

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Stanford Training Area	8	15	16	²⁹ 30	7	Jan	15
Didlington Lakes	4	41	6	6	17	Sep	15
Livermere	13	14	15	9	-		13

Sites not counted in last five years

Blickling Lake
 Gunton Park Lake
 Pentney Gravel Pits
 R. Wensum: Fakenham to Great Ryburgh
 Sennowe Park Lakes

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01

Spade Oak Gravel Pit 18 Nov
 Barton Broad 13 Oct
 Ranworth & Cockshoot Broads ²⁹ 12 Oct

† as site designation does not occur and the 1% criterion is not applied, a qualifying level of 10 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report

RUDDY SHELDUCK

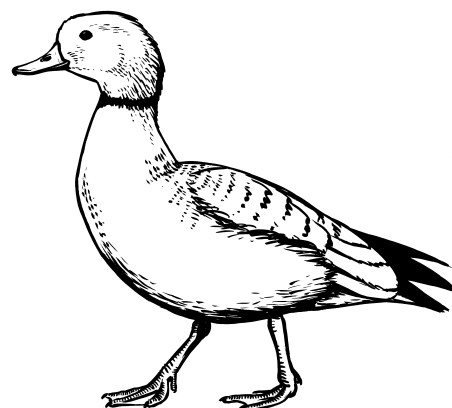
Tadorna ferruginea

Escape and possible vagrant
 Native range: Asia, N Africa & S Europe

GB Max: 10 Aug
NI Max: 0

The summed site maxima for the 25 sites at which the species was found in 2000-01 was 31, compared with 34, 26 and 40 in the preceding three years.

All sites held single birds with the exception of three at Chew Valley Lake in August and on the North Norfolk Coast in February and two at Clennon Valley, Mersey Estuary and on the River Cam.



CAPE SHELDUCK

Tadorna cana

Escape
 Native range: S Africa

One was present at Alveston Lake from October through to January.

AUSTRALIAN SHELDUCK

Tadorna tadornoides

Escape
 Native range: Southern Asia

A single was at Benacre Broad in September.

SHELDUCK
Tadorna tadorna

International threshold: 3,000
Great Britain threshold: 750
All-Ireland threshold: 70

GB Max: 60,692 Jan
NI Max: 4,353 Jan

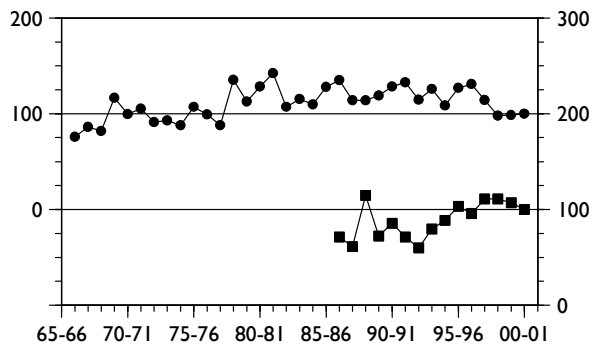


Figure 27. Annual indices for Shelduck in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

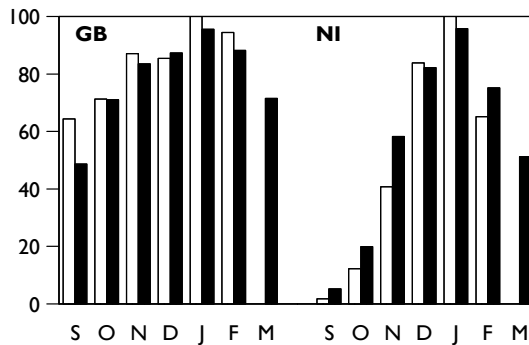


Figure 28. Monthly indices for Shelduck in GB and NI (white bars 2000-01; black bars 1995-96 to 1999-2000)

Following successive falls in the previous three winters, numbers in Great Britain peaked slightly above the 1999-2000 figure. Counts throughout the midwinter months still, however, remain well below those recorded throughout most of the 1990s when totals exceeding 70,000 were not uncommon in two or three different months in a single winter. The annual index value remained almost unchanged from the previous year. Monthly indices largely followed the trend for recent years, although early autumn values were above average.

In Northern Ireland, numbers have fared considerably better over the last decade, rising steadily in the early 1990s and stabilising in the latter half of the decade. The peak count in 2000-01 was the lowest since winter 1995-96, though annual indices, down by 7%, still remain

similar to those of recent years and well above former levels.

Continued high counts of moulting birds on the Mersey Estuary saw the Wash eclipsed as the premier Shelduck site in the UK for the first time since comparative tables were produced in WeBS reports. The steady decline in numbers at the Wash in recent years was, at least temporarily, halted, although the peak count was still amongst the lowest at the site in the last thirty years (15-20,000 was a more normal count in the 1980s and early 1990s). At other sites, notably large counts were recorded on the Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal), Humber and Solway Estuaries and Lindisfarn whilst counts on the Forth Estuary, Medway Estuary and Poole Harbour were well below average. At the last site numbers have fallen by over 60% in the last 5 years.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Mersey Estuary	7,025	14,516	10,600	15,070	10,084	Jul	11,459
The Wash	10,352	12,368	11,430	7,608	10,074	Jan	10,366
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	8,047	10,418	5,634	8,814	11,563	Oct	8,895
Morecambe Bay	5,632	8,426	8,030	6,225	(6,707)	Oct	7,078
Humber Estuary	(3,900)	(4,843)	5,262	4,020	6,918	Aug	5,400
Forth Estuary	5,065	5,507	4,684	3,775	3,009	Sep	4,408
Solway Estuary	3,450	3,370	4,049	³⁰ 3,270	4,606	Nov	3,749
Medway Estuary	³⁰ 5,618	4,160	1,951	2,629	1,920	Jan	3,256
Ribble Estuary	3,788	4,106	2,644	2,908	2,536	Sep	3,196
Strangford Lough	³⁰ 3,493	³⁰ 4,142	3,574	3,193	2,634	Jan	3,407
Severn Estuary	4,117	2,371	³⁰ 3,730	2,281	2,912	Feb	3,082
Blackwater Estuary	4,129	2,123	(1,777)	3,093	2,873	Jan	3,055
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Swale Estuary	2,760	3,027	3,015	2,929	2,013	Jan	2,749
Poole Harbour	4,650	2,662	2,318	2,192	1,748	Feb	2,714 ▼
Thames Estuary	3,094	2,089	2,363	2,387	2,537	Feb	2,494
Hamford Water	3,006	2,781	1,791	1,369	2,003	Feb	2,190

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Stour Estuary	³⁰ 2,247	(2,029)	1,956	³⁰ 2,351	³⁰ 2,164	Jan	2,180
Alde Complex	765	1,935	2,129	1,707	1,328	Jan	1,573
North Norfolk Coast	1,335	³⁰ 1,876	1,310	955	938	Jan	1,283
Burry Inlet	1,282	883	1,327	1,557	1,233	Jan	1,256
Lindisfarne	1,295	927	973	1,224	1,751	Dec	1,234
Chichester Harbour	³⁰ 1,800	³⁰ 1,063	³⁰ 836	1,040	990	Jan	1,146
Colne Estuary	1,338	977	799	963	773	Jan	970
Montrose Basin	596	³⁰ 1,174	973	1,071	907	Jan	944
Eden Estuary	(942)	1,088	(717)	768	680	Oct	870
Deben Estuary	824	875	895	952	772	Feb	864
Cleddau Estuary	1,023	939	921	696	655	Feb	847
Orwell Estuary	1,039	³⁰ 939	³⁰ 645	846	681	Feb	830
Duddon Estuary	853	900	821	814	554	Nov	788
Tees Estuary	893	837	755	784	556	Jan	765

Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland

Larne Lough	440	505	711	414	710	Jan	556
Lough Foyle	527	439	446	419	278	Jan	422
Belfast Lough	³⁰ 775	497	³⁰ 184	250	³⁰ 319	Feb	405
Carlingford Lough	165	198	213	321	326	Feb	245
Loughs Neagh & Beg	188	240	211	157	74	Feb	174
Dundrum Bay	³⁰ 131	64	98	104	79	Mar	95

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Crouch-Roach Estuary
Langstone Harbour

MUSCOVY DUCK

Cairina moschata

Escape
Native range: S America

GB Max: 91 Oct

NI Max: 0

The peak national total rose this year following low figures in the previous two years, although it is some way off the peaks recorded in the mid/late 1990s (e.g. 127 in 1997–1998 and 137 in

1996–1997). However, the 41 sites where this species was seen was the highest ever recorded by WeBS.

Sites with more than five birds in 2000-01

Buxton Pavilion Gardens	25	Mar
Derwent Water	21	Jan/Dec
Fort Henry Ponds & Exton Pk Lake	15	Oct
R. Devon: Kersiepow Ponds	13	Nov
Nafferton Mere	12	Nov
Dart Estuary	11	Feb
R. Devon: Kersiepow Ponds	7	Oct
Blair Drummond Safari Park Loch	6	Oct

WOOD DUCK

Aix sponsa

Escape
Native range: N America

GB Max: 10 Oct

NI Max: 0

Birds were recorded at 14 sites with a peak national total of ten birds. Apart from five at Wellington Gravel Pits, four at Middle Tame

Gravel Pits and two at Middle Pool, Eglwys Nunydd and the Stour Estuary, all other sites held single birds.

MANDARIN
Aix galericulata

Naturalised introduction[†]
Native range: Eastern Asia

GB Max: 491 Dec
NI Max: 4 Apr

A combination of welcomed improvements in coverage and high counts at many regular sites produced record totals in Great Britain. The previous high (315 in November 1997) was eclipsed in all months from September to February. In Northern Ireland, Dundrum Bay remains the only site to regularly record birds. The species' secretive nature and localised movements to sites not covered by WeBS can

cause considerable fluctuations from year to year. In a winter with excellent coverage of key WeBS sites, more than half held above average numbers, most notable being those at Busbridge Lakes and Darwell Reservoir. Others, including Osterley Park Lakes and Panshanger Flash supported relatively few birds. Wraysbury Pond, counted for the first time for WeBS, was a prominent addition to the table.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean	
Sites with mean peak counts of 10 or more birds in Great Britain[†]								
Forest of Dean Ponds	-	²⁰ 146	²⁰ 221	²⁰ 195	-		187	
Wraysbury Pond	-	-	-	-	83	Feb	83	▲
Cuttmil Ponds	106	44	41	65	104	Dec	72	
Severn Estuary	113	40	102	32	72	Sep	72	
Stockgrove Country Park	-	-	34	66	80	Jan	60	
Passfield Lake	48	15	66	(10)	61	Jan	48	
Arun Valley	48	59	45	46	31	several	46	
Bough Beech Reservoir	-	-	-	(2)	²⁹ 40	Sep	40	▲
Connaught Water	28	39	51	27	54	Nov	40	
Dee Flood Meadows	34	²⁹ 38	38	36	31	Dec	35	
Bradley Pools	-	-	-	26	43	Jan	35	
Lost/G'ding Hill/B'dwins Hill Ponds	-	-	-	6	45	Dec	26	▲
Overstone Park Lakes	18	32	-	-	-		25	
Osterley Park Lakes	24	27	20	41	8	Jun/Sep	24	
Panshanger Flash	51	-	22	6	8	Sep	22	
Bramshill Park Lake	7	60	5	19	14	Sep	21	
Busbridge Lakes	0	22	0	-	57	Feb	20	▲
Fonthill Lake	18	(12)	5	23	23	Feb	17	
Woburn Park Lakes	16	9	13	18	25	Oct	16	
Headley Mill Pond	4	16	12	18	16	Feb	13	
Darwell Reservoir	1	4	4	6	46	Oct	12	▲
Norbury Pond	-	-	-	20	2	Nov/Mar	11	

Important sites not counted in last five years

Frenchess Road Pond
Hammer Wood Pond
Paultons Bird Park
Virginia Water

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Epsom Common Ponds
Thursley Lake

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01

Gatton Park 15 Nov
Radnor Mere 13 Nov/Jan
Harewood Lake 10 Sep
Echna Loch 10 Nov

[†] as site designation does not occur and the 1% criterion is not applied, a qualifying level of 10 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report

WIGEON
Anas penelope

International threshold: 12,500
Great Britain threshold: 2,800
All-Ireland threshold: 1,250

GB Max: 382,015 Jan
NI Max: 11,747 Oct

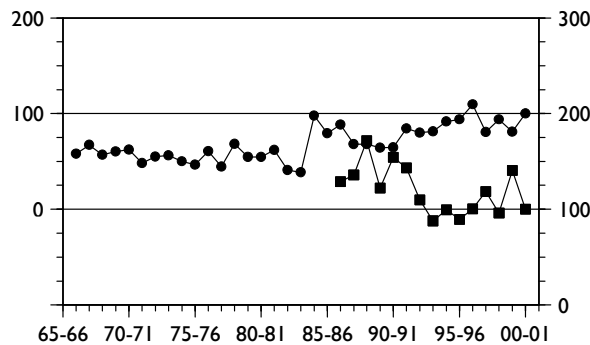


Figure 29. Annual indices for Wigeon in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

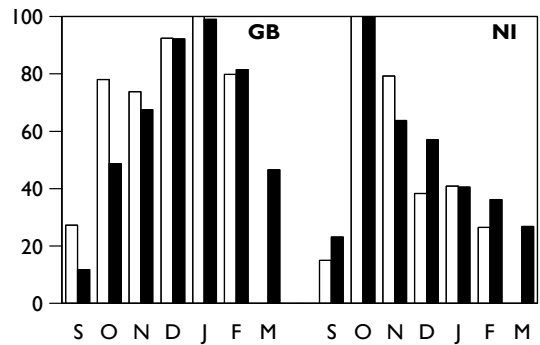


Figure 30. Monthly indices for Wigeon in GB and NI (white bars 2000-01; black bars 1995-96 to 1999-2000)

Numbers in Great Britain were the second highest recorded by WeBS, surpassed only by a count of over 400,000 in 1996-97. This was all the more noteworthy given the relatively low counts on the Ribble Estuary, a site which has, on occasion, held over a quarter of the national total. The annual index rose accordingly whilst monthly indices showed a larger than average proportion of birds were present in the autumn months. In Northern Ireland, the peak count was around average for recent winters, the annual index returning to a level near similar to those of the last nine years

Whilst the number of key sites supporting above average numbers was not exceptional, several recorded counts that were particularly noteworthy. The Somerset Levels held record numbers for the site, whilst sustained high

counts at Breydon Water & Berney Marshes for a further year will see the site added to the list of those supporting internationally important numbers following a steady increase in recent winters. A large count at Lindisfarne in September was unusual for recent years, although numbers there exceeded 20,000 on several occasions in the 1980s. Both Cromarty and Dornoch Firths held above average numbers, whilst a count of over 9,000 birds on Loch of Harray was exceptional for recent years. Numbers at the Blackwater Estuary, a site which qualified as nationally important only the previous year, continued to rise whilst a count of almost 5,000 birds was sufficient to see the River Avon: Ringwood to Christchurch become the only addition to the table in 2000-01.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Ribble Estuary	74,068	66,197	96,855	50,678	63,921	Oct	70,344
Ouse Washes	²⁹ 31,980	26,922	²⁹ 16,999	24,540	²⁹ 14,874	Jan	23,063
Swale Estuary	40,090	13,292	13,837	11,725	17,637	Jan	19,316
Somerset Levels	11,000	16,010	14,523	²⁹ (21,965)	28,366	Dec	18,373
North Norfolk Coast	14,247	12,423	16,398	18,950	20,083	Nov	16,420
Dornoch Firth	11,615	17,240	13,282	9,305	17,445	Oct	13,777
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Breydon Wtr & Berney Marshes	6,500	10,200	11,200	14,130	15,700	Dec	11,546
Cromarty Firth	8,516	11,199	9,338	³⁰ 14,956	14,027	Oct	11,607
Nene Washes	8,090	12,699	13,533	6,994	10,808	Feb	10,425
Mersey Estuary	³⁰ 12,133	10,520	12,013	³⁰ 8,731	8,279	Jan	10,335
Lower Derwent Valley	10,600	7,900	8,100	8,600	-		8,800
Inner Moray Firth	10,097	7,964	8,208	9,746	7,260	Oct	8,655
Alde Complex	8,181	6,810	7,247	6,676	7,145	Jan	7,212
Lindisfarne	4,368	5,600	4,612	5,006	14,141	Sep	6,745
Morecambe Bay	6,432	6,002	4,783	5,289	7,746	Dec	6,050
Severn Estuary	11,548	5,304	4,011	3,559	5,789	Jan	6,042
Middle Yare Marshes	7,189	6,306	5,460	5,387	4,794	Dec	5,827

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Loch of Harray	2,384	5,070	5,263	5,092	9,476	Jan	5,457
Humber Estuary	(5,803)	7,668	4,439	3,315	3,969	Oct	5,039
Arun Valley	4,411	5,155	4,421	4,173	5,343	Dec	4,701
Unspecified SE England site	8,600	5,400	3,900	3,200	1,200	Jan	4,460
Rutland Water	4,968	4,669	3,611	3,630	3,484	Jan	4,072
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	3,682	5,366	3,302	2,751	4,681	Feb	3,956
Blackwater Estuary	2,534	3,031	3,401	4,296	6,507	Feb	3,954
Hamford Water	9,511	2,668	2,825	1,959	2,543	Jan	3,901
Martin Mere	2,460	3,620	6,000	5,430	750	Mar	3,652
Thames Estuary	5,146	1,260	3,407	2,951	5,116	Jan	3,576
Cleddau Estuary	3,351	3,058	4,009	3,532	3,604	Nov	3,511
Montrose Basin	2,735	3,170	3,503	4,402	3,446	Oct	3,451
Exe Estuary	3,184	4,344	4,231	3,143	2,031	Oct	3,387
Stour Estuary	³⁰ 3,847	3,628	2,277	³⁰ 2,518	³⁰ 4,218	Jan	3,298
Southampton Water	3,233	2,791	2,830	3,924	3,351	Jan	3,226
Dyfi Estuary	4,681	2,911	2,489	2,900	2,451	Oct	3,086
Burry Inlet	4,436	3,144	2,514	2,821	2,492	Nov	3,081
Foryd Bay	2,330	1,980	4,140	3,350	3,170	Oct	2,994
Fleet/Wey	3,021	2,637	4,262	1,889	3,062	Oct	2,974
R. Avon: R'wood to Christchurch	1,570	3,000	2,138	3,051	²⁹ 4,945	Jan	2,941 ▲
Medway Estuary	2,951	3,736	4,592	1,751	1,424	Dec	2,891
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Lough Foyle	6,850	9,440	8,829	11,496	8,051	Oct	8,933
Loughs Neagh & Beg	2,398	3,052	2,333	5,743	2,375	Dec	3,180
Strangford Lough	1,900	1,937	2,153	2,469	2,509	Nov	2,194
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels							
Dungeness Gravel Pits							
Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01							
Fen Drayton Gravel Pits	3,314	Dec					

AMERICAN WIGEON

Anas americana

Vagrant

Native range: N & Central America

Apart from the long staying bird, considered to be an escape, at Dorchester Gravel Pits and singles at Foryd Bay in September and October and at Cors Caron in January, all other records were from Scotland.

On Shetland peaks of three, two and two were recorded at Loch of Gards, Loch of Hilwell,

and Loch of Spiggie, respectively. These may relate to the same individuals but ten birds were present at Loch of Hilwell in October (Nightingale & McGeehan 2000). Singles were also recorded along the Moray Coast, at Loch Bee, Loch Spynie and the Lossie Estuary.

CHILOE WIGEON

Anas sibilatrix

Escape

Native range: S America

Two were at Chew Valley Lake in July and singles were seen at the Cotswold Water Park, Radley Gravel Pits and on the Ouse Washes.

GADWALL
Anas strepera

International threshold: **300**
Great Britain threshold: **80**
All-Ireland threshold: **+***

GB Max: **13,562 Jan**
NI Max: **217 Oct**

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

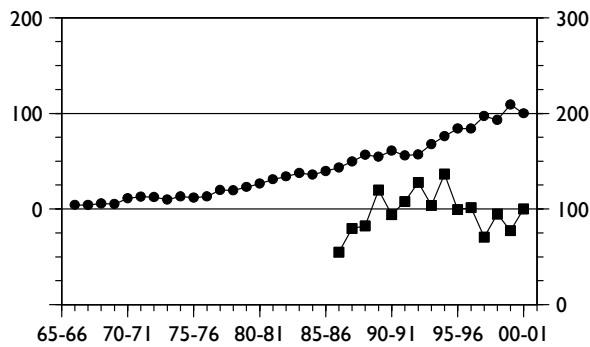


Figure 31. Annual indices for Gadwall in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

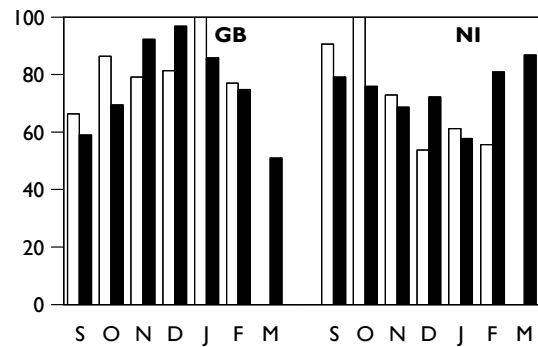


Figure 32. Monthly indices for Gadwall in GB and NI (white bars 2000-01; black bars 1995-96 to 1999-2000)

For the first time in many years the peak number of Gadwall in Great Britain failed to rise to record levels; indeed, it was some 12% lower than the previous winter. As in 1999-2000, the peak occurred in January, slightly later than usual, and monthly indices suggest lower than average numbers in November and December following a peak earlier in the autumn.

The number of birds in Northern Ireland is prone to considerable fluctuations between years, and typically dip in the midwinter period. The peak counts in 2000-01 occurred early, falling markedly by midwinter.

More sites qualify as nationally or internationally important for Gadwall than for any other species of waterbird, partly a consequence of international and national population estimates no longer reflecting the true population status. Relatively few sites hold very large congregations of birds, and numbers at each site may fluctuate considerably between years. Counts on the River Avon: Fordingbridge to Ringwood (inc. Blashford Lakes), Abberton Reservoir, Brent Reservoir and Lower Windrush Valley Gravel Pits were well above normal.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean	
Sites of international importance in the UK								
Rutland Water	733	2,181	961	1,529	967	Sep	1,274	
Wraysbury Gravel Pits	528	734	1,397	612	713	Oct	797	
Ouse Washes	942	²⁹ 1,250	²⁹ 337	²⁹ 808	393	Oct	746	
R. Avon: Fordingbridge to R'wood ²⁹	516	580	611	612	²⁹ 897	Jan	643	
Lee Valley Gravel Pits	576	609	448	764	526	Sep	585	
Thrapston Gravel Pits	(895)	(567)	195	668	531	Jan	572	
Somerset Levels	342	²⁹ 433	⁴ 819	527	453	Jan	515	
Abberton Reservoir	338	120	(460)	549	746	Aug	443	
Loch Leven	235	248	526	544	270	Sep	365	
Hornsea Mere	-	(17)	(315)	(380)	265	Jul	323	
Fen Drayton Gravel Pits	251	388	393	186	345	Jan	313	▲
Thames Estuary	190	198	387	439	346	Feb	312	▲
Sites of national importance in Great Britain								
Pitsford Reservoir	362	355	(169)	204	259	Sep	295	▲
Colne Valley Gravel Pits	434	150	270	155	412	Jan	284	
Lower Derwent Valley	271	283	317	255	-		282	
Eversley Cross & Yateley GP	376	236	183	248	323	Jan	273	
Severn Estuary	281	250	208	294	298	Feb	266	
Fairburn Ings	202	191	358	342	220	Sep	263	
Hoveton Great Broad	-	-	-	230	283	Dec	257	
Buckden/Stirtloe Pits	163	277	277	257	284	Oct	252	
North Norfolk Coast	163	232	258	294	250	Aug	239	
Chichester Gravel Pits	284	188	69	(289)	307	Jan	227	

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean	
Chew Valley Lake	175	200	305	145	310	Aug	227	
Stodmarsh & Collards Lagoon	274	122	240	276	222	Dec	227	
Cotswold Water Park (West)	217	147	272	282	194	Jan	222	
Little Paxton Gravel Pits	287	132	193	132	360	Jan	221	
Earls Barton Gravel Pits	121	264	266	279	159	Sep	218	
Minsmere	240	130	92	(0)	²⁹ 366	Feb	207	
Burghfield Gravel Pits	209	178	236	175	-		200	
Hampton & Kempton Reservoirs	153	198	250	273	113	Sep	197	
Sutton & Lound Gravel Pits	96	150	-	274	-		173	
Hickling Broad	-	-	82	198	229	Feb	170	
Crome's Broad	-	-	-	-	168	Dec	168	▲
Horsey Mere	-	15	(20)	316	-		166	▲
Dinton Pastures	191	64	193	204	-		163	
Hanningfield Reservoir	156	216	105	159	159	Aug	159	
Thorpe Water Park	96	102	178	249	157	Jan	156	
Brent Reservoir	54	121	115	180	306	Oct	155	
Breydon Wtr & Berney Marshes	129	161	258	109	117	Feb	155	
Alton Water	80	312	108	168	92	Dec	152	
Ditchford Gravel Pits	115	118	184	230	104	Jan	150	
Whitlingham Country Park	-	(9)	115	187	145	Jan	149	
North Warren & Thorpness Mere	141	200	²⁹ 123	²⁹ 131	-		149	
Grafham Water	82	223	192	153	76	Nov	145	
Reedham Water	-	-	-	-	141	Jan	141	▲
Meadow Lane Gravel Pits	157	111	178	59	195	Dec	140	
Twyford Gravel Pits	156	89	134	166	-		136	
Sonning Gravel Pit	127	143	132	137	106	Feb	129	
Dungeness Gravel Pits	76	85	169	174	140	Nov	129	
Middle Tame Valley Gravel Pits	(196)	108	99	127	113	Oct	129	
Orwell Estuary	³⁰ 147	59	120	³⁰ 165	150	Sep	128	
Swale Estuary	52	106	251	94	119	Feb	124	
Woolston Eyes	87	79	92	147	211	Nov	123	
Blagdon Lake	164	53	46	175	178	Jul	123	
Tophill Low Reservoirs	40	190	86	²⁹ (141)	158	Nov	123	
Blunham Gravel Pit	-	-	(15)	111	118	Dec	115	
Bewl Water	²⁹ 121	72	122	150	100	Oct	113	
Belvide Reservoir	43	(79)	202	86	116	Aug	112	
Hollowell Reservoir	45	12	124	330	39	Sep	110	
Leybourne/New Hythe Gravel Pits	-	-	-	-	110	Jan	110	▲
Swanholme Lakes	105	99	135	126	83	Feb	110	
Lower Windrush Valley GP	82	130	74	55	(188)	Jan	106	
Crichel Lake	(47)	100	91	149	82	Jan	106	
Fort Henry Ponds & Exton Pk Lake	179	85	119	82	60	Oct	105	
Seaton Gravel Pits	201	109	80	²⁹ 58	74	Feb	104	
Allington Gravel Pit	(40)	-	74	152	86	Nov	104	
Holme Pierrepont Gravel Pits	152	110	140	72	40	Oct	103	
Longside Lake	5	123	178	-	-		102	
Kirby-on-Bain Gravel Pits	(18)	48	123	54	179	Jan	101	▲
Clifford Hill Gravel Pits	115	69	52	201	65	Dec	100	
Stanford Reservoir	(267)	(100)	94	4	33	Oct	100	
Eyebrook Reservoir	56	29	211	-	101	Sep	99	▲
Bainton Pits	71	48	232	96	47	Jan	99	
Nene Washes	63	151	100	138	42	Nov	99	
Langtoft West End Gravel Pits	166	87	66	74	101	Dec	99	
Middle Yare Marshes	85	129	37	143	(77)	Feb	99	
Rye Harbour & Pett Level	113	69	108	73	127	Oct	98	
Unspecified SE England site	27	111	125	110	103	Jan	95	
Tring Reservoirs	79	146	77	68	102	Dec	94	
Blatherwyke Lake	21	15	22	236	174	Sep	94	▲
Thompson Water	-	30	223	26	-		93	▲
Swithland Reservoir	66	61	161	59	117	Nov	93	

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Cotswold Water Park (East)	²⁹ 129	92	63	(41)	87	Dec	93
Wellington Country Park	154	152	26	34	(25)	Nov	92
Swillington Ings	113	52	116	111	53	Aug	89
Otmoor	-	-	-	-	²⁹ 87	Feb	87
North West Solent	63	(26)	133	95	55	Jan	87
The Wash	53	100	135	36	105	Jan	86
Marsh Lane Gravel Pits	100	55	130	54	-		85
Sites with mean peak counts of 10 or more birds in Northern Ireland [†]							
Loughs Neagh & Beg	124	108	182	138	155	Oct	141
Strangford Lough	118	63	83	62	72	Sep	80
Upper Quoile River	58	4	0	6	2	Feb	14
Hillsborough Lakes	4	3	0	53	3	Jan	13

Important sites not counted in last five years

Deeping St James Gravel Pits
 Lackford Gravel Pits
 Shrigley Lakes
 Clea Lakes
 South Iver Gravel Pits
 Sennowe Park Lakes
 Gunton Park Lake

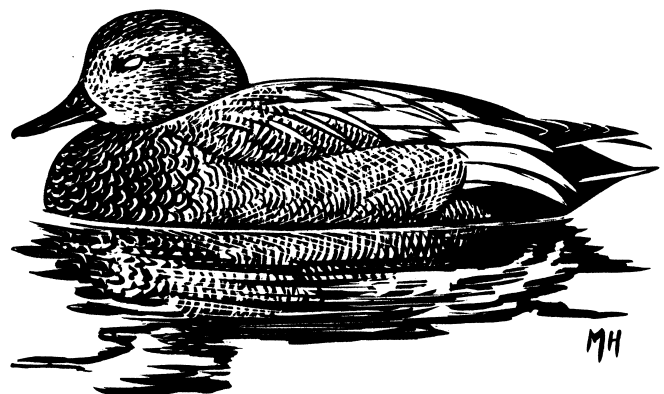
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Broomfleet Brick Ponds
 Stanford Training Area
 Dingle Marshes & Walberswick NNR
 Barons Haugh
 Fleet/Wey
 Roseherne Mere
 Linford Gravel Pits

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01

Potteric Carr Nature Reserve	(96)	Oct	Old Moor Wetlands	111	Sep
Godmanchester Gravel Pit	105	Jan	Ixworth Thorpe	89	Dec
Pen Ponds	86	Dec	Leventhorpe Flood Meadows	86	Sep
Arun Valley	98	Feb	R. Cam: Kingfishers Bridge	106	Feb
Welbeck Estate	106	Oct	North Cave Gravel Pits	106	Jan
Frampton Pools	120	Jan	Lowther Lake	87	Jan
Harrold-Odell Country Park	91	Jan	Colne Estuary	145	Feb
Didlington Lakes	108	Nov	Walthamstow Reservoirs	82	Nov
London Wetland Centre	144	Feb	R. Avon: Salisbury to F'bridge	82	Feb
Alde Complex	106	Jan			

[†] as no all-Ireland threshold has been set, a qualifying level of 10 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report



TEAL
Anas crecca

International threshold: 4,000
Great Britain threshold: 1,400
All-Ireland threshold: 650

GB Max: 149,276 Jan
NI Max: 4,590 Sep

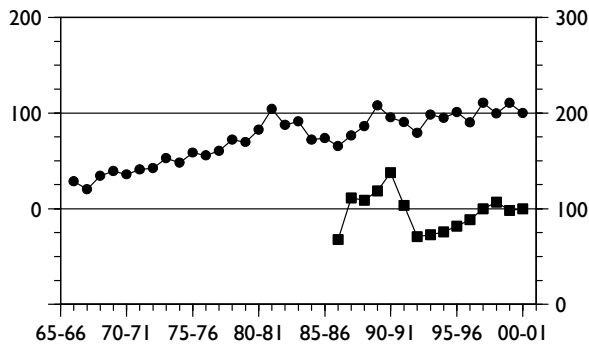


Figure 33. Annual indices for Teal in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

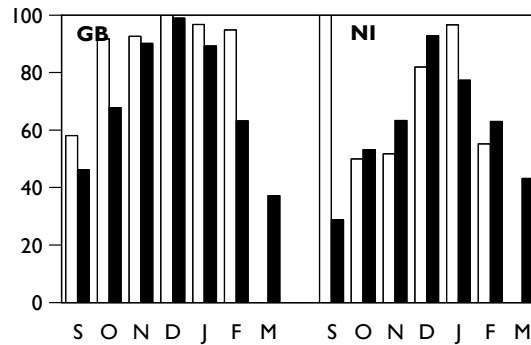


Figure 34. Monthly indices for Teal in GB and NI (white bars 2000-01; black bars 1995-96 to 1999-2000)

National totals in Great Britain reached an all time high in December and rose further to peak in January. Despite these high counts, and sustained higher than average numbers throughout the October to February period. The annual index in Britain fell slightly from the record level of the previous winter. In Northern Ireland, the count was typical for recent years and the annual index remained almost unchanged.

The Somerset Levels, the UK's most important site for Teal, recorded the highest count from any site since the count there in January 1996. Interestingly both of these high counts occurred shortly after cold snaps perhaps suggesting a displacement from other sites

during cold weather. There was a record site count at Martin Mere (like the nearby Ribble Estuary, peaking in late autumn) which raised the site to internationally important status. Elsewhere, the Arun Valley and Blackwater and Swale Estuaries also recorded greatly elevated peaks, while the early autumn count at Lough Foyle was exceptional, more than three times the average of the previous five years. The steady increase in counts at Breydon Water & Berney Marshes was sustained, numbers having risen by almost 750% over the five-year period. The low count at Abberton Reservoir was extraordinary, numbers over 90% below the typical peak.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean	
Sites of international importance in the UK								
Somerset Levels	3,305	16,156	16,037	13,641	²⁹ 19,040	Jan	13,636	
Mersey Estuary	14,120	12,065	9,393	11,700	8,777	Feb	11,211	
Ribble Estuary	7,833	6,209	5,114	5,748	7,874	Oct	6,556	
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	6,545	6,254	4,544	5,185	5,622	Feb	5,630	
Abberton Reservoir	6,756	9,381	(3,593)	5,450	488	Oct	5,519	
Lower Derwent Valley	3,875	5,900	4,300	4,100	-		4,544	
Martin Mere	2,560	5,750	3,170	3,710	6,700	Oct	4,378	▲
Sites of national importance in Great Britain								
Severn Estuary	2,665	2,880	3,772	4,939	5,151	Dec	3,881	
Loch Leven	3,250	3,288	5,055	4,320	2,940	Oct	3,771	
North Norfolk Coast	2,668	3,992	3,721	3,133	4,186	Nov	3,540	
Hamford Water	6,563	2,633	3,266	1,514	2,510	Jan	3,297	▼
Ouse Washes	3,661	²⁹ 3,830	²⁹ 2,970	3,212	2,429	Oct	3,220	
Blackwater Estuary	2,593	2,522	(2,131)	2,598	4,867	Feb	3,145	
Inner Moray Firth	3,407	3,428	³⁰ 3,028	2,921	2,794	Jan	3,116	
Thames Estuary	2,575	1,971	3,346	3,718	3,659	Dec	3,054	
Swale Estuary	2,868	2,457	2,672	2,388	4,385	Oct	2,954	
Cleddau Estuary	2,220	2,637	2,138	2,438	2,427	Jan	2,372	
Horse Mere	-	2,400	(2,500)	2,143	-		2,348	
Arun Valley	655	1,385	2,695	2,438	4,276	Dec	2,290	

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean	
Humber Estuary	(785)	1,528	1,438	2,765	3,370	Oct	2,275	
Southampton Water	2,356	2,493	³⁰ 2,058	³⁰ 1,727	2,366	Jan	2,200	
Dornoch Firth	1,476	(2,073)	2,272	2,039	2,261	Jan	2,024	
Mersehead RSPB Reserve	825	-	-	970	4,180	Dec	1,992	▲
Breydon Wtr & Berney Marshes	500	779	1,284	3,150	4,237	Dec	1,990	▲
Alde Complex	1,793	2,078	1,863	1,837	2,234	Jan	1,961	
Morecambe Bay	1,439	2,114	1,528	1,719	2,956	Nov	1,951	
Nene Washes	1,648	2,054	2,129	1,548	1,592	Dec	1,794	
Mere Sands Wood NR	2,525	1,025	1,350	2,245	1,600	Nov	1,749	
Burry Inlet	2,734	759	2,566	1,471	1,152	Dec	1,736	
Chichester Harbour	2,037	1,649	2,141	1,444	1,359	Jan	1,726	
Woolston Eyes	900	1,500	2,000	1,800	2,100	Feb	1,660	
Poole Harbour	2,297	972	1,623	1,059	2,086	Feb	1,607	
Forth Estuary	929	1,411	1,484	1,419	2,353	Jan	1,519	▲
Rutland Water	1,954	1,402	980	1,876	1,250	Sep	1,492	
Minsmere	779	2,336	1,029	(21)	²⁹ 1,700	Nov	1,461	▲
Medway Estuary	³⁰ 1,968	1,466	1,804	679	1,236	Dec	1,431	
Pagham Harbour	³⁰ 1,660	969	1,716	812	1,849	Feb	1,401	
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland								
Strangford Lough	2,302	1,978	2,519	1,627	1,189	Jan	1,923	
Loughs Neagh & Beg	1,076	2,270	2,388	1,487	2,002	Dec	1,845	
Lough Foyle	837	575	²⁹ 1,500	577	2,888	Sep	1,275	
Upper Lough Erne	368	405	631	1,379	-		696	
Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01								
Holburn Moss	3,920	Sep						
Stour Estuary	³⁰ 2,413	Jan						
R. Avon: R'wood to Christchurch ²⁹	2,178	Jan						
Solway Estuary	2,101	Dec						
Beaulieu Estuary	2,045	Dec						
Dungeness Gravel Pits	1,615	Nov						
Ashleworth Ham	1,559	Jan						
Cotswold Water Park (West)	1,465	Jan						
Caerlaverock WWT	1,420	Nov						

GREEN-WINGED TEAL

Anas carolinensis

Vagrant

Native range: N America

Two individuals were recorded on the Severn Estuary, at different locations in April and January. Singles were noted at Acre Nook Sand Quarry, Inner Moray Firth, Larne Lough, Loch

Bee (South Uist), Loch Scarmclate, Loch of Gards, Loe Pool, Inner Moray Firth, Maer Lake, Morecambe Bay, Poole Harbour and Sandbach Flashes.

SPECKLED TEAL

Anas flavirostris

Escape

Native range: S America

Birds were present at two sites during the winter, Bramshill Park Lake and Woburn Park

Lakes, with maxima of three and two respectively.

MALLARD
Anas platyrhynchos

International threshold: 20,000**
Great Britain threshold: 5,000†
All-Ireland threshold: 500

GB Max: 147,684 Jan
NI Max: 10,028 Sep

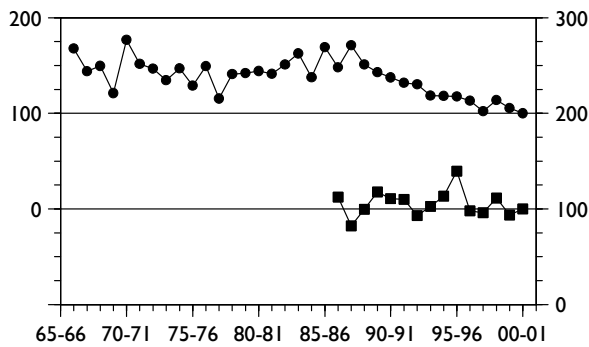


Figure 35. Annual indices for Mallard in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

Although the peak Great Britain count was around average for recent years, suppressed numbers in other winter months saw the annual index fall to its lowest ever level. The eleventh fall in 13 years serves to heighten concern for this species in Britain, particularly given that the factors affecting wintering numbers are largely unknown. Although smaller in scale and restricted in habitats covered, results from other surveys such as the Waterways Bird Survey suggest that breeding populations show no decline in numbers and may even be increasing (Marchant, 2001). Monthly indices followed a typical pattern, although values in January and February were above normal.

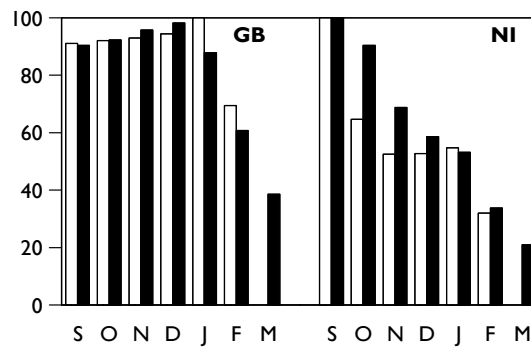


Figure 36. Monthly indices for Mallard in GB and NI (white bars 2000–01; black bars 1995–96 to 1999–2000)

In Northern Ireland, the September peak, although not exceptional, was the highest recorded since September 1995. Monthly indices suggest that this was short lived, the proportion of birds present over the following three months being lower than usual. The annual trend showed little change from the previous year, and has remained relatively stable throughout the period of WeBS monitoring in the province.

Of the key sites for Mallard, only the Humber Estuary recorded counts significantly above the five-year peak mean, although counts in excess of 3,000 birds were recorded at more sites than at any time since 1994–95. Notably, however, three sites no longer surpass the table qualifying levels following counts in 2000–01.

	96–97	97–98	98–99	99–00	00–01	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of 2,000 or more birds in Great Britain †							
Lower Derwent Valley	3,655	2,400	3,450	4,250	-		3,439
Morecambe Bay	3,116	3,615	3,045	3,334	3,126	Sep	3,247
Ouse Washes	2,149	2,582	2,402	²⁹ 4,168	3,657	Oct	2,992
Severn Estuary	3,088	2,101	2,465	2,767	3,265	Dec	2,737
The Wash	2,636	2,771	1,956	2,350	3,264	Jan	2,595
Tring Reservoirs	2,956	2,200	(2,040)	(1,500)	(1,700)	Nov	2,578
Martin Mere	2,885	2,520	2,440	2,230	2,400	Sep	2,495
Humber Estuary	(2,112)	2,215	2,089	2,001	3,460	Dec	2,441
Inner Moray Firth	1,582	2,044	3,325	1,819	1,825	Jan	2,119
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Loughs Neagh & Beg	5,399	5,463	6,176	3,828	6,431	Sep	5,459
Lough Foyle	1,795	1,592	1,696	1,336	1,298	Oct	1,543
Strangford Lough	1,238	1,753	1,198	1,514	1,807	Sep	1,502
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels							
Solway Estuary							
Abberton Reservoir							
Upper Lough Erne							

Important sites not counted in last five years

Ballysaggart Lough

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01

Somerset Levels 2,681 Jan
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal) 2,237 Nov

† as no sites exceed the British threshold, a qualifying level of 2,000 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report

BLACK DUCK

Anas rubripes

Vagrant

Native range: N America

Long-staying birds first recorded by WeBS in 1999-2000 were still present at Stithians Reservoir and Loch Fleet during the winter.

Another was seen at Colliford Reservoir in October.

CHESTNUT TEAL

Anas castanea

Escape

Native range: S Australia

One was present on the Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal) at Inner Marsh Farm in February.

PINTAIL

Anas acuta

International threshold: 600

Great Britain threshold: 280

All-Ireland threshold: 60

GB Max: 20,052 Dec

NI Max: 326 Feb

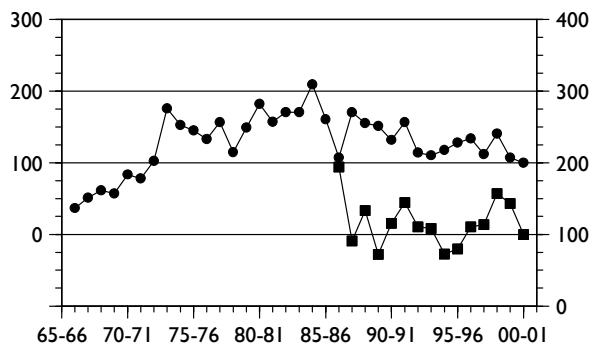


Figure 37. Annual indices for Pintail in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

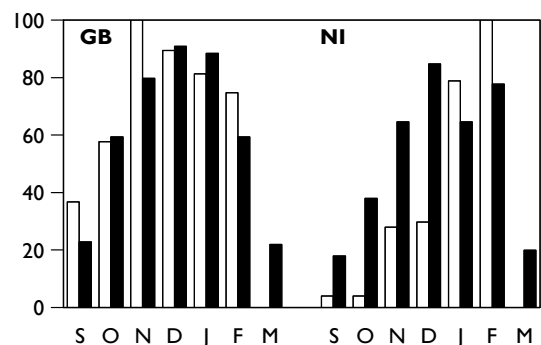


Figure 38. Monthly indices for Pintail in GB and NI (white bars 2000-01; black bars 1995-96 to 1999-2000)

Although higher than the peak of 1999-2000, the December peak of 20,000 in Great Britain was amongst the lowest in the last 25 years. The annual index correspondingly fell to the lowest level since 1971-72. Monthly indices showed a slightly earlier peak than normal in November, whilst the higher than average proportion of birds present in September and February may be a result of the lower than normal peak.

In comparison, Northern Ireland holds relatively small numbers which represent 5-10% of the all-Ireland wintering population. The peak was typical for recent years, although relatively low numbers in early winter saw annual index values fall. Given the small number of birds

involved, the trend can fluctuate considerably between years and no clear pattern is evident.

The low totals in Great Britain were reflected in counts at key sites, the peaks of the top six being well below the recent five-year averages. Despite this, several other sites held unusually high numbers, many being inland floodland sites which can be rapidly exploited by Pintail when conditions become suitable. Amongst the new additions to the table are several such sites, most noteworthy being the following which all supported over 1,000 birds: Somerset Levels, Arun Valley and the River Avon: Ringwood to Christchurch.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean	
Sites of international importance in the UK								
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	5,749	5,954	5,018	2,356	4,216	Oct	4,659	
Morecambe Bay	3,207	4,411	4,795	4,161	2,387	Sep	3,792	
Solway Estuary	3,852	2,677	4,436	3,067	2,389	Dec	3,284	
Ouse Washes	2,055	3,271	2,082	3,804	²⁹ 1,509	Feb	2,544	
Burry Inlet	2,889	1,093	2,782	3,609	1,328	Jan	2,340	
Ribble Estuary	4,073	1,271	3,894	747	819	Jan	2,161	
Nene Washes	264	1,668	1,487	353	2,671	Feb	1,289	
North Norfolk Coast	1,177	1,668	1,075	1,235	987	Nov	1,228	
Medway Estuary	2,047	489	807	463	475	Nov	856	
Mersey Estuary	904	813	882	1,100	491	Nov	838	
Duddon Estuary	1,349	464	918	810	628	Dec	834	
Severn Estuary	698	709	510	898	966	Jan	756	
Pagham Harbour	1,210	1,087	683	³⁰ 434	340	Dec	751	
Stour Estuary	³⁰ 718	638	569	³⁰ 629	691	Feb	649	▲
Sites of national importance in Great Britain								
Swale Estuary	277	570	556	395	952	Dec	550	
Somerset Levels	76	118	171	570	1,546	Dec	496	▲
Arun Valley	167	359	447	199	1,171	Feb	469	▲
Alde Complex	147	340	673	495	506	Jan	432	
Dee Flood Meadows	122	328	94	472	990	Dec	401	
Otmoor	-	-	-	-	²⁹ 396	Feb	396	▲
Tottenham Gravel Pits	415	397	203	410	-		356	
Hamford Water	1,117	54	315	103	102	Jan	338	
Poole Harbour	375	451	285	227	296	Feb	327	
R. Avon: R'wood to Christchurch	0	20	²⁹ 90	30	²⁹ 1,385	Jan	305	▲
Mersehead RSPB Reserve	375	-	-	46	480	Dec	300	▲
Fleet/Wey	414	276	270	233	241	Oct	287	
Martin Mere	231	239	294	313	344	Nov	284	
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland								
Strangford Lough	242	304	313	303	249	Feb	282	
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels								
Inner Moray Firth								
Abberton Reservoir								
Orwell Estuary								
Cromarty Firth								
Lower Derwent Valley								
Blackwater Estuary								
Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01								
Blackwater Estuary	325	Feb	Ashleworth Ham			291	Jan	
Inner Moray Firth	307	Feb	Fen Drayton Gravel Pits			404	Feb	
Breydon Wtr & Berney Marshes	446	Dec	Lough Foyle			75	Feb	
R. Severn/Vyrnwy Confluence	320	Nov						

YELLOW-BILLED PINTAIL

Anas georgica

Escape
Native range: S America

A single was at Liden Lagoon in August.

BAHAMA PINTAIL

Anas bahamensis

Escape
Native range: S America

Single birds were recorded at Avon Estuary, Cowdenknowes Reservoir, Harrow Lodge Park, Llyn Coed-y-dinas and the Taw-Torridge Estuary.

RED-BILLED TEAL

Anas erythrorhyncha

Escape
Native range: Africa

One present at Connaught Water in May, August and September was presumably the same bird as recorded there in 1999–2000.

GARGANEY

Anas querquedula

International threshold: 20,000**
Great Britain threshold: ?[†]
All-Ireland threshold: ?[†]

GB Max: 56 May
NI Max: 0

The peak, around average for recent years, occurred in early summer rather than the usual August peak which failed to materialise in 2000. Birds were recorded at only 37 sites (*cf.* 55–74 in previous four years). Four birds were still present in November, singles remaining through December and January.

Whilst peak national counts occurred during the spring, most site peaks typically occurred during mid-late summer. Five or more birds were recorded at seven sites, each during the July/August period, most notable being 12 at Stodmarsh NNR & Collards Lagoon.

	96–97	97–98	98–99	99–00	00–01	Mon	Mean	
Sites with mean peak counts of four or more birds in Great Britain [†]								
Fairburn Ings	11	3	4	10	4	Aug	6	
Wraysbury Gravel Pits	6	3	7	10	2	Aug	6	
Breydon Wtr & Berney Marshes	0	6	7	8	6	Jun	5	
Stodmarsh & Collards Lagoon	3	0	7	3	12	Jul	5	▲
Ouse Washes	²⁹ 3	²⁹ 6	²⁹ 7	9	0		5	
Chew Valley Lake	3	4	9	3	5	Sep	5	
Unspecified SE England site	2	7	5	7	3	Sep	5	
Rutland Water	8	3	3	7	0		4	
Thames Estuary	1	1	3	6	9	Aug	4	▲

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

North Norfolk Coast

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000–01

Millbrook Clay Pit	10	Jul/Aug
Earls Barton Gravel Pits	6	Aug
Morecambe Bay	5	Jul
Old Moor Wetlands	4	Aug
Severn Estuary	4	Sep
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	4	Sep

[†] as no British or all-Ireland thresholds have been set, a qualifying level of four has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report

BLUE-WINGED TEAL

Anas discors

Vagrant & escape
Native range: Americas

The bird at Stodmarsh & Collards Lagoon first recorded in 1998–1999 was still present in May. Two other singles were seen in August, at

Blithfield Reservoir and on the North Norfolk Coast at Cley.

SHOVELER
Anas clypeata

International threshold: 400
Great Britain threshold: 100
All-Ireland threshold: 65

GB Max: 11,501 Nov
NI Max: 212 Jan

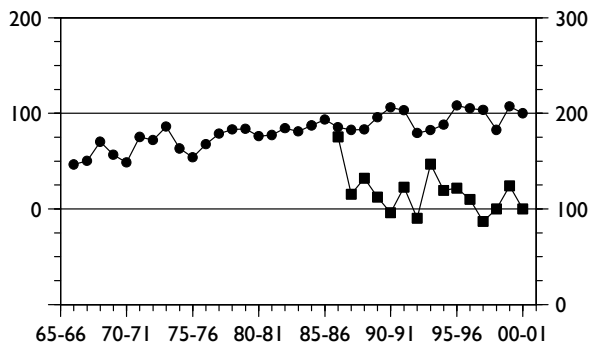


Figure 39. Annual indices for Shoveler in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

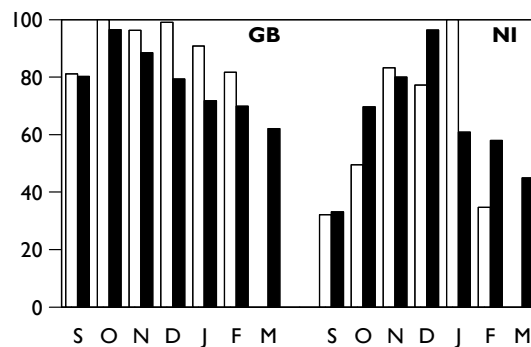


Figure 40. Monthly indices for Shoveler in GB and NI (white bars 2000-01; black bars 1995-96 to 1999-2000)

The late autumn peak in Great Britain was the second highest on record, exceeded only in November 1995 by a count of over 12,000 birds. The timing of the peak, in late autumn, is typical and is reflected in the pattern of monthly indices which show an October or November peak followed by a gradual decline throughout the winter. Interestingly, higher than average numbers persisted throughout the midwinter months, and closer examination of numbers in recent years also suggests that the number of birds staying later in the winter may be increasing. Annual index values in Britain remain on a par with recent years. For a species that occurs only in small numbers in Northern Ireland, peak totals and index values for Shoveler in the province fluctuate relatively little between years.

The number of sites supporting important numbers is higher than for any other species of waterbird with the exception of Gadwall. Concentrations of more than 3-400 birds are very infrequent and occur only on a handful of sites, making the count on the Somerset Levels, the second highest ever recorded by WeBS at any site, all the more noteworthy. Other sites holding well above average numbers included Breydon Water & Berney Marshes, Llynau Y Fali, the Ribble Estuary, Fen Drayton Gravel Pits and Minsmere. Peak counts at many sites fluctuate considerably between years probably a result of the large turnover during the autumn period and their ability to exploit favourable conditions at sites when they occur (Cranswick *et al.* 1997).

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean	
Sites of international importance in the UK								
Ouse Washes	663	²⁹ 925	²⁹ 574	²⁹ 980	287	Oct	686	
Somerset Levels	435	504	485	635	1,343	Dec	680	
Rutland Water	704	531	430	1,154	401	Sep	644	
Burry Inlet	490	363	826	573	368	Nov	524	
Swale Estuary	411	551	468	498	511	Feb	488	
Abberton Reservoir	628	541	(488)	375	352	Oct	477	
Loch Leven	541	426	318	420	480	Sep	437	
Sites of national importance in Great Britain								
Nene Washes	143	689	482	406	190	Dec	382	▼
Breydon Wtr & Berney Marshes	172	183	319	356	620	Nov	330	
Staines Reservoirs	210	490	251	312	(130)	Feb	316	
Blythfield Reservoir	77	436	266	443	341	Aug	313	
Chew Valley Lake	225	405	235	425	270	Sep	312	▼
Dungeness Gravel Pits	421	260	197	269	398	Nov	309	
Unspecified SE England site	359	325	360	320	164	Jan	306	
Stodmarsh & Collards Lagoon	265	328	230	280	409	Nov	302	
Lee Valley Gravel Pits	288	275	228	241	374	Oct	281	
Thames Estuary	197	173	374	187	452	Jan	277	

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean	
Fairburn Ings	352	272	200	144	289	Oct	251	
Lower Derwent Valley	221	310	341	122	-		249	
Severn Estuary	169	150	259	206	306	Feb	218	
Arun Valley	146	176	203	163	392	Dec	216	
Grafham Water	290	160	171	265	128	Nov	203	
Llynnau Y Fali	57	205	178	92	464	Jan	199	
Wraysbury Gravel Pits	157	169	84	399	154	Sep	193	
King George VI Reservoir	310	248	119	114	141	Nov	186	
Tees Estuary	202	201	107	131	260	Sep	180	
Brent Reservoir	100	103	185	241	183	Sep	162	
Woolston Eyes	152	152	104	176	210	Sep	159	
Hanningfield Reservoir	211	304	51	184	42	Nov	158	
Rye Harbour & Pett Level	238	135	126	130	160	Feb	158	
Ribble Estuary	46	92	73	173	(393)	Nov	155	▲
Leighton Moss	188	95	185	146	-		154	
Medway Estuary	³⁰ 264	(80)	156	122	71	Nov	153	
Blagdon Lake	404	64	52	95	145	Oct	152	
North Norfolk Coast	135	121	138	153	203	Oct	150	
Rostherne Mere	103	157	121	278	86	Sep	149	
Alde Complex	120	119	141	161	181	Dec	144	
Humber Estuary	(13)	(78)	92	195	146	Oct	144	
North West Solent	138	(110)	178	110	150	Dec	144	
Fen Drayton Gravel Pits	26	56	155	92	378	Dec	141	▲
Pitsford Reservoir	236	157	(32)	47	114	Oct	139	
Hampton & Kempton Reservoirs	234	88	105	147	118	Oct	138	
Knight & Bessborough Reservoirs	185	160	73	110	159	Aug	137	
Middle Tame Valley Gravel Pits	(186)	116	127	141	102	Sep	134	
Minsmere	69	128	98	(0)	²⁹ 241	Dec	134	
Otmoor	-	-	-	-	²⁹ 134	Dec	134	▲
Walthamstow Reservoirs	144	143	78	143	157	Oct	133	
Swithland Reservoir	98	116	51	203	182	Sep	130	
Fleet/Wey	133	107	217	118	73	Sep	130	
R. Avon: Fordingbridge to R'wood ²⁹	238	52	67	81	182	Feb	124	
Malltraeth Marsh RSPB	89	92	125	145	157	Feb	122	
Willen Lake	25	138	123	128	177	Sep	118	▲
Beddington Sewage Farm	170	95	85	115	125	Sep	118	
Aqualate Mere	358	50	47	(3)	3	Aug	115	
Coombe Country Park	-	(4)	107	(111)	-		109	▲
Middle Yare Marshes	67	106	67	123	175	Oct	108	▲
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	67	91	143	80	157	Nov	108	▲
Poole Harbour	64	103	159	51	158	Jan	107	
Belvide Reservoir	136	(59)	187	21	81	Aug	106	▲
Stanford Reservoir	145	276	19	54	37	Sep	106	
Wraysbury Reservoir	325	69	(41)	18	11	Jan	106	
Reedham Water	-	-	-	-	105	Jan	105	▲
Loch of Strathbeg	(213)	75	19	(65)	(46)	Oct	102	▲

Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland

Strangford Lough	108	101	126	168	159	Jan	132	
Loughs Neagh & Beg	89	84	103	72	53	Sep	80	

Important sites not counted in last five years

Lackford Gravel Pits
Ashford Common Waterworks

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Hornsea Mere
Thrapston Gravel Pits
Colne Valley Gravel Pits

North Warren & Thorpeness Mere
Blackwater Estuary

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000–01

R. Avon: R'wood to Christchurch ²⁹	264	Jan	Hornsea Mere	118	Nov
Cotswold Water Park (West)	188	Dec	Hollowell Reservoir	117	Nov
Solway Estuary	174	Dec	Walmore Common	112	Nov
Shinewater Lake	172	Dec	Southampton Water	106	Jan
Chichester Gravel Pits	160	Jan	Mersehead RSPB Reserve	105	Dec
Seaton Gravel Pits	140	Jan/Feb	Martin Mere	103	Sep
Colne Estuary	128	Feb	Crouch-Roach Estuary	100	Dec
Blyth Estuary (Suffolk)	126	Feb	Rush Bog	(100)	Nov
Great Pool Westwood Park	120	Feb			

RINGED TEAL*Callonetta leucophrys*

Escape
Native range: S America

Singles were at Valentines Park in July and Tundry Park in September.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD*Netta rufina*

Vagrant & escape[†]
Native range: Europe & Asia

GB Max: 110 Jan**NI Max:** 0

Despite the absence of counts for a number of formerly important sites, national totals were amongst the highest recorded by WeBS. Birds were recorded at 42 sites, around average for recent years. The key location remains the Cotswold Water Park, situated on the Gloucestershire/Wiltshire/Oxfordshire border. Combined counts from the two groupings of flooded gravel pits in the area reached their

highest level to date in January (89), though with no combined counts in other months approaching this number the possibility of birds moving between lakes and being recorded twice remains. It is worth noting, however, that despite their striking appearance, birds can be surprisingly elusive. A count of 17 birds at Baston/Langtoft Gravel Pits was also noteworthy.

	96–97	97–98	98–99	99–00	00–01	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of 10 or more birds in Great Britain[†]							
Cotswold Water Park (West)	54	62	60	63	56	Jan	59
Cotswold Water Park (East)	15	12	25	22	33	Jan	21

Sites not counted in last five years

Paultons Bird Park

R. Wensum: Fakenham to Great Ryburgh

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000–01

Baston/Langtoft Gravel Pits 17 Dec

[†] as site designation does not occur and the 1% criterion is not applied, a qualifying level of 10 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report

ROSYBILL*Netta peposaca*

Escape
Native range: S America

One was present in the Cotswold Water Park (East) from October to February.

POCHARD
Aythya ferina

International threshold: **3,500**
Great Britain threshold: **440**
All-Ireland threshold: **400**

GB Max: 34,240 Jan
NI Max: 24,430 Dec

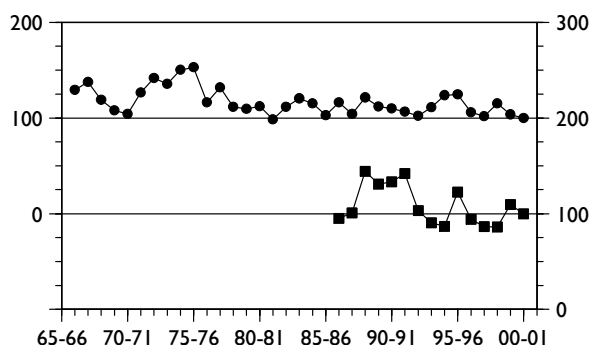


Figure 41. Annual indices for Pochard in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

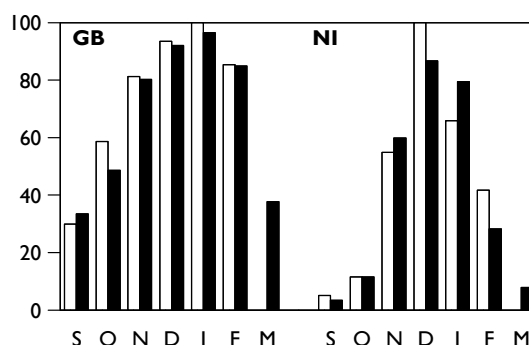


Figure 42. Monthly indices for Pochard in GB and NI (white bars 2000-01; black bars 1995-96 to 1999-2000)

National totals in Great Britain dipped below 35,000 for only the second time since the early 1980s. Consequently, annual indices also fell to their lowest level since this time, although viewed over the long term, numbers appear relatively stable.

Amongst key British sites, sustained high numbers of presumably moulting birds at Abberton Reservoir has seen mean peak counts surpass the level of international importance. Exceptional counts on the Nene Washes, where

numbers fluctuate greatly from one year to the next according to the depth of floodwater, were in stark contrast to totals in the previous winter.

In Northern Ireland, totals are influenced almost solely by counts at Loughs Neagh & Beg which, in the absence of counts from Upper Lough Erne, accounted for over 99% of the birds recorded in the province in some months. The peak count was typical for recent years, and annual indices have remained relatively stable over the last nine years.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Loughs Neagh & Beg	25,230	19,205	29,683	22,681	24,388	Dec	24,237
Ouse Washes	1,413	5,737	5,383	²⁹ 6,345	²⁹ 4,602	Jan	4,696
Abberton Reservoir	3,079	2,518	(2,569)	4,744	5,296	Aug	3,909 ▲
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Middle Tame Valley Gravel Pits	(1,899)	1,236	(1,447)	1,167	1,733	Jan	1,509
Loch Leven	1,692	1,125	1,544	1,320	1,330	Oct	1,402
Nene Washes	185	435	1,943	27	4,102	Feb	1,338
Severn Estuary	1,576	1,248	1,154	1,473	997	Feb	1,290
Cotswold Water Park (East)	1,235	1,151	1,382	(1,225)	723	Nov	1,143
Fleet/Wey	853	848	1,320	850	928	Jan	960
Lower Derwent Valley	750	2,350	311	113	-		881
Martin Mere	1,111	747	767	905	861	Feb	878
Hornsea Mere	-	(64)	806	1,065	580	Jan	817
Cotswold Water Park (West)	562	922	876	670	988	Dec	804
Lower Windrush Valley GP	622	780	655	1,150	(681)	Dec	802
Dungeness Gravel Pits	633	836	659	889	669	Jul	737
Rostherne Mere	2,616	152	133	129	576	Jan	721
Humber Estuary	(2,505)	205	323	317	216	Feb	713
Loch of Boardhouse	913	613	123	1,156	711	Oct	703
Rutland Water	855	680	784	620	318	Jul	651
Wraysbury Gravel Pits	513	697	759	596	494	Dec	612
Loch of Harray	1,119	506	473	416	457	Oct	594
Loch Gelly	1,518	490	-	18	330	Dec	589
Pitsford Reservoir	410	254	1,134	654	357	Sep	562
Poole Harbour	1,386	298	244	363	359	Feb	530

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean	
Hickling Broad	-	-	250	945	390	Dec	528	
Woolston Eyes	365	362	710	630	537	Feb	521	
Chew Valley Lake	865	440	400	520	290	Sep	503	
St Johns Loch	(470)	-	(200)	-	-		(470)	
Loch Ore	540	(410)	496	105	702	Dec	461	▲
R. Avon: Fordingbridge to R'wood ²⁹	665	356	303	377	588	Jan	458	▲
Hanningfield Reservoir	467	377	617	430	397	Feb	458	
Shustoke Reservoirs	740	685	9	340	-		444	▲

Important sites not counted in last five years

Walton Lock

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

R. Irwell

Cheddar Reservoir

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01

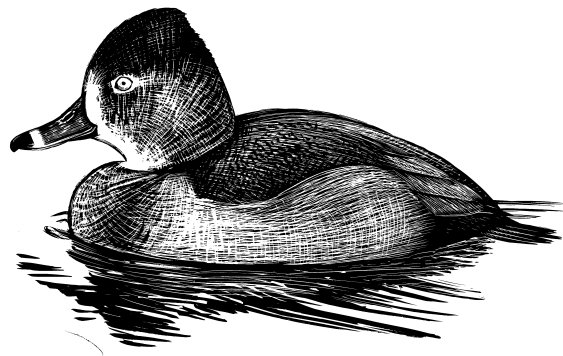
Thames Estuary	677	Jan
Somerset Levels	677	Dec
Fen Drayton Gravel Pits	662	Feb
Eyebrook Reservoir	475	Sep

RING-NECKED DUCK

Aythya collaris

Vagrant
Native range: N America

A maximum of twelve individuals was recorded by WeBS during the winter but this does not allow for birds moving between and being recorded at more than one site. Apart from two at Bough Beech Reservoir in April and Wellington Gravel Pits in December, single birds were noted at Burrator Reservoir, Blagdon Lake, Astley Lake, Barcombe Mills Reservoir, Uskmouth Reedbed Lagoons, Heathfield Gravel Pits and Loch Ore.



FERRUGINOUS DUCK

Aythya nyroca

Vagrant & escape
Native range: Europe, N Africa & Asia

Singles were recorded at nine sites, with one present on the Somerset Levels for the third consecutive winter. Elsewhere, birds were seen at Godmanchester Gravel Pit, Luckford Lake,

Lough Money, Minsmere, Morden Park Lake, Ouse Washes, Ribble Estuary and Sinah Gravel Pit.

NEW ZEALAND SCAUP

Aythya novaeseelandiae

Escape
Native range: New Zealand

One was present on Connaught Water in October and November.

TUFTED DUCK
Aythya fuligula

International threshold: 10,000
Great Britain threshold: 600
All-Ireland threshold: 400

GB Max: 57,207 Jan
NI Max: 26,598 Dec

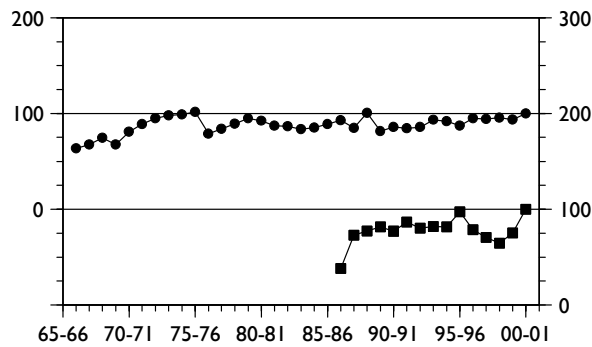


Figure 43. Annual indices for Tufted Duck in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

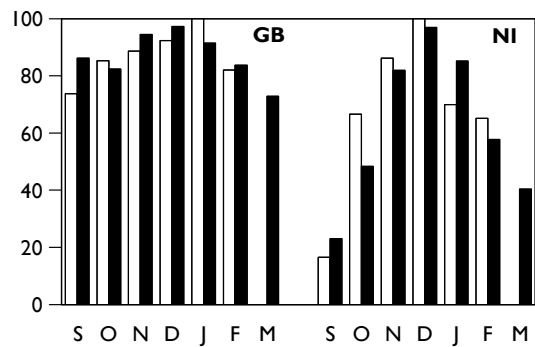


Figure 44. Monthly indices for Tufted Duck in GB and NI (white bars 2000-01; black bars 1995-96 to 1999-2000)

The January 2001 count marked the fourth successive rise in the Great Britain peak. The national total topped 57,000 for the first time ever, and saw the annual index rise to its the third highest level. Long-term trends in numbers are perhaps more stable for Tufted Duck than for any other wildfowl species; typically only small fluctuations occur from one year to the next. Interestingly, annual indices in recent years suggest a small but steady rise since the late 1980s.

In Northern Ireland, annual indices are similarly more stable than for most other

species. With the peak count at Loughs Neagh & Beg being the third highest recorded and a higher than usual proportion of birds present in most months away from the peak, the annual index rose by 33% to reach its highest ever level.

Amongst other key sites, high late summer numbers at Abberton Reservoir were again present. The Ouse Washes and Hanningfield Reservoir held above average numbers, whilst numbers at Wraysbury Gravel Pits were the lowest for a decade.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Loughs Neagh & Beg	27,368	18,697	20,324	20,039	26,360	Dec	22,558
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Loch Leven	4,589	3,310	3,434	3,550	3,900	Nov	3,757
Abberton Reservoir	3,218	2,268	(2,602)	4,654	4,414	Aug	3,639
Rutland Water	3,159	3,557	4,692	3,325	3,313	Sep	3,609
Middle Tame Valley Gravel Pits	(2,384)	2,422	1,645	2,370	2,547	Jan	2,274
Wraysbury Gravel Pits	1,709	2,868	1,667	1,812	781	Oct	1,767
Pitsford Reservoir	2,034	1,129	(2,585)	1,312	1,202	Sep	1,652
Hanningfield Reservoir	1,600	1,747	851	1,534	2,183	Nov	1,583
Ouse Washes	391	1,165	1,662	1,361	2,214	Jan	1,359
Walthamstow Reservoirs	1,083	1,368	1,217	1,194	1,691	Aug	1,311
Staines Reservoirs	1,405	1,283	1,251	1,250	1,243	Aug	1,286
Alton Water	1,536	783	922	736	1,389	Jan	1,073
Lee Valley Gravel Pits	1,163	930	1,053	1,065	1,085	Dec	1,059
Besthorpe/Girton Gravel Pits	1,122	637	847	983	462	Jan	810
Draycote Water	475	645	1,010	1,007	744	Nov	776
Fen Drayton Gravel Pits	646	679	863	755	929	Aug	774
Chasewater	809	744	702	-	-		752
Chew Valley Lake	520	750	735	965	785	Sep	751
Lower Windrush Valley GP	544	624	771	1,020	737	Feb	739
King George V Reservoirs	1,020	700	740	230	970	Aug	732
William Girling Reservoir	738	807	617	859	576	Aug	719
Tophill Low Reservoirs	554	395	514	1,208	920	Aug	718

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Cotswold Water Park (West)	483	521	829	748	753	Dec	667
Thames Estuary	769	444	791	566	653	Jan	645 ▲
Cotswold Water Park (East)	647	707	753	529	581	Nov	643
Severn Estuary	610	382	662	906	625	Dec	637
Dungeness Gravel Pits	558	760	641	645	523	Jul	625
Loch of Harray	524	713	946	534	368	Nov	617
Windermere	565	637	-	-	-		601

Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland

Upper Lough Erne	644	542	255	546	-		497
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Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Hickling Broad
 Little Paxton Gravel Pits
 Loch Watten

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01

Hamilton Low Parks & S'clyde Park	1,088	Jan
King George VI Reservoir	718	Aug
Millbrook Clay Pit	691	Oct
Nene Washes	747	Feb
Grafham Water	765	Nov
Somerset Levels	642	Jan

SCAUP

Aythya marila

International threshold: 3,100
 Great Britain threshold: 110
 All-Ireland threshold: 30*

GB Max: 4,122 Jan
 NI Max: 3,711 Feb

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

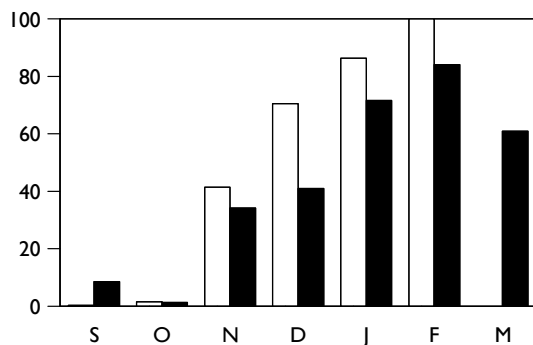
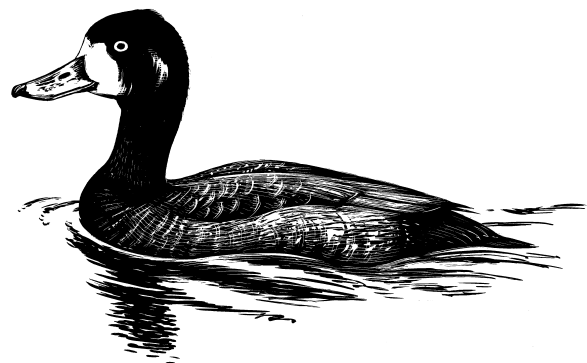


Figure 45. Monthly indices for Scaup in NI (white bars 2000-01; black bars 1995-96 to 1999-2000)

Beg during the course of a winter — indicating a genuine decline in numbers in 2000-01.

Numbers in Northern Ireland were around average, although counts at Loughs Neagh & Beg were, with the exception of just one fewer bird in 1993-94, the lowest there since 1989-90. Numbers at other sites in the province were well above average.

Although somewhat lower than average, the peak total of Scaup in Britain fell within the range of counts for recent winters. Correspondingly, counts at around half the nationally important sites were below their respective five-year peak means, although they were greatly elevated in the Cromarty Firth while recent winters have seen the consistent presence of around two hundred birds in Rough Firth. The most notable decline was in the Solway Estuary, where counts were amongst the lowest at the site in the last decade. There was no corresponding increase at adjacent or other sites — for example, it has been suggested that there may be interchange with Loughs Neagh &



	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Loughs Neagh & Beg	4,222	3,671	4,426	3,874	2,633	Feb	3,765
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Solway Estuary	2,341	4,533	2,006	3,001	³⁰ 1,818	Dec	2,740
Loch Indaal	732	1,110	1,120	900	1,200	Jan	1,012
Loch Ryan	²⁹ 1,320	1,249	200	(637)	631	Jan	850
Inner Moray Firth	332	²⁴ 416	²⁴ 392	480	313	Dec	387
Forth Estuary	1,031	145	342	157	240	Jan	383
Loch of Stenness	318	258	268	250	211	Oct	261
Loch of Harray	²⁹ 20	208	198	201	311	Dec	188
Cromarty Firth	115	45	132	²⁴ 117	424	Jan	167
Humber Estuary	(594)	21	12	2	6	Feb	127
Rough Firth	1	0	170	204	204	Feb	116
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Carlingford Lough	404	572	700	700	800	Dec	635
Belfast Lough	³⁰ 254	95	³⁰ 78	244	493	Feb	233
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels							
North Norfolk Coast							

LESSER SCAUP

Aythya affinis

Vagrant

Native range: N America

Four birds were recorded during 2000-01. In April and May different individuals were recorded at Blagdon Lake, Rutland Water and

Fen Drayton Gravel Pits. During November one was at Meadow Lane Gravel Pits, a site visited by this species in February and March 1999.

EIDER

Somateria mollissima

International threshold: 20,000**
Great Britain threshold: 750
All-Ireland threshold: 20*

GB Max: 24,198 Aug

NI Max: 1,833 Oct

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

The British peak, whilst low for the second year, remained within the relatively narrow range of variation for this species. By contrast, that for Northern Ireland was the highest on record, easily surpassing the previous peak of 1,382 in December 1990.

Counts at individual sites may fluctuate to a fair degree between years. This may, in part, be a consequence of the difficulties of recording seaducks, but Eiders are located relatively close to shore at many sites and, with a degree of patience, and luck with suitable weather, reasonably accurate counts may be obtained. Counts in the Clyde Estuary, Gare Loch, Loch Ryan and Belfast Loch were all notably higher than normal. By contrast, several sites held markedly fewer birds in 2000-01, including Ayr to North Troon, where counts remained very low for the second winter in succession, and at Girvan to Turnberry. Co-ordinated early winter surveys throughout the Firth of Clyde (Waltho 2002) suggest that this area should be treated as a single site for Eider, with declines in some

areas being matched by local increases elsewhere. The survey in September in 2001 recorded rather fewer birds than in recent years, though still totalling 15,692 and similar to the five-year peak mean. Treated as a single site, the Clyde is by far the most important area in the UK for this species, greatly exceeding recent numbers on the Tay. Coverage of the latter site however is problematic, requiring counts to be undertaken at the appropriate point in the tidal cycle which pushes the flock within sight of a suitable vantage point, and then only when suitable viewing conditions prevail. Few appropriate counts have been made at that site in the last five years, the only count to exceed 10,000 having been made during WeBS Low Tide Counts.

A mass mortality of over 20,000 Eiders occurred in the Wadden Sea in winter 1999-2000 (Camphuysen *et al.* 2002). Analyses of dissected birds showed most were severely emaciated and suffering from parasite infestation. Over-exploitation by commercial cockle and mussel

fisheries in the early 1990s, and in particular intense fisheries in summer 1999, are thought to

be key factors in the mortality event.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Tay Estuary	³⁰ 12,255	²⁹ 9,500	6,030	(32)	(190)	Jul	9,262
Forth Estuary	9,166	6,937	7,171	6,283	8,893	Aug	7,690
Morecambe Bay	6,073	8,200	8,131	6,713	5,306	Jul	6,885
Clyde Estuary	5,779	3,299	3,944	4,454	6,126	Aug	4,720
Ythan Estuary	3,216	3,366	3,116	3,944	-		3,411
Gare Loch	¹⁰ 3,037	¹⁰ 2,419	¹⁰ 2,156	¹⁰ 2,261	¹⁰ 3,877	Sep	2,750
Montrose Basin	2,100	2,163	3,365	2,214	(2,500)	Sep/Jan	2,468
Scapa Flow	-	-	³¹ 2,308	-	-		2,308
Ayr to North Troon	¹⁰ 1,359	3,767	4,355	¹⁰ 775	¹⁰ 504	Sep	2,152
Loch Long/Loch Goil	¹⁰ 1,285	¹⁰ 1,331	¹⁰ 2,960	¹⁰ 2,164	¹⁰ 1,539	Sep	1,856
Girvan to Turnberry	2,835	2,645	1,589	1,083	957	Feb	1,822
Farne Islands	-	-	2,500	200	2,434	Nov	1,711
Lindisfarne	1,255	1,209	2,106	1,258	³⁰ 1,841	Nov	1,534
Loch Fyne	-	¹⁰ 1,499	¹⁰ 1,558	¹⁰ 1,510	¹⁰ 1,297	Sep	1,466
Loch Ryan	²⁹ 1,161	228	1,202	1,400	2,037	Jul	1,206
Don Mouth to Ythan Mouth	1,215	2,159	360	634	224	Sep	918
Bute	¹⁰ 571	¹⁰ 763	¹⁰ 949	¹⁰ 1,367	¹⁰ 771	Sep	884
Ardrossan to Farland Head	-	-	-	937	803	Aug	870
The Wash	1,569	638	266	258	1,370	Jan	820
Isle of Cumbrae	941	833	909	577	-		815
Stevenston Point	¹⁰ 1,400	(1,550)	¹⁰ 67	¹⁰ 789	¹⁰ 243	Sep	810
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Belfast Lough	448	922	³⁰ 913	1,076	³⁰ 2,219	Nov	1,116
Outer Ards	709	470	716	382	241	Feb	504
Lough Foyle	452	161	²⁹ 130	11	28	Sep	156
Strangford Lough	61	52	95	122	279	Sep	122
Larne Lough	96	39	100	157	128	Sep	104
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels							
Seahouses to Budle Point							
Irvine/Garnock Estuary							
Dee Estuary (Scotland)							
Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01							
Inner Moray Firth	²⁴ 1,243	Jan					
Alnmouth to Boulmer	757	Jun					

KING EIDER

Somateria spectabilis

Vagrant
Native range: Arctic

On the Forth Estuary one was recorded at Aberlady & Gullane Bays during May.

LONG-TAILED DUCK

Clangula hyemalis

International threshold: 20,000**
Great Britain threshold: 230†
All-Ireland threshold: +**

GB Max: 4,693 Jan
NI Max: 182 Nov

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

WeBS totals in both Britain and Northern Ireland in 2000-01 were particularly impressive, around twice the norm for recent years. For this species in particular, usually located well offshore, counts may vary considerably should conditions

mean that flocks present at traditional sites are, for whatever reason, brought in sight of land. The count of almost 4,000 birds in the Moray Firth, obtained during WeBS Core Counts, is noteworthy not just for this reason, but because

it greatly exceeds the counts obtained using dedicated survey in recent years and demonstrates a genuine increase in 2000–01.

Fortuitous circumstances will no doubt also have contributed to the notably large counts at Loch Indaal and Lough Foyle, but the marked jumps are presumably indicative of a genuine

influx of birds to both sites. By contrast, numbers in the Forth were considerably reduced — matching a decline in Common Scoter at this site — and remained low also at nearby St Andrews Bay for a second year in succession.

	96–97	97–98	98–99	99–00	00–01	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Moray Firth	(735)	²⁴ 2,006	²⁴ 2,482	²⁴ 1,389	3,991	Jan	2,467
Scapa Flow	-	-	³¹ 1,582	-	-		1,582
Forth Estuary	975	660	772	783	319	Jan	702
Hacosay, B'mull & C'grave Sounds ²⁸	421	²⁸ 383	-	-	-		402
South Yell Sound	²⁸ 157	²⁸ 270	²⁸ 191	²⁸ 317	-		234
Sites with mean peak counts of 30 or more birds in Great Britain[†]							
Water Sound	88	(96)	135	120	(179)	Feb	131
Traigh Luskentyre	146	152	(75)	49	49	Jan	99
Loch of Stenness	108	48	88	173	75	Jan	98
Loch Indaal	(4)	3	4	8	231	Sep	62 ▲
Thurso Bay	-	-	-	60	-		60
Aberdeen Beach	-	-	12	88	-		50 ▲
St Andrews Bay	106	29	72	16	7	Jan	46
Seahouses to Budle Point	150	20	0	19	5	Feb	39
Loch of Harray	22	21	85	20	31	Jan	36
Sites with mean peak counts of 30 or more birds in Northern Ireland[†]							
Lough Foyle	0	0	0	4	161	Nov	33 ▲
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels							
Grutness to Quendale							
Whiteness to Scarvister							
North Norfolk Coast							
Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000–01							
North Norfolk Coast	31	Feb					

[†] as few sites exceed the British threshold, and as no all-Ireland threshold has been set, a qualifying level of 30 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report

COMMON SCOTER

Melanitta nigra

GB Max: 5,569 Feb
NI Max: 4 Oct

International threshold: 16,000
Great Britain threshold: 275
All-Ireland threshold: 40*

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

Total counts in 2000–01 by WeBS were within the range of normal values for recent years though, as ever, for this species and Long-tailed Duck more so than any other wildfowl, probably the least representative of the true numbers and trends in the country. Nevertheless, the count from the Forth, perhaps one of the key sites where reasonably accurate survey can be made from land, was markedly low, and although numbers in nearby St Andrews Bay were slightly above normal, WeBS counts suggest a genuine fall in the area in 2000–01. Counts off North Norfolk were higher than usual, but all the more remarkable given that they were made in June. The timing of this count suggests that many of

these birds may oversummer in British waters, although a dedicated survey would be required to establish this. It was, presumably, local movements of the wintering flock in this area that resulted in the much higher than average count in the Wash.

Interest in Common Scoter in the UK has increased markedly in recent years with the development of a Biodiversity Action Plan for this species. Land and aerial survey have continued in Carmarthen Bay, marking the recovery of numbers at this site following the *Sea Empress* oil spill and noting the regular presence of internationally important numbers. Accordingly,

it is hoped that this site will shortly become the UK's first marine Special Protection Area.

In winter 2000–01, CCW extended the programme of aerial surveys in for Common Scoter to Liverpool Bay (Oliver, Robinson & Howard 2001). Monthly surveys were made between November and February, centred around Conwy and Red Wharf Bays, Colwyn Bay and off Blackpool, sites known or suspected to be important for scoter, using a 'total count' method, whereby transects were flown at 1-km intervals, with observers aiming to count all birds out to a distance of 500 m either side of the plane. The results quickly justified the use of this approach, establishing that large flocks of Common Scoter were present at these sites throughout the winter (land-based counts, such as WeBS, had only previously recorded large numbers during clement conditions), with peaks of 865 in the Conwy/Red Wharf Bay area and 4,460 in Colwyn. Particularly remarkable

was a count of 11,701 birds off Blackpool, especially since the majority was found between five and 15 kilometres offshore. These birds were strongly associated with a shallow sandbank and this distribution explains why previous land-based counts from Blackpool had recorded only 2–3,000 birds. This site was quickly established as the most important for Common Scoter in England and a programme for repeat survey has been established.

International interest in scoters saw the convening of an international workshop in Denmark in November 2000 to collate information on numbers and trends in each country, and review real and perceived threats and monitoring needs. A review of numbers for the UK, aided by the improved survey of key sites in recent winters, suggests that the true number of Common Scoter wintering in the UK is likely to be in the region of 50–65,000 (Cranswick in press).

	96–97	97–98	98–99	99–00	00–01	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Carmarthen Bay	¹² 5,800	⁶ 6,240	³² 18,243	³² 21,592	³² 19,506	Feb	14,276
Cardigan Bay	(636)	¹¹ 5,220	(477)	(126)	(280)	Feb	5,220
Solway Firth	(43)	³ (5,000)	³ (1,450)	(3)	(0)		(5,000)
Moray Firth	(609)	²⁴ 2,061	²⁴ 3,543	²⁴ 2,281	3,848	Feb	2,933
North Norfolk Coast	2,070	1,860	1,552	2,182	3,014	Jun	2,136
Forth Estuary	2,320	1,205	1,663	3,764	783	Nov	1,947
St Andrews Bay	1,704	2,771	1,105	880	2,300	Oct	1,752
The Wash	351	200	468	166	2,650	Jan	767
Alt Estuary	12	811	454	572	399	Jan	450
Lindisfarne	300	192	1,512	220	0		445
Colwyn Bay	11	386	363	735	500	Mar	399
Traeth Coch	15	500	550	150	(20)	Sep	304 ▲
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Dundrum Bay	(0)	(0)	755	(0)	(0)		755
Important sites not counted in last five years							
Earlsferry Links to Anstruther							
Craigalea to Newcastle							
Tyrella Shore							
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels							
Rough Firth & Auchencairn Bay							
Clwyd Estuary							
Don Mouth to Ythan Mouth							

SURF SCOTER

Melanitta perspicillata

Vagrant
Native range: N America

Birds were recorded on the Forth Estuary and Inner Moray Firth during the year, with maxima

of four in April and three in February respectively.

VELVET SCOTER
Melanitta fusca

International threshold: 10,000
Great Britain threshold: 30*
All-Ireland threshold: +*

GB Max: 2,464 Dec
NI Max: 0

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

The national total of Velvet Scoter in 2000–01 was particularly impressive, arising largely from the much higher than normal count at St Andrews Bay; national totals in recent winters have barely exceeded 1,000. Although large compared with recent years, numbers at St Andrews have previously been higher still, with counts of 2,400 and 2,200 in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Numbers at the other two key were around average. Together, these three sites comprise the only sites in the UK where Velvet

Scoter occur in significant numbers with any regularity. Not since 1995–96, when 108 were recorded on the North Norfolk Coast, have WeBS counts at any other site in the UK recorded more than 30 birds; small numbers there in 2000–01 saw this site drop from the list of nationally important sites.

In a recent review of scoters in the UK, the estimate of numbers of Velvet Scoter was put at 2,500 to 3,500 birds (Cranswick in press).

	96–97	97–98	98–99	99–00	00–01	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
St Andrews Bay	942	520	840	845	(1,870)	Dec	1,003
Moray Firth	(81)	²⁴ 804	²⁴ 1,090	²⁴ 401	²⁴ 744	Dec	760
Forth Estuary	868	528	433	751	542	Dec	624
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels							
North Norfolk Coast							

GOLDENEYE
Bucephala clangula

International threshold: 3,000
Great Britain threshold: 170
All-Ireland threshold: 110

GB Max: 14,826 Jan
NI Max: 9,309 Feb

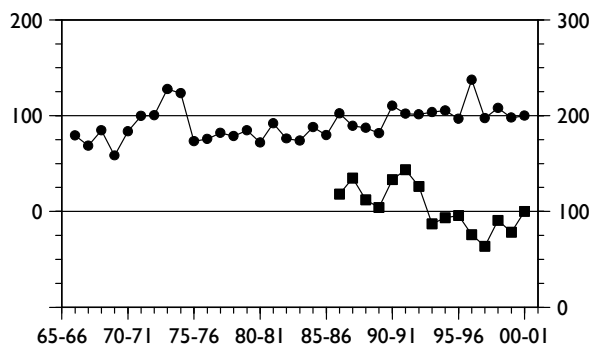


Figure 46. Annual indices for Goldeneye in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

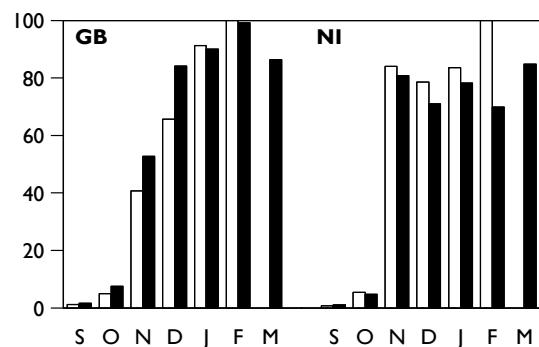


Figure 47. Monthly indices for Goldeneye in GB and NI (white bars 2000–01; black bars 1995–96 to 1999–2000)

The absence of a large proportion of March counts due to the onset of Foot and Mouth Disease perhaps has more significance for Goldeneye than for most other waterbirds. Numbers in Great Britain typically peak late in the winter and a large proportion of birds are still present in March, the last month of the WeBS recording year, and when a number of key sites support their highest numbers (Musgrove *et al.* 2001). In Northern Ireland, the pattern of occurrence varies considerably

between years; any month from November through to March can hold peak numbers.

Peak totals in Great Britain and Northern Ireland in 2000–01 were, respectively, slightly lower and slightly higher than normal, the former usually surpassing 16,000, the latter having varied in the region of 6–10,000 birds. Index values for both Britain and the province, however, rose slightly – that in Northern Ireland being the highest for eight winters.

Counts at most key sites were unremarkable, though numbers on the Tweed

Estuary, Hornsea Mere and on the Ayrshire coast from Girvan to Turnberry were well below normal. The count on the Stour Estuary was noteworthy, and contrasts with the relatively

small numbers at nearby Abberton Reservoir. Numbers at the UK's only internationally important site, Loughs Neagh & Beg, were the highest at the site since winter 1995–96.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance in the UK							
Loughs Neagh & Beg	8,081	5,587	7,611	7,026	8,482	Feb	7,357
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Forth Estuary	2,892	4,864	2,445	1,653	2,414	Feb	2,854
Inner Moray Firth	921	²⁴ 895	³⁰ 964	894	1,141	Jan	963
Abberton Reservoir	839	426	631	651	448	Feb	599
Clyde Estuary	562	509	496	858	468	Jan	579
Tweed Estuary	804	570	585	302	151	Dec	482
Humber Estuary	(558)	287	581	410	498	Dec	467
Rutland Water	427	424	366	354	353	Jan/Feb	385
Kilconquhar Loch	322	253	305	424	298	Feb	320
Morecambe Bay	329	310	314	288	346	Feb	317
Blackwater Estuary	353	(242)	279	265	341	Jan	310
Girvan to Turnberry	672	315	241	131	122	Jan	296
Loch Leven	314	301	382	256	215	Nov	294
Windermere	296	269	-	-	-		283
Scapa Flow	-	-	³¹ 282	-	-		282
Doon Estuary	505	118	134	300	(283)	Nov	268
R. Tweed: Kelso to Coldstream	268	334	198	220	285	Dec	261
Loch of Stenness	259	222	215	310	261	Jan	253
Loch of Skene	202	(356)	231	244	225	Feb	252
Poole Harbour	232	405	182	273	155	Jan	249
Hornsea Mere	-	117	185	(505)	85	Jan	223
Fleet/Wey	254	248	183	202	179	Feb	213
North Norfolk Coast	218	³⁰ 193	199	231	198	Feb	208
Stour Estuary	³⁰ 191	139	154	146	291	Jan	184
Loch Ryan	²⁹ (166)	89	90	271	247	Dec	174 ▲
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Belfast Lough	400	259	³⁰ 337	161	276	Feb	287
Strangford Lough	192	302	298	238	108	Jan	228
Larne Lough	284	238	173	247	136	Feb	216
Carlingford Lough	257	227	154	139	163	Jan	188
Lough Money	136	85	99	128	129	Jan	115
Upper Lough Erne	161	91	77	118	-		112
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels							
Stevenston Point							
Solway Estuary							
Outer Ards							
Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01							
Loch Gairloch	²⁹ 223	Feb					
Tay Estuary	186	Jan					
Hamilton Low Parks & S'clyde Park	181	Jan					

SMEW
Mergellus albellus

International threshold: 250
Great Britain threshold: 2*†
All-Ireland threshold: +*

GB Max: 224 Jan
NI Max: 0

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

The peak national total in Britain fell further from the relative low in 1999–2000. Correspondingly, several sites held rather fewer Smew than normal — the count of 10 at Hickling Broad is thus significant in being double the recent mean. Nevertheless, the most important sites continued to attract average numbers, despite the relatively mild winter, presumably a reflection of the same individuals returning to

traditional sites. Typically, peaks at most occurred in January or February.

A striking feature of the table of key sites is the number of gravel pits. Eight of the top 10 sites and 15 of the 22 listed in total are not just man-made wetlands, but those resulting from specifically from mineral excavation. Quite why this habitat is so favoured in the UK is worthy of further research.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain †							
Wraysbury Gravel Pits	43	61	53	56	53	Jan	53
Dungeness Gravel Pits	16	18	38	29	27	Jan	26
Lee Valley Gravel Pits	31	23	30	22	20	Feb	25
Cotswold Water Park (West)	²⁹ 10	²⁹ 8	19	28	17	Jan	16
Fen Drayton Gravel Pits	22	15	17	14	7	Jan	15
Rutland Water	14	18	19	8	8	Feb	13
Thorpe Water Park	11	13	26	9	6	Jan	13
Twyford Gravel Pits	13	11	9	17	-		13
Earls Barton Gravel Pits	13	15	15	3	(2)	Jan	12
Chew Valley Lake	14	7	15	5	11	Feb	10
Middle Tame Valley Gravel Pits	(6)	5	21	5	8	Jan	10
Eyebrook Reservoir	12	5	12	-	7	Jan	9
Seaton Gravel Pits	3	9	16	²⁹ 9	7	Jan	9
Rye Harbour & Pett Level	14	4	11	7	2	Oct	8
Hornsea Mere	-	0	19	(1)	3	Jan	7
Leybourne/ New Hythe Gravel Pits	-	-	-	-	7	Jan	7
Loch of Strathbeg	9	5	8	(3)	5	Feb	7
Little Paxton Gravel Pits	9	5	4	5	10	Feb	7
Fairburn Ings	2	8	5	6	8	Feb	6 ▲
Bedfont & Ashford Gravel Pits	16	5	1	1	5	Feb	6
Hickling Broad	-	-	4	2	10	Feb	5 ▲
Chichester Gravel Pits	12	5	2	(2)	2	Dec	5 ▲

Important sites not counted in last five years

Staines Moor Gravel Pits

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Hoveringham Gravel Pits

Croxall Pits

Colne Valley Gravel Pits

Pitsford Reservoir

Eglwys Nunydd Reservoir

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01

Stour Estuary ³⁰ 9 Jan

† as the British threshold for national importance is so small, and as no all-Ireland threshold has been set, a qualifying level of five has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER

Mergus serrator

International threshold: 1,250
 Great Britain threshold: 100
 All-Ireland threshold: 20*

GB Max: 3,438 Feb
 NI Max: 447 Sep

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

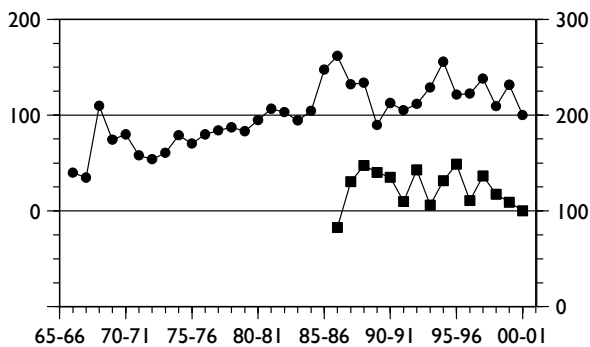


Figure 48. Annual indices for Red-breasted Merganser in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

The 2000–01 peak in Britain represents a marked fall compared with recent winters, when numbers have consistently been around 4,250. Accordingly, the national index value dropped markedly to its lowest value for 11 years and, whilst fluctuating, suggesting a decline over the last six years of around one

third. There was a similar pattern in Northern Ireland, with declines in both the peak total count and the annual index value, the latter being the lowest since the first year for which indices were calculated and which, due to the relative paucity of data at that time, may, in any case, be an artefact.

This picture is reflected generally in counts at most key sites for Red-breasted Merganser: lower than average numbers were recorded at 14 of the 17 nationally important sites in Great Britain and at six of the eight sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland. Numbers have fallen markedly on the Inner Moray Firth and the Duddon Estuary, whilst counts at Lough Foyle represent just five per cent of the figure recorded three years previously.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Scapa Flow	-	-	³¹ 628	-	-		628
Forth Estuary	715	675	622	601	459	Sep	614
Poole Harbour	333	502	385	466	336	Feb	404
Fleet/Wey	344	440	269	530	283	Feb	373
Inner Moray Firth	746	²⁴ 239	²⁴ 431	224	144	Feb	357
Morecambe Bay	323	312	309	475	338	Nov	351
Traeth Lafan	¹⁵ 330	234	¹⁵ 453	¹⁵ 255	317	Aug	318
Duddon Estuary	382	394	378	240	148	Oct	308
Cromarty Firth	193	²⁴ 508	²⁴ 135	³⁰ 168	²⁹ 221	Jul	245
Clyde Estuary	230	186	230	159	125	Jul	186
Loch Indaal	159	157	191	185	163	Aug	171
Chichester Harbour	³⁰ 124	184	³⁰ 141	212	180	Feb	168
Langstone Harbour	182	199	185	116	122	Jan	161
Stevenston Point	(135)	148	-	-	-		148
North Norfolk Coast	166	³⁰ 121	100	128	103	Nov	124
Solway Estuary	130	181	66	122	109	Jan	122
Montrose Basin	52	204	113	100	120	Aug	118
Exe Estuary	67	133	93	130	139	Feb	112
The Wash	132	109	104	75	(16)	Oct	105
Sites of all-Ireland importance in Northern Ireland							
Strangford Lough	276	191	285	211	148	Sep	222
Larne Lough	201	171	195	243	188	Sep	200
Belfast Lough	³⁰ 123	270	³⁰ 123	166	169	Oct	170
Lough Foyle	130	296	²⁹ 99	27	15	Dec	113
Outer Ards	65	50	41	52	35	Feb	49
Carlingford Lough	36	44	46	41	44	Dec	42
Loughs Neagh & Beg	27	23	42	9	21	Sep	24
Bann Estuary	23	24	22	18	17	Feb	21

Important sites not counted in last five years

Craigalea to Newcastle
Tyrella Shore

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Irvine/Garnock Estuary
Loch Lomond
Dundrum Bay

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01

Tay Estuary	127	Feb
Arran	108	Sep
Eden Estuary	104	Aug

GOOSANDER

Mergus merganser

International threshold: 2,000
Great Britain threshold: 90
All-Ireland threshold: +*

GB Max: 2,413 Feb
NI Max: I various

* 50 is normally used as a minimum threshold

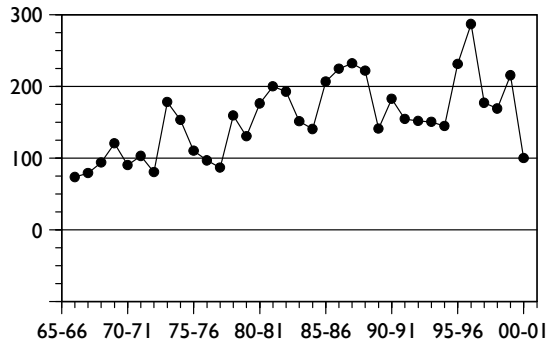


Figure 49. Annual indices for Goosander in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

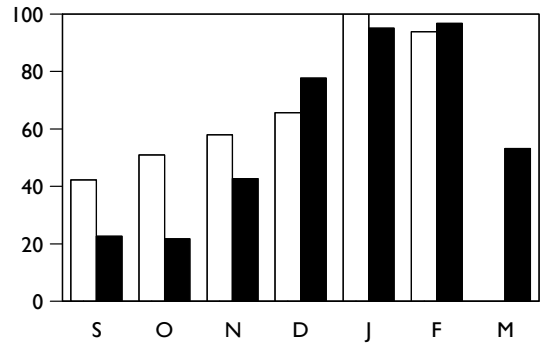
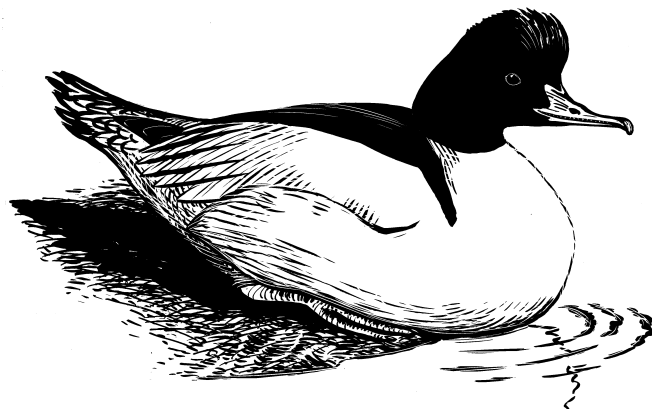


Figure 50. Monthly indices for Goosander in GB (white bars 2000-01; black bars 1995-96 to 1999-2000)

The peak 2000-01 total was the lowest count of Goosander since 1987-88. Although only a few hundred below totals in the early 1990s, the national index value dropped sharply, representing the biggest fall in an individual year and suggesting that abundance now matches the low levels of the 1960s and 1970s. The decline, by around two thirds, since the mid 1990s may reflect in part the severity of the winter. It is likely that counts in the mid 1990s were boosted by the arrival of continental birds during particularly cold winters at that time. Nevertheless, birds in Britain are believed to

represent a largely discrete population, and it might be expected that counts should remain similar in mild winters in the absence of any notable declines in British breeding stock. Although counts at key sites may vary considerably between years, the low counts on Loch Lomond and Hamilton Low Parks & Strathclyde Park are notable, particularly so far north in the range since these presumably comprise solely locally bred birds. The post-breeding gathering on Tynninghame Estuary is in marked contrast to the general picture in 2000-01 and represents the second highest count at any site of Goosander during the last five years. Notable also was the fall from the table of the Inner Moray Firth, for many years the most important site in the country for this species.



	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Tay Estuary	225	240	160	268	230	Sep	225
Hirsel Lake	210	13	²⁹ 490	²⁹ 87	145	Oct	189
Lower Derwent Valley	298	182	111	51	-		161
Loch Lomond	184	226	129	176	11	Oct/Dec	145
Eccup Reservoir	163	163	131	154	95	Feb	141
Tynninghame Estuary	98	107	62	130	(300)	Aug	139
R. Tweed: Kelso to Coldstream	158	84	129	158	111	Feb	128
Hay-a-Park Gravel Pits	209	-	-	²² 58	²² 80	Dec	116
Hamilton Low Parks & S'clyde Park	-	170	140	73	48	Mar	108
Montrose Basin	89	136	129	67	88	Aug	102
Castle Loch (Lochmaben)	²⁹ 132	77	97	76	(0)		96
Blishfield Reservoir	165	74	102	(35)	38	Jan	95

Important sites not counted in last five years

Lochs Garten & Mallachie
 Spey Mouth
 Castle Howard Lake

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Inner Moray Firth
 Eversley Cross & Yateley GP

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01

Talkin Tarn 111 Jan
 Dyfi Estuary 93 Aug

RUDDY DUCK

Oxyura jamaicensis

Naturalised introduction[†]

Native range: North and South America

GB Max: 3,760 Jan
NI Max: 53 Feb

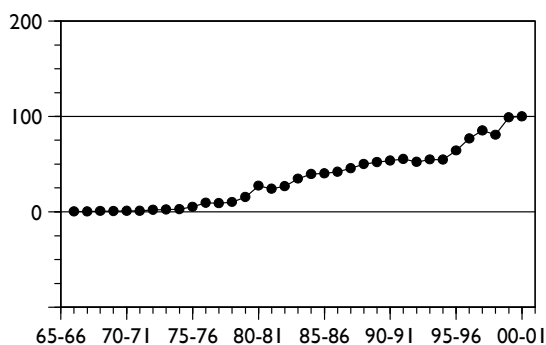


Figure 51. Annual indices for Ruddy Duck in GB

The peak British total fell by 17%, surpassing 3,000 in only two winter months (*cf.* five in winter 1999–2000). Despite the low counts, the annual index remained almost unchanged from the previous winter. In Northern Ireland, where numbers in some months reflect solely those at Loughs Neagh & Beg, counts were typical for recent years.

The results of the regional Ruddy Duck Control Trial were published in 2002 (Central Science Laboratory 2002). The trial was established to determine the feasibility, costs and access requirements necessary to reduce the UK population by 95%. The trial took place

on Anglesey, in the Western Midlands and Fife. Modelling suggests that eradication could be achieved using year-round control in between four and six years if access is available to the principal wintering sites. The likely cost of this reduction would be between £3.6m and £5.4m.

The influence of control trials is reflected in the counts at some key sites, most notably low numbers on the Middle Tame Valley Gravel Pits, Llyn Traffwll, Llyn Alaw and Llynau Y Fali. Notably high counts occurred at several sites in southeast England, including Staines, Hanningfield and Abberton Reservoirs, the Blackwater Estuary and Dungeness Gravel Pits, and the east coast on the Humber and Tees estuaries. Counts at the Cotswold Water Park (West) were also the highest at the site to date.

A detailed analysis of WeBS data up to the beginning of the control trial (Kershaw & Hughes 2002) revealed that wintering Ruddy Ducks were widely distributed within the UK, having been recorded on 742 WeBS sites between 1990–91 and 1999–2000. However, the majority of birds were concentrated on relatively few sites: in January 2000, the top ten sites held approximately 67% of the wintering population

and the top 25 held 83%. The most important site (Rutland Water, Leicestershire) held 1,345 birds or 27% of the total population. The annual population increase had declined from 39% between 1966–67 and 1979–80, to 8–9% during the 1980s, and to 6–7% subsequently. During the 1980s and 1990s, Ruddy Ducks had increased most on estuarine/coastal habitats (by 29% per

annum). This is illustrated by the increasing trends at four estuarine sites in the table below. Although the number of birds on estuarine/coastal habitats is still small, Ruddy Ducks in the UK may now be developing a marine wintering habit typical of their north American counterparts.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean	
Sites with mean peak counts of 30 or more birds in Great Britain[†]								
Rutland Water	1,078	727	1,170	1,345	1,187	Jan	1,101	
Chew Valley Lake	²⁹ 789	²⁹ 700	²⁹ (255)	²⁹ 390	²⁹ 543	Dec	606	
Blithfield Reservoir	566	327	462	449	(420)	Nov	451	
Middle Tame Valley Gravel Pits	(501)	457	260	120	125	Jan	293	
Blagdon Lake	296	213	426	360	68	Sep	273	
Abberton Reservoir	88	99	(217)	443	389	Sep	255	
Hilfield Park Reservoir	306	186	216	298	206	Jan	242	
Stanford Reservoir	221	(181)	147	212	(67)	Dec	193	
Eyebrook Reservoir	239	275	14	-	72	Nov	150	
Pitsford Reservoir	87	98	(70)	167	135	Oct	122	
Hanningfield Reservoir	76	162	44	22	287	Feb	118	
Fairburn Ings	83	243	116	45	100	Dec	117	
Llyn Traffwll	156	122	²⁹ 153	92	61	Sep	117	
Llyn Alaw	²⁹ 62	133	²⁹ 221	159	8	Nov	117	
Staines Reservoirs	112	3	22	127	(244)	Feb	102	
Holme Pierrepont Gravel Pits	134	99	64	102	106	Oct	101	
Clumber Park Lake	111	60	116	66	123	Oct	95	
Belvide Reservoir	31	(2)	59	100	170	Feb	90	
Tophill Low Reservoirs	51	56	85	113	117	Oct	84	
Colwick Country Park	68	41	41	²⁹ 181	-		83	
Attenborough Gravel Pits	265	18	14	23	(0)		80	
Rostherne Mere	152	24	18	88	66	Jan	70	
Dungeness Gravel Pits	29	33	39	110	134	Dec	69	
Kilconquhar Loch	85	62	58	56	74	Aug	67	
Llynnau Y Fali	92	99	71	29	20	Dec	62	
Great Pool Westwood Park	29	51	77	47	90	Feb	59	
Pugneys Country Park Lakes	65	94	51	35	49	Jan	59	
Blackwater Estuary	32	29	38	80	106	Feb	57	
Cropston Reservoir	156	16	1	47	(0)		55	
Bolton-on-Swale Gravel Pits	29	34	57	66	79	Oct	53	
Farmwood Pool	99	61	41	23	17	Oct	48	
Humber Estuary	(6)	16	23	54	99	Nov	48	▲
Cotswold Water Park (West)	16	²⁹ 42	33	34	115	Feb	48	
Angler's Country Park Lake	3	39	54	69	²⁹ 70	Dec	47	
Knight & Bessborough Reservoirs	126	32	32	10	31	Feb	46	
Hule Moss	²⁹ 14	²⁹ 41	²⁹ 73	39	-		42	
Woolston Eyes	40	34	40	48	43	Sep	41	
Tees Estuary	13	25	39	56	71	Oct	41	▲
Thoresby Lake	20	63	19	74	22	Oct	40	
Church Wilne Reservoir	76	2	-	-	-		39	
Brent Reservoir	24	16	46	44	61	Oct	38	
Houghton Green Pool	36	42	38	28	37	Jan	36	
Hollowell Reservoir	7	3	19	60	91	Feb	36	▲
Rufford Lake	51	28	48	22	21	Aug	34	
Hogganfield Loch	15	35	36	44	39	Dec	34	▲
Ravensthorpe Reservoir	11	11	41	58	44	Jan	33	▲
Sutton & Lound Gravel Pits	25	36	-	38	-		33	
Thames Estuary	19	17	31	29	63	Jan	32	▲
Carsington Water	10	10	10	96	(7)	Jun	32	▲
Old Moor Wetlands	25	42	32	31	26	Jul/Aug	31	

Sites with mean peak counts of 30 or more birds in Northern Ireland [†]

Loughs Neagh & Beg	89	28	84	14	53	Feb	54
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Important sites not counted in last five years

Capheaton Reservoir

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Swillington Ings

Worsborough Reservoir

Aqualate Mere

Swithland Reservoir

King George VI Reservoir

Ellesmere Lakes

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000–01

King George V Reservoirs	46	Feb
Walthamstow Reservoirs	(41)	Feb
Wigan Flashes 39		Dec
Linlithgow Loch	36	Sep
Catchpenny Pool	33	Oct
Winterset & Cold Hiendley Reservoirs	32	Jan
Ellesmere Lakes	31	Oct
Melton Country Park	31	Sep
Carr Vale Flash & Reserve Pond	30	Jul

[†] as site designation does not occur and the 1% criterion is not applied, a qualifying levels of 30 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report

ARGENTINE BLUE-BILL

Oxjura vittata

Escape

Native range: South America

Singles were seen on the Ouse Washes in April and at Melton Country Park in September.

WATER RAIL

Rallus aquaticus

International threshold:	?
Great Britain threshold:	? [†]
All-Ireland threshold:	? [†]

GB Max:	449 Dec
NI Max:	1 Dec

A highly secretive species, counts represent only a fraction of the total number of birds in the UK. In 2000–01 birds were recorded at 238 sites, lower than in most recent winters. The peak British total, however, was amongst the highest recorded, only exceeded significantly by the 521 in December 1998. It is interesting that, despite the difficulty in detecting the species during counts, the peak count has occurred in December for seven of the last eight years.

Whilst the largely sedentary breeding population is supplemented in winter by birds from continental Europe (Jenkins 2002), this peak is more likely to reflect the increased ease of detection when submergent and bankside vegetation dies back and colder conditions force birds into more open habitats. Counts from key sites are, perhaps not surprisingly, variable and few were of particular note in 2000–01.

	96–97	97–98	98–99	99–00	00–01	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of 10 or more birds in Great Britain [†]							
Grouville Marsh	(20)	(20)	(10)	(40)	(30)	Oct	(40)
Somerset Levels	42	29	38	34	43	Dec	37
Rye Harbour & Pett Level	40	2	61	40	31	Oct	35
Stodmarsh & Collards Lagoon	9	14	23	41	25	Oct	22
Leighton Moss	18	25	28	15	-		22
Chew Valley Lake	9	19	42	4	29	Dec	21
Fleet Pond	20	20	15	20	25	Nov/Dec	20
Colwick Country Park	68	0	2	4	-		19

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean	
Lower Derwent Valley	26	27	7	8	-		17	
Kenfig NNR	-	⁷ 16	⁷ 14	⁷ 24	⁷ 12	Apr	17	▲
Lee Valley Gravel Pits	10	6	10	22	18	Dec	13	
Doxey Marshes SSSI	15	11	10	11	(8)	Oct/Dec	12	
Marston Sewage Treatment Works	-	-	5	18	-		12	
Kilconquhar Loch	11	8	9	14	15	Jan	11	▲
North Norfolk Coast	6	11	16	10	13	Jan	11	
Severn Estuary	9	5	26	5	8	Nov	11	
Rutland Water	10	6	10	20	6	Jan/Feb	10	
Poole Harbour	7	7	7	16	15	Oct	10	▲
Shipleigh Country Park	0	-	-	-	(20)	Jun	10	▲
Longueville Marsh	(10)	(5)	(10)	(10)	(10)	Dec-Feb	(10)	

Important sites not counted in last five years

Pannel Valley

Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels

Knocksinnock Lagoons

Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01

Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	16	Feb
Southampton Water	13	Nov/Feb
Chichester Harbour	12	Jan
Hornchurch Country Park	10	Dec
Cotswold Water Park (West)	10	Dec

† as no British or all-Ireland thresholds have been set, a qualifying level of 10 has been chosen to select sites for presentation in this report

SPOTTED CRAKE

Porzana porzana

International threshold: ?
Great Britain threshold: ?[†]
All-Ireland threshold: ?[†]

GB Max: 4 Sep
NI Max: 0

During September and October, single birds were recorded at Rye Harbour & Pett Level, Stodmarsh & Collards Lagoon, River Cam:

Kingfishers Bridge, North Norfolk Coast, Hornsea Mere and Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal).

MOORHEN

Gallinula chloropus

International threshold: ?
Great Britain threshold: ?[†]
All-Ireland threshold: ?[†]

GB Max: 13,313 Oct
NI Max: 307 Sep

The peak Great Britain count, just over 1,000 below the record count in 1999–2000, was still amongst the highest recorded by WeBS. The survey, however, barely scratches the surface of the Moorhen wintering population which, although no official population estimate exists, may number in the region of 750,000 birds based on the UK breeding population estimate of 240,000 pairs (Gibbons 1993). In Northern Ireland the peak was in the region of recent fluctuations.

Being a highly dispersed species, it is likely that even if a population estimate were

available, no single site in Great Britain would attain national importance status (i.e. regularly holding 1% of the national population) as a result of WeBS counts. Based on the approximate figure above, even the top sites in the table below would hold no more than 0.1% of the winter population. Of the key sites, numbers at Martin Mere fell for the fourth consecutive year, whilst numbers at Bewl Water were well above average.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of 100 or more birds in Great Britain [†]							
Severn Estuary	829	(21)	860	679	735	Nov	776
Martin Mere	739	710	640	570	510	Jan	634
Lower Derwent Valley	816	680	371	419	-		572
Somerset Levels	253	250	⁴ 424	407	310	Oct	329
North Norfolk Coast	179	334	291	441	309	Jan	311
Durham Coast	175	256	269	307	240	Oct	249
Lee Valley Gravel Pits	234	191	215	278	315	Dec	247
Burry Inlet	220	281	198	213	196	Aug	222
Arun Valley	234	190	197	240	202	Aug	213
Thames Estuary	219	144	150	269	268	Oct	210
Ouse Washes	124	201	287	141	²⁹ 206	Jan	192
Rutland Water	71	119	160	229	237	Oct	163
Chichester Gravel Pits	167	176	138	(138)	132	Nov	153
Blackwater Estuary	181	165	126	138	96	Nov	141
Chew Valley Lake	125	120	145	130	185	Sep	141
Bewl Water	119	60	170	122	230	Sep	140
Grouville Marsh	(100)	(70)	(80)	(140)	(120)	Jan	(140)
Tring Reservoirs	78	148	207	90	149	Oct	134
Rye Harbour & Pett Level	67	111	222	162	99	Oct	132
Pitsford Reservoir	116	21	(123)	172	175	Sep	121
Sutton & Lound Gravel Pits	120	106	-	136	-		121
R. Idle: Bawtry to Misterton	119	-	-	-	-		119
R. Wye: Bakewell to Haddon	118	160	101	114	101	Jan	119
Marston Sewage Treatment Works	-	-	(110)	118	-		118
Fairburn Ings	104	112	120	113	(115)	Jan	113
Lancaster Canal	106	207	88	85	65	Oct	110
Leighton Moss	170	95	90	65	-		105
Swanbourne Lake	42	(60)	130	140	100	Jan	103
Thanet Coast	135	76	122	83	87	Jan	101
Sites with mean peak counts of 30 or more birds in Northern Ireland [†]							
Loughs Neagh & Beg	132	137	201	124	183	Sep	155
Upper Lough Erne	164	52	100	67	-		96
Broad Water Canal	83	71	69	-	55	Sep	70
Sites no longer meeting table qualifying levels							
Upper Quoile River							
Important sites not counted in last five years							
Portavo Lake							
Other sites surpassing table qualifying levels in 2000-01							
Orwell Estuary	160	Jan					
Stodmarsh & Collards Lagoon	152	Aug					
Dee Estuary (Eng/Wal)	134	Feb					
Southampton Water	102	Feb					
Belfast Lough	44	Sep					

[†] as no British or all-Ireland thresholds have been set, qualifying levels of 100 and 30 have been chosen to select sites, in Great Britain and Northern Ireland respectively, for presentation in this report

COOT
Fulica atra

International threshold: 15,000
Great Britain threshold: 1,100
All-Ireland threshold: 250

GB Max: 109,688 Oct
NI Max: 7,240 Oct

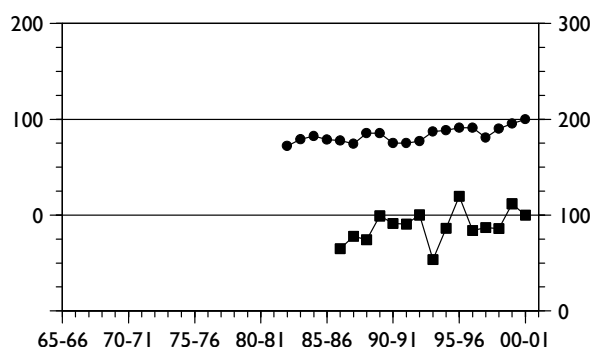


Figure 52. Annual indices for Coot in GB (circles, left axis) and NI (squares, right axis)

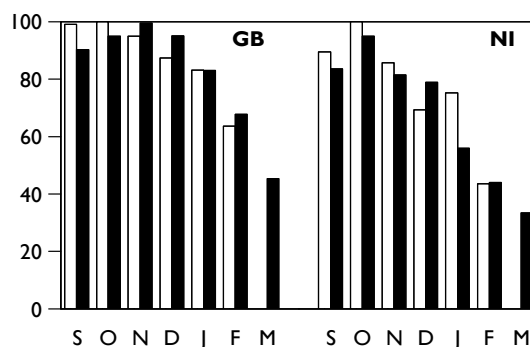


Figure 53. Monthly indices for Coot in GB and NI (white bars 2000-01; black bars 1995-96 to 1999-2000)

The highest counts since 1994-95 at Abberton Reservoir, the UK's premier site for this species, were notable following several years of relatively low numbers. Despite being a widely dispersed species, Abberton and nearby Hanningfield Reservoir may hold in excess of 10% of the birds in the UK at any one time. Other counts of note were at Chew Valley Lake and Little Paxton Gravel Pits, both recording well above average numbers, whilst those at Alton Water dipped considerably.

The peak count in Great Britain was lower than the record total in the previous year, though still amongst the highest recorded by WeBS. This was reflected in the index values

which reached their highest level to date. The peak in October was typical, monthly indices illustrating the early autumn high, tailing off rapidly from mid winter onwards.

In Northern Ireland, counts from Loughs Neagh & Beg make up around 90% of the totals and also strongly influence the index values. Numbers at this site, the second most important in the UK, were typical for recent years and as a consequence peak totals and indices in the province were also around average. Regrettably no data were received for Upper Lough Erne, one of the province's other key sites, during the 2000-01 reporting year.

	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	Mon	Mean
Sites of national importance in Great Britain							
Abberton Reservoir	6,897	4,784	6,493	9,673	11,645	Sep	7,898
Rutland Water	3,935	4,663	3,971	3,759	3,375	Nov	3,941
Hanningfield Reservoir	4,986	3,181	3,337	2,809	4,282	Nov	3,719
Cotswold Water Park (West)	3,110	3,560	3,718	3,980	3,806	Nov	3,635
Lee Valley Gravel Pits	3,023	2,913	2,708	3,559	2,751	Nov	2,991
Cheddar Reservoir	3,100	2,300	2,400	2,500	3,410	Jan	2,742
Hickling Broad	-	-	2,136	4,993	1,021	Sep	2,717
Ouse Washes	²⁹ 1,661	3,082	2,611	3,803	²⁹ 2,062	Jan	2,644
Cotswold Water Park (East)	2,268	2,094	3,608	2,944	2,227	Jan	2,628
Chew Valley Lake	2,500	2,260	2,650	1,980	3,500	Sep	2,578
Lower Windrush Valley GP	2,068	2,629	2,619	2,188	2,274	Nov	2,356
Windermere	2,310	2,029	-	-	-		2,170
Fleet/Wey	2,501	1,562	1,777	1,862	2,346	Oct	2,010
Loch Leven	1,546	1,551	2,285	2,340	2,100	Sep	1,964
Pitsford Reservoir	1,222	1,310	2,281	2,415	2,331	Sep	1,912
Fen Drayton Gravel Pits	1,675	1,709	1,948	1,719	1,787	Oct	1,768
Bliethfield Reservoir	1,109	1,717	2,305	1,946	1,731	Aug	1,762
Middle Tame Valley Gravel Pits	(2,804)	1,196	(1,348)	1,368	1,674	Jan	1,761
Alton Water	1,142	2,135	1,465	3,090	655	Sep	1,697
Little Paxton Gravel Pits	2,173	485	853	1,235	3,014	Oct	1,552
R. Avon: Fordingbridge to R'wood	1,529	1,749	1,354	1,495	1,439	Nov	1,513