

**Name:****Reed bunting***Emberiza schoeniclus***UK status:**

[UK BAP Priority](#). Rapid recent historic decline. BoCC Red List.

**London status:**

Uncommon, declining breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

**Protected status:**

- W&CA S.1(1-3); general protection from intentional killing, injury and catching, possession, and nest destruction.
- Bern Convention, Appendix II  
'Species of principal importance for the conservation of biological diversity in England' (CRoW Act, 2000)

**Relevant London HAPs:**

Reedbeds; Rivers and Streams; Lakes, ponds and reservoirs; Floodplain grassland; Farmland; Hedgerows Statement

**Citation:**

The reed bunting declined substantially across its UK range during the 1970s and '80s, but is now apparently nationally stable. The decrease most likely affected birds that colonised marginal farmland habitats in the '60s, in parallel with several other UK BAP Priority species suffering impacts of agricultural intensification. Declines at wetland strongholds are likely to have had a more long-term effect on the species, and it is here that a renewed downturn in status is currently suspected, possibly due to habitat neglect. Wetland habitats support most of London's reed buntings and pairs may quickly colonise created wetlands even in inner boroughs. Important breeding concentrations are found at Rainham Marshes and the Ingrebourne Valley (LB Havering); the Lee and Colne Valleys, Beddington sewage works (LB Sutton) and the London Wetland Centre (LB Richmond).



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Managing agencies; RSPB, WWT, LVRPA, Thames Water, Environment Agency.

**Conservation priorities:**

- Reedbed maintenance and creation
  - Wetland and Green Belt development control
  - Farmland biodiversity conservation practices (sympathetic hedgerow management, headland creation etc.)
- [All address UK SAP targets **T1**, **T2**]

**References:**

- Baillie, S.R et al. (2005). [Breeding Birds in the Wider Countryside: their conservation status 2004](#). BTO
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