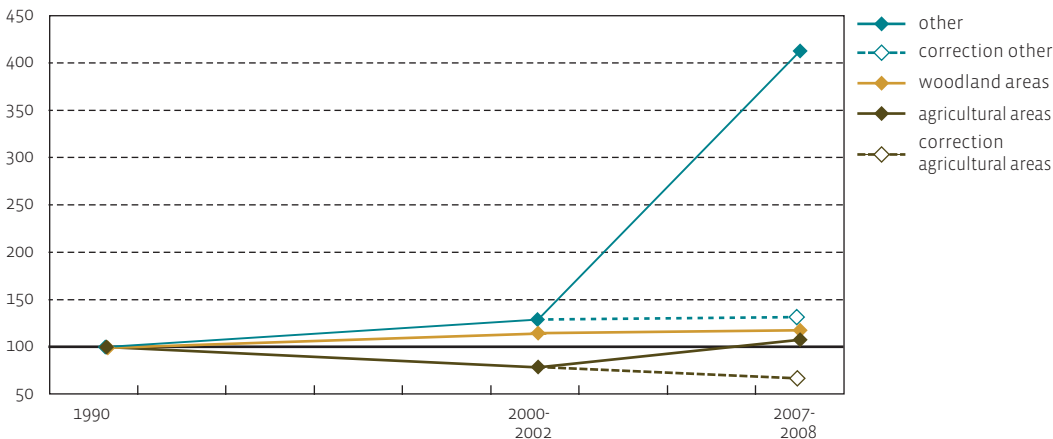




index (1990=100)



Source: www.biodiversityindicators.be (2009) based on INBO, SOVON, BTO, Vansteenwegen (2006), Vermeersch et al. (2004)

Arboreal birds making progress, but progress of birds in agriculture areas is not convincing

The European Common Bird Index describes the trend in a selection of common bird species at European level and for native birds in Flanders for woodland areas, agricultural areas and diverse habitats.

The status of the arboreal birds (e.g. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Eurasian Nuthatch) improved. The general improvement of the arboreal birds is related to the expansion of woodlands, to the effort towards a more natural tree and shrub composition and to allowing the trees to become older.

On average, the status of birds in agricultural areas is back at the level of 1990. The increase between 2000-2002 and 2007-2008 can however be entirely attributed to the strong increase of the Red-backed Shrike (from 3 to 30 breeding pairs). If we leave this species out of consideration, birds in agricultural areas appear on average to be declining by 40 % compared to 1990 (see: agricultural area corrections). The general decline of birds in agricultural areas is related to the intensification and increase in scale of agriculture (e.g. Skylark, Barn Swallow). The strong increase in the numbers of Red-backed Shrike is attributed to a strong increase from Wallonia and Germany.

The 'other' birds from various habitats (e.g. Magpie, Black Crow) improved very strongly between 2000-2002 and 2007-2008. This is however attributed entirely to two species: the Cetti's Warbler increased from 4 to 200 breeding pairs, the Streaked Fantail Warbler from 15 to 87 breeding pairs. Without these two species, which experienced an increased survival rate thanks to warmer winters, the 'other' birds remained virtually stable (see: other correction).