



Why do we ring birds

7. 3. 2016 11:3

Why ring

► Ringing generates information on the survival, productivity and movements of birds, helping us to understand why populations are changing.

► Ringing birds is essential if we are to learn about how long they live and when and where they move, questions that are vital for bird conservation. Placing a lightweight, uniquely numbered, metal ring around a bird's leg provides a reliable and harmless method of identifying birds as individuals.

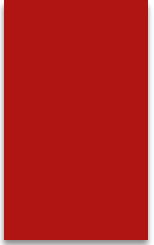


What information
does it give.

Although we have been ringing birds in Britain and Ireland for over 100 years, we are still discovering new facts about migration routes and wintering areas. However, the main focus of the Ringing Scheme today is monitoring bird populations.



What information does ringing give.



Ringling allows us to study how many young birds leave the nest and survive to become adults, as well as how many adults survive the stresses of breeding, migration and severe weather.

Changes in survival rates and other aspects of birds' biology help us to understand the causes of population declines.

Such information is so important for conservation that the BTO runs two special projects to collect it:

Who can ring – see BTO Web Site lots of information.

- ▶ All birds are protected by Law
- ▶ We must hold a licence to catch and or disturb
- ▶ BTO contracted by NE to run licence scheme
- ▶ Would be ringers need to find a trainer
- ▶ Permit system graded – Trainee, C and A and Trainer
- ▶ Permit only covers catching methods and ringing relative to training and experience
- ▶ Schedule 1 species – eg Barn Owl, Little Ringed Plover need licence to disturb and inspect nest during the breeding season.
- ▶ Special Methods need approval, training where appropriate.

Ringling in Cumbria 2022

This year, **12774 birds of 103 species were ringed.**

All carried a unique numbered BTO metal ring.

Some, such as terns and large gulls and selected waders were also fitted with colour-rings.

Some Curlews were leg-flagged.

Some passerines were also colour-ringed as part of long-term studies.

Summary of Cumbria Ringing totals 2022

- ▶ Cumbria totals include four species for which the highest numbers were ringed nationally: **Greylag Goose, Eider, Wood Warbler and Spotted Flycatcher.**
- ▶ Greylag Goose-139; Eider-42 full grown; Osprey-19 nestlings; Hen Harrier-14 nestlings; Red Kite-5 nestlings; Merlin-17 nestlings; Curlew-35 chicks; Great Black-backed Gull-40 chicks; Barn Owl-60 chicks; Marsh Tit-6 full grown; Willow Tit-2 full grown; Wood Warbler-32, including 21 nestlings; Spotted Flycatcher-143, a combination of nestlings and full grown; Pied Flycatcher-970, a combination of nestlings and full grown; Hawfinch-7 full grown; Siskin-548 full grown; Lesser Redpoll-402 full grown; Goldfinch 1182; Yellowhammer 116, all full grown and mostly from Watchtree NR

Nest Recording

- ▶ Finding and recording nests and often ringing pulli
- ▶ Two visits is usually enough for survival estimate
- ▶ No of eggs try to work out first egg date
- ▶ Number of pulli
- ▶ Ring pulli –critical stages for many
- ▶ Minimise disturbance
- ▶ Possible to capture and ring some adults



Ringling Pulli

- Know where and when a bird was born.



26. 5. 2016 18:42

Biometrics – ageing is relative to
moult – key features wing and tail.



Yellow Hammer -tails

Juvenile



Adult



Some moult issues –
a few species
adults and juvs do
a complete moult

- ▶ Willow Warbler – only species to do two complete moults in a year.
- ▶ Starling - adults and Juvs do complete moult as do House and Tree Sparrows and Long-tailed Tit.





Sexing
sexes similar with
lots of birds.
Plumage reliable,
wing length only
a few species.
In breeding
season use brood
patch or cloacal
protuberance.
But note some
males share
incubation.

Biometrics – fat, pectoral muscle.



- ▶ Fat is stored in tracheal pit and then under skin and abdominal cavity
- ▶ Pectoral Muscle basic – 0 breast bone prominent. 1 regular muscle slopes away from breast bone. 2 slightly rounded, 3 well rounded and breast bone hardly showing.
- ▶ Brood Patch – in this instance a Great Spotted Woodpecker. The male helps with incubation.

Disease

- ▶ Two diseases that affect legs – especially Chaffinch.
- ▶ Pox
- ▶ Salmonella
- ▶ Psitticosis



Thermal Imaging

A range of thermal imaging devices now available.

Skylark – common target



Thermal Imagers

- ▶ A wide range of species feed at night
- ▶ Easy to locate with thermal imager
- ▶ Still need lamp and net to dazzle and capture
- ▶ Significant numbers of Skylark, Woodcock, Grey Partridge, Fieldfare, Golden Plover, Snipe and Jack Snipe.
- ▶ Jack Snipe can be captured in daytime on right habitat.
- ▶ Adding significantly to knowledge of species using farmland.



Colour Ringing

- ▶ Advantage: Only need to capture bird once
- ▶ Relies on sightings
- ▶ Many Geese, Ducks, Swans, Waders Gulls and Passerines have been colour ringed
- ▶ One key point - it shows just how site faithful birds are.
- ▶ Important for conservation of habitat.

Colour Ringing



Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The longevity record for this species is: 23 years 3 months 21 days set in 2001

This bird has a particularly interesting set of sightings since it was colour ringed at Harty, Isle of Sheppey, Kent. Where it returns most years, having been seen nearby at Oare in October 2015, December 2016 and July 2021.

On 22nd April 2022 it was seen at Canute, Rockcliffe, having previously been seen on 27th January at Saltcoates, Lytham St Anne's, Lancs and, after the Rockcliffe visit, it went back to Oare and interestingly was still there on 28th June and 14th September. It has been seen twice in Iceland at Myrasysla on 19th April 2018 and 23rd April 2019. It has also been seen a number of times at Marshside, Southport.

European colour-ring Birding

European colour-ring Birding is a platform between the field-observer and the project-leader. Therefore it can not provide any details or life-list of your sighting. To get this information, you have to go through this website, find the project-leader and contact her/him.

This website was created (September 1995) and maintained min. twice monthly by volunteer Dirk Raes [cr-birding ADD skynet.be], totally for free and during his free time. You can contact him in English, Dutch, French and German, but as said : NO life-list can be provided.

European colour-ring Birding is supported by [The Norwegian Bird Ringing Centre](#) , [AVES](#) , [EURING](#) and [SOVON](#).

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Dear ringer,

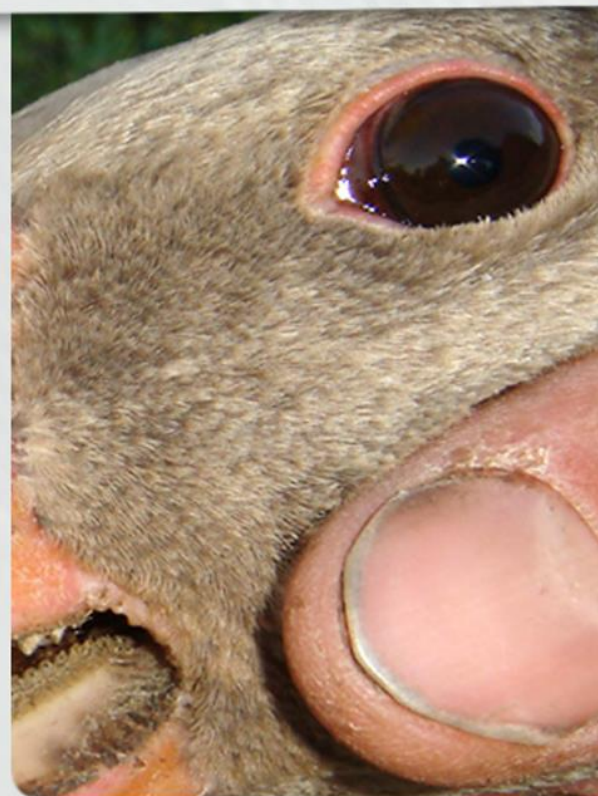
with now >6350 cr-projects, if an update of your project is needed, do please mention - apart from the information - also the exact place [the node, the page] of your project on the cr-birding site.

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Dear field observer,

When you see a colour-ringed bird, feel free to use this website and trace your sighting.

* First, you need to know which bird species it is.



- ▶ Several methods from Satellite tags to PIT tags
- ▶ Geolocators
- ▶ PTT's (Argos Platform Transmitter Terminals)
- ▶ GPS
- ▶ The Motus Wildlife Tracking System (Motus) is an international collaborative research network that uses coordinated automated radio telemetry to facilitate research and education on the ecology and conservation of migratory animals. Motus is a program of Birds Canada in partnership with collaborating researchers and organizations. <https://motus.org/>
- ▶ PIT Tags fit to bird with the ring, needs a receiver. Used for birds returning to the same location repeatedly such as a nest or a feeder.

Tracking and Tagging

Tracking is all about bird movement.

- ▶ Tracking does not provide the population and survival data of general ringing,
- ▶ It provides an insight into the migration routes of birds and sometimes where they die.
- ▶ Reveals where they over-winter.
- ▶ Probably will show the impact of climate change.
- ▶ Cuckoo tracking shows birds in South England migrate thro Spain whereas more northerly bird migrate further east.
<https://www.bto.org/cuckoos>
- ▶ Tracking instruments are now being developed for small passerines.

- ▶ <https://euring.org/research/migration-mapping>
- ▶ Primarily developed as a tool for tracking and predicting outbreaks of avian flu.
- ▶ Gives real time movements of birds migrating from Europe and back.

Euring –co-ordinating ringing throughout Europe.

Isle of May NNR – Bird Observatory



Ringling abroad – My experience Australia and Portugal



► LESSER REDPOLL

Dear Mr F J Mawby

Here are the details of a recovery of one of your birds.

Species: Lesser Redpoll (*Acanthis cabaret*)

Scheme: GBT

Ring no: **BYA7857**

Ringling details

Age: 3 Sex: U Sex meth: U P.ringed: 0 P.alive: 0 Condition: N

Colour marks added: - Metal marks added: N Act1: U Act2: U

Ringling date: 12-Oct-2023 12:00:00

Reg code: - Place code: WTREE Site name: Watchtree Nature Reserve, Cumbria, UK

County code: GBCUM Grid ref: NY3053 Accuracy 1 - Co-ords: 54deg 52min N -3deg -4min W Accuracy 1

Hab1: F3 Hab2: G4

Biometrics: Wing: 70.0 mm. Weight: 9.3 g. Time: 12:00:00hrs

Remarks: -

Ringer: Watchtree Ringing Group, 9195

Finding details

Ring not Verified Age: 5 Sex: U Sex meth: U

Colour marks added: - Metal marks added: - Act1: U Act2: U

Finding date: 12-Jan-2024 (0) 11:00:00

Reg code: - Place code: FARAIR Site name: Farnborough Airport South West, Hampshire, UK

County code: GBHAM Grid ref: SU8453 Accuracy 0 - Co-ords: 51deg 16min N 0deg -47min W Accuracy 0

Hab1: A3 Hab2: C5

Biometrics: Wing: 69.0 mm. Weight: 9.4 g. Time: 11:00:00hrs

Finding condition: 8:20 Movement: 9

Subsequent Capture by Ringer Intentionally Taken

Remarks: -

Duration: 92 days Distance: 428 km Direction: 160deg (SSE)

Finder: C Wilson, 6027

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Ringling details

Age: 6 Sex: U Sex meth: U P.ringed: 0 P.alive: 0 Condition: U
Colour marks added: - Metal marks added: N Act1: U Act2: U

Ringling date: 05-Sept-2005 time unknown

Reg code: - Place code: - Site name: Harrington, Cumbria, UK

County code: GBCUM Grid ref: NX9824 Accuracy 0 - Co-ords: 54deg 35min N -3deg -34min W Accuracy 0

Hab1: H1 Hab2: --

Biometrics: Wing: - mm. Weight: - g. Time: -hrs

Remarks: -

Ringer: J C Callion, 3047

Finding details

Ring not Verified Age: 6 Sex: U Sex meth: U

Colour marks added: - Metal marks added: - Act1: U Act2: U

Finding date: 14-Jul-2023 (0) 00:04:00

Reg code: IOM Place code: IOM Site name: Isle of May, Fife, UK

County code: GBFIF Grid ref: NT6599 Accuracy 0 - Co-ords: 56deg 10min N -2deg -33min W Accuracy 0

Hab1: H1 Hab2: C2

Biometrics: Wing: 121.0 mm. Weight: 30.6 g. Time: 00:04:00hrs

Finding condition: 8:20 Movement: 9

Subsequent Capture by Ringer Intentionally Taken

Remarks: -

Duration: 6521 days Distance: 187 km Direction: 21deg (NNE)

Finder: Isle Of May Bird Observatory, 9049

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Reference 01022024-

Storm Petrel