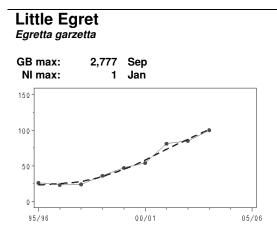
International threshold:	65
Great Britain threshold:	?
All-Ireland threshold:	?

GB max: 36 Jan NI max: 0

Bittern Botaurus stellaris

In line with the improving fortunes of the British breeding population, it was another good year for Bitterns, which were recorded from a total of 45 different sites during 2003/04. Despite above average temperatures, peak numbers were in the winter, especially January when 36 birds were found. Most

summer records referred to booming birds at known breeding sites, with up to eight recorded for Minsmere, from which site relatively few were reported in the winter months, although this could be due to problems of detection. No Bitterns have ever been recorded by WeBS in Northern Ireland.



The Little Egret continues to go from strength to strength. The plot of the British index, published here for the first time, shows the phenomenal rate of increase for a species still on the British Birds Rarities Committee list until the end of 1990. A review of the status of the species (Musgrove 2002) estimated the 1999 post-breeding population to be of the order of 1,700 birds, over 50% more than the peak WeBS core count total that year. Since then, autumn peaks from core counts have increased by a factor of 2.7 and thus if such a scaling factor still holds true there may actually have been closer to 4,400 Little Egrets present in the UK in autumn 2003. Whilst this is an approximate calculation, and the underlying assumptions could be questioned, continued evidence of the discrepancies between core counts and dedicated roost counts at sites such as the Medway Estuary, where a roost of 413 compared with a core count total of 101 in September 2003, shows that this is a species which can still be easy to overlook. A recent review by Voisin et al. (2005) showed that over 8,000 Little Egrets

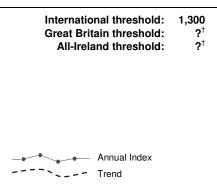


Figure 6.a, Annual indices & trend for Little Egret for GB.

were present in western France in January 2001.

Unsurprisingly, many individual sites exhibited increases over previous years. Whilst the species is still common in its previous core areas of the Solent, Poole and the southwest peninsula, there are a number of sites here where numbers seem to have levelled out and much of the national increase is fuelled by the extremities of the British range, notably around the 'greater Thames', along the east coast of Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk, around the North Norfolk Coast and into the Wash. On the west coast, the Dyfi Estuary, Lavan Sands and the Dee Estuary also hold increased numbers. The cut-off beyond the Dee and the Wash is, however, striking. Counts have yet to exceed three birds on the Humber Estuary or two birds on the Ribble Estuary. Whether this remains the northwards limit for the Little Egret or whether it will continue to push northwards remains to be seen. The species also remains scarce on WeBS counts in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of 1			Britain <sup>†</sup>		10		
Medway Estuary	(71)	(19)	106	(125)	413 <sup>12</sup>	Sep	260
Chichester Harbour	271 <sup>′12</sup>	220 <sup>12</sup>	255 <sup>12</sup>	218	228	Oct	238
Thames Estuary	(30)	83	132	197	255 <sup>12</sup>	Aug	167
Poole Harbour	156 <sup>20</sup>	118	197 <sup>12</sup>	(140)	(179)	Sep	163
Tamar Complex	143 <sup>22</sup>	121	141	129	143	Sep	135
Longueville Marsh	(70)	(85)	132	145	105	Oct	127
Portsmouth Harbour	(51)	64	123 <sup>12</sup>	12 <sup>110</sup>	(34)	Sep	99
Exe Estuary	58	71	149	67	131	Sep	95
Jersey Shore		64	126				95
Kingsbridge Estuary	58	72	100	105	(99)	Sep	87
North Norfolk Coast	8	15 <sup>12</sup>	50 <sup>11</sup>	81	149 <sup>´12</sup>	Nov	86
Burry Inlet	(86)	58	99	87	(90)	Sep	84
Langstone Harbour	51	51	99	88	90	Oct	76
Pagham Harbour	51 <sup>20</sup>	76	81 <sup>12</sup>	76	63	Aug	69
Taw-Torridge Estuary	77 <sup>20</sup>	71	64	60	(74)	Aug	69
Camel Estuary	55 <sup>20</sup>	(77)	48	64	65	Sep	62
Colne Estuary	27 <sup>12</sup>	26	118 <sup>12</sup>	(2)	(35)	Sep	57
Swale Estuary	10 <sup>20</sup>	22	44	(59)	131	Oct	53
Fowey Estuary	40 <sup>20</sup>	49	79	48	35	Sep	50
Fal Complex	(34)	39	(30)	55	52	Jul	49
R. Avon: Salisbury-Fordingbridge	(20)	(38)	49	(79)	19	Oct	46
Guernsey Shore	31	46	50	(48)	(51)	Sep	45
Cleddau Estuary	(17)	25	66	48	36	Sep	44
North West Solent	45 <sup>20</sup>	(30)	(44)	(25)	42	Sep	44
Severn Estuary	(10)	13	59	41	47	Sep	40
Southampton Water	(11)	25	45 <sup>12</sup>	(19)	(51)	Sep	40
Newtown Estuary	46 <sup>20</sup>	38	44 <sup>12</sup>	22	41	Sep	38
Orwell Estuary	(0)	11 <sup>12</sup>	43 <sup>12</sup>	12 <sup>37</sup>	56 <sup>12</sup>	Aug	37
Helford Estuary	(24)	30	33	47	35	Sep	36
Blackwater Estuary	4	15	(35)	(51)	66	Sep	34
Fleet and Wey	30	37	37	38	25	Sep	33
Lavan Sands	(4)	(6)	6 00 <sup>12</sup>	15	67	Sep	29
Avon Estuary	20 <sup>20</sup>	21	33 <sup>12</sup>	24	35	Aug	27
Stour Estuary	5	10	29	32	57	Sep	27
The Wash	2	5	(6)	29	72	Oct	27
Crouch-Roach Estuary	4	15	24	42	43	Sep	26
R. Avon: R'gwood - Christchurch	(12)	26	(28)	26	22	Jan	26
Christchurch Harbour	9 2	(20)	24	21	38	Sep	23
Hamford Water	30 <sup>20</sup>	9 25	31 16	20 31	53	Sep	23 23
Teign Estuary Beaulieu Estuary			6	42	15 22	Sep	23 22
	(7) 26 <sup>20</sup>	19 17	32	42 14		Oct	22
Erme Estuary Axe Estuary (Devon)	20 6	10	32	24	(18) 32	Dec Jan	22
	7	15	12	24 27	32 41		21
Cuckmere Estuary		(12)	12	20		Oct Nov	20 19
Alde Complex Allington Gravel Pit	(4) 0	0	21 <sup>12</sup>	12 <sup>37</sup>	(23) 35 <sup>12</sup>	Jan	19
Dee Estuary (England/Wales)	(5)	7	18 <sup>11</sup>	20	32 <sup>12</sup>	Nov	19
Pegwell Bay	(3)	17	20	23	26	Aug	19
Rye Harbour and Pett Level	16 <sup>20</sup>	9	25	19	20	Aug	19
Dart Estuary	6	12	9	20	44	Sep	18
Yar Estuary	10	19	44 <sup>12</sup>	12	5	Jul	18
Yealm Estuary	16	9	19	25	18	Aug	17
Brading Harbour	3	9	15	26	23	Oct	15
Dengie Flats	3	3	18 <sup>11</sup>	15	(27)	Sep	13
Hayle Estuary	13	13	12	12	15	Jul	13
Bardolf Water Meadows	6	9	10	22	11	Nov	12
Carmarthen Bay	4	(7)	13	9	23	Feb	12
Looe Estuary	(9)	9	5	13	19	Jul	12
Somerset Levels	1	2	14	26	(12)	Jan	11
Breydon Water / Berney Marshes	2	2	7	19	20	Jul	10
Dyfi Estuary	(2)	6	5	10	20	Jan	10
<sup>†</sup> as no British or All-Ireland threshold							

<sup>†</sup> 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

## Great White Egret

GB max: 1 Aug NI max: 0

Grey Heron

Singles were recorded at Rutland Water in August and September, Drakelow Gravel Pit in

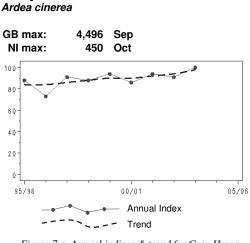


Figure 7.a, Annual indices & trend for Grey Heron for GB.

Grey Herons are widely distributed waterbirds, generally occurring in low numbers at any given site. As a result, for many of the sites holding larger numbers this is principally a function of their larger size. Although the majority of UK Grey Herons are rather sedentary, some dispersal does occur and in the winter as resident birds are joined by immigrants from northern Europe.

The 2003/04 peak core count total in Britain was the highest yet recorded by WeBS; the annual trend suggests a small rise over the last decade. The Northern Ireland peak also remained at a relatively high level, following October and on the Humber Estuary in November.

International threshold: 2,700 Great Britain threshold: ?<sup>†</sup> All-Ireland threshold: ?<sup>†</sup>

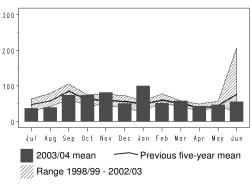


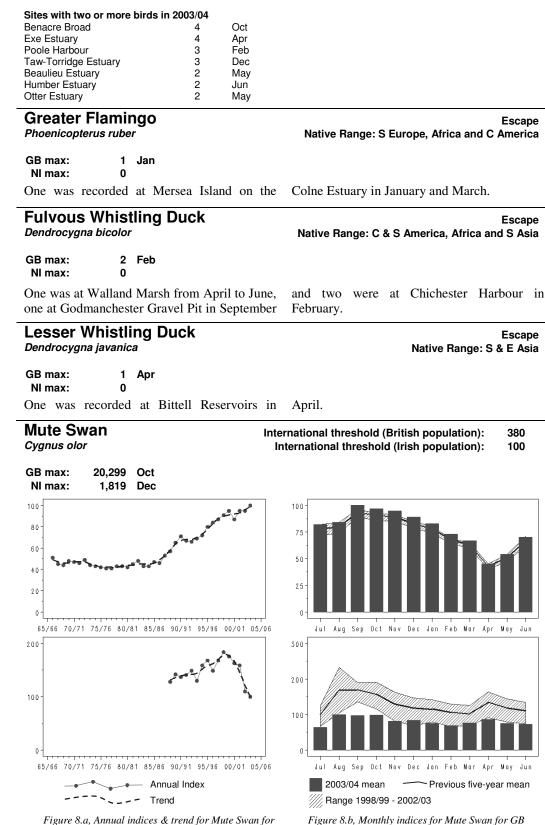
Figure 7.b, Monthly indices for Grey Heron for GB.

an increasing trend in the late 1990s. As would be expected for a largely resident species, the monthly indices suggest relative stability throughout the year.

In line with the small overall increase, there were no spectacular rises in numbers at individual sites but higher numbers than usual at several sites including the Forth Estuary and Cromarty Firth. Lower than usual peaks were noted from Hanningfield Reservoir, Walthamstow Reservoirs and the Ouse Washes. Numbers at the two key Northern Ireland sites remained stable.

		e					
	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	Mon	Mean
Sites with mean peak counts of	50 or more bi	irds in Great	Britain <sup>†</sup>				
R. Avon: Salisbury-Fordingbridge	(102)	326	(100)	(83)	(150)	Oct	326
Somerset Levels	143	148	125	134	(130)	Feb	138
Thames Estuary	(118)	145	(129)	124	(94)	Aug	135
Dee Estuary (England/Wales)	80	124	63 <sup>11</sup>	(111)	87	Sep	93
Walthamstow Reservoirs	44	117	91	133	56	Feb	88
Inner Firth of Clyde	93 <sup>11</sup>	81	90	87	81	Sep	86
Severn Estuary	(51)	(67)	69	104 <sup>11</sup>	73	Sep	82
Morecambe Bay	88	69	51	101	91	Aug	80
Ouse Washes	61	70 <sup>13</sup>	100	104 <sup>13</sup>	55	Feb	78
Taw-Torridge Estuary	78	69	(20)	(41)	77	Aug	75
Coombe Country Park	11			159	37	Feb	69
Colne Valley Gravel Pits	(25)	(21)	(36)	(33)	68	Mar	68
Tees Estuary	57	83	58	66	63	Aug	65
The Wash	91	56	49	54	76	Aug	65
Humber Estuary	85	(40)	(31)	43	(39)	Nov	64

Montrose Basin       83       87       55       24       5         Whinney Loch       61         Forth Estuary       46       59       47       62       7         Durham Coast       60       63       60       41       4         North Norfolk Coast       75       51       39       47       (3)         Ribble Estuary       88       (48)       27       40       (3)         Hanningfield Reservoir       137       57       20       21       1         Solway Estuary       63       (48)       28       (48)       28       (48)       27       40       (3)         Cromarty Firth       45       41       48       44       7       Poole Harbour       50       49       50       49       (4)         Loughs Neagh and Beg       269       267       87       225       20         Strangford Lough       96       92       113       103       10         this report       Theland thresholds have been set a qualifying level of 50 has been chosen to set in this report       50       Andeen set a qualifying level of 50 has been chosen to set in this report         Durham Case       0       One was recorded at Ormesby Re	57 54 78 <sup>11</sup> 41 38) 31) 18 49) 73 47) 28 22 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20	Oc Se 11 De Ma ) Oc ) Se ) Oc Oc ) Se Oc Co Co Co Se Oc Co Se Oc Co Se Oc Co Se	att     61       ap     61       ac     58       ar     53       att     53       ap     52       ap     51       att     50       ap     211       att     101       for presentation       Scarce
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North Norfolk Coast     75     51     39     47     (3)       Ribble Estuary     88     (48)     27     40     (3)       Hanningfield Reservoir     137     57     50     21     17       Solway Estuary     63     (48)     28 <sup>11</sup> (69)     (47)       Poole Harbour     50     49     50     44     77       Poole Harbour     50     49     50     44     77       Poole Harbour     50     49     50     44     77       Sites with mean peak counts of 50 or more birds in Northern Ireland <sup>†</sup> Loughs Neagh and Beg     269     267     87     225     20       Sitrangford Lough     96     92     113     103     100       * as no British or All-Ireland thresholds have been set a qualifying level of 50 has been chosen to set in this report     78     78     78     28       Purple Heron     Ardea purpurea     GB     GB     Native Range: Eur     70       GB max:     1     Aug     Native Range: Eur     70     70       The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum beir Harewood Lake were noted there throughout     70     70       GB max:     1     May     Nmax:     0     2004; this bird was origina remained on the Exe Estuar	338) 31) 18 49) 73 47) 08 02 02 08 02 02 08 02	) Oc ) Se ) Oc ) Se Oc ct sites t	et 53 ap 52 ap 51 et 51 et 50 ap 211 et 101 for presentation Scarce
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Sites with mean peak counts of 50 or more birds in Northern Ireland <sup>†</sup> Loughs Neagh and Beg       269       267       87       225       20         Strangford Lough       96       92       113       103       10 <sup>†</sup> as no British or All-Ireland thresholds have been set a qualifying level of 50 has been chosen to see in this report       Purple Heron         Ardea purpurea       GB max:       1       Aug         NI max:       0       0       One was recorded at Ormesby Reservoir in August.         White Stork       Ciconia ciconia       Native Range: Eur         GB max:       3       Mar         NI max:       0       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum beir         Harewood Lake were noted there throughout       Glossy Ibis         Plegadis falcinellus       Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1       May         NI max:       0       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird       2004; this bird was origina         remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in November 2002 WeBS cousix months between May 2003 and March         Sacred Ibis       Threskiornis aethiopicus         Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Afr         GB max:	08 02 elect si	Se Oc ct sites f	and escape
Loughs Neagh and Beg 269 267 87 225 20 Strangford Lough 96 92 113 103 10 <sup>†</sup> as no British or All-Ireland thresholds have been set a qualifying level of 50 has been chosen to see in this report Purple Heron Ardea purpurea GB max: 1 Aug NI max: 0 One was recorded at Ormesby Reservoir in August. White Stork Ciconia ciconia GB max: 3 Mar NI max: 0 The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum bein Harewood Lake were noted there throughout Glossy Ibis Plegadis falcinellus Mative Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia GB max: 1 May NI max: 0 The long-staying and well-watched bird 2004; this bird was origina remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in November 2002 WeBS cou six months between May 2003 and March Sacred Ibis Threskiornis aethiopicus Mative Range: Africa, Asia, Australia GB max: 1 Apr NI max: 0 One was recorded every month at Outwood likely a local escape, the in	)2 elect si	Oc ct sites f	and escape
Strangford Lough       96       92       113       103       107         * as no British or All-Ireland thresholds have been set a qualifying level of 50 has been chosen to sein this report       Purple Heron         Ardea purpurea       GB max:       1       Aug         MI max:       0       0       One was recorded at Ormesby Reservoir in August.         White Stork       Ciconia ciconia       Native Range: Eur         GB max:       3       Mar         NI max:       0       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum beir         Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis       Plegadis falcinellus         Plegadis falcinellus       Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1       May         NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird 2004; this bird was origina remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in six months between May 2003 and March       November 2002 WeBS coursis         Sacred Ibis       Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Africa, Asia, ethic Range: Africa, Asi	)2 elect si	Oc ct sites f	and escape
<sup>+</sup> as no British or All-Ireland thresholds have been set a qualifying level of 50 has been chosen to see in this report          Purple Heron         Ardea purpurea         GB max:       1         Aug         NI max:       0         One was recorded at Ormesby Reservoir in August.         White Stork         Ciconia ciconia       Native Range: Eur         GB max:       3       Mar         NI max:       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum bein         Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis         Plegadis falcinellus         Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1         May         NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in six months between May 2003 and March         Sacred Ibis         Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Africa, Barge: Africa, Asia, Parge: Africa, Asia, O         One was recorded every month at Outwood likely a local escape, the in	elect si	et sites f	and escape
In this report          Purple Heron         Ardea purpurea         GB max:       1 Aug         NI max:       0         One was recorded at Ormesby Reservoir in August.         White Stork <i>Ciconia ciconia</i> B max:       3 Mar         NI max:       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum beir         Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis         Plegadis falcinellus         Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1 May         NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird 2004; this bird was origina remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in six months between May 2003 and March         Sacred Ibis       Threskiornis aethiopicus         Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Africa, Asia, extra farmer and the provide a local escape, the in the provement at Outwood		agrant	Scarce and escape
Ardea purpurea         GB max:       1       Aug         NI max:       0         One was recorded at Ormesby Reservoir in August.         White Stork         Ciconia ciconia       Native Range: Eur         GB max:       3       Mar         NI max:       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum beir         Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis         Plegadis falcinellus         Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1         May         NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in six months between May 2003 and March         Sacred Ibis         Threskiornis aethiopicus         Ranz:       1         Apr         NI max:       0         One was recorded every month at Outwood likely a local escape, the in	Vagr	-	and escape
GB max:       1       Aug         NI max:       0         One was recorded at Ormesby Reservoir in August.         White Stork         Ciconia ciconia       Native Range: Eur         GB max:       3       Mar         NI max:       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum bein Harewood Lake were noted there throughout       The year, the maximum bein Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis       Plegadis falcinellus       Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1       May         NI max:       0       2004; this bird was origina         The long-staying and well-watched bird six months between May 2003 and March       November 2002 WeBS coursis         Sacred Ibis       Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Africa, Asia, et ange: Africa, et ange:	Vagr	-	-
NI max:       0         One was recorded at Ormesby Reservoir in August.         White Stork         Ciconia ciconia         GB max:       3 Mar         NI max:       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis         Plegadis falcinellus         Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1 May         NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird six months between May 2003 and March         Sacred Ibis         Threskiornis aethiopicus         Native Range:         Apr         NI max:       0         One was recorded every month at Outwood likely a local escape, the in	Vagr	-	-
NI max:       0         One was recorded at Ormesby Reservoir in August.         White Stork         Ciconia ciconia         GB max:       3 Mar         NI max:       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis         Plegadis falcinellus         Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1 May         NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird six months between May 2003 and March         Sacred Ibis         Threskiornis aethiopicus         Native Range:         Apr         NI max:       0         One was recorded every month at Outwood likely a local escape, the in	Vagr	-	-
One was recorded at Ormesby Reservoir in August.         White Stork         Ciconia ciconia         GB max:       3 Mar         NI max:       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of Harewood Lake were noted there throughout       the year, the maximum bein Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis       Plegadis falcinellus       Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1 May       Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1 May       November 2002 WeBS coustion         The long-staying and well-watched bird six months between May 2003 and March       2004; this bird was origina         Sacred Ibis       Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Africa, Asia, extremest Africa, asia, asia, extremest Africa, asia, as	Vagr	-	-
White Stork       Native Range: Europe         GB max:       3 Mar         NI max:       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum bein Harewood Lake were noted there throughout       The year, the maximum bein Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis       Plegadis falcinellus       Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1 May         NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird       2004; this bird was origina         remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in six months between May 2003 and March       November 2002 WeBS cours         Sacred Ibis       Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Africa, Asia, extra find the second data for t	Vagr	-	-
Ciconia ciconia       Native Range: Europe         GB max:       3       Mar         NI max:       0       The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum bein Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis       Plegadis falcinellus       Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1       May         NI max:       0       2004; this bird was origina         The long-staying and well-watched bird remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in six months between May 2003 and March       November 2002 WeBS cours         Sacred Ibis       Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Africa, Asia, extra farmer and the second and the	Vagra	-	-
GB max:       3 Mar         NI max:       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum bein Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis         Plegadis falcinellus         Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1 May         NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird       2004; this bird was origina         remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in six months between May 2003 and March       November 2002 WeBS cours         Sacred Ibis       Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Africa, Asia, extra field         GB max:       1 Apr       Native Range: Africa, Asia, extra field         O       One was recorded every month at Outwood       likely a local escape, the in	-	be, Afri	ca and Asia
NI max:       0         The usual free-flying White Storks of the year, the maximum bein Harewood Lake were noted there throughout       The year, the maximum bein Harewood Lake were noted there throughout         Glossy Ibis Plegadis falcinellus       Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1 May NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in six months between May 2003 and March       2004; this bird was origina November 2002 WeBS cours         Sacred Ibis Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Africa Asia, Australia         GB max:       1 Apr         NI max:       0         One was recorded every month at Outwood       likely a local escape, the in	ope,		
Glossy Ibis         Plegadis falcinellus       Native Range: S Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1       May         NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird       2004; this bird was origina         remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in six months between May 2003 and March       November 2002 WeBS courses         Sacred Ibis         Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Africa, Asia, Australia         GB max:       1       Apr         NI max:       0       One was recorded every month at Outwood	ıg th	three	in March.
GB max:       1       May         NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird       2004; this bird was original         remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in six months between May 2003 and March       November 2002 WeBS courses         Sacred Ibis       Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Afr         GB max:       1       Apr         NI max:       0       One was recorded every month at Outwood       likely a local escape, the in		and N 9	Vagran
NI max:       0         The long-staying and well-watched bird remained on the Exe Estuary, being noted in six months between May 2003 and March       2004; this bird was original November 2002 WeBS could be a structure of the structure			
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Threskiornis aethiopicus       Native Range: Afr         GB max:       1       Apr         NI max:       0         One was recorded every month at Outwood likely a local escape, the in	III.		
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One was recorded every month at Outwood likely a local escape, the in			
		easing	v naturalise
Swan Sancinary, where this species was also Dodulation in western France	creas		
			o a potenti
noted back during the 1998/99 winter, source.			
presumably the same individual. Whilst most			
Spoonbill			
Spoonbill International the Platalea leucorodia	ce is	is also	
GB max: 10 May	ce is	is also	l: 100
NI max: 0	ce is	is also	l: 100
Spoonbills were recorded from 14 sites in Exe Estuary was the most	ce is	is also	
2003/04, with a peak of 10 in May and up to species in 2003/04, with five birds throughout the winter months. The months.	ce is	is also	



GB (above) & NI (below).

Figure 8.b, Monthly indices for Mute Swan for GB (above) & NI (below).

Mute Swans are widespread, being found in a variety of wetland habitats and showing tolerance to human activity. The majority of birds are thought to be sedentary although post-natal dispersal and winter movements, mainly southwest or towards coastal regions, are common.

Although British and Northern Irish maxima were both comparable to previous years, very different patterns were evident in annual indices. The British index rose 5% to its highest ever level, whilst in contrast the fifth consecutive decline in the Northern Irish indices equates to current values being almost half of those five years ago. Furthermore, monthly indices were below the range of the previous five years in all months except

December, February and March, although these still failed to reach average levels. Conversely, British monthly indices peaked above average throughout the year.

Counts at Lough Neagh and Beg were well below average for the site, although the fiveyear mean for the site still exceeds any other in the UK. The Fleet and Wey remained the top site in Britain with the 2003/04 peak over 20% higher than that for any other site. As during 2002/03 current counts for Abberton Reservoir exceeded the international qualifying threshold levels, however, mean values fell to just below this level. The second year of below average counts recorded at Lough Foyle have resulted in a mean peak below the international qualifying threshold.

1 5		1	1 20					
	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	Mon	Mean	
Sites of international importance	in the UK							
Loughs Neagh and Beg	1,887	1,931	1,346	1,391	920	Sep	1,495	
Fleet and Wey	1,177	1,150	1,228	1,368	1,092	Oct	1,203	
Somerset Levels	(1,011)	(1,110)	(1,121)	(1,039)	(883)	Dec	(1,121)	
Ouse Washes	662	726 <sup>13</sup>	`1,110 <sup>´13</sup>	782 <sup>13</sup>	530 <sup>13</sup>	Jan	762	
Loch of Harray	(495)	597	597	672	522	Feb	597	
Rutland Water	617	547	590	594	542	Jul	578	
Loch Leven	406	496	506	550	526	Sep	497	
Tweed Estuary	580	575	464 <sup>13</sup>	414	446	Jul	496	
R. Avon: Salisbury-Fordingbridge	(263)	(395)	(229)	(162)	(311)	Oct	(395)	
Hornsea Mere	364	346	217	486	527 <sup>13</sup>	Aug	388 🔺	
Upper Lough Erne	328	445	306	323	272	Dec	335	
Lower Lough Erne				199	(286)	Dec	243	
Strangford Lough	225	174	183	180	193	Oct	191	
Broad Water Canal		113	77	172	152	Oct	129	
Sites no longer meeting table qua	alifying leve	els in WeBS-\	/ear 2003/20	04				
Lough Foyle	115	98	101	77	66	Jan	91	
Other sites attaining table qualify	ring levels i	in WeBS-Year	2003/2004	in Great Brita	in			
Loch Bee (South Uist)	341	343	200	297	407	Aug	318	
Abberton Reservoir	520	328	187	387	379	Aug	360 🖵	۲
Other sites attaining table qualify	ing levels i	in WeBS-Year	2003/2004	in Northern li	reland			
Upper Quoile River	88	32	117	(71)	108	Oct	86	

## Black Swan

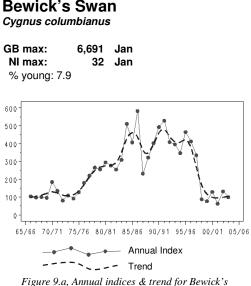
## Cygnus atratus

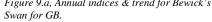
Escape Native Range: Australia

GB max:	49	Nov
NI max:	0	

The GB maximum count of 49 was similar to that recorded by WeBS in recent years. None were noted in Northern Ireland. The species was recorded from a total of 73 sites, slightly up on recent years, as was the summed site maxima of 128. Twelve sites held three or more birds, compared to eight and 10 in the previous two years. Overall, this suggests consolidation or stabilisation of this relatively regular escape/feral bird.

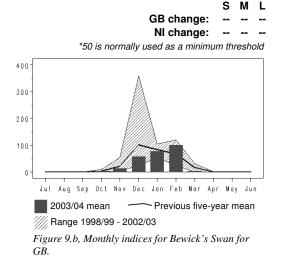
Sites with three or more birds in 20	03/04	
Woburn Park Lakes	8	Sep
Walthamstow Reservoirs	6	May
Nene Washes	4	Jan
R.Kennet: R'bury-Chilton Foliat	4	Jun
Abberton Reservoir	3	Apr
Cassington & Yarnton GPs	3	Öct
Dungeness Gravel Pits	3	Jan
Fleet and Wey	3	Aug
Hill Ridware Lake	3	Nov
King George V Reservoirs	3	Oct
Mersey Estuary	3	Sep
R. Cam: Owlstone - Baits Bite	3	Oct





Bewick's Swans breed across the far northern tundra of Russia, the western population, which breed on the Kanin Peninsula, migrate southwest in the autumn to winter mainly in Britain and the Netherlands.

Peak GB numbers in 2003/04 were slightly higher than the previous year, although the total is heavily influenced by roost counts from a single site, the Ouse Washes. A high roost count early in January at the Ouse Washes (in fact, the highest single site total ever recorded in the UK), although not synchronised with WeBS Core Counts elsewhere in Britain, perhaps suggests that the true peak was even higher, perhaps about 7,000. The annual indices suggest that numbers remain low but are similar to the last few years; the indices are, however, based on core counts alone and so may well be somewhat unrepresentative. Productivity was low during the summer of 2003, with 7.9% young being the lowest since 1997.



International threshold (bewickii):

Great Britain threshold:

All-Ireland threshold:

290

81

25'

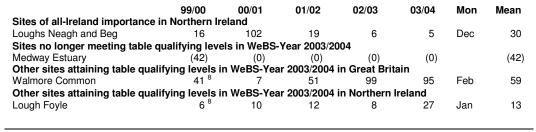
Elsewhere, numbers of birds using the Nene Washes, Severn Estuary and Martin Mere appeared to be similar to recent winters, whilst counts at Breydon Water, St Benet's Levels and Walmore Common were higher than their recent averages.

Whilst the peak count in Northern Ireland was higher than during the two previous winters, it was still extremely small compared to the early 1990s, when a peak count of 805 was recorded. There remains uncertainty as to whether overall numbers of this population have declined, or whether birds have redistributed and are mostly wintering further east, closer to the breeding grounds. An international census carried out in early 2005 should help to provide answers.

A bird identified as being of the nominate race, known as Whistling Swan, was present at Gadloch between April and October, with presumably the same bird also recorded from nearby Bridgend Farm Pool in May.

	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance							
Ouse Washes	5,649 <sup>8</sup>	4,693 <sup>12</sup>	5,735 <sup>8</sup>	5,177 <sup>8</sup>	6,330 <sup>8</sup>	Dec	5,517
Nene Washes	327	1,100	347 <sup>12</sup>	1,068	790	Feb	726
Sites of national importance in G	reat Britain						
Severn Estuary	216 <sup>8</sup>	272 <sup>8</sup>	310 <sup>8</sup>	345 <sup>8</sup>	230	Jan	275
Martin Mere and Ribble Estuary	163 <sup>8</sup>	322 <sup>8</sup>	296 <sup>8</sup>	315	221	Jan	263
St Benet's Levels	209	(206)	147	287	280	Jan	231
Breydon Water / Berney Marshes	132	186	85	240	220	Feb	173
Old Romney	160 <sup>8</sup>				184 <sup>13</sup>	Jan	172
Somerset Levels	(117)	(146)	(108)	(69)	(112)	Jan	(146)
Confidential SE England Site	64	10	180	220	148	Jan	124
Dee Estuary (England/Wales)	56 <sup>8</sup>	(118)	(78)	(70)	(92)	Feb	83 🔺

59



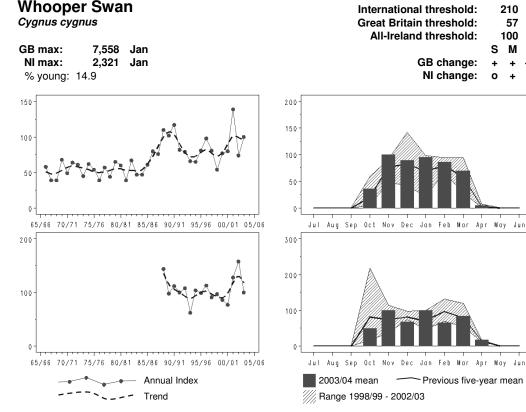


Figure 10.a, Annual indices & trend for Whooper Swan for GB (above) & NI (below).

Almost the entire Icelandic breeding population of Whooper Swan winters in Britain and Ireland, although significant numbers remain in Iceland and small numbers continue on to the Netherlands, Denmark and southern Scandinavia (Brazil, 2003). With the UK regularly hosting the majority of this population it is unsurprising that a total of nine sites held internationally and a further 29 nationally important numbers in the five years up to 2003/04.

The Ouse Washes and Martin Mere/Ribble Estuary remained the only sites outside Northern Ireland or Scotland to hold internationally important numbers; and while

Figure 10.b, Monthly indices for Whooper Swan for GB (above) & NI (below).

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peak numbers at the latter were lower than those of the past three years supplementary counts at the Ouse Washes helped boost the 2003/04 peak. This trend was reflected across sites of international importance that, with the exception of Loch of Strathbeg, all held peak numbers below average. The five-year mean for Black Cart Water fell below the international qualifying level, while in contrast, mean peaks at four sites Lindisfarne, Loch Connell, Barons Folly and Clatto Reservoir each surpassed 57 birds.

Stark differences were also evident at the national level with the Northern Irish index falling and that of Britain rising. Following its

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highest ever peak in 2002/03 the Northern Irish index fell by over a third, however, numbers remain comparable to those of the past decade. Conversely, the British rose by a third contributing to the increase witnessed over the past 20 years. between Britain and Northern Ireland. However, with November and January counts above average in both Britain and Northern Ireland, and December counts below average, no evidence of this interchange was seen during 2003/04. The overall productivity of 14.9% was similar to that of 2002/03.

Previous Wildfowl and Wader Counts have suggested the possibility of winter movements

	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	Mon	Mean
Sites of international importance	in the UK		0	10			
Ouse Washes	2,120 <sup>12</sup>	1,797 <sup>8</sup>	2,894 <sup>8</sup>	2,745 <sup>12</sup>	3,624 <sup>8</sup>	Jan	2,636
Martin Mere and Ribble Estuary	1,335 <sup>8</sup>	1,650	1,762 <sup>8</sup>	1,770 <sup>8</sup>	1,597	Dec	1,623
Loughs Neagh and Beg	(641)	(735)	(1,532)	1,514	867	Jan	1,304
Lough Foyle	657	434	548	3,284	680	Nov	1,121
Upper Lough Erne	985	1,010	1,228 <sup>13</sup>	658	855	Dec	947
Loch of Strathbeg	262	424	(223)	(67)	794	Nov	493
Solway Estuary	223 <sup>8</sup>	466 <sup>8</sup>	(309)	340 8	(188)	Nov	343
R. Clyde: Carstairs - Thankerton	393	142	242	(101)	91	Feb	217
Black Cart Water	187 <sup>3</sup>	299	238 <sup>3</sup>	176 <sup>3</sup>	151 <sup>3</sup>	Mar	210
Sites of national importance in G							
Loch Eye and Cromarty	180 <sup>8</sup>	(39)	230	141	322	Oct	205
Nene Washes	9	111	110 <sup>12</sup>	663 <sup>12</sup>	111	Feb	201
Loch of Wester	45	(86)	341				193
Wigtown Bay	134	(110)	156	(135)	255	Mar	182
Lower Teviot Valley	(12)	(179)	(50)	(29)			(179)
R. Nith: Keltonbank to Nunholm	(146)	131	125	(108)	165	Feb	142
Killimster Loch			135				135
Ravenstruther		347		0	48	Mar	132
Loch a` Phuill (Tiree)	142	36		168	118	Nov	116
Dornoch Firth	84	307	53 <sup>11</sup>	23	94	Oct	112
Loch Insh and Spey Marshes	125 <sup>13</sup>	96	92	91			101
Caistron Quarry		71	71	67	164	Dec	93
Loch of Lintrathen	68	96	10	166	93	Jan	87
Inner Moray and Inverness Firth	17	1	173	60	165	Feb	83
Vasa Loch Shapinsay				68	96	Nov	82
Lower Derwent Ings	81						81
Forth Estuary	(20)	(95)	(20)	(24)	62 <sup>11</sup>	Feb	79
Milldam and Balfour Mains Pools	53 <sup>13</sup>	112	98	41	86	Jan	78
R. Tweed: Kelso to Coldstream	50	47	60	116	109	Dec	76
Warkworth Lane Ponds	113 <sup>8</sup>	62	25	128	47	Mar	75
Threave Estate	(117)	74	21				71
Lindisfarne	47	45 <sup>11</sup>	15	(90)	(139)	Mar	67 🔺
Loch Leven	144	144	0	13	19	Dec	64
Loch of Spiggie	24	73	47	86	89	Nov	64
Loch Connell	63						63 🔺
Kinnordy Loch	17		116	82	35	Feb	63
Barons Folly	71	107	3	4	126	Jan	62 🔺
Clatto Reservoir	52	108	62	10	58	Nov	58 🔺
Sites of all-Ireland importance in	Northern Ire	land					
Strangford Lough	177	220 <sup>11</sup>	212	191	150	Jan	190
Other sites attaining table qualify							
Tyninghame Estuary	76 <sup>8</sup>	15	49	3	135	Feb	56
Loch Moraig	37	15	12	20	121	Nov	41
St Benet's Levels	27	(26)	6	58	108	Jan	50
Douglas Estate Ponds	13	30	21	22	100	Nov	37
Fergus Loch	32	31	38	36	73	Nov	42
Wilkhaven to Rockfield	70	1	60	0	70	Feb	40
Martnaham Loch	1	34	37	32	67	Dec	34