Rare Breeding Birds Panel collection of breeding bird records

Historical summary data for Red Necked Grebe

For other birds in this section of historical summary data visit: http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-5601

For further information on the following visit their websites

Rare Breeding Bird Panel - http://www.rbbp.org.uk/

Joint Nature Conservation Committee – www.jncc.gov.uk


British Trust for Ornithology - http://www.bto.org.uk/
**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

Two records of single adults in summer.

**Lanark** Adult displaying on 25th May at same pool as one seen on 16th June 1974.

**Perth** One adult summered.

This species has never been recorded even attempting to nest in Britain, but it breeds commonly on the Continent north to central Finland and west to Denmark. The above records are of special interest in the light of the recent colonisation of, particularly, Scotland by other Fenno-Scandian birds.

---

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

Four sites: four summering.

**Lanark** One site: single male seen regularly during second half of May and on 6th and 15th June.

**County A** Three sites, but no evidence of breeding: (1) one seen on 18 dates during May to October; (2) one seen on five dates during July to October; (3) one seen on three dates during June to August.

This is the third successive year in which individuals have summered in the UK, the annual totals rising from one in 1974 to two in 1975 and, now, four in 1976. Developments are awaited with keen interest.

---

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

One site: one possibly summered.

**Gwynedd** One site: single adult in summer plumage 10th to 18th May and again 20th August to 18th September. In 1976, similar adult seen on nearby lake on 13th August.

This is the fourth successive year in which this species has featured—albeit marginally—in these reports.

1977 **Perth** One site: adult on 11th April and 14th August, presumably summered.

This 1977 record is the second relating to possible summering in that year (cf. Gwynedd, *Brit. Birds* 72: 306).
Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

1978

None reported in 1978.

1979

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

One site: single summered.

County A

One site: single adult from at least 2nd May to 27th July.

A return to the 1975-77 situation, after no summer records in 1978. Breeding has never been suspected, but eventual colonisation seems distinctly possible.

1980

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Three sites: 0-3 pairs breeding; first ever nest built in Britain.

County A

One site: one from 26th May to 25th June.

County B

One site: pair built nest, but did not lay eggs; first seen 14th June, built raft on 12th June, when displaced and copulated (on raft), display continued until 20th, when new nest found, adult covered nest when leaving, still sitting on 3rd July and covering nest when leaving, but nest still empty; pair left area before mid July; presumably young pair making first breeding attempts.

Colonisation moved one step nearer with a pair building a nest at one of two Scottish sites.

1981

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Two sites, but probably only one individual summering.

County B

Two sites, but probably one bird: one from 26th May to at least 10th June.

1977 Perthshire

Mentioned only as an adult seen on 17th June as well as 1st, 4th, and 18th August.

A disappointing reverse from the events of 1975-76, which seemed to herald colonisation, with a pair nest-building and copulating in 1980.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sites</th>
<th>Pairs</th>
<th>Individuals in summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

1982

Two sites, involving two individuals.

**Essex** One site: one individual summered.

**County B** One site: adult, in breeding plumage, 12th April to 8th June.

1981 **Northamptonshire** One site: adult in breeding plumage and displaying, 4th May to 2nd May.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sites</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pairs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals in summer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presence in breeding plumage well into the summer suggests that breeding may yet occur in Britain.

1983

Two sites, involving three individuals.

**England, SE** One site: one from 20th February to 12th November.

**Scotland, S** One site: two, sometimes one, in breeding plumage and displaying on several dates between 17th April and 24th June.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sites</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pairs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals in summer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pair in Scotland may have left as a result of disturbance to the habitat.

1984

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

One locality: one individual.

**Scotland, S** One locality: adult in breeding plumage from 3rd May to 6th June. This species has frequented site in question for several years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. individuals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. pairs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observations in recent years have suggested a real possibility of the species breeding at this site.

1985

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

One locality: one, possibly two, pairs.

**Scotland, S** One locality: present in breeding plumage from 23rd May to 27th July; pair, with much display, carrying of nest material, and attempted mating; third on nine dates, thought to be a female, and one report, on 3rd July, of four.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. individuals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. pairs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The observations summarised above encourage the belief that breeding will eventually be attempted at this site.
Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Five localities: one pair and at least three other individuals.

England, E Two localities: (1) one in full breeding plumage from 17th April to 29th May; (2) thought to be the same individual as at locality 1 from 6th June to 20th August.

Wales One locality: one in full breeding plumage from 14th April to 20th June.

Scotland, S Two localities: (1) single on 1st May; (2) one from 21st April to 9th July, pair from 13th May to 20th June: thought to have chosen nest site, but breeding abandoned because of heavy rain and disturbance by small boats.

No. localities 5 2 0 1 3 3 2 2 1 1 5
No. individuals 5 2 0 1 4 2 2 3 1 4 5
No. pairs 0 0 0 0 1 0 1 0 1 1 1

The pair in Scotland was at the site occupied in 1985, but breeding success remains elusive.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Ten localities: one pair and at least seven other individuals.

England, S & E Five localities: (1) adult present all summer, with two in August, accompanied by a very young juvenile, thought probable that they could have bred in the area; (2) one on adjacent waters on 22nd March, 9th April, from 6th June to 19th August and during 7th–27th September; (3) one from 7th June to 30th August; (4) one from 29th March to 5th May, and from 19th July to 4th October; (5) one from 15th to 17th April.

England, N Two localities: (1) one on 25th May, very vocal; (2) one on nearby water on 30th May, possibly the same individual.

Scotland Three localities: (1) one on 22nd June; (2) one, presumed to be the same individual, on 6th July; (3) one from 23rd April to 27th May, at site where pair thought to have attempted nesting in 1986.

No. localities 2 0 1 3 3 2 2 1 1 5 10
No. individuals 2 0 1 4 2 2 3 1 4 5 9
No. pairs 0 0 0 1 0 0 1 0 1 1 1

Although the presence of a 'very young' juvenile in August might not be thought to constitute absolute proof of breeding in the UK, there can be little doubt that there is an increasing summer presence of this lovely grebe.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Eight localities: two pairs attempted breeding.

England, SE One locality: one present from 7th to 28th July, and presumably the same individual on 6th August.

England, E Four localities: (1) pair nested and laid one egg, which was taken by a Magpie *Pica pica*; a second clutch of three eggs was laid, but failed to hatch although incubated for more than the full term; (2) pair in full breeding plumage on 14th May only, displaying; (3) one in full breeding plumage present from 19th to 29th June; (4) pair present from 15th July to 11th September, with much courtship and, on 9th August, copulation.

England, Central One locality: one in breeding plumage on 4th April and 1st May, 'and probably on most dates in between'.

Scotland, S Two localities: (1) pair laid two eggs by 20th June, but evidence suggests that the nest was preyed on by mink *Mustela lutreola/canis; (2) adult, in breeding plumage, from 3rd April to 10th June.

No. localities 0 1 3 3 2 2 1 1 5 10 8
No. individuals 0 1 4 2 2 3 1 4 5 9 12
No. pairs 0 0 1 0 0 1 0 1 1 1 3

Although we still lack proof that this species has bred successfully in Britain or Ireland, the steady increase in numbers during the years 1984–88 encourages one to believe that we shall not have much longer to wait.
Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Six localities in six counties: two pairs built nests.

**England, E** Three localities: (1) male, at site where breeding attempted in 1988, built nest, but no female joined him; (2) one from 11th March to 29th August, with two present on 2nd April, and nest-building activity noted on 13th May; (3) pair from 22nd May to 7th June, with courtship behaviour, one remaining until 26th June.

**England, N** One locality: probably same individual, in breeding plumage, at adjacent localities on 24th and 25th April.

**Scotland** Two localities: (1) pair from 14th May to at least 14th July, built two platforms and nest, but presumably did not lay; (2) adult at regular site from 29th March to 20th April.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. localities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. individuals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. pairs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summer occurrences continue to be widespread. Although events in 1989 were not quite so encouraging as those in 1988 (Brit. Birds 84: 188-191; Scot. Birds 15: 133), there must still be a good prospect that the species will soon breed successfully in Britain.

**1990**

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Five localities in six counties: two pairs built nests.

**England, E** One locality: male from 29th March to 21st August, joined by female on 10th May; they nested, but she died on 28th May.

**England, Central** One locality: one in breeding plumage on 1st April.

**Wales** One locality: one on 20th July.

**Scotland, S** Two localities: (1) pair made three nesting attempts, but failed; (2) adult on 11th April.

Over the last 15 years, this beautiful grebe has increasingly summered in Western Europe and has bred in France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Its attempts to nest in Britain have so far failed to result in any fledged young, and seem to have levelled off. For a full account of this species attempting to breed in England, see Parslow-Otsu & Elliott (1991, Brit. Birds 84: 188-191). LAB

**1991**

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Three localities in three counties; one pair built nest.

**England, E** One locality: one from 1st April to 11th August.

**England, N** One locality: one in breeding plumage in late June and July.

**Scotland, S** One locality: pair built three nests, but no eggs laid.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. localities</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. individuals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. pairs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There has still not been a successful breeding attempt in Britain and, if anything, this now looks less likely as numbers decline from the peak of three years ago. What may well be the same pair in southern Scotland has now built nests in each of the last three years, though a second Scottish site, where eggs have been laid in past years, seems to have been abandoned.
Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Nine localities in six counties; two pairs built nest platforms and copulated.

England, SW One locality: one in summer plumage, 17th April to 25th August.
England, SE Three localities: (1) wintering bird to 27th April, when in summer plumage; (2) summer-plumaged adult on 15th June; (3) summer-plumaged adult 9th to 11th August.

Scotland, SE Three localities: (1) pair from 16th May to 12th August, built platform and copulated; (2) male 11th January to 1st April; (3) male 4th April to 14th August (possibly same as at (2)).

Scotland, Mid One locality: pair built platforms and copulated, but no eggs laid.

There has been a small but welcome increase this year in all categories but still falling short of actual breeding. The presumed same pair in southern Scotland built platforms for the fourth year running. There was also a nesting attempt in eastern England after a gap last year.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Seven localities in six counties: only singles recorded.

England, SW One locality: one, paired with a Great Crested Grebe *P. cristatus* from February to 7th April.

England, SE Three localities: (1) one from 25th April to 12th July; (2) one from 25th April to 21st June; (3) one in March and August at site where pair attempted to breed in 1992.

Scotland, SE One locality: breeding-plumaged adult from 21st April to 21st June, seen displaying.

Scotland, Mid One locality: adult on 9th May at site used by summering pair; in past years.

It is disappointing that no pairs were reported this year following the good season last year with two pairs nest-building and copulating. Even the southern Scotland pair, which had managed four consecutive years of platform-building, failed to appear this year.
Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Ten localities in ten counties: pair built platforms.

**England, SE** Two localities: (1) single from November 1993 to November 1994; (2) single during 5th-15th June.

**England, E** Two localities: (1) one from 28th April to 5th November, calling during April and May; (2) one from 3rd May to 2nd August.

**England, Central** One locality: one in summer plumage on 24th April, and during 9th-11th July.

**England, N** Three localities: (1) single(s) on 8th May, 29th June and 18th July; (2) adult from 16th May to mid August; (3) fledged juvenile on 23rd July, definitely not bred at site.

**Scotland, S** One locality: pair at regular summering site from 15th March to 1st July, seen copulating and built nest platforms, but no egg-laying suspected.

**Scotland, Mid** One locality: six (ages unknown) on 18th September possibly summed at this potential breeding site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. localities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. individuals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. pairs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After a gap of one year, the southern Scotland pair was back and was observed copulating and nest-building, but, as usual, not progressing further. The fledged juvenile in northern England in July is early for a migrant.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

32 localities: 51-59 pairs breeding.

**Scotland, Mid and N & W** 32 localities: (1)-(32) total of 51 pairs bred, producing minimum of 30 young to near fledging; also eight singles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. localities</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed pairs</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible/probable pairs</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max. total pairs</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There has been a substantial decline in the number of breeding pairs this year, which may, perhaps, be linked to the large-scale mortality of seabirds on the east