

## REED BUNTING *EMBERIZA SCHOENICLUS* SPECIES ACTION PLAN

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The reed bunting is a UKBAP priority species and a UK SAP has been prepared<sup>37</sup>. Due to a local decline in numbers it is important for biodiversity conservation locally.

Relevant Legislation/Species Status	
priority species (P) or species of conservation concern (S)	P
EC Birds Directive 1979	-
Berne Convention (1982)	App. II
Bonn Convention (1979)	-
CITES (1975)	-
WCA 1981	Part I Section 1 Sch. 3
Birds of Conservation Concern List <sup>30</sup>	Red



© CCBC 2002

### 2. CURRENT STATUS

#### 2.1 UK and Wales

The reed bunting is commonly associated with wetland sites and farmland, but it has suffered a significant decline in national population and range within the last 23 years, with a decrease of 68% between 1975 and 1998<sup>6</sup>.

In addition, the reed bunting has recently been shown to be suffering reduced survival rates and breeding performance.

#### 2.2 Caerphilly County Borough

While the impact of the national trend is not known, the numbers of this species has certainly fallen within the county borough, with reed buntings noticeably absent or fewer now in what were regarded as traditional sites. **Map 2.11** shows the distribution of the reed bunting in the county borough.

#### 2.3 Links with Habitats

- **Wetlands** (rivers, reedbeds, canals and still waters)
- *Deciduous Woodland* (wet woodland - 'carr')
- Agricultural land, particularly wet land with more diverse habitat types

### 3. CURRENT FACTORS AFFECTING THE SPECIES

Threats to the reed bunting are not entirely understood, although survey work carried out by the BTO indicates a decline that coincides with a number of other bird species, many of which share a diet of cereal, grass and wildflower seeds, and also feed their young on insects. These may be affected by similar changes in agricultural practices such as:

- increased use of pesticides and fertilisers
- switch from spring sown to autumn sown crops and the consequent loss of winter stubble fields

- o more intensive use of grassland
- o a general reduction in habitat diversity on farmland due to the loss of mixed farming and increased specialisation
- o removal of hedgerows and field borders
- o drainage and improvement of wet farmland

#### 4. CURRENT ACTION

- 4.1 The reed bunting is likely to have benefited from initiatives designed to attract or maintain other wetland species, since it readily moves into newly created wetlands. Conservation organisations have devoted considerable resources towards the acquisition and management of reedbeds, wet grassland and other wetland areas.
- 4.2 The Gwent Ornithological Society and Glamorgan Bird Club gather information from its members on the distribution of reed bunting and other birds and both bodies publish annual bird reports<sup>17, 18, 19</sup>.
- 4.3 The BTO Breeding Bird Survey also contributes to the annual monitoring and recording of reed bunting populations<sup>6</sup>.

#### 5. OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

##### 5.1 UK Objectives and Targets

- 5.1.1 In the short term, halt or reverse the decline in numbers of the reed bunting by the year 2003 so that the Breeding Bird Survey Index is at least at 1996 levels.
- 5.1.2 In the long term, see a sustained recovery in numbers so that the BBS Index is at least 50% higher than 1996 levels, in both wetland and farmland habitats, by 2008.

##### 5.2 Caerphilly Objectives and Targets

- 5.2.1 Maintain present breeding numbers where strongholds of the species currently exist (Target: ongoing) and reverse the population decline in the other areas (Target: 2010).
- 5.2.2 Protect reed bunting habitats, particularly during the breeding season (Target: ongoing).

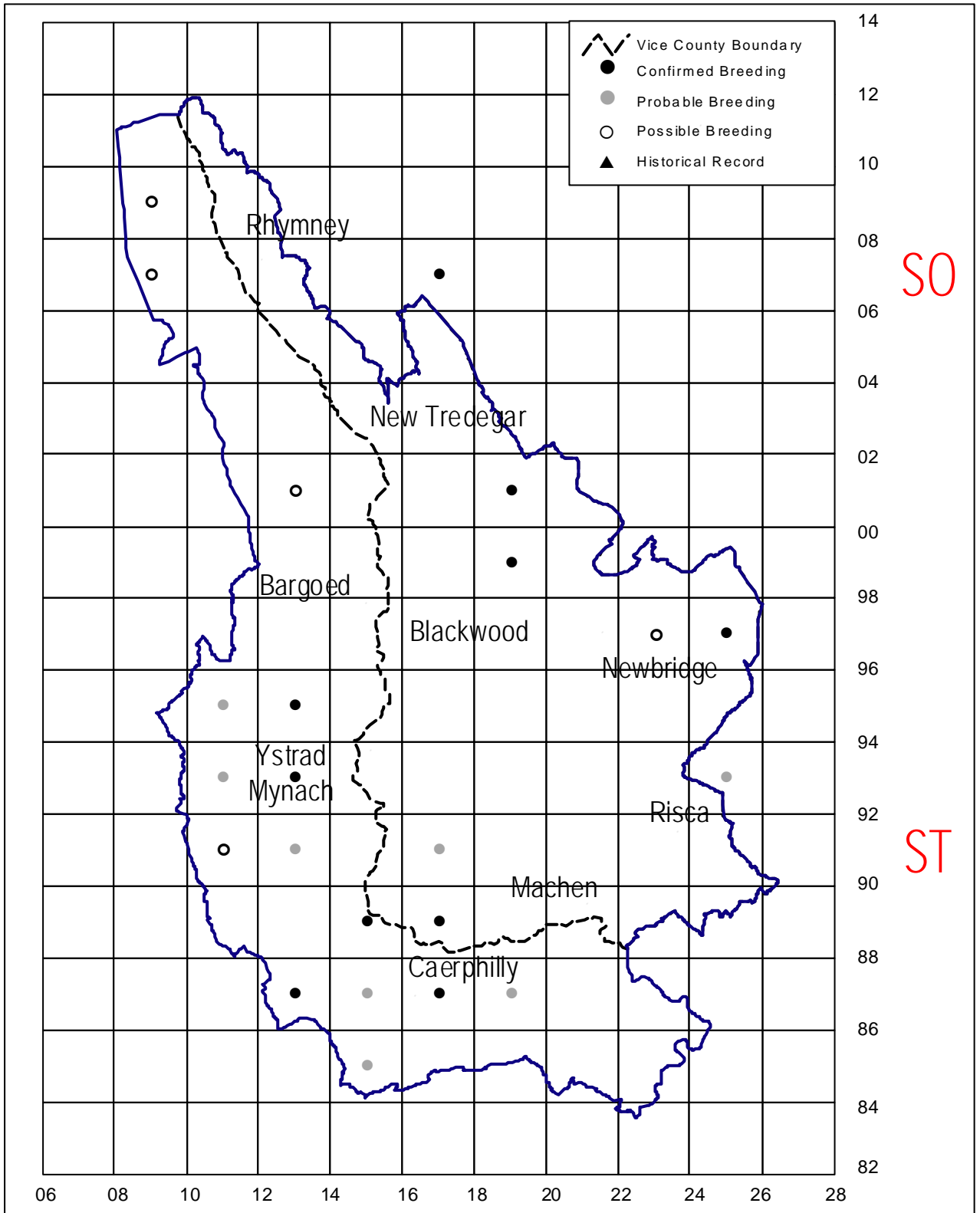
#### 6. ACTION AND KEY PARTNERS

Action	Key Partners		Year to be complete or in place by:								
	Lead	Partners	2003	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>6.1 Policy and Legislation</b>											
6.1.1 Promote farming practices that will benefit the reed bunting, and other farmland birds.	CCW	NFU FUW RSPB NAWAD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.1.2 Seek to designate sites of importance for the reed bunting and other wetland birds, as SIN, or LNR.	CCBC	CCW GWT GLWT									✓

Action	Key Partners		Year to be complete or in place by:								
	Lead	Partners	2003	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>6.2 Site Safeguard and Management</b>											
6.2.1 Ensure sympathetic management and practices on wetland habitats.	EA	WW/DC CCBC CCW	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.2.2 Adopt sympathetic management on all CCBC owned land with breeding reed bunting.	CCBC	CCW		✓							
<b>6.3 Species Management and Protection</b>											
6.3.1 Ensure breeding sites are protected from disturbance or deterioration in habitat quality.	CCBC	CCW landowners	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.3.2 Seek to enhance the local population through appropriate management of potential sites identified through survey 6.5.2. (e.g. reedbed creation).	CCBC	CCW GWT GLWT				✓				✓	
6.3.3 Continue to implement wildlife legislation.	Gwent Police	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>6.4 Advisory</b>											
6.4.1 Educate and inform the general public as to the relative importance of our reed bunting population.	CBP	RSPB Schools Youth Forum	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>6.5 Future Research and Monitoring</b>											
6.5.1 Survey and monitor reed bunting within the county borough area.	GBC GOS	BTO GWT GLWT CCBC	✘								
6.5.2 Survey to identify potential new sites for the reed bunting.	GBC GOS	BTO	✘								
<b>6.6 Communications and Publicity</b>											
6.6.1 Produce an educational leaflet to be available at Countryside Parks and other CCBC property that highlights the importance of the species.	CBP	-		✓							

✘ Survey years to be determined.

MAP 2.11 – REED BUNTING



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Caerphilly County Borough Council, LA09004L, 2001.

Atgynhychwyd o fapiad yr Arolwg Ordnans gyda chaniatad rheolwr Llyfrfa ei Mawrhydi hawlfraint y Goron. Mae atgynhychu heb awdurdod yn torri hawlfraint y Goron. Gall hyn arwain at erlyniad neu achos sfil. Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili, LA09004L, 2001.