

## Item 42.92

Lloyd, L.C. (1943) *Trans. CSVFC.* 1943:71  
**Shrewsbury rookeries re-surveyed.**

71

### **SHREWSBURY ROOKERIES RE-SURVEYED**

By **L. C. Lloyd, F.L.S., M.B.O.U.**

(SUMMARY)

Rookeries in an area of fourteen square miles centred on Shrewsbury were surveyed in April, 1939, and a detailed account of the results was published in these *Transactions* (Lloyd, 1939). In 1944, in connection with the rook investigation organized by Mr. James Fisher on behalf of the British Trust for Ornithology, I was asked to repeat the survey in order to find out what changes, if any, had taken place in the rook population of the district during the five years which had elapsed since the earlier survey. The enquiry was undertaken in response to a request from the Agricultural Research Council, who were anxious to ascertain whether there had been any significant increase in the country's rook population during the war.

The results of the 1944 Shrewsbury survey, compared with those of 1939, may be summarized as follows:—

	1939	1944
Nests ... ..	349	248
Estimated rook population ...	820	583
Nests per square mile ... ..	25	17.7
Acres per rook ... ..	11	15
Acres of agricultural land per rook	7.5	10

These figures represent a decline of 29 per cent in the estimated rook population of the area.

When the results of the 1944 censuses came to be studied it was found that Shrewsbury was one of the very few areas where the rook population had decreased during the years 1939-44. Taking England as a whole, during the ten years 1934-44, the rook population increased significantly—probably by more than 9 per cent, and possibly by as much as 27 per cent (Fisher, 1944). The increase was particularly marked in some of the East Midland counties centred on the Trent basin—Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Rutland and the Soke of Peterborough. In the neighbouring county of Cheshire, however, decreases were noted in both areas which were surveyed—4.3 per cent in Wirral and 30 per cent in the Marbury area, a figure which corresponds strikingly with Shrewsbury's 29 per cent decline. The possible causes of such decreases are obscure, and cannot profitably be discussed without a good deal of research and field-work which at present cannot be undertaken.

Acknowledgment is made of the help given in this enquiry by Miss Mackenzie, Mrs. Thickpenny, Mr. A. L. Lloyd and Mr. W. Davies.

#### **References**

Fisher, James (1944): A summary of censuses of the breeding population of rooks in England; with the results of the censuses in 1944. British Trust for Ornithology, Edward Grey Institute, Oxford.

Lloyd, L. C. (1939): A survey of rookeries in the Shrewsbury district. *Trans. Caradoc and Severn Valley Field Club*, vol. xi, pp. 76-93.