

20 | WADDER 25 | CALENDAR



HOW TO TAKE PART



REGISTER

Register your interest: Using our online form (https://bit.ly/BTO_WadersSurvey) or email your name and farm name to waders@bto.org to let us know you're thinking of participating.



SURVEY PERIOD

First week of April to the last week of July.

SURVEY AREA

Survey Area: Decide which area you want to provide counts for. This can be your whole farm or a portion. Attach a map of your farm's survey area with the fields numbered. Use the same numbers in your weekly counts (below). Fields are the basic unit of area for the Wader Calendar, but if you need to use another area unit that is not a field (e.g., you want to provide counts for part of a very large field or unenclosed land), you can do so by marking these areas on your map as 'Field 1', 'Field 2', etc.). If needed, contact us at waders@bto.org for map assistance.



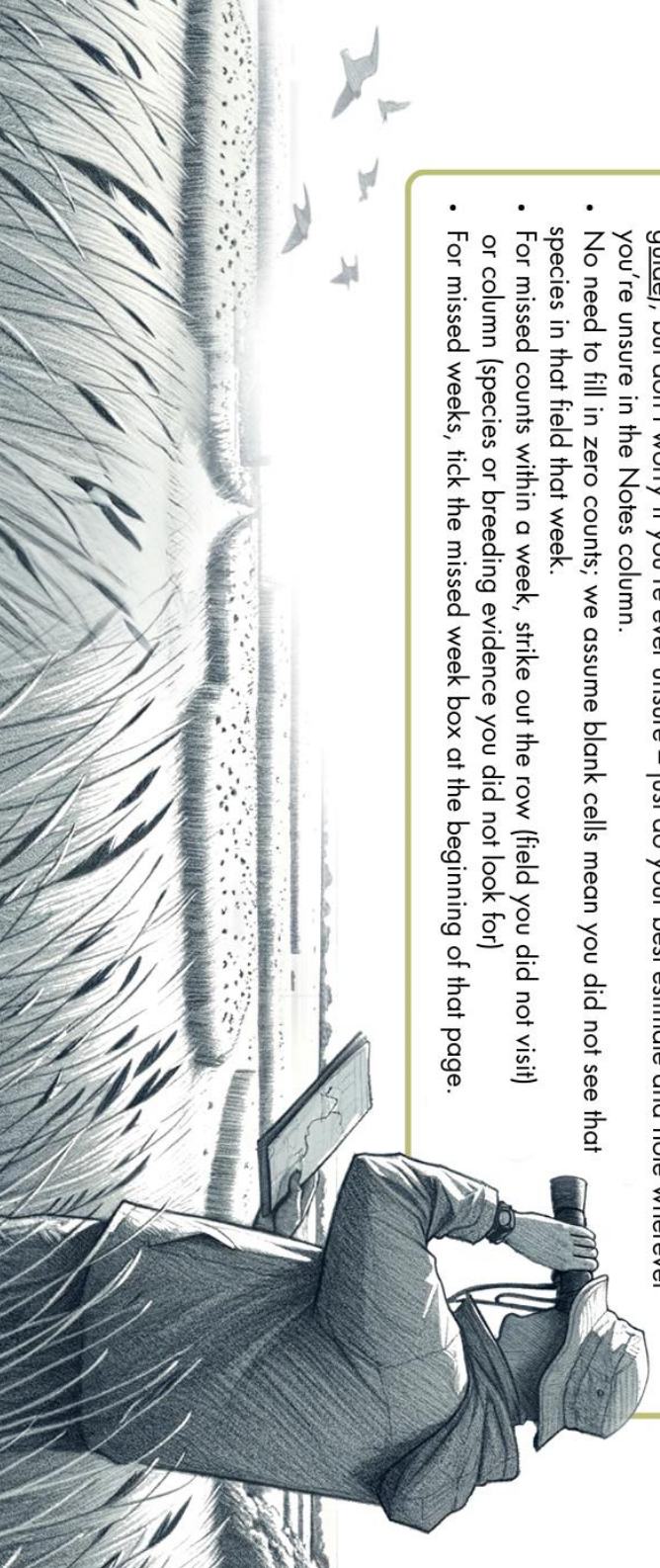
WEEKLY COUNTS

One point during each week (note time/date), try to estimate counts for each species, in each field. Use these categories:

- **Total count (T)** of potentially breeding birds, so please don't include temporary flocks seen in fields (these can be included in the notes column)
- **Breeding evidence (B)** the total number of birds observed displaying or 'singing', seen on nests, with chicks, or repeatedly alarm-calling/agitated and/or reluctant to leave the area (a sign nests or chicks are nearby) – include counts of chicks seen (and species) in the notes column

TIPS ON COUNTS

- Remember, B count can't exceed T (i.e., there can't be more birds showing breeding evidence than there are birds in total).
- Read our guidance on recognising wader behaviours (www.bto.org/wader-survey-behaviour-guide), but don't worry if you're ever unsure – just do your best estimate and note wherever you're unsure in the Notes column.
- No need to fill in zero counts; we assume blank cells mean you did not see that species in that field that week.
- For missed counts within a week, strike out the row (field you did not visit) or column (species or breeding evidence you did not look for)
- For missed weeks, tick the missed week box at the beginning of that page.



KEY WADER BEHAVIOURS

The Breeding (B) category may require recognising key wader behaviours. Territorial displays and 'song' and alarm/agitation behaviours may be difficult to recognise for beginners, but they become easier to recognise with a little practice.

Display and 'song' tends to be lengthy, melodic, and varied calls waders make in flight over a specific area (their breeding territory), or from the ground or perched on a fencepost or wall. Waders display when they have settled on breeding grounds, and it is a good sign they have laid a nest or intend to.

When waders are alarm-calling and agitated because they have chicks or have nests close to hatching, they:

- Persistently make repeated, less melodic alarm-calls (which often sound panicked)
- Show a reluctance to leave the area (when not breeding, or early on nests, waders tend to just leave the area to avoid potential danger)
- May fly aggressively towards an intruder or circle above them
- A good rule of thumb is if a wader is making noise for longer than a couple of seconds, there is a good chance it is either displaying or alarm-calling, indicating it is Breeding (B). Do not include waders that make one or two quick calls, then leave the area in the Breeding (B) count.



We have produced guidance on interpreting behaviours of the Wader Calendar target species, available at www.bto.org/wader-survey-behaviour-guide, if you wish to visit that webpage.

The key thing to remember is to just do your best. We hope the survey is simple and enjoyable to do, so please don't get too hung up on recognising behaviours!

FARM DETAILS AND FIELD MANAGEMENT

Though it isn't essential, it is extremely valuable if you keep and provide notes on stocking, cutting, and harvest dates in each field included in your Wader Calendar. Complete the Farm Details and Field Management sections at the end of the survey period before returning your Wader Calendar

RETURNING YOUR WADER CALENDAR

before the 30 November 2022, email a scan/photo of your completed Recording Form to waders@bto.org. You can create a scan using a smartphone with a PDF scanning app. (e.g. Adobe Scan@), however if you'd prefer, simply post it to FAO: Wader Project Officer, BTO Scotland, Unit 15 Beta Centre, Stirling University, Innovation Park, Stirling, FK9 4NF.

That's it for 2025! Thank you for undertaking this survey and helping to increase our knowledge of waders on farmland, to better conserve these wonderful birds. Please insert the map of your study area for this Wader Calendar booklet, with fields numbered to match the field numbers in your Wader Calendar booklet. This is important. It is especially helpful if you can provide a summary of the management of each of these fields in the table on the next page. Then fill in Farm Details below and email photos/scan to waders@bto.org, or post to: Wader Calendar, BTO Scotland, Unit 15 Beta Centre, Stirling University Innovation Park, FK9 4NF. We will store and use this information adhering to the BTO Policy on Data and Information (<https://www.bto.org/our-science/data/data-and-information-policy>).

FARM DETAILS : SURVEY AREA

Farm Name		Approximate central grid reference:	
Farm Address		Observer name(s)	
Contact email		Contact telephone (optional):	
Notes on survey area (optional):			

RELEVANT MANAGEMENT

Number of gamekeepers active on the survey area (1 = full-time, or equivalent, 0.5 = part-time, or equivalent, 0 = none)		Wader-specific habitat management	
Notes on gamekeeper effort, other predator control, and wader-specific management:			
If you spread muck or slurry, please provide details of each, on which fields, and dates you do so:			

FIELD MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

Field No: same as the field numbers you used to count your waders in the weekly tables.

Field type: select category which most closely reflects the field's type April/July: arable (A), hay meadow (H), silage meadow (S), uniform, lush green sward, dominated by one or two species of grass and perhaps clover, very few other plants present (I), varying vegetation height and colour across the field, with at least a few different grasses and perhaps other (flowering) plants present (U), other (O) - if selecting other, please describe in Notes column

Livestock

Species: select from sheep, beef cattle, dairy cattle, pigs, or other (if selecting other, please describe in Notes column), ideally including breed(s)

Stock in 1: enter the date you first had stock in the field (choose 1st Jan if you had them in from the start of the year) and number of stock (pure numbers of Livestock Units (LU))

Stock out 1: enter the date you first took stock out of the field and number of stock (pure numbers of Livestock Units (LU))

Stock in 2: enter the date you re-stocked the field (leave blank or enter "N/A" if only stocked once) and number of stock (pure numbers of Livestock Units (LU))

Stock out 2: enter the date you took stock out of the field for a second time (leave blank or enter "N/A" if only stocked once) and number of stock (pure numbers of Livestock Units (LU))

NB – if you stocked and re-stocked fields more than twice, please just enter the relevant dates between 1 April and 31 July.

Grass cuts

Date 1st cut: the date at which you took your first hay or silage cut in that field (leave blank or enter "N/A" if permanent pasture, arable, or other)

Date 2nd cut: the date at which you took your second cut in that field (usually silage, leave blank or enter "N/A" if only one cut made)

Date 3rd cut: the date at which you took your third cut in that field (usually silage, leave blank or enter "N/A" if only one or two cuts made)

NB – rarely, fields can be shut-up and left to grow, but not cut, effectively as standing hay, known as "deferred grazing" – the livestock and meadow cuts should make this clear, but please include details of this in the Notes column.

Arable

Crop type: e.g., wheat, barley, potato, brassicas, etc., or "fallow"

Seeded date: enter the approximate date you seeded the crop (leave blank or enter "N/A" if left fallow)

Harvest date: enter the approximate date you harvested your crop (leave blank or enter "N/A" if left fallow)