

Blythe Valley ringing report 2015



Redwing

2015 was the third year of ringing at Blythe Valley. A total of 679 birds - 465 new and 214 re-traps of 24 species were handled during the year. Numbers were down due to a combination of holidays in June/July and poor weather in November and December, when no ringing at all was possible. A total of 13 visits totalling 219 volunteering hours were carried out, plus the monitoring of nest boxes, which had a very successful season.

Fig 1. Ringing totals 2015

	New	Retrap	Total
Blackbird	5		5
Blackcap	22	3	25
Blue Tit	228	108	336
Bullfinch	16	4	20
Chaffinch	5		5
Chiffchaff	8		8
Coal Tit	3	1	4
Dunnock	11	3	14
Garden Warbler	1		1
Goldfinch	9		9
Great Spotted Woodpecker	9	6	15
Great Tit	91	55	146
Greenfinch	4		4
Lesser Redpoll	3		3
Long-tailed Tit	1	20	21
Nuthatch	2	1	3
Redwing	5		5
Reed Warbler	2	1	3
Robin	18	8	26
Sedge Warbler	1		1
Treecreeper	1	2	3
Whitethroat	11	1	12
Willow Warbler	2		2
Wren	7	1	8
Total	465	214	679

Ringling is usually undertaken at weekends, as most of the volunteer ringers work during the week. The biggest problem has been the windy weather, which has been an unwelcome feature for most of the year, particularly in the final quarter. Unlike at other sites, there are few sheltered areas at Blythe where we can ring when the forecast is poor. Once wind speeds exceed 10mph, we struggle to ring (and cannot ring in wet weather).

Ringling almost always commences at sunrise, and continues for as long is productive, using mist nests of various sizes.

Supplementary feeding continues throughout the year, with a combination of sunflower hearts, fat cakes, niger seed and peanuts provided. Feeding stations are regularly moved to help record bird populations around the site.

Fig 2. Ringing totals by month 2015

	Jan	Feb	Apr	May	Aug	Sept	Oct	Total
Blackbird	1				3		1	5
Blackcap			4		15	5	1	25
Blue Tit	44	11	6	96	79	43	57	336
Bullfinch			1		14	5		20
Chaffinch	3	1	1					5
Chiffchaff			4		4			8
Coal Tit						1	3	4
Dunnock			3		6	5		14
Garden Warbler					1			1
Goldfinch			1				8	9
Great Spotted Woodpecker	1		1		6		7	15
Great Tit	23	9	6	15	40	28	25	146
Greenfinch			4					4
Lesser Redpoll							3	3
Long-tailed Tit	13	3			2		3	21
Nuthatch					1	1	1	3
Redwing	4						1	5
Reed Warbler					2	1		3
Robin	2	2	2		13	3	4	26
Sedge Warbler			1					1
Treecreeper	2	1						3
Whitethroat					11	1		12
Willow Warbler			1			1		2
Wren			1		6	1		8
Total	93	27	36	111	203	95	114	679

Ringing was only possible during 7 months in 2015 for reasons already mentioned. We may have to review whether it would be possible/practical for the ringing group to ring at Blythe in the absence of Leigh & Tony (Kelly), subject to usual BTO licence restrictions, holiday periods and mid-week ringing, when weekend forecasts are unsuitable.

In addition to the above totals, we received recovery details for a Sedge Warbler ringed at Blythe in 2012 and recaptured 26km away by Wychavon ringing group. Whilst on the surface this doesn't appear to be a particularly impressive journey, this species winters in tropical and southern Africa, so has completed this return journey at least 4 times, as it was ringed by us as an adult in 2012.

Sedge Warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) Ring no L980297

Ringing date: 12-May-2012 08:00:00

Blythe Valley, West Midlands, UK

Grid ref: SP1375 Accuracy 1 Co-ords: 52deg 22min N 1deg 49min W Accuracy 1

Biometrics: Wing: 63 mm. Weight: 10.7 g. Time: 08:00:00hrs

Finding date: 10-May-2015

Rous Lench, Worcestershire, UK

Grid ref: SP0052 Accuracy 0 Co-ords: 52deg 10min N 2deg 0min W Accuracy 0

Biometrics: Wing: 64 mm.

Duration: 1093 days Distance: 26 km Direction: 210deg (SSW)

Finder: Wychavon RG, 9115

Fig 3. Ringing totals by age 2015 - (bold numbers actual/likely breeding records)

Species by Age	1	2	3	3J	4	5	6	Total
Blackbird			1	3		1		5
Blackcap			6	11	5	3		25
Blue Tit	89		53	99	26	48	21	336
Bullfinch			3	11	2	2	2	20
Chaffinch					2		3	5
Chiffchaff			1	3		3	1	8
Coal Tit			4					4
Dunnock			1	7	5		1	14
Garden Warbler			1					1
Goldfinch			7	1			1	9
Great Spotted Woodpecker			12		2		1	15
Great Tit	15		30	45	17	29	10	146
Greenfinch							4	4
Lesser Redpoll			2		1			3
Long-tailed Tit		5			16			21
Nuthatch		3						3
Redwing			1		1	1	2	5
Reed Warbler			3					3
Robin			11	7	2	5	1	26
Sedge Warbler					1			1
Treecreeper					3			3
Whitethroat			3	5	3	1		12
Willow Warbler			1		1			2
Wren			2	5			1	8
Total	104	8	142	197	87	93	48	679

Age codes

1 Pulli ringed in nest

2 Fully grown, year of hatching unknown (including current year)

3 Definitely hatched during current calendar year (e.g. first-years in autumn)

3J* Passerines only - definitely hatched this calendar year and still partly or completely in juvenile body plumage*

4 Hatched before current calendar year - exact year unknown (e.g. many adults in autumn)

5 Definitely hatched during previous calendar year (e.g. first-years in early spring)

6 Hatched before last calendar year - exact year unknown (e.g. many adults in spring)

From the above table, we can be confident any bird ringed as a 3J has probably fledged from a nest on site. Because of the lack of ringing during the summer, breeding adults will be under-recorded on site, identified either by plumage/moult presence of a brood patch (generally females only) - these are listed in Fig 4 (below).

Fig 4. Probable breeding adults 2015

Blackbird	Greenfinch
Blackcap	Jay
Blue Tit	Reed Warbler
Bullfinch	Robin
Chaffinch	Sedge Warbler
Chiffchaff	Song Thrush
Dunnock	Treecreeper
Garden Warbler	Whitethroat
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Willow Warbler
Great Tit	Wren

Fig 5. Nest box outcomes 2015 - (NE - nest empty, JD - juvenile dead)

Nest Number	Species	Subsite	Box	Outcome	Outcome type	First Egg	Eggs	Pulli	Fledged
Blythe Valley									
388	BLUTI	ILLSHA	A1	NE	S	23/04/2015	11	11	11
394	GRETI	BLYTHE	A11	NE	S	21/04/2015	10	7	7
395	BLUTI	MARL	A12	NE	S	17/04/2015	11	11	11
396	GRETI	MARL	A13	NE	S	19/04/2015	8	8	8
397	BLUTI	HAWKES	A14	NE	S	27/04/2015	8	8	8
398	BLUTI	ILLSHA	A15	NE	S	17/04/2015	11	11	10
399	BLUTI	BLYTHG	A16	NE	S	18/04/2015	10	9	9
400	BLUTI	ILLSHA	A18	JD	F	28/04/2015	6	2	0
401	BLUTI	ILLSHA	A19	NE	S	10/05/2015	10	7	4
389	GRETI	MARL	A2	NE	S	18/04/2015	8	8	8
402	GRETI	ILLSHA	A20	NE	S	21/04/2015	6	5	5
403	BLUTI	BLYTHE	A23	NE	S	10/05/2015	6	6	4
404	BLUTI	MARL	A25	NE	S	22/04/2015	8	8	8
405	BLUTI	HAWKES	A26	NE	S	22/04/2015	10	10	10
406	BLUTI	MARL	A27	JD	F	18/04/2015	11	11	0
390	BLUTI	BLYTHE	A3	NE	S	11/05/2015	7	6	6
391	BLUTI	MARL	A5	NE	S	24/04/2015	11	10	10
392	BLUTI	BLYTHE	A8	NE	S	25/04/2015	8	7	7
393	BLUTI	BLYTHE	A9	NE	S	28/04/2015	9	9	9
Place totals:							169	154	135
Nests: 19									
Year totals:							169	154	135
Year averages:							8.89	8.11	7.11
% of eggs:								91.12	79.88
% of pulli:									87.66
Total nest records: 19									

2015 was a very successful year, with the majority of chicks fledging and only 2 nests completely failing. Many thanks to Humphrey and his team for monitoring and recording the outcomes over this period.



Juvenile Reed Warbler Z279456,
ringed 11/08/2015

Fig 6. Total new birds ringed to date

	Year				
	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Blackbird	23	14	10	5	52
Blackcap	32	11	30	22	95
Blue Tit	99	240	313	228	880
Bullfinch	18	10	21	16	65
Chaffinch	2	8	14	5	29
Chiffchaff	29	9	14	8	60
Coal Tit		2	1	3	6
Common Redpoll			2		2
Dunnock	18	9	20	11	58
Garden Warbler	1		2	1	4
Goldcrest	2	1	9		12
Goldfinch	18	30	19	9	76
Grasshopper Warbler		1			1
Great Spotted Woodpecker	3	4	7	9	23
Great Tit	86	106	134	91	417
Greenfinch	25	15	38	4	82
Jay	1	1	2		4
Lesser Redpoll	26	71	32	3	132
Lesser Whitethroat	2				2
Linnet	1				1
Long-tailed Tit	28	21	29	1	79
Meadow Pipit	1	5	2		8
Nuthatch			5	2	7
Redstart			2		2
Redwing		1	19	5	25
Reed Bunting	20	5	2		27
Reed Warbler	28	9	7	2	46
Robin	21	13	24	18	76
Sedge Warbler	9	3		1	13
Siskin	2	2	10		14
Song Thrush	13	2	5		20
Sparrowhawk		1	2		3
Treecreeper	2	3	1	1	7
Whitethroat	26	21	5	11	63
Willow Warbler	17	4	7	2	30
Wren	29	8	20	7	64
Total	582	630	808	465	2485

Total 36 species ringed



Chaffinch male

Fig 7. Total re-trapped birds

	Year				
	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Blackbird		2			2
Blackcap	3		2	3	8
Blue Tit	32	56	130	108	326
Bullfinch	3	1	3	4	11
Chaffinch		1	2		3
Chiffchaff	3	2			5
Coal Tit				1	1
Dunnock	2	7	8	3	20
Goldcrest			2		2
Great Spotted Woodpecker	1		2	6	9
Great Tit	25	45	103	55	228
Greenfinch	1		1		2
Lesser Redpoll		2			2
Long-tailed Tit	21	20	25	20	86
Nuthatch				1	1
Reed Bunting	4	4	2		10
Reed Warbler	14	9	8	1	32
Robin	3	3	3	8	17
Sedge Warbler	4	1			5
Song Thrush	1				1
Treecreeper				2	2
Whitethroat	4	8	1	1	14
Willow Warbler	2	4	2		8
Wren	7			1	8
Total	130	165	294	214	803



Treecreeper

Overall, despite all our efforts, 2015 was quite a disappointing year for ringing, as shown in Fig 6. We experienced a milder, warmer windier year which made ringing more difficult . Hopefully 2016 will be more productive.

I would like to thank all the ringers, Humphrey, all the chaps on security Blythe Valley management for providing the funding for rings, equipment and bird food.