

Ringing by the Wildfowl Trust, 1980

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The table below shows the numbers of ducks ringed by the Wildfowl Trust in 1980 at its various trapping stations. The total is about 1,000 down on 1979 largely through lower catches of Mallard at Abberton Reservoir, and of Pochard and Tufted Duck at Blunham. The absence of any cold spells, such as occurred in early 1979, will also have caused lower catches of some species.

Abberton Reservoir caught smaller numbers of most species compared with 1979, while the number of Teal ringed was one of the lowest ever. Abbotsbury Decoy, in the other hand, improved on last year's catch of Teal and contributed nearly half the total. As already mentioned the traps at Blunham gravel pits were less successful though even 500 diving ducks is a substantial contribution. Borough Fen Decoy was only operated a few times during the year, with the main catching effort in the area concentrated on the traps at Deeping Lake where numbers of Mallard were down, but diving ducks up.

The season at Nacton Decoy showed a slight improvement on recent poor years though still well below the level of ten years ago. The decoy at Slimbridge was partially refurbished during the summer and useful numbers of Mallard and Gadwall were caught in it during the autumn, with reasonable totals of other species being trapped in the swan 'pipe'.

There was a single catch of 160 Barnacle Geese on the Solway in late January, of which 36 were retraps.

Ringing of wild swans received a boost with the completion of traps at Eastpark and Welney. A single catch in the former, in January, produced 50 Whooper and 2 Bewick's Swans, while there were two small catches at Welney totalling 5 Whoopers and 17 Bewick's.

The continuing study of Mute Swans at Abbotsbury, Dorset (see p. 35) resulted in 513 birds being ringed during the year. The majority of these were part of a record round-up of 831 moulting birds, made in early August.

Ducks ringed by the Wildfowl Trust, 1980.

	Abberton	Abbotsbury	Blunham	Borough Fen	Deeping Lake	Nacton	Slimbridge	Total
Shelduck	23				2	9		34
Wigeon	45	2	1		26	9		92
Gadwall	89		21		9	6	177	302
Teal	134	295	2	58	2	106	62	659
Mallard	1,072	22	6	54	390	449	739	2,763
Pintail	3	7				96	124	230
Garganey	1							1
Shoveler	24		13	3	2	3	31	76
Pochard	64		182		10		97	353
Tufted	325		302		104	1	53	785
Scaup					1		1	2
Totals	1,780	326	527	115	546	679	1,284	5,297

The Total column also includes the following ringed at Eastpark: 9 Wigeon and 2 Mallard.