

***Wildfowl* 75: Editorial**

Following the big push to publish two issues of *Wildfowl* in 2024 (*Wildfowl* 74 and *Wildfowl* Special Issue No. 7), this year the Editorial Board has turned its attention to determining the future of the online repository of the journal, which is crucial for ensuring that the wealth of information described in its papers is secured. *Wildfowl* online was launched in its present open access journal format in 2010, with the elegant design and ready access to pdfs of published papers achieved through the vision and expertise of Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust's (WWT's) technological guru Robin Jones, who developed the website. Within just 2 years (in 2012), the full back catalogue (covering all years since the journal was first published as the *Annual Report of the Severn Wildfowl Trust* in 1948) was available in electronic (pdf) format, as a result of volunteer Christine Orchard heroically scanning all papers in early issues of the journal, which Robin loaded onto the website. From the outset, *Wildfowl* online has been hosted by the WWT on its website. This continued in 2021, when publication of the journal was transferred by the WWT to the Editor (as Wildfowl Press), as a temporary arrangement pending finding a more permanent home for *Wildfowl* online.

We are therefore now delighted to report that The Royal Danish Library (RDL) has kindly agreed to host the *Wildfowl* online (including all past, current and future issues) on its website, at <https://tidsskrift.dk/Wildfowl>. This was made possible by the support of Jesper Boserup Thestrup of the RDL, and again by Robin Jones who miraculously transferred the whole back catalogue to the new site, whilst the Editorial Board got to grips with the latest Open Journal System (OJS) software used to publish the journal online. As when hosted by the WWT, *Wildfowl* online continues to be open access at its new home with the RDL. Readers may currently find some typing errors in the metadata, for which we apologise, but please be assured that these will steadily be corrected (working back from the most recent issues to the earliest volumes) in the coming months. Printed copies of recent (post 2020) issues of *Wildfowl* also continue to be available by subscription, on contacting the Editor.

Wildfowl 75 notably includes several papers which describe the results of long-term studies. Two review papers – on the behavioural ecology of urban Greylag Geese *Anser anser* and the breeding strategies of Dark-bellied Brent Geese *Branta b. bernicla* – both give an excellent description of research undertaken on the factors affecting these populations over many years. A relatively recent change in the nesting behaviour of urban Greylags is also described in a separate contribution, with the geese in Hamburg found nesting on buildings (instead of at ground level) since 2013, at heights of up to 25 m. The photographs of females sitting in planters on balconies overlooking the city are quite dramatic! More worryingly, another long-term study, on the status of the NE/NW European population of Bewick's Swans *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*, found that the declining trend in numbers since the peak of 29,780 birds in the mid-1990s is continuing. The January 2020 census found only 12,930 birds in the population, the lowest estimate since the mid-20th century. Moreover, with population-level

breeding success continuing to be low, it is anticipated that the next census (in January 2026) will find that numbers have declined further still.

Several more papers on geese appear in *Wildfowl* 75, including a very timely analysis of the ingestion of synthetic micro-particles by geese in Great Britain and Ireland, which provides further evidence on the extent of this ecological issue. The parental behaviour of Pink-footed Geese *Anser brachyrhynchus* during autumn migration is analysed, with results related to cooperation by paired birds throughout their annual cycle. Two short communications from studies of Greater White-fronted Geese *Anser albifrons* are also presented: one describing male nest-sitting during incubation; the other on the effect of neckbands on the birds' pairing status. For the ducks, we read of the value of ring recovery data for assessing changes in hunting pressure for Common Teal *Anas crecca*, which suggests that hunting pressure on this species has become increasingly concentrated in France during the 21st century. Further north, a comparative study of variation in hatching success for sea ducks (Common Eider *Somateria m. mollissima*, Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca* and Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*) breeding on an island in the Baltic Sea interestingly found a lack of covariation between the species over the years, which indicates that species-specific traits (e.g. phenology and behaviour) may override other local factors influencing breeding success. Whilst in the Caucasus, historical data on the contraction in range of Velvet Scoters *Melanitta fusca* breeding in the region (to the birds' only remaining breeding colony at Lake Tabatskuri in Georgia) are analysed, and current conditions at sites previously used by the species assessed. The findings provide important information needed for developing the conservation measures required to restore the species to its former range.

Since the start of 2025, Editorial Board members have very kindly taken on the role of "Handling Editors", which has been of significant help in spreading the work involved in processing papers submitted to the journal. I am immensely grateful to them all for their time and, given that the procedure proved very effective, this will likely continue into the future. As always, my personal thanks go to Ellen Matthews (EM Typesetting) and the printing team (including Andrew Hopwood) at Henry Ling Ltd, whose expertise and professionalism ensure that *Wildfowl* is published to a high standard and on schedule. I also remain indebted to Paul Marshall for the beautiful cover designs, which greatly enhance the look of each volume. Finally, I wish to thank the referees for their expert reviews of papers, which are crucial for maintaining the journal's scientific status, and the authors for submitting their work to *Wildfowl*. I am delighted with this year's issue, and hope that others will find it equally of interest.

Eileen Rees
Editor: *Wildfowl*