

BBS BREEDING BIRD Recording Form – Instructions

- **Period.** Unlike the standard monthly recording form, this one covers the whole breeding season, from now, probably until September (though pigeons and doves could go on until the end of the year). So starting in March, just go on adding information for as long as you are able to collect it.
- **Submission.** Although the form covers a period of several months, *please return it each month*, along with the standard form, to help us keep tabs on where the gaps are, and which squares or species may need targeting.
- **Species.** The form has fewer species on it than the standard form, because only about half the species breed, or are likely to breed, in the parish. There are spaces available at the end of list for additional species, but as these are likely to be rare breeding birds, please inform us as soon as possible after their discovery if you do find any.
- **Squares.** There are 21 columns on the form, one for each square visited. This should be enough for most people, and many will of course use just one, as with the standard form. However, if you do decide to explore more of the parish this year, and eventually need more columns, either insert them or start a second form.
- **Breeding codes.** Breeding will be recorded by using BTO breeding codes. These have been sent out before, so you may be familiar with them, but here they are again (below), and they also appear on the recording form – so no excuses! The codes, grouped into *possible*, *probable* and *confirmed* breeding, are listed in an order which reflects increasingly strong evidence of breeding from **H** (bird in appropriate habitat - weak evidence of possible breeding) through to **NY** (nest with young - very strong evidence of confirmed breeding!).
- **Procedure.** In the list of codes, each code ‘trumps’ all those above it, so if you have several lines of evidence for breeding for a species in a square, just insert the one that is closest to the bottom of the list. Perhaps initially, **H** and **S** will be the main codes, but hopefully some will have been replaced by a probable or confirmed breeding code later in the season. What you should have on the form by the end of the month is the *best* evidence you have of breeding up to that point. If you’ve got **NE** or other confirmed breeding evidence for a species, forget any possible or probable codes you may have

recorded. However, you may only have **S** by the end of, say, March. That will be on the copy of the form you send in, but in April you may record **NE**, in which case replace the **S** with **NE**, and unless you then find a nest with young (NY) you don't need to do any more for that species in the square.

- **And finally. Possible breeding good, probably breeding better, confirmed breeding best!** But please be accurate and cautious. We would like as many probable and confirmed breeding records as possible, but if all you have *definitely* recorded during the whole season is singing, just leave it as an **S**.

BTO Breeding Codes

Possible Breeding	
H	Species observed in breeding season in suitable nesting H abitat
S	S inging male present (or breeding calls heard) in breeding season in suitable breeding habitat. (For this purpose, singing also includes cooing doves and pigeons and drumming woodpeckers.)
Probable Breeding	
P	P air observed in suitable nesting habitat in breeding season
T	T erritory presumed through registration of territorial behaviour (song etc) on at least two different days a week or more apart at the same place, or many individuals on one day
D	D courtship and D isplay (judged to be in or near potential breeding habitat)
N	N visiting probable N est site
A	A gitated behaviour or anxiety calls from adults, suggesting probable presence of nest or young nearby
B	B nest B uilding or excavating nest-hole
Confirmed Breeding	
DD	DD istraction- D isplay or injury feigning
UN	UN used N est or eggshells found (occupied or laid within period of survey)
FL	FL recently F ledged young or downy young. Careful consideration should be given to the likely provenance of any fledged juvenile capable of significant geographical movement. Evidence of dependency on adults (e.g. feeding) is helpful. Be cautious, even if the record comes from suitable habitat
ON	ON adults entering or leaving nest-site in circumstances indicating O ccupied N est (including high nests or nest holes, the contents of which cannot be seen) or adults seen incubating
FF	FF adult carrying F aecal sac or F ood for young
NE	NE st containing E ggs
NY	NY est with Y oung seen or heard