HIGHER TREMARCOOMBE PROJECT

Pipewell and Toyz Pond Restoration Year 2 – 2012

INTRODUCTION

In the previous year a bird survey was carried out to establish a record of birdlife inhabiting the designated project area. The object of this exercise was to establish a reference date prior to the commencement of restoration work on the pipewell and Toyz Pond and the attempt to eradicate Himalayan Balsam.

The practice of this year's survey was to find out whether the work carried out had had a detrimental effect on the population density and species variety.

We British Trust for Ornithology’s (BTO) Territory Mapping procedure was used; the same as in 2011. During the breeding season territories are mainly marked by conspicuous song, display and periodic disputes with neighbours. These territories are revealed by a series of clusters. Additionally these procedures can identify nesting, feeding and fledgling young .

Observations of birds and their activities are recorded on maps using codes (see 2011 survey)

A total of 31 different bird species were recorded; a slight increase on the 2011 figure of 29. This year 21 species were identified as positively holding breeding territories (indicated by\*on the species list). 10 species (identified by ![C:\Users\Derris\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\38ZDT811\MC900432530[1].png]()on species list) did not provide sufficient evidence to show definite breeding activity-it is hoped that they did raise young.

Two interesting observations were made during this year's survey. The small rookery, numbering 4 occupied nests, recorded in 2011, had been abandoned. However, one derelict nest was taken over by a pair of Carrion Crows who successfully nested. Secondly, the number of territories increased from 7 in 2011 to 10 in 2012. Conversely, Collared Dove territories dropped from 3 to only one. It would appear that the doves are being pushed by their larger cousins.

Once again the diversity of species shows that this small area has a high conservation value. Therefore it is vital that it is carefully managed so that the residents in Higher Tremarcoombe can continue to enjoy the variety of birdlife.

So far it appears that the restoration work has not had an adverse effect on the birdlife in the area. Timing and the degree of restoration activity is crucial to ensure that it does not have a detrimental effect on the bird population. To achieve this end may I suggest that the agreed restoration work measures used in 2011 are continued. That is that light activity on clearing Himalayan Balsam commences after the first week in June. Then from late July onwards more extensive and rigorous clearance work is undertaken, with major operations getting underway by mid-August onwards and continuing throughout the autumn and winter months.

Although the Toyz Pond area is currently looking reminiscent of a Blitz bomb crater, I am aware that there is much more work to be done. With this in mind I intend to carry out surveys in the spring of 2013 and 2014. Hopefully, by 2014 the pond will be full of water so I can perhaps look for a further increase in the diversity of the avifauna.

Bob Stockhausen 25th July 2012

STANDARD MAPPING CODES FOR BIRDS – SPECIES LIST

B - Blackbird\*

CH- Chaffinch\*

R - Robin\*

WR - Wren\*

WP - Wood pigeon\*

CD - Collared Dove\*

CC - Chiffchaff\*

GT - Great Tit\*

BT - Blue \*

ST - Song Thrush\*

D – Dunnock\*

BC – Black Cap\*

WW – Willow Warbler

JD – Jackdaw\*

HS - House Sparrow\*

GO - Goldfinch\*

MG - Magpie\*

SD - Stock Dove![C:\Users\Derris\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\38ZDT811\MC900432530[1].png]()

C - Carrion Crow\*

PW - Pied Wagtail ![C:\Users\Derris\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\38ZDT811\MC900432530[1].png]()

LT - Long-tailed Tit ![C:\Users\Derris\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\38ZDT811\MC900432530[1].png]()

GR – Greenfinch ![C:\Users\Derris\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\38ZDT811\MC900432530[1].png]()

B - Buzzard\*

J - Jay\*

BF - Bullfinch\*

CT – Coal Tit ![C:\Users\Derris\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\38ZDT811\MC900432530[1].png]()

GW - Garden Warbler ![C:\Users\Derris\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\38ZDT811\MC900432530[1].png]()

GC - Goldcrest![C:\Users\Derris\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\38ZDT811\MC900432530[1].png]()

SK – Siskin ![C:\Users\Derris\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\38ZDT811\MC900432530[1].png]()

RN - Raven![C:\Users\Derris\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\38ZDT811\MC900432530[1].png]()

SL - Swallow![C:\Users\Derris\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\38ZDT811\MC900432530[1].png]()