

## Why submitting records to RBBP helps bird conservation in the UK

The most important aspect of the RBBP report is the annual review of the status of our regular but rare breeders, at UK, regional and county level. The RBBP dataset and archive is *unique* in that it combines county data (collected by local birdwatchers across the country and submitted to county bird recorders), with all other available sources of data on rare breeding birds (such as Schedule 1 and Nest Records Scheme returns, data from RSPB reserves, raptor study group data and other species studies).

Working with the RBBP to collate these data is one of the most important jobs of the county recorder. Here are some of the important reasons to submit your records to RBBP:

- Your records are included in the overall UK population statistics for each species, providing added value and context to the records collected locally.
- Each submission complements the others and allows RBBP to build up annual totals of all the 80-90 rare species which breed in the UK each year.
- Definitive records of breeding of those rarer species which breed only occasionally is recorded for posterity, helping, for example, research and compilers of avifaunas.
- All records are archived safely and separately as part of the UK's ornithological archive, so that details are not lost in the future.
- The annual statistics are incredibly important to conservation and to science, and are most useful if they cover a consistent and large proportion of the UK's population of each species.
- RBBP statistics contribute to Government wild bird indicators, reporting requirements for the EU Nature Directives and other international obligations, reviews of the UK's Special Protection Area network, Birds of Conservation Concern assessments and the annual State of the UK's Birds report. Recent research uses have included species studies, informing national survey design and studies on the importance of protected area networks and the impact of climate change. For many of these uses however, accurate locational information is critical as stressed previously; otherwise is it not possible to match records to protected areas or other locations.
- Publication of the report provides feedback to the birding community.
- Submission of data to RBBP also fully serves your observer's expectations that their data is going forward into national population statistics for rare and scarce breeding species.

We also recommend that all annual county bird reports make reference to the RBBP stating that appropriate records are shared with RBBP for all the reasons listed above. Such a statement may help encourage some of your local birdwatchers to make that extra effort to record their observations of RBBP species and, most importantly, submit them to you!

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