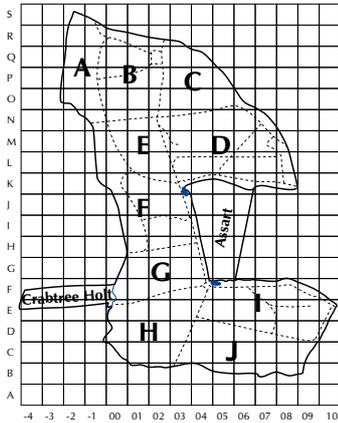


TWITTER

2019/3
Number 123



Treswell Wood - Information To Tell Every Recorder

August 2019 Treswell Wood IPM Group
(Integrated Population Monitoring)

Project leaders:

CBC Pat Quinn-Catling

Nest Records Chris du Feu

Ringing John Clark



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The Second Treswell Wood Conference - 29th February 2020

Our first conference held in 2012 did a great deal to increase coherence of the group and to provide impetus for the future. With the loss of John McMeeking we felt the time was appropriate to consider the future. The Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust is being very supportive of the group, and wishes it to continue its long-term monitoring programme in the wood. The Trust is unaware of any comparable monitoring operation elsewhere. The Trust has offered use of the Idle Valley as the venue for the conference and will be organising a great deal of the administration of it - for which we are very grateful indeed.

The conference will give us a chance for the different groups operating in the wood to get together, learn about what the other groups are doing and have done, find out about future plans and see what has been learnt about the wood. It will also be a useful introduction for anyone who may wish to consider joining one of the projects.

The programme is yet to be finalised, but will include an introduction from Paul Wilkinson, CEO of the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust.

Presentations will be aimed at showing what we do. Those from Lincoln University and the BTO will also show some of the ways in which the data we generate are being used.

Ringing

Nestbox monitoring

The CBC bird survey

The Dormouse project

Woodland Management and plans for Treswell Wood

The Assart monitoring work and Ash die-back

What we have learned from the data

Plans for future projects

A buffet lunch will be included, in addition to the vital coffee and biscuits.. In order to cover the costs there will be a charge of around £15.

Put the date in your diary (or a big reminder to put it in when you get next year's), and think about whether there is anyone else to invite who might be interested.

Details of booking will be circulated as soon as they are available and the event should be advertised in the NWT programme of events.

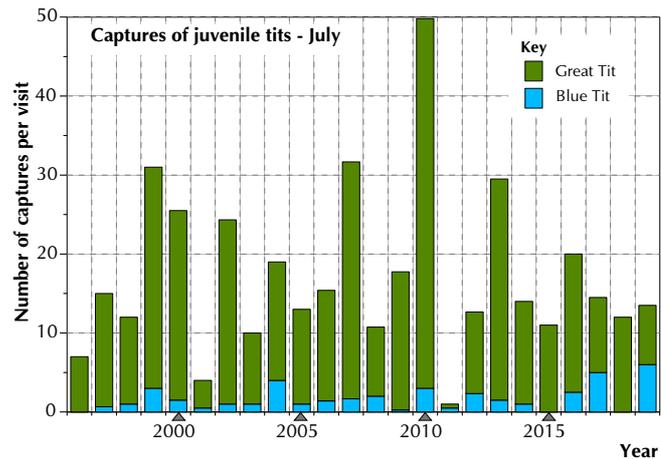
A popular feature of our last conference was the book stall with natural history related books. Start searching for the surplus items to bring to the stall.

As with all voluntary work there are times when volunteers are thin on the ground. This has almost been a problem in the ringing group where people with appropriate licenses are required. While we can see our current ringers progressing, we would welcome more people to the group. We can offer excellent opportunities to learn about birds, to be trained as ringers, to monitor nestboxes or map breeding territories.

We look forward to meeting you on the day.

Ringling - May to August

The standard site captures in this third interval of the year were comfortably above average. Four species contributed the bulk of the captures - Blackcap, Wren, Robin and Blackbird. Just reaching double figures came Chiffchaff and Bullfinch. In spite of the high numbers nesting, very few tits were caught in the standard net sites. After tits have fledged we make efforts to retrap them at the feeding station. There is considerable variation in the numbers we catch depending on timing and success of nesting amongst other things. Normally we find that Great Tits use the feeders much more for the first month or two after fledging, with Blue Tits appearing later in the summer. This year's July captures at the feeders have been, perhaps, a little lower than typical. The proportion of Blue Tits is 45% and this is unprecedentedly high. (Note that the graph only goes back to 1996 - prior to that we did not use the feeding station until September.)



We continue to make casual species records and even the commonplace can provide interest. We found several clumps of Corn Mint *Mentha arvensis* near the entrance to the wood. This was our first record. Is it something we have just not noticed before or is it a new arrival? The Garden Snail *Cornu aspersum* is a widespread species, often too abundant in gardens. We found one in the car park recently and this is only the fifth time we have recorded them, our first record being in 2002. All the records have been, again, in that area which is most subject to introductions by human activity (indeed one record was of a snail in some garden rubbish which had been dumped at the wood entrance). Perhaps most intriguing of the recent records, or rather non-records, is that of the hedgehog. We have never recorded a single one in the wood, not even a dead one on the road outside the wood. Nearly 50 years is a long time to not record a hedgehog. Are there any in the wood?

Events in Nestboxes - Treswell Wood, 2019

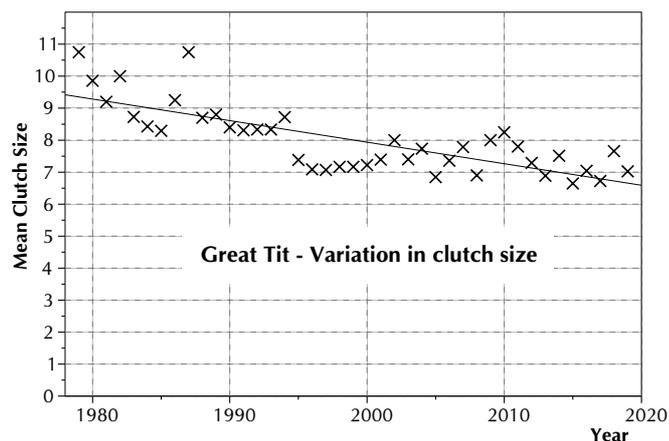
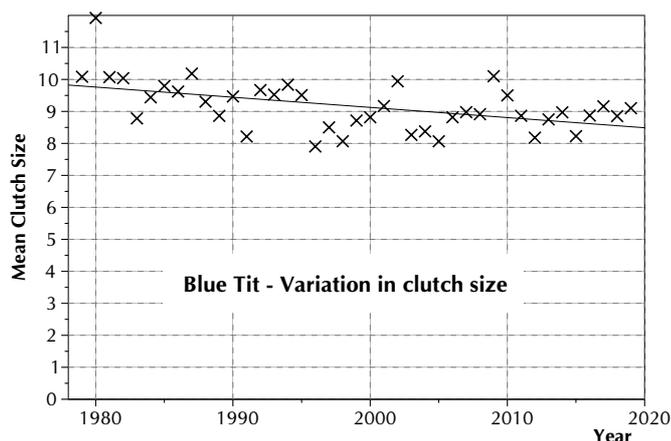
Species	Nests		Eggs laid	Birds			% Success Rate	
	Recorded	Successful		Adults caught on nests	Nestlings fledged	Nestlings recaptured (to Aug. 17 th)	Nests	Eggs
Stock Dove*	7	6	12	4	10	0	85	83
<i>Woodpigeon</i>	1	0	2	.	0	.	0	0
Tawny Owl	3	3	11	3	7	0	100	64
Coal Tit	1	0	10	0	0	.	0	0
Marsh Tit	2	1	17	1	9	1	50	53
Blue Tit	63	40	563	51	231	13	63	41
Great Tit	40	24	281	9	110	11	60	39
Wren	6	2	34	.	12	0	33	35
<i>Robin</i>	1	0	5
Greenfinch	1	1	4	.	4	0	.	.
Totals	125	77	939	67	473	25	62	50
2018	120	81	910	78	545	85	68	60
2017	105	75	747	38	416	45	71	56
2016	91	54	626	38	324	47	59	51
2015	102	59	633	41	283	33	58	45
2014	119	65	791	31	330	33	55	42
2013	80	51	484	26	314	76	64	65
2012	112	50	670	28	219	35	45	33
2011	111	62	796	32	310	29	56	39
2010	112	80	778	25	539	146	71	69
2009	118	54	648	26	300	38	46	46
2008	108	29	589	22	139	17	27	24
2007	129	64	922	52	313	35	50	34

Notes: Nests of species in italics were open nests found incidentally during the nestbox rounds or by other workers in the wood. The numbers of nests recorded, for all species, exclude nests which were abandoned before any eggs were laid.

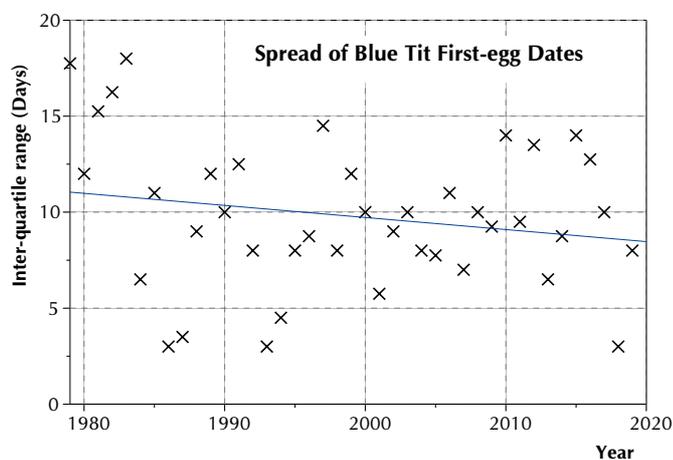
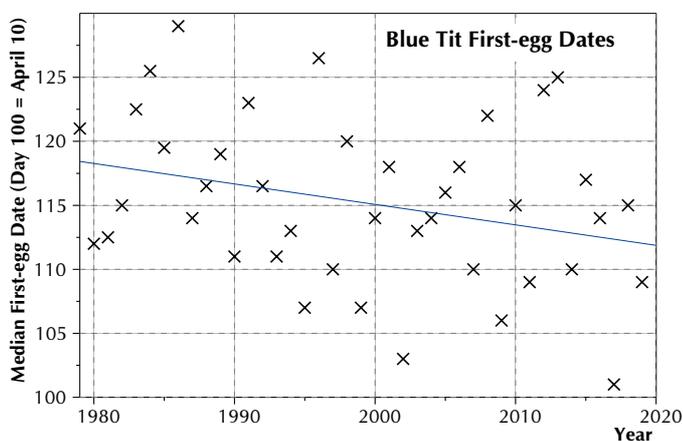
* Some Stock Dove nests are still active.

The nesting season

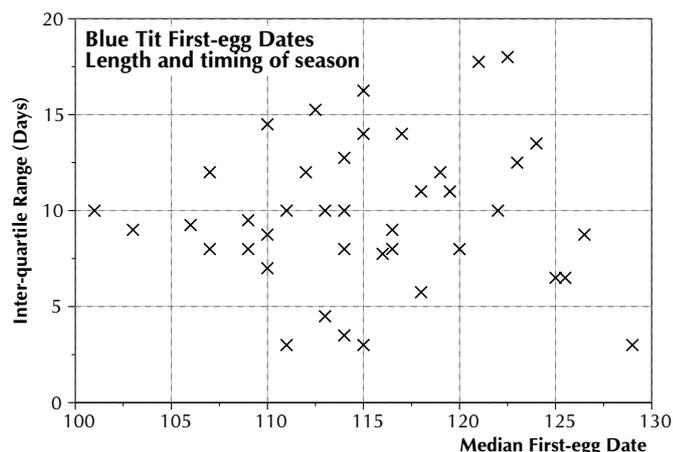
The year began with promise with some early nest building. Egg laying began in the first nests but then weather deteriorated to the extent that a few tits suspended egg laying for a few days and several seemed to delay starting egg laying. The later start for many birds, coupled with high numbers nesting, led to fairly low average clutch size (Blue Tit 9, Great Tit 7). These are significantly lower than in the early nestbox years when populations of the tit species were probably still restricted by the lack of natural nest sites. The graphs illustrate the changes in average clutch sizes. We should not take this declining clutch size to indicate that conditions in the wood are deteriorating for these species. In fact, the present clutch sizes are typical for the species: it is the earlier years where clutch sizes were larger than average. What we are likely to be seeing is clutch sizes settling to 'typical' for the species as the populations are becoming limited by food supply rather than lack of nesting holes. The weather remained fairly dry but did not become particularly warm until after nesting had finished. We had the feeling that food for the tits was in short supply - the results from the frass trapping, when they are available, will tell us if this feeling is justified.



The interruption to egg laying led to a more protracted season than last year's exceptional compactness. We have always looked at first egg dates in order to see the general trend towards earlier nesting. In spite of the weather-related delay, the Blue Tit median first-egg date this year has been three days earlier than the long-term trend would predict.



What we had never looked at before was the spread of egg laying. The length of the laying season is better measured using the inter-quartile range of first-egg dates rather than the earliest and latest dates. These would be unduly influenced by atypical very early and very late nests (late nests often being replacement clutches for earlier failed nests). The inter-quartile range measures the time span of the middle 50% of nests. With earlier nesting we could expect that the season would be longer, birds having more time to rear young and late arrivals in the wood could take advantage of vacant territories resulting from predation of adults. Not so. Although it is weak, there is a trend to shortening of the season over the years in spite of the earlier start.



Although the start date is becoming generally earlier, there is very large between-year variation. What if the length of the season depends on how early it starts? The third graph shows absolutely no connection between the start date and season's length.

What does influence it? It could be weather, food supply, population size or many other things. There is clear scope here for some further probing into this aspect of egg laying in relation to climate change.

This year's total of nests found was a little above last year's very high total. Failures - probably mostly weather and food related - then reduced success rates considerably. So although the number of birds fledged was still somewhat higher than average, the nest and egg failure rate was also on the high side.

Normally we find a number of open nesting Blackbirds, thrushes and Robins or Chaffinches. This year we have found none - just one Woodpigeon and one Greenfinch nest.

Ted Cowley

Readers will be sad to hear of the death of Ted Cowley at the end of May. Ted was one of John McMeeking's trainees and was present with John on the first ringing visit to the wood in 1972. He appeared in the wood fairly often until he left Nottinghamshire after retiring in the mid 1990s. Ted had been BTO county representative for many years and was, of course, a world authority on his beloved Sand Martins. Although we had not seen him in the wood for some considerable time, he will be missed by many, not least for his unmistakable presence at the BTO conferences. Our sympathy goes to his family.

Noteworthy Encounters

Species	Age/sex	Ring	Date	Grid
Tawny Owl	10	GR24214	23/6/2019	C03

This is our non-conformist Tawny Owl which has all but one of its seven captures in a mist net rather than on a nest. The species is sedentary and it is no surprise that all its captures have been in the same southern part of the wood. It seems, unusually, to fly more during the day than most of the species. We include in this section of 'Noteworthy captures' birds that have left their mark. This bird did leave a very big mark but, fortunately, Amy had a spare pair of trousers with her.

Great Spotted Woodpecker	3	LK36036	30/6/2019	Q03
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The search for a method of sexing juvenile Great Spotted Woodpeckers continues. We have been measuring the length of the red crown and there does seem to be a bimodal distribution of lengths. We are, rightly, very wary of sexing birds just on the basis of some biometric. We hope that, in time, we may be able to suggest something similar to that for sexing Goldfinches, where the red comes beyond some well defined point on the head. We had built up a reasonable data set in the past but so far this has come to nothing because so few of the juveniles we measured were ever found as adults after their post-juvenile moult - when the sex would be clear. After a few years with frustratingly low captures of the species, this year we have captured five new adults (with no adults recaptured from previous years). This year we have also captured five new juveniles so it seems the wood has been successfully repopulated by the species.

We retrapped this bird six weeks later in August. By this time it appeared its red cap was even longer. However, close inspection showed the few, scattered, rearmost, red-tipped feathers were, in fact, newly sprouted adult red nape feathers. Examination of the juvenile red crown then showed adult black feathers just sprouting. No need to wait any longer to know the sex of this bird.

At one point we captured two juveniles at the same time. One (LK39044) had a grey smudge in the cheek and the other did not. We wonder whether this was a one-off event or perhaps something to do with sexing?

Marsh Tit	3J	AVC1821	28/7/2019	Q03
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A very welcome first capture of any of this year's nine nestling-ringed Marsh Tits. We did find two nests in boxes, only one of which succeeded. However we have already captured three unringed juvenile Marsh Tits. Because of the highly sedentary nature of the species, it looks as if these juveniles were reared in, or very near, the wood. This makes it likely that our two nests in boxes represent only a minor part of this species' breeding activity.

Blue Tit	5	AVC1854	22/6/2019	Beckingham, Controlled
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A most unexpected capture. In the mist net in my back garden were two Blue Tits. One, a recently fledged juvenile with a ring, obviously one of my garden nest box nestlings. The ringed adult would be one of its parents? Not so. The bird had been ringed as a nesting adult in Treswell Wood in early May. She remained sitting dutifully on her eggs until a week after they should have hatched before abandoning the nest. At that point she must have decided her future lay elsewhere. By the time she was found in Beckingham she was already well into the annual moult.

Blackcap **4M** **D309370** **21/7/2019** **N00**

Apart from D309052, this bird has, by nearly three months, our oldest Blackcap ringing history. It was ringed 5y 94d previously on 19/4/2014 and retrapped in both of the next two years. We did not see it in 2017/18. All its captures have been close together on Howard's Ride. In fact it has lived longer than D309052 because we first caught it as a first breeding season bird in 2014 making it a product of 2013, as was the sad cat victim. Maybe it will grace us with its presence next year?

Blackcap **4M** **Z782886** **23/6/2019** **E02**

This is a bird which has read the instructions about site-faithfulness. Its three captures over three successive breeding seasons, have all been in one of two adjacent mist nets. We look forward to seeing it in the same net next spring.

Blackbird **2** **RB06595** **16/4/1987** **Cargo, Carlisle**

No error here in the date. For some reason the recovery slip remained in John McMeeking's 'pending tray' and only emerged during sorting thorough these old papers. It is a rather odd movement. The bird had been ringed in the wood in June 1986 and the recovery event (no cause of death known) in the subsequent breeding season. Blackbirds can make long distance migratory movements within and beyond the British Isles but, as a rule, they are fairly faithful to their breeding site. Incidentally, this was our first record in Cumbria. Since then only one more has been reported - a Goldcrest ringed in the wood in November 1999 and controlled in Maryport in March 2000.

Robin **6** **Z782451** **7/7/2019** **D10**

Robins have small territories and defend them vigorously during the breeding season. This bird was ringed as a juvenile in the north of the wood in 2016 and retrapped there still in juvenile plumage until the end of August 2016. Thereafter it should have made its way to find a place to defend to breed. But we did not see it again until nearly three years later by which time it had finished breeding for the year. We caught it in a place where we set mist nets fairly often so it is rather odd that we had not captured it during the preceding years.

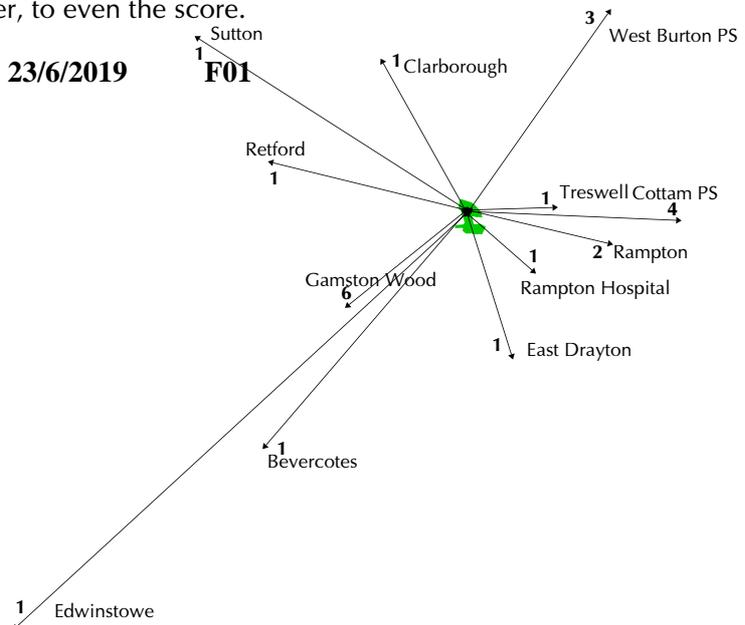
Chaffinch **6M** **APC7779** **24/3/2019** **Q03**

In spite of the large numbers of birds ringed by Peter Cobb in Darlton, 6km to the south, over the years and in view of this species' mobility, it is surprising that this is the first Chaffinch he has ringed there which we have recaptured in the wood. It was ringed by Peter in Darlton on 17/9/2018. Over the years two of our Chaffinches have been caught by Peter in Darlton. Send us another one, Peter, to even the score.

Bullfinch **5M** **AHF4618** **23/6/2019**

This is the 23rd Bullfinch encountered both in the wood and elsewhere. Unlike the rather more mobile Blackcaps, all these Bullfinches have been strictly Nottinghamshire birds. The maps shows where they have been found. Perhaps surprisingly, in spite of the proximity on Lincolnshire to Treswell Wood, none of our birds have been reported on the 'other side' of the Trent whereas several have travelled much further distances within the home county as seen in the diagram.

Nottinghamshire birds? Had they been Lincolnshire birds we could have called them 'Yellowbellies'. Several other counties have similar colloquial names for their natives. We cannot find such a term for Nottinghamshire natives. Any offers?

**Greenfinch** **6M** **TX78213** **30/6/2019** **Q03**

Ringed by Peter Cobb in Darlton on 10/6/2015 and not reported since. The species can be very mobile so no surprise that it has not been seen either here or again at Darlton.

It was found very near a nest with eggs so when, later in the morning we caught another Greenfinch nearby we were sure it would be the female. Wrong again - it was a new male, NZ53022.

As for the nest, the four eggs hatched, the young were ringed and all fledged. The used nest was a splendid example of a successful nest and will go to Lincoln University (together with our usual supply of tit nests) for research projects there. This is the first time we have ringed Greenfinch nestlings in the wood.

Greenfinch

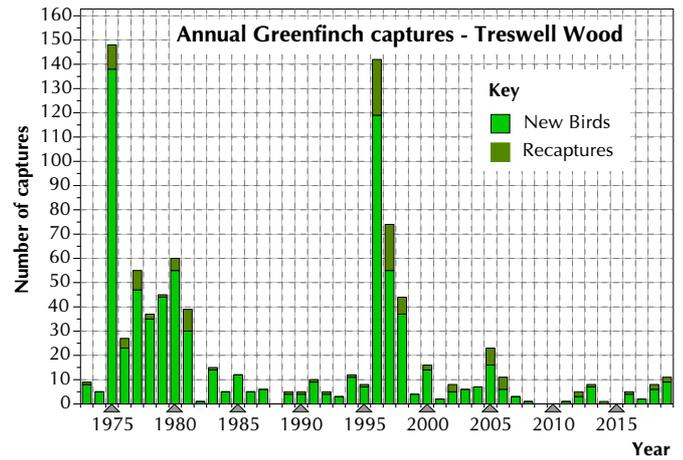
6M

TT49231

19/5/2019

Q04

The third capture of this bird ringed on 10/4/2016 and retrapped on 25/3/2018. Retrapped today, at the same time, was female TT49346 ringed on 15/4/2018. May and June brought a total of eight adult captures, all on north edge of wood. This will give us the highest annual total for the species since at least 2005. The high numbers in the early years resulted from captures at Pheasant feeding stations and, in 1975, in stubble fields adjacent to the wood at Stanhope Farm. The spike in the late 1990s resulted from unusually large numbers at the feeding station coupled with extra effort to catch them. Very low numbers since 2005 reflect the national decline resulting from trichomonosis which was first recorded nationally in 2006. Maybe the species is now beginning to recover.



10-Week Summary: 2019 Interval 3, Captures in Standard Sites

	New Birds			Recaptures			Total
	Adult	5	3	Adult	5	3	
Tawny Owl	.	.	.	1	.	.	1
Marsh Tit	.	.	1	3	.	.	4
Blue Tit	.	.	2	.	.	.	2
Great Tit	.	.	3	1	4	.	8
Chiffchaff	8	1	1	.	.	.	10
Blackcap	22	1	8	8	.	.	39
Wren	5	7	15	1	3	.	31
Nuthatch	.	.	1	.	.	.	1
Treecreeper	.	.	5	.	2	.	7
Blackbird	5	2	1	8	2	.	18
Song Thrush	4	1	1	1	.	.	7
Robin	.	3	11	3	3	3	23
Dunnock	1	.	.	2	2	.	5
Chaffinch	.	1	.	1	.	.	2
Bullfinch	3	6	2	1	.	.	12
Totals	48	22	51	30	16	3	170

Treswell Wood Standard Site Totals in 10-week periods - Summary table

Summary Data since standard site netting began in 1978:

Interval	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Maximum	128	198	288	253	177	864
Minimum	57	33	89	66	59	364
Mean	91	113	160	131	125	617

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
2008 - 2017	93	133	150	109	120	605

Recent Years

2014	83	132	181	123	120	639
2015	105	123	136	137	158	659
2016	102	185	193	109	109	698
2017	106	198	163	150	163	780
2018	95	108	182	184	119	688
2019	113	131	170			