

TWITTER

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Ringling: By permission of NWT
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Treswell Wood - Information To Tell Every Ringer.

After the high captures of 1995, the start of 1996 seemed somewhat quiet. Wet and cold weather may have given the expectation that populations and captures would be low. In fact, we have begun the year with above-average totals in the constant effort nets, indeed even slightly higher than those of 1995! José's Great Tits are in full song and it should not be long before the first Song Thrush or Blackbird nest is seen.

David Glue of the BTO Nest Records Unit has written to say thanks to all who have been involved in any way with nest recording. Below are some quotes from his letter to us.

... greatest value comes from covering the same sites from year to year, alongside allied ringing data. For this the BTO relays a large message of thanks to all group members involved. (That's all of you who helped with nestbox work, and who stand in at the mist nets whilst Chris is at the boxes.) Wren - 17 cards - best set yet for 1995. We live in exciting times. So much to analyse, so many potential projects to tackle and queries to solve. Hope Treswell Wood will continue to help. wishing you enjoyable nest finding, recording and nestboxing in 1996.

Treswell Wood Ringing Group?

At one or two recent Ringers' Conferences a number of delegates have appeared with a name badge saying **Treswell Wood Ringing Group**. Dave Coker consulted his database of ringing groups and found we do not exist. We consulted psychologists who suggested there might be a deep seated yearning for a corporate identity amongst people who ringed in Treswell Wood. It could be explained using a number of theories, most of which we failed to understand. However, learned opinion (Jacquie Clarke) is that it could be a good thing to form a group based on the Treswell activities. Please let us know what you think.

Noteworthy Captures

Species	Ring	Date	Grid
Great Spotted Woodpecker	XE21661	3/3/96	Q02 Feeder
Our third woodpecker capture for the year - this one was ringed nearly a year before, at the feeders. We have certainly had more captures of this species over the past two years than we have known before.			
Wren	5S9567	3/3/96	F04
Post juvenile non-dispersal! This bird was ringed as a nestling in a box in E05 on 27/5/95 and recaptured roosting in a box on 2/1/96 in F01, now it is back again near its natal box.			
Goldcrest	0Y5859	1/1/96	Q01
We do not know where our winter visitors travel from, but this one seems to have reached the far point of its migration - it was ringed here on 26/10/95 in Q01. On both occasions it was close to another Goldcrest - but for the fact that it too was a male we might have considered them a pair.			
Robin	J522233	25/2/96	N00
More post-juvenile dispersal - ringed as a juvenile in D09 on 21/8/94, next retrapped in N99 on 30/12/94 and recaptured 3 more times in N99 or N00 since then.			
Song Thrush	RX57566	11/2/96	Q03
John, José and Chris scrutinised this bird's plumage closely All agreed it appeared to be a 1995 bird with all greater coverts moulted, a few juvenile median coverts retained and pointed tail feathers. It is remarkable how Jenni & Winkler give us so much more scope for ageing birds precisely. Unfortunately this bird was actually ringed as a 3 on 31/12/93!			
Marsh Tit	J639013	25/2/96	N99
Captured with K181537 - we thought them a pair at first but this bird is a male and K181537 is really too large (wing 64)			

made when we were in the grip of hard weather. We had been putting grain at the feeders since the early autumn. The other better dates, all of them before 1988, have been in January (3), February (9) and April (1).

2/1/96

Roost boxes

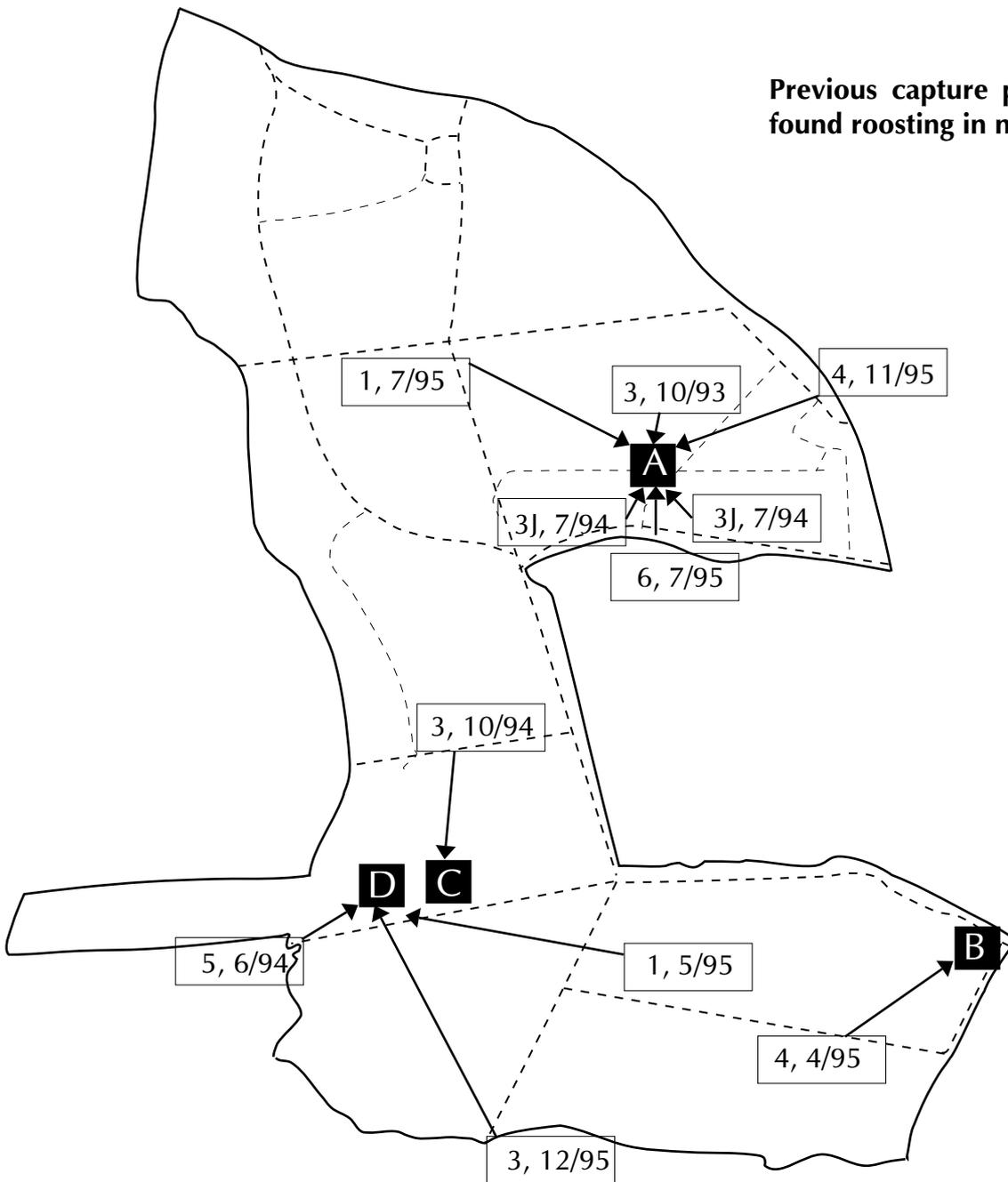
Seven Wrens were caught roosting together in a box in F01. After our previous single individual found last time in a nearby box it may be that they are just beginning to develop the box roosting habit. Of the 7, three were retraps. One was an adult which had been trapped nearby during the breeding season, another a juvenile first trapped in B03 two weeks earlier and the third a 1995 nestling from a box in E05. Does the movement of the second bird from B03 give an idea of the distance these Wrens move to a communal roost? If so, where are the other birds? Seven Wrens is hardly the total population of the southern part of the wood!

3/2/96

Roost boxes again

Three Wrens in E10 and 12 in L05. The maps show where they were ringed. Of all the 7 Wrens with rings in these boxes, only one had been recaptured previously. 5F5305 had evaded capture since 24/10/93 - a long time for a Wren! Why have we only just started finding them roosting in boxes? Why have so few of these been recaptured since ringing?

Previous capture positions of Wrens found roosting in nestboxes.



Box	Date roost found
A	3/2/96
B	3/2/96
C	27/10/95
D	2/1/96

Boxes by the arrows give the age codes at the times of previous captures and the months and years of previous captures of the Wrens.

The next Ten Weeks

Start looking for signs of breeding. Record activity codes B for breeding and sexing method codes C or P for cloaca or brood patch. Try to examine all birds for signs of breeding activity, not just those where sex can only be determined in the breeding season - activity code is important for national analyses. Remember not to put a sex method code if sex was determined by plumage. So for example, use B, P for a female Robin in breeding condition and sexed by brood patch but B for a female Blackbird in breeding condition but sexed by plumage. Below is a reprint of the activity and age codes

which we are most likely to need.

Activity code

- B** Breeding adult. Use this code if the bird is in breeding condition.
- R** at Roost
- T** Tape lured

Sexing method code

- P** brood Patch - females
- C** Cloacal protuberance - males

Wrens and Treecreepers

Reprints of our IBIS paper on Wren and Treecreeper survival and movements have been received. If you would like a copy ask John for one. We hope you regard this as your work - you have all invested a good deal of time in it. The key points are: Wren mortality increases in cold winters (confirmation of existing knowledge); Treecreeper survival varies from year to year (first time any data set has been robust enough to confirm what was believed); Treecreeper mortality depends on cold wet winters rather than, as is the case with Wrens, just on cold winters (this is a new finding). Survival rate of Wrens is density dependent (this is first time density dependent survival has been confirmed in a small-bird population). Wren males are more sedentary than females.

The thoughts of Chairman John

- 1 **Disappearing Song Thrushes.** Were Sparrowhawks the last straw? We still have the Sparrowhawk nest from Nightingale Ride of some years back. We only found one ringed bird (a Dunnock, ringed at Rampton Hospital!) but there were many bird legs. Any volunteers for identifying the bits? Did this Sparrowhawk help deplete our Song Thrush population?
- 2 **Wren dispersal.** We know juvenile Wrens 'move further within the wood' than do adult Wrens, and that female adults move more than males. But do female juveniles move more than male juveniles and do they have, like adults, lower survival rates than males? Have we enough captures of juveniles which we have later been able to sex to be able to find out?
- 3 **Composition of catches.** Do the proportions of new birds (of given species) vary between our standard sites (within a given time of year)?

Forthcoming Papers?

We received two offers within two days, both of them unsolicited. First came from Will Peach who had been meeting with experts from RSPB and BTO discussing the Song Thrush problem. He asked us if he could have the Song Thrush and Blackbird data sets in for a similar analysis to our Wren and Treecreeper paper. He thinks our data may help throw light on what is causing the continued decline of Song Thrushes.

Andy Gosler and Jeremy Greenwood published a paper in Nature last year. They reported that Great Tits are about 1gm lighter in places where Sparrowhawks are present. This seems to be in order that they are faster in escaping from surprise attacks. Andy is excited by the prospect of our biometric data set. It would enable analysis of weights of birds before and after Sparrowhawks arrived in the wood. He could compare any weight changes with those he found in his Nature paper. The value of the Treswell data is that it covers periods before, during and after the spread of Sparrowhawks to the area and the data are computerised (well, almost - see below!). He was only able to carry out his Great Tit study because the BTO had access to a mass of Great Tit biometric data (from EGI and BTO). Such a dataset is lacking for other species. Both these erudite gentlemen have offered to write joint papers with us and we have enthusiastically agreed in principle. Any offers of help?

Data Entry - Biometrics from the past.

Andy Gosler is of the firm opinion that it is important to computerise our biometric data - wings, weights, initial of ringers and activity/moult codes. Without doing this we would not be able to attack the Sparrowhawk job. (And our back data would be of less value when they are submitted on disk in the near future.) At present these data are not held on computer for the years 1972 to 1990. Computerising will be a big job (but not without interest!). Chris will write a program which will allow easy entry of these data on any PC. The program should be ready by the end of the summer. Volunteers will be welcome to help with the data entry task. Qualifications are only a knowledge of the ringing system here, a PC and dedication to the cause. Training will be given and the rates of pay can be expressed in a very round figure!

Ten-week Summary - January to March 1996

1996 Interval 1, Visits 1235 1237 1232 1233 1240 1236 1239 (Standard Sites only)

	New Birds			Recaptures			Total
	Adult	5	3	Adult	5	3	
Sparrowhawk	.	1	.	.	.	.	1
Wren	2	.	.	.	2	.	4
Robin	1	4	.	3	3	.	11
Blackbird	4	8	.	1	.	.	13
Goldcrest	1	1	.	3	3	.	8
Long-tailed Tit	1	.	.	6	.	.	7
Marsh Tit	.	.	.	3	5	.	8
Willow Tit	.	.	.	2	1	.	3
Coal Tit	.	1	.	4	.	.	5
Blue Tit	1	4	.	7	7	.	19
Great Tit	.	2	.	4	4	.	10
Treecreeper	.	1	.	1	.	.	2
Jay	1	.	.	.	.	.	1
Chaffinch	1	1	.	.	.	.	2
Bullfinch	.	1	.	.	.	.	1
Totals	12	24	.	34	25	.	95

Treswell Wood Standard Site Totals in 10-week Periods

Period Year	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1978	101	131	243	223	131	829
1979	97	115	180	91	123	606
1980	86	102	211	147	170	716
1981	102	110	288	188	177	865
1982	66	113	142	89	110	520
1983	82	140	143	185	128	678
1984	91	114	110	82	106	503
1985	103	88	135	118	88	532
1986	77	104	153	68	141	543
1987	95	112	196	209	124	736
1988	92	143	180	137	119	671
1989	124	137	282	145	103	791
1990	99	145	204	130	175	753
1991	65	57	99	74	127	422
1992	64	64	115	223	159	625
1993	81	70	112	158	126	547
1994	88	109	209	155	157	718
1995	91	124	240	253	104	812
1996	95					
Max	124	145	288	253	177	865
Min	64	57	99	68	88	422
Mean	89	110	180	149	132	659