678
1984	91	114	110	82	106	503
1985	103	88	135	118	88	532
1986	77	104	153	68	141	543
1987	95	112	196	209	124	736
1988	92	143	180	137	119	671
1989	124	137	282	145	103	791
1990	99	145	204	130	175	753
1991	65	57	99	74	127	422
1992	64	64	115	223	159	625
1993	81	70	112	158	126	547
1994	88	109	209	155	157	718
1995	91	124	240	253	104	812
1996	95	121	128	116	97	557
1997	59	99	126	98	98	480
1998	78	84	116	80	106	464
<b>1999</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>(88)</b>
<b>Maximum</b>	124	145	288	253	177	865
<b>Minimum</b>	59	57	99	68	88	422
<b>Mean</b>	87	109	172	141	127	637