

# Wimbledon Park Bird Counts 1986-2022

1

Visits were made once a month over the duration of the 36-year study. Each visit followed a standard walk (black line), which was 2.75km long and took around 2 hours to complete.

The trend lines on the graphs below are five-year moving averages.

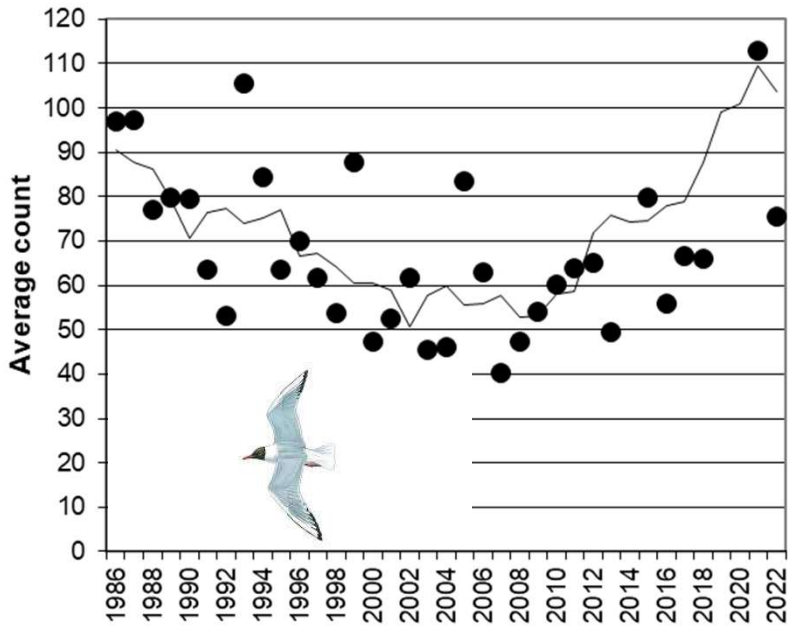
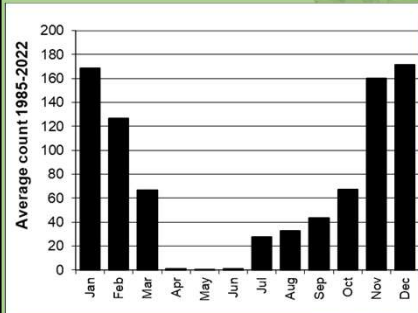


Every bird seen or heard was counted, avoiding double counting where possible. As species differed in their detectability, the counts cannot be compared between species.

2

# Black-headed gull

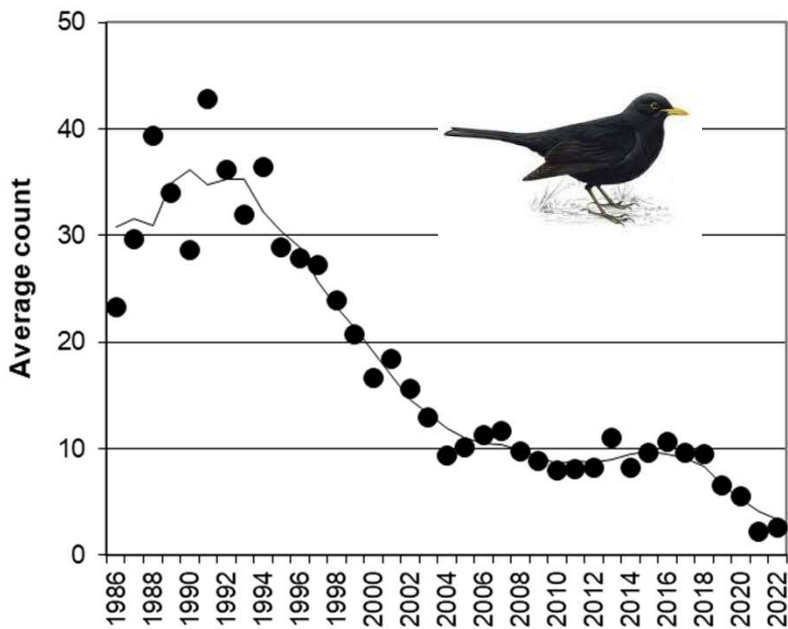
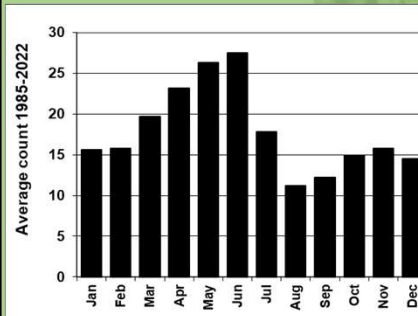
Mainly a winter visitor. Counts declined gradually to the 2000s and then increased. Overall, an increase to 115% of 1986 count by 2022.



3

# Blackbird

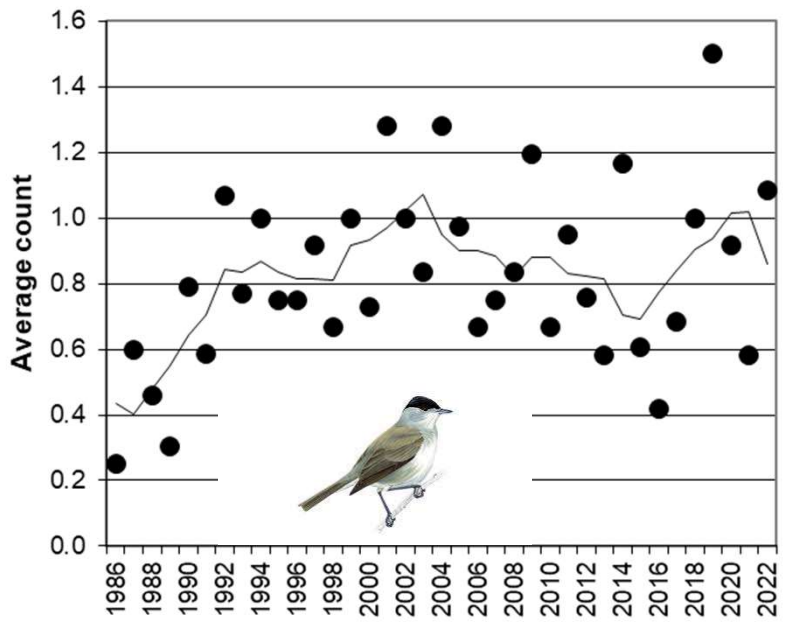
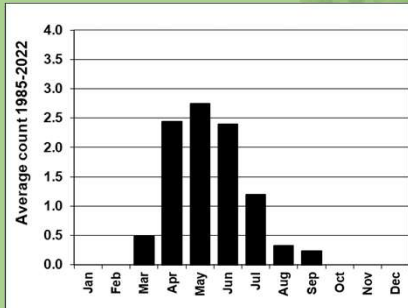
Counts declined throughout the 36 years. Overall, a decrease to 10% of the 1986 count by 2022.



4

# Blackcap

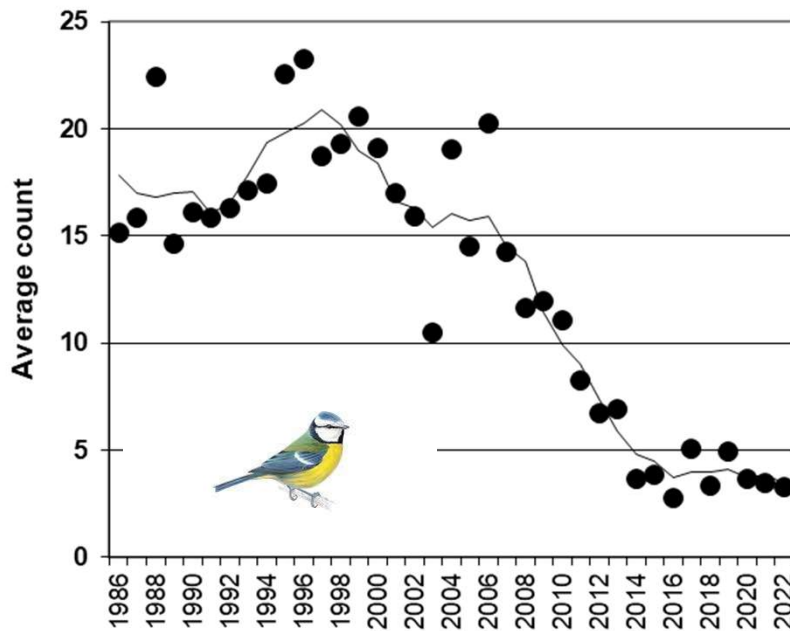
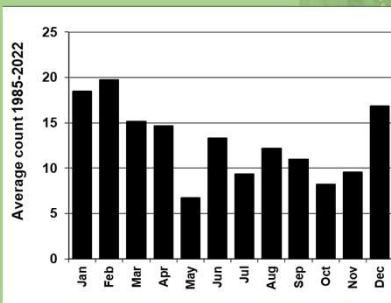
Most blackcaps winter further south. These breeding-season counts increased to around 1990 and then levelled off. Overall, an increase to about twice the 1986 count by 2022.



5

# Blue tit

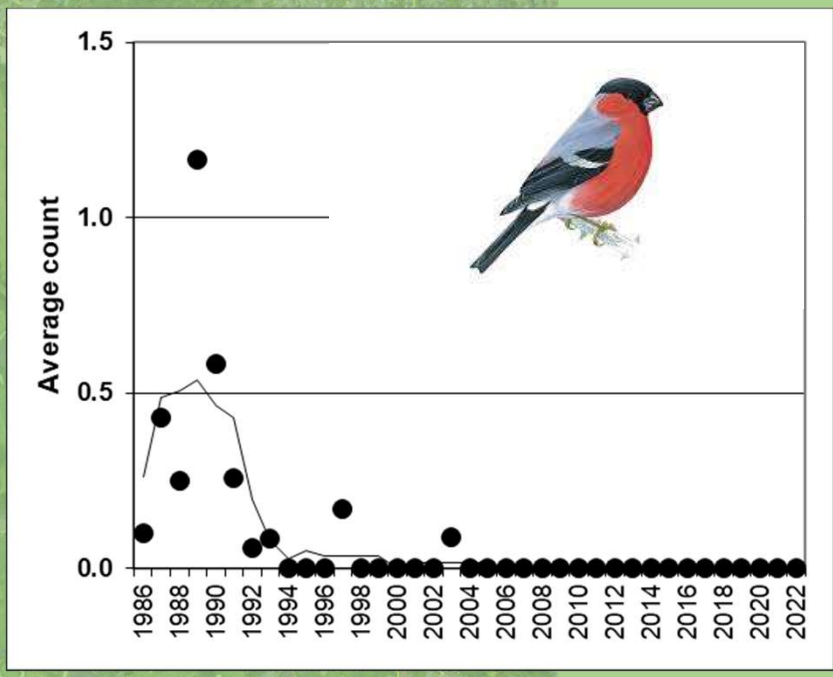
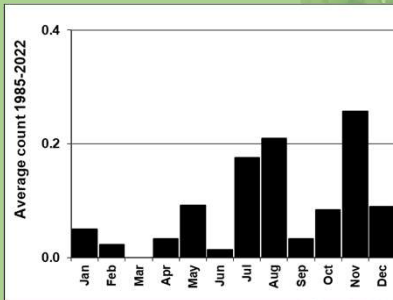
Counts increased slightly up to 1997 and then declined. Overall, a decrease to about 20% of the 1986 count by 2022.



6

# Bullfinch

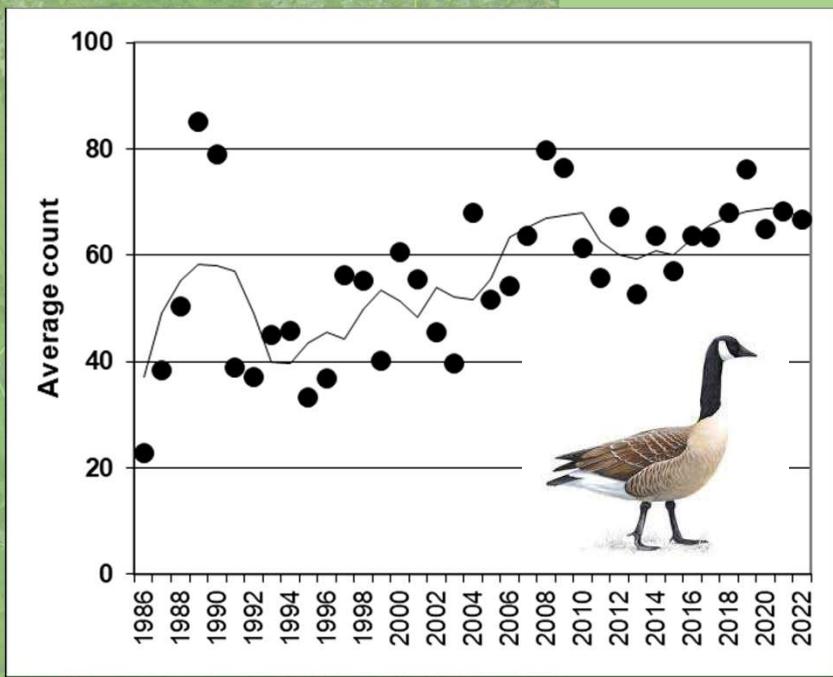
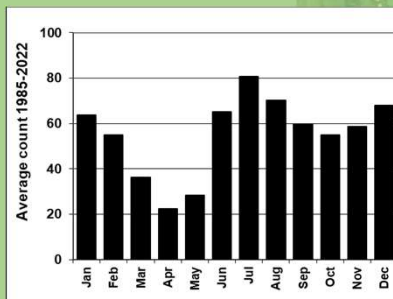
Always scarce. It declined sharply to 1994 and was last found in 2004.



7

# Canada goose

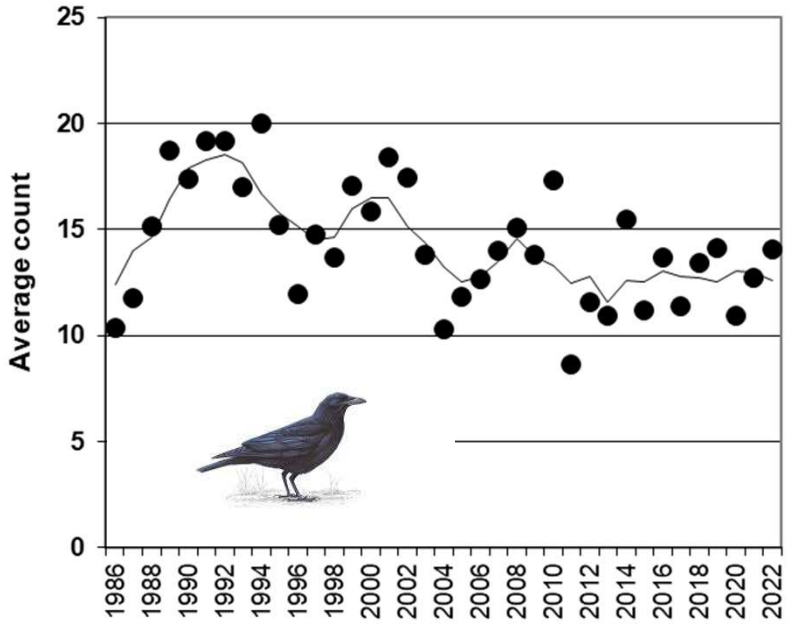
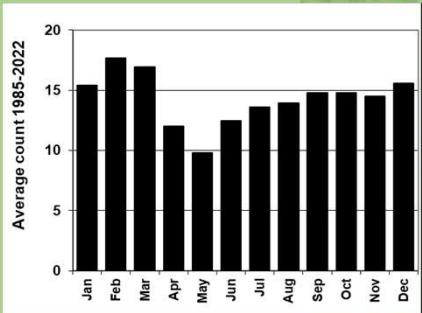
Counts increased throughout the 36 years. Overall, an increase to about 180% of the 1986 count by 2022.



8

## Carrion crow

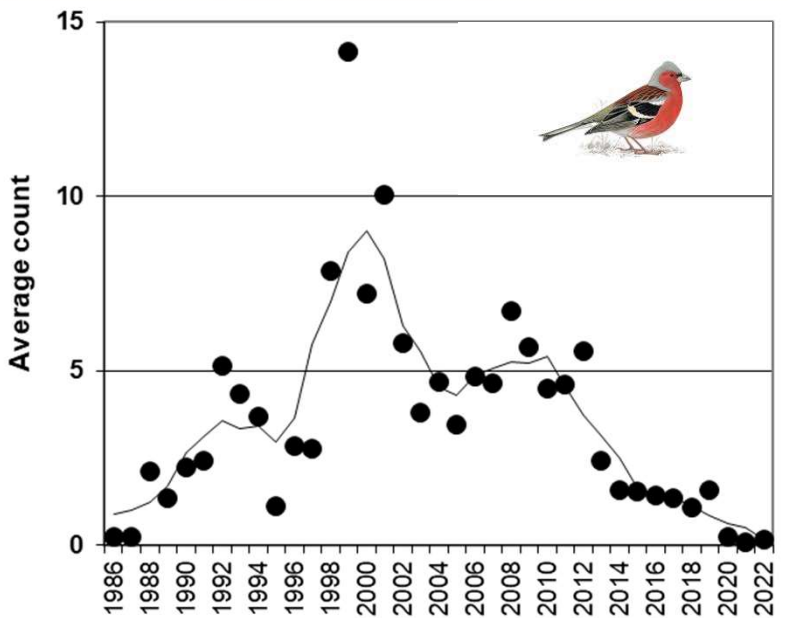
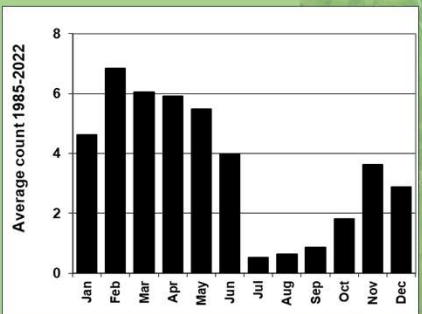
Counts increased to around 1992 and then declined slowly. Overall, there was no change between 1986 and 2022.



9

## Chaffinch

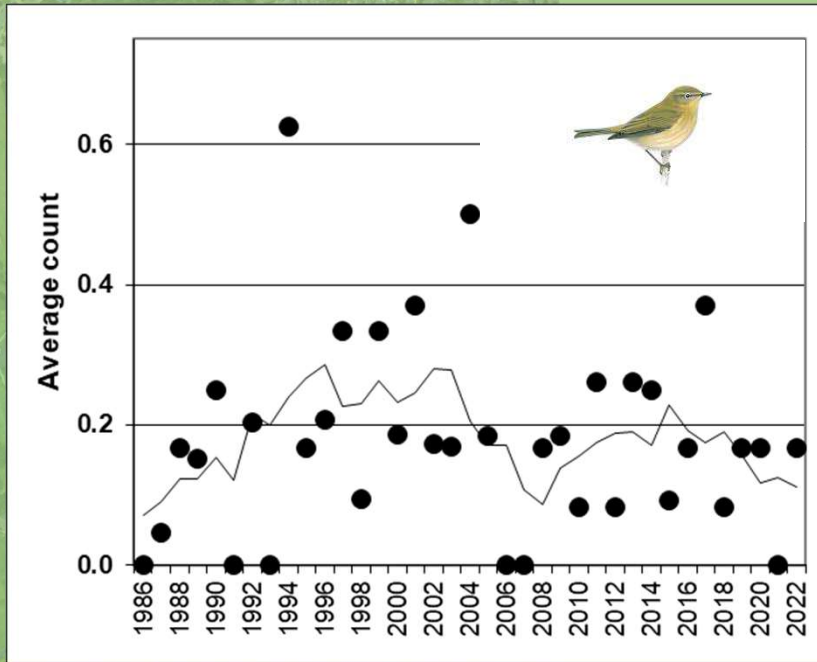
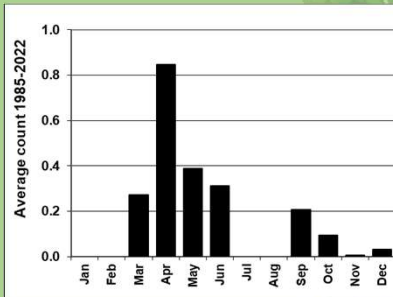
Counts increased to peak around 2000 and then declined to a very low number. The decline after 2012 might match the national decline attributed to trichomonosis. Overall, there was a decrease to 20% of the 1986 count by 2022.



10

# Chiffchaff

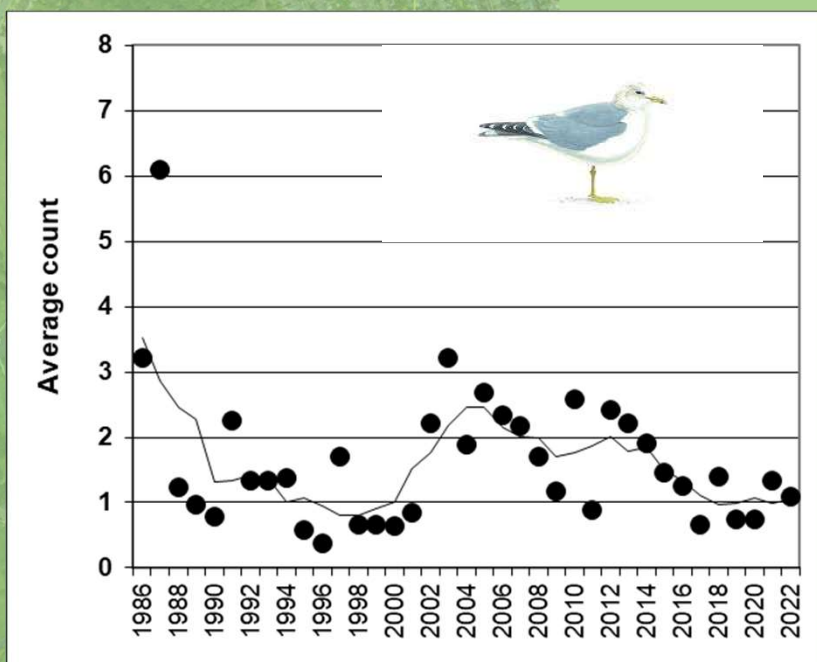
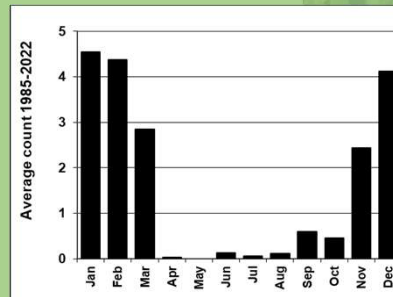
Found in small numbers. Counts were too variable for any trend to be detected.



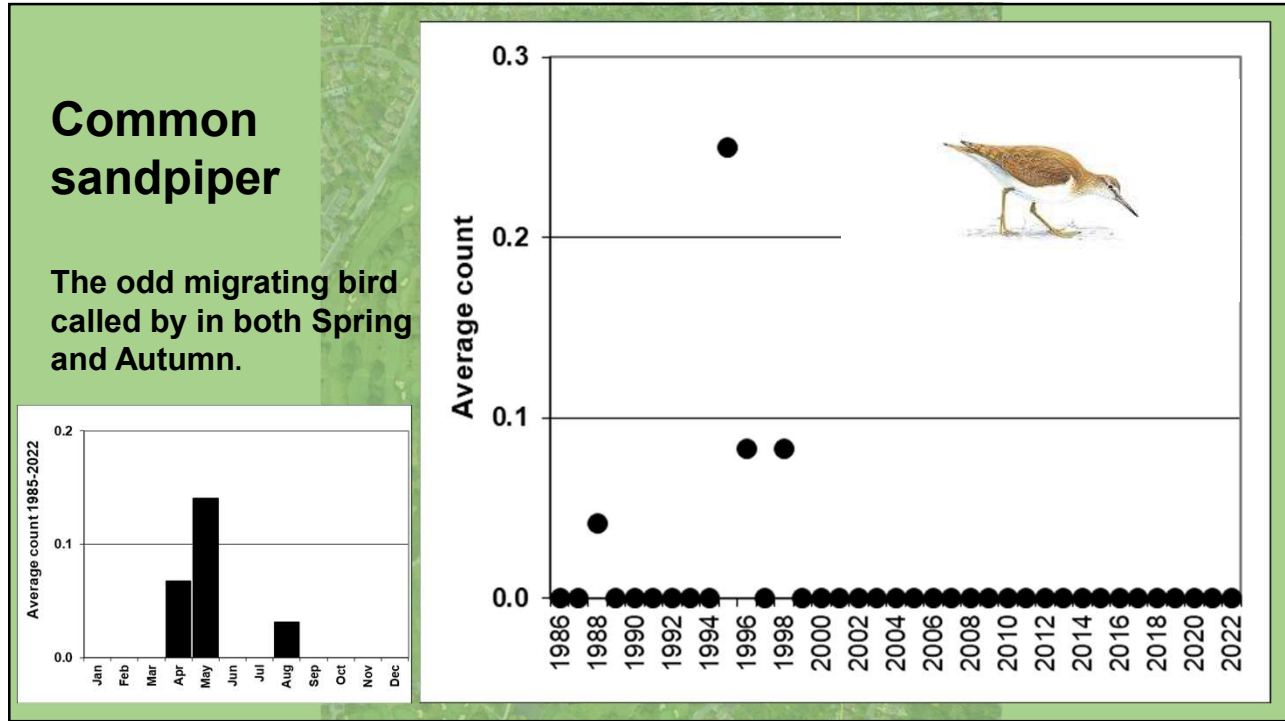
11

# Common gull

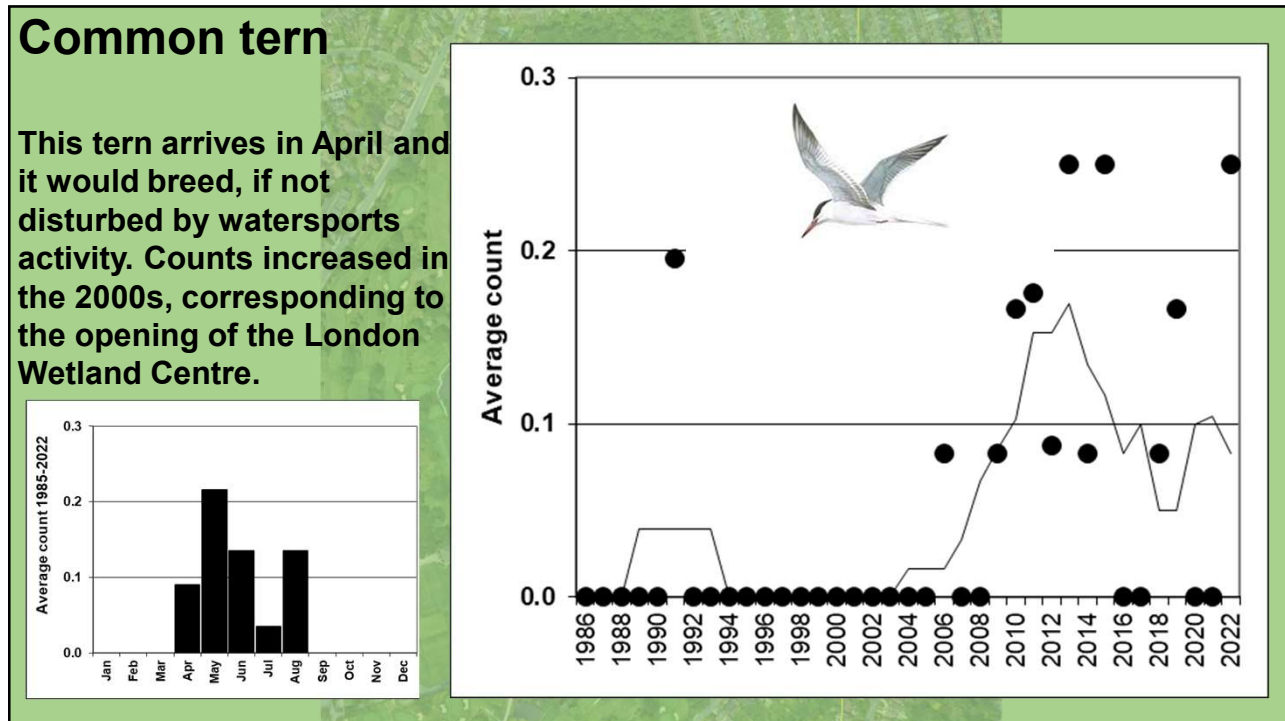
A winter visitor. Counts declined to around 1998 and then rose to around 2005 before declining again. Overall, the count in 2022 was around 30% of that in 1986.



12



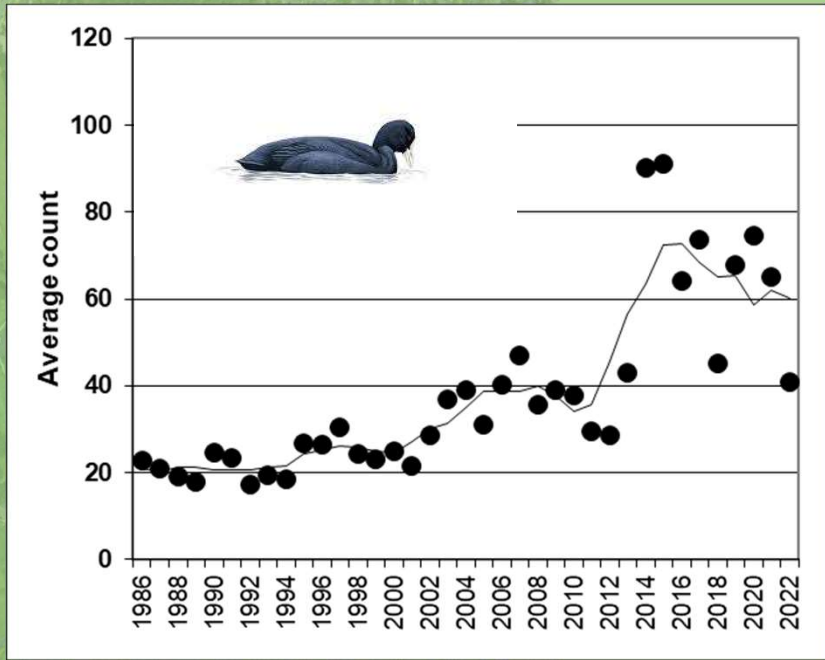
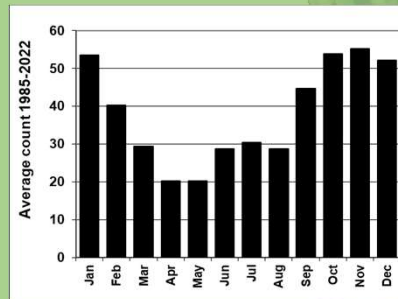
13



14

# Coot

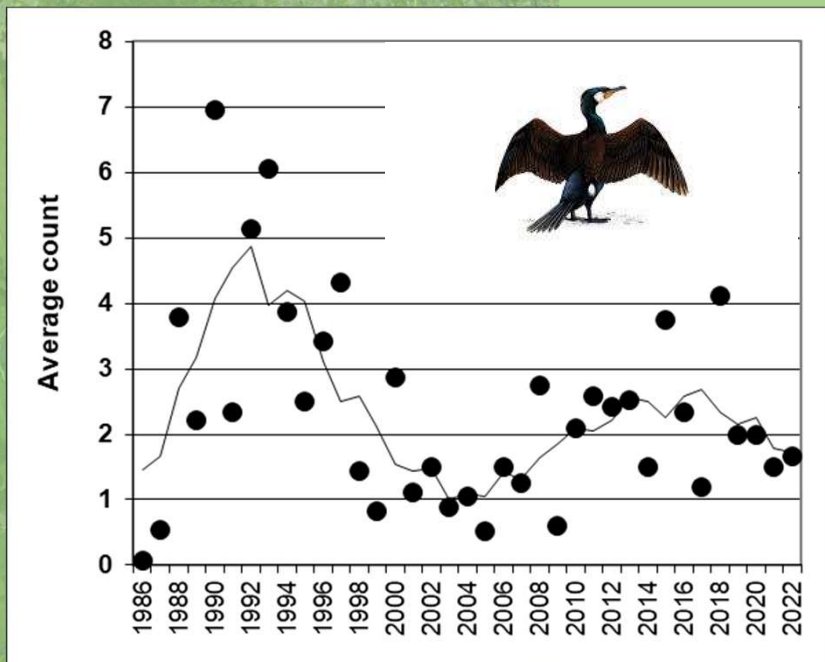
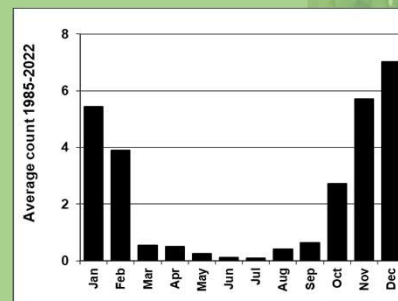
Counts increased gradually until they doubled in 2014, when waterweed increased. Then there was a decline as waterweed declined. Overall, the count in 2022 was around three times that in 1986.



15

# Cormorant

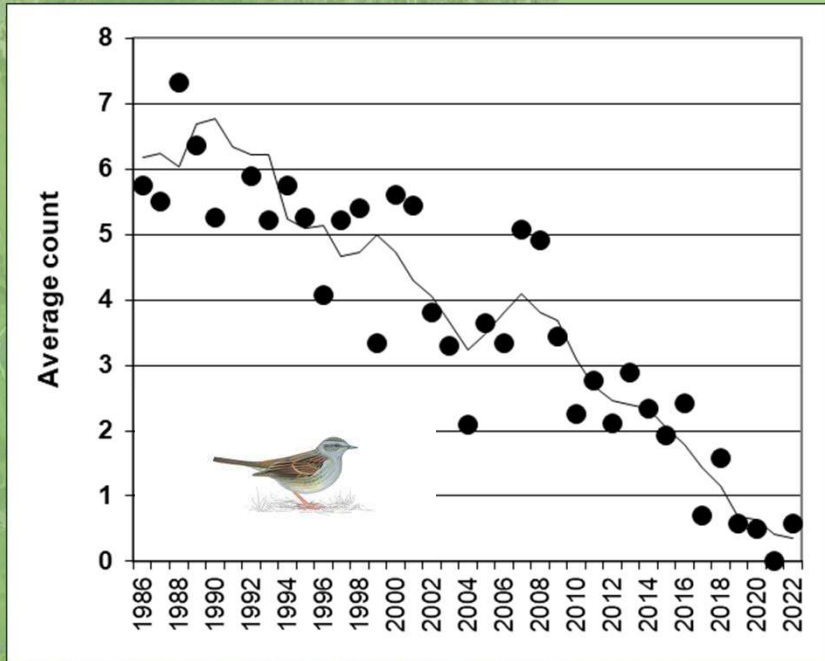
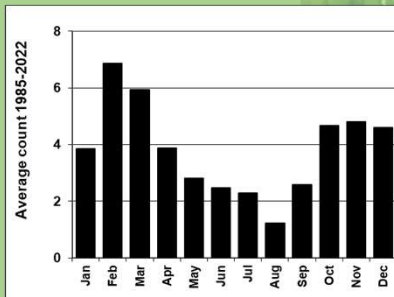
Mainly a winter visitor. Counts increased until around 1992, then decreased until 2003, before rising to a lower peak in 2017. Overall, there was little trend, as the count in 2022 was similar to that in 1986.



16

# Dunnock

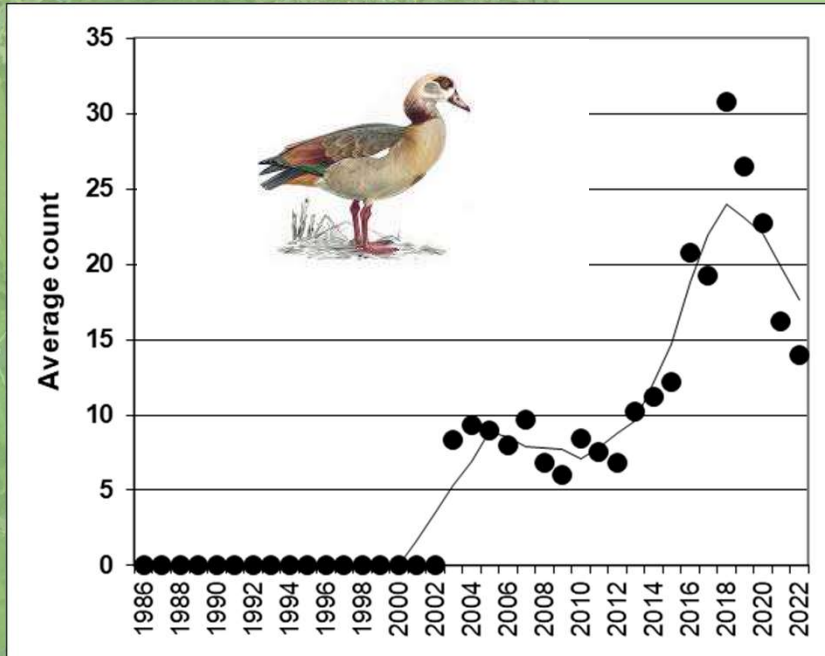
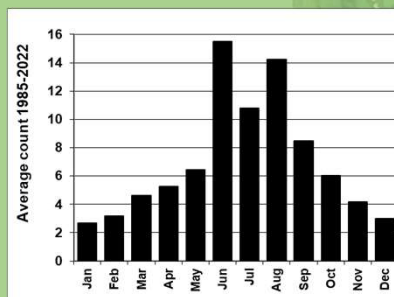
Counts declined at an accelerating rate. Overall, the count in 2022 was around 6% of that in 1986.



17

# Egyptian goose

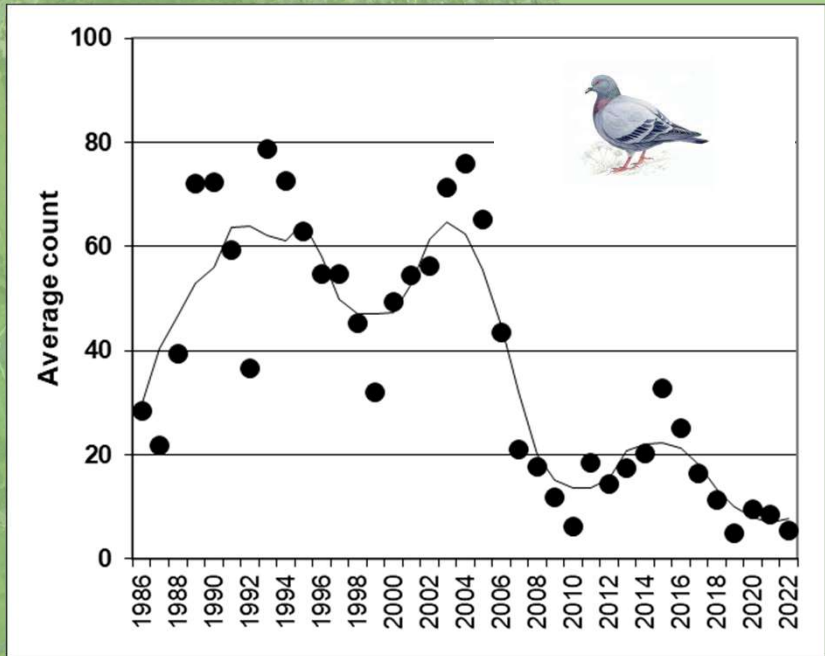
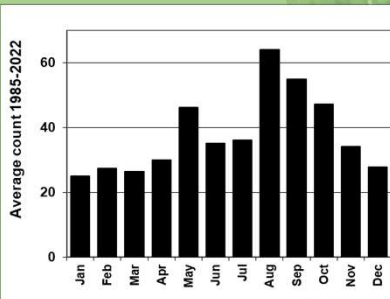
Absent until some ten birds arrived in 2003. An increase began around 2014, with counts peaking in 2018. The count in 2022 averaged 18 birds.



18

## Feral pigeon

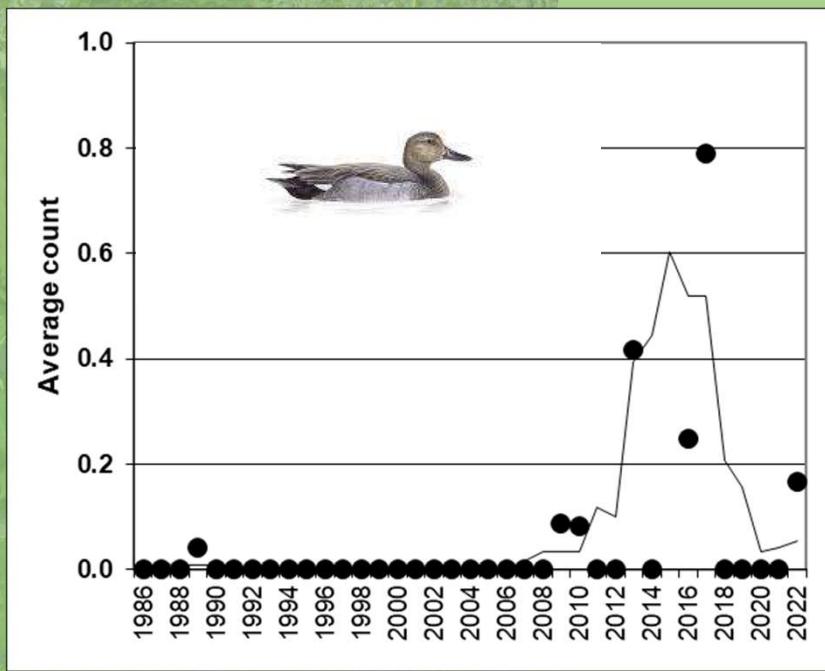
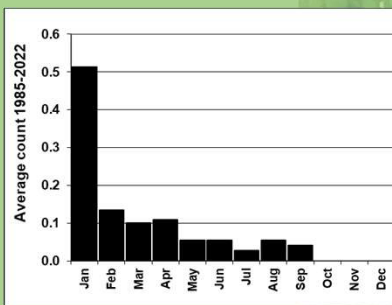
Counts increased until the 1990s and were level until 2005, then declined to lower numbers. The count in 2022 was around 25% of that in 1986.



19

## Gadwall

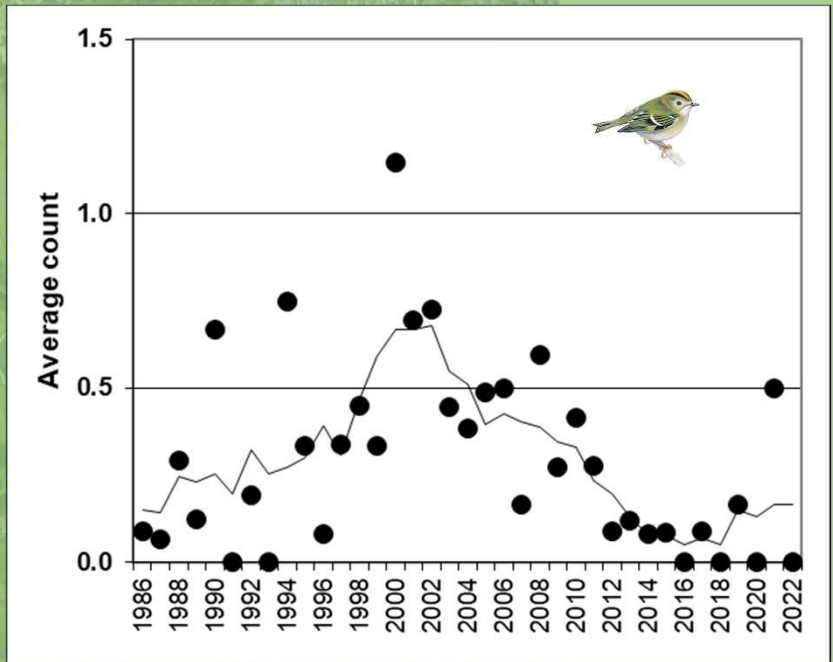
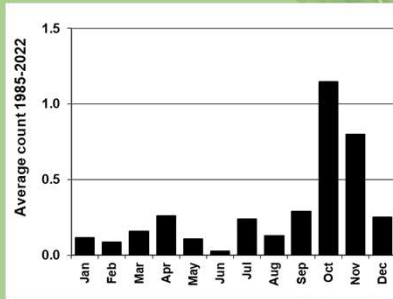
Just a stray Gadwall was seen before 2009, when it began to be seen in winter, with a few remaining right through summer. There has been no evidence of breeding, however.



20

# Goldcrest

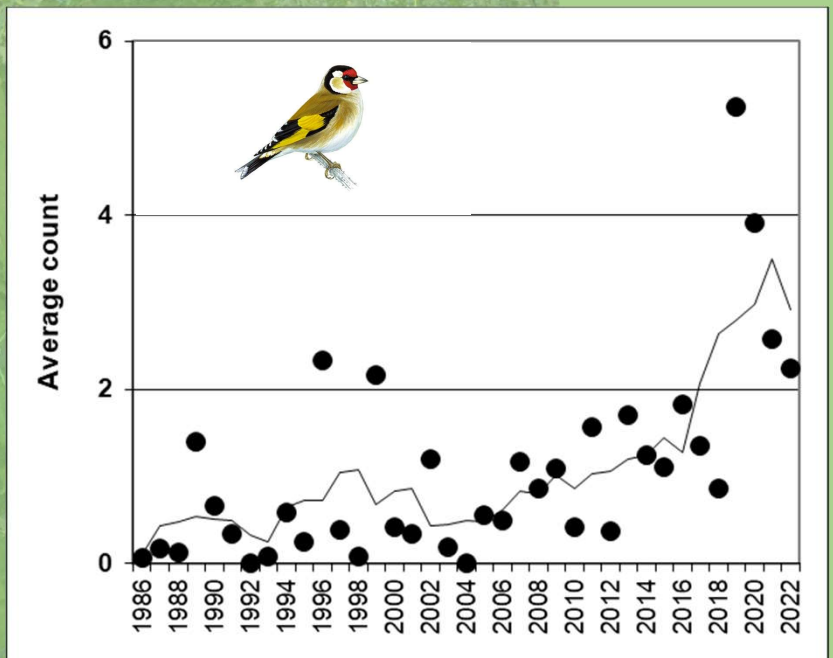
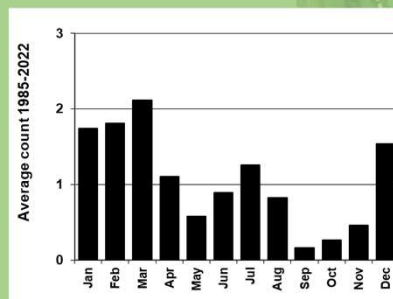
Increasing up to peak counts around 2001, then declining back down. The count in 2022 was similar to that in 1986.



21

# Goldfinch

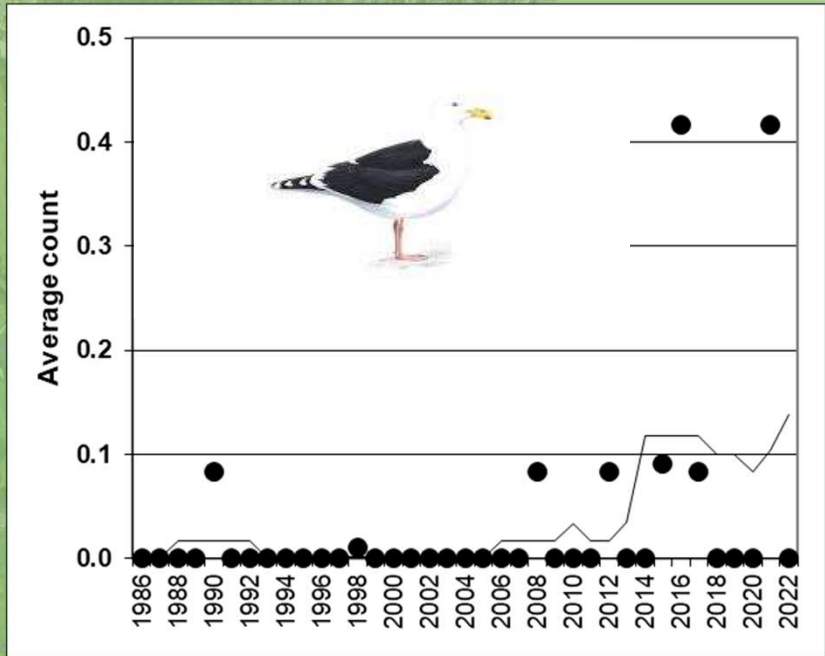
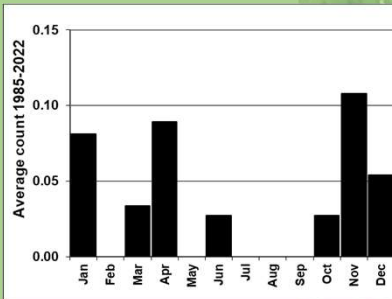
An accelerating increase from a very low starting count. The count in 2022 was around three birds.



22

## Great black-backed gull

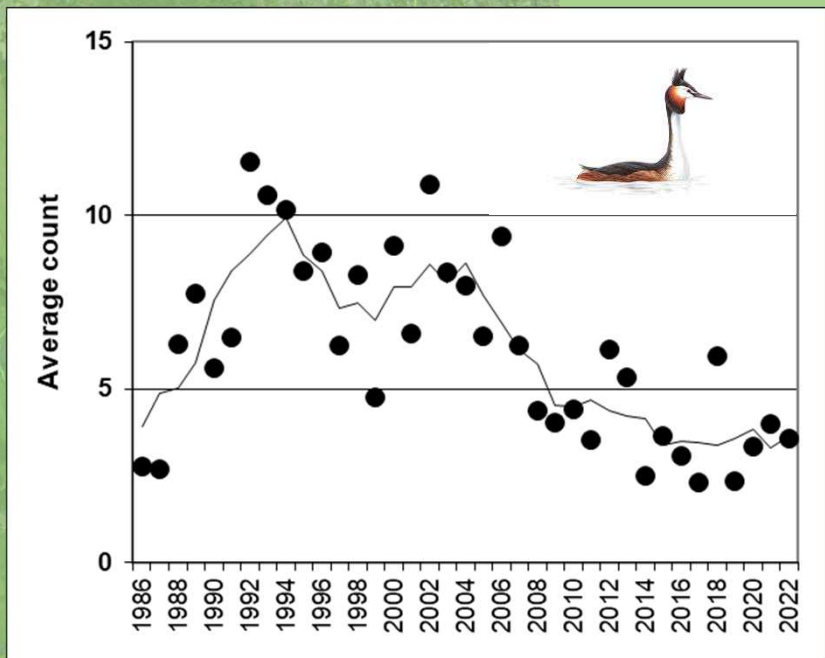
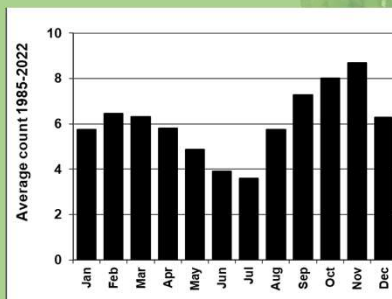
One or two birds seen sporadically and more often in recent years.



23

## Great crested grebe

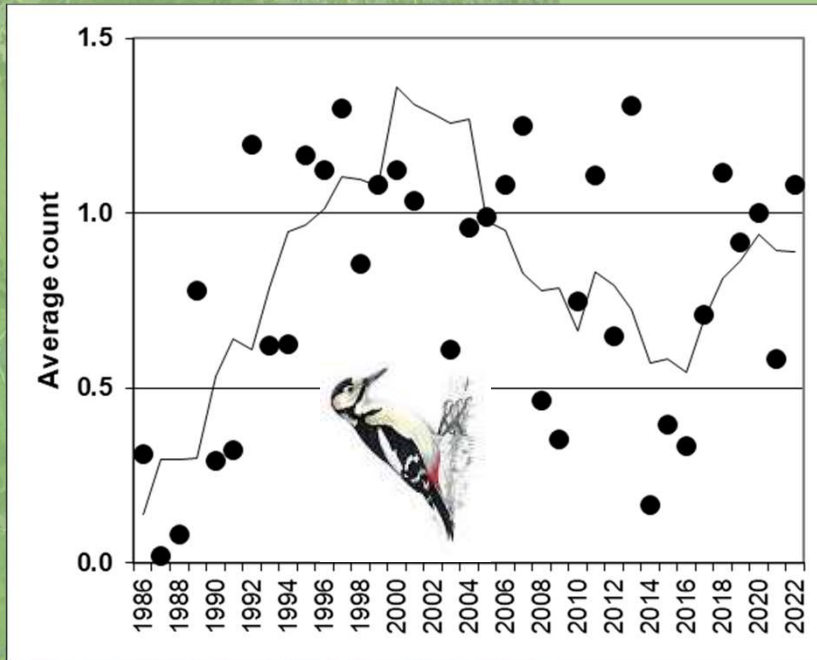
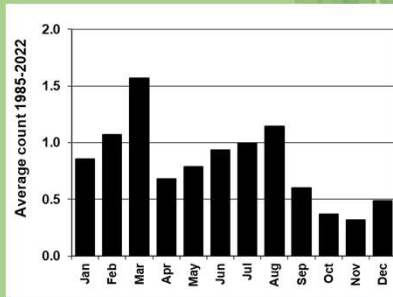
Counts increased up until 1994, followed by a slow decrease back down. The count in 2022 was much the same as that in 1986.



24

## Great spotted woodpecker

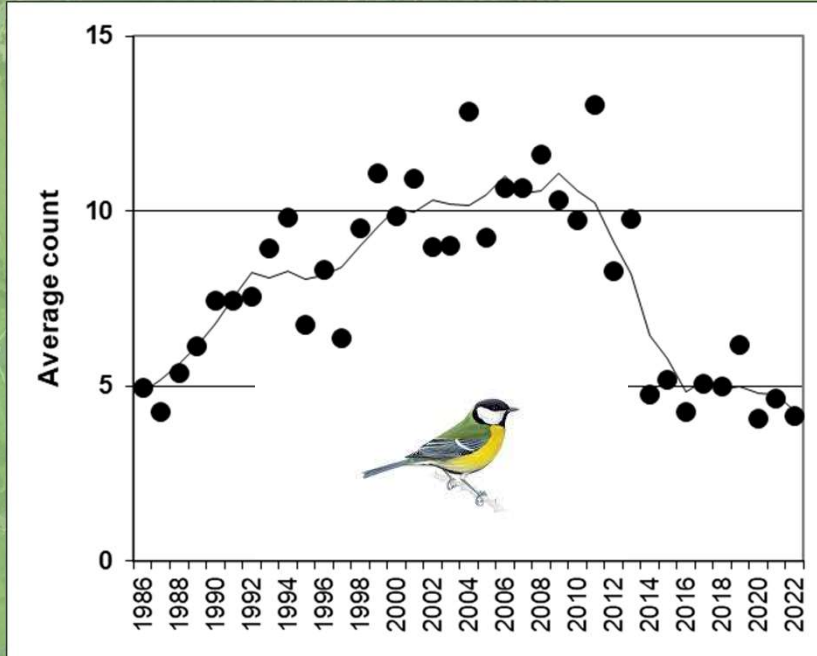
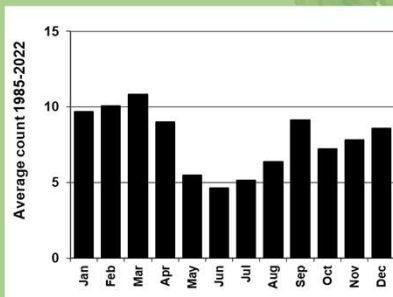
Counts increased up until 2000, followed by an irregular small decrease. The count in 2022 was around six times that in 1986.



25

## Great tit

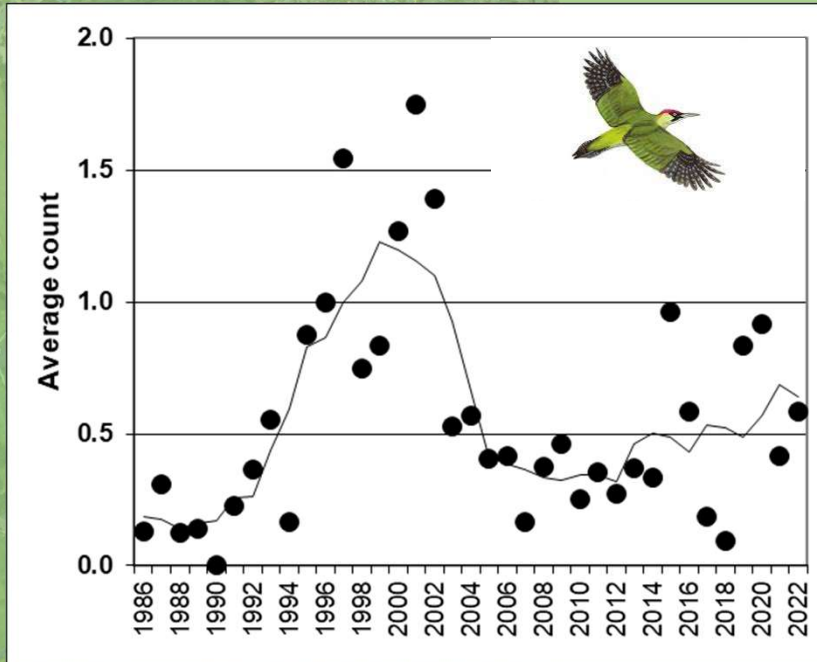
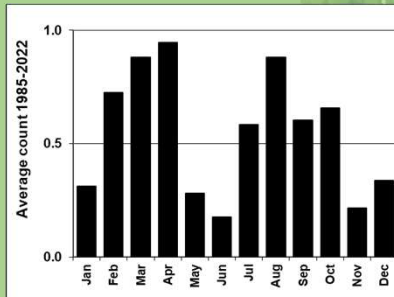
Counts increased up to a broad peak around 2008 only to halve in 2014. The count in 2022 was around 90% of that in 1986.



26

## Green woodpecker

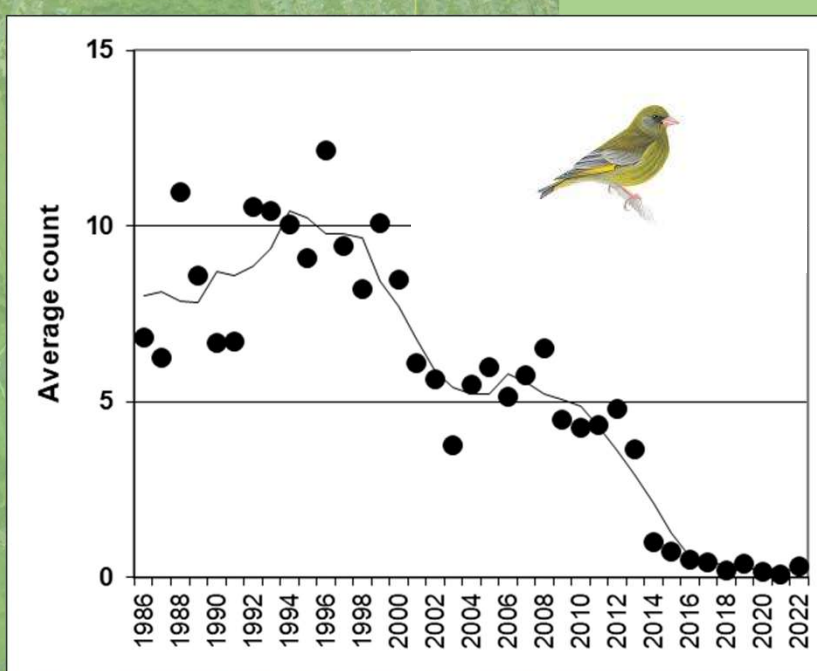
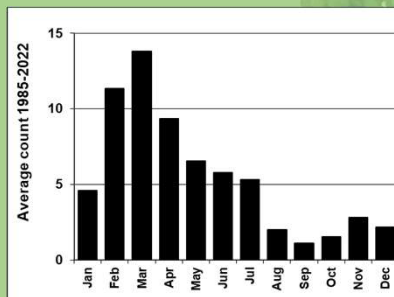
Counts increased up to a peak around 2000 only to fall back somewhat by 2005. The count in 2022 was around three times that in 1986.



27

## Greenfinch

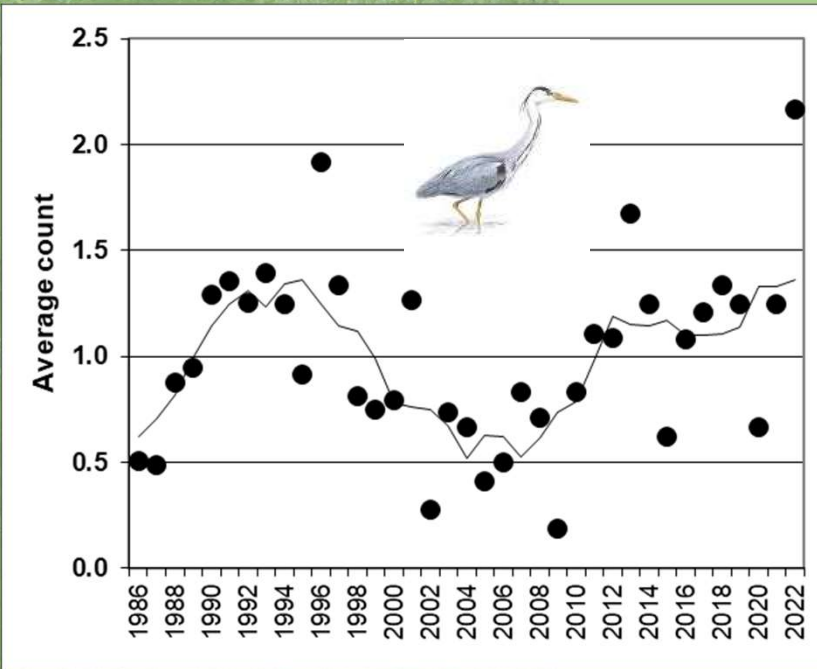
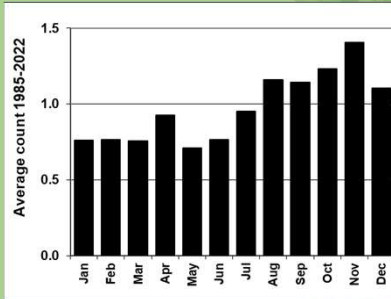
Counts increased up to 1996. A severe decline began in 2001, well before the identification of deaths from trichomonosis in the UK four years later. The count in 2022 was 2.5% of that in 1986.



28

## Grey heron

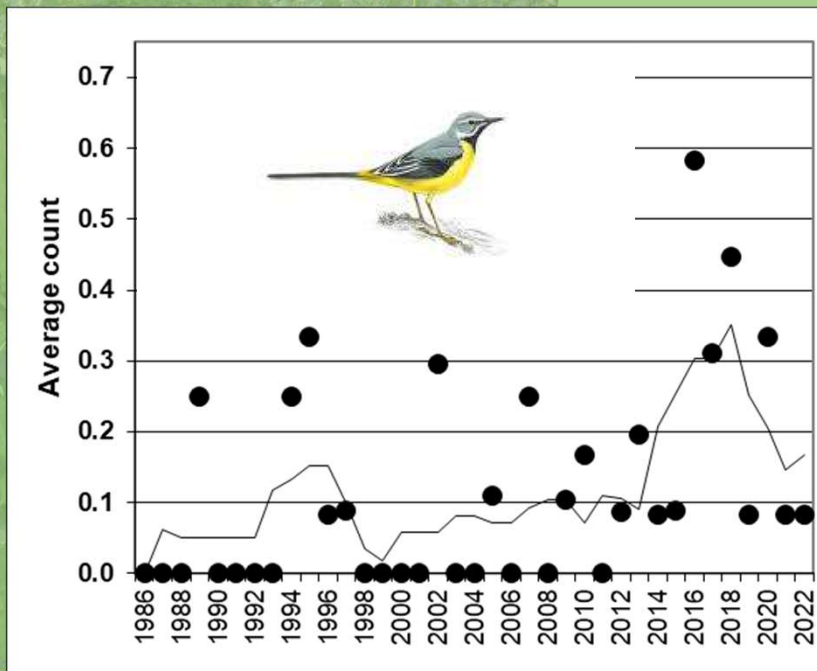
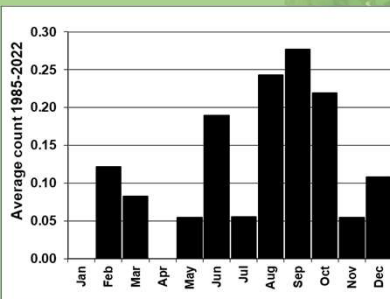
Counts increased up to a peak around 1994 only to decline back by 2005, with a slow increase to 2022 when they began to breed on the island. The count in 2022 was twice that in 1986.



29

## Grey wagtail

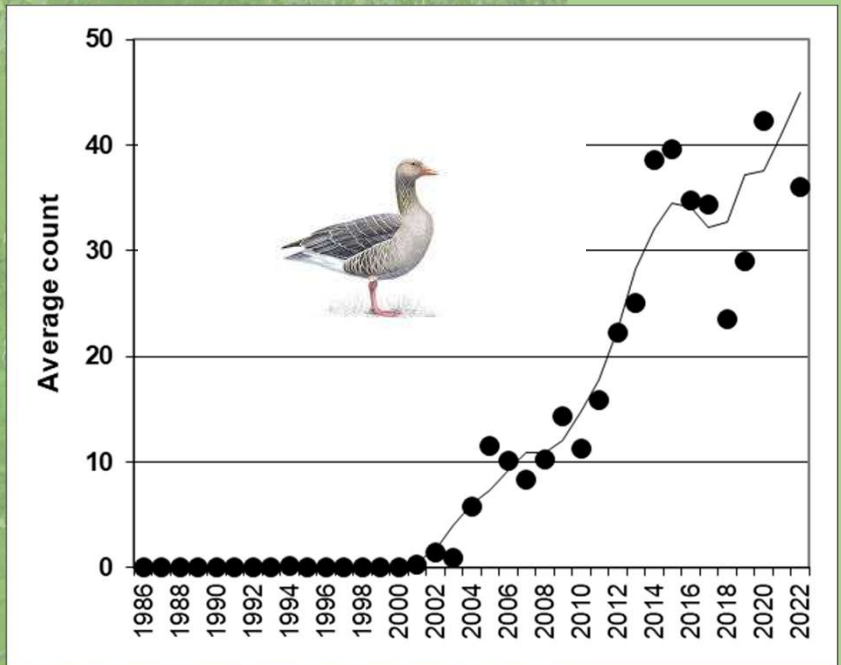
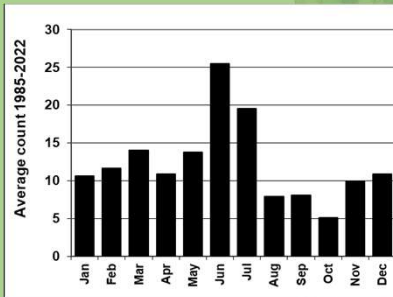
A resident species, seen mainly in the Brook, supplemented by visitors in Autumn. Seen more often in recent years, but with no proof of breeding.



30

# Greylag

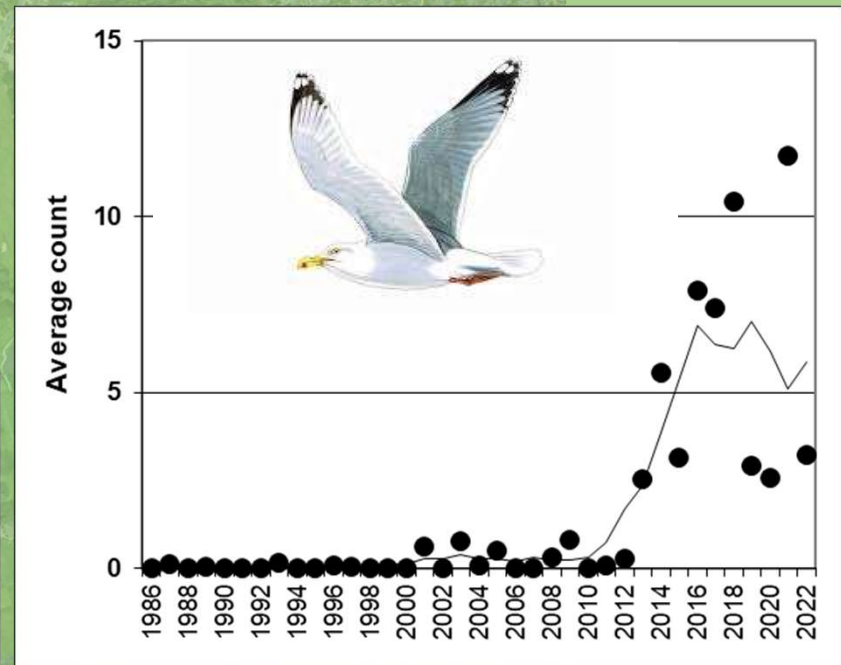
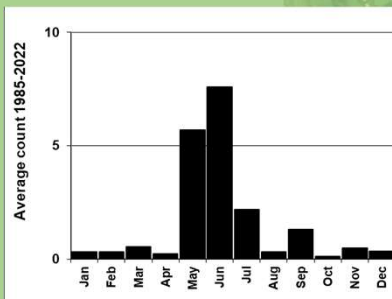
Arrived in 2001, after which counts increased up to an average of 45 birds in 2022.



31

# Herring gull

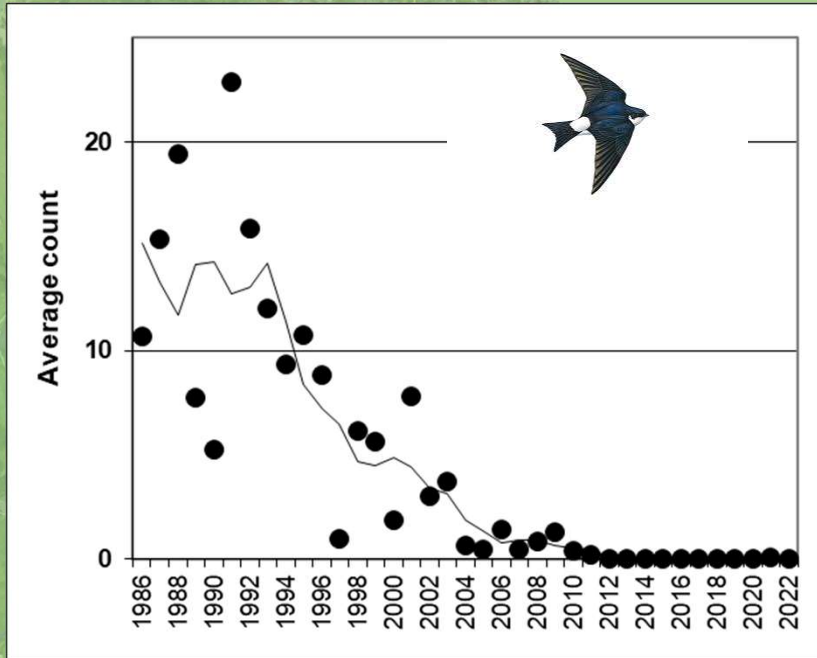
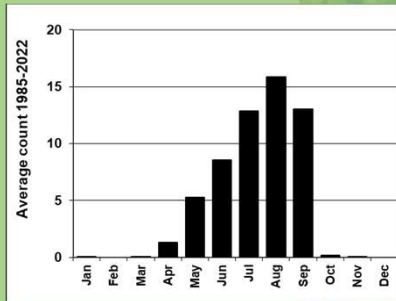
Seen only sporadically before 2013, when it came to breed nearby. Most birds, however, are in a non-breeding flock, which has increased greatly.



32

## House martin

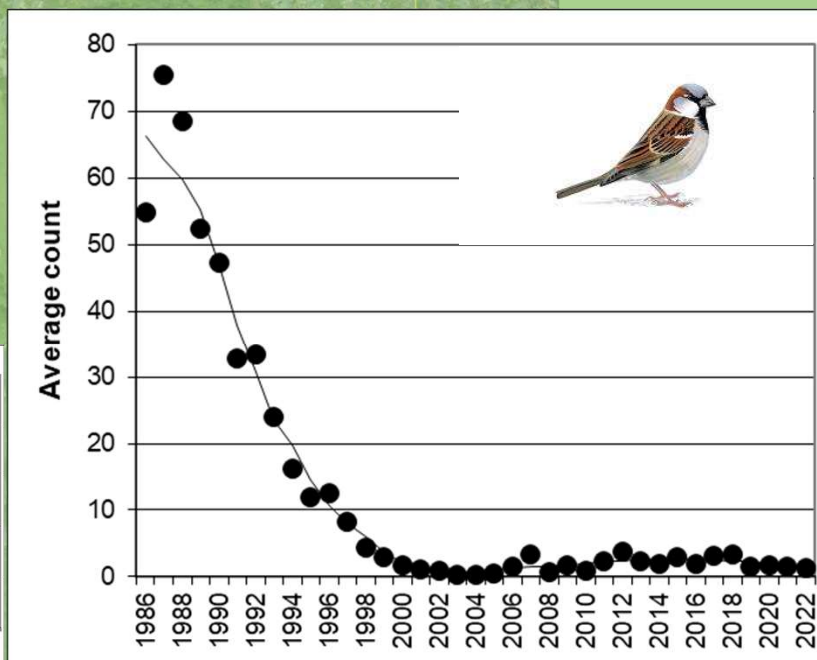
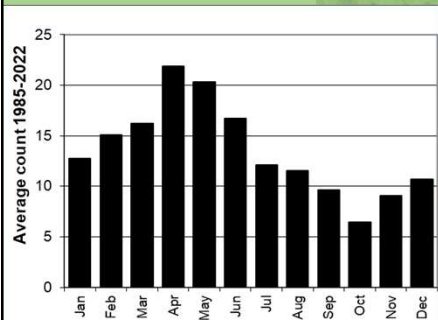
Migrates south after breeding. The gradual decline reflects the number of nests within commuting distance. Now seen only in Spring and Autumn as migrants pass through.



33

## House sparrow.

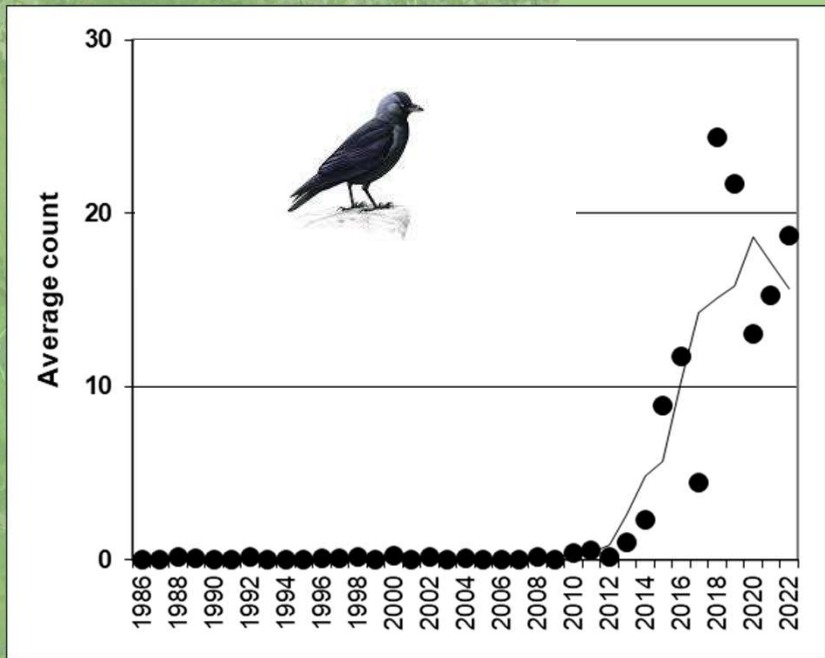
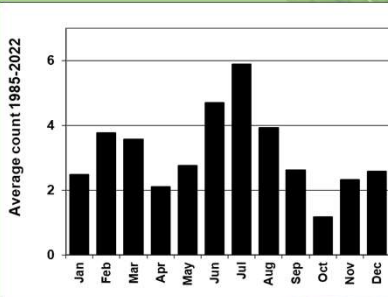
Counts declined greatly to 2003 and then recovered slightly. The overall decline was to 2.25% of 1986 count by 2022. This is very much bigger than shown by national monitoring, which began in 1994.



34

# Jackdaw

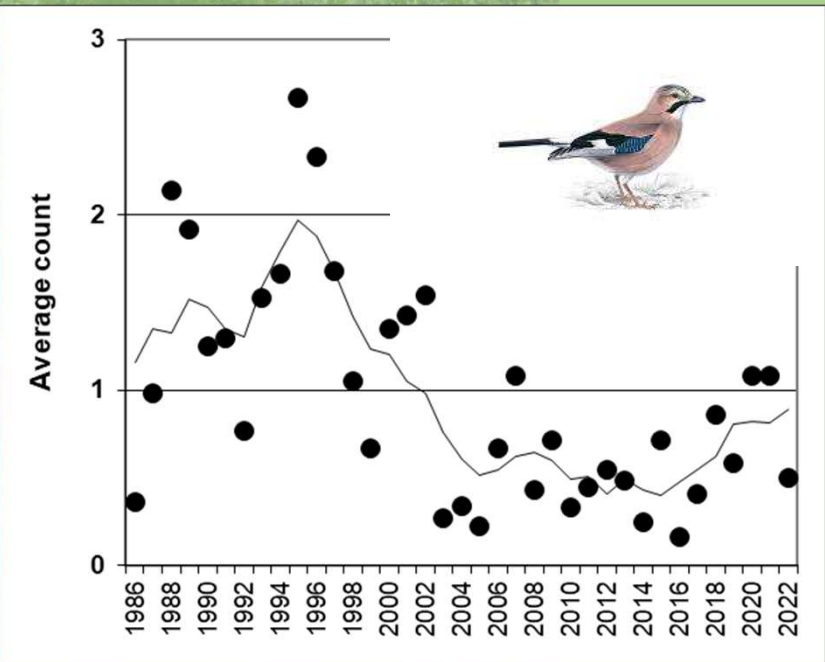
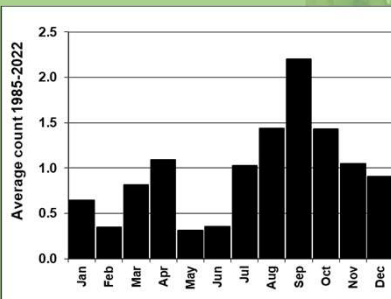
Before 2010, I saw only the odd bird flying over. Then birds began to feed locally. Counts increased to average 16 by 2022.



35

# Jay

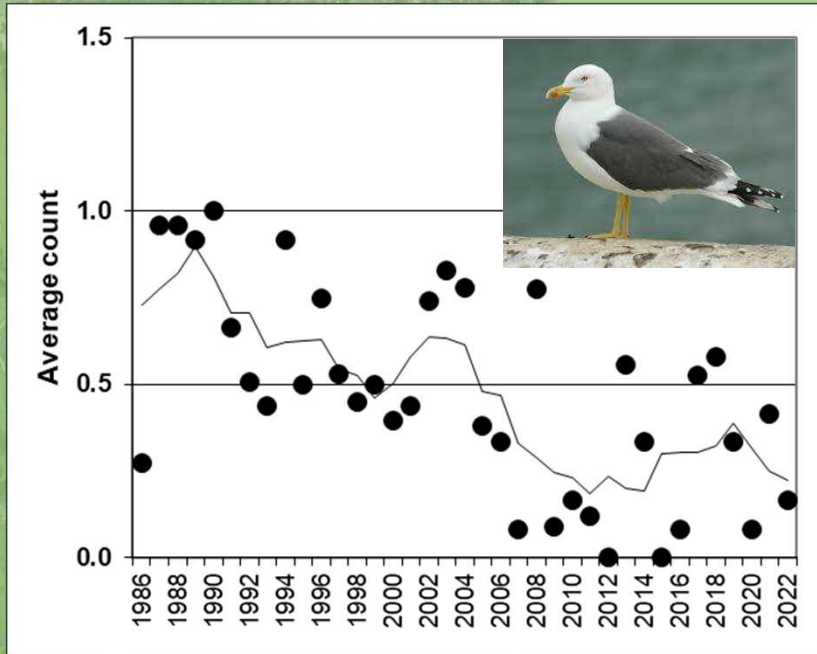
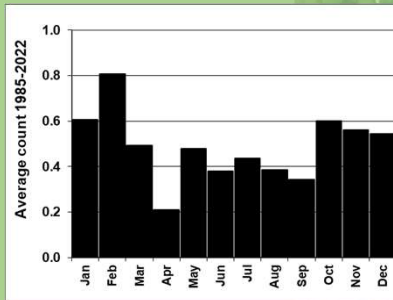
Counts rose to 1995 and then declined to the mid 2000s, before rising a little after 2015. The overall decline was to 75% of 1986 count by 2022.



36

## Lesser black-backed gull

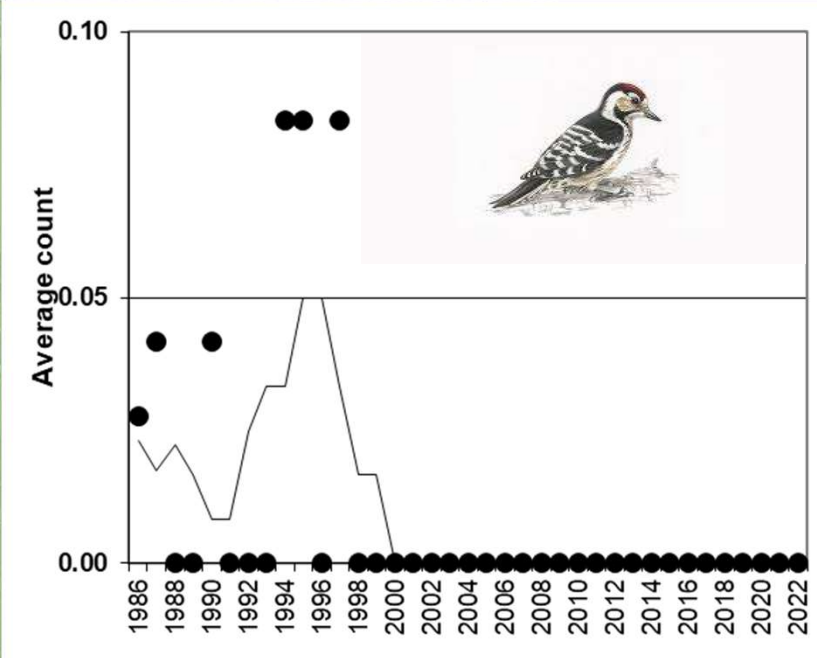
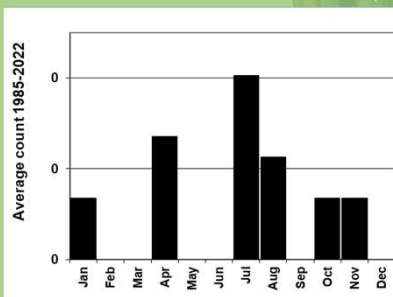
Counts decreased over the 36 years. The 2022 counts averaged 30% of the 1986 value.



37

## Lesser spotted woodpecker

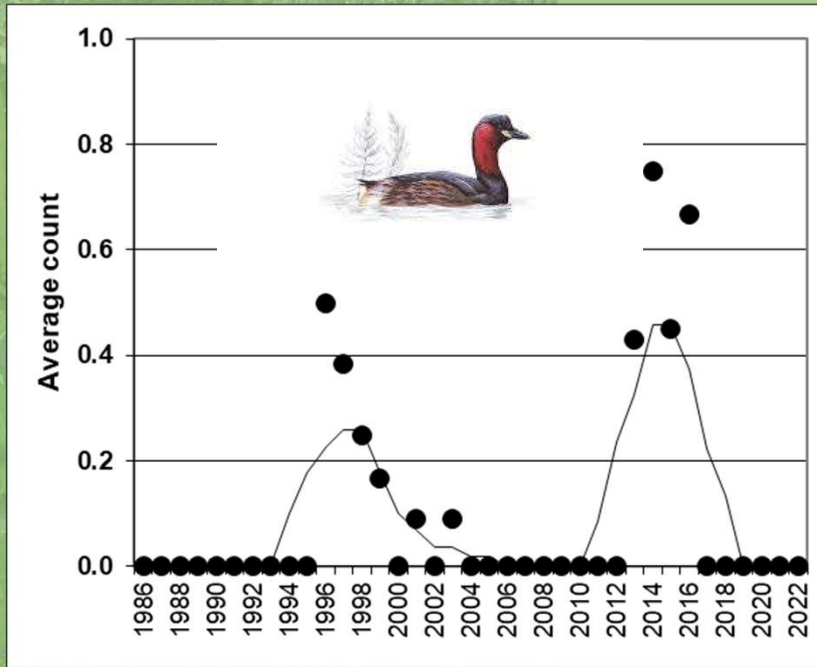
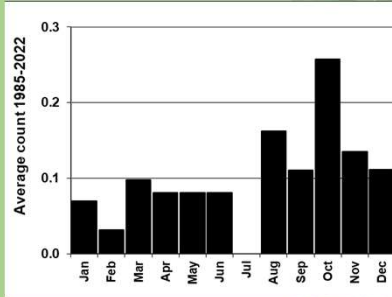
Seen year-round. Occasional birds were detected up until 1997 and none since.



38

## Little grebe

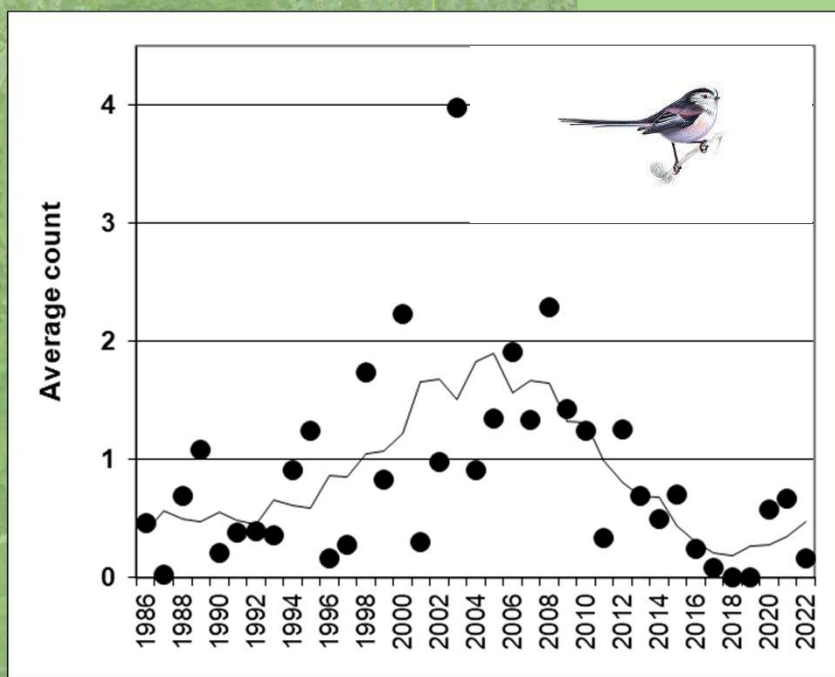
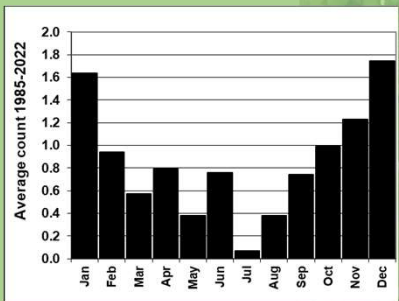
Seen in small numbers over two time periods: between 1996 and 2003, and 2013 and 2016.



39

## Long-tailed tit

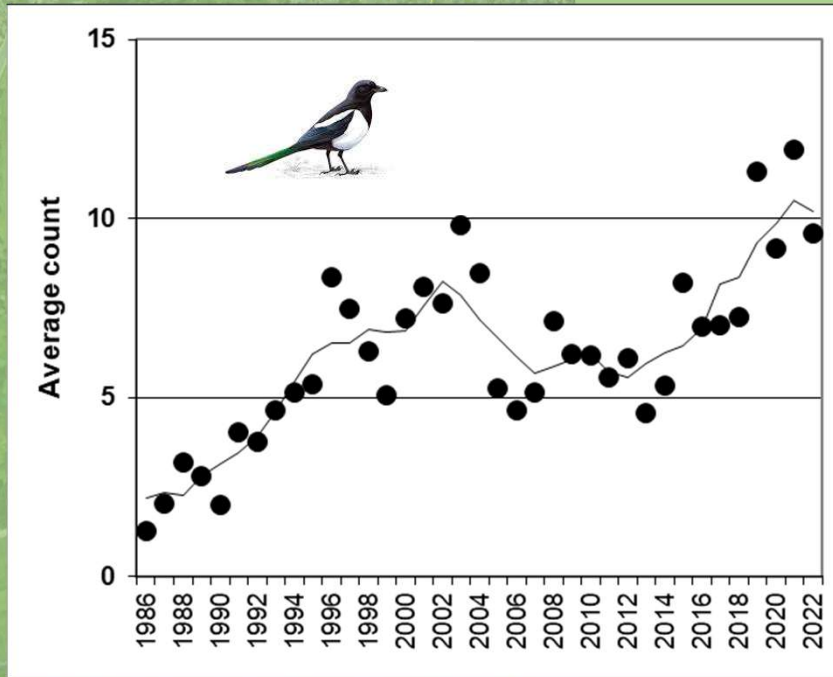
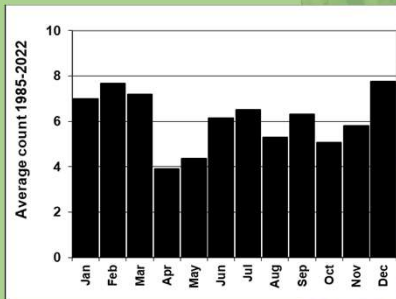
These visited mainly in winter. Counts increased to a peak in 2005 and then decreased, so there was no difference between the 1986 and 2022 averages.



40

# Magpie

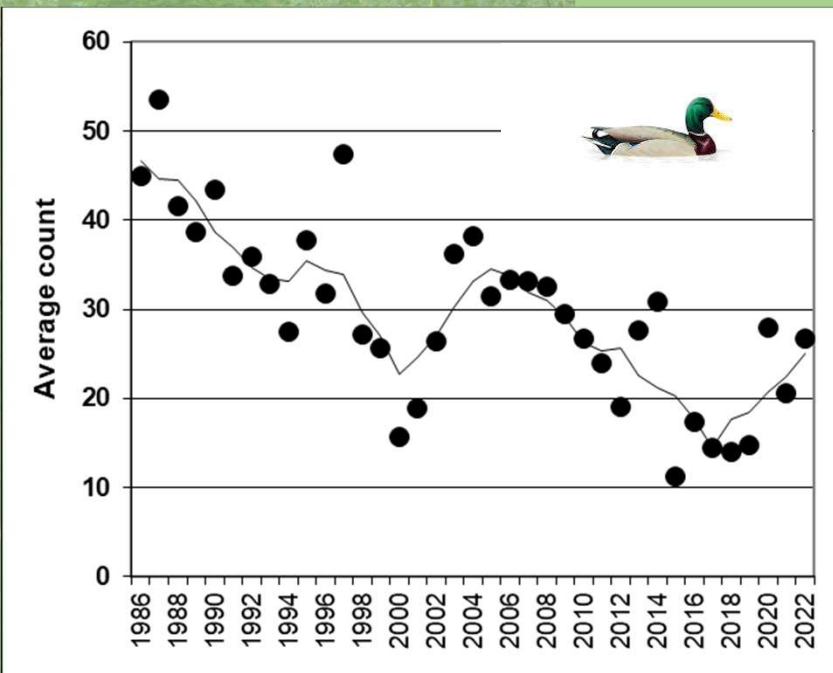
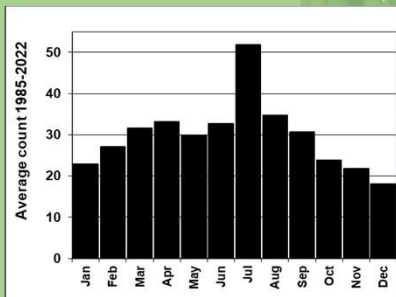
Counts increased to a peak in 2002 and then decreased to 2012, only to increase again. The 2022 average was nearly five times that in 1986.



41

# Mallard

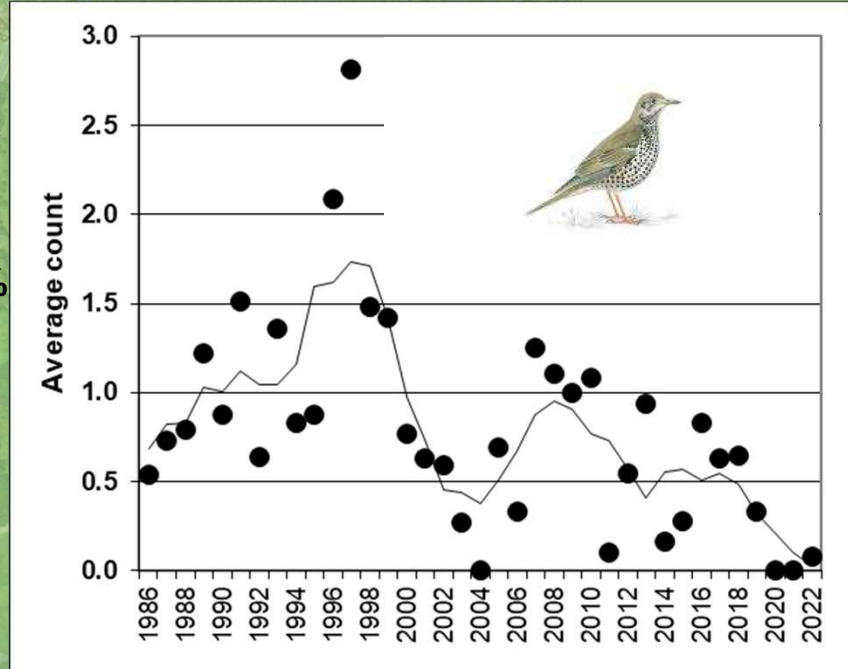
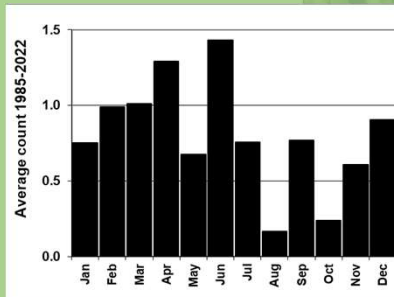
Counts decreased over the whole 36 years. The 2022 average was about 55% of that in 1986.



42

# Mistle thrush

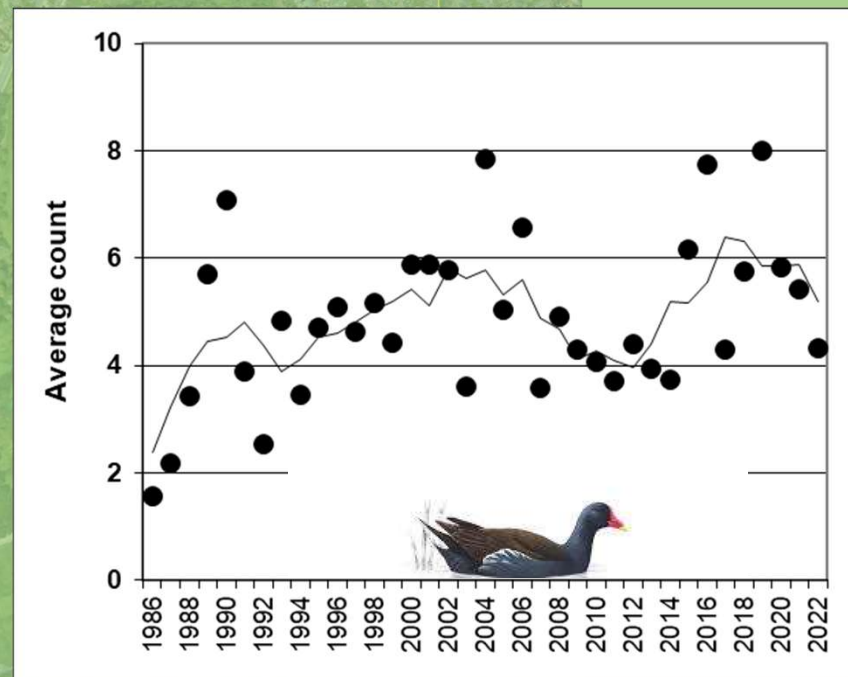
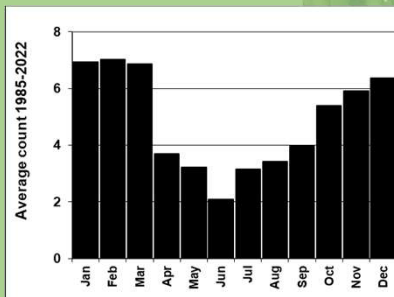
Counts decreased over the whole 36 years. The 2022 average was about 4% of that in 1986.



43

# Moorhen

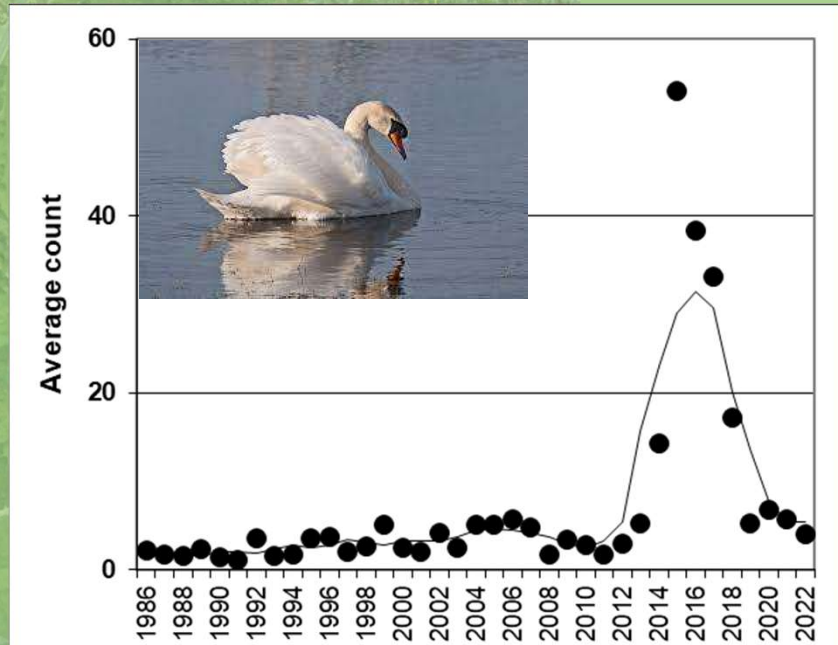
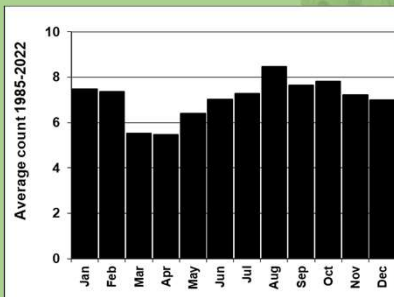
Counts increased to a peak around 2003, then declined to 2012, before increasing again. The 2022 average was about twice that in 1986.



44

## Mute swan

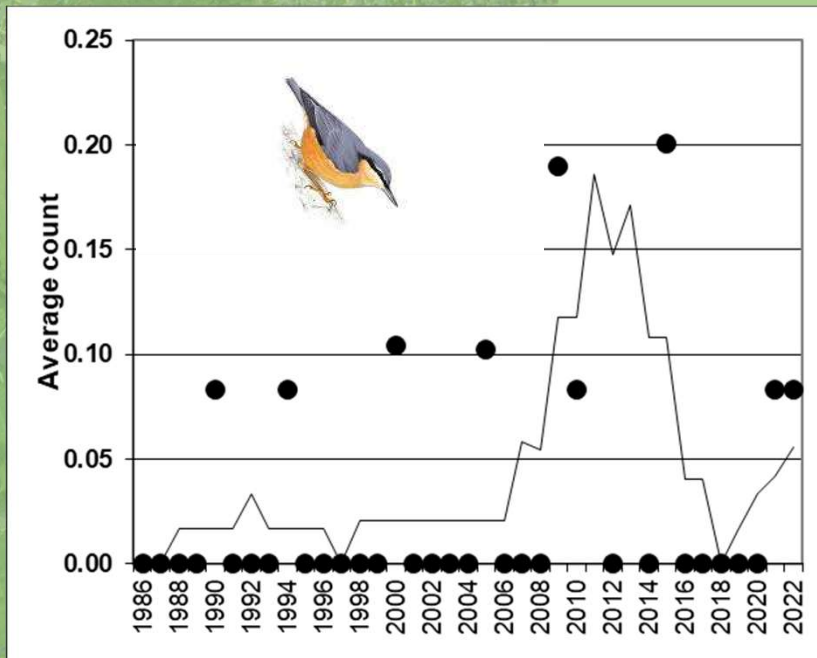
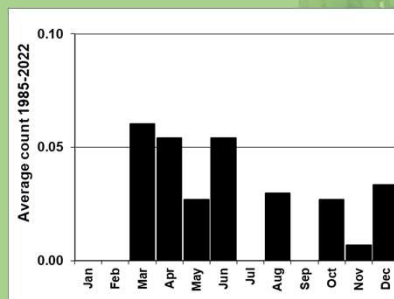
Until 2014 the lake had one pair and their cygnets. Then waterweed recovered, attracting a non-breeding flock. Both the waterweed and the swans returned to low levels after 2015.



45

## Nuthatch

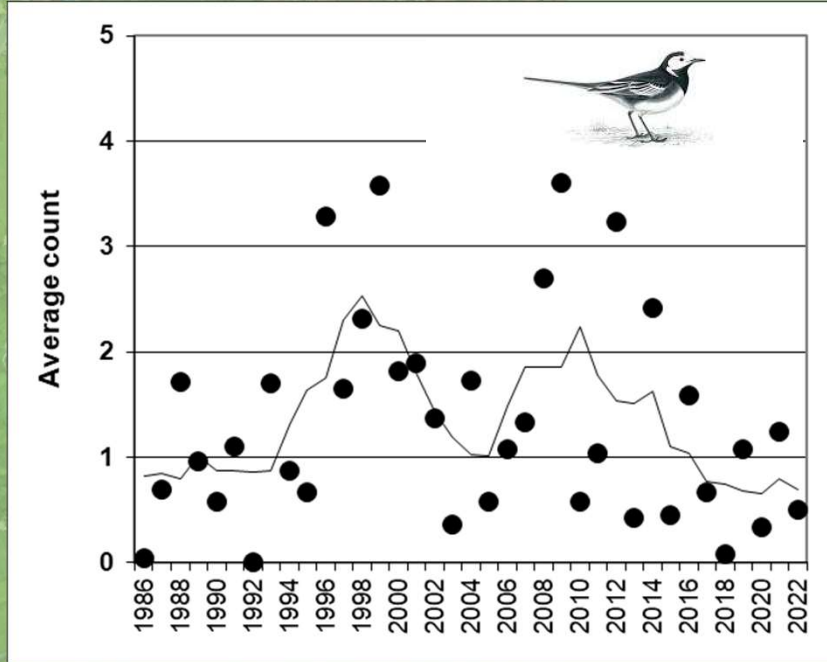
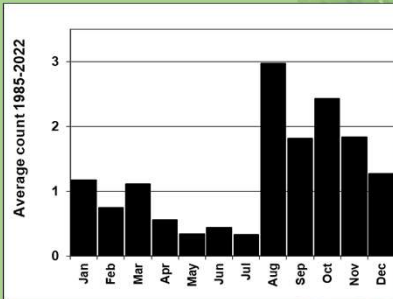
An occasional bird was detected, more often in Spring. Numbers were too small to detect any trend.



46

## Pied wagtail

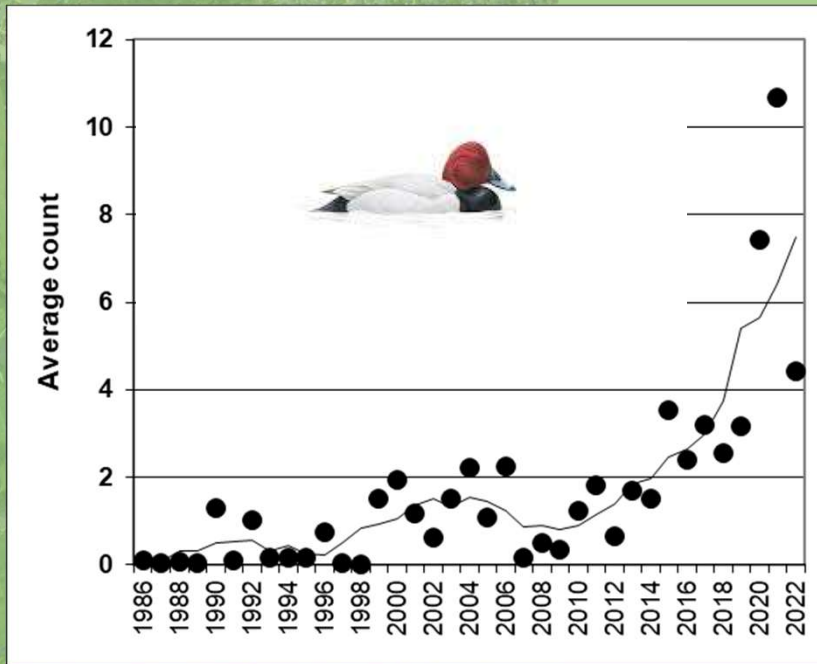
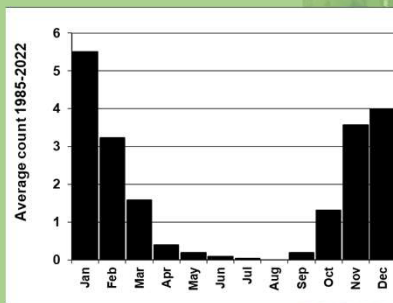
Although resident, most were seen in Autumn. Counts increased up to the 2000s before declining. There was little difference between the 1986 and 2022 averages.



47

## Pochard

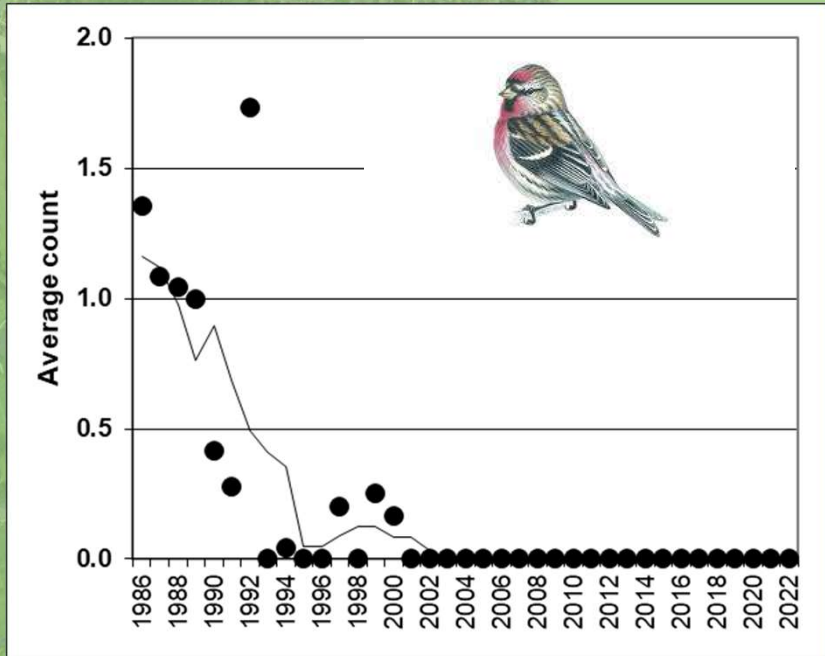
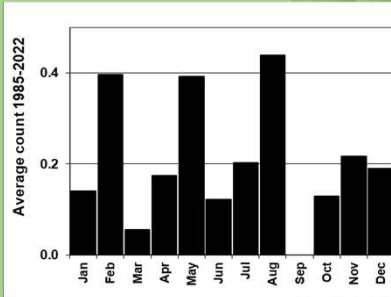
Seen predominantly in Autumn and Winter. From a very low start, counts increased gradually to 2014, and then faster.



48

# Redpoll

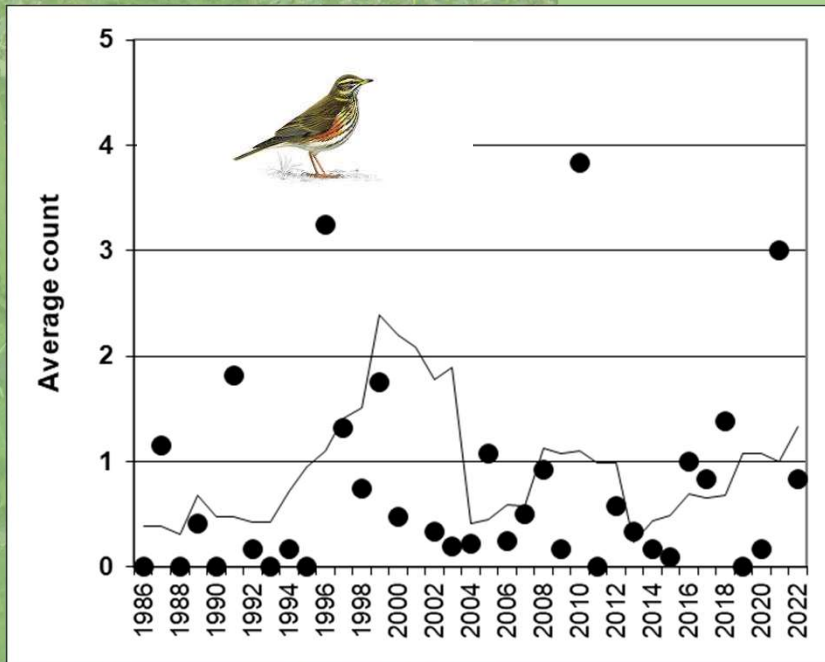
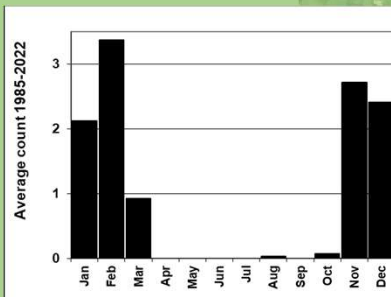
A scarce year-round resident in the 1980s, but counts declined to zero by 2021 and none have been detected since.



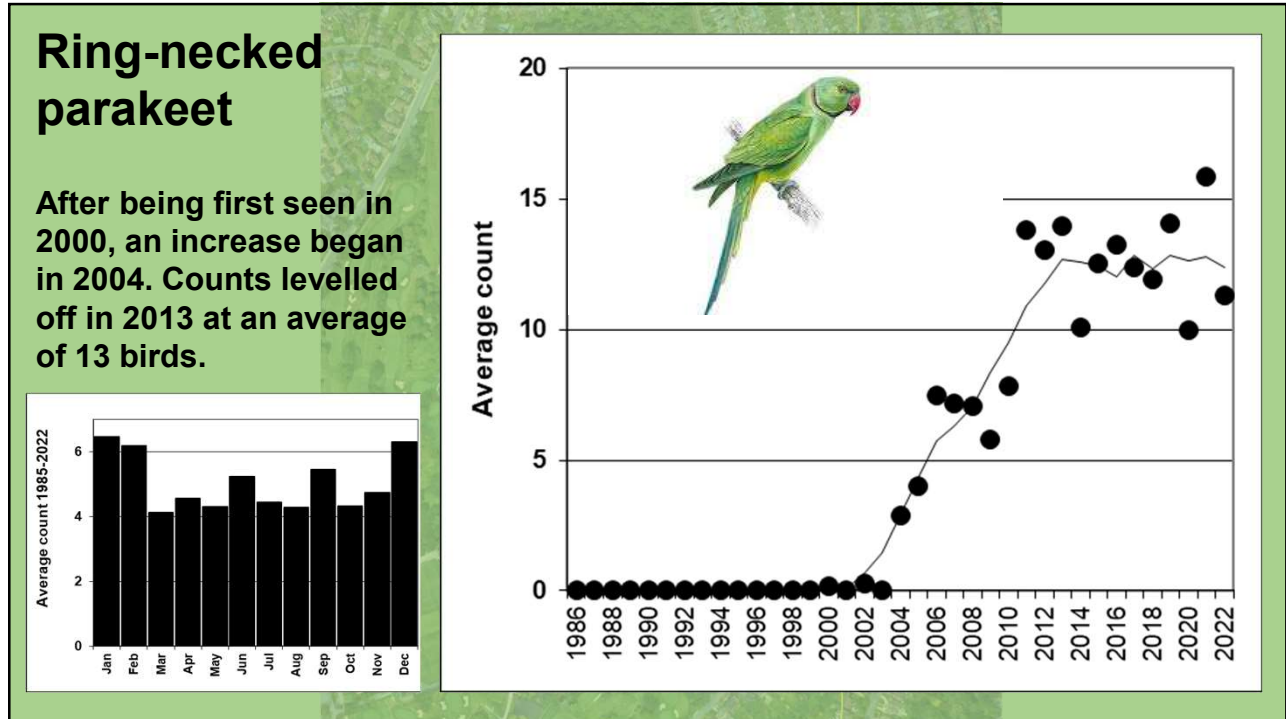
49

# Redwing

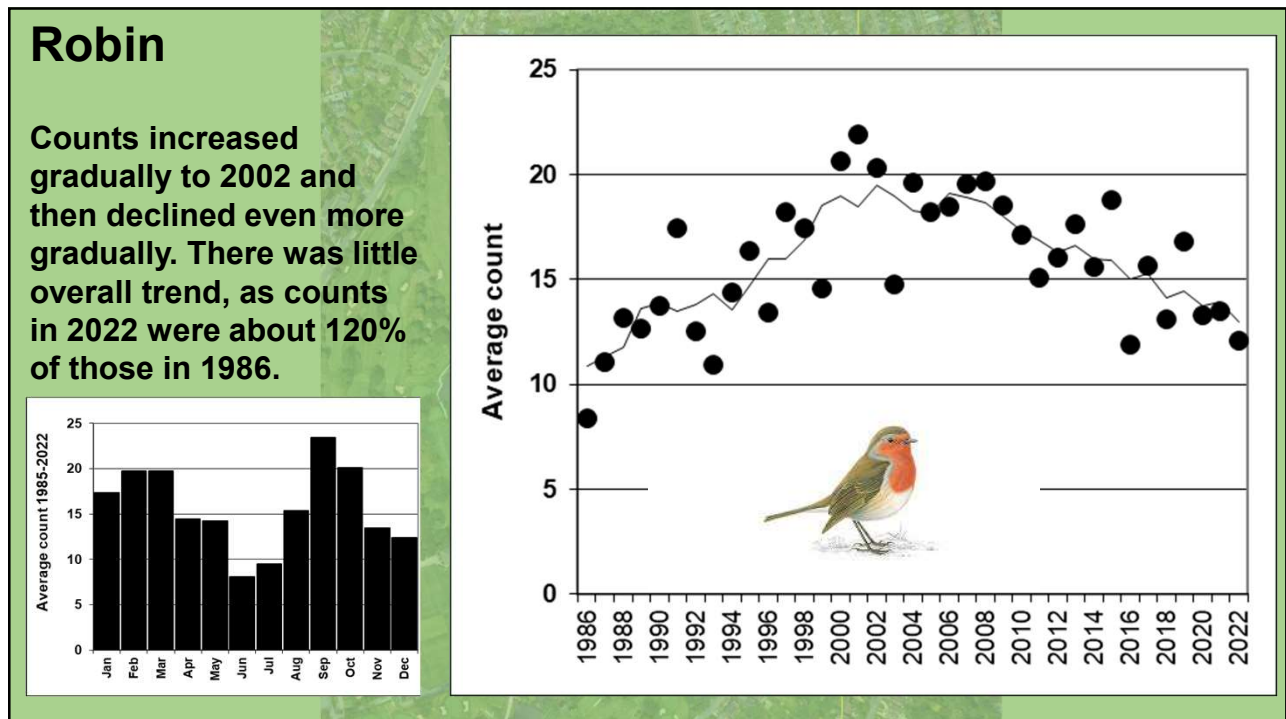
A northern thrush, wintering with us, seen in such small numbers that no trend could be detected.



50



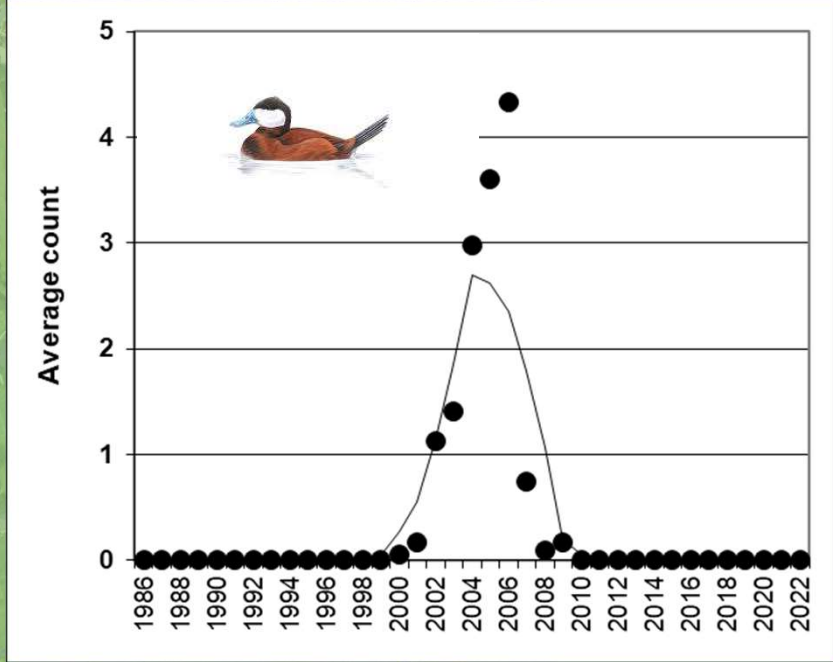
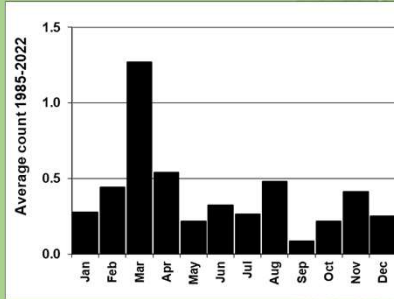
51



52

## Ruddy duck

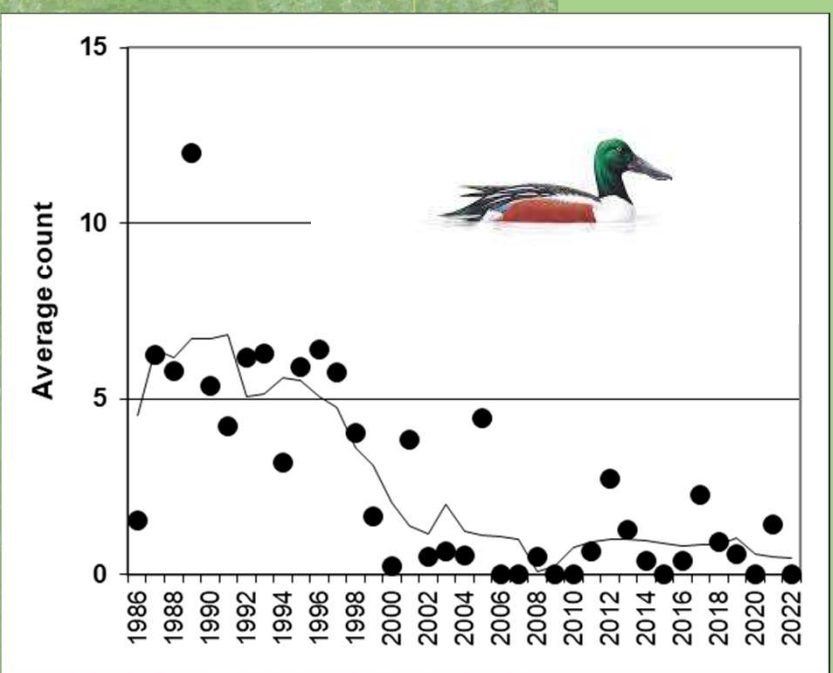
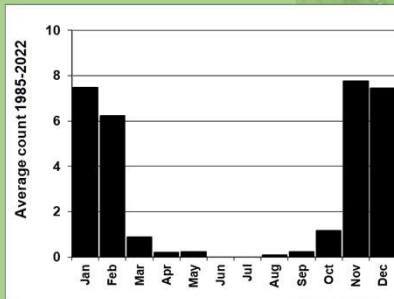
A feral species from north America, first seen in 2000. Counts increased greatly to 2006 and then declined even faster as the national eradication programme came into effect. None have been seen since 2009.



53

## Shoveler

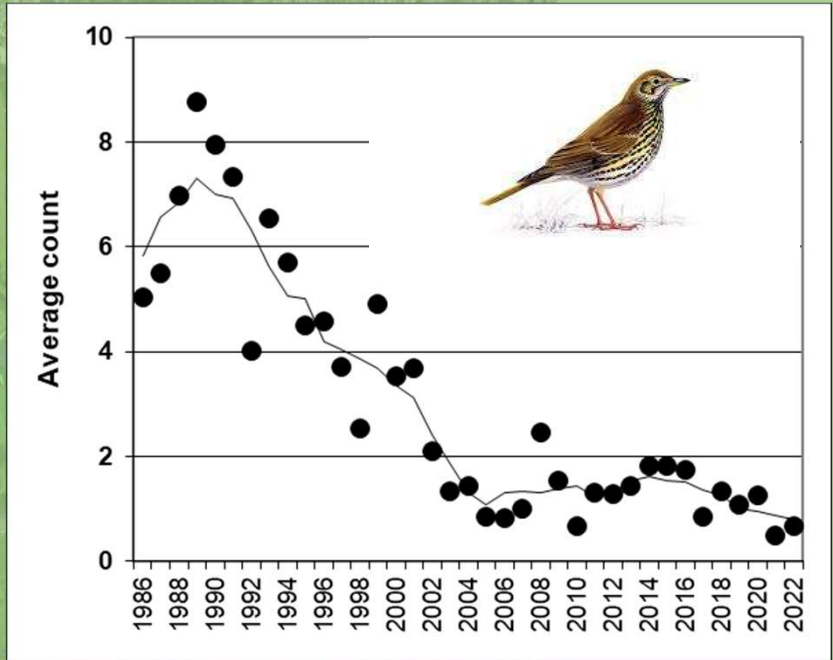
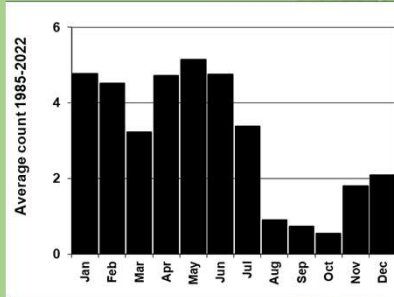
A winter visitor. Counts declined slowly after 1991 and faster after 1997, levelling off by 2006. The overall change was a reduction to 10% of the 1986 average by 2022.



54

## Song thrush

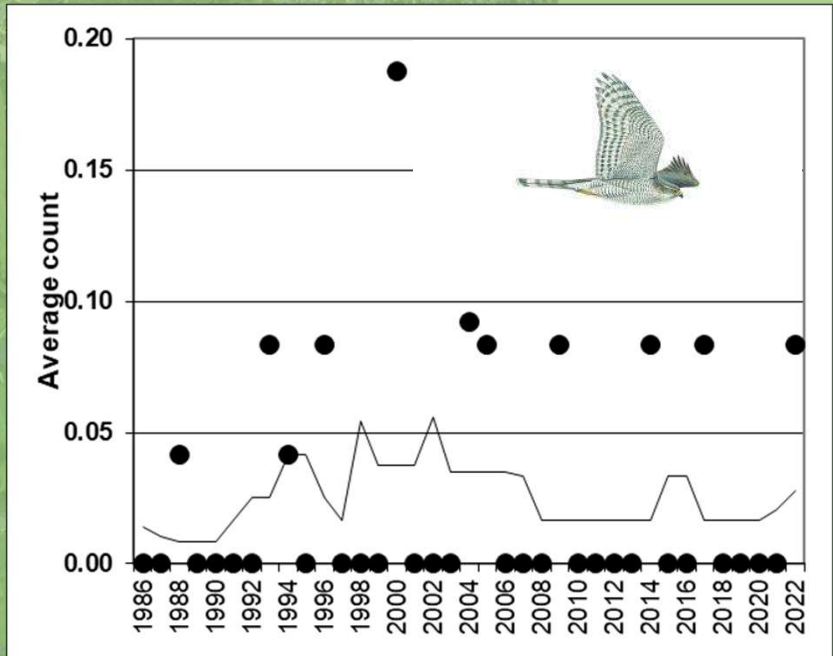
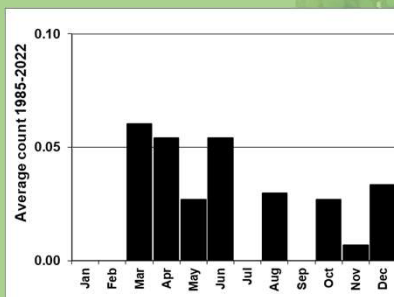
Easily detected when singing, but not found in big numbers. Counts declined throughout the 36 years. The overall change was a reduction to 14% of the 1986 average by 2022.



55

## Sparrowhawk

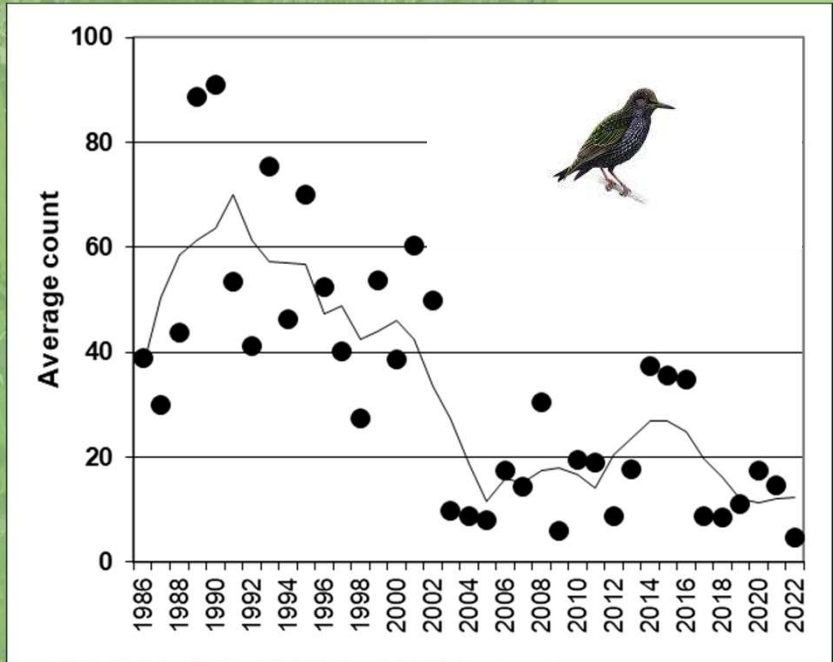
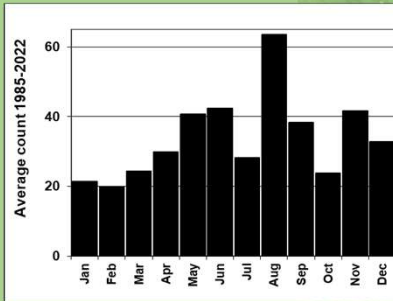
An occasional bird was seen, more often in Spring. Numbers were too small to detect any trend.



56

# Starling

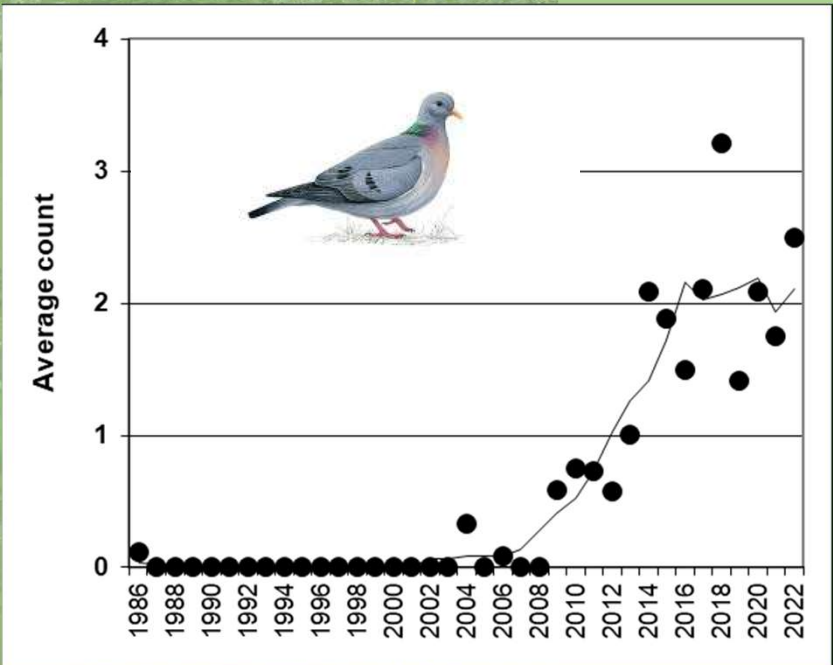
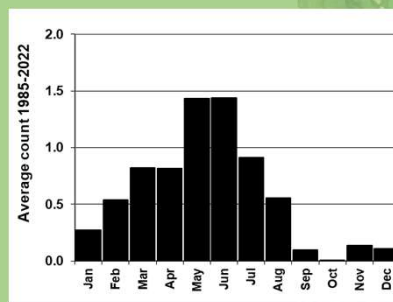
Counts declined throughout the 36 years. National data suggest a decline since the 1960s and a 55% decline since 1995. Our overall change was a reduction to a third of the 1986 average by 2022.



57

# Stock dove

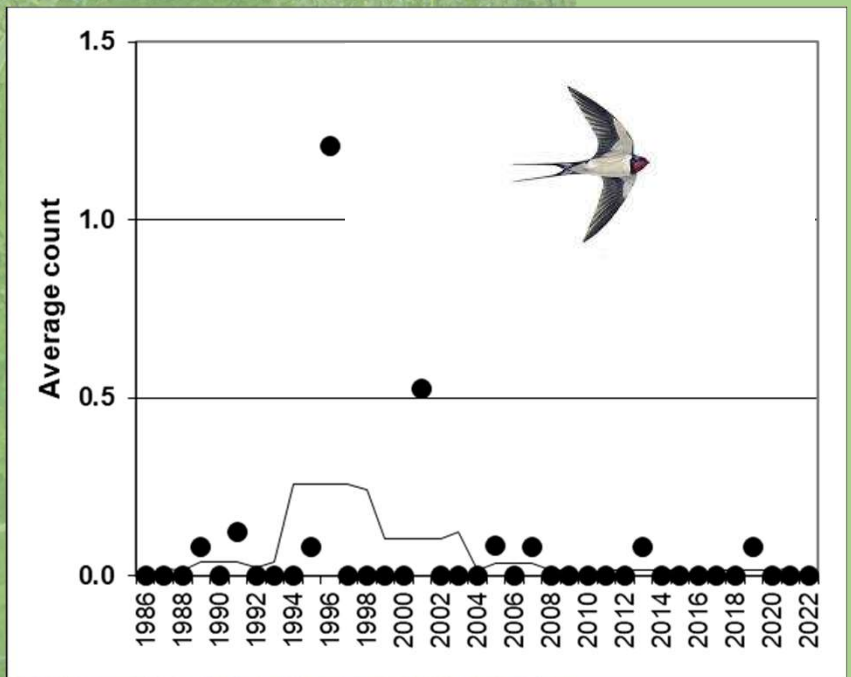
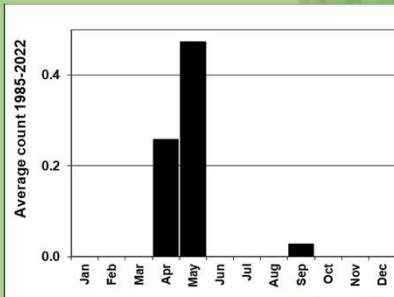
Only the occasional dove was found before 2004, after which counts increased rapidly up until 2016. Since then, counts have averaged two birds.



58

# Swallow

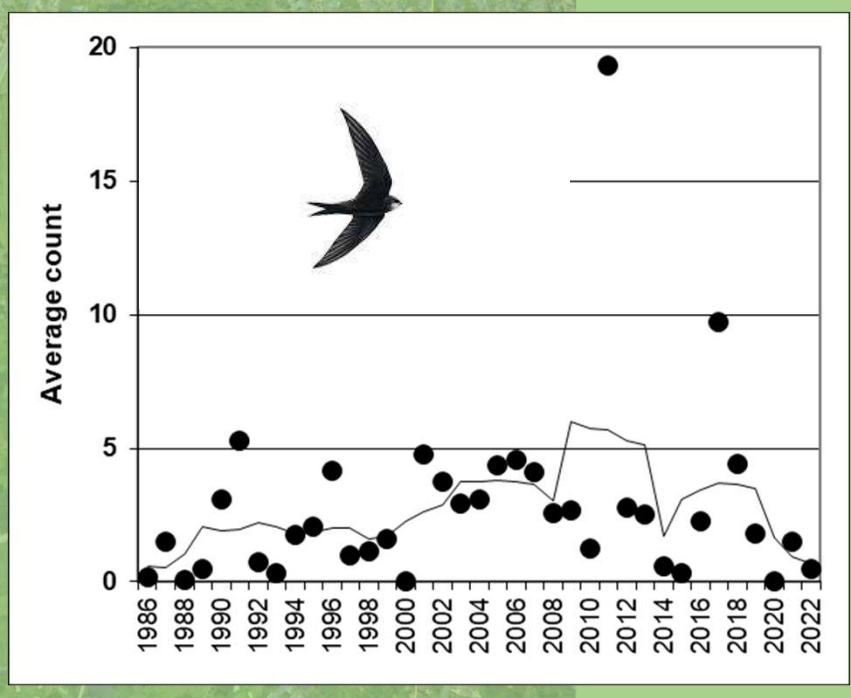
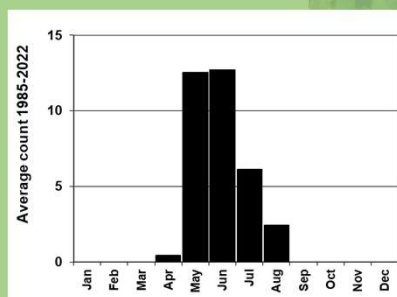
Seen mainly on passage in Spring migration. Detections were too sporadic for any trend to be detected.



59

# Swift

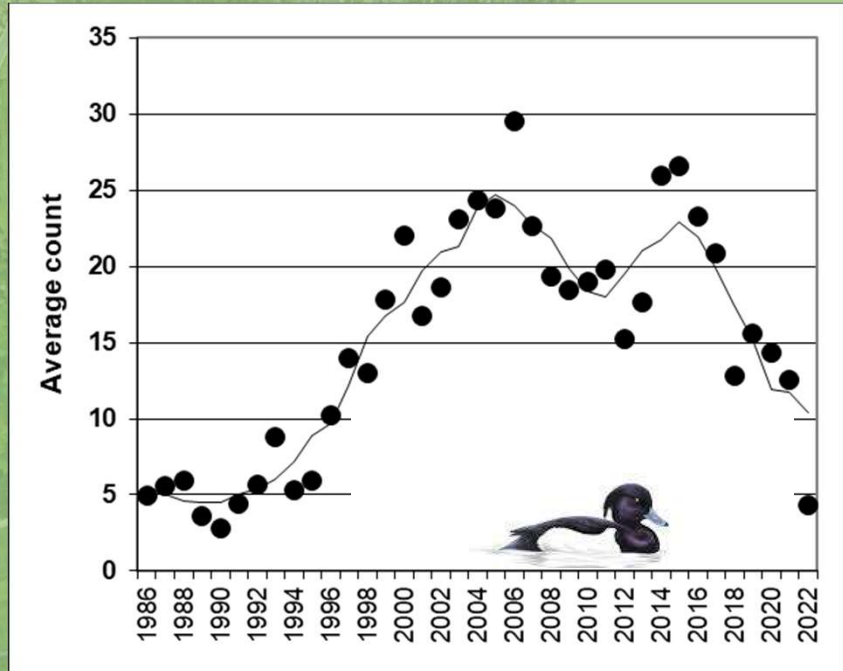
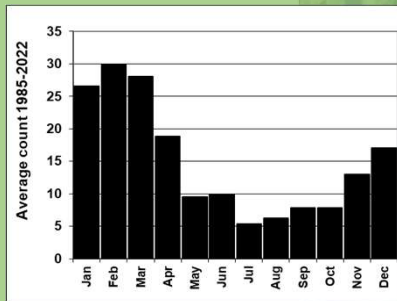
Swifts migrate south for winter. When breeding, they commute from distant nests for insects over the lake. There was a slow increase up until 2009, followed by a faster decrease. The net effect was little difference between average counts in 1986 and 2022.



60

## Tufted duck

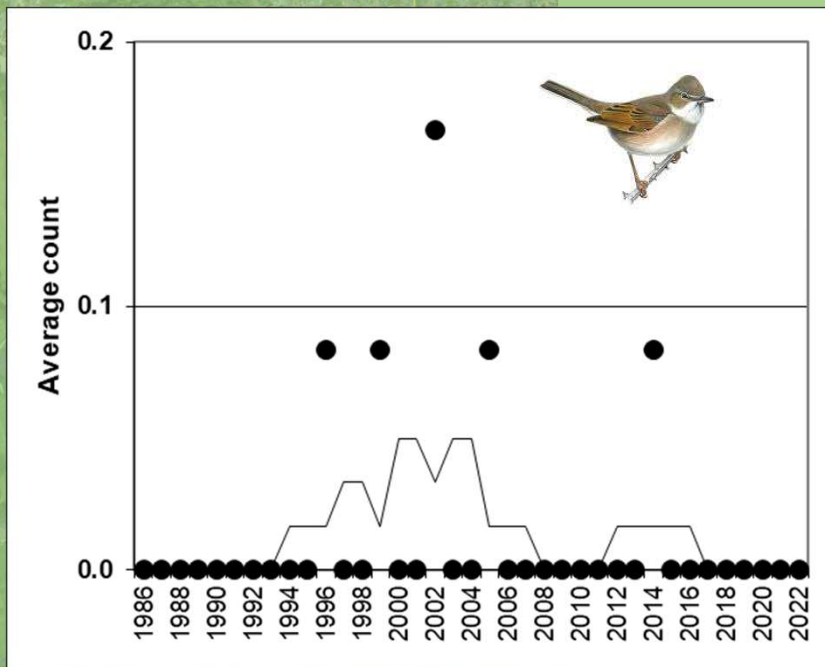
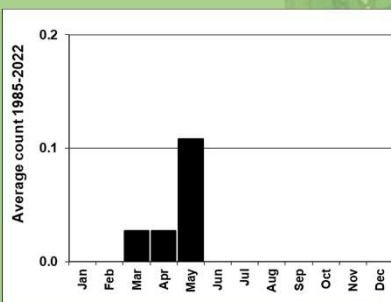
They came to the lake mainly in winter. Counts were low at first and then rose to a high between 2005 and 2015 before declining. The net effect was that 2022 counts averaged around twice those of 1986.



61

## Whitethroat

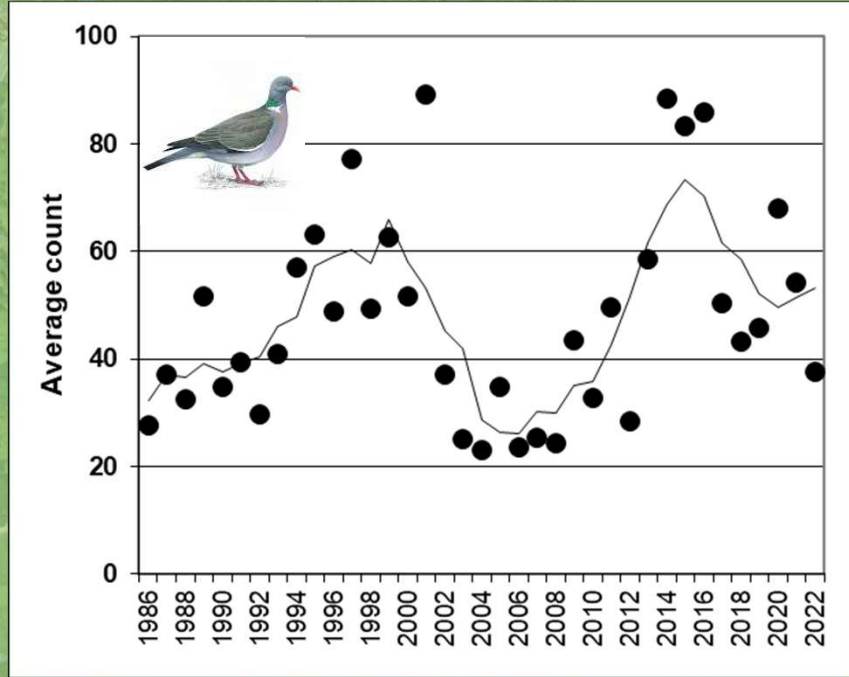
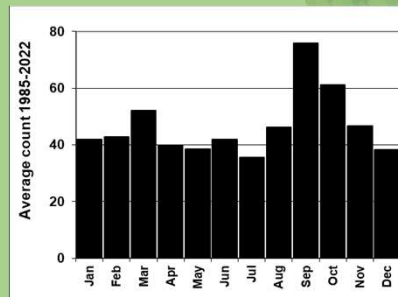
Seen on passage in Spring migration. Apparently more abundant between 1995 and 2015.



62

# Woodpigeon

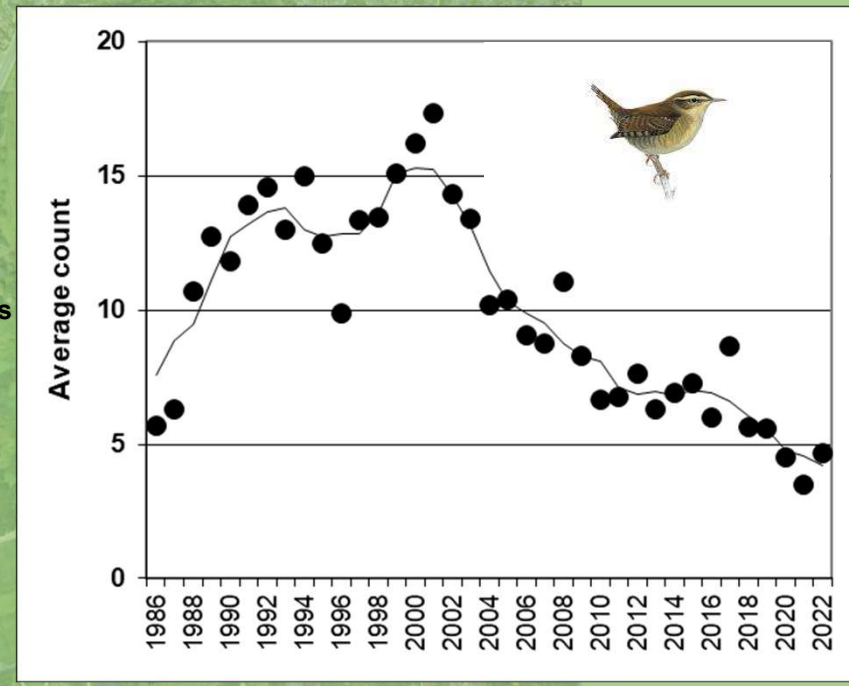
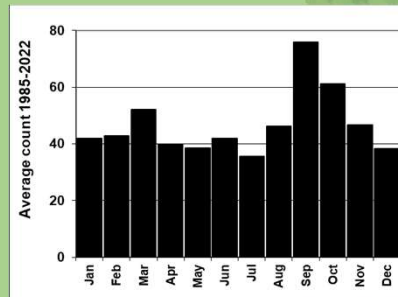
Large numbers were found throughout the year. There was no clear trend in counts, although those in 2022 averaged 160% of those in 1986.



63

# Wren

Supposed to be badly affected by cold winters, the low start in 1986-7 might reflect three cold winters, but drops in 1996 and 2004 followed unexceptional winters. Counts rose to 2001 and declined. The net effect was that 2022 counts averaged 55% of 1986 counts.



64

# Grey squirrel

Seen year-round.  
 Counts were variable,  
 but peaked around 1996  
 and 2018.

