



Our Common Cause:
Our Upland Commons

Enabling a
shared future
for all



Whinchat/moorland bird project



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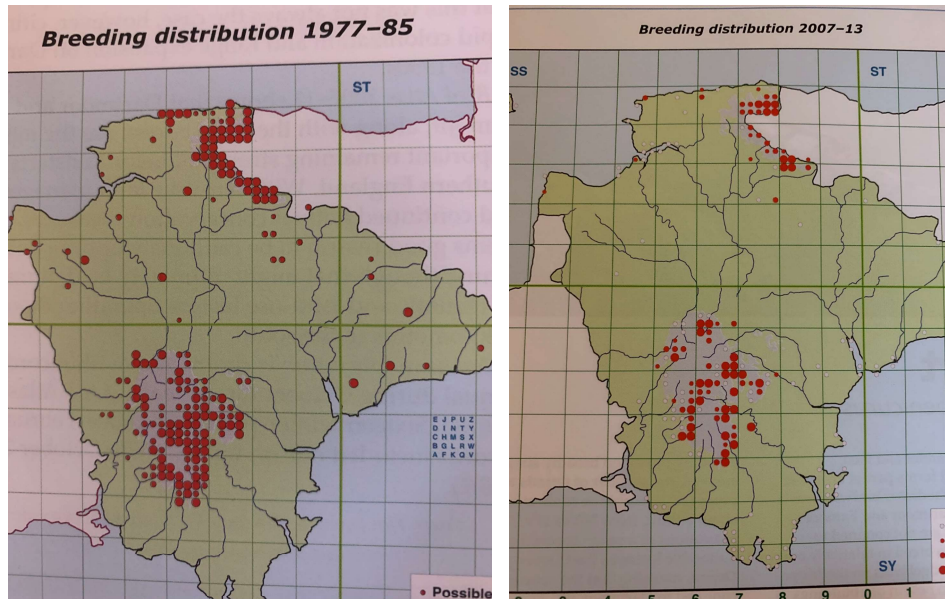


Project rationale and aim

- Whinchat, and many other moorland birds, are of high conservation concern
- E.g. Whinchats: -56% decline nationally (1995-2017)
- Range contraction into the uplands; also declining in the uplands
- Whinchat select areas with higher bracken cover, low density of trees and favour valley bottoms
- We have gaps in our understanding of what this species needs
- **AIM** - To further our understanding of whinchat, and other bird populations, and their habitats to inform discussions on moorland management.

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Whinchat change in Devon



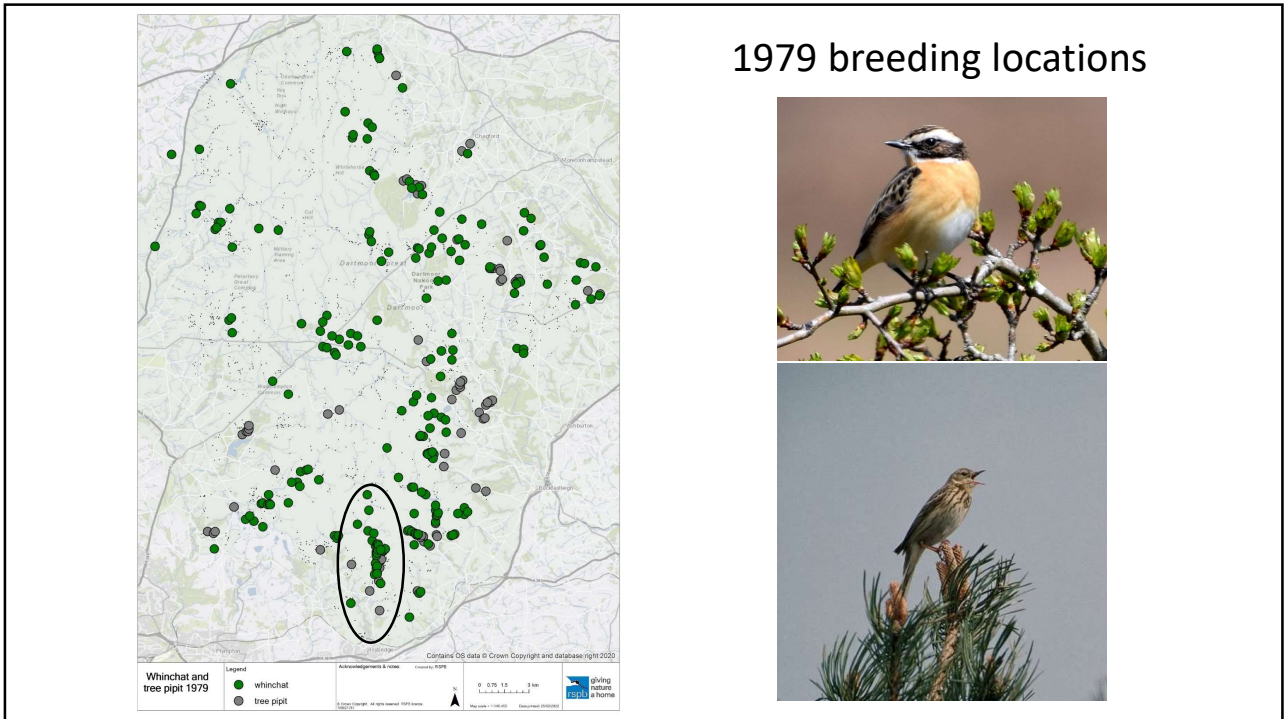
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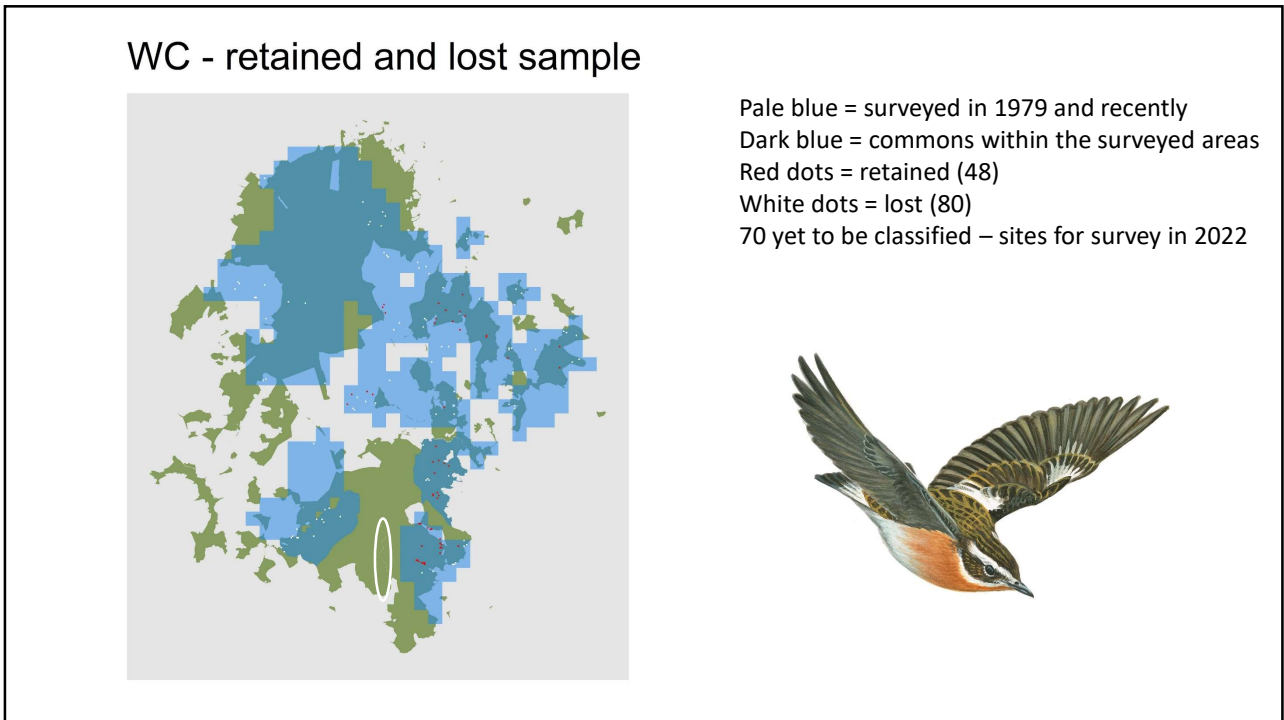
Project approach

- Population distribution change from 1979 to recent (c last 5 years) – locations where retained or lost
- We will also look at tree pipit and cuckoo
- Collect habitat data at retained/lost locations
- Working across Dartmoor moorland to get adequate sample size
- Additional bird survey work in important areas without recent survey or for verification
- Cuckoo – Devon Atlas and remote sensing data
- Analysis to assess if particular habitat features explain presence/absence of species
- Reporting and results sharing

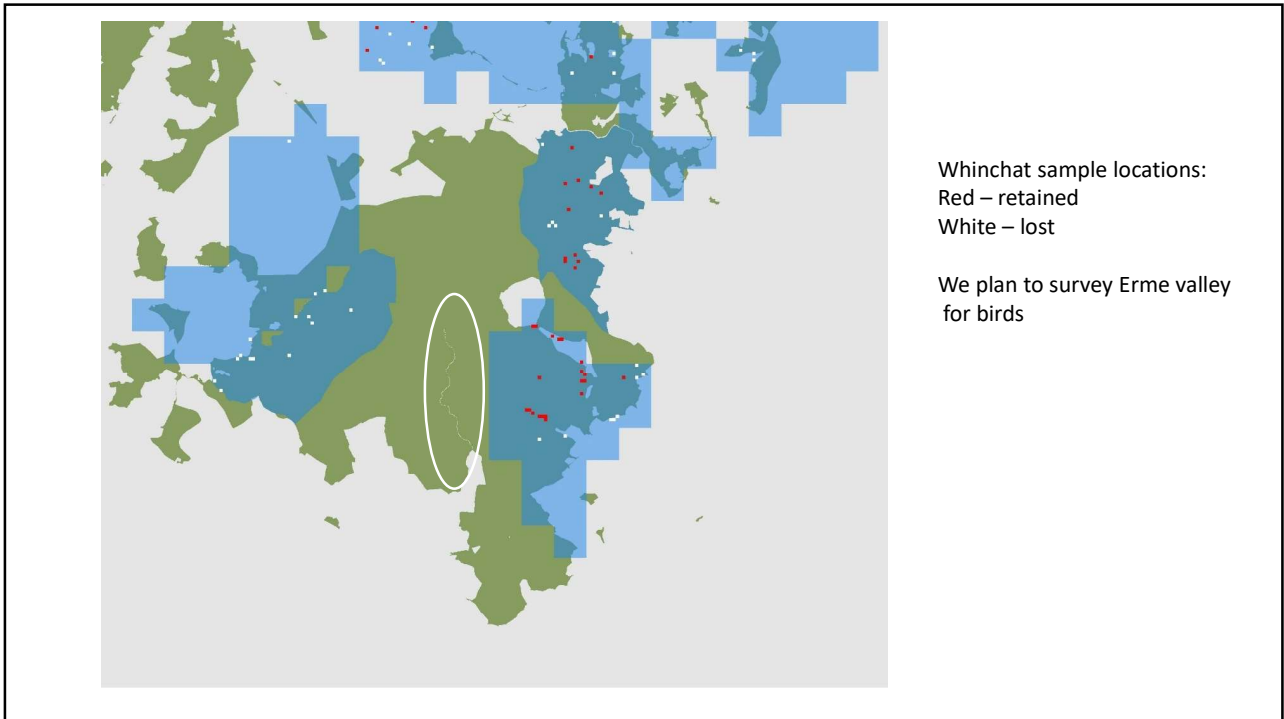
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Habitat measurements

- **Broad-scale** variables, recorded separately at the 100x100m (the focal square) and 300x300m scale.
- E.g. number of trees,% bracken coverage, presence of perch features
- **Fine-scale** variables, recorded at 30 evenly spaced points along two parallel transects (15 points per transect) within the focal (100m x 100m) square.
- E.g. vegetation height and density

This is how it will work....

16:15

Whinchat Veg Survey

Points:

Point: *

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 10
11 12 13 14 15
16 17 18 19 20
21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30

Veg height non-br applicable? *

Yes No

Veg height non-br: *

Max height within a 5cm radius of the cane

mm

Tallest non-br species: *

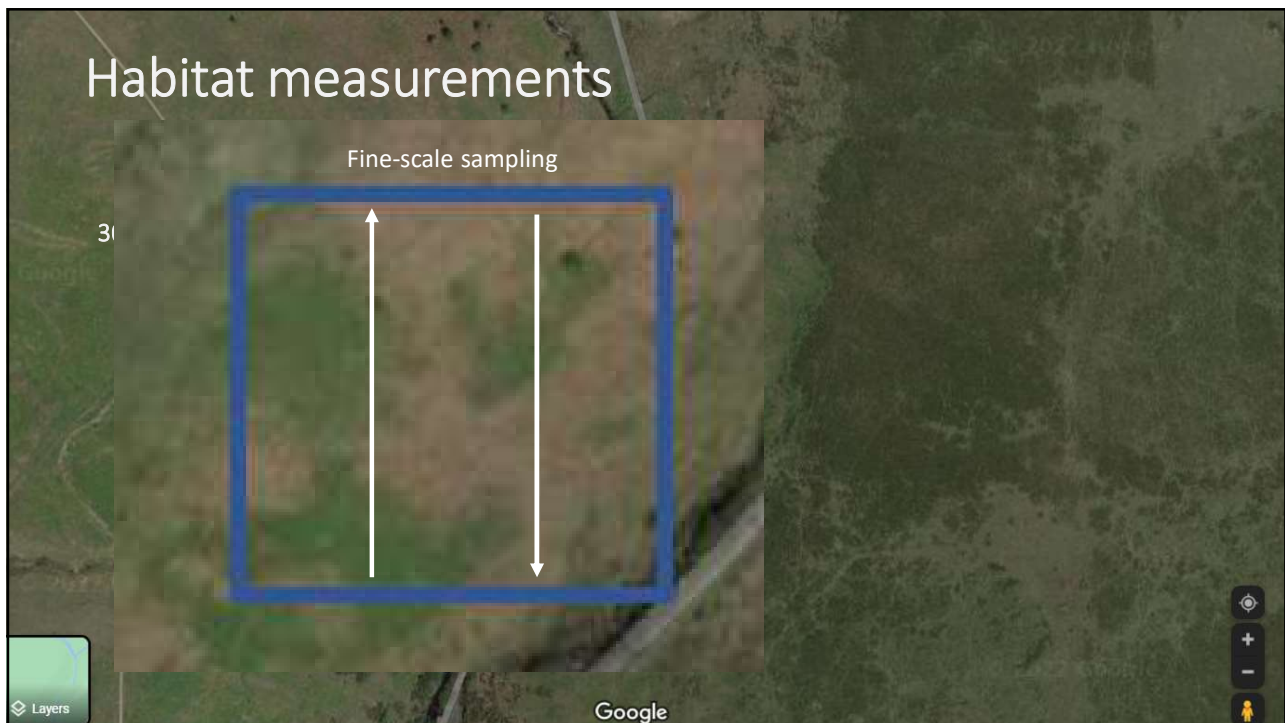
Purple moor-grass Matt grass
 Fescues Common bent
 Cotton grass Other grasses
 Ericaceous vegetation Tall rush
 Gorse Other woody shrubs

Bracken height applicable? *

Yes No

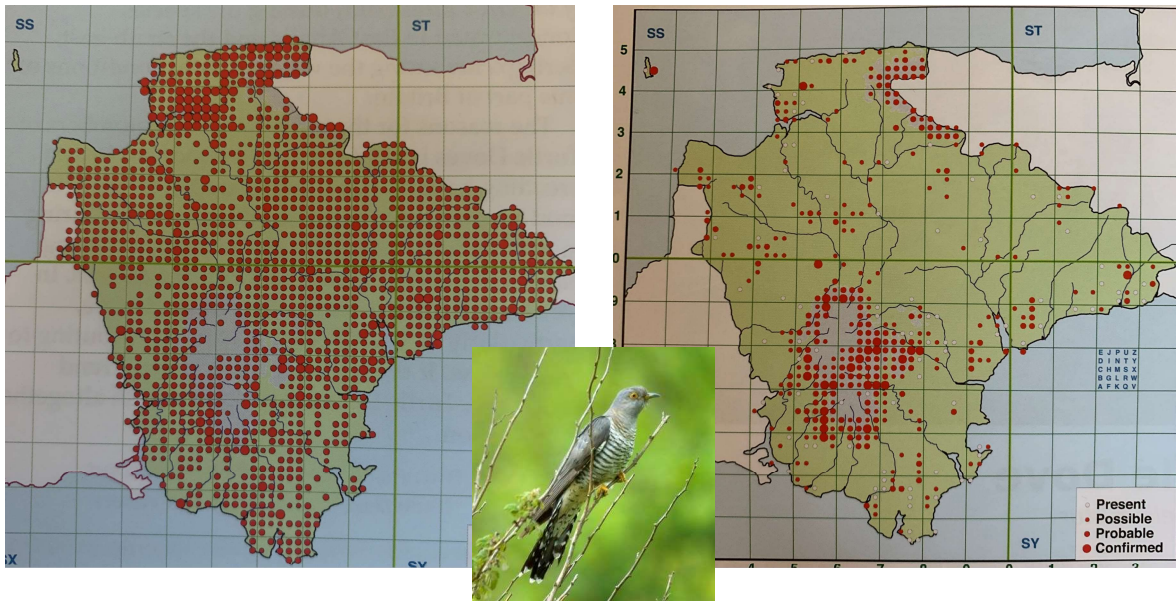
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Habitat measurements



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Cuckoo change in Devon



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photos: Fiona Freshney

Engagement and outputs

- Site visits during the season
- Presentation, results and site visits at the end of the project to share and discuss findings
- Results will be published
- Presentation for a wider audience
- Anything else that might be useful for commoners?
- Any other questions?

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