

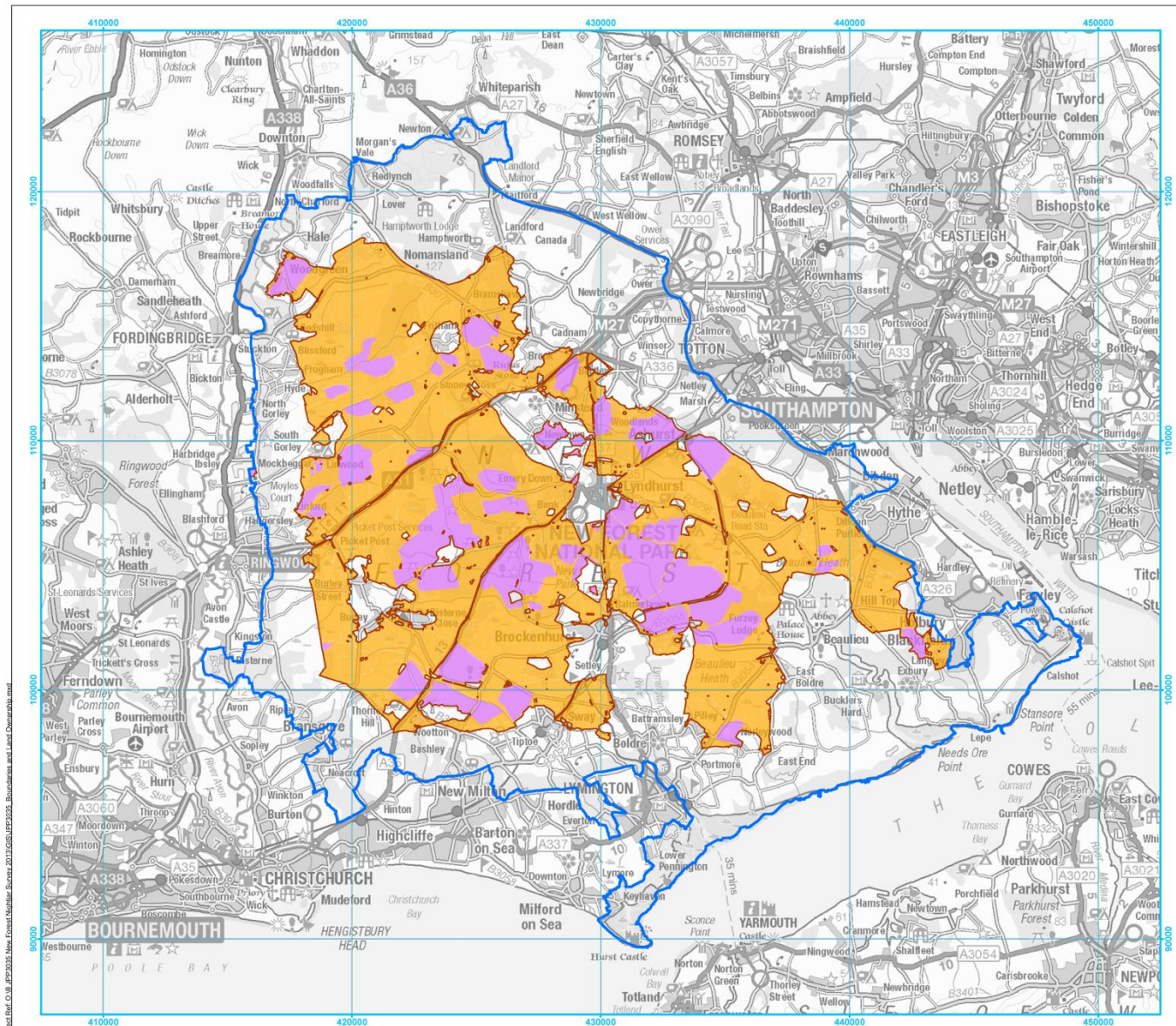
# **New Forest National Park**

## **Survey of Nightjar 2013**



## Background to the study

- As part of the HLS agreement there is a requirement to undertake surveys for bird species for which the New Forest Special Protection Area is designated.
- The HLS board identified the requirement for delivery of a comprehensive survey of Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* in 2013 in accordance with the methodology used in the national surveys.
- RPS were commissioned to undertake a survey of breeding Nightjar on land covered by the HLS scheme.
- In addition, survey was also required to cover suitable habitat outside the HLS area but forming part of the Crown Lands managed by the Forestry Commission.
- The objective of the study was to provide a comprehensive and robust dataset.



#### Legend

- New Forest National Park
- Survey boundary
- Forestry Commission Inclosures not included in the HLS Scheme area
- High Level Stewardship Scheme area

Rev	Date	Amendment	Name	Checked

■ Data Source: RPS 2013

Status: **FINAL**



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■ Client: New Forest National Park Authority  
Project: New Forest National Park Survey of Nightjar 2013

Title: Extent of Boundaries and Land Ownerships

Scale: 1:150,000@A3

Projection: British National Grid Datum: OSGB36  
Date: 06/12/2013 Drawn: BF Checked: NG


■ Job Ref: JPP3035 Figure No: 1.1 Revision: **A**

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# Nightjar



- Nocturnal – slightly larger than a thrush
- Churring 
- In the UK Nightjar is principally a species of lowland heath and young conifer plantations
- Particularly like woodland-heathland interface and adjacent areas which are rich in invertebrate prey.
- Adaptations to nocturnal feeding

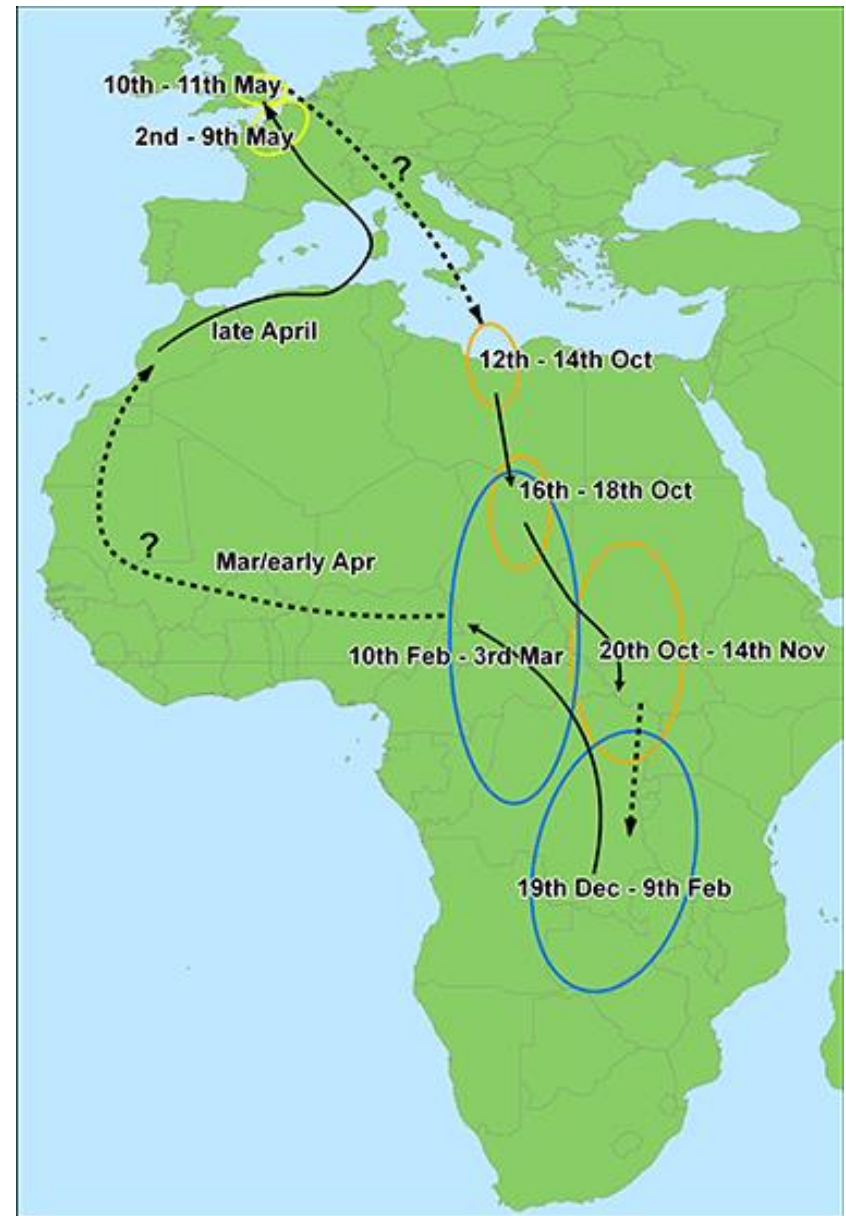


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## Migration

- Arrive in May
- Leave in August
- By October reached north Africa
- Spend the winter months in the rainforest of the Democratic Republic of Congo
- Leave the wintering grounds in mid-February



## Nightjar in the New Forest



- Designated as a Special Protection Area for several bird species – one of which is Nightjar.
- UK population at time of last survey in 2004 was 4,606 territorial males.
- The New Forest held 629 territorial males at the time of the last survey.

## Survey Preparation

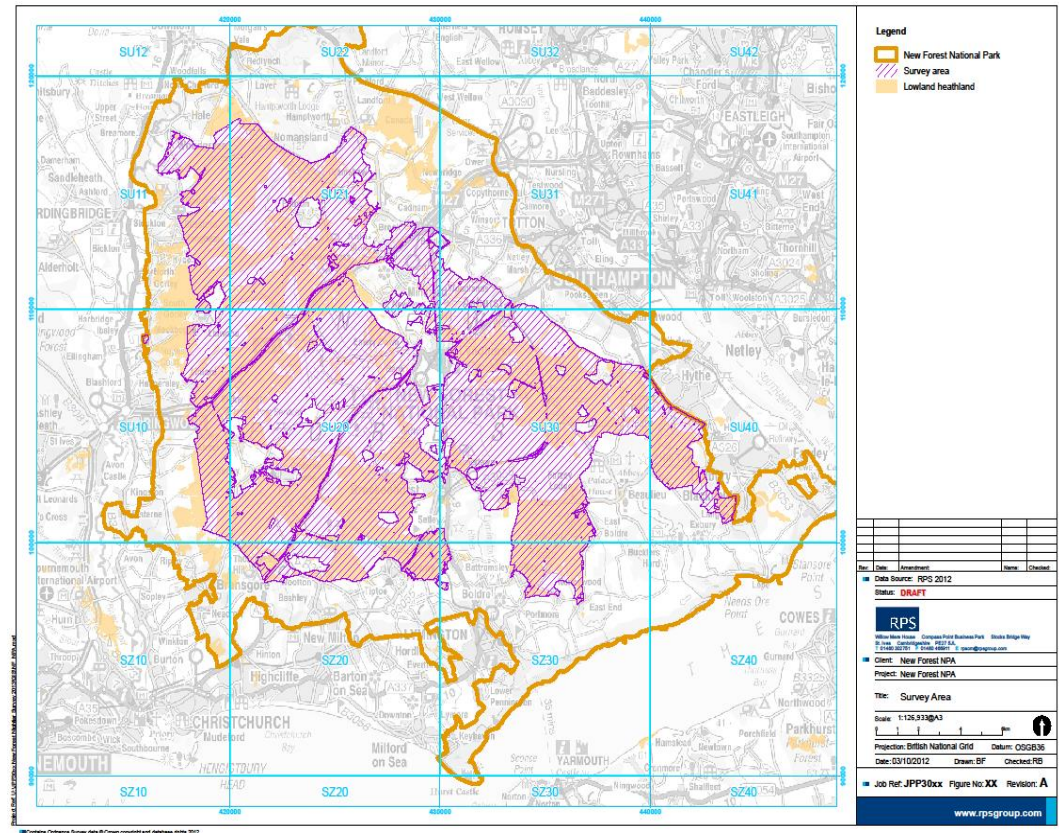
Two phases:

- Identifying suitable habitat to be surveyed.
- Determining survey units and plotting routes.

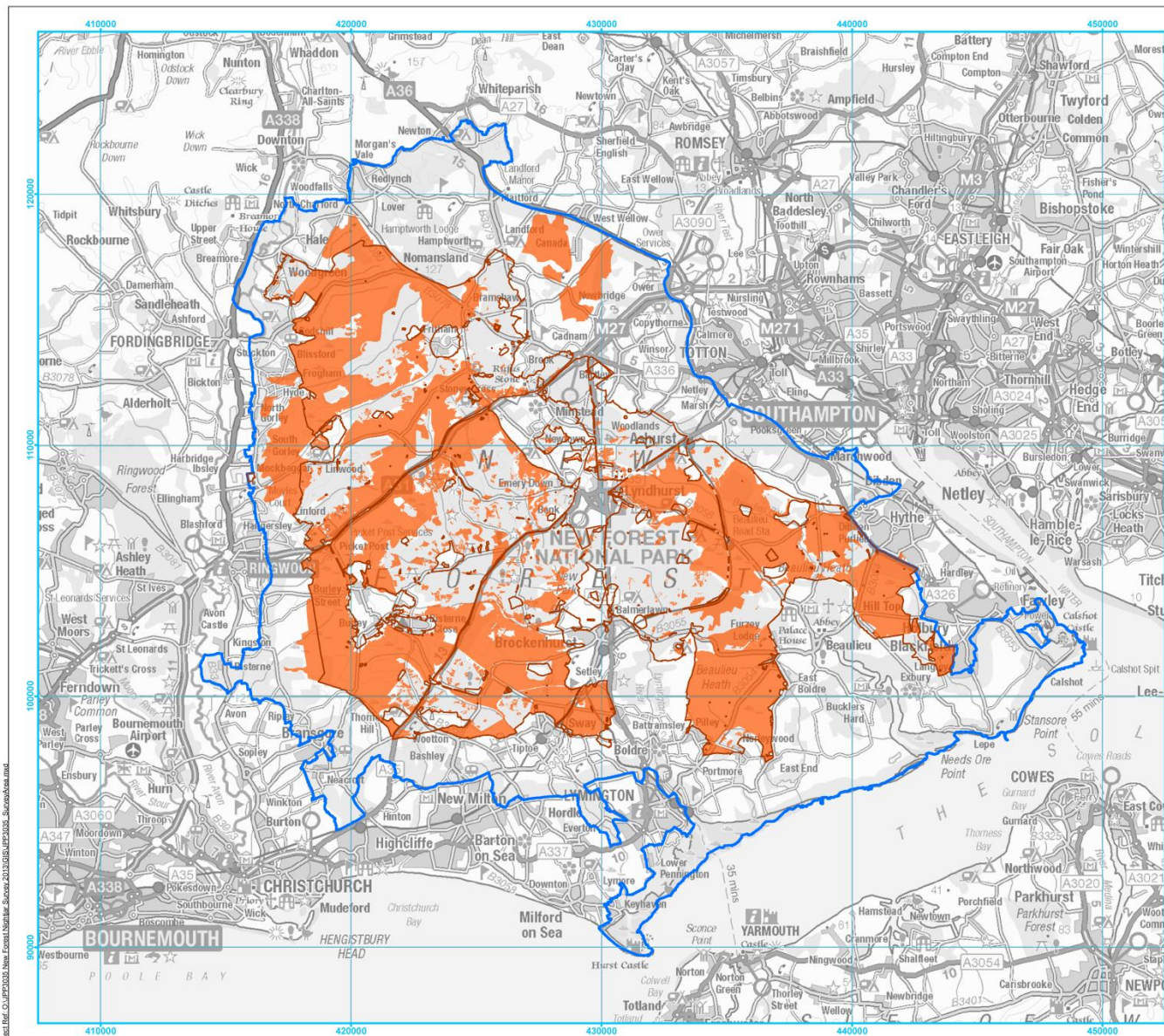


# Area to be surveyed

- GIS to map habitats
- Various datasets supplied by Natural England and the Forestry Commission
- Criteria used to determine habitat







#### Legend

- New Forest National Park
- Survey boundary
- Surveyed area (with suitable habitat)

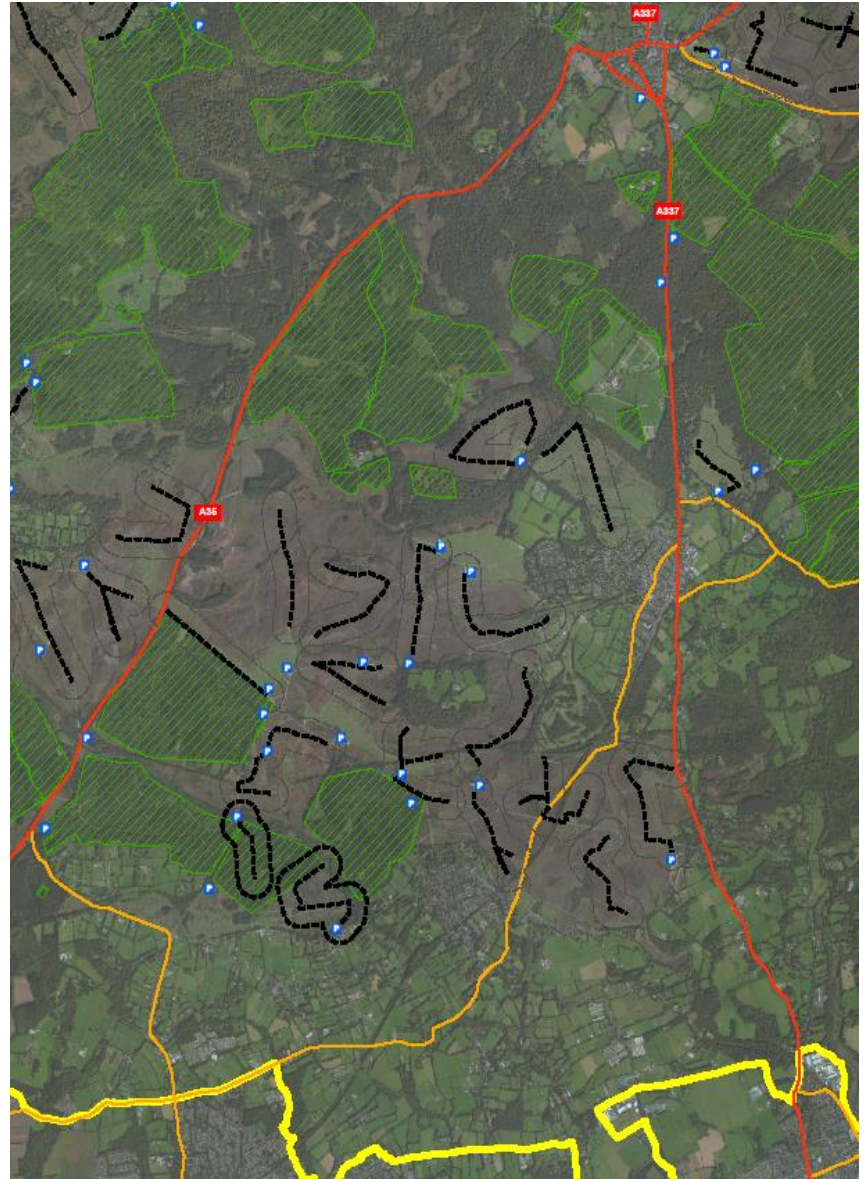
Rev.	Date	Amendment:	Name:	Checked:
<p>■ Data Source: RPS 2013</p> <p>Status: <b>FINAL</b></p>				
<p><b>RPS</b></p> <p>Willow Mere House   Compass Point Business Park   Stocks Bridge Way          St Ives   Cambridgeshire   PE27 5LJ          T 01480 302751   F 01480 499911   E <a href="mailto:rps@rpsgroup.com">rps@rpsgroup.com</a></p>				
<p>■ Client: New Forest National Park Authority</p> <p>Project: New Forest National Park Survey of Nightjar 2013</p>				
<p>Title: Extent of Area Surveyed</p>				
<p>Scale: 1:150,000@A3</p>				
<p>Projection: British National Grid   Datum: OSGB36</p>				
<p>Date: 06/12/2013   Drawn: BF   Checked: NG</p>				
<p>■ Job Ref: JPP3035   Figure No: 2.1   Revision: A</p>				

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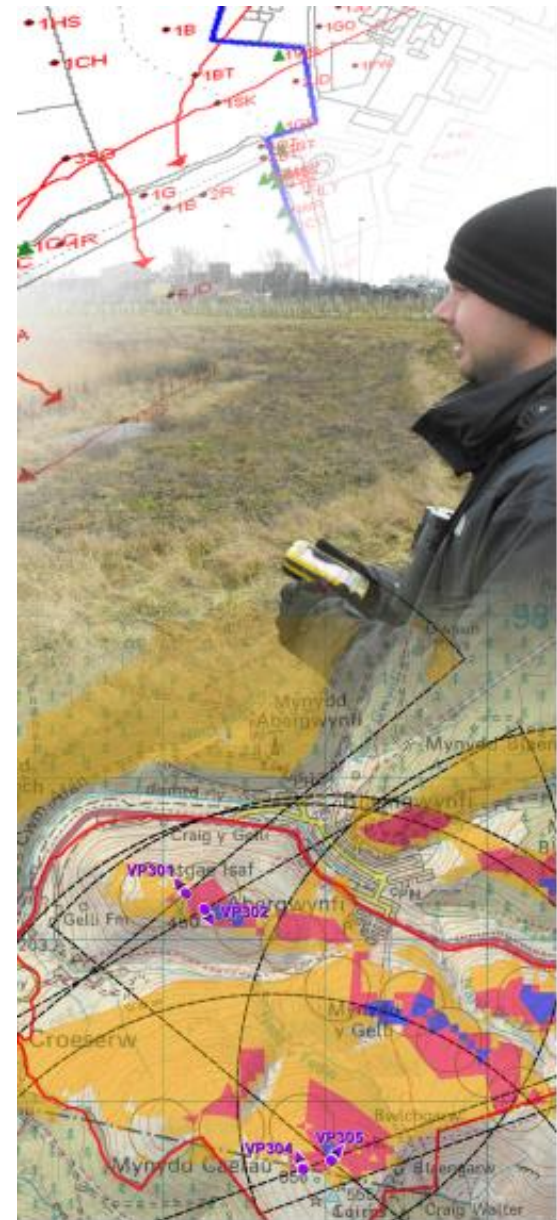
## Identifying survey routes

- Criteria from national survey methodology
  1. Each survey should cover no more than 80ha
  2. Observer should walk within 200m of all potentially suitable habitat



## Fieldwork

- Two visits between last week of May and mid July
- One visit at dusk and one at dawn
- Recorded on handheld computers directly in GIS

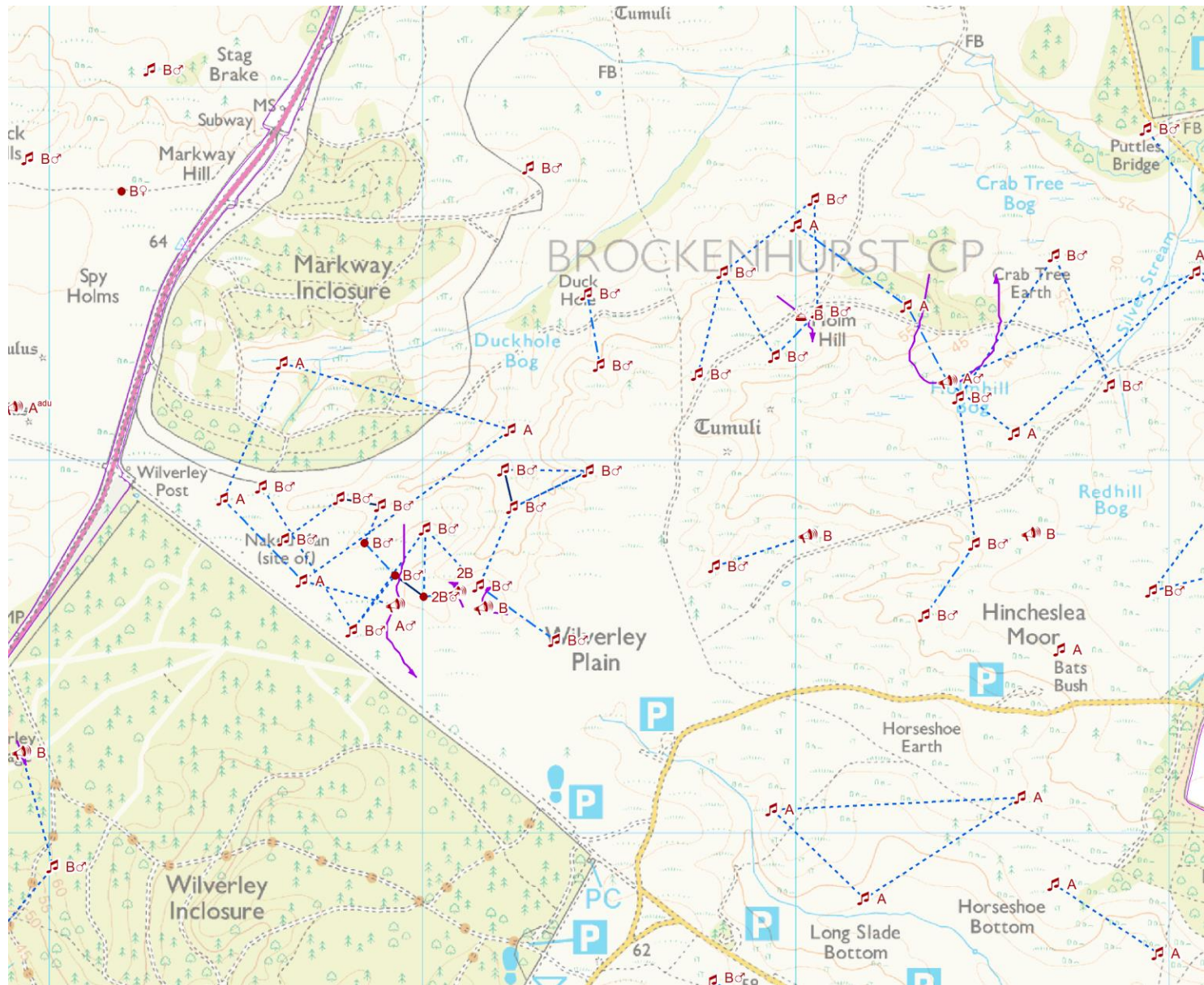






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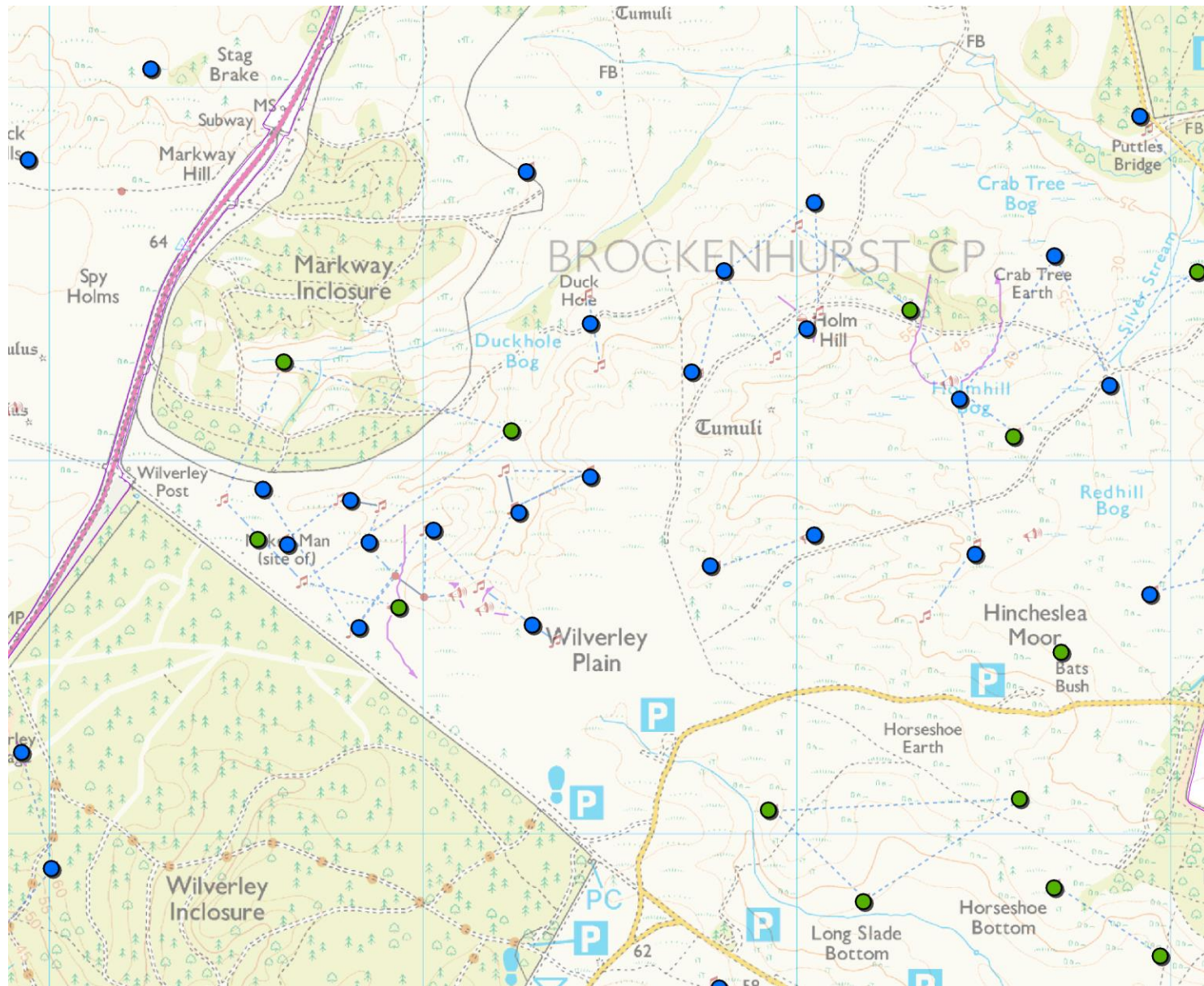
Raw data





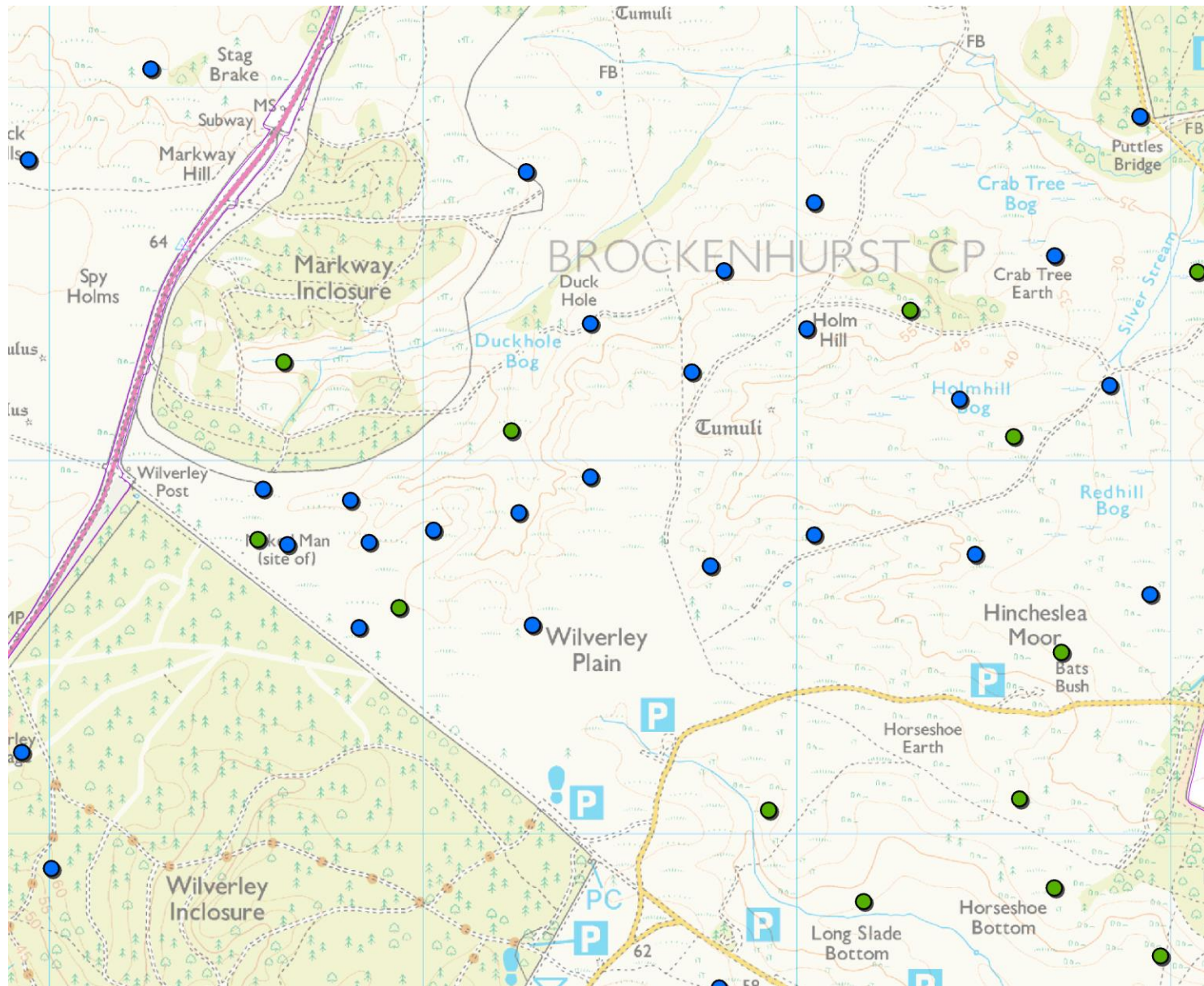
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Individual  
males for  
visits 1 and 2



RPS

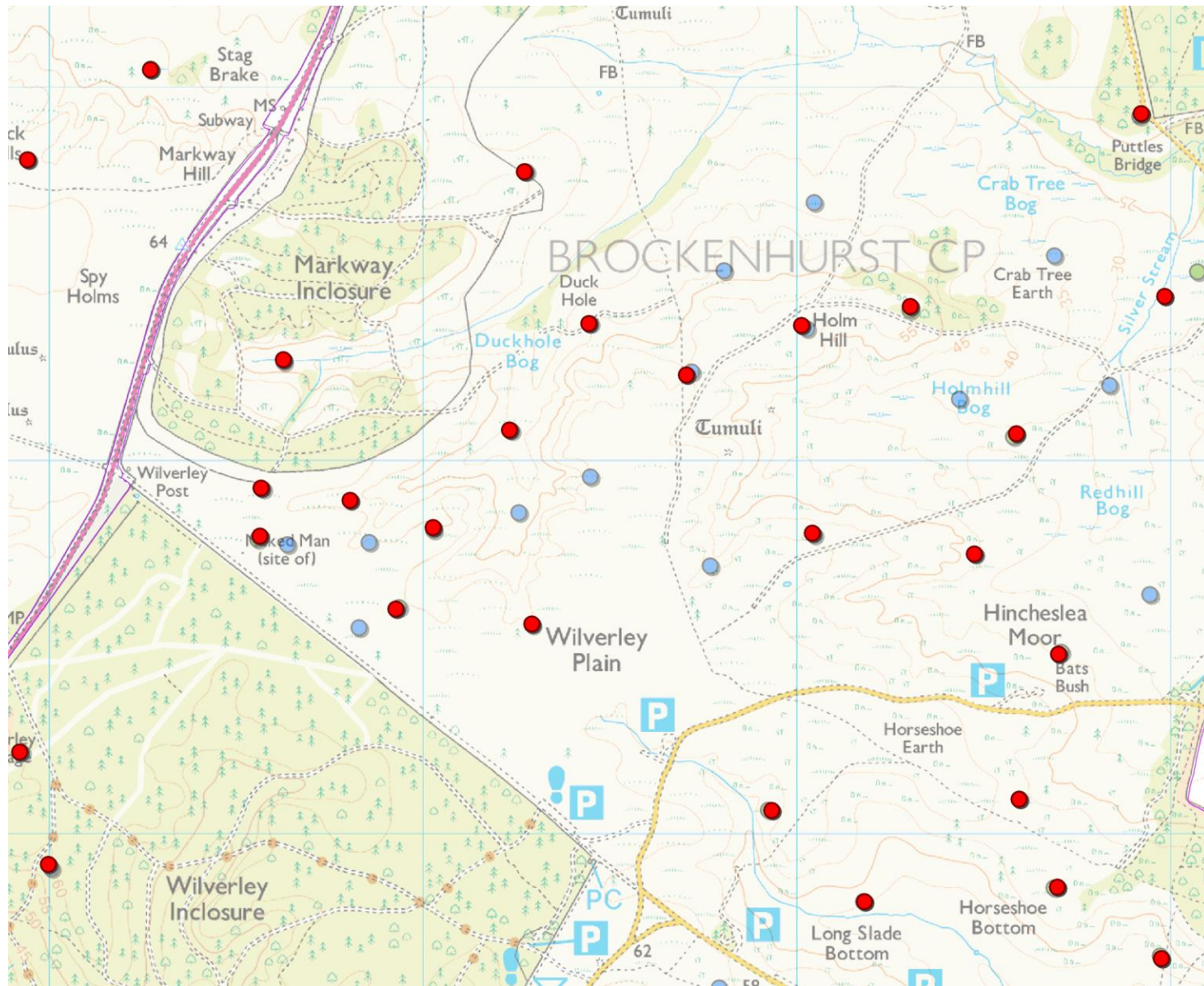
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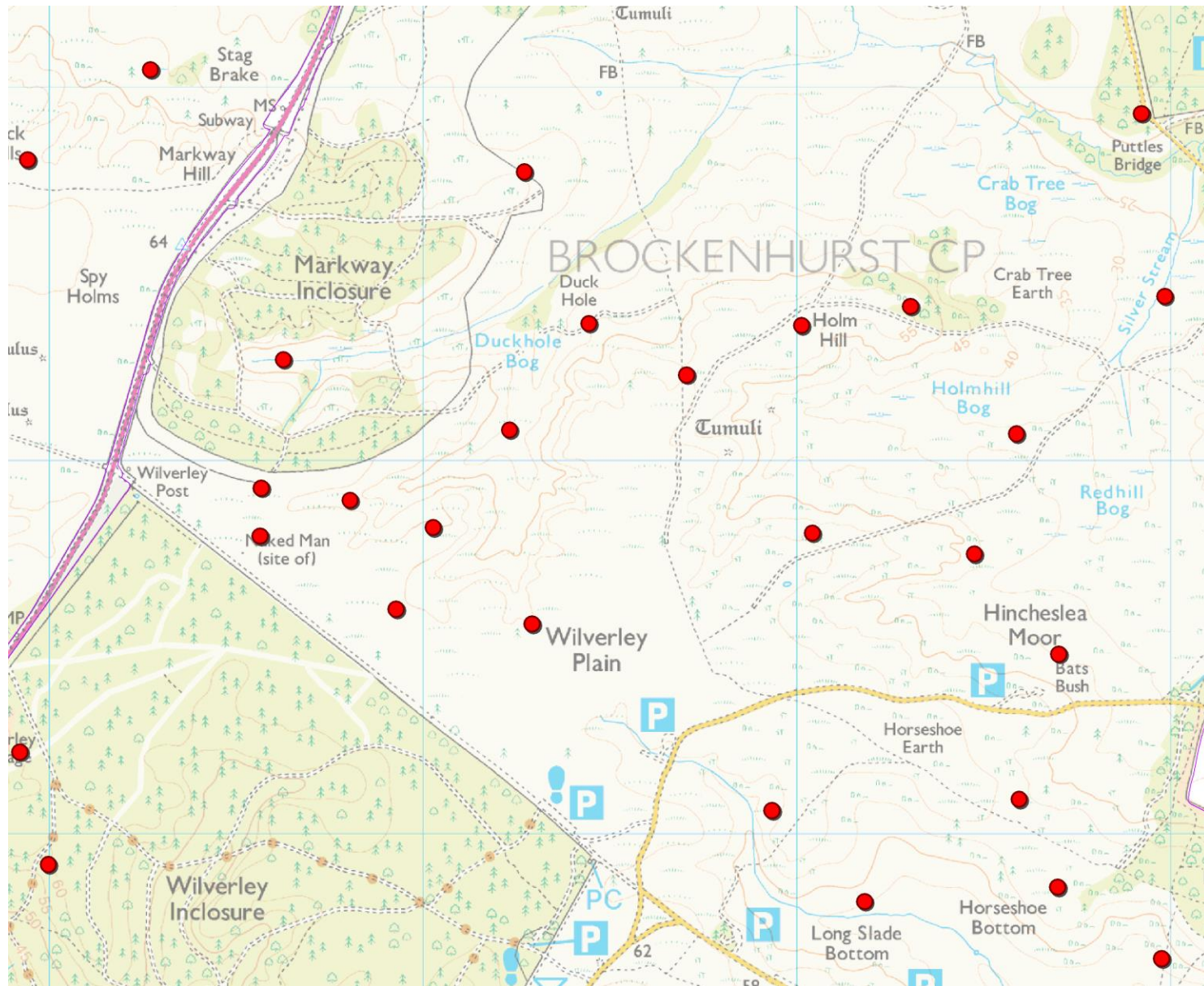
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Determine  
number of  
territories  
from clusters  
of  
registrations



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Define  
territory  
centre points



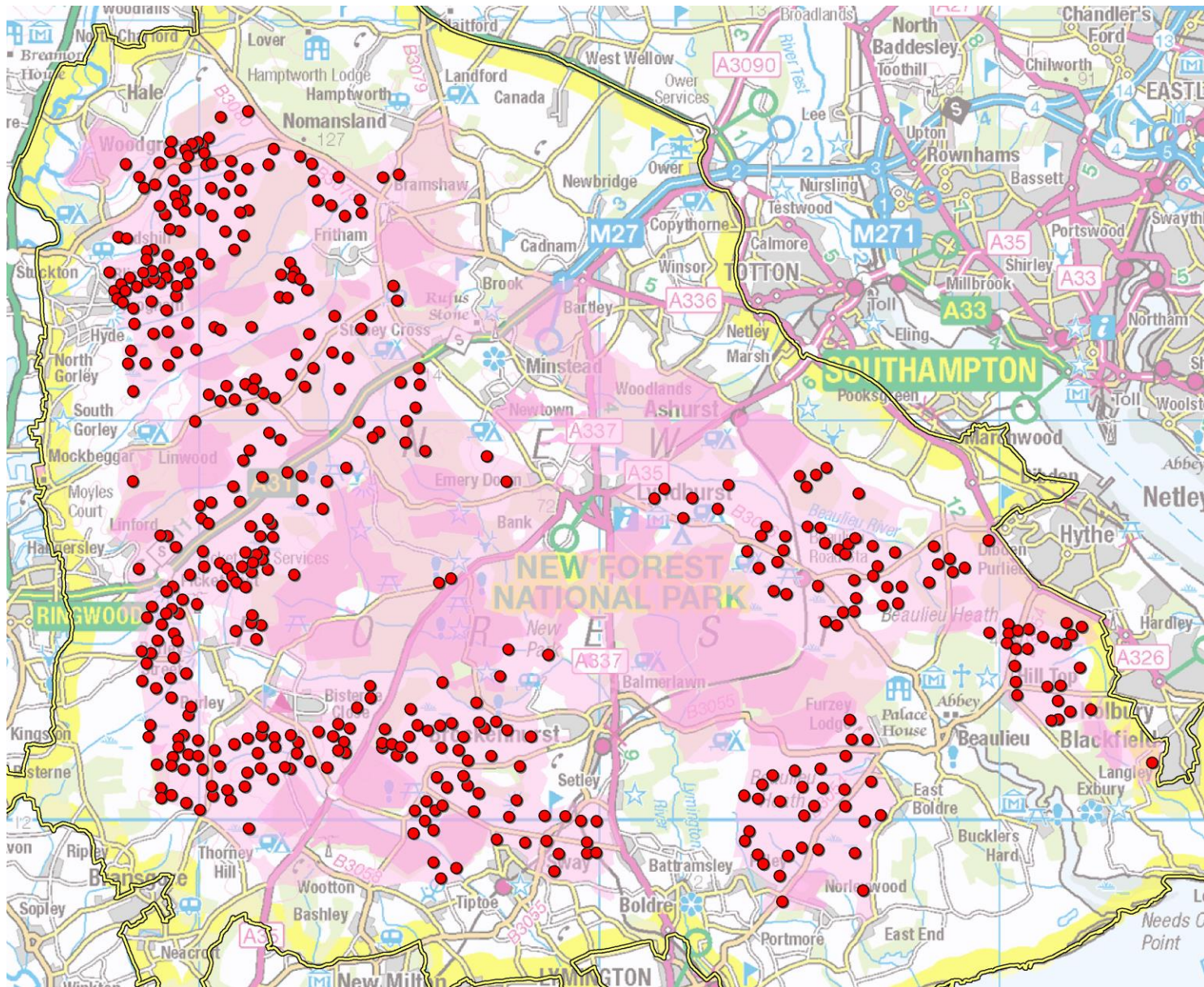
## Results

- Total breeding population of 544.



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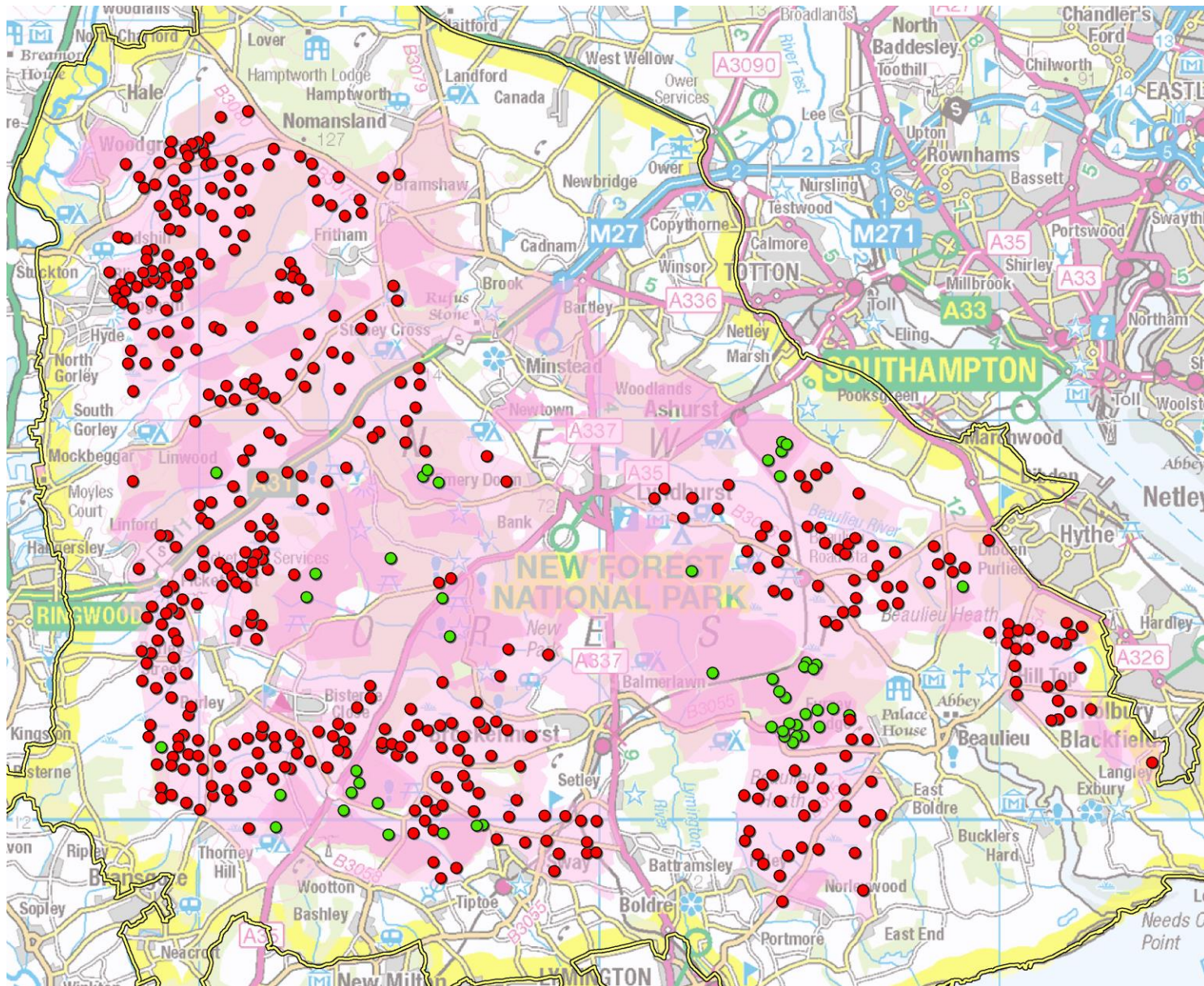
441 territories  
on land  
within the  
HLS  
scheme





RPS

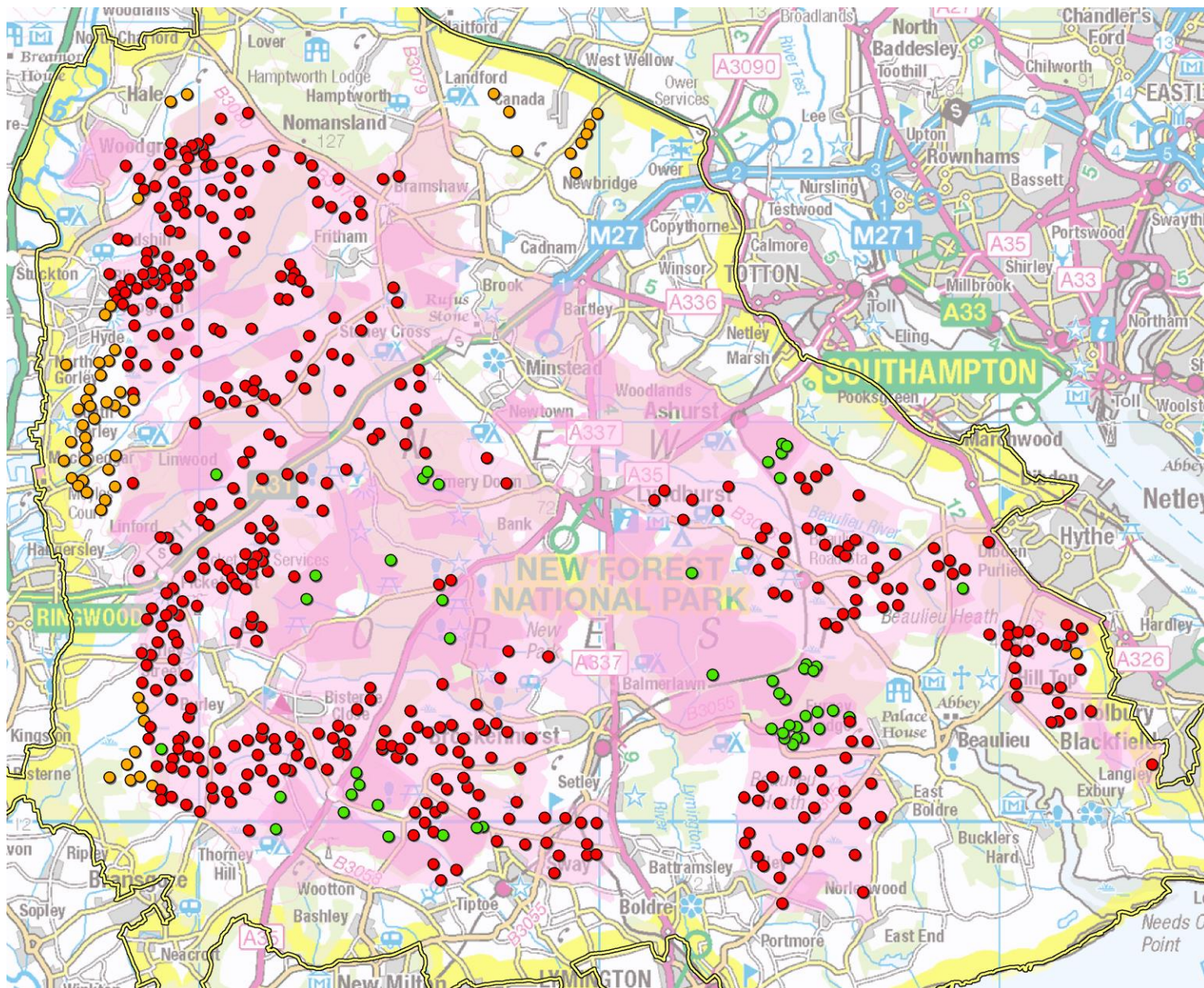
49 territories  
within the  
forestry  
enclosures  
outside the  
HLS  
scheme





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A further 54 territories on land outside of these boundaries but within the National Park.



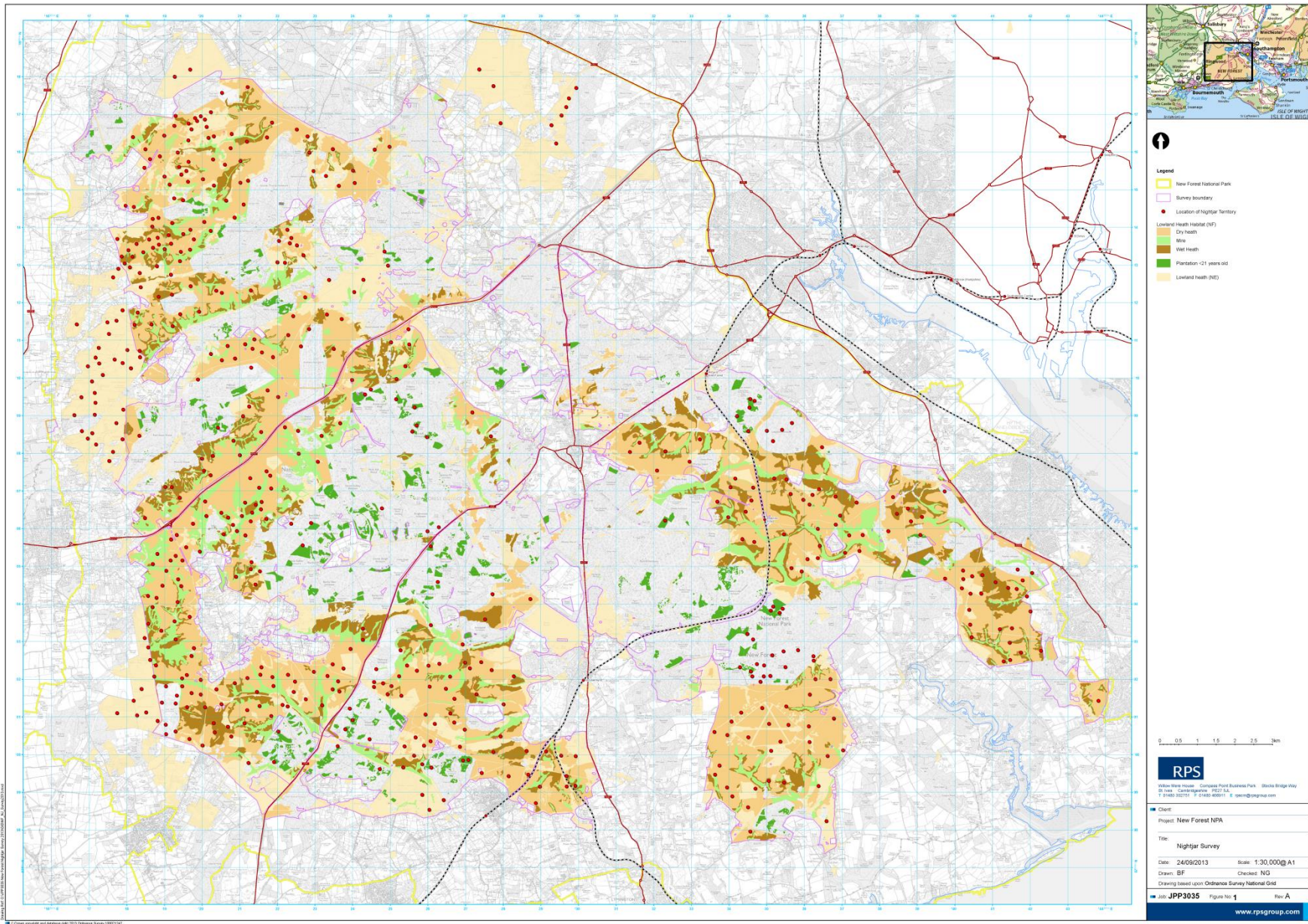
## The New Forest Nightjar population

- Given slight variations in technique and the previous survey being undertaken over two years it is considered that the population is stable.
- Based on last national survey in which the population was considered to be 4,606 territorial males the 2013 population represents 12% of the UK breeding population.

## Habitat preference

- 78% of Nightjar territory centres were located on, or within 100m of, dry heath.





## Conclusions

The dataset collected provides:

- A robust baseline of the current breeding population of Nightjar
- Detail and methods in inform future surveys of Nightjar
- A basis upon which to assess factors influencing the breeding population and distribution



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