

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) | | | |

to be a young female. J639013 is a 1994 nestbox bird which now has 13 captures to its credit, most at the feeders or Howard's Ride.

Marsh Tit **K181537** **1/1/96** **R00**

A 1995 nestling reared in N05 then caught on 3/9/95 in R99. Since then it has been trapped at the feeders 7 times but today at Grove End. From its large wing (64) it appears to be a male - has he already found a territory for himself? Probably not - retrapped again in N99 on 25/2/96!

Blue Tit **F253395** **4/2/96** **D08**

Unlike F253405, below, this bird has been captured a few times, including as a breeding female in one of the Dormouse boxes in 1995. Ringed as a juvenile on 25/11/90, this is currently our oldest known Blue Tit.

Blue Tit **F253405** **4/2/96** **D08**

Ringed 30/12/90 in D03 and not recaptured until today. This must be our longest between-captures time for any Blue Tit. Has it been elsewhere or does it lurk somewhere in the darker reaches of Block J?

Blue Tit **H229090** **21/2/93** **Q02 Feeder**

Another of our oldest currently known Blue Tits - ringed 10/11/91 at the feeders and a regular visitor since.

Blue Tit **J033002** **21/1/96** **Q02 Feeder**

Like J033003 below, ringed on 4/10/92 - a survivor. This one lives in the Windy Ride area but is a regular at the feeders.

Blue Tit **J033003** **2/1/96** **P99 Roosting**

A survivor - this bird knows where the food is (8 captures at the feeders since ringing on 4/10/92) and has been found roosting in the safety of boxes nearby during two winters. Recaptured again 26/2/96 in O02.

Blue Tit **J118089** **2/1/96** **N99 Roosting**

One of a number of nestling-ringed (23/5/93, N05) Blue Tits found roosting in boxes on this visit. As with the some others, it is a regular at the feeders and roosts in the northern third of the wood. (see also J639119 and K181919).

Blue Tit **J522418** **2/1/96** **L06 Roosting**

This bird's only mist net experience was when it was ringed as a juvenile in L07 on 16/10/94. Since then it has been strictly a box bird with captures as a breeding female in N06 and three times at roost in L06.

Blue Tit **J639084** **3/2/96** **F05 Roosting**

A good case of post-natal dispersal - ringed as a nestling in P01 in May 1994, recaptured in November 1994 in D08, then as a breeding adult in F05 in May 1995, and now roosting in a box in its breeding area.

Blue Tit **J639119** **2/1/96** **Q03 Roosting**

Ringed as a nestling on 26/5/94 in L07, this bird is a regular at the feeders.

Blue Tit **K181941** **21/2/96** **Q02 Feeder**

One of a trio of 1995 nestlings first retrapped on 21/2/96 at the feeders. This was the day when the annual February influx of Great Tits began. Had we not ringed these 3 Blue Tits as nestlings they would have appeared as 'birds new to the wood'. Have they behaved as did K287554 (see under controls), gone elsewhere during the winter and then returned; or have they been in the wood all the time? It would be very interesting to look at the patterns of first recaptures of our nestbox blue tits - there have been several more 'first captured' at the feeders since these three appeared.

Blue Tit **K181919** **2/1/96** **N06 Roosting**

The youngest of the three nestling-ringed Blue Tits found roosting on this visit. It is also the one with furthest to travel from roost site to feeders where it is already a regular visitor. Roosting again in the same box on 3/2/96.

Great Tit **H609622** **3/2/96** **F03 Roosting**

Black Right, Yellow Left. An old friend - ringed at Cottam by Dave Fogg on 3/10/93, she lives in the centre of the wood but is a regular commuter to the feeders. We have recorded her nests in both 1994 and 1995. Although surviving two breeding seasons is an above-average performance for a Great Tit, at the present rate of nestling production she is not doing so well - broods of 3 and 1 bird respectively. None of her offspring have been recaptured.

Great Tit **J522446** **4/2/96** **D08**

A female ringed as a juvenile in B03 on 27/11/94. Caught in F06 on 8/10/95, at the feeders on 3/12/95 and now back towards the far end of Nightingale Ride. This becomes more interesting when we know that male J522484 (alias White over Light Blue Right) was caught with her on the last three occasions. A regular feeder bird, he spent last spring in the middle of block I. If we can colour ring her in time we shall see whether they are back in that area as a breeding pair this summer.

Great Tit **J522574** **3/3/96** **H04**

Ringed as a juvenile at the feeders in July 1995, this bird was recaptured there in September but has not been seen there since. Suddenly it reappears - not at the feeders, like most of the February influx, but well over half way across the wood.

Great Tit **NN18142** **2/1/96** **P00 Roosting**

This bird was reared in a box in K05 during 1995 and has become a regular at the feeders. This box is within easy commuting distance. Where will it make its breeding territory?

Chaffinch **J033270** **1/1/96** **Q02 Feeders**

Like many Chaffinches this one was not seen for a long time after ringing - 20/2/94 as a 6M at the feeders. Where does he live?

Chaffinch **J522640** **21/2/96** **Q02 Feeders**

And another one - ringed at the feeders on 11/12/94 and not seen since until this capture.

Look out for...

Great Spotted Woodpecker **RH94571**

This bird seems to have perpetual juvenile primary coverts. If you catch it at any time would you give it a thorough going over - use a moult card perhaps. Look particularly at pc and secondaries to observe if any are regrowing and whether they are new or old.

Robin **K463113**

This Robin has unusually red flesh. Its legs look softer and fleshier than the normal scaly brown of a typical Robin.

Great Tits **Colour ringing cock-ups**

J033061 and **J522856** both have the combination **Light Blue Right, Green Left**. If you catch either, replace the colour rings with a new combination.

K463214, **J522574** were captured and the colour ring combination - if any - not noted. One unknown Great Tit has been reported with **Green Right, Yellow Left**. Make particular note of any of these you capture, recording both colour ring and BTO ring number or colour ringing them if they have only the metal ring.

Controls & Recoveries

Great Spotted Woodpecker **RE84000** **11/2/96** **Q03**

Our first ever Great Spotted Woodpecker control - ringed by Peter Harrison at Sturton-le-Steeple as an adult female on 11/7/93 and not recaptured since then. As with RH94571 it had some unmoulted primary coverts.

Wren **OY5824** **3/2/96** **L05**

Recently dead in a box containing 12 live roosting Wrens - presumably a victim of recent cold weather. Ringed as a nestling on 9/7/95 in the MSC hut N02.

Blue Tit **J118287** **2/1/96** **L07**

Dead in a box - the body was partly dismembered so this bird seems to be the victim of a predator rather than of the cold. He was ringed on 13/2/94 at Treswell End (N05) roosting and had been caught nearby and at the feeders since.

Blue Tit **J522624** **3/2/96** **Sturton-le-Steeple.**

An intriguing control. She was ringed, breeding, on a nest in May 1995 in C05 and not seen anywhere else. What is this Treswell Wood breeder doing as far away as this in winter? Why not use the feeders in the wood?

Blue Tit **J639141** **2/1/96** **P99**

Recently dead in a box - it seems this 1994 nestling, which had been a regular at the feeders and Grove End, was a victim of the cold weather of late 1995.

Blue Tit **K181737** **2/1/96** **Q01**

Another victim of the cold? This 1995 nestling was reared in a box in F05 and had been found roosting earlier in the same box and been trapped at the feeders nearby. In spite of the dispersal to a place with abundant food, survival is not guaranteed.

Blue Tit **K287554** **15/10/95** **Sturton-le-Steeple.**

Ringed as a nestling in K00 on 28/5/95 and retrapped on 16/7/95 in H04. Even better than this capture in Sturton-le-Steeple was the return recapture, back again at our feeders on 21/2/96 and 25/2/96. The first returning nestling from elsewhere for some time.

Great Tit **K347853** **3/3/96** **Q02F**

One of our annual influx of new Great Tits. It was ringed near Derby (SK3840) on 17/2/96 at a feeding station and travelled the 60km north-east to Treswell Wood during the following two weeks. A big and rapid movement!

Noteworthy Days

1/1/96 **Yellowhammers**

The 13th best visit ever for this species, and best since 28/2/87 when 16 were captured; only 9 today. This visit was

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

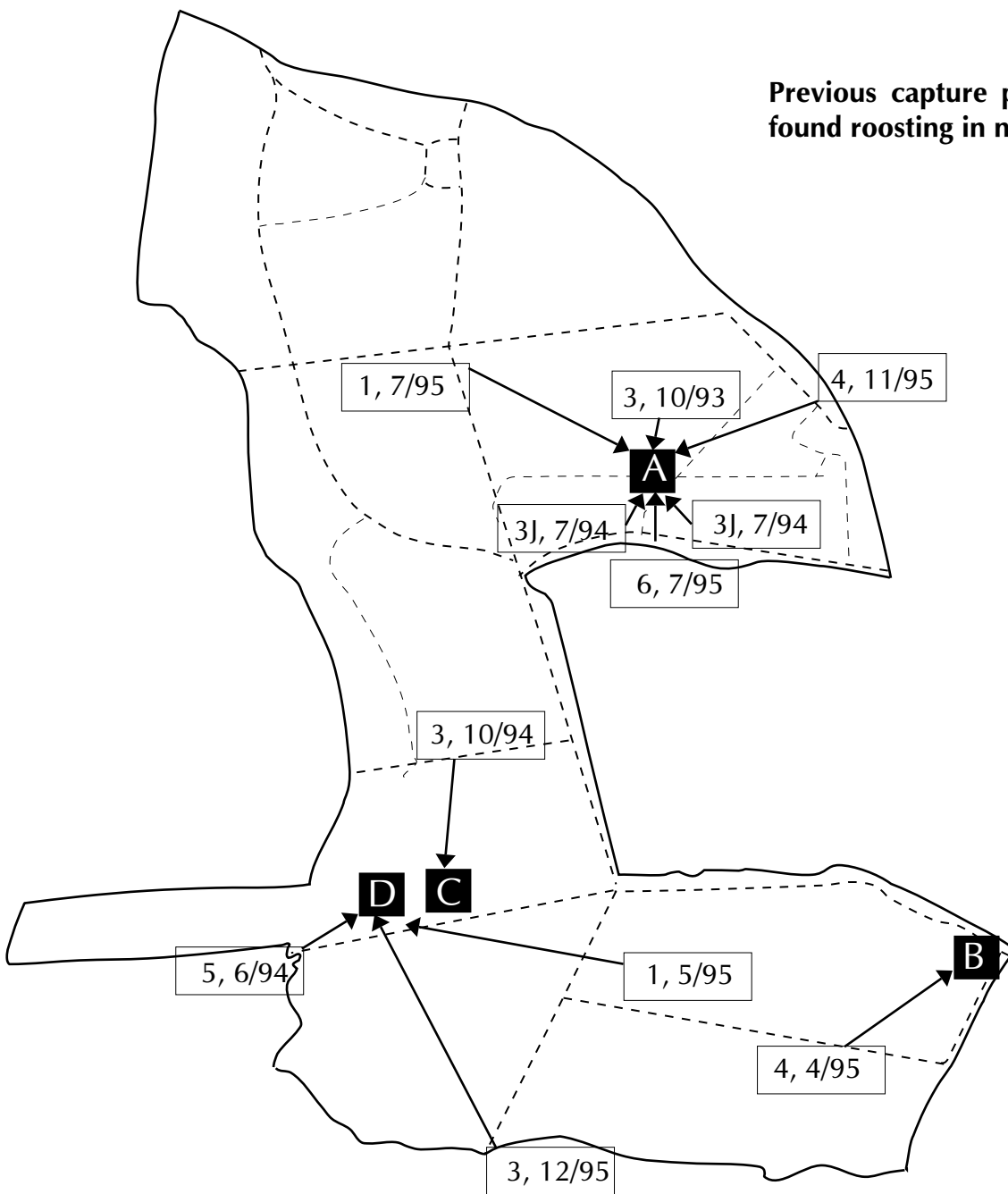
Seven Wrens were caught roosting together in a box in F01. After our previous single individual found last time in a nearby box it may be that they are just beginning to develop the box roosting habit. Of the 7, three were retraps. One was an adult which had been trapped nearby during the breeding season, 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 |