

## SPECIES ACTION PLAN : Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*)

<p><b>Associated Species Action Plans</b></p> <p>Bats</p> <p>Brown hare</p> <p>Grey partridge</p> <p>Skylark</p> <p>Tree sparrow</p>	<p><b>1. Current Status</b></p> <p>This species has shown a 65% decline over 20 years nationally. This figures has been taken from the Common Bird Census (CBC) and Constant Effort Site records both of which are long term studies by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO).</p> <p>A decline of 61% in the catches of juveniles along with ringing recoveries that show first year survival rate for song thrushes dropping from 48% before the decline began to an average of 40% now. Mathematically adjusted this figure is big enough to account for the population decline but the reason for the reduction in first year survival rate is not yet known and is particularly odd in light of the fact that clutch size, hatching success and fledgling success show no real change. In fact hatching and fledgling success has shown a slight increase and ringing shows adult survival rate shows no marked reduction.</p>
<p><b>Associated Habitat Action Plans</b></p> <p>Arable fields</p> <p>Arable field margins &amp; beetle banks</p> <p>Gardens, allotments, parks and open spaces</p> <p>Grassland (all types)</p> <p>Lowland heathland</p> <p>Woodland</p>	<p><b>2. Current factors affecting species</b></p> <p>Severe winters 1981/82 1986/87 1990/91?</p> <p>Changes in Rural Landscape such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in hedgerows.</li> <li>• Larger fields.</li> <li>• Reduction in field margins.</li> <li>• Reduction in grassland.</li> <li>• Spring sowing reduced.</li> <li>• Autumn sowing increased.</li> <li>• Stubble fields reduced (winter).</li> <li>• Drainage.</li> <li>• Increased use of pesticides &amp; molluscicide in 1970s.</li> </ul> <p>Predation, including cat kills.</p>

### 3. Current Action

#### 3.1 Legal status

The song thrush does not receive special protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It does however receive general protection under Sections 1-8 of the Act.



### 3.2 Management, research and guidance

There should be continuing research into population trends and possible causes of decline.

#### 4. Action Plan objectives and targets

Objective	Target
1. Establish population trends and conservation status.	2004
2. Establish reasons for apparent local decline in song thrush populations.	2004
3. Instigate measures to halt the decline.	2004
4. Increase the breeding population by 20%.	2011
5. Raise public awareness of the species.	2004

## 5. Proposed action with partners to meet objectives

ACTION	POTENTIAL DELIVERERS		YEAR							Meets objective number
	Lead	Partner	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2011	
<b>5.1 Policy and legislation</b>										
Lobby central government to make the case for amendments to legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To allow experimental captive breeding;</li> <li>Affecting use/ sale of molluscides;</li> <li>To include song thrush on Schedule 1 of the W&amp;CA 1981.</li> </ul>	WT	LCG's RSPB		•	•	•				1, 3
Encourage the adoption of policy discouraging the use of molluscides on land controlled by local authorities e.g. parks, allotments.	LA's	WT			•					3
<b>5.2 Site / species management and protection</b>										
Draw up plans for managing good population sites and look at management plans for low population site.	LA's	WT, EN, LCG's			•	•				3, 4
Investigate the possibility of small stock captive breeding, possibly using disabled birds.	RSPB	PDSA, BBC			•	•				3, 4
<b>5.3 Advisory</b>										
Target allotment holders and gardeners for campaign to discourage use of slug pellets.	WT, LA's	WMBC RSPB			•	•				3, 5

ACTION	POTENTIAL DELIVERERS		YEAR							Meets objective number
	Lead	Partner	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2011	
Inform public of plight of species and use of pesticides, slug pellets etc.	WT	WMBC RSPB, LA's			•	•				5
<b>5.4 Future research and monitoring</b>										
Monitor sites to assess population and survey good and bad sites to try and correlate population with habitat.	WT	WMB RSPB, LCG's ER			•	•		•	•	1, 2
Continue to promote Common Bird Census, Constant Effort Sites, Garden Bird Surveys, etc. to amass more data.	BTO	WMBC RSPB, LCG's	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	1, 2
Organise survey work to try and assess local population and population hotspots. (i.e. areas with high population).	LA's Ranger Services	NN	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	1
<b>5.5 Communications and publicity</b>				•	•	•				
Publicity campaign to allotment, local authority parks re molluscicides and habitat maintenance needs of the song thrush.	WT	WMBC RSPB, LA's			•	•				5
Continue participation in public surveys and produce publicity material.	WT	NN, BTO, RSPB			•	•				5
<b>5.6 Links to other Action Plans</b>										
Tree Sparrow, Skylark and other declining 'common' bird species										

## **6. Co-ordination and Review**

This Biodiversity Action Plan will be implemented over 10 years with a first review after 5 years. A group will be set up to co-ordinate implementation and to report to the Biodiversity Action Plan Steering Group. This group will meet at a minimum on a yearly basis.

Review will be carried out in conjunction with related Habitat and Species Action Plans as appropriate and will consist of measuring achievement of targets. The group will, with the support of the Steering Group, develop and implement appropriate monitoring methods, which will inform the review process.

The Action Plan will be revised and updated in the light of review results and any relevant changes in circumstances and / or additional information which becomes available during the review period.

In line with national guidance, the Steering Group will report to the UK Biodiversity Steering Group.