

LONDON BIRD REPORT

NO.81 FOR THE YEAR 2016

PRODUCED BY THE LBR EDITORIAL BOARD



PUBLISHED MAY 2018

CONTENTS

Introduction and Acknowledgements - Pete Lambert	5						
Rarities Committee and Recorders	7						
Recording Arrangements	8						
Map of the London Area	9						
Review of the Year - Nick Rutter	10						
Rarities Committee and Recorders Recording Arrangements Map of the London Area Review of the Year - Nick Rutter Contributors to the Systematic List Birds of the London Area: the systematic list Swans to Shelduck - Alex Massey Dabbling Ducks - Magnus Anderson Diving Ducks - Dave Bradshaw Gamebirds - Bob Watts Divers to Shag - Ian Woodward Herons - Gareth Richards Raptors - Andrew Moon Rails - Quentin Given Oystercatcher to Jack Snipe - Roy Woodward Common Snipe to Phalaropes - Andrew Self Skuas to Gulls - Richard Bonser Terns - David Campbell Auks to Cuckoo - John Colmans Owls to Woodpeckers - Paul Goodman Larks to Waxwing - Gabriel Jamie Wren to Thrushes - Alan Lewis, Quentin Given, Dave Bradshaw, Tim Harris,							
Birds of the London Area: the systematic list	23						
Swans to Shelduck - Alex Massey	25						
Dabbling Ducks - Magnus Anderson	30						
Diving Ducks - Dave Bradshaw	36						
Gamebirds - Bob Watts	42						
Divers to Shag - Ian Woodward	44						
Herons - Gareth Richards	50						
Raptors - Andrew Moon	56						
Rails - Quentin Given	64						
Oystercatcher to Jack Snipe - Roy Woodward	67						
Common Snipe to Phalaropes - Andrew Self	76						
Skuas to Gulls - Richard Bonser	82						
Terns - David Campbell	91						
Auks to Cuckoo - John Colmans	94						
Owls to Woodpeckers - Paul Goodman	101						
Larks to Waxwing - Gabriel Jamie	110						
Wren to Thrushes - Alan Lewis, Quentin Given, Dave Bradshaw, Tim Harris,							
Andrew Self, Peter Newmark	119						
Warblers - Paul Whiteman	128						
Crests to Treecreeper - Pete Lambert, Paul Whiteman, Quentin Given,							
Paul Goodman	138						
Golden Oriole to Sparrows - Alan Lewis	146						
Chaffinch to Siskin - Angela Linnell	153						
Linnet to Hawfinch - Pete Lambert	157						
Buntings - Bob Watts	161						

Appendix I: Escapes - Pete Lambert
Appendix II: Hybrids - Pete Lambert
Appendix III: Non-proven & non-submitted records and records in circulation 171
First and Last Dates of Regular Migrants
Papers about birds in the London Area
Ringing Report - Paul Roper
Cory's Shearwater at The Regent's Park - David Johnson
The Breeding Bird Survey in London - Ian Woodward
An Historic Review of the Birds of the Inner Thames Kentish Marshes
to 1900 - John F. Burton190
The Birds of Franks Park, Belvedere, 2001-2016 - Andrew S. Waller
Oriental Turtle Dove at Otford, Kent - Barry Wright
BTO House Martin Study, Redbridge - Chris Gannaway & Bill Neate 228
Publication of the London Bird Atlas and supplements 235
Parrots in the London Area - A Summary of a London Bird Atlas Supplement -
Richard Arnold, Ian Woodward, Neil Smith
Links to files on the LNHS website: http://lnhs.org.uk

Please follow these sequences on the new LNHS website to find links to files.

About Us> LNHS Sections> London Bird Club. 'The London Bird Report': Rare birds in London 1900 to 2015.

About Us> LNHS Sections> London Bird Club. 'Bird Recording': Checklist Guide Breeding Criteria' (PDF) or 'Checklist Guide' (spreadsheet); Full Gazetteer; LNHS Bird Recording Form.

Publications> London Bird Report> 'Downloads': Consolidated contents; past issues of the London Bird Report; Foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls by Alan Gibson; A Study of the Movements and Site Fidelity of Foreign Ringed Black-headed Gulls in St James's Park, 1983-86 by A.P. Gosling; Indexes of Common and Scientific Names.

Front cover: Lesser Whitethroat. (Russ Sherriff)

Back cover: Gulls passing the Shard in central London on the way to their to roost. (Jonathan Lethbridge)

LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1858 - REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 206228

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS

A. J. Barratt, D. Bevan, FLS, R. M. Burton, MA, FLS,
J. A. Edgington, PhD, FLS, J. F. Hewlett, PhD, K. H. Hyatt, FLS

OFFICERS FOR 2018

PRESIDENT Vacant

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Helen Baker, MBOU, Colin Bowlt, PhD, FLS, Mark Burgess, David J. Montier, Colin W. Plant, BSc, FRES, Pat J. Sellar, BSc (Eng), FRGS, MBOU, R. John Swindells, Edward Tuddenham, MD, H. Michael Wilsdon, MBOU

SECRETARY

David Howdon

TREASURER Michael West

ASSISTANT TREASURER
Robin Blades

World List Abbreviation: Lond. Bird Rep.
Copyright © London Natural History Society 2018

Designed by Nigel Partridge
Printed by Swallowtail Print Limited, Norwich, Norfolk

ISBN 0 901009 44 X ISSN 0141 4348

Published by the London Natural History Society - May 2018 http://www.lnhs.org.uk

LONDON BIRD CLUB

The London Bird Club is the section of the London Natural History Society for those with a particular interest in birds.

http://www.lnhs.org.uk > About Us> LNHS Sections> London Bird Club twitter.com/londonbirdclub

> CHAIR Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne

COMMITTEE SECRETARY

Douglas Bilton

LONDON BIRD REPORT FOR 2016

This London Bird Report has been produced by an Editorial Board, comprising:

Introduction

There have been some changes in this issue to the species that our Rarities Committee consider. Starting with this edition, our Rarities Committee will no longer require descriptions for Great Egret, Caspian Gull or Yellow-browed Warbler. For those wishing to check online for dates when rare birds have been seen in London, there is a link on our website which you should be able to reach by a search for 'Rare birds in London 1900 to 2015'.

The Birds of the London Area section has been edited by a team this year, but we are still looking for others who would like to join that team. If you think you might be able to help, please contact me. We are also looking for someone with web skills who could help us improve our section of the LNHS website.

Because of a shortage of space in this issue, the following items are now on the website rather than printed in this report: Mini-Gazetteer, Checklist, Breeding Criteria and Indexes.

While working on this report we were sorry to hear of the death in early 2017 of David Wills, who for many years provided us with details of birds recorded at Wimbledon Common.

Amongst changes to our Gazetteer, we are now distinguishing between two Wandle Parks in our Surrey sector: Wandle Park, Colliers Wood (TQ267703) and Wandle Park, Croydon (TQ315656).

Richard Carpenter, one of the people who proof-read this issue, is stepping down from this role and we would like to thank him for all the work he has done for us.

As always, your comments on this issue are very welcome, especially any suggestions as to how we could improve things even more. My contact details are given below.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the London Natural History Society, I would like to thank the many individuals and organisations who have contributed their records. Without your enthusiastic support we could not produce the annual *London Bird Report*.

I would also like to thank all those volunteers who helped with the production of the report: the authors of the Review of the Year and the Systematic List, and the authors of the papers (listed above); all the photographers who kindly donated their photos; Mavis Pilbeam, Mike Howard, Richard Carpenter, Sean Huggins and Tara Wikramanayake for proof-reading the text; and all the members of the Editorial Board. Thanks also to Garganey Consulting Ltd for the ringing recovery maps; Nigel Partridge for designing the layouts; and Swallowtail Print for printing and distributing this issue.

I am particularly grateful to all the Recorders, who, in addition to the time-consuming tasks of inputting all the data for their area, checked the species accounts in the Systematic List and provided comments and corrections. I would also like to thank the many people who looked at the draft text and made comments to improve it. If you would also like to see draft copies of future reports for comment, please let me know. Thanks also to Thames Water for the many courtesies extended to our members, and to the following organisations for their generous help in the exchange of records:

BirdGuides, British Birds Rarities Committee, British Trust for Ornithology,
Buckinghamshire Bird Club, East London Birders Forum,
Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC,
Hertfordshire Natural History Society, Kent Ornithological Society,
Londonbirders Yahoo group, Surrey Bird Club

Pete Lambert, Chair of the Editorial Board, May 2018 109 Gloucester Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 6AF Email: plamb@phonecoop.coop Phone: 020 8531 9814

RARITIES COMMITTEE AND RECORDERS

RARITIES COMMITTEE

Chairman: Bob Watts Members: John Archer, Richard Bonser, Sean Huggins, Rob Innes, Andrew Moon, Andrew Self.

LNHS LONDON & SECTOR BIRD RECORDERS

London Recorder: Andrew Self 16 Harp Island Close, Neasden, London, NW10 0DF Email: a-self@sky.com

Bucks: Andrew Moon
Holmsgarth, Wenhaston, Blackheath, Halesworth, Suffolk, IP19 9ET
Email: andrew.moon@talk21.com

Essex: Roy Woodward 62C High Street, Cheshunt, Herts, EN8 0AH Email: roy.rkwoodward@ntlworld.com

Herts: Roger Payne
40 Lyndhurst Drive, Harpenden, Herts, AL5 5RJ
Email: rogerwpayne@gmail.com

Inner London: Richard Bonser Flat 7, 96 Rope Street, Surrey Quays, London, SE16 7TQ Email: richbonser8181@hotmail.com

> Kent: John Archer 8 Smead Way, London, SE13 7GE Email: johnkingsley.archer@gmail.com

Middlesex: Sean Huggins 206 East Ferry Road, Isle of Dogs, London, E14 3AY Email: shuggins@hotmail.co.uk

Surrey: David Campbell Flat 12, California Court, 25 Downs Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5NR Email: devilbirder@ gmail.com

RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS

http://www.lnhs.org.uk > About Us> LNHS Sections> London Bird Club. 'Bird Recording'

The London recording area covered by this Report, 'the London Area', lies within a 20-mile radius of St Paul's Cathedral. The Area covers the whole of Greater London and parts of Hertfordshire, Essex, Kent, Surrey, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. However, for continuity of recording, we still use the Watsonian vice-counties in this Report rather than the present administrative areas (but we combine vice-counties 18 and 19 as Essex). These vice-county boundaries are all shown on the map opposite. We also use a special recording zone for 'Inner London', which covers parts of Middlesex, Surrey and (just) Kent. This is a rectangular area, five miles north to south, eight miles east to west, centred on the site of the old Charing Cross on the south side of Trafalgar Square.

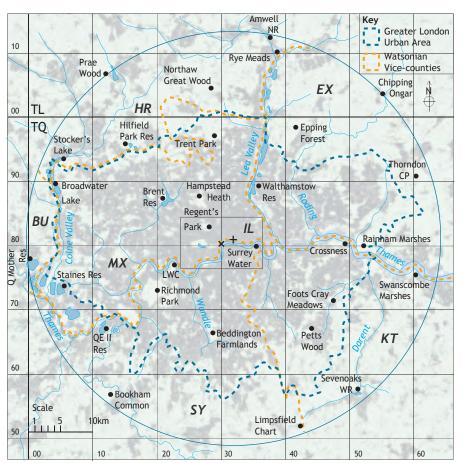
All records are welcome, from LNHS members and non-members alike. We would particularly like information on the local status of common species, breeding records, notes on passage (including first and last dates and main movements), regular counts of wintering populations, notes on behaviour, as well as details of unusual birds. Regular reports from the same sites are a great help in seeing population trends, and such reports, along with comments on changes in status, are always very welcome. Our Guide to Contributors of Records (on the LNHS website, together with the Breeding Criteria) give guidance on what information we would like for each species. Records should be sent to the appropriate Recorder listed on page 7 or to the Chair of the LBR Editorial Board. Please use site names as listed in our Gazetteer (see below) if you can, when sending in records. If you send in details from sites not listed in the Gazetteer, please give an OS Grid Reference for the site.

For records of any year to appear in the *LBR*, we must have them no later than March 31st of the year after. Records received after then will just be added to our database.

It would be very helpful if you could send in records on a spreadsheet; a sample and instructions are on our website (under About Us> LNHS Sections> London Bird Club> Bird Recording, then 'LNHS Bird Recording Form'). Otherwise contact one of our Recorders or the Chair of the Editorial Board. It would also help if you list different species in the order used in this Report. Separate sheets should be used for each recording area.

Records of nationally rare species have to be considered by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Their website (www.bbrc.org.uk) gives details. You should send these records as soon as possible after the sighting, with a copy to the relevant Recorder. Breeding records of rare species should be sent to the relevant Recorder. Details will then be sent to the Rare Breeding Birds Panel (www.rbbp.org.uk). Where requested, records will of course be treated in strict confidence. Records of other rare and unusual species in the London Area are considered by our Rarities Committee before being included in the *London Bird Report*. Species for which we need a full description or brief description/field notes are listed in the Guide for Contributors. Please send these as soon as possible after the sighting.

Our records are stored with Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) and if you would like to use any of our records for study purposes, please contact GiGL for details: http://www.gigl.org.uk/contact/



LNHS Area map with locations of some well-known bird-watching sites. Boundary sites give an indication of the extent of the LNHS Area. A grey background shows a built-up area.

(Contains Ordnance Survey data ©Crown copyright and database rights 2012)

Gazetteers of Sites

Two gazetteers of sites are on the LNHS website (see top of page 8). The Full Gazetteer lists open spaces and the names of towns, villages etc. The Mini-Gazetteer lists the main sites in the London Area as well as all the sites added to the Full Gazetteer this year (the latter in *italic* type). Neither Gazetteer lists streets; you should be able to locate these easily with a street map, but contact us if you have difficulty.

Each site name is followed by the recording area for that site and an OS Grid Reference; this should help you to find the site on a map. The Grid Reference either refers to the centre of the site, or to a point of particular ornithological interest. Not all of these sites are open to the public; some are private, for some you need to have a permit. Contact the Chair of the Editorial Board if you need information on any site (details on page 6).

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2016

The year saw two firsts for London: Cory's Shearwater and Oriental Turtle Dove. Other highlights included London's second Dusky Warbler and Franklin's Gull, fifth Spotted Sandpiper, and tenth records of Black-winged Stilt and Bee-eater. Other notable scarcities included Common Rosefinch, Hooded Crow, Serin, Ortolan Bunting, Golden Oriole, two Hoopoe, three Wryneck, two Grey Phalarope, two Stone-curlew, Montagu's Harrier, five Spoonbill, Common Crane, Little Bittern, Purple Heron, Cattle Egret, Temminck's Stint, Pectoral Sandpiper, three White Stork and an obligingly long-staying Ferruginous Duck. It was the best year yet for records of Yellow-browed Warbler, Great Egret, Glossy Ibis, Caspian Gull and Osprey, and the best since 2010 for Hen Harrier and White-fronted Goose. The year saw the second highest total of Whooper Swan since 1990. Seabirds featured strongly, with (in addition to the Regent's Park Shearwater), records of two Sabine's Gull, three Glaucous Gull, 14 Iceland Gull, Leach's Storm-Petrel, Fulmar, Shag, Razorbill, Little Auk and two Guillemot.

The first winter period was very mild, with low numbers of hard-weather visitors, including Smew, Scaup and Bittern. There was only one Waxwing record and one Great Grey Shrike, while Ruff were recorded only at one site. The mild weather saw good numbers of Stonechat, Dartford Warbler, Bearded Tit, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Firecrest and Green Sandpiper. There were nine records of Iceland Gull and seven records of Siberian Chiffchaff. There were four Great Northern Diver in the west London reservoirs and two in Essex.

Spring saw an unusual record of a Grey Phalarope. There were good numbers of Common Redstart and Pied Flycatcher. Numbers of Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Whinchat, Ring Ouzel, Tree Pipit and Meadow Pipit were lower than in 2015. No Spoonbills were recorded in the spring. Woodcock were recorded at 18 sites in the second half of March, and 14 Osprey were recorded on passage in March.

Few species saw major increases in breeding numbers, though those recording slight increases included Gadwall, Tufted Duck, Mallard, Little Egret, Grey Heron, Lapwing, Skylark, Linnet and Common Whitethroat. Notable breeding records included Shoveler at Rainham Marshes, Marsh Harrier, Red Kite (at least three pairs), Great Black-backed Gull, Long-eared Owl (with Short-eared Owl also possible), Black Redstart (three sites), Firecrest, Spotted Flycatcher (possibly three sites) and Raven (two sites). The first breeding attempts of Black-necked Grebe at Hilfield Park Res failed this year but at least three young fledged from later attempts. Peregrine records showed a similar number of breeding pairs to 2015, but with greater success resulting in 53 young fledging. Marsh Tit were still clinging on in very low numbers, while Tree Sparrow enjoyed slightly better breeding success at their two sites. Species showing a decline included Grey Partridge, Collared Dove, Swallow, Garden Warbler, Swift, Little Ringed Plover, Goldcrest, Willow Warbler, Green Woodpecker and Great Spotted Woodpecker. There were no breeding records of Lesser Spotted Woodpecker or Tree Pipit, and no proven breeding record of Turtle Dove. House Sparrow breeding numbers remained

stable, as did numbers of Hobby, Buzzard, Water Rail, Blackcap and Lesser Whitethroat. Autumn saw a series of excellent records of seabirds, including Cory's Shearwater, Leach's Storm-petrel, two Gannet, Shag, two Sabine's Gull and Great and Arctic Skua. At least 356 Sandwich Tern were recorded on passage. There were good numbers of Grey Plover, Knot, Turnstone and Curlew Sandpiper, but only eight Wood Sandpiper. Some six Hen Harrier were recorded at Rainham Marshes, while 19 Osprey were recorded on passage. Numbers of passage Ring Ouzel and Meadow Pipit were higher than in 2015; 22 Pied Flycatcher were recorded and about 100 Common Redstart. There was a notable influx of about 33 Yellow-browed Warbler from late September into October. Woodpigeon passage was concentrated into the period from 2nd to 6th November.

The second winter period was also mild, with low numbers of Bittern, though the period was enlivened by a small irruption of Waxwing. The weather again favoured wintering Stonechat, Blackcap, Dartford Warbler, Chiffchaff (with two records of Siberian Chiffchaff), Firecrest and Bearded Tit. Siskin numbers were low. Two Great Northern Diver appeared in the west London reservoirs, while five Slavonian Grebe and four Great Egret were recorded.

January

The month saw year highs of 1,000 Wigeon, 2,000 Teal and 11 Rock Pipit at Rainham Marshes, 118 Egyptian Goose and 942 Feral Pigeon at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens, 25 Goosander at Wraysbury Res, 570 Lesser Black-backed Gull at Beddington Farmlands, 14 Caspian Gull at Dartford Marshes, 956 Carrion Crow at Horsenden Hill, 11 Water Pipit at Horton, 15 Brambling at Amwell NR and 140 Siskin at Stocker's Lake. On 1st, two Woodcock and a Cetti's Warbler were at Regent's Park. On 8th, eight Whooper Swan were at Rainham Marshes; on 22nd, one Whooper Swan was at Watford. A Turtle Dove was at Wanstead Flats on 9th. On 10th, six Hawfinch were at Wormley West End. A Great Grey Shrike found at Bury Farm, Edgware, stayed until late April. On 19th, 52 Whitefronted Goose flew over Canons Farm. The month ended with a Franklin's Gull at Amwell NR.

February

Year highs this month included 868 Common Pochard at Staines Res, five Smew at Bedfont Lakes CP, 37 Avocet and 1,170 Dunlin at West Thurrock Marshes, 200 Golden Plover, 2,150 Lapwing, six Short-eared Owl and 160 Great Black-backed Gull at Rainham Marshes, 89 Snipe at Rye Meads, 1,200 Common Gull at both Wanstead Flats and William Girling Res, 159 Magpie at Morden Hall Park, 5,000 Ring-necked Parakeet at Island Barn Res and 35 Corn Bunting at Longfield Gallops. On 3rd, a Glaucous Gull was at Q. Mother Res. A Fulmar was at Purfleet on 13th, while 41 Chiffchaff were at Broadwater Lake on 16th. On 18th, an Oriental Turtle Dove was found at Otford, where it stayed until 12th May, while a Glaucous Gull was at Dartford Marshes. Two Pintail were at Regent's Park on 21st and a Long-eared Owl was at Rainham Marshes on 25th.

March

The month saw year highs of 56 Pintail and nine Common Scoter at Rainham Marshes, 76 Goldeneye at Staines Res, 20 Jack Snipe at Rye Meads, 16 Turnstone at Swanscombe

Marshes and 3,850 Starling at Holmethorpe SP. On 3rd, single Mealy Redpoll were recorded at Cornmill Meadow and Stocker's Lake. A Little Stint was at West Thurrock Marshes on 13th. Chaffinch passage saw 1,100 over Canons Farm on 14th. On 21st, a Woodcock was at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens, while a Common Scoter was at Southwark Park (staying until 10th April). On 23rd, a Hooded Crow was at Wanstead Flats. Buzzard passage peaked on 25th, with 48 records, while two Bewick's Swan flew from Middlesex to Surrey. On 26th, a Pintail was at Regent's Park, while a Wheatear was there on 29th.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

April

Year highs this month included 25 Black-necked Grebe at Hilfield Park Res, 31 Curlew at Rainham Marshes and 11 White Wagtail at Q. Mother Res. On 1st, a Brambling was at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens, staying until 5th. Twelve Wheatear were at Regent's Park on 3rd. On 4th, a Common Crane flew over Ellenbrook Fields and a flock of 17 Brent Goose was at Rainham Marshes. A spring high count of at least 12 Little Ringed Plover were at Staines Res on 5th, while 45 Buzzard records that day included 26 over Canons Farm. On 7th, a spring high 200 Sand Martin were at Broadwater Lake, while a Long-eared Owl was at Beddington Farmlands on 8th. An ill-fated Razorbill was at Rainham Marshes from 9th until its demise on 11th. Little Gull migration peaked on 11th with 35 records, while Ring Ouzel migration peaked on the same day with eight birds. On 12th, spring passage of Wheatear peaked, with 133 birds including 27 at Richmond Park, while Rainham Marshes recorded a Stone-curlew on 12th and a Montagu's Harrier on 17th. On 16th, a Blue-headed Wagtail was at Home Park, while Swallow passage included 500 at Brent Res. A Wryneck was at Watford on 19th, and the spring's only Curlew Sandpiper was at Rainham Marshes on 20th. A Nightingale was at Victoria Embankment Gardens on 22nd, while 120 Common Tern were at Rainham Marshes. On 23rd, a Channel Wagtail was at Staines Res (with other records at Staines Res and Rainham Marshes on 26th) and five Mediterranean Gull were at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens. On 24th, a Grey Phalarope was at Staines Res, with 64 Arctic Tern there and 50 recorded at Gallions Reach, while 23 Knot were at Rainham Marshes. Whinchat passage peaked on 29th-30th, with 28 birds recorded. There was a Wryneck at Rainham Marshes on 30th which stayed to 1st May.

May

May saw year highs of 14 Hobby at Cheshunt GP, 2,000 Swift at Hilfield Park Res and 41 Common Whitethroat at South Norwood CP. On 1st, a Hoopoe was at Broxbourne and a Montagu's Harrier was recorded over Northfleet; Montagu's Harrier was also recorded over Colnbrook on 29th. On 2nd, three Cuckoo were at Ingrebourne Valley and a Wood Warbler was at Victoria Park. A Slavonian Grebe was at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) on 3rd, staying until 14th. On 4th, two Black-winged Stilt were at Island Barn Res, a Honey Buzzard flew over Brook Farm, Upminster, a Wood Warbler was at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens, an Oystercatcher flew past Limehouse and a Cuckoo was at Regent's Park, while two Whimbrel flew over there. Passage of Black Tern on 5th saw 13 birds recorded, including six at Staines Res. Common Sandpiper passage peaked on 6th, with 50 birds recorded. A dead Quail was found at Stifford Clays, Essex on 7th,

while a Serin flew over Crossness on 8th. On 10th, 44 Grey Plover were at Rainham Marshes, and five were at Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough) and at London Wetland Centre. Rainham Marshes hosted a Stone-curlew on 12th, and a Glossy Ibis was recorded there on 13th; the latter date also saw a Common Scoter in Regent's Park. A Bee-eater flew over Wimbledon Common on 19th. On 29th, a Little Bittern was found at London Wetland Centre, staying to 3rd June.

June

A year high 108 Shelduck were recorded at Crossness. On 2nd, three Turtle Dove were at Fawkham Green, with the same number at Stanford Rivers the next day. On 5th, a Honey Buzzard flew over Alexandra Park. A Golden Oriole was at Rainham Marshes on 10th, while on 11th a Purple Heron was at Rye Meads, a Nightjar was flushed at Island Barn Res and a Spotted Sandpiper was at Brent Res.

July

A year high 608 Canada Goose were at Walthamstow Res and 25 Common Sandpiper were at KGV Res. On 2nd, a White Stork was at Q. Mary GP; there were further records at Beddington Farmlands on 22nd and from 26th to 6th August. A Common Rosefinch found at Walthamstow Marshes on 3rd stayed until 12th, and was seen again on 20th. On 4th, six Raven were at Horton Brook Quarry. On 21st, 30 Sedge Warbler and 40 Reed Warbler were at Stocker's Lake, while 200 Sand Martin were at Rainham Marshes on 30th.

August

Year highs this month included five Garganey and 260 Goldfinch at Rainham Marshes, 61 Red-crested Pochard at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens, 2,265 Tufted Duck at Walthamstow Res, ten Whinchat at Crossness and 12 Spotted Flycatcher at Weald CP. On 5th, four Oystercatcher were near the Tower of London. On 6th, single Glossy Ibis were recorded over Buckhurst Hill and at Rainham Marshes; the latter site also recorded one on 11th, and one was at KGV Res from 16th to 21st. On 11th, an autumn high count of six Little Ringed Plover were at Rainham Marshes. On 18th, a Hoopoe was at Aldborough Hatch. Passage on 19th saw 12 Little Terns through Q. Mother Res, 21 Black Terns at Beddington Farmlands (and seven at Staines Res), and 225 Common Tern upriver at Gallions Reach. A Red-necked Grebe was at KGV Res on 21st. Single Little Stint were recorded at Rainham Marshes on 21st and 24th, with two there on 22nd and 23rd; two were also recorded at Rye Meads from 27th to 29th, with one at Staines Res on the latter date. A Temminck's Stint was at Rainham Marshes from 22nd to 24th. A Whimbrel flew over Regent's Park on 22nd, while a Green Sandpiper was there on 26th, and six Golden Plover flew over on 29th. On 25th, a Wryneck was at Hatfield, and on 27th at least 110 Sandwich Tern were at Gallions Reach.

September

The month saw year highs of 238 Great Crested Grebe and 1,106 Cormorant at Q. Mary Res, 34 Ringed Plover, 15 Ruff and 51 Yellow-legged Gull at Rainham Marshes, 750 Stock Dove at Walton Downs, 1,800 Swallow at Beddington Farmlands, 1,140 House Martin at Richmond Park, 357 Meadow Pipit over Barn Elms PF, 55 Yellow Wagtail at KGV Res and

20 Bearded Tit at Swanscombe Marshes. On 3rd, a Wheatear was at Victoria Park. A Honey Buzzard flew over Canons Farm on 6th; a further record was over Beddington Farmlands on 17th. An Ortolan Bunting was at Wanstead Park on 7th. On 8th, 40 Bar-tailed Godwit flew over Sidcup. A Leach's Storm-petrel was at Q. Mother Res on 10th, while a Great Skua was at Staines Res on that day. Whinchat passage peaked on 11th, with 51 birds recorded. On 13th, a Sabine's Gull flew over Beddington Farmlands, with a further record at Q. Mother Res on 20th. On 15th, a Cory's Shearwater flew over Regent's Park. An Arctic Skua flew past Rainham Marshes on 17th. On 18th, three Spoonbill flew over Walthamstow Marshes while a Shag was at KGVI Res. A Ferruginous Duck was found on 20th at Brent Res, where it stayed until 2nd October. A Spoonbill was at Rainham Marshes on 26th and 27th. A Pectoral Sandpiper stayed at Q. Mother Res from 28th to 6th October.

October

Year highs this month included 405 Greylag Goose at Rainham Marshes, 50 Mandarin Duck at Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath, 78 Little Egret at Mar Dyke Valley, 348 Redshank at West Thurrock Marshes, 335 Pied Wagtail at Harrow, 42 Stonechat at Richmond Park and 70 Long-tailed Tit at Holmethorpe SP. On 2nd, A Gannet flew over Chiswick while a Spoonbill flew over Crossness; a Spoonbill was also recorded at Rainham Marshes from 5th to 8th. A Guillemot was recorded at Bankside and Greenwich on 5th, with another record at Teddington Lock from 14th to 15th. On 6th, 24 Whitefronted Goose flew over Rainham Marshes, followed by 15 at Wanstead Flats on 8th and 25 at Purfleet on 9th. Autumn Little Gull passage peaked on 6th, with 49 birds recorded including 30 at Beddington Farmlands, while a peak count of 17 Mediterranean Gulls flew past Rainham Marshes that day. On 8th, an Arctic Skua was at Dartford Marshes, while a Honey Buzzard flew over Brent Res on 9th. Ring Ouzel passage peaked on 9th, with 13 birds recorded; passage of Redwing also peaked that day, with 2,867 recorded, including 1,500 over Hampstead Heath and 560 over Primrose Hill. On 11th, eight Common Crossbill flew over Barn Elms PF and a Tree Pipit was at Primrose Hill. A Mealy Redpoll was at Rainham Marshes on 19th, and a Whooper Swan was there on 20th. On 21st, a Wheatear was at Primrose Hill and Starling passage peaked with 3,840 birds recorded, while Chaffinch passage on 21st and 22nd included over 520 birds over Wanstead Flats. Also on 21st, 14 Brambling flew over Barn Elms PF, while 74 Goldfinch were at Victoria Park. On 23rd, 12 Lapwing flew over Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens, and three Great Egret were over Rainham Marshes, while two Cattle Egret were at that site from 23rd to 25th. On 27th, 55 Greenfinch flew over Brent Res. A Dusky Warbler found at Rainham Marshes on 29th stayed till the next day, while a Snow Bunting was also at Rainham Marshes; 32 Barnacle Goose flew over Vicarage Farm, Enfield and Great Grey Shrike was at Wanstead Flats.

November

The month saw year highs of 52 Barnacle Goose at QEII Res and Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), 537 Black-tailed Godwit and seven Red-breasted Merganser at Rainham Marshes, 1,000 Coot at KGV Res, 16 Grey Wagtail at Hogsmill SW, 5,442 Jackdaw at Beddington Farmlands and 500 Linnet at Canons Farm. A Marsh Harrier flew over St

Pancras on 1st. On 2nd, a Red-throated Diver was at KGV Res and a Gannet flew over Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens. On 3rd, a Snow Bunting was at Rainham Marshes, while Woodpigeon passage peaked; counts included 15,000 over Woodberry Wetlands, 12,000 over Brook Farm, Upminster and 11,200 over Rainham Marshes. On 4th, single Cattle Egret were recorded at Rainham Marshes and Q. Mother Res and a Snipe flew over Primrose Hill. A Rook was at Victoria Park on 5th. On 6th, a Grey Phalarope was at Amwell NR and a Little Auk was at the same site on 7th. Also on 7th, eight Whooper Swan were at Stocker's Lake, with one there the next day. Fieldfare passage peaked on 8th, with 1,243 birds recorded. A dead Woodcock was found in the grounds of the Natural History Museum on 9th; live individuals were recorded in Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on 18th and 23rd. A Long-eared Owl was at Waltham Abbey on 13th and 14th. On 26th, a Spoonbill flew over Cobham.

December

Year highs this month included 156 Mute Swan at Harrow Lodge Park, five Bittern, 11 Water Rail and 616 Mallard at London Wetland Centre, 338 Shoveler at Staines Res, seven Woodcock at Richmond Park, 18,300 Black-headed Gull past Hogsmill SW, 600 Fieldfare at Swanscombe Marshes, 14 Marsh Tit at Juniper Bottom, 123 House Sparrow at Upminster and 34 Yellowhammer at Orsett Fen. On 2nd, 44 White-fronted Goose flew west at Brook Farm, Upminster while a Cattle Egret flew over Priest Hill NR. Also on 2nd, 20 Waxwing were at Potters Bar; a similar number were at Forestdale on 21st. A Great Skua was at Rainham Marshes on 3rd. On 9th, more than 400 Redwing flew over St James's Park. On 12th, two Whooper Swan were at Tyttenhanger GP, while a Little Stint was at Rainham Marshes on 13th and 15th. A Long-eared Owl was at Beddington Farmlands on 14th. A Cattle Egret was at Rainham Marshes from 16th to 20th. On 18th, 45 Lesser Redpoll were at Banstead Woods. On 20th, 37 White-fronted Goose were at Rainham Marshes. A Glossy Ibis flew over Woodberry Wetlands on 23rd, and on that date a peak of 24 Tree Sparrow were at Tyttenhanger Farm. On 25th, three Pintail were at Regent's Park. The year ended with a Glaucous Gull at Beddington Farmlands on 30th and 31st.

Amos M

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

All contributors of ornithological records to the Society in 2016 are listed below. We apologise if any names have been omitted inadvertently.

In order to save space, contributors' initials have been combined under each surname and separated by commas - except when an abbreviation is attributed to a contributor: in this case the surname, initials and abbreviation stand alone.

To assist you in identifying a contributor from an attributed abbreviation, look in the main list under the name given against the abbreviation in the table below.

main tist under t	ne name given aga	ainst the appreviat	tion in the table be	elow.		
AD: Dent AHa: Harris AHo: Hobson AM: Meadows AMn: Middleton ARo: Rose AT: Tweed AW: Webb ABT: Tomczynski ACG: Galsworthy ARD: Duckett ASMS: Self AVM: Moon BG: BirdGuides BR: Reed BT: Todd BV: Vaughan BEW: Wright CFa: Farthing CMY: Manville CR: Ryland	CDRH: Heard DCa: Campbell DE: Element DJ: Johnson DMs: Meadows DSm: Smith DSb: Stanbridge DGDL: Darrell- Lambert DJM: Morris DMH: Harris EB: Broad FB: Broom FP: Prater FS: Simpson GB: Barter GS: Spinks GWJ: Jones HLy: Lacey HV: Vaughan HTB: Bradshaw	IBr: Bradshaw IS: Stewart JHa: Hale JL: Lethbridge JPa: Partridge JW: Wasse JWn: Winterman JKA: Archer KLP: Purdey LE: Edwins MA: Amos MAS: Andersson MDr: Dron MF: Foster MG: Gregory MII: Ilett MK: Kirkland MKh: Kohler MMe: Messenger MP: Parker MWy: Worsey	NC: Croft NKe: Keogh NS: Smith NT: Tanner NJG: Gardner OD: Dewhurst PBa: Ball PHt: Hart PLw: Lewis PSt: Street PWt: Watts PW: Whiteman PRA: Alfrey RBs: Barnes RB: Beddard RBd: Braddock RBr: Browne RHI: Hall RT: Todd RAH: Husband REI: Innes	RGB: Booth RIJ: Jones RJW: Watts RMP: Rye Meads SB: Bacon SBy: Barry SCa: Carter SCg: Cocking SD: Drake SF: Fisher SG: Gale SHa: Harris S SHy: Harvey SHs: Huggins SP: Papps SWs: Waters SWf: Worsfield TBn: Brown VHF: Halley- Frame		
Abrahams D, P Absolom A Adamoulas A Adams D, G Adelman E Agar J, N Agombar D Aiden M Alderman C Aldridge C Alexander H Alexandra Park Observers Grp. Alfrey PR Allan I Allcock DJ, J Allen AE, D, E, J, R Amer RF	Anderson B, I, L, M, ME, N Andersson M MAS Andrews D, M Andrzejewski K Angus P Appleton AJ Applewood C Arbon J Archer D Archer JK Archie S Arnfield R Arnold J, L, R Ashby A Ashen R Ashken L Ashton J, K Aspden K	Atkins D Attiwell J Aungier L Austin BP, D, M, P, T Avery MI Avis DV Avison G Ayers R, S Aylen P Aylward PJ, S Back A, R Bacon P Bacon S Baglee P Bagott D Bailey A, C, J, M Baker CG, D, H, J, N, R, T	Ball P PBa Ball S Bantock H Baradar E Baranova M Barber LJ, M, P Barclay F Barker A Barlow E Barnard J Barnes C, DJ, GJ, J Barnes R RBs Barnett C, M Barrallora S Barrett D Barrie M Barrington JW Barrow K	Barry S SBy Barter G GB Bartlett A Bassett AD Bassoli G Bast D Batchelor SD Bater S Bates D, K, WTG Batten L, LA, N Bayley A Beach C Beacon M Beadle D Beale J Beaney VR Beasley A Beatley M Beaumont B		

Baldwin C

Atherton B

Barry L

Beckenham P

Beddard R Beddington Farm Bird Group Beddow K Bell A, D, M, T Belman PJ Belzunce OE Benlogg G Bennell I Bennett AJ, B, BT, J, KA, L, V Benton C, D Benyon M Berry S Bessant C Bessick D Beswick NW Bevan S Bhansal H Bhatia Z Biggs A, N Bignold SM Bingley JH Birch K Bird J, ME, T BirdGuides BG Birkett J Birks A Bishop B, W Black C. P Blackburn M. T Blackman R Blackmore K Bladen P Blake AE, J-M, K, S. T Blance S Blanchard B Blatcher P Blond V Blunden V Blyth J Blythe T Bodini L Bolderstone T Bolton D Bond C Bone P Bonner A Bonser RH Boorman JM Booth D Booth RG RGB Boswell SA Botterill N Boudreau K

S

Boulby M Bufton J Boureau K Bull K. P. S Bournat M Bullock R Bower L Bunce S Boxell F Buntins M Boyle A, B Burch J Bradbury M, MJ Burgess K. M. Braddock R RBd Burgum N Bradley F Burns ANM, P Bradnum D Burrows A Bradshaw D Bursche P Bradshaw H HTB Burston PJ Bradshaw I Burton J Brady J Busby M Bushell J Braggs J Braidman S Bramley S Butson P Brandwood K Buxton A, R Brangwyn T Byrne J Branley S Cadera Ja. Jo Brannan K Caiden M Bratton H Caine G. T Braun M Cairns J Calbrade NA Brav J. P Calderón S Brent Birders Brice I Caldwell C. S Brickley K Callahan D, I Briggs BD, P Callf RM Bright A. JF Calvert S Brinton P Cameron A Briscoe D Camp J Bristow P Broad E Broadbent I Brodie E Canny G Brollv M Brook K Brooke-Taylor D Bird Group Brooker I Capper D Brookes CM, L Carle I Carlill P Brooks C Broom F FB Carlsson D Brosnan F Carpenter BR Brown A. B. E. Carr D GB. J. L. M. N. Carruthers P Carson B Brown T TBn Browne R Carter S Browning S Carter SJ Brownsell T Cartwright H Brovd SJ Cashman P Brvant D. I Castro F BTO WeBS Unit Catchpole A Buckel FC, V Cattell M Buckingham S Cawthorne M Budd B, RA Ceconi P

Chadwick S Chaffe M Chalmcils D Chalmers S Chambers B. H. Champion B Chandler J. S Chaplin E Chapman C, CB, EG. J. P. SE Charles M, P Charleson E Charlton C. L Chastell S. SM Butler J. M. R. T Cheales H Cheeseman A Chekawa T Cheke B Chick AP Chiddock J Childs S Chinnick T Chisholm J Chown PK Christensen J Christopher R Churches B Churchill R Ciaden M Claire H Campbell D DCa Clancy T Cane-Honevsett Clark D. DN. FC. G, JM, K, P, S, Canons Farm & Clarke J. M. P. T Banstead Wood Clarkson J Cleal DL Clements C. FA Clements-Partridge A Clench K Clien P Cliff P Cliffe J. P Coates A. P. V Carter D. L. PM Coath M Cocking S Cogley C Cohen SH Cohn V Cohrs C. V Cokor M Cole D Coleman D, J Colledge D

Collier S Collings HTG Collins J. M. P. S Collinson I Colmans J Colson R Coltman A Combes D Comerford R Comri V Conev SP Connor S Considine D Constance S Cook D. G. HRA. R Cooke J Coombes R Cooper A, B, C, S Copleston K, P Corbet P Cording D Corfield GW Corley P Cossey S Coulber E Coulson J, V Coultrip G Cours V Court V Cousens M Cousins R Coverdale G Covill B Cowan D Cowmeadow D Cox A. D. G. N. P, S Crabtree G Cracknell PA Craft J Crane J Crathorne B Crenol A Cripps B, RJ Critchlev PA Croft N NC Crooks B Crossness LNR Crothall L Crouch Y Crovdon Birders Crudleigh P Crystall B Cuff MJ Cuhrs V

NKe

MKh

HLv

Donald O

Donnelly S

Dorman A

Douglas S

Dove A, W

Dowle J

Doyle K

Drake S

Drew R

Driver P

Dron M

Dowding EJ

Dowman S

Draconis H

Drakeford T

Drewitt EJA

Drummond I

Duckworth NA

Duggan N

Dugham H

Duncan K

Dungey SM

Dunn C. D

Dunnett A

Dunwoodv R

Dunne R

Dutta A

Dvde S

Dvkes B

Dysing W

Eagles R

Eames D

Earp M

East J

R. S

Edwins L

Eerdmans P

Egginton J

Elcoate MD

Eldridge T

Flement D

Ellam C

Flliott R

Ellis I, IS

Elmes J-P

Elsev NJC

Elsoffer M

Elsom S

Moustache G

Elliott-

DF

Eaton MA

Eblundon V

Edwards E. I. J.

Duckett AR ARD

Downing A, AJ

Doubleday A

Cullen C
Culley D
Culshaw AJ
Cunningham M
Curran-White K
Curson L Cutting KAD
Czapski S Czerwinska A
Dagley JR
Dalziel R
Damant A
Daniells J
Dar R
Darbyshire I, J, K
Dare E
Darrell-Lambert
DG DGDL
Darsley RR
Dave W
David M
Davies AC, BM,
G, J, JW, P, R, S
Davis J Dawes A
Dawes A Dawson D
Dawton B
Day A, J
de Montule C
de Silva D
Dean D, K
Deane G
Delaloye P
Delpy M
Denham D
Denison N
Dennis R
Dent A AD
Dent M Derbyshire J
Desai P
Dewey R
Dewhurst C
Dewhurst O OD
Dewhurst ORB
Diamond JR
Dickason P
Dickens J
Dilger M
Dillon S
Dillon-Hooper E
Dingain L
Dixon K, M, P
Dobbie J
Dodd M, N Doe B
DOC D

Elson H Elton P Elves R Elwell S Emblem-English C Emerson C. J Emmens RP England D English P Epstein B Errey D Etal I Evans A. G. HW. I. LGR. M. R. S Everett CM Evershed R Facer R Fagan B Faint M Fair G Fanthorpe P Farmer J Farrar AR, M Farrell C. M Farthing C CFa Faure J Fearnside JD Fegan T Felder K Fell J. M Fentiman C Fenton H Fenton-Scott D Ferguson J. M. S Ferriday N Few J Fisher H. J Fisher S Fisher SL Fitz L Fitzgerald B Fitzpatrick P Flack I Flanagon A Flannagan AW Flesher R Fletcher D. JM. Т Flinn G Flouch P Flovd M Fogg H, S Folkerd G Foot J

Forbes-Wood G

SJ

Gatlev SJ Ford A. AE. E. N Fordham J Geary R Forshaw H Gedge D Forsyth C, T Gee B Forward TJ Gentry G Foster D. G Gibbs A. M Foster M Gibson A. C. N. Foster S R, T Fowles RA Giddens S Fox AS, J Gilbert C. J. M. Francik B N. R. T Francis G, GJ, R Giles P Franklin J. M. T Gilham R Fraser B. J Gill E. G Frearson S Gillings S Free B. J Gilry A Freed K Gin C Freeland-Havnes Gisseleire Y Given 0 Freemantle A Glanville C Freestock M Glvnn B Goddard AP Freestone M French M Godden N Friend A Goff D Friends of Golden A Brookmill Park Gompertz D Friends of West Gooderham J Ham Park Gooding J Frieze A Goodman P. S Goodrich D Frith M Goodsell R Frost P Frv C Goodsir S Fuller P Gordon J. JD Fure A Gore S Gait J Gorsuch AN Gale J Gosnell C Gouldstone A Gale S Gallagher K Gowers J Gallions Birders Gowing R Galpin B Gowrley R Galsworthy AC Grainger J ACG Gram G Gambles JD Granger-Taylor N Game M Grant I Gannaway CR, H Gravatt J Garbutt N Graves B Garcia F Gravett JC Gray A, J, M, P Gardiner AH, J Gardner NJ NJG Greasby RT Garner AK Greatbanks S Green B. R. S Garritt C Garvey T Greenwood D Garwood MR Gregory M Gascoine D Gregory S Gates J. NJF. S. Grey C, P

MG

Griffin W

Griffiths D Grimstead S Gross RD Group B Guerra N Guest K Guiver J Gunkel P Gupta TD Guthrie G Gutteridge AC Gwynn A Habben M Hack R Haddican D Hagglund P Haig A Haines B, WG Haldane P Hale D Hale J JHa Hall A, AG Hall R RHl Hall S, WD Halley-Frame V VHF Halstead H Hamilton S Hammond D, M Hancock R Hannam J Harbird R Harbison Y Harbott AG Harcombe S Hardie AJ Harding AV, C, G Hare M. P Hargreaves R Harkin N Harley S Harper B, M Harpin D Harrington S Harris A ΔHa Harris B Harris DM DMH Harris G. K. L. M, NG, RG Harris S Harris SM, T Harrison B. DW. H. L. R Harrow M Hart EM Hart P PHt

Hills D Hart R Hartshorn M Hilton AC, R Hartwell C Hines M Harvey S Hoad A Hatton WA Hoare D. J Havercroft J Hobson A Hawgood G Hodgson P Hawkes M Hogan D Hawkins P Hogg J Hawksworth A Holdsworth R Hawtree JN Holland J Hay G Hollands B Haydon H, RM Holleran T Hayes D, F, S Hollov M Haylock T Holmes AL Haynes A, B, K Holmstoel R Haywood D Holt C Hazell C Holtby C Hazleton M Homscheid J Headd R Honey G, M, N Heading S Hook M Heal J Hooker T Healev M. S. SJ Hooper MS Heard CDR CDRH Hopkins L. N. P. Hearnshaw P R Heinersdorff T Horgan P Held A Hornby K Hellicar M Hoskin D Helm C Hough S Hemingway M Houslev DJ Hemming JH Houston T Henderson J Howard P Henry S Howarth G. I Henson G Howdon D Hepburn D Howes R Herbert C. R Howev S Heselden RGW Howie G Hewett J Hubbard G. M Hewitt R Hubble M Heys J Huckle S Hevwood S Hudson A. J. S Hibberd M Huggins J Huggins S Hibbett S Hickling M Huggins V Hickman M Hughes J. M. S Hicks J. M Hull C Hulls T Hider N Higgins G Humble J Higgs N Humphreys-Hilfield Reservoir Jones A Bird Report Hunt G. N Hill D. J. L. M. S. Hunter D. MI Hurry N Hilliard D.J. Hurst F Hillion F Husband B Hillman J Husband RA RAH

Judd I Hutchinson D. P Hutchison P Jupp C Hutlev D Kadir R Hyatt A Kalli G Hvde C Kallmer D AHo Hyland P Karen J-P Ilett M Karunanavake K Kavanagh T Imms K Ingham JB Kave R Ingram B Keane D Innes A Keen J Innes RE RFI Keene R Insley H Keeper T Insole P Kehl I Inward DR Keith R Iredale R Kelbv B Ireland N Kellett A Irwin S Kellv DJ Islington U3A Kemmis BP Ismail K Kempa M Jack J Kennard V Jackman N Kennedy O. R. T Kennelly AD, T Jackson A. B. D. ED. I. J Kent OS Jacobs S Keogh N Jakeman T Kernahan G Jakobsen K Kerr K, M James G. GA. P. Kerrigan S R, T Kettell MM Khan N Jagues L Jarmir J Kiddell D Jarrett S Kilgour R Jarvis K Kilham R Jasinski J King J, M Jeffree R Kings M Jeffrevs D Kirby A, AJ, P Jellett S Kirk L. R Kirkland M Jenkins P Jenkinson RI Kitchen C, S Jennings D. S Kitching I Jessop D Kite P Jitlal M Klauws J SHs Johbins D Knight C. DC. G. Johnson D D.J Johnson J. M. Knott N. S Knox P NG. R. S Jones A, B, C, Knudsen K CDR, CM, D, EL, Kohler M Kortlandt DJ Jones GW GWJ Kourtis F Jones I, J, JF, P, Kwoc P PE, R La Pietra A Jones RI Lacev H Jones RJ, S, SEI Ladt W Jordan D. M Laird A Joyce D Lambert D, P, SR Luke P

Lux T

Lycett I

Lyness D

Lyons D

Mackay A

Macken A

MacMillan D

Macrow FC

Magness I

Maher P

Mak M

Malins D

Mallow D Mann D. L. T

Mant E

Mantle P

Manville C

Manville P

Maple Cross

Marett A, M

Markowitz S

Marks W

Marlow R

Marrett A

Marriott S

Marsh B. S

Martens D

P. R. RJ

Martinleith D

Birdwatching

Marylebone

Society

Maskell JM

Mason C. G

Massev A. L

Mathias H

Mattos P

Matuch X

Maynard J

McCafferty A

McCallum I, L

McCarthy D. M

McCartnev C

McClean F

Mav N

Matthews D

Marshall P. SK

Martin J. JP. KM.

Maroevic FJ

Ringing Group

Marchant JH, K

CMv

Manning C, S

Mahieu N

MacDonald W

Mac M

Lamsdell C, D
Lanfear J
Lang I
Langley L, R
Langston D
Langton C
Langworthy W
Lapworth G
Larch F
Larman S
Larson W
Last B, W
Lathey PA
Laurie P
Law JL, SJ
Lawler G, L
Lawrence J
Lawson A, AR, J,
MJ
Lay N
Layfield AR
Lea D
Leach D
Lead M
Leaver L
Leavett R
Lee A
Leeke S
Leeke J
Leerjet E
Legall N
Leighton R
Leppard T
Leslie R
Lethbridge J JL
Levy J, M, S Lewis A, H, M
Lewis A, H, M
Lewis P PLw
Lewis S
Liddle A
Lindenberg 5
Lindo D
Lindsay M
Ling D
Llewellyn S
Lloyd P
Lodge C
London M
London Zoo
Longley M
Lord R
Lovett N
Lowbridge C
Lowe A, D, J
Lowman P
Lucas R
Luckhurst P
'

McCleary MJ McCormick J McCulloch JI McCullough A McCullun I McDonnell J McGilvrav K, KL McGough D McKee MJ McKenzie D. J McKinnon I McLeod P McLoughlin M McLoughton M McManus KJ, M McMillan D McSherry JE McSweenev JR McWalter D Meadows A Meadows D DMs Meadows K Meaton A Meier J Menari R Menzie SD Mercer D Merchant P Merrick R Merritt A Merryweather A Messenger M MMe Messenger PJ Michael CF Middens S Middleton A AMn Middleton D. R. S Midglev K Miers C Millar A Millard S Millen DJ Miller A. B. M. MJ Millett J Milligan B, SP Mills C. D. R Minhinnick S Minshull B Mitchell D, M Moll N Mollov M Monckton A Moon AV AVM Mooney R Moore G, P, PD, RC, S

Noble SD Moorhouse P Morden Hall Park Nolan C Nature Group Norcott B Morden R Norman I, R Moreton G North R Morgan J Northover S Morris D Nowers MD, T Morris DJ D.JM Nugent F Morris GE, R Nunn G Morrison D Nurse M Morton E. R. SD. Nuttall R O'Brian T Moss A. J. P O'Carroll P Moule J O'Connor WJ O'Donnell P Moulton T O'Flvnn C Mount L Mullender CAS O'Halloran K Munroe B O'Hanlon J Munton P O'Hare F Murphy C. D. M O'Mahonev FK Murray B, J O'Shea A O'Sullivan F Murray J Snr Oakenfull P Murray K, RD, S Oakes A Musgrove A. D Mvers 0 Oakland M Myring P Oaks P Naggs F Oates SJ Nash C. M. PF Oddv C Nasir J Oliver PJ Natelson O Omonva I Neal D. S. SM Orchard M Neale M Orme M Neate WD Orr-Ewing DC Neate-Clegg M Orton GR Ness R Osborn P. S Netherwood M. Osborne C. H. R. Neville LG Osmond J Newbigging G Osterberg F Newbound PJ Osterley Birding Newham J. W Group Newman J. R Owen D Newmark P Page B. S Newnham W Page-Jones R Newson J Paice M Newton J Paine M Nichols G. SC Paines R Nicholson JP, L Painter D Nicholson-Ross G Palacios V Nick B Palethorpe A Nicks S Palfrev T Nie P Palmer CJ, J, Niedrum T JC, K, KJP, M, S Papps P Nieland S Niloc A Papps S Noakes J Parce S

Parish J Park N MP Parker M Parr M Parry C Partridge J JPa Pask R Passingham J Patel S Patmore S Patrick C Patterson V Payne D, LKR, RW Peacock GIH, K Pearce A, S Pearson A, R Peck TJ Pedder B Pedley A Pedliham A Peel A, C Peers D, M Peggs G, S Pegram B Pell J Pembridge M Pepper D, JK Perfect E, S Perry A Petch L Petlev R Peverett CB Phillips J, M, P Pia D Piccolo A, T Pickering P Pierrepont D Pilcher R Pink S Pinkham D Pittman P Plant J. L Podmore A Polley D Pollitt M Poole C Porritt D Portugal S Posen S Poskitt T Potter A. N Powell A. R Powell-Jones O Power A. R Powlesland M

Poynter S FP Prater F Richardson R Pratley I Preston N, T Bird Group Price B, K, N Prideaux RH Ridge J, N, V Priestnall S Pringle HAI Ridlev MJ Privett KC Rigby P Prowse AD Riggs RJ Puckett T Riley S Pulteson V Rimes DN Purdey K Rinsler M Putnam RHA Ritchen R Puttock B Rivoire JR Pyrah RJ Roach A Ouail J Ouig A Robertson BD. Ouinn A Ouinto-Ashman E Robinson D. L. Radcliffe S M. S. T Radford M Robson I Rae A. R Rocksborough-Ralph G Smith S Ramsav C Rodger A Ramsbottom M Rodway LM Randall A, C Rogers K, L Rands H Rokinsy S Ranger P Rolf J Rank M Rollinson T Raper S Roman AJ Rare Bird Alert Rookes R Rastelli M Roome C Rathjen M Rose A Rawlings ND, P, T Read S Ross-Smith VH Reade-Edwards C Rosser SE Reanev A Rossiter BN Reddy R Rothwell DW Redfern M Rowbotham I Redhead JW Reding B. E. P. W Roy C Redmond P Rovston P Reed B BR RSPB Crovdon Reed C. M Local Group Reeves B. J Local Group Regan R Regent's Park Birders Local Group RSPB Rainham Reid A. B. J Rettke-Grover R RSPB St Albans Revelev J Local Group Revill TJ Ruis C Revnolds A. C. E. Ruiz J G, J, JL, M Rhodes P

Richards G, P, S Ruscoe M Russ G Richmond Park Russell B. D. L Rutherford B, H Richmond Park Rutter N Friday Bird Grp. Rvan F. L Rvder G Rve Meads Partnership RMP Rye Meads Ringing Group Ryland C Rvlands K Rvmer T Saddington L Salford R Salmon A Roberts A. EH. S Sams T Sandell I Sandford-Smith B Saunders JC Savage J Savery R Saw H Sawtell G Schouten C Scott A, NKL, S Scurfield A Seale J Searle M Segall P Seiffert S Self ASM Sell P Rose C. G. I. J. W Sellar J. P Sellwood J Senior N Sergent V Seright S Seymour K Rowland AJ, J Shalbrav B Shammas C. F Shannon T Sharman K Sharp C. M. PJ RSPB Guildford Shaw G. I. MD Shawood J RSPB NW London Shearman A Sheehan M Sheils B Sheldon R Shenton L Shephard S Shepherd D. J. Rumsby B, M, T M. RJ Rumsey D Shepherd-Wells M

Sherlock B, C Sherriff R Sherwen J Sherwood J Shilland EM Shipp F, T Shippey S Silenhim N Sillery G Simkins G Simmonds J. Y CR Simmons J. M Simms D. O Simon A Simonsson I Simpson F FS Simpson G Simulik L Sitnikova M Sivanesan S Skeels D Sketch PA Skinner A Skotnicki A Slee J Sleeman L Smallshire P Smart A. C. Smith B, C Smith D Smith G, H, J, K, KR. KW. L. M ASMS Smith N Smith RN, S, T, TA Smout C Smyth L Sorrell D Southam G. M. Southcott M Spalees E Spall T Speller T Spence IM, L Spencer P. PA, R Spenslev D Spicer N Spink R Spinks C Spinks G GS Spinks GC Sauires C Stachnicki IA Stallard B Stanbridge D DSb Stanger A

Teale R

Terry JH

Thain M

M, S

Theobald I, RC

Thiedeman B

Thomas A, BJ,

Thomason E

Thornley S

Thornton B

Thurgood A

Thrush P

Timms D

Todd B

Todd R

Tomalin R

Tomkins T

Toms B

Town M

Toombs K

Tragett B

Treen P

Tranfield B

Trektellen

website

Trevis B

Trim C

Trout NS

Tuck D. R

J, L, R, RM

Turnham C

Turton M, S

Turvev I

Tusa É

Tutt D

Tweed A

Twells G

Twinn M

Twyford N

Tyler D, P, Y

Twinberrow G

Turner B, C, D,

Trollope CE

Tregenza P. V

Tomlinson C

Tollemache B

Tomczynski AB

Titshall A

Thompson J, T

Stanley M, R Stannard E Stansfield RH Startup J Steel JH Steele AJ, K Steiner-Goldberg S Stephens D, R Stevens M, P Stewart A, G IS Stewart I Stocken J Stockwell B, M Stomwell M Stone-Lee O Stones T Stratton ND Street P Strickland I Stride D Stroud A, B Stuart T Stubbs D, R Sturgess GM Surbiton & District Bird Watching Soc. Surgenor-Aldridge G Surrey BC Surtees S Suttle K, KH Sutton G, K, P Swan J Swann White J Swanson I Sweetland AS, J, Swinney S Swithenbank J Syed Q Symonds H Symons F Tanner A Tanner N NT Taplin C Tarratt KD Tarrran D Taylor A, C, D, I, J, L, N, R, RE

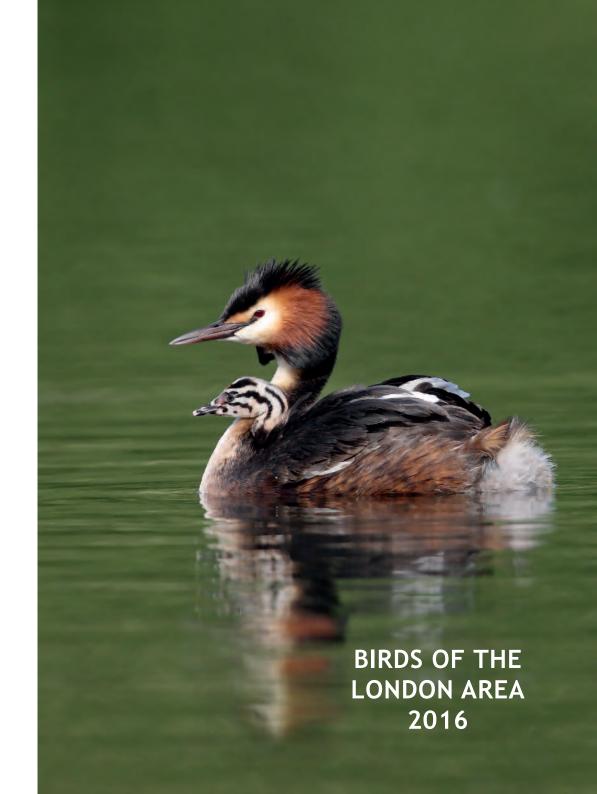
Tyson L Tyttenhanger Birders Unite R Upstone M Upton G Utting D Utton BM Vale M Valentine L Vallas JC Van Der Veen N Van Hear S Vaughan B Vaughan H Vaughan P, TC Veale K Venables H Vereycken P Verlander N ABT Verrall AG Viles DJ Vine GJ, T Vodden CH von Hagen C Wakeham K Townsend K, P, R Wakerling V Waldron K, P Walford MF Walker A. BJ. P. S Wall S Wallace M. P Waller J, M Walsh J. JR Walthamstow Birders Wang E Wanstead Birders Warby D Ward C, I, J, KRA, P Wardell A Warden R Wardman M ΑT Warford J Warner L Warren D, JE Warrington S Wasilewski M

JW

Wasse J

Waters S SWs Watson C, IR, J, M. T Watts B, C, K Watts P Watts PJ. RC Watts RJ RJW Web H Webb A Webb D, R Webster PJ Weigand M Weight B Weigund R Weil J Weir J Welch D Weller D. RD Wells B, D, J, TJ Welsh Harp Conservation Group Wende SP Wenham R West C, S, V Westley G Weston D, H Westwood C Wheatcroft D Whedon M Wheeler M. MJ. R Whele J Whiskin B White A, C, F, G, L, M, P, PD, T Whitehead H. S Whitehouse A Whitelee A Whitelegg D Whiteman P PW Whitfield A, J Whitman J. P Whittle M Whyte G Wickenden K Wickham SM Widdowson D Wilcock A Wilczur J Wild N

Wilden N Wilding D Wileman T Wilis C Wilkinson A, C, I, Willett JD Williams A. C. DJ, I, K, O, PA Williamson J Willis J, K Wills D Wilson A, G, I, J, M. P. Z Wingrove M Winn AC Winstanley A Winterman J JWn Witt A Wolfenden S Wood A, S, SD, T Woodham C Woodlands Farm Trust Woods NJ, S Woodward I, ID, Woolfenden S Woolley RH Woolmore K Worby M Worsey M MWy SWf Worsfold S Worth P Wozniak B WREN Wildlife & Conservation Group Wright BE BEW Wright C, D, G, N, S, T Wyatt T Wyllie R Wyn-Jones H, S Yates J Youell C Young G, J Younger S Zimmer D



BIRDS OF THE LONDON AREA, 2016

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

WITH SOME ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS

A Report on Bird-life within Twenty Miles of St Paul's Cathedral

The nomenclature of species in the systematic list of this report is based on the Birds of Britain: the Complete Checklist, Fourth Edition (Mitchell and Vinicombe, 2012). The sequence of species still follows Birds of Britain: the Complete Checklist, Third Edition (Mitchell and Vinicombe, 2010). A Checklist of Birds of the London Area is on the LNHS website (see page 3).

The six counties within the London Area are denoted in the report as follows: Essex or EX, Herts or HR = Hertfordshire, Middx or MX = Middlesex, Bucks or BU = Buckinghamshire, Kent or KT, Surrey or SY, and In Lond or IL = Inner London (the central rectangular area shown on the map on page 9). Other abbreviations are:

BBS	= Breeding Bird Survey	o/h	= overhead
Cem	= Cemetery	OS	= Open Space
CP	= Country Park	PF	= Playing Field(s)
FB	= Filter Beds	PS	= Power Station
fem	= female	QE II	= Queen Elizabeth II
GC	= Golf Course	Q. Mary	= Queen Mary
Gdn(s)	= Garden(s)	Q. Mother	= Queen Mother
GP	= Gravel Pit(s)	R	= River
imm, juv	= immature, juvenile	Res	= Reservoir(s)
KGV	= King George V	RG	= Recreation Ground
KGVI	= King George VI	SF/SW	= Sewage Farm/Works
LBR	= London Bird Report	SP	= Sand Pit(s)
LNR	= Local Nature Reserve	WeBS	= Wetland Bird Survey
NR	= Nature Reserve	WR	= Wildfowl Reserve
N, S, E, W	= North, South, East and West		

Observer abbreviations are shown only against records for species which are rare in the London Area. A list of all the observers who have contributed records for 2016 appears on pages 16 to 22. The abbreviation 'mo' used for some records, indicates 'many observers'. All running totals of rare or unusual birds that are provided in the systematic list refer to occurrences since 1900.

The term 'Lower Thames' is used for the section of the R Thames from the Thames Barrier to the eastern edge of our recording area. The term 'West London reservoirs' is used for the following reservoirs: Island Barn, KGVI, QE II, Q. Mary, Q. Mother, Staines, Walton and Wraysbury.

Status refers to the status of a species in the London Area - not in the UK as a whole.

Previous page: Great Crested Grebe with a very young chick hitching a ride. (Jonathan Lethbridge)

Mute Swan Cygnus olor

Status: common breeding resident.

There were 100 breeding records (including nest building), down on last year's high total of 125 and the previous year's 113. Four sites hosted flocks of 100+ (three last year), and flocks of 50+ were reported from 13 sites (same as last year). This species is often underrecorded in the London Area and this may be a factor in the breeding total fluctuations. More regular peak counts and breeding records would therefore be welcome. Below are breeding record totals followed by the highest counts in each sector.

Mute Swan breeding records (including nest building)

Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
17	20	33	0	8	14	8	100

Essex: Harrow Lodge Park, 156 on Dec 15th. KGV Res, 116 on Nov 13th.

Herts: Rye Meads, 40 on Oct 16th. Middx: Brent Res. 75 on Jul 24th. Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 54 on Jan 13th. Kent: Southmere Lake, 64 on Jan 21st. Surrey: Truss's Island, 132 on Jan 1st.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 147 on Dec 20th.

Bewick's Swan Cygnus columbianus

Status: scarce migrant, usually in autumn, and winter visitor.

One record this year, of two birds seen from three sites on March 25th, is an improvement on last year (when there were no records), but otherwise is the lowest total since 2007, when there was also one record.

Middx: Staines Res, two flew SE at 06:25 on Mar 25th (REI).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, two flew across from W then headed NE at 06:45 on Mar

25th (GWJ et al). QE II Res, two E on Mar 25th (DMH).

Whooper Swan Cygnus cygnus

Status: rare winter visitor.

This species was recorded in the London Area for the eighth consecutive year, with five records of 20 birds, the second highest total of birds since 1990, beaten only by the 25 recorded in 2014. There were two flocks of eight birds - at Rainham Marshes in January and Stocker's Lake in November, with five other records of ones or twos. Two records were in January, the other three records were in October, November and December. All records came from the Essex and Herts sectors.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, eight on Jan 8th (AT) and one on Oct 20th (PSt, AT et al).

Herts: Stocker's Lake, eight on Nov 7th with one staying to 8th (PLw, SCa et al). Tyttenhanger GP, two on Dec 12th (VK). Watford, one on Jan 22nd (MHu).

White-fronted Goose Anser albifrons

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A good year for this species, with 11 records of 164 birds (assuming that the October birds relate to one group of 25) which is the highest total since 2010, when a massive 587 were seen. All but two of the records were from Essex.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

A single bird was at Fairlop Waters on January 2nd; then the largest flock of the year, 52 birds, flew south-east over Canons Farm on the 19th. In March, two were at Belhus Woods CP on the 1st, then one flew east over Putney Bridge on the 20th.

The second winter period began with four sightings of up to 25 birds at various Essex sites during a three-day period in early October; all these records possibly pertain to the same flock. The first record was of 24 flying east at Rainham Marshes on the 6th. On the 8th, 15 were seen also flying east at Wanstead Flats. The following day about 25 flew north at Purfleet.

There were three December records: flocks of 44 going west at Brook Farm, Upminster on the 2nd, and 37 at Rainham Marshes on the 20th, with the final record of the year being two seen on Boxing Day at Orsett Fen.

Greylag Goose Anser anser

Status: common breeding resident.

Breeding totals for this species tend to fluctuate from year to year. This year's 74 broods (from 26 sites) is down from last year's 104 (from 31 sites), but more in line with the 77 (from 28 sites) in 2014. Although the latest Breeding Bird Survey shows a significant 126% increase in the South East from 1995-2015, and the London Atlas shows the number of occupied tetrads has doubled over a similar period, figures from sites where we also have breeding records for the most recent two years are down in most cases, so the increase may be levelling off or have stopped. However, reduced coverage at other previous known breeding sites may also be a factor.

The highest count was 405 at Rainham Marshes in October (down from 480 at Sevenoaks WR last year). Counts of 100 or more came from 16 sites (ten last year). Below are all breeding records (no. of broods in brackets) along with the highest counts for each sector.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (8). Fairlop Waters (1). Rainham Marshes (7); 405 on Oct 2nd. Walthamstow Res (21). Warren Gorge (5).

Herts: Amwell NR (1+). Hampermill Lake (1). Lynsters Farm (1); 123 on Sep 29th. Seventy Acres Lake (1). Stocker's Lake (1).

Middx: Broadwater Lake (4). Staines Res, 80+ on Jan 17th.

Bucks: Horton GP (1). Q. Mother Res, 60 on Aug 27th.

Kent: Chipstead Lake (1+). Crossness (1). Darenth Lakes (3). Kelsey Park (1). Ruxley GP (1). Sevenoaks WR (3+, 60 goslings in May); 380 on Jul 2nd. Sundridge (1). Swanscombe Marshes (1).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (1), Painshill Park (1), Trevereux (1): 364 on Sep 14th, a site record count. Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (3).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (3); 318 on Jan 18th. St James's Park (1).

Brent Goose Branta bernicla

Status: occasional migrant and winter visitor.

The number of individual birds seen this year was only 82, compared with 135 in 2015 and 506 in 2014. It was the lowest total for many years and well down on the average of 278 for 2011-2015.

The first record was of two flying south over Rye Meads on January 1st, with one at KGV Res and five at Rainham Marshes the following day. One was at Q. Mother Res on the 7th with four at London Wetland Centre on the 14th. Four were seen on the river at Pimlico on February 5th, then one was reported on the river on the 6th at Purfleet (also reported from Rainham Marshes), followed by 14 at Rainham Marshes from the 21st to 22nd. In March, two were at London Wetland Centre on the 10th, then four flew over Wandle Meadow Nature Park on the 22nd, with two at Holmethorpe SP on the 24th. One was reported at Rainham Marshes on the 28th and 30th, then 17 (the largest flock of the year) were there on April 4th, followed by one on the 9th. The next day six were at Q. Mother Res, with two at Rainham Marshes on the 13th.

The first returning bird was on October 27th, when one circled over QE II Res. On 30th, two were seen at Gallions Reach, with probably the same two birds also seen at Rainham Marshes; the next day, a minimum of two were heard flying over Watford. In November, two were at Rainham Marshes on the 9th, then all the rest of the year's records were singles: Rainham Marshes on 24th; Hilfield Park Res from 24th to 25th; Gallions Reach on 30th; Sevenoaks WR on December 11th; Q. Mother Res and Woodberry Wetlands on 14th; Rainham Marshes on 20th, with the last of the year at Creekmouth, Barking on December 30th.

Barnacle Goose Branta leucopsis

Status: rare winter visitor and occasional visitor from self-sustaining population outside the London Area.

As usual, birds believed to be escapes are listed in Appendix I of this report. Below are listed records believed to be from wild or self-sustaining populations outside the London Area. There were 17 such records this year: two in January, one in May and 14 from October onwards.

Middx: Vicarage Farm, 32 over on Oct 29th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, nine on Nov 11th and six over on 20th.

Surrey: Barn Elms PF, 23 over on Oct 19th. Island Barn Res, 31 on Jan 3rd, 33 on Oct 11th, 41 on 22nd and ten on 29th, then 17 on Dec 8th. Putney, five on May 5th. QE II Res, 52 on Nov 2nd. Walton-on-Thames, 17 over on Dec 10th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), birds from 2015 remained in the area until Feb 15th with peak of 31 on Jan 2nd, birds roosting from Oct 28th to Nov 26th with peak of 52 on Nov 3rd and ten over on 15th, then 19 from Dec 26th into 2017.

Canada Goose Branta canadensis

Status: very common, introduced breeding resident.

Breeding records were down to 193 pairs/broods from 67 sites, in line with the 175 from 65 sites in 2014, compared with 236 from 97 sites last year. The two most successful sites were again Walthamstow Res and Beddington Farmlands, both reporting similar totals to



Canada Goose. (Andrew Moon)

last year. As with other wildfowl species, breeding totals in our area can vary considerably from year to year, so observer coverage could be a factor - there were far fewer records received from the Hertfordshire and Surrey sectors, for example.

Below are breeding records for sites with three or more broods (no. in brackets), plus significant counts of young birds, and a selection of the highest overall counts, most of which as usual are of mid-summer moulting birds.

Essex: Breeding records from nine sites. KGV Res, 500 on Aug 23rd. Rainham Marshes (15). Roding Valley Meadows NR (4). Walthamstow Res (48); 608 on Jul 3rd.

Herts: Breeding records from ten sites. Hilfield Park Res, 283 on Sep 4th. Rye Meads (4). Stocker's Lake & Bury Lake (3+). Tyttenhanger GP (5); 449 on Aug 28th.

Middx: Breeding records from 20 sites. Brent Res (3). Broadwater Lake (3).

Bucks: No breeding records. Q. Mother Res, 360 on Aug 15th.

Kent: Breeding records from 11 sites. Lamorbey Park (4). Sevenoaks WR (bred, 56 goslings in June); 235 on Jul 12th.

Surrey: Breeding records from 14 sites. Beddington Farmlands (24 pairs). Beddington Park (3). Dulwich Park (3). Holmethorpe SP, 335 on Aug 4th. London Wetland Centre (3). Morden Hall Park (4+). Richmond Park (5+).

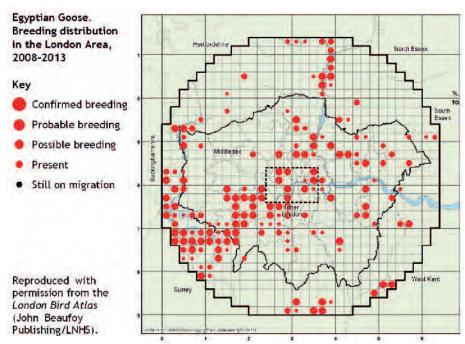
In Lond: Breeding records from three sites. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 266 on Jul 21st.

Egyptian Goose Alopochen aegyptiaca

Status: increasing, introduced breeding resident.

The number of sites this species was reported from was 278, exactly the same as last year, but the number of breeding records dropped for the first time since 2011. There

were only 59 at 37 sites, down from 64 at 48 sites last year, but similar to the 55 at 34 sites in 2013; so the drop may just be due to reports from fewer sites. Breeding records from some new sites suggests the population is still expanding in London. Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens again saw the highest count. Below are all breeding records, with the number of broods in brackets, along with selected high counts. The map below (from the *London Bird Atlas*) shows the breeding distribution across the London Area during the period 2008-2013, with generally greater concentration in the south-west part.



Essex: Valentines Park (1). Walthamstow Res (4).

Herts: Amwell NR (1). Moor Park GC (2).

Middx: Boxer's Lake, Enfield (1). Bushy Park (1). Clissold Park (1). Frays Farm Meadows (1). Grovelands Park (1). Hampstead Heath (1). Home Park (4); 70 on Sep 17th. Pymmes Park (1). Q. Mary Res (1); 102 on Sep 3rd.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 81 on Aug 21st. Wraysbury GP (1).

Kent: Chipstead Lake (1). Crystal Palace Park (2). Danson Park (2). Darenth Lakes (1). Greenwich Park (2). Sevenoaks WR (3).

Surrey: Barnes Green Pond (1). Beddington Park (1). Claremont Landscape Gdn (1). Kingston-upon-Thames (1). Leg O Mutton NR (1). Morden Hall Park (1). Painshill Park (1). QE II Res (1). Richmond Park (5+). South Norwood CP (2). Tooting Common (1). Truss's Island (1). Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough) (1). Wimbledon Park, 67 on Jun 25th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (6); 118 on Jan 18th. Regent's Park (1); 66 on Oct 20th. Southwark Park (1). St James's Park (1).

Shelduck Tadorna tadorna

Status: passage migrant, decreasing breeding resident on Lower Thames, regular visitor to major waters where it breeds in small numbers.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

This year's breeding total was marginally down on last year, with 17 broods at eight sites (21 from 16 in 2015), but the number of broods has improved over the last three years, as shown in the table below. There were also pairs or juveniles recorded at 15 other sites where breeding was not proven. For the fourth consecutive year, Crossness posted the year's highest total of 108, up on last year's 80 but well below the 155 in 2014. Breeding records are shown below (no. of broods in brackets) and total number of young seen if known, along with selected high counts.

Shelduck breeding records 2007-2016

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of broods	11	13	16	13	15	7	13	20	21	17

Essex: Barking Bay, 50 on Jun 5th. Rainham Marshes (8); 82 on Dec 18th. Walthamstow Res (1), five young.

Middx: Bow Creek (2+), 9+ young. Q. Mary Res (1), three young. Staines Res (2), 12 young; 26 on May 6th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes (1), two young. Crossness, 108 on Jun 24th. Dartford Marshes (1), 11 young. Swanscombe Marshes (1), 11 young. Thamesview GC, c60 on Mar 24th. Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 13 on Feb 21st. QE II Res, 16 on May 26th.

Mandarin Duck Aix galericulata

Status: introduced breeding resident, established and locally common.

The number of broods was 24 this year (25 in 2015, 39 in 2014 and 25 in 2013). Overall numbers show a small increase. Below are all breeding records (no. of broods in brackets) and significant counts.

Essex: Butler's Retreat Pond, 38 on Nov 4th. Highams Park (1). Strawberry Hill Ponds (2); 26 on Dec 4th.

Herts: Aldenham CP, 32 on Dec 2nd. Beech Farm GP & Coopers Green GP (1). Cassiobury Park (2), including 14 ducklings on May 15th, a site record. Hilfield Park Res (1).

Middx: Bay Farm (1). Bentley Priory NR (1). Boxer's Lake, Enfield (1+). Bushy Park, 40 on Aug 4th. Q. Mary GP (bred, used nest boxes but no young seen). Totteridge Valley (2). Trent Park (2). Wildwoods, Enfield, 47 on Dec 22nd. Whitewebbs Park, 43 on Jan 21st.

Bucks: Black Park, 26 on Feb 12th.

Kent: Kelsey Park (1); 33 on Jun 14th. Lewisham (1).

Surrey: Black Pond (1). Kingston-upon-Thames, pair nested, no young seen. Millers Pond (1). R Mole, Leatherhead (2). Richmond Park (3); 21 on Jan 18th & Oct 7th. Trevereux (1). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath, 50 on Oct 30th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, eight on May 15th. Regent's Park, 28 on Jan 1st.

Eurasian Wigeon Anas penelope

Status: common winter visitor with occasional summer records.

Rainham Marshes again had the highest counts, which peaked at 1,000 on January 12th and 24th. This is down on the 2015 peak which was 1,200. There were a few birds present during the summer. Wanstead Park had its highest number yet again. Winter numbers generally appeared similar to last year.

The table below gives monthly peaks from sites with counts of 100 or more, with other significant counts below that.

Eur	asian Wigeon	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX	Belhus Woods CP	119	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	20
	Hall Marsh Scrape	52	41	38	1	-	-	-	-	185	-	12	13
	Rainham Marshes	1000	872	505	306	4	1	2	4	27	217	400	218
HR	Aldenham CP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	111	48	-
	Amwell NR	200	95	59	2	-	-	-	-	8	31	35	185
	Bowyer's Water	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	185	-	5	-
	Bury & Stocker's Lake	s 71	79	90	-	-	-	-	4	47	80	140	140
	Hilfield Park Res	210	95	193	-	-	-	-	-	40	106	63	101
	Radlett Aero GP	229	230	189	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MX	Kempton NR	60	101	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	13	79
	Staines Res	347	421	328	3	1	-	-	2	53	100	287	246
BU	Horton Brook Quarry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	135	105	-	-
KT	Dartford Marshes	35	90	-	-	-	-	-	2	14	217	54	22
SY	Walton Res (C & L)	105	170	216	19	-	-	-	4	103	199	76	35
	Wetland Centre	140	84	56	9	-	-	-	-	71	102	182	273

Essex: Holyfield Lake, 76 on Dec 3rd. Purfleet, 92 on Feb 13th. Wanstead Park, 61 on Nov 16th, was a site record.

Herts: Foxholes, 80 on Mar 14th, Lynsters Lake, 95 on Dec 27th, Maple Cross, 50 on Mar 18th. Ware, 52 on Feb 25th.

Middx: Bedfont Lakes CP, 59 on Oct 3rd. Broadwater Lake, 50 on Jan 17th. Q. Mary Res, 67 on Feb 20th.

Bucks: Thorney Weir Lake, 35 on Jan 21st. Wraysbury GP, 30 on Jan 1st.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, 50 on Oct 6th. Crossness, 58 on Jan 2nd.

Surrey: Barn Elms PF, 69 over on Oct 7th. Thorpe Water Park, 64 on Jan 1st.

In Lond: Battersea Park, singles on Mar 29th, Oct 8th & 14th and Nov 3rd & 13th.

Gadwall Anas strepera

Status: local breeding resident and common winter visitor.

Rye Meads had 25 broods this year, up from 18 in the previous year. The overall total of 48 broods was five more than last year. The peak count this year was 495 at Rye Meads, well below the 702 at Wraysbury GP last year but still above the 2014 peak of 370. Wintering numbers generally appeared similar to last year. Counts for the major sites are shown in the table, all breeding (no. of broods in brackets), and other interesting records are given below.

Gad	dwall	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
EX	Wanstead Park	200	16	8	2	2	1	1	2	16	162	467	161
HR	Hilfield Park Res	30	35	28	19	8	29	70	53	20	87	111	150
	Rye Meads	75	86	126	35	75	455	175	495	429	270	103	53
MX	Bedfont Lakes CP	-	145	14	7	2	64	49	-	56	137	-	122
BU	Wraysbury GP	176	145	-	3	-	-	-	-	2	9	55	5
ΚT	Crossness	100	55	90	70	60	24	11	29	9	10	58	51
SY	Beddington Farmlands	80	60	52	30	12	25	5	22	56	60	80	109
	Walton Res (C & L)	66	15	25	7	9	7	8	24	72	105	122	95

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Essex: Rainham Marshes (3), 14 pairs summered. Walthamstow Res, three birds summered. Herts: Amwell NR (2). Hilfield Park Res (1). Maple Lodge NR (1). Rye Meads (25). Tyttenhanger GP (1).

Middx: Brent Res (5). Stain Hill Res (1). Tottenham Marshes (1), second brood ever. Woodberry Wetlands (1).

Bucks: Horton GP (1).

Surrey: London Wetland Centre (4).

In Lond: Battersea Park (1); 160 on Nov 13th. Chelsea Wharf, 17 on Jan 16th. Green Park, one on Feb 12th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, six on Mar 2nd & 8th. Regent's Park, seven on Nov 18th. R Thames: Battersea Bridge to Wandsworth Bridge, three on Apr 10th. St James's Park (1), brood of nine; seven on Oct 6th. Victoria Park, 24 on Jan 22nd.

Eurasian Teal Anas crecca

Status: common winter visitor and rare breeder.

Although a few birds were present during the breeding season there was no proof of breeding, the last recorded attempt being in 2014. Overall, wintering numbers were up on last year. The peak count was 2,000 at Rainham Marshes on January 12th (2015 peak there of 700), while at Crossness the peak count was 1,254 on September 19th (803 in 2014).

The table below gives counts for the major sites, with significant records from other sites below the table.

Eur	asian Teal	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
EX	Gallions Reach	21	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	300	21
	Mar Dyke Valley	132	68	51	28	-	-	-	-	-	5	46	84
	Rainham Marshes	2000	600	600	413	4	3	9	208	800	308	184	313
	West Thurrock Marshe	3 27	100	44	66	-	-	-	-	1	38	38	26
HR	Rye Meads	85	89	46	20	4	7	7	30	96	80	94	124
MX	Bow Creek	120	60	60	4	-	-	-	-	24	60	-	80
	Brent Res	70	110	61	37	5	5	1	31	191	141	130	97
	East India Dock Basin	200	240	222	64	-	-	-	9	92	180	270	127
	Staines Res	102	116	87	51	-	5	2	11	40	58	40	41
KT	Crayford Marshes	80	50	50	30	-	-	-	-	300	40	20	5
	Crossness	700	350	680	200	2	10	9	210	1254	410	526	390
SY	Beddington Farmlands	250	200	200	120	1	6	12	55	175	200	300	300
	Kew to Richmond	79	57	104	8	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	87

Putney Bridge-Barnes	150	168	133	-	-	-	-	-	22	72	68	268
Wetland Centre	178	172	179	56	2	9	16	78	126	151	257	192

Essex: Abbey Mills, 150 on Dec 18th. Bow Creek Ecology Park, 83 on Jan 6th. Creekmouth, Barking, 250 on Dec 30th. William Girling Res, 90 on Jan 16th.

Herts: Amwell NR, 80 on Jan 9th, 86 on Nov 19th. Tyttenhanger GP, 48 on Dec 5th.

Middx: Fulham Reach, 74 on Jan 2nd. Hackney Marsh, 68 on Feb 10th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 25 on Nov 9th. Wraysbury GP, eight on Nov 13th.

Kent: Dartford Marshes, 83 on Sep 21st. Erith, 83 on Jan 21st. Sevenoaks WR, 90 on Dec 21st. Swanscombe Marshes, 85 on Jan 9th and on Mar 15th.

Surrey: Hogsmill SW, 69 on Jan 16th. Holmethorpe SP, 84 on Dec 8th & 12th. R Wandle: Carshalton Ponds to Wandsworth, 78 on Dec 27th.

In Lond: Battersea Park, six on Oct 13th and on Nov 30th. Chelsea Wharf, 16 on Jan 16th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Jan 6th-7th, May 13th and Nov 30th. Rotherhithe, singles on Nov 8th and Dec 7th. Victoria Park, one on Dec 27th.

Mallard Anas platyrhynchos

Status: very common and widespread breeding resident.

The total number of broods was 320, up from 298 last year. The peak count was 616 at London Wetland Centre on December 12th (475 at Staines Res last year) and the peak summer count was 388, also at London Wetland Centre, on August 16th (513 at the same site last year). The table below shows sites that had a count of 150 or more. Breeding records are summarised below the table.

Ma	lard	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
MX	Q. Mary Res	8	10	34	-	21	25	51	176	25	12	8	12
KT	Crossness	30	15	16	3	43	11	27	85	156	27	60	44
	Kelsey Park	105	122	65	92	101	93	150	81	145	123	120	98
SY	Putney Bridge-Barnes	247	301	179	-	107	-	-	-	346	212	376	278
	R Wandle (Carshalton												
	Ponds-Wandsworth)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	290
	Kew-Richmond	103	22	43	60	85	57	178	-	143	-	-	122
	Wetland Centre	214	171	158	173	165	164	248	388	169	285	297	616

Essex: 64 broods from 13 sites. Herts: 62 broods from 13 sites. Middx: 81 broods from 26 sites. Kent: 42 broods from 11 sites. Surrey: 68 broods from 15 sites.

In Lond: Three broods from three sites.

Northern Pintail Anas acuta

Status: passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers, very occasional summer visitor.

Wintering numbers were similar to 2015. The peak count was 56 at Rainham Marshes on

March 4th (peak count last year there of 51). The last record in the first half of the year was on May 8th at Dagenham Chase and the first returning birds were on August 16th at Amwell NR. The table below gives counts from the key sites and, below that, all the records from other sites.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Nor	thern Pintail	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
EX	Rainham Marshes	51	45	56	14	-	-	-	6	4	10	20	20
	KGV Res	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-
HR	Amwell NR	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-
MX	Brent Res	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
	Staines Res	2	1	6	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
KT	Dartford Marshes	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	5
SY	Beddington Farmlands	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	3
	Wetland Centre	6	8	6	3	-	-	-	-	1	2	13	8

Essex: Connaught Water, singles in January and October to December. Dagenham Chase, one occasionally between Jan 13th and May 8th. Purfleet, one upriver on Feb 15th. Sewardstone Marsh, one on Oct 15th.

Herts: Cheshunt GP, one on Oct 20th. Hilfield Park Res, two on Jan 19th, four on Jan 28th and two on Apr 11th. Maple Lodge NR, one on Sep 1st. Seventy Acres Lake, singles on Jan 2nd and on Oct 20th. Stanstead Innings, singles regularly from Jan 3rd to Mar 19th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Sep 16th and on Dec 24th.

Middx: Broadwater Lake, one on Mar 6th and on Apr 14th. Enfield Lock, one on Mar 7th. KGVI Res, one on Mar 6th & 25th, two on Mar 20th. Osterley Park, one on Oct 19th. Wraysbury Res, one on Nov 5th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Oct 8th, two on Nov 11th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, one on Jan 20th. Crossness, one on Sep 18th. Sevenoaks WR, one on ten dates between Aug 31st and Oct 8th. Swanscombe Marshes, one on Oct 14th.

Surrey: Holmethorpe SP, singles on Apr 5th and on several dates from Nov 13th to Dec 28th. QE II Res, 17 W on Sep 21st and two on Oct 4th. Richmond Park, one on Jan 3rd. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), one on Sep 15th and five on 20th, up to four on several dates from Oct 6th to Nov 27th. Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough), two on Mar 25th, In Lond: Regent's Park, two on Feb 21st, one on Mar 26th and three on Dec 25th.

Garganey Anas guerguedula

Status: scarce passage migrant, rare in winter; occasionally breeds.

The first migrant arrived at Island Barn Res on March 21st (nine days later than last year). More followed from March 30th at Thorpe Water Park and they were noted during April and May at Sevenoaks WR, Hilfield Park Res, Ingrebourne Valley, KGV Res, Rainham Marshes, Walthamstow Res, Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), Fairlop Waters, Holmethorpe SP and Rye Meads, numbering one or two in all cases. In June, Amwell NR saw two birds on the 1st, as did London Wetland Centre on 8th; there were also singles at Queensbury Park on 4th and at Rainham Marshes on 6th-7th. Rye Meads saw the biggest June concentration with a pair from 2nd and three birds on 11th-14th, and also the latest birds with three on 17th.



Garganey. (Alan Reynolds)

The first returning birds were three on July 16th (exactly one month earlier than last year) at Rye Meads and one at Staines Res on the same date. Others followed from July 24th until September at Beddington Farmlands, Broadwater Lake, Crossness, Darlands Lake, KGV Res, London Wetland Centre, Q. Mother Res, Rainham Marshes, Rye Meads and Tyttenhanger GP. The last bird was at Beddington Farmlands on September 29th. The highest count, of five birds, was at Rainham Marshes on August 23rd. There were birds recorded at 23 sites this year, compared with 18 sites in 2015.

Northern Shoveler Anas clypeata

Status: common passage migrant and winter visitor, scarce breeder, with small numbers recorded in summer.

Most of our wintering population had left by late April and began to return in mid-August, similar to last year. The highest count was 338 at Staines Res in December, 55 below the 2015 peak of 393, and well below the 581 in 2014. London Wetland Centre was the only other site to have numbers of national significance (180 for BTO WeBS counts). The only breeding reports came from Rainham Marshes. The table below gives monthly figures for the key sites. Below that are significant records from other sites and a summary of records from Inner London (no. of broods in brackets).

Nor	thern Shoveler	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX	Rainham Marshes	72	160	125	78	12	10	2	47	41	96	25	37
HR	Amwell NR	48	30	30	40	10	-	-	11	-	-	34	10
	Hilfield Park Res	39	90	97	65	1	3	-	6	16	24	29	54
	Rye Meads	66	57	93	88	7	9	14	21	68	38	75	50
MX	Brent Res	17	40	13	10	11	1	4	19	110	75	22	26
	Staines Res	44	58	152	112	-	1	3	5	47	100	128	338
	Stain Hill Res	19	45	27	18	-	-	-	2	4	102	32	29
ΚT	Crossness	132	44	53	14	-	-	-	7	7	12	46	109
	Beddington Farmlands	60	65	55	40	7	3	5	25	92	92	80	60
	Wetland Centre	216	274	172	72	3	5	8	105	177	194	99	296

Essex: Rainham Marshes (7), seven broods seen although ten pairs present. Walthamstow Res, 80 on Oct 18th. Wanstead Park, 66 on Mar 18th.

Herts: Stocker's Lake, 84 on Mar 4th. Tyttenhanger GP, 61 on Nov 7th.

Middx: Bedfont Lakes CP, 115 on Feb 15th.

Bucks: Horton GP, 55 on Jan 9th.

Kent: Dartford Marshes, 26 on Dec 9th. Sevenoaks WR, 28 on Dec 17th.

Surrey: Hogsmill SW, 80 on Feb 8th. Holmethorpe SP, 71 on Mar 21st. Richmond Park, 62

on Oct 26th.

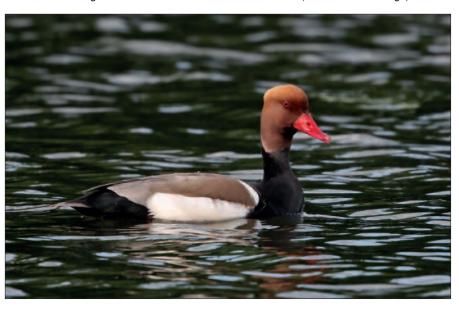
In Lond: Battersea Park, 38 on Mar 13th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 32 on Nov 15th. Regent's Park, 46 on Nov 26th. Southwark Park, 12 on Jan 20th. Victoria Park, 11 on Jan 6th.

Red-crested Pochard Netta rufina

Status: introduced breeding resident, probably also rare autumn and winter visitor from the Continent.

The attraction of Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens continues to grow for this gaudy introduced duck with a peak count of 61 compared with 36 at the same site in 2015. This was almost twice the highest number at Regent's Park which, up until last year, had always had the highest count since the population was judged self-sustaining in 2010. Bury Lake with 25 had the highest count outside Inner London. Records came from around 51 different sites this year confirming that this species can turn up on almost any river, lake or canal in our area. The only confirmed breeding records were at Buckingham Palace

Whilst the inner-London parks remain the best location for Red-crested Pochard, other sites can get visits. This bird was at Wanstead Park. (Jonathan Lethbridge)



Gardens, Regent's Park and Victoria Park, though a pair was also seen mating at Stocker's Lake in April. Peak counts at sites where ten or more were recorded are listed below (no. of broods in brackets).

Herts: Bury Lake, 25 on Dec 15th. Stocker's Lake, 16 on Dec 1st & 7th.

Middx: Bushy Park, 16 on Sep 9th.

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 61 on Aug 22nd. Regent's Park (3); 33 on Jan 4th. St James's Park, 17 on Feb 3rd. Victoria Park (1); 13 on Dec 8th.

Common Pochard Aythya ferina

Status: common winter visitor and migrant, scarce breeder.

The very high numbers at Staines Res in late 2015 continued into 2016 with a peak count of 868 on February 2nd compared with just 143 in the same month last year. Improved food supply following the draining of the north basin is thought to be the reason for such a large flock which departed en masse in March with 660 counted on March 4th and none on March 26th. By the second winter period, numbers at Staines Res were back to more typical levels. The only other sites with counts of over 150 birds were Broadwater Lake and Hilfield Park Res. Submitted breeding records are incomplete but numbers were down on 2015 with 41 broods from 16 sites compared with 49 broods from 18 sites. The reduction at Walthamstow Res where numbers of young fell from 16 in 2015 to just one may point to a real decrease in breeding success here. Peak monthly counts of 50 or over are included in the table with all submitted breeding records (no. of broods in brackets).

Con	nmon Pochard	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX	Fairlop Waters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62	-	-	-
	Holyfield Lake	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
	KGV Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	-	-	-
	Walthamstow Res	109	59	-	-	-	-	-	137	-	70	58	53
HR	Bury & Stocker's Lakes	65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Hilfield Park Res	-	-	-	-	-	57	134	151	-	-	-	-
	Rye Meads	-	-	-	-	54	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Troy Mill Lake	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MX	Bedfont Lakes CP	-	101	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Brent Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	54
	Broadwater Lake	150	200	-	-	-	157	-	-	56	-	-	-
	Staines Res	862	868	660	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	121
BU	Wraysbury GP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120
SY	Beddington Farmlands	-	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Richmond Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	63	65	-
	Thorpe Water Park	81	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Wetland Centre	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	88
IL	Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	53	-	-	51
	St James's Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	55

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (1). Rainham Marshes (4). Walthamstow Res (1).

Herts: Amwell NR (1). Maple Lodge NR (2). Rye Meads (15). Stocker's Lake (1). Verulamium Park (1).

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Middx: Brent Res (1). Red House Res (1).

Kent: Crossness (2), Swanscombe Marshes (1).

Surrey: Leg O Mutton NR (1). London Wetland Centre (2). Walton Res (Knight &

Bessborough) (4).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns, four pairs present but no young raised. Regent's Park (3).

Ferruginous Duck Aythya nyroca

Status: rare vagrant.

A single record for the year is now becoming typical for this species. It is, however, only the second since 1990 to turn up in September with November being the favourite month for arrivals. A near-fortnight stay enabled this drake to be enjoyed by a procession of admirers.

Middx: Brent Res, drake from Sep 20th to Oct 2nd (ASMS, RB et al).

Tufted Duck Aythya fuliqula

Status: regular resident breeder and common winter visitor.

For the first time, three sites recorded peak counts over 2,000. The post-breeding flock at Walthamstow Res was, as usual, the highest count with 2,265 on August 14th, down on last year's record 2,860. But it was almost matched by the 2,148 birds at KGVI Res on August 21st while the unprecedented large flock at Staines Res, remaining from late 2015, saw 2,001 recorded on January 17th. The highest count in Inner London was 148 in St James's Park on December 7th. The 194 broods and 44 sites are up on last year's 145 from 35. Breeding success was particularly high at the main site of Rye Meads with 58 broods this year (22 in 2015 and 27 in 2014). The table contains all monthly counts of 500 and above with numbers of submitted broods in each county and at the main sites shown below.

Tuf	ted Duck	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
EX	KGV Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	1100	1000	-	-	-	-
	Walthamstow Res	560	-	-	-	-	-	-	2265	602	560	684	519
MX	Broadwater Lake	500	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	KGVI Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	1519	2148	680	529	-	-
	Q. Mary Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	750	-	-	-
	Staines Res	2001	600	-	-	-	-	708	546	-	-	-	-
BU	Wraysbury GP	861	926	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Essex: 24 broods. Belhus Woods CP (5). Rainham Marshes (6). Walthamstow Res (10).

Herts: 73 broods. Rye Meads (58). Middx: 23 broods. Stain Hill Res (5).

Kent: Six broods.

Surrey: 60 broods. Beddington Farmlands (12), London Wetland Centre (24). Walton Res

(Chelsea & Lambeth) (c20).

In Lond: Eight broods. Regent's Park (5).

Greater Scaup Avthya marila

Status: regular but uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant, occasional large influxes during cold weather.

Milder winters continue to see a general decline in numbers. There were as few as 17 different birds, similar to the figure of recent years (discounting 2015's single large flock) but well down, for example, on the 58 seen in 2010. The number of sites, however, is up with birds reported from 14 compared with nine last year and just four in 2014. Staines Res again accounted for the most birds with five separate individuals (four in the first winter period).

Essex: Dagenham Chase, fem from Jan 1st to Mar 19th. KGV Res, male from Jan 12th to Apr 24th. Walthamstow Res, male from 2015 stayed until Feb 7th, perhaps same returned Dec 4th until end of year.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, fem on May 7th.

Middx: Brent Res, male on May 11th. Broadwater Lake, two males on Feb 16th. Staines Res, three from 2015, joined by a fourth from Jan 20th with the last seen on Apr 30th and 1st-winter male on Dec 22nd.

Bucks: Horton GP, one on Nov 13th. Q. Mother Res, juv on Nov 4th. Wraysbury GP, one on and off from Nov 17th to Dec 26th.

Surrey: Holmethorpe SP, fem from Feb 21th to Apr 7th. Island Barn Res, two on Nov 27th with one on Dec 12th. London Wetland Centre, one on Jan 17th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), two on Nov 3rd which remained into 2017.

Common Scoter Melanitta nigra

Status: passage migrant and occasional winter visitor, never numerous.

Around 70 birds were seen, broadly in line with recent years, with records from every month except October. The largest flock was nine on the Thames on March 25th at Rainham Marshes which again was the site with the most records. Holmethorpe SP hosted the largest flock inland with seven on June 30th. The female first seen at Horton GP in December 2015 is thought to have visited several nearby sites during a stay which lasted until the end of April. After last year's first Inner London record since 2009, two were seen this year.

Essex: Barking Bay, five on Mar 20th. Fairlop Waters, one on Jun 2nd. Gallions Reach, one on Mar 30th and six on Nov 26th. KGV Res, one from Jan 23rd to Feb 20th, two on Apr 14th and another on Jul 18th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Feb 13th and Mar 18th, two on Mar 19th, five on Mar 20th (presumed same as Barking), nine on Mar 25th with eight on the 30th, two on Apr 6th-12th but with six on the 11th, and one on Apr 13th, singles on Aug 17th and Nov 24th. William Girling Res, one on Jan 16th and Dec 14th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Jan 17th. Hilfield Park Res, one on Mar 21st, from Apr 13th-21st and another on Sep 15th.

Middx: KGVI Res, fem (same as Q. Mother Res) seen here and intermittently at Staines Res and Wraysbury Res from Mar 6th to Apr 30th, male on Mar 20th. Q. Mary Res, male on Sep 18th. Staines Res, male on Jun 8th & 16th, male on Sep 19th & 22nd, two on Nov 24th. Wraysbury Res. one from Nov 18th-26th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, fem overwintering from 2015 to Feb 28th (also seen regularly at



Most Common Scoter records come from the Thames, however this female spent nearly three weeks in Southwark Park. (Jonathan Lethbridge)

Horton GP), three on Mar 21st and on Jul 22nd.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, two on Mar 12th. Crossness, five on Mar 20th (same as Barking Bay and Rainham). Swanscombe Marsh, one Mar 24th.

Surrey: Holmethorpe SP, seven on Jun 30th. Island Barn Res, three from Nov 23rd-27th with one remaining until Dec 2nd.

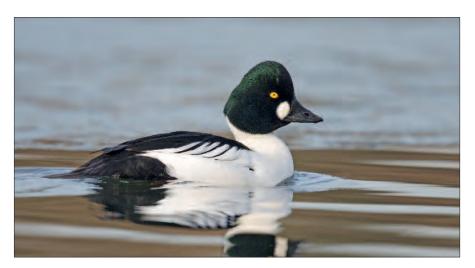
In Lond: Southwark Park, fem from Mar 21st to Apr 10th. Regent's Park, one on May 13th.

Common Goldeneye Bucephala clangula

Status: common winter visitor, occasional summer records.

Staines Res continues to attract high numbers with the peak of 76 on March 15th, only two below last year's figure at the same site, which was the highest count in the London Area since 2008. KGV Res with 43 in the same month and Wraysbury GP with 35 on the last day of the year also had peak counts above 30. Thanks to a drake which oversummered at Stocker's Lake (and a metal-ringed female which again raised young at Springwell Lake), birds were recorded in every month. The last, apart from these, in the first winter period was on April 17th in Richmond Park with the first returning bird at KGV Res on July 14th. Peak monthly counts over 15 are below together with peak counts for other sectors.

Cor	nmon Goldeneye	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX	KGV Res	19	27	43	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HR	Stocker's Lake	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
MX	Broadwater Lake	-	16	-	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	KGVI Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
	Staines Res	60	48	76	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	18
BU	Wraysbury GP	27	30	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	35



A drake Common Goldeneye is an impressive looking duck. This bird was at Bury Lake.

(Andrew Moon)

Kent: Littlebrook Lake, singles on Jan 6th and Mar 11th.

Surrey: Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough), peak of nine on Mar 28th.

Smew Mergellus albellus

Status: winter visitor in highly variable but declining numbers.

In the first winter period, the number of individuals may have been as few as 14, another reduction from 2015's low of 24. Only Bedfont Lakes CP - and even here only on one day - recorded a peak count of five compared with three sites last year. Discounting records from at least one tame but mobile presumed feral redhead in the north, the last in the first winter period was on March 22nd and the first returner on November 10th. All records are given below.

Essex: Holyfield Lake, one on Jan 23rd. KGV Res, two from Jan 6th to Mar 21st. William Girling Res, one on Jan 16th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one from Jan to Mar 12th and from Nov 14th to Dec 31st. Friday Lake, maximum of three on Jan 18th with one remaining until Mar 22nd, one on Nov 10th and Dec 5th. Rye Meads, one on Dec 17th. Seventy Acre Lake, drake on Jan 2nd. Stocker's Lake, one from Dec 27th-29th.

Middx: Bedfont Lakes CP, from Jan 5th to Mar 17th with a maximum of five on Feb 23rd. Princes Lake, one on Dec 2nd. Staines Res, three on Mar 12th.

Bucks: Horton GP, one on Dec 7th. Wraysbury GP, three from Jan 13th-21st with two until Feb 25th.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on Jan 11th and Mar 26th. Thorpe Water Park, one on Nov 13th.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Another poor year, with just 14 individuals seen at five sites - two fewer sites than in 2015 when 15 were recorded and well down on 30 birds from 11 sites in 2014. There was one at the West London reservoirs in the first winter, then two in the spring, two in September and the rest at the end of the year. The total would have been at a record low in recent times without the flock of seven.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Essex: Creekmouth, Barking, drake on Nov 17th. Rainham Marshes, two on Apr 24th, two on Sep 17th, seven on Nov 9th and one on Dec 27th.

Surrey: Island Barn Res, drake from Nov 27th-29th. QE II Res, drake on Jan 18th & 20th and Feb 5th. Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough), drake on Jan 21st & 30th and Dec 7th. (All the Surrey records are believed to be of the same drake, returning for a number of winters.)

Goosander Mergus merganser

Status: regular winter visitor, very rare in summer.

Eight sites recorded counts of over ten, the same as last year, but the peak count of 25 at Wraysbury Res was exactly half the highest total of 2015 at William Girling Res. The last of the first winter period was seen at KGV Res on April 9th. The same site hosted the first returning bird on September 12th. For the second successive year, there were no Inner London records. Below are the peak counts in both winter periods at sites where over ten were recorded.

Essex: KGV Res, 19 on Jan 6th.

Herts: Seventy Acres Lake, 12 on Jan 10th and 18 on Dec 3rd. Turnford Marsh GP, 21 on Dec 13th.

Middx: Wraysbury Res, 25 on Jan 13th. Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 14 on Feb 7th.

Surrey: QE II Res, 23 on Feb 5th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), 13 on Feb 4th and 15 on Dec 24th. Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough), 24 on Jan 1st and 15 on Dec 24th.

Ruddy Duck Oxyura jamaicensis

Status: formerly a widespread winter visitor and localised breeder of non-native origin; now much declined due to nationwide eradication programme.

Just four birds this year, the same as in 2015, of the few surviving the eradication programme.

Herts: Bowyer's Water, fem from Nov 17th-19th (BR et al).

Middx: Staines Res, three on Jan 21st (male, fem and imm), with male on Jan 27th and fem on Nov 25th (AVM et al).

Red-legged Partridge Alectoris rufa

Status: breeding resident, of introduced origin.

The vast majority of records were again from farmland in Essex, Hertfordshire and Middlesex, where 66 sites provided records. All breeding records are given below (no. of pairs/territories in brackets), with high counts and other significant records.

Essex: Reported from 26 sites. Chigwell (1). Dagenham Chase, one on Mar 17th was unusual. KGV Res, one on Mar 6th. Mar Dyke Valley (1). Orsett Fen (2); 83 on Dec 2nd. Rainham Marshes, one on May 1st.

Herts: Reported from 23 sites. Berrybushes Wood, 18 on Oct 23rd. Borehamwood, two feeding all day in a garden on Apr 21st. Coursers Farm (1), two juvs. Wildhill, 20 on Sep 18th.

Middx: Reported from 17 sites. Enfield Chase Area: Park Farm (1), two juvs seen; Parkside Farm/Res (2), two juvs seen; South Lodge Farm (1); Whitewebbs Farm (2). Finsbury Park, one walking down Regina Rd on Apr 9th. Totteridge Valley (4).

Bucks: Colnbrook, two on May 29th and Sep 11th, one on Nov 13th and two on Dec 4th. Horton Brook Quarry, one on Mar 13th, two on Jul 9th & one on 25th and five on Nov 27th. Iver Heath, one on Nov 25th. Wraysbury GP (1).

Kent: Darenth Lakes, ten on Nov 1st. High Elms CP, five on Dec 9th. Longfield Gallops, present all year, 16 on Jan 5th. Rushmore Hill, three on Jan 16th. Shoreham, two on Nov 28th. Sundridge, two on Jul 29th. Swanscombe Marshes, peak of five on Oct 14th. Upper College Farm, one on Apr 13th.

Surrey: Reported from ten sites, several in the breeding season. Holmethorpe SP, six on Mar 3rd. Langley Vale Farm, five on Jan 4th. Rushett Farm (3); five on Oct 12th and Dec 9th.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Status: breeding resident, declining.

Records came from eight sites in two sectors (nine sites and five sectors in 2015), with birds recorded at seven sites in the period between April and June. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 26% decrease in the UK since last year following a long term decrease of 79% in the South East from 1995-2015. All the evidence of our records supports this continued decline. All records are given below.

Essex: Temple Farm, Roydon, two on Jun 18th.

Herts: Beech Farm GP & Coopers Green GP, records on several dates from Mar 5th to Dec 8th, with peak of four on later date. Colney Heath, two on Apr 23rd. Courser's Farm, two on Apr 23rd and one on Oct 14th. Ellenbrook Fields, two on May 22nd, probable breeding. Tyttenhanger Farm, two on May 27th. West End, singles on Jun 18th and Dec 11th. Wildhill, seven on Oct 17th.

Common Quail Coturnix coturnix

Status: rare summer visitor.

There was just one record this year, of a bird which was caught by a cat and the photo sent to a local birder. This is below the average over the past decade, as the table below shows.

Common Quail records 2007-2016: 33 records, 36 birds

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of records	4	2	4	6	6	4	3	1	2	1
No. of birds	4	2	6	6	6	5	3	1	2	1

Essex: Stifford Clays, one on May 7th (per DGDL).

Pheasant Phasianus colchicus

Status: common breeding resident, of introduced origin.

There were records from 205 sites (265 in 2015), nearly half accounted for by the Essex and Hertfordshire sectors but it was difficult to confirm breeding success. Numbers of pairs/territories are listed (in brackets), with all high counts and other significant or unusual records such as those from more urban areas.

Essex: Reported from 46 sites. Brook Farm, Upminster (1). Epping, 20 on Jan 1st. Ilford, male on Mar 27th. Leyton Flats, fem on Apr 28th. Mar Dyke Valley (2). Orsett Fen (5). Rainham Marshes, 16 on Jan 9th. Waterworks NR, one on Apr 12th was unusual.

Herts: Reported from 52 sites. Amwell NR (2). Bedmond, 11 on May 12th. Essendon, 29 on Apr 5th. Essendonbury, nine on Apr 16th. Hatfield Park, 33 on Mar 27th. Rye Meads (1); 21 on Feb 18th. West End, 23 on Apr 18th. Wildhill, 50 on Sep 18th.

Middx: Reported from 29 sites. Brent Res, several records included a pair on Mar 13th. Enfield Chase Area: Vicarage Farm (1), brood of five. Home Park (6). Poplar, pair on Oct 27th at base of Balfron Tower. Ten Acre Wood, Yeading (1), four young. Tottenham Marshes (5), no young seen. Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, male on Oct 28th and Nov 1st, the first site record. Trent Park (1), three young. Woodberry Wetlands, one on Apr 13th.

Bucks: Reported from four sites. Black Park, four records from Apr 2nd to Jul 24th, with peak of four on May 28th. Higher Denham, one on Apr 26th. Iver, one on Feb 24th. Q. Mother Res, one on Nov 29th.

Kent: Reported from 37 sites. Crayford Marshes (1). Crossness (3). Darenth Lakes, 12 on Nov 1st. Dartford Marshes (1). Greenwich, fem on roof on Feb 27th then in road on 28th. Sevenoaks WR, 40 on May 29th. Swanscombe Marshes (18).

Surrey: Reported from 34 sites. Ashtead Common, ten on Mar 25th. Beddington Farmlands, five on Apr 5th. Canons Farm (1). Cheverells Farm, 12 on Sep 14th. Langley Vale Farm, 12 on Jan 4th. London Wetland Centre, nine records of singles between January and October. Selsdon, 21 on Dec 26th. South Norwood CP, ten on Apr 13th. Worcester Park, one on Apr 13th.

In Lond: Hemans Estate Community Gdn, Lambeth, male on Mar 13th. Holland Park, dead fem on Mar 5th. Regent's Park, male on Apr 29th.

Red-throated Diver Gavia stellata

Status: rare winter visitor and occasional migrant.

Following a blank year in 2015, there was just one November record this year. There have only been 12 birds recorded in the last ten years (details in table below), whereas there were 28 in the previous ten years from 1997 to 2006 and 36 from 1987 to 1996; so there does seem a decline in numbers seen in London.

Red-throated Diver records 2007-2016: 12 birds

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of birds	3	2	0	0	0	2	2*	2	0	1

^{*} and one overwintering from 2012

Essex: KGV Res, one on Nov 2nd (CFa, TBr).

Great Northern Diver Gavia immer

Status: scarce winter visitor and occasional migrant, often after hard weather.

During the first winter, four birds were seen on the west London reservoirs, including two long staying and mobile adults; the first on Horton GP, Q. Mother Res and Q. Mary Res, and the second, which remained until May 12th, frequenting Staines Res, KGVI Res, Wraysbury Res and Island Barn Res. Two additional birds in Essex remained from 2015.

An adult and a juvenile were observed during the second winter, both arriving in December, with the adult being seen on both Staines Res and KGVI Res and thought to be a returning individual from the first winter.

Essex: Fairlop Waters, one from 2015 to Jan 7th. KGV Res, singles on Jan 2nd & 12th, Feb 20th & 23rd.

Middx: KGVI Res, adult irregularly from Jan 21st to May 8th, juv on Mar 20th, adult on Dec 28th & 29th. Q. Mary Res, adult on Jan 17th (same as Bucks bird), juv from Dec 18th into 2017. Staines Res, 2nd-winter on Jan 1st & 13th, adult from Jan 13th-20th and May 12th, adult from Dec 25th into 2017 (same as KGVI Res bird). Wraysbury Res, one on Apr 5th.

Bucks: Horton GP, adult on Jan 19th, 21st & 27th-28th. Q. Mother Res, adult from Jan 30th to Feb 9th (same as Horton GP).

Surrey: Island Barn Res, adult from Jan 3rd-13th.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Status: widespread breeding resident on most suitable waters, also passage migrant and winter visitor.

A minimum of 152 broods/territories were counted, lower than the 170 in 2015 but higher than the 139 in 2014. Numbers were down slightly for the second year in succession at the two major sites, Rainham Marshes (35, compared with 38 in 2015) and Rye Meads (15, compared with 19 in 2015), but were similar at most other important sites and slightly up at both Walthamstow Res (nine, compared with five broods in 2015) and Beddington Farmlands (nine, compared with seven in 2015). Records were received from 128 sites in January and February and from 120 sites in November and December, similar to the reporting rate for 2015 (118 and 101 sites for the respective periods). Below is a breeding summary for each sector, breeding records for the main sites (no. of territories/broods in brackets), plus a summary of Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: 61 broods/pairs at nine sites. Rainham Marshes (35). Walthamstow Res (9 broods); 30 on Sep 17th.

Herts: 32 pairs at eight sites. Rye Meads (15); 48 on Sep 17th. Bury/Stocker's Lakes (9).

Middx: 14+ pairs at ten sites. Bedfont Lakes CP, 31 on Oct 31st. Stain Hill Res (3+).

Bucks: No breeding records. Wraysbury GP, five on Feb 18th.

Kent: Five to six pairs at four sites. Lullingstone Park, 17 on Nov 28th. Swanscombe Marshes (2).

Surrey: 36 pairs/broods at 15 sites. Beddington Farmlands (9); 35 on Sep 1st & 18th. Holmethorpe SP, 33 on Aug 15th. R Wandle (7). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (6).

In Lond: Battersea Park, eight on Oct 14th. Buckingham Palace Gdns (1). Regent's Park (1). Southwark Park (1). St James's Park, eight on Nov 11th and Dec 7th. Victoria Park (1-2).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Status: common breeding resident and winter visitor.

There were at least 105 pairs/broods at 58 sites, compared with 126 at 72 sites in 2015. Reported breeding numbers were lower this year in Hertfordshire, Essex and Surrey but higher in Middlesex. Breeding behaviour during winter was observed at five sites, including large chicks seen in February at both Frogmore Lakes and Blackwell Basin.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Numbers counted at the more significant sites are shown in the table below. Below that is a breeding summary for each sector, breeding records for the main sites (no. of territories/broods in brackets), plus a summary of Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Great Crested Grebe	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
MX Q. Mary Res	166	128	209	145	80	101	138	184	238	182	155	190
Staines Res	11	5	4	19	18	11	148	142	175	78	192	210

Essex: 17 pairs/broods at eight sites. KGV Res, 40 on Aug 23rd. Walthamstow Res (7 broods): c100 on Sep 17th.

Herts: 24 pairs/broods at ten sites. Aldenham Res (4 broods). Hilfield Park Res (5); 68 on Aug 29th.

Middx: 30 pairs/broods at 17 sites. Canary Wharf (6). Wraysbury Res, 108 on Sep 22nd and 103 on Oct 6th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 45 on Aug 8th. Thorney CP (1). Wraysbury GP, 42 on Jan 13th.

Kent: 16+ pairs/broods at ten sites. Sevenoaks WR (6+ broods); 37 on Jan 6th.

Surrey: Ten+ pairs at seven sites. Island Barn Res, 27 on Aug 10th. London Wetland Centre (3+).

In Lond: Battersea Park (one pair, two broods). Canada Water (1). Hyde Park/ Kensington Gdns (3+); 18 on Oct 18th. Shadwell Basin (1). Victoria Park (1).

Red-necked Grebe Podiceps grisegena

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A total of three birds was the highest since 2012. Since 2005, this total has only been bettered once (seven in 2010). Records of more than one bird together are unusual and interesting behaviour was observed at KGVI Res when the young bird called several times and the adult swam up to join it.

Essex: KGV Res, one on Aug 21st (NS et al).

Middx: KGVI Res, adult and 1st-winter on Oct 29th (REI, DJM, KLP).

Slavonian Grebe Podiceps auritus

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A minimum of seven birds were seen, assuming the records from KGV and William Girling Res between January and March 6th relate to the same bird (which was present from 2015). This was the only one at the start of the year, then there was the first May record this century (see table below), followed by five birds at the end of the year.

Slavonian Grebe arrival dates 2000-2016: 137 birds*

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	27	23	9	15	1	-	-	2	5	12	22	21

*perhaps 4 more in 2014 and 3 more in 2015

Essex: KGV Res, one irregularly between Jan 2nd & 28th (SF et al), one on Mar 6th (SHs), one on Sep 4th (NS), two on Nov 26th (AMn). William Girling Res, one on Feb 9th (BR). Herts: Amwell NR, one on Nov 13th (BR).

Surrey: Holmethorpe SP, one on Dec 27th (RIJ). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), one from May 3rd-14th (DMH et al).

Black-necked Grebe Podiceps nigricollis

Status: passage and winter migrant and rare breeder.

Although numbers at Hilfield Park Res were similar to normal in the spring, all early breeding attempts were considered to have failed for an unknown reason on or just before May 25th, when 16 of the 20 birds present were observed doing nothing and away from the reed beds. The first of four broods was not seen until August 8th, but at least three young still fledged. Winter numbers were low at William Girling Res, probably due to low water level while maintenance was carried out. Counts from the main sites are summarised in the table and all other records are listed below the table.

Bla	ck-necked Grebe	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
EX	KGV Res	1	-	-	1	-	3	-	-	1	-	-	-
	William Girling Res	9	10	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HR	Hilfield Park Res	1	13	20	25	20	20	8	9	7	2	1	-
MX	KGVI Res	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-
	Staines Res	7	11	11	6	1	1	5	5	4	4	4	2
SY	Island Barn Res	-	2	2	7	1	1	-	-	3	1	-	-
	QE II Res	1	-	2	1	2	2	-	1	-	-	-	-

Black-necked Grebe in full summer plumage. (Dave Harris)



Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Sep 7th. Walthamstow Res, four on May 9th, two from May 10th-12th and on Jun 24th, singles on Nov 22nd and from Dec 4th-22nd.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Herts: Amwell NR, two on Jun 6th. Hilfield Park Res (four broods). Tyttenhanger GP, two on May 27th.

Middx: Q. Mary Res, one on Dec 22nd. Woodberry Wetlands, two on Jun 22nd. Wraysbury Res, adult and juy on Sep 13th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, juv on Aug 19th.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, singles on Sep 25th and Oct 5th.

Surrey: Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), two on May 26th and Jun 22nd. Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough) singles on Apr 18th and from Aug 29th to Sep 5th.

Northern Fulmar Fulmarus glacialis

Status: rare visitor.

A single bird observed drifting upriver on a rising tide in February, was the first record since 2013. As the table below shows, arrival dates for records since 1980 are spread across almost all months, with January being the only month when none have been seen. Only one of these 30 records has involved more than one bird, when three were seen together in 2008.

Northern Fulmar arrival dates 1980-2016: 30 records, 32 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	-	4	3	4	6	2	3	1	3	1	1	2
No. of birds	-	4	3	4	8	2	3	1	3	1	1	2

Essex: Purfleet, one drifted upriver at 15:20 on Feb 13th (FS).

Cory's Shearwater Calonectris diomedea

Status: rare vagrant.

Most rare seabirds found in the London Area are observed on the outer Thames or the larger reservoirs, and Inner London is certainly not regarded as a hotspot, though seabirds are occasionally recorded here (including a Gannet this year). It is remarkable, therefore, that the first ever Cory's Shearwater in the London Area was seen (and photographed) flying over Regent's Park. It is believed to be only the third inland record in the UK. Full details are given on page 184.

In Lond: Regent's Park, one flew SW at 10:48 on Sep 15th (DJ, ARD).

Leach's Storm-petrel Oceanodroma leucorhoa

Status: rare visitor, often during 'wreck' conditions.

This was the first record since 2009. It was present throughout the day, but only a small number of London birders were able to catch up with it, as access at the site is restricted to permit holders. All the records since 2000 have been between September and December (see table below).

Leach's Storm-petrel arrival dates 2000-2016: 21 records, 22 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	8	2	6
No. of birds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	9	2	6

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Sep 10th (ABT et al).

Northern Gannet Morus bassanus

Status: scarce visitor.

There were two records again this year, as in 2014 and 2015, and both were in the autumn. The number of records and the date of the records are both typical with 27 of the past 42 records being between September and November. However the Inner London record is the first for that sector since 1995, when one was seen over Regent's Park.

Middx: Chiswick, one SW on Oct 2nd (OD).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one over on Nov 2nd (DE).



Gannet is rare enough anywhere in London, but this bird was right in the centre over Kensington Gardens. (David Element)

Cormorant Phalacrocorax carbo

Status: increasing breeding resident and common on suitable water-bodies elsewhere, especially in winter.

Breeding was reported from just six sites this year. Breeding numbers were similar to recent years at Amwell NR and Q. Mary GP, but the count of 33 at Broadwater Lake was lower (51 in 2015) and another low count from Walthamstow Res may indicate a genuine decline here since counts of 300+ early this century; however counting nests is difficult at this site, and there was a count of 280 nests as recently as 2011. The Estonian ringed bird returned to East India Dock Basin in September for a fourth winter.

The table below shows monthly maxima at regularly counted sites with larger numbers. Some exceptional counts were made at Q. Mary Res in the autumn, peaking at 1,106 (surpassing the count of 910 in February 2015) with counts of 700 or more at Staines Res presumably involving many of the same individuals. Below the table are breeding records (no. of nests in brackets) and notable counts from other localities.

Cor	morant	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX	Walthamstow Res	56	95	200	138	-	96	-	-	73	57	103	20
MX	Q. Mary Res	40	60	100	150	80	118	450	971	1106	100	38	300
	Staines Res	4	1	1	2	-	1	8	400	784	3	393	400
	Wraysbury Res	31	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	123	457	-	-
BU	Q. Mother Res	24	14	39	48	9	8	37	200	180	210	1	8
SY	Island Barn Res	35	16	11	7	7	4	45	25	115	332	50	22
	QE II Res	185	190	95	61	15	12	98	285	270	202	260	210
	Walton Res (C & L))	80	13	1	1	1	1	55	118	92	200	218	55
	Wetland Centre	50	170	175	115	5	5	14	20	23	32	45	76

Essex: Holyfield Lake (35). KGV Res, 224 on Aug 11th. Stubbers Outdoor Pursuits Centre, 73 on Jan 24th. Walthamstow Res (129).

Herts: Amwell NR (33); 60 on Mar 30th. Hilfield Park Res, 68 on Sep 25th. Tyttenhanger GP, 71 on Dec 24th.

Middx: Broadwater Lake (33); 94 on Jan 5th. Q. Mary GP (c35). Tottenham Marshes, 165 N in small groups on Oct 11th at 07:30 (from Walthamstow Res roost).

Bucks: Thorney Weir Lake, 46 on Jan 29th. Wraysbury GP (2); 46 on Oct 28th.

Kent: Crossness, 62 on Nov 24th.

Surrey: R Thames: Kew to Richmond, 94 on Mar 14th. Wandsworth Park, 115 on R Thames

on Feb 13th.

In Lond: Battersea Park, 122 on Jan 5th.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Status: irregular visitor, usually in winter, occasionally in good numbers.

This is the first record since 2013. There were 53 records in the ten years from 2000 to 2009, but there have only been 21 records in the seven years since then, so numbers seem to be declining in London. The main peak arrival time for this species is during the winter months, but autumn records are not unusual. The table below shows arrival dates for recent records.

Shag arrival dates 2000-2016: 74 birds/records

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	9	5	7	4	-	1	2	7	10	1	13	15

Middx: KGVI Res, juv on Sep 18th (AVM).

Bittern Botaurus stellaris

Status: scarce winter visitor, often returning to favoured sites.

Records were received from 13 sites. Of these, there were 12 sites in the first winter period, two more than last year, but still well below previous levels (for example, 25 in 2013). The last wintering bird was recorded on March 19th. A male was found freshly dead at Stanstead Innings on March 16th. The second winter period had records from eight sites, one fewer than last year. The earliest returning bird was recorded at Rye Meads on September 18th. The first bird at the London Wetland Centre was on November



Shag at King George VI Reservoir. (Andrew Moon)

14th, a month later than has been usual in recent years. As in previous years the Lee Valley and the London Wetland Centre remain the species' stronghold in London. All sites at which birds were recorded are listed below with peak counts.

Essex: Brook Farm, Upminster, one on Jan 17th. Hooks Marsh Lake, one on Mar 16th. Ingrebourne Valley, one on Mar 7th. Rainham Marshes, one on four dates between Jan 23rd and Feb 4th, singles on Nov 7th & 29th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one from Jan 22nd to Mar 17th, with two on Feb 15th, one from Nov 7th to Dec 7th. North Met Pit, two on Mar 16th, singles on Oct 12th and Dec 14th. Rye Meads, one on five dates between Jan 19th and Mar 6th, one from Sep 18th to Dec 31st. Seventy Acres Lake, one recorded regularly between Jan 2nd and Mar 19th, with two on Jan 23rd, one on Oct 23rd & 29th, then two on Nov 8th & 25th. Stanstead Innings, up to two between Jan 13th and Feb 28th, with a male found dead on Mar 16th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Jan 8th.

Middx: Woodberry Wetlands, one on Jan 19th.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, up to four recorded regularly from Jan 1st to Mar 1st, one recorded regularly from Nov 14th to the month's end, then up to three regularly to the year's end, with five on Dec 29th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), one on Nov 11th remained into 2017.

Little Bittern Ixobrychus minutus

Status: rare vagrant.

A stunning male in full breeding plumage at the London Wetland Centre was found initially on the afternoon of May 29th and then showed itself several times a day during its six-day stay. This was the 12th record for London and the first since 2012. The table below shows all the records.

Little Bittern records 1954-2016: 12 records

Year	1954	1956	1961	1976	1995	1996	1997	2012	2016
No. of records	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on May 29th to Jun 3rd (MP et al).

Cattle Egret Bubulcus ibis

Status: rare (but increasing) vagrant.

There were five records this year, all in the autumn/winter period, involving six birds. They are the first records since 2010 and bring the total to 16 records of 24 birds. They include the first record of more than one bird since 1992, and the first November and December records. The table below shows all the records.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Cattle Egret records 1992-2016: 16 records, 24 birds

Year	1992	1995	1998	2001	2002	2007	2008	2010	2016
No. of records	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	2	5
No. of birds	8	1	1	1	1	3	1	2	6

Essex: Rainham Marshes, up to two from Oct 23rd-25th (JW, AT, RBs, PSt et al); singles on Nov 4th (RBs) and from Dec 16th-20th (mo).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Nov 4th repeatedly circled low over the gull flock between 16:20 & 17:00, before departing to the W (CDRH).

Surrey: Priest Hill NR, one flew N at 10:45 on Dec 2nd (SG).

Little Egret Egretta garzetta

Status: scarce breeder and visitor, increasing.

There were records from 313 sites in the year, a slight increase on the 307 sites recorded in 2015 (see table below for 2016/2015 comparison, 2015 figures in brackets).

Little Egret - number of sites where recorded, by sector

Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond
56 (68)	59 (60)	91 (66)	7 (11)	46 (46)	45 (48)	9 (8)

They bred at nine sites this year (seven in 2015) with the first ever records from Stanborough Lakes. The total number of nests was 54 (51 in 2015). The highest count outside the breeding season was 78 at Mar Dyke Valley on two dates in October, a new peak count for the London Area. We are again grateful to the BTO for making records available from its Heronries Census. Below are all breeding records (no. of pairs/nests/broods in brackets if known), together with the peak counts for each sector.

Essex: Mar Dyke Valley, 78 on Oct 6th & 25th. Netherhall GP (5). Walthamstow Res (17), fledged 39 young. Warren Gorge (10), fledged 20 young.

Herts: Amwell NR (7). Stanborough Lakes (3). Stocker's Lake (7); 66 roosting on Jan 12th. Verulamium Park (2).

Middx: Broadwater Lake (2); 26 on Jan 18th.

Bucks: Wraysbury, seven on Jan 5th, 8th & 10th. Wraysbury GP (1).

Kent: Crossness, 18 on Sep 26th.

Surrey: Peak count of four at three sites.

In Lond: Recorded at nine sites with a peak count of two at Regent's Park on May 2nd & 9th.

Great Egret Ardea alba

Status: rare but increasing visitor.

Records came from a new high of 18 sites, with peak counts of three at Rainham Marshes and two at Tyttenhanger GP. The table below shows the number of sites where they were recorded each month. Whilst this species remains a very rare breeding bird in southern England, it is tempting to speculate as to how many years it will be before it joins the breeding avifauna of London. All records are listed below.

Great Egret records 2016

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites where recorded	2	-	2	3	2	1	2	-	4	6	3	1

Essex: Beam Parklands, one on Jul 8th. Fairlop Waters, one over on Jan 2nd. Gallions Reach, one on Apr 10th. KGV Res, one on Apr 24th. Mar Dyke Valley, one roosting with Little Egrets on Sep 1st. Rainham Marshes, singles on Mar 23rd & 25th, Apr 20th, May 12th-15th, Sep 25th-28th, Oct 7th-8th; three E on Oct 23rd and one over on Nov 8th. Walthamstow Res. one N on May 25th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Jul 3rd. Hilfield Park Res, one on Oct 7th. Stocker's Lake, one on Oct 26th. Tyttenhanger GP, one from Nov 14th-20th, then up to two from Nov 21st to the end of the year.

Middx: Ten Acre Wood, Yeading, singles over on Sep 27th & 28th.

Bucks: Horton GP, one on Oct 6th. Wraysbury GP, one on Jun 10th.

Kent: Darenth Lakes, one on Nov 29th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Jan 20th and one S on Mar 18th. Holmethorpe SP, one on Oct 11th. Leg O Mutton NR, one SE on Oct 8th.

Grey Heron Ardea cinerea

Status: common breeding resident.

There were 398 nests reported, an increase on the 366 reported in 2015. As noted in LBR 2015, heronries are difficult to record and some variations in nest/brood counts from sites are almost certainly observer effort related. Certainly nest numbers and breeding success continued to vary from site to site.

Grey Heron nests 2007-2016

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of nests	456	473	523	472	437	367	352	381	366	398

Below are details of nest counts at heronries, with the number of nests in brackets. Notable high counts away from known breeding colonies and/or outside the breeding months are also given and the highest counts as usual are from Beddington Farmlands. Once again, the LNHS thanks the BTO for permitting the use of data from its Heronries Census.

Essex: Holyfield Lake (4). Netherhall GP (32). Valentines Park (no count, two last year). Waltham Abbey Woods (1). Walthamstow Res (no count, 33 last year). Warren Gorge (7). Herts: Aldenham CP (5). Amwell NR (17). Frogmore Lakes (1). Stanborough Lakes (8). Stocker's Lake (26). Tyttenhanger GP (7). Verulamium Park (9).



There have only been seven records of Purple Heron in the capital this century. This bird was at Rye Meads. (Alan Reynolds)

Middx: Boxer's Lake, Enfield (3). Broadwater Lake (10). Frays Valley NR (14). Heathrow Airport, 16 on Mar 19th. Home Park (5). Isleworth Ait (2). Kempton NR (4). Little Britain Lake (15). Osterley Park (1. Wildwoods (2). Bucks: Q. Mother Res (2). Wraysbury GP (14).

Kent: Crossway Lake NR (10). Crossness, 24 on Sep 29th. Manor House Gdns (6). Kelsey Park (23). Sevenoaks WR (1). Swanscombe Marshes (1).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, peak counts of 45 on Jul 1st & 18th. Beddington Park, (1). Bookham Common (18). Brentford Ait (18). Corporation Island (12). Gatton Lake (32). Hogsmill SW (1). Horton CP (5). Kew Green (2). Leg O Mutton NR (19). Morden Hall Park (15). Richmond Park (6). R Thames: Kew to Richmond, 62 on May 9th. Thorpe Water Park (10).

In Lond: Battersea Park (20). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (3). Regent's Park (no count, four last year); 30 on Aug 30th.

Purple Heron Ardea purpurea

Status: scarce vagrant.

There was just one well-watched bird this year, seen on just one day. This is only the seventh record this century (details in the table below) and it is only the second record ever in June. The only previous Rye Meads bird was in 1972.

Purple Heron records 2000-2016: 7 records, 7 birds

Year	2005	2009	2014	2016
No. of records	2	3	1	1
No. of birds	2	3	1	1

Herts: Rye Meads, one on Jun 11th (AHa, SHa).

White Stork Ciconia ciconia

Status: scarce vagrant.

There were three accepted records this year, after one last year (see App III for other records for which descriptions would be very welcome). All arrived in July; the last July bird was in 2003. The table below shows the arrival dates of recent records.

White Stork arrival dates 1930-2016: 35 records, 35 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records by month	-	-	5	8	6	3	5	4	3	-	-	1

Middx: Q. Mary GP, one on Jul 2nd (RGB, ACG).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Jul 22nd seemed to have a black bill and legs and was ringed with a white flag on the bottom of the tarsus of one leg and a bluish ring on the tarsus of the other leg (PRA *et al*); adult from Jul 26th to Aug 6th (MKh *et al*).

Glossy Ibis Plegadis falcinellus

Status: rare but increasing vagrant.

There were six records accepted this year, the highest ever; it is hard to know how many different birds were involved in these records, all of which were in Essex. If they all involved different birds, then they were the 16th to 20th records for London. A May record at Rainham Marshes was followed by an early August record over Buckhurst Hill and one at Rainham Marshes on the same date. There was then another record five days later at Rainham Marshes, followed four days later by one at KGV Res that stayed for four days. The last flew over Woodberry Wetlands in December, the first record for this month.

Essex: Buckhurst Hill, one over on Aug 6th (AT). KGV Res, one from Aug 16th-17th, 19th & 21st (MMe et al). Rainham Marshes, singles on May 13th (CR), Aug 6th (JHa, EB et al) and Aug 11th (AD et al). Woodberry Wetlands, one over on Dec 23rd (CFa, TBr).

Spoonbill Platalea leucorodia

Status: scarce but increasing migrant.

There were five records accepted this year. The first was a group of three birds on September 18th, followed by one from September 26th to 27th, one on October 2nd, one from October 5th to 8th and then one on November 26th. (See App III for other

One of five Spoonbill records this year, this bird was at Rainham Marshes in September. (Russ Sherriff)



records for which descriptions would be very welcome). This is the first year without a spring record since 2012. Since the turn of the century, only 2000 and 2004 have been blank years for this species. The table below shows the records since 2010.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Spoonbill records 2010-2016: 29 records, 51 birds

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of records	4	5	2	6	3	4	5
No. of birds	4	5	2	20	4	9	7

Essex: Rainham Marshes, singles from Sep 26th-27th (MG et al) and from Oct 5th-8th (FS et al). Walthamstow Marshes, three on Sep 18th, all thought to be imm, flew in from N, circled for approximately ten minutes and then flew off SSW (PW).

Kent: Crossness, juv flew high NE at 12:00 on Oct 2nd (JKA).

Surrey: Cobham, one flew SE low over A3 at 11:30 on Nov 26th (CMv).

Honey Buzzard Pernis apivorus

Status: scarce visitor.

There were five accepted records this year, three more than last year (see App III for other records for which descriptions would be very welcome). One was in May, one in June, two in September and the other in October; May and September are peak times for them to appear, but the June and October records are less usual. (See LBR 2015 for details of arrival dates from 2001-2015.)

Essex: Brook Farm, Upminster, one N on May 4th (RBs).

Middx: Alexandra Park, one over on Jun 5th (RJW). Brent Res, one over on Oct 9th (RB, RAH et al).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one S on Sep 17th (PRA, RBr et al). Canons Farm, one on Sep 6th (GB).

Red Kite Milvus milvus

Status: increasingly common resident, and scarce breeder, in the north and west of the area, fairly regular migrant elsewhere.

Although overall totals declined slightly to about 2,300 reports (2,500 in 2015), it proved to be another good year for this increasingly visible raptor. Breeding Bird Survey data continues to show an upward trend with a 20% increase from 2015-2016 in the South East. However, it is guite probable that in their core area of Hertfordshire (52% of all sightings) and Middlesex (26%) they often go unreported on many occasions, because they are now so 'common'. The overall distribution of records changed little from 2016, although Middlesex continues to make up ground on Hertfordshire; away from these areas numbers are beginning to increase slightly in Essex, but declined in Surrey. This is hardly surprising given that most sightings in these latter counties refer to passage birds. Once again the peak period for records is March to May, with totals no doubt swelled by passage through or across London.

Red Kite sightings by month

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sightings	144	189	343	398	258	184	158	122	127	138	132	122



March and April are the best months to see Red Kite in London. (Andrew Moon)

At least three pairs bred successfully this year: one each in the Buckinghamshire (1 juvenile), Hertfordshire (1 juvenile) and Middlesex (2 juveniles) sectors; in addition a further four pairs were suspected of breeding (all in Hertfordshire). This is the first time that this raptor has successfully bred in the Buckinghamshire and Middlesex sectors. The largest count this year was 31 at Iver Heath on December 23rd; the count of ten at Staines Moor on March 17th illustrates how successfully they have spread south along the Colne Valley.

Red Kite sightings by sector

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond
Sightings	151	1211	595	82	40	221	15
Percentage	7	52	26	3	2	10	<1

In Lond: Camden Town, singles on May 3rd and Jul 20th. Charing Cross Hospital, two on Jun 11th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Mar 12th, 16th & 21st, two on May 15th and one on May 17th. Regent's Park, singles on Mar 25th and May 22nd. Russia Dock Woodland, one on Jun 15th. St James's Park, singles on Jun 28th and Jul 21st. St Katherine's Dock, two on Apr 9th. Stockwell, one on Apr 3rd.

Marsh Harrier Circus aeruginosus

Status: scarce, but increasing passage migrant; has recently bred.

This marvellous bird of prey is becoming an increasingly familiar sight along the Thamesside marshes with about 90% of all sightings coming from this area; successful breeding was confirmed at Swanscombe Marshes this year and they probably also bred at Rainham Marshes. It remains very difficult to gauge the exact number of birds seen during the year; the only reliable constant is those records away from the Thames, about 30 being seen this year (compared with 36 in 2015), with March, April and August seeming to be the most favoured months for overland movement. Once again the largest counts came from Rainham Marshes where up to eight birds could be seen during July, which may well relate to breeding birds as it involved four juveniles. All records are given below, summarised in some cases.

Essex: Beckton, one on Dec 14th. Gallions Reach, singles on Aug 16th, 29th, Nov 6th and 30th. Ingrebourne Valley, singles recorded in both winter periods. Rainham Marshes, at least two pairs were present and probably bred. Walthamstow Res, singles on Sep 11th and Nov 8th. West Thurrock Marshes, one on Apr 14th.

Herts: Amwell NR, singles on Mar 18th & 28th, Apr 1st & 11th, and Aug 4th. Croxley Hall GPs, one on Jul 6th. Ellenbrook Fields, one on Aug 23rd. Rye Meads, singles on Mar 25th, Apr 1st, 2nd & 15th, Nov 25th and Dec 10th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Aug 23rd. West End, one on May 7th.

Middx: East India Dock Basin, one on Mar 31st. Hammersmith Cem, one on Jun 6th. Kempton NR, one on May 27th. Staines Moor, one on Dec 4th, also seen at Staines Res.

Bucks: Horton GP, one on Dec 4th. Q. Mother Res, one on Aug 6th.

Kent: Crayford/Dartford Marshes, recorded in both winter periods. Crossness, recorded in both winter periods. Swanscombe Marshes, present all year, one pair bred raising two young. Thames Road Wetland, singles on Mar 10th & 23rd.

Surrey: Barn Elms PF, one over on Sep 19th. Beddington Farmlands, singles on Jan 17th and Feb 11th & 12th. Leg O Mutton NR, two over on Oct 2nd. London Wetland Centre, one on Dec 3rd. South Norwood CP, one on Aug 26th. Thorpe Water Park, male over on Mar 17th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), singles on Apr 24th and Oct 3rd.

In Lond: St Pancras, one over on Nov 1st.

Marsh Harrier	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Records	98	54	68	73	41	37	40	54	22	49	48	57
Records (not Thames-side)	1	3	6	5	1	1	1	4	2	1	3	2
Individuals/month	12	11	13	23	5	6	14	10	6	9	11	8

Hen Harrier Circus cyaneus

Status: scarce migrant; formerly a regular winter visitor to the Thames-side marshes.

There were about 15 records of 15 birds which is the best yearly return since 2010 and

there was a very welcome comeback at Rainham Marshes during the autumn, where about six birds were logged during the period, although some degree of duplication may have taken place. All records involve ringtails (females or immatures), unless stated.

Hen Harrier records 2010-2016: 68 records, 68 birds

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of records	18	4	6	12	8	5	15
No. of birds	18	4	6	12	8	5	15

Essex: Brook Farm, Upminster, a male flew S on Sep 11th. Bulphan Fen, one on Dec 27th. Gallions Reach, one on Dec 11th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Apr 29th, Oct 22nd & 30th, an adult male on Nov 7th, one on Nov 12th, 29th and Dec 5th, then a juv male intermittently from Dec 7th-11th, finally one from Dec 13th-20th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles on Feb 13th and Nov 13th. Headley, one on Nov 26th. Leg O Mutton NR, one over on Oct 2nd. Richmond Park, one SW on Nov 13th, also seen later at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth).

Montagu's Harrier Circus pygargus

Status: rare migrant.

There were three accepted records this year, the first since 2013 (see App III for other records for which descriptions would be very welcome). One was in April and two in May and were a very welcome reappearance of this endangered, and sadly decreasing, summer visitor. The table below shows records since 1990.

Montagu's Harrier 1990-2016: 16 records, 16 birds

Year	1990	1992	1994	1995	2000	2001	2002	2006	2009	2011	2013	2016
No. of records	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	3

Essex: Rainham Marshes, a male S on Apr 17th (IBr). Bucks: Colnbrook, a ringtail WNW on May 29th (CDRH). Kent: Northfleet, a ringtail W on May 1st (BEW).

Sparrowhawk Accipiter nisus

Status: common breeding resident.

As far as the number of records are concerned, the upward surge continues with over 3,000 reports this year. Unfortunately there was not such good news on the breeding front. There were fewer territories (32, down from 37 in 2015), although there was marginally more breeding success (23 proved to have bred, compared with 22 in 2015). The most productive areas were: Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath with five pairs and Totteridge Valley with three pairs. One pair at Stocker's Lake raised five youngsters, although only four fledged successfully. Prey items included: Woodpigeon, Feral Pigeon, Blackbird, Redwing, Blackcap and Greenfinch, but some of the more unexpected species that were seen to be pursued included: Kingfisher, Chiffchaff and several bats. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was a 22% decline in England in that period.

Sparrowhawk	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
Territories	6	3	10	0	3	8	2	32
Proved	1	3	10	0	1	7	1	23

In Lond: Records (all singles unless stated) were received from: Battersea Park, Bermondsey, Brockley NR (three on Oct 27th), Buckingham Palace Gdns (bred unsuccessfully), City of London, Earl's Court, Haggerston, Holborn, Holland Park, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, Kensington, Lord's Cricket Ground, Mayfair, Regent's Park, Rotherhithe (two on Aug 10th), Soho, Southwark Park, St James's Park, Stave Hill, Trafalgar Square, Victoria, Victoria Park (bred successfully) and Waterloo Station.

Common Buzzard Buteo buteo

Status: scarce but increasing breeder; regular migrant/visitor.

There were just over 4,000 sightings this year, a modest increase from 2015 (nearly 4,000). Similarly, the breeding statistics proved to be broadly similar to those from last year with approximately 27 territories (26 in 2015), out of which 15 bred successfully (13 in 2015). The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there has been a nearly 1,100% increase since 1995 in the South East, which illustrates how impressive its spread has been. The distribution within London has changed very little in the main sectors (Essex, Hertfordshire, Middlesex and Surrey) since 2015, with each having a pretty much equal share.

March provided the biggest passage peak with at least 48 birds seen on 25th, followed in April by at least 45 on 5th (26 at Canons Farm including 18 migrants, 11 at South Weald and eight at Beddington Farmlands) and 32 on 12th (18 at Wraysbury, 14 at Canons Farm). The only other movements took place on September 18th, 21st and 23rd at Rainham Marshes and Richmond Park and on October 22nd at Rainham Marshes (see below for details).

Essex: Twelve pairs were on territory, of which three pairs bred, raising at least five young. Rainham Marshes, 13 on Mar 25th, 15 on Sep 18th, 25 on Sep 21st and 31 on Oct 22nd.

Herts: Just four pairs were reported, of which two bred, fledging two young.

Middx: Five pairs were present, out of which at least four bred, raising at least three young. Hampstead Heath, 15 on Mar 25th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 18 on Apr 12th.

Kent: No pairs on territory.

Surrey: A minimum of six pairs were located and all six bred, fledging a minimum of eight young. Beddington Farmlands, 16 on Mar 31st. Canons Farm, 26 on Apr 5th and 20 on 8th. Richmond Park, 20 on Mar 25th, 18 on Sep 21st and 18 on 23rd.

In Lond: Records of single birds (unless stated) were received from: Bloomsbury, Clerkenwell, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, Marylebone, Mile End Park, Regent's Park (two on Apr 19th, four on May 22nd), Rotherhithe, St James's Park (four on Apr 19th), St Paul's Cathedral and Victoria Park.

Osprey Pandion haliaetus

Status: scarce passage migrant.

This was undoubtedly the best year ever with at least 57 records, of perhaps 58 birds; 37 of these records were in the spring and 19 in the autumn, with one midsummer bird. There was an astonishing, and unprecedented, passage in March with 13 records (of 14 birds), which started on the 14th. Another 19 records of singles followed in April. There were just five records in May and just one summer sighting.

The return autumn passage also started early on August 2nd, followed by another nine records in the month, including one lingering at Panshanger Park from August 29th until September 6th. There were seven more records in September followed by two records on October 2nd. All records are given below.

Essex: Banbury Res, one on Sep 10th. Dagenham Chase, one on Apr 27th. Gallions Reach, singles on Apr 11th & 30th. North Ockendon, one on Apr 10th. Q. Elizabeth Olympic Park, one on Mar 25th (seen later at Walthamstow Res). Rainham Marshes, singles on Apr 17th, 20th and Aug 27th. Romford, one on Mar 19th. Walthamstow Marshes, one on Apr 11th. Walthamstow Res, two on Mar 25th and one on Aug 28th. Wanstead Flats, one on Apr 3rd. Woodford Green, one on Oct 2nd.

Herts: Amwell NR, singles on Mar 28th (also seen at Rye Meads), Apr 8th, and Aug 22nd. Cole Green Tip, one on Apr 13th. Coopers Green GP, one on Apr 12th. Hatfield Garden Village, one on Aug 14th. Hertford, one on Aug 21st. Maple Cross, one on May 28th. Oxhey, one on Mar 30th. Panshanger Park, one on Apr 13th and then a long-staying bird from Aug 29th to Sep 6th. Rickmansworth, one on Mar 24th. Rye Meads, singles on Mar 28th, Apr 24th and Sep 11th. Smallford GP, one on Sep 14th. St Albans, two on Mar 25th (perhaps same as Walthamstow). Stanstead Innings, one on Aug 2nd. Troy Mill Lake, one on Aug 22nd & 23rd. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Apr 27th. Watford, one on Apr 4th. Welham Green, one on May 8th. Welwyn Garden City, one on Mar 26th.

Middx: East Barnet, one on Mar 22nd. Frays Farm Meadows, one on Sep 6th. Kempton NR, one on Aug 23rd. North Finchley, singles on Mar 14th & 17th. Wembley, one on Mar 30th.

Bucks: Denham, one on Sep 6th. Q. Mother Res, singles on Mar 27th, May 2nd, Jun 21st and Sep 10th. Wraysbury GP, one on Sep 15th.

Kent: Foots Cray Meadows, one on May 30th. Greenwich Park, one on Apr 5th. Longfield Gallops, one on Apr 22nd. Thamesmere Lakes, one on Apr 24th.

Surrey: Leg O Mutton NR, one on Oct 2nd. London Wetland Centre, one on Aug 31st. North Sheen, one on May 28th. Richmond Park, one on Apr 11th.

Kestrel Falco tinnunculus

Status: common breeding resident.

The number of sightings this year remained at a very high level with nearly 4,000 reports. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was a 25% reduction in England from 2015 to 2016. This may be reflected in the breeding data, as there was a decline in the number of territories to 41 (55 in 2015) and the number of pairs reported to have bred successfully also dropped down to 19 (28 in 2015). It is difficult to determine what factors might have caused this,



Kestrel. (Jamie Partridge)

other than fluctuating observer coverage. The 28 pairs known to have bred produced a minimum of 30 young which, bizarrely, was higher than that reported in 2015 (27). The highest count was ten on Staines Moor on September 1st, no doubt augmented by locally bred juveniles. Prey items identified included Sand Martin and Pied Wagtail, as well as several voles and a rat.

Kestrel	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Totals
Territories	9	8	6	0	4	14	0	41
Proved	2	7	5	0	3	2	0	19

In Lond: Records were received from: Barbican, Bloomsbury, City of London, Elephant & Castle, Fulham, Globe Town, Grays Inn Gdns, Holborn, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, Mayfair, Natural History Museum, Primrose Hill, Regent's Park, St James's Park, Tower Hill, Tower of London, Trafalgar Square, University College, Victoria Park and Westminster.

Merlin Falco columbarius

Status: scarce migrant and winter visitor.

There was another good showing this year with 34 records. The table below shows the spread of these records over the months. It is hard to estimate how many birds were involved, since 26 of these records came from the Lower Thames and may have involved some of the same birds. For example, the 23 sightings at Rainham Marshes could have involved at least four and perhaps up to ten birds.

Merlin records

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	5	4	8	3	-	-	-	-	2	3	5	4

Essex: Gallions Reach, a male on Nov 30th. Rainham Marshes, one on Jan 13th, 23rd, 30th, a fem on Feb 2nd, 3rd and 17th, a male on Mar 3rd, a fem on 5th, 6th, 8th, 12th and 13th, a male on Apr 7th, a fem on 9th and 12th. In the autumn a fem on Sep 24th, Oct 30th, one on Nov 19th and 30th, a male on Dec 15th, 18th, 19th and 20th. Wanstead Flats, a fem on Nov 28th.

Herts: Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross, singles on Jan 14th and Feb 28th.

Middx: Brent Res, a male on Oct 21st. Park Farm, Enfield, a fem on Oct 22nd. Wraysbury Res, a fem on Sep 17th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, a fem on Jan 9th. Dartford Marshes, a male on Nov 5th.

Surrey: Chelsham, one on Mar 22nd. Holmethorpe SP, one on Mar 24th.

Hobby Falco subbuteo

Status: breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

Although the overall number of records was marginally down this year, at about 1,100, they still remained close to the historical high of about 1,250 in 2015. The most favoured sector was Essex with about 26% of all sightings, however this was greatly assisted by

the huge total of sightings at Rainham Marshes where birds were seen on an almost daily basis in spring and autumn.

The breeding totals were very similar to last year with a maximum of just 12 territories, of which at least nine pairs bred successfully. It does seem very unlikely that this is the true total for London, as it is a species that can be very secretive in the nesting season.

The first arrival was at Black Park

Hobby is a frequently seen species in London during the summer period. (Andrew Moon)



on April 2nd, followed by further singles at London Wetland Centre on 5th and Fairlop Waters on 6th. There was then a slight lull until 10th, when a more general arrival started; this included highs of three at Rainham Marshes on 19th, four at Horton GP on 20th and six at Rye Meads on 30th. May proved to be a very busy month with multiple sightings on many days and five counts of nine or more, including 14 (the highest count of the year) at Cheshunt GPs on 16th.

There were well over 200 sightings in June and July, many in areas where no breeding activity was reported, providing considerable evidence that it is under-reported as a breeding species.

In the autumn there were virtually daily sightings right throughout August and September, with the peak count being ten at Rainham Marshes on September 3rd. The last birds were on October 7th at both Rainham Marshes and Rye Meads.

Hobby pairs breeding	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Totals
Territories	1	2	4	0	0	5	0	12
Proved	1	2	3	0	0	3	0	9

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on May 13th and Sep 23rd. Mile End Park, one on Apr 13th. Regent's Park, singles on May 12th and Aug 31st.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Status: scarce but increasingly regular breeding resident and winter visitor.

This spectacular falcon, now a regular sight in many parts of the metropolis, is continuing to flourish. The number of sightings was similar to 2015 (1,700), as were the number of breeding pairs (25), however the total of successful pairs rose to 21, which between them fledged a minimum of 53 young (both the latter totals were all-time highs).

The list of species that were preyed on by Peregrines this year included: Ring-necked Parakeet, Starling, Woodpigeon and Feral Pigeon; although birds that were seen being chased (unsuccessfully) included Little Egret, Jackdaw and Pectoral Sandpiper. Some birds were also observed mobbing Red Kite, Common Buzzard, Kestrel and Carrion Crow.

Peregrine Falcon	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of pairs present	6	5	13	15	19	22	28	23	21	25	25	25
No. of successful pairs	5	3	3	4	5	5	9	10	15	18	16	21
No. of young fledged	3	2	8	9	11	8	23	28	38	51	47	53

Essex: Five pairs present, of which four raised nine young.

Middx: Four pairs present, one pair failed and three pairs raised seven young.

Kent: Two pairs bred, fledging seven young.

Surrey: Six pairs attempted to breed, one pair failed, but five pairs raised 11 young.

In Lond: Eight pairs present, out of which seven pairs fledged 19 young.

Water Rail Rallus aquaticus

Status: common, but elusive, winter visitor; scarce breeder.

Estimated numbers in the first and last four months of the year were 141 and 157 (161 and 150 birds in 2015). Records came from 115 sites, similar to last year's 110 and 103

in 2014. There were 16 breeding pairs reported from four sites this year, similar to the 17 from six sites last year and 17 from seven in 2014. In Inner London they were reported from four sites, one more than in 2015. It is likely that weather is the biggest factor affecting both numbers of wintering birds in London, and their visibility. All breeding records are given below (no. of pairs/territories in brackets) and high counts.

Water Rail - winter totals of birds

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey I	n Lond	Total
First winter	37	38	16	2	13	33	3	142
Second winter	28	42	18	3	16	48	2	157

Essex: Rainham Marshes (5); six on Aug 23rd. Walthamstow Marshes, five on Feb 10th. Wanstead Park, one seemed to be carrying nesting material on 20th, although there was no further evidence to suggest breeding there.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, five on Dec 29th. Rye Meads (6); eight on Jan 16th. Seventy Acres Lake, five on Nov 8th. Stocker's Farm, six on Nov 7th.

Middx: Brent Res, six on Jan 1st.

Bucks: Colnbrook, two on Dec 11th. Horton GP, two on Mar 13th.

Kent: Ruxley GP (1); six on Nov 3rd. Swanscombe Marshes (4).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, six in October, November and December. London Wetland Centre, 11 on Dec 18th. Richmond Park, at least two heard in summer. South Norwood CP, nine on Oct 24th.

In Lond: Battersea Park, one on Nov 30th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Oct 23rd. Regent's Park, singles on Jan 4th & 11th, Feb 9th & 21st and Dec 16th & 25th. St James's Park, one on Jan 20th.

Moorhen Gallinula chloropus

Status: very common breeding resident.

The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was a 15% decrease in the South East in that period. There has also been a 28% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015. There are only four sites where we have breeding records from both 2015 and 2016 and two of these showed a decrease and two an increase, so no sign of any trend there. They were recorded at 477 sites this year, up from 413 sites in 2014; but this may be just due to more records being received. Breeding was recorded at 62 sites including three in Inner London - certainly both underreported. A notable 35 juveniles were seen at Mar Dyke Valley on one day. Below are breeding records for sites where five or more were recorded and all Inner London breeding records (no. of pairs/broods in brackets), plus counts of 35 or more.

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley, 37 on Feb 15th. Mar Dyke Valley, 41 on Aug 26th. Mayesbrook Park, 45 on Dec 26th. Rainham Marshes, 76 on Feb 21st. Walthamstow Res (3). Wanstead Flats, 50 on Nov 13th. Wanstead Park, 47 on Nov 13th.

Herts: Rye Meads, 93 on Feb 20th. Tyttenhanger GP, 42 on Nov 13th. Verulamium Park, 50 on Jan 25th and Mar 11th.

Middx: Bedfont Lakes CP, 46 on Oct 3rd. Brent Res, 53 on Nov 17th. Hampstead Heath, 52 on Oct 15th. Home Park (8). Horsenden Hill, 36 on Dec 6th.



Moorhen. (Jonathan Lethbridge)

Kent: Crystal Palace Park, 38 on Nov 6th. Danson Park, 53 on Feb 9th. Ruxley GP, 35 on Nov 11th. Sevenoaks WR, 38 on Sep 18th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (43); 87 in December. Fishponds Wood LNR, 39 on Nov 30th. Holmethorpe SP, 54 on Oct 10th. London Wetland Centre, 112 on Dec 12th. Mayflower Park (5). Morden Hall Park, 42 on Feb 27th. R Thames: Kew to Richmond, 54 on Dec 19th. R Wandle: Butter Hill to Morden Hall Park (45). R Wandle: Carshalton Ponds to Wandsworth, 179 on Dec 27th. Richmond Park (14). Waddon Ponds (5). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (14).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (4). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 40 on Nov 15th. Mile End Park (1). Regent's Park, 51 on Nov 18th. St James's Park, 79 on Dec 7th. Wapping Canals (1).

Coot Fulica atra

Status: very common breeding resident and winter visitor.

The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was a 22% decrease in the South East in that period. We have breeding records from only six sites in both 2015 and 2016 and five of these show a decrease this year, which suggests breeding numbers have decreased in London. They were reported from 415 sites, by far the highest in recent years (276 in 2015, 224 in 2014) but breeding was only reported at 74 sites, down from 111 last year. The highest count was 1,000 at KGV Res, which is the highest site count since 2011. Below are breeding records for sites where five or more were recorded (no. of broods/pairs/nests in brackets), and counts over 300 (200 in Kent and Inner London).

Essex: KGV Res, 1,000 on Nov 2nd. Rainham Marshes (52). Walthamstow Res (7); 369 on Oct 15th.

Herts: Helicon Lake (6). Maple Lodge NR (7). Rye Meads, 667 on Sep 17th. Stocker's Lake and Bury Lake, 480 on Dec 2nd and 581 on Dec 18th. Troy Mill Lake, 380 on Dec 21st. Tyttenhanger GP (6).

Middx: Bedfont Lakes CP, 570 on Oct 31st. Brent Res, 438 on Aug 21st. Broadwater Lake, 550 on Sep 27th. KGVI Res, 410 on Oct 16th. Staines Res, 318 on Aug 21st. Tottenham Marshes (5). Town Park, Enfield (4+). Wraysbury Res, 550 on Oct 6th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 503 on Feb 18th.

Kent: Foots Cray Meadows (5). Sevenoaks WR (5). Southmere Lake, 250 on Jan 21st.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (37); 440 on Oct 15th & 22nd. Gatton Park Lake (7 nests). Mayflower Park (5). Morden Hall Park (8 pairs). Ravensbury Park (8 nests). Richmond Park (15). Waddon Ponds (7).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 293 on Dec 20th. Regent's Park, 336 on Nov 18th. St James's Park, 257 on Dec 7th.

Common Crane Grus grus

Status: rare vagrant.

There was just one accepted record this year, the 19th for London and the first since 2014. The arrival date in April is typical (see table below), as was the fact that it was flying over.

Common Crane arrival dates 1924-2016: 19 records, 28 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	1	-	-	7	5	2	-	-	2	1	-	1
No. of birds	1	-	-	9	6	2	-	-	8	1	-	1

Herts: Ellenbrook Fields, one over on Apr 4th (AM).

Oystercatcher Haematopus ostralegus

Status: localised breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Oystercatcher records during 2016 again followed a typical pattern with widely scattered reports from Thames-side sites, reservoirs and gravel pits between February 8th and October 24th. Outside of this period there were just three records in January and four in December, all of singles, although atypically these were mainly from large reservoirs rather than from the Thames. The highest numbers recorded were at Rainham Marshes where seven pairs were present along the Thames during the breeding season. Away from the Lower Thames the highest number recorded together at any site was five.

In total, there were 16 breeding pairs present (12 in 2015), including seven pairs at Rainham Marshes and pairs at seven additional sites. Eight pairs were confirmed breeding (up from five last year), at Amwell NR, Broadwater Lake, Rainham Marshes (two pairs), Stocker's Lake, Tyttenhanger GP, Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) and Wraysbury GP.

In Lond: One flew E past Limehouse at 09:35 on May 4th and four were seen near the Tower of London on Aug 5th.



LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Black-winged Stilt is still a major London rarity but becoming more frequent. (Dave Harris)

Black-winged Stilt Himantopus himantopus

Status: rare vagrant.

A record of two together at Island Barn Res becomes the tenth London record, following one in 2015, and is the third May record. There have only been two previous records involving two stilts together. The table below shows all the records.



Black-winged Stilt records 1900-2016: 10 records, 13 birds

Year	1918	1955	1968	1984	1997	1998	2010	2015	2016
No. of records	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
No. of birds	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2

Surrey: Island Barn Res, two on May 4th (DMH).

Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta

Status: scarce visitor in all months of the year; occasional breeder.

Avocets were seen in the London Area in all months of 2016, although there were only seven records between April 25th and August 27th. Unlike last year reports were regular during both winter periods, with the majority of these coming from the Lower Thames where there were peak counts of 37 during the first winter period and 22 during the latter part of the year.

There was a fairly good spring passage with birds seen at 12 widely scattered locations across the area during March and April, and a much lighter autumn passage, between late July and the end of September, when records came from three sites in west London and three on the Lower Thames.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, recorded in all months except July, with peaks of five in May, six in September, and 22 on Dec 31st. West Thurrock Marshes, monthly peaks of 35 on Jan 23rd, 37 on Feb 27th, 11 on Nov 24th and ten on Dec 24th.

Herts: Amwell NR, singles on Mar 12th and Apr 2nd.

Middx: Staines Res, five on Mar 23rd, singles on Mar 25th, Apr 2nd and Jul 20th. Woodberry Wetlands, one NE at 08:02 on Apr 2nd

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 11 on Jan 2nd, one on Apr 15th and two on Sep 14th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, singles in January and four on Mar 20th. Dartford Marshes, one or two on 11 dates between Jan 5th and Oct 30th. Swanscombe Marshes, recorded on seven dates with peaks of 13 on Mar 13th and 12 on Nov 26th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Mar 15th & 18th, with four on 20th, singles on Apr 2nd and from Sep 13th-14th. Holmethorpe SP, one on Mar 23rd. London Wetland Centre, singles on Mar 15th and Nov 26th.

Stone-curlew Burhinus oedicnemus

Status: scarce passage migrant.

There were two spring records this year, but unusually both were at the same site. The April date is very typical, with 17 of the 33 records since 1990 being in that month. The May record is more unusual: this is the third May record since 1990 and the latest May record since 1959, when one flew over Ponders End SF on May 24th. This individual had been colour-ringed as a chick on Salisbury Plain in 2009 and had not been reported anywhere since then.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, singles on Apr 12th (DSm et al) and May 12th (HV, PW et al).

Little Ringed Plover Charadrius dubius

Status: breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first spring migrant was at Wraysbury Res on March 14th. No more were reported until March 19th but six additional sites then recorded their first of the year over the next five days. As usual passage migrants are difficult to separate from individuals on breeding territories, but spring passage seems to have peaked at the beginning of April when there were high counts of 12 to 15 at Staines Res on April 5th, with ten there on 10th. The highest spring count anywhere else was six.

The breeding season seems to have been a particularly poor one in our area with only two confirmed breeding pairs and four additional pairs reported as probably breeding. This compares to a 2008 to 2015 average of ten confirmed pairs and seven probable pairs per year (with the lowest in that period being seven confirmed pairs and four probable breeding pairs in 2012). This year's numbers may be the lowest since 1946, which was two years after the first recorded breeding in the London Area. Loss of suitable breeding habitat may be a factor, as display and even copulation were reported during the spring at several localities but regular observers reported that breeding had not taken place on site, often because of a lack of available breeding habitat.

Little Ringed Plover	Pairs confirmed breeding	Pairs probably breeding	Other pairs present	Total
Essex	1	2	0	3
Herts	0	2	3	5
Middx	0	0	7	7
Bucks	0	0	1	1
Kent	1	0	2	3
Surrey	0	0	2	2
Total	2	4	15	21

Following the poor breeding season, numbers during the autumn were very low with the highest counts being six at Rainham Marshes on August 11th and five at East India Dock Basin on July 19th. There were five September records from sites on the Lower Thames, with the last individual of the year being a juvenile at KGVI Res on the rather late date of October 6th.

Ringed Plover Charadrius hiaticula

Status: localised breeder and winter visitor; common passage migrant.

This was a very typical year for this species, with wintering birds at sites on the Lower Thames during both winter periods, a few winter records of one or two individuals away from the Thames, spring and autumn passage migrants at widespread localities, and one confirmed breeding pair.

Peak counts during the first winter period were 24 at Rainham Marshes on January 8th and 10th and 16 at Belvedere on January 25th. Spring passage was mainly from mid-March to early June, peaking during May when there were highs of 17 at Brent Res on 10th, 33 at Rainham Marshes on 11th and 26 there on 25th. Although there were early June records from a few sites, the only confirmed breeding was a single pair at Crossness.

Autumn passage commenced in early August, peaking in September with high counts of 34 at Rainham Marshes on 5th and 30 at Gallions Reach on 18th. Maximum counts later in the year were 18 on the Thames at Belvedere on October 2nd and 18th.

European Golden Plover Pluvialis apricaria

Status: regular winter visitor to parts of the area, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor elsewhere.

The distribution of wintering Golden Plovers in our area was typical, with the larger flocks showing a clear bias towards the north, but peak numbers were down on recent years, and well below those recorded ten years ago, when the highest counts were in four figures.

The last wintering birds were at three sites in the Hertfordshire sector on April 1st, although after this there was a late migrant recorded at the London Wetland Centre on June 4th.

The first returning bird of the autumn was seen at Wanstead Flats on August 26th.

Essex: Brook Farm, Upminster, 54 on Mar 19th. Fairlop Waters, peaks of 58 in January and eight in November. Gallions Reach, 11 flew upriver on Sep 6th. Rainham Marshes, monthly peaks of 150 on Jan 9th, 200 on Feb 21st, 81 on Mar 13th, 153 on Oct 30th, 97 on Nov 4th and 80 on Dec 9th. Valentines Park, 180 on Feb 4th.

Herts: Amwell NR, peak of 70 on Nov 13th and Dec 7th. Coopers Green Lane, 51 on Dec 29th. Radlett Aero GP, 82 on Apr 1st. Stocker's Farm, 50 on Apr 1st. Theobalds Park Farm, 104 on Jan 9th.

Middx: Brent Res, one over on Nov 20th. Harmondsworth, ten on Oct 30th and 65 on Dec 4th. KGVI Res, one W on Nov 5th. Ruislip Lido, ten S on Oct 29th. Staines Res, one N on Oct 8th and seven over on 29th.

Bucks: Langley, 122 on Dec 23rd and 60 on 25th. Q. Mother Res, 120 on Jan 1st, two on Sep 20th and 60 on Nov 27th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, up to 150 in January and 90 on Dec 9th. Dartford Marshes, peaks of 111 on Jan 29th, 124 on Feb 6th, 153 on Oct 30th and 76 on Nov 5th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, two on Mar 28th. Holmethorpe SP, singles on Feb 28th and Nov 19th & 25th. Island Barn Res, one W on Sep 17th. London Wetland Centre, singles on Feb 4th and Jun 4th. Morden Hall Park, one over on Sep 3rd. Nore Hill, one SE on Oct 6th.

In Lond: Regent's Park, six over on Aug 29th.

Grey Plover Pluvialis squatarola

Status: passage migrant in variable numbers, and scarce winter visitor.

As has become the norm for this species, almost all winter records came from sites along the Lower Thames. Numbers were low at the beginning of the year with only single individuals seen, reflecting the lack of records at the end of 2015, but reports were slightly more frequent at the end of year when up to three were seen at a time.

Passage numbers in both spring and autumn were higher than in recent years with birds seen at widely scattered sites. Spring passage, between March 19th and May 18th, involved around 70 individuals (eight in 2015), including 49 on May 10th when there were 44 at Rainham Marshes and five at Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough) which were seen latter at the London Wetland Centre. Just 16 were seen between July 23rd and October 23rd in the autumn (three in 2015), but this was still the best autumn passage since 2010 when three flocks brought the autumn total to about 36.

Northern Lapwing Vanellus vanellus

Status: widespread breeding species, common winter visitor and passage migrant.

A total of 151 reported pairs/territories was another increase (138 last year, 115 in 2014); Rainham Marshes accounts for nearly half of the reported territories. The actual number of territories in our area is quite likely to be higher since birds were reported at quite a few sites in the breeding season without any mention of breeding or territorial activity. Outside the breeding season the largest flocks continue to be found to the north and east of London.

Essex: 71 pairs/territories. Fairlop Waters, 350 on Nov 25th and 362 on Dec 18th. Orsett

Fen, 313 on Nov 14th and 549 on Dec 2nd. Rainham Marshes (68); peak counts at either end of the year of 2,150 on Feb 21st and 1,500 on Dec 18th.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Herts: 18 pairs/territories. Rye Meads, 350 on Dec 10th. Tyttenhanger GP, 450 on Nov 20th. Middx: 12 pairs/territories. Broadwater Lake, 150 on Jan 25th. Staines Res, 95 on Feb 12th. Stanwell Moor, 95 on Feb 10th.

Kent: Four pairs/territories. Crayford/Dartford Marshes, numbers in each winter period peaked at c1,000 on Jan 9th and 350 on Dec 9th. Crossness, 320 on Feb 12th and 392 on Dec 22nd. Sevenoaks WR, 325 on Jan 13th

Surrey: 46 pairs/territories. Beddington Farmlands (11). Holmethorpe SP, 90 on Nov 1st. London Wetland Centre (16); peak counts of 156 on Jan 17th and 152 on Dec 12th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (6): 118 on Jan 17th, 134 on Feb 14th and 143 on Dec 27th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 12 over on Oct 23rd. Primrose Hill, one circled and then flew SE on Nov 8th.

Knot Calidris canutus

Status: passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers.

With 27 records, involving 67 to 73 birds, this was the best year for this generally scarce species in the London Area since 2010 (when over 100 individuals were seen, including a flock of 29).

One at Rainham Marshes from January 30th to February 2nd was the only record at the beginning of the year. Spring passage, between March 28th and May 15th, involved 31 to 32 individuals, mainly at sites on the Lower Thames, and included 23 at Rainham Marshes on April 24th. Slightly lower numbers passed through during the autumn with 19 to 24 between August 30th and October 14th. The majority of these autumn migrants were seen at reservoirs; one at Staines Moor on October 7th was only the third site record. At the end of the year up to seven at a time were seen at Rainham Marshes on four dates between November 9th and December 30th.

Sanderling Calidris alba

Status: passage migrant in variable numbers, rare in winter.

This was a very typical year with a likely minimum of 99 individuals passing through, nearly 90% of these during a fairly contracted period in the spring.

Spring passage was between April 24th and May 25th with birds visiting 12 different widely scattered sites. Some of these sites had several birds passing through, sometimes with an almost daily turnover as a succession of individuals were recorded. One seen at Dartford Marshes and Rainham Marshes on July 13th is likely to have been the beginning of the autumn return passage and was followed by ten individuals, at seven locations, between August 6th and September 28th, and then one at Rainham Marshes on November 12th.

Little Stint Calidris minuta

Status: scarce passage migrant in variable, but usually small numbers, rare in winter.

At least six birds were seen this year, with four of these during the autumn, which is an average showing. The table below shows the recent breakdown of birds.

Little Stint 2010-2016

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of spring birds	4	4	3	5	0	6	1
No. of autumn birds	4	4	2	1	7	10	4
No. of winter birds	0	0	2	0	0	2	1

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one from Aug 21st-24th (PHt, HV et al) with two (at least one a juv) on 22nd-23rd and one on Dec 13th & 15th (NKe, HV). West Thurrock Marshes, one on Mar 13th is probably best treated as an early spring migrant (DGDL).

Herts: Rye Meads, two juvs from Aug 27th-29th (mo). Middx: Staines Res, an injured juv on Aug 29th (REI, AVM).

Temminck's Stint Calidris temminckii

Status: rare passage migrant, predominantly occurring during May.

One on an autumn stopover for a few days made it three years in a row that this less than annual species has been recorded. However, autumn records are less usual; as the table below shows, 27 of the 39 records since 1990 have been in May and only three in August.

Temminck's Stint arrival dates 1990-2016: 39 records, 49 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	-	-	-	1	27	2	1	3	4	1	-	-
No. of birds	-	-	-	1	37	2	1	3	4	1	-	-

Essex: Rainham Marshes, an adult from Aug 22nd-24th (HV, MHe, AT et al).

Pectoral Sandpiper Calidris melanotos

Status: rare passage migrant, mostly during September.

One record during the year, as has been the case since 2012. The date is very typical with about two-thirds of arrivals since 1990 being in September.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, a juv from Sep 28th-Oct 6th. Flushed by a juv Peregrine on Sep 29th and flew off high, but returned later (CDRH et al).

Pectoral Sandpiper is now generally annual in London, with records concentrated, like this Surrey sector bird, in September. (Andrew Moon)



Curlew Sandpiper Calidris ferruginea

Status: passage migrant in variable numbers, mainly in autumn.

A minimum of eight individuals, but potentially over twice that number, made this a good year for birders to catch up with this species in London. The majority of reports came from Rainham Marshes, with a few reports from Crayford and Dartford Marshes perhaps involving the same birds as those visiting Rainham. One record was from the spring, the remainder were from the autumn/early winter.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Essex: KGV Res, one on Oct 8th (AMn). Rainham Marshes, one on Apr 20th (DGDL), one on Aug 23rd, up to two most days from Sep 16th-28th, singles on Oct 1st, 16th & 29th and Nov 5th, 9th & 13th (mo).

Kent: Crayford Marshes, singles on Sep 19th and Nov 4th & 6th (IS, MA, RT, BT). Dartford Marshes, singles on Aug 23rd and Sep 18th, with two on 20th & 22nd and one on 23rd, then singles on Oct 29th and Nov 4th (FS).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Aug 24th (GWJ).

Dunlin Calidris alpina

Status: common passage migrant and winter visitor.

As usual Dunlin were to be found at sites along the Lower Thames in reasonably high numbers at either end of the year. As is typically the case, there was evidence of movement





between sites, with the highest single count being 1,170 at West Thurrock Marshes on February 24th.

Dunlin peak site counts along Lower Thames marshes

	Jan	reb	mar	sep	Oct	NOV	Dec
Rainham Marshes	700	500	292	84	107	758	506
Crayford/Dartford Marshes	1000	538	112	41	107	121	100
Crossness	1000	500	250	3	1	1000	450
West Thurrock Marshes	500	1170	312	2	16	800	1400
Others	300	550	20	4	3	300	350

Away from the Thames, Dunlin continue to be mostly a spring and autumn passage migrant, with spring passage this year mainly between March 13th and May 15th, and autumn passage from mid-July to mid-October. Most spring migrants passed through very quickly, but autumn passage tends to be less hurried. Very few flocks were recorded away from the Thames, with the only double figure counts being ten at Staines Res on April 30th, ten at Q. Mother Res on September 13th and 12 at Beddington Farmlands on October 24th. Since it is difficult to know whether records of individuals seen at nearby sites, or at the same site on subsequent days, involve new birds, the number of records in a month can sometimes be more than the minimum number of individuals. It is likely that more than the minimum number given in the table below passed through London each month.

Dunlin records away from Lower Thames

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	0	2	7	10	11	2	10	12	9	9	7	0
No. of records	0	2	16	31	40	2	22	39	17	20	27	0
Minimum No. of birds	0	4	21	55	47	2	17	38	32	46	22	0

Ruff Philomachus pugnax

Status: regular passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

This species was very scarce in the London Area during 2016, except for Rainham Marshes, which was the only site to host wintering birds and the sole spring migrant. In autumn, migrants were almost daily at Rainham and seen at a further six sites with 12 records of 16 individuals, surprisingly there were no reports from the Hertfordshire, Middlesex or Kent sectors.

Essex: Gallions Reach, one on Nov 30th. KGV Res, two on Sep 11th and one on 17th. Rainham Marshes, one on Jan 23rd & 25th, two on Feb 27th, three on Mar 16th with one until 18th, one on May 26th; recorded most days from Aug 22nd until Oct 16th, with monthly highs of five on Aug 29th, 15 on Sep 6th and four on Oct 2nd.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, an adult male on Jul 13th, two on Sep 5th and one on 15th. Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, two males on Jun 26th. London Wetland Centre, one on

Sep 8th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), two on Sep 16th with one remaining to 20th, then one on 24th.

Jack Snipe Lymnocryptes minimus

Status: widespread but elusive winter visitor and passage migrant.

Overall numbers seemed to be slightly higher than last year, with a notable increase at several sites during March that suggests a spring passage movement. High counts during the year came from Rye Meads, with a peak of 20 on March 5th, and Beddington Farmlands, with maxima at either end of the year of nine on February 1st and 14 on October 15th. The highest single count from elsewhere was seven at Holmethorpe SP on February 28th. The last remaining bird of the first winter period was at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) on May 4th and the first of the autumn was at Brent Res on September 20th. All records are given or summarised below, with the maximum recorded at each end of the year given in brackets for sites with two or more records.

Jack Snipe	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Essex	2	1	8	2	-	3	9	4
Herts	11	10	20	1	1	7	5	2
Middx	2	2	4	1	2	6	7	4
Bucks	2	1	3	2	-	-	-	-
Kent	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-
Surrey	13	20	10	3	1	19	11	10
Monthly total	31	35	46	9	4	35	33	21

Essex: Dagenham Chase (1:0). Fairlop Waters (3:0). Ingrebourne Valley (0:1). Orsett Fen, one on Mar 2nd. Rainham Marshes (3:3). Redbridge Lakes, two on Nov 28th. Walthamstow Marshes (1:0). Wanstead Flats (0:1). West Thurrock Marshes (1:2).

Herts: Amwell NR (1:2). Panshanger Park, one on Dec 3rd. Rye Meads (20:5). Tyttenhanger GP. one on Dec 31st.

Middx: Brent Res (2:2). Kempton NR (0:1). Ruislip Lido (0:3). Staines Moor (1:2). Ten Acre Wood, Yeading, one on Mar 27th. Totteridge Valley, one on Oct 6th. Woodberry Wetlands, one on Nov 13th.

Bucks: Horton (3:0). Wraysbury GP, one flushed on Apr 5th.

Kent: Belvedere & Erith Marshes, one on Nov 2nd. Sutcliffe Park (1:0).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (9:15). Bookham Common, one on Dec 26th. Chipstead, one on Dec 5th. Hogsmill SW (0:1). Holmethorpe SP (7:1). Kingswood, one on Dec 5th. London Wetland Centre (2:4). Richmond Park (1:2). South Norwood CP, one on Mar 27th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (1:2). Wimbledon Common (2:1).

Common Snipe Gallinago gallinago

Status: common winter visitor and passage migrant, former scarce breeder.

Over-wintering birds were slightly more abundant during the first three months of the year than in 2015 with the peak counts all coming in February: 89 at Rye Meads on 10th, 60 at Beddington Farmlands and 56 at Rainham Marshes on 21st. Numbers declined during March but Beddington Farmlands and Rye Meads still recorded counts of 30 or more in April. A few sites held up to four birds in May and one at Horton GP on June 1st appeared to have sustained wing damage. One tardy migrant was present at Brent Res from June 8th to 11th.

The first autumn migrant was on July 16th at Horton Brook Quarry (unless it was the same bird as the Horton GP one in June). Elsewhere only London Wetland Centre and Rainham Marshes had any Snipe this month. Migrants were quick to build up during August with 18 at Rainham Marshes on 2nd and 15 at Ingrebourne Valley on 18th. There was a marked increase in numbers during the second half of September and through October with peaks of 81 at Rye Meads on October 14th and 71 at Ingrebourne Valley on October 31st. Surprisingly numbers declined in December and the highest count was just 45 at Beddington Farmlands on 18th.

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns, one on Apr 29th. Primrose Hill, one flew over on Nov 4th.

Woodcock Scolopax rusticola

Status: localised breeding species, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Woodcock were less widespread during the first two months of the year compared with the previous two years with records from 34 sites (39 in 2014 and 2015). The peak count was six in Richmond Park on January 17th. There were also counts of three at Brentwood on January 16th and Hilfield Park Res on February 2nd. There was an obvious passage during the latter half of March with birds being recorded at 18 sites. The last migrant was on April 1st at Richmond Park.

At Prince's Coverts, using BTO methodology from five visits in the breeding season, it was estimated that there were seven roding birds present. Other potential breeding birds were seen at Cole Green Tip on July 24th and flying over Highgate on August 2nd while one at Beddington Farmlands on August 27th was an early migrant.

Just three individuals were seen in October, all between 23rd and 26th. There was a large arrival throughout November and into December, with birds being recorded at 32 sites and the highest count again coming from Richmond Park with seven on December 13th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Mar 21st and Nov 18th & 23rd. Natural History Museum, one found dead in grounds on Nov 9th. Regent's Park, two on Jan 1st.

Black-tailed Godwit Limosa limosa

Status: passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers.

Present on the Lower Thames between West Thurrock Marshes and Dagenham in the winter months with a peak of at least 300 at Erith on January 12th. Elsewhere there were up to two present at Sevenoaks WR from January 1st to 9th and two at Holmethorpe SP on January 4th.

Migrants started to appear in March with singles at both Hall Marsh Scrape and London Wetland Centre on 10th; two at Beddington Farmlands on 13th with one remaining until 14th; one at London Wetland Centre on 13th; two at Dagenham Chase on 15th; and one at Rye Meads on 21st. Just seven birds were seen away from the Thames in April. The last ones of spring were in May with one at Rye Meads on 1st; singles at Crossness and Walthamstow Res on 2nd; one at Dartford Marshes and two at Rainham Marshes on 3rd; two at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) on 8th and finally, 16 at Crossness on 17th.

Autumn migrants began to return in late June with one at Glen Faba on 28th and eight at Rainham Marshes on 30th. July was the peak month with records from 14 sites, ten of which were away from the Lower Thames. Notable counts were 12 at Beddington

Farmlands on 1st; nine at Ingrebourne Valley on 5th; 13 at Rye Meads on 19th; nine at Q. Mary Res on 24th; 22 at Staines Res on 24th; 11 at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) on 26th and 19 at Ingrebourne Valley on 27th. From August, most birds were seen on the Lower Thames with no more than three at nine sites, except for 17 at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) on August 8th and nine that flew north at KGV Res on September 9th. The year's maximum count was 537 at Rainham Marshes on November 13th.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Bar-tailed Godwit Limosa lapponica

Status: passage migrant in variable numbers, scarce in winter.

The only record in the winter months was a single bird on the Lower Thames between Crossness and the Dartford/Rainham Marshes area from January 17th to 24th. An early migrant was at Staines Res on March 19th but the main spring passage occurred between April 20th and May 12th with a total of just 12 birds compared with 26 last year. The highest count was four in the Dartford/Rainham Marshes area from April 23rd to 24th. One of two birds at Staines Moor on May 12th was ringed as an adult in the Netherlands in 2006 and this was the first record of the bird outside the Netherlands since then.

The first autumn arrivals were in September with one at Q. Mother Res on 5th, followed by flocks of 40 over Sidcup on 8th and 25 over Banstead Wood on 10th. Small numbers were seen on the Lower Thames between September 10th and November 6th and the only record elsewhere was three at Beddington Farmlands on September 12th.

Eurasian Whimbrel Numenius phaeopus

Status: regular passage migrant.

Two early migrants flew over Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park on March 13th but the main passage took place between April 3rd and May 28th. There was a total of about 112 birds (172 in 2015) with the highest counts coming from Rainham Marshes with ten on May 8th, nine on May 9th and seven on May 6th; away from the Lower Thames there were five at both Horton Brook Quarry on April 16th and Staines Res on April 24th.

London Wetland Centre claimed the first autumn migrant with one on July 1st. Most records for the rest of autumn were from the Lower Thames where the peak count was ten at Crossness on August 2nd. Elsewhere only one or two birds were recorded apart from a flock of six over Walthamstow Res on July 10th.

In Lond: Regent's Park, two on May 4th and one on Aug 22nd. Rotherhithe, one just after midnight on May 12th.

Eurasian Curlew Numenius arauata

Status: winter visitor and passage migrant.

The Lower Thames was responsible for all records during the first two months of the year with a maximum count of 14 at both Rainham Marshes on January 25th and Dagenham Riverside on February 5th. Migrants began to appear more widely from March 5th through to the last of spring on May 21st, however all of the double-figure counts were from Rainham Marshes with a peak of 31 on April 7th.

In June, birds seen flying west or north at six sites were presumably migrants, only birds at Rainham Marshes in June may not have been migrants. In June, birds were seen flying west or north at six sites and there were also up to two at Rainham Marshes on four days. Almost all records from July onwards were again from the Lower Thames where the peak was 26 at Rainham Marshes on December 18th. Elsewhere there was one over Brent Res on September 4th; one over Pinner on October 28th; one at both Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) and Walton Res (Knight & Bess borough) on the next day; two at London Wetland Centre on November 9th with one there on 20th; and one at Rye Meads on December 13th.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Status: common passage migrant and localised winter visitor.

Over-wintering birds were reported from Beddington Farmlands, Walthamstow Res and on the Lower Thames between Bow Creek and Swanscombe Marshes; the peak count was four at both Plumstead on March 12th and Walthamstow Res on January 20th. There were also isolated records from Amwell NR, Isleworth, R Thames between Kew and Richmond, William Girling Res and Yeading.

The first spring migrant was in April at Stocker's Lake on 5th with a widespread arrival from mid-month and a maximum of 16 at Walthamstow Res on 30th. The peak passage was on May 6th with 50 birds recorded in total. Numbers of migrants declined after mid-May and the last was at Tottenham Marshes on May 26th.

Autumn migrants were seen at four sites in June from 20th onwards with a much more widespread passage in July and August. High numbers were present throughout at KGV Res with a peak of 25 on July 30th. Other good counts were 21 at Walthamstow Res on August 29th, 20 at Gallions Reach on several dates and 20 at Staines Res on August 21st. September saw a gradual decrease in migrants, particularly after mid-month with peaks of 15 at Brent Res on 3rd and 6th and at KGV Res on 3rd. There was no clear end to autumn passage with birds being seen throughout October.

During November and December, most birds were reported from the Lower Thames with a maximum of five at Creekmouth, Barking on December 26th. Away from the Thames, there were three wintering birds at Walthamstow Res.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, two on Jun 28th and Aug 30th. Limehouse, four on May 6th. Regent's Park, singles on May 4th and Jul 12th. St James's Park, one on Jul 12th. Victoria Park, two on Jul 2nd.

Spotted Sandpiper Actitis macularius

Status: rare vagrant.

The wader highlight of the year was a summer-plumaged Spotted Sandpiper which spent a day at Brent Res in mid-June. This is the fifth record for London and is similar to the last record, at Hilfield Park Res on June 24th, 2012. Four of the five records are of adult birds in summer plumage. There is one 19th-century record, of a bird which was part of a collection purchased in 1852 and which had been obtained (i.e. shot) at Brent Res.

Middx: Brent Res. adult on Jun 11th (ASMS et al).

Green Sandpiper Tringa ochropus

Status: widespread winter visitor and passage migrant (mainly in autumn).

Present at 33 sites during the first two months of the year compared with 28 in 2015.

Apart from the sites listed in the table below, the only counts above three were six at Crossness on February 16th and five at Panshanger Park on February 24th. Spring migrants began to appear from the beginning of March and continued through to May 14th with the last bird being at Staines Res; the peak count was six at London Wetland Centre on April 20th.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

The first autumn migrants were on June 4th at Beddington Farmlands and Kempton NR, which were followed by daily records from various sites. The peak passage occurred from July 24th to the end of August with high counts away from the main sites of 11 at Ingrebourne Valley on July 26th and 13 at William Girling Res on August 9th. Passage tailed off quickly in September with no count above five apart from at the main sites. Most migrants had left by the start of October with wintering birds beginning to settle in although there was a small influx in December with a count of five at Walthamstow Res on 15th to 16th and four at both Island Barn Res and Wraysbury Res.

Monthly maxima for the main sites are listed below.

Gre	en Sandpiper	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
EX	Rainham Marshes	7	5	2	5	-	2	3	8	1	2	3	1
HR	Rye Meads	5	3	2	2	-	2	10	10	6	6	4	6
MX	Brent Res	2	1	3	2	-	4	4	6	5	4	2	3
SY	Beddington Farmlands	5	5	7	4	-	1	14	16	11	5	4	3



In Lond: Regent's Park, one on Aug 26th was the sixth site record.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Status: scarce passage migrant with occasional winter records.

Five birds were seen this year, the regular overwintering bird and its part-time friend along with two new birds in the Rainham area and one at the London Wetland Centre.

Essex/Kent: Crayford/Dartford/Rainham Marshes, one from 2015 to Apr 24th with two from Jan 20th to 23rd and on Apr 20th, the same bird was suspected to have returned on Aug 18th until Oct 8th (mo); a juv from Sep 8th-9th (HV, PHt, FS). Rainham Marshes, a different bird on Jun 28th (MDr).

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on Jun 7th (SBy).

Greenshank Tringa nebularia

Status: regular passage migrant, rare in winter.

The only winter record this year was one at Rainham Marshes on January 23rd. Spring migrants arrived from April 3rd and passage continued to June 2nd with a total of around 70 birds recorded: of these, 24 were on the Lower Thames and 46 elsewhere. The maximum count was seven at Rainham on May 9th.

Autumn passage lasted from July 5th to October 31st. Notable records in July included singles over Hampstead Heath on 9th, Wanstead Park on 13th, Cowley on 14th and Croydon on 21st and 23rd and eight over South Norwood CP on 27th. Up to eight were present on the Lower Thames Marshes in August and there were also eight at Dagenham Chase on September 5th. The last of the year was at Cole Green Tip on November 29th.

Wood Sandpiper Tringa glareola

Status: uncommon passage migrant.

There were five birds in spring which is about average. All were single birds: Holmethorpe SP on May 6th, Ingrebourne Valley on May 6th to 7th, Rainham Marshes on May 11th, Beddington Farmlands on May 26th and Rye Meads on June 3rd.

Autumn passage was particularly poor with only eight birds compared with 28 last year. Two early birds were at Sevenoaks WR on June 25th; one remained at Beddington Farmlands from August 3rd to 12th; Rainham Marshes had one on August 6th and another from August 21st to 29th with two on 23rd; Tyttenhanger GP had one on August 31st; and a late juvenile was present at Brent Res from October 21st to 23rd.

Common Redshank Tringa totanus

Status: common winter visitor and passage migrant, localised breeder.

Monthly maximum counts from the main sites on the Lower Thames are given below; there is considerable interchange between these locations. Elsewhere the highest count was 86 at London Wetland Centre on May 10th.

Cor	nmon Redshank	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX	Rainham Marshes	219	77	200	67	43	60	3	19	46	148	325	279
	W. Thurrock Marshes	70	106	133	-	-	-	-	1	-	348	134	85
ΚT	Crayford Marshes	56	50	25	27	-	-	2	10	40	100	100	-
	Crossness	200	60	49	21	-	-	2	16	52	185	218	78
	Dartford Marshes	25	19	4	-	1	-	6	3	46	148	62	-
	Swanscombe Marshes	130	35	107	30	-	-	-	1	1	51	65	83

Breeding records are listed below.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, 60 territories (48 in 2015).

Herts: Amwell NR, two pairs probably nested but were unsuccessful. Letty Green, distraction display seen so assumed to have bred.

Middx: Staines Moor, one territory.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, three pairs present, one young hatched but did not fledge.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Status: passage migrant and localised winter visitor.

The only regular wintering flock was at Swanscombe Marshes which peaked at 16 on March 15th; they were occasionally across the river at Grays. There were six at Rainham Marshes on November 4th with one to two birds present in the area to the end of the year.

There were 23 spring migrants (13 in 2015) between April 24th and May 20th with high counts of seven at Rainham Marshes on May 10th and three at Staines Res on May 9th and 14th to 15th.

In autumn around 35 birds (34 in 2015) were recorded between July 17th and September 26th; the highest counts were four at Rainham Marshes on September 12th and three at Q. Mother Res on August 27th.

From October, wintering flock peaks were six at Rainham Marshes on November 4th

and five at Swanscombe Marshes on November 11th. The only other records were singles at Brent Res on November 7th and Kew Bridge on November 8th.

Grey Phalarope Phalaropus fulicarius

Status: rare visitor, normally in late autumn and winter.

There were two records this year (the first since 2014) including one in spring at Staines Res, which was in partial summer plumage. The April record is the first since at least 1990; the table below shows all arrival dates since 1990.

Grey Phalarope arrival dates 1990-2016: 31 records, 31 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	7	7	10	4

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Nov 6th (PBa et al). Middx: Staines Res, adult on Apr 24th (PWt et al).

Phalarope sp

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, a phalarope flew around the North Lake on Oct 11th, but couldn't be identified to species (RBr, DSb).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Status: regular but scarce autumn migrant; rare in other seasons.

It was another poor year for this species with two typical records of autumn fly-bys from the R Thames, following the single record in 2015. This contrasts strongly with the highest annual totals of 40 birds in 2000 and 25 in 1992.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one W on Sep 17th (RBs). Kent: Dartford Marshes, one on Oct 8th (FS).

Great Skua Stercorarius skua

Status: regular but scarce migrant.

There were two accepted records this year (see App III for other records for which descriptions would be very welcome). This is the tenth consecutive year that this species has been recorded and follows the single record in 2015 and the record influx of at least 46 birds in 2014. The bird at Rainham Marshes on December 3rd was feeding on a Guillemot on the foreshore - a unique sighting for London.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Dec 3rd (RBs).

Middx: Staines Res, one on Sep 10th then flew W (REI).

Sabine's Gull Xema sabini

Status: rare autumn vagrant.

There were two birds this year, an adult and a juvenile, both in September. Remarkably, one was at the same site as the two most recent London records, in 2013 and 2014. These are the seventh and eighth records since 2010, in comparison to only four records from 2000 to 2009.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, juv on the morning of Sep 20th (CDRH, ABT).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, adult circling o/h on Sep 13th (RBr, DSb).

Kittiwake Rissa tridactyla

Status: regular, but scarce, passage migrant and winter visitor.

It was another poor year for this species with just 22 birds; remarkably the same number as 2015 (compared with 117 birds in 2014 and 48 in 2013). The peak site was Rainham Marshes with three records involving six birds.

March was the peak month with eight birds, including singles at Amwell NR on 5th, Brent Res on 19th, Q. Mother Res on 20th, Staines Res on 24th, Gallions Reach on 26th and three at Rainham Marshes on 30th. A handful were also seen in January and February, including two adults at Rainham Marshes on January 2nd and a moribund bird at Brent Res on 3rd. Late spring passage was very slow with just a single adult at Staines Res on May 31st and two adults at Rye Meads briefly on June 1st. Autumn and the second winter period mirrored spring's dearth of records, with singles at Beddington Farmlands on September 15th, Rainham Marshes on October 6th, West Thurrock Marshes on November 24th and finally an adult at Q. Mother Res on December 23rd.

Kittiwake monthly records 2016

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	5	2	8	-	1	2	-	-	1	1	1	1

Black-headed Gull Chroicocephalus ridibundus

 $\textbf{Status:} \ \ \text{very common winter visitor and passage migrant, increasing breeder.}$

This is the commonest gull in London and is increasing as a breeding species. There were at least 795 breeding pairs from 12 sites (compared with 556 pairs from nine sites in 2015 and 410 pairs from ten sites in 2014), with 49% of the total coming from the Rye Meads colony, which saw an increase to 289 pairs (185 in 2015). With only 14 breeding pairs in the whole recording area in 2000, it took until 2007 before the population exceeded 100 pairs, but it has only really significantly increased since 2013.

The highest count was 18,300 flying east at Hogsmill SW on December 29th (compared with the 2015 annual high of 14,500 at the same site); there were 63 counts of 2,000 or more birds (43 in 2015 and 13 in 2014), with 27 of these coming from a single observer at Hogsmill SW, illustrating how observer coverage and under reporting impacts this species on an annual basis. There were leucistic birds at Brent Res, Hilfield Park Res and Tyttenhanger GP and colour ringed individuals from Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and the UK. Below are peak counts along with breeding pairs.

Essex: William Girling Res, 4,900 on Feb 23rd.

Herts: Amwell NR (67). Hilfield Park Res (36), 36 young. Maple Lodge NR (15). Rye Meads (289). Seventy Acres Lake (40). Stocker's Lake (14), 20 young. Tyttenhanger GP, 1,236 on Aug 31st.

Middx: Broadwater Lake (29), 32+ young. Home Park, 11,700 on Jan 23rd. Ruislip Lido (1), one young. Staines Res (54), 40 young.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 500 on Aug 15th. Wraysbury GP (4).

Kent: Dartford Marshes, 3,000 on Mar 16th.

Surrey: Hogsmill SW, 18,300 on Dec 29th. London Wetland Centre (66), 58 young. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (c180); 130 young.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 998 on Feb 22nd.

Little Gull Hydrocoloeus minutus

Status: regular passage migrant, occasional in summer and winter.

It was another poor year for this species with 203 birds recorded (following 189 in 2015 and 420 in 2014), with January, April and December accounting for 89% of the records. There was a peak count of 30 birds at Beddington Farmlands on October 6th, while the typical spring passage of April-May peaked at just 15 at Staines Res on April 11th. The classic conditions conducive for the species - drizzle with south-easterly winds in April or early May - just did not happen this year.

Little Gull monthly records 2016

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	51	1	16	65	5	3	0	6	5	49	1	1

There was an influx in early January with 49 birds seen between January 2nd to 6th, including 11 at Rainham Marshes on 2nd, 17 at Hilfield Park Res on 5th and eight at O. Mother Res on 6th. One at Walthamstow Res on February 6th was the sole record for the month, while 16 birds in March peaked at seven at Island Barn Res on 31st. Spring passage started on April 2nd with 11 north-west over Mitcham, but never really got going in comparative terms; the peak migration day was April 11th with 35 noted, including 15 at Staines Res, ten at Hilfield Park Res and eight at Beddington Farmlands. A handful of May records were all single birds, with all three June records relating to 1st-summer birds with the last on the 6th.

Following a dearth of July records, two were at Broadwater Lake on August 17th and a further four singles were seen by the month's end. September passage was poor with just five birds seen, which included three at Staines Res on 15th. October 6th was the day it all happened with all 49 records for the month happening on this date, including the annual peak of 30 at Beddington Farmlands, 17 at Rainham Marshes and singles at London Wetland Centre and KGVI Res. The only November record and the last of the year was a 1st-winter at Walthamstow Res on 22nd.

Franklin's Gull Larus pipixcan

Status: rare vagrant.

The second record for London following one at Thamesmead in April 2000. This year's bird was in the roost at Amwell NR on January 31st having been seen at Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire the previous day.

Herts: Amwell NR, adult in the roost on Jan 31st from 16:33 to 16:55 when it flew S (MII, BR et al).

Mediterranean Gull Larus melanocephalus

Status: regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

It was an average year by recent standards, with slightly lower numbers overall compared

with 2014, particularly in the second winter period. There was, however, a good peak count with a flock of 17 birds that flew downriver at Rainham Marshes on October 6th (compared with seven in 2015 and four in 2014) and a flock of five at Hyde Park on April 23rd was a notable Inner London record. There were 18 counts of three or more birds from nine sites during the year.

During the first winter period, the species was most regularly encountered at roost sites with numbers peaking at five at Q. Mother Res on January 4th and three at Hilfield Park Res on February 5th and 14th. Spring passage commenced with three at Swanscombe Marshes on March 15th and small groups of adults (between three and five birds) seen at six sites between then and May 10th was indicative of the communal nature of the species. One remained at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) during May and June, displaying with Black-headed Gulls and gathering nesting material.

The first juvenile of the year was at Rye Meads on July 20th (compared with the first juvenile in 2015 on July 10th and in 2014 on July 5th) with another ten juveniles seen by the end of August, slightly down on the 15 seen in the equivalent period in 2015. Records from October to December were down on the first winter period and the same period in 2015, potentially as a result of a poor breeding season outside of the recording area. They included regulars such as the one in Burgess Park returning for its 9th winter, though the Valentines Park bird did not return at the year end for what would have been its 18th winter.

There was a German-ringed adult at Canons Farm on February 29th and an Irish-ringed 2nd-summer at Broadwater Lake, Q. Mother Res and Staines Res on various dates in March and April. The table below shows the number of individuals recorded each month and the number of sites they were at.

Mediterranean Gull records	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	21	29	28	24	10	14	29	9	6	27	14	10
No. of sites	15	21	11	12	6	7	17	6	6	10	9	9

In Lond: Burgess Park, regular adult on Dec 17th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, five on Serpentine on Apr 23rd from 11:32 to 11:44 then flew N. Limehouse, two adults on Jun 8th. Primrose Hill, one over on Oct 7th.

Common Gull Larus canus

Status: common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Numbers recorded remain similar to the last few years, although observer coverage and perhaps not population fluctuations can explain year-on-year trends. Colour-ring reading shows birds have a high level of wintering site fidelity with London's wintering birds emanating from continental populations including Denmark, Finland and Norway. There were 46 counts of 100 or more (from 18 sites), compared with 53 (from 21 sites) in 2015. Countering this, there were an impressive 12 counts of 500 or more birds (compared with two counts in 2015) - peaking at 1,200 at both Wanstead Flats on February 21st and William Girling Res on February 23rd.

There were 20 birds seen in May and seven in June, mostly lingering 1st-summers. The pulse of birds returning started from July 25th, noticeably later than the previous year,

and the first juvenile was at Q. Mary Res on July 24th (compared with August 1st in 2015 and July 19th in 2014). Below are details of peak counts from sites with counts of 100 or more.

Essex: Fairlop Waters, 153 on Dec 18th. KGV Res, 190 on Jan 16th. Nags Head Lane Fishery, Brentwood, 350 on Feb 1st. Rainham Marshes, 291 on Feb 6th. Roding Valley Meadows NR, 138 on Jan 10th. Wanstead Flats, 1,200 on Feb 21st. William Girling Res, 1,200 on Feb 23rd.

Herts: Rye Meads, 410 on Dec 3rd.

Middx: Brent Res, 534 on Mar 13th. Millfields Park, Clapton, 100 on Jan 8th. Totteridge Valley, 600 on Mar 13th.

Kent: Chipstead Lake, 200 on Dec 22nd. Sevenoaks WR, 150 on Feb 24th.

Surrey: Richmond Park, 100 on Jan 10th. Wimbledon Common, 140 on Feb 23rd. Warren Barn Farm, 250 on Mar 8th.

Lesser Black-backed Gull Larus fuscus

Status: common, most regular in autumn and winter; breeds in small but increasing numbers.

There were 22 confirmed breeding pairs this year with 30 young noted (51 pairs in 2015 and 27 pairs in 2014). Again under-recording and relatively inaccessible breeding locations means that the species' true status is unknown. Staines Res received several recently fledged juveniles, presumably from the Heathrow Airport rooftop colony that was not surveyed this year and several other sites with water bodies reported juveniles in late summer that were presumably locally bred.

There were two counts of 300 or more birds, both from Beddington Farmlands, and this is the same number as the previous year. However, the annual high count of 570 was well down on the previous two years (1,150 in 2015 and 940 in 2014) and there were only 16 counts of 100 or more birds during the year. Listed below are all confirmed breeding records (no. of pairs/nests in brackets), as well as peak counts of over 100 birds.

Essex: Roding Valley Meadows NR, 215 on Dec 13th. Walthamstow Res (16), 27 young. Herts: Amwell NR, 270 on Feb 23rd. Hilfield Park Res, 200 on Mar 26th. Tyttenhanger GP, 108 on Jul 3rd.

Middx: Harrow (2). Pinner (1), one young. Woodberry Wetlands (2).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res (1), two young (first ever breeding at this site).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 570 on Jan 27th. Molesey Industrial Estate (1), three young. Poulter Park, 100 on Feb 28th and Mar 4th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 18 on Mar 14th.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Status: common, most regular in winter; breeds in small numbers.

This is London's commonest large gull and is present throughout the year with local populations boosted by continental and northern birds during harsh weather. There were only four breeding pairs located this year, in comparison to 19 in 2015 and 26 pairs in 2014. Breeding records and peak counts are continually under recorded given the species' ubiquitous status, although paucity of breeding counts is often due to their inaccessibility

(on rooftops of industrial buildings). Leucistic adults were at Amwell NR on November 21st and Greenwich Peninsula on July 30th.

There were an impressive 106 counts of over 1,000 birds (64 in 2015 and just six in 2014) with observers from Beddington Farmlands and Hogsmill SW submitting regular counts, which inevitably has contributed to this increase in recording. Peak counts were 10,000 birds from Beddington Farmlands in January, February and December - relatively consistent with the peak of 10,520 there in 2015. No counts came in from the previous stronghold of Rainham Marshes, illustrating the decline in numbers there as a result of reduced landfill activity. Listed below are all confirmed breeding records (no. of pairs/nests in brackets), as well as peak counts of over 500 birds.

Essex: Walthamstow Res (3), three young. Herts: Hilfield Park Res, 808 on Dec 18th.

Middx: Bushy Park, 510 on Oct 15th. Hampton Court Park, 2,750 on Jan 23rd. Home Park, 1,738 on Oct 29th.

Kent: Dartford Marshes, 750 on Jan 10th and Mar 20th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 10,000 in January, February and December. Canons Farm, 730 on Dec 25th. Hogsmill SW, 7,150 on Dec 6th. Kingston-upon-Thames (1); 1,900 on Jan 1st. Morden Park Hall, 528 on Nov 26th. New Malden, 1,313 on Oct 8th. Poulter Park, 3,573 on Mar 4th.

Yellow-legged Gull Larus michahellis

Status: regular late summer and autumn visitor, widely reported in smaller numbers at other times of year.

It was a poor year for this species, with just one count of over 50 birds, compared with

A juvenile Yellow-legged Gull on the Thames in late summer. (Richard Bonser)



five counts in 2015 and three in 2014. The annual high count was 51 at Rainham Marshes on September 30th (154 and 163 in 2015 and 2014 respectively), a distinct decline on the period 2012 to 2015 where annual highs were all three figure counts. Rainham Marshes' stronghold for this species may, unfortunately, be coming to an end with the lack of activity on the landfill and is an obvious reason for the decline in numbers this year.

This decline is not only limited to Rainham Marshes, as a peak count of 35 at Wraysbury Res on August 30th contrasts with an annual high there of 90 on August 21st 2011. Admittedly the species does rely on recording from London's 'larophiles', but given its noteworthy status on any given day and the continuity of observations at certain sites each year, this does suggest a decline is real and not an under recording issue.

Despite the reduced numbers, the existing pattern of a late summer/early autumn peak and a few lingering during the winter still held true. The species remains relatively scarce in Hertfordshire, where it is largely an Amwell NR roost speciality, peaking in the first winter period at six on January 28th and four on November 5th during the second winter period. The first juveniles were two at Greenwich on July 9th, eight days later than in 2015 and two days after the first juveniles in 2014. The following table shows monthly maxima for all sites with high counts.

Yellow-legged Gull monthly maxima 2016

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX	Rainham Marshes	12	5	-	1	-	1	45	46	51	33	13	14
BU	Q. Mother Res	3	1	-	3	-	2	10	13	5	4	3	3
KT	Crayford/Dartford	6	4	3	1	1	-	36	34	28	26	9	-
	Greenwich	-	-	-	1	-	2	5	10	1	1	-	3

In Lond: Regent's Park, two on Jan 1st and singles on Jul 12th and Oct 12th & 20th. Rotherhithe, 1st-summer on Jul 12th, juv on 28th and three juvs on 29th. South Bank, two juvs on Aug 9th. St James's Park, singles on Jan 8th and Feb 13th. Tower Bridge, one on Aug 8th.

Caspian Gull Larus cachinnans

Status: scarce visitor mainly in winter.

London continues to be a stronghold for this species nationally and it was a record year with an estimated 90 birds seen (previous highest totals were 78 in 2015 and 75 in 2014). If there has been an upward trend, this is surprising given smaller numbers of the previous species and reduced use of landfill sites, though the westward expansion of the species in Germany is well-documented and increased observer awareness and effort plays its part too. A continual easterly airflow during September and October was potentially also a factor in this influx. There was a massive count of 14 birds at Dartford Marshes on February 10th, which was a London record, while five at Amwell NR on March 7th and November 16th were impressive. Records were focused around a handful of localities, though there were surprisingly no Middlesex records, while the Greenwich Peninsula/Lyle Park/Thames Barrier saw increased coverage in the second half of the year and there was a single Inner London record on December 5th. The following table shows the number of different individuals recorded each month at favoured sites.



London is probably the Caspian Gull capital of the UK - a combination of a lot of rubbish and keen gullers. (Richard Bonser)

Caspian Gull monthly records 2016

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX	Rainham Marshes	3	4	1	1	-	-	1	1	5	8	1	2
HR	Amwell NR	5	4	3	4	3	-	-	-	-	1	6	1
BU	Q. Mother Res	2	-	2	1	-	-	-	1	2	-	2	2
KT	Crayford/Dartford	14	5	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
SY	Beddington Farmlands	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-

London's gulls regularly move between sites, so some duplication of birds is inevitable despite certain plumage traits often allowing individual birds to be recognised. Two 1stwinters, ringed in Germany with yellow rings, were seen at Thames Barrier on September 25th and November 20th, with the first bird also seen at Rainham Marshes on October 26th; meanwhile a juvenile at Q. Mother Res on August 27th, with a yellow ring, was presumably also from this scheme.

Essex: Creekmouth, Barking, two on Sep 6th and one on Oct 24th. Gallions Reach, adult on Oct 23rd. Leyton, three: 1st-winter at Eagle Pond from Feb 12th-22nd (same as Wanstead, below) and 1st-winter at Leyton Tip on Mar 10th and an adult on Oct 29th. Lyle Park/Thames Barrier Park, nine different 1st-winters from Sep 25th onwards. Rainham Marshes, 20+: peak count of four on Sep 30th and Oct 24th. Seventy Acres Lake, 2nd-winter on Feb 14th. Walthamstow Res, three: 1st-winters from Jan 10th-17th, Mar 14th and Dec 24th. Wanstead Flats, 1st-winter from Jan 29th to Feb 12th (same as Leyton, above). West Thurrock Marshes, two on Mar 13th.

Herts: Amwell NR, at least 17: eight between January to April, five on Mar 7th, three on

May 5th, then at least six from November to December with five on Nov 16th. Tyttenhanger GP, 1st-winter intermittently in roost from Oct 21st to Dec 12th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, minimum of eight with two January to April, a yellow-ringed juv on Aug 28th, two 1st-winters in September, three (near adult, 2nd-winter and 1st-winter) in November and three (adult and two 1st-winters) in December.

Kent: Crayford/Dartford Marshes, 20+: record count of 14 (three adults, 3rd-winter, four 2nd-winters and six 1st-winters) on Jan 10th. Crossness, two adults and 3rd-winter on Jan 17th. Greenwich Peninsula, two 1st-winters on Nov 20th and different 1st-winters on Dec 6th and Dec 23rd. Swanscombe Marshes, 1st-winter on Feb 27th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, at least five: at least three in the 1st-winter period with a 1st-winter from Jan 2nd to Mar 14th, an additional 1st-winter on Mar 8th and adults on Jan 30th and Mar 8th with at least two (1st-winter and 2nd-winter) intermittently from Sep 16th to Dec 31st. Island Barn Res, four: 1st-winter in roost on Jan 15th, 1st winter on Oct 28th and Nov 24th, small adult in roost on Nov 25th and Dec 20th, 1st-winter in roost on Nov 25th and Dec 22nd, 2nd-winter in roost on Dec 2nd. Putney, one on Mar 12th. QE II Res, 1st-winter in roost on Feb 5th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), five: 1st/w from 2015, intermittently from Jan 1st to Feb 15th-16th; the regular adult intermittently from Feb 3rd to Mar 1st; 1st-winter on Oct 26th and Dec 14th; returning adult intermittently from Nov 10th to Dec 27th; two adults on Dec 26th; 2nd-winter on Dec 2nd.

In Lond: Regent's Park, one on Dec 5th.

Iceland Gull Larus glaucoides

Status: scarce winter visitor, more regular in cold weather.

It was a good year for this species, with about 14 birds recorded (compared with about nine in 2015 and about 11 in 2014). But see App III for other records for which descriptions would be very welcome. Birds were typically wide ranging, particularly at the weekends when their usual landfill sites were closed, and a long-staying juvenile in Surrey - lingering



until mid-May - was particularly noteworthy. Typically the first winter period was much better, with 11 birds, in comparison to the four birds recorded in November and December.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, juv on Feb 27th and Mar 26th, one on Apr 16th, adult on Nov 9th and imm on Nov 17th. Middx: Staines Res, juv on Mar 13th and Apr 29th (same as Bucks below).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, juv on Apr 29th (same as Staines Res above) and sub-adult on Nov 26th.

Kent: Dartford Marshes, one on Jan 6th

2016 was a good year for Iceland Gull; this bird was at Greenwich in April. (Richard Bonser) and juv on Feb 27th and Mar 1st. Greenwich Peninsula, juv on Apr 3rd.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, juv intermittently from Jan 8th to May 6th, 2nd-winter Apr 16th, juv Nov 24th and Dec 31st. Canons Farm, juv on Feb 28th (same as Beddington). Island Barn Res, juv from Feb 15th-18th and Mar 3rd & 18th (same as Beddington), adult on Nov 24th and juv on Nov 28th and Dec 31st (same as Beddington). London Wetland Centre, juv intermittently from Feb 6th to May 12th (same as Beddington). QE II Res, juv in roost on Mar 23rd (same as Beddington).

Glaucous Gull Larus hyperboreus

Status: scarce winter visitor in varying numbers, more regular in cold weather.

A similar showing to recent years, with three records (one in 2015 and then three in 2012, 2013 and 2014). Glaucous Gulls continue to be well outnumbered by Iceland Gulls, and given the reduction in landfill sites, this northern breeding species' status in London is unlikely to increase.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, juv on Feb 3rd (CDRH). **Kent:** Dartford Marshes, one on Feb 18th (BG).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, juv from Dec 30th-31st (DCa, PRA et al).

Great Black-backed Gull Larus marinus

Status: fairly common winter visitor in small numbers, less common at other seasons; has bred recently.

The species bred in London for the first time since 2013, with a pair fledging two young at Walthamstow Res. The year high was 160 at Rainham Marshes on February 2nd (155 in 2015 and 125 in 2014). Otherwise, it was an average year for this species, with 22 counts of over 50 birds (26 in 2015 and 15 in 2014) and Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) recording seven of these, its highest being 145 on January 30th. The species is significantly more common in winter months, with local populations bolstered by Danish and Norwegian birds on the evidence of colour ring reading. Listed below are high counts for sites within each sector.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, 160 on Feb 2nd. Walthamstow Res (1).

Herts: Amwell NR, 125 on Jan 28th. Middx: Staines Res, ten on Jan 17th. Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 50 on Jan 3rd. Kent: Dartford Marshes. 61 on Jan 10th.

Surrey: Island Barn Res, 106 on Jan 1st. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), 145 on Jan

30th and 101 on Nov 25th.

In Lond: Victoria Embankment, 21 on Apr 16th.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Status: uncommon spring and autumn passage migrant.

The first individual of the year was on April 30th at Holmethorpe SP followed by one at Island Barn Res and Staines Res on May 4th. Between May 7th and 12th, they were reported every day with records from Amwell NR, Q. Mother Res, Rainham Marshes, Staines Res, Walthamstow Res and Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough). On May 15th, one was at Walton

93

Res (Knight & Bessborough) and, in June, there were five at Barking Bay on 3rd and one at Rainham Marshes on 7th. Assuming the June birds were spring migrants, there were 19 birds (17 in 2015).

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

One at Staines Res on July 7th was presumably a failed breeder and autumn migration was marked in a grand way with a party of 12 birds moving through Q. Mother Res on August 19th. The rest of the passage was lean with three flying upriver at Purfleet on August 28th and singles at Barking Bay and Rainham Marshes the next day. The last bird of the year was rather late on September 14th at Gallions Reach. Including the July bird, there were 20 birds (15 in 2015).

Black Tern Chlidonias niger

Status: regular spring and autumn passage migrant, with numbers varying annually with weather conditions and breeding success on the Continent.

A forerunner to the main spring movement appeared at Walthamstow Res on April 16th but no further birds appeared until May 5th, when there were five at Broadwater Lake, six at Staines Res and two at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth). The next day, six remained at Staines Res but there were also three at Walthamstow Res and one at the Thames Barrier. These were followed by five at Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough) and one at William Girling Res on 7th and one at Amwell NR on 8th. From 10th to 14th there were daily records at a total of 11 different sites including highs of six at KGV Res, five at Staines Res and four at Amwell NR and Rainham Marshes. Those on May 14th were the last of the spring passage.

Autumn passage began with an early bird at Thorney CP on July 21st but there were no more until August, with one at Staines Res on 5th followed by perhaps the same bird there on 6th as well as two at London Wetland Centre. There was then a gap before the next arrivals on 19th. These included 21 seen at Beddington Farmlands (17 in one flock, followed by four later), seven at Staines Res and two at Gallions Reach and Q. Mother Res. From 20th to 26th there were one or two birds at Staines Res and on 27th there were 15 at Q. Mary Res. There were no more until September, with three at Q. Mother Res on 7th and three at Staines Res on 11th. On 12th, there were singles at QE II Res and Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) and, on 13th, there was one at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), followed by three at Staines Res on 14th and 15th, then one at Dartford Marshes on 17th and two there on 18th. The last of the year was one at Gallions Reach on September 28th.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Status: uncommon passage migrant, often in small flocks.

It was a good spring for the species with 46 birds recorded (15 last year). The first was one at Gallions Reach on March 31st, followed by six at KGV Res on April 2nd, one at Amwell NR on 4th and singles on 10th at Staines Res and Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth). There were daily records from 12th to 14th at four sites involving 14 birds with a peak of five at Walthamstow Res on 13th. There were then two at Rainham Marshes on 17th followed by a single there on 23rd. On the last day of April, one was at Rye Meads and two flew over Walthamstow Marshes, one of which was also seen at Walthamstow Res.

There were records on only three days in May: two at Swanscombe Marshes on 4th, one at Beddington Farmlands on 10th, when there were also two at Rainham Marshes, and then five at Staines Res on 31st. In June, there was one at Staines Res on 2nd, followed on 4th by singles at Beddington Farmlands and at Rainham Marshes, then one at Horton GP on 16th, with the last spring birds being two at Holmethorpe SP on 19th.

A strong flow of birds along the R Thames made the autumn quite a remarkable one. One at Rotherhithe on July 12th was the first of the return movement, followed by two at QE II Res on 19th and two at Rainham Marshes on 29th. There was one more at Rainham Marshes on August 5th before passage started in earnest in mid-August. From August 12th to September 22nd, at least 356 were logged along the R Thames from Kent and Essex sites, mainly between Gallions Reach and Purfleet. This immense figure is mostly thanks to a run of impressive August counts at Gallions Reach, including 21 on 16th, 60 on 24th and 110 on 27th. The count of "at least 110" moving and feeding here, appears to be the largest count ever in London. Away from the Thames, there was also a total of about 28 birds in August or September at Beddington Farmlands, KGV Res, Q. Mary Res, Q. Mother Res, Staines Res, Walthamstow Res and Wraysbury Res. One along the R Thames at Dartford Marshes on October 5th was the final bird of the year and the only October record.

In Lond: Rotherhithe, one briefly off Greenland Pier on Jul 12th.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Status: common summer visitor and passage migrant.

A modest spring passage began on March 30th with four at Rainham Marshes and one at Hilfield Park Res, the first count of any significance not coming till April 12th when 46 went through the former site. Rainham Marshes went on to be the only site to claim any sizable counts over the course of the spring, logging 100 on April 16th, 80 the next day and 120 on 22nd. Movement fizzled out by early May, by which point most birds had established themselves at breeding sites. May 10th saw the final push represented by 65 at Rainham Marshes and 51 at Hilfield Park Res, the latter also accounting for the season's highest day count for a site away from the Thames by some margin.

There were at least 135 breeding pairs reported from 20 sites (125 pairs from 19 sites last year). The records from Upminster and Leg O Mutton NR, are the first we've had from these sites in recent years. Breeding resumed at Staines Res after it was drained last year. There was no report from Seventy Acres Lake (30 pairs last year). Breeding success was variable with several sites reporting none fledged. More information on breeding success would be welcomed.

Autumn passage was a hushed affair and seemed to begin in early August, when a count of 100 was made at Crossness on 3rd and 62 were seen at Staines Res on 6th, although a significant proportion of these birds will have been from the local breeding population. Records of 160 and 225 upriver at Gallions Reach on August 13th and 19th, respectively, seemed to represent more purposeful movements. Further three-figure counts included 100 at Crossness and 150 at Gallions Reach on August 24th. Throughout August small numbers were widespread at other sites along the R Thames and at a variety of typical large waterbodies. A noticeable drop in migration intensity was evident in September: 30 were counted at Poyle Poplars NR on 8th, beaten only by Gallions Reach for the month's highest count, with 35 there on 12th. Just seven birds moved through in October, including one at Richmond Park on 7th and 8th; the last to depart was one at Crossness on October 31st. All breeding and inner London records are given below.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Essex: Brook Farm, Upminster (1), one fledged. Walthamstow Res (12), 11 hatched.

Herts: Amwell NR (7), at least three fledged. Hilfield Park Res (1), one fledged. Rye Meads (27), 34 hatched. Stocker's Lake (8), eight fledged.

Middx: Alexandra Park (1). Blackwall Basin (1). Brent Res (2), none hatched. Broadwater Lake (3-5), none hatched. East India Dock Basin (2), none hatched. Ruislip Lido (3), at least five young. Staines Res (20), 22+ fledged.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res (3). Thorney CP (1), three fledged.

Kent: Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park (7), at least six fledged.

Surrey: Leg O Mutton NR (4), 6 fledged. London Wetland Centre (2), two fledged. Richmond Park (3), two fledged. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (27), 20 hatched.

In Lond: Hyde Park, two on Jun 6th & 8th and singles on Jul 8th, 10th, 13th & 21st. Regent's Park, one on May 10th. Rotherhithe, one on Apr 16th. Shadwell Basin, one on May 19th

Arctic Tern Sterna paradisaea

Status: regular spring and autumn passage migrant, often in small flocks with numbers varying annually.

Early April saw the first birds, starting with two at Rainham Marshes on April 6th. A light passage followed over the rest of April, with birds dropping into reservoirs and flying along the R Thames. But site counts only reached double figures in the last week of the month, with peak counts on April 24th of 50 at Gallions Reach and 64 at Staines Res. Passage continued at a low ebb throughout May, the highest count being 24 birds at Gallions Reach on 11th with the last of the spring on 30th being one at Horton GP and 12 at Rainham Marshes.

The southbound migration started with one at London Wetland Centre on July 12th, followed by one at Walthamstow Res on 30th but passage only got underway from mid-August with 32 at Gallions Reach on 14th being the highest count. During September there were counts of 25 at Q. Mother Res on 5th and 12 at Purfleet on 18th. Just three birds were seen in early October, with singles at West Thurrock Marshes on 5th, Rainham Marshes on 6th and the last at Gallions Reach on 9th.

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Status: scarce autumn and winter visitor, subject to occasional winter influxes.

There were three reports this year, all in October, although two almost certainly refer to the same bird. One was the first Inner London record since 2012. This is the ninth consecutive year in which this species has appeared in London, and on entirely typical dates.

Kent: Greenwich, one on Oct 5th - presumably the same as the Inner London bird (BG). Middx/Surrey: Teddington Lock, one in this area on Oct 14th and again on 15th (MF, BG). In Lond: Bankside, one floating upstream on Oct 5th (RBd).

Razorbill Alca torda

Status: rare visitor, mainly in winter.

A single record for the second consecutive year, which is very unusual (the last consecutive records were in 1960 and 1961). It is also only the second April record ever. Records since 1970 are shown in the table below. This individual arrived at Rainham Marshes on April 9th after apparently injuring itself on an overhead power cable. It remained on the Reserve until it sadly passed away on April 11th, by which time it had been seen and photographed by many observers. This appears to have been the first record of a bird not sitting on or flying over the river since the Fairlop Lake bird in 1988.

Razorbill records from 1970 to 2016: 11 records, 11 birds

Year	1972	1978	1983	1988	1990	1996	2011	2015	2016
No. of records	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1
No. of birds	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one from Apr 9th-11th (mo).

Little Auk Alle alle

Status: rare, late autumn and winter visitor.

A single record for the second year running on a very typical date. Nine of the 17 records since 1991 have been in November and all of these records have been between October and January. This was the first record from the Hertfordshire sector since 1995.

Herts: Amwell NR, one for a few minutes on the morning of Nov 7th (BR).

Feral Pigeon Columba livia

Status: abundant feral resident.

A massive total of 538 sites recorded this species in 2016, a significant increase over the 300 sites recording it in 2015. It is very encouraging that more recorders are now noting this species but many simply report it as present without providing any estimate of numbers, which would be even more helpful. No site produced a four figure total this year, with the highest individual count of 942 coming from Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens: three figure totals were recorded there throughout the year, which must be good news for Central London's Peregrine population. In contrast to the increase in sites, breeding (suspected or proved) or the presence of juveniles was noted at only nine sites. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 26% decrease in the South East in that period; there has also been a 24% decrease in London from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey, however, reported them in 81% of gardens, a slight increase over 2015. Peak counts for sites with 100 or more are listed below.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, 340 on Nov 23rd. Valentines Park, 100 on Nov 26th and Dec 26th. Wanstead, 100 on Dec 7th.

Herts: Beech Farm GP, 124 on Oct 30th. St Albans, 100 on Sep 12th. Tyttenhanger GP, 120 on Nov 16th. Verulamium Park, 100 on Mar 11th.

Middx: Heathrow Airport, 100 on Nov 22nd. Osterley Park, 135 on Sep 22nd.

Kent: Darenth Lakes, 100 on Oct 7th. Erith, c600 on Nov 25th. Woodlands Farm, 100 on

Feb 10th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 180 on May 14th. Canons Farm, 400+ on Oct 15th. Croham Hurst, 168 on Oct 9th. Dulwich Park, 137 on Oct 28th. Hogsmill SW, 230 on Jan 16th. Kingston-upon-Thames, 135 on Jan 1st. London Wetland Centre, 170 on Aug 16th. New Malden, 200 on Oct 1st and Dec 6th. R Thames: Putney Bridge to Barnes Bridge, 102 on May 6th. Seething Wells, 135 on Jan 3rd. Selsdon Woods, 150 on Dec 10th. South Norwood Lake, 136 on Aug 13th. Truss's Island, 123 on Jan 16th. Waddon Ponds, 130 on Apr 9th. Wandle Park, Colliers Wood, 140 on Aug 7th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 942 on Jan 18th. Islington, 150 on May 7th. Limehouse, 144 on May 29th. Mayfair, 200 on Feb 27th. Regent's Park, 220 on May 3rd. Soho, 150 on Jan 19th. St James's Park, 400 on Sep 7th. St Pancras, 132 on Apr 19th. Victoria Park, 250 on Nov 5th.

Stock Dove Columba oenas

Status: breeding resident and passage migrant.

There were fewer records this year: the number of sites reporting this species decreased from 445 to 412, the number of sites with breeding pairs dropped from 61 to 45 and the total number of breeding pairs fell from 201 to 190. However, there are a number of sites at which Stock Doves are recorded throughout the year, where they presumably breed, from which no breeding data is provided, so the position may be better than the figures suggest. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any

Stock Dove. (Andrew Moon)



changes since last year, but there was an 11% decrease in England in that period. This follows a 35% increase in the South East of this species from 1995-2015.

Stock Dove - sites and pairs

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
Sites	74	61	98	6	62	102	9	412
Sites with pairs	10	4	9	0	11	9	2	45
No. of pairs	26	17	29	0	43	71	4	190

Below are breeding records for sites where five or more were recorded (no. of pairs in brackets), plus a summary of records from Inner London sites and peak counts for sites with 50 or more birds.

Essex: Bulphan Fen, 82 on Oct 22nd. Mar Dyke Valley (5). Rainham Marshes, 229 on Dec 27th. Herts: Coursers Farm, 55 on Oct 11th. Maple Cross, 100 on Mar 18th. Rye Meads (14). Tyttenhanger GP, 148 on Oct 13th. Woodoaks Farm, 100 on Jan 28th.

Middx: Home Park (11). South Lodge Farm, 59 on Jun 4th. Totteridge Valley (10+). Whitewebbs Farm, 64 on Feb 23rd.

Kent: Coldblow, 50+ on Feb 5th and Mar 18th. Crossness, 50+ on Feb 18th. Foots Cray Meadows (12). Greenwich Park (13). Toy's Hill, 60 on Nov 7th.

Surrey: Banstead Wood (7). Beddington Farmlands, 60 on Oct 1st & 29th. Canons Farm, 300 on Apr 8th. Hogsmill SW (5); 79 on Nov 14th. Holmethorpe SP, 500 on Mar 10th. Horton CP, 100 on Mar 4th. Morden Cem (12). Morden Hall Park (12). New Malden, 57 on Oct 8th. Ockham, 80 on Nov 15th. Ravens Ait, 154 on Oct 7th. Walton Downs, 750 on Sep 26th. Wimbledon Common (c30).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (2). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2). Primrose Hill, seven on Oct 9th, six on both Oct 14th and Nov 13th (all on visible migration). Regent's Park, 32 on Jan 1st otherwise no more than five. Victoria Park, 22 on Mar 30th and 14 on Feb 27th. Also recorded at Battersea Park, Holland Park, Southwark Park and the Tower of London.

Woodpigeon Columba palumbus

Status: abundant breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

There has been no change in the status of this very familiar species. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 56% increase in London from 1995 to 2015. It was reported from 81% of London gardens in the 2016 RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch; the RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 96% of gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 99% in 2015. In view of that it remains surprising that only around 20 sites recorded birds either breeding, holding territory or the presence of juveniles: however, this is a familiar phenomenon with our very commonest species.

The annual autumn migration again produced some impressive figures: these were roughly comparable to the last two years but nowhere near the exceptional totals of 2013. Although movement was visible, as usual, from mid-October onwards, it was noticeable that passage was concentrated this year (as the table below suggests) from November 2nd to 6th. Passage continued beyond the end of November, with sizeable counts being recorded at a number of sites, most notably Canons Farm and Hogsmill SW.

Most of this movement, though, was north-east as opposed to the traditional south-west direction of October and November. Sites where more than 3,000 birds were seen in total are listed below.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Woodpigeon - highest autumn counts

Site	Total	No. of counts	Highest count (date)
Brent Res	18,062	15	8,792 (Nov 2nd)
Woodberry Wetlands	15,000	1	15,000 (Nov 3rd)
Brook Farm, Upminster	12,000	1	12,000 (Nov 3rd)
Rainham Marshes	11,540	2	11,200 (Nov 3rd)
Hogsmill SW	5,352	19	857 (Nov 4th)
Beddington Farmlands	4,400	1	4,400 (Nov 2nd)
Mar Dyke Valley	3,565	1	3,565 (Nov 2nd)

There were a number of counts of 1,000 plus birds in the first winter period: the highest of these was 1,500 at Tyttenhanger GP on March 12th. Mention should also be made of a flock of 1,100 birds at Canons Farm on September 19th.

Collared Dove Streptopelia decaocto

Status: common breeding resident, scarce in central London.

The figures show a reduction in most sectors in the number of sites recording this species, with a large reduction from 91 to 72 for Middlesex. This is in line with the Breeding Bird Survey, which shows a 7% decrease in London since last year. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 79% of gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 77% in 2015 but a dramatic reduction on 94% in 1995. Very few sites provided confirmed breeding records, and some of the figures for breeding pairs set out below have been inferred from the information provided. However, it is clear that there are many more pairs breeding than are listed here. Below are listed the number of sites in each sector, breeding records for sites where two or more were recorded (numbers of pair/territories in brackets), some of the largest counts and a summary of the Inner London records (where there was a slight increase in the number of sites recording this species).

Essex: Reported from 82 sites. Mar Dyke Valley (3). Rainham Marshes, 53 on Nov 11th and 61 on Nov 23rd. Stanford Rivers, 40 on Nov 17th.

Herts: Reported from 61 sites. Lynsters Lake and Farm, 30 on Jan 16th. Rye Meads (7). Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross, 57 on Jan 6th.

Middx: Reported from 72 sites.

Bucks: Reported from three sites.

Kent: Reported from 74 sites, Crayford Marshes, 50 on Aug 15th, Darenth Lakes, 48 on Oct 7th and 53 on Nov 1st.

Surrey: Reported from 97 sites. Hogsmill SW, many counts of 100+ from Oct 12th to year end with a max of 175 on Nov 19th. Molesey Heath (3). Morden Hall Park (10). Surbiton, 69 on Sep 15th.

In Lond: Reported from Battersea, Bermondsey, Brompton Cem, Globe Town, Natural History Museum, Primrose Hill, Regent's Park, Rotherhithe, Southwark Park, St James's Park and Victoria Park.

Turtle Dove Streptopelia turtur

Status: rare summer breeding visitor and scarce passage migrant.

The melancholy tale continues. As few as 15 records were submitted in total, a couple of which clearly refer to the same birds. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a decline of 95% in the South East between 1995 and 2015. It is hard to believe that, unless a miracle occurs, the Turtle Dove will not go the way of the Red-backed Shrike and other once familiar breeding species that have been lost in recent decades.

The records that were submitted were an odd mix. As with last year, there was a winter record: a single on January 9th at Wanstead Flats. The first spring migrant was a single at North Weald on May 7th, followed by another at South Weald Cricket Club on May 26th. On May 27th there were two birds at Stanford Rivers, with birds at Harlow on 28th and Morden Hall Park on 30th. Three birds were noted at Fawkham Green on June 2nd but there were no further records from this location. However, by June 3rd, the Stanford Rivers birds had increased to three, one of which was seen nest-building; no further records emerged from this site but the possibility of breeding cannot be discounted. Singles were present at Aveley on June 30th, Orsett Fen (a male heard purring) and Rainham Marshes on July 12th. There were only three autumn records: singles at Bushy Park on August 8th, Molesey Heath on August 31st and Fairlop Waters on September 29th, the last of the year.

Oriental Turtle Dove Streptopelia orientalis

Status: rare vagrant.

A first winter Oriental Turtle Dove of the sub-species meena was present in a private garden in Otford, Kent from at least February 18th until May 12th. Sightings were possible from side roads and, once its presence was made known, it was seen and photographed by many observers during the latter part of its stay. This is the first record of this species in the London Area. (See page 225 for details of how the news of this bird first reached birders in early April.)

Kent: Otford, one from Feb 18th to May 12th (LE, ARo, JWn et al).

Ring-necked Parakeet Psittacula krameri

Status: naturalised breeding resident, increasing in range and numbers.

Following a lower number of records in 2015, this year saw a return to 2014 levels with birds being reported from 646 sites. All sectors saw an increase but the south and west continued to dominate, with Middlesex and Surrey accounting for around half of this total. There was an increase in the number of pairs breeding or holding territories from 63 to 100; again though, 60 of those pairs came from two sites. Home Park and Wimbledon Common. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey recorded birds in 92% of gardens (the same as in 2015) but, interestingly, the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch reported them in just 18% of gardens in London, down from nearly 50% last year. The very considerable tolerance shown by this species in the Central London parks was evidenced by a record of a parakeet taking pieces of apple from the hand in Hyde Park. The only noted victim of mobbing by this species this year was a Red Kite.

Ring-necked Parakeet - peak roost counts

Danson Park	2,000 (Dec)
Orpington	270 (Oct)
Petts Wood	500 (Nov)
Ruxley GP	300 (Nov)
Hogsmill SF	870 (Aug)
Island Barn Res	5,000 (Feb)
Mitcham Common	4,300 (Jan)
	Orpington Petts Wood Ruxley GP Hogsmill SF Island Barn Res

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Sector site totals and selected high counts other than those listed in the table above are given below.

Essex: Reported from 75 sites. Belhus Woods CP, 84 on Aug 3rd. Buckhurst Hill, 80 on Dec 22nd. Claybury Woods and Park, 110 on Dec 16th. Dagenham Chase, 160 on Jan 30th. Highams Park, 70 on Mar 6th. Ingrebourne Valley, 80 on Feb 15th.

Herts: Reported from 91 sites. Hilfield Park Res, 38 on Dec 3rd. St Albans, 100 on Sep 15th. Verulamium Park, 40 on Sep 13th.

Middx: Reported from 153 sites. Acton, 200 on Feb 9th. Bushy Park, 1,960 on Oct 15th. Hackney Marsh, 200 on May 23rd. Home Park, 101 on Oct 29th. Horsenden Hill, 300 on Sep 30th. Pinner, 427 on Oct 22nd.

Bucks: Reported from 11 sites. Wraysbury GP, 50 on Jan 1st.

Kent: Reported from 99 sites. Coldblow, 300 on Jan 11th. Foots Cray Meadows, 70 on Dec 25th. Kelsey Park, 550 on Sep 7th. Longfield Gallops, 85 on Sep 5th.

Surrey: Reported from 177 sites. Beddington Farmlands, 1,500 on Sep 1st. Chessington, 200 on Sep 2nd. Holmethorpe SP, 1,150 on Aug 8th. Leg O Mutton NR, 200 on Dec 13th. Morden Hall Park, 579 on Mar 27th. Norbury, 200 on Sep 13th.

In Lond: Reported from 40 sites. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 50 on May 29th.

Common Cuckoo Cuculus canorus

Status: breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The number of sites recording this species dropped this year from 112 to 100, continuing the slight but persistent decline over recent years. Of these sites, 94 recorded birds in April or May, 22 in June and eight from July onwards, reflecting the proportions in 2015. Breeding was as usual difficult to prove and only at Rye Meads was it described as confirmed. As with last year Rainham Marshes, with five territories held, remained the stronghold for this definitive summer visitor. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was a 9% decrease in the UK since last year. There has also been a 70% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015.

The first bird of the year was a single at North Weald Bassett on April 7th. From April 9th birds were sighted daily throughout the month: nearly all of these sightings referred to single birds with two occasionally present. Birds continued to be seen throughout May, with three in the Ingrebourne Valley on May 2nd being the first instance of more than two birds. The first juvenile was noted at Crossness on July 14th. Autumn migration began with a single at Canons Farm on July 28th. There were only a handful of August records and the last and only September record was on the 8th at Richmond Park, which also hosted the final bird in 2015. There was only one Inner London record, a single at Regent's Park on May 4th.

Cuckoo - sites where reported

	Spring	Summer	Autumn
	(Apr-May)	(June)	(July-Oct)
Essex	23	9	2
Herts	34	7	0
Middx	13	2	1
Bucks	4	0	0
Kent	9	2	1
Surrey	10	2	4
Inner London	1	0	0

Barn Owl Tyto alba

Status: rare breeding resident and scarce winter visitor.

Records came from 55 sites, a significant decrease from 77 in 2015, but more than in 2014 with 44 records. There were sightings throughout the year, with reports in the summer period at many sites where there were no reports of breeding, but most of these were of singles only. Details are shown in the table below. Six pairs were confirmed to have bred, one more than in 2015: three in Essex, one in Middlesex and two in Surrey. One pair still had young in the nest in November. There were also two reports of probable breeding (none in 2015).

Barn Owl - sites where reported

	Winter	Summer	Winter
	(Jan-Apr)	(May-Aug)	(Sep-Dec)
Bucks	2	1	1
Essex	6	10	6
Herts	11	8	7
Kent	1	-	1
Middx	3	4	2
Surrey	2	5	2

Little Owl Athene noctua

Status: localised breeding resident, introduced to UK in the 19th century.

Records were received from 108 sites, a small increase on 2015 (104 sites), but slightly fewer than 2014 (113 sites). There were 35 pairs reported to have probably bred (18 in 2015), but birds may have bred at several other sites where more than one bird was reported throughout the breeding season. Five pairs probably bred in Inner London. The number of sites at which they were reported is shown below together with estimates of breeding pairs.

Essex: Reported from 19 sites.

Herts: Reported from 23 sites. Stocker's Farm (1). Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross (1).

Middx: Reported from 27 sites. Cranford CP (2). Home Park (1). Marble Hill Park (1). Park Farm, Enfield (1). Pinner Park Farm (1). Rectory Farm (1). Totteridge Valley (5+).

Bucks: Reported from two sites.

Kent: Reported from six sites.

Surrey: Reported from 29 sites. Canons Farm (4). Morden Cem (1). Richmond Park (10+). Titsey Park (1).

In Lond: Reported from two sites (the same as 2015). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (4). Regent's Park (1), juv bird present on Aug 18th.

Tawny Owl Strix aluco

Status: common breeding resident in the outer parts of the London Area, scarce towards the centre.

Reported from 156 sites (157 in 2015). There were 35 breeding records from 16 sites, compared with 11 records from six sites in 2015 and 24 records from 18 sites in 2014. This species is clearly under-recorded as there were two or more birds present at 16 other sites during the breeding season, up from 13 sites in 2015. There was no confirmed breeding in Inner London, unlike in 2014, when three pairs bred. The number of sites at which they were reported is shown below together with estimates of breeding pairs.

Essex: Reported from 19 sites. No confirmed breeding reported but there were four calling at High Beach on Sep 5th.

Herts: Reported from 33 sites. Hilfield Park Res (1). Maple Lodge NR (1). St Albans (1). Stocker's Lake (1).

Middx: Reported from 32 sites. Horsenden Hill (1). Totteridge Valley (4). Trent Park (1). Bucks: Reported from three sites. Black Park (1).

Kent: Reported from 12 sites. Joyden's Wood (1).

Surrey: Reported from 55 sites. Banstead Wood (1). Kings Wood (2). Leg O Mutton NR (1). Morden Hall Park (1). Richmond Park (10+). Trevereux (2). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (6).

In Lond: Reported from two sites. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Mar 2nd, two to three calling on Apr 23rd and Jul 25th near old nest site. Swiss Cottage, one on Dec 1st.

Long-eared Owl Asio otus

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; rare breeder.

Recorded at four sites, up from two in 2015. A pair successfully raised young in Essex where they bred in 2014. Other records were in February, November and December of wintering birds, with one in April at a less usual time.

Essex: Site A (1). Rainham Marshes, one on Feb 25th (AW). Waltham Abbey, one on Nov 13th-14th (BG, RHI).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles on Apr 8th (FP et al) and Dec 14th (RBr).

Short-eared Owl Asio flammeus

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, with occasional influxes; rare breeder. Another excellent year with records at 54 sites (76 in 2015, although only 29 in 2014). There were many more reports in the first half of the year than during the second. Birds



2016 was another good year for Short-eared Owl. (Shaun Harvey)

were present during ten months of the year including a possible breeding pair in Essex. The last breeding record was in 2008. There were many records in January, which were presumably of birds present since December 2015, then a small decrease in the number of sites recording birds in February, followed by a steady increase until April. There was then an influx in October, although only a few remained in December. Monthly numbers of sites with records are listed below.

Short-eared Owl monthly site records

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total no. of sites recorded	13	7	13	23	14	1	-	-	2	15	15	5

There were reports from 41 sites in the first half of the year and 26 sites in the second half. The highest counts were six birds at Rainham Marshes on February 11th and 22nd

and there were four at Home Park on January 20th. Unlike in 2015, there were no Inner London records (two in 2015). Sites with two or more birds are listed below.

Essex: Reported from 23 sites. Rainham Marshes, up to six present in the first winter period, two present in June, singles on many dates from October 16th, two on Nov 13th and Dec 11th and up to four present from Dec 17th until the end of the year. Waltham Abbey, two on Apr 20th.

Herts: Reported from seven sites. Borehamwood, two on Mar 21st, 28th & 31st. Cole Green Tip, two on Jan 4th & 28th and Mar 11th. Frogmore Lakes, two on Feb 20th and Nov 17th.

Middx: Reported from nine sites. Enfield Lock, two on May 3rd. Home Park, up to four from Jan 9th with one still present on May 14th. Rammey Marsh, two on Apr 20th and May 3rd. South Harefield area, two on Jan 8th, three on 11th, two on 14th & 19th and three on Feb 3rd, 4th, 16th & 18th and two on 24th. Staines Moor, two on Jan 8th, Apr 21st, Oct 16th, 20th, 23rd & 24th and Dec 2nd.

Bucks: Only reported from Horton Brook Quarry with one on Apr 7th.

Kent: Reported from five sites. Crayford Marshes, two on Jan 11th and Mar 10th. Dartford Marshes, two on Apr 24th.

Surrey: Reported from nine sites.

European Nightjar Caprimulgus europaeus

Status: rare passage migrant, occasionally breeding.

There was just one record this year, of a bird flushed in June, just a few feet in front of the observer.

Surrey: Island Barn Res, fem flushed from grass at the car park on Jun 11th (DMH).

Common Swift Apus apus

Status: common, though probably declining, breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first arrivals were singles at Rainham Marshes and Walthamstow Res on April 15th. Numbers steadily increased until there were 300 at Staines Res on April 24th, then 700 at Walthamstow Res on May 2nd with the highest count of the year of 2,000 at Hilfield Park Res on May 30th. The last of the year was one at West Wickham on September 30th. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 45% increase in the South East in the same period. This follows a 54% decline in London from 1995-2015. The increase in the South East since last year was not reflected in our breeding records which declined to 16 pairs this year (38 in 2015). Obtaining evidence of breeding and counting pairs is difficult for this species with most observers just recording one or one plus pairs so it is probably very under-recorded. Breeding records are given below (numbers of pairs in brackets), together with peak counts.

Essex: Grays (3). Walthamstow Res, 700 on May 2nd.

Herts: Hertford (1). Hilfield Park Res, 2,000 on May 30th. St Albans (1+).

Middx: Ashford (1). Brent Res, 600 on May 30th. Fulham Reach (1). Mill Hill (1). Staines (1+). Staines Res, 900 on May 31st. West Harrow (1). Woodberry Wetlands (1).

Kent: Foots Cray (1+). Greenwich (3+).

Surrey: Forestdale (1). Limpsfield Chart (2). London Wetland Centre, 300 on May 14th.



Anyone who has tried to photograph a Swift will know how good a photo this is!

(Andrew Moon)

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Status: locally common breeding resident with additional birds in winter.

They were reported at 282 sites, fewer than in 2015 (305 sites), but almost the same as 2014 (280 sites). Four or more were seen together at 15 sites (17 in 2015): Brent Res, Grays Gorge, Holmethorpe SP, Kingston-upon-Thames, Morden Hall Park, Q. Mary GP, Rainham Marshes, R Wandle: Carshalton Ponds to Wandsworth, Ruxley GP, Rye Meads, Sevenoaks WR, Stanstead Innings, Stocker's Farm, Stocker's Lake and Warren Gorge. There were many records of single birds in the breeding season and there were 18 breeding pairs, which is an increase on 2015 (14 breeding pairs). The number of sites where they were reported is shown below for each sector, with breeding records and a summary of records for Inner London.

Essex: Reported at 54 sites. Belhus Woods CP (1). Grays Gorge (1). Mar Dyke Valley (1). Rainham Marshes (1), pair raised two broods.



LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

The azure flash of a passing Kingfisher, often heard before it is seen, is always an exciting moment. (Alan Reynolds)

Herts: Reported at 47 sites. Hilfield Park Res (1). Rye Meads (1). Stocker's Lake (1). Tyttenhanger GP (1).

Middx: Reported at 67 sites. Hackney Marsh (1). Hampstead Heath (1). Q. Mary GP (1). **Bucks:** Reported at five sites.

Kent: Reported at 39 sites.

Surrey: Reported at 57 sites. Common Meadow (1). Hogsmill SW (1). Kingston-upon-Thames (1). London Wetland Centre (1). Thorpe Water Park (2). Wilderness Island. Carshalton (1), pair raised two broods.

In Lond: Reported at 13 sites from the beginning of the year until Mar 22nd then from Jul 4th until the end of the year. More than five records were received from Rotherhithe. St James's Park and Victoria Park.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Status: rare vagrant.

One was seen flying with swallows at Wimbledon Common for just five to ten minutes in May. This was the 10th London record, the last being in 2015. The table below shows all of London's records.

European Bee-eater arrival dates 1955-2016: 10 records, 22 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	-	-	-	2	2	4	1	1	-	-	-	-
No. of birds	-	-	-	5	2	13	1	1	-	-	-	-

Surrey: Wimbledon Common, one on May 19th (MAs).

Hoopoe Upupa epops

Status: scarce passage migrant.

There were two accepted records this year (see App III for other records for which descriptions would be very welcome). The first was in May and the second in August. The table below shows the number of records since 2010.

Hoopoe records 2	2010-2016: 12	records,	12 birds
------------------	---------------	----------	----------

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of records	5	1	1	2	0	1	2

Essex: Aldborough Hatch, one on Aug 18th (AHo, SWf).

Herts: Broxbourne, one on May 1st (DMs).

Wryneck Jynx torquilla

Status: scarce passage migrant.

There were three accepted records this year, one in the Essex sector and two in the Hertfordshire sector (see App III for other records for which descriptions would be very welcome). The first two were in April and the third in August; September is usually the most likely month to see these in London, as the table below shows.

Wryneck arrival dates 2000-2016: 65 records, 65 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	-	-	-	9	1	-	-	19	34	2	-	-

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one from Apr 30th to May 1st (HTB, IBr, MWy, BG). Herts: Hatfield, one on Aug 25th (SWs). Watford, one on Apr 19th (SCg).

Green Woodpecker Picus viridis

Status: common breeding resident.



Records were received for 508 sites, slightly fewer than in 2015 (516) but still larger than the 278 in 2014. There were 97 breeding pairs, down from 130 in 2015, but similar to the 96 in 2014. Breeding numbers were probably higher than reported as birds were



Green Woodpecker is a common breeding resident, but rather shy. (Andrew Moon)

present during the breeding season at many other sites. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 46% increase in London from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 51% of gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 52% in 2015. Below are breeding records for sites where two or more were recorded (no. of territories/pairs in brackets), plus all Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: Reported from 96 sites. Belhus Woods CP (5). Mar Dyke Valley (4). Rainham Marshes (2). Warren Gorge (2).

Herts: Reported from 74 sites.

Middx: Reported from 123 sites. Home Park (12); 17 on Mar 31st.

Bucks: Reported from seven sites.

Kent: Reported from 82 sites. Foots Cray Meadows (4). Greenwich Park (2). Lullingstone Park (3).

Surrey: Reported from 114 sites. Arbrook

Common (2). Banstead Wood (3). Canons Farm (2); 11 on Apr 21st. Holmethorpe SP, 16 on Apr 18th. Molesey Heath (2). Trevereux (2+). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (12). In Lond: Reported from Battersea Park, Fulham Palace Meadow Allotments (1), Holland Park, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2), Queen's Park, Kilburn, Regent's Park, Rotherhithe, Royal Albert Hall, Southwark Park, Stave Hill and Victoria Park.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Great Spotted Woodpecker Dendrocopos major

Status: common breeding resident.

Recorded at 553 sites, which is slightly fewer than in 2015 (577) and a further decrease in confirmed breeding with 119 pairs (126 in 2015, 157 in 2014). The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 7% decrease in London since last year, but an increase in London of 53% from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 75% of gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 77% in 2015. Below are breeding records for sites where two or more were recorded (no. of territories/pairs in brackets), plus a summary of Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: Reported from 102 sites. Highams Park (2). Epping Forest Woodland Burial Park, ten on Mar 15th.

Herts: Reported from 79 sites. Bernards Heath (2). Wormley Wood, 12 on Mar 7th. Middx: Reported from 127 sites. Hackney Marsh (2). Home Park (5). Queen's Wood (4).

Bucks: Reported from seven sites.

Kent: Reported from 88 sites. Foots Cray Meadows (4). Greenwich Park (2)

Surrey: Reported from 127 sites. Arbrook Common (2). Ashtead Common (2). Banstead Wood (4). Canons Farm (3). Holmethorpe SP, 12 on Mar 21st. Morden Hall Park (3). Wimbledon Common (40).

In Lond: Reported from 23 sites with just a single sighting at 11 sites and ten or more sightings at five sites (Camberwell, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2), Regent's Park, Rotherhithe and Victoria Park). They were present at 15 sites in the breeding season (April to July).

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

Status: scarce and declining breeding resident.

After three years with increases in the number of sites where this species was recorded, there was a sharp decrease to only 37 sites (55 in 2015 and 48 in 2014). Most records were of single birds with two recorded at five sites (same as in 2015). There were no reports of probable or confirmed breeding although birds were present in March, April, May and October at Cassiobury Park which may indicate breeding. At the previous stronghold for this species, Richmond Park, there were only seven records, all of single birds. There were no records from Inner London sites (two in 2015). All records are given below.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, male on Mar 1st & 13th and two males on 20th, male on Apr 26th. Cely Woods, pair on Mar 13th & 15th, male on Mar 19th & 20th and pair on May 8th. High Beech, one on Apr 3rd. Kelvedon Hatch, one on Apr 1st. Mar Dyke Valley, male on Apr 7th and May 2nd. Rainham Marshes, fem on Jan 21st. Upminster, one on Feb 24th. Wanstead Park, one on Jan 1st, two on Jan 16th and one on Mar 13th. Weald Park, one on Jan 16th. Woodford Green, male on Jan 26th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Feb 26th. Cassiobury Park, male on Mar 31st, male on most dates from Apr 23rd to May 4th with a pair on Apr 26th and two males on May 2nd; none thereafter until one on Oct 24th. Ellenbrooks Fields, male on Apr 26th. Rickmansworth, male on Mar 22nd. Sherrardspark Wood, one on Mar 16th. Stocker's Lake, one on Mar 3rd, Apr 3rd, 4th, 14th-17th and Jul 21st. Withey Beds LNR, male on Apr 2nd and two on 24th. Verulamium Park, one on Mar 13th & 31st. Watford, one on Apr 27th and May 3rd.

2016 saw a sharp decline in locations where Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was seen. This bird was photographed in Watford. (Alan Reynolds)



Middx: Brent Park, one on Mar 26th. Bushy Park, one on Mar 25th and Apr 9th. Park Farm, Enfield, male on Jan 25th. Trent Park, male on Jan 25th and Feb 24th. Whitewebbs Wood, male on Jan 23rd.

Kent: Bexley Park Wood, one on Mar 30th. Sevenoaks WR, male on Mar 20th, Apr 30th and May 3rd.

Surrey: Chessington, one on Aug 30th & 31st. Cobham, one on Apr 14th. Esher, male on Mar 13th. Horton CP, one on Jan 25th. Kingswood, one on Apr 13th. London Wetland Centre, one on Mar 5th & 25th. Mayflower Park, one on Nov 7th. Morden Cem, one on Oct 27th. Mitcham Common, male on Feb 13th. Richmond Park, fem on Jan 1st, male on Feb 20th, Mar 13th & 31st, Apr 12th, May 5th and one on Dec 30th. Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath, one on six dates in spring and on Nov 29th.

Woodlark Lullula arborea

Status: scarce passage migrant and occasional rare breeder.

There were 11 records from ten sites in 2016 (up from just five records from five sites in 2015), including two singing and displaying birds at a site in Surrey where they have previously bred. As usual, most records were in October (seven). The species remains on the green list (birds of least conservation concern) having been downgraded from amber in 2015.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, singles on Oct 31st and Nov 3rd. Wanstead Flats, one on Oct 14th. Wanstead Park, one over on Oct 25th.

Bucks: Colnbrook, one on May 15th.

Kent: Ruxley GP, one over on Nov 3rd. Swanscombe Marshes, one over on Oct 28th. Surrey: Site B, five on Jun 18th, including two singing and displaying males. Holmethorpe SP, one on Oct 31st. Leg O Mutton NR, one over on Oct 8th. Walton Downs, one on Aug 12th.

Skylark Alauda arvensis

Status: common breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

There were more winter flocks of 50 or more again this year (12 flocks from 11 sites; only nine sites in 2015 and two in 2014). Four of these were in the 1st-winter period with eight in the 2nd-winter period. But the highest count was only 100, way down from the 250 in 2015 and 400 in 2014.

There was a total of 260 territories from 67 sites (up from 236 territories from 54 sites in 2015). The highest numbers of territories were at Rainham Marshes (46, up from 39 in 2015) and Orsett Fen (28, up from 21 in 2015). Richmond Park had 16 territories (a slight increase on 14 from 2015). The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was a 29% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015. The largest daily counts during autumn passage were in October. The highest count was 60 birds over Wanstead Flats on October 21st.

Below are the number of territories for each sector, breeding records for sites where two or more were recorded (no. of territories in brackets), plus all Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: 101 territories from 15 sites (79 territories from ten sites last year). Belhus Woods CP (3). Bulphan Fen, 100 on Dec 27th. Grey Goose Farm (3). Gunpowder Park (5). Orsett Fen (28). Rainham Marshes (46). Theydon Bois (4). Wanstead Flats (3).



This is one of the last remaining breeding Skylarks on Wanstead Flats.
(Jonathan Lethbridge)

Herts: 50 territories from 16 sites (38 territories from ten sites last year). Abbots Langley (7). Colney Heath (5). Ellenbrook Fields (4). Tyttenhanger GP (7). Smug Oak (5). Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross (12).

Middx: 27 territories from 12 sites (19 territories from ten sites last year). Bushy Park (3). Home Park (9). Lake Farm CP (3). Staines Moor (3). Vicarage Farm (3). Warren Farm Sports Centre (3).

Kent: 32 territories from 12 sites (33 territories from ten sites last year). Crayford Marshes (6). Darenth Lakes (5). Layhams Farm (10). Swanscombe Marshes (4).

Surrey: 50 territories from 12 sites (67 territories from 14 sites last year). Beddington Farmlands (2). Canons Farm (7). Farthing Downs (2+). Richmond Park (16). Riddlesdown (10+). Rushett Farm (6). Trevereux (2).

In Lond: Primrose Hill, one over on Oct 9th, two over on 10th, one over on 19th, two over on 21st and then two over on Nov 8th.

Sand Martin Riparia riparia

Status: common summer visitor, localised breeder and passage migrant.

The first sighting was on March 13th (five days later than in 2015) with one at Belhus Woods CP. There were then singles at KGV Res on 15th and at Brent Res and Hilfield Park Res on 18th. After this, there were then records on almost all subsequent days in spring. The biggest day count of the spring was 200 at Broadwater Lake on April 7th. Other maximum site counts of the spring (all during April) included 160 at Holmethorpe SP on April 24th, 130 at Staines Res on 26th, 100 at Walthamstow Res on 27th and 100 at Sevenoaks WR on 28th.

We have had very few records of breeding this year but don't know whether this is because of declining breeding or not. More breeding counts would be very welcome. There was a new colony at Q. Mary GP, but unfortunately on July 2nd the front of the sand bank collapsed destroying virtually all the nests. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, and found no significant changes in England.

The biggest feeding flock of the summer was 200 at Rainham Marshes on July 30th (much lower than last year's highest of 800 at Staines Res on July 28th). Other large site counts were 100 at London Wetland Centre on June 20th & 25th and 155 at Holmethorpe SP on August 22nd. The last record of the year was one at Tottenham Hale on October 13th.

Essex: Walthamstow Res (possibly bred).

Middx: Q. Mary GP (bred).

Surrey: London Wetland Centre (70). Oxted SP (15), down from 25 last year. Ravens Ait (bred).

In Lond: Rotherhithe (2). Victoria Park, 30+ on Apr 9th.

Swallow Hirundo rustica

Status: common summer visitor and passage migrant, breeding confined to rural areas.

The first record of the year was three birds at Hayes Hill Farm on March 11th (three days earlier than last year and nine days earlier than in 2014). There were no further records until March 20th when one was at Staines Moor and then on March 23rd singles were seen at Dagenham Chase, Thames Road Wetland and Enfield Lock. Birds were recorded on almost all subsequent spring days. Large numbers of birds were recorded on April 16th with site counts of 100 or more at Beddington Farmlands (100), Brent Res (500), Bury Lake (100), KGV Res (110), Stocker's Lake (100), Tyttenhanger GP (120) and Walthamstow Res (300). Other large spring counts were 275 birds at Stocker's Lake on April 22nd and 220 at Staines Res on April 24th. In spring as a whole, there were day counts of 100 or more birds at 11 sites (up from six last year and four in 2014).

Breeding was reported at 17 sites (down from 28 sites in 2015) with only eight of these sites having more than one nest.

The first large counts of the autumn passage were 350 birds at Canons Farm on August 30th and 1,800 at Beddington Farmlands on September 1st. In total, there were 23 counts of more than 100 birds at a single site during autumn passage (down from last year's exceptional autumn passage which had 99 counts of more than 100 birds). Other large autumn counts in September were 420 at Canons Farm on 8th, 600 at Beddington Farmlands on 14th, 710 at Richmond Park on 21st, 1,224 at Crossness on 29th and 400 at Warren Barn Farm also on 29th. The last bird of the year was a single at Rickmansworth on the very late date of December 12th, prior to which a single was at Upminster on November 7th. Breeding sites are listed below, with the number of nests in brackets.

Essex: Rainham Marshes (1). Brook Farm, Upminster (2). Mar Dyke Valley (3).

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP (1).

Middx: Home Park (3). Kempton Park Race Course (1). Stanwell Moor (1+). Strayfield Road (4). Totteridge Valley (2). Vicarage Farm (1).

Surrey: Canons Farm (1+). Epsom (1+). Richmond Park (3). Tolworth (1). Trevereux (7). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (2). Worcester Park (1).

House Martin Delichon urbicum

Status: breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first of the year were at three sites on March 27th (earlier than 2015's date of April 1st but later than the first date in 2014 which was March 18th). Birds were then reported daily throughout the spring. There were 15 site counts of 50 or more birds during April and May (up from 11 in 2015 and six in 2014), the largest counts being 100 birds each at Stanstead Innings on April 25th and at Sevenoaks WR on May 2nd and 31st.

There were 108 active nests reported from 21 sites (down from 212 active nests from 51 sites in 2015) and there are only eight sites where we have records for both years, so it is hard to make much comparison. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there has been a 60% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015. (An account of a BBS House Martin survey at Aldborough Hatch Equestrian Centre, Essex is on page 228.) Regular counts from sites would be very welcome to try and see whether they are still declining. All records of active nests/pairs are given below.

Post-breeding gatherings and early migrant flocks in August peaked with 200 birds over Stain Hill Res on August 20th. During September, there were 29 counts of 100 or more birds (down from 90 in 2015 but up from 11 in 2014). The highest count of the month was 1,140 south over Richmond Park on September 24th. The last birds of the year were two over Banstead Wood on October 24th (earlier than the last bird of 2015 which was on November 10th).

Essex: Chafford Hundred (2). Orsett Fen (3). Walthamstow FB (1+). Warren Gorge (3).

Herts: Frogmore Lakes (3). Hunton Bridge (5). Stocker's Farm (4).

Middx: Ashford (8). Feltham (25). Hampton Wick (2). Hanworth (2). Staines (4+). Stanwell Moor (1+). West Hendon, The Broadway (12+).

Kent: Crayford (3). Lullingstone Park (2).

Surrey: Berrylands (5). Holmethorpe SP (2). Putney (5).

In Lond: Hermitage Basin (4). Knightsbridge (8). Primrose Hill (4).

Tree Pipit Anthus trivialis

Status: passage migrant and, possibly now, former breeding summer visitor.

The first record of the year was on March 28th at Dulwich Park. This is a typical arrival date for this species but slightly later than the first record of 2015 (which was March 17th). Spring passage was lighter than last year, involving 14 birds (24 in 2015) with one in March, 12 in April and one at Colnbrook on May 2nd being the final passage bird of the spring.

There was a pair at Ellenbrook Fields from April 17th-18th, with the male singing, but, for the fifth year running, there were no records of birds holding territory. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but shows a 28% decrease in England in that period and a 46% decrease from 1995-2015.

Autumn passage consisted of approximately 45 birds (down from 109 in 2015 and 97 in 2014). The first birds of the autumn were on August 12th at Hampstead Heath and Rainham Marshes; this was followed by birds at both Banstead Wood and Wraysbury GP on 14th. It was another week before there were any more records and the bulk of the birds appeared in the last week of August and the first week of September. The total for

August was 16 birds, there were 25 birds in September and just four birds in October, with the last at Primrose Hill on 11th. All records are given below.

Essex: Boyles Court Farm, one on Sep 11th. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, one on Sep 18th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Apr 4th, Aug 12th, 23rd & 26th, Sep 1st, 2nd & 4th and Oct 9th. Wanstead Flats, singles on Aug 21st & 26th, Sep 2nd, 5th-7th &11th.

Herts: Ellenbrook Fields, singles from Apr 9th-11th, two on Apr 17th, singles on Apr 18th and Aug 29th. Maple Cross, one on Apr 23rd.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Sep 2nd. Bentley Priory NR, one on Sep 1st. Hampstead Heath, singles on Aug 12th and Sep 17th & 27th. Home Park, one on Apr 14th. Horsenden Hill, one on Sep 7th. South Harefield, one on Apr 17th.

Bucks: Colnbrook, one on May 2nd and three on Aug 29th. Wraysbury GP, one on Aug 14th and two on Sep 7th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, one on Sep 28th. Lullingstone Park, one on Apr 5th.

Surrey: Banstead Wood, one on Aug 14th. Barnes Green Pond, one on Aug 26th. Beddington Farmlands, one on Apr 22nd, two on 23rd, singles on 25th & 28th and two on Oct 5th. Canons Farm, one on Apr 24th. Dulwich Park, one on Mar 28th. Morden Hall Park, one on Sep 3rd. Richmond Park, two on Aug 28th, three on Sep 3rd and one on 5th. Riddlesdown, one on Sep 12th. Wimbledon Common, one on Aug 24th.

In Lond: Primrose Hill, one on Oct 11th.

Meadow Pipit Anthus pratensis

Status: common passage migrant and winter visitor, localised breeder.

There were three winter flocks with 50 or more birds (down from five in 2015 but the same number as in 2014): 50 at Havering-atte-Bower on January 23rd, 54 at Orsett Fen on January 25th and 50 at KGVI Res on November 3rd.

Spring passage was less heavy than last year with only one count of 50 or more birds: 96 over Watermeads in two hours on March 25th. This was down from the unusually high 19 such counts in 2015, but comparable to the two such counts in 2014).

Breeding records came from 12 sites (down from 15 in 2015). There was a noticeable increase at Rainham Marshes: 17 territories this year, after just five last year. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was an 11% decrease in England in the same period; there has also been a 45% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015. All territories are given below (no. of territories/singing males in brackets).

Compared with spring passage, autumn passage was heavier than last year with 28 counts of 50 or more birds (up from 20 counts in 2015) and five counts of 100 or more birds (up from two in 2015). The highest count of the autumn was 357 over Barn Elms PF on September 30th.

Essex: Orsett Fen (3). Rainham Marshes (17). Wanstead Flats (4).

Herts: Ellenbrook Fields (3). Frogmore Lakes (3).

Middx: Home Park (2). Ten Acre Wood (2).

Kent: Crayford Marshes (4+). Crossness (1). Layhams Farm (1).

Surrey: Richmond Park (1). Riddlesdown (3).

Rock Pipit Anthus petrosus

Status: passage migrant and winter visitor.

Rainham Marshes, the best site in the London Area for this species, had a peak count of 11 birds on January 31st. This is the same peak count as in 2015 but down from counts in previous years (which peaked at 32 birds in 2013). The last bird of the spring was on April 22nd at Rainham Marshes (much later than the latest bird of spring 2015 which was on March 29th) and the first bird of the autumn was on September 17th also at Rainham Marshes. Monthly maxima for the locations with records in three or more months are given below, followed by other records.

Rock Pipit monthly maxima		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
EX	Rainham Marshes	11	9	6	1	-	-	-	-	1	4	5	6
	West Thurrock Marshes	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	3
MX	Staines Reservoir	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	1
ΚT	Belvedere	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1
	Erith	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	3
	Swanscombe Marshes	3	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1	1

Essex: Creekmouth, Barking, one on Feb 21st, four on Dec 26th and two on 30th. Dagenham Chase, singles on Oct 2nd & 30th. Gallions Reach, three on Oct 30th and one on Nov 26th. KGV Res, one on Mar 24th, two on Oct 8th & 13th, four on 15th, one on 26th and two on 30th, then one on Nov 2nd. Lyle Park, Silvertown, one on Dec 31st. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, one on Mar 24th. Walthamstow Res, one on Mar 18th, two on Oct 8th, three on 9th, one on 30th and two on Nov 2nd.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, singles on Mar 20th & 21st and Oct 3rd, 4th & 25th. Rye Meads, one on Oct 28th.

Middx: Blackwall Basin, one on Jan 15th. KGVI Res, one on Mar 13th and two on Oct 13th. Tottenham Marshes, singles on Oct 12th & 21st. Wraysbury Res, singles on Mar 14th, Oct 2nd & 28th and Nov 26th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, two on Mar 19th, increasing to three on 20th, two different birds on 22nd & 23rd; then singles on Sep 24th and Oct 1st-2nd, with two on 3rd, three on 4th, one on 5th, three on 6th and two on 7th.

Kent: Crayford/Dartford Marshes, up to five in January and one on Feb 10th, one on Sep 30th, up to three in October and one on Nov 2nd. Crossness, two on Jan 2nd and one on 7th; singles on Oct 21st, 23rd, 28th & 30th, two on Dec 2nd and one on 13th.

Surrey: Barn Elms PF, one over on Sep 19th. Beddington Farmlands, one on Mar 20th. Leg O Mutton NR, two on Sep 20th. London Wetland Centre, singles on Feb 4th and Oct 20th. QE II Res, one on Oct 2nd. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), two on Mar 20th.

Water Pipit Anthus spinoletta

Status: regular but localised winter visitor and passage migrant.

Reports came from 23 sites (up from 21 in 2015 and 19 in 2014). Peak counts were 11 at Horton on January 8th and nine at KGVI Res on November 3rd and 15th. The maximum at Rainham Marshes during 2016 was seven birds (down from 14 in 2015). The last spring bird was on April 16th at Beddington Farmlands. The first autumn bird was on October

8th, also at Beddington Farmlands. Monthly maxima are given for sites with records in five or more months. All other records follow.

Wa	ter Pipit monthly maxima	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX	Rainham Marshes	2	4	7	5	-	-	-	-	-	2	7	6
HR	Rye Meads	3	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-
MX	Staines Moor	7	7	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	5	4	1
	KGVI Res	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	9	2
SY	Beddington Farmlands	8	3	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	2	5	7
	Wetland Centre	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	3

Essex: Dagenham Chase, one on Oct 30th. West Thurrock Marshes, one on Mar 13th. William Girling Res, one on Apr 10th.

Middx: Brent Res, one over on Oct 26th. Q. Mary Res, one on Dec 18th. Staines Res, singles on Mar 5th & 13th, six on 17th, singles on 19th, 20th & 22nd, two on 23rd and four on Nov 26th. Stanwell, five on Mar 6th. Wraysbury Res, three on Mar 10th.

Bucks: Horton, 11 on Jan 8th and two on Nov 27th. Horton Brook Quarry, one on Apr 10th. Q. Mother Res, one on Nov 3rd.

Kent: Crayford/Dartford Marshes, singles on Jan 18th, 19th & 27th and three on Mar 10th. Erith, one on Feb 10th. Swanscombe Marshes, singles on Jan 1st, Mar 9th, Oct 21st & 28th, Nov 5th, 11th & 18th and two on Nov 26th.

Surrey: Holmethorpe SP, one on Jan 21st. QE II Res, one on Oct 28th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), one on Oct 23rd.

Yellow Wagtail Motacilla flava

Status: common passage migrant and decreasing, now scarce, breeder.

The first bird in spring was on March 28th at Holmethorpe SP. During spring passage there were 12 counts of ten or more birds (same as in 2015 and up from two in 2014)). The largest day count in spring was 30 birds on April 26th at Rainham Marshes (the largest counts of 2015, 37 and 30 birds, were also on April 26th). There were no spring counts of more than five birds after May 10th.

There were only breeding records from two sites this year, down on five sites in 2015. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was 20% increase in England in that period; this follows a 41% decrease in England from 1995-2015.

Autumn passage got going in the first half of August with 20 birds at Rainham Marshes on 5th. However, numbers picked up from around 23rd with almost daily counts of more than ten birds, giving a total of 37 such counts during autumn. The maximum day count was 55 birds at KGV Res on September 18th. There were no counts of more than five birds after September 29th and the last record of the year was one at KGVI Res on October 16th.

Below are breeding records (no. of territories in brackets), plus all Inner London records.

Essex: Orsett Fen (3).
Herts: Tyttenhanger GP (1).

In Lond: Primrose Hill, singles on Oct 9th & 10th. Regent's Park, one on Sep 30th.

SUB-SPECIES: Blue-headed Wagtail M. f. flava

Status: passage migrant, more commonly seen in spring than in autumn.

There was just one spring record this year (four in 2015).

Middx: Home Park, a male on Apr 16th (NT).

Hybrid: Channel Wagtail M. f. flava x M. f. flavissima

There were two birds which showed features of being this hybrid.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Apr 26th (AT).

Middx: Staines Res, singles on Apr 23rd (KLP, PWt) & 26th (REI).

Grey Wagtail Motacilla cinerea

Status: common breeding resident and passage migrant.

There were 66 breeding records (including probably breeding and singing males) in 2016 (69 pairs in 2015 and 47 in 2014). The largest winter counts were 16 at Hogsmill SW on November 13th and 13 at the same site on December 13th, followed by ten along the R Wandle from Carshalton Ponds to Wandsworth on December 27th and at Chiswell Green on February 14th.

There was only a single double figure count in spring of ten, at Hogsmill SW on April 10th. There were some double figure counts in summer of 11 birds at Woodberry Wetlands on June 21st, ten at Rye Meads on July 30th and August 13th-14th and 27th, 12 at KGV Res on August 23rd. There were signs of autumn passage on September 2nd with birds flying over Brent Reservoir. There were double figure autumn counts from Rye Meads, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and Hogsmill SW, with the peak count being 16 at Hogsmill SW. All breeding records are given below.

Essex: Brook Farm, Upminster (1). Hainault (1). Mar Dyke Valley (1). Nags Head Lane Fishery, Brentwood (1). Rainham Marshes (1). Roding Valley Meadows NR (1). Romford (1).

Herts: Frogmore Lakes (1). Hilfield Park Res (1). Rye Meads (5). Seventy Acres Lake (1). Sopwell Mill (1). St Albans (1). Tyttenhanger GP (1).

Middx: Brent Res (1). Bury Farm (1). Enfield Chase (1). Millwall Docks (1). Muswell Hill (1). Oakwood (1). Southgate (1). Staines (1). Totteridge Valley (1). Wildwoods, Enfield (1).

Kent: Brookmill Park (1). Crystal Palace Park (1). Foots Cray (1). Foots Cray Meadows (1). Lullingstone Park (1). Sevenoaks WR (1).

Surrey: Barn Elms PF (1). Beddington Farmlands (5). Carshalton Ponds (1). Croydon (2). Earlsfield (2). Kingston-upon-Thames (2). Merton Abbey Mills (1). Ravensbury Park (1). Richmond Park (2). Streatham (1). Sutton (1). Wandle Creek (2). Wandle Park, Colliers Wood (2). Wandle Park, Croydon (1). Watermeads (1). Wilderness Island, Carshalton (1).

In Lond: Chelsea Wharf (1). Fenchurch Street Station (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1). Limehouse Basin (1). Southwark Park (1). Victoria Park (1).

Pied Wagtail Motacilla alba

Status: common breeding resident and winter visitor.

There were 26 territories reported in 2016 (down from 28 in 2015 and 33 in 2014). The biggest count was of at least 335 birds going to a roost in Harrow on October 14th. Other

large roost counts were 150 at Harold Wood SW on February 1st, 102 on Epping High Street on December 19th, 75 at Brentwood Station on March 16th and at least 70 birds at Wimbledon on October 29th.

Away from roosts there were no counts of 50 or more birds during March and April (down from two such events in 2015). Large counts during autumn included 121 birds at Staines Res on August 28th. All breeding records are given below.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (1). Brook Farm, Upminster (1). Mar Dyke Valley (2). Rainham Marshes (2).

Middx: Boxer's Lake (1). Brent Res (1). Cockfosters Sports Ground (1). Enfield Town (1). Oakmere Park (1). Oakwood (1). Park Farm, Enfield (1). Parkside Farm (1). Pinner (1). South Lodge Farm (1). Southgate (1). Staines Res (1). Strayfield Road (1). Vicarage Farm (1).

Kent: Foots Cray Meadows (2).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (2). Hogsmill SW (1). Leatherhead (1).

Sub-species: White Wagtail M. a. alba

Status: passage migrant, more commonly seen in spring than in autumn.

As usual most records were in spring with the first at Beddington Farmlands on March 1st. But there were then no more records until 19th, after which reports came from several sites. Numbers peaked during April, with just six records in May. The highest count was 11 at Q. Mother Res on April 12th, but there were also ten at Staines Res on 27th.

In June, a female was found at Q. Mother Res in a presumed family party with a male Pied Wagtail and two fully-fledged young; presumably, this mixed pair bred close-by. There was also a female carrying food at Q. Mary Res, so this could be another mixed pair. All records are given below, summarised for some sites.

Essex: Dagenham Chase, singles on Mar 29th and Apr 13th. Fairlop Waters, one on Apr 24th. KGV Res, nine records in April, with peak of six on 17th, then one on May 1st. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, one on Mar 26th. Rainham Marshes, singles on six dates in April. Walthamstow Res, singles on six dates in spring. William Girling Res, two on Apr 10th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Apr 19th. Ellenbrook Fields, one on Apr 10th. Stocker's Farm, one on Apr 16th. Tyttenhanger GP, one or two on six spring dates.

Middx: Brent Res, singles on five spring dates. Finsbury Park, one on Apr 15th. Guy Lodge Farm, one on Apr 7th. KGVI Res, two on Apr 2nd, one on 3rd and two on 14th. Q. Mary Res, one on Jun 11th. Staines Res, frequent records from Mar 30th to May 3rd with peak of ten plus on Apr 26th-27th. Whitewebbs Farm, one on Apr 7th. Woodberry Wetlands, one on Apr 8th.

Bucks: Colnbrook, one on Apr 27th. Q. Mother Res, frequent records from Mar 29th to Apr 28th with peak of 11 on Apr 12th.

Kent: Dartford Marshes, two on Mar 28th. Lamorbey Park, one on Apr 9th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles on six spring dates. Holmethorpe SP, one on Mar 28th. Island Barn Res, one on Apr 3rd. London Wetland Centre, singles on six spring dates. Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough), one on Apr 18th.

Waxwing Bombycilla garrulus

Status: uncommon but sometimes numerous irruptive visitor.

The last previous Waxwing reports were in March 2014, so a single record in January 2016 was very welcome. This was followed though by more birds from November 3rd, with some remaining into 2017. The largest count was 20+ birds at both Potters Bar on December 2nd and Forestdale on 21st, but there were no other counts higher than eight. This was a much smaller irruption than the one in 2012/13, or the really large one of 2010/11. All records are given below.

Essex: Collier Row, three on Nov 3rd. Harold Hill, eight on Dec 31st. Mar Dyke Valley, two over on Dec 9th. Walthamstow, one on Dec 30th.

Herts: Hertford, five from Dec 19th-23rd. Oxhey, two on Dec 8th. Panshanger, two on Dec 27th and four on 28th. Rickmansworth, one on Nov 24th. Tyttenhanger GP, one over on Dec 27th.

Middx: Clapton, one on Dec 10th. Muswell Hill, two on Jan 8th. Potters Bar, 20+ on Dec 2nd. Kent: Greenwich Park, three or four on Nov 5th. Sidcup, one heard on Dec 28th.

Surrey: Forestdale, 20+ on Dec 21st. Wandle Meadow Nature Park, one over on Nov 16th. **In Lond:** Regent's Park, two on Nov 14th.

Wren Troglodytes troglodytes

Status: abundant breeding resident with influxes in autumn and winter.

Breeding counts from regular sites were mostly similar to last year although there were noticeable increases at Beddington Farmlands (from 96 to 129). The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 15% increase in London since last year, following a 42% increase in London from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 89% of gardens surveyed in 2016, up from 84% in 2015. Breeding records are given below for sites where ten or more territories or singing males (number in brackets) were recorded, along with some of the higher counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (14). Mar Dyke Valley (32). Orsett Fen (20). Rainham Marshes (69). Herts: Maple Lodge NR (21). Rickmansworth Aquadrome (24). Rye Meads (82). Sherrardspark Wood (10). Stocker's Lake (17).

Middx: Broadwater Lake (63). Fryent CP, 24 on Mar 24th. Home Park (53). Kensal Green Cem (10).

Kent: Chipstead Lake, 30 on Jun 30th. Darenth Lakes, 40 on May 23rd. Sevenoaks WR, 55 on Apr 13th & 20th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (19). Beddington Farmlands (129). Berrylands, 47 on Jan 24th. Canons Farm (24). Esher Common (16). Hogsmill SW, 46 on Feb 20th. Holmethorpe SP, 95 on Apr 4th. Kingston-upon-Thames, 42 on Mar 19th. Molesey Heath (29). Morden Hall Park (73). Surbiton (24). West End Common (24).

In Lond: Regent's Park, ten on Mar 13th. Victoria Park, 13 on May 1st.

Dunnock Prunella modularis

Status: abundant breeding resident.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 29% increase from 1995-2015. Apart from the large increase in territories at Beddington



Dunnock, (Andrew Moon)

Farmlands (from 45 in 2015 to 70 in 2016), there was little sign of change from last year. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 89% of gardens surveyed in 2016, down from the 95% in 2015.

Breeding records are given below for sites where ten or more territories or singing males (number in brackets) were recorded, along with some of the higher counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, 18 on Mar 20th. Mar Dyke Valley (14); 15 on Mar 8th. North Weald, 30 on Dec 6th. Orsett Fen (13); 14 on Sep 17th. Rainham Marshes (22); 17 on Mar 12th. Warren Gorge, 17 on Mar 10th. West Thurrock Marshes, 13 on Apr 14th.

Herts: Brickendon, 15 on Jun 8th. Rye Meads, 19 on Mar 11th. Tyttenhanger GP, 20 on Apr 11th.

Middx: Broadwater Lake, ten on May 1st. Home Park (12).

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 22 on Apr 5th.

Kent: Chipstead Lake, 16 on Feb 19th. Crossness, 12 on Apr 5th. Darenth Lakes, 20 on Dec 2nd. Sevenoaks WR, 13 on Mar 5th. Swanscombe Marshes, ten on Apr 9th.

Surrey: Ashtead Common, 24 on Mar 17th. Beddington Farmlands (70); 20 on Apr 1st. Berrylands, 22 on Jan 10th. Bookham Common, ten on Mar 18th. Canons Farm, 19 on Nov 27th. Esher College, 11 on Apr 14th. Hogsmill SW (14); 40 on Nov 13th. Holmethorpe SP, 52 on Apr 4th. London Wetland Centre, 14 on Mar 2nd. Molesey Heath (10), 15 last year.

In Lond: Holland Park, three on Apr 30th. St Pancras, four on Mar 1st. Victoria Park, four on Nov 5th.

Robin Erithacus rubecula

Status: abundant breeding resident with influxes in autumn and winter.

This widespread and well-loved species continues to prosper in London with the Breeding Bird Survey showing a further 7% increase in London this year following an 84% increase in London from 1995-2015. From the few sites where regular breeding numbers are recorded, there were signs of a small increase in territories this year: at Rainham Marshes from 23 last year to 26 and at Rye Meads from 53 to 58. A fledged young bird was seen in Maple Cross on March 18th. Breeding records are given for sites where ten or more singing males or territories (no. in brackets) were recorded.

Essex: Belhus Wood CP (28). Mar Dyke Valley (14). Rainham Marshes (26). Roding Valley Meadows NR (13).

Herts: Chess Valley (12). Rickmansworth Aquadrome (18). Rye Meads (58).

Middx: Broadwater Lake (19). Home Park (59).

Surrey: Arbrook Common (12). Banstead Wood (34). Beddington Farmlands (38). Esher Common (25). Mayflower Park (12). Molesey Heath (18). Morden Hall Park (19).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (12).

Nightingale Luscinia megarhynchos

Status: breeding summer visitor in small numbers, scarce passage migrant.

The first of the year were on April 14th but as usual there were few records after early June - just two singles in July. From the records we have, there appeared to be 11 territorial birds at four sites, compared with ten at three sites last year. The Breeding Bird Survey has too small a sample in London to show any trends, but there has been a 48% decrease in England from 1995-2015, and there is no sign of this changing in London. The Inner London record is unusual, the first since 2012. All records are given below with numbers of territories in brackets.

Essex: Dagenham Riverside, one on May 23rd. Fishers Green (6). Netherhall GP, one on Jun 3rd.

Herts: Bayfordbury, one on May 6th & 10th. Ellenbrook Fields, one on Apr 23rd.

Middx: Cowley Peachy, one on Apr 21st. Shepperton GP, one on May 5th.

Kent: Northfleet, one on Jul 12th. Swanscombe Marshes (2).

Surrey: Bookham Common (1). Croham Hurst, one on Jul 5th. Prince's Coverts (2). Tooting Common, one on May 12th.

In Lond: Victoria Embankment Gdns, one on Apr 22nd.

Black Redstart Phoenicurus ochruros

Status: breeding summer visitor, passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers.

This year there were three records of breeding or probable breeding (none last year) and nine other singing birds (seven last year). Records came from 32 sites outside Inner London, which is in line with recent years. Almost all of these records were outside the

123

breeding season. Breeding records are shown in the table and records from other sites are listed below.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Black Redstart	Pairs proved breeding	Other pairs present	Additional singing males
Essex	-	-	2
Middx	1	-	1
Kent	-	-	1
Surrey	-	-	1
In Lond	2	-	4

Essex: Fairlop Waters, one on Apr 26th. Rainham Marshes, single birds on Mar 28th, Apr 3rd and Nov 3rd & 12th. Waterworks NR, one on Apr 20th & 23rd.

Herts: Rye Meads, one on Oct 29th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Apr 19th, 20th & 28th. Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross, one from Oct 10th-22nd.

Middx: Fulham Reach, one on Jan 23rd. Hackney Wick, one on May 2nd and Jun 6th. Hayes, one on Oct 3rd. Lake Farm CP, one on Oct 2nd & 3rd. Mill Hill, singles on Nov 8th and Dec 6th. Osterley Park, one on Dec 11th. Staines Res, two on Oct 27th and one on 28th. The Paddock LNR, one on Apr 6th. Tottenham Marshes, one on Sep 19th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Mar 22nd.

Kent: Belvedere, one on Mar 23rd, Crossness, singles on Jan 4th, Mar 23rd, Oct 31st, Nov 14th and Dec 11th. Erith, one from Jan 4th to Feb 19th. Greenwich Peninsula, one on Mar 27th. Ruxley, one on Oct 27th. Swanscombe Marshes, one on Oct 22nd.

Surrey: Banstead, one on Oct 28th. Beddington Farmlands, singles on Aug 13th, Oct 4th and Nov 2nd. Godstone, one on Nov 16th. Hogsmill SW, one on May 1st. Holmethorpe SP, one on Dec 18th. Island Barn Res, singles on Mar 27th and Oct 13th. London Wetland Centre, one on May 4th. South Norwood CP, one on Mar 24th. Warren Barn Farm, one on Apr 1st. In Lond: Battersea PS, one on Jan 9th. Middlesex St E1, one on May 16th. Whittington Gdns EC4, one on May 27th.

Common Redstart Phoenicurus phoenicurus

Status: passage migrant.

Spring passage was much more marked than usual, with about 120 birds seen on 36 dates and across 64 sites. With the exception of 2013, there have been fewer than 40 spring birds each year since at least 2008. The first record was on April 2nd at Holyfield Hall Farm. Thereafter there were records on all but two days until May 4th, with sightings at eight to ten sites on six dates. Another four records came from later in May or early June and a straggler was seen on June 28th at Rainham Marshes.

Autumn passage produced about 100 birds, within the normal range, from about 50 sites. The first record was on July 22nd at the London Wetland Centre and the last on October 18th, an exceptionally late date, at Tottenham Marshes. There were records on most days from August 12th to September 19th, but on only seven days thereafter. Wanstead Flats again had the highest day count, with six on September 11th.

In Lond: City of London, one on Apr 15th. Regent's Park, one on Apr 28th and two on 29th, then one on Aug 23rd, two on 29th and one on 31st. Rotherhithe, one or two from Apr 5th-8th. Victoria Park, one on Apr 12th.

Whinchat Saxicola rubetra

Status: regular passage migrant and former breeding summer visitor.

Spring migrants began arriving from April 12th with one at Upper College Farm. About 96 birds were recorded this spring compared with 160 last year. The peak passage was on April 29th and 30th when 28 birds were seen including a peak of five at Rainham Marshes on the latter date. The last ones of spring were also at Rainham Marshes on May 22nd.

An early autumn migrant was seen at Alexandra Park on July 6th with the only other sighting this month being at London Wetland Centre on 21st. Apart from an isolated fall of ten at Crossness on August 2nd, which was the highest count of the year, only relatively small numbers were seen in August until the last week of the month. This peak period continued through to the first half of September with the peak day being on September 11th when 51 birds were counted. The last of the year was at Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough) on October 13th.

In Lond: Regent's Park, two on Apr 29th, Aug 23rd and Sep 13th.

European Stonechat Saxicola rubicola

Status: localised breeding resident, regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Like last year, many more sites produced records in the winter months than in other recent years. There were records from 40 sites in January (35 last year), 28 sites in February (the same as last year) and 39 sites in December (27 last year). So wintering numbers still seem to be increasing. In October, boosted by migration, there were records from about 70 sites. Day counts were into double figures at nine sites. Last year's "astonishing" record of 33 birds on one day was outstripped this year, with 42 birds at Richmond Park on October 11th. Counts of over 15 were also recorded at London Wetland

Below left: This externely pale European Stonechat spent the second winter period at Richmond Park, but did not exhibit classic 'Siberian' features. (Lee Dingain) Below right: European Stonechat at Rainham Marshes. (Russ Sherriff)





Centre, with 22 on January 9th, High Breach, with 20 on October 2nd, and Staines Moor, with 18 on January 5th. A pale female bird at Richmond Park in late October raised hopes that it might be a Stejneger's Stonechat, but DNA testing of its droppings showed that it was merely a pale European Stonechat.

As expected, between May and August fewer than ten sites produced records, but breeding was confirmed at three sites (none confirmed in 2015). Sites with records in the breeding season (mid-April to end August) and the only Inner London record are given below.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, pair in May.

Middx: Staines Moor, pair in May and breeding probably attempted.

Bucks: Black Park, two on Jul 24th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, singles on Apr 12th-13th and Aug 15th. Swanscombe Marshes (1).

Surrey: Esher Common (1). Holmethorpe SP, present in May. Richmond Park (2).

In Lond: Russia Dock Woodland, male on Mar 13th.

Northern Wheatear Oenanthe oenanthe

Status: common passage migrant and very occasional breeding visitor.

The first migrant of the year was at London Wetland Centre on the relatively late date of March 23rd, 15 days later than last year. Birds were then seen daily until May 8th, with just five more birds after this date with the last on May 19th. The first rush was on April 2nd when 70 birds were seen including at least 12 in Richmond Park. The next day, 115 were counted including 22 at Rainham Marshes. Another large influx occurred on

This southbound Wheatear was at Wanstead Flats in mid-September. (Jonathan Lethbridge)



April 12th with a total of 133 birds, the highest count being 27 at Richmond Park. They all moved on very quickly as only six birds were reported the following day.

The first autumn migrant was on July 21st at Stocker's Lake and the only other record this month was at Holmethorpe SP on 31st. There was a light passage throughout August until the last few days when numbers increased and the only double-figure count was on 31st with ten at Longfield Gallops. The majority of birds had passed through by the middle of September although birds were recorded on most days throughout October with the last at Staines Res on 31st.

Only two birds were considered to be of the *leucorrhoa* subspecies: singles at Richmond Park on May 4th and at Q. Mother Res on September 5th.

In Lond: Primrose Hill, one on Oct 21st. Regent's Park, one on Mar 29th, 12 on Apr 3rd and three on Apr 29th. Victoria Park, one on Sep 3rd.

Ring Ouzel Turdus torquatus

Status: regular passage migrant, but never common.

Spring migration started with one at London Wetland Centre on March 24th and continued to May 5th when the last was at Alexandra Park. About 70 birds were seen compared with 112 last year. Passage was spread thinly with the peak day count being just eight birds on April 11th.

There was a similar total in autumn with 72 birds counted between October 3rd and November 21st, much higher than last year's total of 24. The peak passage was from October 7th to 9th with 13 birds recorded on the latter date. The highest count was four at Wanstead Flats on October 8th and at Nore Hill on October 9th.

In Lond: Battersea, one on Oct 11th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Oct 9th. Primrose Hill, two on Oct 9th and one on Nov 8th. Queen's Park, Kilburn, one on Apr 16th. Regent's Park, one on Apr 24th and two on Oct 7th & 31st.

Blackbird Turdus merula

Status: abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding records for this species are, as usual, very patchy but there appears to be a slight increase in numbers this year. Among the sites which saw the biggest increases are Beddington Farmlands which saw territories rise from 32 in 2015 to 51 while in the Mar Dyke Valley numbers doubled from 12 to 24. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 4% increase in the South East; it also shows a 28% decrease in London from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 99% of gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 100% in 2015. More breeding records would be welcomed. Below are breeding records for sites where five or more were recorded (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus some of the higher counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (13). Mar Dyke Valley (24). North Weald, 40 on Dec 6th. Orsett Fen (15). Rainham Marshes (21). Warren Gorge (11).

Herts: Amwell NR (7). Chess Valley (6). Rye Meads (25); 60 on Dec 1st. Stocker's Lake/Bury Lake (7).

Middx: Home Park (39).

Kent: Chipstead Lake, 43 on Mar 18th. Darenth Lakes, 67 on Feb 15th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (8). Beddington Farmlands (51). Holmethorpe SP, 74 in November and December. London Wetland Centre (11). Molesey Heath (15). Morden Hall Park (21). In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (20). Victoria Park, 39 on Jun 4th.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Fieldfare *Turdus* pilaris

Status: regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

A majority of the 29 counts of 200 or more were at the start of the year (17 out of 29 counts), when the largest count was 500 at Cranham Marsh NR in January. The last birds were at Totteridge Valley and Vicarage Farm on April 21st.

Returning birds appeared from September 22nd at Orpington, with notable movements across many areas in late October and early November. The peak dates for visible migration were October 20th to 22nd, November 3rd to 4th and November 8th (on the latter date 1,243 were counted at 22 sites). There were 12 counts of 200 or more at this end of the year, with the peak being 600, which was the highest count of the year. Below are high counts for each sector.

Essex: Bedfords Park, 300 on Jan 17th. Cranham Marsh NR, 500 on Jan 7th. Holyfield Hall Farm, 300 on Feb 3rd. Orsett Fen, 275 on Feb 2nd.

Herts: Panshanger, 250 on Feb 4th. Tyttenhanger GP, 202 on Feb 21st.

Middx: Dyrham Park, 250 on Feb 6th. Totteridge Valley, 200+ on Mar 12th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 35+ on Jan 7th.

Kent: Chalk Wood, Swanley, 250 on Mar 17th. Swanscombe Marshes, 600 on Dec 24th.

Surrey: Canons Farm, 400 on Mar 20th and 200 on Dec 25th. Walton Heath and Banstead

Heath, 600 on Nov 4th.

In Lond: Primrose Hill, 120 over on Oct 17th.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Status: common, but locally declining, breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 9% increase in the South East. This supports anecdotal evidence that this species continues to make a recovery in London. Territories on Tottenham Marsh have increased from 11 in 2013 to 20 this year with an increase at Beddington Farmlands over the same period from seven to 12. Even with this welcome increase, however, the Breeding Bird Survey shows breeding numbers in London remain 35% below the levels in 1995. The RSPB Crovdon Bird Survey reported them in only 67% of gardens surveyed in 2016, down from the 71% in 2015. Below are breeding records for sites where five or more were recorded (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), breeding records for Inner London and some of the higher counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (10). Mar Dyke Valley (13). Orsett Fen (5). Rainham Marshes (6). Wanstead Flats, 13 singing on Feb 4th. Wanstead Park, ten singing on Feb 10th.

Herts: Chess Valley (5). Maple Lodge NR (5). Northaw Great Wood, nine singing on Feb 11th. Rickmansworth Aquadrome (6). Rye Meads (11).

Middx: Brent Res, 72 over on Oct 14th. Broadwater Lake (8). Grovelands Park (5). Home Park (12). Greenford, 12 singing along R Brent on Jan 9th. Staines/Stanwell Moor, 13 singing on Jan 5th. Tottenham Marshes (20). Trent Park (5).

Kent: Foots Cray Meadows, six singing on Feb 14th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (7). Beddington Farmlands (12). Canons Farm (6). Molesey Heath (13). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (35).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (3). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, six on May 29th. Primrose Hill, 15+ over on Oct 21st. Regent's Park, 16 over on Oct 7th.

Redwing Turdus iliacus

Status: common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Numbers were generally low early in the year, increasing in late February and March, when they presumably included birds on return migration. The last record was of one at Dagenham Chase on the typical late-April date of April 26th.

The first returning birds were six at Brook Farm, Upminster, on September 17th. Numbers were higher in this second winter period than at the start of the year: of the 50 counts of 200 or more, 29 were in the second winter period. Autumn passage was concentrated in early and mid-October, as is usual, peaking on October 9th and October 20th to 21st, with 2,867 noted at 32 sites on the first date. It was not quite as concentrated as in 2015 when all the high counts were in a period of four days. On December 9th, observers at some locations reported a significant movement of birds flying south or south-west. Below are high counts for each sector.

Essex: Orsett Fen, 367 on Dec 26th. Wanstead Flats, 300 over on Oct 20th.

Herts: Ellenbrook Fields, 300 on Dec 11th.

Middx: Hampstead Heath, 1,500 over on Oct 9th. Q. Mary GP, 400 on Mar 19th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 100 on Jan 7th.

Kent: Chislehurst Common, 200 on Dec 20th. Petts Wood, 200 on Dec 19th.

Surrey: Addington Hills, 570 on Dec 16th. Beddington Farmlands, 432 on Oct 20th and 365 on Dec 15th.

In Lond: Primrose Hill, 560 over on Oct 9th. St James's Park, 400+ over on Dec 9th.

Mistle Thrush Turdus viscivorus

Status: common breeding resident.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 53% decline in London from 1995-2015. Of the seven sites where we have breeding estimates for 2015 and 2016, five show declines, suggesting the decline may be continuing in London. More regular breeding reports would be very welcome. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 26% of gardens surveyed in 2016, down from 32% in 2015. The species was added to the Red list in 2015 because of its decline and this decline appears to be worst in the southeast of Britain (BTO website: BirdTrends). Below are breeding records for sites where two or more were recorded (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus all Inner London breeding records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (3). Lloyd Park, Walthamstow, 11 on Oct 3rd. Mar Dyke Valley (3). Orsett Fen (2). Wanstead Flats (2). Wanstead Park (2); 12 on Dec 5th.

Herts: Moor Park GC, 18 on Dec 2nd. Verulamium Park, 11 on May 16th.

Middx: Home Park (2). Oakwood Park (3). Park Farm, Enfield, 16 on Sep 29th. Trent Park (2). Wraysbury Res, 20 on Oct 2nd.

Kent: Darenth Lakes (8). Greenwich Park (4+). Lullingstone Park, 32 on Jun 27th. Otford, 15 on Aug 2nd. Scadbury Park (2).

Surrey: Hinchley Wood (2). Norwood New Town, 13 on Aug 20th. Putney, 14 over on Sep 19th. Selsdon, 19 on Jul 5th. Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (12).

In Lond: Battersea (1). Buckingham Palace Gdns (1). Canonbury, 12 on Jul 14th. Victoria Park (3); 18 on Sep 1st.

Cetti's Warbler Cettia cetti

Status: scarce migrant and winter visitor, but increasing breeder.

After a large increase in sites and breeding records last year this species continues to consolidate its presence in London, being recorded in nearly 20% more sites than 2015. Breeding numbers (no. of territories in brackets) recorded are nearly 30% lower than in 2015 but these have only been counted where observers have been explicit about breeding and, given the numbers of birds present throughout the summer, is clearly far from the whole picture.

Essex: Recorded at 39 sites. Belhus Woods CP (5). Mar Dyke Valley (7). Orsett Fen (1). Rainham Marshes (66). Walthamstow Res (4). Warren Gorge (2).

Herts: Recorded at 26 sites. Rye Meads (19). Stanstead Innings (3).

Middx: Recorded at 26 sites. Horsenden Hill (1). Tottenham Marshes (1). Woodberry Wetlands (1).

Bucks: Recorded at four sites. Wraysbury GP, five on Nov 10th.

Kent: Recorded at 20 sites. Swanscombe Marshes (22).

Surrey: Recorded at 18 sites. Beddington Farmlands (3). Cow Common (2). London Wetland Centre (10). Molesey Heath (2). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (2).



In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one seen on many dates between March and June. Regent's Park, one on Jan 1st.

Grasshopper Warbler Locustella naevia

Status: scarce passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

The first of the year was on April 8th at Rye Meads, a little earlier than last year (April 13th) and in the next five days there were records at Coopers Green GP, Ellenbrook Fields, London Wetland Centre, Rainham Marshes, Staines Moor and Totteridge

Cetti's Warbler at Rainham, a species that is on the increase in London. (Russ Sherriff) Valley. By the end of April there were territorial birds at Ellenbrook Fields, Rainham Marshes, Rye Meads, Swanscombe Marshes and Tottenham Marshes as well as passage birds at Beddington Farmlands, Cornmill Meadows, Dagenham Chase, Dartford Marshes, Frays Farm Meadows, Ingrebourne Valley, Panshanger Park, Rammey Marsh, South Harefield, and South Norwood CP. In mid-May, another passage bird appeared at Roding Valley Park making about 15 passage birds at 15 sites in addition to the 11 territorial birds at five sites listed below.

In the autumn, there were five returning birds at five sites: in July at Cornmill Meadows on 5th and Longfield Gallops on 20th, followed by three singles in September at Richmond Park on 5th, Canons Farm on the 18th, with the last at Wimbledon Common on 24th.

The passage figures are lower than last year but the territorial figures are similar to last year. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there has been a 31% decrease in England from 1995-2015.

Essex: Rainham Marshes (6).

Herts: Ellenbrook Fields (1). Rye Meads (1).

Kent: Swanscombe Marshes (1). **Middx:** Tottenham Marshes (2).

Sedge Warbler Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

Status: common and widespread migrant and breeding summer visitor.

The first bird of the year arrived at Rainham Marshes on April 2nd and in the next six days they were recorded at a further 12 sites. Arrivals were fairly steady for the rest of the month but peaked in the last week of April. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there has been a 21% decrease in England from 1995-2015 (with the Waterways Breeding Birds Survey showing an even higher 45% decrease in that period). It is therefore pleasing that the breeding numbers at the traditionally best sites for the species are higher this year: Rainham Marshes had a 16% increase and Rye Meads a 60% increase.

Return migration got underway early as can be seen from the high number at Stocker's Lake just after the middle of July. Migration peaked in the first third of August. There were five birds reported from four sites in October, the last trapped at Stanwell Moor on October 9th. Below are breeding records for sites where two or more were recorded (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus all Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: Rainham Marshes (102). Walthamstow Marshes (10). Walthamstow Res (4).

Herts: Amwell NR, 15 on May 12th. Rye Meads (64). Stocker's Lake, 30 on Jul 21st.

Middx: Staines Moor, a bird on May 22nd had been ringed as a first year in August 2013 in north-west Spain. Tottenham Marshes (4).

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 15 on Aug 5th.

Kent: Swanscombe Marshes (2); 15 on Apr 28th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, ten on Apr 30th. London Wetland Centre (2); ten on Sep 5th.

In Lond: Regent's Park, one on Apr 13th, two on Apr 29th and four on May 19th.

Rotherhithe, one on Aug 5th. St James's Park, singles on Apr 11th & 27th.

Reed Warbler Acrocephalus scirpaceus

Status: common and widespread passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

The first two birds of the year turned up at Rainham Marshes on April 3rd but only four other sites had records during the following week. Migration peaked around the last week of April and first week of May. The Waterways Breeding Birds Survey recorded a 15% increase from 2015 to 2016 and this is reflected in the breeding numbers shown below, which were about 21% up on last year. The largest numbers recorded during the autumn passage were in the second half of July and numbers were fairly consistent through to the middle of September but then dropped off rapidly. Just seven birds were reported from four sites in October, the last at East India Dock Basin on 17th. Below are breeding records for sites where two or more were recorded (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), some high counts and all Inner London records.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (12). Mar Dyke Valley (11). Orsett Fen (6). Rainham Marshes (193). Walthamstow Res (19). Wanstead Park (4). Warren Gorge (6).

Herts: Hilfield Park Res (4). Maple Lodge NR (2). Rye Meads (117). Stanborough Lakes (8). Stocker's Lake, 40 on Jul 21st.

Middx: Brent Res (3+). East India Dock Basin (4). Hampstead Heath (1). Home Park (3). Horsenden Hill (2+). Kempton NR (3+). Q. Mary GP (7). Staines (2). Tottenham Marshes (3). Woodberry Wetlands (7); 60 on Jun 21st.

Kent: Greenwich Peninsula (4). Swanscombe Marshes (37).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (36). Esher Common (3). London Wetland Centre (13).

Reed Warblers had a good breeding year in our area. (Richard Bonser)



Richmond Park (7). South Norwood CP (5+). Thorpe Water Park (6). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (10).

In Lond: Bankside, one on Sep 22nd. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2). Mile End Park, one on seven dates between Jun 7th and Jul 4th. Regent's Park, two on Apr 29th and May 3rd, one on May 19th. Rotherhithe, one on Aug 5th. Southwark Park, one on May 16th, two on 19th and one on 21st. St James's Park (2).

Blackcap Sylvia atricapilla

Status: common summer breeding visitor and passage migrant, increasingly common and widespread in winter.

With just 79 birds seen in the last two months of 2015, it was good to see 144 recorded during January and February of 2016, from 100 sites. New arrivals were obvious from early March and migration peaked during the first two weeks of April. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 50% of gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 53% in 2015. The Breeding Bird Survey shows an 11% decrease in London since last year, following a 171% increase in London from 1995-2015. Comparing sites where we have numbers from 2015, breeding records for 2016 appear quite similar. Autumn migration peaked at the end of August but, as is usual, was a protracted affair. There were fewer birds recorded in the second winter period than in the first winter period: 105 being reported from 77 sites in November and December. Below are breeding records for sites where five or more were recorded (no. of territories in brackets), some high autumn counts and a summary of Inner London records.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (15). Grays Gorge (6). Mar Dyke Valley (26). Orsett Fen (10). Rainham Marshes (17). Walthamstow Res (13). Warren Gorge (6).

Herts: Chess Valley (5). Maple Lodge NR (10). Northaw Great Wood (6). Rickmansworth Aquadrome (10). Rye Meads (44).

Middx: Home Park (19). Tottenham Marshes (27). Totteridge Valley (15+).

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 25 on Aug 5th.

Kent: Foots Cray Meadows (c30). Greenwich Park (10+). Lullingstone Park (9). Swanscombe Marshes (10).

Surrey: Arbrook Common (9). Banstead Wood (18). Beddington Farmlands (29). Bookham Common (21). Esher Common (5). London Wetland Centre (5). Mayflower Park (6). Molesey Heath (32). Morden Cem (7). Morden Hall Park (12). Sanderstead Plantation (5+). West End Common (15). Wimbledon Common (c70).

In Lond: Reported from Bankside, Battersea Park, Bloomsbury, Brompton Cem, Burgess Park, Canonbury, Globe Town, Hammersmith Cem, Holland Park, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, King Edward Memorial Park, Mile End, Natural History Museum, North Kensington, Primrose Hill, Regent's Park, Rotherhithe, Russia Dock Woodland, Southwark Park, Spa Fields, St James's Park, St John's Wood Church Ground LNR, St Paul's Cathedral, Vauxhall, Victoria, Victoria Embankment, Victoria Park, Wapping.

Garden Warbler Sylvia borin

Status: widespread passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

Spring came early for this species in 2016, with the first record on March 27th at Hadley Wood. This appears to equal the earliest ever arrival in 1954. This bird was followed by

a few more from April 1st but migration proper started around the second week of April, peaking in the first week of May. Counting confirmed records and singing birds after mid-May indicate breeding was very poor this year with just 74 territories (compared with 118 in 2015 and 92 in 2014). This echoes the Breeding Bird Survey, which although it had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, shows a 17% decrease in the UK from 2015 to 2016; and a 40% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015. Single birds were reported from just ten sites during September and only two in October, with the last bird at Rainham Marshes on the 8th. Below are all breeding records (no. of territories in brackets) and all Inner London records.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (1), Grays Gorge (1), Mar Dyke Valley (1), Rainham Marshes (1). Wanstead Flats (2).

Herts: Helicon Lake/Pynesfield GP (1). Northaw Great Wood (2). Rye Meads (13). Seventy Acres Lake (1). Tyttenhanger GP (1).

Middx: Brent Res (1). Broadwater Lake (10). Staines (1). Tottenham Marshes (2). Trent Park (2).

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, ten on May 1st & 11th, birds also present in June and probably bred.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (1). Banstead Wood (1). Bookham Common (8). London Wetland Centre (1). Molesey Heath (1). Richmond Park (1). West End Common (1). Wimbledon Common (21).

In Lond: Burgess Park, one on Apr 16th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Apr 29th. Regent's Park, singles on Jul 26th and Aug 18th & 29th. Victoria Embankment, one on Apr 26th and two on 28th.

Lesser Whitethroat Sylvia curruca

Status: widespread passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

The first of the year was on the typical date of April 8th at Rye Meads, and birds appeared daily from the 11th. Peak arrivals were during the last ten days of April. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there has been a 29% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015. Breeding numbers reported, however, were roughly the same this year as last: 52 pairs compared with 50 in 2015. Passage birds were noted from 36 sites in September but no site recorded more than four birds in a day. There were three records in October, with the last at Stanwell Moor on 12th. Below are all breeding records (no. of territories in brackets) and Inner London records.

Essex: Leyton Flats (1). Lion Gorge (1). Mar Dyke Valley (1). Orsett Fen (1). Rainham Marshes (4). Wanstead Flats (1).

Herts: Amwell NR (1). Colney Heath (1). Cooper's Green GP (1). Croxley Common Moor (1). Ellenbrook Fields (3+). Frogmore Lakes (1). Rye Meads (7). Tyttenhanger GP (1). Upper Dollis Valley (1).

Middx: Brent Res (1). Hampstead Heath (2). Horsenden Hill (1). Middlesex FB (1). Stanwell Moor (1). Tottenham Marshes (3). Totteridge Valley (7+). Vicarage Farm (1). Wormwood Scrubs (1).

Bucks: Colnbrook (1).

Lesser Whitethroat. (Russ Sherriff)

Kent: Swanscombe Marshes (4).

Surrey: Banstead Wood (1). Bookham Common (1). Canons Farm (1). Molesey Heath, a brown-backed bird on Sep 22nd, was thought to be possibly of the blythii race.

In Lond: Mile End Park, one on Apr 28th. Regent's Park, singles on May 3rd and Aug 31st. Victoria Park, one on Apr 28th.

Common Whitethroat Sylvia communis

Status: common and widespread passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

There were two March arrivals this year: at Molesey Heath on the 29th and Hatfield Garden Villas on the 30th. By April 7th,



arrivals were daily and peaked during the last few days of April and first few days of May. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there has been a 50% increase in the South East from 1995-2015. From sites where we have regular breeding counts, there does seem to be an increase this year, though with some fluctuations. The largest numbers recorded in autumn were during the last two weeks of August and first two weeks of September. There were four records in October, with the last of the year at Hilfield Park Res on the 3rd. Below are breeding records for sites where ten or more were recorded (no. of territories in brackets), some high counts and all Inner London records.

Essex: Mar Dyke Valley (18). Orsett Fen (17). Rainham Marshes (93). Wanstead Flats, 30+ on Aug 8th.

Herts: Rve Meads (27).

Middx: Ten Acre Wood, 30 on May 8th. Tottenham Marshes (23). Totteridge Valley (10+).

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 26 on Aug 5th.

Kent: Foots Cray Meadows (14). Swanscombe Marshes (32).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (60). Bookham Common (12). Holmethorpe SP, 39 on May 3rd. Molesey Heath (26). Richmond Park (15+). South Norwood CP, 41 on May 16th. Wimbledon Common (18).

In Lond: Bloomsbury, one on May 3rd. Burgess Park, records on Apr 29th, Jun 14th, 16th, 20th-21st & 29th. Mile End Park, one on Apr 28th. Natural History Museum, one on May 3rd. Regent's Park, singles on May 10th and Aug 27th & 30th. Bankside, one on Sep 22nd & 26th and two on 29th. St James's Park, one on Apr 12th, 25th, 27th and May 5th & 12th. Victoria Embankment, one on Apr 22nd.

Dartford Warbler Sylvia undata

Status: rare breeding species, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

At the start of the year, there were at least eight birds remaining from 2015 at five sites, although some soon vanished. A female at Canons Farm on March 7th was the only spring migrant. At the end of the year, there were seven birds, with perhaps five wintering at four sites. Another good year; mild winters clearly suit this species. All records are shown below.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Essex: Rainham Marshes, up to three from 2015 were reported from January to March, with the last on Mar 21st; one on Nov 5th.

Middx: Staines Moor, one on Nov 11th.

Bucks: Colnbrook, a first-winter from 2015 on Jan 23rd; a first-winter from Oct 30th to Dec 11th.

Kent: Swanscombe Marshes, one from 2015 on Jan 16th; one on Oct 14th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one from 2015 on Jan 9th-10th & 14th; one from Nov 2nd to Dec 28th. Canons Farm, one on Mar 7th. Richmond Park, up to two from 2015 recorded in January and February until Feb 21st; up to two from Nov 8th to Dec 28th. Wimbledon Common, one from Sep 20th to at least Dec 19th.

Yellow-browed Warbler Phylloscopus inornatus

Status: scarce passage migrant.

There was a huge increase in records this year, due to an unprecedented autumn influx. One remained from 2015 at Brent Res on January 1st, but was not seen after then. There was then one in a garden at Gidea Park on January 25th. There were spring birds at Rye Meads from March 19th to April 10th and at Brent Res from April 3rd to 17th, and one at Gidea Park on April 12th.

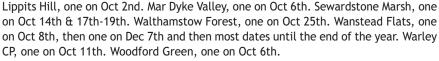
There was then an autumn influx from September 29th and during October involving about 33 birds. This was part of a nationwide increase, with just under 5,000 observations of Yellow-browed Warbler logged in BirdTrack up to the end of October (BTO website). One of these lingered to November 4th but then no more were seen until one at Wanstead Flats from December 7th to the end of the year. This looks like a total of 38 new birds

for the year, compared with a peak count of three in any previous year. All records are given below.

Essex: Bedfords Park, one on Oct 4th. Gidea Park, singles on Jan 25th and Apr 12th-13th. Gunpowder Park, one on Oct 4th. Havering-atte-Bower, one on Oct 9th. Higham's Park, one on Oct 8th. Leyton Flats, one on Oct 4th-5th & 8th.

Yellow-browed Warbler is becoming an expected autumn vagrant in London, with over 30 records in 2016. This one was discovered on call at Wanstead Flats. (Jonathan Lethbridge)





Herts: Rye Meads, one from Mar 19th to Apr 10th. Stocker's Lake, one on Oct 9th.

Middx: Acton Park, one on Oct 7th. Brent Res, one from 2015 on Jan 1st, another from Apr 3rd-17th; one from Oct 21st-28th and Nov 3rd-4th. Edmonton, one on Oct 9th-11th. North Finchley, one on Oct 8th. Q. Mary GP, one trapped Oct 8th. Staines, one on Oct 26th & 28th. Staines Moor, one on Oct 8th-9th. Tottenham Marshes, one on Oct 11th. Totteridge Valley, one on Oct 18th.

Bucks: Black Park, one heard on Oct 20th. Q. Mother Res, one on Oct 8th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one from Oct 7th-11th. Forestdale, one on Oct 14th & 17th. Holmethorpe SP, one on Oct 10th. Morden Hall Park, one on Oct 22nd.

In Lond: Regent's Park, one from Sep 29th-30th. St James's Park, one on Oct 11th.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

Status: rare vagrant.

Perhaps it was no surprise that such a good year for Siberian vagrancy to the British Isles should yield the capital's second Dusky Warbler, six years after the first one in late February 2010. This one was on a more typical migration date, in late autumn, than the first, which was presumably a relocating wintering individual. No doubt there will be more but finding such a skulking species is always going to be a prize.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one from Oct 29th-30th (SHy et al).

Wood Warbler Phylloscopus sibilatrix

Status: scarce passage migrant and former breeding summer visitor.

With nine records in spring and two in autumn this species continues to hang on as a London bird (in 2015, there were six records in spring and eight in autumn). Most were seen on just one day, the last territorial bird was in 2006 and the last breeding record was from as long ago as 1996. There are Inner London records most years, so perhaps some are being overlooked on the outer edges of our recording area. All records are given below.

Essex: Chafford Hundred, one on May 11th. Walthamstow Res, one on Apr 27th. Weald CP, one on Aug 25th.

Herts: Wormley Wood, one on Apr 28th.

Middx: Home Park, one on Apr 27th.

Kent: Ruxley GP, one on Aug 15th. Sevenoaks WR, one on Apr 21st and another Apr 28th-30th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Apr 30th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on May 4th. Victoria Park, one on May 2nd.

Common Chiffchaff Phylloscopus collybita

Status: common and widespread breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, and increasingly widespread in winter.

A very good start to the year with 109 sites reporting birds during January and February, possibly the highest number ever. The largest count was 41 on February 16th at Broadwater







137

Lake; the observer described this as staggering, his highest count in 40 years. The next highest count during this period was just 20. Migration peaked around the first two weeks of April. The Breeding Bird Survey shows an 8% increase in London since last year, as well as a 144% increase in London from 1995-2015. Where we have breeding records from sites in 2015 and 2016, numbers were largely similar. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 26% of gardens surveyed in 2016, the same as in 2015. Peak numbers in autumn were recorded throughout September and the first two weeks of October. Birds were present at 98 sites in November and December, but the largest count then was 14 at Rye Meads on December 17th. Below are breeding records for sites where five or more were recorded (no. of territories in brackets), some high counts and a summary of Inner London records. Warren Gorge (5).

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (14). Mar Dyke Valley (12). Orsett Fen (6). Rainham Marshes (12).

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Herts: Northaw Great Wood (7+). Rye Meads (23); 60 on Sep 18th. Stocker's Lake/Bury Lake (8).

Middx: Home Park (10+). Q. Mary GP, 60 on Oct 15th. Tottenham Marshes (18). Totteridge Valley (15+).

Kent: Swanscombe Marshes (6).

Surrey: Arbrook Common (7). Banstead Wood (13). Beddington Farmlands (8). Bookham Common (23). Canons Farm (8). Esher Common (7). Holmethorpe SP, 43 on Sep 19th. Molesey Heath (18). Morden Hall Park (5). West End Common (5). Wimbledon Common (c40).

In Lond: Recorded in the first winter period from Haggerston, Hermitage Basin and Victoria Park, Passage birds recorded at 16 sites. Recorded in the second winter period from Rotherhithe and St James's Park.

Sub-species: Siberian Chiffchaff P. c. tristis

Status: rare winter visitor and passage migrant.

There were probably nine birds this year (the highest count since 1991, when there were also eight), plus one overwintering from 2015. (See App III for other records for which descriptions would be very welcome). There were three January arrivals (plus the overwintering bird), another in February, three in April, one in November and one in December. This is the fourth consecutive year they have been seen (see table below for recent records).

Siberian Chiffchaff records 2009-2016: 21 records. 21 birds

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of records	3	0	0	0	2	6*	1*	9*

^{*}also overwintering birds from previous year

Essex: Dagenham Chase, one on several dates from Jan 16th to Feb 12th (VHF, SD). Rainham Marshes, singles on several dates from Jan 9th-18th (SB et al) and on Feb 19th (Hly). Walthamstow Marshes, one on Apr 10th (JPa et al).

Herts: Bowyer's Water, one on Nov 17th (BR). Rye Meads, singles on Apr 9th and Dec 17th which were both ringed and DNA-identified (RMP).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on several dates from Jan 1st-20th (NJG, BG); another

This is a classic 'tristis' Chiffchaff, otherwise known as Siberian Chiffchaff. (Shaun Harvey) on Apr 7th-8th (BG,GS). Thorpe Water Park, one from 2015 stayed until Jan 15th (DCa, DGDL).

Willow Warbler Phylloscopus trochilus

Status: common and widespread passage migrant, declining as a breeding species.

The first for the year was seen at Purley on March 12th and by the end of the month birds had been reported from a further 11 sites. The bulk of spring passage occurred in the first half of April. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there has been a 78% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015. Breeding records we have for 2016 show a decline since last year; taking birds singing after mid-May as indicative of breeding, there were just 32 territories at 21 sites (37 territories at 29 sites in 2015). Mixed singers were noted at Blackheath Village, Cooper's Green GP, Dennis Bland NR, Frogmore Lakes, Leyton Flats, Maple Cross, Oakwood Park, Ruislip Lido and Wanstead Flats and seem to be increasing as breeding decreases; could there be a connection? Autumn passage peaked at the end of August. Nine sites recorded birds in October, the last at Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park on 21st. Below are all breeding records (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus a summary of Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (2). Fairlop Waters (1). Leyton Flats (1). Mar Dyke Valley (1). Netherhall GP (1). Pages Wood (1). Wanstead Flats (1).

Herts: Ellenbrook Fields (1). Frogmore Lakes (1). Merry Hill (2). Rye Meads (1). Sutton's Farm, Sandridge (1).

Middx: Brent Res (1). Hampstead Heath (1). Oakwood Park (1). Roxbourne Park (1). Ruislip Lido (1).

Surrey: Banstead Wood (1). Headley Heath (8). Prince's Coverts (1). Wimbledon Common (3). In Lond: Birds were recorded at Brockley NR, Burgess Park, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns,



Willow Warbler. (Russ Sherriff)

New River Walk, Regent's Park, Rotherhithe, Southwark Park, St James's Park, Vauxhall, Victoria Embankment Gdns and Victoria Park.

Goldcrest Regulus regulus

Status: breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were 146 territories reported this year, down on the 187 reported last year. Along with several other common birds, it must be massively under-recorded. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 46% of gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 44% in 2015. The Breeding Bird Survey

had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there has been a 32% increase in the South East from 1995-2015. All records of breeding (pairs/singing males/territories of two or more) are given below (in brackets) with peak counts for each sector and a summary for Inner London.

Essex: 14 territories. Belhus Woods CP (3); 22 on Oct 16th. Grays Cem (3).

Herts: 27 territories. Bricket Wood Common (2). Chess Valley (3). Essendon, 16 on Oct 16th. North Mymms Park (2). Rickmansworth Aquadrome (2). Rye Meads (6).

Middx: 24 territories. Broadwater Lake (3). Fir & Pond Wood (3). Grovelands Park (4). Monken Hadley Common (3). Q. Mary GP, 50 in October. Trent Park (2).

Bucks: Black Park (5). Wraysbury GP, 18 on Oct 13th.

Kent: 14 territories. Greenwich Park (3). Joyden's Wood (2). Oxleas Wood, 30+ on Mar 4th and Dec 6th. Sevenoaks WR (2).

Surrey: 61 territories. Esher Common (6). Holmesthorpe SP (2). Kings Wood (3). London Wetland Centre, 30 on Dec 13th. Morden Hall Park (4). Sanderstead (2). Sanderstead Plantation (2). Selsdon Park (2). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (c35).

In Lond: Battersea Park, four on Oct 6th & 13th. Burgess Park, four on Jan 16th & 25th. Hammersmith Cem, four on Mar 4th. Hyde Park /Kensington Gdns, six on Oct 18th.

Fewer Goldcrest territories were recorded in 2016. (Russ Sherriff)



Russia Dock Woodland, four on Oct 26th. Stave Hill, eight on Dec 20th. Victoria Park (1); six on Jan 2nd.

Firecrest Regulus ignicapilla

Status: scarce passage migrant and winter visitor; rare breeder.

Reports came from 120 sites during the year (123 in 2015 and 65 in 2014) with similar numbers in the two winter periods (see table below for details). A pair bred in Middlesex again and were seen feeding at least three young.

Firecrest - number of sites

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey I	n Lond	Totals
Jan-Mar	14	10	15	0	6	16	2	63
Oct-Dec	12	1	8	1	20	12	3	57
Jan-Dec	26	14	25	3	24	23	5	120

During January to March, there were nine sites with birds reported for a prolonged period: Abney Park Cemetery LNR, Dagenham Chase, Grovelands Park, Leyton Flats, Oxleas Wood, Thorpe Water Park, Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, Trent Park and Wanstead Flats. There were five birds at Ladywalk Wood on February 25th, four at Petts Wood on February 10th and also at Stave Hill on March 18th, and there were three at two other sites.

Most birds had gone by the end of March but there were signs of spring passage in April at 14 sites. Six sites had birds in May and a pair bred again in Middlesex, with at least three young being fed. Apart from the breeding birds, there were reports from three sites in July and August.

The first bird of the autumn was at Queen's Wood on September 22nd. During October to December, there were six sites with birds reported for a prolonged period: Lamorbey Park, Oxleas Wood, Petts Wood, Rotherhithe, Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park and Trent Park. Six birds were at Wanstead Park on October 18th, four at Petts Wood on December 19th and three at Oxleas Wood on October 10th.

Spotted Flycatcher Muscicapa striata

Status: declining breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

In spring there were reports from 30 sites (19 in 2015) with the first on April 23rd at Brockwell Park. Nearly all the records were single birds, with two at only Staines Moor on May 7th and at Morden Hall Park on May 14th. About 31 birds were involved, compared with only 22 in 2015, although there were 34 in 2014.

Breeding was confirmed at three sites and probable at a fourth which is a slight improvement on last year (one confirmed, two probable and one suspected). The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, although there was a 34% increase in the UK as a whole. But there has been a 61% decrease in England from 1995-2015.

Away from the breeding sites, there were nine sites reporting birds in July and then a steady flow of records from August 6th, so it looked as though autumn passage started earlier than last year. Numbers peaked in the third week of August. There were reports from July onwards at 74 sites (98 sites in 2015) with the highest count being 12 at Weald

CP on August 25th, but there were also peaks of eight at Wanstead Flats on September 6th. Looking at the number of birds that were reported each day, the total from July was 296 birds, although some of these were probably the same bird staying for a few days. There were just four records in October, with the last on 9th at Staines Moor.

Below are all records showing signs of breeding, number of sites in spring/autumn or all records for some sectors, highest counts in the sector and all Inner London records, summarised in some cases.

Essex: Spring seven sites, autumn 25 sites (four and 25 in 2015). Navestock, pair in June. Weald CP, 12 on Aug 25th.

Herts: Spring five sites, autumn ten sites (four and 17 in 2015). Amwell NR (1), three young seen. Panshanger Park (1), three young seen. Rush Green (1).

Middx: Spring four sites, autumn 21 sites (three and 26 in 2015). Woodberry Wetlands, three on Aug 25th & 29th.

Bucks: Langley Park, singles on Jul 9th & 23rd.

Kent: Spring one site, autumn two sites (three and 12 in 2015). Crayford Marshes, singles Aug 29th and Sep 30th. Lamorbey Park, one from May 6th-7th. Sidcup, two from Aug 28th-29th.

Surrey: Spring nine sites, autumn nine sites (five and 13 in 2015). Richmond Park, two on Sep 5th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on three spring days and three autumn days. Regent's Park, one on May 4th, one or two on seven days in autumn. Rotherhithe, two on Sep 28th. Victoria Park, singles on May 7th and Aug 25th, two on Aug 26th, then one from Sep 26th-28th.

Pied Flycatcher Ficedula hypoleuca

Status: passage migrant in variable numbers.

The first of the year was at Woodberry Wetlands on April 9th, which was also present the next day. There were five more singles seen from 13th to 17th at Finchley, Finsbury Park, London Wetland Centre, Regent's Park and Tottenham Marshes. On the 19th, there was one at Walthamstow Marshes, followed on 23rd by one at Old Park Wood, Harefield. The last few singles were at Oxleas Wood on 28th, Lamorbey Park on 29th and 30th, Hilfield Park Res on 30th, Wraysbury GP on May 4th and the last of the spring at Kempton NR on May 7th. Thirteen birds in the spring is quite something nowadays (there were only three in 2015), the best total in at least a decade.

The number of autumn records were fairly normal in comparison, at around 22 individuals (lower than the 36 in 2015, but higher than the 18 in 2014). The first was at Waterworks NR on August 17th and there were a further 11 birds in August at Bedfords Park, Brockwell Park, Buckhurst Hill, Mar Dyke Valley, Park Farm in Enfield, Regent's Park, Vicarage Farm, Wanstead Flats and Weald CP. There were about ten birds in September at Bush Hill Park, Morden Hall Park, Mudchute Farm, Wanstead Flats and Woodberry Wetlands. The last of the year was at Wanstead Flats on September 23rd. As often happens, Wanstead Flats was the site with most autumn records (recorded on 11 different days) with a peak of three on September 4th and 5th.



Bearded Tit Panurus biarmicus

Status: scarce autumn and winter visitor, rare breeder.

Fourteen sites recorded birds during the year (only nine sites in 2015) with birds seen at six sites in the first winter period and at ten in the second winter period (in 2015, there were six sites and seven sites at these two periods). Five pairs bred at Rainham Marshes, where birds were recorded throughout the year. Breeding was also recorded at Swanscombe Marshes, where birds were seen throughout the year, with a high count of 20 on September 30th. Below are all records, summarised in some cases.

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley, singles on Mar 17th & 21st and three on Apr 3rd, then two on Nov 16th and three on 19th. Mar Dyke Valley, one on Aug 26th. Rainham Marshes (5), "many broods"; present from January through to November with a high count of 14 on Oct 10th. Warren Gorge, one on Aug 15th.

Herts: Amwell NR, a fem from Jan 5th to Feb 16th and again from Apr 3rd-4th. Rye Meads, up to three between Nov 15th and Dec 24th. Stocker's Lake, four on Oct 9th.

Kent: Crayford/Dartford Marshes, two on many dates between Jan 3rd and Mar 25th. Crossness, up to five between Oct 14th and Dec 29th. Swanscombe Marshes (1); present from January through till November, with up to two birds at the beginning of the year, rising to four in early April and then the highest count of 20 on Sep 30th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Jul 23rd. Holmethorpe SP, a pair from Mar 23rd-27th. London Wetland Centre, one from Dec 19th-31st. South Norwood CP, a male from 2015 remained until Mar 22nd.

Long-tailed Tit Aegithalos caudatus

Status: common and widespread breeding resident.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 78% increase in London from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them

in 89% of gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 82% in 2015. There were at least 124 pairs reported this year (218 in 2015, 176 in 2014) but it may be that this change is due to recording effort as, where we have data for both years, overall numbers seem to be rising. Below are breeding records for sites where three or more were recorded (no. of territories/pairs in brackets), plus a summary of Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (9); 50 on Jan 1st. Mar Dyke Valley (7); 43 on Nov 2nd. Rainham Marshes (11).

Herts: Cheshunt GPs, 40 on Jan 16th. Hilfield Park Res, 35 on Jun 19th. Rye Meads (21).

Long-tailed Tit. (Andrew Moon)



Middx: Bow, 25 on Sep 28th. Broadwater Lake (1); 32 on Jul 27th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 20 on Nov 13th. **Kent:** Sevenoaks WR, 35 on Nov 23rd.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (3); 50 on Aug 1st. Croham Hurst, 30 on Oct 9th. Egham Hythe Lake (5). Holmethorpe SP, 70 on Oct 27th. London Wetland Centre, 44 on Dec 13th. Morden Hall Park (6); 50 on Nov 19th.

In Lond: Battersea Park, 15 on Oct 13th. Buckingham Palace Gdns (2). Natural History Museum, 11 on Feb 16th. Rotherhithe, 15 on Dec 20th. Victoria Park, 12 on Nov 5th.

Blue Tit Cyanistes caeruleus

Status: abundant breeding resident.

The number of territories/pairs reported was 224 (341 in 2015), although it is massively under-reported; however, there were changes between sectors with decreases in Essex, Hertfordshire and Kent and increases in Middlesex and Surrey. The number of sites in Inner London where birds were reported increased enormously from nine to 42, but there were no reports of confirmed breeding, although they undoubtedly did breed. Vagaries in reporting are likely to be responsible, with no counts from several sites that had high numbers in previous years. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 17% decrease in London since last year. Below are breeding records for sites where six or more were recorded (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus a summary of Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: 84 pairs. Belhus Woods CP (24). Grays Gorge (7). Mar Dyke Valley (14). Orsett Fen (10). Warren Gorge (8); 55 on Jan 11th.

Herts: Four pairs. Hilfield Park Res, 56 on Jan 17th. West End, 56 on Apr 18th.





Middx: 46 pairs. Home Park (21).

Bucks: Reported only from Black Park with a peak of 14 on May 3rd.

Kent: Four pairs.

Surrey: 86 pairs. Arbrook Common (8). Holmethorpe SP, 61 on Jan 5th. Molesey Heath (8). Morden Hall Park (20). Surbiton (6).

In Lond: Reported from 42 sites (nine in 2015). More than one bird was present at nine sites during the breeding season so undoubtedly bred. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, present throughout the year with 50 on May 29th. Regent's Park, 16 on Jan 4th. Victoria Park, 36 on Sep 10th.

Great Tit Parus major

Status: abundant breeding resident.

The number of territories/pairs reported was at least 354 (577 in 2015). Like Blue Tit, it is very under-reported, especially as there were no counts from several sites that had significant numbers breeding in previous years. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but there was a 9% decrease in England in that period. Below are breeding records for sites where 12 or more were recorded (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus a summary of Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: 80 pairs. Belhus Woods CP (12). Mar Dyke Valley (25). Warren Gorge, 32 on Jan 11th and Dec 15th.

Herts: 80 pairs. Hatfield Park, 38 on Mar 27th. Rickmansworth Aquadrome (12). Rye Meads (52).

Middx: 38 pairs. Fryent CP, 29 on Feb 29th. Home Park (22).

Bucks: Reported from seven sites with a peak of 22 at Wraysbury GP on Apr 5th.

Kent: Six pairs. Darenth Lakes, 25 on Feb 15th.

Surrey: 173 pairs. Ashtead Common (15). Banstead Wood (14). Beddington Farmlands (38). London Wetland Centre (15); 45 on Feb 23rd. Morden Hall Park (12). Surbiton (12).

In Lond: Reported from 39 sites (11 in 2015), but pairs, singing or evidence of breeding was reported at only two sites (down from five in 2015). Battersea (1). Globe Town (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 50 on May 29th.

Coal Tit Periparus ater

Status: common breeding species and autumn passage migrant.

The number of territories/pairs reported was at least 111, the same number as in 2015. Along with several other common birds, it must be massively under-recorded. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 78% of gardens surveyed in 2016, down from 82% in 2015. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was a 13% decrease in England during this period. Below are breeding records for sites where two or more were recorded (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus a summary of Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: Five pairs. Wanstead Park (2).

Herts: Six pairs. Hoddesdonpark Wood, 20 on Jan 23rd. Northaw Great Wood (3). Symondshyde Great Wood, 40 on Nov 7th.

Middx: 28 pairs. Enfield Town (2). Grovelands Park (2). Southgate (2). Trent Park (6). Whitewebbs Wood (6). Woodberry Wetlands (4).

Bucks: Two pairs. Black Park (2).

Kent: Five pairs. Joyden's Wood, 12 on Jun 22nd.

Surrey: 65 pairs. Banstead Wood (4). Canons Farm (3). Esher Common (7). Horniman Museum (2). South Norwood Lake, 14 on Mar 28th. Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (40).

In Lond: Reported from seven sites (12 in 2015). No breeding records but birds were recorded throughout the year at Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns and there were three at Battersea Park on Oct 6th and 13th and at Holland Park on Apr 30th.

Marsh Tit Poecile palustris

Status: localised and declining breeding resident and scarce winter visitor.

Reported from 39 sites (36 in 2015) with 26 between March and July (19 in 2015). A pair probably bred at Northaw Great Wood and a pair bred at Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (the first there since 1979). Of the 26 potential breeding sites, 14 relate to birds seen on a single day. Eleven were recorded at Juniper Bottom in December, probably indicative of breeding and there were pairs seen at several other sites during the breeding season. Birds were reported from 22 sites in Surrey (21 in 2015), ten sites in Hertfordshire (eight in 2015), four sites in Kent (five in 2015), one site in Essex (two in 2015) and one in Bucks (none in 2015). The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was a 20% decrease in England in that period. There has also been a 40% decline in the South East from 1995-2015. Below is a summary of records for all sites.

Essex: Dagenham Chase, one on Mar 20th.

Herts: Amwell NR, singles on Jan 2nd & 24th, Feb 18th-19th & 25th-26th, two on Apr 9th and one on Nov 8th. Balls Wood, one on Jul 6th. Brookmans Park, one on Dec 3rd. Hatfield, one on Jan 8th. Moor Park GC, singles on Apr 11th and Dec 31st. Northaw Great Wood (1); seen throughout the year with a peak of at least four on Oct 27th. Panshanger Aerodrome, two on Apr 10th and one on 16th. Sherrardspark Wood, one on Mar 16th. The Withey Beds LNR, one on Sep 2nd. Wormley Wood, two on Jan 12th and one on 26th, then two on Feb 2nd.

Middx: Fir & Pond Woods, present on Mar 11th. Ruislip Woods, one on Jan 1st (the first record for many years).

Bucks: Black Park, one on Jul 6th & 24th.

Kent: High Elms CP, two on Apr 3rd. Otford, present on Jan 1st. Petts Wood, one on Jan 16th. Pratt's Bottom, one on Dec 22nd.

Surrey: Addington, two on Mar 11th & 18th. Ashtead Common, one on Apr 10th & 29th. Beddington Farmlands, one on Apr 1st. Bletchingley, one on Jun 29th. Bookham Common, two on Feb 16th and one on 26th, one on Mar 3rd and two on Jul 24th. Cheam, one on Apr 17th. Forestdale, one on Jan 1st, two in June and July and singles on several dates in September, November and December. Headley Heath, two on May 29th. Horton CP, two on Sep 22nd. Hutchinson's Bank, two on Mar 11th. Juniper Bottom, 11 on Dec 14th. Kings Wood, present from Mar 18th-21st, singles on May 1st & 19th and on Aug 15th. Langley Vale Farm, three on Jan 4th. Lumberdine Wood, two on Oct 17th. Sanderstead,

singles on Jan 10th and from Aug 15th to Oct 23rd. Selsdon, two on May 6th. Selsdon Woods, one on May 9th & 28th. Titsey Wood, singles on Jan 15th and Feb 19th, with two on Mar 30th. Walton Downs, one on Mar 14th. White Hill, two on Feb 12th and one on Apr 16th. Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (1).

Nuthatch Sitta europaea

Status: common breeding resident.

There were at least 109 pairs/territories reported this year, an increase on last year (99 pairs). This total is certainly an underestimate; there were reports from 340 sites (379 in 2015). The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them from 57% of gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 56% in 2015. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was an 8% decrease in England in that period, following a 48% increase in the South East from 1995-2015. Below are all breeding records (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus a summary of Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: 39 sites, five pairs. Bedfords Park (1). Belhus Woods CP (1). Thorndon CP North (2). Waltham Abbey (1).

Herts: 49 sites, three pairs. Abbots Langley (1). Cassiobury Park, ten on May 1st. Hoddesdonpark Wood, 12 on Jan 23rd and Feb 26th. Northaw Great Wood (1). Sherrardspark Wood (1). Wormley Wood, 14 on Mar 7th.

Middx: 82 sites, 37 pairs. Arnos Park (1). Boxer's Lake (1). Bruce Castle Park (1). Bushy Park (1). Fir & Pond Woods (2). Grovelands Park (6). Hilly Fields Park (3). Home Park (3). Oakmere Park (1). Pinner (1). Pymmes Park (2). Q. Mary GP (1). Queen's Wood (1). Totteridge Valley (1). Town Park, Enfield (1). Trent Park (5). Whitewebbs Wood (4). Wildwoods (2).

Bucks: Five sites.

Kent: 51 sites, 11+ pairs. Bexley Park Woods (1). Foots Cray Meadows (3). Greenwich Park (2+). Joyden's Wood (1). Lamorbey Park (1). Lullingstone Park (2). Oxleas Wood (1).

Surrey: 111 sites, c51 pairs. Arbrook Common (2). Banstead Wood (12). Brockwell Park (1). Canons Farm (3). Island Barn Res (1). Kingston-upon-Thames (1). Leatherhead (1). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (c30).

In Lond: Holland Park, one on Apr 30th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2). Regent's Park, one on Aug 27th.

Treecreeper Certhia familiaris

Status: common breeding resident.

There were 79+ pairs recorded (compared with 84 pairs/territories in 2015). Reports came from 211 sites (226 in 2015 and 187 in 2014). Below are all breeding records (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus a summary for Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: 38 sites, four pairs. Belhus Woods CP (1). Holyfield Hall Farm (1). Leyton Flats (1). Thorndon CP North (1).

Herts: 47 sites, seven pairs. Frogmore Lakes (1). Hilfield Park Res (1). Maple Lodge NR (1). Northaw Great Wood (2); ten on May 26th. Sherrardspark Wood (2).

Middx: 49 sites, 22+ pairs. Bushy Park (1). Fir & Pond Woods (3). Grovelands Park (1). Hilly Fields Park (1). Home Park (1). Monken Hadley Common (1). Potters Bar (1). Q. Mary GP (1+). Springwell Lake (1). Staines Moor (1). Ten Acre Wood, Yeading (1). Totteridge Valley (2+). Trent Park (4). Vault Hill Wood (1). Whitewebbs Wood (1). Wildwoods (1).

Bucks: Five sites.

Kent: 27 sites, two pairs. Farningham Woods (1). Oxleas Wood (1).

Surrey: 44 sites, 35+ pairs. Banstead Wood (7). Barnes (1). Canons Farm (3). Morden Hall Park (3). Norbury Park (1). Trevereux (2). West End Common (1). Wimbledon Common (24+).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2).

Golden Oriole Oriolus oriolus

Status: rare passage migrant, most often in May.

One record this year, the first since 2013 (see App III for other records for which descriptions would be very welcome). The arrival is a little later than usual: as the table below shows, over 80% of the records since 1990 have been in May.

Golden Oriole arrival dates 1990-2016: 35 records, 35 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	-	-	-	1	29	3	1	-	1	-	-	-

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one singing on Jun 10th (HV).

Great Grey Shrike Lanius excubitor

Status: rare passage migrant and winter visitor.

Two records this year, after three records last year. The first was a long-stayer, being first reported in mid-January and last seen in late April. The other was a one-day bird in October. Arrivals in January are unusual, with only five of the 30 birds seen since 1990 arriving in this month (see table below). The last record of an April bird was in 2007 and you have to go back to the early 1990s to find the last long-staying bird. October is the month when they are most likely to be seen in London.

Great Grey Shrike arrival dates 1990-2016: 31 records, 31 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	5	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	2	15	6	-

Essex: Wanstead Flats, one on Oct 29th (TBn).

Middx: Bury Farm, Edgware, one seen often from Jan 13th to Apr 29th (FB et al).

Jay Garrulus glandarius

Status: common breeding bird, the resident population boosted by immigrants in the autumn and winter.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year but a 14% decrease in the South East in that period. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 85% of gardens surveyed in 2016 compared with 90% in 1995. There were reports from

22 sites in Inner London which is down from 29 sites last year. Breeding records are given below (no. of pairs in brackets) as well as some of the higher counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (4). Connaught Water, ten on Mar 7th. Mar Dyke Valley (2), 13 on Oct 6th. Roding Valley, 11 on Oct 14th. Wanstead Park, 20+ on Apr 7th. Warren Gorge (1). Herts: Wormley Wood, 13 on Mar 7th.

Middx: Bushy Park, ten on Feb 23rd and Nov 2nd. Hampstead Heath, nine on Mar 23rd. Highgate Wood, eight on Apr 19th. Home Park (4). Kensal Green Cem (2). Q. Mary GP, 12 on Oct 22nd. Tottenham Marshes (2).

Bucks: Black Park, five on Apr 2nd.

Kent: Darenth Lakes, six on Oct 7th. Foots Cray Meadows, eight on Feb 4th. Greenwich Park (2). High Elms CP, six on Dec 9th. Kelsey Park, six on Oct 11th. Petts Wood, six on Mar 24th. Sevenoaks WR, nine during September to October.

Surrey: Addington Hills, 13 on Oct 21st. Ashtead Common, 22 on Apr 1st. Banstead Wood, nine on Dec 27th. Beddington Farmlands, ten during October. Bookham Common, 19 on Mar 3rd. Canons Farm, 15 on Nov 27th. Holmethorpe SP, 17 on Oct 24th. Lloyd Park, Croydon, 13 during April and October. Molesey Heath (2). Morden Hall Park (6). South Norwood CP, 12 on Apr 19th. Wimbledon Common (20).

In Lond: Battersea, two on Sep 14th. Battersea Park, three on Oct 19th. Bloomsbury, two on Jul 3rd. Buckingham Palace Gdns (1). Camberwell, one during January and March. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, peak count of six. Limehouse, two on May 29th. Primrose Hill, two on Mar 15th. Regent's Park, peak count of three on Dec 20th. Rotherhithe, three on Oct 3rd. Victoria Park, four on Nov 5th. Wapping Wood, two on Feb 24th.

Magpie Pica pica

Status: abundant breeding resident.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 4% decrease in England in that period; it also shows a 36% increase in London from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 99% of the gardens surveyed in 2016, the same as last year. We still receive few breeding estimates and more would be welcome. Breeding records are given below for sites with two or more pairs (no. of pairs in brackets) as well as some of the higher counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, 22 on Apr 5th. Claybury Woods & Park, 40 on Nov 28th going to roost. Grays Gorge, 33 going to roost on Jan 2nd. Harold Wood SW, 25 on Jan 5th. Highams Park, 28 on Jan 30th. KGV Res, 24 on Jan 2nd. Mar Dyke Valley (5); 31 on Dec 9th. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, 27 on Jul 23rd. Rainham Marshes, 29 on Nov 11th. Roding Valley Meadows NR, 32 on Dec 23rd. Strawberry Hill Ponds, 48 roosting on Jan 31st. Warren Gorge, 99 roosting on Jan 2nd. West Ham Park, 27 in December.

Herts: Amwell NR, 50 on Jan 23rd. Bernards Heath, 21 on Feb 21st. Lynsters Farm, 30 on Nov 8th. Radlett Aero GP, 34 on Feb 13th. Rye Meads (13); 55 on Feb 18th. Tyttenhanger GP, 36 on Feb 21st.

Middx: Darlands Lake, 23 on Apr 1st. Enfield Grammar School (2). Fryent CP, 46 on Feb 25th. Grovelands Park (4). Home Park (15). Horsenden Hill, 39 on Feb 20th. Osterley Park, 23 on Jan 17th. Ponders End, 30 on Oct 4th. Vicarage Farm, 23 on Dec 14th at pre-

roost gathering. Whitewebbs Farm, 23 on Feb 23rd. Wormwood Scrubs, 28 on Jan 24th. **Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, 14 on Mar 23rd.

Kent: Bromley Common, 29 on Dec 5th. Chipstead Lake, 35 on Mar 18th. Coldblow, 30 on Jan 11th. Darenth Lakes, 55 in October and November. Dartford Marshes, 43 on Oct 25th. Foots Cray Meadows, c40 on Mar 9th. Greenwich Park (2-3). Ladywell Fields (4). Sevenoaks WR, 40 on Jan 20th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (2). Beddington Farmlands, 36 in December. Elmbridge OS, 40 on Jan 24th. Holmethorpe SP, 78 on Mar 8th. Horniman Museum (2). Kingston-upon-Thames, 36 on Mar 13th, some nest building. London Wetland Centre, 51 on Nov 1st. Morden Hall Park (15); 159 roosting on Feb 6th. South Norwood CP, 60 on Jan 6th at pre-roost gathering.

In Lond: Battersea Park, 11 in October. Burgess Park, 12 on Jan 25th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 20 on May 29th. Regent's Park (2); 20 on Jan 4th. Victoria Park, 19 on Mar 5th.

Jackdaw Corvus monedula

Status: common breeding resident and passage migrant; much scarcer in the inner suburbs and city centre.

The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year but there was a 9% decrease in the South East in that period. There has also been a 72% increase in the South East from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird survey reported them in 42% of gardens surveyed, a small increase on the 40% reported in 2015. In some parts of London Jackdaws are only passage migrants; in other parts there are large roost movements and large groups feeding. There were no obvious records of any large passage movements again this year. Breeding records are given below (no. of pairs in brackets) as well as some of the higher counts and all Inner London records.

Essex: Bedfords Park, 300 on Jan 4th. Brook Farm, Upminster, c800 feeding on Sep 1st. Clay Tye Wood, 900 roosting in October and November. Gunpowder Park, 200 on Oct 31st. Hangman's Wood (2). Loughton, 200 on May 30th. Mar Dyke Valley (22). Roding Valley Meadows, 500 on Jul 18th. Warren Gorge (4).

Herts: Amwell NR, 200 on Feb 1st. Frogmore Lakes, 300 roosting on Nov 16th. Hatfield, 200 on Oct 13th. Hoddesdon, 300 on Dec 25th. Maple Lodge NR, 1,000 roosting on Mar 15th and Dec 11th-16th. Rye Meads (3). Stocker's Farm, 4,400 roosting on Nov 7th. Tyttenhanger GP, 400 on Nov 7th. Watford, 216 on Sep 5th.

Middx: Brent Res (1); 338 roosting on Oct 13th. Broadwater Lake, 1,000 roosting on Jan 5th. Home Park, 271 on May 8th. Q. Mary GP, 2,000 on Jan 9th, 16th & 23rd. Totteridge Valley, 300 roosting on Jan 17th.

Bucks: Langley Park, 88 on Mar 10th.

Kent: Coldblow, 100 on Jan 11th. Foots Cray Meadows, 100+ leaving roost on Dec 7th. Greatness Pits, 220 on Sep 25th. Petts Wood, 150 on Feb 10th. Ruxley GP, 200 leaving roost on Oct 24th. Sevenoaks WR, 950 roosting on Dec 21st.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 5,442 in November. Canons Farm & Banstead Wood, 250 on Jan 2nd. Collier's Wood, 1,100 leaving roost on Apr 1st. Holmethorpe SP, 2,000 on Nov 24th. Morden Hall Park, 232 on Feb 6th. Motspur Park, 600 in pre-roost gathering on Sep 13th. New Malden, 800 roosting on Oct 18th. Ravens Ait, 260 on Nov 24th.

Wandle Park, Colliers Wood, 330 on Oct 2nd. Wimbledon, 472 flying over on Apr 7th. Worcester Park, 600 roosting on Sep 27th.

In Lond: Haggerston, two on Feb 12th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, seven on Mar 8th. King's Cross Station, 15 on Jan 23rd. Regent's Park, two on Apr 16th. St James's Park, two on Apr 29th. Victoria Park, two on Mar 5th. Westminster, two on Nov 8th.

Rook Corvus frugilegus

Status: common breeding resident in the outer part of the London Area, much scarcer in urban localities.

The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was a 20% decrease in the South East in that period. This follows a decline of 13% from 1995-2015 in England. Regular counts from rookeries would be very useful, to enable us to report on any local trends. Details of all rookeries are given below with the number of occupied nests in brackets, followed by some of the highest counts in each sector. The only Inner London record this year was at Victoria Park.

Essex: Clay Tye Wood (46); 600 roosting during the year. Gunpowder Park, 200 on Oct 30th. North Weald (18). Park Farm, Havering, 340 on Nov 24th. Roding Valley Meadows (4). Stanford Rivers (27). Stapleford Abbotts, 200 on Sep 12th.

Herts: Coursers Farm, 45 on Sep 17th. Essendon, 45 on Dec 4th. Letty Green (27). Maple Lodge NR, 53 on Dec 16th. Rye Meads, 45 on Jan 1st. Tyttenhanger GP, 50 on Aug 31st.

Middx: Totteridge Valley, 40+ on Oct 22nd.

Bucks: Black Park, four on Jul 24th.

Kent: Brooklands Lakes (2). West Kingsdown, 30 on Jul 27th.

Surrey: Egham, 300 on Jan 25th. Holmethorpe SP, 250 on Aug 11th.

In Lond: Victoria Park, one over on Nov 5th.

Carrion Crow Corvus corone

Status: abundant breeding resident.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a long-term increase of 46% from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 92% of gardens surveyed, the same as in 2015. There appears to have been a decline since the early years of the survey. We receive relatively few breeding records and more nest counts would be very welcome. Breeding records are given below for sites with five or more pairs (no. of pairs in brackets) as well as some of the higher counts.

Essex: Epping Forest Woodlands, 88 on Apr 4th. Leyton Flats, 107 on Mar 23rd. Mar Dyke Valley (9). Orsett Fen, 141 on Dec 2nd. Roding Valley Meadows, 80 on Jan 26th. Walthamstow Res (7). Wanstead Park, 90 on Aug 26th.

Herts: Berrybushes Wood, 69 on Oct 23rd. Hatfield Park, 55 on Nov 28th. Rye Meads (8); 70 on Mar 13th. Tyttenhanger GP, 130 on Nov 13th.

Middx: Bentley Priory NR, 100 on Jan 3rd. Brent Res, 118 in pre-roost gathering on Oct 31st. Finsbury Park, 100 on Feb 29th. Fryent CP, 123 on Jul 28th. Home Park (5); 121 on Jan 9th. Horsenden Hill, 956 on Jan 23rd. Totteridge Valley, 100+ on Jan 17th. Wormwood Scrubs, 152 on Apr 24th.

Bucks: Horton, 20 on Oct 2nd. New Denham, 25 on Jul 16th.

Kent: Danson Park, 77 on Dec 20th. Foots Cray Meadows, c75 on Sep 26th. Greatness Pits, 125 on Oct 30th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 400 on Jul 29th. Canons Farm, 250 during April. Holmethorpe SP, 350 on Mar 14th. Molesey Heath (3). Rushett Farm, 120 on Sep 2nd. South Norwood CP, 152 on Jan 18th. Wandle Park, Croydon, 130 on Jun 6th. Wandsworth Park, 149 on Feb 9th.

In Lond: Battersea Park, 100 on Nov 3rd. Burgess Park, 130 on Nov 6th. St James's Park & Green Park, 54 on Feb 2nd.

Hooded Crow Corvus cornix

Status: rare visitor.

Rarely seen in the London Area, this is the first record for six years. Since 1990, the only records were singles in 1990, 1991, 1997 and 2010. There was a report of one on the previous day at Blackheath (listed in App III) which could have been the same bird. A description of this bird would be very welcome.

Essex: Wanstead Flats, one on Mar 23rd (BV).

Raven Corvus corax

Status: scarce but increasing visitor and recent breeder.

Once again a pair bred at Swanscombe Marshes in Kent, fledging two young and another pair bred in Surrey, raising two young. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 130% increase in England from 1995-2015. There were more records of pairs, but most records are still single birds flying over. Below are all breeding records and records of two or more birds.

Essex: Reported from six sites, down from last year's 15. Chafford Hundred, three on Oct 16th. Rainham Marshes, two often during the year, with four on Apr 26th.

Herts: Reported from 24 sites, up from last year's 16. Amwell NR, two on Jan 12th, 28th & 30th, Oct 22nd and Dec 1st. Bayfordbury, two on Dec 7th and four on 16th. Colney Heath, two on Oct 10th. Hertford, two on Dec 8th. Hilfield Park Res, two on Feb 28th. Hoddesdon, two on Mar 13th. Jersey Farm, two on Dec 3rd. Rickmansworth, two on Jan 2nd. Rye Meads, three on Oct 9th. Stocker's Lake, two on Apr 17th. Turnford Marsh GP, two on Dec 1st. Tyttenhanger GP, two on Apr 28th. Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross, two on Aug 20th.

Middx: Reported from nine sites. Bentley Priory NR, two on Apr 2nd.

Bucks: Reported from four sites. Black Park, two on Apr 2nd, May 3rd & 28th and Jul 6th & 24th. Horton Brook Quarry, family group of six flew off NE on Jul 4th. Langley Park, two on Jul 9th. Q. Mother Res, two on Jul 27th and Sep 29th.

This Hooded Crow at Wanstead Flats is only the fifth London record for a quarter of a century. (Bob Vaughan)



Starling. (Andrew Moon)

Kent: Reported from 11 sites. Swanscombe Marshes (1); five on Jun 23rd and Jul 8th.

Surrey: Reported from 16 sites. Site A (1). Banstead Wood, two on Jan 28th. Canons Farm, two on Dec 20th. Cheverells Farm, two on Feb 11th. Holmethorpe SP, two on Sep 19th and Oct 13th. Nore Hill & Warren, two on Sep 30th. Riddlesdown Quarry, two on Feb 3rd. Trevereux, two during July and August.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Status: common, but continued declining, breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows no



significant change in London since last year, but there was a 10% decrease in UK since last year and there has also been a 57% decrease in London from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported the bird in 75% of gardens surveyed in 2016, down from 78% in 2015, and this is the lowest figure since the survey started in 1995. It therefore seems likely that their decline continues. More breeding records would be welcome to help monitor this decline. The passage over London was once again lighter than previous years, with the largest movement taking place on October 21st with 3,840 birds from six sites flying generally west. Below are breeding records, some of the highest counts and migrating flocks.

Essex: Bulphan Fen, 500 on Oct 22nd. Chafford Hundred, 350 on Sep 29th. Cornmill Meadows & Breaches Farm, 250+ on Mar 15th. Grays Cem (3). Hangman's Wood (10). Leyton Flats, 360 on Nov 8th. Mar Dyke Valley (4). Orsett Fen (8). Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, 350 on Oct 2nd. Rainham Marshes, 670 on Aug 23rd. Tottenham Marshes, 380 on Oct 22nd. Wanstead Flats, 2,000 on Oct 22nd.

Herts: Brookmans Park, 160 on Mar 15th. Coursers Farm, 175 on Oct 16th. Hilfield Park Res, c200 on Oct 26th. Maple Cross, 200 on Sep 22nd. Rye Meads, 3,500 on Nov 4th. Stanstead Abbotts, 1,000+ leaving roost on Nov 2nd. Tyttenhanger GP, 450 on Oct 22nd. Bred at Chess Valley, Cuffley, Ellenbrook Fields, St Albans, Stocker's Lake and Watford.

Middx: Bushy Park, 110 on Jul 25th. Home Park, 158 on Oct 29th. Pinner, 131 on Aug 24th. Staines Moor, 260 on Sep 5th. Staines Res, 800+ on Jul 25th. Wormwood Scrubs, 120 on May 20th. Bred at Broomfield Park, Colindale, Hammersmith Cem, Pinner and Trent Park.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 160 on Jul 7th.

Kent: Chipstead Lake, 250 on Oct 24th. Crayford Marshes, 500 on Aug 29th. Crossness,

600 on Aug 17th. Darenth Lakes, 220 on Oct 7th. Longfield Gallops, 253 on Oct 25th. Ruxley GP, 300 on Oct 24th including 150+ from roost. Sevenoaks WR, 650 roosting on Nov 12th. Sidcup, 585 mostly W on Oct 23rd. Swanscombe Marshes 1,010 W on Oct 21st. Bred at Bexleyheath, Fawkham Green and Greenwich Park.

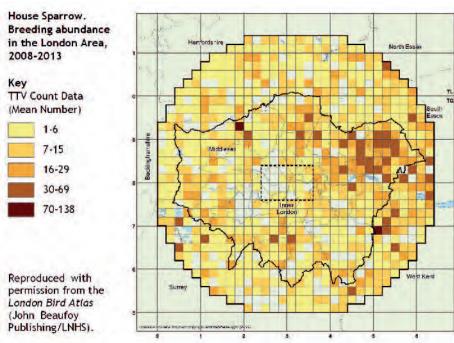
Surrey: Barn Elms PF, 1,490 W on Oct 21st. Beddington Farmlands, 1,400 in January. Canons Farm, 450 on Nov 11th. Hogsmill SW, 370 on Nov 13th. Holmethorpe SP, 3,850 on Mar 3rd & 4th. Kingston-upon-Thames, 250 on Nov 28th. London Wetland Centre, 300 on Feb 22nd and Nov 12th. Morden Hall Park, 535 on Oct 23rd. Richmond Park, c500 on Oct 18th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 100 on Sep 1st. Primrose Hill, 425 over on Oct 21st. Bred at London Bridge, Mile End and Tower of London.

House Sparrow Passer domesticus

Status: breeding resident, declined severely since 1990s.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 4% decrease in England in that period. In addition there is a long-term decline of 73% in London from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 44% of gardens surveyed in 2016, which was up from 39% in 2015. This increase, with no significant change in the Breeding Bird Survey, may suggest that the House Sparrow's decline in urban areas has slowed. More breeding records would be welcome. Below are breeding records (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus a summary of Inner London records and some of the higher counts. The map below (from the *London Bird Atlas*)



shows the breeding abundance across the London Area during the period 2008-2013, with generally greater abundance in the north-east part.

Essex: Chafford Hundred (8); 107 on Dec 15th. Grays (30). Mar Dyke Valley (6). Rainham Marshes, 120 roosting on Jul 12th and Dec 24th. Upminster, 123 on Dec 15th. Also bred at Roding Valley Meadows.

Herts: Bernards Heath (30). Borehamwood (10). Stocker's Farm, 70 on Aug 17th.

Middx: Isle of Dogs, 40 on Feb 17th. Pinner Park Farm, 56 on Jul 18th. Poplar Docks, 40 on Aug 23rd. Stockwell, 40 on Jul 1st. Bred at Bow, Fulham Reach, Greenford, Hampstead Heath, Ponders End, Totteridge Valley and Wormwood Scrubs.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, ten on May 14th.

Kent: Albany Park (3). Barnehurst GC, 115 on Jan 21st. Blackheath Village (5). Northumberland Heath, 60 on May 11th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 50 on Aug 22nd and Dec 17th. Brockwell Park (6); 50 on Aug 25th. Canons Farm (14); 80 on Sep 8th. Kingston-upon-Thames, 61 on May 1st. Mayflower Park, 50 on Jun 1st. Rushett Farm, c100 on Aug 18th. Also bred at Berrylands, Brixton, Kingston-upon-Thames, Mayflower Park and Wimbledon Common.

In Lond: Battersea, 20 on Jul 13th. Burgess Park, 20 on Nov 6th. Gabriel's Wharf, 30 on Dec 30th. Limehouse, 48 on May 29th. Pimlico (11). Rotherhithe, 25 on Dec 14th. Shandy Park, Stepney, 25 on Jan 17th. Tower of London (4).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Status: scarce breeding resident, confined to two sites; occasional passage migrant or dispersing visitor.

There were reports from nine sites this year, an increase on four sites last year. There were higher breeding counts from the two breeding sites in London. At Beddington Farmlands, there were five breeding pairs (up from two last year). In the Coursers Farm area, 15 pairs nested (up from five last year) and 53 young fledged, the highest number since 2012. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was been no significant change in the UK in that period. There has also been a 69% increase in England from 1995-2015. Tree Sparrows have now withdrawn completely from some southern and western regions of Britain (BTO website). Below are all records, summarised for breeding sites.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, six on Oct 22nd.

Herts: Coursers Farm (15), 53 young fledged. Hertford, four on Oct 23rd. Maple Cross, one on Oct 8th. North Mymms Park, three on Dec 3rd. Tyttenhanger Farm, peak of 24 on Dec 23rd.

Kent: Ebbsfleet, six on Aug 12th. West Kingsdown, ten on Aug 4th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (5).

Chaffinch Fringilla coelebs

Status: common breeding resident, augmented by continental influxes in autumn and winter.

There were 26 counts of 100 birds or more, well above the 16 records in 2015 and nine in 2014. Spring passage was notable on March 14th and 15th when over 1,000 birds were

seen flying over Canons Farm. The main migration of the autumn was observed on October 21st and 22nd. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, although there was a 10% decrease in England in that period. But there has been an 88% increase in London from 1995 to 2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 78% of gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 75% in 2015. Below are breeding records of five or more birds (no. of territories in brackets) followed by high counts, summarised in some cases and with selected records for Inner London.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (6). Brook Farm, Upminster (7). Mar Dyke Valley (6). Orsett Fen (14). Rainham Marshes (8). Wanstead Flats, 520+ on Oct 22nd.

Herts: Maple Lodge NR (6). Rickmansworth Aquadrome (10). Rye Meads, 114 on Feb 13th. Middx: Brent Res, 109 over on Oct 22nd. Broadwater Lake (10). Hampstead Heath, 100+ NW on Oct 9th. Home Park (10). Tottenham Marshes, 157 W on Oct 22nd.

Kent: Greenwich Park (9-10).

Surrey: Barn Elms PF, 168 NW on Oct 21st. Canons Farm, 1,100 on Mar 14th. Ewell, 200 on Nov 26th. Kingston-upon-Thames (5).

In Lond: Primrose Hill, 117 NW on Oct 10th and 70 over on 21st. Victoria Park, 11 on May 1st. Wapping, 12 on Nov 18th.

Brambling Fringilla montifringilla

Status: regular autumn migrant and winter visitor, sometimes in large numbers.

There were three counts of ten or more birds, compared with two in 2015 and three in 2014. The highest count was 15 at Amwell NR on January 23rd. The last bird of spring was one at the London Wetland Centre on April 27th and the first of the autumn was one at Brent Res on October 2nd. This compares with the last bird of spring seen on April 14th in 2015 and the first bird of autumn on September 27th. Below are counts of two or more birds except for Inner London, where the only record is given.

Essex: Baldwins Hill, ten on Dec 20th. Brentwood, two on Mar 18th and three on 31st. Gunpowder Park, two on Oct 30th. KGV Res, five on Oct 8th. Rainham Marshes, two on Oct 24th. Wanstead Flats, eight on Oct 22nd and two on 24th.

Herts: Amwell NR, 15 on Jan 23rd. Brookmans Park, three on Apr 5th. Hatfield Park, six on Dec 18th. Hertford, two on Jan 1st & 12th. Rye Meads, two or three on several dates in January and February, with a peak of four on Jan 21st. Wildhill, two on Feb 21st.

Middx: Brent Res, pair seen in a garden from Jan 1st to Mar 20th. Tottenham Marshes, two on Oct 24th.

Bucks: Colnbrook, four on Jan 5th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, two on Oct 14th. Greenwich Park, two on Oct 23rd. Sidcup, three on Oct 21st.

Surrey: Barn Elms PF, 14 over on Oct 21st. Beddington Farmlands, two on Feb 29th and Oct 8th. Canons Farm, two on Mar 13th, three on 14th and two on 15th. London Wetland Centre, two on Jan 20th. Moorhouse, two on Nov 30th and Dec 12th. Putney, three on Nov 13th. Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath, two on Oct 18th.

In London: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one from Apr 1st-5th.

European Serin Serinus serinus

Status: rare vagrant.

Although there were two records in 2015, Serins are scarce birds in London. Recent records are shown in the table below, and the 2008, 2009 and 2010 birds (all seen at Rainham Marshes) were around for lengthy periods. This year's record was of one flying over calling in May.

European Serin records 2000-2016: 7 records, 11 birds

Year	2002	2008	2009	2010	2015	2016
No. of records	1	1	1	1	2	1
No. of birds	1	3	2	2	2	1

Kent: Crossness, one E calling on May 8th (JKA, RHB).

Greenfinch Carduelis chloris

Status: common breeding resident and passage migrant.

As in 2015, the higher counts seem to be totals for birds passing over on passage, such as the 55 on October 27th over Brent Res in a period of three hours; although there were up to 20 in a Loughton garden in December. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 12% decrease in England; this follows a 52% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 65% of gardens surveyed in 2016, down from 72% in 2015. Counts in Inner London also were lower than last year. Below are breeding records of three or more (no. of territories in brackets) and higher counts, summarised in some cases.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (3). Brook Farm, Upminster (4). Loughton, 20 on Dec 18th. Mar Dyke Valley (4). Orsett Fen (3). Rainham Marshes (12); 27 on 17th. Warren Gorge (5). West Thurrock Marshes, 24 on Jan 15th.

Herts: Beech Farm GP, 12 on Feb 14th. Rye Meads (7).

Middx: Brent Res, 55 over on Oct 27th. Broomfield Park, 23 in pre-roost gathering on Dec 21st. Hampton (4). Harlesden (3). Home Park (11). Woodberry Wetlands, 25 on Oct 5th & 8th.

Kent: Foots Cray Meadows (3). Longfield Gallops, 29 on Jan 31st.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (15). Hogsmill SW, 47 on Nov 19th. London Wetland Centre (3); 25 on Jul 27th and Aug 24th. Molesey Heath (10). Morden Hall Park (5); 35 on Oct 9th. Surbiton (3). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (c20).

In Lond: Haggerston, four on Feb 13th. Natural

Greenfinch. (Russ Sherriff)



History Museum, four on Jun 2nd. Regent's Park, ten on Aug 21st. Rotherhithe, four on Nov 29th and Dec 27th. St James's Park, five on Apr 29th. Stave Hill, eight on Dec 5th.

Goldfinch Carduelis carduelis

Status: breeding resident and passage migrant, now common throughout the year.

There were 20 records of 100 birds or more in 2016, fewer than the 52 such records in 2015, but still higher than any other year from 2011 onwards. There were 74 birds in a single flock in Victoria Park in Inner London on October 21st. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year, but a 13% increase in the South East; this follows a 412% increase in London from 1995 to 2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported them in 88% of the gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 85% in 2015. Breeding records of three or more (no of territories in brackets), higher counts and some Inner London records are given below.

Essex: Brook Farm, Upminster (3). Grays Cem (3). Orsett Fen (12). Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, 180 on Sep 17th. Rainham Marshes (33); 260 on Aug 23rd. Warren Gorge (3).

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, 104 on Dec 12th.

Middx: Brent Res, 47 over on Nov 11th. Home Park (6). Vicarage Farm (3).

Kent: Crayford Marshes, 100 on Aug 18th. Crossness, 100 on Aug 17th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 100 on Aug 1st & 27th. Canons Farm (7). Holmethorpe SP, 120 on Jan 19th. Molesey Heath (3). Morden Hall Park (6). Richmond, 150 on 15th. Worcester Park, 100 on Aug 15th.

In Lond: Hammersmith Cem, c40 on Nov 23rd. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, c20 on Nov





12th. Kensington, 15 on Aug 24th. Limehouse, 11 on Dec 18th. Primrose Hill, 60+ W on Oct 20th and 50 N/NW on 21st. Regent's Park, 14 on Dec 20th. Shandy Park, Stepney, 12 on Jan 17th. Victoria Park, 21 on Jan 2nd and 74 on Oct 21st.

Siskin Carduelis spinus

Status: common winter visitor and passage migrant; rare breeder although increasingly regular in summer.

There were five counts of 100 or more birds this year compared with eight in 2015 and four in 2014. Four of these counts were in January and one was in December. Counts of Siskins were much higher in January 2016 than in December. Most had gone by the middle of April but there were a few summer records. There was no evidence of breeding and birds began to return in late September. Below are record high counts for each winter period, other notable sightings and all Inner London records.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, 56 on Feb 11th. Holyfield Lake, 80 on Jan 23rd. Walthamstow, one on Jun 12th.

Herts: Cheshunt GPs, 80 on Feb 19th. Maple Lodge NR, 100 on Jan 3rd, 11th & 27th. North Mymms Park, two on May 1st. Stocker's Lake, 140 on Jan 7th and 100 on Dec 18th. Welham Green, four on May 15th.

Middx: Broadwater Lake, 50 on Jan 8th. Bushy Park, 60 on Feb 10th. Trent Park, 20 on Dec 31st.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 35 on Jan 14th.

Kent: Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park, three on Jun 16th. High Broom Wood, 45 on Jan 15th. Sevenoaks WR, 90 on Jan 6th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common, c40 on Nov 20th. London Wetland Centre, 78 on Feb 5th. Prince's Coverts, c50 on Oct 16th. Richmond Park, c50 on Feb 6th and Nov 27th. Wimbledon Common, one on May 15th.

In Lond: Camden Town, 15 on Feb 10th. Camley Street Natural Park, three on Mar 22nd. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Jan 9th and two on Mar 16th. Limehouse, 12 on Jan 17th. Maida Vale, five on Feb 11th. Marylebone, eight on Mar 17th. Primrose Hill, peak of 37 over on Oct 10th. Regent's Park, one on Mar 13th and three on 26th. Rotherhithe, ten on Mar 12th. Shandy Park, Stepney, 12 on Jan 17th. Soho, eight on Mar 17th. St Pancras, eight on Jan 24th. Stave Hill, four on Mar 4th & 18th. Victoria Park, one on Oct 19th & 21st.

Linnet Carduelis cannabina

Status: common but declining breeding resident and passage migrant.

There were slightly more large flocks this year (21 of 100 or more, compared with 19 last year), and the peak count was higher (500 compared with 400). There were 83 breeding pairs, a slight increase on the 75 pairs in 2015, with some sites where we have records for both years showing an increase. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there has been a 32% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015. More regular breeding counts from sites would be very welcome. Below are all records of breeding (no. of breeding pairs, singing males/territories in brackets), with high counts and all Inner London records.

BIRDS OF THE LONDON AREA, 2016

159

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (4). Fairlop Waters (3). Orsett Fen (15). Rainham Marshes (41); 220 on Oct 21st.

Herts: Ellenbrook Fields (1+). Maple Cross, 150 on Oct 22nd.

Middx: Vicarage Farm (1). Whitewebbs Farm, 150 on Apr 7th.

Kent: Longfield Gallops, 285 on Sep 16th. Swanscombe Marshes (1). Upper College Farm (2).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (9). Canons Farm (3); 500 on Nov 24th. Molesey Heath (3).

In Lond: Primrose Hill, autumn passage with peak of 11 on Oct 21st. Victoria Park, one

over on Oct 21st.

Lesser Redpoll Carduelis cabaret

Status: passage migrant and winter visitor; former breeding resident.

There were fewer records this year than last (689 compared with 786) but the highest count of c50 was fewer than last year's peak of 56. There were more records in the first winter period than in the second winter period although the largest number of records this year were at the end of October. There were no summering reports, with only ten records in May and with birds not returning until mid-September. The peak monthly counts at the start of the year were 32 in January, 31 in February, 40 in March and 30 in April. At the end of the year peak counts were 50 in October, 18 in November and 45 in December. High counts and all Inner London records are given below.

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley, 32 on Jan 1st. Wanstead Flats, 32 on Oct 21st.

Herts: Seventy Acres Lake, 30 on Jan 2nd. Tyttenhanger Farm, 25 on Apr 13th.

Middx: Brent Res, 18 on Oct 15th. Ruislip Woods, c50 on Oct 29th.

Bucks: Colnbrook, 18 on Jan 10th. **Kent:** North Cray, 12 on Mar 21st.

Surrey: Banstead Wood, 45 on Dec 18th. Beddington Farmlands, 31 on Feb 13th. Tandridge,

40 on Mar 13th.

In Lond: Brockley NR, one on Oct 27th. Camley Street Natural Park, two on Mar 1st. Primrose Hill, one over on Oct 7th. St James's Park, one on Mar 11th. St Pancras, two on Mar 1st. Victoria Park, one over on Oct 19th.

Mealy Redpoll Carduelis flammea

Status: scarce irruptive winter visitor.

There were just three records of Mealy Redpoll this year, involving three birds, from Essex and Hertfordshire only; this is the lowest total since 2004.

Essex: Cornmill Meadows, one on Mar 3rd (SP). Rainham Marshes, one on Oct 19th (HV).

Herts: Stocker's Lake, one on Mar 3rd (MK).

Common Crossbill Loxia curvirostra

Status: irruptive visitor, rare breeding species (usually following irruptions).

There were just 17 records this year from 13 sites involving a total of 32 birds. This makes it the worst year since 2007, when there were just nine records and far below recent years (47 records of 142 birds in 2015, 34 records of 111 birds in 2014). They were, as usual, scattered over the months, as shown in the following table. All records are given below.

Common Crossbill records	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	0ct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	-	1	1	1	-	1	4	3	1	4	1	-
No. of birds	-	1	2	1	-	1	8	5	1	12	1	-

Essex: Gidea Park, one on Jun 28th. Rainham Marshes, one on Apr 7th.

Herts: Amwell NR, singles over on Aug 10th and Oct 22nd. Brookmans Park, one over on Sep 19th.

Middx: Hampstead Heath, one over on Jul 24th. West Harrow, two briefly on Aug 10th.

Bucks: Black Park, one on Jul 20th and five on 24th, then two on Oct 20th.

Kent: Ruxley GP, one over on Nov 8th.

Surrey: Barn Elms PF, eight over on Oct 11th. Beddington Farmlands, a juv found dead on Jul 2nd. London Wetland Centre, two on Mar 14th and Aug 14th. Morden Hall Park, one over on Oct 22nd. Rushett Farm, one over on Feb 3rd.

Common Rosefinch Carpodacus erythrinus

Status: rare vagrant.

The 11th record for London, this was a fairly long-staying bird. It was close to the Essex/Middlesex boundary at times and was recorded west of the R Lee Navigation in Middlesex once or twice. This was the third July record, although the table of arrival dates below shows no particular pattern.

Common Rosefinch arrival dates 1971-2016: 11 records, 11 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	-	1	-	-	-	2	3	-	3	1	-	1

Essex: Walthamstow Marshes, one from Jul 3rd-12th & 20th (JPa et al).

This is the 11th record for Common Rosefinch in London, and this Walthamstow bird was particularly smart. (Jamie Partridge)





Bullfinch. (Andrew Moon)

Bullfinch Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Status: fairly common breeding resident.

There were records from 205 sites this year, fewer than the 230 sites in 2015. There were only 23 records of breeding/territories, although there were another 22 pairs recorded during the period mid-May to June, making a possible 45 breeding pairs (34 breeding pairs reported in 2015). There were records from 105 sites during the period mid-March to June, fewer than the 123 "during the breeding season" reported in 2015. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there was a 27% increase in the South East in that period. This follows a decrease of 28% in the South East from 1995-2015. The RSPB Croydon Bird Survey reported Bullfinches in 24% of gardens surveyed in 2016, similar to the 22% in 2015. Below are all breeding records (no. of pairs/territories in brackets) and pairs reported mid-March to June, together with high counts. There were no Inner London records.

Essex: Recorded at 47 sites. Belhus Woods CP (2). Cely Woods, pair on Mar 15th. Dagenham Chase, pair on Mar 15th. Gunpowder Park, pair on Mar 25th. Hall Marsh Scrape, pair on Mar 28th. Holyfield Hall Farm, pair on Apr 2nd. Ingrebourne Valley, pair on Mar 18th. Mar Dyke Valley, juv on Jun 22nd. North Weald, seven on Jan 17th. Pages Wood, pair on Mar 27th. Upminster, pair on Jun 27th. Woodford Green, two males and a fem on May 18th.

Herts: Recorded at 45 sites. Frogmore Lakes, eight on Oct 28th. Hilfield Park Res (1). Panshanger Park, pair on Apr 15th. Rye Meads (4). Stocker's Lake (1). Tyttenhanger GP, pair on May 13th. Welham Green (1).

Middx: Recorded at 41 sites. Brent Res (1+). Dennis Bland NR, pair on May 1st. Gutteridge

Wood, pair on Jun 19th. Monken Hadley Common, two pairs on May 20th. Ruislip Woods, pair on May 2nd. Ten Acre Wood, Yeading, three males and two fems on May 8th. Totteridge Valley (2+). Trent Park (2). Vicarage Farm, pair on Jun 17th, seven on Dec 30th.

Bucks: Recorded at two sites. Black Park, four on Jul 6th. Wraysbury GP, five on Nov 13th. **Kent:** Recorded at 25 sites. Foots Cray Meadows, pair on Apr 30th. Scadbury Park, c10 on Jan 13th. Sidcup, pair on Mar 21st.

Surrey: Recorded at 45 sites. Ashtead Common, seven on Mar 17th. Banstead Wood (3); 21 on Jan 1st. Bookham Common (5). Canons Farm (1). Holmethorpe SP, 17 on Dec 8th. Prince's Coverts, pair on May 7th. Rushett Farm, pair on Apr 28th.

Hawfinch Coccothraustes coccothraustes

Status: very scarce breeding resident; occasional passage migrant.

There were just 12 records this year, from 11 sites, whereas there were 32 records from 12 sites in 2015. Three of the records were in January, one in February, one in April, five in October and two in November.

Essex: Connaught Water, one over on Nov 7th. Leyton Flats, one heard on Oct 19th. Wanstead Flats, one on Oct 19th. Woodford Green, one on Nov 12th.

Herts: Amwell NR, two on Jan 18th. Wormley West End, six on Jan 10th and two on Feb 27th.

Middx: Bentley Priory NR, one on Jan 2nd. Fryent CP, one on Oct 1st.

Surrey: Canons Farm, one on Apr 9th. Morden Hall Park, one over on Oct 9th. Richmond Park, three on Oct 19th.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Status: scarce autumn and winter visitor.

Two records this year (one more than last year). They were both at the same site within five days of each other, on October 29th and November 3rd. November is the most likely month for these to turn up in London, with nearly half of all the records since 1990 being in November. There have been 40 records since 2000, 19 of which occurred between 2010 and 2012. The table below shows records for the last ten years.

Snow Bunting records 2007-2016: 32 records, 34 birds

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of records	2	2	2	7	6	6	1	3	1	2
No. of birds	2	2	2	7	9	6	1	2	1	2

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Oct 29th (JW) and a male on Nov 3rd (RBs).

Yellowhammer Emberiza citrinella

Status: widespread but declining breeding resident, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

They were reported from 104 sites this year and there were 54 territories/singing males (64 in 2015), although there were several additional sites where birds were present during the breeding season. The Essex and Hertfordshire sectors accounted for about 60% of the sites and the breeding records. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in

London to show any changes since last year, but there has been a 41% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015. Below are all breeding records (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), some unusual records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: Recorded at 26 sites, 28 pairs. Belhus Woods CP (1). Brook Farm, Upminster (2). Epping (1). Mar Dyke Valley (1). Orsett Fen (21); 34 on Dec 26th. Theydon Bois (2).

Herts: Recorded at 33 sites, ten pairs. Bedmond (2). Brickendon (1). Coopers Green GP (1); 30+ on Oct 16th. Coopers Green Lane (2). Ellenbrook Fields (1). Maple Cross (1). Tyttenhanger Farm (1). West Hyde (1); juv seen on Sep 11th.

Middx: Recorded at ten sites, four pairs. Brent Res, one N calling on Nov 2nd. Osterley Park, four on Oct 19th. Vicarage Farm (3); 20 on Dec 13th. Whitewebbs Farm (1); 22 feeding on Jan 19th.

Kent: Recorded at 17 sites, no pairs. Chipstead Lake, 17 on Mar 18th. Crayford Marshes, one on Jan 24th. Otford, four on May 9th. Pratts Bottom, five on May 4th. Shoreham, three on Jun 14th, 14 on Nov 28th. Sutcliffe Park, one on May 3rd was the first site record. Twitton, four on May 9th.

Surrey: Recorded at 18 sites, 12+ pairs. Bletchingley, one on May 4th & 6th. Canons Farm (2); 33 on Jan 1st. Chessington (1). Farthing Downs (2+). Holmethorpe SP, 28 on Feb 16th, up to eight present April to July. Ridlands, no singing males for the first time in over 30 years. Rushett Farm (2). Trevereux (5+).

Ortolan Bunting Emberiza hortulana

Status: rare, but near annual occasional spring and mainly autumn migrant.

A single bird this year, which was the first since 2011. There have only been 12 records

Ortolan Bunting is a rare bird in London, and this September bird on Wanstead Flats was only present for a day. (Bob Vaughan)





Reed Bunting. (Alan Reynolds)

now since 2000, see table below for details. It was an autumn arrival, as have been 18 of the 28 records. With poor views in the morning it was thought to be a Corn Bunting, but it was correctly identified once a photo was circulated, and it was seen in better conditions later on.

Ortolan Bunting records 2000-2016: 12 records, 13 birds

Year	2000	2002	2003	2004	2007	2008	2010	2011	2016
No. of records	1	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1
No. of birds	1	1	4	1	1	1	2	1	1

Essex: Wanstead Park, juv on Sep 7th (NC, JL, BV et al).

Reed Bunting Emberiza schoeniclus

Status: fairly common but declining breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. A minimum of 195 singing males/territories (218 in 2015) with several additional sites with birds present during the breeding season. Essex, Hertfordshire and Surrey provided

over 80% of the breeding season records. The Breeding Bird Survey had too small a sample in London to show any changes since last year, but there has been a 32% decrease in the South East from 1995-2015. Below are breeding records (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), all the Inner London records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (3). Cornmill Meadows (5). Ingrebourne Valley (5). Leyton Flats (1). Mar Dyke Valley (4). Orsett Fen (8). Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (1). Rainham Marshes (54). Roding Valley Meadows NR (3). Walthamstow Marshes (8). Wanstead Flats (1-2).

Herts: Amwell NR (3). Frogmore Lakes (1). Hilfield Park Res (5). Maple Lodge NR (1). Rye Meads (20); 35 on Jan 1st and Mar 12th. St Albans (1). Stocker's Lake (3). Tyttenhanger GP (1-2).

Middx: Bayhurst Wood CP, 30 roosting on Jan 19th. Brent Res (2). Broadwater Lake (3). Bushy Park (1). Parkside Farm/Res (1). Q. Mary GP (2). Staines Moor (9). Ten Acre Wood, Yeading (2). Tottenham Marshes (1). Totteridge Valley (1). Woodberry Wetlands (1). Yeading Brook Meadows (1).

Kent: Crayford Marshes (1+); 15 on Sep 19th. Swanscombe Marshes (1).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (2). Chessington (1). Cow Common (1). Esher Common (1). Jubilee Wood (1). London Wetland Centre (5). Mayflower Park (2). Molesley Heath (1). Morden Hall Park (1). Richmond Park (23); 31 on Sep 5th. South Norwood CP (1). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (2).

In Lond: Primrose Hill, singles over on Oct 14th & 19th. Regent's Park, one on Mar 26th. Victoria Park, male on Feb 27th was believed to be the first record since 2005.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Status: declining and increasingly localised breeding resident.

Reported from 12 sites this year (similar to the 11 in 2015). There was a minimum of 12 territorial males, the same as in 2015, but these were at just three sites (six sites in 2015). There was a big increase at Rainham Marshes to nine territories, up from four in 2015. They were also recorded in the summer at six further sites. The largest flock was again at Longfield Gallops in Kent, on the edge of our recording area, but the peak there of 35 was only half the 71 recorded in 2015. Below are all records, summarised in some cases, with breeding records (no. of territories/singing males in brackets).

Essex: Bulphan Fen, eight on Dec 27th. Mar Dyke Valley, two on Oct 25th. Orsett Fen (2). Rainham Marshes (9, including three on landfill).

Herts: West Hyde, reported from Mar 25th to May 2nd, with four on Apr 29th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes (1). Dartford Marshes, three on May 3rd. Farningham, one on May 15th. Hook Green, one on Apr 30th. Horton Kirby, ten on Apr 27th. Longfield Gallops, present all year with peak of 35 on Feb 16th. Otford, one on Oct 19th.

APPENDIX I: ESCAPES

The following records relate to birds known, or presumed, to be of captive origin. In addition to those listed, there are fully-winged individuals of several species of wildfowl in collections including those at St James's Park and Bushy Park.

Black Swan Cygnus atratus

Herts: Aldenham CP, one from Oct 3rd to Nov 1st and two on Nov 7th. Hilfield Park Res, two from Nov 8th-13th.

Middx: Brent Res, one from Sep 26th-30th, and then from Nov 19th to year end. Home Park, one on Dec 27th. Ruislip Lido, one on Nov 14th.

Surrey: Barn Elms PF, one on Sep 24th. Claremont Landscape Garden, singles on Jan 1st and Nov 18th, 19th & 29th. Island Barn Res, two on Sep 22nd. Kingston-upon-Thames, singles on Aug 13th and Dec 27th & 29th. London Wetland Centre, one from Sep 24th-25th. Painshill Park, two from Sep 30th to Nov 11th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), one from Nov 6th to Dec 24th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one intermittently from Jan 1st to Sep 11th.

Whooper Swan Cygnus cygnus

Surrey: QE II Res and Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), one on Aug 13th.

Barnacle Goose Branta leucopsis

Normally, most records here are of single birds, so the reports of two and three birds below are unusual and may be wandering birds from established feral populations.

Essex: Dagenham Chase, one on May 14th. Fairlop Waters, two on Mar 20th and from Aug 3rd-21st. Fishers Green Goosefield, one on Oct 25th. KGV Res, two on Apr 24th. Rainham Marshes, three on May 19th. Walthamstow FB, one on Jan 25th. Walthamstow Res, one from 2015 to Mar 30th, three on Apr 13th, two on Apr 14th, 21st & 24th, then one on Jun 6th. Wanstead Flats, one on May 11th.

Herts: Aldenham CP, singles on May 7th and Jun 5th. Amwell NR, two on May 7th and three on Jun 29th. Cheshunt GPs, two on Apr 13th and one on Nov 26th. Ellenbrook Fields, one over on Apr 20th. Elstree, one on May 4th. Hilfield Park Res, one on Feb 14th, two on Jun 19th and then one or two on several dates between Jun 26th and Sep 4th. Lynsters Farm, one on Oct 3rd. Rye Meads, three on Jun 5th. St Albans, two over on May 12th. Stanborough Lakes, one on Mar 21st. Stocker's Lake, singles on Sep 21st, Oct 17th & 25th and Dec 29th. Tyttenhanger GP, singles from Feb 12th to Mar 4th, Apr 5th & 20th, and then until May 7th; three on May 28th, one on Jun 4th, then three on Jun 8th & 12th; singles on Sep 4th & 17th-20th, Oct 21st and Nov 15th; two on Nov 23rd & 26th and Dec 26th. Verulamium Park, singles on Mar 6th, Jun 19th and Aug 18th.

Middx: Enfield Island Village, one on Sep 18th. Springwell Lake, one over on Oct 5th. Staines Moor, three over on Apr 21st. Staines Res, one over on Jun 8th. Wormwood Scrubs, one over on Jun 5th.

Kent: Deptford Creek, one on Jun 4th.

Surrey: Esher, one on Oct 13th. Holmethorpe SP, singles on Apr 17th and Oct 27th. Island Barn Res, two on Dec 2nd. London Wetland Centre, one on Apr 22nd. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), two from Apr 13th-14th and on 16th, with three on 17th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Apr 26th.

Emperor Goose Anser canagicus

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on Dec 21st.

Ross's Goose Anser rossii

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, one on several dates from Feb 3rd to Apr 17th.

Bar-headed Goose Anser indicus

Essex: Walthamstow Res. singles on May 25th and Jun 6th.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on Dec 29th. Richmond, one on May 19th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, two on May 16th, one on 21st, two on 30th and

one on Jun 2nd.

166

Swan Goose Anser cygnoides

In Lond: R Thames between Tower Hill and Rotherhithe, one on Jul 11th.

Ruddy Shelduck Tadorna ferruginea

Herts: Hertford, two on Dec 4th.

Muscovy Duck Cairina moschata

Essex: Fairlop Waters, one on Jan 3rd. Hainault Forest, singles on Jan 18th, Feb 1st & 19th, Mar 15th, Apr 11th and Dec 16th. Mayesbrook Park, singles on Sep 18th, Oct 14th and Dec 26th. Seventy Acres Lake, one on Nov 4th.

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, one on Jun 25th.

Middx: Brent Res, three from Nov 1st into 2017.

Kent: Darenth Lakes, one on Jan 14th. Otford, three on Apr 3rd and one on Jun 16th.

Ringed Teal Callonetta leucophrys

Essex: Connaught Water, one on Dec 25th.

Wood Duck Aix sponsa

Essex: Harrow Lodge Park, two on Oct 31st and one on Dec 19th. Valentines Park, one on Apr 2nd.

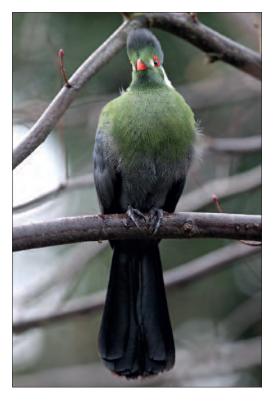
Herts: London Colney, one on Dec 12th.

Kent: Kelsey Park, singles on Jan 12th, Jun 14th, Jul 12th, Aug 9th and Oct 11th.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, two on Jul 5th.

Puna Teal Spatula puna

Essex: KGV Res, singles on Oct 13th & 29th in flood relief channel.



APPENDIX I

An escaped White-cheeked Turaco has been living wild in Wanstead since at least early 2010 and is still seen regularly. (Jonathan Lethbridge)

Grey Teal Anas gracilis

Middx: Brent Res, one on Apr 3rd.

Chestnut Teal *Anas castanea*

Middx: Hampstead Heath, pair on Mar 13th.

Helmeted Guineafowl Numidia meleagris

Herts: West End, two on May 30th, three on Jun 18th, Nov 6th and Dec 11th.

Indian Peafowl Netta rufina

Essex: Epping Forest Woodland Burial Park, three on Mar 15th, two on Apr 4th, one on

May 9th and two on Jun 7th.

Herts: Hatfield Park, singles on May 15th and Jun 12th.

White-cheeked Turaco Tauraco leucotis

Essex: Wanstead Park, one present all year.

White Pelican Pelecanus onocrotalus

In Lond: St James's Park, one present all year which on Apr 14th was buzzed by a Peregrine while soaring overhead.

Red-tailed Hawk Buteo jamaicensis

Essex: Enfield Lock, one found dead on Oct 25th.

Saker Falcon Falco cherrug

Kent: Swanscombe Marshes, one on Sep 22nd.

Cockatiel Nymphicus hollandicus

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Mar 31st. London Wetland Centre, one on Sep 12th.

Monk Parakeet Myiopsitta monachus

Herts: Borehamwood, 62 on Dec 2nd and three on Dec 17th.

Middx: Isle of Dogs/Millwall Park/Mudchute Farm, recorded seven months of the year with a peak count of 19 on Jan 4th and Dec 23rd.

Blue-crowned Parakeet *Psittacara acuticaudatus*

Kent: Kelsey Park, two on Dec 11th.

Eastern Rosella Platycercus eximius

Surrey: Morden, in a garden on Mar 24th.

Plum-headed Parakeet Psittacula cyanocephala

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Apr 4th.

Red-chested Sunbird Nectarinia erythrocerca

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Aug 6th.

Common Waxbill Estrilda astrild

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles on Jul 26th and on unspecified dates in August and September.

White-rumped Munia Lonchura striata

Surrey: Richmond Park, one on Feb 11th was the domesticated form know as Society Finch.

Pin-tailed Whydah Vidua macroura

In Lond: Camden Town, one on Apr 29th.

APPENDIX II: HYBRIDS

The following records are of wild or feral hybrids, but records of Canada x Greylag Goose hybrids are not reported here. All birds are reported as described by the observers and are listed in order of the first-named species involved. It would be helpful if observers could send photographs of hybrids, where available.

Barnacle Goose x Canada Goose

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, one on Nov 27th. Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on Dec 7th.

Barnacle Goose x Brent Goose

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, three on May 28th and Jun 11th-13th, then two on Nov 5th & 7th and three on Dec 18th.

Ruddy Shelduck x Shelduck

Essex: Barking Bay, one on Jul 23rd. Kent: Crossness, one on Oct 2nd.

Gadwall x Mallard

Surrey: Island Barn Res, one from May 5th-26th and on Sep 25th and Nov 11th.

Yellow-billed Pintail x unknown

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on May 1st.

Red-crested Pochard x Tufted Duck

Middx: Bushv Park, a male on May 1st.

Common Pochard x Red-crested Pochard

Middx: Broadwater Lake, a male on Feb 14th & 18th.

Aythya hybrids

Aytha hybrids are listed below under the described type, where such a description is given.

Aythya hybrid

Middx: Alexandra Park, singles on Feb 18th & 20th, Aug 29th and Sep 6th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, two on Jan 29th.

Common Pochard hybrid

Essex: Walthamstow Res, a male on Apr 24th and May 1st.

Common Pochard x Ferruginous Duck

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, a male on Jan 2nd.

Middx: Staines Res, a female on Jan 16th-17th, 23rd & 30th and Feb 4th, 7th & 13th; a male on Jan 17th, Feb 19th to Mar 8th, which returned on Dec 31st; a second male on Feb 27th-28th.

Common Pochard x Tufted Duck

Middx: Grovelands Park, a male on Jul 5th, 10th, 26th, 28th & 30th. Staines Res, a fem from 2015, from Jan 1st-5th, 16th-18th, 22nd & 27th, which returned from Nov 24th to year end; a male on Jan 16th-17th, 27th, 30th & 31st and Feb 9th, and a second male on Feb 27th-28th and Mar 4th-11th.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, singles on Feb 26th and Apr 11th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), regular drake on Feb 10th, Mar 29th and Dec 2nd; seen also at Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough) on Feb 4th and Dec 5th.

In Lond: St James's Park, a male on Oct 16th. Victoria Park, a male on Feb 25th.

Tufted Duck hybrid

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, singles on Feb 27th and Oct 24th.

Greater Scaup x Tufted Duck

Middx: KGVI Res, a fem on Mar 13th, 20th & 25th and Apr 2nd-3rd (the same as the Staines bird). Staines Res, a fem on Feb 27th-29th, Mar 5th-6th and Apr 12th & 25th-30th. Victoria Park, a male on Jan 28th.

Surrey: Island Barn Res, fem from Mar 17th to Apr 5th. London Wetland Centre, one on Mar 19th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), fem on Feb 23rd and Mar 11th (same as Island Barn Res).

Saker-type hybrid

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Mar 24th.

Herring Gull x Lesser Black-backed Gull

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, adult on Jul 30th.

House Martin x Swallow

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Oct 1st.

APPENDIX III: NON-PROVEN AND NON-SUBMITTED RECORDS

Non-proven records

The following records were submitted to the LNHS but have not been accepted, either by the British Birds Rarities Committee or by our Rarities Committee.

Ferruginous Duck	Gatton Park/Lake	Mar 20th
White Stork	Kelsey Park	Aug 7th
Blyth's Reed Warbler	Leg O Mutton NR	Sep 10th-11th
Siberian Chiffchaff	Greenwich Peninsula	Apr 10th & 17th

Non-submitted records

The following records have been reported but to date no details have been received by the LNHS. Photos and descriptions (or notes where appropriate) for any of these records would be welcomed, so that in due course they may be published as accepted records.

Whooper Swan	Fairlop Waters	Jan 17th
Whooper Swan	Beddington Park	Oct 15th
Ferruginous Duck	Tyttenhanger GP	Jan 2nd
Ferruginous Duck	Staines Res	Mar 3rd
Red-throated Diver	Rainham Marshes	Jun 22nd
White Stork	Watford	Apr 28th
White Stork	Heathrow Airport	Jul 22nd
White Stork	Holmethorpe SP	Jul 31st
White Stork	North Cheam	Aug 4th
White Stork	Purley	Jul 28th
Honey Buzzard	Gidea Park	Sep 8th
Honey Buzzard	Rainham Marshes	Sep 6th
Honey Buzzard	Romford	May 2nd
Honey Buzzard	Cheshunt GPs	May 13th
Honey Buzzard	Cheshunt GPs	May 14th
Honey Buzzard	Chiswick	Sep 21st
Honey Buzzard	Hornsey	May 28th
Honey Buzzard	Tottenham Marshes	Oct 5th
Honey Buzzard	Totteridge Valley	Oct 23rd
Honey Buzzard	Black Park	Jul 23rd
Honey Buzzard	Woodlands Farm, Shooters Hill	Sep 20th
Honey Buzzard	Holmethorpe SP	Aug 27th
Honey Buzzard	Nork Park	Aug 22nd
Honey Buzzard	Selsdon Woods	Aug 15th
Honey Buzzard	Wimbledon Common	May 15th
Honey Buzzard	Regent's Park	May 22nd

Δ.	PΙ	PI	F	N	ח	١X	ш

Chipstead

Cranford CP

Tyttenhanger GP

Tyttenhanger GP

Tyttenhanger GP

Q. Mother Res

Q. Mother Res

Staines Moor

South Norwood CP

Chafford Hundred

Dagenham Chase

Rainham Marshes

Broadwater Lake

Waterworks NR

Ruislip Woods

Beddington Farmlands

KGV Res

KGV Res

Brent Res

London Wetland Centre

Apr 14th & 16th Apr 9th May 4th Aug 17th Oct 15th Aug 28th-31st Sep 9th Sep 23rd Oct 10th Sep 29th Oct 2nd Aug 22nd Aug 27th May 22nd Oct 16th Mar 25th Nov 25th Mar 23rd to Apr 21st Jan 25th, 28th, 30th and Feb 5th Dec 11th Mar 25th 21ct

173

	•	
Siberian Chiffchaff	London Wetland Centre	Mar 25th-31st
Siberian Chiffchaff	London Wetland Centre	Apr 19th
Siberian Chiffchaff	Ravensbury Park	Jan 16th
Willow Tit	London Wetland Centre	Nov 20th
Golden Oriole	Pinner	Jun 19th
Golden Oriole	Barnes	Jun 19th
Golden Oriole	Godstone	May 26th
Golden Oriole	King's College Sports Ground	Jun 19th
Golden Oriole	Wallington	Jun 19th
Hooded Crow	Blackheath	Mar 19th
European Serin	Rainham Marshes	Apr 7th & 9th
Lapland Bunting	Barn Elms PF	Oct 19th
Lapland Bunting	Beddington Farmlands	Oct 22nd
Snow Bunting	Putney	Mar 6th

Records still in circulation

Hoopoe

Hoopoe

Wryneck

Blue-headed Wagtail

White Wagtail

Marsh Warbler

Marsh Warbler

Siberian Chiffchaff

Siberian Chiffchaff

Siberian Chiffchaff

Siberian Chiffchaff

Siberian Chiffchaff

Siberian Chiffchaff

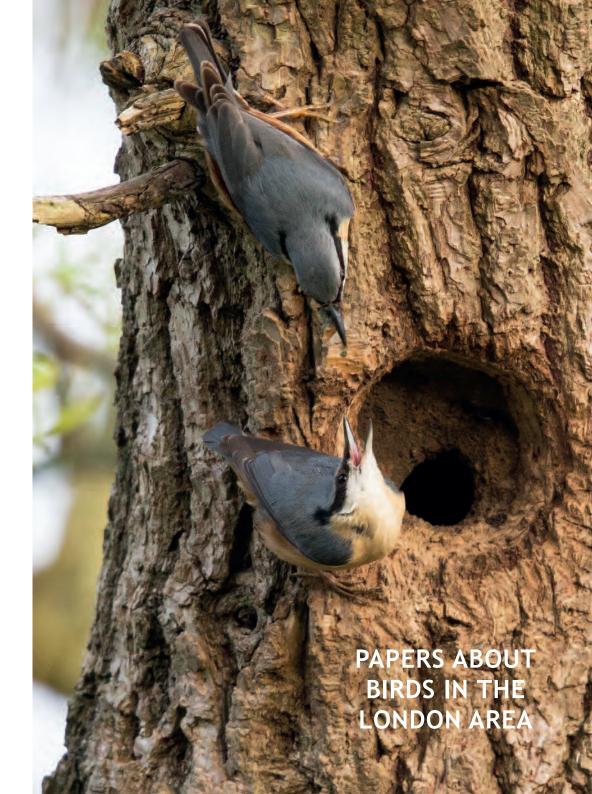
The following record is still being considered by our Rarities Committee.

	European Serin	Leyton Flats	Oct 12th	
--	----------------	--------------	----------	--

Black Kite	Claybury Woods & Park	Apr 2nd
Black Kite	Gunpowder Park	Apr 9th
Black Kite	Sevenoaks WR	Jun 27th
Black Kite	Swanley Village	May 20th
Montagu's Harrier	Rainham Marshes	May 22nd
Goshawk	Gallion's Reach	Apr 13th
Goshawk	Gunpowder Park	Nov 18th
Goshawk	Rainham Marshes	Feb 23rd
Goshawk	Rainham Marshes	Aug 29th
Goshawk	Rainham Marshes	Oct 1st
Goshawk	Rainham Marshes	Oct 9th
Goshawk	Romford	Mar 25th
Goshawk	Cheshunt GPs	Nov 22nd
Goshawk	Alexandra Park	Aug 24th
Goshawk	Enfield Town	Apr 5th
Goshawk	Pinner	Oct 16th
Goshawk	Black Park	Apr 2nd
Goshawk	Black Park	May 28th
Goshawk	Black Park	Jul 7th
Goshawk	Black Park	Jul 24th
Goshawk	Canons Farm	Apr 12th
Goshawk	Holmethorpe SP	Nov 30th
Goshawk	Leg O Mutton NR	Oct 2nd
Merlin	Fairlop Waters	Jan 17th
Merlin	Enfield Lock	Jan 19th
Merlin	Home Park	Mar 9th
Merlin	Barn Elms PF	Oct 19th
Merlin	Chipstead	Aug 7th
Merlin	Raynes Park	Oct 13th
Common Crane	Rainham Marshes	Aug 12th
Pectoral Sandpiper	KGV Res	Aug 9th
Great Skua	Rainham Marshes	Nov 1st
Great Skua	West Thurrock Marshes	Sep 16th
Great Skua	Leg O Mutton NR	Oct 2nd
Ring-billed Gull	London Wetland Centre	Mar 13th-14th
Iceland Gull	Fulham Reach	Dec 2nd
Iceland Gull	Woolwich	Mar 11th
Iceland Gull	Morden Hall Park	Feb 28th
Iceland Gull	Watermeads	Mar 4th
Iceland Gull	Victoria	Dec 30th
Roseate Tern	Gallion's Reach	Apr 24th
Roseate Tern	Rainham Marshes	Aug 18th
European Nightjar	Farningham Woods	May 8th
Ноорое	Nazeing Meads	Jun 9th
Ноорое	Orpington	May 2nd

FIRST AND LAST DATES OF REGULAR MIGRANTS

Summer Migrants	Arrival		Depart	ure
Garganey	Mar 21	Island Barn Res	Sep 29	Beddington Farmlands
Osprey	Mar 14	North Finchley	Oct 2	Leg O Mutton NR/Woodford Green
Hobby	Apr 2	Black Park	Oct 7	Rainham Marshes/Rye Meads
Little Ringed Plover	Mar 14	Wraysbury Res	Oct 6	KGVI Res
Eurasian Whimbrel	Mar 13	Q. Elizabeth Olympic Park	Sep 24	London Wetland Centre
Little Tern	Apr 30	Holmethorpe SP	Sep 14	Gallions Reach
Black Tern	Apr 16	Walthamstow Res	Sep 28	Gallions Reach
Sandwich Tern	Mar 31	Gallions Reach	Oct 5	Dartford Marshes
Common Tern	Mar 30	Rainham Marshes/	Oct 31	Crossness
		Hilfield Park Res		
Arctic Tern	Apr 6	Rainham Marshes	Oct 9	Gallions Reach
Turtle Dove	May 7	North Weald	Sep 29	Fairlop Waters
Common Cuckoo	Apr 7	North Weald Bassett	Sep 8	Richmond Park
Common Swift	Apr 15	Rainham Marshes/	Sep 30	West Wickham
		Walthamstow Res		
Sand Martin	Mar 13	Belhus Woods CP	Oct 13	Tottenham Hale
Swallow	Mar 11	Hayes Hill Farm	Dec 12	Rickmansworth
House Martin	Mar 27	Three sites	Oct 24	Banstead Wood
Tree Pipit	Mar 28	Dulwich Park	Oct 11	Primrose Hill
Yellow Wagtail	Mar 28	Holmethorpe SP	Oct 16	KGVI Res
Nightingale	Apr 14	Swanscombe Marshes	Jul 12	Northfleet
Common Redstart	Apr 2	Holyfield Hall Farm	Oct 18	Tottenham Marshes
Whinchat	Apr 12	Upper College Farm	Oct 13	Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough)
Northern Wheatear	Mar 23	London Wetland Centre	Oct 31	Staines Res
Ring Ouzel	Mar 24	London Wetland Centre	Nov 21	Brent Res
Grasshopper Warbler	Apr 8	Rye Meads	Sep 24	Wimbledon Common
Sedge Warbler	Apr 2	Rainham Marshes	Oct 9	Stanwell Moor
Reed Warbler	Apr 3	Rainham Marshes	Oct 17	East India Dock Basin
Garden Warbler	Mar 27	Hadley Wood	Oct 8	Rainham Marshes
Lesser Whitethroat	Apr 8	Rye Meads	Oct 12	Stanwell Moor
Common Whitethroat	Mar 29	Molesey Heath	Oct 3	Hilfield Park Res
Wood Warbler	Apr 21	Sevenoaks WR	Aug 25	Weald CP
Willow Warbler	Mar 12	Purley	Oct 21	Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park
Spotted Flycatcher	Apr 23	Brockwell Park	Oct 9	Staines Moor
Pied Flycatcher	Apr 9	Woodberry Wetlands	Sep 23	Wanstead Flats
Winter Migrants	Depart	ure	Arrival	
Smew	Mar 22	Friday Lake	Nov 10	Friday Lake
Goosander	Apr 9	KGV Res	Sep 12	KGV Res
Bittern	Mar 19	Seventy Acres Lake	Sep 18	Rye Meads
Jack Snipe	May 4	Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth)	Sep 20	Brent Res
Rock Pipit	Apr 22	Rainham Marshes	Sep 17	Rainham Marshes
Water Pipit	Apr 16	Beddington Farmlands	Oct 8	Beddington Farmlands
Fieldfare	Apr 21	Totteridge Valley/Vicarage Farm	Sep 22	Orpington
Redwing	Apr 26	Dagenham Chase	Sep 17	Brook Farm, Upminster
Brambling	Apr 27	London Wetland Centre	Oct 2	Brent Res



Ringing Report by Paul Roper 177

Cory's Shearwater at the Regent's Park, September 15th 2016 - the first for London by David Johnson 184

The Breeding Bird Survey in London by Ian Woodward 187

An Historic Review of the Birds of the Kentish Inner Thames Marshes to 1900 by John F. Burton 190

The Birds of Franks Park, Belvedere, 2001-2016 by Andrew S. Waller 220

Oriental Turtle Dove at Otford, Kent, February 18th 2016 - the first for London by Barry Wright 225

BTO House Martin Survey at Aldborough Hall Equestrian Centre: a Thriving Colony by Chris Gannaway 228

Two articles are posted on the LNHS website as part of this issue:

Foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls by Alan Gibson - the regular spreadsheet based on Alan's reports is now cumulative and includes all his records from 2013 to 2016; and

A Study of the Movements and Site Fidelity of Foreign Ringed Black-headed Gulls in St James's Park, 1983-86 by A.P. Gosling - this report was first published in LBR No.50 for 1985 and is included for historical reference. NB. This file is not searchable.

Both files can be downloaded at:

http://www.lnhs.org.uk >

Publications > London Bird Report > Downloads. 'London Bird Report 2016'

Previous page: The records indicate that the status of Nuthatch is improving in London. (Andrew Moon)

RINGING REPORT

PAUL ROPER

Ringing in London is carried out by a range of groups, partnerships and individuals. Full details of all ringing and recoveries can be found on the BTO website, from where all of the data for this report has been downloaded, giving a more accurate and repeatable data set for the LNHS recording area (the 'London Area').

From now on, some scientific comparisons on ringing data between years may be possible and may have some meaning - assuming effort is reasonably consistent. Numbers of many species ringed vary year on year due to a range of factors such as ringer effort and coverage, or weather conditions which can have a marked effect on catching success and final totals for any year. For these reasons many changes in species figures in this type of report are not a reflection of population levels but more often ringer activity. A much better reflection of population levels is through Constant Effort Sites (CES), and a number are running in the London Area; the data is pooled nationally and can be found on the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) website:

https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/surveys/ces

The BTO online data for ringing in the UK is now being given for the London Area, and for 2016 this shows a total of 25,146 birds ringed of which 2,993 were nestlings and 22,153 were full-grown fledged birds.

Detailed information on birds ringed and recovered can be found for the London Area at: New birds ringed: https://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/results2016/ringGBLO2016.htm Ringed birds recovered: https://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/results2016/recGBLO2016.htm

The BTO website splits the totals into the following categories: Pullus, Juvenile, Adult, Unaged, Retrapped and Recovered. For the purpose of this report Unaged, Juvenile and Adult totals have been merged into full-grown as one column in Table 1. Annual totals are also given for the previous two years, also in Table 1. Readers who refer back to previous reports will notice adjustments in totals for 2014 and 2015. Late totals have been added to the BTO database and for 2014 the total has risen from 26,894 to 27,358 and for 2015 from 26,974 to 27,004. Additions of note were a Nightjar, a Wryneck, three Skylark and a Bearded Tit - all ringed in 2014.

Numbers of wildfowl remained fairly stable in 2016 with larger numbers of Egyptian Geese, Teal and Tufted Duck ringed. No Buzzards were ringed, and Peregrine continues to decrease in numbers ringed. Fewer wader species were ringed - although a welcome return was a single Woodcock. North Thames Gull Group has now completely stopped at Rainham, so numbers of gulls will be greatly reduced. Two Tree Pipits and two Water Pipits were of note as were no Spotted Flycatchers; four Bearded Tits were also an increase on recent years. Warbler totals were fairly stable compared to recent years although four Grasshopper Warblers were of note; the star bird was the addition of a Yellow-browed Warbler. Finally, Redpoll numbers remained reasonable and recoveries of this species continue to yield interesting data on their movements and origins. Full details of all species ringed in 2016 are given in Table 1.

The BTO relies on people reporting ringed birds, so if you find a bird wearing a ring or have read metal or colour rings in the field, please report the details at www.ring.ac

Table 1. Species totals of birds reported as ringed in the London Area during 2016 and comparison totals for 2015 and 2014.

Key: FG = full-grown; pul = nestling (pullus)

Species	pul	FG	Total	Total	Total	Species	pul	FG	Total	Total	Total
•	•		2016			•	-			2015	
Mute Swan	42	301	343	404	248	Collared Dove	0	11	11	18	20
Greylag Goose	2	11	13	5	8	Ring-necked Parakee	t 0	57	57	27	33
Canada Goose	49	168	217	221	109	Cuckoo	1	0	1	0	0
Egyptian Goose	37	46	83	57	59	Barn Owl	29	5	34	22	57
Mandarin	0	0	0	3	13	Little Owl	3	0	3	3	1
Gadwall	6	9	15	21	4	Tawny Owl	4	2	6	6	15
Teal	0	13	13	6	7	Nightjar	0	0	0	0	1
Mallard	12	68	80	68	34	Swift	3	24	27	4	34
Shoveler	0	0	0	1	1	Kingfisher	0	62	62	78	67
Pochard	5	1	6	3	0	Wryneck	0	0	0	0	1
Tufted Duck	24	22	46	12	8	Green Woodpecker	0	33	33	19	43
Little Grebe	1	4	5	3	7	Gt Sptd Woodpecker	0	69	69	72	92
Great Crested Grebe	e 0	1	1	0	0	Lsr Sptd Woodpecker	0	0	0	1	0
Little Egret	22	0	22	12	13	Skylark	0	0	0	0	3
Grey Heron	16	3	19	21	43	Sand Martin	273	80	353	118	184
Sparrowhawk	6	16	22	19	21	Swallow	146	398	544	665	1441
Buzzard	0	0	0	3	3	House Martin	0	11	11	11	32
Kestrel	25	5	30	28	45	Tree Pipit	0	2	2	0	1
Hobby	0	1	1	3	1	Meadow Pipit	0	136	136	122	303
Peregrine	1	0	1	4	10	Water Pipit	0	2	2	0	0
Water Rail	0	2	2	6	3	Yellow Wagtail	0	0	0	0	1
Moorhen	1	28	29	26	21	Grey Wagtail	19	23	42	27	40
Coot	17	189	206	56	42	Pied Wagtail	3	7	10	8	11
Ringed Plover	0	0	0	0	3	Wren	8	676	684	661	588
Lapwing	8	0	8	8	25	Dunnock	21	764	785	875	893
Jack Snipe	0	7	7	5	12	Robin	32	947	979	972	1098
Snipe	0	16	16	5	32	Nightingale	0	0	0	1	0
Woodcock	0	1	1	0	0	Black Redstart	0	0	0	1	0
Common Sandpiper	0	2	2	7	2	Redstart	0	3	3	3	4
Green Sandpiper	0	7	7	10	4	Whinchat	0	1	1	1	0
Redshank	0	0	0	0	2	Stonechat	0	2	2	7	2
Black-headed Gull	121	17	138	431	412	Wheatear	0	1	1	0	1
Common Gull	0	0	0	5	1	Blackbird	19	639	658	595	801
Lsr Black-backed Gu	ll 0	0	0	4	2	Fieldfare	0	9	9	3	24
Herring Gull	0	0	0	19	35	Song Thrush	0	268	268	257	327
Yellow-legged Gull	0	0	0	1	1	Redwing	0	318	318	173	256
Gt Black-backed Gul	ll 0	0	0	0	2	Mistle Thrush	0	3	3	6	10
Common Tern	46	0	46	66	108	Cetti's Warbler	0	120	120	126	107
Stock Dove	21	11	32	24	23	Grasshopper Warbler	0	4	4	0	3
Woodpigeon	2	72	74	45	59	Sedge Warbler	66	404	470	577	662

Blackcap 3 2228 2231 2883 2727 Magpie 11 32 43 58 58 58 Garden Warbler 0 334 334 453 337 Jackdaw 13 11 24 37 4 Lesser Whitethroat 0 93 93 104 87 Rook 0 0 0 0 1 Whitethroat 4 626 630 766 706 Carrion Crow* 2 2 2 4 1 Yellow-brwd Warbler 0 1 1 0 0 Starling 0 1915 1915 1356 149	14
Garden Warbler 0 334 334 453 337 Jackdaw 13 11 24 37 4 Lesser Whitethroat 0 93 93 104 87 Rook 0 0 0 0 1 Whitethroat 4 626 630 766 706 Carrion Crow* 2 2 2 4 1 Yellow-brwd Warbler 0 1 1 0 0 Starling 0 1915 1915 1356 149	67
Lesser Whitethroat 0 93 93 104 87 Rook 0 0 0 1 Whitethroat 4 626 630 766 706 Carrion Crow* 2 2 4 1 Yellow-brwd Warbler 0 1 1 0 0 Starling 0 1915 1915 1356 149	54
Whitethroat 4 626 630 766 706 Carrion Crow * 2 2 4 1 Yellow-brwd Warbler 0 1 1 0 0 Starling 0 1915 1915 1356 149	40
Yellow-brwd Warbler 0 1 1 0 0 Starling 0 1915 1915 1356 149	0
	4
Chiffchaff 7 2162 2169 1990 1453 House Sparrow 0 166 166 132 16	194
	165
Willow Warbler 0 334 334 191 207 Tree Sparrow 71 10 81 36 5	56
Goldcrest 0 750 750 1033 323 Chaffinch 3 233 236 223 29	298
Firecrest 0 9 9 15 6 Greenfinch 0 217 217 244 40	103
Spotted Flycatcher 0 0 0 1 7 Goldfinch 0 800 800 743 87	370
Pied Flycatcher 0 0 0 1 0 Siskin 0 369 369 43 10	107
Bearded Tit 0 4 4 0 1 Linnet 0 28 28 54 6	63
Long-tailed Tit 0 785 785 982 769 Redpoll Sp 0 0 0 2	7
Blue Tit 899 2035 2934 4217 4086 Lesser Redpoll 0 117 117 205 9	93
Great Tit 765 1147 1912 2405 2709 Bullfinch 0 80 80 103 12	127
Coal Tit 0 105 105 143 91 Yellowhammer 0 13 13 10 2	26
Marsh Tit 0 0 0 1 0 Reed Bunting 19 69 88 139 16	166
Nuthatch 5 23 28 20 22 Total 2993 25146 2735	358
Treecreeper 0 51 51 50 58 22153 27004	

^{*} or Hooded Crow

Recoveries and Controls

A number of interesting recoveries have been reported during the year; a small selection of these are listed below along with some maps showing some species of note. As mentioned on page 177, all recoveries in the London Area can now be found on the BTO website at https://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/results2016/recGBLO2016.htm

The first line shows the ring number, the age (and sex) when ringed, and the date and site of original ringing; the second line the status, date and site of subsequent recovery or recapture including the distance (1 km = 0.625 miles) and number of days between original ringing and final recovery. Dates are in the format dd-mm-yyyy.

Key to symbols used:

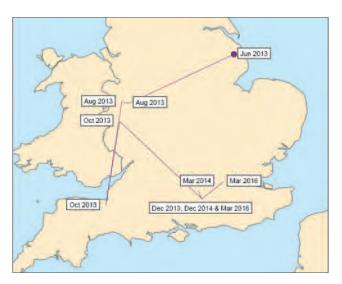
ad	Adult	М	Male			VV	Ring or colour marks
F	Female	pul	Pullus/Nestling				read in the field
J	Juvenile	R	Caught & released by	ring	ger	Χ	Found dead
EUR	ING Codes for the age	of th	e bird when ringed.	2	Current o	alend	dar year or any age older
0	Not aged			3	In First c	alend	ar year
1	Pullus/Nestling			4	Second c	alend	ar year or older
1J	In first calendar year	and o	close to nest	5	In second	l cale	ndar year

Cormorant

S6941	1	03-07-2011	Saaremaa, Vesitukimaa, Estonia
	VV	06-11-2012	Greenland Docks, Rotherhithe, In Lond/Surrey
			1582km WSW: 492d

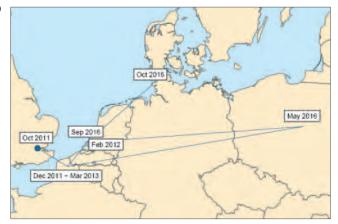
Little Egret GR3634 re-sighting history

Ringing location



Caspian Gull GR15619 re-sighting history

Ringing location



Swallow movement to the London Area

 Ringing location of bird recovered elsewhere



Maps by Garganey Consulting

Little Egret (see map opposite)

Little Egret (s			to official consideration to the second of t
			ts of birds over time can be more interesting than individual
			e wanderings around the UK as well as 2016 London sightings.
GR36342	1	10-06-2013	North Cotes, Lincolnshire
	VV	19-03-2016	Badshot Lea, Aldershot, Surrey; 258km SSW; 1013d
	VV	27-03-2016	London Wetland Centre, Surrey; 225km S; 1021d
Kestrel			
7222312	1F	29-06-2015	Hornsjo, Nordmaling, Västerbotten, PSweden
	R	17-05-2016	Queen Mary Res, Surrey; 1813km SW; 232d
Peregrine			
GR43538	1M	19-05-2012	Vauxhall, In Lond/Surrey
	VV	24-05-2012	Vauxhall, In Lond/Surrey 0km; 5d
	VV	29-05-2016	Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham
		£11-07-2016	178km NNW; 1514d
Dunlin			
PLG	4	29-07-2013	Ujscie Wisly, Swibno, Pomorskie, Poland
JT43662	VV	08-02-2016	Rainham Marshes RSPB, Thurrock, Essex
			1295km WSW; 924d
Green Sandpi	per		,
A long-lived in			
NV29967	3	31-07-2004	Rye Meads, Herts
.,,_,,,,	VV	25-08-2016	Rye Meads, Herts; 0km; 4408d
Mediterranea		20 00 20.0	Tye medal, metal, etan, meda
		n 5 recoveries of	this species
5412165	1	20-06-2015	Pionierinsel Luhe, Stade, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
3112103	VV	24-11-2015	Alexandra Park, Muswell Hill, Middx; 693km WSW; 157d
Yellow-legged		21 11 2013	Accounted Fairly Mastrett Fitte, Midday, 075kill 11574
GR92818	5	22-02-2014	Rainham Tip, Essex
GR72010	VV	27-02-2014	Blaringhem, Nord, Prance; 179km ESE; 5d
	VV	09-04-2014	Preverenges, Vaud, "Switzerland; "720km SE; 46d
	VV	23-10-2016	Walenstadt, St. Gallen, Switzerland; 821km SE; 974d
Casaian Cull			wateristadt, 5t. Gatteri, Switzerland, 62 ikiri 5E, 974d
Caspian Gull			life history than the two simblines in 2017, the man
			nas more life history than the two sightings in 2016; the map
		ull movements o	
GR15619	3	22-10-2011	Rainham Tip, Essex
	R	02-05-2016	Rz. Wisla, Zastow Karczmiski, Poland; 1501km E; 1654d
	VV	29-09-2016	Brouwersdam, Scharendijke, Zeeland, The Netherlands
			253km E; 1804d
		ap on page 182)	
SX40911	1	05-07-2013	Richmond Park, Surrey
	R	14-04-2016	La Somone, Senegal; 4376km SSW; 1014d
Swallow (see	map opp	osite)	
U3772	4	31-07-2015	Uzovsky Salgov, Sabinov,¤Slovakia
	Χ	11-06-2016	Epsom Downs Stables, Surrey; 1536km W; 316d

Common Tern movement from the London Area

 London Area ringing location of bird recovered elsewhere



Lesser Redpoll movement from the London Area

- London Area ringing location of bird recovered elsewhere
- Ringing location of bird recovered in the London Area



Maps by Garganey Consulting

Stonechat			
D544345	1	19-06-2016	near Brandon Park, Suffolk
	VV	26-10-2016	Crossness Nature Reserve, Kent
	VV	& 31-10-2016	107km SSW; 134d
Fieldfare			
CT50082	5F	10-01-2014	Home Cottage Farm, Bucks
	Χ	10-06-2016	Bottnarna, Indal, Västernorrland, Sweden; 1619km NE; 882
Redwing			
RL89474	3	20-11-2015	Broadwater Gravel Pit (Lake), Middx
	R	09-10-2016	Silt Fen Farm, Norfolk; 124km NNE; 324d
Marsh Warbl	er		
The following	g bird, rir	nged abroad, was	found here and reported in 2016.
13990692	3	02-08-2015	Wortegem, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium
	R	20-07-2016	London Wetland Centre, Surrey; 269km WNW; 353d
Chiffchaff			
HEK632	4	29-12-2015	Rye Meads, Herts
	R	06-01-2016	Rye Meads, Herts; 0km; 8d
	Χ	03-04-2016	Egtved, Syddanmark, Vejle, Denmark; 747km ENE; 96d
Coal Tit			
BLB	3	21-09-2015	Berlare, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium
10845299	R	07-03-2016	Iver Heath, Bucks; 322km WNW; 168d
Siskin			
S039062	5M	04-03-2016	Blackheath Park, Kent
	R	25-06-2016	Kerrow, Cannich, Highland; 723km NNW; 113d
D557487	5M	23-05-2014	Inverarnie, Highland
	R	29-02-2016	Iver Heath, Bucks; 692km SSE; 647d
Z962562	5M	23-01-2016	Queen Mary Reservoir, Surrey
	Χ	06-05-2016	Feshiebridge, Highland; 670km NNW; 104d
Y334734	4M	09-02-2012	Iver Heath, Bucks
	R	31-03-2016	Cnoc, Argyll and Bute; 586km NNW; 1512d
Lesser Redpo	oll (see n	nap opposite)	
Z891852	5	13-03-2016	Tandridge, Surrey
	R	15-08-2016	nr Dalchork, nr Lairg, Highland; 808km NNW; 155d
Z834974	4M	26-11-2015	Queen Mary Reservoir, Surrey
	R	23-04-2016	Deer Park Forest Croft, Highland; 724km NNW; 149d
Y516269	4	20-10-2015	Copeland Bird Observatory, Down, N Ireland
	Χ	15-02-2016	Totteridge, Middx; 491km SE; 118d
S375837	3	26-07-2016	Howgill, Cumbria
	R	18-10-2016	Queen Mary Reservoir, Surrey; 413km SSE; 84d
D259533	5M	30-03-2014	Hilfield, Elstree, Herts
	R	17-04-2016	Branch End, Stocksfield, Northumbria; 380km NNW; 749d
Z542798	3F	10-10-2015	Rye Meads, Herts
	R	27-11-2015	Glabbeek, Brabant, Belgium; 357km ESE; 48d

RINGING REPORT

Paul Roper. ntgg_sightings@hotmail.co.uk

CORY'S SHEARWATER AT THE REGENT'S PARK, SEPTEMBER 15TH 2016 - THE FIRST FOR LONDON

DAVID JOHNSON

During a very warm week, where temperatures reached the very high 20s, I decided to fill up the bird baths which are situated in areas fenced off from the public in order that the birds can drink and bathe in peace. The week had already produced some good migrants: four Whinchat, three Yellow Wagtails, a Spotted Flycatcher, a Kingfisher and good numbers of common migrants such as Whitethroats, Chiffchaffs and Blackcaps. At around 10:40 I filled up the drinking pool in the Cricket Pen; it was a very hot morning and the breeze was coming from a north-easterly direction. After filling up the bath I walked away, and immediately a Chiffchaff and two Blackcaps came down to drink. At this moment I thought I would go outside the pen to look back at the pool from a better angle in the hope that something a bit more exciting would come down to drink.

After about five minutes of no activity I started to sky-watch and look for any passing raptors that might be going over. The first bird I saw was coming towards me about 120 metres (400 feet) up and from a north-easterly direction. With my naked eye it looked large, its plumage was very white on the underparts and its jizz was a bit odd. It flew and glided on bowed wings and the flapping was very leisurely and relaxed, not appearing to be in any great hurry to get anywhere. When I lifted my binoculars, I could easily see the bulky pale yellow bill with its dark tip, and the neat, dark edging to the wings which stood out against the very white underside of wings, breast, belly and undertail coverts; these dark edgings formed a dark patch at the primary tips. The white underside was very silky when the sun was on the bird, the wings were long and slender and the face darkish. I had really good views of it in full sunshine for about a minute as the bird was leisurely cruising around above me, then all of a sudden it started to drift south-west.

I knew what it was (and was struggling to believe it!) and phoned Tony Duckett. I knew where he was working - we were separated by a tall, native hedgerow and he was about 80 metres away from me. I shouted: "CORY'S SHEARWATER drifting over Longbridge heading south-west", and thankfully Tony also saw the bird and managed to take some record images of it before it drifted out of view behind a willow tree.

Occasionally it would thermal and bank, showing off its dark upperparts. I was surprised how well the pale yellow bill stood out in the bright sunshine. At one stage the bird even started flying back towards us, and I hoped it would come down to the lake, but it just thermalled up higher and went south-west. Tony and I were shouting to each other to make sure we both had the bird in view; I am not sure what the joggers and dog walkers thought of us but it was very exciting.

I have seen lots of Great and Cory's Shearwaters, and had just come back from a long weekend of Scilly pelagics run by Bob Flood. These I did on August 26th, 27th and 28th, when I saw over 300 Great and 80+ Cory's Shearwaters, so these species were still very fresh in my mind. The only thing that briefly threw me was the jizz because I had never









All these images are of the Cory's Shearwater flapping and soaring to gain height as it was drifting away:

- 1 This is the typical shape that shows best the characteristics of the Cory's - especially the head and the large bill.
- **2** This image shows the Cory's gliding and flapping on bowed wings.
- **3** Here you can see the white underside and long wings as it glides.
- 4 A nice shot of the white underwing showing the dark edging which runs into a dark patch at the primary tips; also, really deep bowed wings and white to the side of tail and breast.
- **5** This was the last we saw of the Cory's as it drifted south-west and vanished behind this willow tree.

(All photos, Tony Duckett)



seen a Cory's Shearwater this high up directly above me. Usually I have seen them shearing the waves.

Tony Duckett did extremely well getting the images, and he was up against a glaring sun, heat haze, his camera was on the wrong settings and there was no time to adjust these as the bird was drifting away. I feel without these images the record would struggle to be accepted as it is a very very unusual and unique record.

I believe this to be only the third inland record. The first was on the October 2nd 1971 at Chasewater Reservoir in Staffordshire; this bird was released at the coast but unfortunately died. The second was found at Woodfalls in Wiltshire in a chicken-pen on September 3rd 1984 and was released on the Dorset coast.

After working 26 years (and counting) as a wildlife officer in Regent's Park, I have finally contributed to the London Bird List - something I personally have wanted to do -but this species, Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris borealis*, was never ever on my radar.

Afterthoughts

After the bird disappeared from view I immediately phoned Rare Bird Alert and told them what the bird was, which direction it was flying and what time I saw the bird, in the hope that other birders might get to see it. Unfortunately, as far as I am aware, no other birders managed to see it. I was surprised that the Cory's Shearwater did not come down on one of the many reservoirs in south-west London. These bodies of water are huge and were directly in the Cory's line of flight. Most probably the bird must have carried on flying over them; I hope it made it back to the sea.

When the news came on Rare Bird Alert and other information services, people started to question my sighting, saying: "are you sure that is what you saw?", "are you sure it wasn't an Osprey?" and other disbelieving queries. I told all the doubters that there were record shots of it and these would appear on Twitter and the Rare Bird Alert gallery. As soon as these photos were viewed, the response was: "WOW, what an outrageous and incredible record!"

It just goes to show that working a local patch can be extremely rewarding and that birding can be unpredictable; you never know what will be your next sighting. I shall never forget this sighting; it is still hard to believe.

Acknowledgement

Thanks again to Tony Duckett for these images.

David Johnson, Nursery Lodge, Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London, NW1 4NY

THE BREEDING BIRD SURVEY IN LONDON

IAN WOODWARD

The BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) was introduced in 1994 to provide a measure of the population changes of our common and widespread birds. One-kilometre squares were chosen at random by BBS organisers at the BTO. Each square is allocated to a volunteer, who makes two early-morning transect walks between April and June, separated by at least four weeks. The survey is repeated each year, following the same route. All birds observed are counted; not just those known to be breeding. By comparing counts of birds made on the same squares in successive years, it is possible to measure population changes.

Where species are sufficiently widespread, changes in population can be measured at regional level as well as at national level. This report covers the London government office region, and therefore does not represent the entire LNHS area.

In 2016, a total of 106 squares were surveyed in the London region, the same number as in 2015 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number of squares covered over the most-recent ten years .

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
119	109	110	105	98	99	112	108	106	106

In 2016, a total of 93 species were recorded during BBS visits, including a Redbreasted Merganser, the first time this species has been recorded on BBS walks in London, taking the total seen on London squares to 136 species. Other sightings in 2016 included a Wood Warbler, the equal second highest total for Wheatear (five birds) and the first Cetti's Warbler recorded on BBS walks since 2010. As in previous years, Feral Pigeon, Woodpigeon and Starling were the most abundantly recorded species in 2016.

Table 2 shows the population changes in London between 2015/2016 and 1995/2015, compared with the change found nationally over these periods. The criterion for inclusion in the table is that a species occurs in an average of 30 squares per year over the survey period 1994 to 2016, which is considered to be the minimum number to provide reliable trends. As a result of the low number of squares covered in the early years of the survey, we can report on only 27 species, with no new species being added to the report in 2016.

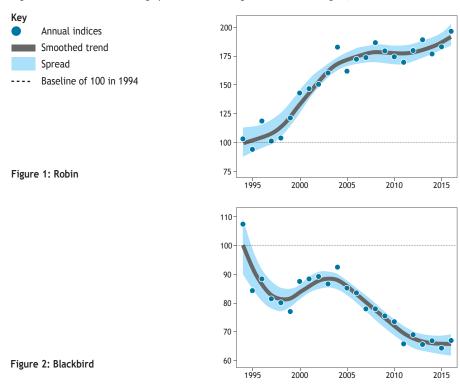
Fifteen species show a statistically significant increase in London between 1995 and 2015, and seven species show a significant decrease in London: Feral Pigeon; Swift; Starling; Blackbird; Song Thrush; Mistle Thrush; and House Sparrow.

Just two species showed statistically significant population changes between 2015 and 2016 in London. Blue Tit decreased significantly, following a significant increase the previous year (2014/15); however Wren increased between 2015 and 2016.

BBS results show that two widespread UK species, Blackbird and Robin, common both in gardens and the wider countryside, have experienced similar increases across the UK

over the last 20 years (of 22% and 25% respectively) but show very different trends in Greater London (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). The increase for Robin (84%) has been greater than that in the UK as a whole, whereas the decline of Blackbird in London (-28%) contrasts with increases elsewhere. The reason for the decline in Greater London is unknown. Sanderson (2010) suggested that the removal of autumn leaves could have affected feeding opportunities and be a possible factor behind the decline observed in Kensington Gardens, and he also considered the risk of nest predation having a larger adverse effect at a site level once numbers were low. Climate change could also potentially affect feeding opportunities as drier summers could make it more difficult for Blackbirds to feed on worms and other soil invertebrates.

Figures 1 & 2. BBS index trend-graphs for the London government office region, 1994-2016.



Editorial note to Table 2: 'Sample size London' is the mean number of squares per year on which the species was recorded over the course of the BBS survey (1994-2016 for the 2016 paper). The figures in the remaining columns are percentages. Writing explanatory text would be complicated, to convey something that is both accurate and concise; further information on BBS is at: http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/bbs

Table 2. Population changes in numbers of birds in the BTO's London region compared with the United Kingdom. (Icl=lower confidence limit; ucl=upper confidence limit; figures in blue type are statistically significant). The long-term trend has been smoothed. As smoothing involves truncation of the end points this trend is labelled as 1995/2015, even though the survey period covered is from 1994 to 2016.

	Sample	Change	Change	Change	Change	Change	Change
	size	2015/2016	2015/2016	1995/2015	1995/2015	1995/2015	1995/2015
	London	London	UK	London	London lcl	London ucl	UK
Mallard	43	-1	2	-20	-43	22	18
Feral Pigeon	73	-7	-10	-24	-36	-4	-21
Woodpigeon	82	1	-3	56	22	93	35
Collared Dove	52	-7	-7	-10	-34	26	3
Ring-necked Parakee	et 42	35	12	>10,000	-	-	1,455
Common Swift	58	-4	-7	-54	-69	-33	-51
Green Woodpecker	31	-5	-4	46	4	117	31
Great Sp. Woodpeck	er 38	11	-7	53	20	91	130
Magpie	81	-2	-6	36	15	65	-2
Jay	40	-14	-8	-14	-34	15	19
Carrion Crow	82	12	1	46	11	90	18
Blue Tit	81	-17	-7	13	-8	44	1
Great Tit	76	-4	-12	108	72	168	37
Long-tailed Tit	33	-34	2	78	15	196	17
Chiffchaff	33	-1	8	144	64	284	109
Blackcap	46	11	-11	171	111	261	145
Wren	76	15	9	42	23	76	32
Starling	79	-15	-10	-57	-68	-46	-51
Blackbird	82	4	-2	-28	-38	-15	22
Song Thrush	51	21	5	-35	-50	-17	22
Mistle Thrush	34	20	4	-53	-70	-34	-25
Robin	79	7	7	84	52	121	25
Dunnock	62	1	-1	29	1	69	23
House Sparrow	69	1	-6	-73	-80	-66	-6
Chaffinch	57	-18	-11	88	35	204	-2
Greenfinch	60	-2	-16	-28	-47	5	-46
Goldfinch	50	6	-6	412	247	666	122

Reference

SANDERSON, R., 2010. Autumn bird counts in Kensington Gardens, 1925-2010. Lond. Bird Rep. 75: 209-215.

Ian Woodward, 245 Larkshall Road, Chingford, London, E4 9HY ian.woodward@bto.org

AN HISTORIC REVIEW OF THE BIRDS OF THE KENTISH INNER THAMES MARSHES TO 1900

JOHN F. BURTON

Dedicated to the memory of Peter Grant and Ken Palmer

Introduction

In the early 1950s I did much of my bird-watching on the Kentish Thames-side marshes between Greenwich and Gravesend, especially the Plumstead Marshes and the Dartford and Stone Marshes. Up to about 1970 rather few ornithologists visited this area, most preferring to travel farther east to the more extensive and relatively unspoilt marshes beyond Gravesend (see Gilham & Homes, 1950). Although I also bird-watched on the latter, I made a point of concentrating on the then rather unfashionable marshes closer to London, partly as it was easier for me to reach them from my then home at Charlton, in the Borough of Greenwich.

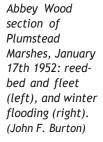
Despite their closeness to London and the steady encroachment of industry on to these marshes from the late 19th century onwards, I found bird-watching there to be quite rewarding. From 1948 till 1953, when I joined the staff of the British Trust for Ornithology, I was on the staff of the Natural History Museum at South Kensington. At that time it was my intention to write an account of the observations I made of the birds of these particular marshes, incorporating the contemporary observations of fellow ornithologists, such as those of the late Ken Palmer, as well as historical records. In connection with the latter, I spent a lot of my free time in the Museum's libraries, poring through such 19th-century journals as the *Zoologist* (every volume checked from 1843 to 1914) and *The Field*, etc., as well as appropriate books, and extracting the



records I found on to index cards. Unfortunately, events, such as moving to Oxford to become Assistant Secretary of the BTO and then studying at the university, before joining the BBC Natural History Unit in Bristol in 1960, where I stayed until retirement in 1988, overtook my plans and I never completed my project.

In 1964, however, I learned that a then LNHS member, Mr. Clive Jolly, was planning an ecological study of Swanscombe Marshes and was appealing in the Society's *Ornithological Bulletin* for past records. As a result of my sending him my Swanscombe records and explaining that they were part of my project to cover the whole of the marshes from Greenwich to Gravesend, he then became interested in extending his study to cover the whole area, and, at his request, I sent him all my notes and my card index. Unfortunately, for understandable reasons, he was also unable to complete the project and I and the Society lost contact with him. Then 'out of the blue' and to my delight I received an email from him in July 2014 telling me that he had discovered my present whereabouts and would be happy to return my data, which he did in October 2014.

Only now have I found the time to take up the project again. However, as I had contributed a detailed manuscript account of my observations to the late R.C. Homes for use in *The Birds of the London Area* (LNHS 1957, 1964) and contributed my observations also to the *London Bird Report* from 1947 to 1953, there seemed no point in offering them now for publication, especially as various papers have appeared since then in the *LBR* on some of these Thames-side marshes (e.g., Wheatley, 1991; Morris & Wright, 1992)) and in the late Jeffery Harrison and Peter Grant's book *The Thames Transformed: London's River and its Waterfowl* (1976). I have therefore decided to confine myself to this historical account based upon the records up to the early 1900s that I chiefly extracted from the Museum sources mentioned above. As some of these are not referred to in Andrew Self's excellent *The Birds of London* (2014), it seemed to me well worth doing.







Above: Dartford Marshes: looking northnorth-east over pasture towards (left) Dartford Creek (River Darent) and (centre) the Thames river wall, April 15th 1951.

Right: Swanscombe Marsh: looking towards the North Downs, June 4th 1950.

Below: Dartford Marshes: Dartford Creek saltmarsh, April 15th 1951. (All photos John F. Burton)





Topographical notes

In the early 19th century the Thames-side marshes were not unlike those to the east of Gravesend nowadays; of small extent at Greenwich and gradually widening out beyond Woolwich, except where the inland line of hills come close to the river. Ruegg (1847), a Woolwich journalist and an amateur wildfowler, gave an evocative description of the Plumstead and Erith Marshes at that time, describing them as 'a region of swamps, meres, and stagnant dykes,' though reclamation was in progress and cultivation spreading. 'The vegetation', he wrote, 'is rank and luxuriant in the highest degree; and its surface being intersected with broad dykes, a vast amount of sub-aquatic vegetation, the prolific source of miasmata, is constantly nourished.' At that time the North Kent railway had just been laid along the edge of the marshes and he commented on 'how singular it was to hear the shrill whistle of the locomotive and the clatter of iron wheels, where some brief 12 months since, the heron, plover, and the bittern roamed in almost undisturbed solitude. Throughout this vast district scarcely a tree raises its head, with the exception of some dozen or two of willows beside the running brooks, and a few hedgerows of venerable white-thorn (hawthorn), the growth of some century and a half.' Ruegg also described 'threading our way over the marsh, for one has need of a compass here, where a broad dyke meets us at every few yards, we come suddenly upon a large swamp, and, "whirr," before us springs, uttering at the same moment his loud "scarp," the snipe.'

In 1945, when I first bird-watched on the Plumstead and Erith Marshes, drainage and agricultural development had long been largely completed, but, here and there, I still found remnants of the marshes as Ruegg knew them: large and dense reed-beds, reed-fringed fleets and dykes, stagnant ditches, a swampy pool edged with a luxuriant growth of great water dock and rushes, and occasional boggy areas. Much of the marshy ground had given way to cultivated fields and allotments, but green meadows, liable to flooding in winter, still survived and were grazed by cattle and horses (Burton, 1958, 1979, 2014).

Winter flooding was apparently more frequent and extensive in Ruegg's day. For instance, he related an occasion, in November 1844, when he strolled along one of the manor-ways and came upon an adjacent field, 'which for the first time, perhaps in some hundred years, had been reclaimed from pasture, and to the dominion of the plough. It had produced a luxuriant crop of weeds as well as potatoes, and the autumnal rains, which had fallen copiously, had made its surface a succession of pools and bogs. The field swarmed with countless multitudes of birds,... a few lapwings were busily engaged in one corner in pursuit of their slimy prey; starlings, fieldfares, redwings, blackbirds, thrushes, larks, sparrows, and other birds, made the ground absolutely dark with their numbers, and at every successive cause of alarm, the winged multitude rose and fell in dark, undulating masses. Interspersed with these, and not less numerous than their coadjutors, were the snipes, who thronged every pool and swamp in the field with such numbers that the effect of a discharge amongst them must have been prodigious.'

Most of Greenwich Marshes had been converted into agricultural fields by 1800 and only a few sheds and barns had been built there (Bartlett, 1964-65; Mills, 1999), but much of the central area retained a rural character into the late 19th century (Mills op.cit.) and wet ground and reed-beds remained, even as late as the 1880s. Small such areas, including quite a large reed-bed, survived in the 1940s and 1950s, when I visited



Above: Crayford and Dartford Marshes: the mouth of the River Darent at Dartford Creek, May 14th 1950.

Right: Dartford Marshes: old sailing barges in Long Reach, June 28th 1952.

Below: Stone Marshes: looking eastwards towards Greenhithe and Swanscombe, 1951.

(All photos John F. Burton)





these marshes (Burton, 2013), and even into the 1980s when Swales *et al*, (1989), surveyed them in 1984 and 1985. Eventually industry of one kind or another gradually moved in as it did elsewhere in the vicinity of Woolwich, Belvedere, Erith, Dartford, Greenhithe and Swanscombe. Nevertheless much attractive and relatively unspoiled marshland remained when I and my ornithological friends roamed it in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Since then, however, developments such as the large Thamesmead residential area at Plumstead and Abbey Wood, and the Dartford Motorway river crossing have changed the scene a great deal from what I once knew (Burton, 1979, 2014).

But not everything has been detrimental. The establishment of the Ecology Park at Greenwich Marsh and Crossness Nature Reserve have been beneficial for wildlife, as has the immense reduction of pollution in the Thames described by Harrison and Grant (1976). Subsequent papers published in the *LBR* testify to the benefits the reduction of pollution has brought for birds, fish and other estuarine river life, while the outfall sewage works and the nature reserve at Crossness have become a local Mecca for bird-watchers.

Over much of the 19th century, the reclaimed marshes east of Erith consisted largely of pasture but with some cultivated fields and orchards along their fringe, much of which still survived in the 1950s despite the incursion of industry and bricks and mortar here and there. Small areas of salt-marsh were to be found in places beside the Thames at Crayford, Dartford and Stone Marshes, and bordering the conjunction of the River Darent with the Thames, as they still are. At Swanscombe Marshes, the extensive Broadness salt-marsh in a bend of the Thames also still exists.

In the following systematic list I have often quoted the authors' of the reports own words as I feel they provide an authentic flavour of their historic nature and, in any case, many readers may not have ready access to the publications in which they appeared.

Systematic List

In this paper I have followed the nomenclature and species order used by Self (2014).

Bewick's Swan Cygnus columbianus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: usually seen in hard weather, generally scarce (Ruegg, 1847).

Whooper Swan Cygnus cygnus

1829/30: Dartford Marshes: one shot during the winter (Self, 2014).

1859: Dartford Marshes (Turner, 1909).

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: usually seen in hard weather, generally scarce (Ruegg, 1847).

Bean Goose Anser fabilis

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: seen in hard weather, generally scarce (Ruegg, 1847).

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: seen in hard weather, generally scarce (Ruegg, 1847).

1881: Thames marshes between Barking and Rainham, Essex: 'two shot by a man named

Sutton on January 19th' (E. Curtis, 1881). Not mentioned by Self (2014).

1904: 'It is seldom that wild geese occur in the neighbourhood of Dartford, but while out shooting in Dartford Marshes, near the Powder Wharf, Mr. Gingell shot an immature specimen of the Brent Goose.' (Davis, 1904).

Shelduck Tadorna tadorna

1859: Dartford Marshes (Turner, 1909).

Wigeon Anas penelope

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: formerly more frequent than in 1847. Of the duck species 'the most plentiful in the pools and brooks are the mallard, teal and widgeon (sic)' (Ruegg, 1847).

1904: Dartford Marshes: 'met with only when very severe cold weather sets in, and it is compelled to come from the mouth of the Thames further inland to the banks of the small creeks running into the River Thames' (Davis, 1904).

Teal Anas crecca

c.1837-1847: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: with the Mallard, the most plentiful of the ducks here, 'lurking in the morasses and pools and breeding in the swamps', although less numerously than formerly (Ruegg, 1847).

1904: Dartford Marshes: not uncommon during winter (Davis, 1904).

Mallard Anas platyrhynchos

c.1837-1847: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: with the Teal the most numerous of the ducks, breeding in the morasses, pools and swamps 'from which their eggs are not infrequently taken by the farmer and hatched by hens' (Ruegg, 1847).

1904: Dartford Marshes: 'still nests regularly; seldom a season passes without a nest or two being found' (Davis, 1904).

Pintail Anas acuta

1859: Dartford Marshes (Turner, 1909).

Garganey Anas guerquedula

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'we have the garganey' (Ruegg, 1847).

Red-crested Pochard Netta rufina

1830s: Erith: 'The female figured by Gould in his *Birds of Europe* was killed out of a flock of 18 on the Thames near Erith, prior to 1837, and was added to the collection of the Hon. W.T.T. Fiennes.' (Morris, 1850-57; Glegg, 1929; Self, 2014).

Pochard Aythya ferina

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: the most plentiful duck species on the Thames in winter (Ruegg, 1847).

1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Not uncommon during the winter, especially along the banks of the River Thames and the creeks leading into it.' (Davis, 1904).

Scaup Avthva marila

1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: reported by Ruegg (1847), probably most often in hard weather.

1859: Dartford Marshes (Turner, 1909). Ticehurst (1909) mentioned that several had been shot at Dartford in the 19th century.

King Eider Somateria spectabilis

Pre-1847: Erith Reach: a male shot (Self, 2014).

Long-tailed Duck Clangula hyemalis

1829-30: Dartford Marshes: one shot during the winter (Self, 2014).

Common Scoter Melanitta nigra

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes (Ruegg, 1847).

1859: Dartford Marshes (Turner, 1909).

1904: Dartford Marshes: 'A straggler in our district' (Davis, 1904). Ticehurst (1909) also mentioned that this species had been reported here at times in the 19th century.

Velvet Scoter Melanitta fusca

1859: Dartford Marshes (Turner, 1909).

1904: Dartford Marshes: described by Davis (1904) as a straggler.

Surf Scoter Melanitta perspicillata

1907: Greenhithe/Swanscombe: Davis (1907) reported that 'Mr. Farn, late of Greenhithe, Kent, informs me that while out wildfowl shooting lower down on the river (Thames), he saw a pair of Surf Scoters swimming, and got sufficiently close to them as to be sure of their identity.' This record does not appear to have been accepted by other authorities and in the absence of supporting evidence must be considered doubtful, especially as so far it has not been recorded in the London area.)

Goldeneye Bucephala clangula

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: reported here in winter by Ruegg (1847).

Smew Mergellus albellus

1819-20: Bugsby's Reach, River Thames: Graves (1811-21) recorded that 'In severe seasons the Smew has been taken in the nets of fishermen in the Thames' and that in the winter of 1819-20 two adult males were taken alive in Bow Creek on the opposite side of the Thames to Greenwich Marsh.

1859: Dartford Marshes (Turner, 1909). Davis (1907) reported that 'many years ago' he was informed that one was shot in the parish of Dartford, but had no further information.

Red-breasted Merganser Mergus serrator

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: scarce visitor, chiefly in autumn and winter (Ruegg, 1847).

1904: Dartford Marshes: Davis (1904) reported that 'Several of these birds have been brought to me, which had been shot on the river Thames. They have been obtained invariably during very severe cold weather.'

Goosander Mergus merganser

1811: Woolwich: Graves (1811-21) reported that on Nov 29th 1811, two were taken in a net by a fisherman in the Thames near Woolwich and were kept alive for some months. 1829/30: Erith: one shot that winter (Self, 2014).

1859: Dartford & Erith Marshes (Turner,1909). Ticehurst (1909) reported that several had been shot here.

Red-legged Partridge Alectoris rufa

1904: Dartford district: 'not uncommon' (Davis, 1904).

Grev Partridge Perdix perdix

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'tolerably abundant' (Ruegg, 1847).

1904: Dartford district: fairly common (Davis, 1904).

Ouail Coturnix coturnix

1904: Dartford & Crayford: Davis (1904) stated that the 'Quail used to be much more common round and about Dartford than it is at the present time; I have known the nest and eggs of this bird to have been taken some years back on Mr. Upton's land, near the "Willows", Crayford.' Ticehurst (1909) also stated that the Quail occurred and bred not infrequently at Dartford Marshes.

Pheasant Phasianus colchicus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: scarce due to the lack of cover (Ruegg, 1847).

Red-throated Diver Gavia stellata

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor, chiefly in autumn and winter (Ruegg, 1847).

1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Rarely to be met with here on the Thames save in winter. I had recently a fine specimen brought to me which had been shot on the river, which was in breeding plumage, and a very fine bird indeed' (Davis, 1904).

Black-throated Diver Gavia arctica

1850: Erith Marshes: one obtained on the Thames (Fielding, 1850); one reported from Purfleet saltings on the Essex side of Long Reach.

1904: Dartford Marshes: one shot on the Thames (Davis, 1907).

Great Northern Diver Gavia immer

1813-14: Two were reported by Graves (1811-21) to have been captured on the Thames below Woolwich that winter. He wrote that they were 'kept alive for some months on an extensive piece of water, from which they escaped in April.' They were seen on the river in that neighbourhood for several days after 'and although repeatedly shot at, they constantly escaped by diving.'

1876: Erith: one reported by Smee (1876) to have been shot on the Thames here on Feb 12th 1876 by one of the men engaged in the Easton Foundary [sic].

c.1900: Dartford Marshes: 'I once had an immature example of this bird brought to me which had been shot on the Thames near Long Reach' (Davis, 1907).

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

c.1837-47: 'Rare wanderer in bad weather generally to Plumstead and Erith Marshes' (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'a straggler up the Thames through stress of weather, this bird is to be met with occasionally. I had a specimen brought to me for preservation which had been shot on the river at Long Reach.' (Davis, 1904).

Leach's Petrel Oceanodroma leucorhoa

1864: Greenwich Marshes: Bugsby's Reach, River Thames: one shot near the Steam Mill opposite Bow Creek in March (Self, 2014).

1874: Barking Reach, River Thames: one shot that year adjacent to Plumstead Marshes (Self, 2014).

Gannet Morus bassanus

1798: Dartford: one taken alive near here in September (Self, 2014).

1847: Dartford: 'A few days since (5 March 1847), a Gannet was brought to me, which had been captured by a shepherd in a turnip-field, about three miles from this place.' It tore its captor's hands with its beak (White, 1847).

Cormorant Phalacrocorax carbo

1848: Swanscombe: an immature was shot by a bargeman on the Thames on Apr 30th 1848 'after being chased by several people for the space of an hour, during which time he kept diving.' (Faller, 1848). This record is also mentioned by Ticehurst (1909) and Self (2014).

1906: Dartford Marshes, Kent/West Thurrock Marsh, Essex: an immature haunted this stretch of the river (Long Reach). Seen twice in December (Horn, 1921). Not mentioned by Self (2014).

Bittern Botaurus stellaris

1801: Dartford Marshes: 'I believe that this bird may be met with in the marshes about us at all seasons, yet is observed most frequent in winter.' (Latham, 1781-1802) quoted from Self (2014).

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'Occasionally met with - several fine specimens have been procured in the last 8 or 10 years.' (Ruegg, 1847).

c.1889: 'One shot at Dartford Powder Mills some 15 years back.' (Davis, 1904).

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'Occasionally shot.' (Ruegg, 1847).

Night Heron Nycticorax nycticorax

1883: Plumstead Marshes: an immature shot on Dec 3rd that year (Self, 2014).

Grey Heron Ardea cinerea

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: nearest known heronry to these marshes was considered by Richard Ruegg (1847) to be at Penshurst, Kent. But according to Nicholson, (1929), this heronry was said to have been deserted about 1810. In any case, the ancient heronry at Wanstead Park, on the Essex side of the Thames, at a distance of just over six miles (c.10 km.) is much closer. Moreover, a heronry of immemorial date existed at Cobham, Kent, and this would have been nearer than Penshurst.

1873: 'Not uncommon' on the Erith Marshes (C.J. Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: 'Not infrequent in the Dartford Marshes and frequently seen at dawn fishing in the basin at Crayford Creek. During the winter months there is usually a party of them, numbering six to eight, fishing in the ditches in the marshes.' (Davis, 1904); 'a resident here informs me that early one morning he and a friend came upon 13 of these birds in a ditch which is close to the banks of the Thames in Dartford Marshes' (Davis, 1907). Presumably these birds came from the heronry at Cobham rather than Wanstead, although the ancient one at Yantlet on the Isle of Grain might have been an alternative source.

White Stork Ciconia ciconia

1847: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) surmised that this species was present on these marshes in the 18th century.

Glossy Ibis Plegadis falcinellus

Pre-1857: Swanscombe; one was shot here prior to 1857 (Self, 2014), probably on the marshes.

Spoonbill Platalea leucorodia

16th century: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: according to Self (2014), Spoonbills were known to occur in the Woolwich area until at least 1600.

c.1812: Greenwich one appeared here prior to 1812 (Self, 2014).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: scarce visitor, generally in autumn and winter (Ruegg, 1847).

1873: Erith Marshes: winter visitor (Smith, 1873).

1890s: Local on ponds and marsh dykes near the Thames (Turner, 1909).

Pre-1904: Dartford: formerly more common. Used to be seen on Mill Pond, but disappeared a few years ago (Davis, 1904)

Great Crested Grebe Podiceps cristatus

c.1820: Thames between Greenwich and Gravesend: large flock present 'some years prior to 1824' (Self, 2014).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'A rare bird in our district, I have met with but one specimen, which was in winter plumage.' (Davis, 1904).

Red-necked Grebe Podiceps grisegena

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'It is to be met with very rarely in our district and then only in hard weather.' (Davis, 1904).

Slavonian Grebe Podiceps auritus

1870: Charlton (Borough of Greenwich): one here in 1870 (Self, 2014).

Black-necked Grebe Podiceps nigricollis

1907: Dartford Marshes: one shot at Long Reach in January 1907 (Ticehurst, 1909); 'it was an immature, apparently scarcely full-grown' (Davis, 1907).

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Honey Buzzard Pernis apivorus

1881: Dartford: one shot here in the autumn (Self, 2014). This may not have been on the Dartford Marshes.

Red Kite Milvus milvus

18th century: breeding pairs reported in Swanscombe Wood (Self, 2014) may well have hunted over the nearby Swanscombe Marshes.

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) wrote that 'we are seldom without the kite.' I suspect that he was referring to the early years of this period as the Red Kite is thought to have disappeared from the London area by about then.

Marsh Harrier Circus aeruginosus

1812: Deptford: Graves (1821) wrote that 'a pair built a nest, composed of sticks, grass, and the leaves and decayed stalks of the flowering rush in an osier ground near the Grand Surrey Canal, on the Deptford Road; it was placed on a small hillock just above the water's edge and contained five dusky white eggs. The female was shot from the nest, but being slightly wounded lived for several months in confinement.'

1871-72: 'Five shot during these two years in Gravesend district, three out of the five being females (Button, 1872).

1904: 'I am informed by Mr. Farn that this bird has been obtained in the neighbourhood of Swanscombe Woods.' (Davis, 1904).

Hen Harrier Circus cyaneus

1820: Graves (1821) wrote that this species was 'Not uncommon on the Kent and Essex marshes near London' and that it was 'often to be seen in fields at Rolls Meadows by the Old Kent Road' at Bermondsey.

1859: Greenwich Marshes (Turner, 1909).

1888: Swanscombe. One shot on Oct 30th (Self, 2014).

Montagu's Harrier Circus pyargus

Pre-1847: 'regularly recorded in the Woolwich area until the early part of the 19th century' (Self, 2014).

1852: 'I have a fine old female of Montagu's Harrier, that was shot in Woolwich (Plumstead) Marshes on the 16th of August last.' (Green, 1853).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

c1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes 'abounds' Ruegg, 1847).

1873: Erith Marshes: 'Scarce of late years' (Smith, 1873).

Common Buzzard Buteo buteo

19th century: Dartford area: considered to be a regular autumn migrant (Self, 2014).

1871-72: Gravesend district: two females shot during the winter (Button, 1872).

1881: Essex: two seen on Jan 20th 1881 'hawking over large reed-beds near the gulf between Barking and Rainham Marshes. Man named Sutton shot another the previous day.' (Curtis, 1881). Not mentioned by Self (2014).

Rough-legged Buzzard Buteo lagopus

1871-72: Gravesend district: 'Several sent me this winter: all females.' (Button, 1872). **Osprev** Pandion haliaetus

1821: Dartford: one reported by Latham (1821) to have been shot near here (Self, 2014).

1859: Dartford: 'I shot one on the 23rd September (1859) a beautiful adult male Osprey. It was about here for three or four days, coming to a millhead to feed on gudgeon. It measured 5 feet 4 inches across the wings from tip to tip.' (E.S.H., 1859).

Pre-1904: Belvedere: 'one shot a short time back' (Davis, 1904).

Kestrel Falco tinnunculus

c1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'we are seldom without the kestrel' (Ruegg, 1847).

1871-72: Gravesend district: 'unusually numerous' in these years (Button, 1872).

1873: Erith Marshes: 'scarce of late years' (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'common. Nests in the chalk cliffs both at Stone and Greenhithe.' (Davis, 1904).

Merlin Falco columbarius

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'sometimes seen' (Ruegg, 1847).

1871-72: Gravesend district: 'Frequent on the marshes this winter.' (Button, 1872)

Pre-1904: Dartford: 'I have had specimens brought to me which have been shot quite near the town, usually from one of the deep railway cuttings to which it seems very partial, and then only in the autumn months.' (Davis, 1904).

Hobby Falco subbuteo

19th century: Woolwich: breeding occurred here 'on an unrecorded date' (Self, 2014). Pre-1904: Swanscombe: 'very rare visitor. Mr. (A.B.) Farn informs me that it has been observed at Swanscombe.' (Davis, 1904).

Peregrine Falco peregrinus

1871-72: Gravesend district: 'Three shot since Christmas', a male and two females (Button, 1872).

Water Rail Rallus aquaticus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'we are seldom, in the proper season, without a few specimens of the water rail, and the corn-crake. The lurking habits of these birds, however, render them always comparatively scarce to the casual observer.' (Ruegg, 1847).

19th century: Northfleet: seen in June in an unrecorded year (Self, 2014).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Although not very frequently seen, it is fairly common in all the marshes of the district. It is resident throughout the year, but I have never found its nest.' (Davis 1904).

Spotted Crake Porzana porzana

1821: Bermondsey: Graves (1821) wrote that the Spotted Crake 'is met with in greater abundance within a few miles of London, than perhaps in any other part of this kingdom. We have known this bird to breed in fields to the left of (i.e., north) of the Kent-Road. called Roll's Meadow; one of them was killed, after which they forsook the spot.'

pre-1824: Dartford Marshes: a pair was shot in summer prior to 1824 (Self. 2014).

1841: Dagenham, Essex: one reported.

1887: Barking, Essex: one reported.

Pre-1904: Dartford: 'I have, at different times, had several specimens brought to me, nearly all of them, however, had met their death through flying against the telegraph wires at Sidcup (Davis, 1904).

Corncrake Crex crex

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'we are seldom, in the proper season, without a few specimens of... the corn-crake' (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Dartford & Dartford Marshes: 'Fairly common throughout the district, it can

be heard almost any summer's evening in the fields on the outskirts of Dartford; it is, however, seldom seen. Its nest is frequently found by the haymakers when cutting the hay.' (Davis, 1904).

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Moorhen Gallinula chloropus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'Teeming as the marshes do with pools and sedgy swamps, the moor-hen, or gallinule, is a bird which is always plentiful.' (Ruegg, 1847). Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Common' (Davis, 1904).

Coot Fulica atra

19th century: only a winter visitor to the Thames marshes from Plumstead to Gravesend until c.1920.

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'occasionally seen.' (Ruegg, 1847).

1873: Erith Marshes: 'no lack of Coots in bad winters' (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Dartford district: occasional visitor not known to nest (Davis, 1904).

Crane Grus grus

1847: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) speculated that 'some half-century since,' these marshes must have been the haunt of this species. Palin's statement 1872, quoted by Self (2014), that Cranes were once common around Aveley, opposite Crayford and Dartford Marshes on the Essex side of the river, prior to the area being drained, supports Ruegg's opinion.

Oystercatcher Haematopus ostralegus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'not at all common; I have had two or three specimens brought to me which had been shot on the banks of the Thames near Long Reach, but always during hard weather.' (Davis, 1904).

Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta

1847: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: undoubtedly an inhabitant of the lower Thames marshes until it became extinct in the early 19th century. Ruegg (1847) speculated that it was an inhabitant of these marshes 'some half century since' (i.e., until the late 18th century).

Collared Pratincole Glareola pratincola

1847: Plumstead Marshes: Ruegg (1847) wrote that 'A friend of mine, an old sportsman, once saw a pair of the collared pratincole flying over the marshes; but he had not his gun with him, or the birds would have fallen a comparatively easy prey, as they were within gunshot. Being himself a collector, I have no doubt of the identity of the birds.' Nevertheless, as Self (2014) concludes, due to the lack of further details this record cannot by modern standards be accepted.

Ringed Plover Charadrius hiaticula

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Crayford & Dartford Marshes: 'Fairly common along the Thames at Long Reach, and occasionally on the banks of the Creek at the mouth where it joins the Thames. It is found mostly during the winter.' (Davis, 1904).

Golden Plover Pluvialis apricaria

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: frequent in winter (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Dartford district & Marshes: 'This bird is met with in our district only during the winter; then it appears in considerable numbers, but coming as they do quite suddenly, they often disappear just as quickly.' (Davis, 1904).

Lapwing Vanellus vanellus

c.1837-1847: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'a few dozen couples breed in our swamps.'

(Ruegg, 1847). He specifically mentioned them frequenting a field recently drained and planted with potatoes and described how he unsuccessfully tried to rear three recently hatched young that had been brought to him from these marshes a 'few summers' before his date of writing.

1873: Erith Marshes: 'Not uncommon.' (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'A common resident with us; I have found its eggs in the marshes near the Thames.' (Davis, 1904).

Knot Calidris canutus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'Specimens of this bird have been brought to me on several occasions which had been shot on the banks of the Thames near Dartford.' (Davis, 1904).

Sanderling Calidris alba

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor (Ruegg, 1847).

1864: Gravesend: one shot by R.M. Presland in spring of 1864 (Clarke, 1864).

Little Stint Calidris minuta

1873: Erith Marshes: rare (Smith, 1873).

1880: Grays, Essex: 'Has been noted.' (Dickens, 1880).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'I have had but one specimen brought to me. This was shot near Long Reach.' (Davis, 1904; Ticehurst 1909).

Curlew Sandpiper Calidris ferruginea

1801: Greenwich Marshes: one 'taken' near here (Latham in Self, 2014).

Purple Sandpiper Calidris maritima

1879: Greenhithe: a few recorded from the saltings in November (Ticehurst, 1909). Not mentioned by Self (2014).

Pre-1904: Dartford: 'I have not met with this bird of late years in our district, but have had it brought to me more than once to be preserved.' (Davis, 1904).

Dunlin Calidris alpina

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'scattered groups come up the river as far as Greenwich. We have usually a wandering flock of fifty or a hundred on the large mudflat in Halfway Reach, and on the Essex shore opposite they are rather more plentiful.' (Ruegg, 1847). Not mentioned by Self (2014), who commented that its status in the 19th century on the Lower Thames Marshes 'went unrecorded', although he frequently quoted Ruegg's records of other species.

1873: Erith Marshes: 'the commonest wader' (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'common winter visitor in small flocks' (Davis, 1904).

Ruff Philomachus pugnax

1785: Greenwich: one shot Aug 5th 1785 (Self, 2014).

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'I have had several specimens pass through my hands, which had been shot in our district, but in all cases they were hen birds.' (Davis, 1904).

Jack Snipe Lymnocryptes minimus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: frequent in winter (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1859: Greenwich Marshes (Turner, 1909).

Pre-1909: Dartford Marshes: 'This bird is quite common in the marshes at times, but its appearance is rather fitful; common one day, not to be met with another day.' (Davis, 1904); 'uncertain in appearance' with the Common Snipe (A.P. Macklin in Turner, 1909).

Snipe Gallinago gallinago

1812: Bermondsey: 'We have met with it in considerable numbers during the months of June and July (1812) in the osier ground bordering on the Surrey Canal, in the Kent Road. We found many nests...' (Graves, 1811-21).

c.1837-45: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Common, especially in winter, when flocks of up to a hundred occurred (Ruegg, 1847). As mentioned in the Introduction above, Ruegg vividly described an occasion in the early part of November 1844 when he strolled down one of the manor-ways on these marshes and came upon a flooded field whose surface had become a succession of pools and bogs,' where Snipe 'thronged every pool and swamp. From this time till January they abounded in the marshes, filling every swamp, and rill, and quagmire.'

Pre-1859: Greenwich Marshes (Turner, 1909).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Fairly common; I know that it breeds in these, as I have a clutch of eggs which were brought to me that were obtained there.' (Davis, 1904).

Great Snipe Gallinago media/Woodcock Scolopax rusticola

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Self (2014) quotes the statement by Ruegg (1847) that 'occasionally, though rarely,' the Great Snipe occurred on these marshes. However, as Ruegg goes on to say that 'the great breeding-place of this bird, I am told, is in Epping Forest, whence our collectors procure most of their British specimens, sometimes being fortunate enough to obtain their eggs or young', I think it probable that he really meant the Woodcock, especially as he does not mention this species, well known to field sportsmen of the period, anywhere in his book.

Bar-tailed Godwit Limosa lapponica

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor (Ruegg, 1847).

1873: Erith Marshes: 'a scarcity' (Smith, 1873).

Whimbrel Numenius phaeopus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'occasional visits,... though their numbers are annually diminishing' (Ruegg, 1847).

Curlew Numenius arguata

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: as Whimbrel (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'Occurs along the banks of the Thames in hard weather when driven up from the mouth of the river. It is not, however, to be met with very commonly even then.' (Davis, 1904).

Common Sandpiper Actitis hypoleucos

c.1837-47: Blackwall Reach, Greenwich to Erith Reach, Plumstead & Erith Marshes: numerous on passage in spring and autumn (Ruegg, 1847). Ruegg also thought that a pair or two 'beyond doubt breed there, though from the cover afforded by the "reed shores," as they are termed, their nests are seldom, if ever, discovered.' In the light of modern knowledge this seems unlikely, although summering may have occurred.

1873: Erith Marshes: 'Comes for a few weeks in autumn.' (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Appears about the beginning of July.' (Davis, 1904).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: a reference by Ruegg (1847) to 'we occasionally add... some of the larger varieties of sandpipers, such as the knot, the greenshanks. etc.,' probably included this species, which was a regular passage migrant in these marshes and those around Dartford when I birdwatched there in the early 1950s.

Greenshank Tringa nebularia

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'It occurs, but not commonly, along the banks of the Thames at Long Reach, in company with the other waders in autumn, but I have not met with specimens lately.' (Davis, 1904).

Wood Sandpiper Tringa glareola

Pre-1909: Greenhithe: recorded from the Greenhithe saltings (Ticehurst, 1909).

Redshank Tringa totanus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: not mentioned by Ruegg (1847), although these marshes were probably colonised sometime between 1865 and 1900 as Davis (1904) (see next entry) stated that the Redshank was 'fairly common in the Thames marshes and breeds', as was the case when I bird-watched there in the late 1940s and 1950s. A few pairs at least were breeding in the Abbey Wood part of these marshes in those years.

Pre-1904: Crayford & Dartford Marshes: 'Nests within a mile of Dartford town. In one particular marsh (which I shall not specify for obvious reasons) I have seen as many as half-a-dozen nests with eggs in one day.' (Davis, 1904).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor (Ruegg, 1847).

1896: Dartford Marshes: 'One taken on September 22, 1896; the first specimen I met with.' (Davis, 1904). Not mentioned by Self (2014).

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'Intermixed with the purres (Dunlin), during severe weather, we frequently obtain specimens of the common grey phalarope. They occur somewhat numerously; but beyond thus occasionally falling in with them, we know nothing, from observations in this district, of their habits.' (Ruegg, 1847).

1845: Swanscombe Marshes: one shot in the autumn (Self, 2014).

1866: Blackwall, Greenwich: 'In September, 1866 (a year noted for an extraordinary immigration of Grey Phalaropes) we saw one of these which had been shot..., and another killed off Blackwall.' (Dickens, 1880).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

1862: Greenwich: one, an immature, reported by Harting (1866) to have been shot in the autumn on the Thames in Greenwich Reach (Self, 2014).

Pre-1904: Dartford: 'I have but one specimen obtained in our district.' (Davis, 1904).

Great Skua Stercorarius skua

1790: Greenwich: one reported by Latham to have been killed here in 1790 (Self, 2014). 1867: Greenhithe: one seen on the Thames here by A.H. Smee (1867).

Sabine's Gull Xema sabini

1862: Blackwall, Greenwich: immature shot on the Thames in early September 1862 (Dickens, 1880; Self, 2014).

Kittiwake Rissa tridactvla

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'I have had specimens of this gull, which were shot on the river at Long Reach.' (Davis, 1904).

Black-headed Gull Chroicocephalus ridibundus

1731-38: Gravesend: reported by Albin (1731-38) to be 'very frequent in the River Thames near Gravesend.'

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'Gulls are, of course, abundant in the neighbourhood of a large river like the Thames, being found at almost every season of the year, except the months of June and July, when, high up the stream, they are exceedingly rare. Steam- boats do not seem to deter them, for they may be found in the very heart of the Metropolis, and the animal refuse of large towns seems to serve the

1873: Erith: 'winter visitor' (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'Common on the Thames for the greater part of the year.' (Davis, 1904).

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Little Gull Hydrocoloeus minutus

1860: Greenhithe: one shot in September 1860 (Self, 2014).

1863: Blackwall Reach, Greenwich: one adult in nearly full summer plumage shot on the Thames in early spring 1863 (Self, 2014).

1880: River Thames: 'Within the last twenty years we have noted the occurrence of eight or nine individuals of this species in Blackwall Reach, at Rainham, Grays and Gravesend.' (Dickens, 1880).

Common Gull Larus canus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: as Ruegg (1847) listed this species among the gulls 'we have' one gains the impression that it may have been fairly frequent along the Thames here, presumably chiefly in the winter months.

1866: Blackwall, Greenwich: Self (2014) quotes Harting's (1966) statement that half-adozen were shot on the Thames here in September, apparently in 1865.

1873: Erith: occurs here (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'Fairly common on the Thames, especially in the winter months.' (Davis, 1904).

Lesser Black-backed Gull Larus fuscus

c.1837: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) mentioned the occurrence of 'blackbacked gulls' here without specifying the precise species. As the Great Black-backed Gull was known to breed in the Thames Estuary at this period and was known to occasionally wander up-river, whereas the Lesser Black-backed was then a scarcity (Self, 2014), it would seem probable that it was the former that Ruegg and his wildfowler colleagues saw.

1873: Erith: Smith (1873) recorded it as a winter visitor, in view of which I suspect these birds were misidentified and, again, were really the Great Black-backed Gull, although he also reported the latter separately (see below).

Pre-1904: Dartford: Davis (1904) mentioned its occurrence but without giving any indication of its frequency. By the end of the century, however, it was being recorded more frequently on the upper Thames.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: mentioned by Ruegg (1847) without any indication of status or other details.

Pre-1904: Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'it is to be met with on the Thames at Long Reach.' (Davis, 1904). Again no indication of frequency is given.

Great Black-backed Gull Larus marinus

19th century: River Thames: as mentioned above under Lesser Black-backed Gull, this species was known occasionally to wander up-river from its then breeding sites in the Thames Estuary (Self, 2014).

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: as suggested above under Lesser Black-backed Gull, this may have been the unspecified black-backed gull reported from the river here by Ruegg (1847).

1873: Erith: 'a winter visitor' (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'I have had but one specimen of this great gull brought to me; it was shot near the Thames, and was in poor condition.' (Davis, 1904).

Little Tern Sternula albifrons

Pre-1909: Dartford Marshes: Ticehurst (1909), quoted by Self (2014), stated that this species could be seen as far up the Thames as here in autumn.

Black Tern Chlidonias niger

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: reported by Ruegg (1847) from here without any indication of frequency.

Sandwich Tern Sterna sandvicensis

c.1784: Greenwich: One shot on the Thames (Self, 2014).

Common Tern Sterna hirundo

1812: Bermondsey: two dozen seen on the Grand Surrey Canal (Self, 2014).

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: reported by Ruegg (1847) from here without any indication of frequency.

1873: Erith: 'one seen swooping down on the brackish tide', apparently in 1873 (Smith,

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'This bird may be seen flying along the course of the Thames during the summer until the early autumn.' (Davis, 1904).

Guillemot Uria aalge

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor, chiefly in autumn and winter (Ruegg, 1847).

1893: Greenwich: five seen on the Thames off the pier, 20 November 1893 (Green, 1893; Self. 2014).

Pre-1904: Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'met with in winter on the Thames in the vicinity of Long Reach.' (Davis, 1904)

Razorbill Alca torda

1894: Rotherhithe: 'large numbers', which had been taken on the Thames here received by a taxidermist for preservation (Self, 2014).

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor, chiefly in autumn and winter (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: occasional visitor to the Thames here (Davis, 1904).

Little Auk Alle alle

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor (Ruegg, 1847).

1894-95: Greenwich and Dartford: recorded here during the influx that occurred in this winter (Self, 1904).

Pre-1904: Greenhithe: the specimens that Davis (1904) reported receiving from here, Darenth and Bexley, 'some few years back' probably referred to the influx of 1894-95. **Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor, chiefly in autumn and winter (Ruegg, 1847).

1887: Between Erith and Gravesend: one shot on the Thames on July 12th 1887 (Fortune, 1887). Not mentioned by Self (2014).

Pre-1904: Dartford: 'Hardly a year passes but that I have specimen of this bird brought to me, which has been obtained in our district, probably driven inland by stormy weather (Davis, 1904).

Pallas's Sandgrouse Syrrhaptes paradoxus

1888: Dartford: recorded from this district in the invasion of 1888 (Davis, 2014). Not listed by Self (2014). Two other records on the Essex side of the Thames were also not mentioned by Self, so I am including them here:-

1888: Barking Side, between Wanstead and Hainhault Forest: 'On Monday, June 4th, a

covey of about sixteen birds were found in a field on St. Swithin's Farm, Barking Side, Essex, by Mr. L. Hatton of Carswell. They were disturbed from a patch of rye and flew off eastwards. Two adult males were subsequently shot.' (Crouch, 1888).

1888: Barking: 'On November 23rd and 24th several flocks of Pallas's Sandgrouse were seen on the marshes near Barking, a number being shot by the local gunners.' (Cooper, 1888).

Stock Dove Columba oenas

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) mentioned its occurrence here without any indications of numbers.

1873: Erith: Smith (1873) stated that it was rarer than the Turtle Dove here.

Pre-1904: Dartford district: Davis (1904) made no mention of its presence.

Woodpigeon Columba palumbus

c.1837-47: Plumstead and Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) stated that the Woodpigeon, called by him the 'ring-pigeon', breeds in the neighbouring woods and that they 'come down somewhat numerously to drink at the pools and dykes, and occasionally pay depredatory visits to the newly-sown wheat-fields.'

1873: Erith: 'abundant' (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Crayford & Dartford Marshes: 'Frequently seen in summer flying over the marshes to the Creek to obtain water.' (Davis, 1904).

Turtle Dove Streptopelia tutur

1873: Erith: common (Smith, 1873). Curiously Ruegg (1847) makes no mention of its occurrence on the Plumstead and Erith Marshes.

Pre-1904: Dartford district: common (Davis, 1904)

Cuckoo Cuculus canorus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'tolerably abundant' (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: common (Davis, 1904).

Barn Owl Tyto alba:

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'plentiful' (Ruegg, 1847).

1873: Erith: 'Scarce of late years' (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Dartford district: frequent (Davis, 1904).

Little Owl Athene noctua

1903: Dartford District: Two shot in Horton Woods, several miles south of the marshes, otherwise unknown here (Davis, 1904).

Tawny Owl Strix aluco

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'plentiful' (Ruegg, 1847).

Short-eared Owl Asio flammeus

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: fairly common winter visitor (Davis, 1904).

1906: Woolwich (i.e., Plumstead) Marshes: during the influx of 1906, 13 were 'flushed' from under a single Blackthorn hedgerow (Ticehurst, 1909; Self (2014).

Tengmalm's Owl Aegolius funereus

1881: Dartford district: One was shot on Nov 18th 1881 and reported to *The Field* that month (Ticehurst, 1909).

Nightjar Caprimulgus europaeus

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'I have met with it in the Marshes at Dartford' (Davis, 1904).

Kingfisher Alcedo atthis

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'very common in the winter' (Ruegg, 1847).

1873: Erith Marshes: autumn visitor (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'fairly common in all the marshes, even in those close on the borders of the town. They are in the greatest numbers during September just previous to the partial migration, when a great number leave England.' (Davis, 1904).

Wryneck Jynx torquilla

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'tolerably abundant' (Ruegg, 1847).

Green Woodpecker Picus viridis

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) mentions an unspecified woodpecker as being 'tolerably abundant' here. As the Green Woodpecker was more common than the Great Spotted Woodpecker at this period and is well known to make forays from its arboreal breeding habitat to feed on the ground in the open, I consider that this was most likely the species Ruegg means. Moreover, in the !940s and 1950s I found the Green Woodpecker to be a plentiful resident along the edge of the marshes from Plumstead eastwards and often surprised them on the ground well out in these marshes.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'I have had specimens obtained in the Dartford Marshes and all the neighbouring woods. (Davis, 1904). In the 1940s and 1950s I occasionally saw these woodpeckers in the trees along the fringe of the marshes from Plumstead to Greenhithe, including a regular breeding pair at Stone.

Red-backed Shrike Lanius collurio

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasionally seen in spring (Ruegg,1847). In 1947 I located a successful breeding pair in a blackthorn thicket on Erith Marshes. The same or another pair probably bred successfully here again in 1948. In June 1949 a pair was also present on the Abbey Wood part of Plumstead Marshes.

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Fairly common where hawthorns are of good size.' (Davis, 1904).

Great Grey Shrike Lanius excubitor

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) wrote 'I have once or twice, in spring seen a pair of the common shrike, or butcher-bird, as well as the other species of the same genus - the red-backed shrike.' I assume therefore that in this case he means the Great Grey Shrike.

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Not rare in this district. I have seen it in the Dartford Marshes where it is a regular visitor.' Seen in the winters of 1895-96 and 1896-97 (Davis, 1904).

Magpie Pica pica

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) described this as among the 'most familiar' birds here.

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes and district: 'Not common, but fairly abundant some 50 years ago.' (Davis, 1904). Davis also mentioned that one was killed at Greenhithe, presumably around his time of writing.

Jay Garrulus glandarius

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: like the Magpie, Ruegg described this species also as among the most familiar birds here.

Jackdaw Corvus monedula

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: as entries for Magpie and Jay above.

Pre-1904: Dartford & Stone Marshes: resident in the Dartford district throughout the year and frequently seen with Rooks on the saltings at Long Reach on the Thames and

on the arable farmlands. 'The chalk cliffs at Greenhithe seem to be a favourite resort for it to nest in.' (Davis, 1904).

Rook Corvus frugilegus

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) recorded Rooks following the plough in the severe winter of 1846-47 with Fieldfares, Redwings and Starlings, but gave the not surprising impression that this was also the case in normal years.

Pre-1904: Dartford & Stone Marshes: Davis (1904) mentioned the existence of several rookeries in and around Dartford and that large companies of Rooks frequented the saltings along Long Reach and the adjacent arable farmlands.

Carrion Crow Corvus corone

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'met with, though not numerously.' (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: occasionally seen (Davis, 1904).

Hooded Crow Corvus cornix

c.1837-47. Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'abounds with us from October to March, and on the banks of the Thames seems to be almost as numerous as the common rook.' (Ruegg, 1847). Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: winter visitor (Davis, 1904).

Pre-1909: Greenwich: reported by J.W. Tutt to be 'frequently observed in winter on Greenwich Marshes, etc.' (Turner, 1909).

Raven Corvus corax

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'the marshes are seldom without a pair' (Ruegg, 1847).

Blue Tit Cyanistes caeruleus

Pre-1904: Dartford: common (Davis, 1904).

Great Tit Parus major

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'To be met with in all our marshes.' (Davis, 1904).

Marsh Tit Poecile palustris

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'may be met with in Dartford Marshes' (Davis, 1904). In the early 1950s I used to see a few along the edge of the marshes from Dartford to Swanscombe.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'tolerably abundant' (Ruegg, 1847).

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

1787: Dartford Marshes: as stated by Self (2014), this species was known to occur in reed marshes near London, and Latham (1781-1802) implied in 1787 that he knew it occurred in the Dartford Marshes as he wrote of the Bearded Tit there that 'I have never yet been able been able to ascertain the nest and eggs.'

1802: London to Erith: Montagu (1802) wrote that 'It is found in the marshes amongst the reeds between Erith and London.'

1821: Bermondsey to Deptford: Graves (1811-21) wrote that 'we have killed it on the side of the Surrey Canal,... also on the road from Bermondsey to Deptford, called Blue Anchor Lane.'

1821-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Graves (1811-21) wrote in 1821 that the Bearded Tit 'is found in considerable abundance in the extensive tracts of reedland from Woolwich to Erith' and that he had seen it 'in numbers' about Erith. Ruegg (1847) considered it to be 'tolerably abundant' there in his time.

1828: Barking, Essex: 'A Lover of Nature' (1829) stated that the Bearded Tit inhabited

the marshes bordering the Thames in Kent and Essex, and that he had been informed in December 1828 that eight or ten had been seen in a reed-bed below Barking Creek, one of which was shot.

1859: Charlton, between Greenwich and Woolwich: reported by Collingwood (1859) to have been recently taken by a Mr. Hutchinson here.

Skylark Alauda arvensis

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: in Ruegg's time the Skylark was apparently a plentiful breeding bird. In autumn and winter it was often especially numerous, and he described one particular day in November 1844 when there were swarms of them in a recently drained field that had been planted with potatoes.

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: very common breeding species (Davis, 1904).

Sand Martin Riparia riparia

1873: Erith: 'Numerous in the sand-cuttings' (Smith, 1873).

19th century: Charlton (between Greenwich & Woolwich): a large colony existed close to the Thames at Charlton Sandpit (now called Gilbert's Pit) and persisted until at least the late 1940s, when I often visited it, but had declined to around 25 pairs by 1947 (Burton, 2013).

Swallow Hirundo rustica

19th century: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: not mentioned by Ruegg (1847), but almost certainly bred here then as several pairs were doing so annually when I bird-watched on these marshes in the 1940s, frequently using wooden and concrete huts.

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: common (Davis, 1904).

Garden Warbler Sylvia borin

Pre-1904: Dartford: 'Not at all uncommon in our district during the summer months, especially in the marshes and adjacent farm lands.' (Davis, 1904).

Lesser Whitethroat Sylvia curruca

Pre-1904: Dartford: fairly common (Davis, 1904).

Common Whitethroat Sylvia communis

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: very common (Davis, 1904).

Dartford Warbler Sylvia undata

1863: Woolwich: a male was shot on Oct 1st 1863 in blackthorn bushes on the bank of the River Thames (Whitely, 1863).

Grasshopper Warbler Locustella naevia

19th century: Not specifically mentioned by Ruegg (1847) or Davis (1904) as occurring on the marshes on the south side of the Thames, but stated by Self (2014) to be a widespread breeder on marshes and commons across the London Area. I myself never encountered it on these marshes in the 1940s and 1950s.

Savi's Warbler Locustella luscinioides

1853: Erith Marshes: As mentioned by Self (2014), a breeding record from here has not been accepted by Ticehurst (1909). The original note by James Green (1853) was published in the *Zoologist*; he wrote 'I have now by me the nest and five eggs of Savi's Warbler, which I took at Erith in Kent on the 28th May 1853.' Green was a dealer who was considered to be disreputable. He said the nest was built 'solely of reeds.' Usually, the nests are constructed from sedges and/or sweet-grass. Another report of his in the *Zoologist* that he had also taken a nest and eggs of this species at Dagenham, Essex, in May 1850 was rejected by W.E. Glegg for the same reason (Self, 2014).

Sedge Warbler Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

1873: Erith Marshes: 'Abounds in the reedy dykes' (Smith, 1873).

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'very common' (Davis, 1904).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

1783: Dartford Marshes: the eggs and nest of this species were first described by Latham in 1783 from examples obtained by him here (Ticehurst, 1909).

1843: Greenwich to Erith Marshes: numerous up to 1843 here and also present in 'larger or smaller numbers' from Dartford eastwards (Thomas, 1843; Ticehurst, 1909).

c.1859: Deptford: formerly present by the Lower Road (Collingwood, 1859).

c.1859: Woolwich Marshes (i.e., Plumstead Marshes): present (Collingwood, 1859).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes. 'Not common, but fairly distributed throughout these marshes and nests there.' (Davis, 1904).

Waxwing Bombycilla garrulus

1867: Plumstead Marshes: during the large immigration of 1866-67, eight were 'procured' in these marshes in December 1867 (*Victoria County History of Kent*). These were recorded by Clark-Kennedy (1867), who wrote 'I have this day (December 3rd) received a letter from my friend Mr. Whitely of Woolwich, who tells me that he has had brought to him during last week, no less than eight good specimens of the Waxwing. Some were shot in the Plumstead Marshes.'

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) considered the Starling to be 'one of our most familiar birds' and reported them swarming in early November 1844 with Fieldfares, Redwings and other species in a partially flooded field recently converted from marsh pasture to growing potatoes. He also reported them in the severe winter of 1846-47 following the plough on these marshes together with Fieldfares, Redwings and Rooks in January.

Blackbird Turdus merula

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: mentioned by Ruegg (1847) without further detail, apart from his description of them in early November 1844 feeding among swarms of Fieldfares, Redwings and other birds in the flooded potato field referred to under Starling above.

Fieldfare Turdus pilaris

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg (1847) reported seeing many following the plough and feeding on sloes in the Blackthorn hedges, and that they usually arrived in October, but sometimes in the middle of September. As under Starling above, he described them swarming with Redwings and other birds in a flooded potato field in November 1844.

1864: Gravesend: One was shot here in *July* 1864 and sent to J.A. Clarke for preservation (Clarke, 1864).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: Davis (1904) described the Fieldfare as a common winter visitor.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: Ruegg's (1847) above observations on the Fieldfare also apply to this species.

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: apparently also common in winter in his time, Davis (1904) reported that Redwings usually arrive about the middle of October and leave about the middle of April.

Mistle Thrush Turdus viscivorus

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Occurs commonly throughout the winter months feeding on Hawberries.' (Davis, 1904).

Red-spotted Bluethroat Luscinia svecica

1881: Dartford Marshes: an immature male of this race was shot by W.J. Davis on Sept 3rd 1881 and identified in the flesh by A.B. Farn (Ticehurst, 1909). Davis himself (1881) gave the actual date as 4 September, not the third, but in his book (Davis, 1904) gave the date, mistakenly I believe, as September 3rd 1880. The date given by Self (2014) is Sept 3rd 1881.

Black Redstart Phoenicurus ochruros

1885: Stone, near Greenhithe: one seen in a garden by A.B. Farn during autumn 1885 (Ticehurst, 1909).

Common Redstart Phoenicurus phoenicurus

Pre-1904: Dartford: Davis (1904) stated that 'many years ago' it occurred in the gardens of Priory Farm, close to Dartford Station and the edge of the marshes.

Whinchat Saxicola rubetra

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Fairly common and breeds.' (Davis, 1904). In the 1940s and 1950s I found Whinchats breeding in small numbers on all the marshes from Plumstead to Swanscombe.

Stonechat Saxicila rubicola

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Equally common as the Whinchat and nests' (Davis, 1904). This was more or less the situation that I found on the marshes from Plumstead to Swanscombe in the 1940s and 1950s. As well as breeding, Stonechats were quite plentiful in winter on these marshes from October to March.

Northern Wheatear Oenanthe oenanthe

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: 'tolerably abundant' (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'Occurs throughout, especially along the banks of the (Dartford) Creek and the Thames.' (Davis, 1904).

Tree Sparrow Passer montanus

Pre-1909: Dartford Marshes: Ticehurst (1909) stated that this species 'breeds in willows' on these marshes. Davis (1904), however, stated that it was 'fairly common in the early autumn in some seasons' but that he had not known it to breed in the Dartford District. In the 1940s and 1950s I found it to occur in the winter, sometimes in flocks of up to 100, in all the Thames-side marshes from Plumstead to Swanscombe, and located three small breeding colonies in the Dartford and Stone Marshes.

Yellow Wagtail Motacilla flava

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: Davis (1904) stated that the Yellow Wagtail was 'one of the first of our summer visitors, making its appearance in Dartford Marshes and along the banks of the Creek about the latter part of April.' Ticehurst (1909) stated that it bred in considerable numbers from Erith and Dartford Marshes eastwards, as was reported to be the case in 1929 (London Naturalist for 1933, page 114). Self (2014) mentions a report of it being plentiful near Woolwich around 1900, presumably based upon A.P. Macklin's statement in Turner (1909) that it was plentiful on the Thames Marshes and nests there. In the 1940s-1950s I found it breeding in small numbers in all the marshes from Greenwich to Swanscombe, although it declined after 1945.

Grev Wagtail Motacilla cinerea

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'not at all rare' (Davis, 1904). When I bird-watched on the Thames Marshes in the 1940s and 1950s the Grey Wagtail was a regular autumn and winter visitor in small numbers in all of them from Plumstead to Northfleet.

White Wagtail Motacilla alba alba

1829-30: Dartford: Self (2014) mentions one that was shot here in the winter of 1829-30.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Tree Pipit Anthus trivialis

Pre-1904: Crayford & Dartford Marshes: 'I have seen and heard this bird... in all the lanes leading down to the Marshes.' (Davis, 1904).

Meadow Pipit Anthus pratensis

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: very common (Davis, 1904). In the 1940s and 1950s I found Meadow Pipits breeding in small numbers on the fresh and salt marshes from Plumstead to Swanscombe and possibly breeding at Greenwich Marshes, where I saw a male songflighting on May 1st 1949.

Rock Pipit Anthus petrosus

1873: Erith Marshes: 'visits the marshes in winter' (Smith, 1873). Apparently overlooked by Self (2014), who stated that nothing was known about the status of the Rock Pipit on the Thames-side marshes until 1921. In the late 1940s and early 1950s D.F. Owen, K.H. Hyatt and I found it to be especially numerous in winter on the extensive Broadness Salt-marsh at Swanscombe.

Brambling Fringilla montifringilla

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Common sometimes in the autumn. I have known the bird-catchers to take large numbers with their nets' (Davis, 1904).

Greenfinch Carduelis chloris

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: common (Davis, 1904), who commented that bird-catchers take large numbers from the flocks that feed in the stubble in autumn.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Pre-1904: Crayford & Dartford Marshes: 'not uncommon' (Davis, 1904), who commented that he had watched them in early autumn on teazel heads growing quite close to the swing bridge, and also farther down the banks of Dartford Creek through the marshes, and that 'bird-catchers easily take them.'

Linnet Carduelis cannabina

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes & district: 'Common everywhere; many taken by bird-catchers' (Davis, 1904).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

c.1837-47: Plumstead & Erith Marshes: occasional visitor (Ruegg, 1847).

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Not by any means common, it occurs sometimes in the autumn' (Davis, 1904).

Yellowhammer Emberiza citrinella

Pre-1904: Crayford & Dartford Marshes: 'Common in all the lanes about Dartford.' (Davis, 1904). As a breeding species this was still the situation when I bird-watched on the marshes from Plumstead to Swanscombe until about 1947 when a steady decline set in, although it remained fairly numerous east of Erith.

Reed Bunting Emberiza shoeniclus

1873: Erith Marshes: reported from here by Smith (1873).

Pre-1904: Crayford, Dartford & Stone Marshes: 'Not rare in all the Marshes of the Dartford district', where it nests and is resident throughout the year (Davis, 1904). 'Fairly plentiful' in the marshes near Dartford (A.P. Macklin in Turner, 1909). They were still plentiful in the 1940s and 1950s from Plumstead to Swanscombe, with even a pair or two breeding on Greenwich Marshes.

Corn Bunting Emberiza calandra

Pre-1904: Dartford Marshes: 'Not rare. I have taken its nest in the Marshes' (Davis, 1904). When I bird-watched on the Thames marshes from Plumstead to Swanscombe in the 1940s and 1950s it bred sparingly but was most numerous in the Crayford and Dartford Marshes.

Biographical notes

In the above systematic list I have frequently quoted the records of R. Ruegg and W.J. Davis, so I feel it appropriate to give here some biographical details of them that I have been able to glean:-

R. Ruegg (1816-1881)

Richard Ruegg was a journalist and amateur ornithologist who became Editor of the Woolwich Gazette, then a reporter on the Kentish Independent newspaper in 1844, and finally its Editor in 1849 until his death. A much respected and articulate Liberal, he was elected in 1864 a Councillor on Woolwich Town Council, taking a prominent part in local affairs, particularly sanitary reform, of which he was a pioneer. Part of Woolwich Park Estate is named after Richard, who lived in Nightingale Vale. A quote from his book (Ruegg, 1847) reads: 'With an anxious brow and heavy heart have I escaped from the throng of humanity, with its gloom, and anger, and sadness, with its cares, and sorrows, and anxieties - its meshes of folly and its vortices of crime, to revel in green fields, and to spend one hour at least, with nature. No bird, let loose from the gin of the fowler, ever soared into its pure blue home more joyously.'



Richard Ruegg. (familysearch.org)

W.J. Davis (1857-1917)

William James Davis was a naturalist and printer whose father John was a Dartford baker. After leaving elementary school he started his career as a newspaper boy, but by the mid-1870s he was learning the printing trade with a Dartford printer. By 1881, however, he was earning a living as a naturalist and went into business with his elder brother Joseph as J. & W. Davis 'printers, bookbinders, stationers, bird and animal preservers and picture framers.' Joseph was the picture framer. William was the taxidermist and also sold birds' eggs and insect specimens. He wrote at least 11 published books, several of them on natural history subjects, such as *The Birds of the Dartford District* (1904), *Lepidoptera Collecting* (1906), *The Birds of Kent* (1907) and *Bird and Animal Preserving and Mounting* (1907). His collection of mounted British birds passed into the care of the Dartford



William James Davis. (Dartford Chronicle)

Museum on his death in 1917. A popular tradesman and a member of the Liberal Party, he took an active role in the civic life of Dartford, was elected to Dartford Urban District Council and eventually became Chairman (1909-1911) and a Justice of the Peace.

Comments and conclusions

From 1945 to 1953 I contributed my regular observations on the avifauna of these marshes, plus my less regular ones after 1954 to *The Birds of the London Area since 1900* and to the *London Bird Report*. Not surprisingly, they revealed some notable changes in the status of various species compared with the periods before 1900.

The period from about 1850 to 1950 saw the climate of north-west Europe, including the British Isles, emerging from the Little Ice Age of the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries and entering a period of amelioration that came increasingly under the influence of the milder maritime climate of the Atlantic sector with generally milder, wetter winters and often wetter and cooler summers (Burton, 1995).

The amelioration benefited a considerable number of species, such as the Tufted Duck, Pochard, Redshank, Stock Dove and Turtle Dove, all of which expanded their breeding ranges to the north and west. On the other hand, the generally cooler, wetter summers did not favour others like the Wryneck and Red-backed Shrike, which contracted their breeding ranges south-eastwards.

The Tufted Duck first nested in Britain in 1849 in Yorkshire, following which it gradually became established and increased, especially after 1900 when it eventually colonised most of the British Isles by 1940. This explains its absence from Ruegg's list. The Pochard's spread was similar. It did not breed regularly in England until around 1850, but was a fairly common winter visitor, as Ruegg reported. Like the Tufted Duck, Ruegg did not mention seeing Redshanks breeding on the Plumstead and Erith Marshes. This was because they did not colonise the Thames marshes until after 1865 as they had been contracting their breeding range before that date, recovering subsequently in response to the climatic amelioration. Before about 1860 the Stock Dove was a less common bird in Britain than it is nowadays and was confined to south-east England. Its rapid expansion westwards and northwards after that date appears to be correlated with both the 1850-1950 climatic amelioration and the growth of arable farming (Williamson, 1975; Burton, 1995). Judging as far as one can from the comments by Ruegg (1847), Smith (1873) and Davis (1904) it was uncommon on the Thames marshes, but in the 1940s and 1950s I found it to be a numerous breeding species from Woolwich to Swanscombe. Similarly, the Turtle Dove expanded its breeding range in Britain after 1850 and was certainly common on the Thames Marshes by the 1870s at least, as I found to be the case in the 1940s-1950s.

The 1850-1950 climatic amelioration did not of course favour all species. The Redbacked Shrike and the Wryneck were quite common in England before 1850 but subsequently began a slow decline to extinction as breeding birds by 1990. Although other factors were involved, the root cause appears to have been wetter, cooler summers which made it more difficult for them to find the adult insects on which they prey in sufficient quantity, as they were much less active on sunless days (Burton, 1995). In the Red-backed Shrike's case these are grasshoppers, bush-crickets, day-flying Lepidoptera, bees, beetles, etc., as well as small lizards. Ants and their larvae and diurnal beetles are the main prey of the Wryneck. From being 'tolerably abundant' in Ruegg's time the Wryneck had virtually disappeared by the time I bird-watched there, while the Red-backed Shrike, which had been fairly common on the marshes up to around 1900, had declined to a few breeding pairs by the late 1940s.

Although climate change may have been a fundamental factor in the changing fortunes of some species, habitat change was also very important: the drainage of the swamps and pools and the steady conversion in the 19th century of the marsh pasture to arable farming had marked effects on many bird species, such as the Bittern, Teal, Lapwing and the Snipe.

On the River Thames itself, growing pollution and heavy shipping adversely affected the numbers of duck and other waterfowl. In spite of temporary alleviation by the construction of improved sewer works in 1865, pollution continued to increase, particularly from expanding industrial sources. Waterfowl and wader numbers declined to a very low level (Burton, 1973; Harrison & Grant, 1976) until a spectacular recovery began in the 1960s, thanks to the determined clean-up of the Thames described by Harrison & Grant (1976).

When I bird-watched on the Kentish Thames-side marshes in the 1940s and 1950s, the following species were, I believe, scarcer than they had been in the 19th century: Teal, Garganey, Wigeon, Pochard, Scaup, Smew, Corncrake, Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Knot, Dunlin, Ruff, Common Snipe, Black Tern, Common Tern, Barn Owl, Short-eared Owl, Kingfisher, Wryneck, Red-backed Shrike, Tree Sparrow and Brambling.

The following species had been lost: Bittern, Red Kite, Spotted Crake, Raven and Bearded Tit.

The following species were commoner: Tufted Duck, Red-legged Partridge, Great Crested Grebe, Cormorant, Coot, Black-headed Gull, Common Gull, Herring Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Stock Dove, Turtle Dove, Grey Wagtail, Carrion Crow, Magpie, Jay and Starling.

Red-throated Diver, Water Rail, Lapwing, Curlew, Greenshank, Skylark, Yellow Wagtail, Whinchat and Stonechat were among species that appeared to have undergone no significant change. The Mute Swan and Little Owl were gains.

Acknowledgements

I am most grateful to Clive Jolly for returning my research data, which as mentioned in the Introduction, I had loaned to him, thus enabling me to write this paper which I had originally intended to do in the late 1950s.

I am also indebted to Jonathan Partington of the Greenwich Heritage Centre for tracking down on my behalf details of the life of Richard Ruegg that I had otherwise been unable to find.



Keith Hyatt (left - recent Editor of The London Naturalist) and the author birdwatching near Broadness Beacon on the Swanscombe Marshes on October 26th 1952. (John F. Burton)



References

'A LOVER OF NATURE', 1829. Remarks on the Nature and Habits of the Bearded Titmouse. Loudon's Magazine of Natural History. 2: 222-24.

ALBIN, E., 1731-38. A Natural History of Birds. London.

BARTLETT, W.V., 1964-65. The River and Marsh at East Greenwich.

Trans., Greenwich and Lewisham Antiquarian Society. 7: 68-85.

BURTON, J.F., 1958. The wildlife of London's last salt-marsh.

Kent and Sussex. Journ. 3: 445-447.

BURTON, J.F., 1973. Duck and waders on the Thames, 1945-50. Lond. Bird Rep. 37: 65-66.

BURTON, J.F., 1979. When Thamesmead was a reed-bed. Country Life CLXVI: 1767-1768.

BURTON, J.F., 1995. Birds and Climate Change. London.

BURTON, J.F., 2013. The wildlife of the south-east London suburb of Charlton. *Lond. Nat.* 92: 55-79.

BURTON, J.F., 2014. Grey Daggers and Minotaurs in Greenwich Park: Memories of a London Schoolbov Naturalist in the 1940s. Clip Publishing, Dorset.

BUTTON, D.T., 1872. Hawks, etc., at Gravesend. Zoologist. Series 2: 7: 3019.

CLARK-KENNEDY, A., 1867. Waxwings near Woolwich. Zoologist. Series 2: 2: 561.

CLARKE, J.A., 1864. Fieldfare in July. Zoologist. Series 1: 22: 9327.

CLARKE, J.A., 1864. Sanderling at Gravesend. Zoologist. Series 1: 22: 9329.

COLLINGWOOD, C., 1859. The Fauna of Blackheath and its Vicinity. London.

COOPER, J.A., 1888. Pallas's Sand-Grouse near Barking. The Field. 72: 842.

CROUCH, W., 1888. Pallas's Sand Grouse in Essex. The Field, 72: 840.

CURTIS, E., 1881. Buzzards in the Thames Marshes. The Field. 65: 144.

DAVIS, W.J., 1881. Blue-throated Warbler at Dartford. Zoologist. Series 2: 16: 471.

DAVIS, W.J., 1904. Birds of the Dartford District. Dartford, Kent.

DAVIS, W.J., 1907. The Birds of Kent. Dartford.

DICKENS, C., 1880. Dickens's Dictionary of the Thames, pp.143-146. London.

E.S.H., 1859. Osprev near Dartford. The Field, 43: 8 October 1859.

FALLER, H., 1848. Occurrence of the Common Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) in the Thames. *Zoologist*. Series 1: 6: 2149.

FIELDING, C.H., 1850. Memories of Malling, p.259. West Malling, Kent.

FORTUNE, R., 1887. Puffin on the Thames in July. Zoologist. Series 2: 22: 263.

GILHAM, E.H., & HOMES, R.C., 1950. The Birds of the North Kent Marshes. Collins. London.

GLEGG, W.E., 1929 A History of the Birds of Essex, London.

GRAVES, G., 1811-21, British Ornithology. London.

GREEN, J., 1853. Occurrence of Montagu's Harrier in Woolwich Marshes. *Zoologist*. Series 1. 11: 4094.

HARRISON, J., & GRANT, P., 1976. The Thames Transformed: London's River and its Waterfowl. André Deutsch. London.

HARTING, J.E., 1866. The Birds of Middlesex. John van Voorst, London.

LATHAM, J., 1781-1802, A General Synopsis of Birds, London.

LATHAM, J., 1821. A General History of Birds. Jacob & Johnson, Winchester.

LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY, 1957. The Birds of the London Area since 1900. Collins, London.

MILLS, M. 1999., Greenwich Marsh - The 300 years before the Dome. M. Wright, Blackheath, London.

MONTAGU, G., 1802. Ornithological Dictionary of British Birds. White, London.

MORRIS, A.J. & WRIGHT, B.E., 1992. Birds of the Crayford, Dartford and Stone Marshes. *Lond. Bird Rep.* 56: 153-177.

MORRIS, F.O., 1850-57. A History of British Birds vol. 5, p.200. London.

NICHOLSON, E.M., 1929. Report on the "British Birds" census of heronries, 1928, British Birds 22: 270-372.

RUEGG, R., 1847. Summer's Evening Rambles Round Woolwich. Woolwich, London.

SELF, A., 2014. The Birds of London. Bloomsbury, London.

SMEE, A.H., 1867. Common Skua on the Thames. Zoologist Series 2: 2: 1017.

SMEE, A.H., 1876. Great Northern Diver off Erith. Zoologist Series 2, 11: 4930.

SMITH, C.J., 1873. Erith, Its Natural, Civil and Ecclesiastical History. Erith, Kent.

SWALES, S., GAME, M., and YARHAM, I., Nature Conservation in Greenwich.

Ecology Handbook No. 10. London Ecology Unit, London.

THOMAS, W.H., 1843. The Reed-Warbler. Zoologist 1: 97-100.

TICEHURST, N.F., 1909. A History of the Birds of Kent. Witherby, London.

TURNER, H.J., 1909. Aves in A Survey and Record of Woolwich and West Kent, edited by C.H. Grinling et al. Woolwich.

WEST, W., 1906. The Lepidoptera of the southeastern district of London. *Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.* 18: 141-143.

WHEATLEY, N., 1991. The birds of Thamesmead. Lond. Bird Rep. 55: 164-180.

WHITE, R.O., 1847. Occurrence of the Gannet near Dartford, Kent.

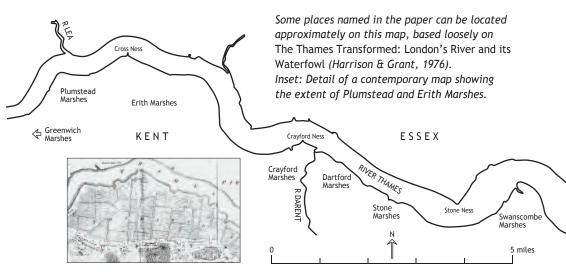
Zoologist: Series 1: 5: 1701.

WHITELY, H., 1863. Dartford Warbler on the Banks of the Thames at Woolwich. *Zoologist*. Series 1: 21: 8819.

WILLIAMSON, K., 1975. Birds and Climatic Change. Bird Study 22: 143-164.

John F. Burton johnfburton@gmx.de

Appendix



THE BIRDS OF FRANKS PARK, BELVEDERE, 2001-2016

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

ANDREW S. WALLER

Introduction

Franks Park, Belvedere, London Borough of Bexley (Grid Ref: TQ500787) consists of 17 hectares of mature woodland and parkland set in the urban environment of Belvedere. It is bordered by Halt Robin Road, Parkside Road, Valley Road and Erith Road.

History

Franks Park is named after Mr Frank Beadle, a local industrialist, whose wife provided the money in his memory for Erith Council to purchase the land in 1920. Additional parcels of land were bought in 1936 and 1939.

The land was originally part of the grounds of Belvedere House and was known as Belvedere Park. Belvedere House, which had been one of the main landmarks in the district, was demolished unfortunately during the mid-20th century.

This old parkland area had a much more open character in previous times, as is known from old maps from the 18th and 19th century, but has become increasingly wooded since then.

Open glades with standing deadwood (below left) and large oak trees within the woodland offer ideal habitats for wood-boring insects and woodpeckers. (Andrew S. Waller)





Habitats

The site is composed predominantly of broad-leaved woodland, with a good ride system and some open glades being present. There is also a large area of short, mown grassland that runs into the centre of the site but with tall grassland habitat on the slopes.

Intriguingly, there are many aspects of this site that conform with semi-natural ancient woodland status, although this possibility has never been proved beyond doubt. My late colleague and friend, Dr Paddy Coker, thought that at least part of the woodland at Franks Park was seminatural ancient woodland. The range of both flora and fauna present here is a good indication of this fascinating scientific possibility, especially the veteran trees and the various ancient woodland indicator species.



A large woodland ride. (Andrew S. Waller)

A variety of tree species are present, but notably large specimens of English oak, beech, sweet chestnut, horse chestnut, ash and field maple. Elder, yew, holly and hawthorn are also present, as is false acacia among other species.

Management

There is open access at this site, which is managed by the London Borough of Bexley and it is a Site of Borough Grade 1 Importance for Nature Conservation.

The management is fairly minimal currently, which probably suits the woodland wildlife present, although the false acacia along the southern-most ride is colonising further so it is hoped this will be controlled in the future, due to its unfortunate invasive nature.

Recording

The bird recording by me at Franks Park covers the years 2001 to 2016, when I was kindly asked by Bexley Council to write a nature conservation management plan for this very interesting site, and in more recent times, when I have visited the site semi-regularly when I can. There was a gap in recording for a few years due to my work unfortunately, but a good list has been compiled over numerous visits.

In total, 41 bird species have been recorded - mainly during the stated period but with the occasional historical record added too for interest.

The woodland bird fauna is surprisingly very good, given the highly urbanised surroundings in this part of SE London. This shows what a critical site it is and how the importance of its connectivity to other nearby woodlands, such as the much larger Lesnes Abbey Woods, for birds and other mobile wildlife cannot be understated.

The presence of woodland birds such as Tawny Owl, Sparrowhawk, Nuthatch and all three woodpecker species is a good indication of how important urban woodlands can be. Why Treecreeper has not been seen by me in the woodland is a mystery: it could be down to under-recording possibly or due to this species being a genuine rarity at the wood, so this needs to be investigated further.

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Firecrest is a very notable winter visitor to Franks Park and has been recorded by me within a mixed tit and Goldcrest flock in one particular year. More yearly study is also needed to see if this species is an annual visitor or not to this site.

Spotted Flycatcher, which was present historically at Franks Park in relatively recent times, has been sadly lost, and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was only seen during the 2001 surveying at this site, which is a major concern.

Clearly, much further bird monitoring is required here. Even though it is surrounded by urban housing and roads, it is a hidden gem of a site with a fascinating range of wildlife present.

Systematic List

Grey Heron: Flyover species; seen since 2002.

Sparrowhawk: Seen since 2003 and a likely breeder in the woodland, but this has not been proved as vet.

Kestrel: Seen only irregularly over Franks Park, and not thought to breed at the site; most recent record was two birds soaring together on Aug 23rd 2016.

Black-headed Gull: Flyover species; seen since 2001.

Common Gull: Flyover species; seen since 2001.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Flyover species; first noted in 2003.

Herring Gull: Flyover species; most recently seen on Aug 23rd 2016.

Feral Pigeon: Seen in small numbers flying over the site since 2001.

Stock Dove: Regular breeding species; noted since 2002. At least two territories in the woodland, with two pairs found on Apr 22nd 2016.

Woodpigeon: Regular breeding species; seen since 2001 in the woodland and parkland. Highest count of 15 birds seen on Oct 5th 2001.

Collared Dove: Regular breeding species; noted since 2001.

Ring-necked Parakeet: First seen in the woodland on Jan 10th 2006; now a regular breeder. Two birds seen on Mar 25th 2006 defending a valuable tree hole from a grev squirrel. A minimum of three pairs present at tree holes on Apr 22nd 2016 and juvenile parakeets seen in the woodland on Aug 5th 2016.

Tawny Owl: Regular breeding species in the woodland; noted by me since 2002, although my colleague Mr L. Aldrich has a record of this species breeding in a container attached to an oak tree here in 1996. On Jun 20th 2002, one to two young heard begging for food from adults at night. A local resident, Mr T. Earley has kindly told me that he heard a Tawny Owl hooting at the edge of the wood as recently as July 2016.

Common Swift: Flyover species over the woodland since 2002. Maximum of six birds.

Green Woodpecker: Regular breeding species; seen since 2001. One territory noted including on Apr 18th 2016.

Great Spotted Woodpecker: Regular breeding species in the woodland; noted since 2001. At least one territory present.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker: Seen for the first time on Oct 25th 2001, when one male was in a single large tree along with both Green and Great Spotted Woodpecker - which was unique to say the least!

House Martin: Flyover species; seen since 2002. On Jul 19th 2002, two birds seen over the woodland.

Wren: Regular breeding species in the woodland during the survey period; a maximum of four territories noted since 2002. Four territories still present on Apr 22nd 2016.

Dunnock: Regular territory at the woodland; seen since 2001. Two territories recorded including on Mar 18th 2016.

Robin: Regular breeding species in the woodland; seen since 2001. Three territories noted in the woodland.

Blackbird: Regular breeding species since 2002. Three territories noted in the woodland and parkland, including on Apr 22nd 2016.

Song Thrush: Regular breeding species; noted since 2001. Maximum of one territory known to be present.

Redwing: Noted since 2002, as a winter visitor, with one bird seen on Feb 14th 2002.

Blackcap: Regular breeding species; noted since 2002. At least two territories in the woodland. One male seen alongside a juvenile bird in a tree on Aug 5th 2016.

Common Chiffchaff: Regular breeding species in the woodland; first noted on Apr 12th 2002. Maximum of two territories in the woodland.

Goldcrest: Seen since 2001 in the woodland but can be quite elusive. Highly likely to breed in the wood. Two birds seen on Nov 27th 2001.

Firecrest: Seen on Dec 6th 2001, at the south-east corner of the woodland, along a main ride. Was noticed in a mixed tit flock and with a Goldcrest present too. Not seen since but may be a more regular winter visitor than currently detected.

Spotted Flycatcher: Last seen at this site in 1996 by my colleague, Mr L. Aldrich. This species bred in ivy in the adjacent fire station yard and was seen to fledge young. Not seen since by either of us, and this reflects its unfortunate declining status in the UK.

Long-tailed Tit: Regular breeding species; seen since 2001. Maximum of three birds seen, on May 15th 2016.

Blue Tit: Regular breeder; seen since 2001. At least three to four territories present in the woodland.

Great Tit: Regular breeder: seen since 2001. At least three territories present in the woodland including on Apr 22nd 2016.

Nuthatch: Regular breeder; noted in the woodland since 2001. On Apr 22nd 2016, one adult bird seen at the north-west section of the wood on a tree, with food in its beak,

so the nest must be very close by.

Jay: Regular breeding species in the woodland; seen since 2001. Pair present in wood on Apr 18th 2016.

Magpie: Breeds annually in the woodland; seen since 2001. At least two tree nests found on Apr 22nd 2016. Juvenile magpies seen at an open glade at the edge of the wood on Aug 5th 2016.

Jackdaw: Breeds annually in the woodland; seen since 2003. One pair inspecting tree holes on Mar 18th 2016.

Carrion Crow: Breeds annually in the woodland; seen since 2001 on every visit to the site. Highest number of 90 birds seen here on Jul 4th 2002. One occupied nest in the wood, with a female present, on Apr 22nd 2016.

Starling: Seen mainly on houses at the very edge of the site, and suspected to be nesting in both houses and trees in the area. No starling nests found as yet at Franks Park. Most recent sighting was a juvenile perched on a house next to the wood on Aug 23rd 2016.

House Sparrow: Present at the edge of the site; seen since 2003. Highest number of birds noted was three on Jan 28th 2003. Likely to be nesting in houses close to Franks Park.

Chaffinch: Regular breeding species in the woodland. Maximum of one territory noted at the site.

Greenfinch: Regular breeding species at the site. Maximum of one territory also noted here.

References

London Borough of Bexley. Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation 2011.

Andrew S. Waller, Regent's Place, 338 Euston Road, London, NW1 3BT

ORIENTAL TURTLE DOVE AT OTFORD, KENT, FEBRUARY 18TH 2016 - THE FIRST FOR LONDON

BARRY WRIGHT

This is the one that almost got away. March 22nd 2016: I received a note from the post office indicating receipt of a letter to sign for and to rearrange for it to be re-delivered. I arranged this but it wasn't there to collect on the said date, so fast forward to April 1st, a late night celebrating my 50th birthday including attempts by me at belly dancing, but that's another story. Next day the postman appeared with a letter to sign for, presumably a late birthday card, but it was addressed to me, the County Recorder. Opening the envelope, I was greeted with a nice letter plus 20 photos of a 'Turtle Dove' taken by John Waterman. According to the letter, the photos were taken in February in a garden in Otford, Kent and sent to Les Edwins, an expert at the RSPB on Turtle Doves, who identified it as an Oriental Turtle Dove, of the *meena* subspecies. Fortunately one of my birthday presents by my side was *Birds of Central Asia* and sure enough there it was staring me in the face: a mega in Kent.

Some photos with a Woodpigeon illustrated just how small the bird was. It was in what appeared to be quite dull winter plumage and the very small size was nearer to European Turtle Dove. It had darker plumage, dull greyish-pink undertail coverts and lower belly, greyish rump and lower back, and extensively whitish-fringed tertials and greater coverts. The neck barring was grey—white, as opposed to black—white in European Turtle Dove. Not an easy identification, but the photos matched *meena* as opposed to *orientalis*.

I suddenly felt ill, cursing the post office and at the same time being aware of the enormity of the record and its interest for birders far and wide, but where was the bird?

I phoned John Waterman immediately, but his wife indicated he was working and not back until that evening. With Otford as my only clue at the time and my lack of skills in googling the garden from aerial images, I spent about six hours wandering around Otford and even parked opposite the bird's as-yet-unknown locality!

Having spoken to John in the evening it transpired that he was certain the bird was present the previous week but the house owner, Tony Rose, was away on holiday and didn't want news of the bird's presence to be released. I did manage to ascertain it was on the estate behind the VW garage but not the exact house and garden. That evening I tweeted out the photos of the bird that John took and within minutes got a call from Chris Batty at Rare Bird Alert (RBA) confirming what we already suspected: that it was the real deal.

Sunday April 3rd, dawn till dusk, I checked the area along with a few hardy souls, but no sign. Daily visits by Martin Warburton and his dog Xanthe failed to locate it; nor did the efforts of Andy Appleton, Chris Gibbard, Terry Laws and Steve Broyd among others.

We assumed the bird had departed and, even knowing the rough area now from googling the home owner's name, failed to turn up the bird.

227



The trail went cold, Xanthe returned to her normal route with Martin for her walks; then fast forward to Wednesday April 27th when I phoned John to establish the final day the bird had been seen so I could forward the record to BBRC. He indicated it was still present a few days before. Once again I experienced that same cold feeling as if I had lost my bins, and I asked if he could forward my mobile number on to Tony Rose, whose garden it was visiting, in case the bird was still present. Xanthe and Martin returned to the area for their walks but failed to even find the grain that Chris had put down near by. Things weren't looking good.

Late on Friday April 29th (but seen early the next day), a message from Tony indicated the bird was present in the morning and evening that day and gave me rough times it appeared, the direction it flew in from and even the road he lived in. I along with a few others and especially Andy Appleton, my companion for the day, established that an area along the end of The Butts Road would be ideal to view the trees in the back gardens. In position from about 4pm, a few of the Otford scouting party assembled even Steve Broyd, having stopped off on route back home from Scotland that morning and sure enough at 17:03pm Andy Lawson, fresh in from Dungeness, saw the bird fly in from the south into the trees... and the rest is history, as they say.

The bird developed a pattern at dawn for a few hours and from roughly 4pm for a few hours, of flying to the trees before dropping into the garden out of view, then flying off south again to where, nobody knows. Speaking to Tony, it was evident that the bird was best viewed from within the house as it was easily spooked if anyone went in the garden,



Left: The Oriental Turtle Dove at 08:27 on May 1st 2016. (Andrew Moon)

Above: Birders in Otford on May 5th - a week before the bird finally departed. (Barry Wright)

but this was not a practical arrangement for the family - hence the reluctance to publicise the exact location. How we had missed it before could have been due to our positioning, the lack of food in the garden to entice it down whilst Tony was away, or simply the speed at which it shot in overhead and the route it had taken. The residents embraced the bird's presence, I spoke to Tony a few times and thanked him on behalf of everyone for tolerating our presence on this quiet Otford estate, a few young boys on the estate took orders for tea and coffee which was a great gesture, and who knows how long the bird will stay. Housing estate birds are never easy twitches - and this was no exception - but the behaviour of the birders visiting was impeccable.

It was my worst case scenario so far as being Kent County Recorder, but all turned out well in the end. My 22 hours looking for the bird was at times frustrating, but I do know Otford pretty well now plus lots of the residents. The bird's full dates of stay were February 18th to May 12th 2016.

Streptopelia orientalis meena represents the first record for the London Area (the LNHS recording area) as well as for Kent; it was accepted by BBRC; and it mirrors the occurrence of a bird in Oxford in gardens a few years before.

Barry Wright, 6 Hatton Close, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 8SD

BTO HOUSE MARTIN SURVEY 2016 AT ALDBOROUGH HALL EQUESTRIAN CENTRE: A THRIVING COLONY

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

CHRIS GANNAWAY

The House Martin population in the Redbridge area has generally followed the national/London downward trend (Ellis & Herbert, 2001 and Woodward, 2008). Fifty years ago I can remember almost every other house in my road had martins breeding; this steadily declined until about 35 years ago when the last pair in the road bred. I should note that our road is not a typical suburban road: though one end leads on to the A12, at the other end it becomes a lane that leads out on to the open countryside of Fairlop Plain and at the top of the lane is sited the Aldborough Hall Equestrian Centre where the House Martin colony - the subject of this study - is situated. The colony is situated on the west-facing wall of the house at the second storey (as this is a private dwelling, viewing is only by prior arrangement).

I first became aware of the colony through general bird-watching then taking on the square for the BTO Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) though it has been only since 2012 (2013 missed) that the colony data has been recorded. House Martins have been recorded on this BBS transect section since the start in 2004.

According to the proprietor, Mrs M Garrett, the first House Martins bred approximately 30 years ago, since when the colony has slowly grown but - as shown in Table 1 - increased substantially between 2012 and 2014.

Table 1. Data from BBS survey 2012-2016 of active House Martin nests in the colony. Note that early visits were carried out in April/May and late visits by mid-June. See Discussion on page 234.

Active nests	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Early visit	8	-	21	30	6
Late visit	11	-	39	39	36



The BTO House Martin Survey

The procedure for the survey means that at least weekly observations (with perhaps twice-weekly visits in the early season) would have to be carried out on the nests throughout the breeding season April to October; this would mean a minimum of 1,300 observations would be needed to cover the colony. It should be noted that 43 old nests were present at the beginning of breeding season in April 2016, indicating some late breeding attempts in 2015. Also, the BTO protocol asked if possible for extended observation on some nests to give an indication of numbers of building/feeding visits in a ten-minute period. To accommodate this, it became obvious that for one person to get the coverage plus the data entry would be a very heavy commitment. It was lucky that Bill Neate was looking to take part in the survey and was willing to take on board half the colony.

Two photographs of the nest line were taken at the beginning of the survey to show the two sections: the left-hand section for myself and the right-hand section for Bill. These were used to identify and number the nests and to mark up where fresh nests were built in the colony.

In practice it was found that a minimum of 30 minutes was required to observe each section of nests during the periods of peak activity in the colony and, when the tenminute timed counts were added, each observer was likely to spend an hour in observation - which could be guite taxing on the neck!

The survey protocol

I have included extracts from the BTO House Martin survey instructions (on the next two pages) to indicate the recording methodology. More information can be obtained from

https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/house-martin-survey/house-martin-nest-study-2016

Left and below: The nests in the Alborough Hatch House Martin colony. These photos have been retouched to remove the shadow from the eaves. The arrows divide the two sections in the survey: 21 nests to the left and 22 nests to the right. (Chris Gannaway)



WHEN TO CARRY OUT YOUR SURVEY VISITS

LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Please monitor the nests at least once a week throughout the breeding season, though there is no need to worry if you need to miss a week due to a holiday. At key periods of activity, especially when the birds are feeding young, more frequent observations will help us to pinpoint the precise timing of nesting. During these periods, twice-weekly or even daily visits would give useful information.

Less frequent visits may be adequate at certain times in the season, e.g. in April, before the main nesting activity begins, and in August and September, if the birds appear to have left the site. At these times, fortnightly visits could be carried out, though weekly visits would still be preferable. Please avoid a gap of more than a fortnight between visits, otherwise nesting activity may be missed. For example, nests can be partially constructed and then fall down within just a few days, or feeding activity can suddenly cease due to predation.

In practice you should allow for a maximum observation period of 15 minutes on each visit for each nest or group of nests. However, during peak periods, visiting for iust a minute or so may be sufficient to immediately record that young are still present in all nests.

Visits can be made at any time of day, apart from the first and last hours of daylight when birds may be roosting. You should also avoid periods of heavy rain or heavy wind, as these may affect activity.

RECORDING NEW NESTS (Form B)

Please note that any new nests that were not present during the preliminary visit but which are built among your chosen nests during the breeding season should also be monitored. Each new nest should be numbered and information recorded on Form B as soon as the birds begin building it. They should also be added to your site diagram or photo. Replacement nests (built in exactly the same position as a nest which has fallen down) do not need to be recorded as a new nest. Use the same number as the nest they are replacing.

RECORDING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please use the appropriate survey codes wherever possible. However, we cannot cover every eventuality, so please use the Comments boxes to tell us about anything else that you think is relevant. Some examples for Form C may include:

- 1 the (minimum) number of young from a particular nest, if you observe them
- 2 the presence of a predator that is taking an interest in the colony, or is observed attacking a nest;
- 3 a record of any severe weather events, or the presence or absence of mud close to the colony following periods of rain or drought.

WHAT TO RECORD DURING A VISIT

It will be useful to have Form C with you but you may find it easier to record information in a notebook and then enter it on the online system or paper Form C later.

During the visit you will need to record the following:

- 1 The time you start observing the nest or group of nests.
- **2** The observation time (i.e. the length of time that you watched each nest or group of nests).
- **3** The condition of each nest.
- 4 The highest level of House Martin activity observed at each nest.
- 5 The occurrence of any unusual incident or failure of the nesting attempt. This may be observed directly or determined from evidence at the site. This will usually relate to the collapse of the nest or damage to one or more of the eggs or young.

CODES USED FOR TELLING US ABOUT YOUR VISIT(S)

Nest condition during visit: If the nest has fallen down since your last visit and only a ring-mark or a few bits of attached mud remain it should be recorded as NO (no nest present), unless the adults start re-building the nest when it can be recorded as N1. If the nest has partially collapsed, record the appropriate nest condition code (e.g. N3) to indicate how much of the nest remains.

- NO No nest present; N1 Incomplete nest, ¼ built; N2 Incomplete, ½ built;
- N3 Incomplete, 3/4 built; N4 Complete nest (incl. artificial nests)

Activity codes: For each nest, record one status code to describe the highest level of House Martin activity observed during your visit - the status codes are ordered from highest (FY) to lowest (V0). More details are provided below about codes V0, AV and FY.

- FY Flying young still using nest (seen flying to or from nest); AN Adult at nest (adult seen to enter complete nest)
- AF Adult feeding young at nest; ON House Martin at nest but you are uncertain whether it is an adult or recently fledged young
- **VY** Visible young (young observed at nest entrance)
- AY Audible young in nest; AB Adult building nest
- DR New droppings observed under nest; AV Adults seen in the vicinity of the nest
- AQ Adults quarrelling/fighting at the nest; V0 No activity observed in the vicinity of the nest

Code AV should be used if the adults appear to be showing some interest in the nest(s) or are approaching close to the nest(s) or the building. Where two or more nests are close together, use your best judgement to decide which nest(s) the birds are showing an interest in and record code V0 for any other nests.

Code FY can be used if you see one or more of the young fledging from the nest. However, young House Martins have been recorded returning to the nest after fledging, so you can also use FY if you observe young birds flying back to the nest in the days after the first young fledge. FY should only be used when you are sure that the flying young are recently fledged and from the nest. If you are unsure, please use code ON instead.



LONDON BIRD REPORT NO.81 2016

Juvenile House Martins in their nest. (Ian Woodward)

Analysis of data for the whole colony

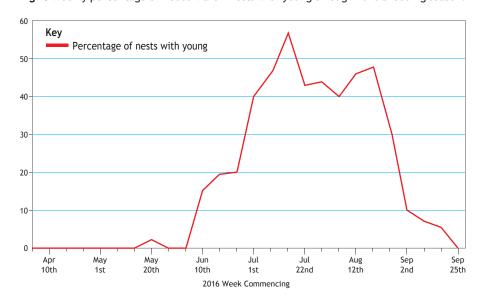
As the data is directly entered by Bill and me into the BTO web database, we did not have the combined information for local analysis. We are indebted to Ian Woodward, the BTO House Martin Research Officer, for making the combined results spreadsheet available to us.

In analysing the results we had to make some assumption that, if young were visible at the entrance to the nest and were being fed for two to three weeks before all activity ceased at the nest, they fledged successfully. We have no idea how many young would have fledged from these perceived successful nests as it is extremely difficult to count the number of nestlings, which may vary from two to four, as there is normally only room for one to two young at the nest entrance at any one time. Note that clutch size is normally 4-5 eggs for the first brood and 2-3 for the second brood.

Summary of results for the whole colony

Total number of observations: 1,605 (ignoring ten-minute timed counts) Total whole nests at end of 2016 breeding season: 53 (increase of 10 nests during the season) Estimated number of attempts to breed: 67 (including second broods) Estimated number of successful attempts: 52 Estimated number of failed attempts: 15 Earliest visit to nest by adult: April 11th 2016 Highest percentage of breeding nests in year: 57% peaked on July 17th 2016

Fig 1. Weekly percentage of House Martin nests with young through 2016 breeding season.



Discussion

- 1. Table 1 (page 228) gives figures for active nests at the time of the BBS visit not the total number of nests (see Summary of results for the whole colony, page 233). With the time constraints in BBS monitoring, there might be an underestimate in the number of active nests at the time of the survey, but the annual recording effort is consistent so numbers between years can be compared. This year's House Martin survey did show higher numbers of occupied nests; we suspect that birds were still arriving late and that some late nest-building took place in mid-season.
- 2. We did not observe any actual fledging from the colony nests but did observe many young martins flying along the nest-line, some of which did enter nests.
- 3. If we assume that two to three birds actually fledged per nest, we can estimate that the colony produced 100-150 young in 2016. Is this enough to keep the colony expanding? (Depending on migration losses).
- 4. We will be monitoring the colony again in 2017, so hope to see if it can expand further or whether it has reached its peak due to food limitations and migration survival. We can assume that the colony has grown to this size due to the presence of the Equestrian Centre's horses and the associated flies providing a close-by source of food for the House Martins and Swallows that nest there. The adjoining Fairlop Waters CP also provides a less readily available source of food over the grassland and waterbodies for the fledged young to feed.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Bill Neate, my fellow surveyor of this site; and to Ian Woodward at the BTO who supplied advice and also produced the chart (Fig 1). Thanks also to Mrs Mary Garrett for allowing Bill and me to carry out the survey over the 2016/2017 breeding season.

References

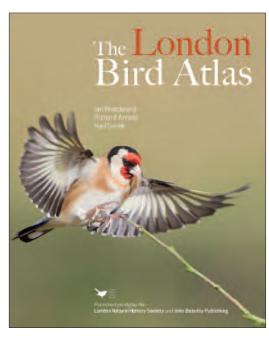
ELLIS, N. J. & HERBERT, C., 2003. The House Martin in North London: decline in occupancy of observed nest sites, 1985-2003. *Lond. Bird Rep.* 66: 167-170.

WOODWARD, I., 2008. House Martins in Walthamstow and Chingford, 2006. Essex Bird Report 2008: 152-156, Essex Birdwatching Society.

Chris Gannaway, 50 Spearpoint Gardens, Aldborough Road North, Ilford, Essex, IG2 7SZ



PUBLICATION OF THE LONDON BIRD ATLAS



The London Bird Atlas (LBA) is a benchmark publication for its scientific content.

- Comprehensive accounts of 188 species with informative graphs, tables and photographs.
- A total of 502 maps including breeding, winter distribution and relative abundance maps.
- Target audience includes scientists and conservationists, as well as keen birders and wildlife enthusiasts.
- All species accounts are written with the lay reader in mind.
- The third atlas for London's birds; will become the new benchmark.
- Published in November 2017.
- 280 x 215 mm, 416 pages.
- Hard cover with dust jacket.
- RRP £39.99
- ISBN 978-1-909612-99-0

The London Bird Atlas is an essential source of reference for London's birders. As well as containing information on where to watch birds and other wildlife in London, it provides the most up-to-date analyses of the changes to London's birds based on a comprehensive survey run in conjunction with the British Trust for Ornithology's National Bird Atlas project.

The analyses of millions of bird records and research tell you which birds are doing well, which ones have declined or held steady, and what the changes have been in relation to previous distribution surveys.

Written by Ian Woodward, a professional ornithologist, and Richard Arnold, a professional ecologist. Detailed maps produced by Neil Smith, a professional ecological cartographer. Illustrated with images from a team of contributing photographers.

A joint publication between the London Natural History Society (LNHS) and specialist natural history publisher John Beaufoy Publishing.

Further information at http://lnhs.org.uk/index.php/publications/london-bird-atlas

Online Supplements to The London Bird Atlas

Owing to space restrictions, it was not possible or desirable to include all species in the printed version of *The London Bird Atlas*; the excluded species were principally escapes, vagrants and rare migrants. It is proposed to produce supplements covering some of the excluded species, which will be posted on the LNHS website.

The first supplement - Parrots in the London Area - is completed; a summary of this, by Richard Arnold, Ian Woodward and Neil Smith, is on pages 237-238.

Previous page: Ring-necked Parakeet. (Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne)

PARROTS IN THE LONDON AREA A SUMMARY OF A LONDON BIRD ATLAS SUPPLEMENT

RICHARD ARNOLD, IAN WOODWARD, NEIL SMITH

http://www.lnhs.org.uk/index.php/publications/london-bird-atlas



Ring-necked Parakeet. (Gehan de Silva Wijeveratne)

Introduction

The native range of parrots is predominantly within the southern hemisphere, with most species occurring in tropical regions. Parrots are popular as pets, with more than 556,000 imported into Britain between 1975 and 2005, excluding Budgerigar and Cockatiel. The captive populations of many species persist through breeding. Escapes are commonplace, with an estimated minimum of 400 per annum, around 17% of these in the London Area, according to analysis of lost/found reports held by the Parrot Society UK. Six or seven species of parrot have bred in the wild in Britain. These are Ring-necked (or Rose-Ringed) parakeet *Psittacula krameri*, Monk (or Quaker) Parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus*, Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria*, Blue-crowned Parakeet (or Conure) *Aratinga acuticaudata*, Peach-faced (or Rosy-faced) Lovebird *Agapornis roseicollis*, Budgerigar *Melopsittacus undulatus* and Red-rumped Parrot *Psephotus haematonotus*.

Parrots in the London Area

Self (2014) lists 29 species of parrots which have been recorded in the London Area. A further two species were recorded in the London Area during the London Bird Atlas Project (2007-2013), bringing the total to 31. Of these, up to 20 species were recorded in the 10-year period 2006 to 2015, with 12 of these species being non-breeding and infrequent escapes that do not survive for long or are soon re-captured.

The Ring-necked Parakeet is an established breeding resident, with an estimated wild population of around 30,000 individuals. It is now reported from every London borough and the surrounding counties. The Monk Parakeet has also established breeding populations, previously in up to four localities but just two remain. The population may have peaked at between 100 and 150 individuals but is now the subject of a Defra control programme and numbers may now be less than 50. There is also a population of Blue-crowned Parakeet in south-east London. These birds have been proved to breed only once. Despite this, the population has been present since 1997 and now comprises around five individuals. Hybrid and mixed pairs of Alexandrine Parakeet (with Ringnecked Parakeet) have also bred in London, in 2001 and possibly 2002. It is unclear if pure Alexandrine Parakeet bred in the London Area at that time; however breeding by a pair reportedly occurred in 2008. There is no evidence of an established population, although the occasional bird is reported.

Two other species have shown themselves able to survive as escapes in the London Area for more than one year but have not been reported breeding here or elsewhere in the UK. These are Senegal Parrot *Poicephalus senegalus* and Blue-fronted Amazon *Amazona aestiva*. Senegal Parrot was first recorded in the London Area in 1997 (Self, 2014) and up to three were present in Shirley from 2006 to 2011, but not subsequently. Up to two Blue-fronted Amazon were recorded at the Ring-necked Parakeet roost at Hersham between 2000 and 2006 (Self, 2014). There were no further records until January 2013, when a single bird was reported to be at large in Stoneleigh. It survived for at least 16 months, being last recorded in May 2014.

Budgerigar and Cockatiel *Nymphicus hollandicus* are both frequently reported but there is no suggestion that escaped birds of these species survive for very long. Given its popularity as a cage bird, the Peach-faced Lovebird is recorded surprisingly infrequently in the London Area. Again, escaped birds do not seem to survive very long. However, both Budgerigar and Peach-faced Lovebird have survived winters and bred in the wild elsewhere in the UK in the past.

Full Paper

The full paper is available under 'Supplements' at

http://www.lnhs.org.uk/index.php/publications/london-bird-atlas and includes distribution maps and a complete set of references. Online publication of further supplements will be announced there, and in the quarterly LNHS *Newsletter*.

Bibliography

SELF, A., 2014. The Birds of London. Bloomsbury, London.

Richard Arnold, BTO South London Contact. richard.arnold@thomsonecology.com

LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The Society publishes ornithological and other natural history records for the area within 20 miles of St Paul's Cathedral. As well as Ornithology, other interests in natural history are catered for through the Society's Sections which record and study the major groups of flora and fauna, and the habitats in which they are found. Meetings organised by each Section are open to all members.

New members, beginners and experts alike, are welcome. An extensive programme of talks and field meetings, open to all, is provided throughout the year. As well as the annual *London Bird Report*, the Society publishes a journal, *The London Naturalist*, each year and its *Newsletter* every quarter. Members have access to a large lending and reference library of natural history books and can join one or more of several reading circles which circulate many natural history journals at a fraction of the cost of subscribing direct.

Yearly subscriptions range from £20 (for ordinary members) through £16 for senior members (over 65 years and who have been in continuous membership for ten years or more) to £5 for students (under 18 years of age, or receiving full-time education). Additional family members who enjoy all the benefits of membership except separate publications pay only £4 each. Subscriptions may be paid by PayPal or Standing Order (see 'Join Us'), or by Cheque made payable to the London Natural History Society and sent to the Assistant Treasurer:

Robin Blades, 32 Ashfield Road, London, N14 7JY

Further copies of this issue of the *London Bird Report* may be obtained (price £8.00 plus £2.00 UK postage and packing) from:

Catherine Schmitt, 4 Falkland Avenue, London, N3 1QR

Back numbers of most recent issues are also available from the same address. Cheques should be made payable to the London Natural History Society.

London Natural History Society c/o The Linnean Society of London Burlington House Piccadilly London, W1J 0BF

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The LBR Editorial Board welcomes papers, short notes, photographs and drawings relating to the ornithology of the London Area and will be pleased to advise authors on the acceptability of material at draft stage if desired.

PAPERS should be submitted to the Papers Editor: Mike Trier, 38 Maury Road, London N16 7BP, email: miketrier@waitrose.com

Texts should be sent as RTF or MS Word file attachments to an email. The dates of all records included should be no later than the nominal year of publication. Printed text (hard copy) can be scanned; please contact the Papers Editor first before submitting it.

Style English names of birds require initial capitals except after a hyphen, but group names, animals and flowers do not. Scientific names should be in italics, but only the first (generic) name should have an initial capital; their use in the text is optional, but should be included in the first mention in a paper about a particular species. Dates should take the form January 1st 2015; numbers under 11 should be spelt out in text; fractions should be decimalised. Full points should be omitted from well-known initials, such as BTO, LNHS and RSPB, and also from 'eg', 'ie' and 'et al'. Speech quotation marks should be double; all others should be single.

Systematic lists within papers should be in the order of Checklist of Birds of the London Area, and in the following format for economy of space: **Common name:** Description etc.

References to publications should be given in full, with the name spelt out and in italics, and in the following style:

HARRISON, J., & GRANT, P.J., 1976. The Thames Transformed. London.

MOON, A.V., 1988. The influx of Sabine's Gulls and other Seabirds in October 1987. *Lond. Bird Rep.* 52: 121-132.

Illustrations Figures and graphs in papers are welcomed. Graphs should be embedded in the text document. Digital figures (maps etc) should be sent as separate files, with their position indicated in the text. Some figures can be originated by the Papers Editor from hard copy: contact him first for guidance.

Proofs and Reprints Authors of papers and short notes will be sent proofs, if requested, but only printers' mistakes may be changed at this stage. Up to two free reprints of papers are provided if ordered by authors in advance; larger quantities are charged at cost.

PHOTOGRAPHS should be submitted to the Photographic Editor, Jonathan Lethbridge: email: jonathan.lethbridge@btinternet.com.

Digital photographs should be in jpeg format, saved at the highest quality at 300dpi, and with a minimum length on one side of 2000 pixels. Each image should be accompanied by full details including species name, location, date and photographer's name; this can be in the image file name, or in an accompanying document. All images must comply with our Ethical Policy; details are on our website at:

http://lnhs.org.uk/ethical-policy-for-photos.htm

LINE DRAWINGS should be submitted to the Papers Editor (see above). They may be submitted as digital files (by email or on CD) or as hard-copy, suitably protected if posting.

