

# Extreme mobility of a Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* brood

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Wader nesting sites are not always suitable as a feeding territory for the young. Thus parents will frequently lead their broods to a better site, sometimes several hundred metres away. They may change locations again if modifications are occurring in the habitats. Distances moved by the Lapwing *V. vanellus* during the first two weeks are, in general, rather limited. Redfern (1982) found that after hatching, broods move distances between some tens of metres and 200 m. Cramp & Simmons (1983) indicated that broods will be 50 to 120 m from their nest in their first week and up to 250 m away by the second week. Imboden (1968) and Galbraith (1988) respectively mentioned a brood 1.2 km distant from its nest three days after hatching, and another one 1.5 km away from its nest. This latter record appears to be the maximum distance recorded in the literature.

Whilst ringing Lapwing chicks in the Breton Marsh, we recorded a more extensive movement. On April 23 1991, around noon, two chicks aged three days were ringed in the vicinity of the village of Le Perrier (46°49' N, 2°00'W). On May 2, two chicks about twelve days old were captured at a 2 km straight-line distance from the site of the first capture (Figure 1). One of these two chicks had been ringed at the initial capture site.

The area is covered exclusively by grazed and ungrazed meadows. Grazed meadows are favourable for chick rearing, which is not the case for ungrazed meadows. What is more, the height of the grass makes chick movements difficult or impossible. All these meadows are separated from one another by one to five metre wide ditches, that are more or less overgrown by vegetation, some with steep banks rising more than 50 cm above water level.

During its nine day movement, this chick most probably this brood, followed a path by which it probably avoided the ungrazed meadows and those ditches too difficult to pass. It is therefore probable that the distance moved was actually far greater than 2 km.

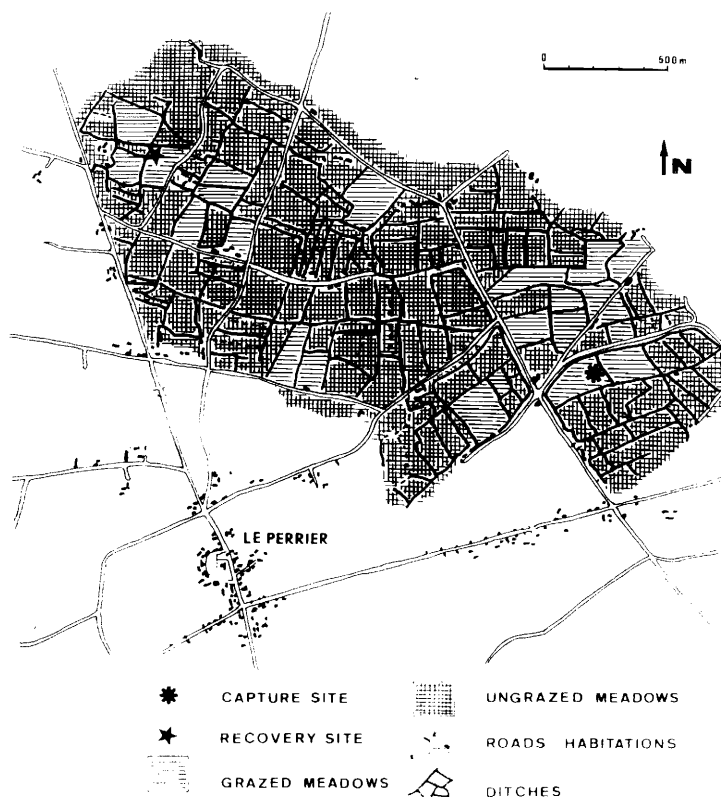


Fig.1 Capture and recovery sites of a Lapwing chick in the Breton

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