

Britain working on new atlas of birds

November 4 2007

The British Trust for Ornithology has begun collecting data from thousands of volunteers for a new atlas of the birds of the British Isles.

The atlas is scheduled to appear in 2012 after four years of observations around Britain and Ireland, The Independent reported. It is expected to include details on 250 species.

Volunteers can report individual sightings of birds. If they want to make a more organized contribution, they will be assigned to an area 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) on each side to make two summer and two winter visits, recording all birds spotted during a single hour each time.

The trust intends to get a more accurate picture of whether the 40 species listed as red-lighted or endangered, and the 121 that are amber-lighted, are declining or recovering. Another question is the effect of warmer weather on species ranges.

Organizers say almost anyone can volunteer because many birds are spotted in gardens and public parks.

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Citation: Britain working on new atlas of birds (2007, November 4) retrieved 4 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2007-11-britain-atlas-birds.html>

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