

West Midland Bird Club and Regional BTO Black Redstart Survey

Covering the region Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and the West Midlands
Commencement date January 1st 2016

Jim Winsper
West Midland Bird Club



This is a joint survey that has been organised through the combined efforts of the West Midland Bird Club and our regional network of the British Trust for Ornithology. The aim of this survey is to provide up-to-date information concerning the regional annual status of the Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*. The area to be covered in this survey is that which is known as: - The West Midland Bird Club region - covering the counties of Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and the Metropolitan County West Midlands.

The reasoning behind the undertaking of this survey is largely based on our belief that historical knowledge concerning the status of the Black Redstart in this region would benefit from being updated. The fact that there has been a lapse of almost 30 years since any meaningful study has taken place concerning the status of Black Redstart in this region is again, reason enough for this survey to be carried out.

This project is not intended as being a species study, it is a status survey. This will involve the exploration of our region in an effort to find Black Redstarts and thereby evaluate the number of birds found to their regional annual status. This overall value will cover the status categories of: breeding - wintering - and passage birds. Wintering birds may comprise of two categories, birds that over-winter (resident) and winter visitors.

Finding a Black Redstart at any time of year is a memorable record, establishing that the bird is breeding or wintering in our region is an exciting prospect. As of January 1st 2016 we can make this happen on a greater scale than might normally be the case. In order to fulfil our aim it is essential that we succeed in achieving adequate coverage of the entire region and to make this happen we need your support. I am extremely enthusiastic about this survey and fascinated by what might be revealed, even if we simply confirm our current understanding of the birds' regional status, it will be an understanding based on a firm foundation. Please do not be put off from taking part in this survey if you consider your knowledge of the Black Redstart to be limited. This is a survey that anyone interested in ornithology can become involved in, some straightforward instructions will provide the armoury for your involvement and there is plenty of support to assist in any way or at any time that you feel will be important to you. An information and guidelines paper, together with survey instructions, are available to all those taking part or, in downloadable format from the West Midland Bird Club

website - visit: www.westmidlandbirdclub.org.uk (navigate to the Research page via the menu).

Picture 01 shows an intermediate plumage male Black Redstart, Warwickshire – Photo copyright Dave Hutton

Contact Jim Winsper at: website@westmidlandbirdclub.org.uk or Steve Davies at: stevedaviesbtorep@hotmail.com for further information regarding any element of this survey or to submit your sightings and findings.

Image
01. Intermediate plumage male Black Redstart – Warwickshire – Photo Dave Hutton