

A new Breeding Bird Atlas for North East Scotland

Report on progress and plans for publication

You may have been wondering about progress with the North East Scotland Breeding Bird Atlas and this short newsletter will bring you up to date with developments. As you know, the fieldwork was successfully completed during 2006 with every tetrad in North East Scotland and Moray receiving at least one recording visit; a remarkable achievement.

Production of the Atlas – the maps

Although the initial task of converting the data on ‘tetrad’ and ‘supplementary’ cards into maps was completed some time ago we have been anxious to include records from all sources over the 5 year period. It is only relatively recently that the final data has been added.

It is clearly important that our present atlas allows comparison of modern breeding status with that found during fieldwork for the ‘*Birds of North-East Scotland*’ Atlas, whose recording period spanned 1981-84. This has not proved straightforward because the earlier atlas employed 395 recording units that do not match the 2431 tetrads covered during the present atlas in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray. Matching the two data sets to permit comparison has proved to be very time-consuming but is now complete.

Remember that the earlier atlas ‘*Birds of North-East Scotland*’ by Buckland, Bell and Picozzi (1990), which has long been out of print, can now be obtained on CD as a .pdf file. If you would like to take advantage of

this offer please send a cheque for £10 to Ian Francis, payable to ‘Scottish Ornithologists’ Club’. Proceeds will go towards the publication of our new atlas.

Production of the Atlas – the species accounts

We are fortunate that our area contains a large number of people who have special knowledge or interest in particular species. As a result we now have in place a team of 59 authors who are writing the accounts for the (nearly) 200 species that were recorded during the fieldwork period. These authors have all received the data and maps for their species and we hope to have received first drafts for the majority of these by the end of October. The editing process will then take place over the winter and we hope that most species accounts will be in a final form by the end of March.

Production of the Atlas – proceeding to publication

At the same time as the species accounts are being prepared we shall need to write the general introductory sections of the book. We also intend to include many photographs, illustrating birds and their habitats. As many as possible of these will have been taken by local photographers in our area. Please get in touch if you think you have high quality colour digital photographs that we might use. Images reflecting aspects of breeding activity are of course particularly valuable.

We hope to publish the book by the end of 2009.

If you would like any further information, please contact Ian Francis at ian@farmland.plus.com (01224 624824 daytime or 01975 562457 evenings) for Aberdeenshire, or Martin Cook martin.cook99@btinternet.com (01542 850296) for Moray.