

Colour-ringed Twite in the Pennines

In conjunction with the RSPB, from Autumn 2014, we have been colour-ringing Twite *Linaria flavirostris* in the Pennine region of West Yorks. This study has several aims: first, to investigate the changing wintering areas of birds which gather in the area; secondly to determine whether they remain to breed in the area in summer and thirdly as a means of studying feeding behaviour and range of nesting birds. We will also be assisting with productivity surveys of Twite breeding in the Pennines during the spring and summer to assess population trends over time.

All birds have been ringed with a metal BTO ring on the left leg with a single colour-ring above the metal ring and two colour rings on the right leg. The colours used have been: black (N), white (W), yellow (Y), orange (O), red (R), dark green (G), blue (B) and pale/pastel blue (P).



So far in 2014, c.150 birds have been individually colour-ringed of which 67% were juveniles (Nov, 2014), indicative of a successful breeding season. This included a bird ringed as a nestling in 2009 as part of a previous study, at 5 years 3 months it wasn't far from beating the longevity record at that time although, it has since pushed to over 6 years! (T Mainwood). While some birds have been re-sighted at locations up to 15km away, four have been reported from the Lincolnshire another in Flintshire, two in Norfolk and two more in Suffolk (the latter just a week after ringing). We have also noted, as those before us had also found that this population will rove widely for food, 2 birds caught early one morning were re-sighted near Huddersfield that afternoon.

We would be grateful to receive any sightings of these birds, either in the area of ringing or elsewhere. Sightings, including location, date, full colour-ring combinations, and numbers of birds in the flock, should be sent to Jamie Dunning at: jamiedunning8@gmail.com. All sightings will be acknowledged and the finder provided with the original ringing details.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to those who have run similar projects before us, including David Sowter and Sean Gray and Linda Williams who were kind enough to offer information on previous Pennine Twite work; the Grampian RG for kindly lending us one of their whoosh nets; the people who have tirelessly baited feeding stations, especially Tim Walker and David Sill. Also to the ringers who have offered their time to lend a hand where was needed, Mick Pearson and Gillian Dinsmore; The RSPB Twite Recovery Project, Nick Wilkinson, who co-prepared the CR application, provided our first batch of rings and advised throughout, Tim Melling, Roy Taylor, Jenny Oldroyde, Dave O'Hara (RSPB Dove Stone), Mike Denton, Kelvin Jones (BTO Wales), Alan Draper and Henry McGhie for their useful comments. Then C Atkin, S Whayman, N Lound, A Brown, B Perkins, P Dewy, D Horsey, R S J Smith, S Blain, S Westeberg,, C Chapman and K Jones for reporting CR birds. Additionally to the above, thanks to the Cley bird club, Lincs bird club, East Lancs ornithological society, Calderdale bird club, Bird guides and The BTO for their help in promoting the project.

Jamie Dunning & Steve Christmas