

HOS survey of Ringed Plover 2022

The Ringed Plover faces many pressures at breeding sites in Hampshire with numbers declining from 140-165 pairs in 1991 (1986-1991 Atlas) to just 25 pairs at the end of latest atlas period in 2012. A perfect storm of loss of habitat due to development and sea level rise and poor productivity, largely as a result of recreation pressure have resulted in an alarming decline of breeding Ringed Plover in Hampshire.

The main aim of the 2022 survey is to survey all suitable habitat for Ringed Plover looking for breeding attempts, and where found, assessing productivity. Almost all Ringed Plover in Hampshire nest at the coast mainly on shingle but also occasionally on sand. Surveys should take place between 15th April and 30th June at any time of day, but mornings are best. A minimum of three visits, at least two weeks apart covering all suitable habitat in the designated area.

By its nature, Ringed Plover breeding habitat is linear, for the survey we will require observers to walk their section ideally within 150m of suitable breeding habitat. Walk at a steady pace stopping to scan with binoculars at regular intervals. Ringed Plover will walk off the nest at 80-100m range and are usually easily seen, often uttering a short alarm call as they do. Record all observations of Ringed Plover on a map noting behaviour, interactions with other Ringed Plover and the total number of birds observed along with a 10 figure grid ref or 'what three words' to enable us to plot the exact location. Also please record an obvious signs of disturbance observed on each visit, transcribe results onto the survey sheet either in the field or at the end of each survey.

If a breeding attempt is found, please keep at least 150m from the suspected nest site to avoid disturbance. Further visits, from a safe distance are encouraged to monitor the progress of the breeding attempt. Please be mindful of other species that might also be breeding in the vicinity.

We will provide observers with a recording sheet for each of their areas and we encourage them to print off a 1:25000 OS map of the square on which to map their locations. These maps can easily be printed from the Web (for example <http://www.bing.com/maps>) but we are happy to provide them if you have difficulty. Marcus will be coordinating the western Solent surveys and Trevor the eastern Solent.

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