

Wensum Valley Birdwatching Society

Guidelines for submitting Records

Notes for Contributors.

1. Why do we want your records?

To help to build up a picture of the seasonal occurrence of birds in the Wensum Valley area and to communicate that to our members and other interested groups.

2. What records do we want from members?

All records please but of particular interest would be:

- any breeding records
- the first and last dates you record summer and winter migrants
- counts of flocks, roosts or monthly maxima at a particular site
- counts of nests in heronries or rookeries
- details of any birds seen in unusual locations
- any records of unusual behaviour or of albinos

3. Where do we want records from?

A map of the WVBS Recording Area including the River Wensum and all its tributaries is attached. It stretches between TF80 (western border) and TG20 (eastern border) and from TF10/TG10 in the south to TF/TG34 in the north. There is a small area in the SE that falls outside this area.

4. How should I send my records in?

We have set up a database for the records for two reasons:

- to make the entry of records less time consuming for the Recorder
- to make the collation of the records easier for the production of the monthly summary and our Annual Report for members.

The raw data has to be inputted into the database and this process can be speeded up if you use a Species Record Form and send it to the Recorder by email or by mail. The forms are available by email from the Recorder upon request at recorder@wvbs.co.uk. Printed copies are available at our indoor meetings.

If you hand write it PLEASE write clearly.

The electronic Excel Record Form follows the format of the database so that data can be transferred directly into the database (saving a lot of time).

A few helpful hints.

Since the revised recording system was introduced in January 2008 we have noticed a few things that will help the system run more smoothly.

Below are a few pointers that will ease the administrative burden.

It is important that the records are in the same column order as the Record Form otherwise they cannot be simply “copied & pasted” into the database, i.e.

Species	Number	Date	Location	Grid ref	Observer	Notes
Barn Owl	1	28/02/07	Scarning	TF9313	Ian Brittain	Over field

Species

Please use the list of species names attached otherwise when sorting the database by species” all records of a single species may not come together e.g., B.H.Gull will not be listed with Black-headed Gull when the records are sorted by the database.

Number

No real problems here but remember you as the observer can make the best judgement as to how many “few”, “several”, “lots” etc. means. Your best estimate will be better than a guess by the compilers of the annual report. So “5 – 10”, “65 – 80” etc whatever your best guess is would be helpful.

Date

It is important to use the format: 4/02/08.

This is because normally members submit their records for a specific month together on one record sheet but if a bird is seen on the 4th February 2008 and 4th is entered in the Date column then the month and year will be lost when the database sorts the records at the end of the year. Where a bird has been seen all month put 1/mm/09 in Date column and "all month" in the Notes column.

Similarly if a bird is seen from say the 10th put 10/mm/09 in the Date column and "to end month" in the Notes column.

Location

The key thing here is the order the entry is made in.

Please put the nearest village or town first eg "Gt Witchingham, Mill Fm" rather than "Mill Fm, Gt Witchingham" otherwise when sorting by "Location" all the Mill Fms will come together rather than the villages. Other examples are Elsing, Mill St and Elsing, Fustyweed.

Grid Ref.

While not essential it is very helpful to have a grid reference especially for places that are not well known. A list of grid references for most of the reported sites can be found in the latest Annual Report.

Observer

Your name rather than just initials would help as there may be other members with the same initials.

When filling the form in using Excel it is not necessary to type your name in every cell.

Put your name in the top cell then you can either:

"copy" and "paste" into the selected cells in one operation or alternatively,

put the cursor in the bottom right hand corner of the cell with your name in it until a + sign appears then holding the left hand button of your mouse down and drag it down to cover all cells that need filling with your name.

Notes

Use for any comments which will enhance the record e.g. "Flying to NW"

5. When should you submit your records?

If possible either as soon as possible after the sighting has been made or alternatively as soon as possible after the last day of each month when the sightings were made.

Late records will be accepted but it may not be possible to include them in the monthly summary for members that appear in our newsletters. However they will be stored in the database and used to compile the Annual Report.

6. Enclosures

Together with these notes you will find a species list, a map of our recording area and a record submission form.

7. Who should you submit your records to?

To our Recorder – Liz Waller either

- by email to recorder@wvbs.co.uk
- or by mail to 228, Taverham Road, Taverham, Norwich NR8 6SX