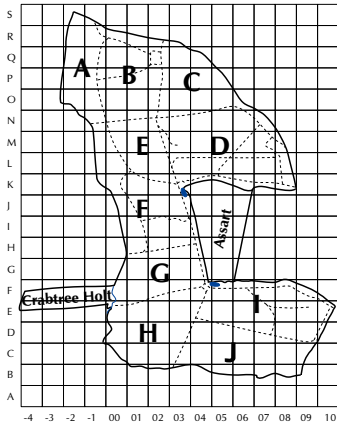


# TWITTER



Treswell Wood - Information To Tell Every Recorder

**March 2019 Treswell Wood IPM Group**  
(Integrated Population Monitoring)

**Project leaders:**

**CBC** Pat Quinn-Catling

**2019/1**

**Nest Records** Chris du Feu

**Number 121**

**Ringing** John Clark

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## John McMeeking - 1<sup>st</sup> March 1929 - 12<sup>th</sup> February 2019

With the passing of John we have lost a man with remarkable powers of leadership, inspiration, vision and influence. He will be greatly missed, but he has left a strong, coherent team and his guiding hand will continue to be felt in years to come.

John was always heavily involved with the Nottinghamshire Trust for Nature Conservation (now NWT). Treswell Wood was the Trust's first woodland reserve. As soon as the deeds were signed, John began ringing in the wood 'to see what was there'. The first ringing visit was on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1972. John then engaged in exploratory ringing in the wood. By 1978 enough was understood to initiate a standard site regime. A Common Birds Census led by Margaret Price began in 1973. John installed a handful of nestboxes and in 1979 a major nestbox operation was instituted. That made Treswell Wood into an integrated population monitoring site, although the term integrated population monitoring had not yet been coined. Coppice management records were added to the already-unique computerised Treswell Wood data set. It is fortuitous that the work began before the present time of very rapid climate change. This gives a sound baseline for analyses relating to changes in phenology. This baseline is likely to prove vital in examining the impacts of other changes - such as ash dieback.

Over the years John made over 1,500 ringing visits to the wood - an average of three Sundays a month. There are 13,440 bird processings assigned to his name, although he will have taken part in very many more - extracting from mist nets, discussing ageing and sexing etc. The first bird he handled was a juvenile female Blackbird and the last, on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2018, was Blue Tit juvenile. Both these were of appropriately common species - John's ringing was about 'what is there, not what is rare.'

John initially hoped there might be 'a paper to come from the project'. This has been amply fulfilled with a dozen papers, a dozen more where Treswell Wood data have been used in national or international studies, various posters, short notes and many student projects. Data from the wood have been used to develop identification and ageing techniques and results used in BTO guides. Particularly significant publications showed that constant effort techniques could, indeed, measure juvenile abundance; Wren survival is density dependent; Treecreeper mortality is greatest in winters which were both cold and wet; how coppice age relates to bird use.

John had an eye for detail and was keen to record things in as much relevant detail as possible. The 'McMeeking' grid he superimposed on the wood enables bird encounters to be plotted at an appropriate resolution. The early field records include many cryptic records of moult which have all been translatable into the BTO moult codes which were not defined until over a decade later. This attention to detail often involved time spent digging into past data but always resulted in an improved dataset or interesting findings.

Very many ringers have benefited from his knowledge, help, advice, critical encouragement, direction and friendship. How many? There are at least 200 people who have ringed with John in the wood and many more who John has influenced in other ringing operations. In addition he was well known in BTO circles having served as BTO Chairman and Chairman of the Ringing Committee and an ever-present force at BTO Ringers' and main conferences. John has made the group's operation an integral part of NWT management of the wood. His calming and positive presence has ensured continuing constructive relationships with local landowners and visitors.

John had a fall in early November and was 'confined to quarters'. In mid-December advanced pancreatic cancer was diagnosed he was given a week or two to live. His wife, Jean, said he never did anything in a hurry. True to form, these two weeks lasted two months. He spent these months at home, mercifully free from pain and with a steady stream of visitors. He remained fully alert until the very last days and still had his beloved Treswell Wood high in his thoughts with copies of the weekend's field sheets by his bedside. He frequently expressed his gratitude for the continuing work done by group members in the wood. In return we are most grateful for the many things he has done and for the inspiration he has been to us.

*John Clark & Chris du Feu*

## 2019 - the first 10 weeks

The first 10 week interval of the year has proved rather difficult with weather preventing ringing on some Sundays. Nevertheless we have completed the seven vital standard site visits with a little time to spare. Thanks to those who were able to help on a weekday and apologies to those who missed a weekend ringing session.

The standard site captures have been somewhat higher than average - the fifth highest since we began the constant effort netting in 1978. Normally winter numbers are boosted by good numbers of Goldcrests, but they have not been present in large numbers. Robin numbers are low too and that makes the high total surprising. Blue and Great Tits, and Blackbirds have been present in good numbers. Perhaps the mild winter encouraged more tits to stay in the wood - certainly we caught more than usual roosting in boxes in January. Another winter visitor, the Redwing, boosted the total with seven in the standard site nets on one day. The diversity was increased with a wider range of non-passerine species than usual - Woodcock, Tawny Owl and Sparrowhawk.

In spite of the mild winter, signs of spring in the wood have been few. Faithful dog's mercury came into full bloom on time, bluebells were pushing up leaves in mid-February but it was not until the very end of February that we saw the next spring flowers - coltsfoot - in the usual site in the car park. By late February birds were beginning to behave territorially and Song Thrushes were particularly evident - we have caught several recently and hope this is a sign of a recovery for the species.

## Common Birds Census 2018

This is the first year that our CBC analysis has been done entirely in-house. Thanks to the observers' work and to Pat for creating the composite species maps. Ellen has determined the territories after having valuable and very effective training last year from John Marchant at the BTO. The maps are now with Steve who is digitising them. They will soon be available electronically or in printed form.

The important thing for the operation of the territory mapping is consistency from year to year. It is accepted that the maps produced cannot reflect reality exactly - in fact the territories themselves are not fixed even within a season. What is important is that the relationship between reality and the determined territories remains constant from year to year. It is the relative changes in territory numbers that are the key features rather than the absolute numbers of territories determined. For this reason, when there is any change in the system - such as a new map analyst - we need to be sure the results have not been affected by the change. It was, therefore, prudent to look very carefully at the results this year in relation to those last year.

Almost everything looked to be in order with numbers much as expected and generally matching our feelings with mist-netting - e.g. lower numbers of Robins and Wrens but more Blue Tits. However, there were two species where things looked very odd indeed - Great Spotted Woodpecker and Willow Warbler. Interestingly both these species are so voluble that even I (with hearing in only one ear) can hear and recognise them, so I do not think it is observers suddenly becoming inconsistent.

We did hear more Willow Warblers than usual but our captures were not any greater than the usual derisory handful. Nine territories looks like more than we would have expected from ringing. On the other hand several of the observations were of interactions between individuals indicating territory demarcation lines which is a clear sign of territory boundary. If these birds are now singing in tree tops in coppiced areas where we do not do much mist netting, this could explain things. On looking at the map, it could be seen that most of the territories carefully avoid our frequently-netted areas. This looks like one species where CBC and mist-netting are sampling things very differently.

Great Spotted Woodpecker territories determined were higher than usual when we had felt a lack of the species, particularly as far as juveniles were concerned. We had also noted a lack of predation on nest boxes. Looking at the maps, though, the observations are in very tight clusters which does indicate distinct territories. Interestingly these territories do not reach far into nestbox or mist-netting areas. We know that their nest raiding behaviour is very localised and happens when they need food for their young. Our old villain, CT 84206, which we think was the bird which had wreaked havoc in the north-west section of the wood for some years, has not been seen for over a year and his former territory is now vacant. I wonder if we did really have a good number of territories but breeding success was very low. That would lead to few juveniles, low food demands and consequently little tit nest predation. The lack of juvenile captures in the autumn, coupled with unringed birds coming into the wood in spring gives further support to this.

At first I thought it would be worth looking at these two species' territory determination again. However, it seems that, not only are the territories determined quite consistently with what we have seen in nest recording and ringing, but also that seeing where the territories are (or are not) gives us insight into what is happening in the wood.

Thanks again to all who have worked on this long-running operation.

## Treswell Wood CBC - Numbers of territories - 2018

Species	10-year averages				2016	2017	2018
	76...85	86...95	96...05	06...15			
Canada Goose*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0	p	0
Mallard	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	2	p	p
Sparrowhawk	0.2	0.6	0.7	0.6	1	p	p
Buzzard	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.8	1	1	p
Hen Harrier	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	p	p	0
Kestrel	0.4	0.0	0.6	0.7	1	0	p
Pheasant	6.5	7.2	7.3	7.6	3	4	8
Woodcock	1.9	0.5	0.6	0.7	p	p	0
Lapwing*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0	p	0
Black-headed Gull	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	p	p	0
Stock Dove	0.4	0.0	3.7	4.5	5	4	9
Woodpigeon	0.5	0.2	nc	nc	14	nc	12
Collared Dove	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.2	p	0	0
Cuckoo	3.7	0.9	0.4	0.2	0	0	0
Barn Owl	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	p	0	0
Tawny Owl	2.0	1.5	2.2	1.2	3	2	1
Green Woodpecker	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	3	2	2
Great Spotted Woodpecker	2.6	2.4	4.0	5.8	3	3	8
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	p	0	0
Skylark*	0.1	0.1	0.2	2.9	3	1	0
Swallow*	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.3	p	p	0
Meadow Pipit	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0	0	0
Pied Wagtail	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0	0	0
Wren	57.6	69.9	79.1	70.2	88	79	46
Dunnock	25.5	17.8	10.5	8.3	7	10	8
Robin	59.4	47.3	67.7	50.6	41	51	33
Blackbird	33.0	24.3	26.1	27.3	21	25	26
Song Thrush	26.6	12.0	6.2	8.5	12	11	10
Redwing	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	p	p	0
Fieldfare	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	p	p	0
Mistle Thrush	0.3	0.6	1.9	2.5	1	p	0
Lesser Whitethroat	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	p	0	0
Whitethroat	3.6	0.9	0.3	0.1	0	0	0
Garden Warbler	15.2	6.9	7.0	4.5	p	0	1
Blackcap	13.9	20.5	26.3	24.2	20	24	38
Chiffchaff	11.5	12.2	18.8	23.1	29	42	28
Willow Warbler	35.7	24.8	5.9	3.2	1	3	9
Goldcrest	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	2	5	0
Spotted Flycatcher	2.3	1.0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0
Long-tailed Tit	3.2	4.2	6.6	4.5	2	2	4
Marsh Tit	1.1	1.6	3.2	2.1	3	4	6
Willow Tit	2.4	2.6	2.6	0.6	0	1	p
Coal Tit	2.3	4.1	6.9	4.4	3	2	4
Blue Tit	46.5	63.2	60.3	42.7	38	51	58
Great Tit	20.1	32.3	41.0	39.1	25	28	42
Nuthatch	0.2	0.7	1.2	4.5	4	6	9
Treecreeper	1.9	3.7	3.4	3.1	4	2	6
Jay	3.4	1.9	1.5	1.7	2	2	p
Magpie	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.1	0	p	0
Jackdaw	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.3	3	1	2
Rook	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	p	p	0
Carrion Crow	0.5	0.2	0.8	1.5	3	3	p
Raven	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	p	0	0
Tree Sparrow	15.9	0.0	0.0	0.3	0	0	0
Chaffinch	35.9	39.0	44.7	42.5	37	39	44
Greenfinch	1.1	0.2	1.3	0.3	0	p	0
Goldfinch	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.8	p	1	2
Linnet	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0	0	0
Bullfinch	4.3	2.2	1.2	2.4	2	4	7
Yellowhammer	1.6	0.4	0.3	0.2	p	1	0
<b>Total territories</b>	<b>457.2</b>	<b>411.9</b>	<b>426.8</b>	<b>404.3</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>423</b>

**Notes:** p - present but too few observations to determine any territory. nc - not counted, \* territorial behaviour recorded but extremely unlikely that nesting takes place in the wood itself.

## Frass

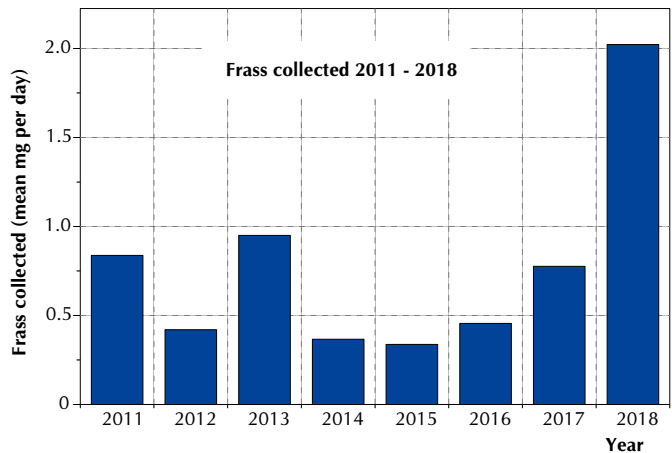
Ken Smith has, as usual, gone through our frass collection and comments:

*Here are the 2018 frass results for Treswell. I am sorry they have taken so long but the frass levels have been quite high this year and it has taken longer than usual to get through the Herts. and Lancs. samples.*

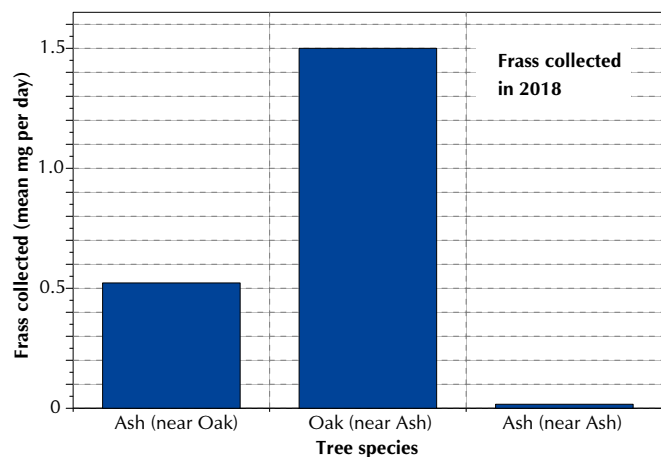
*I have had a quick look at data for previous years and I think this is the best year you have had so far for frass. I think the good weather through the main breeding season also meant that the patterns of the peaks are very clear. If Treswell is anything like other woods I would expect frass to increase over the next two or three years before declining again....a dangerous prediction!*

*Your predictions about ash were spot on - the tray under the isolated ash tree (F7) hardly had any frass at all.*

The first graph shows the mean frass fall per day for all years since we began collection. As Ken says, 2018 has been a good year. As noted in an earlier issue of Twitter, 2018 was also a very good year for tit nest productivity. The research done so far on frass (and published) has looked at the timing of frass (and therefore timing of the caterpillar crop) in relation to timing of tit nests in order to determine whether there was now increasing phenological mismatch between tit breeding and the caterpillar crop. Ken is now intending to examine any connections between the abundance of frass and nest productivity. Data from sites, such as Treswell Wood, where we have consistent records of tit breeding and of frass production, will be used for this study.

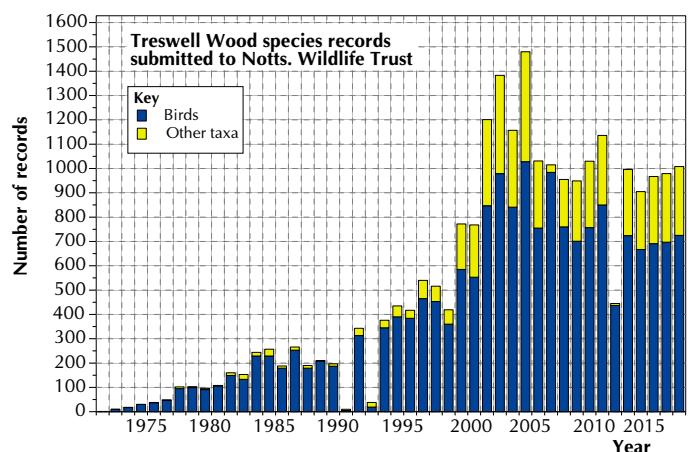


We had come to believe that ash was a very poor species for caterpillars and it was likely that frass under ash trees was largely composed of frass from oak which had drifted in the wind. To explore this further we placed an additional collecting tray (F7) under an ash tree as far from any oaks as we could manage. This additional tray collected no frass at all except once when it had a very small amount. Even then, though, it seems very likely that this could have resulted from wind drift: frass is light and some could drift as far as the 40 metres from the nearest oak. Had there been any frass falling from this ash it seems more likely that we would have found a little frass on each occasion rather than some only on the one occasion. The second graph shows the very low crop below the ash-only trap (F7) together with much higher values below the oak and ash pairs. If the low value of F7 represents the true value of ash produce, then the crop recorded under ash adjacent to oak really reflects what has fallen from oak and drifted to the trap under the adjacent ash. The amounts of frass collected in Treswell Wood have always been much lower than in Ken's other sites which are all pure oak woodland. In those woods, frass which drifts away from one oak will be replaced by drift from other nearby oaks so giving higher values than in Treswell Wood, even if the amount from particular oak trees is identical to those in this wood.



## Species Records from Treswell Wood

In addition to recording birds, group members also make less systematic records of other animals, plants and fungus in the wood. Although collected casually, after a time they do build to form a useful collection. One problem has been in compiling all the many handwritten observations on field sheets from the past. Thanks to efforts of students from Queen Elizabeth's High School in Gainsborough and staff of TDX, Nottingham, most records from most years have been committed to computer. Formatting and checking the data from these



different routes has taken more time but enough is now done to make a worthwhile submission of species records to the Notts. Wildlife Trust which owns the wood. The trust has now received 18,593 lines of data dating back to 1972 when John McMeeking made his first ringing visit to the wood. Each line is a 'species record' - that is a name of a species, on a particular day at a particular place.

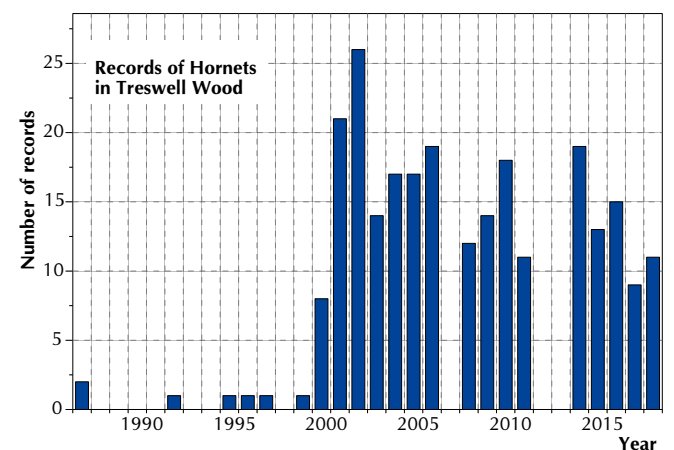
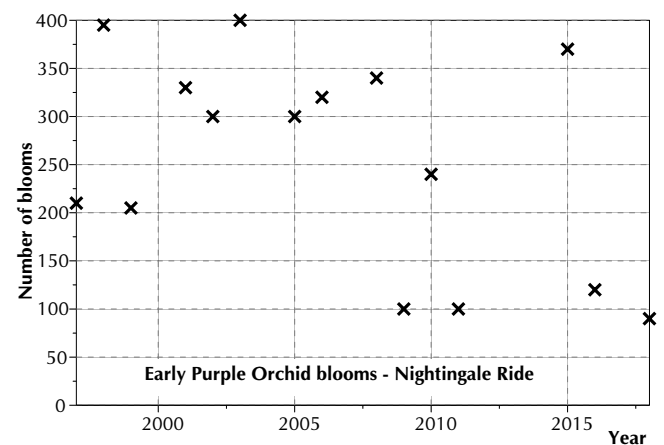
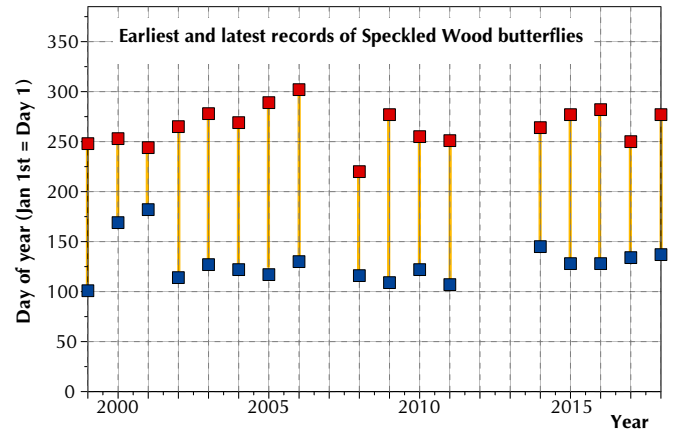
The most obvious value of a species record is to know that a species exists (or did exist once) in that place. At first glance it may seem uselessly repetitive to continue to record, say, dog's mercury. We know this ancient woodland indicator species is abundant in the wood - why bother to record it again and again? What becomes interesting are additional notes with the basic species record. If the record includes, for example, 'in bloom' then we have a record of timing of natural events. Over the years, even casual records can begin to show phenological changes. All data can only be fully understood if we understand how they were gathered. It would appear from the graph of annual species records that the wood is steadily increasing in bird and other organism abundance. However, it must be noted that members of the group are generally becoming more thorough at recording species and do make special efforts to record 'significant' events (such as first flowering dates). It is these efforts which lead to greater numbers of records. There are a few 'missing teeth' in the graphs and these indicate the few remaining records to be extracted from the field sheets.

The graph shows the earliest and latest records of Speckled Wood butterflies in flight and gives an example of how we can show changes in annual appearance and length of season. In this case, though, between-year variation seems to be greater than any underlying trend resulting from climate change.

We have counted Early Purple Orchids in a large patch in the south of the wood for the last 20 years. Between-year variation in abundance is marked but, perhaps worryingly, the numbers from the last years have been much lower than normal in this part of the wood (which is a non-intervention area). On the other hand, we keep finding small clumps of the species elsewhere that we have not previously seen. Perhaps, overall, it is not in decline.

Sometimes we have unexpected opportunities to record major events - the colonisation (or recolonisation?) of the wood by hornets is one such. They are large, spectacular insects and hard to miss or misidentify. The graph shows just the number of times we have made a note of them - either in flight, entangled in a mist net or a nest. The records prior to 2000 show the first, early attempts at colonisation which did not seem to result in a successful nest and were probably (definitely in one case) prospecting queens. This fine, docile species is now an established part of the woodland fauna.

Some records are of common but under-recorded species. For instance, we have made only two records of the daisy, *Bellis perennis*. It is surprising how the commonplace is so often overlooked. Sometimes we may come across a rarity (or perhaps just rarely recorded species). In 1979, we found a small beetle, *Gnathoncus buyssoni* in an old tit nest. This was only the 14<sup>th</sup> record in the country and the first record away from the south-east of England. There was no doubt about its identity as it was examined by an expert at the Natural History Museum in London. I suspect it is a rarely recorded member of the bird nest fauna rather than being genuinely rare. Whereas these rarities provide interest, in John McMeeking's words, we should be recording what is there, not just looking for what is rare. These species records show just what is there.





## BTO Blue Tit Post-juvenile Moulting Project

February brought the second half of the BTO project to examine the relationship between the extent of post-juvenile moult and over-winter survival. Ringers were asked to record the extent of moult of juveniles in November and again the following February. The expectation is that birds which moult more feathers are those which were in better condition in the first place and their new, stronger feathers will further aid over-winter survival. Thus we should see that the spring birds have, on average, more replaced feathers than the birds captured in autumn. In addition, the project should be able to look at regional differences within Britain (it is possible that northern birds moult less than southern birds, for example) and there is the possibility of looking at differences in habitats too. Of course, Treswell Wood Blue Tits will contribute just a small proportion to the national collection. But what do our own birds tell us? Whichever way you look at it, our birds have performed in exactly the opposite way to that which we had anticipated. The table shows the rather surprising results.

The four features examined were these: Number of greater coverts moulted - the higher the score, the greater the extent of moult. Alula - this is given a score in the range 0-3, the higher the score, the greater the moult. Secondaries and tail feathers - the number which have moulted - the higher the score the greater the extent of moult (secondaries range 0 - 9 and tail range 0-12). For all these features, the autumn birds have an average score indicating a greater degree of moult than the spring birds - this indicates that the assumed 'fitter' autumn birds have survived the winter less well.

Sample	New Greater Coverts	Alula	Secondaries	Tail
Autumn	8.9	1.6	0.6	2.8
Spring	8.3	1.5	0.5	2.1

We do not know if these results will be reflected nation-wide - if so it will give food for thought. If not we may wonder why the Treswell Wood birds might be different? We wait and see.

## The Birds of Nottinghamshire

*After many years' gestation, the new Birds of Nottinghamshire was finally sent to Liverpool University Press (LUP) in November. The first proofs arrived at the end of January and they hope that the finished book will be available in the summer. The book comprises sections on the ecology and habitats of Notts., a history of bird recording in the county and, of course, a systematic list. This totals over 330 species including such national rarities as the country's first Egyptian Nightjar, Lesser Yellowlegs, Dusky Thrush, Black-headed Bunting and Redhead. But, likely to be of more interest to the Treswell Wood team, there are detailed accounts of the many common species to be found across the county. Blue and Great Tits, Treecreeper, Robin, Wren and Nuthatch all feature, brought to life by your own Chris du Feu. And the contribution of the Treswell Wood IPM operation is further highlighted by results from Blackcaps, Garden Warblers, Blackbirds, Song Thrushes, Great Spotted Woodpeckers, Marsh Tits and many others.*

*The changing face of the county's birdlife is described and discussed. The dramatic declines in Turtle Dove, Corn Bunting, Willow Tit and Cuckoo are documented, while the arrival and establishment of birds including Little Egret, Marsh Harrier, Avocet and Cetti's Warbler are also reported.*

*The book will be lavishly illustrated with a wealth of photographs (all taken within the county) and hundreds of sketches by Michael Warren. There are also scores of maps developed from the recent BTO Atlases, with graphs and histograms showing patterns of abundance and change.*

*It is intended that the book will be dedicated to the memory of John McMeeking, whose contribution to Nottinghamshire's ornithology will be well-known to readers of TWITTER.*

**David Parkin**

## The National Nest Reference Collection of the Hunterian Museum.

### Appeal for nests 2019 from Mike Hansell

*It is now 20 years since I began this collection of the nests of British breeding birds. This is a good time for me to prepare to hand on the future of it to someone younger. I am very pleased that Dr Stewart White, Senior Lecturer in University of Glasgow is now joining me. He has extensive experience as a field naturalist with a particular interest in ornithology, and he is enthusiastic for the future development and growth of the Nest Collection.*

*Because of the maturity of the Collection, our wish list now concentrates on the nests of UK species that are particularly rare or very difficult to locate. Nests from anywhere will be welcome. The target species are: Black Redstart, Cetti's Warbler, Dartford Warbler, Firecrest, Grasshopper Warbler, Jay, Lesser Redpoll, Nightingale, Redwing, Siskin, Snow Bunting, Turtle Dove.*

*Dartford Warbler: Thanks to the efforts of more than 140 donors over the years, the Collection has grown into an*

important ornithological resource resulting in the use of our nests in academic research projects. This year we want to put particular stress on current research at the University of St Andrews on nests of the Dartford Warbler. Here, Professor Sue Healy and her group have been studying the striking and surprising variation in its nest design and composition. This finding came to light through contributions made by donors to our Nest Collection and it is these nests that have been used in St Andrews initially to describe this nest variation. Now the priority is to understand better the basis for it. As this could well be habitat related, we now need sample nests from as many different locations in its UK range, so every additional nest will make a valuable contribution.

It is unlikely that we will be fortunate enough to find any of these in Treswell Wood but efforts to locate them elsewhere would be appreciated. You can contact Mike at [Mike.Hansell@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Mike.Hansell@glasgow.ac.uk)

## Noteworthy Encounters

**Species**                      **Age/sex**                      **Ring**                      **Date**                      **Grid**  
**Sparrowhawk**                      **5F**                      **EY42358**                      **28/1/2019**                      **D09**

After catching four Sparrowhawks in reasonably close succession in early 2018, we caught no more until this one. Until the last few years most of the Sparrowhawks we have caught were male. We considered this might have been partly a result of the larger females being able to escape from mist nets more easily. However, since 2012 the sex ratio has been about equal. Has the population changed in some way?

**Woodcock**                      **5**                      **ET42357**                      **20/1/2009**                      **O05**

We have previously ringed only 11 adult Woodcock although we do sometimes see them in the wood in winter. In the 1980s we also found some broods which we were able to ring. We caught three adults in the 1970s, five in the 1980s then no more until one in 2010 and another in 2016. The recovery rate of this non-conformist wading bird, is very high - four of the 11 birds have been recovered. Sadly all four were shot. We hope his one has a better fate.

**Tawny Owl**                      **10**                      **GR24214**                      **3/2/2019**                      **E04**

Most of the adult Tawny Owls we catch are nesting in boxes. This is an unusual one in that we have only once caught it on a nest. Its other five captures have been in mist nets, mostly around 08:00 rather than in the very early morning when some might still be hunting. After its first capture, which was in a mist net in the north-east of the wood in September 2014, all its captures have been somewhere along Bower's Ride. Tawny Owls do tend to be sedentary, sticking to their well known hunting territory. This one seems no exception.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** **5F**                      **LE35500**                      **20/1/2019**                      **Q03**

The notes about this species in the CBC report describe unusual aspects of 2018. The saga continues and this bird, with two others, help strengthen the idea that 2018 was a bad season for the species in the wood. Two of these three caught so far this year have been clearly ageable as first winter birds, showing a clear contrast between adult and juvenile feathers **within** the greater/median/lesser covert tracts. The third bird had no such contrast so could have been a juvenile that had moulted all these coverts or else an adult that had undergone a normal full moult (except, as very frequently, for some random primary coverts). It seems as if juveniles are dispersing from elsewhere (probably nearby as the species is very sedentary) to find good breeding habitat in the wood.

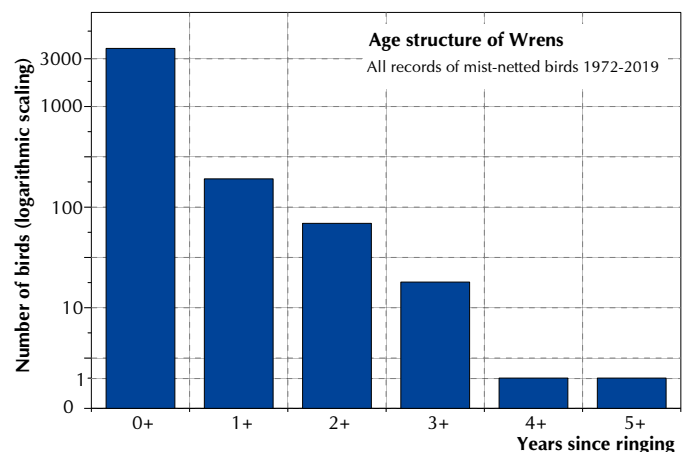
**Great Spotted Woodpecker**  
**January captures 1973 - 2019**

	New	Retrap
<b>Previous years</b>	16	37
<b>2019</b>	3	0

Looking at past captures of the species in January and February we see that 70% of our captures have been of retrapped birds - that is, birds which are already likely to be Treswell Wood residents. This year, all three captures have been of incomers. It is only a small sample, not statistically significant, but does help support the idea that 2018 was a terrible breeding season for them in the wood.

**Wren**                      **6**                      **EYD946**  
**6/1/2019**                      **Q01**

Now just over three years old, this is a relatively long-lived bird. Ringed as nestling in 2015 in a Dormouse box in east of the wood M07. All its adult captures have been on north edge of the wood. Whereas an interval of over three years since ringing may not seem very long, as far as this species is concerned it is very long indeed. Only one Wren in 200 which we ring is encountered



again more than three years after ringing. In human terms this Wren has lived long enough to deserve a card from the Queen.

The graph illustrates the age structure of all the Wrens we have caught. Note that it has been logarithmically scaled. Had the vertical axis been linear, such is the rarity even of 2+ year birds, that either the 0+ bar would have reached the ceiling or else the 3+ bar and beyond would have been invisibly small.

**Song Thrush**                      **6**                      **RW58288**                      **17/2/2019**                      **N-1**

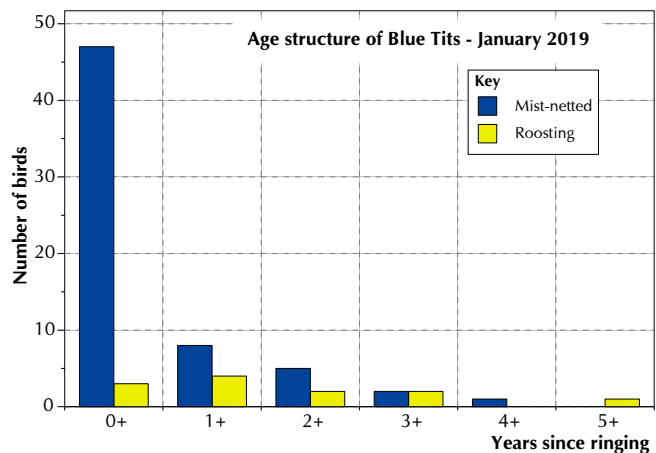
It seems to be a good year for this species in the wood so far. They have been very obvious singing in late February. CBC territories in 2018 were comparable to the previous two years and much better than in the two previous decades. Are we seeing a long-term recovery for this attractive species? So far we have caught four this year - this is very pleasing as normally we catch very few until the spring arrives. This individual is the only retrap, having been ringed in 2015, and retrapped only once in 2017. Of the three new birds, only one was a first winter bird, the other two were adults.

**Redwing**                              **5**                      **RT55984**                      **3/2/2019**                      **C03**

The first of 10 Redwings caught on the day. This is the second highest number we have ever caught on any day. On average we catch only three or four a year. The record day, when 18 were caught, was on 24<sup>th</sup> January 1976 - the same time of year and also with nets set in the same part of the wood.

**Blackbird**                              **6M**                      **LE35206**  
**3/2/2019**                      **D03**

This bird was ringed as a breeding male in April 2015 so is now a respectably middle-aged Blackbird. It seems to be a resident in the wood having been trapped in both winters and summers and always somewhere on Bower's Ride. The mystery is why it has been so infrequently trapped - this is only its fourth appearance. Bower's Ride is one of our standard sites, netted five times each year so we have had 20 opportunities to catch this presumed resident in its home area. Explanations, as usual, welcome.



**Blue Tit**                              **6**                      **L327780**                      **15/1/2019**                      **N01 Roosting**

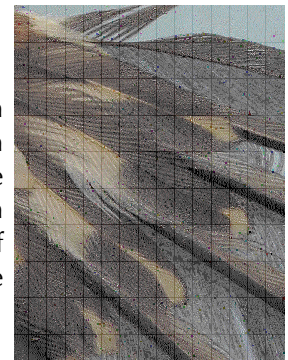
Our oldest recently caught Blue Tit - 5y 8mo since ringing as a nestling. This was its 13<sup>th</sup> capture when roosting (always in one of three closely sited boxes). It has only been retrapped in mist nets five times. In an earlier issue of Twitter we noted that the roosting birds seemed to be drawn from a partly separate sector of the woodland tit population. Further evidence for this comes from the age structure of roosting birds. The graph compares the ages (as measured by lengths of ringing histories) of birds found roosting in boxes and birds caught in mist nets. The average age of the mist-netted birds is 11 months but that of roosting birds just over two years.

**Blue Tit**                              **5**                      **AVC1617**                      **10/1/2019**                      **Retford**

The first of the 2019 nestling-ringed birds to be found away from Treswell Wood, recaptured by the North Notts. Ringing Group some 7km distant. It had not been retrapped in the wood since being ringed although its sibling, AVC1616, was still in the wood in February. In view of the large number of nestlings ringed in 2018 it is, perhaps, surprising that more have not been found elsewhere.

**Treecreeper**                              **4**                      **JTE279**                      **6/1/2019**                      **P00**

We have been building a collection of photographs of tips of Treecreeper primary coverts in order to improve our knowledge of ageing individuals. This one was ringed as a juvenile in 2017 and on this occasion was thought, at first, to be a first winter bird because of one particularly large buff tip on a primary covert. In fact, its juvenile covert tips were even larger than these. Svensson and Demongin both suggest that the shape and size of the buff tip on the longest primary covert may be of use in ageing birds but do urge caution until the method has been more thoroughly tested. This individual is clearly one of the testers.



**Nuthatch**                              **4M**                      **TT49332**                      **24/12/2018**                      **Creswell**

This is the first Nuthatch we have ringed in the wood to be found elsewhere. We ringed it in September 2017 and it was recaptured at Creswell in March 2018. Since then it has been retrapped there four more times. The straight-line distance to Creswell from Treswell is about 25km. Had this movement been made before publication of the BTO Migration Atlas in 2002, it would have joined the other dozen exceptional movements of over 20km recorded in the ringing scheme at the time. It is certainly a noteworthy movement. The direction, almost due West, is



unexpected too. The species is expanding its range slowly eastwards and northwards and has now reached Scotland. Why should a bird, on the fringes of its eastern range, move back into an area where the species is well established and where territories may be hard to establish?

### Chaffinch 6F D309368 24/2/2019 H04

We have been mercifully free of diseased birds for some time. However, diseased birds are often like the proverbial London buses. This bird, which we had ringed in 2014 was last retrapped in September 2018 and, at that time, did not have any sign of disease. In fact, we had been examining finches closely for traces of scaly leg mite for an autumn survey. Today it had the beginnings of scaly leg mite on the left leg and severe infestation on the right leg. In addition to that it had a pox pustule on the right knee joint. This is the first time we have recorded pox on this species (it is likely to be a different form of pox from the one that we have seen on Great Tits in the recent past). The mite and pox are not fatal in themselves, but they will reduce the bird's ability to preen and forage and probably make it more prone to predation. Alas, this reasonably old bird is unlikely to make it to the age record book. On a subsequent net round on the same day we found another Chaffinch with both legs badly infested with scaly leg mite - unringed and unringable.

### 10-Week Summary: 2019 Interval 1, Captures in Standard Sites

	New Birds			Recaptures			Total
	Adult	5	3	Adult	5	3	
Sparrowhawk	.	1	.	.	.	.	1
Woodcock	.	1	.	.	.	.	1
Tawny Owl	.	.	.	1	.	.	1
Wren	.	2	.	5	2	.	9
Duncock	.	1	.	1	1	.	3
Robin	.	3	.	1	5	.	9
Blackbird	8	6	.	7	3	.	24
Song Thrush	2	1	.	1	.	.	4
Redwing	3	4	.	.	.	.	7
Goldcrest	1	.	.	2	4	.	7
Long-tailed Tit	1	.	.	2	.	.	3
Marsh Tit	.	.	.	1	3	.	4
Coal Tit	.	.	.	.	1	.	1
Blue Tit	.	4	.	6	6	.	16
Great Tit	.	2	.	3	13	.	18
Treecreeper	.	2	.	.	.	.	2
Chaffinch	.	.	.	1	.	.	1
Bullfinch	.	1	.	.	1	.	2
<b>Totals</b>	15	28	.	31	39	.	113

### Treswell Wood Standard Site Totals in 10-week periods - Summary table

Summary Data since standard site netting began in 1978:

Interval	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Maximum	128	198	288	253	177	864
Minimum	57	33	89	66	59	364
Mean	91	113	160	131	125	615

10-year Averages since standard site netting began in 1978:

1978 - 1987	90	113	182	140	130	655
1988 - 1997	86	107	170	149	127	637
1998 - 2007	95	100	134	120	125	574
2008 - 2017	93	133	150	109	120	605

Recent Years

2014	83	132	181	123	120	639
2015	105	123	136	137	158	659
2016	102	185	193	109	109	698
2017	106	198	163	150	163	780
2018	95	108	182	184	119	688