

International Golden Plover 2008

Title

International Golden Plover Count October 2008

Description and Summary of Results

Recent decades have seen a growing interest in the changing distribution and abundance of Golden Plovers *Pluvialis apricaria* in NW Europe. The species is one of a handful of wader species that falls through the net of standard estuarine wader monitoring in Europe and so requires dedicated surveys to determine its status. The first survey of a series was carried out in October 2003 and this encompassed the main countries where birds of Scandinavian and Russian breeding origin were concentrated on passage in October. However some areas known to hold birds were not counted for various reasons, and so another survey was done in October 2008. October was chosen because it was thought that autumn passage birds then were most concentrated in the smallest areas, especially in continental Europe. The British population was thought to peak in November and to comprise birds from the northwest of Europe as well as Scandinavia and nearby.

In October 2008, professional and volunteer surveyors searched in 16 countries, eight more than in October 2003, including significant figures from Iceland and Lithuania. In total, just over 1 million birds were counted, representing an apparent 1% decline since 2003.

However, country-level coverage was variable and the apparent shortfall was within the margin of survey error.

Only Latvia returned a zero count despite searches of known areas or sites, and Bulgaria found only 3 birds despite extensive coverage. However numbers found in Iceland and Lithuania were higher than expected. Coverage of wetlands in the UK and Ireland was good but coverage of farmland was poor.

Methods of Data Capture

The 2008 survey employed the same methods as the 2003 survey, using country organisers contacted under the umbrella of the International Wader Study Group, and with individual countries using a method best suited to the scale of abundance and aggregation of the species, and also the practical limitations of the density of observers. These ranged from coordinated and synchronised counts of large parts of the October range of the species, through some areas being covered but in a less systematic manner, to totals being simply the sum of any casual records received.

Ideally all observations were made in the week 15-22 October 2008.

Purpose of Data Capture

To obtain counts of the numbers of Golden Plovers across northwest Europe.

Geographic Coverage

All of the UK and coverage extended into many areas of NW Europe, each country organising counts.

Temporal Coverage

Co-ordinated counts were carried out in October 2008 with a stated ideal of the week 15-22 October.

Other Interested parties

The survey was organised by the International Wader Study Group, with BTO being responsible for the British contribution.

Organiser(s)

Simon Gillings

Current Staff Contact

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Publications

The main report is:

Gillings, S., Avontins, A., Crowe, O., Dalakchieva, S., Devos, K., Elts, J., Green, M., Gunnarsson, T.G., Kleefstra, R., Kubelka, V., Lehtiniemi, T., Meissner, W., Pakstyte, E., Rasmussen, L., Szimuly, G. & Wahl, J. 2012. Results of a coordinated count of Eurasian Golden Plovers *Pluvialis apricaria* in Europe during October 2008. *Wader Study Group Bulletin* 119: 125-128.

Available from NBN?

No.

Computer data -- location

Personal space.

Computer data -- outline contents

Computer data -- description of contents

Information held in BTO Archives

Notes on Access and Use

Other information needed

Notes on Survey Design

Specific Issues for Analysis