

LONDON BIRD REPORT 2023

LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



LONDON BIRD REPORT

NO.88 FOR THE YEAR 2023

PRODUCED BY THE LBR EDITORIAL BOARD:

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See inside back cover for LBR 2024 details

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Front cover: Wheatear: everyone's favourite Spring migrant! (Rudraksha Chodankar)
Back cover: An interesting photo of Mute Swan flying over Staines Moor, with a jumbo jet in the background. (Peter Gasson)
Opposite: There was a slight increase in sites for Corn Bunting this year, from 15 to 17. This one, on dock, was seen on Rainham Marshes. (Russ Sherriff)

Citations from the London Bird Report should follow this style:
Oliver, P., 2018. Breeding density of Buzzards in Surrey. *Lond. Bird Rep.* 82: 207-210

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Sequences to file links on the LNHS website: www.lnhs.org.uk

Recording> Recording Birds: Bird Recording Form, Checklist Guide Breeding Criteria, Details of an Unusual Record Form, LBC Gazetteer of Sites.

Publications> London Bird Report: Back issues of the London Bird Report.

Publications> London Bird Report> London Bird Report additional materials:

Consolidated table of contents: 1936 to present.

LNHS bird checklists, breeding criteria, indexes and gazetteers: LBR checklist and breeding criteria: 2023; Indexes of common and scientific names: 2023; Gazetteer sites added: 2023.

Rare Birds in the London Area: Rare Birds in London 1900 to 2018.

Foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls data: Foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls 2013-2023.

LBR Corrections: London Bird Report 1985 and 2010-2016

Volunteering Vacancies - see under News: Volunteering:

> Download our handy leaflet <

LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1858

The Society publishes ornithological and other natural history records for the area within 20 miles (32km) 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 its journal, The London Naturalist, each year, its Newsletter every quarter and its full-colour Programme every six months; this includes details of its virtual talks, which are archived on the Society's website afterwards and can be viewed by members of the Society and the public. 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 journals and Newsletter, pay only £4 each. Subscriptions may be paid by PayPal or Standing Order (see 'Join Us' on our website), or by Cheque made payable to the London Natural History Society and sent to The Assistant Treasurer, LNHS:

Robin Blades, 8 Chapman House, Chapman Square, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG1 2SQ
Further copies of this issue of the London Bird Report, and back numbers of most recent issues, may be obtained (price £8.00 plus £2.00 UK postage and packing) from:

Mike Coleman, publicationsales@lnhs.org.uk

Cheques should be made payable to the London Natural History Society; or see our website:

www.lnhs.org.uk > Publications > London Bird Report > Buying back issues

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LONDON BIRD CLUB

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

www.lnhs.org.uk > About Us > LNHS Sections > London Bird Club

CHAIR

Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne, FLS

COMMITTEE SECRETARY

Cecilia Derrick

INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Introduction

We have made some changes to our Checklist of Birds of the London Area this year. See page 240 for details.

We were sorry to hear that Sean Huggins had died in September 2024. Sean was a member of our Rarities Committee from LBR 2013 and recently stood down as Bird Recorder for Middlesex - a post he had held since LBR 2008. He was also a section writer for LBR 2007 to 2021 and a professional proof-reader who volunteered his services to the London Bird Report. A tribute to Sean is on page 18. We also learned of the sad death of Tony Duckett, Wildlife Officer at Regent's Park, who was so willing to share his knowledge of birds with visiting members of the Society. His detailed paper on Regent's Park is in LBR 2013, pages 220-231; an obituary is on page 20. Two Vice-Presidents of the Society who were connected with birds also died during 2024 - David J. Montier and Patrick Sellar; their full obituaries will be in *The London Naturalist*. A short tribute to David Montier's contributions to London's birds is on page 16. We send our commiserations to all the families of the deceased.

John Archer has stepped down as a member of the Editorial Board. John was one of the original members when the Board was set up in 2010 and we thank him for all his work over the years since then. We welcome Alex Massey and Ben Hillier as Editors.

Jonathan Lethbridge will be standing down as Photographic Editor after completion of this - his fourteenth - issue of the LBR. We'd like to thank Jonathan for his excellent work during this time. Anke Marsh will be taking his place - welcome Anke! And welcome to Henry Wyn-Jones, who takes over as Bird Recorder for Middlesex.

As always, your comments on this issue are very welcome, especially any suggestions for how we could improve things even more. **Our contact details are on page 2.**

A list of abbreviations used throughout the text of the London Bird Report is on page 38.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the London Natural History Society, we 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.

We would also like to thank all those volunteers, listed on the inside front cover, who helped with the production of the report. Thanks also to Nigel Partridge for designing the layouts; and to Sudbury Print Group for printing and distributing this issue.

We are 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. We 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 contact us. 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, Essex Birdwatching Society, Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC, Hertfordshire Natural History Society, Kent Ornithological Society, Londonbirders Yahoo group, Surrey Bird Club.

RARITIES COMMITTEE AND RECORDERS

RARITIES COMMITTEE

Chairman: Bob Watts

Email: rarebirds@lnhs.org.uk

Members: John Archer, Richard Bonser, Sean Huggins (†2024), Rob Innes, Andrew Moon, Andrew Self

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Middlesex: Henry Wyn-Jones

Email: birdrecmiddx@lnhs.org.uk

Surrey: Paul Goodman

Email: birdrecsurrey@lnhs.org.uk

Alternatively, see the London Bird Club section of the Contact Us page on the LNHS website where there are links to these email addresses:

www.lnhs.org.uk > [About LNHS](#) > [Contact us](#) > [Enquiries about London Bird Club](#)

Bird records sent by post for all counties should be addressed to

LNHS Bird Records

38 Maury Road

London

N16 7BP

from where they will be forwarded to the appropriate Recorder(s).

RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS

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, along with comments on changes in status, are always very welcome. Our Checklist of Birds of the London Area and Guide to Contributors of Records (pages 239 to 249), together with Breeding Criteria (page 250), specify what information we would like for each species.

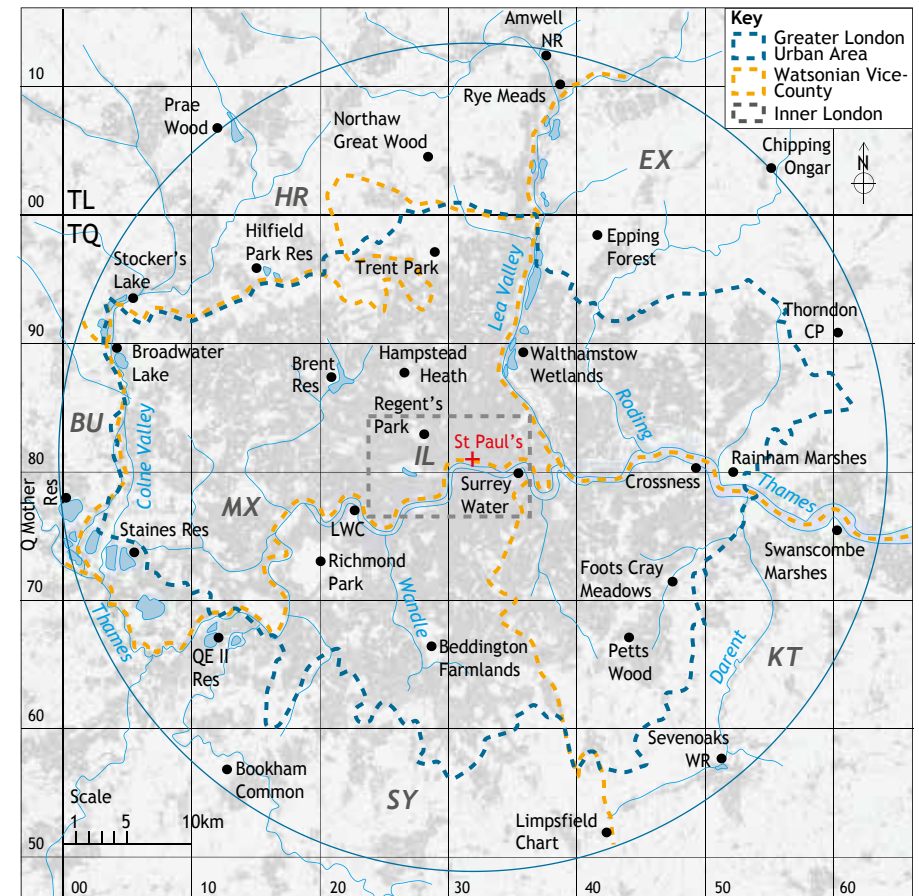
When sending in records, please use site names as listed in our Gazetteer (see opposite) if you can. **If you send in details from sites not listed in the Gazetteer, please give an OS Grid Reference for the site.** A useful website for finding an accurate Grid Reference is <https://gridreferencefinder.com> which gives both six-figure and ten-figure references.

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 thereafter will just be added to our database.

We would prefer that you input records using the Going Birding Records Portal; alternatively, send us records on our Bird Recording Form. Both of these are on our website under [Recording > Recording Birds](#) together with other relevant information. Otherwise, contact one of our Recorders (see page 9) or the Editorial Board. It would also help if you list different species in the order used in this Report. Separate sheets of the Bird Recording Form 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 Checklist and Guide to 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)

Gazetteer of Sites

The LBC Gazetteer of Sites is on the LNHS website (see page 5). This full gazetteer lists open spaces and the names of towns, villages etc. It does not list 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 Editorial Board if you need information on any site. **Our contact details are on page 2.**

MINI-GAZETTEER OF SITES - SUMMARY VERSION

Following a review of our Gazetteer of sites, we have added over 600 smaller sites to our list. As a result, this year's Mini-gazetteer only lists the main sites in London. Cross-references from older names are in **red** type. A key to abbreviations is on page 38.

Full details of all the 3,439 sites in our full LBC Gazetteer of Sites can be found online; the sites added in 2023 are also online in a separate spreadsheet 'Gazetteer sites added: 2023'. See page 5 for links to the online gazetteers.

If a site is not entirely within one of our recording areas, then it is usually taken to be in the recording area that contains the larger area of the site. The most notable of these are: all of the Lea Valley reservoirs, Crystal Palace Park, Holyfield Lake, South Norwood Country Park, Stocker's Lake, Victoria Park and Wraybury Reservoir.

Addington Hills	SY	TQ352644	Cheshunt Gravel Pits - LVRP	HR	TL370030
Aldenham Country Park	HR	TQ170955	For records where precise pit not identified.		
Alexandra Park	MX	TQ300900	Chess Valley	HR	TQ052961
Amwell Nature Reserve	HR	TL378128	Chorleywood Common	HR	TQ033963
Arbrook Common	SY	TQ143632	Claybury Woods & Park	EX	TQ435912
Ashford Common	MX	TQ087697	Cobham Floods	SY	TQ106595
Ashted Common	SY	TQ175595	Cole Green Tip	HR	TL265112
Banbury Reservoir	EX	TQ362915	Colnbrook Landfill	BU	TQ025778
Banstead Downs	SY	TQ252610	Connaught Water	EX	TQ404953
Barking Bay/Marsh	EX	TQ477820	Part of Epping Forest		
Barnes Common	SY	TQ222758	Coopers Green Gravel Pits	HR	TL201097
Bartlett Park	MX	TQ373814	Coopers Green Lane	HR	TL192096
Battersea Park	IL/SY	TQ282772	Cornmill Meadows - LVRP	EX	TL380011
Beddington Farmlands	SY	TQ290667	Cray Valley Golf Course	KT	TQ481695
Bedfont Lakes Country Park	MX	TQ078726	Crayford Marshes	KT	TQ532775
Beech Farm Gravel Pit	HR	TL190088	Creekmouth, Barking	EX	TQ452827
Belhus Woods Country Park	EX	TQ570825	Crossness	KT	TQ490808
Bentley Priory Nature Reserve	MX	TQ155927	Croxley Common Moor	HR	TQ082948
Black Park	BU	TQ010836	Crystal Palace Park	KT	TQ347707
Bookham Common	SY	TQ130565	Dagenham Chase	EX	TQ514858
Brent Res	MX	TQ215870	Dartford Marshes	KT	TQ544774
Bricket Wood Common	HR	TL130010	Davy Down	EX	TQ592803
Broadwater Lake	MX	TQ045892	Downe Bank	KT	TQ438609
Broxbourne Woods	HR	TL329073	Duck Wood	EX	TQ555923
Buckingham Palace Gardens	IL/MX	TQ288796	Dulwich Park	SY	TQ335735
Bulphan Fen	EX	TQ633864	Dulwich Upper Wood	SY	TQ339729
Burgess Park	IL/SY	TQ335778	Dulwich Village	SY	TQ334739
Bury Lake	HR	TQ053938	East India Dock Basin - LVRP	MX	TQ391808
Bushy Park	MX	TQ160690	East Sheen Common	SY	TQ195745
Canada Water	IL/SY	TQ355793	Ellenbrook Fields	HR	TL205090
Canons Farm	SY	TQ248577	Enfield Chase	MX	TQ290988
Cassiobury Park	HR	TQ090970	Epsom Common	SY	TQ190605
Cely Woods	EX	TQ560830	Epsom Downs	SY	TQ219582

Esher Common	SY	TQ135625	Hounslow Heath	MX	TQ123745
Fairlop Waters	EX	TQ459905	Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens	IL/MX	TQ274804
Farthing Downs	SY	TQ299576	Ingrebourne Valley	EX	TQ538843
Fir & Pond Woods	MX	TL276011	Island Barn Reservoir	SY	TQ140670
Fishers Green Goosefield - LVRP	EX	TL380038	Joyden's Wood	KT	TQ500715
Fishers Green Island - LVRP	EX	TL376037	A small part is in Bexley		
Foots Cray Meadows	KT	TQ478715	Kelsey Park	KT	TQ376688
Frays Valley Local Nature Reserve	MX	TQ055865	Kemnal Woods	KT	TQ448717
Frays Wildfowl Lake - LVRP	MX	TQ056864	Kempton Nature Reserve	MX	TQ116706
Friday Lake	HR	TL371020	Kew Gardens	SY	TQ182769
Frogmore Lakes	HR	TL150033	King George V Dock	EX	TQ432803
Fryent Country Park	MX	TQ194877	King George V Reservoir	EX	TQ374964
Galleyhill Wood	EX	TL394034	King George VI Reservoir	MX	TQ041732
Part of Epping Forest			Knights Wood	EX	TQ409931
Gallions Reach	EX/KT	TQ445801	Part of Epping Forest		
Garsons Farm	SY	TQ125639	Lake Farm Country Park	MX	TQ091803
Gatton Park/Lake	SY	TQ271525	Lamorbey Park	KT	TQ465731
Glen Faba - LVRP	EX	TL393088	Leg O Mutton Nature Reserve	SY	TQ218774
Gobions Wood	HR	TL256035	Letchmore Heath	HR	TQ155977
Godstone Sand Pit	SY	TQ345518	Leyton Flats	EX	TQ397885
Grays Gorge	EX	TQ608789	Part of Epping Forest		
Greenland Dock	IL/SY	TQ361791	Limpfield Chart	SY	TQ431521
Greenwich Park	KT	TQ390775	Lion Gorge	EX	TQ599786
Greenwich Peninsula	KT	TQ393796	Lippitts Hill	EX	TQ392976
Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park	KT	TQ400793	Part of Epping Forest		
Grey Goose Farm	EX	TQ629807	Littlebrook Lake	KT	TQ553756
Hackney Marsh - LVRP	MX	TQ366861	London Wetland Centre	SY	TQ228770
Hainault Forest Country Park	EX	TQ476932	Long Running	EX	TQ434997
Hall Marsh Scrape - LVRP	EX	TL373017	Part of Epping Forest		
Hampermill Lake	HR	TQ095942	Longfield Gallops	KT	TQ602697
Hampstead Heath	MX	TQ273866	Lullingstone Park	KT	TQ520645
Hatfield Park	HR	TL240080	Lynsters Farm	HR	TQ034920
Havering Country Park	EX	TQ505930	Lynsters Lake	HR	TQ038916
Hayes Common	KT	TQ405652	Maple Lodge Nature Reserve	HR	TQ036924
Hayes Hill Farm - LVRP	EX	TL383033	Mar Dyke Valley	EX	TQ600805
Hersham Gravel Pit	SY	TQ128663	Millwall Docks	MX	TQ377795
Highgate Cemetery	MX	TQ284871	Molesey Heath	SY	TQ132672
Highgate Wood	MX	TQ283887	Mollands Lane Gravel Pits	EX	TQ604820
Hilfield Park Reservoir	HR	TQ158959	Monken Hadley Common	MX	TQ262971
Hilly Fields Park	MX	TQ323985	Morden Hall Park	SY	TQ264687
Hoddesdonpark Wood	HR	TL352084	Mores Plantation	EX	TQ566968
Hogsmill Nature Reserve	SY	TQ197682	Mudchute Farm	MX	TQ381786
Previously Hogsmill Sewage Works			Nazeing	EX	TL414065
Holmethorpe Sand Pits	SY	TQ295515	North Mymms Park	HR	TL215045
Holyfield Hall Farm - LVRP	EX	TL384038	Northaw Great Wood	HR	TL285044
Holyfield Lake - LVRP	EX	TL378045	Orsett Fen	EX	TQ628833
Home Park	MX	TQ166676	Otford to Filston	KT	TQ521602
Horsenden Hill	MX	TQ162844	Walk from Otford Farm. Grid ref is mid point on path.		

Oxhey Hall	HR	TQ103943	Stanstead Innings - LVRP	HR	TL388112
Oxhey Woods	HR	TQ105925	Stanwell Moor	MX	TQ034744
Oxleas Wood	KT	TQ445759	Stocker's Farm	HR	TQ052933
Oxshott Heath	SY	TQ139612	Stocker's Lake	HR	TQ046935
Panshanger Park	HR	TL283130	Stoke Newington Res > Woodberry Wetlands		
Perivale Wood	MX	TQ159836	Stone Marshes	KT	TQ568755
Poplar Dock	MX	TQ382803	Strawberry Bank	KT	TQ452608
Poyle Poplars Nature Reserve	BU	TQ030764	Streatham Common	SY	TQ305709
Prince's Coverts	SY	TQ160610	Stubbers Outdoor Pursuits Centre	EX	TQ575845
Prospect Park	MX	TQ377823	Surrey Water	IL/SY	TQ356800
Queen Elizabeth II Reservoir	SY	TQ120670	Swanscombe Marshes	KT	TQ605760
Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park	EX	TQ381846	Symondshyde Great Wood	HR	TL195107
Queen Mary Gravel Pit	MX	TQ059700	Syon Park	MX	TQ173765
Queen Mary Reservoir	MX	TQ070695	Ten Acres, Yeading (as OS map)	MX	TQ099838
Queen Mother Reservoir	BU	TQ007768	Previously Ten Acre Wood, Yeading		
Queen's Wood	MX	TQ288886	Tenchleys	SY	TQ419512
Radlett Aero Gravel Pit	HR	TL155035	Thames Barrier	EX/KT	TQ415795
Rainham Marshes	EX	TQ525800	Thames Chase	EX	TQ584863
Ramsey Marsh - LVRP	MX	TQ374996	Thamesmere Lakes	KT	TQ463810
Regent's Park	IL/MX	TQ281828	The Ledges, Esher	SY	TQ122628
Richmond Park	SY	TQ200730	The Mores, Brentwood	EX	TQ561965
Rickmansworth Aquadrome	HR	TQ057940	The Withey Beds LNR, Watford	HR	TQ078941
Ripple Nature Reserve	EX	TQ468827	Theobalds Park	HR	TL345005
River Darent, Otford Road	KT	TQ526582	Thorndon Country Park North	EX	TQ608912
Roding Valley Meadows NR	EX	TQ430943	Thorndon Country Park South	EX	TQ627903
Ruislip Woods	MX	TQ094890	Thorpe Water Park	SY	TQ030681
Rushett Farm	SY	TQ173608	Tolworth Court Farm	SY	TQ200650
Russia Dock Woodland	IL/SY	TQ362797	Tooting Common	SY	TQ293720
Ruxley Gravel Pits	KT	TQ473700	Tottenham Marshes - LVRP	MX	TQ354910
Rye Meads	HR	TL383103	Totteridge Valley	MX	TQ240930
Selsdon Woods	SY	TQ362616	Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park	MX	TQ370823
Sevenoaks Wildfowl Reserve	KT	TQ522570	Trent Park	MX	TQ290970
Seventy Acres Lake - LVRP	HR	TL374030	Trevereux	SY	TQ430510
Sewardstone Marsh - LVRP	EX	TQ379985	Troy Mill Lake	HR	TQ039905
Sheen Common	SY	TQ196746	Tyttenhanger Gravel Pits	HR	TL191052
Smallford Gravel Pit	HR	TL197071	Valentines Park	EX	TQ438878
South Norwood Country Park	SY	TQ353684	Vauxhall Park	IL/SY	TQ304776
South Norwood Lake	SY	TQ341693	Verulamium Park	HR	TL138069
Southwark Park	IL/SY	TQ352789	Vicarage Farm	MX	TQ304979
Spencer Road Wetland	SY	TQ279665	Victoria Park	IL/MX	TQ363840
St James's Park	IL/MX	TQ294798	Waddon Ponds	SY	TQ309650
St Katherine Docks	IL/MX	TQ340805	Walthamstow Forest	EX	TQ393912
St Paul's Cray Common	KT	TQ452691	Part of Epping Forest		
Staines Moor	MX	TQ033734	Walthamstow Marshes - LVRP	EX	TQ350878
Staines Reservoir	MX	TQ051731	Walthamstow Wetlands	EX	TQ353890
Stanborough Lakes	HR	TL230108	Previously Walthamstow Reservoirs. See opposite.		
Stanmore Common	MX	TQ156940	Walton Downs	SY	TQ220573
Stanmore Country Park	MX	TQ173928	Walton Heath	SY	TQ232540

Walthamstow Wetlands

Originally Walthamstow Reservoirs - an important working reservoir complex for Thames Water - Walthamstow Wetlands is now also a London Wildlife Trust (LWT) nature reserve, Europe's largest urban wetland reserve.

In partnership with Waltham Forest, Thames Water and Heritage Fund, LWT have produced a map of the Reserve, running from Tottenham Marshes in the north to Walthamstow Marshes in the south; it includes onsite facilities and marks the three main entrances: Lockwood Way in the north; Ferry Lane in the east (with car park); and Coppermill Lane in the south (with a small car park south of the entrance). A large-scale version of the map is available on the LWT website at:

https://www.wildlondon.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-10/Walthamstow%20Wetlands%20Map_OCT24.pdf

A Greenway is being constructed that will connect Walthamstow Wetlands in Waltham Forest to Woodberry Wetlands (see below) in Stoke Newington via Springfield Park, Clapton Common, and East and West Bank Nature Reserve.

An alternative map, by James Cracknell, includes a number of new entrance points and sets it in position in the neighbouring Lee Valley Park; it is online at:

<https://2.bp.blogspot.com/-FdyMP7gHwGg/VreGwfe4idl/AAAAAAAAVMU/PtCOvMbwBSU/s1600/www.jpg>



Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth)	SY	TQ122698	West End Common	SY	TQ125632
Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough)	SY	TQ119681	West Hyde Gravel Pit	HR	TQ034913
Wandle Meadow Nature Park	SY	TQ264710	West India Docks	MX	TQ376800
Wandsworth Common	SY	TQ275740	West Thurrock Marshes	EX	TQ583767
Wanstead Flats	EX	TQ410864	Whitewebbs Wood	MX	TQ323997
Part of Epping Forest			Whittings Hill Open Space, Arkley	HR	TQ231954
Wanstead Park	EX	TQ415875	Willowbank	MX	TQ057853
Part of Epping Forest			Wimbledon Common	SY	TQ227721
Warley Country Park	EX	TQ583925	Woodberry Wetlands	MX	TQ326876
Warlies Park	EX	TL412017	Previously Stoke Newington Reservoirs		
Part of Warlies Estate, Epping Forest			Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross	HR	TQ033933
Warren Gorge	EX	TQ597794	Wormwood Scrubs	MX	TQ221818
Warren Hill	EX	TQ413952	Wraysbury Gravel Pit	BU	TQ015735
Part of Epping Forest			Wraysbury Reservoir	MX	TQ025745
Waterlow Park	MX	TQ286872	Yardley Hill, Chingford	EX	TQ382958
Watermeadows Open Space	KT	TQ472690	Yeading Brook Meadows	MX	TQ105822
Waterworks Nature Reserve	EX	TQ363868	Yiewsley Lake	MX	TQ050804

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2023

NICK RUTTER AND PETE LAMBERT

**227 species were recorded in London during 2023 (excluding escapes and subspecies).
No new species for London were recorded.**

Notable sightings for the year included London's fifth Lesser Scaup (remaining from 2022), the first Black-throated Divers since 2019, the first Fulmar since 2017, the first Manx Shearwater since 2018 and London's third Citrine Wagtail. A number of counts were the highest on record: 21 Great White Egrets, 80 Little Egrets and a flock of 19 White Storks. Other records included totals of two Glossy Ibis, three Night-herons, a single Purple Heron, a Honey-buzzard and two Cranes. Notable waterbird records included 12 Whooper Swans, a total of about 90 Common Scoter, one Long-tailed Duck, four Red-necked Grebes and three Slavonian Grebes. A total of four Black-winged Stilts was the highest ever. Gulls included a single Glaucous Gull, at least four Iceland Gulls and about 80 Caspian Gulls. Three White-winged Black Terns were seen. Seabirds included six Arctic Skuas, two Long-tailed Skuas and up to three Common Guillemots. Alpine Swifts were recorded from six sites. Other scarce migrants included one Hoopoe, two Wrynecks, two Red-backed Shrikes, one Golden Oriole and two Ortolan Buntings. Firecrest reports continued to increase, and Cetti's Warblers were reported from a record number of sites. Other notable records included two Penduline Tits, two Siberian Chiffchaffs, one Marsh Warbler, one Richard's Pipit and two Little Buntings. There were four records of Yellow-browed Warblers, but no records of Tree Sparrows this year- the first time since at least 1900.

The first Winter period saw only four Scaup and perhaps eight Smew. Bitterns were reported at eight sites. Three Ruffs were at Rainham Marshes, which hosted a Hen Harrier, as well as a Merlin on two dates in January - three further records from other sites came in March and April. Other first Winter records included two Pink-footed Geese and two Great Northern Divers. 154 Water Rails were recorded across the area. Woodcocks were at 38 sites, while Green Sandpipers were at 33 sites. Four Iceland Gulls were recorded. Snipe numbers were lower than previous years, while about 30 Jack Snipe were recorded. Three sites hosted Short-eared Owls, while four sites held Bearded Tits. Among wintering warblers, there were Chiffchaffs at 126 sites and 268 Blackcaps were recorded across 178 sites; a single Lesser Whitethroat and about 17 Dartford Warblers were also present in the area. Wintering Stonechats were at 61 sites.

Spring passage included three Garganeys, 19 Ospreys and up to 100 Grey Plovers, 120 Whimbrel and 170 Bar-tailed Godwits. Black-tailed Godwits were found at 15 localities. Only two Knots were seen; other waders included 109 Sanderling, seven Little Stints, five Wood Sandpipers and two Spotted Redshanks. 208 Mediterranean Gulls were recorded, but only 78 Little Gulls. Up to 71 Black Terns were seen; other migrating Terns included 14 Little Terns and at least 30 Sandwich Terns. There were three Turtle Dove records, while Cuckoos were reported from 160 sites. Among the passerines, records included two Wood Warblers, 38 Ring Ouzels, 33 Spotted Flycatchers from 29 sites, ten Tree Pipits and good numbers of Redstarts (69 from 39 sites) and Whinchats (84 from 39 sites). Wheatears were recorded from 86 sites.

Inconsistent coverage, and the lack of complete records from key sites such as Rainham Marshes, made it difficult to discern trends in breeding success for many species. A pair of Barnacle Geese bred successfully at Walthamstow Wetlands, while Black-necked Grebes raised two young at Hilfield Park Res. Little Egrets bred at nine sites, while Water Rails probably bred at two. Four pairs of Avocets bred successfully and at least three pairs of Oystercatchers bred. A pair of Great Black-backed Gulls that raised young at Walthamstow Wetlands were the first to breed in the area since 2020. There was confirmed breeding of Marsh Harriers but none of Mediterranean Gulls. Only a single pair of Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers were confirmed to have bred. Hobby held 20 territories, with breeding confirmed at 12, while, from 46 breeding pairs of Peregrines, 67 juveniles fledged from 26 pairs - including 17 fledging from seven pairs in Inner London. Ravens bred at seven sites and Marsh Tits probably bred at five. There were no confirmed breeding records of Woodlarks, but Firecrests were confirmed to have bred at four sites, with a total of 15 territories. There were four possible breeding pairs of Spotted Flycatchers, while Nightingales held territories at three sites. There were at least 29 possible breeding pairs of Black Redstarts.

Autumn saw 12 Osprey records. Wader records included Ringed Plovers at 25 sites, about 55 Whimbrels through 11 sites, Black-tailed Godwits at 21 sites, some 45 Turnstones across nine sites and up to nine Knots from six. Other waders included three Little Stints, two Grey Phalaropes, six Wood Sandpipers, a single Spotted Redshank and 57 Greenshank. About 80 Black Terns but only one Little Tern were seen. Only three Cuckoos were recorded in August (with a further record in October) and there was a single record of Turtle Dove. Passerine records included seven Woodlarks, three Wood Warblers, 22 Ring Ouzels and some 25 Pied Flycatchers. Spotted Flycatchers were recorded at 86 sites, Redstarts from 37, Whinchat from 72 and Wheatear from 66. Four Yellow-browed Warblers were recorded from mid-October to November.

The highlight of the second Winter period for many was an irruption of Waxwings, with about 316 birds present over November and December. The period saw possibly six Smew and five Scaup. Two Black-throated Divers were at Staines Res, and at least seven Great Northern Divers were seen in the recording area. Six or seven Hen Harriers were seen. There were also single Merlins recorded from four sites, while Bittern were at three sites, Woodcocks at 54 and Short-eared Owls at 28. Water Rail numbers reached 151, while about 30 Jack Snipe were present and Bearded Tits were at seven sites. Three Ruffs were at Rainham Marshes. Wintering Chiffchaffs were reported from 138 sites and Blackcaps totalled 118 from 75 sites. A Ring Ouzel overwintered, and Stonechats were at 46 sites.

January

The month saw year highs at Rainham Marshes of 900 Lapwings, 2,000 Herring Gulls, three Caspian Gulls (a joint year high) and 250 House Sparrows (with a similar number in April). Year peak counts at other sites included 42 Mandarin Ducks at Hampstead Heath, 330 Pochards at Staines Res, 350 Black-tailed Godwits and 116 Great Black-backed Gulls at Dartford Marshes, 250 Redshanks at Erith Reach, 9,850 Black-headed Gulls over Kingston-on-Thames, 2,000 Jackdaws at a roost on Mitcham Common (a joint year high), 500 Linnets at Ridge, 100 Siskins at Cheshunt GP and ten Corn Buntings at Orsett Fen. The year started with three notable species over-wintering from 2022: a Lesser Scaup at Staines Res (staying till February 20th) and,

at KGV Res, a Red-necked Grebe (staying until April 17th) and a Slavonian Grebe (staying until April 11th). On 2nd, a Pink-footed Goose was at Otford, where it was last seen on April 23rd, and a Glaucous Gull was at Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough). A Red-necked Grebe was at Rainham Marshes on 22nd and 25th and a Hen Harrier was there on 31st.

February

Year peak counts included 52 Pintails at Rainham Marshes, 19 Goosanders at Weald CP, 149 Shelducks at Crossness, 13 Turnstones at Swanscombe Marshes, 1,000 Common Gulls at KGV Res, 600 Rooks at a roost at Clay Tye Wood, Essex, 75 Greenfinches at Victoria Park and 58 Yellowhammers at Fairplay Farm, North Ockendon. On 4th, a Caspian Gull and three Yellow-legged Gulls were at Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens. A Little Bunting was at Stanborough Reedmarsh, Herts on 21st (staying until March 25th). Wintering Stonechat numbers across the area reached 50 on 24th; a count on Putney Heath from 28th to March 2nd recorded 41 Firecrests.

March

The month saw year highs of 61 Goldeneye and 15 Black-necked Grebes at Staines Res and 70 Hawfinches at Juniper Top, Surrey. On 3rd, a Pink-footed Goose was at Royal Mid Surrey GC, where it was last seen on 15th. A Caspian Gull was at Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens on 6th, while a Fulmar found at Southwark on 8th was taken into care. On 9th, a Little Bunting was at Amwell NR. A Stone-curlew was at Beddington Farmlands on 15th. On 22nd, a Siberian Chiffchaff was in a Sutton garden, while two Whooper Swans were at Hilfield Park Res on 25th. Alpine Swifts were recorded at six sites across the area from 23rd to 27th. An influx of Sand Martins on 29th saw 225 at Island Barn Res and 200 at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth). A wayward Gannet was found on a roof at Bishopsgate on 29th.

April

Year high counts this month included 17 Oystercatchers, 43 Bar-tailed Godwits and 25 Mediterranean Gulls at Rainham Marshes, 100 Golden Plovers over Moor Park GC, 24 Curlews at Swanscombe Marshes, 37 Arctic Terns at Hilfield Park Res, 30 Jays at Kew Gardens and 30 Yellow Wagtails at Stanborough GP. A Night-heron was at Brent Res on 1st; a further record was at Thornden CP South from 26th to 29th. On 4th, a Long-tailed Duck was at Hilfield Park Res, a Curlew flew over Paddington Green and a Penduline Tit was at Rye Meads. A Pheasant was recorded at Russia Dock Woodland on 5th. On 7th, a Goosander flew over Primrose Hill, while a Crane was seen at Island Barn Res, Richmond Park and Walton Res (Chelsea and Lambeth); another Crane record came from Beddington Farmlands on 24th. On 17th, 40 Blackcaps were at Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens; a Channel Wagtail was at Staines Res on that day, with a further record from Walthamstow Marshes from 22nd to 23rd. On 19th, 42 Sedge Warblers were recorded at Rainham Marshes, while a Ring Ouzel was at Primrose Hill, followed by other records at Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens on 22nd and Wapping on 23rd. An arrival of Little Gulls on 21st saw 18 at Island Barn Res and 12 at Staines Res, while a Brambling was at Victoria Park on that day. On 23rd, Wheatear migration peaked with 129 across the area, and a Turtle Dove was at London Wetland Centre; another Turtle Dove record came from Rye Meads on 30th. An arrival of Swallows on 24th included 300 at Hilfield Park Res. On 26th, a Wood Warbler was at Kings Wood, Surrey. On 27th, six Little Stints were at Dartford Marsh and a Spotted Redshank flew over Beddington Farmlands.

May

May saw year highs of 13 Grey Plovers and ten Hobby at Rainham Marshes, 51 Buzzards over Richmond Park, 14 Ruffs and eight Greenshanks at Beddington Farmlands, 21 Black Terns and 1,200 Swifts at Staines Res and 68 Wrens in Banstead Wood. An escaped Great Horned Owl was at Russia Dock Woodland for the first two days of the month. On 4th, three White-winged Black Terns were at Rainham Marshes and a Ring Ouzel was at Holland Park. A Spotted Redshank was at Rainham Marshes on 5th. On that day, a Black-winged Stilt was found at Rainham Marshes, staying till 7th; on 7th, one was recorded over the R Thames and at Staines Moor, while two were at Rainham Marshes on 17th. On 6th, 30 Reed Warblers were recorded at Rainham Marshes. On 12th the only Honey-buzzard of the year was at Banstead Downs. On 14th, 13 Reed Warblers were at Regent's Park. A Hoopoe was in a garden at Croxley Green on 15th. Very unusually for this time of the year, there was a Hen Harrier at Rainham Marshes on 16th. A Night-heron was at Hilfield Park Res on 21st. On 24th, a Wood Warbler was at Stanwell Moor and a Golden Oriole was at Wimbledon Common. On 26th, a Quail was at Longfield and a Marsh Warbler was at Wandle Meadow Nature Park. A Glossy Ibis was at Rainham Marshes on 29th, with another record on June 1st.

June

Year peak counts this month included 484 Greylag Geese at Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens, 75 Ringed Plovers and 15 Sanderlings at Rainham Marshes, 18 Little Owls at Richmond Park, 26 Treecreepers at Northaw Great Wood and 58 Dunnocks at Beddington Farmlands. On 1st, a Quail was at Bonnet's Wood, Essex. A Red-backed Shrike was at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) on 3rd, while two Arctic Skuas were at Rainham Marshes on that day. On 11th, a Turtle Dove was by R Thames between Battersea and Vauxhall Bridge. A Quail was at Redwell Wood Farm on 13th, a Citrine Wagtail was at London Wetland Centre on 14th and on 15th a Cuckoo was at Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens.

July

The month saw year high counts of 492 Canada Geese at Walthamstow Wetlands, 16 Little Ringed Plovers at a breeding site in Herts, 9,000 Ring-necked Parakeets at a roost in Kingston-on-Thames and 25 Mistle Thrushes at Panshanger Park, Herts. On 6th, a Red-necked Grebe was at Hilfield Park Res. A flock of 17 Whimbrel at Staines Res on 27th was the year's largest. On 29th, five Garganeys were at Rye Meads, remaining until August 24th.

August

Year highs this month included 2,204 Tufted Ducks at Walthamstow Wetlands, 54 Red Kites at Wormley West End, 26 Common Sandpipers at KGV Res, 17 Green Sandpipers at Beddington Farmlands, 14 Sandwich Terns at Rainham Marshes, 300 Common Terns at Q. Mother Res and 31 Willow Warblers at Belhus Woods CP. A count of 3,000 Starlings at Beddington Farmlands on 2nd was a joint year high. On 6th, an Arctic Skua was at Staines Res; the same site recorded a Long-tailed Skua on 28th. On 13th, two Crossbills were at Victoria Park, and a Green Sandpiper was there on 14th. On 16th, 15 Willow Warblers were in Regent's Park, while on 18th a Pied Flycatcher was in Battersea Park and a Spotted Redshank was at Barking Bay/Marsh. On 19th, a flock of 19 White Storks flew over Rainham Marshes, a Common Guillemot was at Rainham Marshes and Creekmouth, Barking and a Wryneck was at Staines Moor. A Wood Warbler was at Wanstead Flats from 22nd to 23rd,

while another record came from Alexandra Palace from 24th to 30th, with another record on Hampstead Heath on 30th. Spotted Flycatcher passage peaked on 23rd, with 39 across the area including a year high count of ten at Wanstead Flats. On 25th, there were three Redstarts in Regent's Park, while peak migration of Whinchats saw 25 across the area (with a year high count of eight at Wanstead Flats). Wheatear migration also peaked on 25th, with 46 across the area. On 31st, a Fulmar was at QEII Res.

September

The month saw year high counts of 298 Egyptian Geese at QE II Res, 675 Gadwall at Rye Meads, 50 Little Grebes and 749 Coot at Walthamstow Wetlands, 172 Great Crested Grebes at Q. Mother Res, 900 Cormorants at Staines Res, 16 Yellow-legged Gulls at Poyle, 1,742 Stock Doves over Epsom Downs, 18 Bearded Tits and 424 Meadow Pipits at Rainham Marshes, 71 Long-tailed Tits at Mar Dyke Valley and 200 Goldfinches at Stanborough GP (a joint year high). On 2nd, two Arctic Skuas were over Walthamstow Marshes and a Nightjar was at Ingrebourne Valley; another was recorded on a windowsill in Inner London on 23rd. A Red-backed Shrike was at Osterley Park on 3rd, staying to 12th. On 7th, a Turtle Dove was at Goff Oaks and a Wryneck was at Colnbrook. An Ortolan Bunting was sound recorded over Wanstead Flats on the night of 7th to 8th and another was sound recorded at Hampstead Heath on 13th. A Common Guillemot was seen at both Kew Bridge and Richmond on 16th, with another record at Rainham Marshes on 17th. Also on 16th, a Long-tailed Skua was at Rainham Marshes; an Arctic Skua was at the same site on 20th, while a Manx Shearwater was at KGV Res. On 23rd, 11 Spoonbills flew over Walthamstow Wetlands, and a year high count of eight Tree Pipits were recorded at Rainham Marshes; another Tree Pipit record came from Battersea PS on 27th. On 24th, at least 3,000 hirundines flew over Priest Hill in an hour; on that day, House Martin counts included 1,137 at Epsom Downs, 572 at Canons Farm, 550 at Queen's Wood and 500 at KGV Res. On 25th, a Ruddy Duck was at Connaught Water, while on 26th, 550 Swallows flew over Hampstead Heath.

October

Year highs this month included 250 Shovelers, about 12 Common Scoters, seven Cattle Egrets and seven Rock Pipits at Rainham Marshes, 50 Red-legged Partridges at Mar Dyke Valley, 24 Little Gulls over Staines Moor, over 840 Feral Pigeons in St James's Park, 56 Collared Doves at Blackbirds Farm, Herts, 200 Skylarks at Canons Farm, 27 Water Pipits at Staines Moor, 19 Bramblings at Putney and 35 Reed Buntings at Rye Meads. A count of 80 Little Egrets at Walthamstow Wetlands was a year high outside the breeding season. A Glossy Ibis was at Rye Meads and Stanstead Innings from 7th to 21st. Redwing migration peaked on 9th, with 9,937 across the area, including counts of 835 at Walthamstow Wetlands and 820 at Wanstead Flats. That day also saw 249 Song Thrushes over Hampstead Heath, 21 Great White Egrets over Staines Res and a Richard's Pipit at Dagenham Chase. A Hen Harrier was at Hampstead Heath on 11th, with further records on 15th at Knockholt and on 22nd at Staines Moor. A very late juvenile Cuckoo was filmed at Bromley on 11th. A Yellow-browed Warbler was at Richmond Park on 13th and another at Knockholt on 15th. Chaffinch migration saw a year high count of 900 over Rainham Marshes on 14th, while on the next day a Brambling was at Cremorne Gardens. A Pink-footed Goose was at Rainham Marshes on 14th, remaining until 30th. Stonechat migration peaked on 15th, with 65 recorded across the area, spread

between 20 sites. A Shag was at Rainham Marshes on 16th and 18th. A Ring Ouzel was at Brompton Cemetery on 20th, and a Whooper Swan was at Rye Meads on 23rd & 24th.

November

The month saw year highs of 75 Brent Geese at Greenhithe, 130 Mute Swans at Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens, 25 Grey Partridges at Stanborough GP, 17 Water Rails at London Wetland Centre, 1,800 Dunlin at Rainham Marshes (with a similar number there on December 9th), 23 Kittiwakes at Rainham Marshes, ten Short-eared Owls at Staines Moor and a joint year high count of 3,000 Starlings in a murmuration at Grays Park. A Spotted Redshank was at Dartford Marshes on 3rd. On 5th, a Ruddy Duck was at Bowyer's Water. On 6th, Rainham Marshes saw year high counts of 623 Fieldfares and 33,335 Woodpigeons, while 10,375 of the latter species flew over Epsom Downs on that day. On 7th, a Hen Harrier was at Rainham Marshes (with another there on 17th), 142 Fieldfares were over Regent's Park and two Common Redpolls were at Richmond Park (also present on 9th and 24th), while another Common Redpoll record came from Banstead Wood on 29th. A Grey Phalarope was at Island Barn Res from 9th to 11th, while another record came from KGV Res from 28th to 29th. Yellow-browed Warbler records came from Totteridge Valley on 9th and Minet CP on 24th. A Penduline Tit was at Rye Meads from 10th to 11th. On 12th, a Purple Heron flew past Q. Mother Res. A Goosander and a Ring Ouzel were at Regent's Park on 17th. A Slavonian Grebe was on the R Thames at Barnes on 21st and a Hen Harrier was at Fairlop Waters. A Lapwing was at Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens on 23rd. There was another Hen Harrier at Staines Moor on 27th. On 28th, a Red-necked Grebe was at KGV Res (staying to 30th), nine Whooper Swans toured the area from Inner London to Kent, and three Bewick's Swans were at Stanborough GP on 30th.

December

Year high counts this month included 656 Wigeon, 1,023 Teal, seven Marsh Harriers, 76 Snipe and 750 Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Rainham Marshes, 392 Mallards along the R Wandle, 32 Red-crested Pochards at Bury Lake, 72 Avocets at West Thurrock Marshes, ten Woodcocks roosting at Cely Woods, 16 Jack Snipe at Rye Meads, 39 Blackbirds at Orsett Fen, 14 Grey Wagtails at Beckton Creekside NR, 160 Pied Wagtails at a Croydon roost, 180 Lesser Redpolls at Banstead Woods and 200 Goldfinches at KGV Res. Winter corvid roosts saw year high counts of 81 Magpies at Warren Gorge, 3,000 Jackdaws at Mitcham Common on 17th and 350 Carrion Crows at Bricket Wood Common, Herts. A count of 34 Grey Herons at Brent Res was a year high outside the breeding season, and wintering Chiffchaffs reached a peak count of 20 at Crossness. A Long-eared Owl was at Belhus Woods CP on 1st. On 3rd, two Smew were at Amwell NR, staying to the year-end; while on 11th two Smew visited both Bedfont Lakes and Princes Lake. Also on 11th, a Pink-footed Goose was at Amwell NR. A Slavonian Grebe was at KGV Res from 14th to the year end. On 17th, A year high count of four Red-breasted Mergansers were at Barking Bay/Marsh, while two White-fronted Geese were at London Wetland Centre from 24th to 26th. A count of three Caspian Gulls on R Thames at Crossness/Thamesmead on 28th was a joint year high. The winter irruption of Waxwings saw a highest count of 111 across the area on 29th, with the largest flock being the 68 recorded at Tufnell Park on 30th. The year ended with a Siberian Chiffchaff on Staines Moor and a Caspian Gull at Westminster Bridge on 31st.

CONTRIBUTORS TO BIRDS OF THE LONDON AREA

Because of the increasing number of bird records we are now accessing, we have changed the way we list the contributors of records. All 4,866 contributors to the Society in 2023 are listed below. We apologise if any names have been omitted inadvertently. In order to save space: contributors' surnames are listed under each letter of the alphabet and separated by semi-colons; initials under each surname are separated by commas. For the purpose of indexing, accents have been ignored.

How you can help us

With an annual report such as this, it is useful if we can report on changes from one year to another. One way you can help with that is to send breeding bird estimates for sites that you visit during the breeding season. You can do this on the electronic websites BirdTrack and eBird using their breeding code indicators. But if you don't want to do that, you can put details on a spread sheet and email them to us. Or, perhaps you'd like to do breeding estimates for a site you don't regularly visit? All welcome.

List of Observers

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BIRDS OF THE LONDON AREA 2023



Opposite: Goldcrest territories were more frequently reported in 2023. This bird was at Greenwich Park in March. (Rudraksha Chodankar)

BIRDS OF THE LONDON AREA, 2023

WITH SOME ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS

A Report on Bird-life within 20 miles of St Paul's - the London Area

This section of the Report follows the British Ornithological Union (BOU) 9th Edition order and - with one exception - nomenclature; we have retained the common name Feral Pigeon. The Checklist of Birds of the London Area appears on pages 239-249.

The six vice-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 11). Other abbreviations are:

BBS	= BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey	OS	= Open Space
BTO	= British Trust for Ornithology	PF	= Playing Field(s)
CP	= Country Park	PS	= Power Station
FB	= Filter Beds	QE	= Queen Elizabeth
GC	= Golf Course	QE II	= Queen Elizabeth II
Gdn(s)	= Garden(s)	Q. Mary	= Queen Mary
GP	= Gravel Pit(s)	Q. Mother	= Queen Mother
imm, juv(s)	= immature, juvenile(s)	R	= River
JNCC	= Joint Nature Conservation Committee	RBBP	= Rare Breeding Bird Panel
KGV	= King George V	Res	= Reservoir(s)
KGVI	= King George VI	RG	= Recreation Ground
LBR	= London Bird Report	RSPB	= Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
LNR	= Local Nature Reserve	SF/SW	= Sewage Farm/Works
LVRP	= Lee Valley Regional Park	SP	= Sand Pit(s)
N, S, E, W	= North, South, East and West	WeBS	= Wetland Bird Survey
NR	= Nature Reserve	WR	= Wildfowl Reserve

Observer names are shown only against records for species which are rare in the London Area. To report an unusual bird, please download the new 'Details of an Unusual Bird (description form)' - see page 5 under [Links to files on the LNHS website: Recording> Recording Birds](#). A list of all the observers who have contributed records for 2023 appears on pages 27-36.

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 Wraybury.

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

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Status: occasional migrant and winter visitor.

There were records from 15 sites this year, one more than 2022. At least 104 birds were recorded, including 75 on one day, which is almost double last year's total (between 49 to 57), and slightly above the two previous years (95 in 2021 and 100+ in 2020).

The only January record was of four birds flying upriver at Swanscombe Marshes on the 6th. Two were at London Wetland Centre on February 22nd, one was recorded heading downriver from Crossness on March 13th and one was at Q. Mother Res on the 29th. In April, there were three records of single birds: one seen at both Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth and Knight & Bessborough) on the 2nd, one again at Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough) on the 23rd, and another on the same day at KGV Res that stayed to the 25th.

The first returning bird - and the first September record since 2020 - was at Q. Mother Res on the 27th. Two birds were at Warley Hall Lane Fishery on October 22nd, one was at Kempton NR on the 25th, and one was at Rainham Marshes on the 27th. The largest single day count was at Greenhithe on November 5th, when three flocks totalling 75 birds flew upriver during the afternoon. One went upriver at Rainham Marshes on the 18th, and one was at Beddington Farmlands on the 21st, then two were at Rainham Marshes on the 26th, with one at Island Barn Res on the same day. In December, seven birds were at West Thurrock Marshes briefly on the 1st, one was at QEII Res on the 15th, and the final bird of the year was at Rainham Marshes on the 27th.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Status: very common, introduced breeding resident.

The number of breeding records rose this year, with 261 pairs/broods at 143 sites, compared with 246 at 91 sites last year, but was down on the 289 at 110 sites in 2021. There was a substantial increase in the number of breeding sites, perhaps due to increased observer coverage. Most regular sites reported similar figures to last year, although there was a big increase at Rye Meads (20 pairs compared with seven). No definite breeding numbers were received from the main breeding stronghold of Rainham Marshes (83 pairs, 55 broods last year), where many birds surely bred, so the true overall breeding figure is likely to be much higher.

Below are breeding records for sites with three or more pairs/broods (no. in brackets is broods unless stated otherwise) and the highest counts from sites where more than 250 were recorded.

Essex: Breeding reported from 24 sites (17 in 2022). Bretons Farm (3). Dagenham Chase (4). Hainault Forest CP, 264 on Jul 11th. Rainham Marshes (bred); 279 on Jan 15th. Walthamstow Wetlands (11); 492 on Jul 8th. Wanstead Flats (4). Warren Gorge (3).

Herts: Breeding reported from 18 sites (17). Broxbourne, c282 on Jan 2nd. Coursers Road GP, 330 on Sep 3rd. Hilfield Park Res (3). Rye Meads (20 pairs); 290 on Sep 14th. Tyttenhanger GP (6).

Middx: Breeding reported from 35 sites (21). Boxer's Lake, Enfield (3). Brent Res, 255 on Jun 14th.

Bucks: Breeding reported from two sites (none). Q. Mother Res, c310 on Sep 13th.

Kent: Breeding reported from 20 sites (nine). Sevenoaks WR, 364 on Sep 28th.

Surrey: Breeding reported from 36 sites (23). Beddington Farmlands (40 nests). Downside (3). Island Barn Res, 254 on Oct 10th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (10, none fledged). West End Common (3 territories).

In Lond: Breeding reported from eight sites (five). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 392 on Jun 19th.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Status: regular winter visitor to SW London; otherwise mainly rare winter visitor but has bred.

Barnacle Goose was reported from 35 sites, much fewer than the two previous years (53 in 2022 and 55 in 2021), but higher than the 24 sites in 2020. As in the previous two years, the majority of records pertain to two main flocks: one in the Lee Valley Regional Park, reported from several sites in Essex and Hertfordshire, and the other being the regular flock in south-west London, reported in most years since 2010 and believed to come from a naturalised population summering outside our area.

Two pairs attempted to breed at Walthamstow Wetlands, with one pair successfully fledging one young. This is the second successive year that confirmed breeding took

This flock of Barnacle Geese at Island Barn Reservoir in October seem to return to SW London each winter. (Dave Harris)



place at the site, although no young fledged last year. Breeding was also suspected there in 2021.

Below is a summary for each sector and details of the larger flocks (peak counts given only for some sites).

Essex: Reported from 13 sites. Hayes Hill Farm, 27 on Mar 15th. Holyfield Hall Farm, peaks of 24+ on Jan 29th and 16 on Dec 11th & 17th. KGV Res, 14 on Aug 29th. Nazeing, 16 on Dec 30th. Walthamstow Wetlands (2); peaks of 22 on Feb 25th and 16 on Dec 22nd.

Herts: Reported from 12 sites. Broxbourne, 50+ on Oct 22nd. Cheshunt GP, peaks of 22 on Jan 27th and 14 on Oct 2nd. Seventy Acres Lake, peaks of 27 on Mar 15th, and 15 on Sep 23rd & 27th.

Middx: Reported from four sites.

Surrey: Reported from six sites. Island Barn Res, peaks of 160 on Jan 24th and 208 on Oct 21st. QE II Res, 29 over on Sep 30th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), 100 on Feb 1st. Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough) 14 on Sep 4th.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Status: common breeding resident.

Although the number of breeding sites rose this year (60, compared with 43 last year), the number of reported pairs/broods dropped to 111 (included three hybrid broods crossed with Canada Goose), compared with 134 last year and 149 at 49 sites in 2021.



This Greylag Goose family photo was taken at Walthamstow Wetlands. (Ann Playford)

However, as with Canada Goose, whilst most regular breeding sites reported similar numbers to last year, the number of records received from Rainham Marshes dropped considerably, with just six broods reported (62 pairs, 44 broods in 2022), and this almost certainly accounts for the difference.

The highest count was 484 at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens (down from 500+ at Sevenoaks WR last year). Counts of 100 or more came from 21 sites (26 last year).

Below are breeding records at sites with three or more pairs and sector totals (no. in brackets is broods unless stated otherwise) along with the highest counts for each sector.

Essex: 56 broods/nests at 18 sites. Belhus Woods CP (4). Brook Farm, Upminster (3 nests, all paired with Canada Goose). Connaught Water (4). Fairlop Waters (6). Glen Faba (3).

Rainham Marshes (6); 272 on Nov 17th. Walthamstow Wetlands (10). Warren Gorge (8).

Herts: 15 broods at nine sites. Lynsters Farm (3). Rye Meads, 96 on Sep 6th.

Middx: Four broods/nests at four sites. Broadwater Lake, 98 on Jan 9th.

Bucks: Two broods at two sites. Q. Mother Res, 155 on Sep 11th.

Kent: Nine broods at nine sites. Sevenoaks WR, c280 on Jun 23rd.

Surrey: 18 broods/nests at 14 sites. Buckland SP, 313 on Aug 5th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (3).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1+); 484 on Jun 19th. Regent's Park (3). St James's Park (2+). Victoria Park (1+).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Status: scarce winter visitor.

A typical year for this species in the London Area, with four accepted records, each involving single birds, three of which were relatively long-stayers - one at Otford in Kent between January and April, one that spent nearly two weeks during March at the Royal Mid Surrey Golf Club, and another that spent the second half of October at Rainham Marshes. All records are summarised below.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on six dates from Oct 14th-30th (many observers).

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Dec 11th (A Day, C Gibson).

Kent: Otford, one from Jan 2nd-5th & 7th-9th, Feb 21st, 23rd & 26th-27th, Mar 3rd and Apr 23rd (R Bonser *et al*).

Surrey: Royal Mid Surrey GC, one on Mar 3rd & 15th (C Aldridge).

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

After ten records of up to 47 birds last year, following large influxes into the London Area in the two prior years (133 birds in 2021 and 130+ in 2020), there was just one record this year, of two birds that stayed for three days over the Christmas period at London Wetland Centre. This is the first time since 2005 that there was only one record in our area, and is also the lowest total number of birds this century.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, two from Dec 24th-26th (many observers, London Wetland Centre).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Status: common breeding resident.

In recent years, there has been little fluctuation in reported breeding numbers (including nest-building) in the London Area; however, this year there were 155 records from 135 sites (132 records from 108 sites in 2022 and 127 from 96 in 2021). Where we have breeding records from the same sites in these years, most show little or no change, so it may be that the rise this year is due to increased observer coverage. There were multiple pairs/broods at 13 sites (16 last year). 'Polish' morph cygnets (ie, cygnets with white rather than grey plumage) were noted at Brent Res, Brockwell Park, South Norwood CP and Walthamstow Wetlands.

Only one site had counts of 100 or more (four in 2022 and two in 2021), and a further seven sites had counts of 50 or more (13 in 2022 and 12 in 2021).

Below are breeding record totals followed by selected high counts in each sector.

Mute Swan breeding records (including nest building)

Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
35	22	40	3	12	31	12	155

Essex: Eagle Pond, 86 on May 6th. Harrow Lodge Park, 86 on Jul 3rd. Hollow Pond, 74 on Jul 22nd.

Herts: Rye Meads, 57 on Oct 14th.



These Pintail were photographed in Rainham Marshes in February. (Rudraksha Chodankar)

Walthamstow Wetlands, one on Oct 9th and a male on Nov 16th. Wanstead Flats, one on Sep 10th. Wanstead Park, one from Sep 10th-17th (same as Wanstead Flats)
Herts: Amwell NR, male on Jan 26th. Hilfield Park Res, two males and two females on Jan 13th. Rye Meads, female from Jul 19th-29th and a male on Dec 31st. Stanborough GP, one on Aug 4th and three over on Sep 21st.
Middx: Kempton NR, two males on Feb 16th and two on Mar 13th. Q. Mary Res, male on Nov 26th. Red House Res, two males on Feb 19th and Mar 12th.
Kent: Crayford Marshes, pair on Feb 24th and eight on Mar 2nd.
Surrey: Chiswick Eyot, male on Sep 21st. Leg O Mutton NR, male on Feb 20th. QE II Res, male on Sep 16th and two on Nov 3rd. Richmond Park, one on Oct 14th. R Thames: Putney Bridge to Barnes Bridge, one on Sep 21st. Wimbledon Common, recorded as present on Oct 13th.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Status: common winter visitor and rare breeder.

Although birds were present in May and June at several sites, and summering pairs were recorded at seven sites, breeding was not confirmed.

Comparing data for 22 sites across both years, wintering numbers in January and February were higher than in 2022 at eight of the 22 sites, lower at nine sites and similar at five sites; but in November and December, numbers were higher at three sites, lower at 12 sites and similar at seven sites. The peak count was 1,023 at Rainham Marshes on December 16th, similar to the 2022 peak there of 1,100. Likewise, the peak of 600 at Crossness on December 13th was similar to the peak there last year of 560.

The table below shows regularly watched sites that had a count of 100 or more, with

high counts from other sites and peak counts (excluding known or suspected collection birds) from all Inner London sites listed below the table.

Teal	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Rainham Marshes	430	500	124	123	8	3	54	120	289	800	932	1023
West Thurrock Marshes	24	17	25	10	-	-	-	15	108	24	170	63
HR Rye Meads	57	40	61	52	3	8	19	25	75	125	92	74
Stanborough GP	120	120	30	141	1	2	1	13	7	16	22	52
MX Brent Res	155	61	55	40	1	12	9	48	158	136	134	128
KT Crayford Marshes	200	100	50	50	-	-	-	-	10	17	300	200
Crossness	388	450	389	150	-	32	16	150	590	447	403	600
Dartford Marshes	185	26	8	90	4	-	3	-	20	5	40	120
SY Beddington Farmlands	382	266	300	75	1	14	12	42	150	300	350	375
Putney Bridge-Barnes	203	119	111	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	26	76
Wetland Centre	90	139	104	30	2	6	7	33	80	70	100	104

Essex: William Girling Res, 105 on Jan 22nd.

In Lond: Battersea Park, ten on Jan 24th. Chelsea Creek, four on Feb 6th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, two on Nov 10th and Dec 28th. Regent's Park, four on Jan 20th. St James's Park, two on Jan 3rd. Tate Modern, female on Nov 28th. Victoria Park, two on Dec 1st.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

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

This introduced duck remains widespread across London with records from over 50 sites. The peak count of 32 was up on last year's figure of 25 and was back at Bury Lake in the Colne Valley rather than at Regent's Park. However, this total remains well down on the 61 at Bury Lake as recently as 2020. Breeding was recorded from Maple Lodge NR and Rye Meads, compared with three sites last year.

Peak sector counts and peak site counts of ten or over are listed below. The totals for Regent's Park and St James's Park may include pinioned birds.

Essex: Dagenham Chase, two on Mar 18th & 22nd and May 14th. Ingrebourne Valley, two on Mar 11th.

Herts: Bury Lake, 32 on Dec 3rd. Rickmansworth Aquadrome, 14 on Feb 25th. Rye Meads, 13 on July 21st & 25th and Aug 10th. Stocker's Lake, 27 on Dec 14th.

Middx: Finsbury Park, six on Apr 23rd.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, one on Jan 15th.

Surrey: Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), two on Mar 5th.

In Lond: Regent's Park, 18 on Dec 31st. St James's Park, 12 on Oct 17th.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Status: common winter visitor and migrant, scarce breeder. **RBBP**

Another good year with the peak count of 330 at Staines Res on January 23rd, higher than the 286 at the same site in 2022 and the largest total since 2019. Seventeen sites,



Scaup is an uncommon winter visitor to London, generally found on the larger water bodies. (Phil Aylen)

last year at KGV Res. As always, individual birds moved between sites, making accurate interpretation of the records challenging. All records are given: those in the first winter period at Stain Hill Res, Staines Res and both Walton reservoirs are all presumed to involve the same birds.

Essex: KGV Res, male from 2022 to May 1st and from Nov 28th to end of year with two on Dec 10th & 29th. Walthamstow Wetlands, male from Jan 5th to May 5th and on Nov 23rd.

Herts: Amwell NR, imm male on Dec 16th (presumed same as Stanstead Innings). Stanstead Innings, imm male from Nov 17th to Dec 22nd.

Middx: Stain Hill Res, male on Feb 19th. Staines Res, pair on Apr 6th and male on Sep 23rd.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, juv/female from Nov 20th-25th.

Surrey: Island Barn Res, female from Jan 1st to Apr 8th, male on Jan 14th & 24th and Mar 1st-3rd. London Wetland Centre, male on Mar 12th. Thorpe Water Park, female on Feb 5th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), pair from Jan 15th to Feb 23rd. Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough), pair from Feb 26th to Apr 8th.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

Status: rare vagrant.

The immature drake - the fifth for London - was present but too distant for a definite identification in December 2022 and drew a steady stream of admirers after its identification was confirmed in January.

Middx: Staines Res, male from beginning of year until Feb 20th (RE Innes *et al*).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

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

A much better showing for this sea-duck with around 90 individuals compared with just 45 last year. Birds were seen in every month from March to November apart from June, with clear peaks in March, April, August and October when over 40 were seen including a flock of ten on the R Thames. All records are given.

Essex: Creekmouth, Barking, five on Sep 24th. KGV Res, two on Mar 19th, one on July 25th. Rainham Marshes, four on Apr 17th and 24th, a male on Aug 18th and female on Aug 19th, two on Sep 17th, ten on Oct 12th and seven on Oct 17th. Walthamstow Wetlands, three on Oct 12th.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, one on Mar 27th and two on Apr 10th. Stocker's Lake, one on Apr 7th.

Middx: Staines Moor, two over on Oct 12th. Staines Res, seven on Aug 2nd.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, two on May 25th, five on Aug 28th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, ten on Oct 12th. Erith Marshes, one on Aug 18th (both records presumed same as Rainham Marshes). West Thamesmead, one on Nov 25th. Woolwich, one on Nov 25th.

Surrey: Putney, four over on Nov 8th. QEII Res, one from Mar 17th-27th, seven on Oct 27th. Richmond Park, c12 on Oct 15th. Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough), female from Mar 23rd to Apr 6th, male from Apr 7th-13th and seven on Jul 3rd.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Status: scarce recently, but was annual visitor.

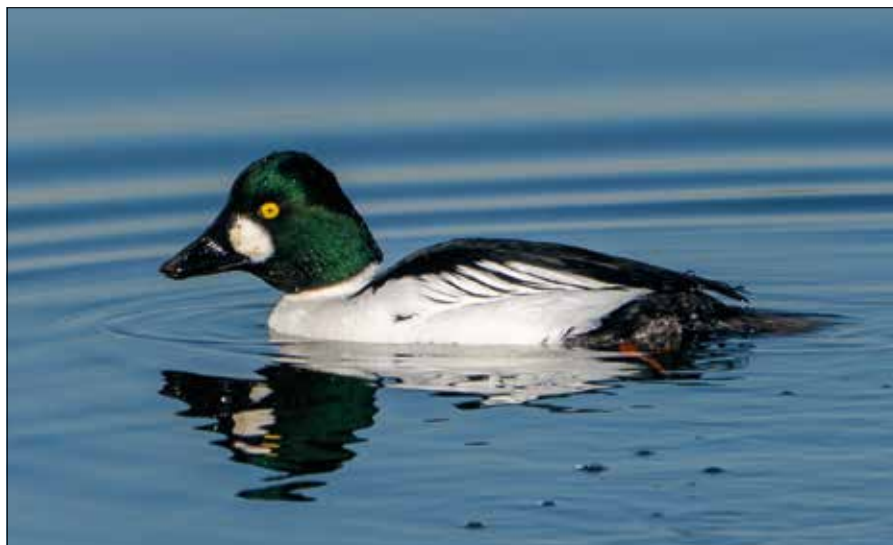
After the first blank year since 2017 last year, there was a single accepted record, in April. As is often the case with this lovely sea-duck, it only stayed for the day.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, drake on Apr 4th (J Fearnside *et al*).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Status: common winter visitor, has bred.

The peak count of 61 at Staines Res on March 16th was the highest since 2020 and well above last year's highest total of 38. But this increase seems to be partly a result of a greater concentration at certain sites, with a lower count this year at Wraybury GP for example (peak count 18, compared with 33 in 2022), than a big overall increase in numbers. As last year, six sites saw counts of 15 or over. A pair may have over-summered at Troy Mill Lake with records from late May, but for the fourth consecutive year there was no confirmed breeding in the London Area. The first returning bird at KGV Res on



Goldeneye is a winter visitor to London. (Ann Playford)

July 20th was 18 days later than last year.

The table below gives monthly peak counts at sites with at least one count of over ten.

Goldeneye	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX KGV Res	25	28	29	24	-	-	1	1	1	9	12	12
William Girling Res	2	2	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HR Stocker's Lake	9	15	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6	7
MX KGV Res	14	22	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	7
Staines Res	34	59	61	5	-	-	-	-	-	6	18	32
Wraysbury Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	-
BU Wraysbury GP	18	18	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	18
SY Walton Res (K&B)	4	10	11	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	4

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Status: winter visitor in highly variable but declining numbers.

The peak count at any site was again two, as has been the case for the last five years. Even ten years ago, by which time the decline in numbers of wintering birds in London and the UK was well underway, Wraysbury GP hosted 17 birds on one day. This year, the same site had single birds on just two days. All records are given.

Essex: KGV Res, male from Feb 4th to Apr 9th.

Herts: Amwell NR, pair from Dec 3rd to the end of the year. Cheshunt GPs, female on Jan 2nd, male from Jan 27th to Feb 15th and from Dec 29th to end of year. Stanstead Innings, female on Dec 28th. Stocker's Lake, male from Feb 2nd to Mar 16th.



Smew numbers have declined dramatically and are now considered to be scarce visitors to the UK as a whole. This male was seen at Stocker's Lake in March. (Joe Downing)

Middx: Bedfont Lakes CP, one on Jan 13th and two on Dec 11th. Broadwater Lake, male from Jan 9th-15th. Princes Lake, male from Jan 5th to Feb 6th, two on Dec 11th. Springwell Lake, one on Mar 15th (presumed same as Stocker's Lake).

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, male on Jan 3rd & 23rd.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Status: regular winter visitor, very rare in summer.

The wintering numbers of this attractive duck in London seem to be holding up. Records came from over 60 sites and the peak count of 19 at Weald CP was three above last year's highest total at KGV Res. Six sites - an increase of one - had counts of over ten. Ten years ago, the peak count was 22 but only five sites had counts of over ten.

After last year's first Inner London record since 2014, there were two more this year over Primrose Hill and at Regent's Park (outside the collection). The last spring birds were a pair at Troy Mill Lakes on May 30th with the first returning bird at KGV Res on September 28th.

Peak counts of over eight are recorded for each winter period and both Inner London records.

Essex: Connaught Water, 16 on Dec 10th. Holyfield Lake, 11 on Feb 17th. KGV Res, 15 on Jan 1st and 12 on Nov 7th. Weald CP, 19 on Feb 8th and 17+ on Dec 4th & 9th.

Herts: Turnford Marsh, nine on Jan 28th and 13 on Dec 16th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, nine on Jan 3rd.

Surrey: QEII Res, 11 on Jan 8th.

In Lond: Primrose Hill, one over NE on Apr 7th. Regent's Park, one on Nov 17th.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A very similar showing to last year with 11 birds, just one less than in 2022. All but one record was on the R Thames which has become unusual in recent years when the major reservoirs have been the favoured sites.

Essex: Barking Bay, three on Nov 30th and four on Dec 17th. Rainham Marshes, one on Apr 4th and two on Nov 17th.

Middx: Ruislip Lido, one from Feb 22nd-24th.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

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

After a blank year in 2022, two individuals - although opposition to the eradication programme may also mean others remain unreported. Ten years ago, by which time the efforts to eradicate this non-native duck were in full swing, there were still records involving 19 birds from eight sites in London. The number of Ruddy Duck has fallen from around 6,000 in 2001 to just a dozen individuals and a maximum of 1-2 pairs across the country (BB 116: 499).

A male Red-breasted Merganser after a dive into the Ruislip Lido. (Joe Downing)



Essex: Connaught Water, female on Sep 25th.

Herts: Bowyer's Water, male on Nov 5th.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Status: breeding resident, of introduced origin.

Records were received from 80 sites (82 in 2022). The majority, 60%, of the records came from the Essex and Hertfordshire sectors.

All breeding records are given (nos. of pairs/territories are in brackets), along with high counts and other significant records. Some of the higher counts may involve released birds.

Essex: Reported from 23 sites. Codham Hall (1). Damyn's Hall Aerodrome, 25 on Nov 5th. Fairplay Farm, Upminster (1). Mar Dyke Valley, 50 on Oct 23rd. Orsett Fen (3), bred. Walthamstow Wetlands, one on Apr 3rd. Waterworks NR, one from Apr 22nd-28th.

Herts: Reported from 26 sites. Coursers Road GP (1). Cuffley, 20 on Nov 11th. Essendon (1+). Potters Crouch (1). Sergehill (1). Stanborough GP (1); peak of 25 on Dec 20th. Wildhill, c30 on Oct 12th.

Middx: Reported from 10 sites. Enfield Chase area: Holly Hill Farm, 13 on Jan 9th; Park Farm (1); Parkside Farm/Res (1); Sloemans Farm, 31 on Dec 23rd. Enfield Town, one on Jun 28th near Southbury Stn. Southall, one along Melrose Drive on Dec 20th.

Bucks: Reported from two sites. Q. Mother Res, one on May 14th.

Kent: Reported from seven sites. Cudham (1). Northfleet Green, eight on Jan 4th.

Surrey: Reported from 12 sites. Cheverells Farm, 15 on Dec 26th. Woldingham, 37 on Jan 1st.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Status: breeding resident, declining.

Records came from eight sites across two sectors (as in 2022). Breeding looks likely to have occurred at Brook Farm, Upminster and Essendon.

All records are given below summarised for Essendon (no. of breeding birds/territories are in brackets).

Essex: Brook Farm, Upminster (1); four on Feb 21st, two on Feb 25th and Mar 13th. Great Warley Hall, one on Sep 22nd. Mar Dyke Valley, singles on Sep 6th & 16th and three on Nov 26th. West Horndon, four on Dec 3rd.

Herts: Essendon (1); recorded between March and December with peak count of 21 on Oct 28th likely to have followed a recent release. Rye Meads, one on May 14th. Stanborough GP, 25 on Nov 6th (a closely knit covey, likely recent releases), two on Nov 22nd, 18 on Dec 1st & 28th. West End Common, 12 on Oct 8th.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Status: rare summer visitor. **RBBP**

There were three records of three birds which is below the recent average. There have been 50 records of 53 birds since 2010.

Essex: Bonnet's Wood, male calling from farm field on Jun 1st (RT Barnes).

with the highest numbers occurring from August to October. The peak count this year was 172 at Q. Mother Res in September.

Numbers at the more significant sites with regular counts are shown in the table. Below that is a breeding summary for each sector, breeding counts for Inner London and all sites with three or more pairs (no. of pairs given unless stated as broods), plus some of the higher counts at sites not listed in the table.

*Great Crested Grebe breeds in London, with numbers augmented during winter.
This bird was at Walthamstow Wetlands in April. (Ann Playford)*



Great Crested Grebe	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
HR Hilfield Park Res	9	14	11	12	19	28	37	37	51	50	48	44
MX Q. Mary Res	57	11	11	6	3	4	19	62	72	90	80	48
Staines Res	23	22	22	58	51	71	87	74	130	26	35	23
BU Q. Mother Res	-	23	10	7	8	27	1	87	172	123	1	1
SY QE II Res	32	23	18	18	20	92	145	170	135	74	37	24

Essex: 31 pairs/broods at 20 sites. Belhus Woods CP (4 broods). KGV Res, 140 on Sep 28th. Walthamstow Wetlands (6 broods); 140 on Oct 9th. Warren Gorge (4 broods). William Girling Res, 33 on Jun 18th.

Herts: 45 pairs/broods at 24 sites. Bowyer's Water (3). Broxbourne GP (6). Hilfield Park Res (5 broods). Seventy Acres Lake (3 broods). Stocker's Lake (5); 30 on Feb 19th. Tyttenhanger GP (4).

Middx: 23 pairs/broods at 19 sites. Brent Res, 71 on Oct 31st. KGVI Res, 130 on Oct 14th. Wraysbury Res, 140 on Nov 10th. Q. Mary GP, 30 on Aug 19th.

Bucks: one pair at one site.

Kent: 13 pairs at ten sites.

Surrey: 26 pairs/broods at 15 sites. Buckland SP (4).

In Lond: nine pairs at seven sites. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2); 15 on Jun 20th, Sep 23rd and Oct 2nd. Regent's Park (1). St James's Park (1). Victoria Park (1). Battersea Park (1). Burgess Park (2). Greenland Dock (1).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

This year, three birds were recorded, including a long-staying bird at KGV Res in the first winter period which remained from 2022 and one at the same site towards the end of the year, possibly the same bird. In recent years, fewer birds have been recorded than the average of around seven birds per year from 2000 to 2018.

Essex: KGV Res, one from 2022 to Apr 11th (many observers) and one from Dec 14th-31st (C Farthing *et al*).

Surrey: R Thames: Barnes, one on Nov 21st (N Anderson).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Status: passage and winter migrant and rare breeder. **RBBP**

At Hilfield Park Res, the first sighting was one on March 3rd reaching a peak of nine in June. Two young were seen but disappeared in early August. The last successful breeding was in 2019.

There was a pair on Alexandra Lake in Wanstead Flats in late March (in the last two years, there has been a long-staying bird there in the summer months). The female departed after about three weeks and the male subsequently died.

Counts at Hilfield Park Res and Staines Res were similar to last year, but none were seen at the two Essex reservoirs (KGV and William Girling) in autumn. Last year, William Girling Res had 13 in October.

Counts from the main sites are summarised in the following table, and all other

Essex: Reported from 19 sites (12 in 2022). Rainham Marshes, at least one on 59 dates from Apr 4th to Nov 24th with three on May 15th and seven dates from Aug 24th to Sep 30th. Walthamstow Wetlands, one on 56 dates from Jan 1st to Mar 7th.

Herts: Reported from 12 sites (12). Amwell NR, one on eight dates from Mar 1st-16th, two on Oct 11th, singles on Oct 18th, Nov 3rd and Dec 15th. Rye Meads, one on Mar 4th, at least one on 42 dates from Aug 29th to Oct 18th with peak of three on Aug 29th and Sep 18th. Tyttenhanger GP, at least one on 13 dates from Sep 3rd to Dec 30th with peak of four on Oct 21st.

Middx: Reported from 11 sites (9). Staines Res, 21 flew W on Oct 9th. Stanwell Moor, five flew W on Oct 22nd.

Bucks: Reported from four sites (2). Horton GP, seven on Oct 17th. Q. Mother Res, six on Oct 20th.

Kent: Reported from six sites (8). Crossness, six on Oct 19th.

Surrey: Reported from seven sites (7). Beddington Farmlands, singles on Mar 8th, Apr 4th & 23rd, one on 17 dates from Sep 3rd to Oct 16th, four on Nov 26th and one on Dec 1st. Holmethorpe SP, five on Oct 9th and eight on Oct 17th.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Status: scarce breeder and increasingly common winter visitor. **RBBP**

Breeding was confirmed from nine sites: no report was received from Clay Tye Wood (two nests in 2022) and Broadwater Lake (one nest in 2022), and Bretons Lake appears in the report for the first time. There was a total of 73 nests (97 in 2022) with all colonies having fewer nests than last year, except for Stanborough Lakes. Stocker's Lake had the largest fall from ten to three nests, although it is worth noting that this species can be difficult to survey accurately as nests can be hidden in vegetation. The three largest colonies were at Walthamstow Wetlands (22 in 2023, 25 in 2022), Netherhall GP (12 in 2023, 16 in 2022) and Stanborough Lakes (11 in 2023, 10 in 2022).

Little Egret nests 2013-2023

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
No. of nests	36	45	51	54	58	68	94	-	84	97	73

Outside the breeding season, 80 was the highest count at Walthamstow Wetlands in October (48 at Rainham Marshes in June 2022) and is the highest ever in the London Area. They were reported from eight sites in Inner London (six sites in 2022 and 2021).

Below are all records of nests with the number in brackets, together with some notable counts for each sector outside the breeding season and all records for Inner London. Once again, the LNHS thanks the BTO for providing data from their Heronries Census.

Essex: Bretons Lake (2). Hall Marsh Scrape, 30 on Dec 8th. Netherhall GP (12). Rainham Marshes, 31 on Jul 22nd. Walthamstow Wetlands (22); 80 on Oct 9th. Warren Gorge (8), 25 juv.

Herts: Amwell NR (5). Stanborough Lakes (11); 17 on Nov 13th. Stocker's Lake (3). Troy Mill Lake, 19 on Sep 4th. Tyttenhanger GP, 16 on Jul 2nd. Verulamium Park (8).

Middx: Brent Res, 16 on Nov 14th. River Brent: Brent Cross Shopping Centre, 25 on Dec



Little Egret at Woodberry Wetlands showing off its plumage. (Chris Farthing)

18th. Staines Moor, ten on Sep 10th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 11+ on Sep 23rd. Q. Mother Res, ten on Aug 14th.

Kent: Barnes Cray, 11 on Dec 28th. Kelsey Park (2). Sevenoaks WR, ten on Dec 3rd.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 18 at roost on Dec 16th. Mickleham, 25 feeding in field amongst cattle on Dec 31st. QE II Res, 23 on Jun 20th. Watermeads, 21 at roost on Nov 27th.

In Lond: Greenland Dock, one on Feb 12th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Apr 1st, May 2nd and Jun 3rd, three on Jul 12th, singles on Nov 8th & 21st. Regent's Park, one on Jul 10th. Russia Dock Woodland, two on Sep 30th. Southwark Park, two on Jul 14th. St James's Park, singles on Jul 29th and Oct 16th. Victoria Park, two on Sep 23rd.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Status: scarce visitor.

Following a blank last year (the first since 2002), there was just a single record this year, of one found on a roof in Bishopsgate by a member of the public and reported to a birder. The last two Inner London records were in 2016 at Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns and 1995 at Regent's Park.

In Lond: Bishopsgate, one found on roof on Mar 29th (*per* P Redmond).

seven dates from Sep 7th to Nov 11th. KGVI Res, singles on Nov 17th & 30th. Staines Moor, singles on Jan 6th, four dates from Mar 15th to Apr 11th and 11 dates from Sep 2nd to Dec 20th. Staines Res, singles on Mar 6th & 29th, Apr 28th, Nov 6th & 25th and Dec 14th. Stanmore CP, one wing-tagged bird W on Oct 1st.

Bucks: Colnbrook, one on Apr 21st. Horton Brook Quarry, one on Dec 12th. Horton GP, singles on Jan 2nd, SE on Feb 4th and Dec 3rd.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, singles on Jan 4th & 30th, Apr 16th and two on Apr 18th, singles on Nov 1st and Dec 18th. Crossness, singles on eight dates from Jan 7th to Mar 5th with two on 7th, Jun 26th, Oct 8th and four dates in December. Dartford Marshes, singles on eight dates from Jan 1st to Feb 4th, two on Mar 5th, singles on four dates from Apr 8th to May 21st, on seven dates from Sep 9th to Dec 14th with two on Nov 26th. Erith Reach, one on Nov 29th. Swanscombe Skull Site, one on May 23rd. Swanscombe Marshes, up to two on 24 dates from Jan 1st to Jun 8th, Oct 14th, Nov 1st and Dec 9th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles on Mar 21st, Apr 7th, Sep 15th and Oct 15th. Holmethorpe SP, one on Oct 16th. London Wetland Centre, singles on Feb 15th, Apr 3rd, Jul 9th, Aug 27th and Sep 4th. Tulse Hill, one on Apr 17th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), a female/imm on Jan 26th & 27th, Mar 17th, Mar 29th to Apr 13th, female on May 13th, 26th & 27th, imm male intermittent dates from Sep 25th to Nov 27th. Wimbledon, one on Mar 15th.

Marsh Harrier	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Records	61	35	50	55	41	35	42	38	42	43	40	37
Records (not Lower Thames)	6	6	18	17	9	12	22	13	10	12	11	4

The great majority of non-Lower Thames birds recorded in June and July were at Rye Meads and may even have been the same female, which was possibly present in the area from May 14th to August 19th.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

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

The total of eight or nine birds this year is higher than the previous three years and similar to the ten in 2019. Most were on typical dates, but a May record at Rainham Marshes was more unusual.

All records are given below.

Essex: Fairlop Waters, male over on Nov 21st (M Messenger *per* A Bell). Rainham Marshes, female on Jan 31st (P Merchant), male on May 16th (T Clancy), female/imm on Nov 7th (I Bradshaw) and one on Nov 17th (R Bashford, J Birkett).

Middx: Hampstead Heath, female/imm E on Oct 11 (M Andersson, F O'Sullivan). Staines Moor, juvenile male on Oct 22nd (many observers) and one on Nov 27th (B Danforth).

Kent: Knockholt, one on Oct 15th (R Mace)

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Status: increasingly common resident, and scarce breeder, fairly regular migrant.

There were over 6,200 records for this year, some 32% more than the number of records last year. As usual, the number of records peaked in spring (see table below). The



Hen Harrier hunting for prey over Staines Moor. (Joe Downing)

highest count was 54 at Wormley West End on December 20th. Other gatherings of over 15 birds included (highest count listed for each site): 48 at Knockholt on October 16th, 40 at Richmond Park on April 7th, 30 at Bushey Bank on September 23rd, 20 at Copped Hall on February 11th, 19 at Wormley West End on December 8th and 17 at Stanborough GP on November 24th. Prey items observed being taken by Red Kites include Rabbit and 'large worm'.

Red Kite by month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	594	555	731	796	649	525	403	366	370	417	360	450

Red Kite by sector	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond
Sightings	444	2630	1664	176	298	981	24
Percentage	7	42	27	3	5	16	0

Despite the large increase in sightings in 2023 and number of sites in June where the species was recorded compared with 2022, the numbers of territories and breeding

records remained similar, with 28 territories in 2023 (26 in 2022) and three breeding pairs proved (four in 2022).

Red Kite breeding pairs	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
Sites in June	27	67	65	8	24	44	3	238
Territories	4	10	1	2	0	11	0	28
Confirmed	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	3

In Lond: 23 sightings, all singles except where indicated, from 19 sites (35 sightings from 18 sites last year). Bermondsey, Apr 22nd. Green Park, May 24th. Hammersmith Cemetery, Feb 27th. Holland Park, Feb 25th. Houses of Parliament, Mar 19th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, Apr 13th. Islington, two on May 25th. Little Venice, Apr 29th. London Bridge, May 3rd. Lord's Cricket Ground, Apr 8th. Nine Elms, Jun 10th. Primrose Hill, Apr 8th and Oct 10th. Regent's Park, Jun 13th. St James's Park, two on May 27th and singles on Jun 25th, Jul 2nd, Aug 6th and Oct 17th. Tate Modern, May 10th. Victoria Embankment Gdns, May 12th. Victoria Park, May 11th. Waterloo Bridge, May 10th.

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Status: common breeder in the outer parts of the London Area; regular migrant/visitor.

There were 66 territories reported this year (79 territories in 2022, 65 territories in 2021), and the number of pairs proved breeding was 20 (15 pairs in 2022, 29 in 2021). The annual variation in these figures probably reflects changes in reporting and interpretation rather than changes in abundance. The Essex sector held the highest totals, as in the previous three years. However, this year, the highest minimum total of fledged young reported was for the Surrey sector.

Buzzard	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
Territories	22	9	8	1	9	17	0	66
Proved	7	5	1	1	1	5	0	20
Young fledged (min.)	1	4	2	0	1	8	0	16

The maximum spring count was 51 over Richmond Park on May 16th, with other double-figure counts there including at least 50 on April 7th, 40 on Mar 27th, 27 on Apr 27th, 25 on Apr 25th, 20 on Apr 4th, May 3rd and May 10th, 12 on Apr 24th and May 18th, and ten on Apr 24th. Other sites with double-figure counts include 17 at Canons Farm on Mar 15th, 15 at Crockenhill on Apr 17th, 15 at Juniper Top on Mar 11th, 14 at Buckland SP on Mar 17th, 12 at KGV Res on Apr 3rd, 12 at Rainham Marshes on Sep 23rd, 12 at Knockholt on Oct 16th, 11 at Crockenhill on Mar 19th, 11 at Beddington Farmlands on Apr 7th, circa ten at Crayford Marshes on Apr 7th, circa ten at Cray Valley GC on Feb 25th, circa ten at Foots Cray Meadows on Feb 13th, ten at Kempton NR on Mar 18th, ten at Totteridge Valley on Aug 25th, ten at Trent Park on Mar 27th, ten at Beddington Farmlands on Mar 27th and Apr 7th and ten on Epsom Downs on Sep 22nd.

In Lond: Reported from 15 sites (16 last year). Records were received from Camden Town, City of London, Holland Park, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, Kingsland Basin, London Zoo, Lord's Cricket Ground, Maida Vale, Mile End, Paddington Green, Primrose Hill, Regent's Park, Russia Dock Woodland, Tate Modern and Victoria.



Buzzard at Crossness. (Rudraksha Chodankar)

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Status: common winter visitor; scarce breeder.

Reported numbers in the first and last four months of the year were 154 and 151 (159 and 188 in 2022). Records came from 116 sites (compared with 115 last year), including four sites in Inner London (same as last year). Probable or confirmed breeding was recorded at two sites with two pairs at London Wetland Centre.

Below are counts of five or more birds, along with breeding records (no. of pairs/territories are in brackets) and all records for Inner London.

Water Rail: winter totals of birds

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
First winter	35	35	15	4	20	41	4	154
Second winter	34	34	22	4	15	40	2	151

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (1). Ingrebourne Valley, five on Jan 6th. Rainham Marshes, seven on Dec 15th.

Herts: Rye Meads, six on Nov 17th.

Middx: Brent Res, six on Dec 26th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, peak of six on Dec 1st. London Wetland Centre (2); peak of 17 on Nov 1st.



Stunning photo of a Water Rail, a bird more often heard than seen. (Shaun Ferguson)

In Lond: Regent's Park, one on 16 dates from Jan 1st to Mar 6th with two on Feb 20th & 22nd. Russia Dock Woodland, one from Jan 6th to Mar 6th. Southwark Park, one on Mar 13th.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Status: very common breeding resident.

Moorhens were reported from 863 sites (compared with 300 in 2022, 726 in 2021), including 62 in Inner London (74 last year). The reason for these changes may be reporting or interpretation differences although the BBS shows a 26% increase in London

from 2012-22. Evidence of breeding was reported at 136 sites, including 12 in Inner London.

Below are breeding records (in brackets) from sites with five or more pairs/territories and peak counts from sites with 35 or more.

Essex: Bretons Farm, 49 on July 17th. Mar Dyke Valley, 41 on Feb 20th. Wanstead Flats, 35 on Nov 26th. Wanstead Park, 35 on Sep 14th. Warren Gorge, 17 on Mar 19th. Walthamstow Wetlands (10); 85 on Dec 23rd.

Herts: Rye Meads, 60 on Oct 4th.

Middx: Bushy Park, 42 on Dec 18th. Hampstead Heath, 36 on Dec 19th. Staines Moor, 35 on Dec 9th. Walpole Park, 53 on Feb 18th.

Kent: Kelsey Park, 36 on Dec 12th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (32 territories); 100 on Jan 23rd. London Wetland Centre (34); 150 on Aug 27th. Fulham Reach, 50 on Feb 27th. River Wandle: Carshalton Ponds to Wandsworth, 157 on Dec 29th. River Wandle: Waddon Ponds to Beddington Park, 52 on Jan 12th. River Wandle: Mitcham Bridge to Morden Hall Tram Crossing, 38 on Oct 15th. Wey Manor Meadows (6).

In Lond: Greenland Dock, 35 on Dec 7th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens (7); 50 on June 7th. Regent's Park, 46 on Dec 19th. St James's Park, 100 on Nov 7th. Victoria Park, 36 on Jan 22nd.

Moorhen at Walthamstow Wetlands. (Ann Playford)





This Coot and her chick were photographed at Hackney Marshes. (Liam Harper)

Coot *Fulica atra*

Status: very common breeding resident and winter visitor.

Coots were reported from 767 sites this year (611 last year), including 93 in Inner London (81 last year). Like Moorhen, the reason for this increase is reporting or interpretation differences. Breeding was reported at 178 sites (91 last year). The BBS shows a 29% decline in the South East England from 2012-22. The highest count was 749 at Walthamstow Wetlands on September 28th, compared with 1,174 on Holyfield Marsh on October 8th, in 2022.

Below are peak site counts of over 300 (200 in Inner London) and breeding records of five or more pairs (no. of pairs/broods in brackets).

Essex: KGV Res, 600 on Dec 22nd. Rainham Marshes, 420 on Oct 11th. Walthamstow Wetlands (8); 749 on Sep 28th. Warren Gorge (5).

Herts: Broxbourne GP, 300 on Jan 21st. Helicon Lake, 300 on Feb 1st. Maple Lodge NR (6). Troy Mill Lake, 376 on Jan 2nd.

Middx: Brent Res (6). Hampstead Heath (6). Home Park (5). Ruislip Lido, 334 on Dec 21st. Staines Res 416 on Oct 28th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 403 on Oct 6th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (86 territories). QEII Res, 519 on Sep 16th. London Wetland Centre (51); 354 on Dec 1st. Walton Res, 362 on Aug 28th. Wey Manor Meadows (8).

In Lond: Battersea Park (5); Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens, 253 on Sep 25th. St James's Park (7); 200 on Aug 17th.

Crane *Grus grus*

Status: former rare vagrant, now a rare passage migrant (near annual since 2010).

After four birds were seen in 2020 there was just one record in 2021 and none in 2022. Four sightings have been accepted in 2023 probably involving two records of two birds.

As Crane numbers in the UK continue to rise London, records are expected to increase. This bird was spotted over SW London in April. (Dave Harris)



Black-winged Stilt arrival dates 1918-2023: 16 records, 21 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of records	-	-	-	2	8	-	1	2	3	-	-	-
Number of birds	-	-	-	2	12	-	1	2	4	-	-	-

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one from May 5th-7th (A Self *et al*) and two on May 17th (J Blunt *et al*).

Middx: Home Park, one sound recorded circling over the R Thames near Hampton Court/ Kingston Bridge at first light on May 7th (A Skotnicki). Staines Moor, one on May 7th (presumed same as Home Park) (RE Innes).

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Status: scarce visitor in all months of the year, with small numbers wintering on Lower Thames; occasional breeder. **RBBP**

Avocets continue to reinforce their status as a now permanent part of London's avifauna, with at least six nests at Rainham Marshes, of which at least four pairs bred successfully, fledging at least nine young. With regular counts in the 30s and 40s from there during April and May, the actual number of pairs may have been much higher. This is the fourth consecutive year Avocets have bred in the area, and the most successful year to date.

On sites on the R Thames, the maximum count was 72 at West Thurrock Marshes in December with every month having at least 25, except September when the maximum count was just five.

Away from sites on the R Thames, there were just six spring records, between March 9th and June 2nd, and four in autumn, between June 25th and October 12th, with six at Q. Mother Res being the highest count.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, at least six pairs bred; recorded in all months with maxima of 60 on several dates in February and Nov 28th. West Thurrock Marshes, high counts of 50 on Feb 20th and 72 on Dec 1st.

Herts: Amwell NR, one from Mar 9th-10th.

Middx: Staines Res, singles on Mar 16th and May 20th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Aug 11th and six flew SW at 11:00 on Oct 12th.

Kent: Reported from six sites along the R Thames, with the highest counts being 57 at Dartford Marshes from Jan 1st-2nd and 52 at Crayford Marshes on Jan 4th.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on Mar 12th and three on Oct 12th. QE II Res, three on Jun 2nd and one on Jun 25th. Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough), one on Apr 4th.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

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

The number of reported breeding pairs, or presence of likely territories, was low this year with just 84 pairs/territories reported from 29 sites (141 from 35 sites in 2022 and 179 from 41 in 2021). However, there was no survey at Rainham Marshes this year where there were 67 territories last year (25 this year). There was an interesting record from Rye Meads where a bigamous male bred with two females although both unfortunately failed.

Wintering numbers remain lower than they used to be with counts of 100 or more coming from 15 sites (20 sites in 2022), and at least 300 from just four localities. Only five counts were of 500 or more, all from Rainham Marshes, and only one of these was over 600. The number of counts in excess of 1,000 has been declining in recent years and this year there were none, with the highest single count being 900.

Essex: 29 pairs/territories. Rainham Marshes (25); peaks in each winter of 900 on Jan 15th and 471 on Dec 9th.

Herts: 17 pairs/territories. Rye Meads, highs of 455 on Feb 11th and 340 on Dec 8th. Stanstead Abbots, 440 on Feb 14th. Stanstead Innings, 250 on Dec 8th.

Middx: 6 pairs/territories. Staines Res, 250 on Jan 4th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, over 100 on three dates in December with a high of 185 on 20th.

Kent: 9 pairs/territories. Crayford Marshes, 200 on Nov 28th. Dartford Marshes (6); a maximum of 306 on Jan 28th. Sevenoaks WR, maximum of 260 on Jan 6th.

Surrey: 23 pairs/territories. Beddington Farmlands (9). London Wetland Centre (4). Rushett Farm (5).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one briefly on Nov 23rd.

Avocet away from the Thames continues to be a scarce visitor. (Dave Harris)



Spring passage continued well into April, and likely into May, but as always, the presence of potentially breeding birds at many sites made passage birds difficult to separate.

Little Ringed Plover	Pairs confirmed breeding	Pairs probably breeding	Other pairs present	Total
Essex	0	0	2	2
Herts	4	4	3	11
Middx	0	0	1	1
Bucks	0	0	0	0
Kent	0	0	2	2
Surrey	2	0	3	5
Total	6	4	11	21

Late June and July saw regular double-figure counts from two sites in the Herts sector where pairs were present during the breeding season, with the highest count of the year being 16 at one of these sites on July 3rd. Elsewhere the highest late summer or autumn counts did not exceed eight. Four sites had records in early September, with the last two of the year at Rainham Marshes on September 9th.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Status: regular passage migrant.

The first of the year flew north over QE II Res on April 9th with around 100-120 individuals seen at, or over, 18 wetland sites between then and May 21st. This was relatively light in comparison to most recent years since a similar spring total in 2016. Rainham Marshes with 11 on May 19th was the highest spring count with no other count exceeding seven.

The autumn return passage was typical with about 55 through 11 sites from July 2nd onwards. Almost a third of these were in a single flock of 17 that flew south over Staines Res on July 27th, and the last one was at Rainham Marshes on September 21st.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Status: winter visitor and passage migrant.

As is usually now the case, Curlew were seen in all months, and visited sites across the London Area, although most records came from the R Thames and there were only a few in May and June. There were 14 counts of ten or more from sites on the Thames, with the highest being 24 at Swanscombe Marshes on April 5th.

Away from the Thames, there were 36 records of about 75 birds between January 30th and June 4th from 23 localities, including 15 at Belhus Wood CP on February 13th and then 15 records of 22 birds between June 25th and October 25th, from ten localities, including five at Beddington Farmlands on Jul 1st.

In Lond: Paddington Green, one over on Apr 4th.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

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

In January, one was seen at Rainham Marshes on 3rd and then nine at Erith Reach on 12th. Spring passage then occurred between April 16th and May 4th with somewhere



These Bar-tailed Godwits were photographed at Island Barn Reservoir in April. (Dave Harris)

between 100 and 170 individuals seen. Peak passage was during the three days from April 19th, when an estimated 80 to 150 moved through, with some potentially being seen at more than one site. The highest counts were 33 at Dartford Marshes and 25 east over Osterley Park, both on April 20th, and 43 at Rainham Marshes on 21st.

Autumn passage was much lighter with just ten to 20 between July 22nd and October 22nd. All were seen at sites along the Lower Thames, with three at Rainham Marshes on August 18th being the highest count. One at Rainham Marshes on November 19th was the only later record.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Status: passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers.

The first part of the year saw 11 counts of 100 or more from seven sites along the Lower Thames, with the highest single counts being 350 at Dartford Marshes on January 15th and 242 at Beckton Creekside NR on March 5th. Prior to mid-March, the only reports away from Thameside localities in the Essex and Kent sectors were one at the London Wetland Centre on January 12th and five at Beddington Farmlands on February 12th.

As usual, records came from localities spread across the area during spring and autumn passage, with sightings at 15 localities between March 13th and June 8th, including nine away from the Lower Thames, and 21 between June 16th and October 12th, 14 of which were away from the Thames. Most records away from the Thames were single figures,

Bucks: Reported from six sites (four).
Kent: Reported from 123 sites (90). Beckenham, 20 on Sep 28th.
Surrey: Reported from 202 sites (151). Bookham Common (3). Kingston-upon-Thames, 31 on Jan 1st. Molesey Heath (2). Pilgrims Farm, 25 on Dec 26th. Surbiton Cemetery, 23 on Sep 9th.
In Lond: Reported from 33 sites (22).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Status: breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.
There was a slight, but welcome, increase in the number of sites recording this species in 2023, rising from 162 to 184: Essex and Hertfordshire remain the Cuckoo’s strongholds. Birds were reported from 160 sites between March and May (132 last year), 76 sites in June (71) and ten sites between July and October (17).
The only site to confirm breeding was Rye Meads, where two pairs were noted and four young fledged from Reed Warbler nests: several other sites recorded the presence of more than one singing male or the holding of territory. Overall, the numbers would seem to suggest that the Cuckoo is continuing to hold its own.

In terms of migration there were again no March records, the earliest bird of the year (always a most welcome sight or sound) being one at Beddington Farmlands on April 8th which was followed by another in the Ingrebourne Valley the following day: last year’s earliest bird was on April 12th. Records were fairly steady after that, with the highest daily total being four at four different sites (Amwell NR, Bowyer’s Water, Dartford Marshes and Rainham Marshes). Autumn birds were scarce this year, with only four records from August onwards: a juvenile at North Mymms Park on August 7th, a female at Streatham on August 11th, another juvenile at Crossness on August 28th and a very late juvenile filmed at Bromley on October 11th (September 4th last year). The only other October records in the last ten years were in 2014, 2017 and 2021.

Cuckoo: sites where reported

	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (June)	Autumn (Jul-Oct)
Essex	51	25	3
Herts	42	23	2
Middx	19	7	2
Bucks	4	1	0
Kent	11	6	1
Surrey	32	13	2
Inner London	1	1	0

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Jun 15th.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Status: rare breeding resident and scarce winter visitor.
There were reports from 67 sites, fewer than in 2022 (72) but more than in 2021 (58). They were seen throughout the year with sightings at 50 sites during the first and second winter periods and 38 during the summer (see table below). There were 17 pairs from

13 sites where breeding was confirmed compared with eight pairs at eight sites in 2022. There were four pairs at four sites in Essex, eight pairs at five sites in Herts with four nests at one site, one pair in Kent and four pairs at three sites in Surrey. Also, another pair probably bred (one in 2022) in Herts and there were two birds present at one other site during the breeding season, where breeding may have occurred (five in 2021).

Barn Owl: sites where reported

	Winter (Jan-Apr)	Summer (May-Aug)	Winter (Sep-Dec)
Essex	15	10	13
Herts	7	12	8
Middx	3	4	4
Kent	6	3	2
Surrey	5	9	5

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Status: common breeding resident in the outer parts of the London Area, scarce towards the centre.
This owl was reported from 211 sites, an increase on 2022 (185) and 2021 (200). There were 17 pairs from 17 sites where breeding was confirmed, compared with ten pairs

A lovely photo of a Tawny Owl. (Shaun Ferguson)





Beautiful photograph of a Little Owl seen in Osterley Park in August. (Liam Harper)

from nine sites in 2022 and nine pairs from nine sites in 2021. There were five pairs in Herts, four pairs each in Essex and Surrey, two pairs in Middlesex and one pair each in Bucks and Kent. Breeding was not confirmed in Inner London (one pair in 2022). This species is likely to be under-recorded as there were two or more birds present at another 33 sites between March and August, an increase from 16 sites in 2022.

The sites with confirmed breeding pairs (number in brackets) and all records from Inner London are shown below.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (1). Bonnetts Wood (1). Clay Tye Wood (1). Manor Farm, Upminster (1).

Herts: Essendon (1). Hatfield Park (1). New Southgate Cemetery (1). Rye Meads (1). Wormley Wood (1).

Middx: Highgate (1). Trent Park (1).

Bucks: Iver (1).

Kent: Belmont OS (1).

Surrey: Ashted Common (1). Richmond Park (1). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (1). Watermeads (1).

In Lond: Battersea Park, up to two on 16 dates from Jan 4th to Jun 24th and four dates from Sep 22nd to Dec 14th. Bayswater, one on Jan 24th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, up to two on four dates from Apr 15th to May 18th. Regent's Park, singles on Aug 20th and Sep 9th. Vauxhall Pleasure Gdns, one on Dec 18th.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Status: localised breeding resident.

Records were received from 99 sites: the same as in 2022 (100) and a decrease from 2021 (125)). Eight pairs were confirmed to have bred (12 in 2022) and at least another five probably bred (one in 2022), giving a total of 13 pairs (13 in 2022 and 11 in 2021). Any annual variation maybe due to differences in reporting and the interpretation of breeding status, so it is unclear whether any real change has occurred during recent years. More than one bird was recorded during the breeding season at several sites where breeding has occurred in previous years, so breeding is probably under-recorded. There was a high count of 18 from Richmond Park in June where at least ten pairs were reported in 2016 and 2019 whereas only one pair was confirmed to have bred this year reinforcing the view that breeding is under-recorded.

The sites with confirmed breeding pairs (number in brackets) and all records from Inner London are shown below.

Essex: Bonnetts Wood (1). Wanstead Flats (1).

Herts: Munden Estate, six on Dec 26th.

Middx: Totteridge Valley, eight on Oct 12th.

Kent: Cudham (1).

Surrey: Reported from 33 sites. Beddington Park (1). Canons Farm (1+). Little Woodcote (1). Richmond Park (1+); 18 on Jun 28th.

In Lond: Reported from two sites. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1), reported in every month except January, one juvenile fledged. Regent's Park, one on Feb 24th and Mar 7th, 10th, 15th & 17th.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; rare breeder. **RBBP**

Three or four birds were reported at two sites this year (eight birds were reported at four sites in 2022 and eight birds at three sites in 2021). Two of the records were in winter and there was one record in April.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, one on Dec 1st, roosting on island on Huntshill Lake being mobbed by Blackbirds.

Kent: Site B, one on Feb 16th, one holding territory for at least a week in April and one on Dec 9th.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, with occasional influxes; rare breeder. **RBBP**

There were reports from 30 sites, more than in 2022 (18) and 2021 (23). Between January and March they were seen at only three sites, but between September and December there were records at 28 sites.

Short-eared Owl sites

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	1	1	-	5	3	1	-	1	5	13	14	9

Most records were of one or two birds, but the most notable exception was Staines Moor where up to seven were regularly reported in the second winter period with a peak of ten on November 25th. The last bird in the first winter period (excluding a probable summering bird at Rainham Marshes until June 3rd) was a probable late migrant on May 22nd at Staines Moor (May 22nd in 2022). There was a very early returning bird on August 5th at Stanborough GP otherwise the first returning bird was on September 1st at Richmond Park and Q. Mother Res (September 10th in 2022).

All records are given below, summarised in some places.

Essex: Barking Bay/Marsh, singles on Oct 27th and Nov 1st & 12th. Beckton Creekside NR, one on Oct 27th. Leytonstone, singles on Oct 15th & 23rd. Orsett Fen, one on Dec 3rd. Rainham Marshes, up to two on 15 dates from Jan 1st to Jun 3rd and on 16 dates from Oct 14th to Dec 16th with three on Nov 6th. Tylers Common, one on Apr 28th. Walthamstow Wetlands, singles on Sep 25th and Nov 12th.Wanstead Flats, up to two on Oct 9th, 10th, 14th, 15th & 23th.

Herts: Frogmore Lakes, singles on Nov 1st & 30th and Dec 17th. Rye Meads, one on Dec 30th. Stanborough GP, one on Aug 5th, up to four from Nov 21st-28th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, singles on Sep 23rd and Oct 30th. Bushy Park, one on Oct 25th. Finchley, one on Nov 22nd. Finsbury Park, one on Sep 26th. Hampstead Heath, one on Nov 3rd. KGV Res, singles on Dec 1st & 15th. Staines Moor, one from Apr 30th to May 22nd, then from Oct 15th with monthly peaks of six on Oct 28th, ten on Nov 25th and seven on Dec 8th, 16th & 29th. Warren Farm Sports Centre, one on Nov 19th. Wraysbury Res, one on Nov 10th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, singles on Sep 1st, Nov 4th and Dec 20th.



Short-eared Owl at Staines Moor. (Joe Downing)

Kent: Crossness, singles on Apr 16th and Oct 26th. Dartford Marshes, singles on Oct 14th and Dec 2nd. Greenwich Park, one on Apr 5th. Sidcup, one on Oct 9th. Swanscombe Marshes, one on Dec 29th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, up to two on many dates from Oct 8th to Nov 26th. QE II Res, one on Nov 28th.Richmond Park, singles on Jan 15th, Sep 1st, Oct 20th and Nov 26th.

In Lond: Tate Modern, one upriver at 12:52 on Oct 18th.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Status: rare passage migrant, occasionally breeding.

No accepted birds were reported in the breeding season (five sites in 2022 with one in Kent and four in Surrey). There were two migrants in September including one in Inner London, which was roosting on a windowsill. There are reports of two birds that appear in App III, including one in spring, for which descriptions would be very welcome.

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley, one on Sep 2nd (P Hawkins *et al*)

In Lond: Globe Town, one on Sep 23rd (N Chermin)



Lovely photo of a Kingfisher caught in flight at Wandle Park, Colliers Wood. (Dave Element)

Basin, one on Dec 19th. St James’s Park, one on Oct 10th. Victoria Park, singles on Sep 17th and Oct 15th. Victoria Tower Gdns, one on Oct 3rd. Russia Dock Woodland, one on ten dates from Jan 2nd to Mar 5th.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Status: scarce passage migrant.

There is just one accepted record, in May, for this near annual visitor.

Herts: Croxley Green, one visited a garden on May 15th (L Gerrard).

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Status: scarce passage migrant.

There were two records of singles from two sites, one in August and the other in September, which are the two commonest months for this species. Both stayed for only one day. Two records this year is below the average of 3.7 per year during the last ten years.

Wryneck records 2014-2023: 37 records, 37 birds											
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
No. of records	4	6	3	3	3	6	2	3	5	2	

Middx: Staines Moor, one on Aug 19th (RE Innes).

Bucks: Colnbrook, one on Sep 7th (CDR Heard).

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dryobates minor*

Status: scarce and declining breeding resident. **RBBP**

This species was reported from 25 sites, which was more than in 2022 (23) but fewer than in 2021 (32). They were seen at many more sites north of the Thames (11 in Essex, four in Herts and one in Middlesex) than south of the Thames (six in Surrey and three in Kent). There was one confirmed breeding and one probable breeding reported this year (there were two territories in 2022 and one in 2021). Most records were of single birds with two or three birds being reported at four sites (two in 2022, three in 2021, five in 2020). Birds were recorded in ten months of the year and were present at the largest number of sites in April. This is a similar pattern to most previous years.

All records are given below.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker: sites where recorded each month												
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	2	5	6	11	5	1	-	3	4	3	-	1

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, male on Sep 21st. Brentwood, two on Apr 23rd. Brook Farm, Upminster, one on Apr 24th. Cely Woods, one on Feb 19th, female on Mar 7th, pair on Mar 27th and one on Apr 4th and May 1st. Clay Tye Wood, one on Apr 24th. Davy Down, one on Mar 25th. Holyfield Hall Farm, one on Sep 1st. Mar Dyke Valley, pair and another male on Mar 29th, one on Apr 7th & 20th and male on Aug 22nd. Ongar Park Wood, one on Feb 26th and May 8th. Rainham Marshes, one on Sep 9th & 16th. Woodford Green, one on Aug 7th and Oct 17th.

Herts: Moor Park GC, Northwood, one on Feb 12th and Apr 15th. Panshanger Park, a female on Apr 9th. Rye Meads, one on nine dates from Jan 2nd to Apr 22nd with two on Feb 13th. Seventy Acres Lake, one on Mar 9th & 25th.

Middx: Hampstead Heath, one on Jan 13th.

Kent: Cudham, one on Aug 26th & 31st. Fawkham Green, one on Oct 9th. Honor Oak, one on May 23rd.

Surrey: Site A (1), adult feeding young on Jun 8th. Kew Gdns, one on Apr 3rd. London Wetland Centre, one on Apr 3rd. Marden Park Woods, one on Dec 29th. Site B, one on 22 dates from Feb 24th to May 21st with three on Mar 3rd and two on 15th then one on Oct 13th. Surbiton, one on Sep 9th.

For each sector, the number of sites where parakeets were reported and high counts (other than at the roosts listed above) are listed. These may also be at, or on the way to or from, roosts. The number of territories found in surveys is shown in brackets.

Essex: Reported from 192 sites (130 in 2021). KGV Res, 500 on Dec 14th. Walthamstow Marshes, 594 on Nov 24th. Wanstead Flats, 950 on Nov 15th. Wanstead Park, 800 on Feb 2nd. Waterworks NR, 568 on Oct 17th. Woodford Green, 500+ on Dec 9th.

Herts: Reported from 146 sites (101). Cassiobury Park, 150 on Dec 9th. Stanborough Park/Lakes, 475 at roost on Nov 13th. Stocker's Lake, 200 on Sep 21st. Tyttenhanger GP, 190 on Jan 14th.

Middx: Reported from 364 sites (278). Clapton, 385 on Aug 21st. Home Park (40); 850 on Jan 2nd. Hounslow, 400 on May 10th. Woodberry Wetlands, 300 on Oct 28th. Wormwood Scrubs, 700 on Sep 21st.

Bucks: Reported from 17 sites (13). Langley Park, 115 on Dec 26th.

Kent: Reported from 222 sites (153). Shoreham, 400 on Oct 13th. Beckenham Park Place, 100 on Dec 31st.

Surrey: Reported from 381 sites (275). Arbrook Common (2). Fairfield RG, 1,500 on Aug 19th. Kingston-upon-Thames, 2,400 on Jan 26th. Molesey Heath (5). Oxshott Heath (1). Ravens Ait, 2,250 on Aug 21st. Surbiton Cemetery, 4,650 on Sep 9th. The Ledges, Esher (1).

In Lond: Reported from 159 sites (112). Battersea Park, 36 on Dec 14th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 120 on Oct 2nd. Myatt's Field Park, 40 on Jul 31st. Queen's Park, Kilburn, 1,000 on Sep 15th. St John's Wood, 150 on Sep 12th. Regent's Park, 40 on Aug 17th. Victoria Park, 31 on Jun 7th.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Status: rare passage migrant.

There were two individuals this year. A late spring migrant in June and a juvenile in September that stayed for over a week allowing many observers to see it. There was one record last year; since 2000, there have been 26 records all of single birds.

Middx: Osterley Park, juv from Sep 3rd-12th (D Wright *et al*).

Surrey: Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), female on Jun 3rd (DM Harris, S Musievski).

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Status: rare passage migrant, most often in May.

There was one record on Wimbledon Common in May this year. There was one record last year; since 2000, there have been 19 records all of single birds.

Surrey: Wimbledon Common, male singing on May 24th (J Dee).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Status: common breeding bird, the resident population boosted by immigrants in the autumn and winter.

There were 18 reports of confirmed breeding, much higher than the five reported last year but still lower than the 21 reported in 2021. In addition, this year we report on the number of territories found in surveys, where there were 20 territories at nine sites.



Red-backed Shrike at Osterley Park. (Joe Downing)

The BBS shows a 25% decrease in London from 2012-22. In May, one was seen to catch a fledgling Great Tit at Grovelands Park and another seen attacking a nestbox with young Blue Tits at the London Wetland Centre.

Below are the number of territories (in brackets) where a survey was carried out and high counts of ten or more (five or more in Inner London).

Essex: Mar Dyke Valley, 14 on Oct 3rd. Rainham Marshes, ten on Oct 23rd. Walthamstow Wetlands (1).

Herts: Maple Lodge NR, 12 on Jan 1st. Attenborough's Fields, ten on May 4th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, 12 on Apr 7th. Hampstead Heath, 17 on Oct 5th. Home Park (4). Totteridge Valley, ten on Oct 24th.

Kent: Keston Common, 11 on Nov 17th. Knockholt, ten on Oct 15th. Pratt's Bottom, ten on Jan 18th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (1). Ashted Common (4). Banstead Wood, 11 on Oct 26th. Epsom Common, ten on Sep 17th. Esher Common (2). Kew Gdns, 30 on Apr 3rd. Molesey Heath (1). Oxshott Heath (2). The Ledges, Esher (4). Wandsworth Common, ten on Apr 16th. West End Common (1).

Below are breeding records in each sector and sites where three or more birds were reported outside the breeding season.

- Essex:** Reported from 48 sites (48 in 2022). Breeding confirmed at three sites. Brentwood, five on Sep 30th. Fairplay Farm, Upminster, five on Sep 14th and Oct 11th. North Ockendon, five on Dec 3rd. Rainham Marshes, three on Dec 11th. West Horndon four on Dec 3rd.
- Herts:** Reported from 67 sites (53). Breeding confirmed at three sites. Broxbourne Woods, three on Nov 10th. Redwell Wood Farm, three from Aug 27th-28th. Rye Meads, three on Jan 20th and Nov 18th. Stanborough GP, five on Mar 17th and six on Nov 3rd. Watford, three on Mar 24th.
- Middx:** Reported from 31 sites (33). Breeding confirmed at one site. Trent Park, four on Mar 14th. Vicarage Farm, four on Mar 14th and three on Sep 12th.
- Bucks:** Reported from seven sites (19).
- Kent:** Reported from 47 sites (32). Cudham, three on Sep 12th. Knockholt, four on Oct 16th. Scadbury Park, three on Aug 13th.
- Surrey:** Reported from 64 sites (55). Probable breeding at one site. Beddington Farmlands, three on Jan 15th. Canons Farm, four on Sep 27th. Nore Hill, four on Sep 23rd. Surbiton, four on Aug 8th. Woldingham, three on Jan 26th.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Status: uncommon but sometimes numerous irruptive visitor.

There were two records in February following an absence in 2022 and 2021. An irruption began on November 16th followed by another record that month before there were 56 records in December. The largest flock was in Tufnell Park that peaked at 68 on December 30th. The irruption was widespread with records from all sectors, except Bucks, but surprisingly, there were fewer records in the eastern sectors of Essex and Kent. Birds undoubtedly move around but if the peak for each site are totalled then 316 birds were involved, while the highest day count for the area was 111 on December 29th. This irruption is much larger than the last one in 2019 (started in January, 16 sites with peak site count of 13) and may become larger than the irruption in 2016-17 (started in November, 17 sites with peak of 20 in 2016 and 143 sites with peak of 84 in 2017).

Waxwing in the second winter period

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
No. of sites	4	7	9	0	2	6	1	29
Peak count	10	19	68	0	9	23	1	

All records are given below summarised in places.

- Essex:** Bonnetts Wood, two on Nov 16th. Chingford Plain/Connaught Water, ten on Dec 3rd. Shenfield, five on Dec 14th.
- Herts:** East Barnet, six on Dec 21st, 15 from 22nd-23rd and 14 on 24th. Hatfield, two on Dec 17th. Hertford, three on Dec 14th, two on 15th and 19 on 17th. Oak Hill Park, 15 on Dec 22nd and 14 on 23rd. Rye Meads, two on Dec 4th. Stanstead Abbots, six on Dec 30th. Watford, ten on Dec 19th.
- Middx:** Bushy Park, 23 on Dec 27th, five or more on 28th and one on 30th. Capel Manor



Waxwings caused quite a stir in London in November and December 2023 with larger than usual numbers. This one was seen in Balham. (Joe Downing)

- College, three on Dec 4th. Chiswick, two on Dec 16th. Frays Farm Meadows, one on Feb 10th. Kentish Town, 38 on Dec 29th. Mill Hill, two on Dec 27th. Potters Bar, one on Dec 21st. Teddington, singles on Feb 26th and Dec 15th. Tufnell Park, from Dec 24th-31st with peak of 68 on 30th. Warren Farm Sports Centre, two on Dec 17th.
- Kent:** Orpington, eight on Dec 1st. Upper College Farm, nine on Dec 29th.
- Surrey:** Balham, 13 on Nov 23rd, from Dec 22nd-31st with peak of 15 on 23rd and 25th. Banstead Wood, one on Dec 22nd. Hackbridge, two on Dec 30th. Kingston-upon-Thames, six or more on Dec 16th. Richmond Park, 23+ on Dec 16th. Wandsworth Common, from Dec 22nd-29th with peak of 15 on 23rd.
- In Lond:** St Pancras, one on Dec 16th.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Status: common breeding resident and passage migrant.

There were 16 winter flocks of 50 or more at 14 sites (compared with 14 at 12 sites in 2022). Twelve of these were in the first winter period. The highest count was 200 at Canons Farm on October 22nd.

A minimum of 341 territories was counted or suspected (compared with 303 in 2022 and 322 in 2021) from 73 sites (81 in 2022 and 72 in 2021). This is the highest territory count for more than a decade. The largest concentrations were at West Horndon and Orsett Fen, both with 18 territories. However, there was not a complete survey at Rainham Marshes, which usually has the greatest concentration (12+ territories this year; 43 in 2022).

Autumn passage was very light again, with 62 at Epsom Downs on October 10th the only count larger than 50.

Below are the number of territories for each sector, breeding records for sites where three or more pairs were recorded (no. of territories in brackets), plus some of the higher counts and the Inner London records.

Essex: 116+ territories at 14 sites (152+ at 22 in 2022). Brook Farm, Upminster (3). Childerditch (4). Fairplay Farm, Upminster (14). Great Warley Hall (4); 58 on Jan 6th. Manor Farm, Upminster (17). North Ockendon, at Fen Lane (15). Orsett Fen (18); 52 on Jan 6th. Rainham Marshes (20); 50 on Apr 19th. Wanstead Flats (3). West Horndon (18); 64 on Jan 6th.

Herts: 73+ territories at 15 sites (47+ at 19 in 2022). Coopers Green GP (7). Coursers Road GP (10). Frogmore Lakes (4). St Albans, at Jersey Farm (15). Stanborough GP (15); 100 on Sep 30th. Tyttenhanger GP (1); 90 on Jan 22nd. Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross (10); 70 on Nov 27th.

Middx: 45 territories at 18 sites (34 at 15 in 2022). Home Park (11). Sloemans Farm, 150+ on Jan 17th. St Dunstan's Meadow, Lower Feltham (3).

Kent: 33 territories at 13 sites (25+ at 13 sites in 2022). Barnes Cray, 70+ on Jan 3rd. Crayford Marshes (5). Crockenhill, 50 on Jan 27th. Fackenden Down (5). Lullingstone Park (4). Shirehall Farm (4). Upper College Farm (3).

Surrey: 77 territories at 14 sites (45+ at 12 in 2022). Ashted Common, 70+ on Jan 20th. Canons Farm (10); 100 on Mar 10th and 200 on Oct 22nd. Epsom Downs, 62 on Oct 10th. Farthing Downs (3). Priest Hill NR (3). Richmond Park (13). Riddlesdown (3). Rushett Farm (16); 160 on Jan 27th. Slyfield Farm, Fetcham (6). Stoke d'Abernon (5).

In Lond: Primrose Hill, singles N on Feb 10th and Mar 15th. Regent's Park, one N on Oct 17th.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

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

The first of spring were singles at the London Wetland Centre and Wraybury GP on March 10th, a fairly typical date. Small numbers were then seen on several dates until a bigger arrival on March 26th, when there were 70 at Walthamstow Wetlands. Spring passage was generally light, with 225 at Island Barn Res and 200 at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) on March 29th and 150 at Walthamstow Wetlands on April 15th the largest counts.



This Sand Martin was at Hackney Marshes in May. (Liam Harper)

Breeding was confirmed or probable at 13 sites (nine in 2022 and 13 in 2021), with at least 271 nests at the six sites with counts (compared with 182 nests at seven sites with counts in 2022). At the artificial bank at the London Wetland Centre, there were 141 occupied nests, with 402 pulli and 346 fledglings. There were large mid- and late summer counts of 180 at Q. Mother Res on June 29th, 300 at KGV Res on July 14th and 200 there on July 25th and August 8th.

The only autumn count of more than 100 was at Priest Hill on September 24th when one flock of more than 400 of mixed hirundines was "mostly" of this species. The last birds of autumn were five at Brook Farm, Upminster on October 3rd.

Breeding sites are given below, with the number of pairs in brackets, along with all Inner London records.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (4+). KGV Res (bred). QE Olympic Park (bred). Walthamstow Marshes (2).

Herts: Coursers Farm (probably bred). Stanborough GP (bred).

Middx: Home Park (13). Limehouse Cut (bred).

Surrey: Buckland SP (bred). Godstone SP (c90). London Wetland Centre (141), 346 fledglings. Portsmouth Road FB (8). Richmond Park (13+).

In Lond: Burgess Park, one on Apr 24th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, up to eight on



A fabulous shot of the notoriously flighty Long-tailed Tit taken at Walthamstow Wetlands. (Liam Harper)

Surrey: Reported from 48 sites. Beddington Farmlands (9). Hogsmill SW (2). London Wetland Centre (23). Molesey Heath (2). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (17).

In Lond: Reported from seven sites. Battersea Park, one from Jan 27th to Jun 19th with two on Apr 22nd, and one in October and December. Burgess Park, at least one from Jan 6th to Jun 7th, Oct 4th and Nov 20th. Camley Street Natural Park, one on Oct 4th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, up to two on many dates from Jan 1st to Jun 24th and from Oct 16th to Nov 23rd. Regent’s Park, up to five on many dates from Jan 2nd to Jun 19th and one from Aug 17th to Dec 28th. Russia Dock Woodland, up to two on 11 dates from Apr 24th to Jun 8th. St James’s Park, one on Feb 2nd.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Status: common and widespread breeding resident.

There were 249 pairs reported this year (194 in 2022 and 135 in 2021), the largest total since 2012. Despite the increase, the true total is undoubtedly much higher since there are no, or limited, breeding data from many sites with suitable habitat.

Below are records for sites where three or more pairs were counted (no. of pairs/territories in brackets) and all pairs in Inner London, plus high sector counts.

- Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (11); 55 on Jun 27th. Bonnetts Wood (4); 39 on Nov 3rd. Hangman’s Wood (5). Mar Dyke Valley (8); 71 on Sep 18th. Orsett Fen (5). Wanstead Park (12). Warren Gorge (14); 36 on Feb 2nd. Waterworks NR, 35 on Jan 9th.
- Herts:** Northaw Great Wood (3). Rye Meads (13). Seventy Acres Lake, 35 on Nov 24th. Stanborough Park, 35 on Nov 6th.
- Middx:** Broadwater Lake, 44 on Nov 5th. Home Park (6). Stanwell Moor, 52 on Aug 26th. Totteridge Valley, 40 on Jul 19th.
- Kent:** Sevenoaks WR, 40+ on Jun 27th.
- Surrey:** Ashted Common (4). Beddington Farmlands, 40 on Dec 6th. Brockwell Park (5). Canons Farm (4+).
- In Lond:** Battersea Park (1). Burgess Park (1). Fulham (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1). Regent’s Park, 25 on Dec 12th. Victoria Park (1).

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Status: scarce passage migrant and former breeding summer visitor.

As Wood Warbler numbers have been so low in recent years, we have now added it to the species assessed each year by our Rarities Committee. There were five accepted records: two in the spring and three in the autumn. Unusually, two of these birds were present for more than one day. The last time this happened was in 2015. Another two records appear in Appendix III for which descriptions would be very welcome.

- Essex:** Wanstead Flats, one from Aug 22nd-23rd (J Lethbridge *et al*).
- Middx:** Alexandra Park, one from Aug 24th-30th (many observers). Hampstead Heath, one on Aug 30th (P Mantle). Stanwell Moor, one on May 24th (KL Purdy *et al*).
- Surrey:** Kings Wood, one on Apr 26th (J Birkett, G Flinn).

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Status: scarce passage migrant.

There were four records this year, all just seen on single days: two in October and two in November. There were three records last year. As the table below shows, there was a large increase in records in 2016 but a general decline since then. Perhaps we are now moving back to the years before then when less than ten were reported each year.

Yellow-browed Warbler records 2014-2023: 111 records, 112 birds

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
No. of records	3	3	37*	15*	12	10	18*	6*	3	4
No. of birds	3	3	37*	16*	12	10	18*	6*	3	4

*plus over-wintering birds

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Status: scarce passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

There were reports from 18 sites this year (ten sites last year but 29 the year before). Breeding was probable at seven sites involving eight territories. This is better than last year when there were three sites and five territories but similar to 2021 when there were seven sites involving 14 territories.

The first arrivals were two at Swanscombe Marshes on April 9th (one day earlier than last year) but it was a week later before more appeared. The last of the year was at Dartford Marshes on September 13th.

Essex: Fairplay Farm, Upminster (2). Great Warley Hall, one singing on May 3rd. Mar Dyke Valley (1). Rainham Marshes (1), with second singing late April. Roding Valley Park, one singing on Apr 19th.

Grasshopper Warblers are red-listed Summer visitors. Records came from 17 sites with probable breeding at seven sites. This one was at Rainham Marshes in April. (Russ Sherriff)



Female Blackcap enjoying the blackberries in July at Harmondsworth Moor. (Joe Downing)

Herts: Radlett, one singing on Apr 17th & 18th. Rye Meads (1). St Albans, one on Apr 11th. Stanborough GP (1).

Middx: Trent Park, one on Aug 30th.

Kent: Crossness, one singing on Apr 23rd & 24th. Dartford Marshes, one on Sep 13th. Swanscombe Marshes (1).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one singing on Apr 22nd and one on Aug 25th. Hogsmill OS, one singing on Apr 22nd. Island Barn Res, one on Aug 27th. London Wetland Centre (1). Wandsworth Common, one on Apr 22nd.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Status: common summer breeding visitor and passage migrant, increasingly common and widespread in winter.

There were 268 birds reported at 178 sites in the period January to February, a larger number of birds than the 216 reported last year. This appears to be the largest number of birds reported since 2014 when we started to count them. The first report of a singing bird was on January 9th; this was earlier than last year but similar to the January 13th date in 2021.

There are 38 sites listed below where we have breeding evidence for this year and last year: 24 show a decrease, six showed no change and eight increased. This suggests a decrease in breeding numbers since last year. The BBS also shows a statistically significant decrease in London since last year.



There were not quite as many Dartford Warblers in London as last year, but the numbers were still historically high. This bird was at Rainham Marshes. (Russ Sherriff)

Surrey: Hutchinson's Bank (1+). Island Barn Res (1). Slyfield Farm, Fetcham (1+).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one singing on Apr 21st. Regent's Park, singles from Aug 7th-23rd, with two on 25th. Tate Modern, one on Apr 29th.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Status: common and widespread passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

The first of the year was at Mar Dyke Valley on March 29th but there were no more until April 7th at Ingrebourne Valley and Rainham Marshes. There were daily records from then on.

There are ten sites listed below where we have breeding records for this year and last year: one shows no change, six have decreased and three increased. This suggests a decrease since 2022. The BBS shows a decline of 14% in the South East from 2012-22.

There were birds at three sites in October: at Mar Dyke Valley and North Mymms Park on 3rd followed by one at Rainham Marshes on 6th. There was then one at Barking Bay Marsh on November 18th.

Below are breeding records for sites where ten or more pairs were recorded (no. of territories in brackets), some of the higher counts plus all Inner London records.

Essex: Childerditch (13+). Gunpowder Park (15). Mar Dyke Valley (10+). Orsett Fen (10+). Rainham Marshes (12); 35 on May 6th. Roding Valley Meadows NR (13+). Walthamstow Wetlands (11).

Herts: Ellenbrook Fields, 28 on May 10th. Rye Meads (14).

Middx: Home Park (10). Hounslow Heath (15+). Osterley Park, 34 on Aug 15th. Tottenham Marshes (27).

Kent: Swanscombe Marshes (11+); 23 on May 28th.

Surrey: Ashted Common (11). Beddington Farmlands (40). Bookham Common (15+). Molesey Heath (27). Priest Hill NR (10).

In Lond: Bermondsey, one on Apr 22nd. Burgess Park (1+). Camley Street Natural Park, one on Apr 26th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1). Inner Temple Gdns, one singing on May 9th. Regent's Park (2). Russia Dock Woodland, one on Apr 23rd. St Pancras, one on Apr 13th. Tate Modern, singles on Apr 26th & 27th and Aug 16th. Victoria Park, one on Aug 27th.

Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*

Status: rare breeding species, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. **RBBP**

It is difficult to estimate how many birds were present this year as very few of the records give any information about whether birds reported on different dates at a site are thought to be the same bird or different. More information about this would be very welcome. At the start of the year, there were probably nine birds over-wintering from 2022 at Rainham Marshes, Wanstead Flats, Bushy Park, Crossness, Beddington Farmlands (three birds here), London Wetland Centre and Richmond Park. Probable new birds in January were an extra one at Colnbrook and four at Bushy Park. In February there were additional birds at Rainham Marshes, Crossness and Swanscombe Marshes. In March, there were seven more birds at five sites.

From April to June, the only birds reported were three pairs breeding at Esher



Starling showing his iridescent feathers in Hyde Park. (Joe Downing)

Kent: Swanscombe Marshes, 800 on Dec 15th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 1,500 on Aug 1st, 3,000 on Aug 2nd, 1,000 on Aug 11th and 900 on Aug 26th. London Wetland Centre (3). Kingston-upon-Thames, 800 on Jan 1st.

In Lond: Bayswater (1). Bloomsbury (1). Burgess Park (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Status: regular passage migrant, but never common.

Spring passage began on March 26th, three days earlier than 2022, with a male at Beddington Farmlands. The final spring birds were seen on May 7th, with a single at Wanstead Flats and a female at Canons Farm. Over the spring passage, 38 birds were

reported, an increase on the 29 reported in 2022. The peak count was three at Totteridge Valley on April 17th.

Autumn passage began on September 24th, with a male at West Horndon. This was much later than the exceptionally early August 11th of 2022. The final bird was reported on November 18th with an individual at Cole Green Tip, a week earlier than the last bird in 2022. In addition, an overwintering male was reported at Caterham in December. Over the autumn passage, 22 birds were reported, a slight decline from the 25 reported in 2022. Two birds were reported at Hampstead Heath on October 19th, Staines Moor on October 29th, Beddington Farmlands on October 22nd, and Richmond Park on November 9th.

In Lond: Brompton Cemetery, one on Oct 20th. Holland Park, one on May 2nd and May 4th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Apr 22nd. Primrose Hill, one on Apr 19th. Regent's Park, one on Nov 17th. Wapping, one on Apr 23rd.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Status: abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

This year, the number of sites reporting at least five territories has decreased to 21 from 23 in 2022 and 48 in 2021. However, the total number of territories at sites with at least

Ring Ouzels are normally very nervous but this bird at Staines Moor was unusually approachable. (Joe Downing)



five territories has increased by 76 to 358. Additionally, of the 17 sites with territory counts from both last year and this year, ten sites showed increases and only five decreases.

The BBS shows no significant change in Blackbird populations over the last year in London, although there was a statistically significant 45% decline between 2017-22. Breeding records are given below at sites where five or more pairs were recorded (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), as well as year-round high sector counts.

Essex: Bonnetts Wood (11). Cely Woods (5). Mar Dyke Valley (15). North Ockendon (5).

Orsett Fen (9); 39 on Dec 3rd. Walthamstow Wetlands (14+). Warren Gorge (7).

Herts: Amwell NR, 30+ on Dec 10th. Rye Meads (20), 30 on Nov 25th.

Middx: Gunnersbury Park, 30 on May 18th. Home Park (30).

Bucks: Black Park, 11 on Jan 23rd. Landley Park, 11 on Mar 16th.

Blackbird. (Rudraksha Chodankar)



Fieldfare. (Phil Ayley)

Kent: Ladywell Fields (9). Sidcup, 31 on Mar 12th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (10). Ashted Common (33). Banstead Wood (45). Beddington Farmlands (19). Buckland, 58 on May 31st. Canons Farm (34). Esher Common (9). Kingston-upon-Thames (7). Littleworth Common (11). London Wetland Centre (14). Molesey Heath (18). Oxshott Heath (7). The Ledges, Esher (10). West End Common (16).

In Lond: Regent's Park, 23 on Dec 28th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Status: regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were 33 sites with counts of 100 or more birds during the year (25 in 2022), and 13 sites with counts of 200 or more birds (13 in 2022). The highest count during the first winter period was 300+ at Barnes Cray on March 4th. The last bird of the first winter period was an individual at Forest Hill on May 22nd, later than 2022 and 2021.

The first bird of the autumn period was an individual at Wanstead Flats on October 8th, later than in 2022 or 2021, whilst migration appeared to peak in November and persist into December. The highest count was at Rainham Marshes, where 623 individuals were recorded on November 6th, over double the peak autumn count of 2022.

Below are counts of 100 or more for each sector.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, 174 on Nov 6th. Chingford Plain, 100+ on Dec 15th. Fairplay Farm, Upminster, 221 on Dec 20th. Grays, 130 on Nov 7th. Little End, 150+ on Nov 4th. Orsett Fen, 180 on Dec 3rd. Rainham Marshes, 623 on Nov 6th. Wanstead Flats, 255 on Nov 11th. West Horndon, 127 on Feb 15th.



*It was a typical Spring for Whinchats in terms of numbers, however they arrived noticeably late this year. This one was photographed at Crossness.
(Rudraksha Chodankar)*

25th. The last bird of autumn was a female at Vicarage Farm on October 7th.

In Lond: Primrose Hill, one on May 8th. Regent's Park, singles on Apr 22nd, Aug 16th & 24th, Sep 5th & 16th.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

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

In January this species was less widespread than usual, recorded at only 31 sites. However, an influx in February saw them spread to 61 sites, with the citywide count climbing to 50 on February 24th.

Breeding was confirmed at Richmond Park with six pairs fledging at least 15 young (down from nine pairs in 2022). A pair also held territory at Rainham Marshes and birds were recorded throughout the breeding season at Wey Manor Meadows, though in both cases breeding success was not reported.

Autumn passage was modest this year, with birds recorded at just 89 sites from August to October (compared with 141 in 2022's bumper year). Migration peaked on October 15th with 65 birds recorded at 20 sites. Single site counts were correspondingly modest, with a maximum of 13 birds at Richmond Park on October 10th. Numbers by year end were typical, with birds recorded at 46 sites in December and a peak of 25 birds on the 8th.

Below are breeding records (no. of territories/pairs in brackets) and all Inner London records.

Essex: Rainham Marshes (1).

Surrey: Richmond Park (6), 15+ fledged young. Wey Manor Meadows (1).

In Lond: Burgess Park, singles on Feb 26th & 28th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, two on Oct 16th and one on Nov 6th. Primrose Hill, singles on Feb 13th and Mar 20th. Regent's Park, two on Mar 10th and singles on Mar 14th & 17th.

Stonechat. (Liam Harper)





Beautiful Spring photo of a Chaffinch sitting in crab apple blossoms. (Ann Playford)

At the nine sites where we have breeding surveys for both this year and last year, six showed a decrease, two an increase and one stayed the same. The increase at Walthamstow Wetlands from six to 17 pairs was particularly marked. The BBS shows a decrease of 80% in London from 2012-22 compared with a decrease of 47% in England for the same period.

Below are breeding records of three pairs or more (no. of territories in brackets) plus counts of 100 or more and records of ten or more for Inner London.

No. of birds	2023		2022		2021	
	Counts	Sites	Counts	Sites	Counts	Sites
100+	12	10	48	23	58	26
200+	0	0	19	7	24	14
300+	1	1	7	3	7	5

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (6). Bonnetts Wood (3). Cely Woods (5). Fairplay Farm (5). Galley Hill Farm, Waltham Abbey, 180 on Dec 13th. Holyfield Hall Farm, 100 on Nov 16th. Manor Farm, Upminster (5). Mar Dyke Valley (4). North Ockendon (7). Orsett Fen (5). Rainham Marshes, 900+ flew W on Oct 14th. Walthamstow Wetlands (17). Warren Gorge (4). West Horndon (5).

Herts: Brookmans Park, 100 on Dec 30th. Ridge, 100 on Jan 5th and Feb 4th. Rye Meads (2). White Heath Farm, Harefield, 119 on Mar 5th.

Middx: Hampstead Heath (3); 117 on Oct 22nd. Home Park (9). Stanwell Moor, 135 on Oct 22nd. Totteridge Valley, 187 flew W on Oct 15th and 179 flew W on 17th. Trent Park (2).

Surrey: Arbrook Common (3). Banstead Wood (7). Brockwell Park (4). Canons Farm (11); 100 on Mar 4th & 16th. Downsides (6). Epsom Downs, 196 flew S on Oct 15th. Home Park (9). London Wetland Centre (5). Oxshott Heath (4).

In Lond: Reported from 37 sites (27 in 2022). Primrose Hill, 73 on Apr 3rd, ten on Feb 24th, 19 on Mar 17th and 12 on 23rd. Regent's Park, ten on Nov 25th.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Status: regular autumn migrant and winter visitor, sometimes in large numbers.

After the exceptional counts in 2022 with 63 counts of ten or more birds from 23 sites, there was a decrease in sightings with only three counts of ten or more birds from three sites. This was also lower than 2021 (40 counts from 18 sites) but higher than the single count of ten or more birds in 2020. The last bird of spring was on April 21st at Victoria Park (May 5th in 2022 and April 4th in 2021). The first of the autumn was on October 8th at Fairlop Waters (September 1st 2022 and October 7th 2021).

Below are all counts of three or more birds and all records for Inner London.

Essex: Orsett Fen, three on Feb 26th.

Herts: Brookmans Park, three on Dec 30th. Broxbourne Woods, ten on Nov 10th. Ridge, three on Jan 30th.

Middx: Hampstead Heath, four on Oct 26th. Totteridge, seven on Oct 11th, six on 15th and three on 17th.

Surrey: Brockwell Park, five on Nov 12th. Buckland SP, three on Jan 22nd and 17 on Nov 30th. Putney, 19 on Oct 9th. Richmond Park, five on Oct 15th. Woldingham, three on Nov 17th.

In Lond: Cremorne Gdns, one on Oct 15th. Victoria Park, one on Apr 21st.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Status: very scarce breeding resident; occasional passage migrant. **RBBP**

This year, there were 21 records from 18 sites, a decrease from the 31 from 19 sites in 2022 and 35 from 27 sites in 2021. However, there were three large flocks counted in March in Surrey: 70 at Juniper Top, 40 at Mickleham and 36 at Headley Heath compared with no large flocks in 2022 and 2021. These three sites are adjacent so the birds may have been moving between them. There were fewer sightings in the first winter period albeit the three large flocks were in March with some during the summer months but no evidence of breeding. The table below shows the monthly summary followed by all records.

Hawfinch records

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	-	1	4	1	2	1	1	1	-	5	5	2
No. of records	-	1	5	1	2	1	1	1	-	5	5	2

Essex: Cely Woods, one on Oct 16th. Harold Wood, one on Nov 21st. Ongar Park Wood, four on May 8th. Pages Wood, one on Oct 14th and one on Dec 21st. Woodford Green, one E on Nov 25th. Woodredon Estate, one on Oct 9th.

Herts: Chorleywood, one on garden feeder on Apr 20th. Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross, one over on Nov 15th. Wormley West End, singles on Feb 11th and Dec 3rd.



Reed Bunting in flight amongst the Phragmites australis at Walthamstow Wetlands. (Liam Harper)

Surrey: Reported from 31 sites, 35+ pairs. Beddington Farmlands (3). Brockwell Park, singles on Mar 11th and Sep 14th. Buckland SP (2+). Downside (1). Esher Common (1). Fetcham Mill Pond (1). Hogsmill SW (1). London Wetland Centre (8); peak of 12 on Feb 1st. Richmond Park (12+); 11 on Aug 4th. Slyfield Farm, Fetcham (1). Tulse Hill, one over on Sep 10th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (4). Wey Manor Meadows (1).

In Lond: Reported from three sites. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Feb 22nd and singing male on Apr 10th. Mile End Park, female at Ecology Pavilion reedbed on Feb 17th. Regent's Park, up to two on 11 dates from Jan 18th to Oct 10th with single male and female present during the breeding season.

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 such as at St James's Park and Regent's Park.

Black-bellied Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis*

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, four on Oct 12th and five on Oct 20th.

Fulvous Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor*

Essex: Rainham Marshes, two on Apr 22nd and one on Jul 29th.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, three on Oct 12th & 14th.

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

Kent: Welling, present on Mar 25th.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on Nov 1st. Richmond, one on Jul 15th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on May 11th, 18th & 20th and one on Jun 22nd.

Emperor Goose *Anser canagicus*

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, one on Nov 5th.

Swan Goose *Anser cygnoides*

Middx: Boxer's Lake, Enfield, singles on Apr 13th & 15th and Sep 17th.

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Nov 6th.

Herts: Seventy Acres Lake, one on Jan 15th.

Middx: Home Park, one on Aug 28th, Sep 7th, Oct 11th & 15th. Shepperton, one on Jan 2nd. Staines Res, present on Nov 20th.

Kent: Bexleyheath, present on Jan 18th and one on Feb 21st. Danson Park, one on 31 dates from Jan 18th to Nov 1st. Sevenoaks WR, two on Sep 25th. Welling, one on Mar 4th and May 13th.

Surrey: Chertsey Meads, one on Jul 20th. Desborough Island, one on Jan 1st & 21st. Hogsmill OS, one on Jul 15th. Weybridge, one on Feb 25th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on 39 dates from Jan 4th to Dec 9th and two on Aug 16th.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Aug 4th.

Middx: Hatton, two on Feb 16th. Home Park, one on Apr 18th and May 17th. Kempton NR, two on Apr 16th and Dec 14th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Jun 17th, 29th-30th, Jul 1st, 18th, 22nd & 25th-26th and one on Sep 13th.

Kent: Crossness, two on Jun 23rd, one on Jun 27th, 28th & 30th and Aug 1st. Sevenoaks WR, one on Dec 9th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Mar 16th.

FIRST AND LAST DATES OF REGULAR MIGRANTS

Summer Migrants	Arrival	Departure
Garganey	18 Mar Rainham Marshes	18 Oct Walthamstow Wetlands
Osprey	19 Mar Rainham Marshes	23 Sep Hooks Marsh Lake
Little Ringed Plover	9 Mar London Wetland Centre	9 Sep Rainham Marshes
Whimbrel	9 Apr QE II Res	21 Sep Rainham Marshes
Sandwich Tern	10 Apr Amwell NR/Rye Meads	17 Sep Rainham Marshes
Little Tern	25 Apr KGV Res	18 Aug Staines Res
Common Tern	28 Mar Staines Res	4 Nov Rainham Marshes
Arctic Tern	1 Apr Broadwater Lake	10 Nov KGV Res
Black Tern	19 May Staines Res	2 Oct Island Barn Res
Turtle Dove	23 Apr London Wetland Centre	7 Sep Goffs Oak
Cuckoo	8 Apr Beddington Farmlands	11 Oct Bromley
Swift	16 Apr London Wetland Centre	26 Sep Hampstead Heath
Hobby	23 Mar Kelvedon Hatch	23 Oct Stanborough GP
Sand Martin	10 Mar London Wetland Centre/ Wraysbury GP	3 Oct Brook Farm, Upminster
Swallow	13 Mar Wanstead Park	4 Nov Rainham Marshes
House Martin	20 Mar London Wetland Centre	14 Oct Rainham Marshes
Wood Warbler	26 Apr Kings Wood	30 Aug Alexandra Park/Hampstead Heath
Willow Warbler	15 Mar Sevenoaks WR	18 Oct London Wetland Centre
Sedge Warbler	30 Mar Walthamstow Wetlands	22 Oct Stanborough Park
Reed Warbler	4 Apr London Wetland Centre	7 Oct Rye Meads
Grasshopper Warbler	9 Apr Swanscombe Marshes	13 Sep Dartford Marshes
Garden Warbler	9 Apr Rose Walk OS	1 Oct Orsett Fen/Rainham Marshes
Lesser Whitethroat ^W	10 Apr Stanborough GP	12 Oct Belhus Woods CP
Whitethroat	29 Mar Mar Dyke Valley	18 Nov Barking Bay/Marsh
Ring Ouzel ^W	26 Mar Beddington Farmlands	18 Nov Cole Green Tip
Spotted Flycatcher	1 May Elthorne Park, West Ealing	14 Oct Enfield Playing Fields
Nightingale	4 Apr Fishers Green Island	14 Aug Long Ditton
Pied Flycatcher	15 Apr Alexandra Park	29 Sep Wanstead Flats
Redstart	31 Mar Dagenham Chase	22 Sep Hampstead Heath/Vicarage Farm
Whinchat	22 Apr Ten sites	7 Oct Vicarage Farm
Wheatear	14 Mar Four sites	30 Oct Stanborough GP
Yellow Wagtail	13 Mar Brook Farm, Upminster	19 Oct Q. Mother Res
Tree Pipit	9 Apr Staines Moor	26 Sep Hampstead Heath
Winter Migrants	Departure	Arrival
Smew	9 Apr KGV Res	3 Dec Amwell NR
Goosander	30 May Troy Mill Lakes	28 Sep KGV Res
Bittern	11 Mar London Wetland Centre	24 Jun London Wetland Centre
Jack Snipe	30 Apr Rye Meads	24 Sep London Wetland Centre
Fieldfare	22 May Forest Hill	8 Oct Wanstead Flats
Redwing	22 May Forest Hill	22 Sep Beddington Farmlands
Water Pipit	11 Apr Rainham Marshes	14 Oct Staines Moor
Rock Pipit	4 Apr Stanborough GP	16 Sep Rainham Marshes
Brambling	21 Apr Victoria Park	8 Oct Fairlop Waters

W = excludes wintering birds

PAPERS ABOUT BIRDS IN THE LONDON AREA



Ringling Report by *Daniel Whitelegg* 209

Bird-ringing: A Ringling Report Supplement by *Mike Trier* 216

The Breeding Bird Survey in London, 2023 by *Ben Hillier*
& *Richard Arnold* 217

The Breeding Birds of Wanstead Park by *Tim Harris* 221

100 Years of Hampstead Heath Birds: A Summary
by *Pete Mantle* 231

Compiling the London Bird Report by *Mike Trier* 236

Foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls by *Alan Gibson*

Data on foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls, observed by Alan Gibson in four Inner London parks and three parks in Middlesex, now include records from 2023.

These are part of the composite datafile of his records, which are arranged on worksheets in date order, in order of metal and plastic ring markings, and in order of the metal rings in each of the 15 foreign countries in which the gulls were originally ringed (Croatia being added to the list in 2023).

The 2013-2023 file can be downloaded from the LNHS website:

<http://www.lnhs.org.uk> > Publications> London Bird Report> London Bird Report additional materials> 'Foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls 2023'

Previous page: Grey Wagtail. (*Ann Playford*)

RINGING REPORT

DANIEL WHITELEGG



Adult male Shelduck from St James Park (Bill Haines) and 1st-winter male Penduline Tit from Rye Meads (Kathryn Dunnet) were both new additions to the London ringing list in 2023.

In London, bird ringing is undertaken by various of groups, partnerships and individuals that collectively cover a wide range of sites throughout the capital. Full details of ringing in 2023 can be found on the BTO website at: <https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/ringing/publications/online-ringing-reports>.

Numbers of ringed birds per year varies for many species and is due to a range of factors such as ringer effort and coverage or weather conditions. Such factors can have a marked effect on catching success and final totals for any year. These variable reasons mean that any changes in species figures in this type of report are more often not a reflection on population levels but on ringer activity. A much better reflection of population levels can be ascertained through Constant Effort Sites (CES), and there are a number running in the London area. Their 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>.

Table 1 gives totals for each species, and annual totals are also given for the previous two years to enable comparison.

2023 Pullus	2023 Full Grown	2023 Total	Species	2022 Total	2021 Total
0	0	0	Common Redpoll*	0	1
0	137	137	Lesser Redpoll*	20	174
5	573	578	Goldfinch	529	725
0	3	3	Siskin	37	92
0	19	19	Yellowhammer	26	11
0	1	1	Little Bunting	0	0
9	161	170	Reed Bunting	132	137
3,636	17,951	21,587	Total	20,354	19,857

*Taken from the National Ringing Database, which offers three selection options: Common, Lesser or Redpoll sp.

One of the main reasons for ringing birds is to create recoveries of one type or another. Recoveries can be from dead birds, from other ringers catching birds from elsewhere or from field sightings of colour-marked birds, which are easily identifiable. Such recoveries provide some excellent life histories of individual birds. There are now many internet sources of recovered birds; the main one showing all the London Recoveries can be found on the BTO website at: <https://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/results2023/ringGBLO2023.htm>.

For the purpose of this report, highlights of such records are illustrated here:

Little Grebe. Ringed as a juvenile in September 2015, this bird was recaptured at Rye Meads an amazing eight years and three months later. This now stands as the oldest known Little Grebe in the UK.



Avocet. A nestling from Lancashire in 2021, who having wintered in Brittany, France, was seen on spring migration at WWT Barnes in March 2023 before returning to breed at its natal site in April. It also spent some months around The Wash during its first year in 2022.

Barn Owl. A chick born at a rural site 5km SE of Sevenoaks in 2020 was recaptured at a breeding site near Epsom in 2023, 37km away. This is more than three times the average dispersal distance for this species.

Common Tern. Colour-ringed chicks from Bedfont Lakes in 2014 and 2020 were observed breeding in both Northamptonshire and S of Rotterdam, The Netherlands. This highlights the value of colour ringing,

Juvenile Spotted Flycatcher ringed at Walthamstow Wetlands in September; surprisingly the sole ringing record in 2023. (Sam O' Donnell)

especially for species like terns, which are much photographed. Readers can submit colour ring sightings at: <https://cr-birding.org>.

Redwing. A first-year bird in breeding condition, ringed at Wraysbury in July, was most unexpected for what is an exclusive winter migrant to London.

Pied Flycatcher. The majority of first-year Pied Flycatchers encountered in the SE during autumn are of Scandinavian origin. A juvenile born NE of Lancaster and recaptured at Swanscombe Marshes in late August however shows that this is not always the case.

Ringers in London are encouraged to write up short projects or notes on ringing activity for inclusion in this report and to send in photographs of interesting birds caught. Photographers are also invited to send in pictures of birds with colour or metal rings, along with any details of these birds that may be of interest. Material can be sent to danielwhitelegg@gmail.com.

References

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Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Bill Haines, Kathryn Dunnet and Sam O'Donnell for contributing photos for this publication. Gratitude is also extended to the various ringers and groups who provided notable information for inclusion in this report.

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Releasing a ringed Robin. (Paul Roper).

A supplement to the Ringing Report, 'Bird-Ringing' - with photos by Paul Roper and Daniel Whitelegg - is overleaf.



BIRD-RINGING: A RINGING REPORT SUPPLEMENT

MIKE TRIER

The photos illustrate the procedure for ringing a bird and logging the details of ringed birds. Details recorded include ring number, species, age (and sex), wing length, weight, date recorded, and ringer’s initials. Photos by Paul Roper and Daniel Whitelegg.



1. Many birds are trapped using a fine mist net. (PR)



2. The correct size of ring is fitted to the leg of the bird. (DW)



3. The colour of the inside of a Robin’s upper mandible is an indication of age. (PR)



4. Wing length in some species can determine the sex of a bird. (PR)



5. Birds are examined for moult and feather condition. (DW)



6. Birds are weighed to record body condition and health. (DW)

THE BREEDING BIRD SURVEY IN LONDON, 2023

BEN HILLIER & RICHARD ARNOLD

The *BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey* (BBS) is a long-running national monitoring programme for breeding birds in the UK and is coordinated by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). Volunteers survey randomly selected 1km squares in each county twice every year, once in spring and once in early summer, recording birds along predetermined transects. From this data, trends in breeding bird populations are calculated at the national level and at the regional level for England. A summary of the results is provided each year in an annual report (Heywood, *et al.*, 2024). Details about the survey can be found on the BTO website (BTO, 2023), and the reports can be downloaded for every year from 1994 onwards. Greater London is one of the English regions for which trends are reported – a summary of these results for most years has been provided in the London Bird Report (Coleman, n.d.; Woodward, n.d.; Arnold & Hillier, 2024, Arnold & Schalz, 2023).

During the six years before the pandemic, the average number of 1km squares surveyed in Greater London was 101; this fell to 37 in 2020 at the height of the COVID pandemic and has since recovered but not quite to pre-pandemic levels (Table 1). These numbers may differ slightly from earlier articles due to revisions of submitted data.

Table 1. Number of squares surveyed in Greater London over the last ten years.

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
107	106	103	106	96	88	37	81	87	98

Data from *BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey*.

Greater London is the smallest of the regions in England for which trends are reported. It therefore has relatively few 1km squares included in the survey, making trends in bird populations more difficult to elucidate. For trends to be published for a species, that species must have been recorded in a minimum number of squares per year over the survey period being reported.

Trends were possible to determine for 33 species. Of these, Feral Pigeon, Stock Dove, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Ring-necked Parakeet, Chiffchaff and House Sparrow showed significant increases over a five-year period starting from 2017; while Swift, Grey Heron, Green Woodpecker, Long-tailed Tit, Starling, Song Thrush, Mistle Thrush, Blackbird, Dunnock, Chaffinch and Greenfinch showed significant decreases. Chiffchaff has joined the list of species increasing significantly, whilst Swift and Song Thrush have joined the list of species declining significantly. Details are provided in Table 2. Importantly, the percent change should not be interpreted as a precise measure, as there is varying uncertainty depending on the sample size - details of this can be found in the annual BBS report (Heywood, *et al.*, 2024).

all records from all squares surveyed) were, by most numerous first: Feral Pigeon, Woodpigeon, House Sparrow, Carrion Crow, Ring-necked Parakeet and Starling. Eleven species were recorded just once in the 2023 BBS: Red-legged Partridge, Lapwing, Great Black-backed Gull, Little Owl, Kingfisher, Cetti's Warbler, Garden Warbler, Firecrest, Stonechat, Wheatear and Meadow Pipit. Other species that are generally infrequently recorded in BBS squares in Greater London (25 or fewer total squares since 1994) but were recorded in 2023 include Raven, Gadwall and Redwing.

The summary data from the BBS for Greater London is freely available on the BTO website, and trend graphs can be downloaded for all the species for which trends are available. Participation in a premium survey like the BBS is a rewarding experience for all birders across the range of experience and skill; if you are interested and can spare just two early morning site visits per year then please contact your regional representative via the BTO website.

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Richard Arnold¹ and Ben Hillier². BTO, The Nunnery, Thetford, IP24 2PU.
BBS information: www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/bbs

¹BTO regional Representative for South London.

²BTO regional Representative for North London.

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THE BREEDING BIRDS OF WANSTEAD PARK

TIM HARRIS

Introduction

Wanstead Park comprises a mosaic of habitats at the southern apex of Epping Forest. Bordered by the River Roding, Wanstead Golf Course, the City of London Cemetery, the north-west extremity of Wanstead Flats and the suburban avenues of the Aldersbrook and Lakehouse estates, it is entirely on the footprint of the grounds of Palladian Wanstead House. The house itself was demolished in 1824, but its ornamental parkland and water bodies have survived, albeit in a much wilder state than they once were. The park and two adjacent areas - Bush Wood (to the west) and the old sewage works site to

Bush Wood, at the western end of the park, has mature deciduous trees and much standing dead wood, ideal for nesting Stock Doves and Great Spotted Woodpeckers. (Tim Harris)



breeding bird survey of the park in 2015. About 15 observers volunteered, all of whom were familiar with the birds under consideration and - most importantly - their songs.

Only those 30 species whose territories could easily be identified were selected for survey work in the park (Table 1). A simultaneous survey of Wanstead Flats additionally enumerated Skylark and Meadow Pipits (neither of which were present in the park).

This report deals only with Wanstead Park, which was divided up into habitat-based blocks, with one or more observers allocated to each sector. The species selected were those whose singing (or drumming in the case of Great Spotted Woodpecker) males defend territories in spring. Species deemed to be problematic to survey at the time - including Ring-necked Parakeet, Starling, and Blue and Long-tailed Tits - were omitted. Water birds and corvids were also omitted. Each observer worked a route that covered all parts of their sector and mapped the territory centre of each of the individuals under study. Typically, four to six early morning visits were made to ensure that no part of the sector was missed, and to remove duplication. The study time was long - from 16 March to 17 May - to ensure that early-season singers, such as Dunnock, were adequately censused, as well as migrants only arriving on territory in April. To arrive at accurate territory numbers, song 'spikes' were filtered out for Blackcap and Chiffchaff, which arrive in waves and sing in suitable habitat, usually with a proportion of the singers quickly moving on.

As far as was practically possible, the exercise was repeated in 2023, with a similar number of sectors and observers over the same period of spring. Although there were 14 surveyors, due to other commitments some sectors did not receive quite as good coverage in 2023 as in 2015. Three additional species were added: Tawny Owl, because

Table 1: Wanstead Park breeding bird survey.

Species	2015	2023	Species	2015	2023
Stock Dove	16	26	Lesser Whitethroat	2	1
Collared Dove	0	0	Whitethroat	7	5
Tawny Owl	n/s	2	Firecrest	0	0
Great Spotted Woodpecker	12	17	Goldcrest	4	1
Green Woodpecker	13	9	Wren	162	136
Jay	n/s	7	Nuthatch	0	5
Coal Tit	4	1	Treecreeper	0	0
Great Tit	107	108	Blackbird	51	41
Cetti's Warbler	0	2	Song Thrush	27	29
Long-tailed Tit	n/s	9	Mistle Thrush	3	0
Willow Warbler	0	0	Robin	145	120
Chiffchaff	40	41	Dunnock	29	22
Reed Warbler	0	2	Chaffinch	9	1
Blackcap	64	67	Greenfinch	7	2
Garden Warbler	0	0	Goldfinch	2	1
Total				704	655



Opposite: Lesser Spotted Woodpecker last bred in the park in 2010, though a male was on territory for three weeks in 2022. (Jonathan Lethbridge)

Warblers. Some declined or disappeared as breeding species, however. These declines seem to be broadly in line with London BBS figures over this time and reflect macro-scale declines in the region (Mistle Thrush and Willow Warbler, for example), local habitat change (possibly Green Woodpecker), disease (Blackbird and Greenfinch) or a combination of the above. If the survey is conducted again, an even larger team of observers needs to be recruited to ensure coverage is as complete as possible.

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SELF, A., 2014. *The Birds of London*. London Natural History Society & Bloomsbury Publishing UK.

Useful links

<http://wansteadbirding.blogspot.com>

<https://wansteadwildlife.org.uk>

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100 YEARS OF HAMPSTEAD HEATH BIRDS A SUMMARY

PETE MANTLE

The complete text of Pete Mantle's paper will be published in *The London Naturalist* No.104 for 2025, as part of the report on the Hampstead Heath Survey. Here we have produced the species list only, with status where given.

1922 - 2022 Complete Systematic List - 185 species

Brent Goose: Vagrant.

Canada Goose: Occasional visitor.

Greylag Goose: Occasional visitor.

White-fronted Goose: Vagrant.

Mute Swan: Breeding resident.

Bewick's Swan: Vagrant.

Egyptian Goose: Regular visitor and annual breeder.

Shelduck: Vagrant.

Mandarin Duck: Regular visitor and annual breeder.

Garganey: Vagrant.

Shoveler: Annual visitor - mostly autumn/spring.

Gadwall: Annual visitor, declining.

Wigeon: Scarce visitor, autumn/winter.

Mallard: Breeding resident and winter immigrant.

Pintail: Vagrant.

Teal: Regular visitor in small numbers, declining.

Red-Crested Pochard: Vagrant.

Pochard: Scarce winter visitor, fast declining.

Tufted Duck: Breeding resident and winter migrant.

Goldeneye: Very scarce visitor.

Smew: Vagrant.

Goosander: Scarce winter visitor.

Ruddy Duck: Vagrant.

Red-legged Partridge: Vagrant.

Grey Partridge: Vagrant.

Pheasant: Very scarce visitor. Has bred.

Red throated Diver: Vagrant.

Little Grebe: Annual breeder, regular visitor.

Great Crested Grebe: Annual breeder.

White Stork: Vagrant.

Bittern: Vagrant.

Little Bittern: Vagrant.

Grey Heron: Regular visitor.

Great White Egret: Vagrant.

COMPILING THE LONDON BIRD REPORT

MIKE TRIER

Abstract

Having had access to surplus copies of the London Bird Report from our printers, for the purpose of generating publicity for the LNHS, the author has become aware that members of the public question why the Report is published some 16 months after the recording year. This account of how it is produced attempts to explain that.

Introduction

The production of the London Bird Report (LBR) depends on a combination of sequential activities, which determine the completion date, and concurrent activities; the latter includes the monthly collection of data from websites during the recording year.

The dates of the following sequences are based on the production of LBR No.87 2022, which was delivered to LNHS members in May 2024. Two schematic charts are opposite.

Sequential Processes

	DATES TO
Birds of the London Area 2022 (recording year).....	31 Dec 2022
Filter and check data, deadline for 2023 records	31 Mar 2023
Data from Recorders to Data Manager	30 Apr 2023
Update bird database, update gazetteer	31 May 2023
Send list of rarities to Rarities Committee	01 Aug 2023
Allocation of data into 'parcels' for each author	30 Sep 2023
Write species accounts (Authors), identify rarities	24 Oct 2023
Edit species accounts (Section Editors)	31 Dec 2023
Compile Birds of London text first draft and circulate for checking.....	31 Jan 2024
Take in comments and prepare second draft (Senior Editors)	26 Mar 2024
Proof-read second draft	03 Apr 2024
Integrate corrections and comments for final Birds of London text	04 Apr 2024
Process final Birds of London text for Designer	05 Apr 2024
Design and check page layouts [see: Papers - Check layouts (opposite)] .	23 Apr 2024

Other sections

Compile indexes and update contents pages	23 Apr 2024
Check page cross-references	23 Apr 2024
Update inside front cover credits	23 Apr 2024

Printing

Final layouts to print	24 Apr 2024
Check printers' proofs	26 Apr 2024
Commission print and quantity	07 May 2024
Printing completed	15 May 2024

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2023	C,S	C,S	C,S	C,S	C,S	S	S	S	S	W	W	W
2024	E	E	A,E	R,L	P							

Above: Chart of sequential processes for producing the London Bird Report for 2022, which determine the completion date. Below: Approximate timing of concurrent processes.

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2022	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
2023	U	U	U	W	W	W	L	W,E	W,E	W,E	E,R	I
2024	I,W	L	R	L	U,I							

Key	Data	Text	Papers	Photos	Design	Print
	A = Authentication, C = Collecting data, E = Editing text, I = Image selection and captions, L = Layout design, P = Proofs and printing, R = Proof-reading, S = Sorting data, U = Updating sections, W = Writing text.					

Concurrent Processes

Data

Scrape data monthly from birding websites during the recording year

Photos/Images

Request images from photographers
Await and chase receipt of photos
Photo selection
Write captions
Check captions
Photos and captions to Designer

Covers

Select front and rear images
Design cover layouts
Update inside covers text

Papers

Commission papers
Assess total page length
Edit papers
Papers checked by authors
Incorporate corrections
Proof-read papers

Papers (continued)

Allocate photos
Design page layouts
Check layouts (the length of the Papers section determines the space available for photos in the Birds of London section)

Editorial - Front matter

Update text and page layouts
Write Review of the Year
Update Review of the Year
Produce and design Mini-Gazetteer of Sites
Compile List of Observers
Design Review of the Year page layouts
Write Introduction
Proof-read front matter

Editorial - End matter

Appendices and first-and-last-dates layouts
Update Checklist and Guide
Update pages 255 and 256

Website

Add new material during printing

Conclusions

As can be seen from the chart of sequential processes, the major component is the data processing: about one million records were received, checked and processed for the 2022 Report, plus the names of more than 3,500 people who contributed these records.

Second to this is writing and editing the text of the Birds of London section, which contains almost 60,000 words.

Finally, although not part of the sequential processes, the length and timing of the Papers section affects the number of pages available for the Birds of London; and the design of the Birds of London section cannot commence until the Papers section has been designed.

The Editorial Board is always looking at ways in which the time can be reduced and is recruiting further editors to streamline the process. And although a move to an electronic version of the Report is being considered, the sequential processes above are unlikely to be affected.

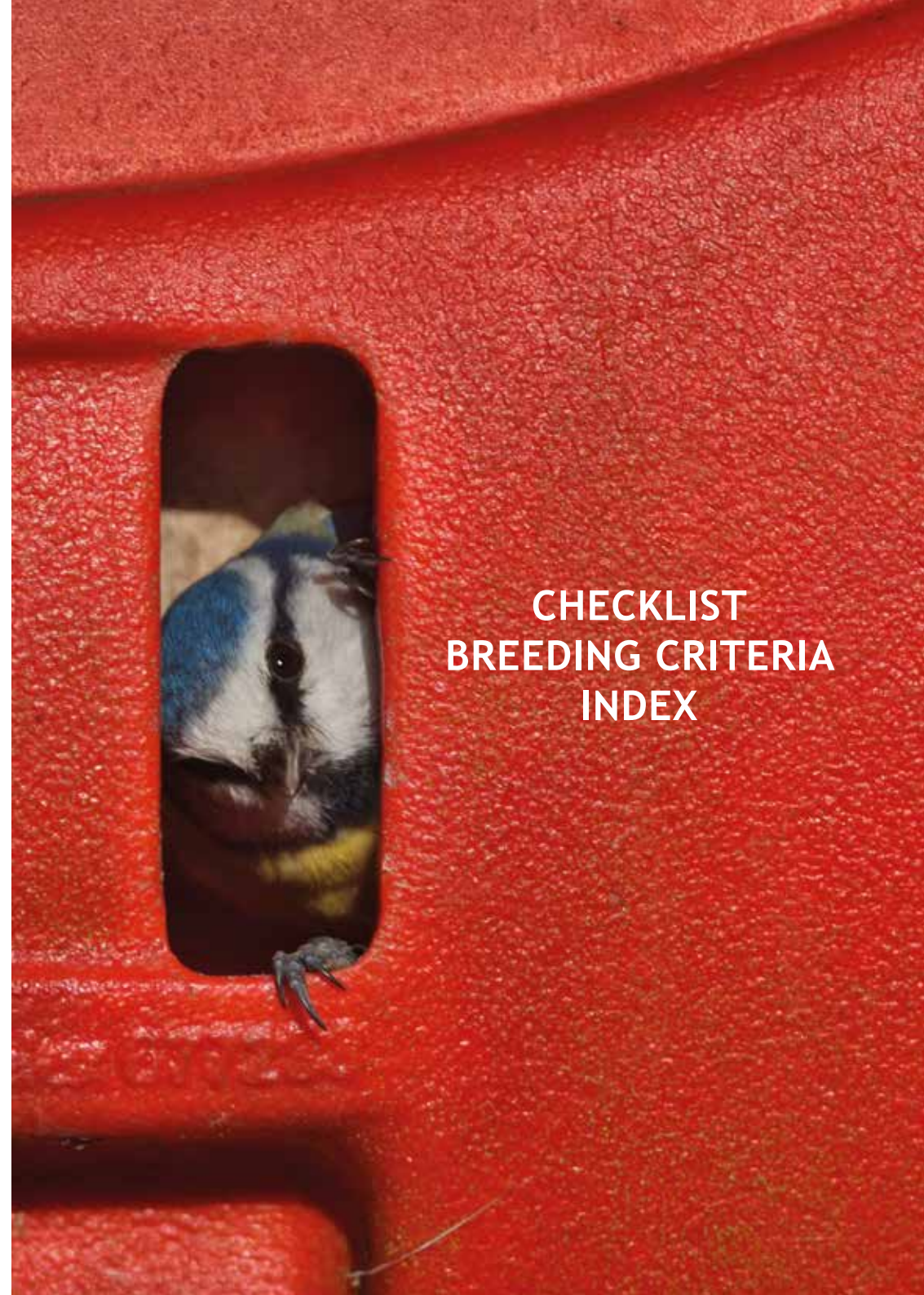
Acknowledgements

Thanks to Pete Lambert for his considerable help in compiling this data.

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Opposite: Blue Tit. (Liam Harper)



CHECKLIST OF BIRDS OF THE LONDON AREA AND GUIDE TO CONTRIBUTORS OF RECORDS

We have made some changes to our Checklist of Birds of the London Area this year. Because of the increase in records, Spoonbill and Cattle Egret have been removed from our rarities list. Broad-billed Sandpiper has been deleted from the checklist, following a review by the BBRC of the sole London record in 1958. Because of a decrease in records, Wood Warbler and Common Redpoll (sometimes called Mealy Redpoll) have been added to our rarities list. We are aware that the BBRC is now treating Subalpine Warbler as three separate species. There have only been four records in London and it seems that it is not possible to allocate any of these four records to one of the three new species. We will therefore be referring to these records as Western Subalpine Warbler/Moltoni's Warbler/Eastern Subalpine Warbler.

The total number of species recorded in an apparently wild state in the London Area in historic times is 373, with the deletion this year of Broad-billed Sandpiper. Of these, the 12 species marked with an * in the checklist were recorded at least once prior to 1900 but have not been recorded in an apparently wild state since. The Checklist follows the order of the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU) List, 9th edition, February 2019 and its nomenclature (apart from Feral Pigeon).

All records of ornithological interest, from LNHS members and non-members alike, are welcomed by the London Bird Club. However, with an ever-growing number of active birdwatchers in the London Area, it seems sensible to issue a guide to our requirements.

This guide is not intended to be comprehensive, and contributors are asked to use their own guidance and common sense, but it does serve as a reference point for the type of records required. For example, with many common breeding species, comparative yearly breeding counts are especially welcomed. The Rarities Committee needs details of any rarities (denoted by R), and also reserves the right to request full details for any record, eg, out-of-season migrants. This guide does not apply to Inner London, where all records are required, but similar criteria regarding descriptions should be followed.

Please note: 'Lower Thames' is defined as the section of the R Thames from the Thames Barrier to the eastern edge of our recording area.

Key to records required:	N	= brief notes required (how identified, view, distance, etc); form available on LNHS website (see Details of an Unusual Bird on page 3).
A	=	all records.
B	=	all breeding records.
BBRC	=	full description required; form from www.bbrc.org.uk. <i>British Birds</i> Rarities Committee makes the decision.
D	=	full description required; form available on LNHS website (see Details of an Unusual Bird on page 3).
F&L	=	first and last dates for any site.
MM	=	dated monthly maximum counts.
	NR	= all records from sites where bird not seen regularly.
	P	= passage movements.
	S	= all records mid-May to mid-July.
	ST	= annual statement of status at a site.
	T	= all territory counts.
	W	= records outside breeding season.

Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	A
Red-breasted Goose*	<i>Branta ruficollis</i>	R BBRC
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	MM, B, ST
Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	R A, N
Snow Goose	<i>Anser caerulescens</i>	R A, D (unless obvious escape)
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	R A, D
Tundra Bean Goose	<i>Anser serrirostris</i>	R A, D
White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	A
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Bewick's Swan	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>	R A, N
Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	R A, N
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>	A
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	MM, NR, B, S
Mandarin Duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>	A
Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>	A
Blue-winged Teal	<i>Spatula discors</i>	R BBRC
Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	MM, NR, B, S
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	MM, NR, B, S
Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	A
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	MM, B, ST
Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	A
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	MM, NR, B, S
Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas carolinensis</i>	R A, D
Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>	A
Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	R BBRC
Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	R A, D
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	A
Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	R A, D
King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>	R BBRC
Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	R A, N
Velvet Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>	R A, D
Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	A
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	R A, N
Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	A
Smew	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>	A
Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	A
Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	A
Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	A, B, ST
Black Grouse*	<i>Lyrurus tetrix</i>	R A, D
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	A
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	A
Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	A

BREEDING CRITERIA

When sending in breeding records, please enter: 'possible breeding', 'probable breeding' or 'confirmed breeding' in the Notes section on the electronic records form according to the definitions below. Additional information should also be given, such as number of territories, broods, nests, young fledged, etc.

Possible breeding

- Species observed in breeding season in suitable nesting habitat
- Singing male present (or breeding calls heard) in breeding season in suitable habitat

Probable breeding

- Pair observed in suitable nesting habitat in breeding season
- Permanent territory presumed on at least two different days, a week or more apart
- Courtship and display (judged to be in or near potential breeding habitat)
- Visiting probable nest-site
- Agitated behaviour or anxiety calls from adults, suggesting nest or young near by
- Brood patch on adult examined in the hand, suggesting incubation
- Nest-building or excavating nest-hole

Confirmed breeding

- Distraction-display or injury-feigning
- Used nest or eggshells found (occupied or laid within period of survey)
- Recently-fledged young (for warblers and other birds whose young are fed at the nest for some time after hatching, 'nidicolous species') or downy young (for ducks and other birds where the young leave the nest soon after hatching, 'nidifugous species')
- Adults entering or leaving nest-site in circumstances indicating occupied nest
- Adult carrying faecal sac or food for young
- Nest containing eggs
- Nest with young seen or heard

The above breeding categories are as used in the BTO Atlas project.



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