

Scottish Woodland Breeding Bird Survey 2009

To target conservation action, we need to know which bird populations are increasing, and which are declining. We can determine specific Scottish population trends for around 50 species – however, counts of many species, such as Great Spotted Woodpecker, Long-tailed Tit, Garden Warbler and Sparrowhawk, are still too low to calculate Scottish trends, or to contribute to wild bird indicators. Indicators are formed by combining the trends of birds in specific habitats to give an overall indication of habitat quality.

BTO has developed a programme to enhance survey coverage in Scotland, in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage and the Forestry Commission. The aim is to improve our ability to determine trends in birds of woodlands and adjacent habitats, such as Spotted Flycatcher, Tree Pipit and Redstart. We are also aiming to increase the species composition of the woodland bird indicator for Scotland, to make it more representative.

As a result, we need birdwatchers to help us keep track of the changing fortunes of the wild birds in Scottish woodlands, by surveying a Scottish woodland square for the BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey. The survey involves two spring visits to a specific 1-km square, to count all the birds seen or heard, so requires reasonable bird identification skills. If required, a free CD of the songs and calls of over 70 British species is available, and the BTO also runs bird ID training courses.

If you'd like to take part, please go to www.bto.org/bbs, and follow the links to sign up for BBS, or email bbs@bto.org.

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British Trust for Ornithology