

Ringling by the Wildfowl Trust, 1981

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The numbers of ducks ringed during 1981 (see table below) showed a marked increase on the previous year. At Abberton reservoir there was a welcome increase in the number of Teal caught, and also in Pochard and Tufted Duck. The latter two species were the main ones caught at Blunham where the catch was nearly doubled compared with 1980. Abbotsbury managed rather fewer Teal than last year, but bad weather interfered at critical periods. Borough Fen Decoy is now little used, though still maintained as an official Ancient Monument. The cage traps at nearby Deeping Lake contributed a useful number of Mallard.

The small numbers of duck caught at Eastpark were incidental to a catch of Whooper Swans. Nacton Decoy was in its last full year of operation by the Wildfowl Trust (the lease is being given up in 1982 and the future of the decoy is uncertain). Numbers of duck caught were slightly

down on 1980. At Slimbridge, the continuing renovation of the Decoy enabled nearly half the total to be caught in it, while the swan 'pipe' contributed all the rest including very good numbers of Pintail and Pochard. Very unusually a flight of Teal developed in the Decoy early in the year and over 200 were caught in just a few weeks. The swan trap at Welney caught small numbers of ducks.

There was no catch of Barnacle Geese *Branta leucopsis* on the Solway, the first year missed for some time. A five-man catching team visited Svalbard in July and rounded up 1,213 Barnacle Geese in just four catches, 535 being newly ringed.

Catches of swans were made at three Trust stations: 42 Bewick's *Cygnus columbianus* were ringed at Slimbridge; 57 Bewick's and 5 Whoopers *C. cygnus* at Welney; and 21 Whoopers at Eastpark. A total of 138 Mute Swans *C. olor* were ringed in Dorset as part of the study there.

Ducks ringed by the Wildfowl Trust, 1981.

	Abberton	Abbotsbury	Blunham	Borough Fen	Deeping Lake	Eastpark	Nacton	Slimbridge	Welney	Total
Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	13		1							14
Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	127	2	2			6	7	2		146
Gadwall <i>A. strepera</i>	41		58		8		1	141		249
Teal <i>A. crecca</i>	353	157	8	85	4		70	254		931
Mallard <i>A. platyrhynchos</i>	1,204	73	2	133	406	9	412	1,114	83	3,466
Pintail <i>A. acuta</i>	3	3	1				49	134		190
Garganey <i>A. querquedula</i>				1						1
Shoveler <i>A. clypeata</i>	5		16	2				35		58
Pochard <i>Aythya ferina</i>	190	6	569					213	36	1,015
Tufted Duck <i>A. fuligula</i>	559	2	376		14			26	1	978
Scaup <i>A. marina</i>	1									1
Ruddy Duck <i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	12									12
Totals	2,508	243	1,033	221	432	15	539	1,949	121	7,061