

SECOS GARDEN BIRD SURVEY FOR OCTOBER 2000 TO MARCH 2001
(THE MILLENIUM EDITION)

The SECOS garden bird survey was initiated by Colin Lythgoe in 1985, based on a format advocated by The British Trust for Ornithology. The following people have undertaken the organisation of the survey since that time and all due credit to them:- Colin Lythgoe from 1985 to 1988, Alan Robinson from 1988 to 1992, Arthur Fisher from 1992 to 1995, Maureen Broad from 1995 to 1997 and Ron and Doreen Jones from 1997 to 2000.

During the 15 years of the survey, the gardens of fifty-seven SECOS members have featured in the survey at various times. The owners of the gardens are listed in the following alphabetically ordered *table 1* below. (My apologies for any errors or omissions.) Five of the original 1985 contributors are still active in the survey. (The first two digits of a member's registration number in *table 2* indicate the year of joining.)

Table 1

<u>No.</u>	<u>NAME</u>
1	Baker Ann
2	Barker John
3	Battersby Alan & Linda
4	Brindley Beryl
5	Broad Maureen
6	Brooks Bill & Betty
7	Clowes Chris
8	Clowes Hilary
9	Crowther Dennis
10	Davies Ann & Tom
11	Davies Basil
12	Dean Brenda
13	Deas Elizabeth
14	Fields Trudy
15	Firth Andrew
16	Fisher Arthur
17	Fowler Lindsay
18	Goodier Roy
19	Green Chris
20	Grice Janet
21	Hambleton D. J.
22	Hope Tony
23	Hubbard Barbara
24	Hughes Richard
25	Hull Charles
26	Innes Helen
27	Jones Doreen
28	Kirkland Pam
29	Knott Helen & Alan

<u>No.</u>	<u>NAME</u>
30	Lowe Joan
31	Lythgoe Colin
32	Masters Sylvia
33	McKelvey Megan
34	Meakin Dave & Elaine
35	Moore B.
36	Nightingale Margaret & Brian
37	O'Hara Dave
38	Owen Derek
39	Perkins Bryan
40	Pickstock Lorna
41	Pixton Bronwyn
42	Pollard Geoff
43	Proudlock Polly
44	Pym Ann
45	Riggall Vera
46	Roberts Janet & Peter
47	Robinson Alan
48	Robinson Mary
49	Selstrom Angus
50	Smith Bob
51	Smith John & Wendy
52	Soper Alan
53	Thompson John
54	Thompson Mary
55	Tilbrook Joan
56	Tomlinson A.
57	Yarwood Geoff

The SECOS members who took part in the 2000/01 survey are listed in *table 2* together with their reference number. A big thank you is extended to all participants.

Table 2

Reg. No.	Name
8501	Hilary Clowes
8502	Brian & Joan Perkins
9703	John & Wendy Smith
9704	Janet Grice
8505	David & Elaine Meakin
8608	Bob Smith
8511	Alan & Joan Soper
8712	Joan Tilbrook
9814	Colin Lythgoe
0015	Megan McKelvey
8518	Ann Pym

Reg. No.	Name
9820	Bill & Betty Brooks
9921	Barbara Hubbard
8722	Arthur Fisher
9923	Janet & Peter Roberts
0025	Alan & Linda Battersby
0026	Charles Hull
0027	Helen & Alan Knott
8731	John P. Barker
9635	Ron & Doreen Jones
9636	Geof Yarwood

Over the fifteen-year period of the SECOS Garden Bird Survey, sixty-eight different species of birds have been recorded as listed in *table 3* below in alphabetical order.

Table 3.

No.	Name
1	Black Headed Gull
2	Blackbird
3	Blackcap
4	Blue Tit
5	Bullfinch
6	Buzzard
7	Chaffinch
8	Chiffchaff
9	Coal Tit
10	Collared Dove
11	Common Gull
12	Corn Bunting
13	Crow
14	Dunnock
15	Feral Pigeon
16	Fieldfare
17	Goldcrest
18	Goldfinch
19	Great Spotted Woodpecker
20	Great Tit
21	Green Woodpecker
22	Greenfinch
23	Grey Heron
24	Grey Wagtail
25	Herring Gull
26	House Martin
27	House Sparrow
28	Jackdaw
29	Jay
30	Kestrel
31	Lapwing

No.	Name
32	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker
33	Linnet
34	Little Owl
35	Long Tailed Tit
36	Magpie
37	Mallard
38	Marsh/ Willow Tit
39	Meadow Pipit
40	Merlin
41	Mistle Thrush
42	Moorhen
43	Mute Swan
44	Nuthatch
45	Pheasant
46	Pied Wagtail
47	Redheaded Bunting
48	Red-legged Partridge
49	Redpoll
50	Redwing
51	Reed Bunting
52	Robin
53	Rook
54	Siskin
55	Skylark
56	Snipe
57	Song Thrush
58	Sparrowhawk
59	Starling
60	Swallow
61	Tawny owl
62	Tree Sparrow

No.	Name
63	Treecreeper
64	Willow Warbler
65	Woodcock

No.	Name
66	Wood Pigeon
67	Wren
68	Yellow Hammer

Table 3 continued

During the 2000/01 survey twenty-one members took part. They produced bird records for twenty-six weeks and in theory a maximum of 546 records per species (21x26=546) was possible. Due to people not being available to record at various times, for reasons like holidays and sickness, the actual number of records per species was reduced to 512 bird/week record occurrences.

In *table 4* below for 2000/01 each species of bird whose name is pre-printed on the member's input form is listed in descending order of number of bird/week record occurrences, as a measure of their commonality within the survey. This method was used in the first SECOS survey of 1985/6. Also shown in the table is the highest single count recorded for each species and the registration number of the member who made the recording. (See *table 2* for their names.)

Table 4

<u>'Listed' Species Recorded</u>		<u>Number of Bird/Week Records (Out of 512)</u>	<u>Number of Gardens Visited (Out of 21)</u>	<u>Highest Count</u>	
<u>No.</u>	<u>Species</u>			<u>Count</u>	<u>Reg. No.</u>
1	Blue Tit	506	21	(100)	0025
2	House Sparrow	489	21	(50)	0027
3	Robin	477	21	4	0026
4	Blackbird	470	21	18	8505
5	Great Tit	461	21	12	0026
6	Starling	451	21	(200)	8712
7	Collared Dove	422	20	17	8518
8	Duncock	420	21	6	9923
9	Chaffinch	389	21	24	8518
10	Greenfinch	366	21	(40)	0027
11	Wood Pigeon	338	20	17	0025
12	Wren	318	21	4	9921
13	Magpie	313	19	8	9820
14	Coal Tit	230	17	3	#1
15	Song Thrush	180	18	3	9703
16	Goldfinch	180	13	28	8502
17	Crow	157	15	9	8501
18	Nuthatch	85	6	2	#2
19	Pied Wagtail	69	13	2	#3
20	Mistle Thrush	64	10	5	0026
21	Black Headed Gull	51	12	12	0027
22	Siskin	21	9	(30)	0025

#1 - Joint between Registration Numbers 9921 & 8722.

#2 - Joint between Registration Numbers 8518, 0025, 0027 & 9635.

#3 - Joint between Registration Numbers 9921, 8722, 0026 & 9636.

() denotes an estimated figure.

In the 1985/6 survey the top ten most common garden birds were: 1) Blue Tit, 2) Blackbird, 3) Robin, 4) Starling, 5) Great Tit, 6) Chaffinch, 7) House Sparrow, 8) Dunnock, 9) Collared Dove, 10) Greenfinch.

From *table 4* above it can be seen that there are no changes to the species in the top ten in year 2000/01 after 15 years. However the order of commonality has changed slightly. Particularly interesting is the fact that the House Sparrow has jumped from seventh place to second despite much publicity suggesting that it is in decline.

No fewer than fourteen contributors from the total of twenty-one recorded the highest count for at least one bird species, which certainly shows some diversity at least.

Table 5 'The Other Species' table below shows the commonality of the other bird visitors which members have hand-written as records on to their input form. A further twenty-nine species were recorded, giving a total number of fifty-one species recorded in this year's survey.

Table 5

<u>Other Species Recorded</u>		<u>Number of Records</u>	<u>Number of Gardens Visited</u>
<u>No.</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>(Out of 512)</u>	<u>(Out of 21)</u>
1	Long Tailed Tit	159	20
2	Great Spotted Woodpecker	95	9
3	Jackdaw	77	7
4	Tree Sparrow	76	7
5	Sparrowhawk	59	13
6	Pheasant	50	6
7	Redwing	49	10
8	Jay	37	4
9	Fieldfare	29	6
10	Grey Wagtail	23	5
11	Goldcrest	20	5
12	Reed Bunting	20	3
13	Bullfinch	15	4
14	Blackcap	13	5
15	Tawny owl	10	2
16	Rook	9	2
17	Treecreeper	8	5
18	Little Owl	7	2
19	Mallard	6	1
20	Grey Heron	5	3
21	Kestrel	4	2
22	Herring Gull	4	1
23	Chiffchaff	3	2
24	Yellow Hammer	3	1
25	Common Gull	2	1
26	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	1	1
27	Moorhen	1	1
28	Red-legged Partridge	1	1
29	Swallow	1	1

Long Tailed Tits have become common and were recorded in twenty of the twenty-one possible gardens of the survey, Sparrowhawks in thirteen and Great Spotted Woodpeckers in nine. In 1985/86 they all appear to have been comparatively rare occurrences.

Of the least common garden visitors our Club Recorder selected the one record of the Lesser-Spotted Woodpecker as the star sighting of the survey. (Member Registration Number 8501.)

A starling roost numbering some two hundred birds was a regular presence in Leylandii neighbouring Joan Tilbrook's garden during the autumn early winter period. This is not so common an occurrence as it once was.

Species now observed displaying adaptive behaviour patterns and feeding from hanging feeders include Chaffinch, Goldfinch, Blackbird, Song Thrush and Robin.

Species observed being devoured by Sparrowhawks include Collared Dove and Greenfinch.

Table 6 provides a summary of weather conditions for the twenty six-week period which is provided courtesy of John Barker. No one will need reminding of one of the wettest autumn to winter periods in recent history at least.

Table 6

<u>Week No.</u>	<u>Number of Days</u>			<u>Inches of Rain</u>	<u>Temp. °F</u>		<u>Wind</u>		<u>One Word Notes</u>
	<u>Sunny</u>	<u>Snowy</u>	<u>Wet</u>		<u>Max</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Direction</u>	<u>Strength</u>	
1	0	0	5	1.29	64	40	S,S/W to N/W	Strong	Thunder
2	Spells	0	6	1.29	58	38	N/W to S/W		
3	0	0	6	0.51	60	36	N/W& S/W	Light	.28" 17 th
4	0	0	4	5.36	61	32	N/W	Strg/Mod	
5	0	0	7	1	48	35	?	Gale	Flooding
6	Little	0	7	2.35	50	35	S/E,N/W,S/W	Varying	Flooding
7	Little	0	7	1.47	49	32	N/W	Strong	Flooding
8	Little	0	7	1.31	46	29	N/W to S/W	Strong	Flooding
9	Little	0	7	1	56	35	S, S/E, S/W.	Strong	Flooding
10	Little	0	7	1.15	53	38	S/W	Gale	Flooding
11	Little	0	7	1.1	52	28	S/W to N/W	Gale	Flooding
12	Little	0	4	0.28	47	31	S/E	Moderate	
13	2	3	2	0.26	37	13	N/E to N/W	Moderate	Snow
14	0	1	5	0.88	45	26	S/W	Moderate	.5" 31 st
15	7	0	4	0.28	41	27	S/W to E	Light	Frost
16	7	0	0	0	41	20	E	?	Frost
17	0	1	7	1.03	46	25	S to S/W	?	Frost
18	0	0	6	0.7	45	28	N/W	Light	Frost
19	0	0	6	0.9	51	22	S/W	Light	Hail
20	Mixed	0	5	0.68	51	25	N/W	Light	Frost
21	0	2	5	0.34	49	19	N/W	Light	Frost
22	Mixed	0	3	0.4	41	18	N/W to S/W	Light	Frost
23	Little	0	5	0.4	56	22	S to S/W	Light	Frost
24	0	0	5	0.44	53	21	S/W to E	Moderate	Frost
25	0	1	2	0.74	56	22	E to W	Moderate	Frost
26	0	0	5	0.39	55	35	S/E to S/W	?	

Forms for the 2001/02 Winter Garden Bird Survey are to be included with the pre-season newsletter for all present members of the survey team in my anticipation and hope of their continued support.

Additional forms for new recruits to the survey will be available at the first club meeting in September. The greater the number of records included in the survey serves to make it more representative and meaningful, so please encourage other members to join up and emphasise the process is simple and undemanding.

Finally if anyone wishes to perform a more detailed analysis of the 2000/01 survey data than is contained in this report, I can make the data available to them as a copy database in Microsoft Access 97 format, if they let me have a 3.5" floppy disk.

Again many thanks to all contributors.

Trevor Clowes.