



BOOK REVIEW

Bakken, V., Runde, O. & Tjørve, E. (2006) Norsk ringmergingsatlas. Vol. 2. Stavanger Museum, Stavanger. ISBN 82-90054-65-3.

The first volume of the Norwegian Bird Ringing Atlas was reviewed in *Ringing & Migration* **22**, 191 (2005). The second volume, covering pigeons to passerines, was published in 2006, completing the series. English translations are provided for the introductory sections and for the synopses and figure legends for each species.

As this is the second volume, I shall not comment in detail upon the clear layout and the way that information is presented. One extra feature in this volume is a history of bird ringing in Norway, with an encouraging emphasis on the people who ring the birds and the way in which standardised data are collected.

The Atlas starts with pigeons – and it is interesting to see just how many Woodpigeons move out of Norway each autumn – and finishes with Reed Bunting. For the latter, the kernel of recoveries indicates that the southeast of England is well within the wintering area of Norwegian Reed Buntings. The recently developed technique of producing kernels that enclose 95% of recoveries (by season, age or whatever) in a shaded area, with the central 50% being indicated in a different colour, adds tremendously to the clarity of migratory stories.

Much of the information in the Bird Ringing Atlas summarises stories with which British birdwatchers are familiar, but it is interesting to look at bird movements from a different perspective. One can see why species such as Whinchat, Redstart and Dunnock appear on the east coast of Britain in the autumn but there are more complicated stories too. For Robins, for instance, there is both passage south and the arrival of birds that stay in Britain for the winter. For the most famous of Scandinavian migrants to Britain & Ireland, Redwings, Fieldfares, Chaffinches and Bramblings, this Atlas did not add much to what one can learn from the BTO Migration Atlas but it was interesting to learn, for instance, of the strong link between Britain & Ireland and Norway

for Blackbirds, with very few birds moving south into continental Europe.

Details about Norwegian breeding species of which we do not really see much in the UK made interesting reading. Dippers take up five pages, as the authors describe the differences in movements of birds ringed in various areas of Norway. Some birds are resident, even in North Norway, but migration distances are generally longer for northern birds. Wintering birds are found mainly in Denmark, southern Norway and along the Swedish coast but there are recoveries around much of the Baltic Sea. Individuals of several species, such as White Wagtail and Spotted Flycatcher, migrate in mainly between southerly and southeasterly directions and therefore do not often visit the UK. At the northern end of the country, there is a really arctic feel to migratory patterns, as the focus for Lapland Bunting and Snow Bunting is on movements between the islands that surround the North Pole.

Different species receive different treatments. One illuminating addition is an analysis of the number of birds that are recovered when shot. For Redwings ringed in Norway, over three-quarters of the recoveries in France, Portugal and Italy, and over half of those in Spain, in the period since the first foreign recovery of a Norwegian-ringed bird in 1919, are of birds that have been shot. There is a similar story for Fieldfare and a major concentration of Meadow Pipits killed by hunters in Spain.

As with the first volume, this is an excellent book. I cannot comment on the accuracy of the text, as I do not read Norwegian, but I did find a small number of places where the use of cut-and-paste when producing English captions had introduced some errors in translating the explanation of maps. This is a minor point, however. Generally, the clarity of the presentation and the variety of the ways in which information is displayed make this an interesting book to dip into, even if one cannot read over 90% of the text.

Available from Natur Og Fritid AS, 4563 Borhaug, Norway (post@naturogfritid.no). The review copy is held in the Chris Mead Library.

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