

# Species and Habitat Action Plan Assessment Form

## Field 1: Action Plan details

<b>Species/Habitat Action Plan</b>	SPOTTED FLYCATCHER <i>Muscicapa striata</i>
<b>Lead Partner/Agency</b>	RSPB
<b>Steering Group/Other organisations</b>	Covered by the umbrella Lowland Farmland Bird Species Action Plan Steering Group which is responsible for 10 BAP species.  Current membership: BTO, CCW, DANI, DETR, DoE(NI), EHS, EN, FRCA, GCT, JNCC, MAFF, PSD, RSPB, SNH, SOAEFD, WOAD.
<b>Work programme in existence?</b>	Planned for February 2000

## Field 2: Objectives and targets overview

Number and text	UK	E	NI	S	W	Comments
4.1 <i>In the short term , halt or reverse the decline in numbers of the spotted flycatcher by the year 2003 so that the Breeding Bird Survey index is at least 1996 levels</i>	Y					Country targets to be considered by February 2000.
4.2 <i>In the long term see a sustained recovery in numbers so that the BBS index is at least 50% higher than 1996 levels and the range has recovered to 1968/72 levels by 2008.</i>	Y					

## Field 3: Proposed actions overview

Number and text	UK	E	NI	S	W	Action significant?	Action complete or ongoing?
5.1.1. <i>No action proposed until the outcome of research actions is available . However, it is expected that the species will benefit from the policy actions proposed for other declining farmland birds</i>						N	
5.3.1. <i>Consider the requirements of nesting spotted flycatchers when providing nest boxes in nature reserves, country parks and other protected areas</i>		Y	Y	Y	Y	N	
5.4.1 <i>Consider the needs of spotted flycatchers in general advice on woodland management. These should include provision of broadleaved stands with an open canopy and open spaces including rides and tree-fall gaps.</i>		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
5.5.1 <i>Analyse BTO Nest Record Cards from the 1960s to look for changes in productivity which might explain the recent population decline.</i>	Y					Y	
5.5.2 <i>Undertake a study into the summer ecology and habitat use of spotted flycatchers including an investigation of the relationship between diet/insect availability , the growth / survival of chicks and fledging success</i>	Y					Y	

5.5.3 Ensure appropriate monitoring of spotted flycatcher numbers through the BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey	Y					Y	
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**Field 4: Assessment of status.**

	Not appropriate	Recovered	Signs of recovery	No change	Declining	Lost	Insufficient information
UK					Y		
England							Y
Northern Ireland							Y
Scotland							Y
Wales							Y
<p>UK Common Birds Census (CBC) shows continuous decline since 1972.</p> <p>UK Breeding Birds Survey (BBS) shows statistically significant<sup>1</sup> decline of -23% 1994-98. Sample sizes too small for reliable country trends.</p> <p>1. 'statistically significant' means that the observed decline is unlikely to be an artefact (of say, sampling strategy) and exceeds pre-defined criteria for it to be accepted as a real change by the scientific community</p>							

**Field 5: Summary statement**

**Very little is known about the factors affecting spotted flycatcher either during the breeding season or on migration or the wintering grounds. The failure to detect a decline in productivity *per nesting attempt* from BTO Nest Record Data might suggest the causes for the decline lie on migration or wintering grounds, however the Nest Record Scheme is unable to measure the number of chicks fledged per pair per year which is the critical demographic parameter; this could decline because of a reduction in the number of breeding attempts per pair. . Whilst this species may benefit from some of the generic prescriptions included in some of the agri-environment schemes these are unlikely to be available on a wide enough scale to allow the plan targets to be met. It is essential that the research project on summer ecology (Action 5.2.2) is commissioned as soon as possible.**

**Field 6: Signing off**

Contact details	Lead Partner	Contact Point
<b>Name</b>	Dr A D Evans	P. Grice Dr S Whitehead
<b>Organisation</b>	RSPB	English Nature Countryside Council for Wales
<b>Assessment date (dd/mm/yy)</b>	23/09/99	23/09/99

Completed forms should be submitted to JNCC

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**Table A: Action Plan objectives and targets (Copiable table)**

Objective/target	4.1 <i>In the short term , halt or reverse the decline in numbers of the spotted flycatcher by the year 2003 so that the Breeding Bird Survey index is at least 1996 levels</i>				
Country	Not appropriate	Target achieved	Some progress	No progress	Insufficient information
<i>UK</i>				Y	
<i>England</i>					Y
<i>Northern Ireland</i>					Y
<i>Scotland</i>					Y
<i>Wales</i>					Y
<p>Country targets to be determined.</p> <p>UK Breeding Birds Survey (BBS) shows statistically significant<sup>1</sup> decline of -23% 1994-98. Sample sizes too small for reliable country trends.</p> <p>1. 'statistically significant' means that the observed decline is unlikely to be an artefact (of say, sampling strategy) and exceeds pre-defined criteria for it to be accepted as a real change by the scientific community</p>					

Objective/target	4.2 <i>In the long term see a sustained recovery in numbers so that the BBS index is at least 50% higher than 1996 levels and the range has recovered to 1968/72 levels by 2008.</i>				
Country	Not appropriate	Target achieved	Some progress	No progress	Insufficient information
<i>UK</i>				Y	
<i>England</i>					Y
<i>Northern Ireland</i>					Y
<i>Scotland</i>					Y
<i>Wales</i>					Y
<p>Too early to assess progress but the prospects for this species appear very bleak. See comments under 4.1</p>					

**Table B: Proposed actions (Copiable table)**

<b>Published action/organisation(s) responsible</b>	5.4.1 <i>‘Consider the needs of spotted flycatchers in general advice on woodland management. These should include encouraging the provision of broadleaved stands with an open canopy and open spaces, including rides and tree fall gaps.</i> CCW, EHS, EN, FA, SNH	
<b>Work plan/organisation(s) responsible</b>		
<b>Action/workplan undertaken?</b>	yes	
<b>Description of work taken and organisation responsible</b>	CCW Management advice given under Tir Gofal agri-environment scheme includes sympathetic management for woodland birds EHS no action undertaken EN The plight and conservation requirements of this species has been conveyed opportunistically to SSSI owner/occupiers by EN’s locally-based conservation staff.	
<b>Output and timescale</b>		<i>Action by</i>
<b>Constraints to action</b>	Lack of detailed knowledge	
<b>Action complete or ongoing?</b>	ongoing	
<b>Next steps</b>	Disseminate existing advice more widely. Use research results to improve advice.	
<b>Output and timescale</b>	Existing advice should be disseminated immediately. Turning the results of any research commissioned into improved advisory material is likely to take at least 5 years (2004)	<i>Action by</i>

<b>Published action/organisation(s) responsible</b>	5.5.1 <i>Analyse BTO Nest Record Cards from the 1960s to look for recent changes in productivity which might explain the population decline.</i> CCW, EHS, EN, JNCC, SNH	
<b>Work plan/organisation(s) responsible</b>		
<b>Action/workplan undertaken?</b>	yes	
<b>Description of work taken and organisation responsible</b>	JNCC funded analysis by BTO on behalf of Country Agencies. Completed in 1999; no evidence from BTO data sets for a change in productivity since the start of the population decline.	
<b>Output and timescale</b>	Manuscript has been prepared.	Action by JNCC, BTO
<b>Constraints to action</b>		
<b>Action complete or ongoing?</b>	ongoing	
<b>Next steps</b>	Disseminate results	
<b>Output and timescale</b>	next 12 months	Action by

<b>Published action/organisation(s) responsible</b>	5.5.2 <i>Undertake a study into the summer ecology and habitat use of the spotted flycatcher, including an investigation of the relationship between diet/insect availability, the growth/survival of chicks and fledging success.</i> CCW, EHS, EN, FC, JNCC, SNH, WOAD	
<b>Work plan/organisation(s) responsible</b>		
<b>Action/workplan undertaken?</b>	no	
<b>Description of work taken and organisation responsible</b>	EN No action, though some thought has been given as to how such a project might be carried out. (see below).	
<b>Output and timescale</b>		Action by
<b>Constraints to action</b>	A key constraint to any study on this species is the dispersed nature of the breeding population, meaning that study areas would need to be very large and so field work would be very difficult (and costly) to manage. An alternative approach might be to encourage BTO volunteers to collect certain information on the species supplemented by some professional field work	
<b>Action complete or ongoing?</b>	not started	
<b>Next steps</b>	Try and secure funding for such a study	
<b>Output and timescale</b>	As soon as possible	Action by

<b>Published action/organisation(s) responsible</b>	5.5.3. <i>Ensure appropriate monitoring of numbers through continuation of the BTO/ JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey.</i> CCW, EHS, EN, JNCC, SNH	
<b>Work plan/organisation(s) responsible</b>		
<b>Action/workplan undertaken?</b>		
<b>Description of work taken and organisation responsible</b>	JNCC: have continued to part fund BTO/ JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey (which covers spotted flycatcher) on behalf of the country agencies. RSPB: have also continued to part fund BBS	
<b>Output and timescale</b>	Noble <i>et al</i> (1999 ) The Breeding Bird Survey 1998. BTO/JNCC/RSPB - Annual report	Action by JNCC BTO RSPB
<b>Constraints to action</b>		
<b>Action complete or ongoing?</b>	ongoing	
<b>Next steps</b>	Maintain current programme. DETR: have commissioned BTO to survey birds in a subsample of the 1km squares covered as part of Countryside Survey 2000. Results will be related to detailed habitat information collected in CS2000 and also Land Cover Map 2000.	
<b>Output and timescale</b>	annual report as above. DETR/BTO CS2000 survey to be conducted in 2000 and report in 2001.	Action by JNCC BTO RSPB DETR