

# Wild Bird Cover

1

## Why?

This unharvested crop is:

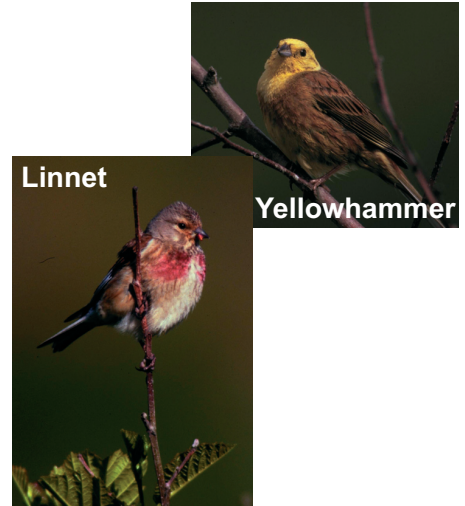
- ❖ giant bird table for seed eating birds
- ❖ habitat for tillage flora and fauna

## Seed eating birds

- Declining:
  - Intensification
  - Specialisation
  - Loss of tillage in many counties

## Seed eating birds

- Need a variety of seeds:
  - Small linseed or kale seeds - Linnet
  - Large cereal seeds – Yellowhammer  
(likes mixed cereals)



Linnet

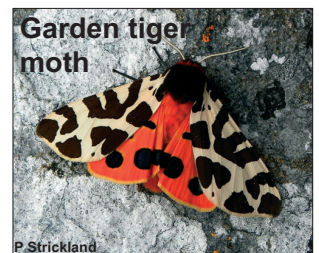
Yellowhammer

## Flowers in Wild Bird Cover

- Attract pollinators and insects



Common carder bumblebee



Garden tiger moth

## Birds and Bats

- Feed on insects

## Birds

- Feed on worms

## Birds of prey

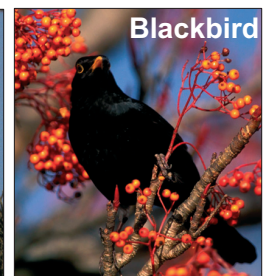
- Feed on small mammals



Leisler's bat



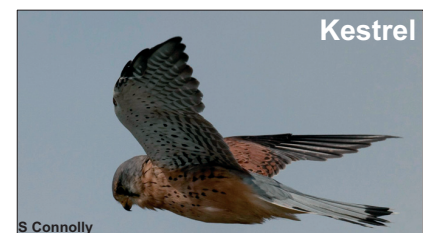
Song thrush



Blackbird



Barn owl



Kestrel

## Wild Bird Cover

- Provides cover for mammals



# Wild Bird Cover

2

**Oats & Linseed sown each year *Recommended***

- Grow in all soil types (including heavy, acid)
- Tolerates a low pH



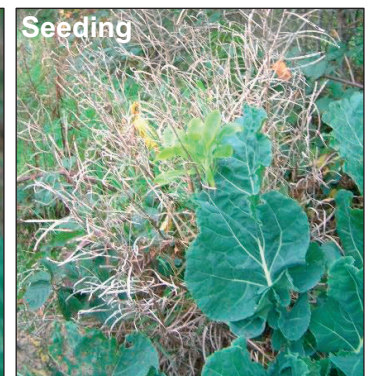
Oats and Linseed sown together

## Kale

- Needs a high pH- lime important
- Fertiliser may be essential for establishment
- Club root risk (resistant varieties available)
- Biennial

- Vegetative in year 1
- Flowers and seeds in year 2
- Remains in situ for 2 years
- Sow every 2<sup>nd</sup> year
- Establish half the plot in kale and other half cereal

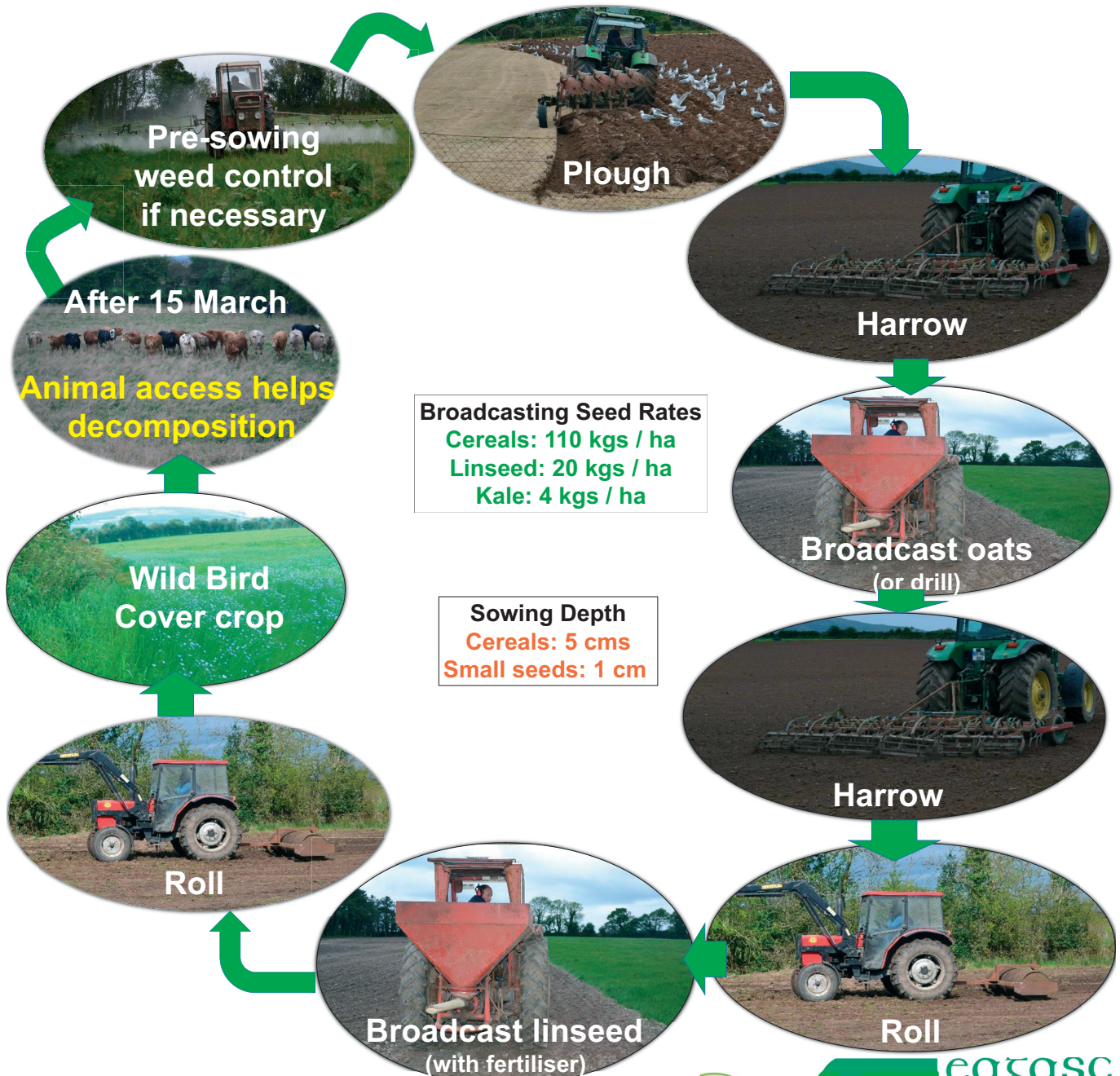
Year	Half Plot	Half Plot
1	Kale Yr 1	Cereal
2	Kale Yr 2	Cereal
3	Cereal	Kale Yr 1
4	Cereal	Kale Yr 2
5	Kale Yr 1	Cereal





## Sowing & Management

- Fine, firm seedbed essential
- Any cultivation method allowed provided successful crop establishment
- Pre-sowing weed control may be necessary
- Plough, harrow and roll as necessary
- Drill or broadcast - seed rate is less if drilling
- Fertilize at half prescribed rate





## GLAS Requirements

- Sow by 31 May
  - each year for cereals,
  - every second year for kale
- Do not apply pesticides after sowing
- Spot treat noxious weeds and invasive species

Ragwort



Thistles



Docks



- Fence
  - stock proof
  - fit for purpose



- Do not harvest
- Retain until 15 March the following year (2 seasons for kale)
- Before replanting, livestock may enter from 15 March to help break down trash

2nd year Kale



Triticale  
and  
Linseed

