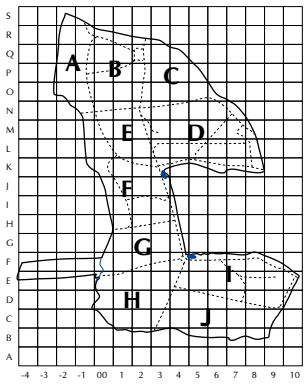


TWITTER

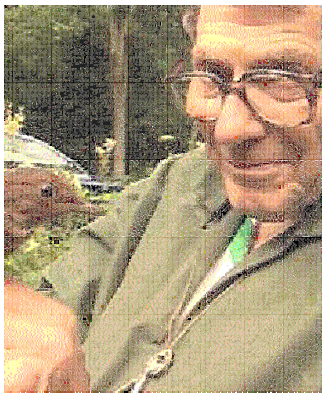
Treswell **W**ood - **I**nformation **T**o **T**ell **E**very **R**ecorder

October 2008 Treswell Wood IPM Group
(Integrated Population Monitoring)

All projects by permission of NWT

Project leaders:

CBC	Pat Quinn-Catling
Nest Records	Chris du Feu
Ringing	John McMeeking



2008/4

Number 69

The purpose of constant effort ringing is to record what birds are there rather than to catch vast numbers of birds. This year, of course, we seem to be recording more of the birds which are not there. Our capture numbers have not been the worst ever but were still very low indeed. The bright spots seem to be numbers of juvenile Robins, Wrens and, unexpectedly, Bullfinches. The first two of these species are multiple-brooded with a long breeding season. It seems that some of their broods have been timed favourably in relation to weather and predation pressures. Treswell Wood is not alone in having these low numbers of birds - many people locally have mentioned the lack of birds in gardens. Overall not a breeding season to been looked back at fondly.

As usual we have continued inspection of nestboxes well beyond the bird breeding season. These inspections have showed absolutely no evidence of dormouse activity in spite of our earlier optimism after the find reported in the first issue of Twitter this year. We had also erected 50 extra dormouse nesting tubes and boxes in compartment G to be available after the birds had finished nesting. Dormice have not used any of these. As so often, it seemed that the species has become extinct in the wood and all the efforts over the past 13 years have come to nothing. Now, however, comes a promising find with evidence of continued existence of these elusive beasts - a hazel nut, freshly opened by a dormouse, was found in compartment G - the same area as the near chain-saw massacre of January and (of course) in the same compartment as all those extra nesting tubes and boxes which they have shunned.

Hornets have not been in much evidence for much of the season, with none being found nesting in boxes. Again, the summer weather has hardly been conducive to them. In the last few weeks, though, they have become much more obvious, being seen on most days and one 'wild' nest being found in the base of an ash stool.

John McMeeking - star of page and screen

We were visited during the summer by BBC Nottingham in order to produce a short item for broadcasting on BBC East Midlands Today. The scheduled day for broadcasting was Tuesday 28th October. However, it can be viewed from http://www.bbc.co.uk/nottingham/content/articles/2008/08/04/john_mcmeeking_bird_ringing_feature.shtml where there is also a web page describing the Treswell Wood operation. Also co-starring in the broadcast are Jo Surgey and John Clark with Chris du Feu as a non-speaking extra.

From that web page there is a link to a page with some of Jo's photographs of Treswell Wood and the ringing operations.

Miscellany

It is a great pleasure to be able to report that John Clark's application for a full A permit to ring birds has been successful. Congratulations to him for a well deserved qualification.

We are fortunate to have five students from Nottingham University joining us for some ringing session and using our data for their third-year projects. The proposed works include examination of the ranges over which tits forage for nest-building material (see Twitter 42); combining Robin ringing data with CBC territory maps; examining nesting success of tits in relation to various aspects of nestbox, nest location and female; comparison of population trends in various species and examination of survival and mortality rates in some species.

Steve Wain has, again, done a magnificent job of computerising the CBC maps. The complete set up to and including the 2007 season is available. The easiest and most effective tool for viewing the maps is as a set of web pages. However, you might wish to have printed copies. All the maps are saved on the CD as JPG images so it is simple enough to assemble some in a desk-top published document should you wish to have printed copies. Alternatively, the Microsoft Windows Picture and Fax Viewer software will print the maps, one to an A4 page, using the printing 'wizard'.

Noteworthy Captures

Species	Age/sex	Ring	Date	Grid

Great Spotted Woodpecker 2 CT84060 12/10/2008 Q02 Feeder

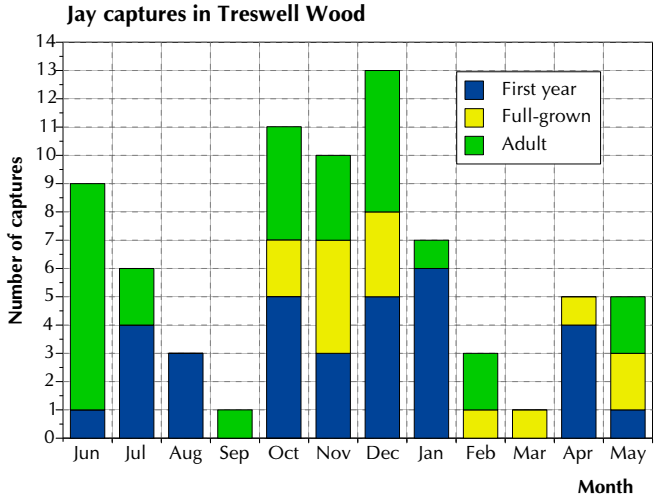
An old friend; this is its 29th capture. With its known history, stretching back to the end of 2004, we can be sure it is not a juvenile. However examination of its plumage is consistent with it being either juvenile or adult. It is not always possible to decide whether the randomly scattered older primary coverts are adult coverts which have not moulted or whether the randomly scattered newer greater coverts are those which a juvenile has moulted during the post-juvenile moult.

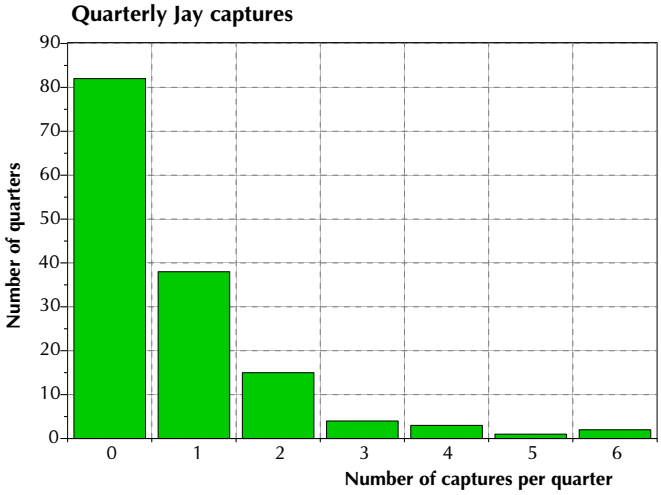
Great Spotted Woodpecker 3 CT84144 17/8/2008 I03

One of only two juveniles of the species to be caught this summer. This compares badly with the past few years when the species seems to have had very successful breeding seasons. It seems that the breeding failure came at a late stage - certainly there was plenty of woodpecker feeding activity towards the end of the fledging period when we lost several tit nests to woodpecker predation.

Jay 3 DA51891 12/10/2008 L04

Our first Jay capture for a year - we hear them much more often than we capture them. Like CT84060, this bird was kind enough to be caught on a day when students from Nottingham were present. Seeing these colourful, larger and powerfully equipped birds in the hand is a special experience. No human blood drawn on this occasion. It was followed, the next week, by another new bird - this time an adult. We have now captured 74 birds and this sample size seemed large enough to enable us to discover something about their pattern of occurrence. The first graph shows the age distribution throughout the year of first captures of all these Jays. (The year is regarded as starting in June, which is the earliest month in which we have ever caught a juvenile Jay. Jays are regarded as first-year from June until the end of the following May. Adults are birds over 1 year old and the full-grown are those which were not ageable in the hand.) I am sure there are underlying patterns in the chart but before drawing any





conclusions it is wise to remember that Jays seem to arrive in clusters, just like London buses. The second chart illustrates this - it gives the total number of Jay captures in each quarter of a year since ringing began in the wood. In most quarters we catch none with just a few quarters giving rather higher numbers. A quick statistical test on these, happily, showed that these captures are not random but clustered, confirming our gut-feelings. (Chi-squared test against Poisson distribution, $\chi^2 = 10.0$ with $\upsilon = 2$. The variance of 1.37 being greater than the mean of 0.75 indicates a clustered, rather than more even, distribution of captures.) It would be worth investigating these capture patterns further - there are two annual peaks of captures. One falls in the autumn and early winter and contains roughly 50% juveniles whereas the Spring and Summer peak, which is less pronounced, has a lower proportion of juveniles. And if you are keen to see Jays in the hand, you are probably best going somewhere else in February, March, August and September.

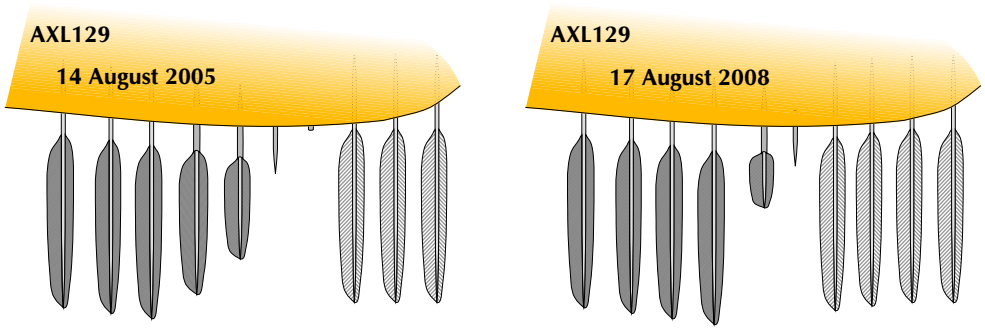
Song Thrush 3 RX57843 21/9/2008 D09

Each year Peter Cobb gives group members who are present at the time, one of his Cobb's Country Store calendars. These always have attractive bird pictures (and that is an excellent reason for ensuring you visit the wood towards the turn of the year). The 2008 calendar opened with the January/February picture depicting a pair of Nuthatches. On the first visit of 2008 we duly trapped a pair of Nuthatches. At this point we thought that the calendar could be a sort of Old Moore's Almanac for the year. March/April approached and we eagerly awaited out first Kingfisher capture. This is not far-fetched a notion for a Kingfisher was seen once at the Piccadilly Pond some years ago. We

were disappointed that February and March passed without this species being added to our ringing list. But still, that left the Red Kite. Another two months of disappointment followed. July/August showed a Grey Wagtail and this was more promising - we have seen them in the car park area two or three times over the last few years. Again, a failure. It was beginning to look as if Old Cobb's Almanac was as reliable as Old Moore's. September/October had a picture of a single Song Thrush and, at last, the prediction has come to fruition again. This bird was the only Song Thrush for the two month interval. The last two months of the year have a Little Owl picture - we look forward (much more in hope than expectation) to our second ever capture of that species.

Goldcrest **4M** **BYP918** **7/9/2008** **E04**
Our first of the species for the autumn. It was followed by several more on subsequent visits. Of all the birds trapped so far this season, though, this was the only adult.

Chiffchaff **4** **AXL129** **17/8/2008** **K03**
Over the past few years we have trapped several Chiffchaffs in moult and made full details of the primary moult. In past Twitters we have shown the rate at which primary moult has progressed in individuals and contrasts in the state of moult at a given time between individuals.



We have also noted how timing of moult for individuals can vary between years. This bird, ringed as an adult in the spring of 2005, was recaptured, in moult, on 14/8/2005. The diagram shows how similar its state of moult was then and today, almost exactly two years later.

Willow Warbler **4** **BYP907** **17/8/2008** **M04**
Willow Warbler catches in recent years have been very low indeed. This is our first for the year. In recent years, most of our captures have been of juveniles late in the summer. However, two of our last three captures - one in 2006 and one in 2008 were late-summer adults, with the 2007 capture being a breeding adult in May. It seems that the species is now almost exclusively an uncommon autumn bird of passage through the wood.

Nuthatch **4M** **TC61292** **14/9/208** **Q02 feeder**
After some weeks without any Nuthatch captures, two appear on one day. This one, which had been ringed in 2007, and a new bird, probably a juvenile. The following week we enjoyed captures of three more of the species which included a retrapped singleton and what appeared to be a pair - an older female with her first-year toy-boy.

Controls and recoveries

Species	Age/sex	Ring	Date	Grid
Blue Tit	**4**	**N645431**	**17/10/2008**	**Rampton**

A nestling-ringed survivor which fledged from the earliest of our Blue Tit broods in 2001. It featured in Twitter 35 after being captured at Rampton in November of 2001. In spite of many visits to Rampton since then it was not retrapped there (or anywhere else) until October this year, since when it has been retrapped twice at Rampton. It is now nearly six and a half years old (but still needs over three more years to break the British age record for the species).

Blue Tit **5** **T197079** **25/2/2007** **M01**
A belated report of this control - there have been a few problems relating to reporting and submitting data during the last two years in the change-over from B-RING to IPMR for our data submission to the BTO. This one has now emerged from the system. It was ringed in Warsop in November 2006, some 23km to the south-east. We retrapped it again in the wood on 5th March 2008.

Blue Tit **3** **V666801** **16/7/2008** **Headon**
Our first report from outside the wood of any nestling-ringed bird from the 2008 cohort. No more than 31 Blue Tits fledged from our boxes and, of those, we have only trapped one within the wood. This bird had moved away to Headon (about 3 km to the south-west) by July where it flew into a window and died. We know that the nesting success this year has been desperately low. With so few recaptures it seems that post-fledging survival has been

low too. This is not surprising with the difficult conditions during the nesting period which may have led to fledgelings being less fit than usual. The continued cold, wet weather will have further reduced chances of survival. It is sad that a rare survivor of the natural dangers should meet its death in a man-made hazard.

Blue Tit 3 V666740 17/10/2008 Rampton

Our second external report of a nestling-ringed bird from the 2008 nestbox fledgelings. This is now only the third of the cohort to be found anywhere. Although a sample size of three will not yield results of statistical significance, this is the first time that we have had more out-of-wood reports than internal recaptures of Blue Tit nestlings from any nestbox cohort.

Great Tit 3M V414542 12/10/2008 Q02 Feeder

A rapid local movement - another escapee from Hillcrest Farm, Treswell. It was ringed on 29th August, still in unsexable juvenile plumage.

10 Week Summary 2008 Interval , Captures in Standard Sites

Visits: 1927 1925 1919 1920 1922 1924 1926

	New Birds			Recaptures			Total
	Adult	**5**	**3**	**Adult**	**5**	**3**	
Wren	2	1	15	1	1	.	20
Dunnock	.	.	1	.	.	1	2
Robin	.	.	16	2	.	3	21
Blackbird	.	.	3	2	.	.	5
Song Thrush	.	.	1	.	.	.	1
Blackcap	1	.	2	2	.	.	5
Chiffchaff	1	.	2	.	.	.	3
Willow Warbler	1	.	.	.	.	.	1
Goldcrest	1	.	2	.	.	.	3
Marsh Tit	.	.	.	3	.	.	3
Blue Tit	.	.	.	2	.	.	2
Great Tit	.	.	.	1	.	1	2
Treecreeper	.	.	3	1	.	1	5
Chaffinch	.	.	.	1	.	.	1
Bullfinch	.	.	8	1	1	2	12
Totals	**6**	**1**	**53**	**16**	**2**	**8**	**86**

Treswell Wood Standard Site Totals in 10-week Periods

Recent years' totals

Interval	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total**
2000	75	106	106	159	170	616
2001	(57)	(33)	(94)	121	59	(364)
2002	85	89	141	176	117	608
2003	117	116	146	104	114	597
2004	103	128	126	165	132	654
2005	107	140	150	88	133	618
2006	128	98	185	125	166	702
2007	107	110	138	73	92	520
2008	125	130	151	**86**	---	(492)

10-year Averages since standard site netting began in 1978

1978 - 1987	90	113	182	140	130	655
1988 - 1997	86	107	170	149	127	637
1998 - 2007	95	100	134	120	125	574

Summary Data since standard site netting began in 1978

Maximum	128	145	288	253	177	865
Minimum	59	64	98	68	59	364
Mean	91	107	163	135	127	616

Note: bracketed numbers in 2001 result from disruption caused by foot and mouth disease outbreak. These numbers are excluded from calculations of minima.