

## SECOS GARDEN BIRD SURVEY FOR OCTOBER 2001 TO MARCH 2002

This year saw the number of contributors to the survey increase from twenty-one to twenty-six. They are listed in *Table 1* below together with their registration number.

**Table 1**

| <u>Reg. No.</u> | <u>Name</u>           |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 8501            | Hilary Clowes         |
| 8502            | Bryan & Joan Perkins  |
| 9703            | John & Wendy Smith    |
| 9704            | Janet Grice           |
| 8505            | David & Elaine Meakin |
| 0107            | Christine Howarth     |
| 8608            | Bob Smith             |
| 0110            | Christopher Price     |
| 8511            | Alan & Joan Soper     |
| 8712            | Joan Tilbrook         |
| 9813            | John Thompson         |
| 9814            | Colin Lythgoe         |
| 0116            | Richard Howells       |

| <u>Reg. No.</u> | <u>Name</u>            |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 8518            | Ann Pym                |
| 0119            | George Fisher          |
| 9820            | Bill & Betty Brookes   |
| 9921            | Barbara Hubbard        |
| 8722            | Arthur Fisher          |
| 9923            | Janet & Peter Roberts  |
| 0025            | Alan & Linda Battersby |
| 0026            | Charles Hull           |
| 0027            | Alan Knott             |
| 0128            | Gordon Fleet           |
| 8731            | John P. Barker         |
| 9635            | Ron & Doreen Jones     |
| 9636            | Geof Yarwood           |

Since the inception of the SECOS Garden Bird Survey, seventy different species of birds have been recorded as listed in *Table 2* below in alphabetical order. Last year's list of sixty-eight species erroneously omitted the brambling and the one new entrant is the stock dove.

**Table 2.**

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Name</u>              |
|------------|--------------------------|
| 1          | Black Headed Gull        |
| 2          | Blackbird                |
| 3          | Blackcap                 |
| 4          | Blue Tit                 |
| 5          | Brambling                |
| 6          | Bullfinch                |
| 7          | Buzzard                  |
| 8          | Chaffinch                |
| 9          | Chiffchaff               |
| 10         | Coal Tit                 |
| 11         | Collared Dove            |
| 12         | Common Gull              |
| 13         | Corn Bunting             |
| 14         | Crow                     |
| 15         | Duncock                  |
| 16         | Feral Pigeon             |
| 17         | Fieldfare                |
| 18         | Goldcrest                |
| 19         | Goldfinch                |
| 20         | Great Spotted Woodpecker |
| 21         | Great Tit                |
| 22         | Green Woodpecker         |

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Name</u>               |
|------------|---------------------------|
| 23         | Greenfinch                |
| 24         | Grey Heron                |
| 25         | Grey Wagtail              |
| 26         | Herring Gull              |
| 27         | House Martin              |
| 28         | House Sparrow             |
| 29         | Jackdaw                   |
| 30         | Jay                       |
| 31         | Kestrel                   |
| 32         | Lapwing                   |
| 33         | Lesser Spotted Woodpecker |
| 34         | Linnet                    |
| 35         | Little Owl                |
| 36         | Long-tailed Tit           |
| 37         | Magpie                    |
| 38         | Mallard                   |
| 39         | Marsh/ Willow Tit         |
| 40         | Meadow Pipit              |
| 41         | Merlin                    |
| 42         | Mistle Thrush             |
| 43         | Moorhen                   |
| 44         | Mute Swan                 |

**Table 2 continued.**

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Name</u>          |
|------------|----------------------|
| 45         | Nuthatch             |
| 46         | Pheasant             |
| 47         | Pied Wagtail         |
| 48         | Redheaded Bunting    |
| 49         | Red-legged Partridge |
| 50         | Redpoll              |
| 51         | Redwing              |
| 52         | Reed Bunting         |
| 53         | Robin                |
| 54         | Rook                 |
| 55         | Siskin               |
| 56         | Skylark              |
| 57         | Snipe                |

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Name</u>    |
|------------|----------------|
| 58         | Song Thrush    |
| 59         | Sparrowhawk    |
| 60         | Starling       |
| 61         | Stock Dove     |
| 62         | Swallow        |
| 63         | Tawny Owl      |
| 64         | Tree Sparrow   |
| 65         | Treecreeper    |
| 66         | Willow Warbler |
| 67         | Woodcock       |
| 68         | Woodpigeon     |
| 69         | Wren           |
| 70         | Yellowhammer   |

With twenty-six participants producing bird records over a period of twenty-six weeks in theory a maximum of 676 bird/week records (26x26 =676) was possible. Due to people being unavoidably not available to record at various times, for reasons like holidays and sickness, the actual number of bird/week records produced was reduced to a highly commendable 632. This provides evidence of the level of dedication devoted to the survey. Once again a big thank you is extended to all participants.

In *Table 3* below 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. Also shown in the table is the highest single count recorded for each species and the registration number of the member(s) who made the highest recording. (See *Table 1* for correlation to names.)

**Table 3 – ‘Ranking of Listed Species’**

| <u>Rank No.</u> | <u>Species</u> | <u>Number of Bird/Week Records (Out of 632)</u> | <u>Number of Gardens Visited (Out of 26)</u> | <u>Highest Single Count</u> |                 |
|-----------------|----------------|---|--|-----------------------------|-----------------|
|                 |                |   |  | <u>Count</u>                | <u>Reg. No.</u> |
| 1 [1]           | Blue Tit       | 617   | 26   | 32                          | 0025            |
| 2 [2]           | House Sparrow  | 616   | 26   | (40)                        | 0027            |
| 3 [4]           | Blackbird      | 606   | 26   | 10                          | 9921            |
| 4 [3]           | Robin          | 597   | 26   | 4                           | 0025            |
| 5 [5]           | Great Tit      | 570   | 26   | 12                          | 0026            |
| 6 [7]           | Collared Dove  | 547   | 26   | 11                          | 8518            |
| 7 [8]           | Dunnock        | 525   | 24   | 6                           | 0027            |
| 8[9]            | Chaffinch      | 498   | 26   | 22                          | 8518            |
| 9[6]            | Starling       | 492   | 24   | (250)                       | 0026            |
| 10[14]          | Coal Tit       | 491   | 26   | 9                           | 0116            |
| 11[11]          | Woodpigeon     | 469   | 25   | 10                          | 0107            |

**Table 3 – ‘Ranking of Listed Species’ (continued)**

| <b>Rank No.</b> | <b>Species</b>    | <b>Number of Bird/Week Records (Out of 632)</b> | <b>Number of Gardens Visited (Out of 26)</b> | <b>Highest Single Count</b> |                 |
|-----------------|-------------------|---|--|-----------------------------|-----------------|
|                 |                   |   |  | <b>Count</b>                | <b>Reg. No.</b> |
| 12[10]          | Greenfinch        | 432   | 24   | 51                          | 9814            |
| 13[13]          | Magpie            | 421   | 26   | 7                           | 9636            |
| 14[12]          | Wren              | 314   | 26   | 3                           | #1              |
| 15[16]          | Goldfinch         | 216   | 19   | 39                          | 8502            |
| 16[17]          | Crow              | 157   | 19   | 8                           | 8722            |
| 17[15]          | Song Thrush       | 152   | 21   | 3                           | 8511            |
| 18[18]          | Nuthatch          | 117   | 13   | 2                           | #2              |
| 19[19]          | Pied Wagtail      | 69  | 18   | 3                           | 0026            |
| 20[22]          | Siskin            | 67  | 14   | 24                          | 9814            |
| 21[20]          | Mistle Thrush     | 50  | 12   | 11                          | 0026            |
| 22[21]          | Black-headed Gull | 41  | 10   | 17                          | 9703            |

#1 - Joint equal count between Registration Nos. 9719, 9820, 0026 & 9636.

#2 - Joint equal count between Registration Nos. 9703, 0107, 8518, 8722, 0025, 0027 & 9635.

[ ] Denotes last year’s corresponding ranking for comparison.

( ) Denotes an estimated count figure.

Since last year the greenfinch has been ousted by the coal tit from the top ten most common garden birds. Also the highest single count for the coal tit was three times higher than the previous year, which tends to endorse the fact that they had a particularly good year.

Other than that, the constituent species in the top ten remain the same with minor alterations to their commonality ranking. Starlings have been demoted from sixth place to ninth endorsing a perceived declining trend.

The number of siskin records more than trebled (300%) compared to last year, which more than outstripped that which could be explained by the 23% increase in bird/week records for this year’s survey.

Fourteen contributors from the total of twenty-six recorded the highest count for at least one bird species, with member No. 0026 recording the highest count for five species.

The roost of some two hundred starlings in conifers adjacent to Joan Tilbrook’s garden is still present and Charles Hull has recorded similar numbers actually in his garden.

Table 4 ‘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 thirty-four species were recorded, giving a total number of fifty-six species recorded in this year’s survey from the seventy in the ‘all-time’ list.

**Table 4 – ‘Ranking of Other Species’**

| <b><u>Rank No.</u></b> | <b><u>Species</u></b>     | <b><u>Number of Bird/Week Records (Out of 632)</u></b> | <b><u>Number of Gardens Visited (Out of 26)</u></b> |
|------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|
| 1[2]                   | Great Spotted Woodpecker  | 122  | 9   |
| 2[8]                   | Jay                       | 111  | 8   |
| 3[1]                   | Long-tailed Tit           | 108  | 19  |
| 4[3]                   | Jackdaw                   | 104  | 13  |
| 5[5]                   | Sparrowhawk               | 77   | 16  |
| 6[4]                   | Tree Sparrow              | 67   | 5   |
| 7[6]                   | Pheasant                  | 58   | 4   |
| 8[9]                   | Fieldfare                 | 38   | 10  |
| 9[7]                   | Redwing                   | 33   | 7   |
| 10                     | Redpoll                   | 20   | 3   |
| 11[16]                 | Rook                      | 16   | 3   |
| 12[20]                 | Grey Heron                | 14   | 6   |
| 12[19]                 | Mallard                   | 14   | 1   |
| 14[21]                 | Kestrel                   | 13   | 5   |
| 15[14]                 | Blackcap                  | 12   | 6   |
| 15[13]                 | Bullfinch                 | 12   | 8   |
| 17                     | Brambling                 | 11   | 5   |
| 18[10]                 | Grey Wagtail              | 8  | 3   |
| 18[15]                 | Tawny Owl                 | 8  | 2   |
| 18[17]                 | Treecreeper               | 8  | 3   |
| 21[11]                 | Goldcrest                 | 7  | 4   |
| 22[11]                 | Reed Bunting              | 6  | 1   |
| 23[23]                 | Chiffchaff                | 5  | 5   |
| 23[26]                 | Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | 5  | 3   |
| 23                     | Merlin                    | 5  | 1   |
| 26[18]                 | Little Owl                | 4  | 1   |
| 27[25]                 | Common Gull               | 2  | 2   |
| 27                     | Stock Dove                | 2  | 2   |
| 29                     | Buzzard                   | 1  | 1   |
| 29                     | Green Woodpecker          | 1  | 1   |
| 29[21]                 | Herring Gull              | 1  | 1   |
| 29                     | Lapwing                   | 1  | 1   |
| 29                     | Marsh/Willow Tit          | 1  | 1   |
| 29                     | Skylark                   | 1  | 1   |
| [26]                   | Moorhen                   | 0  |   |
| [26]                   | Red-legged Partridge      | 0  |   |
| [26]                   | Swallow                   | 0  |   |
| [23]                   | Yellowhammer              | 0  |   |

[ ] Denotes last year’s corresponding ranking for comparison.

The species occupying the top nine ranking positions remain the same as last year with small variations in order. Grey wagtails were in tenth position last year but this year at position eighteen, they were far less common with records reduced from twenty-three to only eight. Redpolls are a welcome new inclusion in the tenth slot however.

Long-tailed tits records were significantly reduced compared to last year when every garden received a visit, though they still visited more gardens (19 out of 26) than any other bird in the 'Other Species' table. Sparrowhawks maintained the same ranking as last year and occurred in sixteen gardens. Great spotted woodpeckers visited nine gardens and with increased occurrences they rank number one in the 'Other Species' table.

Records of merlin by member Registration No. 0110 and of a green woodpecker by member Registration No. 0026 are probably the most notable records in this survey. Lesser-spotted woodpeckers were recorded in three gardens this year. Redpoll also visited three gardens.

Redpoll, brambling, stock dove, buzzard, green woodpecker, lapwing, marsh/willow tit, merlin and skylark were recorded this year unlike last. Stock doves have not previously been recorded in this survey since inception of surveys in 1985 (according to my research).

Last year's records of moorhen, red-legged partridge, swallow and yellowhammer, were not perpetuated this year.

Species now observed displaying adaptive behaviour patterns and feeding from hanging feeders include blackcap, goldfinch, great spotted woodpecker, magpie and robin.

Species observed being devoured by sparrowhawks include blackbird, collared dove, greenfinch, sparrow and starling.

Table 5 provides a brief summary of weather conditions for the twenty-six week period, which once more is provided courtesy of John Barker.

**Table 5 – Weather Summary**

| <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            | 7          | 0.9                   | 66              | 47         | S/W              | Variable        |                       |
| 2               | 2                     | 0            | 5          | 1.1                   | 69              | 47         | S/W              | Strong          |                       |
| 3               | 0                     | 0            | 7          | 0.8                   | 62              | 57         | S/W S/E          | Moderate        |                       |
| 4               | 0                     | 0            | 7          | 1.35                  | 62              | 40         | S                | Moderate        |                       |
| 5               | 3                     | 0            | 4          | 0.25                  | 62              | 39         | W N/W            | Moderate        | Frost                 |
| 6               | 1                     | 0            | 6          | 0.67                  | 52              | 28         | N/W              | Light           |                       |
| 7               | 2                     | 0            | 4          | 0.26                  | 53              | 30         | N/W N S/E        | Light           |                       |
| 8               | 1                     | 0            | 3          | 0.16                  | 54              | 31         | N/W              | Moderate        |                       |
| 9               | 1                     | 0            | 7          | 1.14                  | 56              | 33         | N/W              | Moderate        |                       |
| 10              | 2                     | 0            | 5          | 0.45                  | 53              | 31         | S N/W S/W        | Variable        |                       |
| 11              | 0                     | 0            | 1          | 0.02                  | 41              | 23         | E                | Light           | Frost                 |
| 12              | 1                     | 0            | 3          | 0.12                  | 42              | 24         | N/W              | Light           | Frost                 |
| 13              | 0                     | 1            | 5          | 0.32                  | 46              | 23         | N/W              | Moderate        |                       |

*Table 5 – Weather Summary continued*

| <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> |                       |
| 14              | 5                     | 0            | 2          | 0.45                  | 40              | 18         | N S/E            | Moderate        | Frost                 |
| 15              | 0                     | 0            | 3          | 0.09                  | 44              | 29         | S/W              | Moderate        | Cloudy                |
| 16              | 0                     | 0            | 7          | 0.23                  | 48              | 30         | S/W N/W          | Moderate        | Cloudy                |
| 17              | 0                     | 0            | 6          | 0.74                  | 51              | 32         | S/W S W          | Strong          | Cloudy                |
| 18              | 0                     | 0            | 6          | 0.76                  | 54              | 37         | W S/W            | Strong          | Gales                 |
| 19              | 0                     | 0            | 7          | 1.04                  | 51              | 32         | S/W N/W          | Moderate        | Cloudy                |
| 20              | 1                     | 0            | 3          | 0.15                  | 55              | 27         | S/W N/E          | Light           | Frost                 |
| 21              | 0                     | 1            | 7          | 1.18                  | 51              | 28         | N/W              | Mod>Str         |                       |
| 22              | 0                     | 0            | 6          | 1.02                  | 49              | 25         | N N/W            | Moderate        | Gales                 |
| 23              | 1                     | 0            | 3          | 0.30                  | 53              | 30         | N/W S/W          | Moderate        | Cloudy                |
| 24              | 0                     | 0            | 4          | 0.31                  | 56              | 31         | S/W S/E          | Strong          |                       |
| 25              | 0                     | 0            | 5          | 0.51                  | 60              | 35         | S/W W            | Light           | Overcast              |
| 26              | 4                     | 0            | 0          | 0.00                  | 65              | 31         | S/W              | Light           | Frost                 |

Forms for the 2002/03 Winter Garden Bird Survey will be included with the pre-season newsletter for all present members of the survey team (except those who elected to have e-mail attachment versions and are already in receipt) 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.

If any further members are willing to receive future Garden Bird Survey reports and the forms for the next survey as Microsoft Word e-mail attachments, please let me have your e-mail address. My e-mail address is \_\_\_\_\_ for contact and returning your completed forms.

Finally if anyone wishes to perform a more detailed analysis of the 2001/02 survey data than is contained in this report, I can make the data available to them as a copy of the database in Microsoft Access 97 format. Please let me have a 3.5" floppy disk.

Again many thanks to all contributors.

*Trevor Clowes.*  
*14 May 2002.*