

Whinchats at RSPB Geltsdale in 2016, Cumbria, UK

STEPHEN WESTERBERG, AMANDA PROUD & MARTIN KETCHER (Brampton, United Kingdom)

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RSPB Geltsdale is situated in the North Pennines in northern England and is 5500ha in size. The site is between 200m and 620m asl. All the Whinchats in 2016 nested between 259m and 414m asl (mean 330 m asl).

A Retrap Adult Survival (RAS) project organised by the British Trust for Ornithology has been running on the site since 2011. At present this is the only Whinchat RAS in the UK (unless one started in 2016 that I don't know about).

Summary for 2016

No. of territories	75
No. of nests monitored	50

BTO nest record cards completed and additional habitat information recorded. 85% of nests found were successful (best year in 5 years).

Number of nestlings colour-ringed	199
No. of adults colour-ringed	14
Percent return of 1st years (n=18)	17%
Percent return of 2+ years (n=26)	46%
No. of resightings in 2016	576

(of 56 adults and 105 juveniles). Second best year in 5 years study for post fledging survival, 52% of nestlings seen as juveniles.

19 geolocators fitted to 18 males and 1 female by Malcolm Burgess of RSPB Conservation Science. 16 of the whinchats fitted with geolocators were of known age as 8 were ringed as nestlings in previous years and 8 were new ringed first year birds. Known 3 year old birds were avoided.



Fig. 1: 3 year old female post breeding, ringed as nestling in 2016 (Photo: © Adam MOAN).



Fig. 2: Geolocator on Whinchat at RSPB Geltsdale attached in June 2016 (left side). Male on same territory as previous year (right side; Photos: © Stephen WESTERBERG (left)/Adam MOAN).

Author's addresses:
 STEPHEN WESTERBERG, AMANDA PROUD, MARTIN KETCHER, RSPB Geltsdale nature reserve, Stagsike Cottages, Hallbankgate, Brampton, Cumbria, CA8 2PW, United Kingdom, Stephen.Westerberg@rspb.org.uk



Fig. 3: Juvenile 53 days after fledging and 1500m from nest, offspring of female in Fig.1 (Photo: © ADAM MOAN).