Notes

Dispersive migration of a female Great Spotted Woodpecker between breeding and wintering sites in Britain

Although northern populations of the Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos m. major* undergo regular and often irruptive migrations (Cramp 1985; Gorman 2004), the British subspecies *D. m. anglicus* is thought to be highly sedentary. Data from the BTO Ringing Scheme show that up to 1999 the median distance between ringing and recovery sites was just 2 km and that 95% of ringing recoveries were within 40 km of the ringing site (Wernham *et al.* 2002).

As part of a study of the survival of Great Spotted Woodpeckers, a full-grown female was trapped at the nest in Wormley Wood, Hertfordshire (51°44' N 00°05' W), on 12th May 2014, where it was feeding young. The bird was given a unique colour-ring combination (BTO/blue left, green/yellow right) and its wing length was measured as 132 mm, putting it firmly in the range for *D. m. anglicus* (Smith 2010). Two young left the nest successfully in early June.

To our surprise, green/yellow was photographed by Robert and Judith Cave at their garden bird feeder in Crick, Northamptonshire (52°20' N 01°09' W), on 26th November 2014, some 99 km north of the breeding site. The bird had been appearing in their garden for more than a week before it was photographed. Even though we checked 20 nesting females for colour rings in Wormley Wood in 2015, green/yellow was not found breeding there. We assumed it had simply moved away. However, in 2016 it was again located nesting in Wormley Wood, some 60 m from the nest where it had been ringed in 2014. It was paired with male red/yellow and successfully raised two chicks.

To our astonishment, female green/yellow appeared again in Robert and Judith Cave's garden in Crick in early January 2017 and was photographed on 13th. On checking the woodpecker nests in Wormley Wood on 19th May 2017, we found it again paired with male red/yellow, feeding three small young at a nest just 40 m and 60 m from the sites in 2016 and 2014 respectively. The male red/yellow had been trapped at the nest in

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271. Female Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major anglicus*, Crick, Northamptonshire, November 2014 (and, inset, in January 2017); this bird was ringed at the nest site in Wormley Wood, Hertfordshire, 99 km south of Crick, in May 2014.

the same area of Wormley Wood in 2012, when it was paired with female red/blue. It had nested in the same small area of the wood each year to 2017, changing partner to green/yellow in 2016 and 2017.

This is the first documented case of a Great Spotted Woodpecker undergoing significant, repeated and directed movements between breeding and non-breeding areas. Our bird was found nesting in a small part of a Hertfordshire wood in three years and over the same period was seen in a garden in Northamptonshire, 99 km to the north, in two winters. Although we do not know the natal site of green/yellow, this appears to be a case of 'dispersive migration' as described by Newton (2008).

It is surprising that this type of movement has not been detected before in the Great Spotted Woodpecker. However, even though ringers frequently retrap Great Spotted Woodpeckers at their regular ringing sites, it is unlikely that movements such as this will be detected by ringing alone. In our case it was systematic colour-ringing and recording of colour-ringed birds that detected these movements. Perhaps in future the availability and deployment of new tracking devices will reveal even more of the complexities of movements such as these.

It is also possible that the increasing population of Great Spotted Woodpeckers and the widespread feeding opportunities in gardens has corresponded with an increase in the incidence of dispersive migration, which could be occurring at a range of scales. Detailed analyses of the BTO ringing and recovery data, alongside the retrap data that are now routinely collected, may shed more light on the frequency and scale of these movements and whether they have increased over time.

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We especially thank Robert and Judith Cave without whose keen observations this bird would not have been found and reported in Northamptonshire. Robert and Judith discovered the likely origin of the colour-ringed bird using the excellent **cr-birding.org** website created and run entirely voluntarily by Dirk Raes as a service to ornithology. We thank the Woodland Trust, the owners of Wormley Wood, for their permission and encouragement to work in the wood.

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Reviews

Wildlife and Wind Farms, Conflicts and Solutions (Volume 1 Onshore: Potential Effects; Volume 2 Onshore: Monitoring and Mitigation)

Edited by Martin Perrow. Pelagic Publishing, 2017. Sbk, 289pp and 217pp; colour photographs. ISBN 978-1-78427-119-0; ISBN 978-1-78427-123-7; **£34.99 each volume**

This is a comprehensive, multi-authored overview of current knowledge, broken down into chapters covering the main taxonomic groups involved (most notably birds), as well as impacts on vegetation and local climate. Landscape issues are not dealt with. The chapters have been written and edited to a high standard, although the academic style will appeal primarily to those directly involved with this industry.

Ian Carter