



Ornithological Survey Summary Report

**Westmill Farm
May 2020 – April 2021**

**West Oxfordshire Farmland
Bird Project**

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West Oxfordshire Farmland Bird Project: Summary Report

The West Oxfordshire Farmland Bird Project (WOFBP) year runs from May to April so that we capture a single breeding season and the survey sessions during the following winter. Three survey methods are employed to provide information on bird populations on each farm: bird ringing surveys, nest monitoring and observational counts.

Bird ringing data collected by the project is submitted to the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and is used to inform population trends for each species on national and regional scales. During bird ringing sessions, feeding visits and nest-monitoring fieldwork we carry out observational counts. These are total counts of all species seen or heard during each visit and are incorporated into the BTO BirdTrack scheme.

Analysis of population trends for each species relies on comparing individual years with a baseline and so will become possible after surveying a site for five or more years. To improve the winter survival of farmland bird species, we carry out supplementary feeding throughout the winter and early spring. Detailed summaries of the findings from BTO Nest Record Scheme survey work on each farm, including nest boxes and open nests, are made once the main breeding season has finished.

Supplementary Feeding

- Supplementary feeding of granivorous species was carried out once a week from the **beginning of December through to the end of April (20 weeks)** at a feeding station located at **51.619, -1.655**.
- Each week **~10 kg** of ground food (barley and wheat) was distributed, amounting to roughly **200 kg** in total over the winter.
- The ground feeding is targeted at species including Grey Partridges, Yellowhammers, Reed Buntings, Corn Buntings and Chaffinches.
- In the week leading up to a ringing survey session the site was topped up twice to increase the numbers of birds coming in to feed.

Bird Ringing Surveys

- We carried out **10** ringing survey sessions in **June, July, September, October and December 2020**, from dawn until approximately 10:00.
- The tables on the following pages summarise the total numbers of each species captured during the ringing surveys organised by 1) new birds ringed and 2) recaptures of birds that had been ringed during previous sessions (subsequent encounters).
- During the 2020-21 season we were able to record a number of birds that had already been ringed at other locations (either by our team or by other ringing groups nationally or internationally). Likewise, some birds that were first ringed on the WOFBP farms were subsequently captured or recovered at other locations.
- The ringing sessions were undertaken predominantly during the summer and autumn, covering the arable fields, stewardship wildflower plots, beetle banks, enhanced overwinter stubbles and hedgerows along the B4508. These surveys were aimed at recording migratory species and sedentary farmland species, such as Skylarks and Corn Buntings.
- Further bird ringing surveys were undertaken during late summer and autumn around the feeding station where the birds were concentrated in order to record the most representative dataset of the populations present on the farm. The surveys have minimal impact on the feeding birds because we finish well before midday, allowing birds to return later in the day.
- The weather at the time of the ringing sessions was favourable for use of mist nets for safely catching the birds (overcast and <10 mph winds).

Observational counts for BTO BirdTrack

- Observational counts were carried out on the majority of farm visits as part of the BTO BirdTrack scheme.
- The point counts were conducted across the whole farm to include a wider range of species than documented by the ringing surveys alone.
- Results from these counts are shown at the end of this report and include all birds seen or heard during ringing, feeding and nest finding visits.

Nest Record Scheme Surveys

- From the beginning of May to early September breeding populations of farmland birds were surveyed as part of the BTO Nest Record Scheme.
- During these surveys, nests were located and regularly monitored on subsequent visits to record information on the length of time spent nest building, elapsed time from egg laying to juvenile fledging, clutch size, number of chicks surviving to fledging and the outcome of the nest.
- The majority of chicks were also ringed in the nest allowing us to recapture them in subsequent occasions during bird ringing sessions and provide data on site fidelity, movements and juvenile and adult survival rates.
- The surveys have minimal impact on breeding birds because the time spent near the nest is kept to an absolute minimum and nests were not approached when predators were in the vicinity or when the chicks have reached the stage where they may leave the nest if disturbed.
- The table at the end of the report summarises the total number of nests monitored for each species organised by successful and failed nesting attempts. Nests for which it was not possible to establish the outcome were classified as “unknown outcome”.

**British Trust for Ornithology Ringing Scheme:
Site Annual Summary**

Reporting Year: 2020/21
Site: Westmill Farm, Shrivenham (51.6178681, -1.6518381)

		New rings	Subsequent encounters	Total
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>		1	1
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1		1
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	7	1	8
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	8	1	9
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	64	5	69
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	6		6
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	4		4
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	19		19
Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	6		6
Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	2		2
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	23		23
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	1		1
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	2		2
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	16		16
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	3		3
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	20	1	21
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	2	2	4
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	1		1
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	7	1	8
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	4		4
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	6		6
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	7	1	8
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	144		144
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	3	1	4
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	1		1
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	39	1	40
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	18	2	20
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	52	17	69
Total	28 species	466	34	500

Ringers in Attendance: OJL Fox (5957), N Walker (6527), I Sherriffs (6813), I West (6846), J Haynes (6848), M Roper (T0000), C Narraway (T0000)

West Oxfordshire Farmland Bird Project: Maximum count bird sightings season summary 2020/21

Sites: Westmill Farm, Shrivenham (51.6178681, -1.6518381)

		20/21 Season	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	20/21 Season
	Number of monitoring sessions:	25	1	4	4	2	3	1	0	4	2	0	1	3	25
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	4	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	17	2	3	4	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	10	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	4	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	21	0	3	3	2	5	1	0	4	2	0	0	1	21
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	5	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	5	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	5
Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	258	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	10	28	0	14	200	258
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	14	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	58	0	0	30	0	4	23	0	0	0	0	1	0	58
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	33	0	11	10	0	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	33
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	42	0	5	20	0	0	4	0	3	0	0	2	8	42
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	3	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	4	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	4
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	6	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	9	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	9
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	4	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	16	0	0	5	0	7	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	16
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	202	0	20	60	0	21	25	0	50	0	0	0	26	202
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	338	0	100	100	0	50	50	0	19	5	0	4	10	338
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	83	0	12	14	0	22	30	0	2	0	0	3	0	83
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	5	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	5
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	15	0	11	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	12	0	9	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	1195	200	100	100	40	50	10	0	300	200	0	45	150	1195
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	54	0	2	6	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	54
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	30	0	15	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	5	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	9	0	3	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	5	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	14	2	2	3	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	3	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	33	5	6	12	3	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	343	0	0	150	0	30	25	0	100	34	0	0	4	343
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	10	0	5	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	0	0	16	0	38
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	18	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	15	0	0	0	0	18
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	3	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	9	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	9

		20/21 Season	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	20/21 Season
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	5	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	15	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	6	5	0	0	0	15
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	3	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	45	0	25	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	45
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	19	3	3	3	2	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	4	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Pied/White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	12	0	3	2	0	2	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	12
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	580	0	0	0	0	400	80	0	100	0	0	0	0	580
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	12	0	0	0	2	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	4	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	5	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	4	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	842	7	20	45	0	70	20	0	400	200	0	30	50	842
Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	49	0	5	40	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	49
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	7	0	0	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	361	32	45	70	20	36	12	0	50	30	0	16	50	361
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	36	2	6	5	4	3	0	0	6	3	0	7	0	36
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	4	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	Number of species:	71	8	47	44	17	39	27	0	21	13	0	11	13	71
	Sum of largest sightings:	4966	253	453	760	135	791	321	0	1097	513	0	140	503	4966

**British Trust for Ornithology Ringing Scheme:
Site nest monitoring annual summary**

Reporting Year: 2020/21

Site: Westmill Farm, Shrivenham (51.6178681, -1.6518381)

		Success	Failed	Outcome Unknown	Total
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	2			2
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		3		3
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	4	3		7
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	8	4		12
Total	4 species	14	10	0	24

Ringers in Attendance: OJL Fox (5957), N Walker (6527), I Sherriffs (6813)