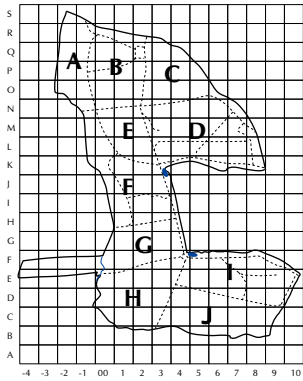


# TWITTER



Treswell Wood - Information To Tell Every Recorder

**March 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

**2008/1**  
**Number 66**



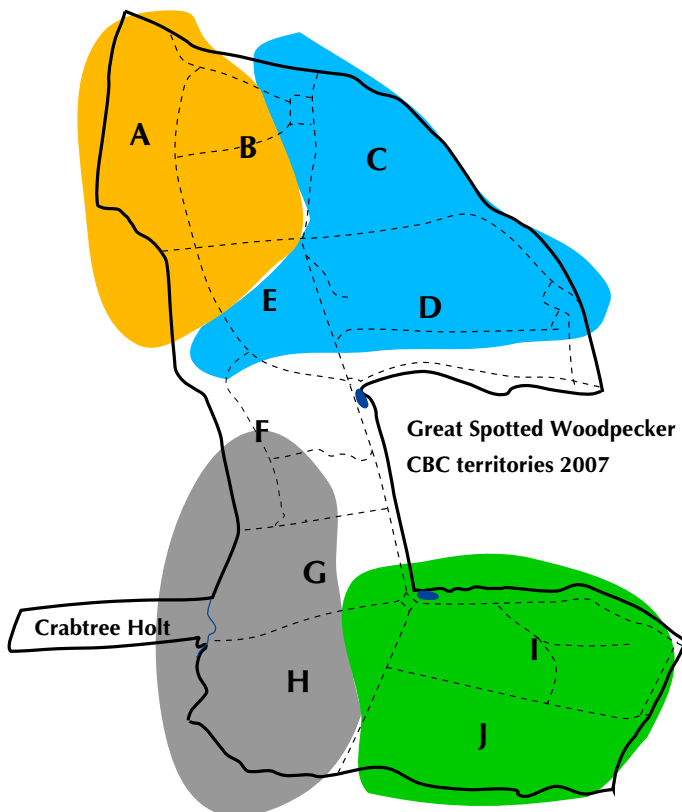
## Common Bird Census 2007

Richard Thewliss, at the BTO, has just completed the drawing of our CBC territory maps for the 2007 season. Steve Wain now has these and is digitising them. The table of territory numbers, with comparisons from past years, is on page 2 of this issue. David Glue, of the BTO, passes on the BTO's thanks to all the Treswell Wood team for this 35<sup>th</sup> year of integrated population monitoring of which the CBC is an important component. Incidentally, it was not until some years after the Treswell Wood census and ringing operations began, that the term 'Integrated Population Monitoring' was coined.

Several features of the territories stand out. First there is general agreement between these results and those found from ringing and nest recording. Some of these are commented upon in the Noteworthy Captures section. Second, there are some detailed differences. For instance, we know that there was more than one pair of Stock Doves nesting in boxes in the wood, yet only one territory is given. This is because the census does not take into account anything other than the standardised observations of the observers. Some species are harder to observe than others, for all sorts of reasons, and the difficulty of recording species varies with the survey method. Stock Doves are pretty

difficult to miss when you look in one of their nestboxes but not so easy to census by other means. And if we relied on mist-netting captures alone we would say the wood was a Stock Dove free zone. The important thing is that the methodology for each survey is standardised, as much as possible, from year to year. Trends in populations can then be seen clearly and, as we see so often, the trends are similar for all three prongs of the integrated population monitoring operation.

It is good to see that Dunnock and Song Thrush numbers seem to be maintaining their slow upward creep after perilously low numbers of 5 or 10 years ago. Blackcap numbers remain high and Chiffchaffs continue to increase. Sadly, for the first time ever there was no confirmed Willow Warbler territory. (There were only four registrations for the species although one did include a family party). Spotted Flycatchers did not feature at all. Tit numbers were down - and this agrees with the nestbox observations - although breeding success was improved on previous years (possibly as a result of fewer boxes). Great Spotted Woodpecker numbers were lower than in recent years - this agrees with our ringing data and may also help explain the lower predation rate of nestboxes by woodpeckers. The territory map for this species is given as a preview of what will be available for all species once Steve has completed the digitisation process.



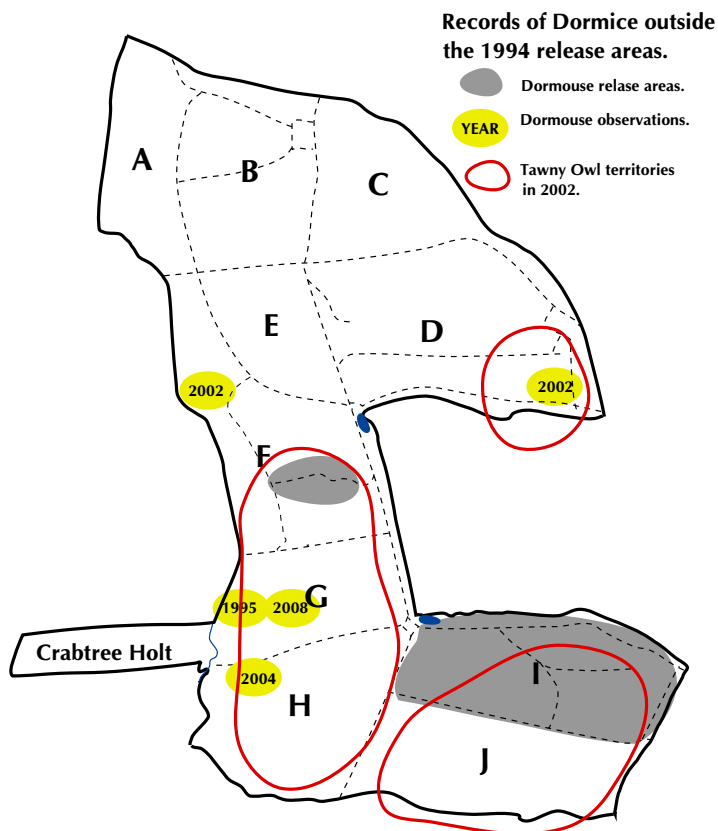
## Dormice in Treswell Wood

After their introduction in 1994, Dormice became less and less frequently sighted. In British Wildlife, December 2002, Paul Bright and Pat Morris gave a rather gloomy summary *This Dormouse population did not immediately*

## Treswell Wood CBC - 2007 Results

Species	Averages						Recent Annual Totals			
	76...80	81...85	86...90	91...95	96...00	01...05	2004	2005	2006	2007
Mallard	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.5	0	0	0	0
Sparrowhawk	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.8	0.6	p	1	0	1
Buzzard	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0	p	p	p
Kestrel	0.6	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.7	p	p	0	0
Red-legged Partridge	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	p
Grey Partridge	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0	p	0	p
Pheasant	8.2	4.7	8.0	6.4	6.0	8.6	12	9	10	8
Golden Pheasant	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	p	0	0	0
Moorhen	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.3	p	0	0	0
Woodcock	2.0	1.8	0.8	0.2	0.2	1.0	1	2	2	1
Stock Dove	0.6	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.4	7.0	6	3	p	1
Woodpigeon	0.0	1.0	0.3	0.0	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1
Collared Dove	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Turtle Dove	7.6	1.4	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.3	0	0	0	0
Cuckoo	5.0	2.4	1.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0	0	0	p
Barn Owl	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	p	p	0	0
Tawny Owl	1.4	2.6	1.8	1.2	1.4	3.0	3	3	1	1
Green Woodpecker	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	1.6	2	3	2	1
Great Spotted Woodpecker	1.6	3.6	2.4	2.4	2.4	5.6	6	6	7	4
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	0.0	0.8	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Skylark	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.5	2	p	3	4
Swallow	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Pied Wagtail	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0	p	0	0
Wren	59.4	55.8	69.0	71.8	81.8	76.4	75	81	56	69
Dunnock	27.2	23.8	22.2	13.4	12.6	8.4	8	8	9	11
Robin	58.4	60.4	46.6	48.0	54.0	81.4	85	98	73	85
Blackbird	35.0	29.0	28.4	20.2	25.2	27.0	34	32	33	32
Song Thrush	29.6	23.6	16.8	7.2	5.6	6.8	3	5	7	13
Fieldfare	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	p
Mistle Thrush	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.6	1.0	2.8	5	3	1	5
Lesser Whitethroat	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Whitethroat	5.6	1.6	1.8	0.0	0.4	0.2	p	0	0	0
Garden Warbler	15.0	15.4	9.4	4.4	7.2	6.8	5	4	1	3
Blackcap	15.4	12.4	20.4	20.6	25.4	27.2	20	29	25	25
Chiffchaff	14.8	8.2	8.6	15.8	19.0	18.6	23	14	17	31
Willow Warbler	27.6	44.0	31.4	18.2	6.8	5.0	8	4	3	p
Goldcrest	0.2	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.6	0.4	1	p	0	0
Spotted Flycatcher	1.6	3.0	1.8	0.2	0.0	0.3	0	p	p	0
Long-tailed Tit	3.4	3.0	3.6	4.8	5.0	8.2	10	9	9	8
Marsh Tit	1.6	0.5	1.0	2.2	4.2	2.1	1	2	p	p
Willow Tit	3.0	1.8	2.4	2.8	2.6	2.5	1	p	p	p
Coal Tit	2.0	2.6	2.0	6.2	7.4	6.4	7	6	7	3
Blue Tit	32.8	60.2	67.2	59.2	70.0	50.6	68	44	49	40
Great Tit	13.4	26.8	36.8	31.8	35.2	46.8	58	46	40	27
Nuthatch	0.0	0.4	0.4	1.0	1.2	1.2	1	2	2	3
Treecreeper	2.0	1.8	4.0	3.4	3.6	3.1	4	2	3	2
Jay	3.2	3.6	2.4	1.4	1.0	1.9	3	1	3	p
Jackdaw	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Carrion Crow	1.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.7	p	2	0	2
Starling	5.2	4.8	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0	0	0	0
House Sparrow	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Tree Sparrow	21.0	10.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	p	p
Chaffinch	33.4	38.4	39.0	39.0	40.6	48.8	53	48	39	42
Greenfinch	1.4	0.8	0.2	0.2	1.8	0.7	1	1	p	1
Goldfinch	0	0	0	0	0	0.8	1	1	2	p
Linnet	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Redpoll	3.6	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Bullfinch	5.4	3.2	3.0	1.4	0.6	1.8	2	2	2	3
Yellowhammer	1.8	1.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	0	0	0	0
Reed Bunting	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total territories</b>	<b>457.4</b>	<b>457.0</b>	<b>437.6</b>	<b>386.2</b>	<b>426.8</b>	<b>464.8</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>422</b>

die out, but its future appears uncertain. Small populations face a high probability of extinction but in this case there were additional problems. Several of the released animals were obese or badly affected by mites. Their viability was open to question, as was the desirability of releasing them, but inadequate facilities were available for retaining them in captivity. Some of these animals probably died soon, perhaps taken by owls. A further problem was the difficulty of reconciling the needs of Dormice with the practical and commercial interests of coppice contractors. The total area of suitable habitat was reduced and dispersal of Dormice impeded, highlighting the importance of planning long-term management of a release site. However, even at that time we had evidence that monitoring of the Dormice through nestbox occupancy was, at best, of limited effectiveness in the wood. In the first season of release, Norman Lewis found about a dozen Dormouse nests in the release area, built in natural sites even though there was a superabundance of nestboxes available. In the second season, a Dormouse nested in a conventional bird nestbox in a different compartment from the release area, one which required the animals to have crossed about 150 metres of newly coppiced woodland. This behaviour was in complete contravention of normal Dormouse protocol: it had clearly not understood that movement from one area to another was only permitted if there was a continuous above-ground route through the undergrowth, nor that nesting in boxes which had been treated with preservative was not allowed. Only single nests were found anywhere in 1999 and another



in 2001. Early in 2002 a headless Dormouse was found in a Tawny Owl nest at the south-east corner of compartment D. Clearly, the animal had been carried to the nest by the owl, but from where? The CBC map for 2002 shows a territory in that area which does not include any of the parts of the wood where Dormice were released; the former release areas were all held by other owl pairs. Tawny Owls are highly sedentary and territorial - thus it seems likely that the headless creature of 2002 was taken from somewhere in compartment D. Another Dormouse nest was found in the autumn of 2002 in compartment F, well away from any release area and in a conventional bird nestbox.

The last sighting of a Dormouse had been in late 2004 when a nest with well-grown young was found in compartment H, again well away from any release area. The circumstances surrounding this nest are probably of significance. It was in an area surrounded by an electric fence and containing habitat-managing pigs. The pigs had removed most of the undergrowth, as was their duty. There was no opportunity for Dormice to nest in a natural situation as all the vegetation, apart from hazel, had been eaten. The nestbox in a hazel was their only opportunity.

In the British Wildlife article, six criteria for measuring the success of an introduction were listed. At that stage, Treswell Wood had fulfilled the first four stages - animals released alive; young born at the site; some animals survive the first winter and second generation young born the next season. The population was not known to have reached stage 5 - more adults present than originally released. However, it is now clear that we have reached stage 6 - evidence of dispersal. The question remained whether our Dormice had become extinct, for whatever reason, or if they remained alive and well but very elusive. Conventional wisdom tends to the former view and suggests that the wood is far from ideal habitat. An alternative view is that Treswell Wood is exceptionally good habitat. The Dormice have little need to use nestboxes as natural sites are abundantly available. Our monitoring program is failing to find them, not because they are not present but because they do not come to the monitoring stations in the required manner. As Dan Bardsley pointed out in Twitter 49, in spite of 5,000 inspection events at 240 Dormouse boxes over 2 years we had not recorded any Dormouse activity until he found the nest in the pig pen.

We now know, however, that the Dormice still live in the wood. In late February, Rob Atkinson and his team were cutting down an ash trunk after the bulk of the tree had fallen in the gales. As the trunk fell to the chain saw, a ball of grass sprang out from a cavity near the base of the tree. Inspection showed this to be a Dormouse nest complete with very-deeply hibernating occupant. The nest was replaced and the trunk hurriedly splinted back into position. As it happens, this event was in compartment G in a newly coppiced area which had previously held high-quality coppice - but coppice still too young to bear hazel nuts for the Dormice. Again, the Dormice are acting against conventional wisdom. Incidentally, the Dormouse was pretty lucky to escape with its life - a shift of a couple of centimetres by the chain saw and it would have been victim of a Treswell chain saw massacre.

Further evidence for their continued presence came with some hazel nut shells found recently in nestboxes in block H. The tooth markings appeared much more like those of Dormice than of Wood Mice.

So what do we know? Our Dormice - or at least one of them - are alive. They have dispersed to many parts of the wood beyond the release area. They dislike using boxes in the wood - whether the 'ideal' type for Dormice or conventional bird boxes - so our monitoring of them using boxes is almost completely ineffective. Is the wood a marginal habitat in which they are unlikely to survive in the long term, or is it such a good habitat that they can live in it almost undetected?

The possibility of a further release into our expanding coppiced areas is now being considered. It will have to be carefully evaluated and planned if it is to be both successful and adequately monitored.

## Mites

Three students from Nottingham University are basing their third-year assignments on studies using our data. We, and they, hope to they can understand more about the interactions between mites and their avian hosts. Preliminary results so far are helpful. In an earlier project, Selina Tape found an annual cycle of mite abundance on Robins which was repeated over the four year period for which we then had data (Twitter 47). The first result is that this pattern continues to be repeated over the eight year time series - that is further strong confirmation that the pattern is real rather than a chance result from a short series of observations. The second result is that the state of coppice regrowth in which the Robins live has no discernible affect on their mite loads. This may seem a non-result but, at present, very little is known at all about what drives mite abundance. Here one possible factor has been eliminated - that is a step forward.

## Margaret Price

*It is with very great sadness that we record the death of Margaret Price on March 1<sup>st</sup>, at the great age of 95. When NWT was founded, in 1963, Margaret was the Secretary of the then Trent Valley Bird Watchers, and one of those who signed the Trust's Memorandum and Articles. She served the Trust in a wide range of rôles throughout the remaining 44 years of her life, and only gave up the monitoring of every planning application in Rushcliffe in the middle of 2007. She was made a Vice-President of the Trust many years ago, and received the Treswell Award in 2002.*

*When the Trust bought Treswell in 1973 Margaret was already involved in Common Bird Census work on other sites, but she volunteered to do about a third of the wood. For the next season, she had found additional observers and awarded herself the monumental task of transferring every observation to a series of species maps. She continued in that role for no less than 32 years, until she handed the CBC reins to Pat Quinn-Catling - a truly magnificent contribution to Treswell's Integrated Population Monitoring scheme.*

*Margaret was a real stalwart of the Trust and is already sadly missed.*

**John McMeeking**

## Noteworthy Captures

Species	Age/sex	Ring	Date	Grid
<b>Kestrel</b>	<b>5M</b>	<b>EH28387</b>	<b>19/01/2008</b>	<b>N02</b>

The first Kestrel to be trapped since May 2004. We have seen Kestrels in the wood very frequently recently. Possibly the opening of more glades is making hunting more productive for them. This one was captured by the glade at the main cross roads.

<b>Jay</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>EL87423</b>	<b>02/03/2008</b>	<b>M06</b>
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The CBC results suggest a smaller number of Jays in the wood than in past years - captures of birds support this. This is our first Jay capture since last October. In 2007 we only trapped two birds - this one and a controlled bird in October.

<b>Great Spotted Woodpecker</b>	<b>5M</b>	<b>CT84384</b>	<b>27/02/2008</b>	<b>Q02</b>
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Just when we were becoming confident that we could not age birds reliably after their post-juvenile moult, along comes a batch of birds which can, very obviously, be aged reliably. Contrast within the primary coverts, or between primary and greater coverts is no help at all in ageing. (Twitter 64). However, this bird and some others have shown a clear contrast within the greater and median coverts. Typically, median coverts will have moulted and the new feathers are fresh and glossy black. These contrast with outer greater coverts which are unmoulted and dull, dark grey. There may or may not be contrast between these old greater coverts and randomly moulted primary coverts.

**Great Tit                      6M            P400676            13/02/2008            O-2 Roosting**

Our oldest known bird so far this year - ringed 5 years and 355 days previously. We have seen it reasonably often since it was ringed in February 2002 as part of the spring influx. This is its third capture when roosting; all its 16 captures have been in the north-west quarter of the wood except once, in the dry part of the summer of 2006 when it was moulting, it strayed as far afield as the pond in K03.

**Great Tit                      4M            V475205            06/02/2008            Q02 Feeder**

We have noted that more juveniles, particularly Great Tits, moult their tail feathers in the autumn. This can make ageing on the shape of the tail feathers unreliable. On recapture today, this bird was aged as an adult because all its plumage features, including the primary coverts, indicated it was adult. It would have been embarrassing to find it was, in fact, not an adult but a first winter bird except that it had been recaptured in July 2007 as a juvenile and a note made that it was moulting its primary, in addition to its greater, coverts. Add to this, the further complication that it was one of our 'Grey Tits' which seem to be present in greater numbers this year than usual.

**Willow Tit                      4            T663083            24/02/2008            G04**

There were no confirmed breeding territories for either Willow Tits or Marsh Tits in the 2007 CBC (although we know at least one pair of Marsh Tits used a nestbox). Captures of both species seem to be less frequent than even 2 years ago, so it is good to see that some of them do survive in the wood. This bird has a creditworthy capture history stretching back to 2005 when it was ringed as a juvenile with another 20 recapture events fairly even spread through time since then.

**Nuthatch                      4M            VS50899            09/03/2008            F-1**

Nuthatch numbers continue to creep up - the 2007 CBC number was the highest yet. We have enjoyed captures of nine individuals so far this year. This particular bird is our oldest known Nuthatch, having been ringed as a juvenile male in 2004. It was retrapped again, always at the car park feeders, 5 times with its last appearance there being in June 2005. Today it appears, after a gap of nearly two and a half years, in the south of the wood in company with another Nuthatch (VR78790, a female, presumably its mate and our second longest-lived Nuthatch).

**Goldfinch                      6F            V475560            05/03/2008            Q02 Feeder**

Goldfinches are undoubtedly increasing in numbers in gardens - probably helped by the provision of so much niger seed in gardens (look at the Garden BirdWatch web site to see how reporting rates in gardens have risen from 10% to around 35% since 1995). We have niger seed feeders for them at both the car park and Piccadilly Circus. Until this capture we have had no evidence of them feeding at the car park feeder and we believe that the niger eaten at the other feeder is taken, mainly, by Marsh Tits with no recent records of Goldfinches. This is our first Goldfinch capture for almost exactly a year. Goldfinches were recorded in the early years of the CBC but none were seen throughout the 1990s. A few have been recorded since then - with their increasing abundance nationally might we expect more captures and more confirmed breeding territories in the future?

## Controls and recoveries

The annual influx of new birds - primarily Great and Blue Tits, brings with it a good number of fairly local movements. In addition, there are some from further afield, some of which we do not yet have the ringing details and which will be reported later. It is interesting to note how many movements relate to this time of year when birds are dispersing to set up breeding territories.

Species	Age/sex	Ring	Date	Place
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<b>Blue Tit</b>	<b>6F</b>	<b>V184826</b>	<b>09/03/2008</b>	<b>D01</b>
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An escapee from Hillcrest Farm, Treswell. Ringed there by John Clark in December 2006. This is its first appearance in the wood.

<b>Blue Tit</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>V318008</b>	<b>08/02/2008</b>	<b>F06</b>
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This is a pleasing, if rather odd, record. The bird was ringed by me at Beckingham in December 2006 as an adult. I next retrapped it on 30 December 2007, just over a year later - as if it had some well defined annual migration route. Five weeks later it appears, for the first time, in Treswell Wood during the annual influx of new birds. Most of the incoming birds are first-winter birds - not old adults like this one.

<b>Blue Tit</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>V475036</b>	<b>06/01/2008</b>	<b>Sturton-le-Steeple</b>
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We ringed this bird in February 2007 during the spring influx and retrapped it in the following May as a breeding adult.

**Great Tit                    5F            TH28916    02/02/2008    F07**

This is the first nestling-ringed bird from Hillcrest Farm to be recaptured in the wood. John Clark ringed it, as one of a brood of five, in June 2007.

**Great Tit                    6F            T005041    7/1/2007       R00**

Another bird from Rampton. It was ringed there 12/01/2006 and retrapped on 02/02/2006. We first trapped it in Treswell Wood on 07/01/2007 and again in May and July of 2007.

**Great Tit                    5F            V414519    09/03/2008    E02**

A rapid recapture of this bird - ringed 4 days earlier by John Clark at Hillcrest Farm.

**Great Tit                    6M            V475031    05/03/2008    Hillcrest Farm, Treswell**

We ringed this bird on 18/02/2007 but had not retrapped it since. John Clark trapped it at Hillcrest Farm at the same time as V414519 (above), a young female which shortly arrived in the wood (but no longer in the company of this older male).

**Chaffinch                    5F            V475138    09/02/2008    Rampton**

This was ringed as a breeding female in the wood in May 2007. This is its first reappearance since then - in company with other wintering Chaffinches visiting the Rampton site.

**10 Week Summary 2008 Interval 1, Captures in Standard Sites**

Visits 1875, 1879, 1871, 1873, 1882, 1874, 1881

	New Birds			Recaptures			Total
	Adult	5	3	Adult	5	3	
Wren	1	3	.	3	5	.	12
Dunnock	.	2	.	3	.	.	5
Robin	1	2	.	7	2	.	12
Blackbird	2	7	.	8	1	.	18
Song Thrush	.	.	.	1	.	.	1
Goldcrest	1	4	.	2	5	.	12
Long-tailed Tit	2	.	.	22	.	.	24
Willow Tit	.	.	.	1	.	.	1
Blue Tit	.	3	.	4	4	.	11
Great Tit	2	3	.	6	6	.	17
Treecreeper	1	1	.	3	.	.	5
Chaffinch	2	1	.	1	1	.	5
Bullfinch	.	2	.	.	.	.	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>125</b>

**Treswell Wood Standard Site Totals in 10-week Periods**

Interval	1	2	3	4	5	Total
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
<b>2008</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>

**Summary Data** since standard site netting began in 1978

<b>Maximum</b>	128	145	288	253	177	865
<b>Minimum</b>	57	33	94	68	59	364
<b>Mean</b>	90	107	163	136	127	623

**10-year Averages** since standard site netting began in 1978

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