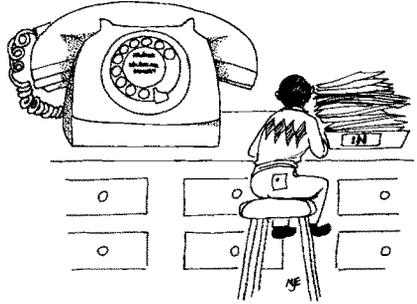


# Requests

**Do write, but please don't phone** *BB* is run with a tiny staff. We try to keep pace with correspondence, but do sometimes fall behind. Nevertheless, if you have a query, please write. We deliberately do not list our telephone number, but some people do manage to reach us. At the end of a telephone conversation, taking up a portion of (and interrupting) our working day, we have a handwritten message to add to the pile of mail. Thus, our time has been lost, for no gain. With an estimated 30,000 readers, we cannot cope with telephone calls unless we employ another member of staff especially to take them. We are not unfriendly, just a little harassed at times. Please be understanding. Please help us to be efficient. On other than urgent editorial matters, please write rather than phone. Thank you.



**Photographs of *Phylloscopus* and other warblers** Black-and-white photographs, colour prints and original colour transparencies are needed urgently for possible use with a forthcoming paper by Alan R. Dean on 'Identification of Greenish Warbler and its possible confusion species'. The obvious candidates are: Green Warbler *P. nitidus*, Two-barred Greenish Warbler *P. plumbeitarsus*, Greenish Warbler *P. trochiloides*, Arctic Warbler *P. borealis*, the Siberian race of Chiffchaff *P. collybita tristis*, the central Asiatic race of Yellow-browed Warbler *P. inornatus humei*, and Tennessee Warbler *Vermivora peregrina*. Please send all photographic material to Mrs Sheila Cobban at the editorial office: Fountains, Park Lane, Blunham, Bedford MK44 3NJ.

**Sand Martins** Provisional counts suggest that the number of Sand Martins *Riparia riparia* in Britain and Ireland during summer 1984 had declined to about 30% of the 1983 population and about 10% (or even less) of the numbers in the mid 1960s. Counts of occupied holes in Sand Martin colonies for 1984 and at least one of the previous four years (1980-1983) are required to substantiate or modify these provisional conclusions and to try to determine the apparently wide regional variation.



Colonies may vary in numbers from year to year due to physical changes at the site, and it is important that the sites should be comparable from year to year. Counts from individual colonies, or, better still, from a series of local colonies (including any new ones founded in 1984), would be useful. Details should include totals of apparently occupied holes, date of count and exact locality. Summaries of the results will appear both in *British Birds* and in *BTO News*.

Please send your information to: Chris Mead, BTO, Beech Grove, Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 5NR.

**If you find a dead predator . . .** Please send any corpses of the following species, for analysis of pesticide residues in a monitoring programme which has been running for the past 20 years: Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*, Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*, Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*, Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, Merlin *F. columbarius*, Peregrine *F. peregrinus*, owls (Strigiformes) and Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*. Your postage costs will be refunded immediately. Specimens received will be autopsied, and analysed for organochlorine and mercury residues. In due course, a report will be sent to the finder. The scheme is intended to monitor pollutant residues in vulnerable species, and hence to keep a check on the effectiveness of Government regulations. Corpses should be well packaged and sent, together with details of date of finding, locality, and circumstances, where known, to Mrs M. B. Haas, Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, Monks Wood Experimental Station, Abbots Ripton, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE17 2LS.

**Whooper Swans with yellow neck-rings** In summer 1984, Whooper Swans *Cygnus cygnus* moulting on the east coast of Iceland were marked with plastic (PVC) neck-rings. They are expected to be resighted mainly in Britain and Ireland, but some may reach the Continent.

The neck-rings are yellow and carry a code of only two black letters (e.g. AA or AB) read vertically and repeated four times around the ring. The same code is repeated on a yellow PVC-ring on the left leg, but the right leg carries an official steel ring issued by the Icelandic Museum of Natural History (PO Box 5320, Reykjavik, Iceland).

Anyone who sees these swans with yellow neck-rings is asked to note the code, the locality, the date and other relevant observations, and to inform Professor Arnthor Gardarsson, University Institute of Biology, Grensasvegur 12, 108 Reykjavik, Iceland. Observers who submit records will receive annual interim reports on resightings.