

Stanford Ringing Group

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Blog: <http://stanfordrg.blogspot.com>

50 Years of Ringing at Stanford!



Stanford Reservoir: the view from the Leicester Paddock at dawn

On 08/05/76, 50 years ago, MJT started bird ringing in the Leicester Paddock at Stanford Reservoir. Here is a selection of the first data produced by him and Peter Finden (PJF), a trainee at the time:

| | | | | 08/05/1976 | | | | |
|-----|---------|-------|----|------------------|-----|--|-----|-----|
| N | 857288 | LOTTI | 4 | 08/05/1976 07:00 | STA | | PJF | 054 |
| N | 857289 | WILWA | 4 | 08/05/1976 07:00 | STA | | PJF | 054 |
| N | 857290 | WILWA | 4 | 08/05/1976 10:00 | STA | | PJF | 054 |
| N | KJ15292 | REEDA | 4 | 08/05/1976 07:00 | STA | | PJF | 054 |
| N | KJ15293 | SEDWA | 4 | 08/05/1976 07:00 | STA | | PJF | 054 |
| N | KJ15294 | REEDA | 4 | 08/05/1976 07:00 | STA | | PJF | 054 |
| N | KJ15295 | REEDA | 4 | 08/05/1976 07:00 | STA | | PJF | 054 |
| N | KJ15296 | REEDA | 4 | 08/05/1976 07:00 | STA | | PJF | 054 |
| N | KJ15297 | REEDA | 4 | 08/05/1976 07:00 | STA | | PJF | 054 |
| ► N | KJ15298 | YELHA | 5F | 08/05/1976 07:00 | STA | | PJF | 054 |
| N | KJ15299 | SEDWA | 4 | 08/05/1976 07:00 | STA | | PJF | 054 |

Totals for that day were: Long Tailed Tit 1, Willow Warbler 2, Bullfinch 1, Reed Warbler 9, Sedge Warbler 16, Yellowhammer 1, Whitethroat 5, Reed Bunting 4, Dunnock 2, Song Thrush 2, making a total of 43 birds. No retraps of course, as no one had ever ringed at Stanford before!

Forward and Summary for 2025 by Mick Townsend (MJT), Group Leader

Wow what a year we have had at Stanford Reservoir! This is our 50th year ringing at this site and our best to date with some 14,070 birds ringed of 60 species. This brought the grand total for the site to 175,383 of 115 species.

What the site is best known for is warblers, on a grand scale. This year we ringed 11,419 which brought our grand total to 99,231 of 17 species. A new species was added this year in the form of a magnificent juvenile Barred Warbler, also a first for Northants. Another species of interest this year was a Wood Warbler which has not been caught here for many years and is now a rare passage migrant in both Leics and Northants.

A juvenile Stonechat caught on the 17th July was a real surprise indicating that breeding had taken place very close by, possibly in a local cover crop. Other unusual species this year were a Greylag Goose (new for the group), and a Firecrest in late November.



MJT working hard to maintain the site for our warblers

As usual our year started with the annual scrub clearing on 1st January right through until the end of March; if this wasn't done the bank around Blowers Lodge Bay would be Woodland by now and not good for much at all. Ringing commences in April much to everyone's relief, even if it is a bit slow with lots of returning birds caught after their winter in warmer countries.

This year our April to June total was up slightly to 1,371 birds ringed of which 346 were Tit pulli, down on last year. July through to October was brilliant with 12,491 birds ringed. Unfortunately November and December were terrible (November being the wettest for 150 years); unsurprisingly there were very few birds about. This resulted in only 190 birds ringed but at least we all had a restful Christmas and New Year.

We again had our annual celebration of migration ringing with members camping out for just over a week, this started on 15th August and ran till the 25th ringing 3,664 birds. We also had 519 retraps and 10 controls totalling 4,193 birds processed in 11 days. Our least productive day was the 20th, with only 168 birds caught, but we did manage to catch our first ever Barred Warbler. This was followed two days later with our best day with 704 birds which included a Wood Warbler; our first since 1982! Other highlights included a Pied Flycatcher, 2 Northern Willow Warbler, 54 Grasshopper Warbler and 19 Common Redstart. A day by day account of our efforts is given in Appendix One.

We ended August having ringed over 5,000 birds, our best monthly total ever. September brought both Blackcap and Chiffchaff in their usual high numbers, this continued into mid October. Redpoll were in very good numbers this year moving through the site from late September, which is early for us, but with the poor weather in November we were unable to continue our good catching rate, but we did end up with just over 200 birds, our 2nd best site total. As already mentioned warbler numbers were exceptional this year with 11,419 ringed, up from last year's 9,240. What a fantastic effort from the ever expanding team!!!

As for the resident birds, it's been a mixed year. A Marsh Tit caught in the bay was the first since 2017 but alas it was the only one. The rest of the tit family were more or less stable. Finch numbers continued their downward slide with very few Chaffinch or Bullfinch caught. Goldfinch numbers dropped by 50% while Greenfinch increased by 50%, compared to 2024. Linnet numbers were stable whilst Redpoll had a brilliant year.

Finally, we have had a great year for recoveries and controls with 51 recoveries (birds ringed at Stanford and caught elsewhere) and 53 controls (birds ringed away from Stanford and caught/seen by us). Of these 42 were caught, five were colour ringed, one had a bill saddle, and two were recorded on our Motus installation. The Motus controls were the first to be recorded by our system and were exceptional.

The first was a Jack Snipe ringed on 29/9/25 at Ottenby, Sweden. It left at 16:25 on the 19/11/25 and arrived at Stanford at 21:40 on 20/11/25, having travelled 1,171 km at an average speed of 39.6 km/h. The second, also a Jack Snipe, was ringed on 22/11/25 again at Ottenby. It left Sweden at 15:47 on 15/11/25 and arrived at Stanford at 19:05 on 17/11/25 having travelled 1,210 km at an average speed of 23.2 km/h. Excellent data and hopefully the first of many birds passing our Motus system.

To document our 50 years at Stanford, overleaf is a table of all the birds ringed at Stanford, ranked from the most ringed through to the most unusual, making a grand total of 175,383!

MJ Townsend (Group Leader/Ringer in Charge)

Global Ringing Numbers over 50 Years at Stanford

| # | Species | Total |
|----|---------------------|-------|
| 1 | Blackcap | 36810 |
| 2 | Chiffchaff | 14364 |
| 3 | Whitethroat | 13683 |
| 4 | Blue Tit | 12734 |
| 5 | Reed Warbler | 9784 |
| 6 | Sedge Warbler | 9705 |
| 7 | Great Tit | 8818 |
| 8 | Willow Warbler | 8645 |
| 9 | Redwing | 6206 |
| 10 | Tree Sparrow | 5155 |
| 11 | Reed Bunting | 5154 |
| 12 | Chaffinch | 3788 |
| 13 | Wren | 3486 |
| 14 | Robin | 3212 |
| 15 | Garden Warbler | 3204 |
| 16 | Greenfinch | 3038 |
| 17 | Blackbird | 2739 |
| 18 | Dunnock | 2607 |
| 19 | Lesser Whitethroat | 2293 |
| 20 | Long Tailed Tit | 2027 |
| 21 | Lesser Redpoll | 1974 |
| 22 | Goldcrest | 1942 |
| 23 | Goldfinch | 1486 |
| 24 | Swallow | 1448 |
| 25 | Bullfinch | 1194 |
| 26 | Song Thrush | 1029 |
| 27 | Meadow Pipit | 896 |
| 28 | Yellowhammer | 896 |
| 29 | Linnet | 853 |
| 30 | Fieldfare | 614 |
| 31 | Grasshopper Warbler | 530 |
| 32 | Treecreeper | 507 |
| 33 | Stock Dove | 477 |
| 34 | House Martin | 441 |
| 35 | Starling | 423 |
| 36 | Willow Tit | 247 |
| 37 | Redstart | 241 |
| 38 | Yellow Wagtail | 233 |
| 39 | Coal Tit | 210 |
| 40 | Kingfisher | 199 |

| # | Species | Total |
|----|--------------------------|-------|
| 41 | Cetti's Warbler | 192 |
| 42 | Sand Martin | 177 |
| 43 | Jackdaw | 175 |
| 44 | Great Spotted Woodpecker | 162 |
| 45 | Swift | 122 |
| 46 | Pied Wagtail | 118 |
| 47 | Grey Wagtail | 105 |
| 48 | Brambling | 82 |
| 49 | Common Tern | 80 |
| 50 | Marsh Tit | 76 |
| 51 | Sparrowhawk | 67 |
| 52 | Woodpigeon | 66 |
| 53 | Barn Owl | 66 |
| 54 | Tawny Owl | 60 |
| 55 | Spotted Flycatcher | 55 |
| 56 | Kestrel | 41 |
| 57 | Cuckoo | 32 |
| 58 | Jay | 30 |
| 59 | Mute Swan | 27 |
| 60 | Mallard | 27 |
| 61 | Green Woodpecker | 25 |
| 62 | Common Sandpiper | 23 |
| 63 | Lapwing | 23 |
| 64 | Siskin | 21 |
| 65 | Nuthatch | 17 |
| 66 | Tree Pipit | 15 |
| 67 | Whinchat | 14 |
| 68 | Magpie | 14 |
| 69 | Carriion Crow | 13 |
| 70 | House Sparrow | 13 |
| 71 | Turtle Dove | 11 |
| 72 | Yellow Browed Warbler | 11 |
| 73 | Moorhen | 11 |
| 74 | Firecrest | 9 |
| 75 | Collared Dove | 8 |
| 76 | Skylark | 7 |
| 77 | Woodcock | 7 |
| 78 | Stonechat | 7 |
| 79 | Gadwall | 6 |
| 80 | Common Redpoll | 6 |

Continued overleaf

| # | Species | Total |
|----|---------------------------|-------|
| 81 | Wryneck | 6 |
| 82 | Marsh Warbler | 4 |
| 83 | Wheatear | 4 |
| 84 | Pied Flycatcher | 4 |
| 85 | Little Ringed Plover | 3 |
| 86 | Common Snipe | 3 |
| 87 | Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | 3 |
| 88 | Mistle Thrush | 3 |
| 89 | Wood Warbler | 3 |
| 90 | Black-headed Gull | 2 |
| 91 | Green Sandpiper | 2 |
| 92 | Jack Snipe | 2 |
| 93 | Little Owl | 2 |
| 94 | Long-eared Owl | 2 |
| 95 | Ringed Plover | 2 |
| 96 | Tufted Duck | 2 |
| 97 | Bearded Tit | 2 |
| 98 | Common Buzzard | 2 |

| # | Species | Total |
|-----|--------------------------|-------|
| 99 | Hobby | 2 |
| 100 | Water Rail | 2 |
| 101 | Blyth's Reed Warbler | 1 |
| 102 | Black Redstart | 1 |
| 103 | Canada Goose | 1 |
| 104 | Corn Bunting | 1 |
| 105 | Goosander | 1 |
| 106 | Grey Heron | 1 |
| 107 | Hoopoe | 1 |
| 108 | Icterine Warbler | 1 |
| 109 | Lesser Black-backed Gull | 1 |
| 110 | Nightingale | 1 |
| 111 | Red Backed Shrike | 1 |
| 112 | Red-legged Partridge | 1 |
| 113 | Dusky Warbler | 1 |
| 114 | Barred Warbler | 1 |
| 115 | Greylag Goose | 1 |

Total 175,383

Contents

| | Page |
|--|------|
| Foreword and Summary by the Group Leader | 2 |
| Global Ringing Numbers over 50 years at Stanford | 4 |
| Thanks | 7 |
| Introduction to Bird Ringing at Stanford | 8 |
| Totals for 2024 | 8 |
| The Ringing Year | 9 |
| Warbler Breeding Success | 10 |
| Individual Species Accounts: Key | 12 |
| • Non Passerines | 12 |
| • Hirundines | 17 |
| • Larks, Pipits and Wagtails | 18 |
| • Wren, Dunnock, Robins, and Chats | 19 |
| • Thrushes | 23 |
| • Warblers | 27 |
| • Crests, Tits and Allies | 35 |
| • Corvids and Allies | 40 |
| • Sparrows and Finches | 43 |
| • Buntings | 47 |
| Nest Recording Report | 49 |
| The Birding Year at Stanford | 54 |
| Controls: Birds from Other Sites Processed at Stanford | 64 |
| Recoveries: Stanford Birds Processed at Other Sites | 69 |
| Group members | 72 |
| Appendix 1: Stanstock Exclusive! | 73 |

Thanks

- Thanks again to Severn Trent Water (STW) for allowing access to their land for ringing and for financial support of our activities. Thanks in particular to Ian Martindale our ranger and to Briony Harrison, conservation manager at STW.
- Thanks also to Parker Farms for allowing us to use the railtrack which provides access to the reservoir. Thanks again for allowing us to camp out during the annual migration festival in August.
- We are very grateful to the individuals who have supported the group financially during the year, including Alan Herbert and Bryan McCallion, and to the Leicestershire & Rutland Ornithological Society for their kind contribution this year.
- Congratulations to our group members who contributed their photos to the annual report, and for their hard work throughout the year.



MJG, DMN, AGH and JLU taking part in our annual scrub bashing activities

Introduction to bird ringing at Stanford Reservoir

Birds have been ringed at Stanford Reservoir since 1976 (see *cover also! Ed.*). The full story of the ringing and associated wildlife activities can be found on the group's website at www.stanfordrg.org.uk. A blog is maintained which gives an account of our activities throughout the year. It can be found at: <http://stanfordrg.blogspot.com/>

Most birds were trapped using mist-nets, with occasional use of traps for specialist species such as Meadow Pipit and Mallard. Most sessions were conducted from dawn until approximately midday. A feeding station is supplied and maintained on a weekly basis in Blowers Lodge Bay with seed, nuts and fat balls. Another is maintained in the Leicestershire Paddock by our birding colleagues.

By law, wild bird ringing in the UK is licensed by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). The procedures of the BTO's *Ringers' Manual* (2001) and online updates from <https://www.bto.org> were followed throughout to secure the welfare of the birds. All extraction, ringing and recording was carried out by group members who are either ringers licensed by the BTO, or are trainees under their direct supervision.

All data were entered directly into the BTO's Demography Online (DemOn) portal.

Totals for 2025

Global Summary

Sixty species of bird were ringed.

- A total of 14,070 new birds were ringed.
- A total of 2,454 birds were recaptured.
- A total of 51 birds ringed elsewhere were controlled at Stanford.

Therefore the total number of birds processed by the Stanford Ringing Group in 2025 is 16,574

Annual numbers ringed over the last decade

| 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 8207 | 7385 | 6606 | 8377 | 9311 | 8312 | 13395 | 13482 | 12010 | 14070 |

The Ringing Year

New birds ringed per month in 2025

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|---------|------|------|-----|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Conservation work | | | | | | | Ringing | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 213 | 527 | 631 | 1764 | 5617 | 3439 | 1681 | 174 | 16 | | | | | | |

Conservation work ('*scrub bashing*') is carried out from the first of January until the first migrants return and the establishment of territories begins.

At the end of August, we had our sixth annual festival of migration, with a week of consecutive ringing mornings.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza continues to affect birds in the UK. Fortunately for the SRG, no noticeable effects were found in our passerines, as it largely affects waterfowl and other sea birds. However, extra precautions were employed during the year *as per* BTO policies.

Most ringing took place at five sites:

- **Paddock:** Ranged along the Leics shore of the reservoir, it consists mainly of scrub, willow and shoreline.
- **Leicestershire Reed Bed:** A medium size reed bed, accessed beyond the Paddock.
- **Railtrack:** In Northants, gives entry to **Blowers Lodge Bay** at the east side of the reservoir. Gives access to approximately 15 net rides. Access is by courtesy of Parker Farms.
- **Point:** Mix of reed bed, woodland and scrub on Northants side, situated at the end of the line of poplars, a conspicuous landmark at Stanford.
- **Top Road:** Two lines of nets along the approach road to the reservoir, an area with beech mast to attract finches and tits

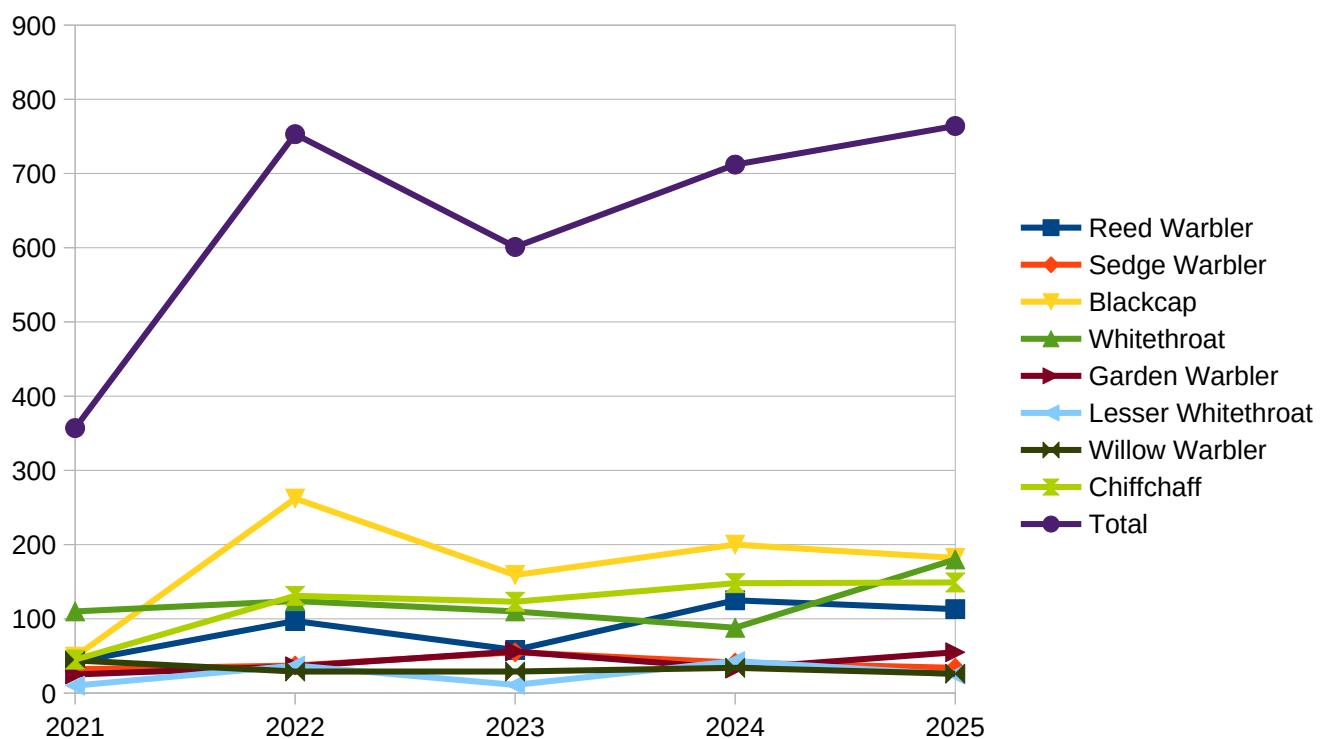
For part of the year, access to sites becomes limited due to waterlogging, so the Railtrack is the main site for autumn into winter.

Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler and Whitethroat populations were monitored as part of the BTO's Ringing for Adult Survival (RAS) census. The nest box ringing team was led by our Group Secretary, AGH, and added large numbers of ringed pulli to the annual totals, specifically targeting our Owls, Doves, Swallows and Tits.

Warbler Beeding Success

This table and graph illustrate the numbers of juvenile warblers (Euring age codes 1, 1J and 3J) ringed at Stanford before 1st August for the last five years; this gives a measure of the breeding success for these species, before the influx of migrants in August. These data suggest that 2025 was a productive year for our warblers, at least as good as the previous year.

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Reed Warbler | 42 | 97 | 58 | 125 | 113 |
| Sedge Warbler | 32 | 37 | 55 | 41 | 34 |
| Blackcap | 49 | 262 | 159 | 200 | 182 |
| Whitethroat | 110 | 124 | 110 | 88 | 180 |
| Garden Warbler | 25 | 36 | 56 | 33 | 55 |
| Lesser Whitethroat | 10 | 37 | 11 | 43 | 25 |
| Willow Warbler | 44 | 29 | 29 | 34 | 26 |
| Chiffchaff | 45 | 131 | 123 | 148 | 149 |
| Total | 357 | 753 | 601 | 712 | 764 |



Individual Species Accounts: Key

- Names in **red** show best ever or best equal year for species
- Names in **blue** show second best
- Names in **green** show third best
- **Species name plus total number ringed in 2025** given in bold.
- **Numbers in brackets in bold** show increase or decrease over a 10 year average for all species where the 10 year average is greater or equal to 10. Hence:

Robin: 223 (+28%)

- This shows that in 2025, 223 Robin were ringed; 28% more than the 10 year average. This was the third highest annual total for this species.
- **Returners:** The number of birds ringed by the SRG in previous years, which were re-caught and processed in 2025.
- **Bar charts** show birds numbers ringed at Stanford over a period of 10 years, for which the 10 year average number of birds ringed is greater or equal to 10.

- **Non Passerines**

Stanford is primarily, but not solely, a site dedicated to ringing passerines using mist nets, but this year there was an unusually strong showing for waterfowl at Stanford, largely due to AGH's duck trap; the seed inside clearly being too tempting. It was a record year for Mallard, Mute Swan and the first ever Greylag. It was good too, to ring the two Sparrowhawks which had been terrorising the Tits around the feeders in Blowers Bay. A record year on the rafts for our Common Terns, with 22 ringed.

Pigeons and Doves were disappointing with below average Stock Dove pulli and no Woodpigeons. Owl numbers were low, although both resident species were ringed. The outstanding excitement for the year was provided by the three Cuckoos ringed, two as pulli completely filling Reed Warbler nests and one juvenile which skirted the Point and had the decency to fly straight into the first reed-bed net!

Mute Swan: 5

Ringed 31 Mar, 12 Apr, 03 May, two on 24 Aug.

Greylag Goose: 1

Ringed 22 October

Mallard: 8

Another success for the duck trap!

Mallard cont.

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | 1 | 7 | | | | |

Sparrowhawk: 2

Ringed 02 Sep, 08 Nov.



One of our two Sparrowhawks this year; a handsome mature male.

Moorhen: 1

Ringed on 19 Aug.

-for photo see appendix 1 -

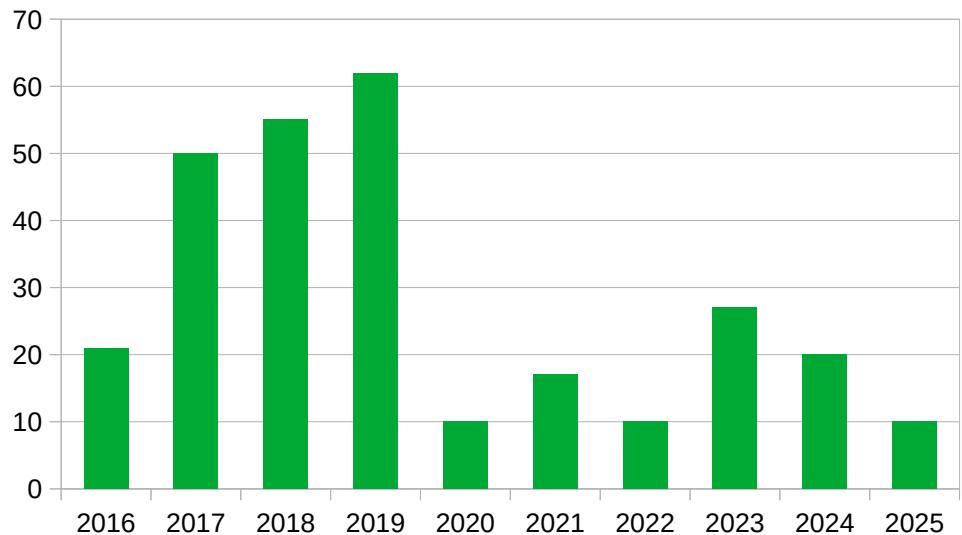
Common Tern: 22

All ringed as pulli, 14 on 14 Jun, 7 on 05 Jul, 1 on 26 Jul.

Stock Dove: 10 (-64%)

Nine ringed as pulli, one as an adult

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | 4 | 1 | 5 | | | | | |

**Cuckoo 3**

Two ringed as pulli 14 Jun, 10 Jul, one as fledged juvenile 05 Jul.

*Recently fledged Cuckoo ringed at the Point*

Barn Owl: 2

Both ringed on 31 May

Tawny Owl: 1

Ringed on 19 Aug

Kingfisher: 5

Two ringed 18 Apr, singles on 16 Jul, 08 Aug, 15 Oct



Great Spotted Woodpecker: 3

Ringed 04 Jun, 26 Jul, 11 Oct

Returners: 1



Juvenile Great Spotted Woodpecker; note the red cap.

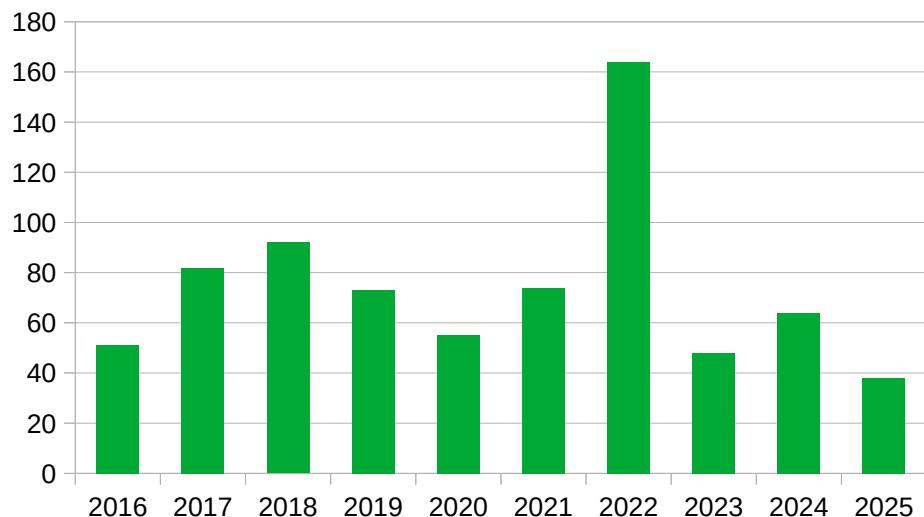
- **Hirundines and Swift**

Rather a disappointing section, with no House Martin (none ringed since 2022), Sand Martin (ditto) nor Swift (2020). The rather sub-par totals for Swallow, ringed at Park Farm, reflect a decidedly lacklustre year for this group, a reflection of how few of these birds were actually spotted at Stanford this year.

Swallow: 38 (-49%)

All ringed as pulli.

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | 6 | 14 | 14 | 4 | | | | |

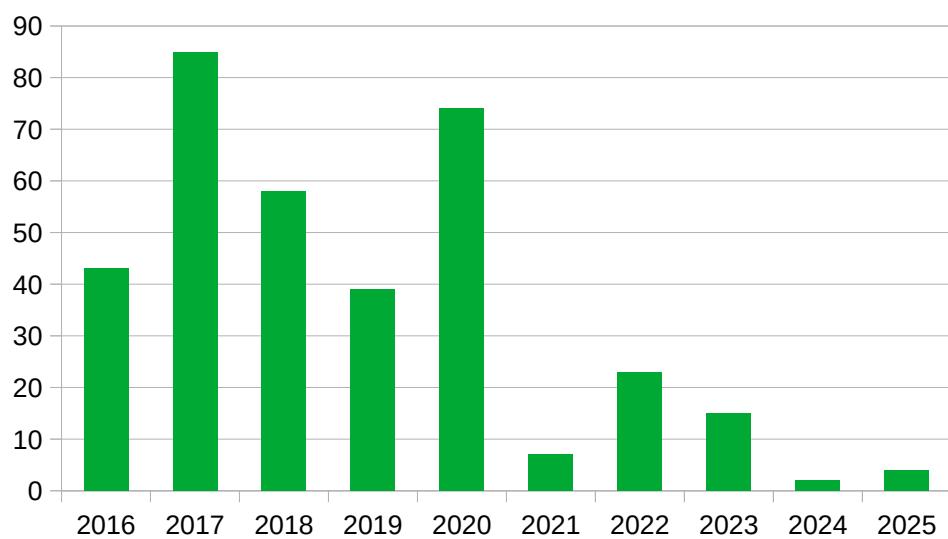


- **Larks, Pipits and Wagtails**

Meadow Pipit had a very poor year. Since 2021 numbers have been low for this gregarious and easily attracted species. No breeding Pied Wagtail were ringed and just one first year bird was caught in a mist net. Grey Wagtail numbers were in line with average years and it is good to again confirm them as breeding birds at Stanford.

Meadow Pipit: 4 (-88%)

One ringed 22 Oct, three 25 Oct.

**Pied Wagtail: 1**

Ringed 16 Oct



Grey Wagtail: 7

One ringed on 09 Jun and 22 Aug; five ringed as pulli, four on 30 Apr, one on 08 Jun.

-for photo see appendix 1-

- **Wren, Dunnock, Robins and Chats**

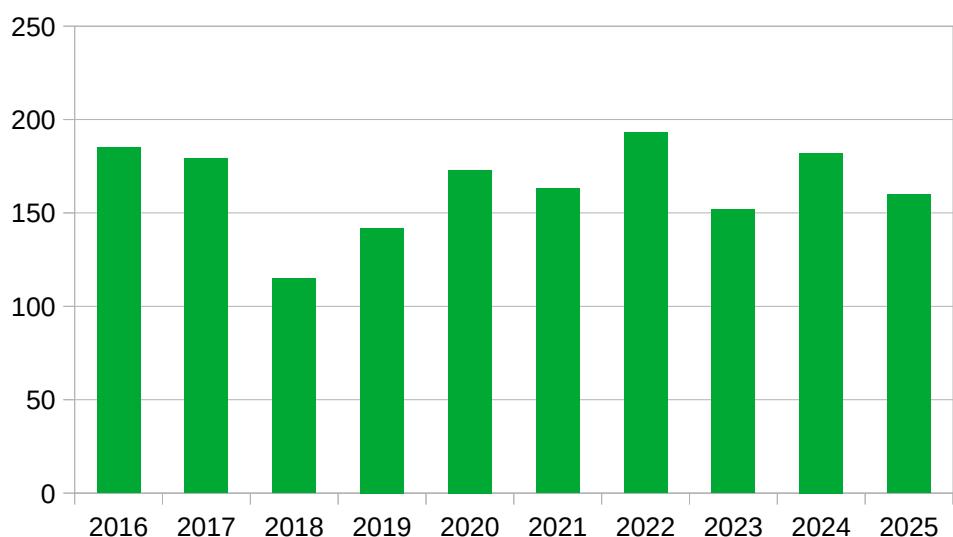
It is good to report a decent if not outstanding year for our resident breeders. Both Wren and Dunnock continue to breed near their 10 year averages. Redstart are migratory birds for Stanford, arriving largely in August, and were in good numbers this year. A very young Stonechat was also ringed, so presumably it had not travelled far. This is a bit of a mystery as they are not known as a locally breeding species.

Wren: 160 (-3%)

Includes two ringed as pulli

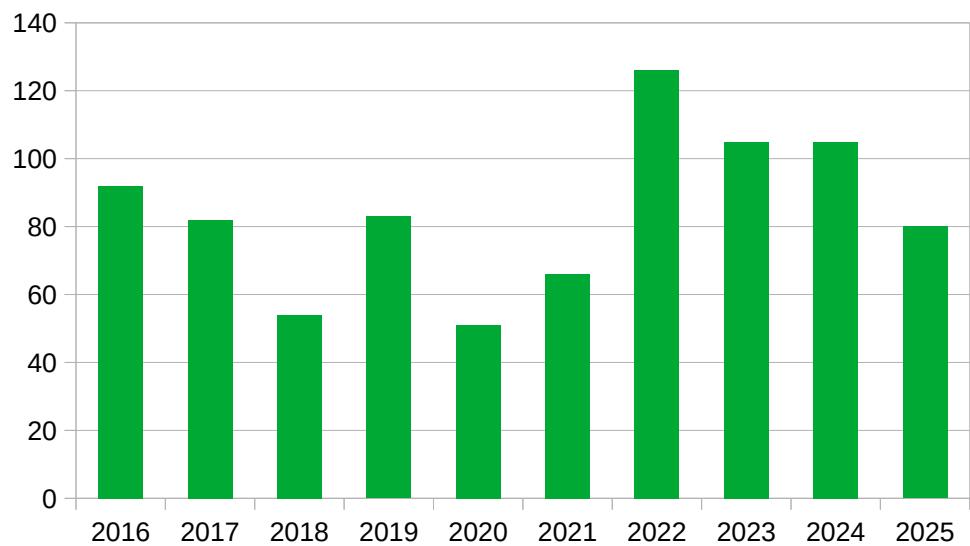
Returners: 22

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 9 | 3 | 13 | 51 | 43 | 10 | 28 | 1 | 1 |

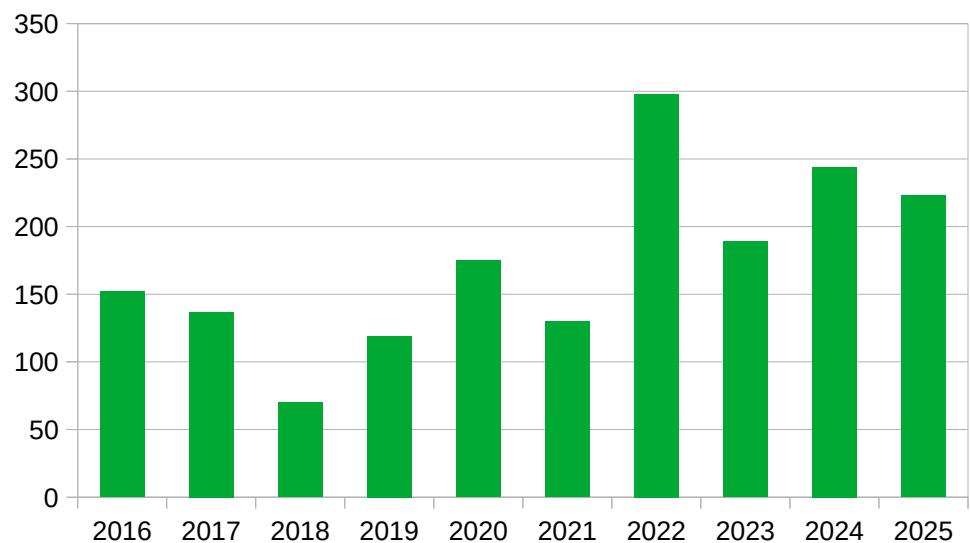


Dunnock: 80 (-5%)**Returners: 34**

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | 4 | 7 | 2 | 19 | 17 | 12 | 6 | 11 | 2 | |

**Robin: 223 (+28%)****Returners: 15**

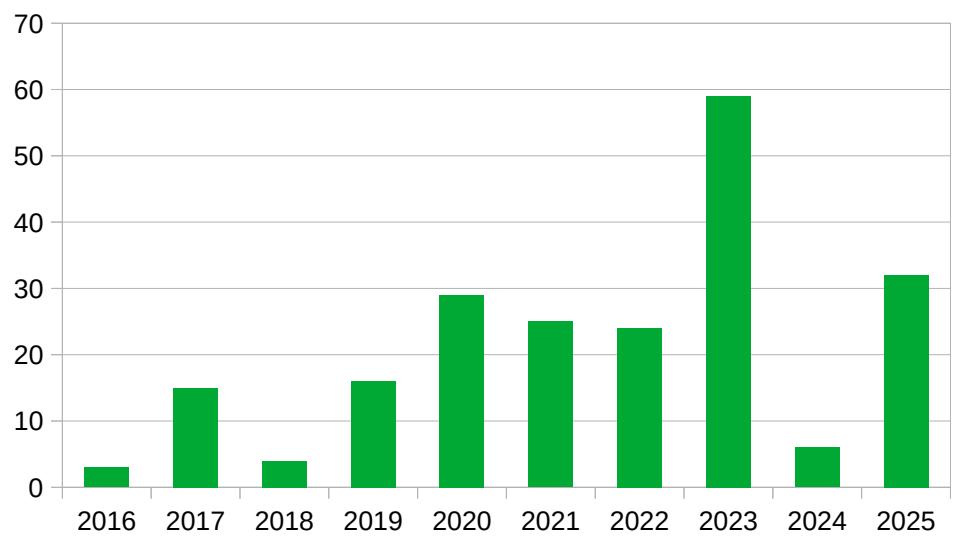
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | 3 | 11 | 35 | 39 | 71 | 45 | 17 | 2 | | |



Redstart: 32 (+50%)

A very pretty female Redstart

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 1 | | | 1 | 28 | 2 | | | |



Stonechat: 1

Ringed 17 Jul.



A decidedly young Stonechat in juvenile plumage- but where did it come from?

- **Thrushes**

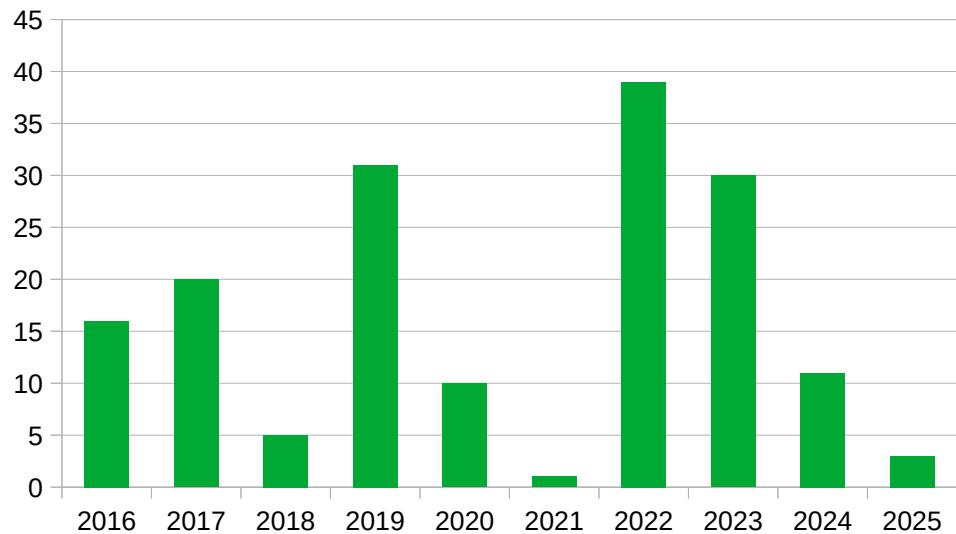
A poor year for both our migrant and resident Thrushes. Three Fieldfare is a very disappointing total, and Redwing numbers were low. This was reflected in a dearth of both species going into December, when their flocks appeared to have moved on. Song Thrush had very low numbers of juveniles across the summer, supplemented by probably migratory birds in the autumn. Blackbird apparently did slightly better as breeders, but still had a poor year. One Blackbird LC98744 was the oldest bird retrapped at Stanford, having originally been ringed on 28 August 2017.

Fieldfare: 3

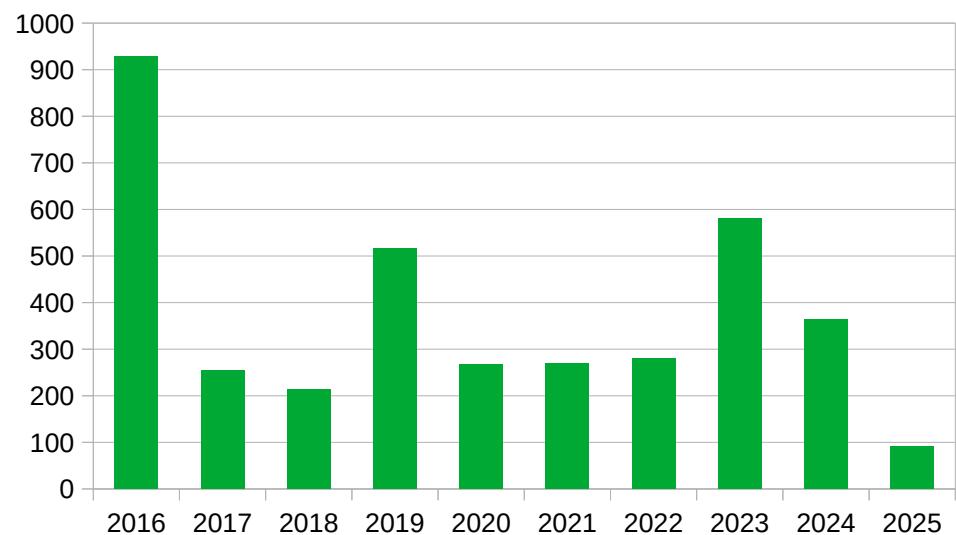
Ringed 18 Oct, 8 & 16 Nov.



Fieldfare; a few more of these handsome birds would have been nice

Fieldfare cont.**Redwing: 91 (-76%)**

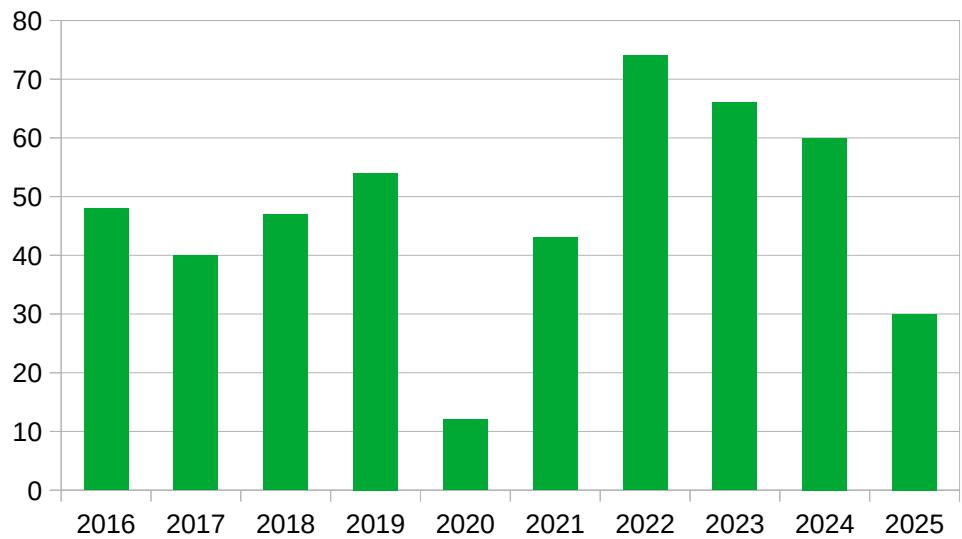
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | | | | 62 | 25 | 4 |



Song Thrush: 30 (-37%)

Returners: 14

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| 1 | | 4 | | 1 | | | 6 | 2 | 2 | 12 | 1 | 1 |



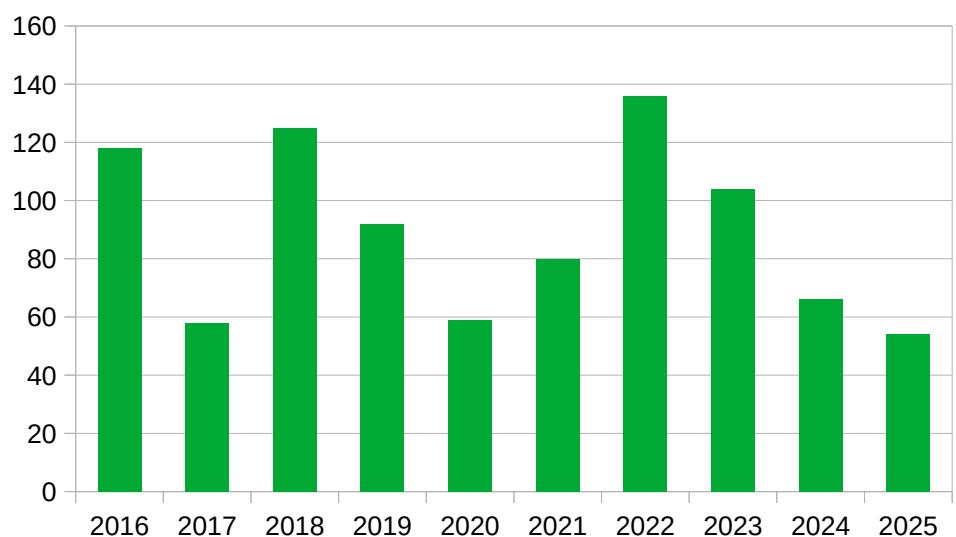
Blackbird: 54 (-39%)

Returners: 17



Not over exposed; this is a very dark migratory continental type Blackbird! Note the black bill.

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 7 | 5 | 2 | 17 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 4 |



- **Warblers**

Finally some good results. It was the best year ever for Grasshopper, Reed, Sedge and Garden Warbler plus Chiffchaff, the second best ever for Cetti's Warbler and Blackcap, and the third best for Lesser Whitethroat. With 111 birds ringed at Stanford in previous years returned to us in 2025, Reed Warbler were our most site faithful birds, followed at 31 by Garden Warbler.

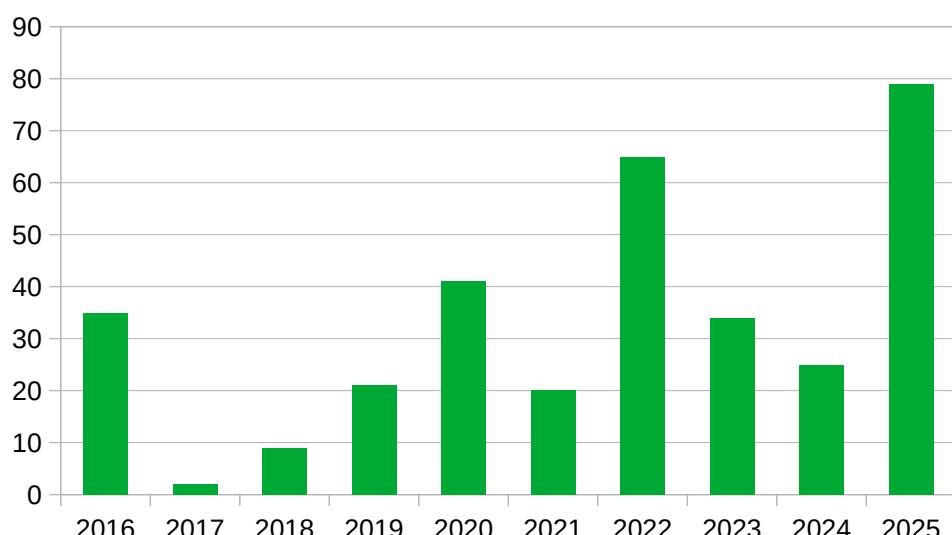
The other warblers had good if not quite such stellar years. Taking into account the promising warbler breeding success results, plus a single Barred Warbler (first ever at Stanford) *plus* a single Wood Warbler (third ever) the only conclusion is that 2025 was a fabulous warbler year!

Grasshopper Warbler: 79 (+139%)



Not a breeding bird at Stanford this year, but still a record total

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | 9 | 65 | 5 | | | |

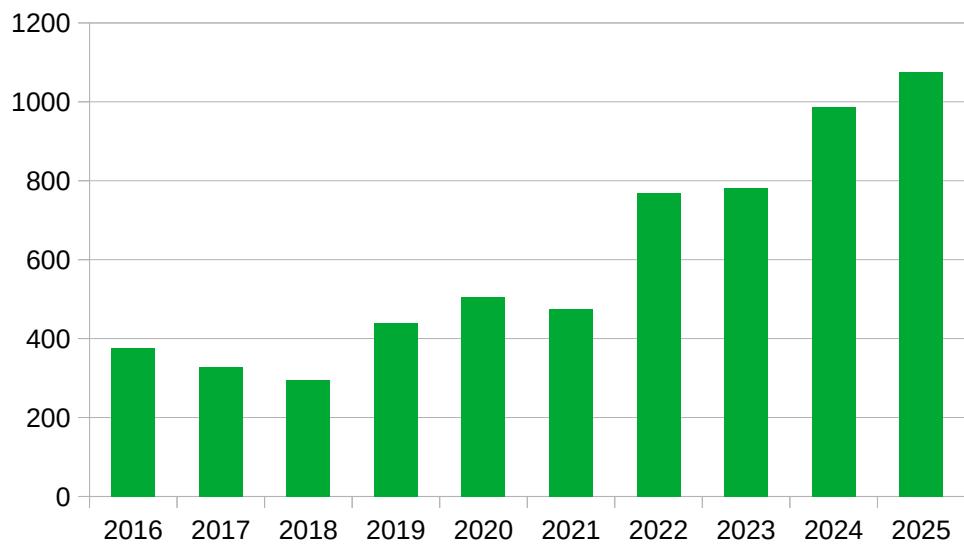


Reed Warbler: 1075 (+78%)

Includes three ringed as pulli

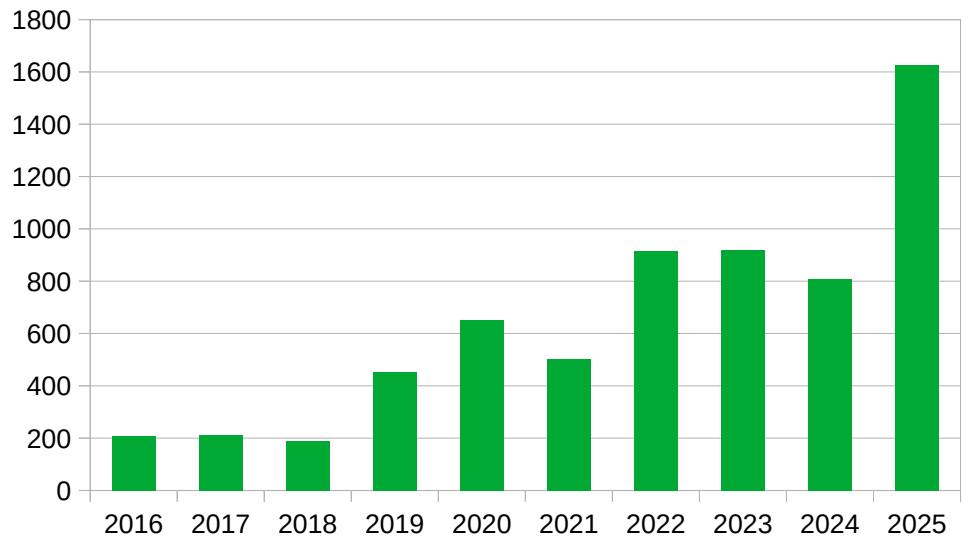
Returners: 111

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 6 | 26 | 57 | 327 | 608 | 46 | 3 | | |

**Sedge Warbler: 1627 (+151%)****Returners: 20***Excellent year for our lovely Sedge Warblers*

Sedge Warbler cont.

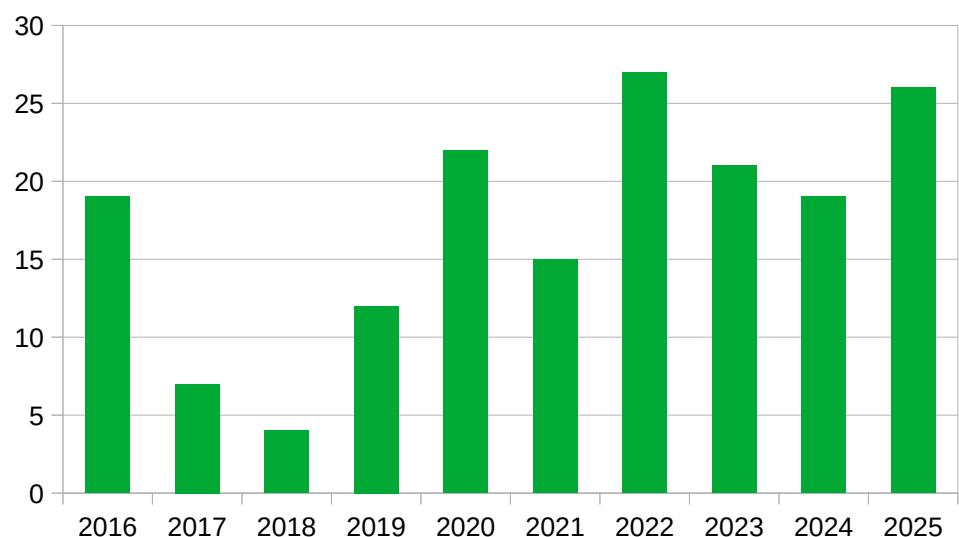
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 25 | 12 | 17 | 468 | 1091 | 13 | 1 | | |



Cetti's Warbler: 26 (+51%)

Returners: 6

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | 1 | | | 9 | | 6 | 6 | 4 |



Barred Warbler: 1

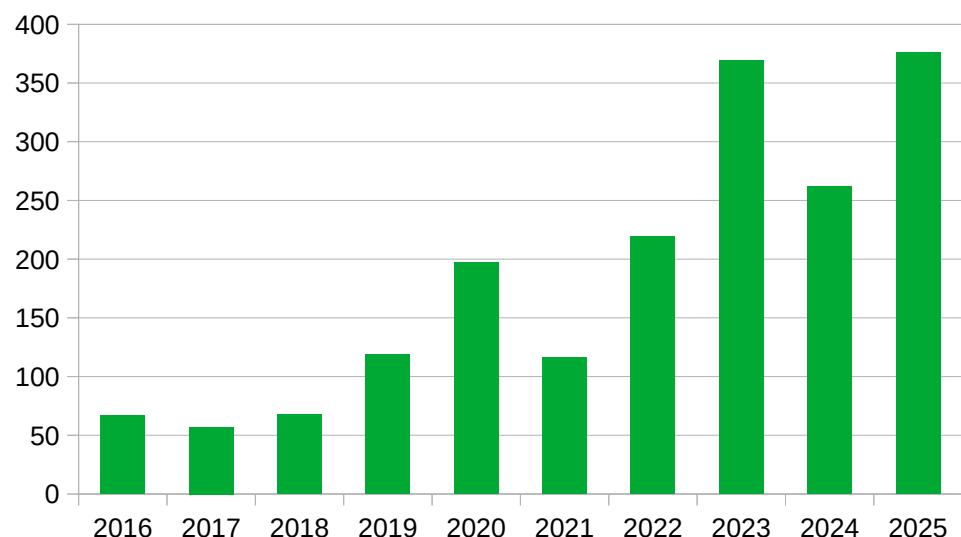
Ringed 20 Aug.



First ever Barred Warbler ringed at Stanford!

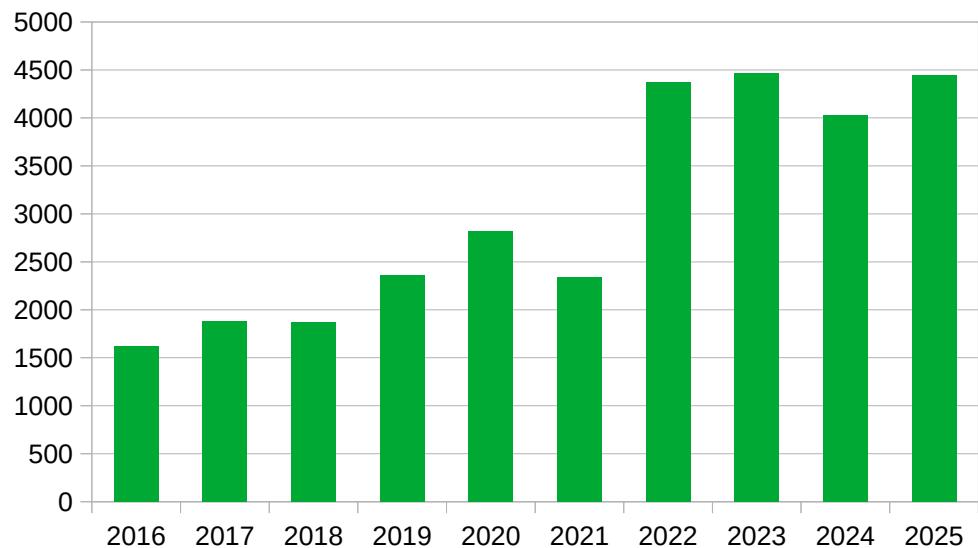
Garden Warbler: 376 (+103%)**Returners:** 31

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 1 | 5 | 22 | 122 | 210 | 16 | | | |



Blackcap: 4441 (+47%)**Returners: 13**

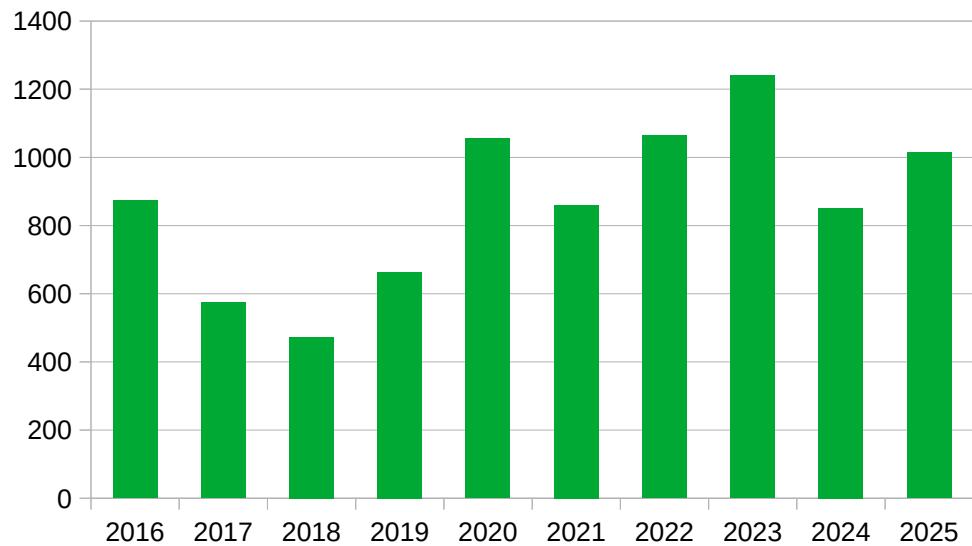
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 42 | 19 | 64 | 148 | 1804 | 1942 | 418 | 3 | 1 |

**Whitethroat: 1015 (+17%)****Returners: 22**

Not a record year, but still good numbers of Whitethroat

Whitethroat cont.

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 8 | 14 | 89 | 171 | 702 | 31 | | | |



Lesser Whitethroat: 176 (+40%)

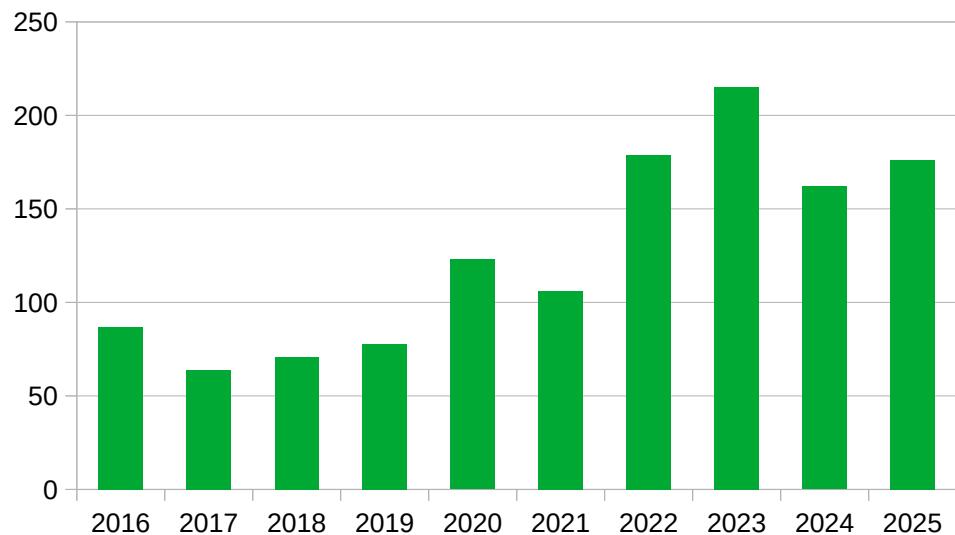
Returners: 5



An excellent year for Lesser Whitethroat

Lesser Whitethroat cont.

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 2 | 4 | 14 | 20 | 118 | 18 | | | |

**Willow Warbler: 663 (+34%)**

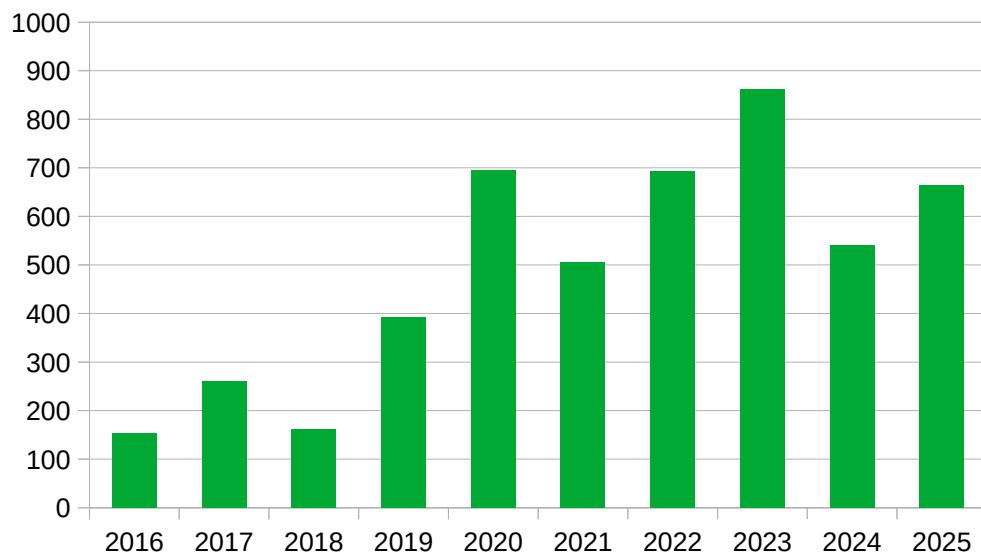
- Includes three *Acredula* type, possibly from north eastern Europe.

Returners: 17

Sombre plumage of an Acredula type Willow Warbler

Willow Warbler cont.

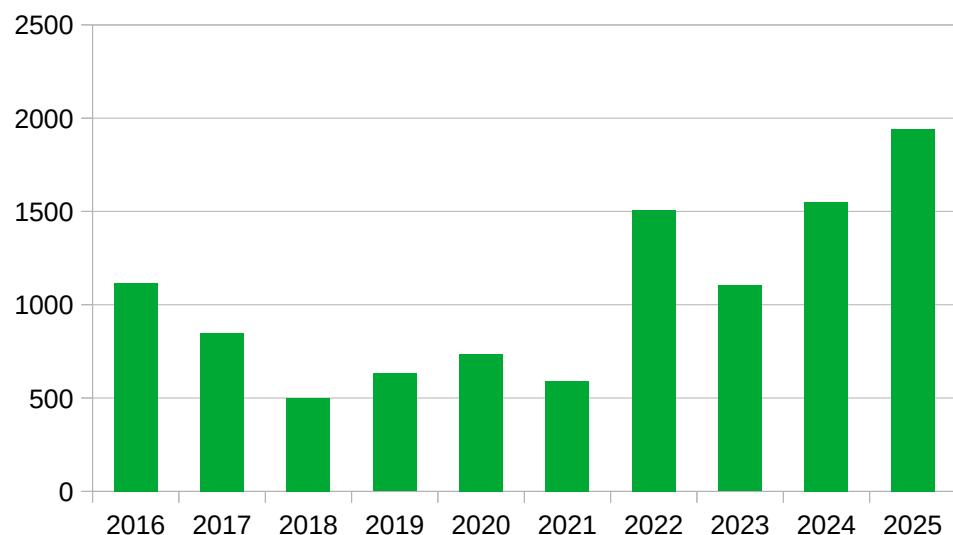
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 7 | 3 | 15 | 74 | 531 | 32 | 1 | | |

**Chiffchaff: 1941 (+84%)**

Includes five ringed as pulli

Returners: 30

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| | | 5 | 26 | 4 | 69 | 98 | 183 | 1029 | 518 | 9 | |



Wood Warbler: 1

Ringed 22 Aug

- for photo see Appendix 1 -

- **Crests, Tits and Allies**

Pied and Spotted Flycatcher, and Firecrest, were excellent additions for 2025; these are not birds which we get to ring every year. Goldcrest had their third best ever year, with some very young juveniles indicating that they breed locally. Our resident tits had rather poor breeding years, but the three main species (Long-tailed, Blue and Great) are clearly maintaining their breeding populations. First year Coal Tits and a Marsh Tit make us hopeful that they are still clinging on as a local breeding species, but perhaps only just. Treecreeper happily had a very good year with their third best ever total.

Firecrest: 1

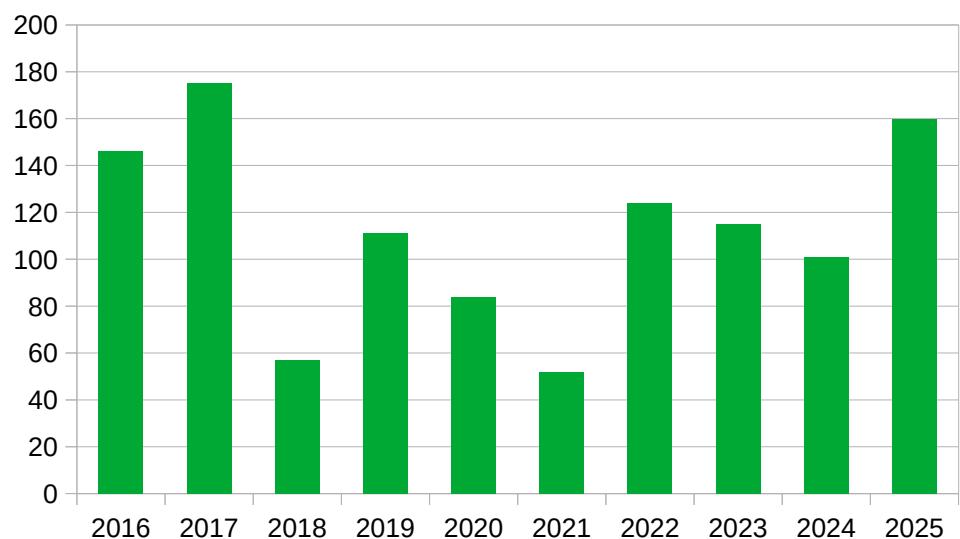
Ringed 16 Nov



Firecrest- a nicely exotic wintry species for Stanford

Goldcrest: 160 (+42%)**Returners: 1**

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | 1 | 6 | 5 | 16 | 48 | 79 | 5 | |

**Pied Flycatcher: 1**

Ringed 25 Aug.

*- for photo see Appendix 1 -***Spotted Flycatcher: 2**

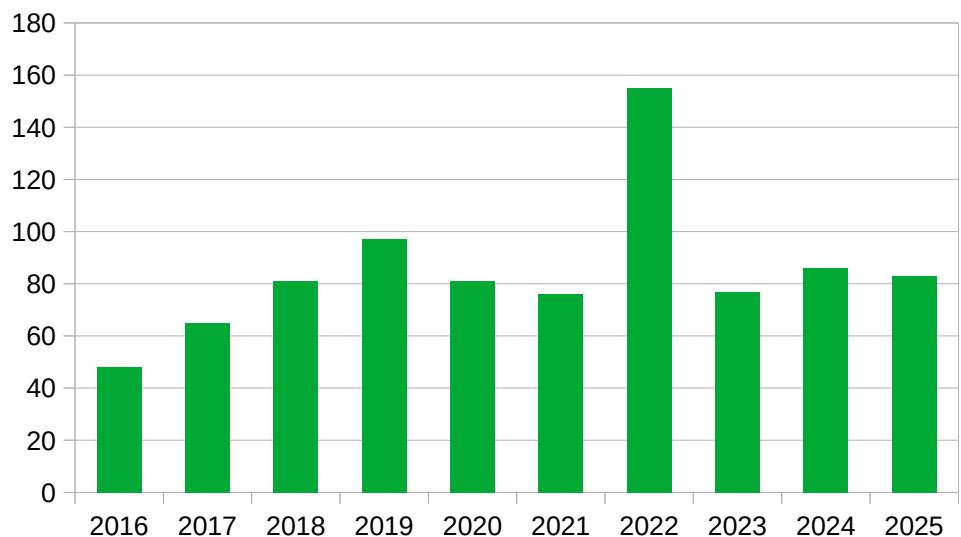
Ringed 11 Aug, 20 Sep.

*Usually one or two Spotted Flycatchers each year- two in 2025!*

Long-tailed Tit: 83 (-2%)

Returners: 15

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 1 | 12 | 11 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 40 | 1 | 2 | | |

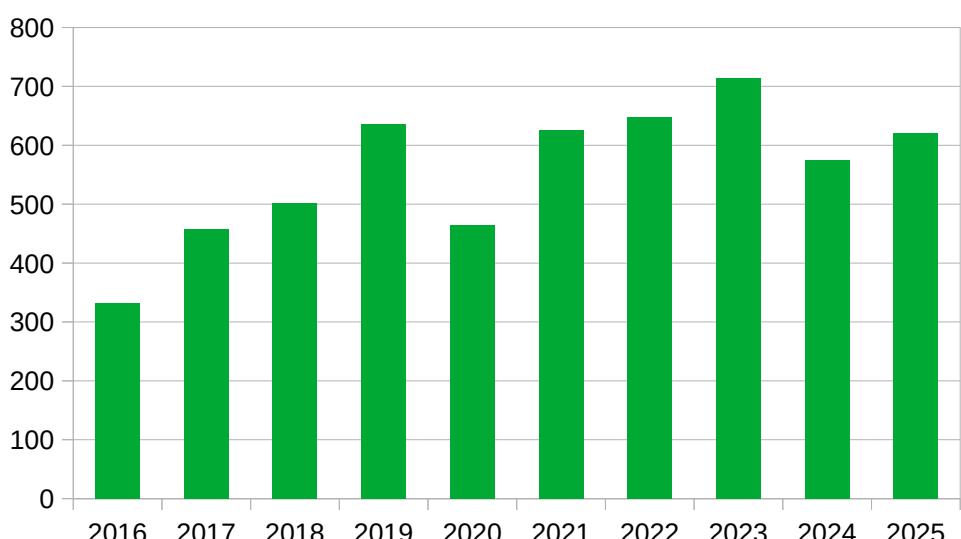


Blue Tit: 621 (+11%)

Includes 220 ringed as pulli.

Returns: 37

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 11 | 219 | 99 | 48 | 41 | 99 | 79 | 24 | 1 | | | |



Coal Tit: 2
Ringed 15 & 28 Aug

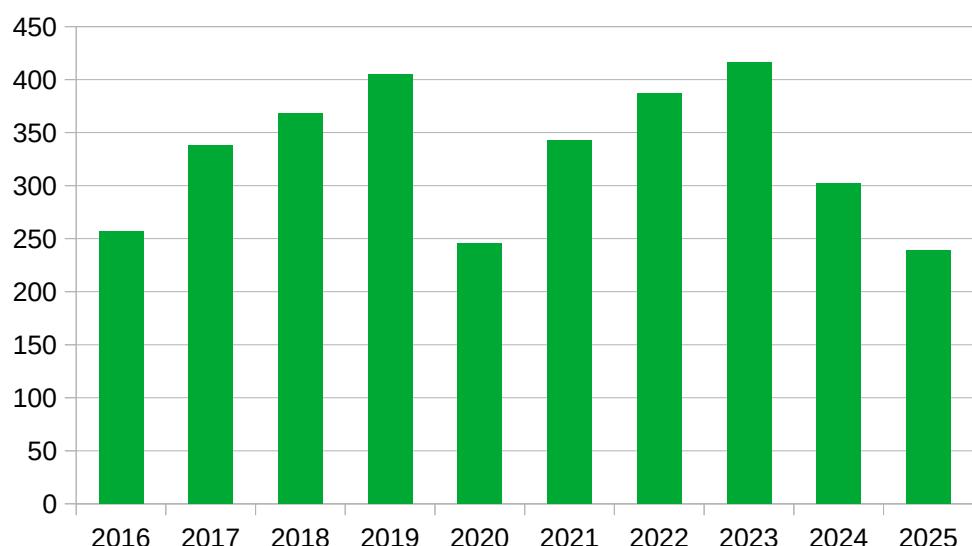
Marsh Tit: 1
Ringed 13 Jun



Just hanging on as a breeding species at Stanford?

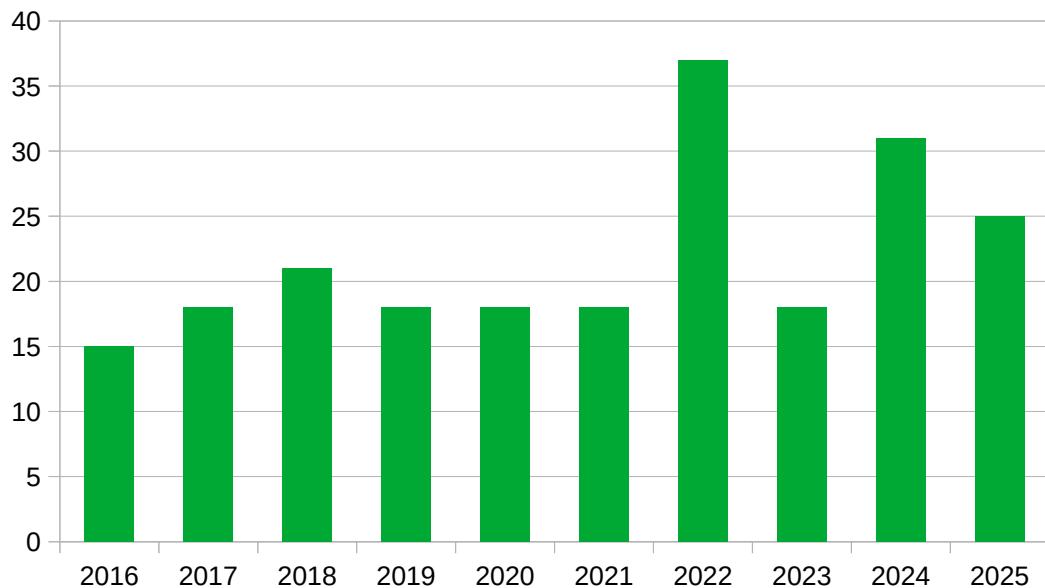
Great Tit: 239 (-28%)
Includes 126 ringed as pulli.
Returners: 22

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | 2 | 3 | 129 | 24 | 17 | 9 | 8 | 45 | 2 | |



Tree creeper: 25 (+14%)**Returners: 2**

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | 2 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 3 | | |



- **Corvids and Allies**

Corvids are so intelligent and observant that they generally manage to avoid our mist nets, preferring to mock us from a distance. This year's single Jay and Magpie were happy exceptions. The Jackdaws were all ringed as pulli as part of AGH's nest recording work. Starlings were ringed in a succession of evening roosts in the Northants reed-bed.

Jay: 1

Ringed 03 May



Surprisingly colourful birds for members of the Corvid family. Unmistakeable and full of character.

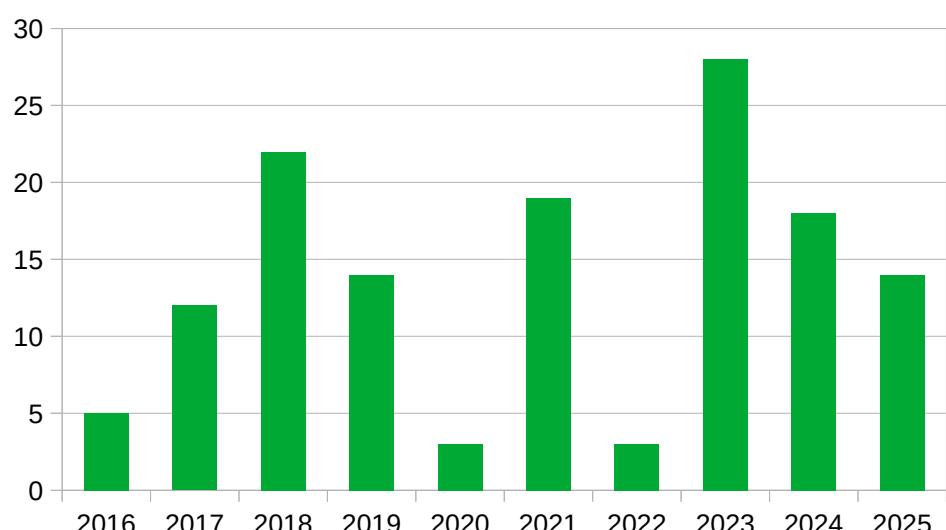
Magpie: 1
Ringed 12 Jul.

The first Magpie ringed since 2021 at Stanford

Jackdaw: 14 (+1%)

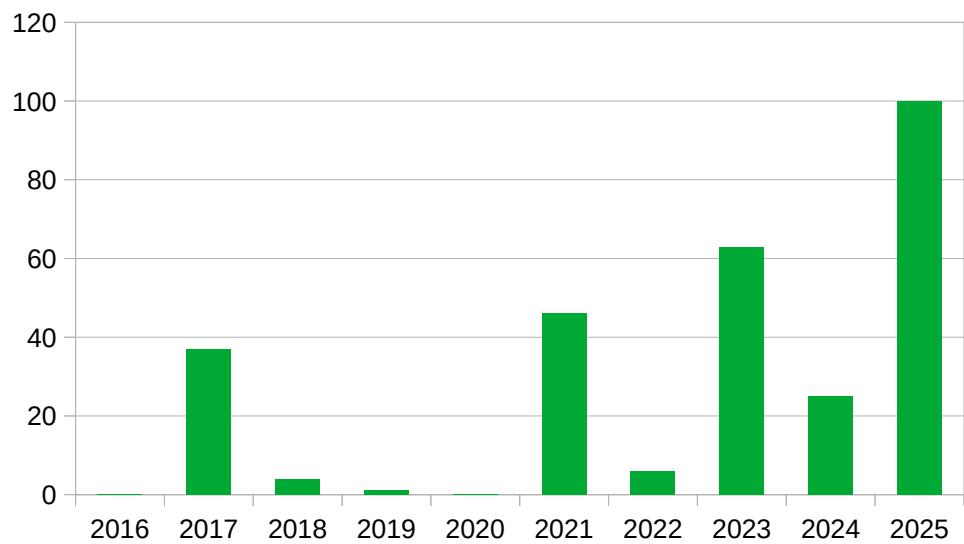
All ringed as pulli.

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | | | | 14 | | |



Starling: 100 (+183%)*A Starling ringed at dusk at the Point*

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | 3 | | | 54 | 43 | |



- **Sparrows and Finches**

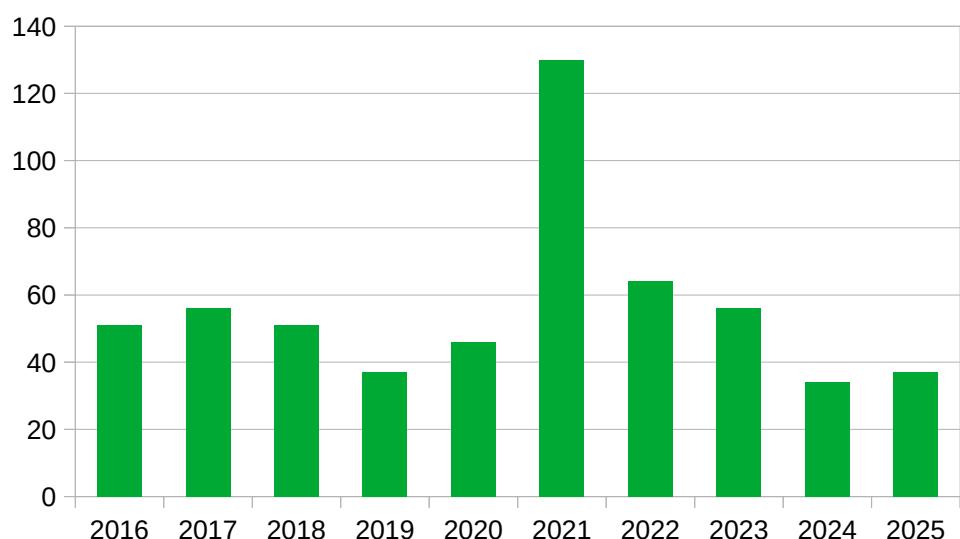
For the second year our Tree Sparrows were notable by their absence, so they really seem to have left Stanford for, at least, the time being. To be optimistic, we could say that our finch numbers are stable, i.e. there was no major decline in their numbers but really these numbers remain disappointing. The exceptions were Linnets which did relatively well. Regarding winter visitors, four Siskin were a welcome bonus and it was nice to see an excellent year for Lesser Redpoll/ Redpoll.

Chaffinch: 37 (-34%)

Returners: 7

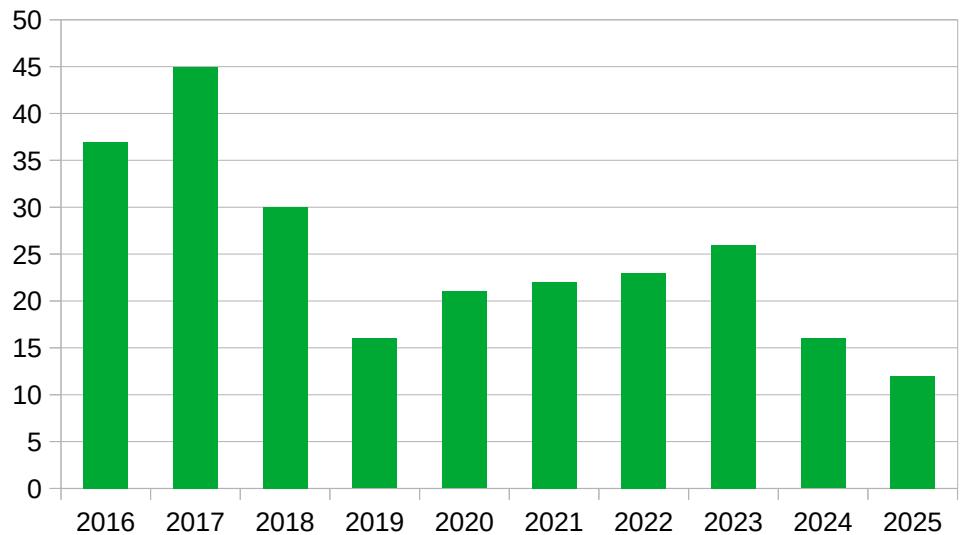


| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 10 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 1 | |

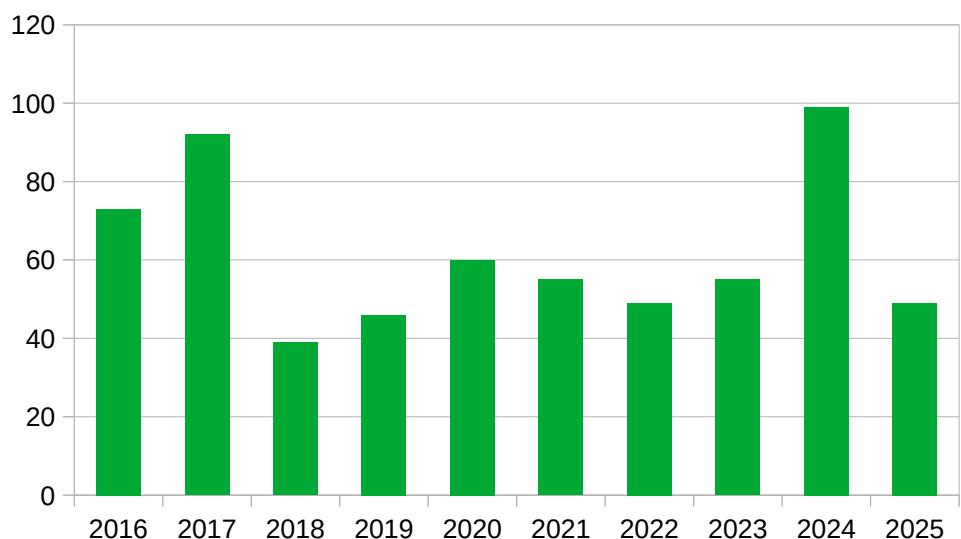


Bullfinch: 12 (-51%)**Returners: 4**

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 7 | | | 3 | 1 | | | 1 | |

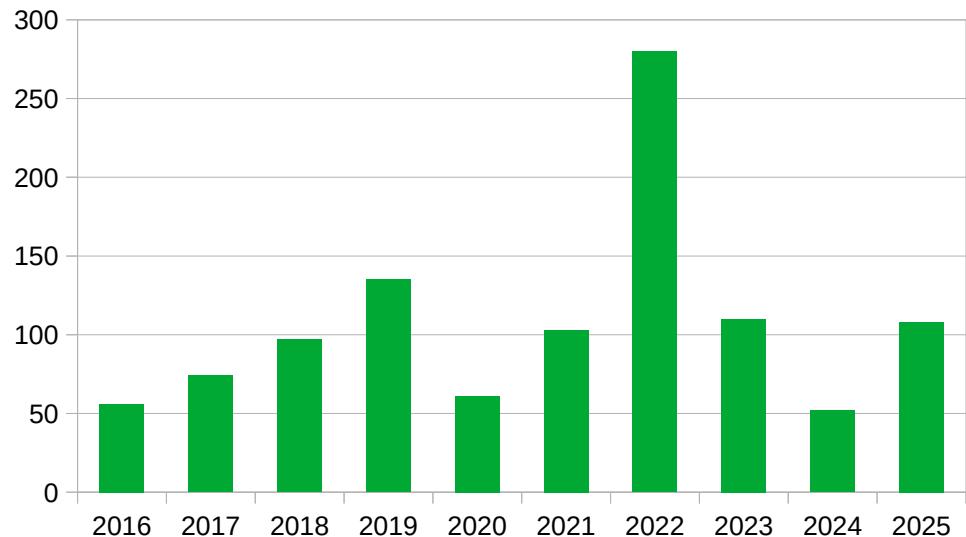
**Goldfinch: 49 (-21%)****Returners: 3**

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 2 | 9 | | 5 | 10 | | 19 | 4 | |



Greenfinch: 108 (no change)**Returners: 1**

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | 2 | | 2 | 95 | 9 | |

**Siskin: 4**

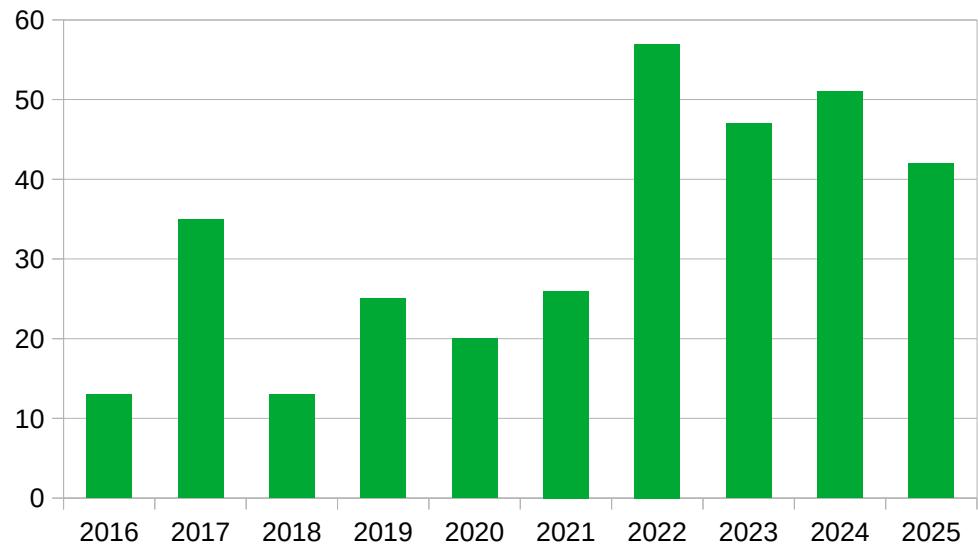
Ringed 19 Sep, 16 Oct, 18 Oct, 03 Dec.

*Very handsome male Siskin*

Linnet: 42 (+27%)

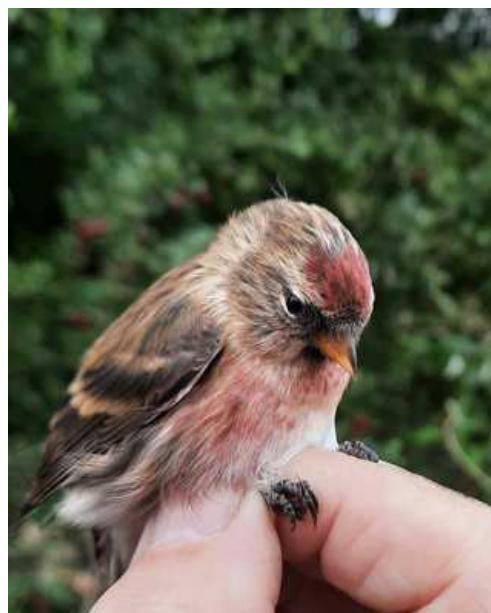
Returners: 4

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 18 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 4 | | | | |



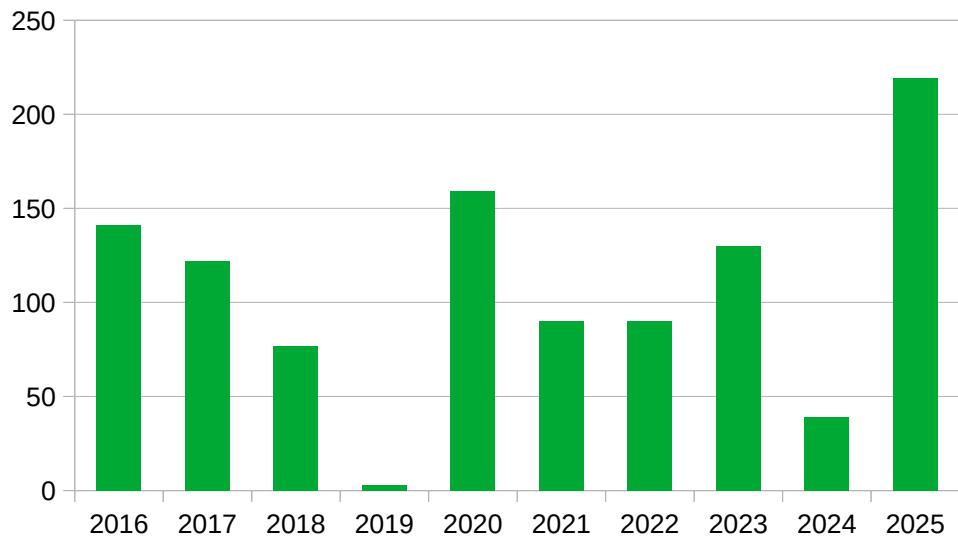
Lesser Redpoll: 219 (+105%)

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | | 50 | 154 | 15 | | |



Very handsome male Lesser Redpoll

Lesser Redpoll cont.



• **Buntings**

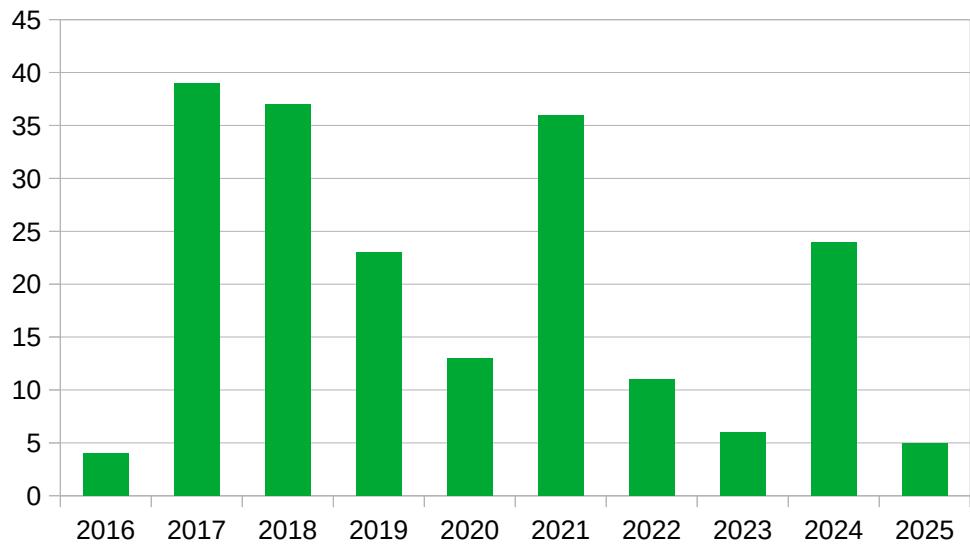
Our two resident Buntings were present, although Yellowhammer numbers were very low. Reed Bunting have had a slightly better than average year and appeared to breed successfully across the sites at Stanford.

Yellowhammer: 5

Ringed 14 Jun, 12 & 21 Jul, 8 Nov & 03 Dec.



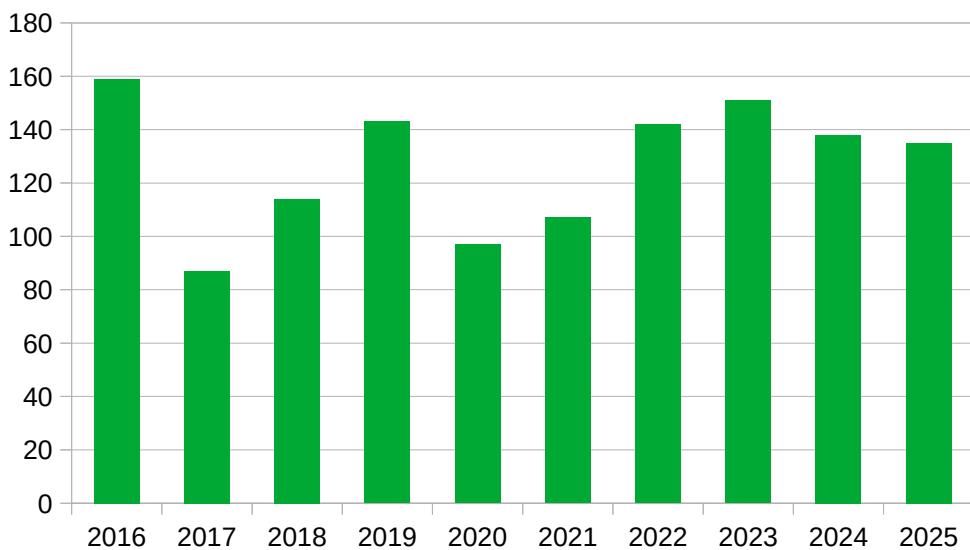
Yellowhammer; a few more would have been nice



Reed Bunting: 135 (+6%)

Returners: 42

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 13 | 5 | 17 | 38 | 23 | 9 | 21 | 9 | |



Nest Recording Report by Adam Homer (AGH)

The warmest year on record! Although the warm sunshine and hot spells were possibly welcomed by some people it's not what nest recorders want to see and nesting birds, particularly nestbox users, undoubtedly suffer from lost broods due to heat exhaustion. There are of course some winners and losers. The winners in 2025 were the larger species like Swans, Geese and Terns and the losers it seems were the residents of our nest boxes. Small open nests are not the easiest nests to find and without evidence only time will tell if this year has had an impact of our common and migrants breeders (see also p.10 *Warbler Breeding Success. Ed.*). All photos courtesy of AGH.

Mute Swan: Nests were found in all four corners of the reservoir this year. Seven nests are the most we have in one breeding season. One nest was predated at egg stage but the remainder had successful outcomes. Two adults from accessible nests were caught by hand and ringed by groups members that had not yet ringed Swans. This experience proved invaluable as special clip rings are our largest rings and require careful application.

Canada Goose: An adult was observed sitting on a nest at the Settling Pond. The nest was inaccessible due to overgrown vegetation so the contents were unrecorded.

Greylag Goose: A nest found on the perimeter footpath on the Leicestershire side was found to contain five eggs. Unfortunately as the weeks went by and probably due to the exposed location, the nest was abandoned.



Greylag Goose nest

Common Tern: A newly renovated raft joined the existing one in Blowers Lodge Bay in early April in readiness for the adults return. Ten nest records and twenty-two pulli from two rafts are both annual records. Stanford Reservoir is one of a number of local sites that have joined a colour-ringing project for Common Terns. These uniquely marked rings will allow us and others to track the young throughout their migration to and from their wintering grounds.



Common Tern nest



Common Tern pullus being ringed



Common Terns on the raft in Blowers Lodge Bay

Stock Dove: A total of thirteen nests was on par with last year. However, only nine young were ringed. Several nests were not visited when the young were big enough to ring due to availability of ringers, so this year's total does not reflect the true number of breeding pairs at Stanford.

Cuckoo: With up to three adults seen including a rufous-morph female the prospect of finding a nest with a Cuckoo egg or chick looked promising this year....and it seems that our luck was in!

Two Reed Warbler nests in the Leicestershire reedbed were found to contain a single Cuckoo chick in each. One chick found naked was visited just five days later and ringed at feathers short stage. The second nest was found to have a slightly larger chick begging for food. These proved to be the first Cuckoo pulli ringed at Stanford since 1994. A third juvenile Cuckoo was trapped and ringed a week later so perhaps there were nests that we failed to find.



Cuckoo number one



Cuckoo number two!

Barn Owl: A pair of adults in a nestbox on the Leicestershire side were trapped and ringed but failed to breed. A pair at nearby Park Farm also failed to breed after raising three young in 2024. Very dry conditions across the country proved difficult for Owls.

Tawny Owl: Another species seemingly struggling with the arid conditions this year. Just one nest containing two eggs was recorded at Stanford. One egg hatched with the nestling ringed at feathers short stage in mid May.

Swallow: Thirty-eight pulli from seventeen nests was an average season although the ringing of pulli started a week earlier and finished a week later than in 2024. No nests produced five eggs this year, only three nests produced four eggs and the remainder were three's and two's.

Grey Wagtail: Five young from two nests were ringed under the bridge at the back of the dam. Both nesting attempts were by the same pair which regularly use the concrete ledges. Grey Wagtails nest earlier than other common species and usually have two broods but can occasionally go for a third.

Wren: Once again Wrens continue to use our tit nest boxes. A nest with seven eggs was found in the nearby wood although only two hatched. This was possibly the result of an infertile male which is not uncommon among some bird species.

Reed Warbler: Only two nests were found after a few sweeps of the reed beds. A number of damaged or destroyed nests were also discovered; a mammalian predator was a likely suspect. Three pulli were ringed from the two nests found.

Chiffchaff: A nest found near the Leicestershire reedbed with five eggs in mid June was visited again three weeks later to ring the five pulli, one of which was retrapped again in August. This was the first Chiffchaff nest found for eight years.

Blue Tit: The lowest number of nests since 2019 and the fewest amount of pulli ringed since 2020. This was a result of the hot weather and a lack of available food for the young that curtailed numbers from the high of 2022 and is a downward trend for the last four years. Two hundred and twenty pulli from twenty-five nests were ringed with over 50% of the nests producing fewer than ten eggs.

Great Tit: As with Blue Tits, Great Tits suffered a catastrophic breeding year. Seventeen nests was the lowest number for twenty-five years and 126 pulli ringed is the lowest since 2020. The only positives were the size of the broods were above average compared to recent years and all this year's broods successfully fledged with no recorded predation or desertion.

Jackdaw: Jackdaws continue their upward trend with a joint highest number of nests recorded. However, from the eleven nests this year over half were predated at egg or young stage. Fourteen pulli were ringed from just four nests with three of these having four young, each successfully fledging.

The Birding Year at Stanford Reservoir 2025 by Chris Hubbard (CH)

This was an exceptional year for birding at Stanford Reservoir. The overall number of species recorded was 157 compared to 158 in 2024, above the 10-year average of 152 species and was the fourth best year ever. Thirteen species were recorded in 2025 that were not recorded in 2024 (compared to 18 in 2024 that weren't recorded in 2023). There was an incredible three new species for the site compared to no additions in 2024. The overall site list stands at 256 although this needs to be reduced to 254 to reflect the revised status of Green-winged Teal and Hooded Crow.

Species Totals for last 10 Years*

| 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 144 | 160 | 137 | 154 | 164 | 149 | 147 | 150 | 158 | 157 |

*Lesser and Common Redpoll counted as separate species up to 2024

Summary of the 13 species recorded in 2025 not recorded in 2024

All birds found by CH unless otherwise stated. All images courtesy of CH unless otherwise attributed. Where noted as ringed, all birds ringed by members of the SRG.



Slavonian Grebe: found on September 26th and only present for one day. The first record since 2003.



Glossy Ibis: three were found on September 19th, the first ever record for the site.

Common Crane: three flew west through the reservoir on March 9th, only the second record (J Riley).



Greater Scaup: four birds present (three females and a drake) initially on December 24th, the first at the site since 2020.

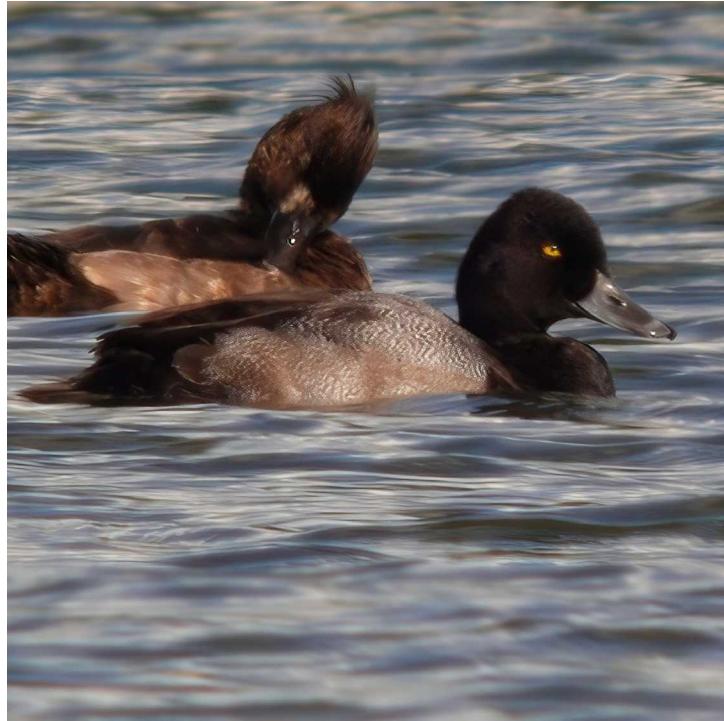


Photo: M Alibone

Lesser Scaup: a drake in eclipse was found on September 23rd, the first ever for Northants and for the site. It was seen briefly the following day but not subsequently, although it relocated to another site in Northants.

Merlin: one on October 25th and another on December 18th were the first at the site since 2023.

Quail: a singing bird was located on June 2nd and present for 2 days, the first since 2023.

Black Redstart: one was seen and photographed at the spillway on October 17th, the first since 2004 (A Hiatt).

Barred Warbler: trapped and ringed on August 20th, a first for Northants and for the site.

Wood Warbler: trapped and ringed on August 22nd. The fifth site record with the last one seen in 2020.

Pied Flycatcher: trapped and ringed on August 25th (*for more details on these four birds, plus photos, see also Appendix 1. Ed.*)

Marsh Tit: trapped and ringed on June 13th.

Common Crossbill: two near the dam on July 25th and another over calling October 19th.

Month by Month Highlights

January



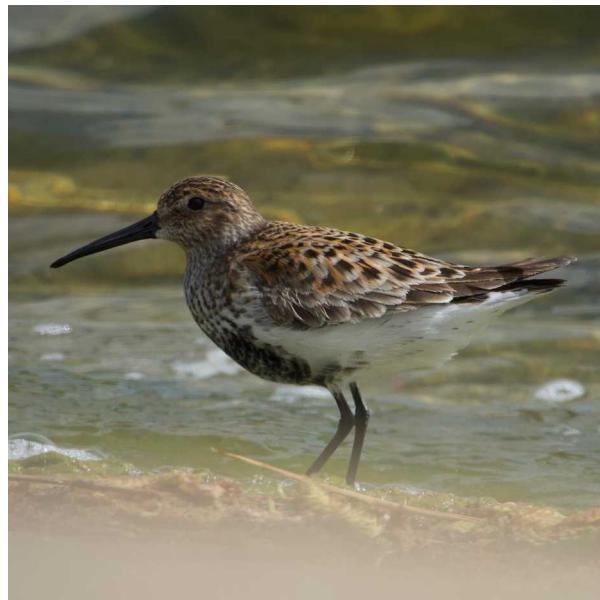
Whooper Swans

The year kicked off with **Mediterranean**, **Yellow-legged** and **Caspian Gulls** in the roost on the 1st. Several **Stonechat** were on site and the first two **Whooper Swans** (Barry Silverman) of the year were on the 9th. The first **Jack Snipe** of the year was recorded on the 28th and then again on the 31st.

February

The first **Woodcock** of the year was on the 2nd, an early **Oystercatcher** was on the 15th.

March



Dunlin

The first **Pink-footed Goose** of the year was with **Greylags** on the 8th. Three **Common Crane** were recorded flying west through the site on the 9th, only the second ever record and the first since 2017 but were not seen again (J Riley). The first three **Sand Martin** of the year were on the 11th followed by **Swallow** on the 24th. The first **Dunlin** was on the 23rd and there was an excellent record of a **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** on the 31st (F Graves).

April



Little Gulls on passage

The first **Yellow Wagtail** was on the 1st. A spring highlight was a passage of **Little Gulls** on the 4th, initially with one and then slowly building to a new high count for the site of 34 by mid-morning.

The first **House Martin** was recorded on the 6th with hirundine numbers building over the month. An early **Redstart** was ringed on the 8th and the first **Common Tern** was seen on the 9th.

Other spring migrants were arriving thick and fast with **Whitethroat**, **Reed Warbler** and **Common Sandpiper** all getting in on the act. Two brief **Black-tailed Godwits** arrived at the dam on the 15th along with four **Redshank** and a **Greenshank** later that day. The first **Garden Warbler** was found on the 16th.

The first **Hobby** was recorded on the 22nd and a nice passage of **Arctic Terns** occurred on the 23rd with a total of 44 birds, joined later by two **Black Terns**, the first of the year. The first **Cuckoo** appeared on the 25th followed by **Osprey** the following day. The first **Whimbrel** of the year went through on the 28th (M Townsend) and more **Black Terns** were present at the end of the month with six on the 30th.

May



Arctic Tern

Another group of 27 **Arctic Terns** was present briefly on the 5th with most moving on early AM. A **Little Ringed Plover** was on the dam on the 19th, the first **Spotted Flycatcher** on the 21st and a reeling **Grasshopper Warbler** were discovered in a crop field adjacent to the reservoir on the 22nd (B Silverman).

June

The **Grasshopper Warbler** continued to hold territory until at least the 10th and a singing **Quail** was found on the evening of 2nd and was present until the 4th, the first since 2023. Another **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** was seen on the 8th (D March) and multiple **Cuckoo** and **Osprey** sightings were recorded throughout the month. A **Marsh Tit** was ringed on the 13th, the first site record since 2021. The first **Marsh Harrier** of the year was on the 22nd.

July



Redshank

The month kicked off well with five **Black-tailed Godwits** and a **Redshank** on the dam on the 2nd. Two **Little Ringed Plovers** were on the dam on the 11th. A female **Ferruginous Duck** was found on the evening of the 13th, the 7th site record. A juvenile **Stonechat** was ringed on the 17th; perhaps indicative of a local breeding pair?

Breeding **Cuckoo** was confirmed on the 20th with a juvenile seen being fed by a Reed Warbler:



Photo: Paul Bunyard (Wildaboutimages)

Two **Crossbill** were briefly seen at the dam on the 25th with an **Arctic Tern** also present on the same day.

August

Up to two **Marsh Harrier** were seen throughout the early part of the month.



Black-necked Grebes

Three **Black-necked Grebes** were found on the 6th, the first of 2025. The first **Whinchat** of the year was found on the 12th, with a very obliging **Ruff** found on the dam on the 18th, the first of 2025 (CH/S Wood). A **Green Sandpiper** was found on the 16th, the **Ruff** was still present on the 19th along with the first **Ringed Plover** of the year and another two **Black Terns**.

One of the star birds of 2025 was a **Barred Warbler** ringed on the 20th. This was the first record for Northants and the site, but despite searching was not seen after release, although the year's first **Bittern** was found by birders searching for the warbler (RW Bullock). Another quality warbler species was ringed on the 22nd when a **Wood Warbler** was extracted from one of the nets in Blowers Lodge Bay, only the third to be ringed at the site.

A **Wheatear** was present on the 23rd and a **Pied Flycatcher** was ringed on the 25th. A passage of **Whimbrel** occurred on the 26th when a single bird was followed by a group of 12 and a group of two on the same morning.

September

Spotted Flycatcher numbers were on the increase with five on the 2nd. A juvenile **Little Gull** was around the tern rafts on the 3rd, and a group of five **Ruff** were briefly on the dam on the 4th.



Ruff

The only site **Tree Pipit** of the year was seen on the 5th. 12 **Grey Herons** dropped in with a **Great Egret** on the 7th and another **Ringed Plover** flew through.

The site's second new bird of the year was recorded on the 19th when three **Glossy Ibis** were found, part of a national invasion of this species and a long overdue addition.

A **Cattle Egret** was present on the same day, the only record of the year.

Good birds kept coming with a **Black-necked Grebe** on the 20th. The third new addition to the site list and another new bird for Northants was discovered on the 23rd in the form of a drake **Lesser Scaup**. The only **Garganey** of 2025 was seen on the 25th and a **Slavonian Grebe** was in the Narrows on the 26th, the first since 2003.

October

The code on our second ever colour ringed **Great Egret** at the site was finally confirmed as AJU on the 5th, ringed at Shapwick Heath in Somerset on the April 18th. The **Glossy Ibis** continued to delight throughout the month and three **Whooper Swans** flew west on the 8th. The **Bittern** was joined by a second bird during the month (B Silverman). Five **Red-crested Pochard** were present on the 13th along with a **Mediterranean Gull** in the roost. A late **Sand Martin** was seen on the 14th and a minimum of 550 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were counted in the roost on the 15th.

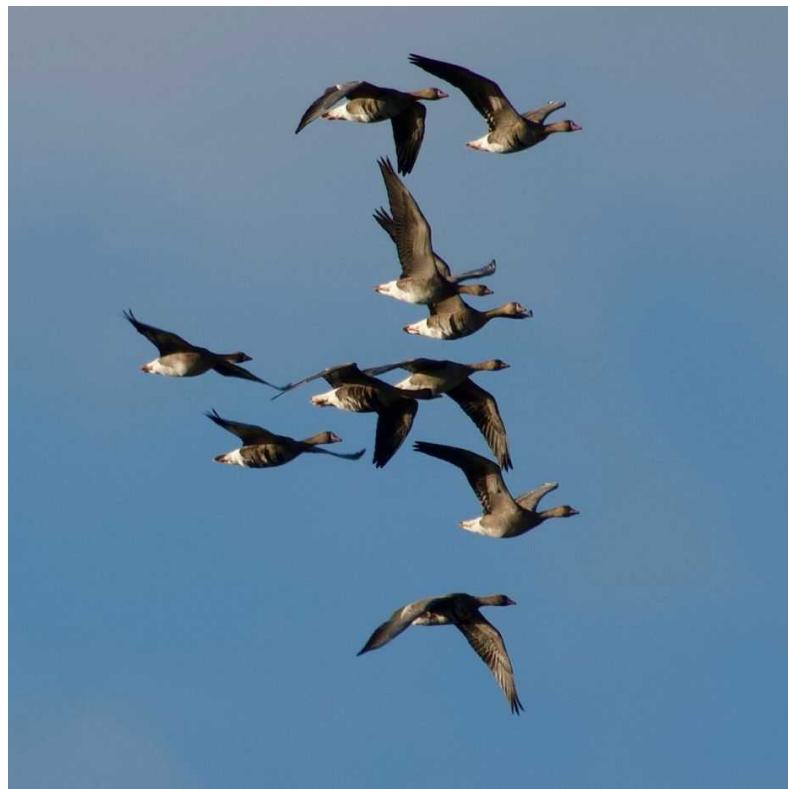
A **Black Redstart** was seen briefly on the 17th, the first record since 2004 (A Hiatt). The second **Crossbill** record was on the 19th. Two more **Whooper Swans** were present on the 22nd and the first **Merlin** of the year on the 25th. Five more **Whooper Swans** flew north on the 26th, and as gull numbers started to build, both **Mediterranean** and **Caspian** started to appear more frequently. The only **Mandarin** record of 2025 was on the 30th (S Wood).

November

The month kicked off with a **Redshank** on the 1st and four more **Red-crested Pochard** on the 2nd. A very late **Common Sandpiper** was initially picked up on the 3rd and then presumably the same bird was seen again on the 13th. Another (or the same) **Lesser**

Spotted Woodpecker was seen on the 7th. The year's only **Firecrest** was ringed on the 16th, making it back-to-back years for this species. The month finished off with a site record count of 30 **Great Egrets** on the 28th.

December



Russian White-fronted Geese

The **Glossy Ibis** continued throughout the month, finally making it through the 100 day mark. Another **Merlin** was seen briefly on the 18th. The year finished off on a high with four **Scaup** at the dam from the 24th to the month's end, the first since 2020. This was eclipsed with the arrival of an initial count of 56 **Russian White-fronted Geese** on the same day with the number increasing to 70 by the year end, the highest ever count at the site and part of a major movement from the continent.

Thanks as always to the Stanford Ringing Group, Severn Trent and to all observers who have shared their sightings and images during 2025. CH.

Controls: Birds Ringed at Other Sites Controlled at Stanford

This section details the birds that were ringed at other sites which were subsequently controlled by the SRG. All details were reported to the BTO, who then contacted the original ringing sites, both in the UK and abroad.

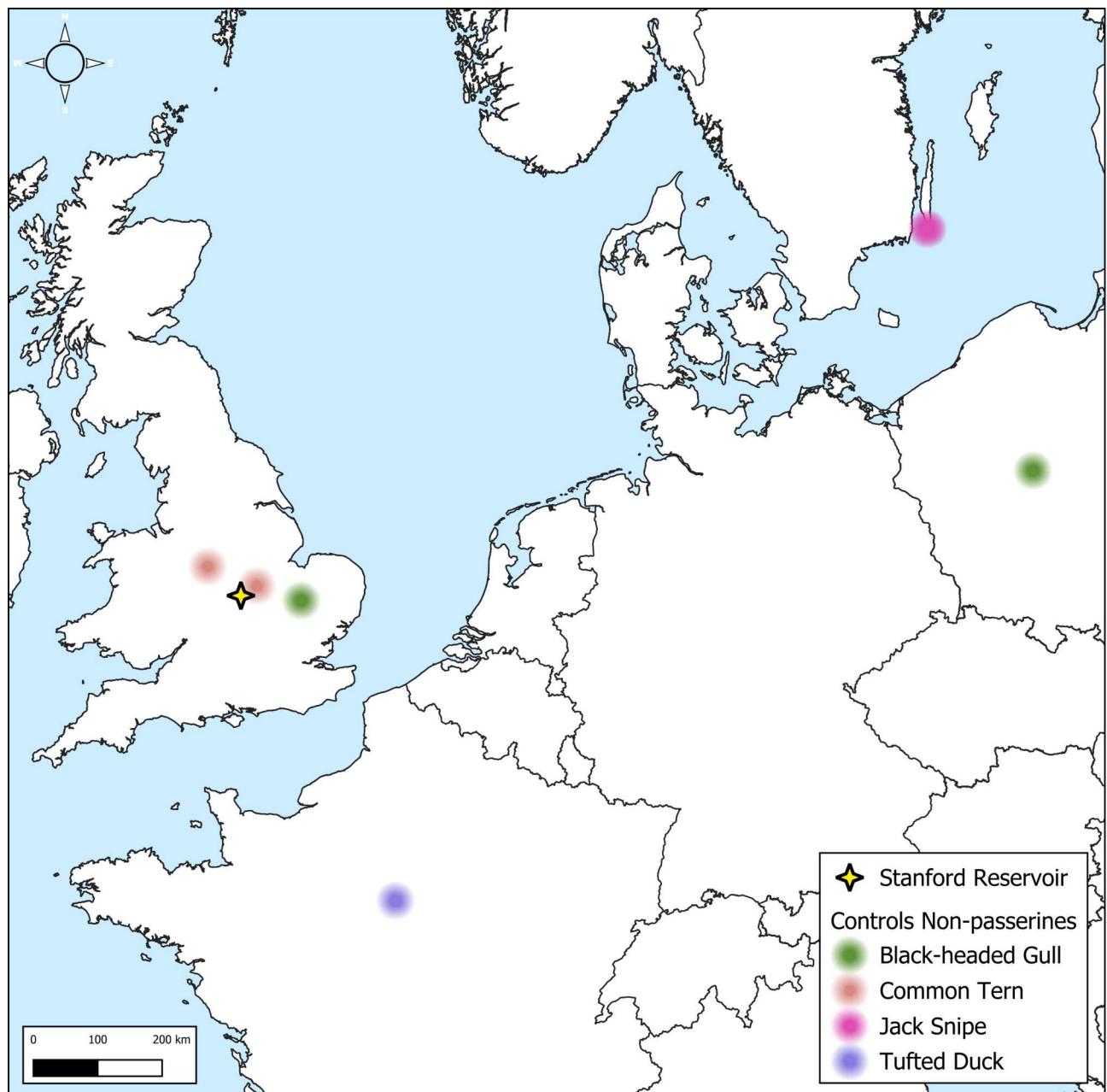
Only one passerine originated in continental Europe making it unwise to generalise, but as in previous years this was ringed on the west coast, specifically near the border between France and Spain.

Two Jack Snipe were detected using the Motus (<http://motus.org>) tracking system installed at Stanford; for more details on this please see the 2022 report. Species marked with an asterisk were identified by local birders.

Maps kindly supplied by HJG

Part 1) Non Passerine Controls

| Species | Ring number | Date ringed | Site of Origin | Date controlled at Stanford | Time taken (days) | Distance to Stanford (km) |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Black-headed Gull* | EM31137 Colour 2AR1 | 25-Jun-2022 | Kingfisher Bridge, Wicken, Cambrs | 10-Jan-2025 | 939 | 92 |
| Black-headed Gull* | Yellow TM4Y | 10-Jun-2017 | Stawy Kiszkowo, Gniezno, Wielkopolskie, Poland | 21-Sep-2025 | 3025 | 1241 |
| Osprey* | 1380173 Blue - 1H5 | 25-Jun-2022 | Confidential, near Rutland | 08-Sep-2025 | 1036 | - |
| Common Tern | SK00122 | 27-Jun-2019 | Eyebrook Reservoir, Leics | 14-Jun-2025 | 2179 | 27 |
| Common Tern* | SK00627 Colour A34 | 29-Jun-2022 | Abbots Bromley, Staffs | 09-Jun-2025 | 1076 | 70 |
| Great Egret * | 1521147 orange AJU | 18-Apr-2025 | Confidential site in Somerset | 14-Oct-2025 | 179 | - |
| Pochard* | KBC Blue nasal saddle | 05-May-2024 | Neuville-aux-bois, France | 09-Nov-2025 | 553 | c. 448 |
| Jack Snipe | 3710233 -Motus- | 29-Sep-2025 | Ottenby Bird Observatory, Sweden | 20-Nov-2025 | 22 | 1171 |
| Jack Snipe | 3710268 -Motus- | 22-Oct-2025 | Ottenby Bird Observatory, Sweden | 17-Nov-2025 | 26 | 1210 |

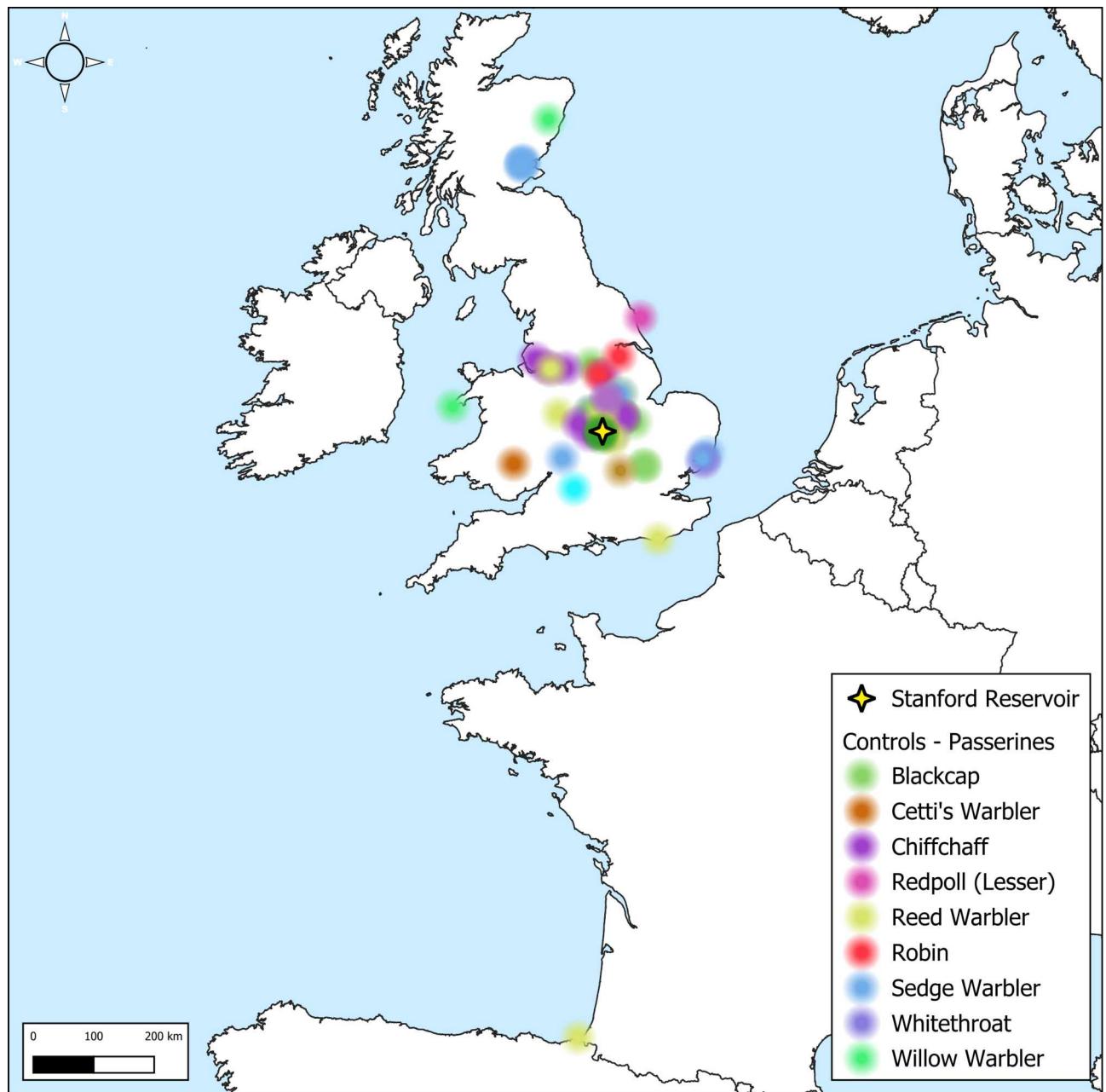
Map 1: Non Passerine Controls

Part 2: Passerine Controls

| Species | Ring number | Date ringed | Site of Origin | Date controlled at Stanford | Time taken (days) | Distance to Stanford (km) |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Blackcap | ABZ5446 | 2-Jul-2025 | East of England Showground, Peterborough | 22-Aug-2025 | 51 | 57 |
| Blackcap | BHF8995 | 29-Sep-2024 | Benington, Herts | 01-Oct-2025 | 367 | 90 |
| Blackcap | BYF0896 | 5-Sep-2025 | North Luffenham Airfield, Rutland | 08-Sep-2025 | 3 | 42 |
| Blackcap | BFF3178 | 10-Aug-2025 | Blackburn Meadows Nature Reserve, Rotherham, S. Yorks | 06-Sep-2025 | 27 | 113 |
| Blackcap | BLJ5045 | 16-Jul-2025 | Kelham Bridge, Leics | 30-Aug-2025 | 45 | 37 |
| Blackcap | BVJ7761 | 18-Aug-2025 | Benington, Herts | 25-Aug-2025 | 7 | 90 |
| Cetti's Warbler | BDE0208 | 9-Sep-2024 | Llangorse Lake, Powys | 25-Aug-2025 | 350 | 157 |
| Cetti's Warbler | BYC9621 | 20-Jun-2025 | Lagoon 3 CES site, Rutland Water, Rutland | 27-Aug-2025 | 68 | 38 |
| Chiffchaff | RPX015 | 29-Sep-2025 | Rainford, St.Helens, Merseyside | 8-Oct-2025 | 9 | 163 |
| Chiffchaff | LTB625 | 20-Aug-2025 | Asfordby, Leics | 26-Sep-2025 | 37 | 38 |
| Chiffchaff | LXT397 | 22-Mar-2024 | Landguard Point, Felixstowe, Suffolk | 26-Sep-2025 | 552 | 173 |
| Chiffchaff | PXN931 | 13-Sep-2025 | Lea Marston, Warks | 26-Sep-2025 | 13 | 42 |
| Chiffchaff | RDK826 | 14-Sep-2025 | Budby Corner Plantations, Worksop | 24-Sep-2025 | 10 | 91 |
| Chiffchaff | PNN349 | 11-May-2024 | Golden Springs, New Mills, Derbs | 22-Sep-2025 | 499 | 123 |
| Chiffchaff | RTP082 | 24-Aug-2025 | Near Warrington, Cheshire | 13-Sep-2025 | 20 | 147 |
| Chiffchaff | PYL366 | 8-Sep-2024 | North Luffenham Airfield, Rutland | 08-Sep-2025 | 365 | 41 |
| Chiffchaff | NKT298 | 6-Aug-2025 | Rostherne Mere (RS), Cheshire | 06-Sep-2025 | 31 | 135 |
| Chiffchaff | PYL366 | 8-Sep-2024 | North Luffenham Airfield, Rutland | 21-Aug-2025 | 347 | 41 |
| Chiffchaff | PLC624 | 14-Apr-2024 | Brandon Marsh, Warks | 12-Apr-2025 | 363 | 23 |
| Redpoll (Lesser) | BYJ3111 | 18-Oct-2025 | South Landing, East Riding of Yorkshire | 16-Nov-2025 | 29 | 198 |
| Reed Warbler | AVT1938 | 30-Aug-2025 | Rostherne Mere, Knutsford, Cheshire | 27-Sep-2025 | 28 | 134 |
| Reed Warbler | BDJ1356 | 2-Aug-2025 | Belvide Reservoir, Staffs | 18-Aug-2025 | 16 | 79 |
| Reed Warbler | BCA0443 | 10-Aug-2023 | Litlington, East Sussex | 25-Jul-2025 | 715 | 200 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|-------------|---|-------------|------|------|
| Reed Warbler | ARP0484 | 19-Sep-2021 | Marston Sewage Works, Lincs | 23-Jul-2025 | 1403 | 68 |
| Reed Warbler* | 9379193 | 6-Sep-2023 | Domaine d'Abbadia, Hendaye, Aquitaine, Pyrénées-Atlantiques, France | 16-Jul-2025 | 679 | 1007 |
| Reed Warbler | BHE0469 | 30-Aug-2024 | Pitsford Reservoir, Northants | 10-Jul-2025 | 314 | 20 |
| Reed Warbler | BXB2404 | 19-Jul-2024 | Lagoon 3 CES site, Rutland Water, Rutland | 22-May-2025 | 307 | 38 |
| Reed Warbler | BZB5112 | 16-May-2024 | Watermead Country Park, Leics | 30-Apr-2025 | 349 | 30 |
| Reed Warbler | AZK3672 | 17-Jul-2020 | Brixworth Sewer Works, Northants | 30-Apr-2025 | 1748 | 16 |
| Robin | BCH9015 | 8-Aug-2025 | Creswell Crags, Derbs | 22-Aug-2025 | 14 | 93 |
| Sedge Warbler | BZH1590 | 17-Aug-2025 | Kemerton Lake Nature Reserve, Warkd | 23-Aug-2025 | 6 | 80 |
| Sedge Warbler | BVH2216 | 7-Aug-2025 | Trimley Marsh Nature Reserve, Suffolk | 09-Aug-2025 | 2 | 170 |
| Sedge Warbler | BPB7317 | 2-Aug-2025 | Powgavie, Inchture, Perth & Kinross | 25-Aug-2025 | 23 | 462 |
| Sedge Warbler | BPB7373 | 2-Aug-2025 | Powgavie, Inchture, Perth & Kinross | 15-Aug-2025 | 13 | 462 |
| Sedge Warbler | BKF8404 | 26-Jul-2025 | Tay Lodge, Errol, Perth & Kinross | 8-Aug-2025 | 13 | 461 |
| Sedge Warbler | BDD4645 | 26-Aug-2024 | Marston Sewage Works, Lincs | 6-Aug-2025 | 345 | 68 |
| Sedge Warbler | AYT3899 | 24-Jul-2025 | Hollesley Heath, Suffolk | 28-Jul-2025 | 4 | 177 |
| Sedge Warbler | E413446 | 10-Jul-2023 | Tay Lodge, Errol, Perth & Kinross | 26-Jul-2025 | 747 | 461 |
| Whitethroat | BLJ5037 | 16-Jul-2025 | Kelham Bridge, Leics | 9-Aug-2025 | 24 | 37 |
| Whitethroat | BHE0544 | 1-Sep-2024 | Harrington Airfield, Northants | 29-Jun-2025 | 301 | 17 |
| Willow Warbler | PLJ997 | 25-Jul-2024 | Loch of Leys, Aberdeenshire | 24-Aug-2025 | 395 | 524 |
| Willow Warbler | PPY898 | 4-May-2024 | Bardsey Island, Gwynedd | 30-Apr-2025 | 361 | 251 |

* this Reed Warbler was also present the previous year, and was first controlled on 13 Jul 24.

Map 2: Passerine Controls 2025

Recoveries: Stanford Birds Processed at Other Sites

This section details the birds that were ringed by the SRG, and which were subsequently trapped and processed at other sites; or Stanford birds which were found by members of the public and were subsequently reported to the BTO. As is usual migratory warblers were the main participants, with the largest group being *Acrocephalus* warblers, both Sedge and Reed. Four sedge Warblers were retrapped on the Atlantic coast of France, in line with previous years, one Blackcap similarly was recorded in Gibraltar, and one Chiffchaff, for reasons known only to itself, took an easterly direction, ending up on the Dutch coast.

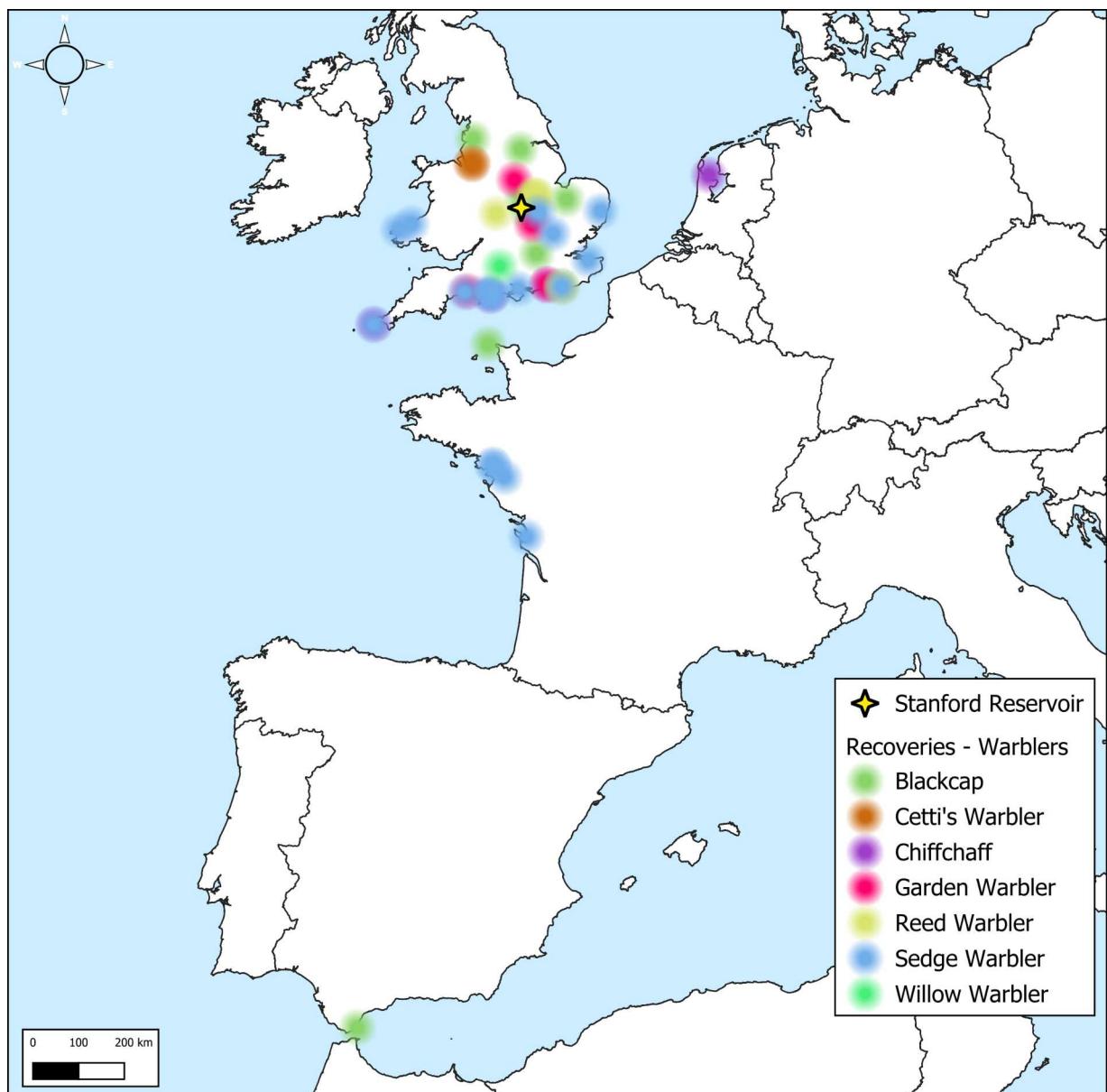
Part 3: List of Recoveries

| Species | Ring number | Date ringed | Site Recovered | Date retrapped | Time taken (days) | Distance to Stanford (km) |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|----------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Barn Owl | GJ74739 | 1-Feb-2020 | South Kilworth, Leics | 26-Feb-2025 | 1852 | 1 |
| Blackcap | BBD8455 | 2-Oct-2025 | Fulwood, Lancs | 14-Oct-2025 | 12 | 187 |
| Blackcap | BAH3671 | 13-Sep-2025 | Jubilee River, Slough | 02-Oct-2025 | 19 | 107 |
| Blackcap | BAH1053 | 24-Aug-2025 | Thorpe Marsh, South Yorks | 27-Aug-2025 | 3 | 128 |
| Blackcap | BCD0087 | 31-May-2025 | Brixworth Sewer Works, Northants | 14-Aug-2025 | 75 | 16 |
| Blackcap | AXV5817 | 24-Sep-2022 | Fordham, Norfolk | 13-Apr-2025 | 932 | 100 |
| Blackcap | ADF1965 | 23-Aug-2020 | Longis Reserve, Alderney, Channel Islands | 31-Mar-2025 | 1681 | 309 |
| Blackcap | BCD3245 | 13-Sep-2024 | Jews' Gate, Gibraltar | 10-Feb-2025 | 150 | 1841 |
| Blackcap | BCD4272 | 30-Oct-2024 | Oadby, Leicester, Leics | 17-Jan-2025 | 79 | 20 |
| Blue Tit | BAH3042 | 5-Sep-2025 | Sewage Treatment Works, Swindon | 12-Oct-2025 | 37 | 106 |
| Cetti's Warbler | BCD2930 | 28-Sep-2024 | Frodsham Marsh, Cheshire | 11-Oct-2025 | 378 | 108 |
| Chiffchaff | RAL378 | 29-Sep-2025 | Nanjizal, Land's End, Cornwall | 16-Oct-2025 | 17 | 413 |
| Chiffchaff | RAL183 | 18-Oct-2025 | Steyning, West Sussex | 30-Oct-2025 | 12 | 179 |
| Chiffchaff | RAL733 | 20-Sep-2025 | Carey Floodplain, Dorset | 29-Sep-2025 | 9 | 205 |
| Chiffchaff | PKX135 | 31-Aug-2024 | Wieringerwerf, Noord-Holland, The Netherlands | 09-Jun-2025 | 282 | 416 |
| Garden Warbler | BCD1617 | 30-Aug-2024 | Linford Lakes Nature Reserve, Milton Keynes | 14-Aug-2025 | 349 | 45 |
| Garden Warbler | BCD0192 | 17-Aug-2025 | Steyning, West Sussex | 23-Aug-2025 | 6 | 179 |
| Garden Warbler | BEA7618 | 13-Aug-2024 | Manor Floods LNR, Ilkeston, Derbs | 09-Aug-2025 | 361 | 63 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|-------------|---|-------------|------------------------|-----|
| Garden Warbler | BBD8920 | 28-Jul-2025 | Coppet Hill, Dorset | 02-Aug-2025 | 5 | 220 |
| Goldfinch | BRA7578 | 6-Aug-2023 | Cropwell Bishop, Notts | 27-Sep-2025 | 783 | 54 |
| Goldfinch | BCD2148 | 29-Oct-2024 | The Old Forge, Cropwell Bishop, Notts | 14-Mar-2025 | 136 | 54 |
| Greenfinch | TX27769 | 23-Oct-2021 | Swinford, Leics | 07-Sep-2025 | 791 | 2 |
| Greenfinch | TX28003 | 22-Oct-2023 | Crick, Northants | 03-Aug-2025 | 651 | 10 |
| Greenfinch | NZ91377 | 5-Jul-2025 | Swinford, Leics | 05-Jul-2025 | 1351 | 5 |
| Redwing | RF20701 | 24-Nov-2007 | Long Marston, Herts | 01-May-2025 | <i>Ring only found</i> | 72 |
| Reed Warbler | BAH3174 | 12-Sep-2025 | Charleston Reedbed, East Sussex | 21-Sep-2025 | 9 | 200 |
| Reed Warbler | AXV8186 | 26-Jul-2023 | Lagoon 3 CES site, Rutland Water, Rutland | 08-Aug-2025 | 744 | 38 |
| Reed Warbler | BCD6291 | 6-Aug-2025 | Charleston Reedbed, East Sussex | 19-Aug-2025 | 13 | 200 |
| Reed Warbler | BEA7622 | 16-Aug-2024 | Lagoon 3 CES site, Rutland Water, Rutland | 09-Jun-2025 | 297 | 38 |
| Reed Warbler | BEA7625 | 16-Aug-2024 | Severn Trent Redditch, Warks | 02-Jun-2025 | 290 | 55 |
| Reed Warbler | AHP6156 | 12-Jul-2022 | North Luffenham Airfield, Rutland | 31-Jul-2025 | 1115 | 42 |
| Robin | BCD1643 | 30-Aug-2024 | Messingham, North Lincs | 13-Mar-2025 | 195 | 126 |
| Sedge Warbler | BCD5480 | 23-Jul-2025 | Nanjizal, Land's End, Cornwall | 02-Aug-2025 | 10 | 413 |
| Sedge Warbler | BBD7691 | 15-Aug-2025 | Llangloffan Fen, Pembrokeshire | 22-Aug-2025 | 7 | 274 |
| Sedge Warbler | BCD2474 | 2-Aug-2025 | Court Farm, Dorset | 06-Aug-2025 | 4 | 202 |
| Sedge Warbler | BCD6320 | 6-Aug-2025 | Carey Floodplain, Dorset | 09-Aug-2025 | 3 | 205 |
| Sedge Warbler | BBD7532 | 14-Aug-2025 | Lytchett Bay, Poole Harbour, Dorset | 23-Aug-2025 | 9 | 200 |
| Sedge Warbler | BBD8865 | 28-Jul-2025 | Cleve Marshes, Seasalter, Kent | 08-Aug-2025 | 11 | 184 |
| Sedge Warbler | BCD5915 | 25-Jul-2025 | Teifi Marshes, Ceredigion | 06-Aug-2025 | 12 | 244 |
| Sedge Warbler | BBD7011 | 2-Aug-2025 | Charleston Reedbed, East Sussex | 07-Aug-2025 | 5 | 200 |
| Sedge Warbler | BCD2457 | 2-Aug-2025 | Heveningham Hall, Suffolk | 06-Aug-2025 | 4 | 172 |
| Sedge Warbler | BBD8872 | 28-Jul-2025 | Hogchester Nature Reserve, Dorset | 06-Aug-2025 | 9 | 225 |
| Sedge Warbler | BEA7022 | 30-Jul-2024 | Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve, Hamps | 25-Jul-2025 | 360 | 180 |
| Sedge Warbler | BCD5999 | 25-Jul-2025 | Benington, Herts | 28-Jul-2025 | 3 | 90 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|-------------|---|-------------|-----|-----|
| Sedge Warbler | BCD5788 | 18-Jul-2025 | Stanwick, Northants | 27-Jul-2025 | 9 | 37 |
| Sedge Warbler | BEA7023 | 30-Jul-2024 | Mars-Ouest, Sant-Philbert-de-Grand-Lieu, Loire-Atlantique, France | 12-Aug-2024 | 13 | 590 |
| Sedge Warbler | BEE5861 | 4-Aug-2024 | Plaisance, Saint-Froult, Charente-Maritime, France | 10-Aug-2024 | 6 | 724 |
| Sedge Warbler | BEA7132 | 2-Aug-2024 | Tour aux Moutons, Donges, Loire-Atlantique, France | 21-Aug-2024 | 19 | 572 |
| Sedge Warbler | BEA9408 | 11-Aug-2024 | Tour aux Moutons, Donges, Loire-Atlantique, France | 22-Aug-2024 | 11 | 572 |
| Willow Warbler | PKX602 | 11-Aug-2024 | Water Dean Bottom, Wilts | 13-Aug-2025 | 367 | 137 |

Map 3: Warbler recoveries



Group Members in 2025

Key:

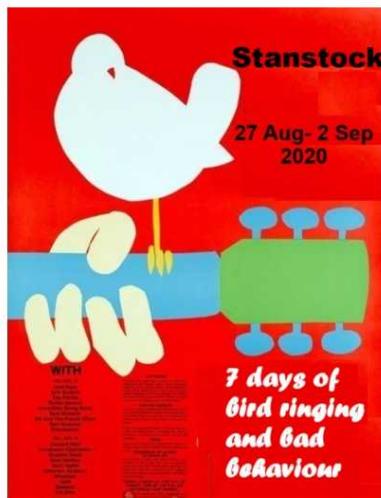
| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| A permit holder: | Fully qualified, can ring independently |
| S (supervisor) permit holder: | As 'A', can also train and assess ringers |
| C (conditional) permit holder: | Can ring without supervision with agreement of trainer |

- Mick Townsend (MJT) Co-founder, Ringer in Charge, S permit ringer
- Adam G Homer (AGH) Group Secretary, Nest Recorder, S permit ringer,
- David Neal (DMN) Group Treasurer, S permit ringer
- Dawn Sheffield (DS1) A permit ringer
- Peter Norrie (PMN) S permit ringer
- Gavin Bennett (GBE) A permit ringer
- Kate Moore (KEM) S permit ringer
- Ed Tyler (ERT) S permit ringer
- Stuart Heath (SH) C permit ringer
- Jo Underwood (JLU) C permit ringer
- Heather Gilbert (HJG) C permit ringer
- Jade Gunnell (JLG) C permit ringer
- Josh Sollitt (JES) C permit ringer
- Emily Bertin (EMB) Trainee ringer
- Matt Gudgeon (MJG) Trainee ringer
- Mark Widdop (MEW) Trainee ringer
- Chris Hubbard (CH) Sightings Officer
- Chris Begley Group Helper
- Peter Bateup Group Helper

Credits

- *Edited by PMN*
- *Posted by Mike Haigh*

Appendix 1: Stanstock Exclusive!



Stanstock II



Saturday 21- Saturday 28 August 2021

Moustaches Optional for the Womenfolk



Stanstock IV: 21-28 August 2023

We Can Ring It!



Explanation overleaf!

The Origins of 'Stanstock' by PN

In the summer of 2020, DMN, SH and PMN had planned to go for a week's ringing on the Seine estuary. However, we were foiled by the French government banning travel from the UK, as the full impact of Covid 19 began to be felt. We therefore had a spare week when leave from work and spouses was already granted. After discussion with the group leader we decided to use the time to camp out at Stanford and ring for a solid week, it being in the midst of migration. As a joke, I called the event '*Stanstock*' as a homage to the Woodstock Festival of 1969, and the name stuck...

Subsequently to alert group members to the dates, each year I have prepared a poster and circulated it on January 1st, hopefully to dispel some of the post Christmas blues and to give us something to look forward through the short days of cold and rain.

- The first poster (2020) was a straightforward lift from a Woodstock 1969 poster, suitably amended.
- The second (2021) was an adaptation from a First World War poster, with Lord Kitchener unexpectedly trying to recruit bird ringers for duty.
- The third (2022) was from the same period, the father looking suitably bashful for not having spent a week ringing with the SRG. Shame sir!
- The fourth (2023) is from the Second World War, exhorting the noble womenfolk of the USA to come and join the war effort, a character sometimes identified as Rosie the Riveter. Directly applicable to the SRG, of course.
- The fifth (2024) is an adaptation of publicity for Hitchcock's 1963 classic film *The Birds*, adapted from a Daphne du Maurier short story. Our outcome was rather less murderous.
- The most recent poster for 2025 was based on Led Zeppelin's epoch making first album cover from 1969, still fresh and powerful today; much like the SRG.

As a one off, in this annual report I have given a day by day report of 2025's festivities. Writing this in January 2026, last August seems a long way off ...

Day 1: Friday 15 August

Birds ringed: Blackcap 42, Blue Tit 1, Chiffchaff 6, Coal Tit 1, Garden Warbler 17, Goldcrest 1, Grasshopper Warbler 1, Lesser Whitethroat 11, Redstart 2, Reed Warbler 32., Robin 2, Sedge Warbler 54, Whitethroat 50, Willow Warbler 56, Wren 2.

Unlike last year, the weather was pretty decent, although typically getting to be quite windy in the afternoons, so we did ring every day! Nets were put up between Safari ride and the Northants Reedbed at the Point, a total of 34, although not all were open every day, depending on the wind and the number of ringers. Two ringing stations were in operation. This year Stanstock actually started early, as MJT was ringing on Friday 15th when a number of us arrived to put up our tents, so we incorporated his session too.



KEM and AGH show willing with a nice evening Reed Warbler... one of many to come!

Day 2: Saturday 16 August

Birds ringed: Blackcap 20, Blue Tit 1, Chiffchaff 12, Garden Warbler 3, Goldcrest 1, Goldfinch 1, Grasshopper Warbler 2, Great Tit 1, Lesser Whitethroat 5, Long Tailed Tit 1, Redstart 3, Reed Warbler 22, Robin 2, Sedge Warbler 38, Song Thrush 1, Whitethroat 3 Willow Warbler (including one Acredula type) 48 Wren 2.

First full day of Stanstock, with two ringing stations; one based on the Railtrack covering Safari through to Box 8 and one at Point covering the Northants Reedbed through to Bench rides. This was to be the pattern for the whole week.



SH, Jasmin A and EMB ringing at Point



Acredula type Willow Warbler

Acredula ssp are a north eastern subspecies of Willow warbler (hence *P. trochilus acredula*); they breed in Norway/ Sweden/ Russia. Essentially a subdued grey/brown bird, rather than the bright yellow and white of the nominate species.

Day 3: Sunday 17 August

Birds ringed: Blackcap 96, Blue Tit 2, Chiffchaff 13, Dunnock 1, Garden Warbler 17, Grasshopper Warbler 6, Lesser Whitethroat 6, Mallard 1, Reed Bunting 2, Reed Warbler 59, Robin 4, Sedge Warbler 84, Whitethroat 58, Willow Warbler 52, Wren 3.

This has been a great year for *Acrocephalus* warbler, a grouping which includes both Sedge and Reed Warbler. A rarity such as Marsh or Byth's Reed Warbler would have been nice, but there is always next year! It does seem that lots of Blackcaps had arrived too.



Reed Warbler a regular returner at Stanford

Of course our own resident birds are still with us, although they seemed to be keeping a lower profile:



Discussing the finer points of moult strategy in a first year Dunnock

Day 4: Monday 18 August

Birds ringed: Blackcap 31, Chiffchaff 9, Coal Tit 1, Garden Warbler 3, Goldcrest 2, Grasshopper Warbler 3, Lesser Whitethroat 12, Long tailed Tit 1, Mallard 1, Reed Warbler 18, Robin 5, Sedge Warbler 32, Whitethroat 26, Willow Warbler 17.



A rare moment of relaxation in the evening at the Railtrack.

Also in the later afternoon, we kept a couple of net open at the feeders, and these provided our only Coal Tits of the year:



Quite a scarce species at Stanford, only our second Coal Tit in 2025

Day 5: Tuesday 19 August

Birds ringed: Blackcap 37, Chiffchaff 12, Dunnock 1, Garden Warbler 1, Grasshopper Warbler 1, Lesser Whitethroat 2, Linnet 1, Mallard 1, Moorhen 1, Redstart 3, Reed Bunting 4, Reed Warbler 16, Robin 1, Sedge Warbler 59, Whitethroat 23, Willow Warbler 21, Wren 2.

Many of the usual autumnal species were present, but this Moorhen (overleaf) is an unusual bird to be ringed at Stanford, being the first since 2022, and only the 12th in total. Prior to these, you have to go back to 2006 for this surprisingly elusive species. Another success for AGH's duck-trap:



The fabulous feet on a juvenile Moorhen!

Whilst on the topic of waterfowl, this is one of seven Mallard unable to resist a free meal of seed in the duck-trap, making this the best ever year for Mallard at Stanford. This one was a ringing tick for EMB:



Day 6: Wednesday 20 August

Birds ringed: Barred Warbler 1, Blackcap 18, Blue Tit 1, Chiffchaff 1, Garden Warbler 6, Grasshopper Warbler 1, Lesser Whitethroat 3, Reed Warbler 18, Robin 2, Sedge Warbler 48, Whitethroat 12, Willow warbler 6, Wren 1.

For once during the week, actually a quieter day, with only a total of 118 birds. However it was also the day with (arguably) the most exciting bird for Stanford, the first ever Barred Warbler; a very pretty juvenile ringed by EMB. Note the fine barring on the flanks, it also had a wing of 88mm, which is very large for a Sylvia warbler, a superb record for the SRG, the reservoir and indeed the East Midlands.

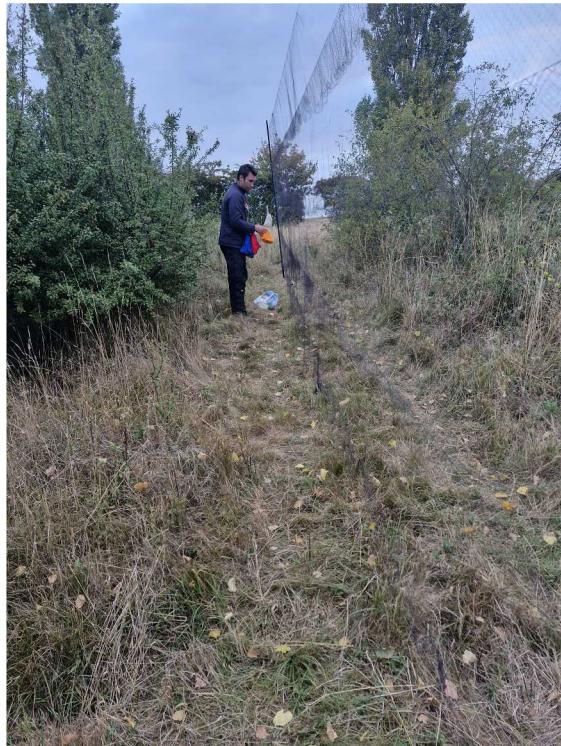


First ever Barred Warbler to be ringed at Stanford!

Day 7: Thursday 21 August

Birds ringed: Blackcap 61, Blue Tit 5, Chiffchaff 9, Garden Warbler 12, Grasshopper Warbler 17, Great Tit 1, Lesser Whitethroat 7, Mallard 1, Redstart 2, Reed Bunting 1, Reed Warbler 17, Robin 4, Sedge Warbler 57, Willow Warbler 63, Wren 2.

Although once again Sedge Warbler was the most numerous species, really the morning belonged to Grasshopper Warblers. The 60 foot net in Box 16 ride on the first round yielded no fewer than 12, plus one Redstart:



*JES confronted by a dozen *L. naevia*; a nice problem to have!*



JES, MJG and ERT compare more Grasshopper Warblers at Bench

Day 8: Friday 22 August

Birds ringed: Blackcap 369, Blue Tit 1, Chiffchaff 9, Garden Warbler 31, Goldfinch 1, Grasshopper Warbler 5, Grey Wagtail 1, Lesser Whitethroat 14, Redstart 3, Reed Warbler 77, Robin 5, Sedge Warbler 56, Whitethroat 70, Willow Warbler 31, Wood Warbler 1, Wren 1.

KEM had been mysteriously disappearing off to the dam, hoping to mist net some of the wagtails attracted to the grass around the spillway. She was rewarded with a single Grey Wagtail:



However, the bird of the day was definitely this Wood Warbler, the first ringed at Stanford since 1982! The full wing formula was taken, but really seeing it in the hand, it was clear it was not a Willow Warbler, it was too large (wing = 73) with a pure white belly, despite being a first year bird, and with luminous yellowish green upper parts:



Day 9: Saturday 23 August

Birds ringed: Blackcap 221, Blue Tit 1, Chiffchaff 13, Garden Warbler 14, Grasshopper Warbler 7, Lesser Whitethroat 11, Mallard 1, Redstart 1, Reed Bunting 3, Reed Warbler 43, Robin 5, Sedge Warbler 87, Whitethroat 38, Willow Warbler 42 (including 1 *acredula* type), Wren 2.

Another busy day! Again Blackcaps were the most numerous, but good numbers of Reed, Sedge and Willow Warbler and Whitethroat increased the total. In the evening, PMN set up the barbecue, DMN provided a bottle of Port, and we relaxed with a glass after a hard days ringing!



KEM and HJG working hard and looking forward to time off for good behaviour.

Day 10: Sunday 24 August

Birds ringed: Blackcap 206, Chiffchaff 21, Garden Warbler 6, Goldcrest 1, Grasshopper Warbler 7, Lesser Whitethroat 11, Long Tailed Tit 5, Mallard 1, Mute Swan 2, Redstart 3, Reed Warbler 27, Robin 2, Sedge Warbler 65, Whitethroat 41, Willow Warbler 18, Wren 3.

Once again, Blackcaps were the most common bird; as we go into autumn, we can confidently expect a total of more than 4,000 for the year.



Handsome male Blackcap... but where do they all come from?

It's also been a brilliant year for Grasshopper Warblers, did we beat the previous annual record of 65? Spoiler alert... yes we did, see also the individual *Species Accounts*. What a year!



A Gropper; one of many!

Last Day! Monday 25 August

Birds ringed: Blackcap 266, Blue Tit 5, Chiffchaff 4, Dunnock 2, Garden Warbler 9, Grasshopper Warbler 7, Great Tit 2, Lesser Whitethroat 9, Long Tailed Tit 1, Mallard 1, Pied Flycatcher 1, Redstart 1, Reed Bunting 1, Reed Warbler 38, Robin 7, Sedge Warbler 53, Whitethroat 32, Willow Warbler 11.

It is perhaps true to say that a certain amount of wear and tear was starting to set in for the old hands!



HJG, SH and JLG (looking slightly disorientated at the end of a long week)

There was one last surprise for the ringers on the railtrack, only the fourth ever Pied Flycatcher to be ringed at Stanford, so definitely a great way to finish the week!



Summary

A brilliant Stanstock for all those involved; the weather held fair, the team were all in good spirits and we had a tremendous selection of birds. It was a great week for all of the team, building upon the experience from previous years. It was particularly nice to get our new trainees involved and take part so positively. Although we didn't encounter two of our seasonal target species, Tree Pipit and Wryneck, this was more than compensated by ringing a Barred Warbler and a Wood Warbler, plus Pied Flycatcher and Moorhen and many, many other migratory warblers, notably 50 Groppers and... loads more lovely birds.

A grand total of 3,660 of new birds were ringed during the week as follows, comprising 29 species: Blackcap 1397, Sedge Warbler 633, Whitethroat 407, Reed Warbler 366, Willow Warbler 365, Garden Warbler 119, Chiffchaff 109, Lesser Whitethroat 91, Grasshopper Warbler 50, Robin 39, Redstart 18, Wren 18, Blue Tit 17, Reed Bunting 11, Long Tailed Tit 8, Mallard 7, Goldcrest 5, Dunnock 4, Goldfinch 4, Great Tit 4, Coal Tit 2, Mute Swan 2, plus singles of Barred Warbler, Grey Wagtail, Linnet, Moorhen, Pied Flycatcher, Song Thrush and Wood Warbler.

Those taking part: AGH, DMN, DS, EMB, ERT, HJG, JES, JLG, JLW, KEM, MAP, MEW, MJG, MJT, PMN, PB and SH.

Guests: Brian Barrett, Ged Andrews, Nigel Judson and Sharon Jervis.

Special thanks to CH for scribing throughout.