



The BTO List of Heron Colonies: 2012 edition



Notes for Heronries Census Regional Organisers

We have sent you a printed extract from the *BTO List of Heron Colonies* that relates directly to your BTO region. One or more separate lists may also have been included of other local sites which do not yet have a 1-km grid reference (and so are not assigned to any BTO region). Please count in 2012 **any heronries that are or may be occupied, including all listed sites that are not recorded as extinct, together with any sites that are unlisted** (eg any heronries or egret colonies newly discovered during Atlas work).

Please **do not treat the list of colonies as a complete checklist for coverage**: rather, please try to ensure that new sites are discovered and included in the Heronries Census as quickly as possible. Don't forget that the Heronries Census includes egrets! Egret nest counts will be shared with the Rare Breeding Birds Panel.

We are happy to supply data extracts, on request, in any format, for cross-checking against local data sets.

KEY TO THE LIST OF COLONIES

Six-figure site code (1st column)

The first three digits of the site code are the number of the vice-county in which the colony is believed to lie. VC numbers run from 001 (West Cornwall with Scilly) to 112 (Shetland) and from 113 (South Kerry) to 152 (Londonderry). Please use the six-figure site codes, **with their leading zeros (eg 001032)**, on data you submit for 2012. For unlisted sites, please do not assign a site code yourself – just leave this blank.

Start and finish years (2nd & 3rd columns)

The start year is the first year for which there are data on file (a count or a code) for this site. The finish year is the most recent year for which there are data (including confirmation of "no birds"). Counts received so far for 2011 are included. Unexpected start and finish years could result from unsubmitted data, data submitted but not punched, or errors in coding or punching of site codes: please say if you can supply extra data or point us to likely errors. We are always keen to add or correct Heronries Census data, for any year.

Status code (4th column)

Letters A–F indicate the present status of each heronry, according to current *Heronries Census* data: see box for a key. No data for 2012 will be expected for sites marked E, unless they have been recolonised, but these **extinct colonies remain on the list – so you can help us correct errors** and fill in gaps such as missing grid references.

A	active, and reported, in 2011
B	believed active, but no 2011 data as yet
C	no recent information: since before 2010
D	deserted – <u>zero</u> Grey Heron 'apparently occupied nests' at most recent count
E	extinct – site no longer seems suitable
F	no Grey Heron data under this site code

County code (5th column)

These are the BTO's four-letter county codes, and should show precisely which side of a major administrative boundary each colony lies. Please help us resolve any remaining errors or uncertainty.

BTO region (6th column)

BTO regions, although loosely county-based, are defined by OS national grid squares: each Regional Rep has a list of the squares that he or she covers. The BTO region code shown here is the standard four-letter code for the region, drawn automatically (with a few exceptions) from the 1-km grid reference on file. Where colonies have no 1-km square reference (2 letters, 4 figures), the region code is also lacking. The list we have sent you is for your **BTO region** and may not correspond exactly to colonies in your county – so please liaise as needed with neighbouring ROs to ensure that colonies falling in boundary zones are covered efficiently. Let me know if you want a heronry to be transferred to another BTO region.

Grid reference and site name (7th & 8th columns)

Please help if you can by filling in blanks, resolving uncertainties or correcting mistakes in these columns. Each British site name should ideally include a place name found on the Landranger OS map (and spelt as on the map and in the OS gazetteer). Grid references on this list are representative ones for each colony. Many colonies shift their position slightly over time, and an annual central grid reference is also included within the *Heronries Census* database. As far as possible, **grid references given for 2012 should be accurate for this year**, and not simply copied from the list of colonies or from previous submissions.

Thank you very much for your help with this survey!

John Marchant, 13 January 2012