Stanford Ringing Group

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Original artwork by KEM

Foreword and Summary for 2020 by the Group Leader

What a year 2020 has been! Sadly, this was the year of the Covid 19 pandemic, with national lockdowns restricting both movement and activities.

It was mid May before we were allowed to recommence our ringing activities. The dreadful weather at the beginning of the year didn't help with our conservation work, in fact about 50% of our available time was either a wash-out or we were under lockdown because of the virus. Despite this, we have broken all sorts of records this year, including:

- Number of species recorded by ringers and birdwatchers at the reservoir: 164
- Number of birds ringed: 9308
- Number processed: 11079
- Number of species ringed: 69

I could carry on with this list but more will be revealed throughout the report. The most remarkable of these records is probably the record number of species sighted, (164) as there is a relatively small number of recorders compared with other sites in both Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, particularly because the reservoir water level didn't drop enough to reveal any mud, thus restricting the number of wader species recorded.

The ringing had a late start this year, so in terms of numbers and species we weren't expecting anything spectacular. How wrong we were! The numbers and range of species were just phenomenal! In July over 1,000 birds were ringed; an excellent start. But then the ringing just exploded, with over 3,000 birds ringed in both August and September, which included a 600+ day in each month. Of the 10 species of warbler which breed at Stanford, all recorded record numbers bar one (Chiffchaff), but we still managed to ring over 700. Some 6,845 Warblers were ringed this year! What a fantastic number with, the lowest being Cetti's Warbler (22) and the highest being Blackcap (2,817). It is really good to see Cetti's established as a robust breeding species at the site.

Stanford Reservoir really is a site that attracts migrants in large numbers. If you look at our all time ringing totals the top 10 most ringed species contain six warbler species, two tit species plus Tree Sparrow and Redwing. The cumulative numbers for the top five ringed over the last 45 years are as follows:

Blackcap 17,162
 Blue Tit 9,553
 Whitethroat 8,652
 Chiffchaff 7,665
 Great Tit 7,131

This really is exceptional for a small inland site like ours.

We have really hit the jackpot this year for unusual species. It started with catching a Stonechat in February, only our second ever. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker followed on 16th July. With fewer than five ringed in the country each year this was a great record and third for the site. With a large influx of Pied Flycatcher on the east coast we decided to try a sound lure and promptly caught one on 15th August, this was swiftly followed by our second ever Wryneck on 27th August, during a time when some of our team were camping at the reservoir for a few days. A real highlight and well deserved for all their effort.

September started with our first ever Buzzard on the 2nd, with Whinchat on the 5th and Wheatear on the 12th. In between these, a Marsh Warbler turned up in the nets on the 10th. Then to our great surprise and delight a second Wryneck was captured on the 14th. Finally, to close the month we caught our earliest ever Yellow-browed Warbler on the 22nd. his was our fifth for the site and the earliest by 15 days. We then added 29 Redstart and 41 Grasshopper Warblers in August and September. What a brilliant two months we have had! Sadly, October was abysmal with no ringing for the first 10 days, very little for the next 10 and nothing again till November. The weather was absolutely terrible with long periods of either wind or rain or both; this resulted in our lowest numbers since 2009 and no unusual birds caught. Not surprising really! The weather was better in November, but by then we had missed the last of the warblers and the beginnings of the annual movement of Goldcrest, Finches and Thrushes. However this didn't slacken the unusual species from coming through with our seventh ever Firecrest on the 4th followed by a pair

of Bearded Tits on the 16th; our first ever ringed for the site! The following couple of weeks produced three Brambling our final unusual species for the year.

The down side, (and there *is* always a down side) is as follows: Stock Dove were down to only 10 birds (50 plus annually over last 3 years) Dunnock a paltry 51 (our lowest total since 2006), Song Thrush *just* reached double figures with 12 and Blackbird were just into the 50s; poor records for both species. Great Tit numbers were down by about 25% on last year's numbers. Tree Sparrow are just spiralling down the plug hole (so to speak) from a high of 660 in 2014 to just 86 this year with only one pair using our nest boxes. Both Finches and Buntings have continued with depressingly low numbers except for Lesser Redpoll (159) and Siskin (6), both migrants here at Stanford. You might think only six Siskin hardly warrants a mention, but if you put it into the context that they do not come to sound lures and, prior to this year we had only caught 9 birds in 45 years, then 6 is a definite plus.

Many thanks to all the ringers and helpers who came and supported us throughout this very trying but exceptional year as without you all this just would not happen and we would not realise how exceptional a site Stanford really is.



Mick Townsend, Ringer in Charge, (and Lucy)

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Thanks

- As in previous years, we would like to thank Seven Trent Water (STW) and Parker Farms for allowing access to their land and to STW for their financial support in supplying the feeders.
- Thanks once again to **STW** for the purchase of a Thermal Imaging camera to support our surveying work.
- Finally, thanks to Leicestershire County Council who, through a SHIRE award, supported the purchase of a Thermal Imaging camera to further help our surveying work.



Introduction to Bird Ringing at Stanford

Birds have been ringed at Stanford Reservoir since 1976. The full story of the ringing and associated wildlife activities can be found on the group's website at www.stanfordrg.org.uk. A blog is maintained which gives an account of our activities throughout the year. It can be found at: http://stanfordrg.blogspot.com/

Most birds were trapped using mist-nets, with occasional use of traps for specialist species such as Meadow Pipit. All sessions were conducted from dawn until approximately midday, with the exception of one evening session to ring in a Starling roost. A feeding station is supplied and maintained on a weekly basis in Blower's Lodge Bay with seed, nuts and fat balls. Another is maintained in the Leicestershire Paddock, by our birding colleagues.

By law, wild bird ringing in the UK is licensed by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). The procedures of the BTO's *Ringers' Manual* (2001) were followed throughout to secure the welfare of the birds. All extraction, ringing and recording was carried out by group members who are either ringers licensed by the BTO, or are trainees under their direct supervision. All data were entered into the BTO's data manager IPMR and were submitted electronically.

The Ringing Year

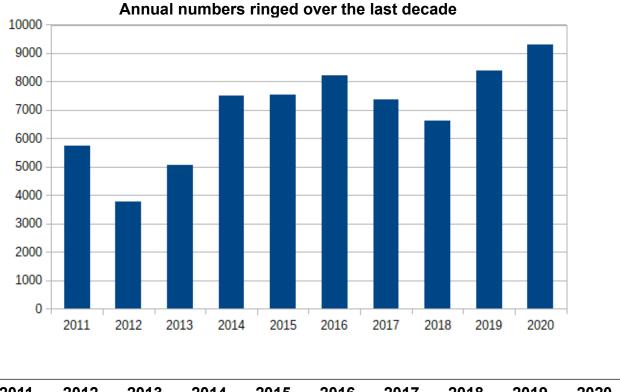
			Nev	v birds	ringed	per m	onth in	2020				
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Conservation work Ringing												
0	11	0	0	521	570	1019	3161	3056	439	365	167	

Conservation work ('scrub bashing') normally is carried out until the beginning of April, when the first migrants return and nest building begins. The small totals in this period illustrate occasional midweek individual ringing sessions, weather permitting. In 2020 we saw the advent of the Covid 19 virus, and group ringing activities were discontinued from March to mid May during lockdown. At the end of August, we had our very own festival to celebrate migration, with five ringing mornings taking place across the week. The group maintained social distancing at all times.

Most ringing took place at four sites:

- Paddock: Ranged along the Leicestershire shore of the reservoir, it consists mainly of scrub, willow and shoreline.
- Leicestershire reed bed: Medium size reed bed, accessed beyond the Paddock.
- **Point:** Mix of reed bed, woodland and scrub on Northamptonshire side, situated at the end of the line of poplars, a conspicuous landmark at Stanford.
- Railtrack: Again in Northamptonshire, gives entry to Blowers Bay at the east side of the reservoir. Gives access to approximately 15 net rides. Access is by courtesy of Parker Farms.

For much of the year, access becomes limited due to waterlogging, so the Railtrack is the main site for autumn into winter.



2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
5727	3786	5062	7519	7537	8207	7385	6606	8377	9308

The Tree Sparrow population was monitored as part of the BTO's Ringing for Adult Survival census. The nest box ringing team was led by our Secretary, AGH, and added large numbers of ringed pulli to the annual totals, specifically regarding our Owls, Doves, Swallows, Tree Sparrows and Tits.

Annual Species Accounts

Key

- Figures in brackets and bold show increase or decrease over a 10 year average for all species, where the 10 year average is greater or equal to five.
- Names in red show best ever or best equal year for species

Non- Passerines

A mixed bag for this group. The outstanding and unique bird was a juvenile buzzard, the first ever at Stanford. Almost as unusual was a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, the first ringed since 2000. The Common Tern was ringed on the floating platform in Blower's Bay. Two Wrynecks was a unique event and four Lapwing pulli were most unusual. Our resident pigeons had a poor year, possibly due to a damp spring, with low numbers of Stock Dove (a most prolific breeder!) and no Wood-pigeon pullli ringed at all. This was another year without Kestrel, although birds have been present during the year.

Sparrowhawk

Three birds ringed on 08 and 31 Aug and 26 Sep One bird retrapped

Buzzard

One bird ringed on 02 Sep

Lapwing

Four birds ringed as pulli on 16 May

Common Sandpiper

Two birds ringed on 02 Aug

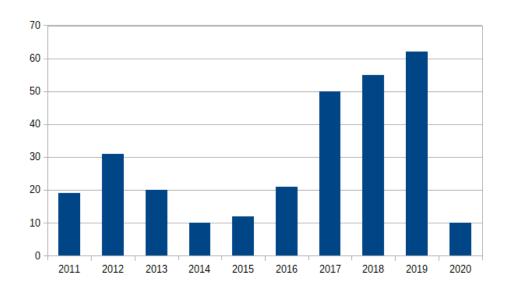
Common tern

One bird ringed as pullus on 04 Jul

Stock Dove

Ten birds ringed ringed, nine as pulli (-65%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	3	2	0	5	0	0	0	0



Barn Owl

One bird ringed on 01 Feb

Tawny Owl

Three birds ringed as pulli on 16 May

Swift

Two birds ringed on 07 June

Kingfisher

Three birds ringed on 30 Jul, 17 Aug and 10 Sep (-56%)

Wryneck

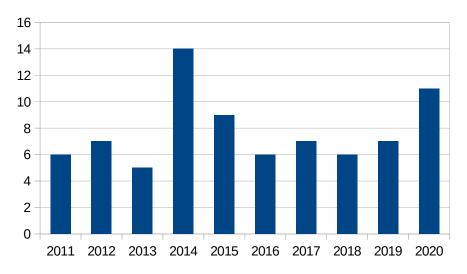
Two birds ringed on 27 Aug and 14 Sep

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Eleven birds ringed (+49%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	6	1	0	1	1	0	2

Five birds retrapped



Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

One bird ringed on 16 July

Skylark

One bird ringed on 24 Aug

Hirundines

A poor year for this migratory group. Both Sand Martin and House Martin were represented by single birds. Sand Martin have never been prolific at Stanford, but House Martin has a 10 year average of 30 birds per year. Swallow had an average year, most birds being ringed as pulli, ringed at Park Farm.

Sand Martin

One bird ringed on 31 Aug

House Martin

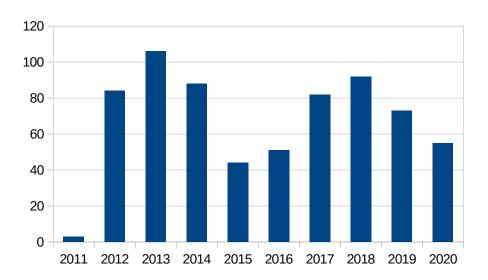
One bird ringed on 04 Jul (-96%)

10

Swallow

Fifty five birds ringed, 47 as pulli (-12%)

Jan									Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	11	21	2	12	9	0	0	0



Larks, Pipits and Wagtails

This was a good year for the group. The Meadow Pipits were all ringed as autumn migrants, as was our single Tree Pipit. It was a good year for our Pied wagtails, who raised two broods, and a record year for our Grey Wagtails, who breed locally and whose numbers are supplemented by migrants in autumn.

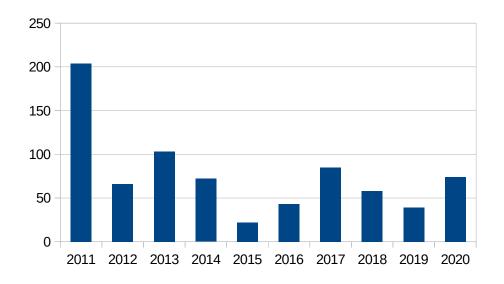
Tree Pipit

One bird ringed on 23 Aug

Meadow Pipit

Seventy four birds ringed (+2%)

- <u> </u>			- 1 - 1	<u> </u>							
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	72	1	0	0

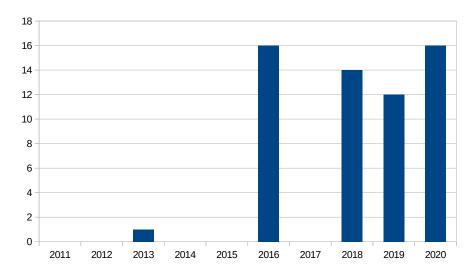


Grey Wagtail

Sixteen birds ringed, five as pulli (+255%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	7	0	8	1	0	0	0

One bird retrapped



Pied Wagtail

Seven birds ringed, six as pulli, four on 16 May, two on 20 Jun, and one as a juvenile on 26 Jul (+159%)

Wren, Dunnock, Robins and Chats

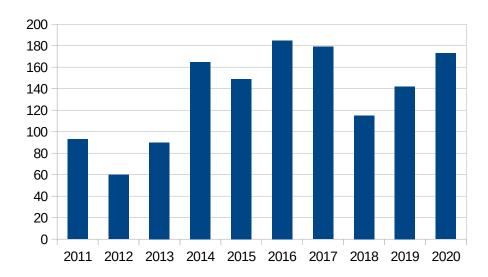
This was an exceptional year for most species in this group. Of the residents, Robin had their best year ever, although this was boosted by a number of falls of birds in the autumn. By contrast, Dunnock had a rather poor year. Redstart is a regular migrant visitor, but this year had a major boost in autumn to a total of twenty nine birds! Single Whinchat, Wheatear and Stonechat completed the count.

12 **Wren**

One hundred and seventy three birds ringed, including 11 pulli (+40%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	5	32	67	18	21	21	8	1

Sixty four birds retrapped

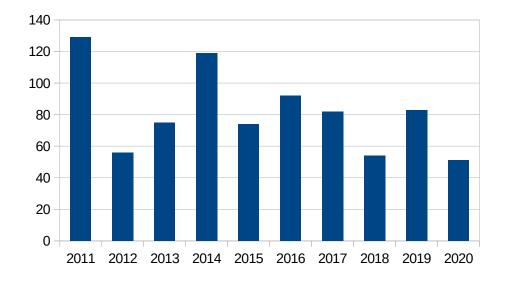


Dunnock

Fifty one birds ringed (-40%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	1	0	0	10	13	11	8	3	0	5	0

Sixty five birds retrapped

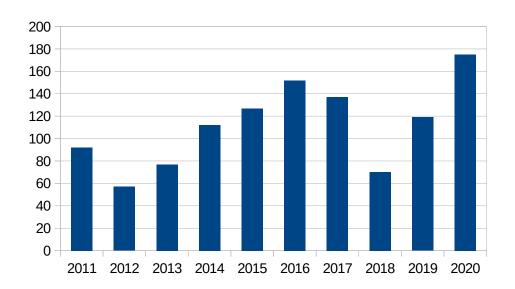


13 **Robin**

One hundred and seventy five birds ringed, including five pulli (+75%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	2	0	0	2	23	28	51	44	13	11	1

Fifty two birds retrapped

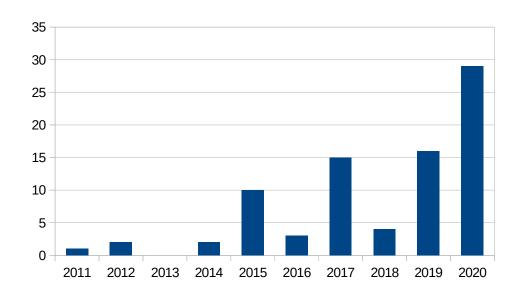


Redstart

Twenty nine birds ringed (+448%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	9	0	0	0

One bird retrapped



Whinchat

One bird ringed 05 Sep

Stonechat

One bird ringed 26 Feb

Wheatear

One bird ringed 12 Sep

Thrushes

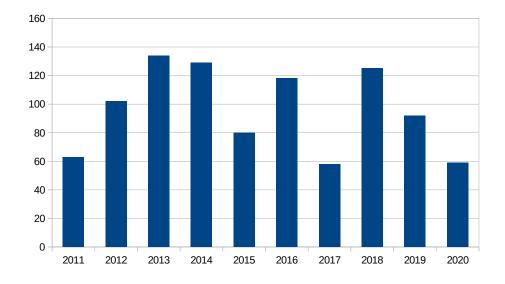
This group had a dreadful year in 2020. All thrushes, both resident and migrant had numbers well below their 10 year average, from -74% (Fieldfare) to -34% (Redwing); of possibly greater concern, both resident thrushes had very poor breeding years.

Blackbird

Fifty nine birds ringed (-41%)

Jan							Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	4	9	7	0	13	15	11

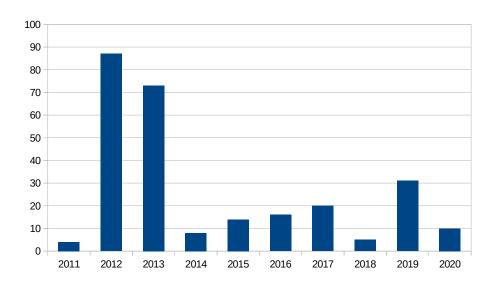
Twenty one birds retrapped



Fieldfare

Ten birds ringed (-74%)

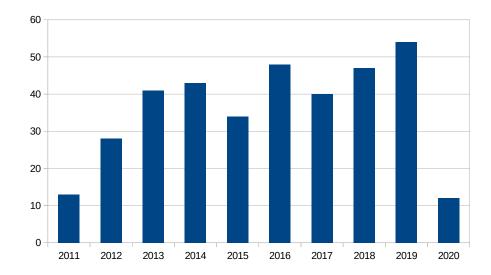
Jan									Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	5



Song Thrush
Twelve birds ringed (-69%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	1	4

Thirteen birds retrapped

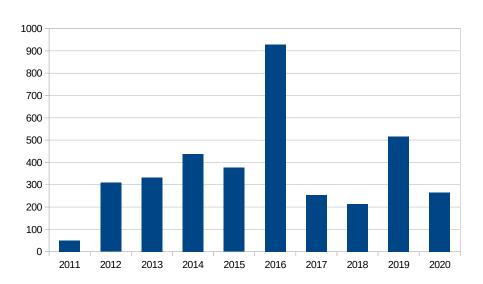


Redwing

Two hundred and sixty five birds ringed (-34%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	88	89	88

One bird retrapped



Warblers

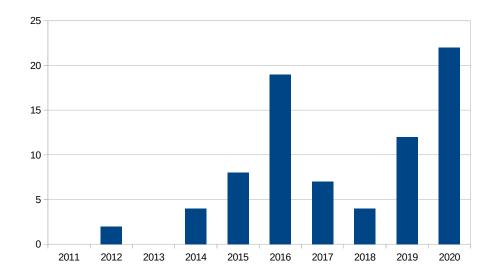
This was an exceptionally good year for our warblers, as outlined in MJT's summary. The only species of warbler which did not have a record year was Chiffchaff, but this species still exceeded its 10 year average by 23%. A truly fantastic year.

Cetti's Warbler

Twenty two birds ringed (+285%)

				May			Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	3	12	3	1	2	1	0

Forty five birds retrapped

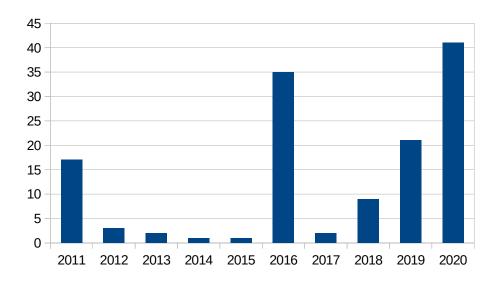


Grasshopper Warbler

Forty one birds ringed (+310)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	3	5	2	25	6	0	0	0

Seven birds retrapped

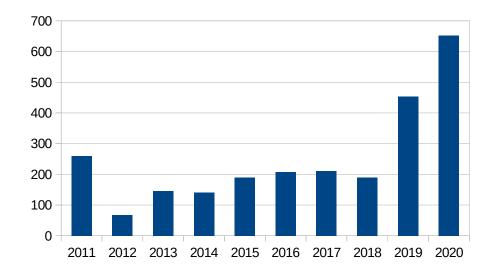


Sedge Warbler

Six hundred and fifty two birds ringed (+220%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	21	18	64	485	64	0	0	0

Sixty one birds retrapped



Marsh Warbler

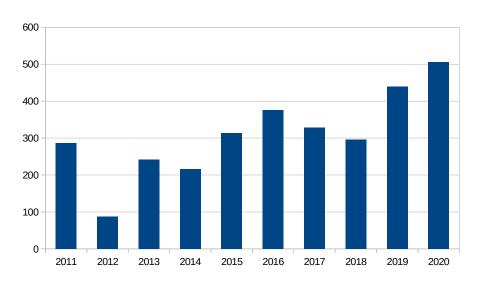
One bird ringed 10 Sep

Reed Warbler

Five hundred and six birds ringed including 14 pulli (+85%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	32	56	106	229	83	0	0	0

Two hundred and thirty seven birds retrapped

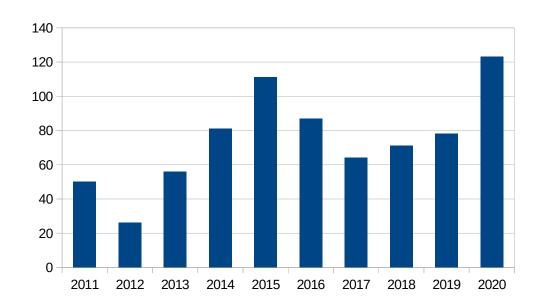


Lesser Whitethroat

One hundred and twenty three birds ringed (+75%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	1	10	35	54	23	0	0	0

Twelve birds retrapped

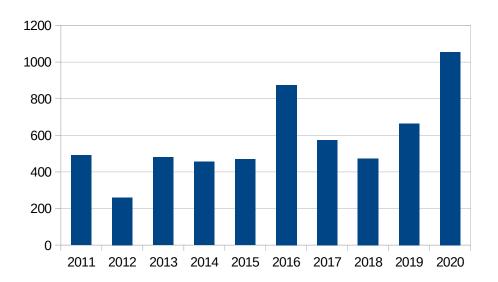


Whitethroat

One thousand and fifty five birds ringed (+108)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	15	57	164	724	95	0	0	0

One hundred and thirty three birds retrapped

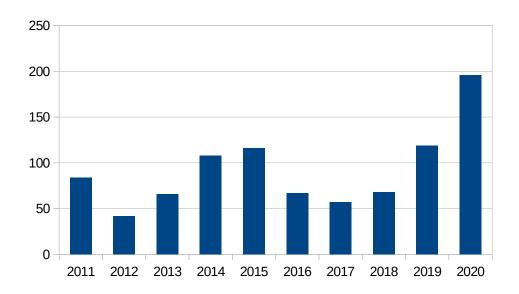


Garden Warbler

One hundred and ninety seven birds ringed (+137%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	6	28	45	111	7	0	0	0

Ninety two birds retrapped

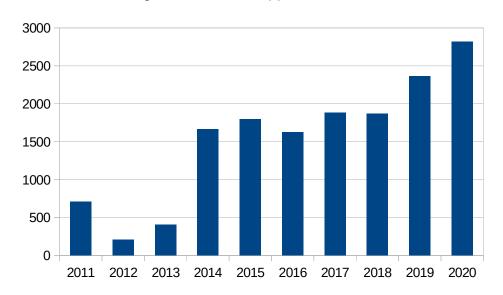


Blackcap

Two thousand eight hundred and seventeen birds ringed (+121%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	11	73	142	657	1911	20	3	0

One hundred and eighteen birds retrapped



Yellow-browed Warbler

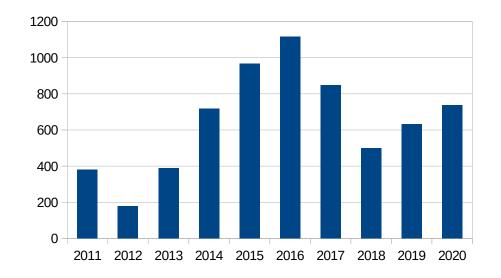
One bird ringed 22 Sep

Chiffchaff

Seven hundred and thirty eight birds ringed (+23%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	18	37	71	85	478	45	4	0

Eighty birds retrapped

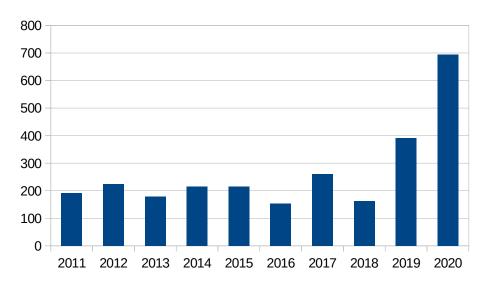


Willow Warbler

Six hundred and ninety five birds ringed (+218%)

Jan				May		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	4	22	74	563	32	0	0	0

Forty four birds retrapped



Crests, Tits, Treecreeper

Blue Tit had a year which was close to their 10 year average, but Great Tit had a poor year, well down on their average, with low numbers of pulli ringed. No Willow or Marsh Tits were ringed this year, and only one Coal Tit was ringed.

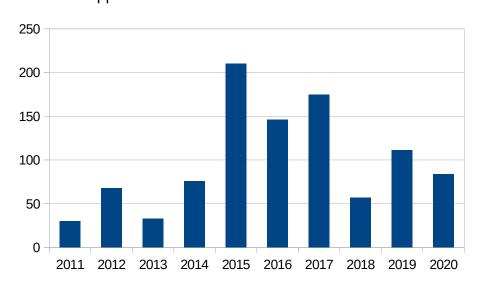
However, there were some pleasant surprises. A single Pied Flycatcher was most welcome, as was a record number of Spotted Flycatcher and Nuthatch. Two Bearded Tits arrived in the Leics Reed bed in November; these were promptly ringed on 16 November-a spectacular new species for the reservoir!

Goldcrest

Eighty four birds ringed (-10%)

<u> </u>												_
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
0	0	0	0	0	0	6	7	33	28	10	0	

Ten birds retrapped



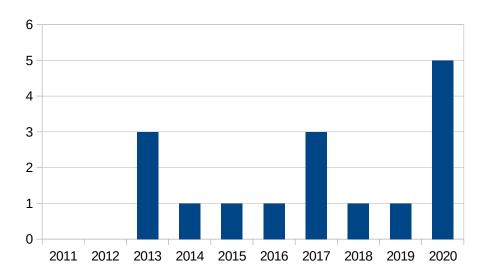
Firecrest

One bird ringed 04 Oct

Spotted Flycatcher

Five birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0



Pied flycatcher

One bird ringed 15 Aug

Bearded Tit

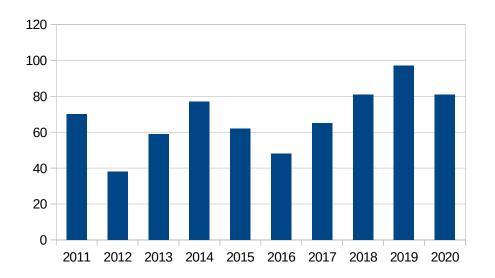
Two birds ringed 16 Oct

Long-tailed Tit

Eighty one birds ringed (+22%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	1	0	0	6	16	23	1	5	19	10	0

Eighty four birds retrapped



Willow Tit

One bird was retrapped

Coal Tit

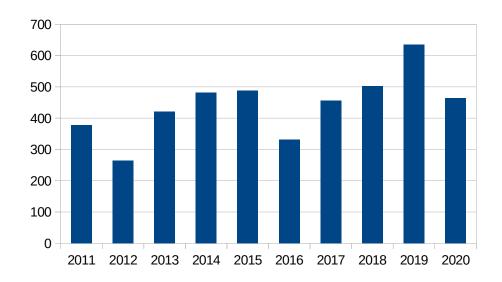
One bird ringed 20 Jun

Blue Tit

Four hundred and sixty five birds ringed, including 207 pulli (+4.6%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	4	0	0	211	60	35	27	40	27	46	15

Three hundred and twenty eight birds retrapped

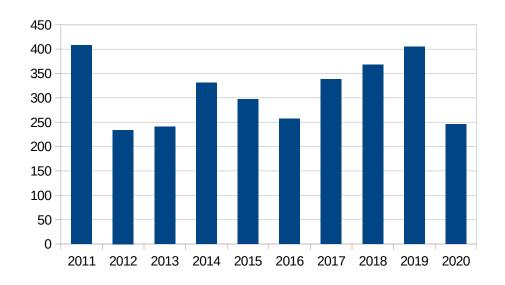


Great Tit

Two hundred and forty six birds ringed, including 124 pulli (-23%)

											Dec
Jan	ren	IVIAI	Aþi	iviay	Juli	Jui	Aug	Sep	OCI	INOV	Dec
0	0	0	0	127	19	22	12	20	17	23	6

One hundred and seventy four birds retrapped



Nuthatch

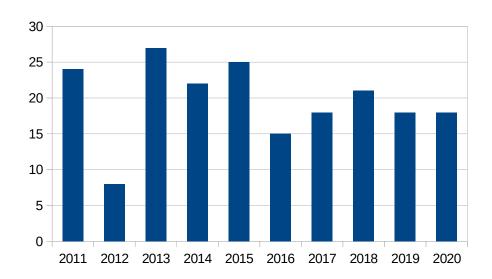
Two birds ringed on 19 Feb and 20 November. One bird retrapped.

Treecreeper

Eighteen birds ringed (-6%)

Jan						Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	-
0	0	0	0	0	6	4	1	1	2	4	0	

Four birds retrapped



Corvids

Members of the Crow family are rarely encountered in the netting areas, so two Magpies was unusual. Numbers of Jackdaw pulli ringed were low.

Magpie

Two birds ringed on 14 and 18 Jul

Jackdaw

Three birds ringed as pulli on 16 May

Sparrows and Finches

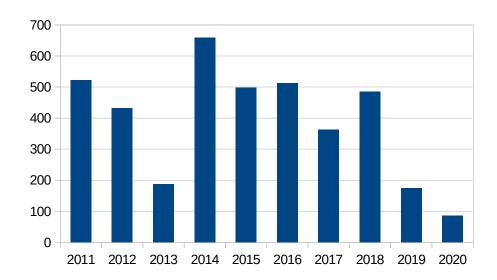
A poor year for our resident birds. Our population of Tree Sparrows based around the feeders and Poplars in Blower's Bay has crashed this year, a continuation of the drastic decrease seen in 2019, again for no discernable reason. Sadly, none of our resident finches had good breeding years, in particular Greenfinch numbers have declined markedly after an apparent recovery during the last four years. Three Brambling ringed under the top road Beech trees was an excellent bonus (the first ringed since 2013), as were the six Siskin and the single Common Redpoll.

Tree Sparrow

Eighty six birds ringed, including 5 pulli (-79%)

Jan										Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	12	17	24	2	0	9	11	11

Twenty four birds retrapped

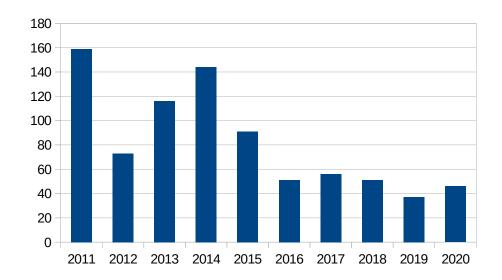


Chaffinch

Forty six birds ringed (-47%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	4	7	4	4	1	19	7

Five birds retrapped



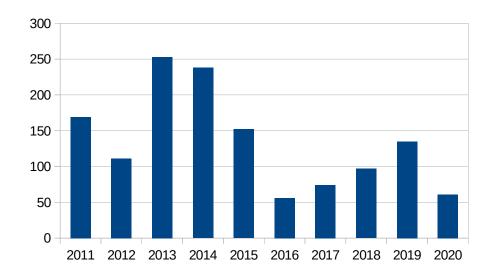
Brambling

Three birds ringed, two on 20 and one on 22 Nov

Greenfinch

Sixty one birds ringed (-53%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	33	22	4

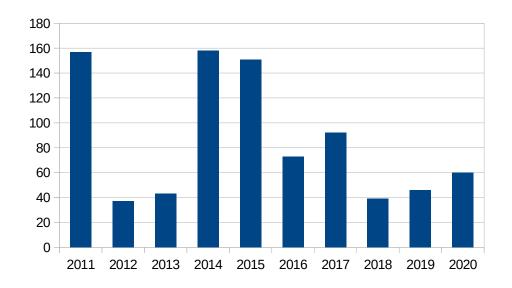


Goldfinch

Sixty birds ringed (-34%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	6	9	32	6

One bird retrapped



Siskin

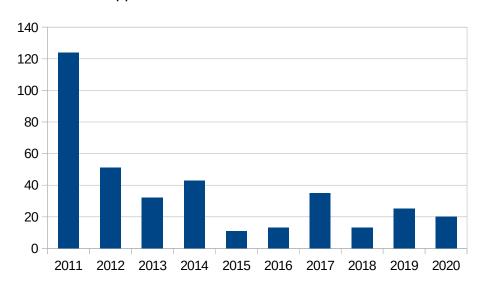
Six birds ringed in September

Linnet

Twenty birds ringed (-52%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	2	4	9	5	0	0	0	0

Three birds retrapped



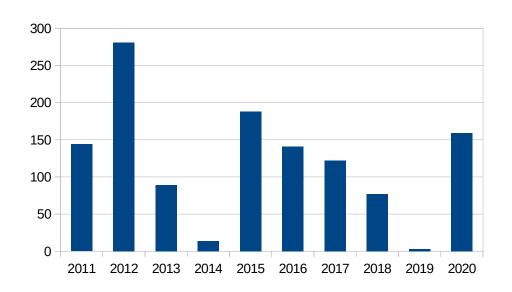
Common Redpoll

One bird ringed 12 Oct

Lesser Redpoll

One hundred and fifty nine birds ringed (+43%)

Jan										Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	61	72	24	1

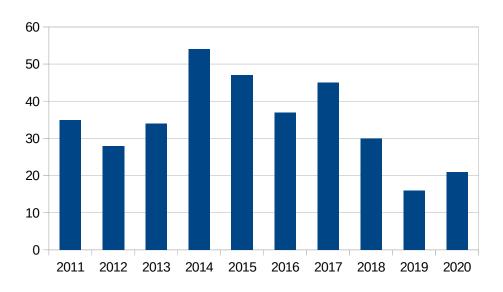


Bullfinch

Twenty one birds ringed (-41%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	6	8	2	0	1	3	1

Fourteen birds retrapped



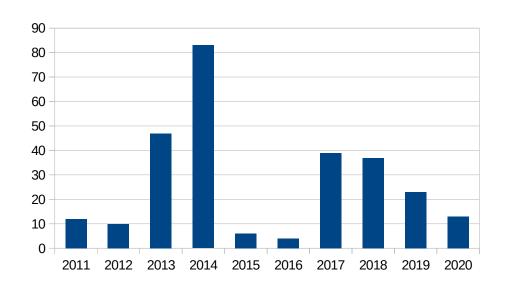
Buntings

Both resident species of Bunting were present, but numbers were down, a seemingly consistent thread for our resident passerines.

Yellowhammer

Thirteen birds ringed (-50%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	8	1

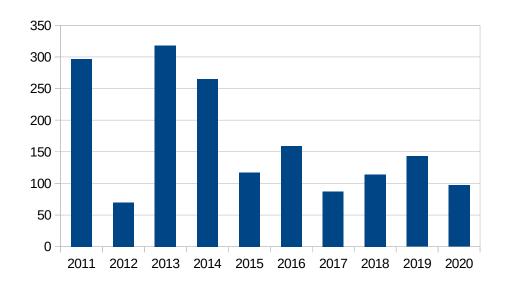


Reed Bunting

Ninety seven birds ringed (-43%)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	7	16	38	12	8	8	5	3

Twenty nine birds retrapped



Nest Recording Report (AGH)

2020 will be remembered for the restrictions of movement across the country due to the Coronavirus pandemic and of course the group's nest recorders had to adhere to the lockdown rules.

Just as the early nesting species such as Tawny Owl and Jackdaw were getting started the countrywide lockdown was announced and we were concerned that we would miss our small window of opportunity of recording the nests of early breeding species and also ringing the pulli.

However, once the lockdown was lifted it was a mad rush to get out and check our large open-fronted nest boxes to see if we could gather some breeding statistics, from what we initially considered a lost cause. Fortunately, we managed to get there in time to find Tawny Owl pulli in two nests from a total of 34 Owl boxes. The number of nesting attempts by all species was 137 which is lower than the last four years but considering the challenges of social-distancing and lockdown restrictions we did alright.

Mute Swan: One female was seen sitting on a nest but the nest contents were not investigated.

Mallard: A pair raised five young ducklings in the Leicestershire reedbed area.

Kestrel: An adult was observed feeding young at the nest in a tree that was too high to be climbed.

Lapwing: Four downy chicks were rounded up and ringed in an adjacent field.

Common Tern: Just one chick was raised on the floating rafts this year.

Feral Pigeon: A female was seen on the nest at a nearby farm but the nest was too high to access.

Stock Dove Only twenty nests were recorded this year which is less than half of the previous two years. Numerous nests were found with the remains of predated adults with Tawny Owl or Grey Squirrel being the culprits. Nine pulli were ringed from just six successful nests, a disastrous season for our most successful breeder at Stanford. **Woodpigeon:** Four nests were found. Two were deserted early in the season due to wet weather, one was predated during late autumn and another had two large young sitting on an inaccessible nest.

Collared Dove: One was seen sitting on a nest at a nearby Farm. On subsequent visits a Feral Pigeon was seen trying to oust it from its nest. The nest was later found abandoned and empty.

Cuckoo: One Reed Warbler nest was found with a single Cuckoo's egg inside. Unfortunately the nest was badly damaged, possibly by the female when she attempted to lay the egg. The nest was found in the same state on two later visits with the egg being deserted.

Barn Owl: A pair attempted breeding at a nearby farm. Three eggs were laid in May but unfortunately they were found cold and addled on a subsequent visit in June.

Tawny Owl: Two nesting attempts this year. A large near-fledged chick was ringed in Game Wood and two slightly smaller chicks were ringed at the Settling Pond.

Swallow: Seventeen nesting attempts were made. Of these, one was triple brooded and three were double brooded. A total of 47 pulli were ringed from three local areas.

Grey Wagtail: Five pulli were ringed from a nest under the bridge at the dam.

Pied Wagtail: Six pulli were ringed from two nests at a nearby farm. One pair found solace in a deserted Swallows nest and another was safely hidden inside the top of a large gas storage container.

Wren: This species sometimes uses nest boxes for breeding, so this year we were very fortunate to find two nests within 30 yards of each other in Tit nest boxes, which were easily accessible for ringing the pulli. Both broods of five and six all fledged successfully. **Robin:** Two nests were found in open-fronted boxes in Game Wood. One was predated after two eggs had been laid and the other successfully raised five young which were later ringed.

Reed Warbler: Fourteen pulli were ringed from eighteen nests found. Most nests were not revisited due to availability.

Blue Tit: Thirty nests were recorded and 207 pulli were ringed which is our fourth highest pulli total for this species. Only three nests were deserted at either egg stage or juvenile stage and just one nest was predated. A good breeding season for Blue Tits.

Great Tit: Unfortunately the same can't be said for Great Tits this year. Only twenty nesting attempts were recorded which is the lowest for six years and 124 pulli ringed is the lowest in ten years, Four nests were deserted at egg or juvenile stage and one nest was found predated. A poor year for Great Tits.

Jackdaw: Seven nests were found in large boxes across the site. Three small young from one nest were the only ones ringed this year. Several broods had fledged during the lockdown period.

Tree Sparrow: A miserable breeding season for this species. Early indications of problems were noted when adults had disappeared from the feeding area during the previous winter. Two nesting attempts were made with just five pulli ringed. This compares to twenty nesting attempts and forty-nine pulli ringed in 2019. A major concern for Stanford Reservoirs Tree Sparrows!

Reed Bunting One nest with five eggs was found in late June but was deserted due to heavy rain.

Summary of the Birding Year at Stanford Reservoir (CH)

2020 has been a weird and challenging year for all of us but from a birding perspective, Stanford Reservoir has really delivered. Overall, the species list for 2020 was a new site record of 164 species, beating the previous best of 160 set in 2017. There are many, many highlights but here are a few:

Iceland and Glaucous Gull, and Kittiwake were among 12 species of gull recorded. Many of these were picked up in a number of cold late afternoons closely studying the gulls that come in to roost at the site from nearby fields and also at the Shawell landfill site.

The star bird of the year by some margin was Caspian Tern, recorded in May and July, the first at the site for 50 years. This is a nationally rare species with only around five records per annum. In addition, Common, Little, Arctic and Black Tern were also recorded. We have had 6 Marsh Harriers during 2020 (a new record) as well as several Merlin and Osprey.

2020 delivered a number of species not seen for some years including: Bearded Tit, the first for 40 years (found by me on the 13th November and still present at the time of writing), Shag (the first for 36 years), 4 Black-necked Grebe, Barnacle Goose, Crossbill, Rock Pipit, Wood Warbler, Bittern, Scaup, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Smew and Nightjar.

The ringing group and local birders have liaised closely throughout, resulting in some spectacular finds in an amazing year. The star birds include: 2 Wryneck, Yellow-browed Warbler, Marsh Warbler, Firecrest, Pied Flycatcher, Tree Pipit, Whinchat, Common Buzzard, record numbers of Redstarts and Grasshopper Warblers, Common Redpoll and of course the first ever Bearded Tits ringed at the site! In all, 69 species ringed in 2020, a new group record!

Despite the lack of exposed shoreline, we have managed to record 18 species of wader in 2020 the highlights being Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwit, Ringed Plover, Jack Snipe, Wood Sandpiper and Whimbrel.

There have been no new additions to the overall site species list in 2020 although Kumlien's Gull (a sub species of Iceland Gull) was new to the site and only the third Northamptonshire record.

So, in summary, 164 species at a site nowhere near the coast represents a superb effort and clearly shows Stanford Reservoir as a vitally important site for migrating, breeding and wintering birds.

For more information, please visit <u>www.stanfordrg.org.uk</u>

For Absent Friends

This section records those birds who have been present on a regular basis at Stanford Reservoir in previous years and in 2020 are either absent, or who have declined so markedly that their future at Stanford is of concern.

Species	Ten year average	Ringed in 2020	Retrapped in 2020
Kestrel	1.2	0	0
Woodpigeon	2.5	0	0
House Martin	30.9	1	0
Yellow Wagtail	4.5	0	0
Coal Tit	7.7	1	0
Marsh Tit	1.4	0	0
Willow Tit	3.7	0	1

Some Notable Birds Ringed at Stanford During 2020



Stonechat



Nuthatch



Swift



Wheatear



Lesser Spotted Woodpecker



Firecrest



Yellow Browed Warbler







Tree Pipit







Stanford Birds Recovered at Other Sites and Reported in 2020

This section details the birds that were ringed by the Stanford Ringing Group, and which were subsequently trapped and processed ('controlled') by other sites; or those birds which were found by members of the public, and were subsequently reported to the BTO. The map shows where Stanford birds were controlled abroad.

As in previous years, this supports the overall picture of our migrant warblers flying down the western coast of France and the Iberian Peninsula, en route to and from west Africa

Stanford Birds Recovered Abroad and Reported in 2020

Only two of our birds were controlled abroad, but one Blackcap managed to travel a mere 5,593 km in 46 days all the way to the Kartong Bird Observatory in Gambia, making an average daily distance of 121km, or 75 miles per day!



Total List

			Total List	T		
Species	Ring number	Date ringed	Site Recovered	Date retrapped	Time taken	Distance to Stanford (km)
Mute Swan	W07468	04/01/2015	Tatenhill, Burton Upon Trent, Staffs	05/01/2020	1y173d	57
Great Spotted Woodpecker	LB16000	22/06/2019	Swinford, Leics	21/04/2020	304d	4
Sedge Warbler	ADF0654	11/07/2020	Westdown Plantation, Wiltshire	07/08/2020	27d	143
	ADF3119	24/08/2020	Nanjizal Cornwall	31/08/2020	7d	413
	ADF4148	01/09/2020	Marston Sewage Works, Lincs	02/09/2020	1d	68
	S668519	11/08/2019	Marston Sewage Works, Lincs	30/07/2020	354d	68
	S668740	18/08/2019	Wetreins Lane, Tilston, Malpas, Cheshire	03/07/2020	320d	136
	S668785	18/08/2019	Woolston Eyes, Warrington	16/06/2020	303d	143
Reed Warbler	ADF1859	08/08/2020	Weaver Valley SBI, Cheshire	23/08/2020	15d	128
	ADF3630	27/08/2020	Icklesham, East Sussex	19/09/2020	23d	209
	S664614	20/08/2018	Longis Reserve, Alderney	16/05/2020	1y270d	309
Blackcap	ADF4540	07/09/2020	Wigston Sewage Works, Leics	16/09/2020	9d	15
	ADF5812	14/10/2019	South Kirkby, West Yorks	02/06/2020	232d	130
	ADF6800	15/09/2020	Sandwich Bay Estate	05/10/2020	20d	214
	ADF7025	21/09/2020	Stansore Point, near Lepe CP, Hampshire	28/09/2020	7d	182
	ADF7265	22/09/2020	Kartong, The Gambia	07/11/2020	46d	5,593
	S663151	08/09/2018	Glaspwll, Powys, Wales	12/05/2020	247d	187
	S664917	14/09/2019	Tavistock, Devon	11/05/2020	240 d	294
	S665233	07/10/2018	Finningley Airfield, near Doncaster	25/05/2019	23d	117
	S043943	30/09/2016	Dairy Farm, Warks	20/09/2020	3y356d	39
Chiffchaff	JYR527	25/07/2018	Stortons Gravel Pits Northants	14/06/2020	1 y325d	24
	KTL297	28/09/2020	Squires Down, Stalbridge, Dorset	07/10/2020	9d	183
Goldcrest	KTL301	28/09/2020	Benington, Herts	09/10/2020	11d	89
Blue Tit	ADF5507	10/01/2020	Kelmarsh Hall Northants	21/09/2019	11d	13
	S661818	18/09/2017	Warkton, Kettering,	28/10/2020	3y40d	28

			Northants			
Great Tit	ADF0043	09/11/2019	Swinford, Leics	03/01/2020	55d	4
	S045533	13/06/2017	Clipston, Northants	12/01/2020	2y213d	10
	S666004	05/10/2019	Meadow Wood, Glebe Farm, Draycote, Warks	19/01/2020	106d	18
Jackdaw	EK41735	25/05/2019	Stanford on Avon	17/05/2020	358d	2
Carrion Crow	FH34525	05/05/2018	Stanford on Avon	17/05/2020	2y12d	2
Greenfinch	NZ91234	13/11/2019	Great Glen, Leics	13/06/2020	213d	18
	NZ91553	18/10/2019	East Goscote, Queniborough, Leics	31/08/2020	318d	34
	NZ91554	18/10/2019	Cheylesmore, Coventry, W Midlands:	30/11/2020	1y43d	27
	TX69784	18/10/2018	Burton Latimer, Northants	21/05/2020	1y216d	30
Goldfinch	AXB3863	02/02/2020	Pirnmill, Isle of Arran, Ayrshire	04/11/2020	276d	454
Lesser Redpoll	S044312	14/10/2016	Cliffords Mesne, Newent, Gloucs	21/03/2020	3y159d	107
Reed Bunting	TX80450	15/05/2017	Brandon Marsh: Warks	07/03/2020	2y297d	22

Birds From Other Sites Recovered at Stanford in 2020

This section details the birds that were ringed at other sites, and which were subsequently controlled by the Stanford Ringing Group. All details were reported to the BTO, who then contacted the original ringing sites, both in the UK and abroad.

The maps shows where birds from other countries which were controlled at Stanford were originally ringed.

Foreign birds, controlled at Stanford



Full List

			Full List			1
Species	Ring number	Date ringed	Site of Origin	Date controlled at Stanford	Time taken	Distance to Stanford (km)
Common Tern	SR43393	28/06/2016	Brandon Marsh	25/06/2020	363d	22
	SR45292	23/06/2014	Wanlip, Leics	30/06/2020	6y7d	30
	XR39786	15/07/2016	Bedfont Lakes, East Bedfont, London	01/08/2020	17d	118
Sand Martin	AJK8785	07/08/2020	Bagworth Heath, Leics	31/08/2020	24	30
Cetti's Warbler	AHF5278	14/07/2019	Brandon Marsh, Warks	18/07/2020	1y4d	22
Sedge Warbler	ACA6665	31/07/2020	Whitmuir Hall, Selkirk, Scottish Borders	08/08/2020	8d	363
	AFK1029	24/08/2020	Wheldrake Ings NR, York, Yorks	30/08/2020	6d	163
	AKK1848	04/08/2020	Powgavie, Inchture, Perth & Kinross	15/08/2020	11d	463
	ARD4117	18/07/2018	Rutland Water	18/07/2020	2y	40
Reed Warbler	AAK0984	30/07/2020	Nightingale Wood, Swindon, UK	02/08/2020	3d	101
	AEN5678	06/08/2020	Rutland Water	15/08/2020	9d	40
	ARD4481	13/07/2018	Lax Hill, Rutland	30/05/2020	322d	38
	AYK3955	12/07/2020	Brandon Marsh, Warks	11/08/2020	30d	22
	A454574	08/04/2018	Lagoa de Santo Andre, Setubal, Portugal	11/07/2020	104d	94
	A493520	23/08/2019	Forninhos, Odemira, Beja, Beja, Portugal	23/05/2020	274d	1752
White- throat	P295674	12/09/2019	Embalse de San Jose, Castronuno, Vallado, Spain	02/07/2020	294d	1268
Garden Warbler	ALF5607	01/08/2019	Pertwood Farm, Wiltshire	18/07/2020	352d	160
Blackcap	ACF4479	28/08/2020	Holme, Notts	10/09/2020	13d	81
	ACL7292	01/09/2020	River Brent, Greenford, Greater London	14/09/2020	13d	113
	ADJ4415	08/08/2020	Wintersett Reservoir, Wakefield, W Yorks	15/09/2020	38d	135
Chiffchaff	JPT576	24/07/2020	Ellerburn, Nth Yorks	28/09/2020	66d	206
	KRV179	24/07/2020	Hams Hall, Whitacre Heath, Warks	22/09/2020	60d	40

	KTD593	04/08/2020	North Luffenham Airfield, Rutland	28/09/2020	55d	40
	LVA418	08/04/2020	Cotesbach, Leics	22/09/2020	167d	7
Willow Warbler	CTC043	20/04/2020	Dungeness, Kent, UK	08/08/2020	110d	219
	LPA870	07/07/2020	Brandon Marsh, Warks	04/08/2020	28d	22
	LXJ083	19/08/2020	Kinneil Lagoon, Falkirk, Scotland	31/08/2020	12d	431
Lesser Redpoll	AAN6081	17/09/2020	Ripon Parks, North Yorks	15/10/2020	28d	196
	AKP7163	10/10/2020	Hatfield Moor, South Yorks	15/10/2020	5d	126
	ALP1541	04/10/2020	Thorpe Marsh, Doncaster	10/10/2020	6d	128
	S597829	13/11/2016	Drum, Peterculter, Aberdeenshire	12/10/2020	334d	524

43 Historic Longevity Records at Stanford

Key:

- National longest recorded ages for these species
 New entries for 2020

Ring number	Species	Date Ringed	Latest Retrap	Age
GR41954	Barn Owl	13/06/2012	06/10/2016	4y 3m 23d
ES46211	Black-headed Gull	09/06/1994	13/04/2017	22y 10m 4d
629300	Black-tailed Godwit	12/06/2005	25/06/2017	12y 0m 15d
CL10718	Blackbird	21/10/2001	05/09/2013	11y 10m 15d
Z364173	Blackcap	25/05/2015	05/09/2020	5y 3m 13d
T684126	Blue Tit	10/06/2006	18/02/2014	7y 8m 10d
K340529	Brambling	12/11/1995	20/11/1995	0y 0m 8d
V732487	Bullfinch	26/07/2008	22/04/2014	5y 8m 26d
5086101	Canada Goose	10/07/1977	16/02/1985	7y 7m 9d
Z371107	Cetti's Warbler	26/08/2016	28/12/2018	2y 4m 3d
C589276	Chaffinch	21/04/1985	26/06/1994	9y 2m 6d
JCE248	Chiffchaff	07/05/2016	14/06/2020	4y 1m 7d
V733257	Coal Tit	15/08/2009	15/11/2012	3y 3m 2d
EJ59783	Common Gull	28/02/1981	27/05/1984	3y 2m 29d
SV20815	Common Tern	12/06/2005	11/08/2012	7y 2m 1d
J880172	Dunnock	21/12/1994	30/06/2001	6y 6m 10d
CW04076	Fieldfare	07/03/2010	01/12/2012	2y 8m 26d
FR14882	Gadwall	25/07/1993	25/01/1994	0y 6m 1d
T179169	Garden Warbler	02/07/2005	08/08/2015	10y 1m 6d
0U0687	Goldcrest	19/10/2002	04/12/2004	2y 1m 15d
V190239	Goldfinch	21/12/2007	08/08/2012	4y 7m 18d
A889049	Grasshopper Warbler	<mark>16/05/1981</mark>	01/06/1986	<mark>5y 0m 16d</mark>
D893076	Great Black-backed Gull	25/06/1976	07/01/1978	1y 6m 14d
LC98526	Great Spotted Woodpecker	12/07/2013	18/01/2019	5y 6m 8d
TE89027	Great Tit	28/05/2005	26/05/2013	7y 11m 29d
DA56894	Green Woodpecker	12/11/2011	24/11/2012	1y 0m 13d
TE89147	Greenfinch	11/06/2005	19/11/2011	6y 5m 9d
Z370887	Grey Wagtail	11/09/2016	19/12/2017	1y 3m 7d
L569818	House Martin	21/09/2010	19/05/2012	1y 7m 29d
TV13457	House Sparrow	26/05/2014	05/04/2018	3y 10m 10d
EK41301	Jackdaw	27/06/2000	17/01/2011	10y 6m 23d

				
DA56832	Jay	20/11/2003	03/04/2005	1y 4m 14d
EK41236	Kestrel	15/05/2004	05/01/2008	3y 7m 22d
SB09529	Kingfisher	05/10/2002	15/11/2003	1y 1m 9d
GP71033	Lesser Black- backed Gull	30/11/1973	08/09/1981	7y 9m 9d
A888944	Lesser Redpoll	11/07/1981	11/08/1985	4y 1m 31d
VA40073	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	04/05/1986	03/08/1986	0y 3m 31d
T179490	Lesser Whitethroat	23/07/2005	02/07/2011	5y 11m 9d
L881442	Linnet	12/05/2011	23/07/2016	5y 2m 13d
EK21602	Little Owl	13/06/1983	19/06/1985	2y 0m 7d
NS50051	Little Ringed Plover	16/06/1986	04/08/1986	0y 1m 17d
GJ42431	Long-eared Owl	28/02/1982	01/04/1982	0y 1m 31d
0U0554	Long-tailed Tit	30/06/2001	14/06/2008	6y 11m 15d
GJ74601	Mallard	24/07/1993	28/11/1995	2y 4m 6d
N592928	Marsh Tit	11/09/1999	30/03/2002	2y 6m 19d
KP36275	Meadow Pipit	18/12/1976	28/10/1978	1y 10m 9d
CF10478	Mistle Thrush	04/01/2002	19/01/2003	1y 0m 15d
Z14641	Mute Swan	11/04/1995	23/07/2009	14y 3m 13d
VX88074	Nuthatch	07/12/2000	10/11/2001	0y 11m 3d
A026580	Pied Flycatcher	17/06/1979	27/08/1983	4y 2m 11d
V618724	Pied/White Wagtail	17/05/2008	25/08/2008	0y 3m 10d
T179382	Redstart	16/07/2005	30/07/2005	0y 0m 14d
9X04691	Redwing	18/10/2013	09/12/2016	3y 1m 21d
L430916	Reed Bunting	04/07/2011	23/11/2018	7y 4m 22d
N592592	Reed Warbler	17/07/1999	16/07/2009	9y 11m 30d
BV26170	Ringed Plover	30/04/2010	15/06/2015	5y 1m 14d
V733652	Robin	19/12/2009	29/12/2014	5y 0m 10d
SX08001	Roseate Tern	16/07/1980	24/05/2004	23y 10m 8d
V188647	Sand Martin	19/06/2006	07/08/2011	5y 1m 17d
E279852	Sedge Warbler	14/07/1993	19/06/1999	5y 11m 5d
P775474	Siskin	09/03/2003	29/01/2006	2y 10m 22d
VA40048	Skylark	13/05/1985	06/07/1985	0y 1m 22d
RB53145	Snipe	17/10/1993	31/10/1994	1y 0m 14d
XK48026	Song Thrush	04/07/1981	15/07/1987	6y 0m 11d
DA56898	Sparrowhawk	13/11/2013	03/12/2016	3y 0m 21d
CL01659	Starling	15/12/2000	04/09/2006	5y 8m 19d
EL13469	Stock Dove	03/09/2011	19/08/2017	5y 11m 16d
Y245575	Swallow	19/05/2012	09/09/2014	2y 3m 21d
SA51643	Swift	31/05/1980	02/06/1984	4y 0m 3d
GJ74632	Tawny Owl	09/04/2005	14/07/2016	11y 3m 6d

Tree Sparrow	24/04/2010	12/04/2015	4y 11m 18d
Treecreeper	02/07/2011	24/10/2016	5y 3m 24d
Whitethroat	03/08/2002	02/08/2009	6y 11m 30d
Willow Tit	13/05/1984	12/07/1987	3y 2m 28d
Willow Warbler	31/07/1994	18/08/2001	7y 0m 19d
Woodcock	17/12/2005	07/01/2006	0y 0m 21d
Woodpigeon	09/05/1981	08/02/1989	7y 9m 2d
Wren	10/05/2008	27/03/2012	3y 10m 17d
Yellow Wagtail	03/07/1976	01/07/1978	1y 11m 28d
Yellowhammer	30/01/1995	06/04/2002	7y 2m 7d
	Treecreeper Whitethroat Willow Tit Willow Warbler Woodcock Woodpigeon Wren Yellow Wagtail	Treecreeper 02/07/2011 Whitethroat 03/08/2002 Willow Tit 13/05/1984 Willow Warbler 31/07/1994 Woodcock 17/12/2005 Woodpigeon 09/05/1981 Wren 10/05/2008 Yellow Wagtail 03/07/1976	Treecreeper 02/07/2011 24/10/2016 Whitethroat 03/08/2002 02/08/2009 Willow Tit 13/05/1984 12/07/1987 Willow Warbler 31/07/1994 18/08/2001 Woodcock 17/12/2005 07/01/2006 Woodpigeon 09/05/1981 08/02/1989 Wren 10/05/2008 27/03/2012 Yellow Wagtail 03/07/1976 01/07/1978

Group Members in 2020

•	Mick Townsend ((MJT)	Co-founder, A permit ringer, trainer, group leader
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• Adam G Homer (AGH) Group secretary, A permit ringer, trainer, nest recorder

David Neal (DMN)
 Group treasurer, A permit ringer, trainer

• Mel Preston (MAP) A permit ringer

Dawn Sheffield (DS1) A permit ringer
 Peter Norrie (PMN) A permit ringer

Gavin Bennet (GBE)
 A permit ringer

• Ed Tyler (ERT) C permit ringer

• Stuart Heath (SH) C permit ringer

Jo Underwood (JLU) C permit ringer

Kate Moore (KEM)
 C permit ringer

Theo De Clermont (TDC) Trainee ringer

Chris Hubbard Sightings OfficerPete Bateup Group Assistant

Credits

- · Report compiled by PMN
- Artwork by KEM
- · Posted by Mike Haigh
- Thanks to Chris Hubbard and group members for photos.