

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	Dunnock
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 ($26 \times 26 = 676$) 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)

<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>
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’

<u>Rank No.</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Number of Bird/Week Records</u> <u>(Out of 632)</u>	<u>Number of Gardens Visited</u> <u>(Out of 26)</u>
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.