

Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland

Farmland bird declines 1998-2021

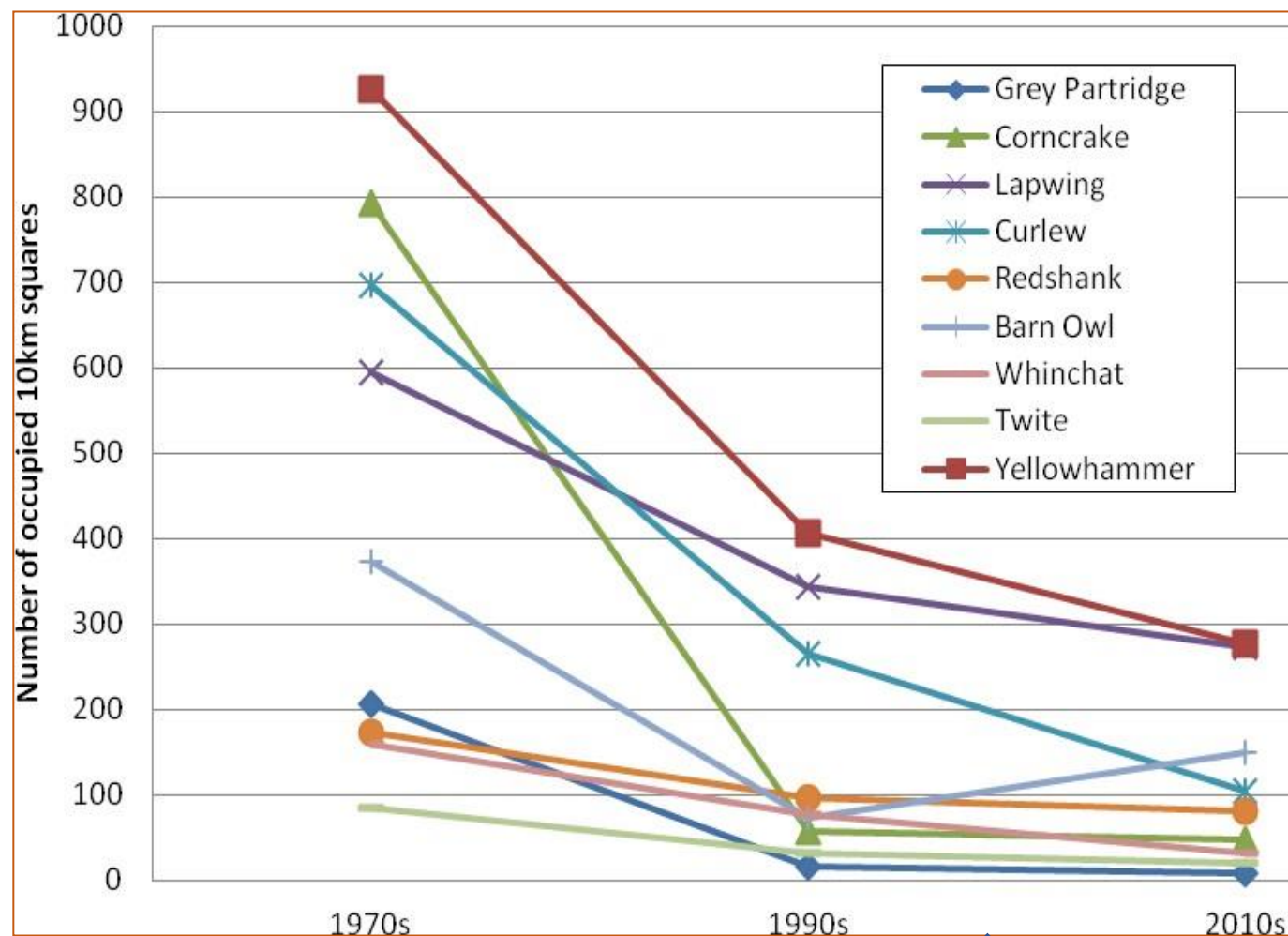


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Farmland bird declines in Ireland.



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BOCCI



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BOCCI 1: 1998. Farmland spp on Red List: n =11

Meadows	Arable/mixed farmland	Damp pastures	Upland/Coastal
Corncrake	Grey Partridge	Curlew	Red grouse
	Barn Owl	Lapwing	Twite
	Yellowhammer		Chough
	Corn bunting		Hen Harrier



= Annex 1



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BOCCI 4: 2021: $n = 16$: 8 spp new to Red and 1 extinct

Meadows	Arable/mixed farmland	Damp pastures	Upland/Coastal
Corncrake	Grey Partridge	Curlew	Red grouse
Meadow Pipit	Barn Owl	Lapwing	Twite
Whinchat	Yellowhammer	Redshank	Golden plover
	Stock dove	Snipe	Dunlin
	Kestrel		

- 1998-2021: 45% increase in no farmland birds on the Red List
- Most of these 16 species were once common and widespread



- **1998-2021: 45% increase in no farmland birds on the Red List**
- **Most of these 16 species were once common and widespread**



What happened.....?

Not enough was done to protect them.



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The Birds Case, 2007

- *4th Complaint – Ireland had not taken sufficient appropriate steps to avoid pollution or deterioration of habitats **outside SPAs**.*

“The measures taken by Ireland are partial, isolated measures, only some of which promote conservation of the bird populations concerned, but which do not constitute a coherent whole”.



Ireland Programme of Measures report 2017 re 4th complaint:

“Ireland has introduced new measures, and built upon existing activity”.

-Targeted actions within GLAS for **corncrake**, **Grey partridge**, **breeding waders** and **twite**...

-Hedgerow measures will benefit ... **owls** and **kestrels**.

-Wild bird cover will... benefit **yellowhammer**.

-LIPP/THM will benefit **snipe & whinchat**.”

Farmland birds on Red List

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These agricultural measures have not worked...

- Successive iterations of AE schemes have not delivered protection and restoration of farmland birds in the wider countryside.
- Other aspects of CAP measures – land eligibility rules, failure to enforce SMRs and GAECs (cross compliance), production supports, TAMS are all driving further biodiversity loss.
- Production led supports leading to ongoing loss of multiple small areas of biodiversity rich habitat.



General failure to have sufficient protection and regulation

- Non Annex 1 farmland spp (Curlew, Lapwing, Snipe) have little protection.
 - No sites designated/not qualifying features of SPAs/SACs.
 - Nests/chicks of ground nesters are not protected from farming activity by Wildlife Act.
 - EIA Agriculture Regulations thresholds are so high that loss of biodiversity habitats is widespread. GAEC 7 being implemented?



Afforestation is resulting in loss of habitats for birds

- “Land Types for Afforestation” targets some habitats which are likely important for meadow pipit and a range of amber listed spp.
- “NIS for Forestry Projects” focused on designated sites.
- “Environmental Requirements for Afforestation” sets out guidance for foresters, but apart from measures for Curlew (which needs revision), non Annex 1 red listed farmland species falling through the net.
- On the ground ecological survey & assessment of applications by qualified ecologists using correct methodologies is required.

Predation of ground nesting birds

- Afforestation and intensification will together lead to greater abundance of generalist predators.
- Will drive further declines of Curlew, Lapwing, Redshank.



Next CAP:

EU Commission Recommendations to Ireland:

Contribute to the protection of biodiversity

Enhance ecosystem services

Preserve habitats and landscapes

Refers to declines in Lapwing, Annex 1 habitats and other farmland biodiversity

Proposed Delivery Mechanisms include:

EIPs, Eco Schemes, next AEC Measure:

But will they be of sufficient spatial scale and financially attractive enough to prevent further intensification...?

THE RESTORATION OF WIDER COUNTRYSIDE SPP REQUIRES BIODIVERSITY-RICH LANDSCAPES



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Food Vision 2030: Ireland's Agri-Food Strategy

MISSION 1: A CLIMATE SMART, ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE
AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

GOAL 2: Restore and Enhance Biodiversity

10% of farmed area prioritised for biodiversity, spread across all farms throughout the country, by 2030.

This will not deliver landscape scale restoration of biodiversity (especially not if the other 90% is farmed to maximise production!).



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Food Vision 2030: Ireland's Agri-Food Strategy

MISSION 2: VIABLE & RESILIENT PRIMARY PRODUCERS WITH ENHANCED WELLBEING

Goal 1: Improve Competitiveness and Productivity of Primary Producers

High ambition for primary producers, focusing on the premiumisation of output, increased integration of certain sectors, and diversification of activity and income streams

THIS COULD DRIVE FURTHER BIODIVERSITY LOSS AND OFFSET GAINS FROM OTHER MEASURES.



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