

Sorby-Breck Ringing Group

September 2007 Newsletter

"To provide data from ringing activities to support the conservation and knowledge of bird species in Derbyshire and South Yorkshire."

Apologies for gaps in Newsletters during July and August. As you will probably be reading this via the website the reason will be obvious. Work to meet this deadline has taken away energies elsewhere.

Dates for your diary.

16th September 2007. Ringing demonstration at Williamthorpe during the morning. Ringing help appreciated.

12th October 2007. Members' meeting at Dronfield Library from 6:45pm. Use car park entrance to the library. Please forward any Agenda items to the Ringing Secretary.

News.

Ringers will have noticed the large number of Mute Swans ringed in 2007. Most are fitted with red Darvic rings which have white letters running in line with the BTO ring used on the birds. You are asked to send in records of any Mute Swan with a Darvic ring you see. The flooding has dispersed many birds and their histories are building up well. Two Swans that landed on the motorway thinking it was deep water were soon relocated to the ringing site thanks to links with the Darvic ring and our link with Yorkshire Swan rescue. Dan Sidley the organiser of the Swan Rescue is now a 'C' ringer within our Group. Any problem with injured Swans please contact Dan (Yorkshire Swan Rescue: www.ysrh.org.uk)

Mist Net Poles

Flood damaged packaging has resulted in poles being rejected for their intended use. With some modifications they make ideal ringing poles being strong, light and weather proof. They are in three 1 metre sections one section withdrawing into the bottom piece. Excellent poles! See Bryn before they are all taken.

Mute Swan Migration

The Mute Swan is easily dismissed as a sedentary species with its movements overlooked. In fact the Mute Swan undergoes a moult migration within the UK. Further south on the continent some populations are migratory by nature.

The British population of Mute Swans is a lowland breeding species and in our region its habitats are often close to public places with non-breeding flocks in summer and winter influenced by weather conditions, particularly in very cold weather movement is expected. The Swan Study Group's monitoring has involved the use of large, individually marked Darvic colour rings. Often whole broods were ringed along with adults ringed during their flightless period in July and August. Recovery rates of these ringed birds are high at almost 1:5 chance of further information. A distance of 40km is used as a cut off point for noteworthy records.

There has at times been a confusing picture of movement due to the action of Swan Rescue Centres in releasing once injured birds into a 'new' locality. Our involvement with the Yorkshire Swan Rescue seeks to make clear in our area what is happening throughout Yorkshire and Derbyshire. We have introduced a consistent practice of re-release at the same site, or within the same area if the same site is not possible ruling out the mechanical movement of ringed birds.

As the local and National population of Swans grow, monitoring of our birds in this considered way is timely and the operation of the Yorkshire Swan Rescue is coordinated so that movements and population distribution are more accurately evaluated.

What rings will a Swan be wearing?

The Mute Swan is our largest British bird and the ring in keeping with this is the largest too, a 'M' size. Most BTO ring sizes are split rings rounded off, the Swan rings are 'C' clip shaped and require crimping together differently. A 'M' size ring is shown in Photograph One. The second photograph shows a plastic Darvic ring fitted to a Mute Swan. The BTO ring is difficult to read in the field, but will last the life of the bird. Darvic's are big, bold and easily read from a distance. Together the two rings help to identify an individual Swan with field records helping to provide a more extensive life history of individual birds. A life

history adds, sibling and parental information, subsequent breeding detail and accompanying detail of a bird's life history.

Sorby-Breck R. G. use RED Darvic rings with clear yellow numbers and letters. (The letters do look white from a distance.) All RED Darvic rings have been fitted to the left leg of the Swans ringed.

Have you seen a Mute Swan wearing a RED Darvic ring? Well, if you have please use our Website and tell us When? and Where? Any additional detail would be appreciated too, such as parents, siblings or brood mate. The information provided will add to the bird's history.

Thank you for taking an interest.

Yorkshire Swan Rescue (Contact www.ysrh.org.uk)

Yorkshire Swan Rescue is a registered charity run by volunteers. Dan Sidley is their coordinator. The group is tireless in their support of Swans.