

TWITTER

Treswell Wood - Information To Tell Every Recorder

May 1999 Treswell Wood IPM Group
(Integrated Population Monitoring)

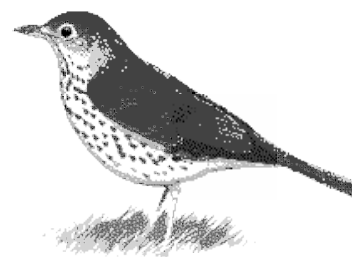
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1999/2 - Number 22

The CBC season is well under way. Thanks to Eric Palmer and Marion Bartley who have stepped in to fill the gap. The year appears to be very ordinary which, after the past two bad years, is a great relief. In all areas, Wrens seem to be abundant and this view is supported by the numbers of Wren nests in bird and dormouse boxes. Blackcaps are present in good numbers and the ringers agree, though Garden Warblers have become very quiet after their initial healthy bursts of song. Nuthatches and Song Thrushes are present in the wood but breeding territories may be few in number. Green Woodpeckers have been heard again in the wood. Interesting sightings include a Curlew flying over the wood, a Buzzard flying over (and several reports of Buzzard activity near the wood since last autumn) and a Little Owl in block F. Although Little Owls have traditionally nested at Stanhope Farm and Forwood Farm, we cannot recall any seen within the wood before. Woodcocks have been seen in I/J but not in the northern part of the wood. On the mammal front, one Wren nest has been usurped by a dormouse. This is good news for the dormouse population which seems to be maintaining at least a toehold, but not such good news for the Wrens. Several boxes have been used by wood mice but predation rates on birds' nests are very low. Does the presence of a breeding pair of Tawny Owls after a gap of a year really keep down the mouse population? One Tawny Owl pellet (Block G) held remains of a single Field Vole.

The mild spring weather enabled many tits to begin nesting early - the first egg laid in the first Blue Tit nest (April 7th) was the second earliest ever, being only one day later than in 1990. The warm weather did not last and over the cold, wet Easter, some birds abandoned or postponed their nesting attempts. As a result, we are having a rather protracted season. As usual we have small numbers of Coal and Marsh Tits nesting, with several nests built by Wrens and good numbers of Great Tits. First impressions of the year were of an amazingly good season. However, a more reasoned analysis shows that numbers are a little lower than average, with more nesting attempts abandoned early on than usual. First impressions are wrong - obviously the memory of the past two years remains very strong. After a bad year followed by a terrible year, anything seems good!

Last year's work with DNA from nestling tits done by Dave Barritt and Koon Wah is bearing fruit in spite of the very low numbers of birds they were able to sample from. Their results are so encouraging that David Parkin is keen to continue for another year. He has secured another student, Kate Maddison, to continue the work as part of her third-year genetics project. So far, all is going very well. There are more nestlings to deal with this year, and the length of the season should enable a more sensitive analysis than if we had enjoyed a normal, shorter, season.

Noteworthy Captures

Species	Age/sex	Ring	Date	Grid
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Sparrowhawk	5M	DA20227	28/3/99	P00
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A new bird and, like most of our Sparrowhawks, a young male.

Great Spotted Woodpecker	6M	RH94583	16/5/99	P-1
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One of our regulars, originally ringed in April 1995, but not seen for a year. Unlike almost all its other captures, this time it was not at the feeders but near to where a nest was later discovered.

Robin	6M	K463490	4/4/99	L05
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Where has he been? He was ringed nearby in L07 as a juvenile in July 1996 and has not been retrapped since. Although this area is not one of our standard sites, it is an area where we do set nets fairly regularly.

Robin	3J	N275027	16/5/99	N01
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The first juvenile to be caught in the season is always special. This is the one! What is remarkable, always, is the

suddenness with which fledging is upon us. By the end of the day we had also captured 4 more juveniles - 3 Blackbirds and one Long-tailed Tit.

Song Thrush **4** **RX57622** **2/5/99** **G04**

Retrapped almost exactly a year after ringing nearby in F03, this bird is behaving exactly as we have come to expect them to - as summer migrants. Where do they spend the winter?

Chiffchaff **4** **9G4064** **28/3/99** **P01**

Strictly speaking, this is our second Chiffchaff capture of the season, the first being caught less than an hour earlier in a nearby net (see Twitter 21, 8Y3482). It may really qualify as our first summer visitor of the year since the other bird may have been a winter visitor about to return to its breeding area. In addition to being our first 'real' summer visitor of the year, this bird was also a recapture from last year - ringed 26/4/98 in H01 and retrapped there later in the season. We generally set a few nets in the P00/P02 area at this time of year because the first Chiffchaffs seem to land here. Are they the same as Blackcaps which have a definite landing area (near the wild service tree) before they move out to their breeding territory? This capture, although not our earliest ever (see Twitter No1) was on the early side.

Garden Warbler **4** **K720699** **2/5/99** **G04**

A new bird, our first, and so far only, bird this year. It was the fifth earliest capture recorded so far in the wood.

Blackcap **6M** **K463818** **2/5/99** **H03**

Ringed as a breeding adult in 1997, and retrapped in 1998 (see Twitter 17). This year he has moved a little further from last year's area than we would expect - all of 400metres! Caught again a week later in F02 - not yet settled?

Blackcap **6M** **K463845** **25/4/99** **D09**

Some of our Blackcaps have been remarkably faithful over several years. This bird has managed, at least, to return to the same standard site after 2 years. It was ringed as a breeding adult in June 1997 in the middle of Nightingale Ride and recaptured today, for the first time, at the east end of the ride.

Blackcap **4M** **K463848** **9/5/99** **F04**

.. but this is how Blackcaps should be! This bird's complete history is:

29/6/97 Net 11, F04
10/5/98 Net 11, F04
9/5/99 Net 11, F04

Willow Tit **4M** **N305750** **16/5/99** **N00**

Avid Twitter readers will recall that adult Willow Tits and Treecreepers almost never move across Norman's Ride (F/G). The northern and southern breeding populations in the wood seem to be quite separate although from time to time juveniles may disperse across the demarcation line. This bird is one of the few exceptions, but even so after his foray across the line (D04 in March) he has returned to the northern part of the wood. In all the years of ringing within the wood, this is one of only a handful of adult Willow Tits which are known to have crossed the line.

Coal Tit **5F** **K720611** **25/4/99** **D05**

Coal Tits are fairly sedentary birds - this one's long-distance movement within the wood is unusual. It was ringed at the start of January at Grove End (R-2) and recaptured today, as a breeding female, in the far south of the wood.

Marsh Tit **6F** **J522325** **2/5/99** **H03 on nest**

J522325 is a regular visitor to Twitter's pages (see issues 9 & 17). She is nesting, yet again, in our boxes. As last year, she is using one of Tim Gyles' stump boxes. She was first ringed in July 1994 as a juvenile and has nested in our boxes in 1995, 1998 and this year.

Blue Tit **6F** **J639165** **2/5/99** **L00 on nest**

This bird has one of our longest histories of nesting in boxes. She fledged from box 80 in 1994 and has nested in boxes every year since then. We gave details of her history in Twitter 17. Curiously she has, once again, shifted territory some distance from near the Main Cross roads (O01) to Windy Ride.

Blue Tit **6F** **K463914** **9/5/99** **D04**

This bird has bred in the wood in each of the past three years and we have captured her on her nest in each of them, However, this is the first time she has been caught in a mist-net. Her breeding territories have been in E08 and F07 which is an area where we do not net particularly often. Has she moved territory this year? If she is a resident of the wood, why have we never caught her at the feeders?

Great Tit **5M** **J522484** **25/4/99** **D07**

This bird is nearly five years old and a veteran of José and Ulli's colour ringing scheme. It has been a regular in Nightingale Ride since being first retrapped there on 4/2/96, although it made its first appearance to us in the wood at the feeders with the 1995 spring influx.

Treecreeper **6M** **5S9509** **9/5/99** **C03**

This individual does not have a record-breaking age yet, but 5 years old is a goodly age for these small insectivores. This bird is particularly pleasing to see as it is one of our very few nestling-ringed Treecreepers. We ringed it in the far north (Q02) on 15/5/94 and since then have only caught it in C03 - the south of Bower's Ride.

Controls and recoveries**Robin** **4** **N305801** **11/4/99** **P02**

Ringed as a juvenile at the feeders in September 1998, this bird was found dead and decapitated on the main ride, presumably a victim of some predator.

Blackbird **6F** **RH94585** **24/2/99** **Blyton SK8594**

We ringed this bird as a breeding female on 23/4/95 near the dam. She has not been recaptured in the wood since then (although we do not often mist-net in that area). She was found in a garden shed and released alive so she is free to return to the wood to demonstrate that she is a summer visitor or else remain in Blyton to show how some sedentary birds do change their breeding territories between years.

Blue Tit **5F** **N271977** **4/4/99** **Q02 Feeder**

The spring influx of Blue and Great Tits often contains a ringed bird - this is one of them. Ringed three months earlier (11/1/99) at Clayworth Copse by North Notts. Ringing Group. This bird was later found nesting in box 9 (Q01).

Greenfinch **3F** **VR78749** **19/2/99** **Headon**

One of our winter feeder-visitors, ringed 13/12/98, found dead at Headon 3km to the SSW.

Blackcaps and Willow Warblers at Treswell Wood and Cottam Power Station

Cottam Power Station has a ringing site which has been operated by Dave Fogg since 1988, with the help of various Treswell ringers, particularly Steve Wain and Peter Harrison. Although it is physically near to the wood and we do exchange a few birds from time to time, the habitats are very different and the positions in relation to the River Trent are different too. Cottam has industrial grassland, scrub, reedbed and lagoon and is adjacent to the Trent (which is a major migration flyway). Treswell, although only 7km from Cottam, is 45m higher and has trees! Dave rings at Cottam slightly less often than we do but has one standard set of nets of approximately the same length as those in Treswell. Our netting moves from one part of the wood to another in a cycle. At both sites we use extra nets according to circumstances. Dave recently looked at between year recaptures of two common summer migrants - Blackcap and Willow Warbler - and made comparisons with our data. Our thanks to Dave for providing the comparisons.

There is a marked difference between the length of recapture histories for both species, with birds in Treswell Wood having a higher proportion of longer histories. The differences between Blackcap histories are most striking (see table below), particularly when the percentages in each class are compared.

Blackcap - Lengths of recapture histories at last capture.

Length (years)	0	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5	Total
TWD	1340	36	28	14	14	9	5	3	0	0	1	1450
as %	92.4%	2.5%	1.9%	1.0%	1.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	
CPS	307	4	3	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	317
as %	96.8%	1.3%	0.9%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	

Note: The length of the history is rounded down to the nearest half year. Thus an adult bird captured twice in the same season only would give an age of 0, unless it was caught both as early as April 1st and as late as October 1st. A juvenile ringed in one autumn and recaptured next spring would give 0.5, but if recaptured in the next autumn would be counted as 1. A bird of any age ringed but never recaptured counts as 0. In this table, each individual is counted once.

Data for Treswell Wood 1973-1999, Cottam Power Station 1988-1999

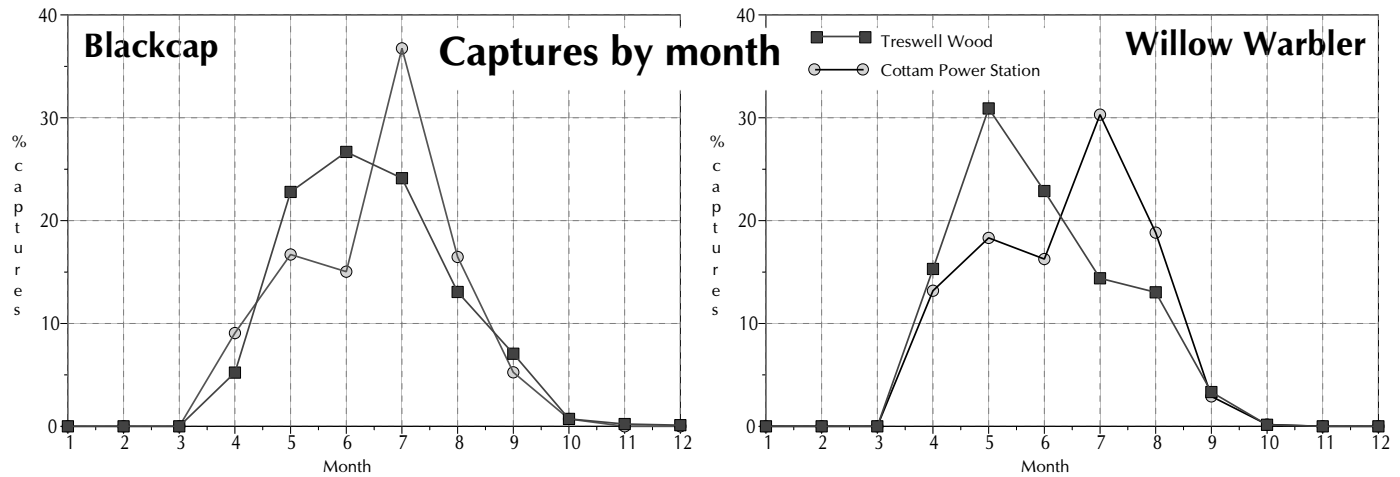
The ratios of juveniles to adults for both species are higher at Cottam than in Treswell.

Proportions of juveniles at Treswell Wood and Cottam Power Station

	Treswell Wood			Cottam Power Station		
	Juveniles	Total birds	% juveniles	Juveniles	Total birds	% juveniles
Blackcap	514	1799	28.6%	169	419	40.3%
Willow Warbler	115	660	17.4%	246	584	42.1%

Note: In this table, each capture (except same-day recaptures) is counted so that birds being retrapped n times will contribute a frequency of n to the total.

The annual pattern of captures varies between the sites for both species. The charts show how Cottam enjoys a higher proportion of captures later in the season.



The tables and charts together demonstrate that Cottam has a higher proportion of juveniles than Treswell, its busiest warbler time comes later and it appears that the site tenacity of its birds is lower. These things fit in with Cottam's position along the Trent flyway. Cottam is more likely than Treswell to have young birds passing through as they make their way south. Birds visiting Treswell, on the other hand, are more likely to be engaging in the post-fledging dispersal during which they familiarise themselves with potential breeding habitat prior to beginning the journey south. No surprises at all in these findings, but it is pleasing that our two datasets strongly support present understanding of bird dispersal and site tenacity. There are also several more questions raised - How long do juveniles stay at either site? What proportion of breeding adults were trapped at the site as juveniles? ...

10 Week Summary 1999 Interval 2

Visits 1403, 1405, 1400, 1401, 1404, 1402, 1406

	New Birds			Recaptures			Total
	Adult			Adult			
Wren	2	3	.	1	3	.	9
Dunnock	.	3	.	6	.	.	9
Robin	3	7	1	1	.	.	12
Blackbird	3	2	.	2	.	.	7
Song Thrush	.	1	.	2	2	.	5
Garden Warbler	1	.	.	.	.	.	1
Blackcap	3	1	.	1	.	.	5
Chiffchaff	2	1	.	1	.	.	4
Willow Warbler	2	.	.	.	.	.	2
Goldcrest	1	1	.	.	.	.	2
Long-tailed Tit	2	.	1	3	.	.	6
Willow Tit	.	.	.	3	.	.	3
Coal Tit	.	.	.	1	1	.	2
Blue Tit	1	1	.	4	3	.	9
Great Tit	.	.	.	6	1	.	7
Nuthatch	.	.	.	1	.	.	1
Treecreeper	.	.	.	2	1	.	3
Chaffinch	.	4	.	.	.	.	4
Bullfinch	2	2	.	1	.	.	5
Totals	22	26	2	35	11	.	96

Treswell Wood Standard Site Totals in 10-week Periods

Year	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1999	88	96	---	---	---	(184)
1978 - 1998						
Max	124	145	288	253	177	865
Min	59	57	99	68	88	422
Mean	87	108	172	141	127	637