

Moray Bird Club AGM
12th March 2026

Moray Bird Club
Corn Bunting
Survey 2025
Results



Corn Bunting basics...



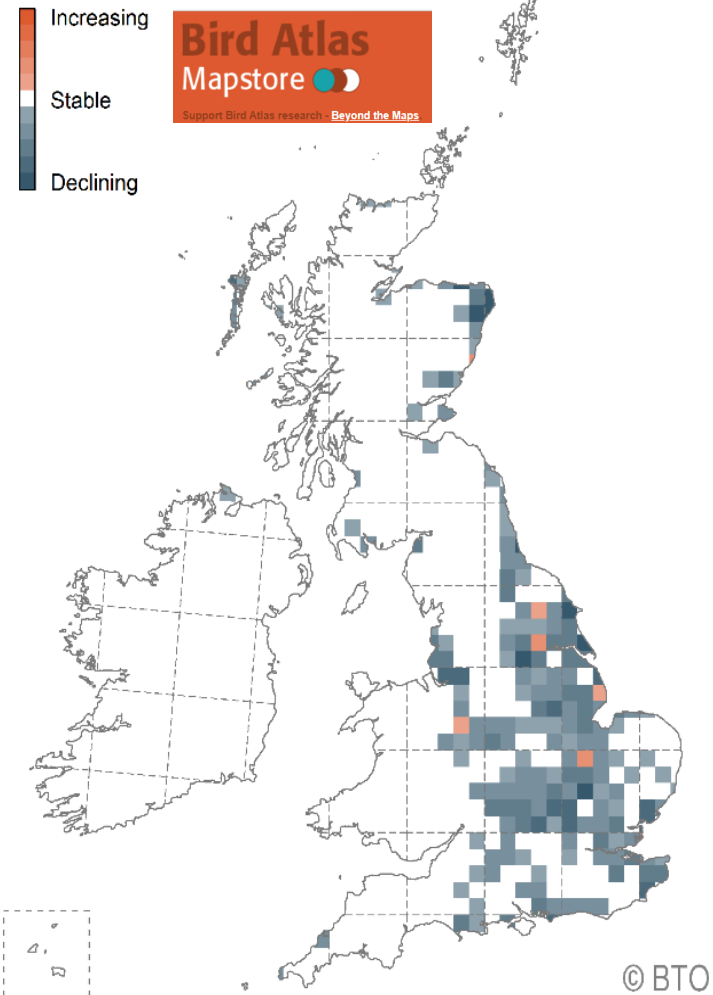
- Farmland specialist favouring open arable landscapes
- Seed-eater all year round; partially insectivorous in summer
- Nests on ground within crops (tall dense grass/cereals)
- Late breeding season, but two broods (where conditions allow)
- Polygynous mating system



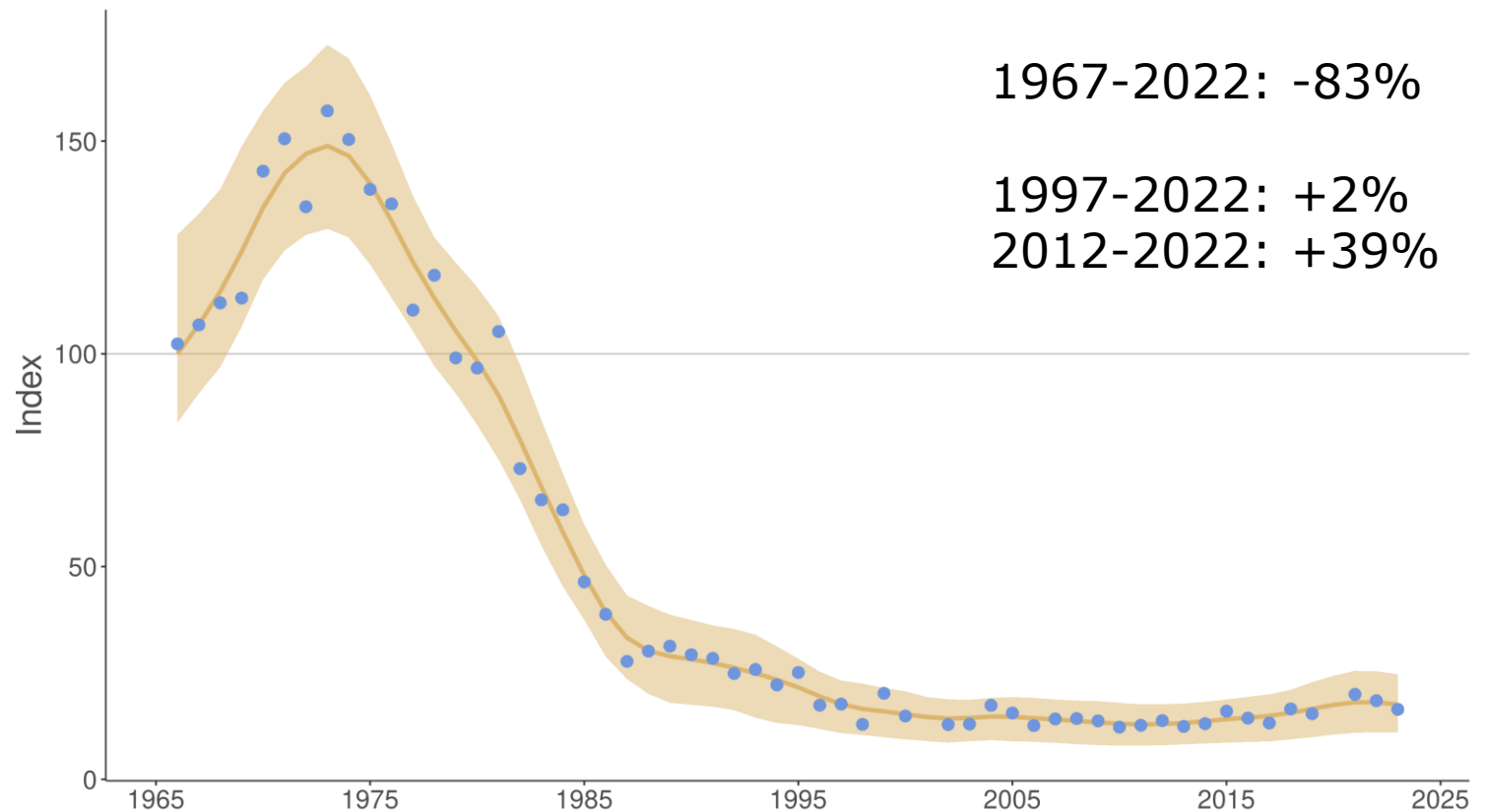
Corn Bunting population declines in the UK



Breeding Abundance Change 1988-91 to 2008-11



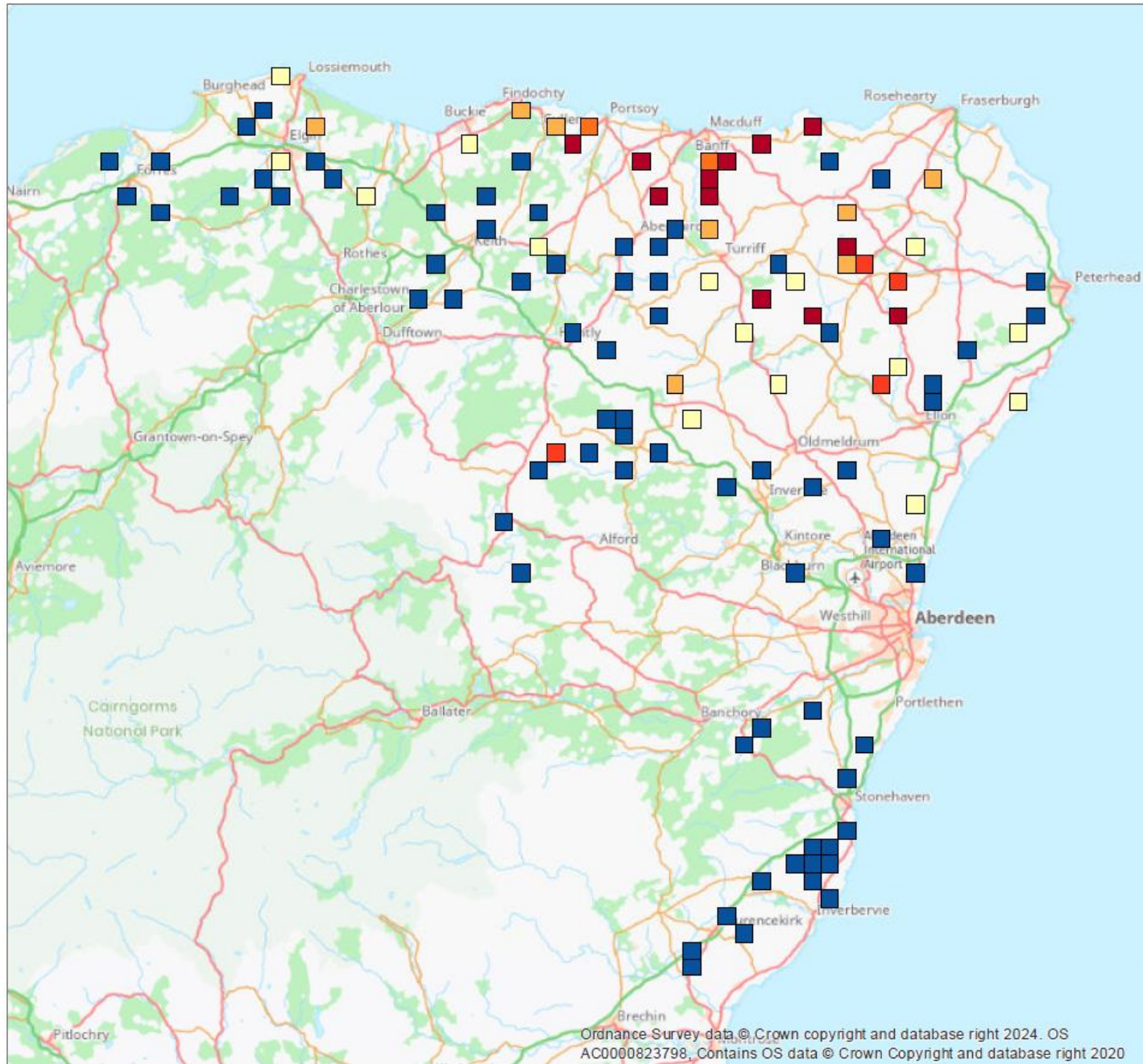
Corn Bunting population abundance
Long-term trend (1960s-) in United Kingdom



Downloaded from www.bto.org on 17 Jan 2025. CC-BY-NC

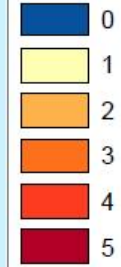
BTO, 2024. BirdTrends 2023: trends in numbers, breeding success and survival for UK breeding birds. www.bto.org/birdtrends

Heat map of Corn Bunting from 2023-24 surveys in North East Scotland



Legend:

Number of Corn Bunting in tetrad



Acknowledgements & notes:

Created by: RSPB

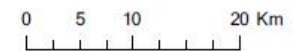
Data reproduced with the permission of RSPB. © Crown Copyright. Ordnance Survey licence number AC0000813580 (2025)

N



Map scale = 1:637,570

Date printed: 23/01/2025



Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. OS AC0000823798. Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2020

Corn Bunting Survey 2024 - Results



Moray breakdown of Results

- 27 Tetrads surveyed
- 19 tetrads - no CB recorded
- 8 tetrads – CB recorded
- Total 13 birds recorded
- 5 of them outside surveyed tetrad



Moray Bird Club

Corn Bunting Survey 2025

BTO Bird Atlas Information:

- 1968-72 – Corn Bunting in 23 10km squares, breeding confirmed in 11 and probable in 6. Breeding birds found Strath Avon and Ben Rinnes area (BTO Atlas 1)
- 1988-91 Breeding confirmed or probable in 7 out of 12 occupied 12km squares (BTO Atlas 2)
- 2008-11 found in 6 squares and breeding confirmed or probable in 4 (BTO Atlas 3)
- North-East Scotland Breeding Bird Atlas 2002-2006 – 26 tetrads recorded confirmed or probable breeding but confined to six 10km squares

Additional Surveys:

- Moray Bird Club Corn Bunting Census 1997 – at least 46 singing males (Shewan 1998)
- Survey between Forres and Lossiemouth 1986-87 singing males in 26 localities (MNBR 1997)



MORAY BIRD CLUB

CORN BUNTING

CENSUS

1997



Moray Bird Club

Corn Bunting Survey 2025

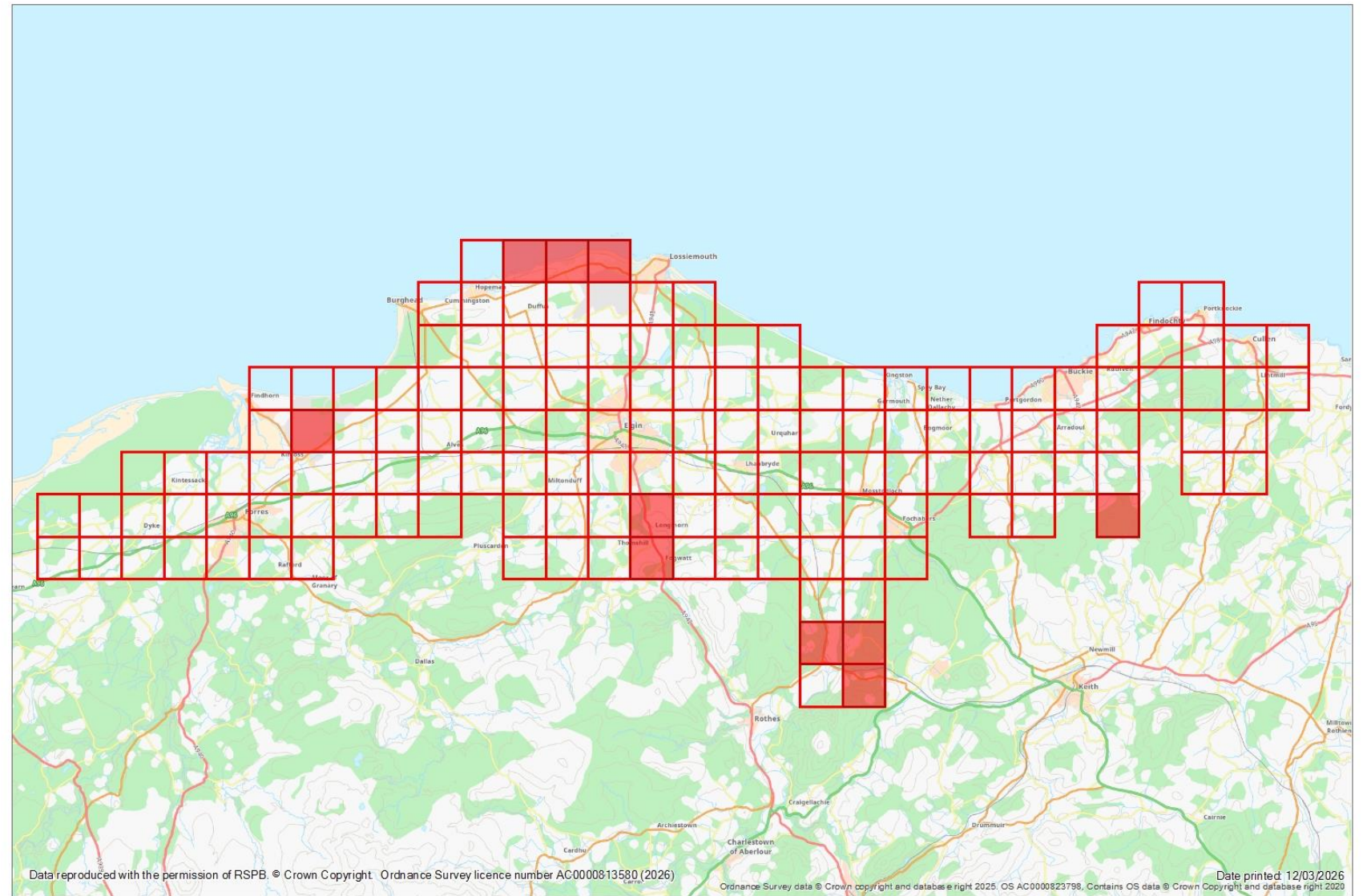
Survey Method

- To match the methods of 2002-2006, tetrads, (2x2 km square) surveyed.
- **Two visits, one in June and one in July.** The two visits at least three weeks apart.
- Surveyed from **public roads, farm tracks and footpaths.** Ideally in calm, dry conditions as song will be audible from quite a distance
- Recorded additional species if come across them – Kestrel and Grey Partridge



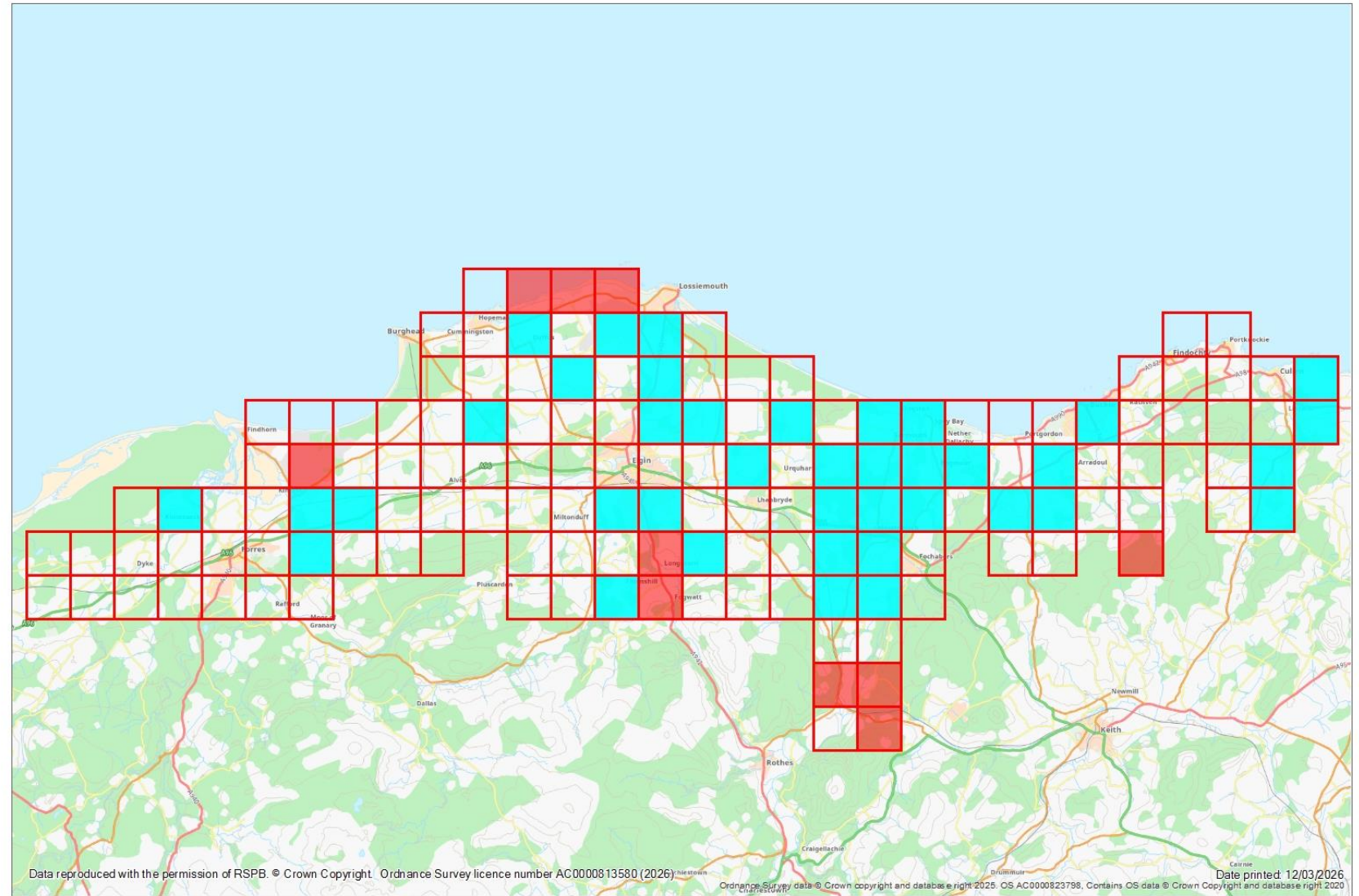
Results

- 143 Tetrads identified
- 135 Tetrads surveyed
- 8 Tetrads not covered
- 114 Tetrads received 2 visits
- 29 Surveyors



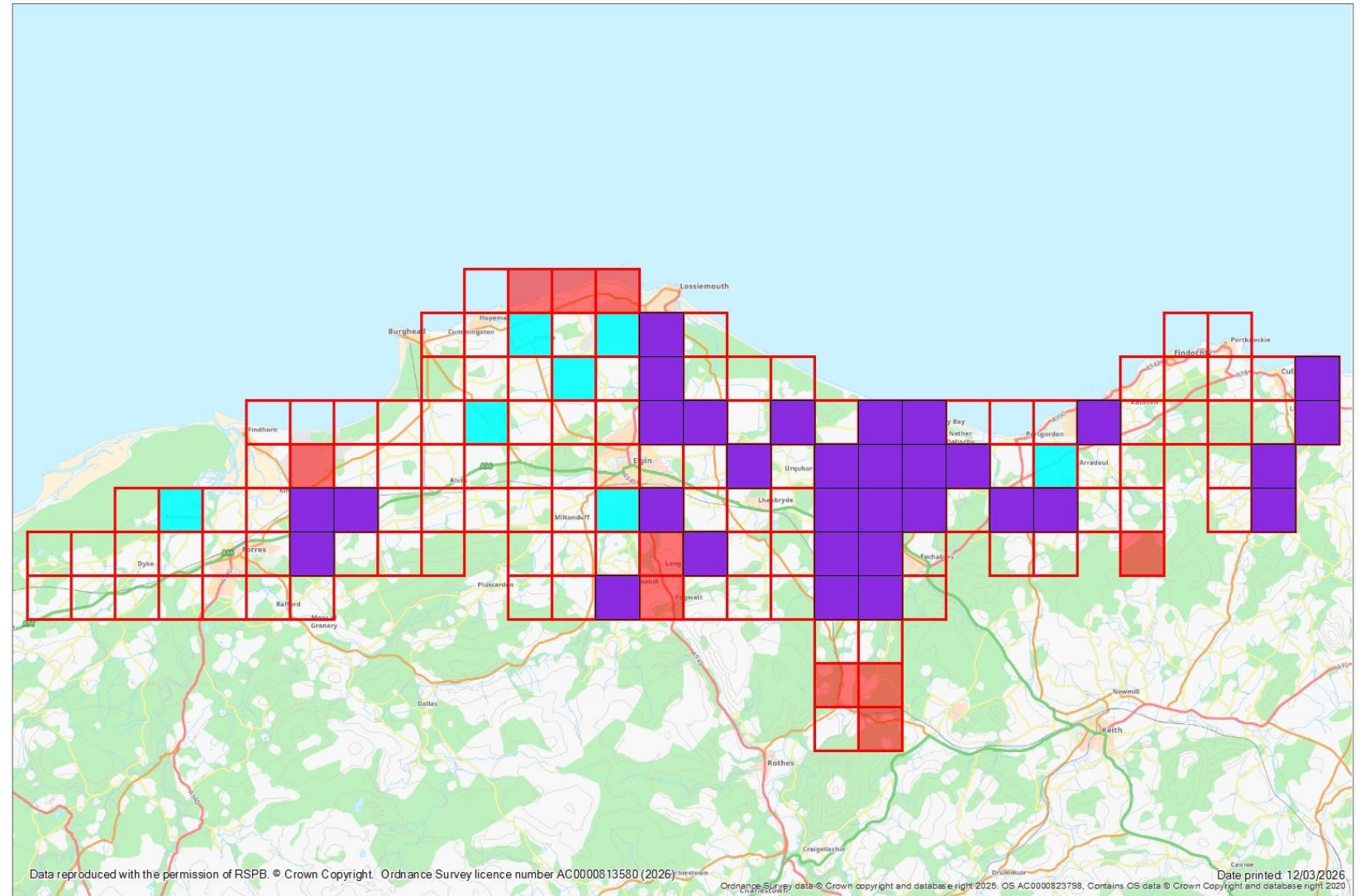
Results

- 39 Tetrads – CB recorded
- 97 Tetrads – no CB recorded



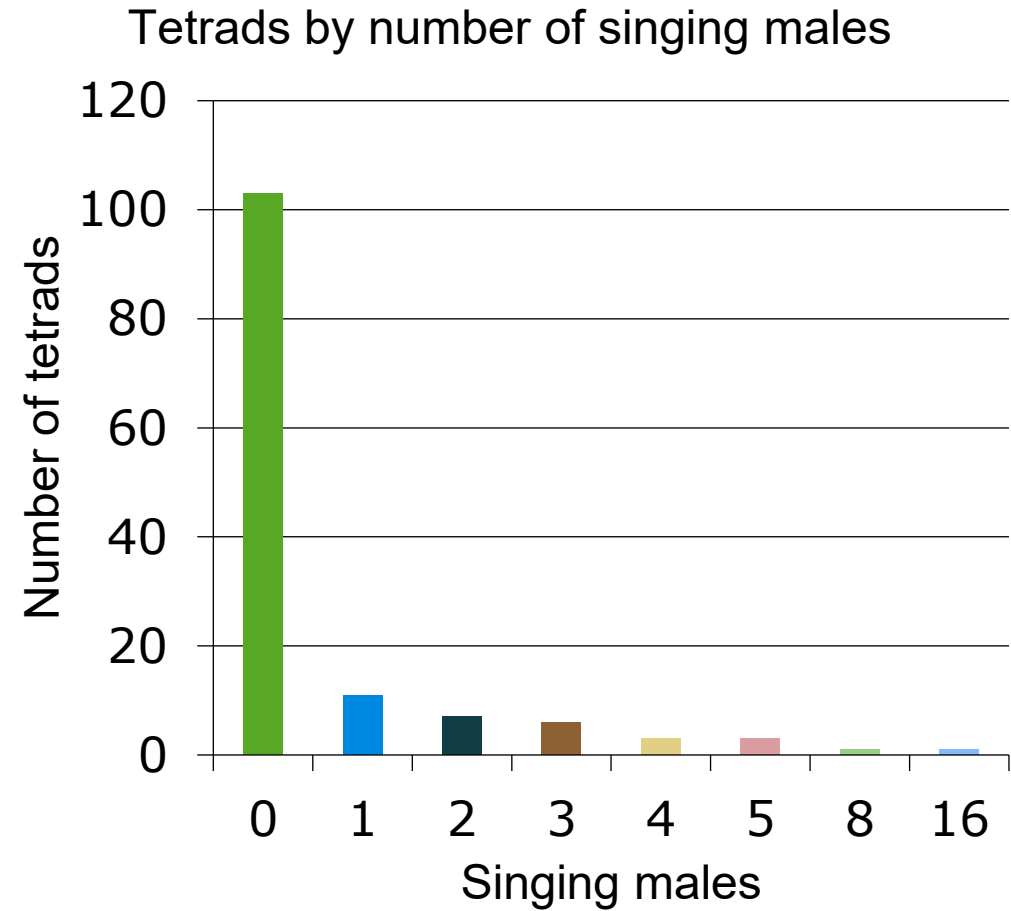
Results

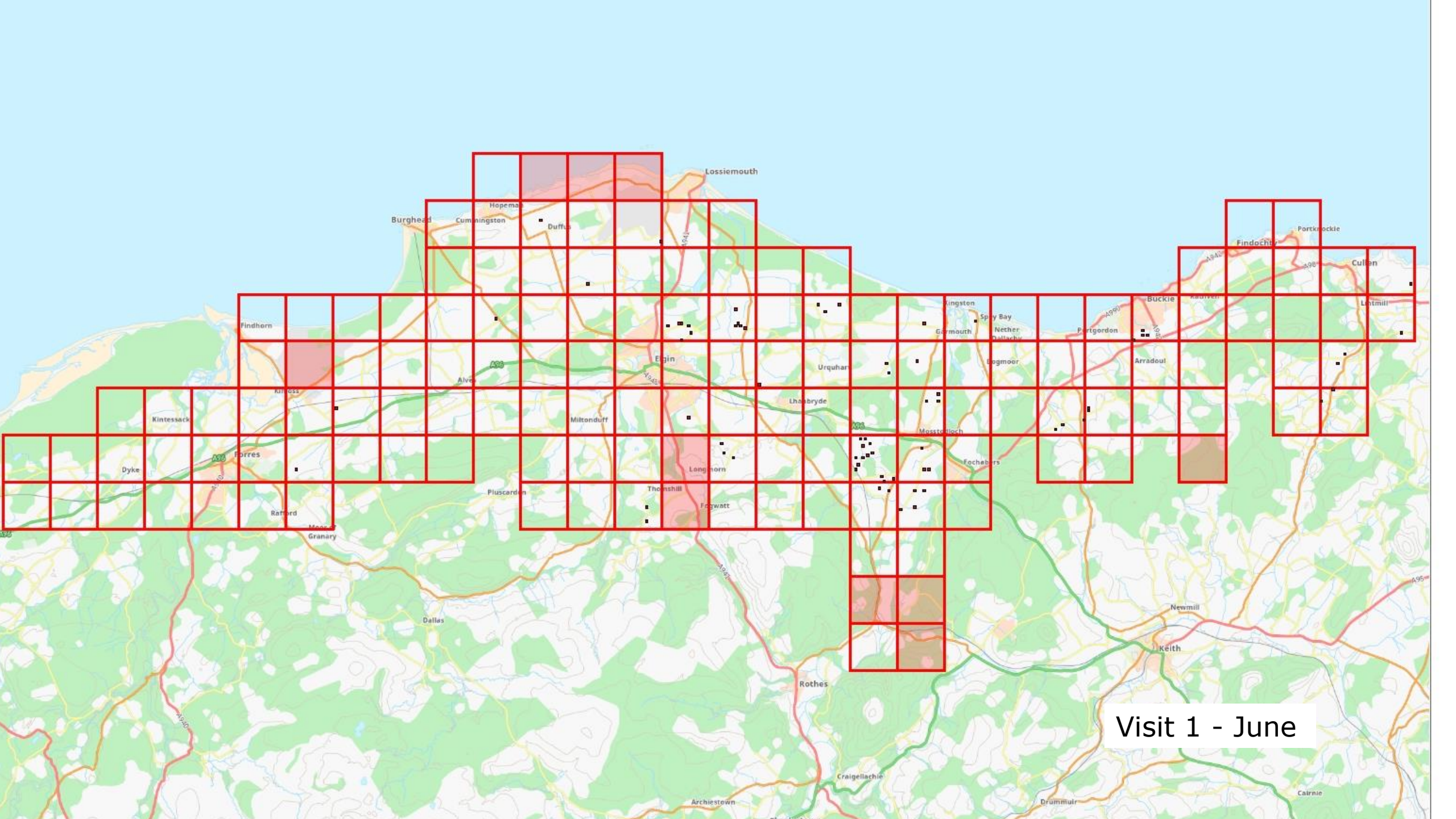
- 32 Tetrads with singing males
- 94 Singing males



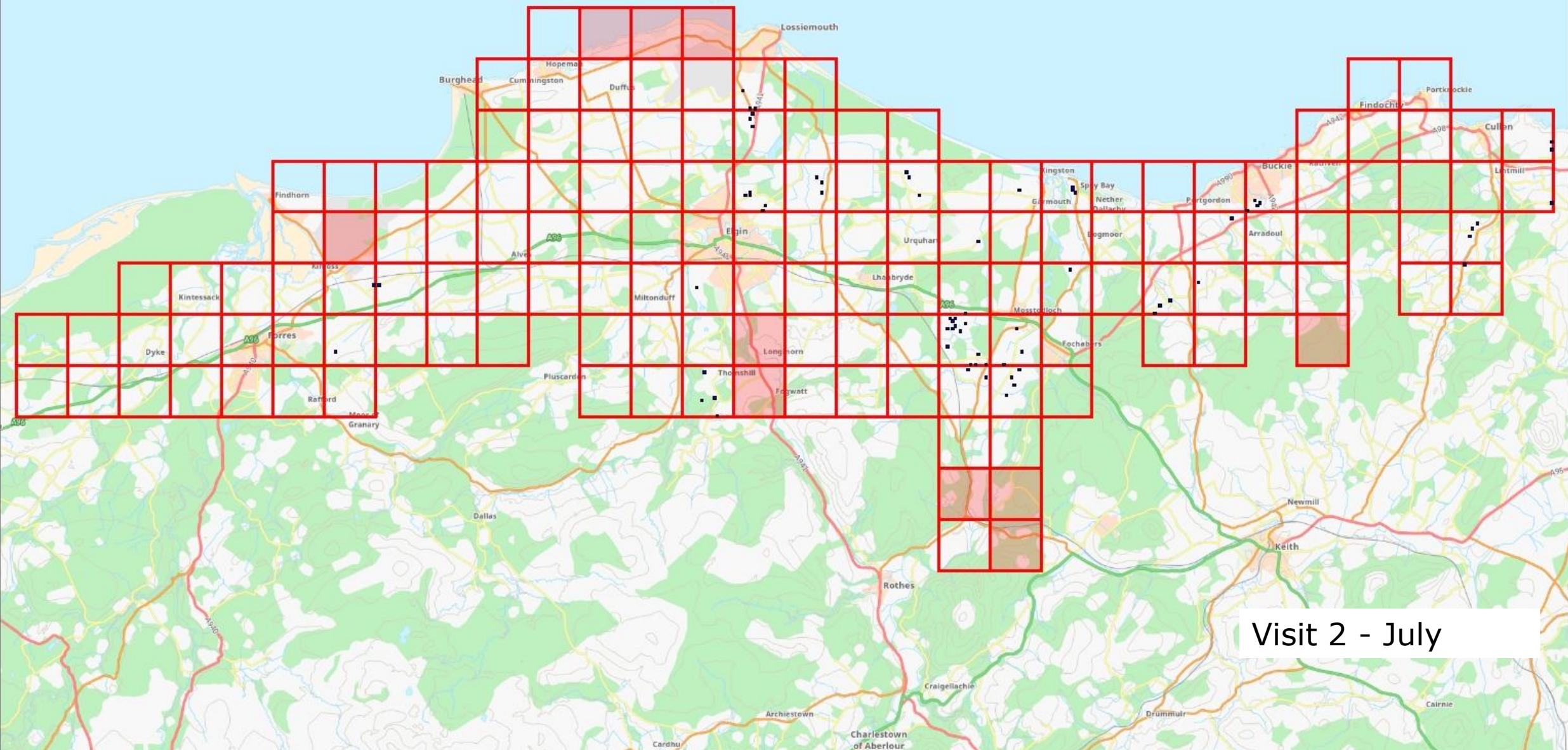
Distribution of Singing Males per Tetrad

No. of Singing Males	Number of Tetrads
0	103
1	11
2	7
3	6
4	3
5	3
8	1
16	1





Visit 1 - June

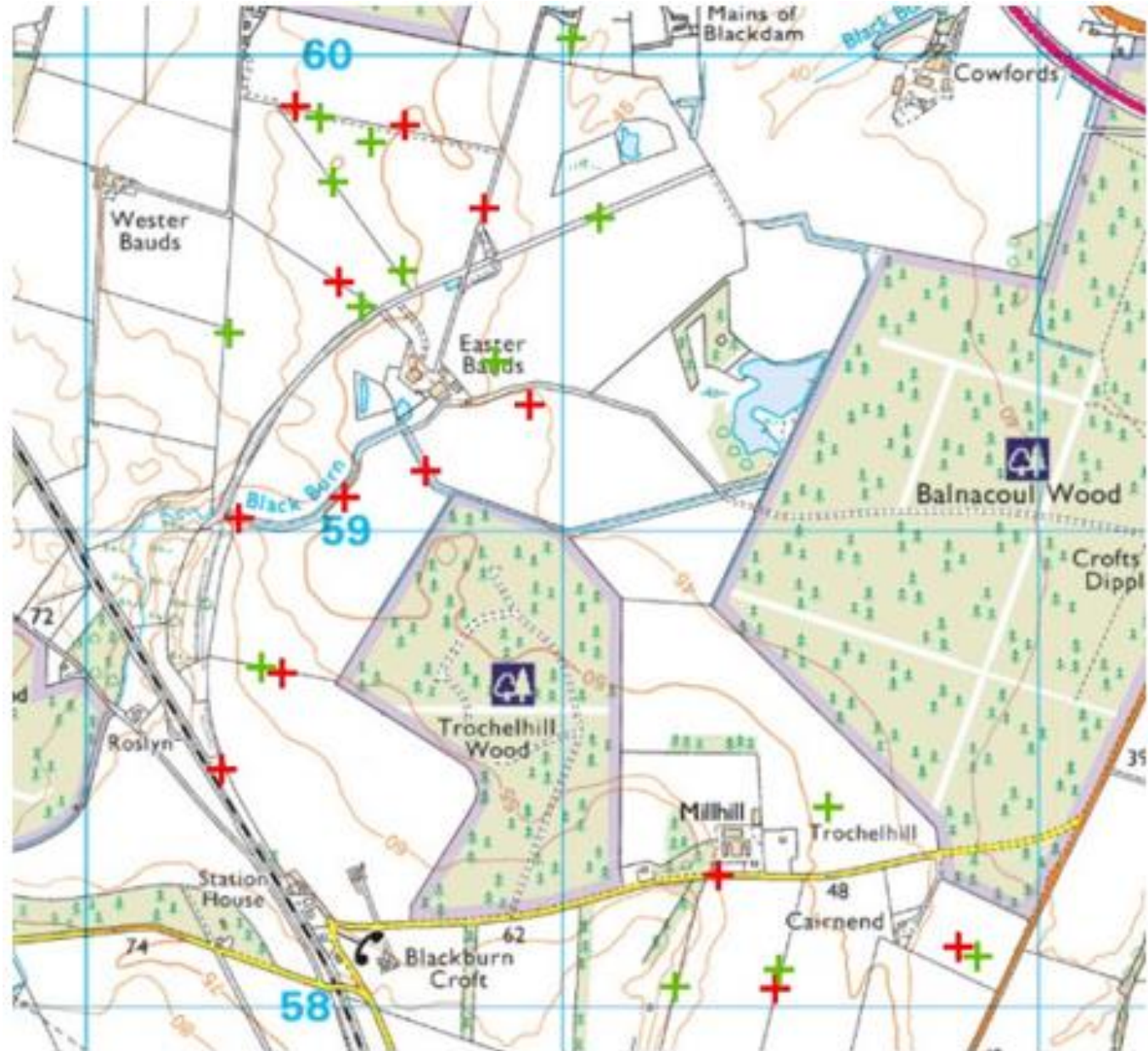


Visit 2 - July

Results

Square with highest number of singing males

16 recorded on both visits



Results – other species

- 3 Tetrads recorded Kestrel
(4 in total)
- 5 Tetrads recorded Grey
Partridge (10 in total)
- 2 Tetrads recorded Quail
(3 in total)



Corn Bunting Survey 2025 - Results

Observations

- Early harvest this year so many birds not present or singing on 2nd visit
- Unless birds laid first clutch in mid-May, unlikely any broods successful.



Corn Bunting Survey – Summary Table

Category	Details
BTO Atlas 1 (1968-72)	23 10km squares; 11 confirmed; 6 probable
BTO Atlas 2 (1988-91)	7 of 12 10km squares confirmed/probable
BTO Atlas 3 (2008-11)	6 10km squares; 4 confirmed/probable
NE Scotland Atlas (2002-06)	26 tetrads; 6 10km squares
1997 Census	46 singing males
1986-87 Survey	26 localities
2025 SOC Survey	39 tetrads; 94 singing males

Summary

- 135 Tetrads surveyed by 29 surveyors
- 39 Tetrads – CB recorded
- 97 Tetrads – no CB recorded
- 32 Tetrads with singing males
- 94 Singing males
- Higher densities in the east
- Only one bird recorded west of Forres
- Information useful for targeting agri-environment schemes
- Baseline to monitor changes





Thank You!