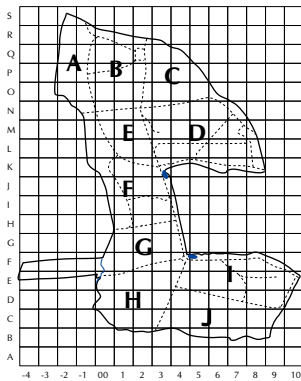


# TWITTER



Treswell Wood - Information To Tell Every Recorder

**December 2004 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

**2004/5 Number 50**

## Another landmark

*As those who study the Page 1 images which decorate the top of each Twitter will have realised, this one is very special because it completes the first ten years of our publication. You will see that Chris is philosophising in his opening paragraph about how we look back to the golden days in the past, and then demonstrates that things are better in the present than we might have thought.*

*Another feature of the first years of 'retirement' is that so many of us quickly begin to wonder how we ever found time to work at all. Chris must certainly be in this category, particularly because of the problem he is having in saying a final 'goodbye' to the world of education with his motto, 'If you can't teach them, set exams and mark them.' Add the time he spends working for all of us as Chairman of the Ringing Committee and as a member of the BTO Council, and you will realise why he did not realise that this was a special issue and tried to make do with just four pages (although they were very tightly packed).*

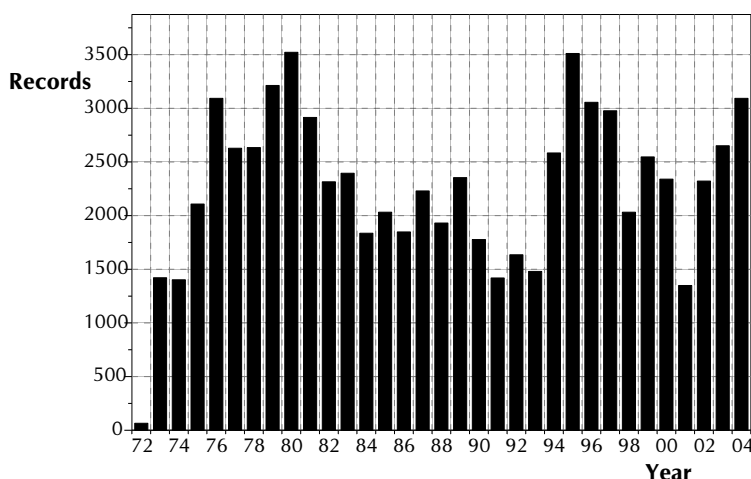
*Fifty Twitters in ten years and Chris has written nearly every word, to say nothing of creating the tables and diagrams and organising a giant proportion of the work we do. His piece below mentions, quite casually, that no nestlings had been ringed from boxes before 1979. What he does not tell us, of course, is who started the nestbox scheme in the first place and ran it almost single-handed for many years. Yes, Chris did. I will not embarrass him further, but I did feel that someone should thank him for the first 50 issues of Twitter. Looking forward to Number 100 in January 2010, can we all try to make his task a little easier by contributing reports, anecdotes or analyses of our own, or even volunteering some sort of assistance in the editing, which will surely become more and more feasible with the continuing developments in the world of information technology.*

**John McMeeking**

A sign of increasing age is looking back to 'the good old days' and comparing them with the present sad state of affairs. In ringers, this condition manifests itself by lamenting the low capture rate, lack of old recaptures, narrowing range of species or any other convenient figure. A sign of real senility must be refusal to believe that all is not as bad as it might feel in the face of evidence. Whichever way you look at the 2004 ringing operations, it has been a good year and has provided the fifth highest number of bird records.

Of course, we are not always comparing like-with-like. This year's records include a handful of sight records and captures from a few extra visits to the feeders. However, other years with high numbers of records also had special

**Annual ringing and processing**



circumstances. 1995 enjoyed massive numbers of nestlings ringed and a good number of sight records and the following two years also yielded plenty of sight records. 1980 and 1979 included large numbers of birds coming to Pheasant feeding stations in the hard winter weather. 1976 was the year of the drought with extra visits to the pond to catch the large numbers of birds drinking at one of the few watering holes in the area but, as in all years before 1979, there were no nestlings ringed in boxes. We have published an annual summary of all records each year since we began producing Twitter. What we have never done is to publish a complete list of annual summary totals. It is included in this issue for the first time.

## 2004 Year Summary - All Records

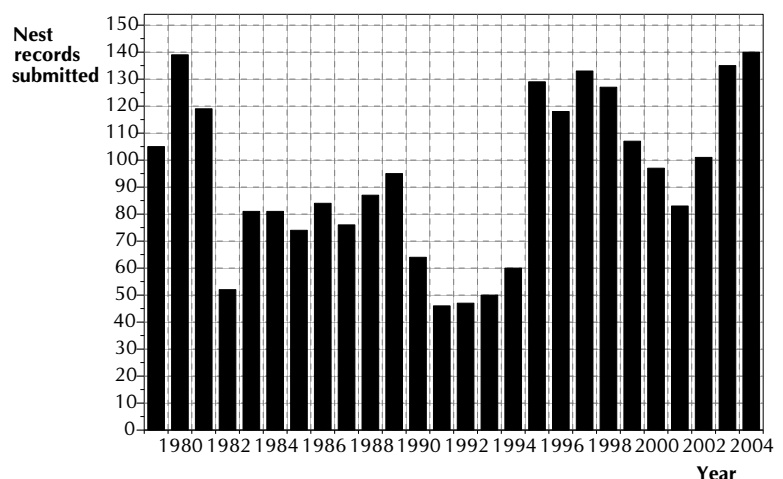
	Ctrl	New Birds			Retraps		Sight	Recvs	Othr	Total
		Adult	Juvnl	Pulli	Rt	SDR				
Sparrowhawk	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	2	
Kestrel	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	1	
Stock Dove	.	.	.	9	.	.	.	.	9	
Woodpigeon	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	
Tawny Owl	.	1	.	3	.	.	.	.	4	
Great Spotted Woodpecker	.	6	7	.	16	2	.	.	31	
Wren	.	23	48	39	46	13	.	1	170	
Dunnock	.	26	15	.	21	11	.	.	73	
Robin	.	33	61	4	87	30	22	.	237	
Blackbird	.	38	19	10	44	9	.	.	120	
Song Thrush	.	10	4	3	6	.	.	.	23	
Redwing	.	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	
Blackcap	.	48	32	4	30	23	.	.	137	
Chiffchaff	1	19	5	.	10	3	.	.	38	
Willow Warbler	.	2	.	.	1	1	.	.	4	
Goldcrest	.	10	48	.	25	6	.	.	89	
Spotted Flycatcher	.	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	
Long-tailed Tit	.	48	9	.	81	13	.	.	151	
Marsh Tit	.	.	5	3	37	1	.	.	46	
Willow Tit	1	1	6	.	45	2	.	.	55	
Coal Tit	.	6	20	58	197	9	.	2	292	
Blue Tit	.	77	50	186	304	17	.	39	674	
Great Tit	4	51	25	210	289	43	.	21	644	
Nuthatch	.	2	8	.	16	.	.	.	26	
Treecreeper	.	6	18	5	48	5	.	.	82	
Jay	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	2	
Chaffinch	.	44	18	4	57	13	.	.	136	
Greenfinch	.	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	7	
Bullfinch	1	7	12	3	7	2	.	.	32	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>1370</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3093</b>	

**Key:** **Ctrl** - Birds ringed elsewhere and caught in Treswell Wood or vice-versa. **Juv** - juveniles. **Pulli** - birds ringed as nestlings. **Rt** - ordinary recaptures. **SDR** - same day recaptures. **Sight** - observations of colour-ringed birds. **Recvs** - recoveries, i.e. our own ringed birds found dead in Treswell Wood. **Other** - all in this table are pulli which were ringed but died before fledging; they are not included in the Pulli column.

The number of birds ringed represents 46% of our total number of records submitted to the BTO ringing database. We have always valued our recapture records, but 2005 will be the first year when it is mandatory for all ringers to submit details of all recaptures to the BTO database. It will be interesting to see how our ratio of recaptures to new birds compares with the overall national figure. I suspect ours will be rather higher. We have a few frequently-occurring species missing from our annual list - including Garden Warbler and Yellowhammer but, on the other hand, we do have some others which are not so frequently captured - including Redwing, Kestrel and Spotted Flycatcher.

Our nest record collection is our largest ever (although by only one nest) and contains slightly more records of open-nesting species than usual, including Blackcap and Bullfinch. We do have the bonus of more dormouse boxes to inspect, although this is not the only factor contributing to the large number of nests. We recorded almost as many in the first years of the dormouse introduction (with rather fewer dormouse boxes). The other really good year - 1980 - was augmented by the population of Tree Sparrows we then enjoyed. Many of them made repeated breeding

Nests recorded annually



attempts, between them contributing nearly half of the total nests recorded. The final success of the breeding season was the first live dormouse record for three years.

Common Bird Census, the third branch of our IPM operation, has completed coverage of the wood, yet again. This provides one of the BTO's longest unbroken series of woodland breeding bird surveys. In addition we have recorded, between us, a good number of other forms of life including some flowering plants, invertebrates and mammals.

So, overall, a good year. (Although we must remind ourselves that our object is not to catch lots of birds but merely to document the fortunes of the bird populations.) Thanks to all of you who have helped in any way in these efforts.

### Annual Summary Totals - All Records

	Ctrl	New Birds			Retraps Rt	SDR	Sight	Recvs	Othr	Total
		Adult	Juvnl	Pulli						
1972	.	30	28	.	3	4	.	.	.	65
1973	4	797	259	.	301	59	.	1	.	1421
1974	2	661	241	7	464	26	.	1	.	1402
1975	3	907	421	.	636	139	.	1	.	2107
1976	3	1014	682	6	1156	230	.	3	.	3094
1977	10	866	486	21	998	241	.	2	4	2628
1978	6	744	684	10	981	206	.	1	2	2634
1979	3	852	586	371	1170	208	.	5	18	3213
1980	13	868	606	551	1269	182	.	21	12	3522
1981	9	699	418	220	908	123	.	5	13	2395
1982	16	519	443	291	910	118	.	14	4	2315
1983	9	669	418	220	908	123	.	5	13	2395
1984	4	471	203	321	727	92	.	3	15	1836
1985	16	399	273	332	863	128	.	8	13	2032
1986	5	373	228	436	648	140	.	6	12	1848
1987	12	414	304	476	827	166	.	5	26	2230
1988	12	412	274	203	862	158	.	9	1	1931
1989	11	503	387	432	835	171	.	1	14	2354
1990	4	444	261	228	653	151	.	7	29	1777
1991	4	337	210	172	553	110	.	.	33	1419
1992	4	294	268	233	655	142	.	3	36	1635
1993	2	350	342	159	506	112	.	2	7	1480
1994	4	535	480	245	947	188	151	8	26	2584
1995	2	449	504	748	1173	235	363	8	29	3511
1996	10	630	268	319	1416	240	147	10	16	3056
1997	12	421	291	421	1280	167	287	9	89	2977
1998	5	412	423	135	851	134	3	12	57	2032
1999	6	447	417	426	1018	167	9	7	50	2547
2000	4	378	399	216	1117	166	11	8	41	2340
2001	3	224	267	330	442	47	3	5	28	1349
2002	6	358	454	440	873	141	6	13	31	2322
2003	8	463	471	259	1207	184	15	8	36	2651
2004	7	473	411	541	1371	203	22	3	62	3093

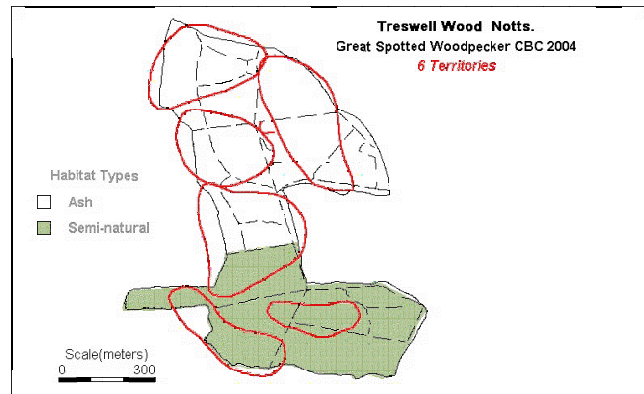
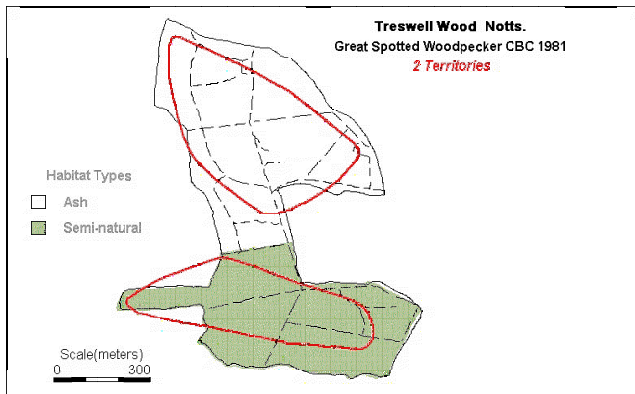
### Digitised CBC Maps

Steve Wain has been continuing with his work of committing the CBC maps to computer. He has also enhanced the user interface (i.e. made it easier for the computer novices to use). Copies of the Treswell data CD-ROM produced from now onwards will have these latest maps. The CBC series runs from 1981 to 2004 inclusive, apart from 1995 and 1996 (The maps for these two years have been filed in a safe place, either with one of the team or at Thetford - any information concerning their whereabouts would be very welcome.)

In addition, Steve has produced a sequence of maps for some species which give a year-by-year rolling display of mapped territories. These do take a good deal of disk space so we will only include some sample ones on the Treswell Wood CD-ROM. These displays could be useful in a variety of ways, including giving presentations about

our work. Should you need such a set of maps for a particular species, ask Steve who will compile it for you. (Alternatively, if you are familiar with any presentation software on a computer it requires little more than selecting a succession of single-year images from the master set of maps on the CD-ROM.) Thanks to Steve for his efforts and to all the many of you have helped provide the data over the years. Next operation will be dealing with the older maps running from 1973 to 1980 which are rather more tricky to interpret and commit to computer.

Two of Steve's digitised maps are shown here. They compare our Great Spotted Woodpecker territories in 1981



with those in 2004. Quite a contrast. Incidentally, we are not alone in enjoying a continuing increase in numbers of this species. A recent report in the RSPB magazine, *Birds*, suggests that one factor in their increase nationally is the decline in competition from Starlings. Strange as it may seem, Starlings can usurp the nests which these apparently well-armed birds have excavated for themselves. The drop in the breeding Starling population has reduced this pressure on these woodpeckers. We did once observe a Great Spotted Woodpecker nest hole being commandeered by Starlings, forcing the woodpeckers to excavate another hole, delaying nesting. We have not recorded any Starling nests since 1983 (when we had just one nest with a small brood of only two nestlings)

## Noteworthy Captures

Species	Age/sex	Ring	Date	Grid
<b>Great Spotted Woodpecker</b>	<b>3F</b>	<b>CT84060</b>	<b>19/12/2004</b>	<b>Q02 feeder</b>

After a month with no woodpecker captures, another one appeared. It is a new bird - most recent birds have been recaptures. As with several earlier woodpecker captures it was at the feeder and in the same small area of netting. It is almost as if all Great Spotted Woodpeckers approach the feeders along a very narrow, well-defined approach path. A mist net of, perhaps, 1 metre radius would catch them all. Why?

<b>Robin</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>R353464</b>	<b>12/12/2004</b>	<b>D08</b>
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Robins are amongst the most territorial of our birds, maintaining their patch throughout the year. It is remarkable how rapidly some young birds establish themselves. We ringed this bird as a juvenile in early July a mere 50 metres away from where it was retrapped today. It was also captured in the same small area at the end of September. We have no idea where it was reared but it seems that it had found a desirable place to settle by July. Whether it wandered elsewhere before returning or remained there we do not know. It is unlikely to be recaptured again any great distance from this spot.

<b>Robin</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>R502795</b>	<b>14/11/2004</b>	<b>M02</b>
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Only the fifth capture for this individual which we ringed, as a juvenile, a mere 50 metres distant from this spot in August 2003. As for R353464 the bird seemed to establish a territory very early in its life. In addition to its few captures, however, we have also observed it another 11 times, identified by its colour ring combination (Left leg: yellow ring over pale blue ring; Right leg: pink and black striped ring over metal ring). It has only ever been seen along the main ride from the huts (N02) as far as the end of Horse Guards' Parade (L02). Keep an eye open for this bird, or indeed any other colour ringed Robin or Willow Tit when you are walking in the wood.

<b>Coal Tit</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>P400519</b>	<b>19/12/2004</b>	<b>L05</b>
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Coal Tits continue to be captured in greater numbers than ever before. Although many are young birds, a few have longer histories. This one, captured for the 18<sup>th</sup> time, was ringed in September 2001 and has been seen at the feeders and in various northerly parts of the wood.

<b>Blue Tit</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>K463540</b>	<b>24/10/2004</b>	<b>Q02 Feeder</b>
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This is our 3<sup>rd</sup> oldest recaptured Blue Tit ever, with a time of 7 years and 313 days since it was ringed by Ulli in December 1996. This is its twelfth capture. Curiously it was not recaptured at all between October 2000 and April 2004 (see Twitter 47 for further comments).

**Great Tit                      4F            R502963      22/12/2004      D00 Roosting**

This bird was first caught in January 2004 at the feeders. She was a regular there until March, reappearing again in November. Apart from that we have not recorded her elsewhere until tonight. It seems she lives in the far south of the wood but commutes to the north for food.

**Great Tit                      4F            R558198      22/12/2004      N05 Roosting**

One of only a handful of birds found roosting this evening and one of only a very few birds which have been found roosting in a box in which she had previously nested.

**Great Tit                      4M            VV92943      28/11/2004      N00**

Not yet a geriatric but at least a respectable age. We ringed this bird as a nestling in 2000. It has been caught, until now, only in the north of the wood, at or near the feeder. Today's capture - 4 years and 171 days after ringing - was as far south as we have recorded it. Even its natal nestbox in P04 was closer to the feeder. Obviously not the Marco Polo of the Great Tit world.

**Nuthatch                      3F            VS50898      19/12/2004      Q02F**

Our Nuthatches continue to make their presence felt. This one was captured at the same time as a young male - VS50899 - and, while the two were being extracted from the net, a third was calling nearby. Both birds were ringed as juveniles in the autumn. We have erected six nestboxes especially for Nuthatches and hope that, next spring, they will finally take to these homes so thoughtfully provided for them.

**Controls and recoveries**

Species	Age/sex	Ring	Date	Grid
Jay	4	DA87118	11/12/2004	Grovefield Stripe, shot

Ringed as juvenile on 12/10/2003 in C03 and not retrapped since. Grovefield Stripe is approximately 1 km west of Crabtree Holt.

**Blue Tit                      3            R353492      11/12/2004      Gainsborough**

Captured by Steve Wain in his garden in Gainsborough, some 12 km to the north-east of Treswell Wood. We ringed this bird at the feeders on 11/7/2004, retrapped it there on 22/8/2004 and 29/8/2004 but not thereafter.

**Coal Tit                      R558207      25/11/2004      Rampton**

The first of our 2004 nestling-ringed birds to be reported from elsewhere. Ringed on 12<sup>th</sup> June and not recaptured by us, although four of its eight siblings have been recaptured within the wood since fledging. Captured by Mike Archer at his feeding station.

**Blue Tit                      R353652      25/11/2004      Rampton**

Ringed in F04 as a juvenile on 31/10/2004 as a juvenile, recaptured by Mike Archer at Rampton a month later.

**Chaffinch                      4M            R353478      2/12/2004      Rampton**

Ringed 11/7/2004 at the feeders, in moult, and never retrapped in the wood.

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

Interval	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1978 - 1987	90	113	182	140	130	655
1988 - 1997	86	107	170	149	127	637
1998 - 2001	75	80	114	118	125	511

**Annual Data**

2002	85	89	141	176	117	608
2003	117	116	146	104	114	597
2004	103	128	126	165	132	654

**Summary data 1978 - 2004**

Max	124	145	288	253	177	865
Mean	87	106	163	141	127	623
Min	75	57	94	68	59	422

## 10 Week Summary 2004 Interval 5 (Standard Site captures only)

Visits 1685, 1680, 1678, 1681, 1679, 1682, 1683

	New Birds			Recaptures			Total
	Adult	5	3	Adult	5	3	
Wren	1	.	7	3	.	3	14
Dunnock	.	.	4	1	.	2	7
Robin	.	.	2	8	.	6	16
Blackbird	2	.	4	3	.	1	10
Song Thrush	1	.	.	.	.	.	1
Goldcrest	5	.	17	.	.	6	28
Long-tailed Tit	3	.	.	11	.	.	14
Marsh Tit	.	.	.	1	.	1	2
Willow Tit	.	.	.	1	.	2	3
Coal Tit	.	.	1	4	.	4	9
Blue Tit	1	.	2	6	.	1	10
Great Tit	.	.	1	7	.	.	8
Nuthatch	1	.	.	.	.	.	1
Treecreeper	.	.	2	2	.	3	7
Bullfinch	.	.	2	.	.	.	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14</b>	.	<b>42</b>	<b>47</b>	.	<b>29</b>	<b>132</b>

### Treswell Wood Integrated Population Monitoring Group - TWIG

TWIG does not have a formal membership list. 'Membership' seems to result from being involved in some way with the group's work. The list below includes all those who have helped in any way during 2004. (Apologies if any names have been omitted.) We are very grateful to all members for their contributions in the wood or elsewhere. We look forward to another productive year in 2005.

### Treswell Wood IPM Group members 2004

Dan Bardsley	Ringling, Nestboxes	Alex Lewis	Ringling, RSPB Willow Tit project
Gill Bardsley	Ringling, Nestboxes	Stuart Martin	CBC
Dave Barritt	Ringling,	Phil May	Scottish correspondent
John Bartley	CBC, Nestboxes, Mammal recording	John McMeeking	Ringling
Pat Bartley	CBC	Peter Phillips	Ringling
Jerzy Behnke	Mites	Margaret Price	CBC founder
John Black	Ringling, Nestboxes	Pat Quinn-Catling	CBC co-ordinator
Kyle Campbell	Ringling	Neil Taylor	Ringling
John Clark	Ringling, Nestboxes	Selina Tape	Mites
Sally Clough	Ringling	David Thompson	Data analysis
Peter Cobb	Ringling	Frank Tillotson	CBC
Roger Cottis	Mammal advice	Liz Tillotson	CBC
Ted Cowley	Ringling	Steve Wain	Ringling, Data processing, 'Bible' production
Andy Edwardes	Nestbox making	Robin Ward	Data analysis
Chris du Feu	Ringling, Nestboxes,	Visitors:	Anthony Slinger (bee survey), Dave Richardson (ringling), Tammy Bardsley and family, Wendi and Harris Campbell, Ashley Jackson, Charmian Davie, Arthur Hoyland
Richard du Feu	Ringling, Data processing		
Jackie Hay	Data analysis		
Chris Holliland	Mammals, Dormouse boxes		
George Hudson	CBC		
Richard Johnson	CBC	John McMeeking	01636 830389
Tony Kennedy	Woodland management	Chris du Feu	01427 848400
Ulli Langemann	Foreign correspondent	Neil Taylor	01427 612933