

## NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The Hampshire Bird Report is an annual publication by the Hampshire Ornithological Society of records and papers on all aspects of Hampshire ornithology. Contributions from both residents and visitors to the county, in the form of records, papers, drawings and photographs are welcomed and will be acknowledged in the Report.

### WHY SUBMIT RECORDS?

Bird recording in Hampshire is one of the core objectives of the Hampshire Ornithological Society and we encourage everyone (not just Society members) to submit records of their observations. The annual Hampshire Bird Report is compiled from the many records submitted and is the only regularly updated account of the county's avifauna, with data on occurrence, distribution, populations, breeding success and unusual records.

### HOW RECORDS ARE USED

Each year we receive over 450,000 records and all are entered into our database to be used for:

- providing the basis of the species accounts in the Hampshire Bird Report
- supplying information for the conservation of Red and Amber listed species
- providing population information against which future changes can be assessed
- assessing the relative value of sites of conservation importance
- responding to planning enquiries and proposed land-use changes.

### WHAT RECORDS DO WE WANT...

Please refer to the Hampshire submission guidance list which indicates the type of records requested for each species. However, all records are valuable, from breeding reports and counts of flocks or roosts, to migration or weather-related movements and rarities. All validated records received are entered into the HOS database and will be accessible for future reference.

Of particular interest are;

- Full checklist for a specific site, including numbers of each species – at times understanding what is not there is as important as what is reported
- Note if a flyover seen but of a species not normally present
- Evidence of breeding in the appropriate season, the highest level from pair in habitat, singing or nest should be used and guidance are in the apps or sheets.

Species requiring a full written description are listed in the submission guidance in addition notes are required for a number of species that are locally scarce or, in the case of migrants found on extreme dates. Descriptions of national rarities can be submitted directly to British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) and assistance can be given in such instances. Records of locally rare or scarce birds are assessed by the Hampshire Records Panel (HOSRP) and require an Unusual Records Form (URF) to be completed.

### ...AND WHERE FROM?

Records are welcomed from all parts of the county. There is a natural bias towards coastal sites and nature reserves as they are excellent places to see birds. Many of these sites produce their own

reports, which are incorporated into the Bird Report, but please don't assume that your records will be forwarded to us automatically by other organisations. Records away from these sites are often thin on the ground, so local patch records and casual recording from less well-watched areas are very important – this includes sites such as your own garden! These records enable us to gain as full a picture as possible of what is happening to Hampshire's birds. Many national surveys are carried out annually in the county as part of the wider picture of the UK's bird life, these are normally done in partnership with HOS and we get a copy of the results. If in doubt, please ask if your records need to be forwarded.

Unsurprisingly the records are not equally distributed across the county. The coastal sites remain the most popular both for watching and recording especially Lymington area, Lepe, Farlington Marshes and Hayling Island, with key inland sites having far fewer records with the New Forest, the Downs and North and the West having very few records. Any records from these under-watched sites are useful.

#### HOW AND WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT MY RECORDS?

**BirdTrack** - Hampshire Ornithological encourages everyone to use the BTO's BirdTrack as it is the recording system of choice. The system allows individuals to input records directly online which the County Recorder can then access. The Birdtrack App acts as a digital notebook, allowing entry directly in the field. It is also a free and convenient way of storing your bird records online, as well as a method to contribute data to conservation science and to have access to the latest trends across the UK for migration movements and distribution. More details about BirdTrack can be found at: [www.bto.org/our-science/projects/Birdtrack](http://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/Birdtrack).

**Going Birding** – although originally envisaged as a news platform, records can be logged on Going Birding <https://www.goingbirding.co.uk/hants/birdnews.asp>. The platform shows interesting species for each day and is a good place to share records of species across the county. The records here are shared with HOS team, however it is possible to stop automatic downloads (and therefore duplication) if you are also using another recording mechanism such as BirdTrack or eBird etc.

#### Alternatives to BirdTrack

- **eBird** – established and run by Cornell University, this is bird focused 'citizen science' platform. HOS acknowledges that this suits international birders better as the platform covers species worldwide and contains a wealth of information on birds across the world. As with Birdtrack there is App to allow direct entry in the field. It also enables photographs to be stored. There is a Hampshire based moderator, a scarce species alert and 389 local hotspots currently in the system. All records are shared with the County Recorder. More details can be found at [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org).
- **Trektellen** - typically used for the recording of visible and nocturnal migration, all records from [www.trektellen.org](http://www.trektellen.org) are uploaded to BirdTrack and so will be received by the County Recorder.
- **The Hampshire records form, (HRF)** a MS Excel workbook, is available for listing your sightings and is transferable directly into the database, thereby saving a lot of time for the administrators. The record form is available on the recording page on the website.
- **Local annual reports** – some dedicated patch-watchers produce their own annual report and forward them to the County Recorders.
- There are many **multi-taxa 'citizen science' platforms**, where there is an ability to record bird species. The main ones of iNaturalist, iRecord and Living Record share their Hampshire bird records with County Recorder.
- Casual records can also be emailed to the County Recorders on an ad hoc basis at any time using the sightings and of course Paper records can be accommodated as outlined on the webpage

Twitter, Facebook and other social media platforms – many people use WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook to share their sightings due to the ability to pass on news quickly and widely. Hampshire Ornithological Society tries to collate some records from these social media platforms. Currently there is no reliable method to ensure that all social media records are captured and therefore we request these records are forwarded via our preferred mechanisms above.

Whatever mechanism you choose, it is best that these are submitted through the year, preferably in quarterly or half year intervals, however annual is also acceptable. At the latest please enter/send records in by the end of January of the following year. Late records will be accepted, but it may not be possible to include them in the Report for that year.