

## **Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* Action Plan**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The spotted flycatcher is a summer migrant to the UK. The species prefers habitats of open woodland, hedgerows with mature trees, parkland and large gardens. The species feeds almost entirely on insects.
- 1.2 The spotted flycatcher generally arrives in the UK to breed around mid-May, when insect numbers are high. The nest is usually built against a wall, but sometimes in a hole. The nest is often built of moss and hair, bound together with cobwebs. The spotted flycatchers will come back to the same spot year after year. The eggs are laid towards the end of May and there is usually one family each summer. The spotted flycatcher returns to wintering areas in Africa during July and August.

### **2. Current Status**

- 2.1 Although widespread throughout lowland Britain, the spotted flycatcher population has been steadily falling since the early 1960s. Common Bird Census data show a 62% decline in woodland populations and a 70% population decline in farmland between 1968 and 1991. The UK population estimate derived from the New Breeding Bird Atlas is 130,000 territories.
- 2.2 Current factors causing loss or decline are not well known, but may include the following:
  - Low invertebrate availability, due to increasing use of insecticides.
  - Loss of nest sites. Many spotted flycatchers nest in large trees and there has been a large-scale loss of these in woodlands and hedgerows, which are favoured habitats.
- 2.3 The spotted flycatcher is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and EC Birds Directive. It is an offence to intentionally injure or kill the bird, or take, damage or destroy their nests whilst in use or being built.
- 2.4 A Species Action Plan has been prepared by the UK Steering Committee which aims in the short term, halt or reverse the decline in numbers of the spotted flycatcher by the year 2003 and in the long term, see a sustained recovery in numbers by 2008.

### **3. Key Site**

- 3.1 The spotted flycatcher has been recorded at Welford landfill site in Northamptonshire.

#### 4. Objectives & Targets

<b>No</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Target</b>
4.1	Increase knowledge of the status and distribution of spotted flycatchers on Biffa Waste Services sites and ensure information is recorded appropriately.	Action to be in place by 2005.
4.2	Ensure appropriate conservation and enhancement measures are implemented on sites where spotted flycatchers have been recorded and protect existing sites from damage and destruction.	Ongoing.
4.3	Ensure knowledge of the status and distribution of spotted flycatchers on Biffa Waste Services sites, and the implementation of the spotted flycatcher SAP, is kept up-to-date and revised as appropriate.	Action to be in place by 2007.
4.4	Increase awareness of the spotted flycatcher and its conservation on Biffa sites.	Ongoing.

## 5. Action Plan

*There are generic actions for Data Collection & Information Management, Site Management, Monitoring & Audit and Biodiversity Awareness that apply to all Species Action Plans. These are located in a separate 'Generic Action Plans' section that should be read in conjunction with this document.*

*Please note that the partners identified in the Spotted Flycatcher Action Plan are not an exclusive list and new partners are both welcome and needed.*

Action	Potential Partners	Year						Meets Objective No.
		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2013	
<b>5.1 Data Collection &amp; Information Management</b>								
5.1.1 Survey and record spotted flycatcher activity at all Biffa sites through an ecological survey programme.	WT	•	•	•				4.1
5.1.2 Develop a procedure to record and manage spotted flycatcher data (as part of a wider BAP information management system).	WT, JNCC	•						4.1
5.1.3 Implement data management system, recording spotted flycatcher data & keep up-to-date as appropriate.	WT		•	•	•	•	•	4.1
5.1.4 Support research into spotted flycatchers particularly in relevant areas highlighted in the UK BAP.	WT, UNI, RSPB, BTO	•	•	•	•	•	•	4.1
<b>5.2 Site Management</b>								
5.2.1 Based on the results of the ecological survey, protect existing spotted flycatcher populations.	WT	•	•	•	•			4.2
5.2.2 Determine use of pesticides on sites where spotted flycatchers are recorded and seek uptake of a more cautious and targeted use.	WT	•						4.2
5.2.3 Review site ecological surveys and select sites where appropriate habitat creation and enhancement measures could be implemented to increase spotted flycatcher population sizes particularly by providing nest boxes.	WT, EN	•	•	•				4.2

Action	Potential Partners	Year						Meets Objective No.
		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2013	
5.2.4 Implement appropriate habitat creation and enhancement techniques for the spotted flycatcher at selected sites	WT		•	•	•	•	•	4.2
5.2.5 Develop generic management prescriptions to improve sites for spotted flycatchers.	WT, EN, RSPB, BTO	•						4.2
5.2.6 Ensure that spotted flycatcher management prescriptions are included in Biodiversity Management Modules for sites where the species occurs.	WT	•	•	•				4.2
<b>5.3 Monitoring &amp; Audit</b>								
5.3.1 Develop a monitoring protocol for spotted flycatchers on Biffa sites.	WT, EN, LA, RSPB, BTO	•						4.3
5.3.2 Implement a monitoring protocol for spotted flycatchers on Biffa sites.	WT		•	•	•	•	•	4.3
5.3.3 Contribute to the UK Breeding Bird Survey through annual monitoring of breeding spotted flycatchers at Biffa sites.	BTO, WT, JNCC, RSPB,	•	•	•	•	•	•	4.3
5.3.4 Pass information gathered during survey and monitoring to JNCC so that it can be incorporated into a national database.	WT, JNCC	•	•	•	•	•	•	4.3
5.3.5 Develop an auditing procedure for the spotted flycatcher species action plan.	WT, EN, LA, RSPB, BTO	•						4.3
5.3.6 Implement an auditing procedure for the spotted flycatcher species action plan.	WT		•	•	•	•	•	4.3
5.3.7 Ensure the spotted flycatcher species action plan species is reviewed and updated.	WT, EN, LA					•	•	4.3

Action	Potential Partners	Year						Meets Objective No.
		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2013	
<b>5.4 Awareness</b>								
5.4.1 Inform relevant site managers of their responsibilities for conserving the spotted flycatcher and provide management advice.	WT	•	•	•				4.4
5.4.2 Produce education and interpretive material for relevant Biffa Waste Services stakeholders on the spotted flycatcher and its action plan.	LA, WT	•	•	•	•	•	•	4.4
5.4.3 Publish results of the spotted flycatcher SAP.	-	•	•	•	•	•	•	4.4

## 6. Partners

- BTO - British Trust for Ornithology
- EN - English Nature
- JNCC - Joint Nature Conservation Committee
- LA - Local Authority
- RSPB - Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- UNI - Universities
- WT - Wildlife Trust