



Goldeneye

Bucephala clangula

Status

Amber listed: BR, WL
Non-SPEC
Schedule 1/II of WCA 1981
Annex II/2 of EC Wild Birds Directive

National monitoring

Rare Breeding Birds Panel.
WeBS.

Population and distribution

Goldeneyes were first proved to breed in Scotland in 1970. Since then, these tree-hole-nesting ducks have increased in Britain, helped by the provision of nest-boxes (*88–91 Atlas*). The numbers wintering in the UK are gradually increasing; favoured wintering grounds include Lough Neagh, the Forth estuary, Inner Moray Firth and Abberton reservoir (*WeBS 1992–93*). In the UK there are an estimated 83–109 pairs of goldeneye breeding and 32,000 birds wintering (*Population Estimates*).

Ecology

Goldeneyes breed in coniferous forest near water. The nest can be up to 1 km from water in adjacent forests, in natural tree-holes or woodpecker holes and under rocks or logs. The birds readily use nest-boxes, but rarely burrows. A clutch of 8–11 eggs is laid from early April. The young are taken to the water soon after hatching. In winter, the birds occur in fresh and salt water, sometimes in large concentrations, especially at waste outfalls (*Red Data Birds*).

Breeding season survey

See *Dabbling and diving ducks* in the generic survey methods section.

Winter survey

See the general guidelines for WeBS counts in the generic survey methods section.