

The 2015-16 UK non-estuarine waterbird survey

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The United Kingdom's Wetland Bird Survey monitors non-breeding waterbirds on wetlands; most estuaries are counted annually but open coastal habitats are not so well covered. Important African-Eurasian Flyway populations of shorebird species such as Purple Sandpiper, Ringed Plover and Turnstone occur widely outside of estuaries, and seaducks, divers and grebes make extensive use of UK inshore waters in winter. Such species consequently are not completely monitored within the Wetland Bird Survey.

The first large-scale survey of waterbirds on the non-estuarine coasts of the United Kingdom, the Winter Shorebird Count (WSC) was undertaken in 1984/85, and was repeated by the Non-Estuarine Waterbird Survey (NEWS) in 2006/07 and 1997/98. NEWS-3 was carried out between December 2015 and February 2016 and covered the UK, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Republic of Ireland (in partnership with the Irish Wetland Bird Survey). The non-estuarine coast of the United Kingdom was divided into count

sectors: 247 in Northern Ireland, 535 in Wales, 1,164 in England and 5,559 in Scotland. Priority sectors were selected randomly from each region, and volunteers were requested to cover these before selecting other stretches of coast for survey. Over 75 % of these priority sectors were surveyed by almost 900 counters. In total, counts were made of coastal birds using around half of the non-estuarine UK coast, both in terms of the number of sectors and length, with completed surveys covering over 8,300 km of coast (mapped at a scale of 1:50,000).

Most counters were volunteers, with a small number of professional fieldworkers increasing coverage in remote areas. A newly developed online submission system allowed rapid collection and analysis of coverage and counts.

The preliminary results of the survey will be shown, including coverage and changes in species population distributions compared with previous UK non-estuarine waterbird surveys.

Long-term monitoring of a Stone Curlew population breeding in intensive farmland landscape

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Over the past fifty years, the agricultural intensification in Europe has been identified to cause a major farmland biodiversity loss. The precise causal relationships between farming practices and bird population declines are still to be elucidated in most cases, and even the breeding ecology of several farmland birds, including threatened species, is still poorly known or established for very few breeding sites. The Stone Curlew (*Burhinus oedicephalus*) is a cryptic species poorly monitored outside England, even in France where 21 % of the European population is present. Our study is based on a 17 years monitoring (1998-2015) of a Stone Curlew population breeding in intensively farmed land-

scape, in the main French breeding region (Center-West). Through the monitored period, we highlight the decrease of several key biological parameters such as population trend, adult survival rate, body condition, reproduction investment and hatching rate. We also provide a population viability analysis which indicates an unsustainable population development for the next decades. Our results were obtained just after the downgrading of the protection status of Stone Curlew from "vulnerable" to "least concern" in Europe. Obviously, there is a lack of knowledge on the Stone Curlew, which can be unfavorable to the preservation of this species in highly perturbed habitat.