

Hertfordshire Bird Atlas



Mapping the distribution of Hertfordshire's birds

Nationally and Locally Rare Species Policy

The Hertfordshire Bird Atlas aims to produce tetrad scale distribution maps for all bird species breeding and wintering in Hertfordshire. This project is being run in parallel with Bird Atlas 2007-11 which will produce maps of both distribution and relative abundance for the whole of Britain and Ireland at the 10km level.

To provide feedback to the observers who are collecting the data for this project, and help to target fieldwork on under-recorded areas, the Hertfordshire Bird Atlas website (www.hertsatlas.org.uk) includes provisional distribution maps which are being updated as the project progresses. Nevertheless, we are mindful of the risks of revealing the presence of some nationally or locally rare breeding birds at the tetrad scale. In alignment with the BTO and the Rare Breeding Birds Panel (RBBP) and with the approval of the Herts Bird Club Scientific Committee, we have formulated this policy to guide the production of online maps. We hope that this will encourage observers to submit their sightings in the knowledge that they will be dealt with appropriately.

This policy closely follows the national guidance (<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/birdatlas/taking-part/btos-rare-species-policy>) which identifies four categories:

None	Maps will not be produced at any scale
100km	Maps may be produced at the 100km scale
10km	Maps may be produced at the 10km scale
Free	Results may be revealed at the tetrad level

For a relatively small county such as Hertfordshire, there is effectively no difference between mapping at the 100km scale and not mapping at all; sitting across the boundaries of three 100km squares (SP, TQ, TL), it would not be appropriate to reveal for example, that a species was breeding in Hertfordshire somewhere in the 100km square SP, since that would localise that record to a greater precision than the RBBP would wish.

Restricting mapping to the 10km scale at the county level also introduces some additional complications. Within the area being surveyed for the county atlas, there are four tetrads which are the only representatives of their bounding 10km square, and revealing the presence of a species in that 10km square would automatically provide tetrad level precision. For this reason the 10km scale maps on the Hertfordshire Bird Atlas website have been restricted to the eighteen 10km square that comprise the Hertfordshire BTO region.

The species to which these restrictions have been applied are listed in the following sections, but note that only the species of relevance to Hertfordshire are included. Note also that the presence of a species in these lists, or of a map page (albeit empty) on the website does not imply that the species has been recorded locally during the current atlas period. In many cases the pages are there to provide a status comparison with previous atlas periods when the species was located.

Maps for some species are shown in more detail than the RBBP guidance advises. The Herts Bird Club Scientific Committee has assessed the risk posed by revealing tetrad-scale records for these species and concluded that the risk is minimal.

Prior to the analysis and publication of the results of the new Hertfordshire Avifauna, the records will be reviewed and final decisions taken on the appropriate mapping scale. This will be based on the scarcity and perceived risk of revealing tetrad-scale location at that time.

Winter Season (November - February)

RBBP species only mapped at 10km resolution

Hen Harrier	Long-eared Owl
Peregrine	Woodlark

Locally rare species only mapped at 10km resolution

Raven

RBBP species only mapped at 10km resolution nationally, but mapped at 2km resolution locally

Red Kite

Breeding Season (April - July)

RBBP species not to be mapped at all

Black-necked Grebe	Stone-curlew	Marsh Warbler
Honey-buzzard	Wryneck	Red-backed Shrike

RBBP species to be mapped at 10-km resolution

Garganey	Little Ringed Plover	Pied Flycatcher
Quail	Long-eared Owl	Bearded Tit
Lady Amherst's Pheasant	Woodlark	Golden Oriole
Hobby	Nightingale	Crossbill
Peregrine	Black Redstart	Hawfinch
Water Rail	Redstart	Cirl Bunting
Spotted Crake	Wood Warbler	Monk Parakeet
Corncrake	Firecrest	

Locally rare species only mapped at 10km resolution

Teal	Common Sandpiper	Raven
Oystercatcher	Nightjar	
Curlew	Whinchat	

RBBP species not mapped nationally, but mapped at 2km resolution locally

Red Kite

RBBP species only mapped at 10km resolution nationally, but mapped at 2km resolution locally

Gadwall	Little Egret	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker
Shoveler	Barn Owl	Cetti's Warbler
Pochard	Kingfisher	

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