

Quakers Coppice Nest Box Breeding Results - 2014

Some of you may have watched BBC's "Springwatch" series earlier this year. The BBC approached the BTO for information on nesting birds. The BTO contacted all their Nest Recorders for comment - over 100 Recorders responded. We sent them a short statement below plus attachments: -

Here in the North West we are still in the middle of the nesting season & many of the nest boxes we survey are still occupied. Early indications suggest that clutch/brood size & success rates in 2014 are lower than previous years. In view of the extremely tight timescales you have been given to supply data, etc. I am enclosing a paper that I and a colleague write annually for our local bird watching group on the nest boxes we have access to. The 2012 edition covers 25 years of data; the 2013 edition compares the most recent 5 years. I hope they are of some use to you in providing information.

The full report compiled by the BTO can be found at: -

http://btoringing.blogspot.co.uk/2014/06/mid-season-nesting-update.html?dm_i=IG4,2I1AX,39HAO5,9B1AX,1

I have included an extract from the report which relates the one of the species we monitor at Quakers Coppice: -

Blue Tit

Last season was one of the latest for nesting Blue Tit since the mid-1960s. From early reports this season, however, it appears this is one of the earliest on record, with laying 2-3 weeks earlier than normal. Andy Turner in Oxfordshire recorded a mean first egg date of 9th April, almost a month earlier than 2013 (6th May). Clutch sizes appear to have been average to below average - this could be down to high adult abundance, and therefore competition, following the good survival prospects over the 2013/14 warm winter. However, warmer springs also tend to be poor for productivity as, although birds advance their laying, caterpillars advance emergence by a greater amount, therefore reducing the synchrony between demand from chicks and availability of insect food. Moreover, the recent wet weather appears to have had a negative impact on chick survival - wet summers in general are problematic as they wash much of the insect food from the canopy.

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Over the 20+ years that the monitoring has taken place the following boxes have been erected: -

small hole (Tit boxes)	19	(16 supplied in '85 by CWT)
large hole (Stock Dove boxes)	15	(the bulk erected in '91)
chimney style (Owl boxes)	2	
wedge style (Treecreeper)	3	

The tables below are a summary of the data compiled. *As there are no plans to produce an Annual Report, if we produce a substantial report, it will be available to members under separate cover later in the season.* In keeping with tradition in this Newsletter, we offer the last five years data for comparison ...

Blue Tit

Year	Nests	Eggs	Hatched	Fledges	Productivity (i.e. fledges ÷ nests)
2014	12	107	95	49	4.1
2013	13	122	99	85	6.5
2012	12	115	95	74	6.2
2011	15	131	110	73	4.9
2010	15	149	135	83	5.5

average (since '85) 6.6

Great Tit

Year	Nests	Eggs	Hatched	Fledges	Productivity (i.e. fledges ÷ nests)
2014	6	38	33	28	4.7
2013	8	47	44	34	4.3
2012	8	51	45	28	3.5
2011	5	40	35	21	4.2
2010	4	27	25	14	3.5

average (since '85) 5.1

Stock Dove

Year	Nests	Eggs	Hatched	Fledges	Productivity (i.e. fledges ÷ nests)
2014	9	17	13	13	1.4
2013	4	8	8	4	1.0
2012	5	13	5	4	0.8
2011	7	16	14	8	1.1
2010	9	19	10	7	0.8

Stock Doves breeding season extends beyond our recording period, so the data is incomplete

Observations: -

Last year we reported that all the 'small hole' boxes were occupied that breeding season. Not all of them were used this year (only 19 of 22). A pair of Nuthatches successfully raised young in one box - the same box as last year (#22). Was it the same pair? In previous years Nuthatch broods were raised in box #21 (2012) & #23 (2005) [one in the middle of the coppice, the other at the other end]. In 2010 a pair raised young in #22!

NB - if anyone is interested in joining us on the survey, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Bill Fox and John Thompson