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The introduction and naturalisation of birds

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Introduced and naturalised wildfowl in Britain

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The popularity of keeping wildfowl is long established in Britain and has increased greatly in the present century. Escapes from collections have resulted in the establishment of populations of a considerable variety of wildfowl. During the summer of 1991, The WWT organised a national survey of introduced geese, with the principal aim of obtaining accurate estimates for the greylag goose *Anser anser* and Canada goose *Branta canadensis* (Delany 1993, 1995). 19,501 greylag geese were found at 447 sites in Britain and 63,581 Canada geese were counted at 1,210 sites. The number of Canada geese counted was 231% higher than that counted in the previous survey in 1976 (Ogilvie 1977).

Thirteen other species of goose were found to occur in the wild, as well as a variety of domesticated geese. Some, such as Egyptian goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus* and barnacle goose *Branta leucopsis* had relatively large naturalised populations, whilst only a few individuals of others such as Ross's goose *Anser rossii* and red-breasted goose *Branta ruficollis* were found. 18 different types of hybrid geese were found, the most numerous being Canada goose/greylag goose. At least six non-native duck species have also established apparently viable populations in the wild and many other duck species and even black swans are found in small numbers (J. Marchant, this volume).

Delany, S.N. 1993. Introduced and escaped geese in Britain in summer 1992. *British Birds*, 86: 591-599.

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