

## **LONDON BIRD ATLAS**

### **Nationally and Locally Rare Species Policy<sup>1</sup>**

The London Bird Atlas aims to produce tetrad scale distribution maps for all bird species breeding and wintering in the area covered by the London Natural History Society (LNHS), a circle of 20 miles radius with its centre at St. Paul's Cathedral. 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 target fieldwork on under-recorded areas, the LNHS website includes a small number of provisional distribution maps which will be updated as the project progresses. It is intended to increase the number of maps to cover more species and encourage further participation in the atlas project. 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 agreement of the LNHS Ornithology Committee and ID panel, 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 ([www.bto.org/birdatlas/taking\\_part/confpolicy.htm](http://www.bto.org/birdatlas/taking_part/confpolicy.htm)) which identifies four categories:

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

For the LNHS area, there is effectively no difference between mapping at the 100km scale and not mapping at all. With the exception of a few tetrads in the 100km square TL, all of the LNHS area is in the 100km square TQ. It would not be appropriate to reveal that a species was breeding in the LNHS area *somewhere* in either TL or TQ, since that would localise the record to a greater precision than the RBBP would wish.

Restricting mapping to the 10km scale at the LNHS area level also introduces some additional complications, as there are 18 10km squares which contain one or more tetrads that are outside the LNHS area, and revealing the presence of a species in the London area and in that 10km square would provide a greater level of precision than the 10km scale. For this reason these 18 10km squares will need to be omitted from maps produced at 10km the scale.

The species to which these restrictions have been applied are listed in the following sections, but note that only species of relevance (or potential relevance) to the LNHS area are included. The presence of a species in these lists does not imply that the species has been recorded locally during the current atlas period. In many cases they may be there in order to provide a status comparison with previous atlas periods when the species was located.

This policy will inevitably lead to some discrepancies between the atlas maps on the website and the current conventions for publication in the London Bird Report. For example, we currently make no attempt to withhold breeding locations of Kingfisher in the bird report. Yet, as a species currently protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, and reported on by the RBBP, the website maps will be presented at the 10km scale. Although Kingfisher was mapped at the tetrad level in the last atlas and will probably be so in the new one, it is felt that the immediacy of online reporting means that it is better to be cautious at this stage.

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<sup>1</sup> This policy is based on the policy of the Hertfordshire Bird Atlas. Thank you to the Herts Bird Club who have allowed the LNHS to copy much of their policy document.

## Final publication of results

*Prior to the analysis and publication of the results of the new London Bird Atlas, the records will be reviewed for some species and final decisions taken on the appropriate mapping scale. It is likely that some species (such as Kingfisher) will be mapped to tetrad level when final results are published. The final decision will be based on the scarcity and perceived risk of revealing tetrad-scale location at that time, as well as national guidelines issued by the BTO and consideration regarding how they are being mapped by the other societies and clubs that overlap the LNHS area. Please inform one of the Atlas co-ordinators (Ian Woodward and Richard Arnold), if you have any concerns about this review with regard to any records you have submitted or are intending to submit.*

## List of species for which mapping will be restricted during the fieldwork period

### Winter season (November to February)

RBBP species only mapped at 10km resolution

Red kite	Peregrine	Woodlark
Hen harrier	Long-eared Owl	Dartford warbler

Locally rare species only mapped at 10km resolution

Barn Owl	Raven
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### Breeding Season (April to July)

RBBP species not to be mapped at all

Black-necked grebe	Red kite	Marsh warbler
Honey-buzzard	Goshawk	Red-backed shrike
	Wryneck	Golden Oriole

RBBP species to be mapped at 10-km resolution

Gadwall	Avocet	Cetti's warbler
Garganey	Little Ringed plover	Wood warbler
Shoveler	Mediterranean Gull	Dartford warbler
Red-crested Pochard	Barn Owl	Firecrest
Pochard	Long-eared Owl	Bearded tit
Quail	Kingfisher	Crossbill
Little egret	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	Hawfinch
Hobby	Woodlark	Monk Parakeet
Peregrine	Nightingale	
Water rail	Black Redstart	
Spotted crane	Redstart	

Locally rare species only mapped at 10km resolution

Teal	Common sandpiper	Raven
Grey partridge	Turtle dove	Willow tit
Oystercatcher	Nightjar	Tree Sparrow
Curlew	Whinchat	Corn bunting