

LONDON BIRD REPORT 2024

LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



LONDON BIRD REPORT

NO.89 FOR THE YEAR 2024

PRODUCED BY THE LBR EDITORIAL BOARD:

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Front cover: The Black-necked Grebe was seen for the first time at Walthamstow Wetlands. (Chris Farthing)
Back cover: These Waxwings were photographed in Tufnell Park. The irruption that began in November 2023 continued into early 2024. (Sam O'Donnell)
Opposite: This Eurasian Jay, perched on a Prunus sp branch, was photographed in Mile End Park. (Karmannye Chaudhary)

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, Rarities Checklist.

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: 2024; Indexes of common and scientific names: 2024; Gazetteer sites added: 2024.

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

Foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls data: Foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls 2013-2024.

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

REGISTERED CHARITY 206228

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:

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PERSONAL DATA

The LNHS privacy notice at <http://www.lnhs.org.uk/index.php/about-us/dataprotection> explains how and why we use people's personal data and your rights in relation to that data. It explains that records may be passed on to other organisations in order to further our natural history and conservation objects. Please read the privacy notice before submitting records to us - your records may include personal data as they show where you were on a particular date.

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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

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Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne, FLS

COMMITTEE SECRETARY
Şeniz Mustafa

2024'. It is now possible to see at a glance how all the species recorded during 2024 performed. Highlights and notable sightings are shown on a map and bar-chart on the first page, with an indication of numbers. These are followed by charts of all the species recorded during the year, showing the vice-county or counties in which each was present; and in which month(s) of the year. The month symbols are a 'heat map' in three shades to denote the number present: light for few birds to dark for many birds. Thanks to Nigel Hawtin for the graphics and to Roger Payne, our Data Manager, for supplying the data in perfect format!

On page 38, there is a table of bird families, divided into Passerines and Non-Passerines, for those interested in the classification of species. It may be retained in future issues of the Report - depending on the space available after the growing list of Contributors!

A reminder to our readers that the order of species in LBR still follows the 2019 BOU British list. See 'Checklist' section on page 240.

We apologise for the omission of Pallid Harrier in the LBR 2023 Checklist. This should have followed Hen Harrier, as:

Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus* R BBRC+

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.**

Abbreviations of Vice-County names are on page 12;

a list of other abbreviations used throughout the text is on page 40.

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.

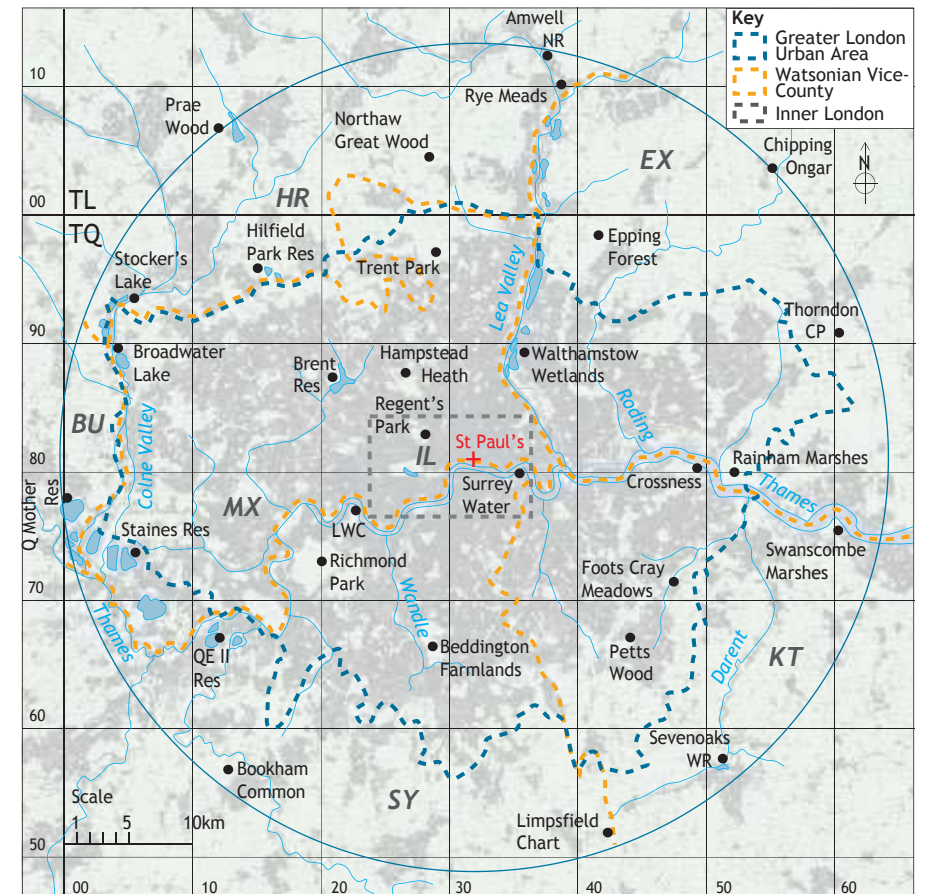
We are particularly grateful to all the Recorders, who, in addition to the time-consuming tasks of inputting all the data for their area, checked the species accounts in the Systematic List and provided comments and corrections. We would also like to thank the many people who looked at the draft text 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.

Opposite: 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)

OUR RECORDS

The records referred to in this report are for the LNHS recording area. This Area, 'the London Area', is a circle, centred on St Paul's Cathedral, which has a 20-mile radius. The Area covers the whole of Greater London and also parts of the present administrative areas of Hertfordshire, Essex, Kent, Surrey, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. However, for continuity of recording, we still use the Watsonian vice-counties in this Report. These are vice-county 16 (West Kent but which we refer to as Kent), vice-county 17 (Surrey), vice-counties 18 and 19 (South Essex and North Essex which we refer to as Essex), vice-county 20 (Hertfordshire), vice-county 21 (Middlesex) and vice-county 24 (Buckinghamshire). You can see full details of these vice-counties on the Biological Records Centre website at www.brc.ac.uk/article/british-vice-counties. These vice-county boundaries that are within the London Area are all shown on the map.



MINI-GAZETTEER OF MAIN SITES IN LONDON

Full details of our Gazetteers and county abbreviations are on pages 9 and 12. Other abbreviations are on page 40. See the Introduction on page 9 for further information.

Site name	County(ies)	Grid ref	Coopers Green Gravel Pits	HR	TL201097
Addington Hills	SY	TQ352644	Coopers Green Lane	HR	TL192096
Aldenham Country Park	HR	TQ170955	Cornmill Meadows (LVRP)	EX	TL380011
Alexandra Park	MX	TQ300900	Cray Valley Golf Course	KT	TQ481695
Amwell Nature Reserve	HR	TL378128	Crayford Marshes	KT	TQ532775
Arbrook Common	SY	TQ143632	Creekmouth, Barking	EX	TQ452827
Ashford Common	MX	TQ087697	Crossness	KT	TQ490808
Ashtead Common	SY	TQ175595	Croxley Common Moor	HR	TQ082948
Banbury Reservoir	EX	TQ362915	Crystal Palace Park	KT	TQ347707
Banstead Downs	SY	TQ252610	Dagenham Chase	EX	TQ514858
Barking Bay/Marsh	EX	TQ477820	Dartford Marshes	KT	TQ544774
Barnes Common	SY	TQ222758	Davy Down	EX	TQ592803
Bartlett Park	MX	TQ373814	Downe Bank	KT	TQ438609
Battersea Park	IL/SY	TQ282772	Duck Wood	EX	TQ555923
Beddington Farmlands	SY	TQ290667	Dulwich Park	SY	TQ335735
Bedfont Lakes Country Park	MX	TQ078726	Dulwich Upper Wood	SY	TQ339729
Beech Farm Gravel Pit	HR	TL190088	Dulwich Village	SY	TQ334739
Belhus Woods Country Park	EX	TQ570825	East India Dock Basin (LVRP)	MX	TQ391808
Bentley Priory Nature Reserve	MX	TQ155927	East Sheen Common	SY	TQ195745
Black Park	BU	TQ010836	Ellenbrook Fields	HR	TL205090
Bookham Common	SY	TQ130565	Enfield Chase	MX	TQ290988
Brent Res	MX	TQ215870	Epsom Common	SY	TQ190605
Bricket Wood Common	HR	TL130010	Epsom Downs	SY	TQ219582
Broadwater Lake	MX	TQ045892	Esher Common	SY	TQ135625
Broxbourne Woods	HR	TL329073	Fairlop Waters	EX	TQ459905
Buckingham Palace Gardens	IL/MX	TQ288796	Farthing Downs	SY	TQ299576
Bulphan Fen	EX	TQ633864	Fir & Pond Woods	MX	TL276011
Burgess Park	IL/SY	TQ335778	Fishers Green Goosefield (LVRP)	EX	TL380038
Bury Lake	HR	TQ053938	Fishers Green Island (LVRP)	EX	TL376037
Bushy Park	MX	TQ160690	Foots Cray Meadows	KT	TQ478715
Canada Water	IL/SY	TQ355793	Frays Valley Local Nature Reserve	MX	TQ055865
Canons Farm	SY	TQ248577	Frays Wildfowl Lake (LVRP)	MX	TQ056864
Cassiobury Park	HR	TQ090970	Friday Lake	HR	TL371020
Cely Woods	EX	TQ560830	Frogmore Lakes	HR	TL150033
Cheshunt Gravel Pits (LVRP)	HR	TL370030	Fryent Country Park	MX	TQ194877
For records where precise pit not identified.			Galleyhill Wood (in Epping Forest)	EX	TL394034
Chess Valley	HR	TQ052961	Gallions Reach	EX/KT	TQ445801
Chorleywood Common	HR	TQ033963	Garsons Farm	SY	TQ125639
Claybury Woods & Park	EX	TQ435912	Gatton Park/Lake	SY	TQ271525
Cobham Floods	SY	TQ106595	Glen Faba (LVRP)	EX	TL393088
Cole Green Tip	HR	TL265112	Gobions Wood	HR	TL256035
Colnbrook Landfill	BU	TQ025778	Godstone Sand Pit	SY	TQ345518
Connaught Water (in Epping Forest)	EX	TQ404953	Grays Gorge	EX	TQ608789

Greenland Dock	IL/SY	TQ361791	Long Running (in Epping Forest)	EX	TQ434997
Greenwich Park	KT	TQ390775	Longfield Gallops	KT	TQ602697
Greenwich Peninsula	KT	TQ393796	Lullingstone Park	KT	TQ520645
Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park	KT	TQ400793	Lynsters Farm	HR	TQ034920
Grey Goose Farm	EX	TQ629807	Lynsters Lake	HR	TQ038916
Hackney Marsh (LVRP)	MX	TQ366861	Maple Lodge Nature Reserve	HR	TQ036924
Hainault Forest Country Park	EX	TQ476932	Mar Dyke Valley	EX	TQ600805
Hall Marsh Scrape (LVRP)	EX	TL373017	Millwall Docks	MX	TQ377795
Hampermill Lake	HR	TQ095942	Molesey Heath	SY	TQ132672
Hampstead Heath	MX	TQ273866	Mollands Lane Gravel Pits	EX	TQ604820
Hatfield Park	HR	TL240080	Monken Hadley Common	MX	TQ262971
Havering Country Park	EX	TQ505930	Morden Hall Park	SY	TQ264687
Hayes Common	KT	TQ405652	Mores Plantation	EX	TQ566968
Hayes Hill Farm (LVRP)	EX	TL383033	Mudchute Farm	MX	TQ381786
Hersham Gravel Pit	SY	TQ128663	Nazeing	EX	TL414065
Highgate Cemetery	MX	TQ284871	North Mymms Park	HR	TL215045
Highgate Wood	MX	TQ283887	Northaw Great Wood	HR	TL285044
Hilfield Park Reservoir	HR	TQ158959	Orsett Fen	EX	TQ628833
Hilly Fields Park	MX	TQ323985	Otford to Filston	KT	TQ521602
Hoddesdonpark Wood	HR	TL352084	Walk from Otford Farm. Grid ref is mid point on path.		
Hogsmill Nature Reserve	SY	TQ197682	Oxhey Hall	HR	TQ103943
Holmethorpe Sand Pits	SY	TQ295515	Oxhey Woods	HR	TQ105925
Holyfield Hall Farm (LVRP)	EX	TL384038	Oxleas Wood	KT	TQ445759
Holyfield Lake (LVRP)	EX	TL378045	Oxshott Heath	SY	TQ139612
Home Park	MX	TQ166676	Panshanger Park	HR	TL283130
Horsenden Hill	MX	TQ162844	Perivale Wood	MX	TQ159836
Hounslow Heath	MX	TQ123745	Poplar Dock	MX	TQ382803
Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens	IL/MX	TQ274804	Poyle Poplars Nature Reserve	BU	TQ030764
Ingrebourne Valley	EX	TQ538843	Prince's Coverts	SY	TQ160610
Island Barn Reservoir	SY	TQ140670	Prospect Park	MX	TQ377823
Joyden's Wood (small part in Bexley)	KT	TQ500715	Queen Elizabeth II Reservoir	SY	TQ120670
Kelsey Park	KT	TQ376688	Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park	EX	TQ381846
Kemnal Woods	KT	TQ448717	Queen Mary Gravel Pit	MX	TQ059700
Kempton Nature Reserve	MX	TQ116706	Queen Mary Reservoir	MX	TQ070695
Kew Gardens	SY	TQ182769	Queen Mother Reservoir	BU	TQ007768
King George V Dock	EX	TQ432803	Queen's Wood	MX	TQ288886
King George V Reservoir	EX	TQ374964	Radlett Aero Gravel Pit	HR	TL155035
King George VI Reservoir	MX	TQ041732	Rainham Marshes	EX	TQ525800
Knighton Wood (in Epping Forest)	EX	TQ409931	Ramney Marsh (LVRP)	MX	TQ374996
Lake Farm Country Park	MX	TQ091803	Regent's Park	IL/MX	TQ281828
Lamorby Park	KT	TQ465731	Richmond Park	SY	TQ200730
Leg O Mutton Nature Reserve	SY	TQ218774	Rickmansworth Aquadrome	HR	TQ057940
Letchmore Heath	HR	TQ155977	Ripple Nature Reserve	EX	TQ468827
Leyton Flats (in Epping Forest)	EX	TQ397885	River Darent, Otford Road	KT	TQ526582
Limpsfield Chart	SY	TQ431521	Roding Valley Meadows NR	EX	TQ430943
Lion Gorge	EX	TQ599786	Ruislip Woods	MX	TQ094890
Lippitts Hill (in Epping Forest)	EX	TQ392976	Rushett Farm	SY	TQ173608
Littlebrook Lake	KT	TQ553756	Russia Dock Woodland	IL/SY	TQ362797
London Wetland Centre	SY	TQ228770	Ruxley Gravel Pits	KT	TQ473700

Recording Birds - <https://lnhs.org.uk/index.php/recording/birds>

All records of ornithological interest, from London Natural History Society (LNHS) members and non-members alike, are welcomed by the London Bird Club (LBC) especially records of breeding, even of common, species. The records are used to compile the annual London Bird Report.

Sensitive records can be sent direct to one of the LNHS bird recorders and will be treated in confidence. See also **Personal Data** on page 6 for details of Data Protection.

The LNHS records a wide variety of flora, fauna and fungi, so for advice on recording other organisms please see our Biological Recording page.

To ensure that your bird records make their way to the LNHS, please use the preferred or alternative submission methods listed below. Please note that bird records submitted through other systems may not be shared with the LBC.

Guidance for Bird Recorders

Every year, a significant amount of time is spent by the volunteers working on the LBC's Rarities Committee and the London Bird Report. It will help us a lot if you can remember the following:

- 1 Use your actual observer name (not a social media handle or alias, however well-known your 'brand name' is).
- 2 Ensure we can contact you by email. (If you registered to a records portal, the email is available.)
- 3 Use standard names in the Gazetteer of Sites used by the LBC (see locality information section below). Note the helpful information in the section below on details to provide and information on sensitive records.

LNHS Recording Area

Details are on page 7. See our Biological Recording page for more details.

Locality Information

Site names, including the names of towns, villages, open spaces, etc, are listed in the [LBC Gazetteer of Sites](#). Please use these site names, when sending in records. If you need to send in details from a site that is not listed in the Gazetteer, please give an OS Grid Reference and relevant background information about the site.

Species Checklists

The [Checklist Guide Breeding Criteria](#) and [Checklist Guide Breeding Criteria Spreadsheet](#) contain the checklist of birds of the London Area and a guide for contributors of ornithological records. Breeding criteria are included on page 11 of the PDF file. 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.

Rarities

Please download the form for submitting [Details of an Unusual Record Form](#). This form can be completed online, for which you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader DC or an equivalent program; alternatively you can print the form and complete it manually. In

either case, please send it to the Chair of the Rarities Committee as an email attachment or by post as soon as possible (see the London Bird Club section of the Contact Us page for details). See also the LBC Rarities Checklist of Description Species.

Surveys

Volunteers are always wanted for the [BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey](#) (BBS).

Preferred Submission Method - Going Birding Records portal

Our preference is that you use the online recording facilities provided for the Club by Going Birding. You can view the latest sightings here and use the links on that page to sign up so that you can submit your records: www.goingbirding.co.uk/london/birdnews.asp

Interesting records can be shared more widely via the London Bird Club Twitter ([@LondonBirdClub](#)) Bird News Google Group.

Alternative Submission Methods

Although the Going Birding Records portal is our preferred submission pathway, we can also receive records through the following alternative submission methods.

BirdTrack - We can take records from the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) BirdTrack system, but please use the site names listed in our Gazetteer of Sites (see locality information section above). Please note that BirdTrack may not make your records available to LNHS automatically. You need to log in to BirdTrack and check the option 'My details & settings'. At the bottom of that page, if it says 'You have asked us not to forward your records to local bird recorders', then we will not be able to obtain your records. You cannot alter this setting directly. You need to email BirdTrack and ask them to change this.

eBird - We can take records from eBird. Their London hotspots are derived from the sites in our Gazetteer of Sites (see locality information section above). Please use these for the localities of your records.

Direct to LNHS Recorder - Please download the [Bird Recording Form](#) and use this Excel spreadsheet to compile your records. The Gazetteer of Sites and the Checklist, Guide and Breeding Criteria are also included as sheets in the Bird Recording Form. The completed spreadsheet should then be sent to the relevant LNHS bird recorder (see the London Bird Club section of the Contact Us page for details).

London Bird Club Wiki - You can enter records on to the LBC Wiki. If you do use the Wiki, please send your email address to the LBC Data Manager (see the London Bird Club section of the Contact Us page for details), so that we can contact you to resolve any problems. Also, please use the suggested format, and the site names in our Gazetteer of Sites (see locality information section above).

If you choose to enter records in more than one way, please let the LBC Data Manager know which one we should take as your "master list", so that we can avoid storing duplicates. (See the London Bird Club section of the Contact Us page for details).

BIRD FAMILIES INCLUDED IN THE LONDON BIRD REPORT

Non-Passerines

Geese, Swans & Ducks	<i>Anatidae</i>
Partridges & Pheasants	<i>Phasianidae</i>
Divers	<i>Gaviidae</i>
Northern Storm Petrels	<i>Hydrobatidae</i>
Petrels & Shearwaters	<i>Procellariidae</i>
Grebes	<i>Podicipedidae</i>
Storks	<i>Ciconiidae</i>
Ibises & Spoonbills	<i>Threskiornithidae</i>
Bitterns, Herons & Egrets	<i>Ardeidae</i>
Gannets	<i>Sulidae</i>
Cormorants	<i>Phalacrocoracidae</i>
Osprey	<i>Pandionidae</i>
Kites, Hawks & Eagles	<i>Accipitridae</i>
Bustard	<i>Otididae</i>
Rails, Waterhens & Coots	<i>Rallidae</i>
Cranes	<i>Gruidae</i>
Thick-knees	<i>Burhinidae</i>
Oystercatchers	<i>Haematopodidae</i>
Stilts & Avocets	<i>Recurvirostridae</i>
Plovers	<i>Charadriidae</i>
Sandpipers & Snipe	<i>Scolopacidae</i>
Pratincoles	<i>Glareolidae</i>
Gulls & Terns	<i>Laridae</i>
Skuas	<i>Stercorariidae</i>
Auks	<i>Alcidae</i>
Pigeons & Doves	<i>Columbidae</i>
Cuckoos	<i>Cuculidae</i>
Barn Owls	<i>Tytonidae</i>
Owls	<i>Strigidae</i>
Nightjars	<i>Caprimulgidae</i>
Swifts	<i>Apodidae</i>
Rollers	<i>Coraciidae</i>
Kingfishers	<i>Alcedinidae</i>
Bee-eaters	<i>Meropidae</i>
Hoopoe	<i>Upupidae</i>
Woodpeckers	<i>Picidae</i>
Falcons	<i>Falconidae</i>
Parrots	<i>Psittaculidae</i>

Passerines are songbirds or perching birds, having three toes pointing forwards and one pointing backwards. All other birds are Non-Passerines.

The lists of families are in the systematic order used in Birds of the London Area (see page 41) and the Checklist & Guide (see page 240).

Passerines

Shrikes	<i>Psittaculidae</i>
Oriole	<i>Oriolidae</i>
Crows and Jays	<i>Corvidae</i>
Waxwings	<i>Bombycillidae</i>
Tits	<i>Paridae</i>
Penduline Tit	<i>Remizidae</i>
Bearded Tit	<i>Panuridae</i>
Larks	<i>Alaudidae</i>
Martins & Swallows	<i>Hirundinidae</i>
Cettia Bush Warblers	<i>Cettiidae</i>
Long-tailed Tits	<i>Aegithalidae</i>
Leaf Warblers & Allies	<i>Phylloscopidae</i>
Reed Warblers & Allies	<i>Acrocephalidae</i>
Grassbirds & Allies	<i>Locustellidae</i>
Sylviid Babblers	<i>Sylviidae</i>
Goldcrests & Kinglets	<i>Regulidae</i>
Wrens	<i>Troglodytidae</i>
Nuthatches	<i>Sittidae</i>
Treecreepers	<i>Certhiidae</i>
Starlings	<i>Sturnidae</i>
Thrushes	<i>Turdidae</i>
Chats & Old World Flycatchers	<i>Muscicapidae</i>
Dipper	<i>Cinclidae</i>
Sparrows	<i>Passeridae</i>
Accentors	<i>Prunellidae</i>
Wagtails and Pipits	<i>Motacillidae</i>
Finches	<i>Fringillidae</i>
Longspurs	<i>Calcariidae</i>

BIRDS OF THE LONDON AREA 2024



Opposite: A Blue Tit beautifully framed by the blue sky and yellow willow flowers.
(Liam Harper)

BIRDS OF THE LONDON AREA, 2024

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.

Below the name of each species, we have a status line which refers to the status of a species in the London Area - not in the UK as a whole. If a species is one of those considered by the Rare Breeding Birds Panel, then **RBBP** appears at the end of the status line(s).

In the tables and any sector lists below we use three character abbreviations for the calendar months (eg Jul for July).

Observer names are shown only against records for species which are rare in the London Area. A list of all the observers who have contributed records for 2024 appears on pages 28-37.

All running totals of rare or unusual birds that are provided in the systematic list refer to occurrences since 1900.

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](#).

Abbreviations used throughout the London Bird Report

In addition to the abbreviations for the sectors of the LNHS Area mentioned on page 12, the following abbreviations are also used throughout the Report.

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
LNHR	= 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

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Status: occasional migrant and winter visitor.

This was the best year for this species in the London Area since 2015 (when about 135 birds were seen at 26 sites) with 111 birds at 19 sites. This compares to 104 at 15 sites in 2023 and between 49-57 at 14 in 2022.

The first record was one bird at Rainham Marshes on January 27th, then two on the 31st recorded at both William Girling Res and KGV Res. A flock of 13 were at the latter site the following day, then three were at Rainham Marshes on February 7th. There was an influx in March, with birds seen at four sites on the 11th: nine at Stanborough GP; seven at Broadwater Lake; one at Walthamstow Wetlands and one on the Grand Union Canal in Hanwell, which remained in the area until the 18th. On the 12th, five flew over the London Wetland Centre and three flew over Walthamstow Wetlands, then on the 15th two were at Grays Riverside. There were two at Sevenoaks WR on the 27th followed by three at Rainham Marshes on the 31st. One recorded there on both April 7th and 11th was possibly the same bird, with the next record being one at Grays Riverside on the 23rd. May records are unusual, but there were two this year: one seen at both Crayford Ness and Rainham Marshes on the 1st, which remained to the following day; and one at Swanscombe Marshes on the 15th.

Return passage started slowly with singles at Rainham Marshes on October 3rd and Barking Bay/Marsh on the 16th, but picked up slightly with two each at Crossness on the 26th and QE II Res on the 30th, then 18 at Rainham Marshes the following day. Three were then at the same site on November 2nd, with two sound-recorded over Wallington on the 3rd. There were eight at Rainham Marshes on the 7th, then singles at Staines Res the next day (seen again there and at KGV Res on the 10th) and Rainham Marshes on the 9th. The next record was not until the 25th, when four were at Swanscombe Marshes. In December, two flew over Cassiobury Park on the 11th, two flew upriver at Rainham Marshes on the 13th, and on the 14th there were singles at London Wetland Centre and Walthamstow Wetlands, and two flying upriver seen from both Crossness and Rainham Marshes. The final records of the year were on the 28th with three downriver at Crossness and one at Sevenoaks WR.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Status: very common, introduced breeding resident.

Although the number of breeding sites dropped (115 compared to 143 last year, when the number of such sites was attributed to possible increased observer coverage), the number of pairs/broods increased from 261 to 301. These figures compare to 246 pairs/broods at 91 sites in 2022. For regular sites where we have different breeding numbers this year and last, nine were down but 18 were up. There were large differences at Walthamstow Wetlands (40 broods compared with 11), Rainham Marshes (14+ broods compared to no definite breeding numbers) and London Wetland Centre (16 pairs compared to one brood) probably due to improved recording at those sites.

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 250 or more were recorded.

Essex: Breeding reported from 16 sites (24 in 2023). Belhus Woods CP (3). Harrow Lodge Park, 250 on Jan 15th. Holyfield Hall Farm, c300 on Dec 29th. Hunsdon Mead, 300+ on Sep 23rd. Rainham Marshes (14+); 417 on Dec 30th. Walthamstow Wetlands (40); 338 on Jun 28th. Warren Gorge (4).

Herts: Breeding reported from 20 sites (18). Amwell NR (8). Frogmore Lakes (3). Hilfield Park Res (4). Maple Lodge NR (3). Rye Meads (16 pairs). Stanborough GP, 490 on Sep 7th. Stanborough Park, 283 on Sep 25th. Stocker's Farm, 285 on Jan 14th. Tyttenhanger GP (5); 365 on Sep 22nd. Verulamium Park, 263 on Sep 11th. White Heath Farm, Harefield, 335 on Dec 3rd.

Middx: Breeding reported from 27 sites (35).

Bucks: Breeding reported from one site (two).

Kent: Breeding reported from 14 sites (20). Otford, 300 on Oct 28th.

Surrey: Breeding reported from 26 sites (36). Beddington Farmlands (42 nests). Buckland SP, 350 on Sep 6th. Downside (3). Island Barn Res, 357 on Oct 7th. Kew Gdns (6+). London Wetland Centre (16 pairs). Morden Hall Park (3). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (5, none fledged).

In Lond: Breeding reported from 11 sites (eight). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 398 on Jul 23rd. Regent's Park (4+); 300 on Jun 5th.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Status: winter visitor to SW London and resident population in the Lee Valley where it has bred, otherwise rare winter visitor.

Barnacle Goose was reported from 32 sites, fewer than the two previous years (35 in 2023 and 53 in 2022). As noted in each of the previous three years, the majority of records pertain to two main gatherings: one in the Lee Valley Regional Park, reported from several sites in the Essex and Herts sectors, and the other being the flock in south-west London.

The Lee Valley gathering of up to 20 birds occurs throughout the year and now breeds. This year, there were three broods at Walthamstow Wetlands, with one pair successfully fledging one young. This is now the third successive year that confirmed breeding has taken place at the site. Breeding was also suspected there in 2021. This population may come from the expanding self-sustaining population in East Anglia.

The south-west London gathering peaked at 204 in November and only occurs in the winter months and has been reported in most years since 2010. It is believed to come from a naturalised population summering outside our area; many colour-ringed birds have been seen that were ringed at Knowsley Wildlife Park, Merseyside with some reported at Otmoor, Oxfordshire.

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

Essex: Reported from 14 sites (13 in 2023). Hall Marsh Scrape, 17 on Mar 3rd & 20th. Holyfield Hall Farm, peaks of 16 on Jan 11th, Mar 11th & 25th and 15 on Oct 28th. KGV Res, 15 on Dec 15th. Walthamstow Wetlands (3); peaks of 19 on Jan 20th and 17 on Nov 21st.

Herts: Reported from eight sites (12). Seventy Acres Lake, 14 on Sep 19th & 25th and Oct 13th.

A Barnacle Goose gosling at Walthamstow Wetlands - the third year of confirmed breeding. (Sam O'Donnell)



Middx: Reported from three sites (four). Littleton, 70 on Feb 11th. Staines Res, 45 SE on Oct 27th.

Bucks: Reported from one site (none). Q Mother Res, 90 NW on Feb 11th.

Kent: Reported from one site (none). Sevenoaks WR, two on Mar 9th.

Surrey: Reported from five sites (six). Hersham GP, 108 on Nov 23rd and Dec 4th. Island Barn Res, peaks of 120 NW on Feb 10th and 204 on Nov 4th. QE II Res, 80 on Feb 14th. Walton-on-Thames, 85 over on Jan 6th & 25th.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Status: common breeding resident.

The number of pairs/broods this year was 144 at 57 sites, including four hybrid broods crossed with Canada Goose. This was a significant increase on last year (111 at 60) and more in line with the previous two years. The average number in the past five years is 127, compared with just 88 in the five-year period prior to that (see table below). As with Canada Goose, where we have breeding figures from sites both this year and last, more showed an increase than a reduction, with the most significant rise at Walthamstow Wetlands, with 32 broods compared to ten.

The highest count was 400 at Otford (down from 484 at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens last year). Counts of 100 or more came from 29 sites (21 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.

Greylag Goose breeding records

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
No. of broods/pairs	104	74	79	88	95	96	149	134	111	144

Essex: 66 broods at 12 sites. Belhus Woods CP (9). Fairlop Waters (8). Rainham Marshes (3+). South Ockendon, 320 on Sep 11th. Walthamstow Wetlands (32). Warren Gorge (6).

Herts: 27 broods at ten sites. Amwell NR (6); 210 on Sep 4th. Lynsters Lake (5 pairs). North Met Pit (7). Verulamium Park (3).

Middx: Seven broods at six sites. Knightscode Farm, 78 on Jan 26th.

Bucks: One brood at one site. Denham Gravel Workings, 12 on Oct 12th.

Kent: Nine broods at eight sites. Otford, 400 on Dec 1st.

Flats, 100 on Oct 7th.

Herts: 14 broods/pairs at 11 sites. Amwell NR (3 pairs). Rye Meads (2). White Heath Farm, Harefield, 81 on Dec 3rd.

Middx: 27 broods at 26 sites. Bushy Park (2). Home Park (4 territories); 111 on Jan 14th.

Bucks: Six broods at six sites. Q. Mother Res, c135 on Aug 1st.

Kent: 27 broods at 22 sites. Beckenham Place Park (3). Chislehurst Common (2). Danson Park (2); 110+ on Jul 8th. Lamorbey Park (2).

Surrey: 41 broods at 36 sites. London Wetland Centre (2). QE II Res, 135 on Sep 5th. Richmond Park (2). South Norwood CP (2). Wandsworth Common (3).

In Lond: 21 broods at 12 sites. Battersea Park (2). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (5); 200 on Jun 21st & 27th. Regent's Park (5).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

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

The number of confirmed broods and breeding sites, 18 and 13 respectively, were both the highest since 2015, when there were 21 at 16 sites, although there is possibly some duplication due to broods moving between nearby sites. Pairs or large young were reported at a further 21 sites where breeding may have occurred but was not proved. Counts of 100 or more were received from two sites: Crossness and Rainham Marshes, and counts of 50 or more were received from one further site: Barking Bay/Marsh.

All breeding records are shown below, with the number of broods in brackets and the total number of ducklings per site where known, along with the highest count for each sector (double-figure counts only).

Essex: Barking Bay/Marsh (2), 22 ducklings. Beckton Creekside NR (1), 11 ducklings. Rainham Marshes (2), 18 ducklings; 120 on Jun 26th. Walthamstow Wetlands (2). West Thurrock Marshes (1).

Herts: Seventy Acres Lake, ten on Mar 3rd.

Middx: East India Dock Basin, 33 on Feb 15th. KGVI Res (1), seven ducklings. Wraysbury Res (1), two ducklings.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res (1), nine ducklings; 16 on May 21st.

Kent: Crayford Marshes (1). Crossness (3+); 148 on Jun 9th. Erith Reach (1). Thamesview GC (1).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, ten on Apr 7th. Island Barn Res (1), three ducklings.

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

Status: introduced breeding resident, established and locally common.

The number of broods this year was 53, down on last year (65 in 2023), but in line with the two years before that (54 in 2022, and 54 in 2021).

Peak counts were higher than last year at Connaught Water (26 in 2024, 18 in 2023), Kelsey Park (33, 30), Regent's Park (32, 24) and Whitewebbs Wood (35, 16) and were lower at Hampstead Heath (34, 42) and Richmond Park (25, 40).

Below are all confirmed breeding records (no. of broods in brackets) and high counts for each sector.

Essex: Connaught Water (1). Strawberry Hill Ponds (4); 38 on Jul 21st.

Herts: Coopers Green GP (1). Stanborough GP (1), female with 11 ducklings on Jun 16th. West End (1).

Middx: Brentford (1). Bushy Park (1). Cowley (1). Grange Park (1). Grovelands Park (2); 48 on Nov 16th. Hampstead Heath (1); 34 on Oct 29th. Osterley Park (1+); 27 on May 15th (including 16 ducklings). Parkside Farm/Res (1). Red House Res (1). Totteridge Valley (5). Trent Park (2). Uxbridge Alder glade (1). Whitewebbs Wood (2); 35 on Dec 30th. Wildwoods, Enfield (1); 27 on Aug 31st.

Bucks: Black Park (1). Langley Park (1). Rectory Wood, Denham (1).

Kent: Chislehurst Common (2). Kelsey Park (1); 33 on Jan 18th. Keston Common (2).

Surrey: Ashted Common (2). Common Meadow (1). Epsom Common (1). Kew Gdns, 27+ on Oct 12th. Richmond Park (5). R Thames: Kew to Richmond (1). R Thames: Teddington to Kingston (1). Slyfield Farm, Fetcham (1).

In Lond: Battersea Park (2); 25 on Jan 7th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1); 15 on Jul 5th. Regent's Park (1); 32 on Jan 18th.

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

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

The first migrant was a male at Stanwell Moor on March 12th (March 18th last year) staying until April 23rd and also seen at Staines Moor. This was followed by a pair at Rye Meads on 21st, a pair seen at both Island Barn Res and Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) on 24th, a female at London Wetland Centre arriving on 28th and remaining until April 6th, and a male at Rainham Marshes on 30th. Birds were seen at six sites in March this year, up from three last year. During April and May, pairs were seen at Staines Moor on

A Mandarin drake in Hyde Park. (Joe Downing)



Kent: Crayford Marshes (1). Crossness (2). Dartford Marshes (1).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (4). Kew Gdns (1). London Wetland Centre (1).

In Lond: Battersea Park, 32 on Jul 14th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 31 on Jan 30th. Nine Elms, c30 on Jan 17th. St James's Park, 47 on Jul 22nd. Regent's Park (1).

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Status: common winter visitor with occasional summer records.

As usual, Rainham Marshes had the highest count with 650 birds on January 1st, similar to last year's count of 656 but much lower than in previous years (1,000+ in 2022, 1,859 in 2021). Numbers at Staines Res between January to March were similar to last year with a peak of 200 on January 15th (200 in January 2023) but October to December numbers were lower with a peak of 88 on December 15th (135 in December 2023). Elsewhere, numbers appeared lower than last year.

There were records of birds in May and June at eight sites (eight last year); however, there were no records suggestive of breeding.

The table below gives monthly peaks from regularly watched sites with counts of 100 or more, with other high counts below that. Most records from Inner London are difficult to assess due to the presence of collection birds at some sites. A few selected records believed to involve wild birds are listed.

Wigeon	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Rainham Marshes	650	542	254	101	3	-	-	4	20	120	575	600
MX Staines Res	200	173	154	8	-	-	-	-	30	7	45	88
KT Crossness	19	15	24	6	1	-	-	3	2	14	11	100
SY Island Barn Res	92	38	166	0	0	0	0	0	4	11	29	124
Walton Res (K&B)	85	166	118	7	0	0	0	0	7	2	41	84
Wetland Centre	80	101	80	3	2	1	3	1	33	55	62	72

Essex: Hunsdon Mead, 300+ on Jan 27th and Feb 2nd.

Middx: Kempton Park Race Course, 101 on Dec 15th.

Kent: Crayford Ness, 200 on Feb 10th. Dartford Marshes, 110 on Nov 3rd.

In Lond: Burgess Park, two on Nov 6th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, five on Sep 15th and three on Nov 9th. Meanwhile Gdns, North Kensington, one on Jan 20th. Regent's Park, occasional records of up to two apparently wild birds. Tower Bridge, two on Mar 15th. Victoria Park, two on Feb 18th.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Status: very common and widespread breeding resident.

The peak count was 397 on October 17th at Stanborough GP, similar to last year's peak of 392 on the River Wandle from Carshalton Ponds to Wandsworth. The peak summer count was also at Stanborough GP, with 210 on August 17th (thought to be releases). Last year's peak count was 152 at London Wetland Centre in June.

The table below shows regularly watched sites that had a count of 150 or more. Other high counts are summarised below the table.



Female Mallard in Wandle Park, Colliers Wood. (David Element)

Mallard	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Rainham Marshes	100	85	70	50	40	60	75	100	91	150	150	85
Warren Gorge	79	97	61	89	68	70	46	52	44	105	168	109
HR Hill Farm, Radlett	41	34	-	-	-	112	79	146	152	21	25	34
Stanborough GP	-	34	34	21	25	200	140	210	376	397	250	140
BU Q. Mother Res	2	6	12	13	13	62	41	155	56	28	33	-
SY Putney Bridge-Barnes	217	98	124	-	-	-	-	-	186	216	271	180
Wetland Centre	115	115	112	93	126	108	116	50	143	192	137	184

Essex: Brook Farm, Upminster, 113 on Nov 8th and Dec 20th. Connaught Water, 120 on Jan 17th & 21st and Dec 23rd. Mar Dyke Valley, 106 on Dec 2nd. Wake Valley Pond, 150 on Dec 21st. Walthamstow Wetlands, 125 on May 16th. West Thurrock Marshes, 123 on Aug 15th.

Herts: Amwell NR, 110+ on Jul 6th. Brickendonbury, 100+ on Dec 13th. Cheshunt GP, c100 on Dec 31st. Stanborough Park, 100 on Sep 22nd.

Middx: Brent Res, 118 on Jul 21st. Grovelands Park, 128 on Nov 9th. Hampstead Heath, 110 on Jan 14th. Town Park, Enfield, 100 on Jan 20th.

Kent: Belvedere, 100 on Aug 3rd and Sep 19th & 28th. Crossness, 120 on Jun 2nd & 9th and Sep 28th. Dartford Marshes, 100 on Aug 25th and Sep 21st & 29th. Kelsey Park, 115 on Sep 29th.



This Ferruginous Duck was photographed at Eagle Pond in January, one of only a few sightings. (Sam O'Donnell)

Wandsworth Common, imm female on Oct 29th and Dec 10th (N Rutter) (same as Tooting Common).

2023 Addition

Bucks: Horton GP, imm male on Sep 18th (CDR Heard).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Status: regular resident breeder and common winter visitor.

Walthamstow Wetlands again saw the highest count with the post-breeding flock reaching 2,320 in July, slightly above the 2,204 in the same month last year. There continue to be big annual changes in numbers at individual sites, presumably depending on water levels and disturbance. Staines Res, for example, had a peak count of 1,603 this year compared to 992 in 2023. But overall, numbers seem pretty stable with the same eight sites as last year seeing counts of over 500. Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens continues to be the favourite site in Inner London with 130 counted in November, down on last year's 183.

As always, breeding records are likely to be incomplete but the 163 submitted broods is well below last year's figure of 192. Evidence of a poor breeding season is supported by declines at sites which are more consistently monitored. Numbers of broods at Walthamstow Wetlands fell from 31 last year to 23 and at Rye Meads from 33 to 26.

The table gives peak monthly counts of over 500, with below, the number of broods for each sector and all sites with four or more broods.

Tufted Duck	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX KGV Res	1200	-	-	-	-	-	1200	1146	-	-	-	-
Walthamstow Wetlands	-	-	-	-	-	-	2320	1210	936	610	-	-
MX KGV Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	618	1170	-	-	-	-
Q. Mother Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	541	-	-	-
Staines Res	618	580	635	-	-	-	1223	1603	1553	-	-	560
SY QE II Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	545	840	-	-	-	-
Walton Res (C&L)	588	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Walton Res (K&B)	-	-	-	-	-	-	724	953	-	-	-	-

Essex: 38 broods. Banbury Res (5). Dagenham Chase (4). Walthamstow Wetlands (23).

Herts: 50 broods. Amwell NR (8). Maple Lodge NR (6). Rye Meads (26).

Middx: 22 broods.

Bucks: Three broods.

Kent: Six broods.

Surrey: 36 broods. Beddington Farmlands (15). Kew Gdns (4). Walton Res (C&L) (10).

In Lond: Eight broods.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

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

Another poor year with perhaps as few as four individuals in the first winter period and three in the second winter period. Only KGV Res, which remains the best site in the London Area for this seaduck, and Hilfield Park Res saw long-staying birds. Since 2000, they have been seen every year, except this year, on the west London reservoirs/gravel pits. There was an unseasonal record of a male in June at KGV Res that stayed for 15 days, which is not unprecedented since a male turned up at one of the Lee Valley reservoirs for four years between 2018 and 2021.

All records are given.

Essex: KGV Res, male from Jan 4th to Apr 6th, two males from Jan 11th to Mar 23rd, two males and female on Feb 12th, male from Jun 6th-20th, male from Nov 16th to end of the year. Walthamstow Wetlands, male from Jan 31st to Feb 1st.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, female from Jan 11th to Apr 13th.

Middx: Brent Res, female from Oct 30th to Nov 9th. Shepperton GP, male on Jan 23rd.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

Status: rare vagrant.

The drake that visited Staines Res in October is the sixth record for the London Area. It must be possible that it was the same individual recorded at the site from December 2022 to February 2023, when it was a first-winter bird. This time, however, it only stayed for one day.

Middx: Staines Res, male on Oct 12th (RE Innes, K Purdey).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Status: scarce visitor, usually in winter.

A female or immature drake found late afternoon at Q. Mother Res is the first record since 2020. As is often the case with this large seaduck in London, it had disappeared by the next morning. The finder's notes mention that at one point it swam past a Velvet Scoter which may be a unique occurrence in London in recent decades.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, female/imm male on Dec 14th (CDR Heard).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Status: rare passage migrant and winter visitor.

An astonishing double with the species above. The immature male at Q. Mother Res is the first since 2021 when, after a gap of eight years, there was a small influx in late February/early March. Like the Eider, it was a one-day visitor.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, imm male on Dec 14th (CDR Heard).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

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

A wide spread of records as usual with birds reported every month except June and December. Leaving aside April's recordings of nocturnal migration, 48 individuals were seen, a big reduction on last year's 90 but ahead of the 45 in 2022. September with 13 birds was the most productive month and the Thames at Rainham Marshes with 16 birds the most favoured site during the year.

Essex: Barking Bay, one on Aug 17th and two on Sep 6th. Beckton Creekside, one on Apr 27th. KGV Res, three on Jan 13th, one on four dates from May 2nd-8th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Jan 6th, Mar 6th, three on 16th, singles on Apr 6th & 27th, Sep 21st, two on Oct 15th, three on 31st and three on Nov 12th. William Girling Res, three on Jan 13th (presumed same as KGV Res birds).

Herts: Bowyer's Water, one on Sep 22nd. Hilfield Park Res, one from Feb 11th-12th. Stanstead Innings, one from Sep 8th-17th. Stocker's Lake, one from Apr 28th-29th.

Middx: KGV Res, one on Sep 5th. Q. Mary Res, four on Sep 6th. Staines Res, one from July 12th-20th, one from Aug 18th-23rd, one on Sep 5th (same as KGV Res) and three on 23rd.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, two on Sep 23rd.

Surrey: Island Barn Res, one on Sep 6th. QE II Res, two on Apr 2nd and three on Nov 4th. Wallington, nocturnal flight calls on Apr 7th and Oct 4th. Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough), two on Apr 2nd (same as QE II Res).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Status: scarce recently, but was annual visitor.

A typical year for this dainty seaduck with a single record on an inland reservoir. The immature male was found late morning at Walthamstow Wetlands in January but had disappeared by the next day. The last time London hosted more than one bird was back in 2018 when a pair turned up at the same site in June.

Essex: Walthamstow Wetlands, imm male on Jan 5th (S Harris *et al*).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Status: common winter visitor, has bred.

Numbers continue to fall with the peak count of 51 at Staines Res down from the 61 seen at the same site last year. Only six sites compared to eight in 2023 saw counts of over ten. Forty years ago, 127 were seen on a WeBS count across neighbouring KGV Res and William Girling Res with 96 at KGV Res. The last record of the first winter period was at Stocker's Lake on May 10th and the first returning birds were at Bowyer's Water on October 17th. In Inner London, St James's Park hosted two wild birds from January 16th to February 15th.

Monthly counts of over ten are included in the table below.

Goldeneye	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX KGV Res	35	36	35	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	21
HR Amwell NR	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MX Broadwater Lake	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
KGV Res	12	24	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Staines Res	32	41	51	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	23
BU Wraysbury GP	19	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	15
SY Walton Res (K&B)	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Status: scarce winter visitor, following declines.

There is no sign of the rapid decline of this exquisite duck in London reversing. Milder winters are enabling birds to stay closer to the breeding grounds in the north and east of Europe with a big drop in the numbers reaching the near-continent. The highest count at any site was again two with perhaps as few as five individuals in the first winter

A male Goldeneye trying very hard to impress his mate, photographed at Staines Reservoir in February. (Joe Downing)





Another fairly poor year for the Goosander, a winter visitor. This one was photographed in Staines Moor. (Joe Downing)

period. Even as late as the turn of the century, London hosted 100 wintering birds with 30 still recorded in 2014.

All records are given below.

Essex: KGV Res, male from Jan 11th to Apr 1st, female on Nov 21st.

Herts: Amwell NR, pair from start of year to Mar 17th and female from Nov 30th to end of year. Bowyer's Water, male on Jan 4th, 7th & 9th. Seventy Acres Lake, male from Jan 3rd-25th. Stanstead Innings, female from Jan 3rd-7th & 26th and female on Nov 22nd (both presumed same as Amwell NR).

Middx: Bedfont Lakes CP, one on Jan 5th. Princes Lake, two males from Jan 4th-10th. Staines Res, male from Feb 24th-25th and male on Dec 14th.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Status: regular winter visitor, very rare in summer.

The peak count of 25 at both Weald CP and QE II Res was the highest since 2021 when there were 29 at Weald CP. This species has suffered large declines like other sawbills, however, it is still a relatively widespread winter visitor to the London Area. Records came from around 80 sites (60 in 2023) with six seeing counts of over ten. For the third year running, the species was seen in Inner London with one at Burgess Park. The final bird of the first winter period was at Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough) on April 26th while the first returning birds were juveniles at QE II Res on July 1st and at Amwell NR on July 20th.

Peak monthly counts of over eight are included below as well as all Inner London records.

Essex: Connaught Water, 11 on Nov 15th. Holyfield Lake, nine on Jan 28th. KGV Res, nine on Jan 14th and 11 on Feb 20th. Mollands Lane GP, ten on Jan 25th and Dec 13th. Weald CP, 14 on Jan 9th and 25 on Dec 20th.

Herts: Seventy Acres Lake, 15 on Jan 5th. Turnford Marsh GP, 21 on Jan 3rd.

Surrey: QE II Res, 12 on Jan 27th, 25 on Feb 18th and 21 on Mar 12th.

In Lond: Burgess Park, male on Nov 29th.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A big drop in sightings with only six individuals seen compared to 11 last year and 12 in 2022. The reduction is largely due to just a single bird being seen on the Thames where last year there were groups of three and four.

All records are given below.

Essex: Grays Riverside, male on Sep 25th. Ingrebourne Valley, one on Jan 16th.

Middx: Staines Res, imm male from Dec 12th-29th.

Surrey: Island Barn Res, female on Mar 6th, imm male on Oct 16th and female on Nov 13th.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Status: breeding resident, of introduced origin.

Records were received from 105 sites (80 in 2023). As last year the majority of the records, 61%, came from the Essex and Herts sectors.

Only six Red-breasted Mergansers were seen this year, including this one at Staines Res. (Joe Downing)



Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Status: rare winter visitor and occasional migrant.

This year, there were at least two birds at three sites, one in each winter period. Unusually, all birds were seen in flight. This is the first time that more than one bird has been recorded since 2019.

Essex: KGV Res, one S on Mar 29th (E Dillon-Hooper).

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one SW on Nov 2nd (C Dewhurst, O Dewhurst). New Malden, one NE over garden on Nov 3rd (presumed same as London Wetland Centre bird) (T Inns).

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Status: rare winter visitor and occasional migrant.

In the first winter period, there were two long-staying juveniles from 2023 at Staines Res that stayed until March 17th. These birds remained for over three months, which is long but not unprecedented. There are at least three other stays of three months or more: February 1st to June 5th 1937, September 24th 1956 to June 22nd 1957 and January 16th to May 19th 1987 at Leg o Mutton Res/R Thames, Walthamstow Wetlands and Q. Mother Res/Wraysbury GP respectively.

In the second winter period, there was a long-staying juvenile at KGV Res, the first record at this site since 2000.

The Black-throated Diver is a rare visitor to London. This was one of two juveniles that stayed at Staines Reservoir from 2023 to March 2024. (Joe Downing)



Essex: KGV Res, juv from Dec 1st-31st (N Smith, H Lacey).

Middx: Staines Res, two juvs from 2023 to Mar 17th (many observers).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

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

It was the best year this century for this diver, which does make determining numbers difficult as birds moved between the larger reservoirs. In the first winter period, there were at least 11 birds, three in Essex and eight in Middlesex, including six individuals at the adjacent KGV Res and Staines Res. The two Surrey birds were presumed to have also been seen in Middlesex. Of these 11 birds, at least three were presumed to be over-wintering from 2023. In the second winter period, the first arrival was an adult at Q. Mother Res on October 25th (November 3rd 2023). There were at least six birds (two in Essex, three in Middlesex and one in Bucks).

Great Northern Diver records 2015-2024

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
No. of birds	4	6*	4*	6*	4*	4*	4*	3*	7-8*	14*

*ignoring over-wintering birds

Essex: KGV Res, one on Feb 27th, adult from Nov 17th, joined by a second bird from Dec 23rd, both until end of year. Walthamstow Wetlands, juv on Dec 8th. William Girling Res, three on Jan 5th, 6th & 9th.

Middx: Broadwater Lake, juv from Jan 9th-29th, Feb 11th & 18th. Park Royal, one taken into care on Jan 12th. Staines Res/KGV Res, three juvs from 2023 then up to six (adult and at least four juvs) to May 14th, adult on Oct 27th and different adult from Dec 1st-31st, joined by juv from Dec 25th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, juv on Apr 26th (presumed same as Staines Res bird), adult on Oct 25th and Nov 30th (presumed to be same bird but different from Staines Res bird).

Surrey: Island Barn Res, adult and juv from Jan 2nd-7th (possibly same as Staines Res birds).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

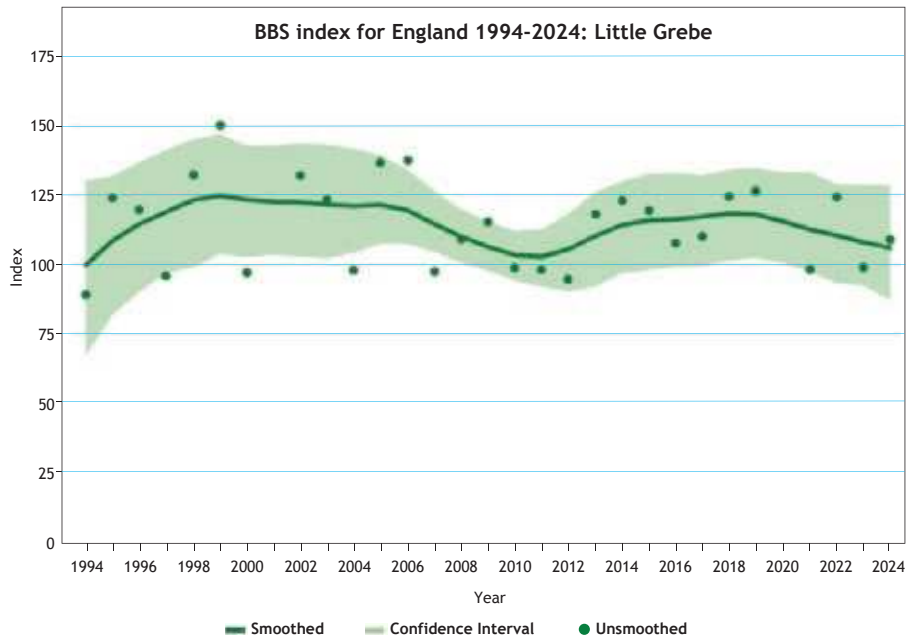
Status: widespread breeding resident on most suitable waters, also passage migrant and winter visitor.

At least 102 pairs/broods were reported this year. At the sites with the highest numbers in recent years, there is no clear trend: Rainham Marshes (four in 2024, no count in 2023, 18 in 2022), Rye Meads (11 in 2024, eight in 2023) and Beddington Farmlands (nine in 2024, five in 2023). There will be vagaries in reporting, however, there seems to be an overall downward trend in the London Area in the last ten years (see table). The trend from the BBS in England has fluctuated with a low around 2011 (see graph).

Little Grebe breeding records (minimum number of pairs/broods/territories) 2015-2024

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
No. of nests	170	152	149	123	112	97	93	121	95	102

Records were received from 149 sites in January and February and 148 sites in



Little Grebe smoothed population trends from 1994-2024 for England. Shaded areas represent 85% confidence intervals. Data from *BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey*.

November and December (155 and 125 in the respective periods last year).

Below 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 for each sector.

Essex: 21 pairs/broods at 15 sites. KGV Res, 26 on Jan 11th. Rainham Marshes (4 broods).

Walthamstow Wetlands (3 broods); 75 on Oct 7th.

Herts: 29 pairs/broods at 14 sites. Hilfield Park Res (3 broods). Rye Meads (11).

Middx: 16 pairs/broods at 14 sites.

Bucks: Two broods at one site.

Kent: Six pairs/broods at four sites. Beckenham Place Park (3).

Surrey: 20 pairs/broods at 17 sites. Beddington Farmlands (9); 26 on August 19th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (3).

In Lond: Eight pairs/broods at six sites. Battersea Park (1 brood). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1). Regent's Park (2 broods). Southwark Park (2 broods). St James's Park (1). Victoria Park (1).

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

In the first winter period, there was probably just one bird at KGV Res and the neighbouring

William Girling Res. Since 2020, they have been seen every year at KGV Res and may involve the same birds. One to two birds is typical; in line with numbers since 2000.

Essex: KGV Res, one on 12 dates from Jan 8th to Mar 21st (D Leach, I Lycett *et al*). William Girling Res, one on Jan 13th and Mar 9th (R Woodward) (presumed same as KGV Res bird).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Status: common breeding resident and winter visitor.

This year, 166 pairs/broods were reported from 88 sites, which is higher than recent years: there were 147 at 96 sites in 2023, 134 at 74 sites in 2022 and 102 at 59 sites in 2021. The highest breeding counts were at North Met Pit with 12 pairs (no count in 2023, 11 in 2022), Hilfield Park Res with eight broods (five in 2023, three pairs in 2022) and Walthamstow Wetlands with seven broods (six in 2023, eight in 2022).

The higher counts this year were recorded at Wraysbury Res, Walthamstow Wetlands and Staines Res, with the highest numbers occurring from August to October. The peak count this year was 276 at Wraysbury Res on September 25th (172 at Q. Mother Res in September 2023). Q. Mary Res has historically been a site with high numbers, but the only count received this year was for February.

Numbers at sites with at least one count of 50 or more are shown in the table. Below

There were more broods this year for the Great Crested Grebes. This one from Walthamstow Wetlands was one of 160 pairs/broods recorded across London. (Liam Harper)



one on Jun 10th. Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross, one on Jun 10th.

Middx: Bury Farm, one on Aug 22nd. Harefield GP, three on May 16th. KGV Res, one on Oct 27th. Staines Moor, one on Sep 13th, ten on Sep 16th and one on Sep 28th. Staines Res, one on Sep 26th, two on Oct 27th and one on Nov 17th. Woodberry Wetlands, one on Oct 19th.

Bucks: Colnbrook, one on Feb 8th. Q. Mother Res, ten on Sep 16th.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, one on Jun 21st.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Mar 23rd, two from Oct 15th-16th, one on 18th and 25th-27th. Island Barn Res, three on Mar 27th. London Wetland Centre, singles on Jan 23rd, Aug 1st and Oct 16th. QE II Res, one on Jul 27th. Richmond Park, one on Sep 2nd.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Status: common breeding resident.

Counts were made at 56 heronries (49 in 2023) and the minimum number of occupied nests was 421 (399 in 2023). We were pleased to receive counts from Brentford Ait (9 nests) and Regent's Park (13 nests) this year after an absence last year, but no counts were received from Bookham Common (16 nests in 2023) and Isleworth Ait (10 in 2023). There were increases at Amwell NR (10 in 2023, 20 in 2024) and Netherhall GP (17 in 2023, 27 in 2024) but at both heronries, the count was closer to the number of nests in 2022. The two largest heronries showed little change: Gatton Park (33 in 2024, 29 in 2023) and Walthamstow Wetlands (28 in both 2024 and 2023). Notable this year were nine new heronries, nearly all solitary nests (indicated by 1st in the sector accounts).

Grey Heron nests 2015-2024

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
No. of nests	366	398	384	459	467	-	393	435	397+	421

There has been a marked change in the size of heronries. This year, the average number of nests per heronry was seven nests, while in 2000 the average was 17. In 2000, Walthamstow Wetlands had one of the largest heronries in the country with 110 nests; and there were another nine heronries with 20 or more nests and just five heronries with one nest. This year, Gatton Park/Lake was the largest heronry with 33 nests and there were another five heronries with 20 or more nests and 14 heronries with one nest.

Outside the breeding season, the peak count was 28 at Beddington Farmlands in September, compared with 34 at Brent Res in December 2023. There was an unusual record of a flock

A Grey Heron with a newt for lunch at Kew Gardens. (Peter Gasson)



of 25 flying SW at Sidcup in October.

Below are breeding records with the number of nests in brackets and significant counts either away from known colonies or outside the breeding season. The LNHS thanks the BTO for permitting the use of data from their Heronries Census.

Essex: Bretons Farm (3:1st). Connaught Water (3). Fairlop Waters (3). Holyfield Lake (4). Netherhall GP (27). Thorndon CP North (5). Valentines Park (6). Waltham Abbey Woods (6). Walthamstow Wetlands (28). Wanstead Flats (1:1st), nest abandoned. Warren Gorge (17), 43 juv.

Herts: Amwell NR (20). Frogmore Lakes (1). Otterspool (1). Seventy Acres Lake (4). Stanborough Lakes (10). Stocker's Lake (23). Tyttenhanger GP (10). Verulamium Park (5).

Middx: Boxer's Lake, Enfield (7). Brent Res (9); 21 on Oct 19th. Broadwater Lake (10). Clissold Park (1:1st). Frays Wildfowl Lake (6). Home Park (2). Hurlingham Park (2). Little Britain Lake (6). Osterley Park (1). Q. Mary GP (6). Red House Res (3).

Bucks: Colnbrook (1:1st).

Kent: Brookmill Park (1:1st). Crossway Lake NR (16). Danson Park (1). Kelsey Park (12). Manor House Gdns (4). Sevenoaks WR (5). Sidcup, 25 SW on Oct 2nd. Swanscombe Marshes (3).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (11); 28 on Sep 23rd. Bookham Common (bred). Brentford Ait (9). Carshalton Ponds (10). Epsom Common (4). Ewell Court Park (3). Gatton Park/Lake (33). Hogsmill NR (1). Leg O Mutton NR (7). Morden Hall Park (5). Richmond Park (6); 21 on Aug 19th. R Thames : Sunbury (1:1st). South Norwood CP (1:1st). Thorpe Water Park (26).

In Lond: Battersea Park (14). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1); 20 on Jul 3rd. Regent's Park (13). Southwark Park (1:1st). Victoria Park (2:1st).

Correction

Since 2017, we have been reporting on heronries at Kempton NR and Red House Res but have now found out that these refer to the same heronry. The number of nests is often different, so we have used the count from the BTO Heronries Census to update the figures in the table. From this report, we will use Red House Res since the heronry is nearest to this site. Before 2014, the heronry was called Kempton Park Res where there were three reservoirs (Kempton Park East, Kempton Park West and Red House). Kempton Park West and East were decommissioned and drained in the 1980s; Kempton Park East has been managed as a nature reserve since 1996 becoming Kempton NR. The heronry was formed in 1942 (*LBR 1945*) and at its peak there were 95 nests in 1961; it has moved once, over the course of 4-5 years between 1988 and 1992 and has been at its current location since then.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Status: scarce vagrant.

There were two accepted records this year; there have now been 33 records in the London Area with 13 since 2000. In the past three years, there has been one record each year. The June record is fairly typical, but it is only the second October record and the latest in that month; there was a November record last year.

One other record appears in App III for which a description would be very welcome.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, imm from Jun 8th-9th (JC Wasse *et al*).

Middx: Ponders End Lake, juv on Oct 27th (A Middleton).

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

Status: scarce but increasing visitor.

There has been an increase in the number of sites this year with 79, the highest ever (59 in 2023, 50 in 2022 and 73 in 2021). There was also an increase in the number of counts with two or more birds, 107 from 17 sites (55 from 18 sites in 2023) with 62 counts from Rainham Marshes alone. The peak count was six at Beddington Farmlands in January and October (21 at Staines Res in October 2023). The monthly occurrence of site records was greatest between September and November; the same as last year. The peak day count for the London Area was on October 3rd when 15 birds were present at five sites.

Great White Egret: number of sites by month

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	12	8	6	4	10	8	4	10	27	26	27	14

Below are counts of more than three, along with summaries from sites that have more than ten records.

Essex: Reported from 16 sites (19 in 2022). Ingrebourne Valley, four on Aug 25th and five on Sep 6th. Rainham Marshes, at least one on many dates from Apr 4th to Dec 20th with five on Oct 5th and four on Oct 12th & 19th. Warren Gorge, four on Oct 3rd, 15th & 24th.

Herts: Reported from 28 sites (12). Aldenham CP, one from Feb 2nd-3rd, up to two on 19 dates from Nov 5th to Dec 31st. Amwell NR, three on Jan 10th, one on nine dates from Jan 14th-31st, singles on Jul 6th, Sep 2nd and Oct 2nd. Rye Meads, five on Jan 10th, singles on Jan 19th, Feb 4th-8th, Jun 10th, up to two on 27 dates from Aug 13th to Sep 24th and one on Dec 31st. Tyttenhanger GP, up to two on nine dates from Jan 4th-19th, singles on May 27th, Sep 28th, Oct 3rd and up to three on ten dates from Nov 27th to Dec 31st.

Middx: Reported from 15 sites (11). Kempton NR, one on Jul 23rd and 12 dates from Sep 6th to Oct 7th.

Bucks: Reported from two sites (4).

Kent: Reported from nine sites (6). Sevenoaks WR, four on Sep 6th.

Surrey: Reported from nine sites (7). Beddington Farmlands, six on Jan 11th, singles on Jan 14th, Mar 26th, three on Apr 24th, one on May 12th, one or more on 11 dates from Aug 31st to Nov 21st with six on Oct 3rd and three on Oct 25th. London Wetland Centre, two from May 11th-12th, singles on May 18th, Jun 13th, five dates from Aug 10th to Sep 22nd and two on Oct 20th. Holmethorpe SP, four on Sep 8th.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

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

Breeding was confirmed from ten sites (9 in 2023): the extra site was Broadwater Lake where we did not receive a count in 2023. There was a total of 72 nests (73 in 2023). Nests can be difficult to survey accurately as they are often hidden in vegetation, which



A fantastic photo of a Little Egret with a big Common Eel. (David Element)

makes the detection of trends difficult. Stocker's Lake may illustrate this problem with counts of ten, three and 11 in the last three years. The largest colony remains at Walthamstow Wetlands (20 in 2024, 22 in 2023) with the next largest being at Warren Gorge (16 in 2024, 8 in 2023).

Little Egret nests 2015-2024

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
No. of nests	51	54	58	68	94	-	84	97	73	72

Outside the breeding season, 53 was the highest count at Rainham Marshes in August (80 at Walthamstow Wetlands in October 2023). David Element's photographic study at Wandle Park (*LBR 2021*) saw egret no. 1 return to the Park for its tenth successive winter. They were reported from nine sites in Inner London (seven in 2023).

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 (3). Ingrebourne Valley, 20 on Aug 13th. Netherhall GP (5). Rainham Marshes, 53 on Aug 14th. Walthamstow Wetlands (20); 39 on Sep 3rd. Warren Gorge (16), 44 juv.

Herts: Aldenham CP, 51 on Nov 11th. Amwell NR (5). Stanborough Lakes (4). Stocker's Lake (11). Tyttenhanger GP, 18 on Dec 31st. Verulamium Park (4).

Middx: Brent Res, 32 on Oct 10th. Broadwater Lake (2+); 33 on Sep 15th. Kempton NR, 15 on Aug 3rd.

This immature Gannet was seen over KGV Reservoir, one of only two records for this species in 2024. (Eugene Dillon-Hooper)



Bucks: Horton GP, 18 on Oct 27th. Wraybury GP, 23 on Oct 2nd.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, 15 on Jul 25th. Kelsey Park (2). Sevenoaks WR, 16 on Dec 14th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 18 at roost on Jan 3rd and Oct 12th. QE II Res, 34 on Aug 1st. Richmond Park, 30 on Aug 21st & 23rd.

In Lond: Battersea Park, one on Aug 11th. Battersea PS, one on Aug 15th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, two on Jul 28th. Limehouse, one on Apr 1st. Regent's Park, eight on Jan 1st, singles on Jul 9th, Sep 18th and two on Oct 15th. South Lambeth, one on May 19th. St James's Park, singles on Mar 30th, Jun 3rd, Sep 19th and Dec 28th. Victoria Embankment Gdns, two on Jun 29th.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Status: scarce visitor.

There were two accepted records this year, one of which was observed at two different localities, with six birds involved in total. An adult and four immatures flew over Richmond Park and Staines Moor on September 28th, and an immature was seen over KGV Res on October 11th.

The dates are typical with 43 of the 64 records since 2000 (61 out of 82 birds) occurring in either September or October.

Essex: KGV Res, one SSW on Oct 11th (E Dillon-Hooper).

Middx: Staines Moor, five SW on Sep 28th (C Jones, RE Innes).

Surrey: Richmond Park, five W on Sep 28th (P Pentek, J Wilczur).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

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

Breeding was reported from six sites this year (seven in 2023) with the total of 210+ occupied nests (250 in 2023). The overall decrease was mainly due to reductions at Q. Mary GP with an estimate of 30 nests (c55 nests in 2023) and Broadwater Lake, where the total of 19+ was a minimum count (30 nests in 2023). The annual counts at Q. Mary GP are highly variable and the change may reflect viewing and counting differences rather than a genuine decline.

The peak count was 1,250 at KGVI Res on September 2nd, an increase from the peak 2023 count of 900 at Staines Res.

Other interesting records included a colour-ringed bird at Coopers Green GP on May 26th, which had been ringed in June 2022 at Hale Duck Decoy in Cheshire and had been reported at Ellenbrook Fields in August 2022.

The table below shows the monthly maxima at sites with larger numbers. Breeding

records (with no. of pairs in brackets) and higher peak counts from other sites (excluding counts of flyovers) are shown below the table.

Cormorant	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Walthamstow Wetlands	65	64	81	35	45	105	120	47	400	250	43	30
Warren Gorge	108	27	-	-	17	11	23	39	77	79	82	94
MX Staines Res	-	1	-	-	-	-	266	330	750	39	-	-
BU Q Mother Res	8	5	6	19	139	20	300	1068	1000	7	3	4
SY Island Barn Res	16	18	7	1	3	11	98	215	124	13	22	39
QE II Res	125	101	65	38	62	37	340	345	320	165	150	135
Walton Res (K&B)	7	6	2	1	13	23	475	300	180	72	2	5

Essex: Holyfield Lake (24); 116 on Oct 21st. Walthamstow Wetlands (105). Warren Gorge (3). William Girling Res, 164 on Sep 20th.

Herts: Amwell NR (29).

Middx: Brent Res, 115 on Jan 14th. Broadwater Lake (19+). KGVI Res, 1,250 on Sep 2nd. Q. Mary GP (c30). Wraybury Res, 175 on Sep 25th.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, c100 on Jan 10th.

In Lond: Battersea Park, 140 on Feb 24th. Regents Park, 110 at roost on Jan 17th.

This beautiful photograph of a Cormorant was taken at Hyde Park in October. (Joe Downing)





Osprey sightings increased this year and this one was spotted in August at Rainham Marshes. (Russ Sherriff)

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Status: scarce passage migrant.

This year, there were judged to be 39 birds, which is higher than the 32 birds in 2023. There were 21 in spring and 18 in autumn. Whilst efforts were made to eliminate duplication, some birds observed at more than one location on the same day may have been the same bird.

The first was on April 1st at Beddington Farmlands (March 19th last year). There were 15 birds in April, five in May and one in June on the 8th. The first in autumn was on August 22nd. There were probably four birds in August (Rainham Marshes and Sevenoaks WR had birds on consecutive days), followed by nine in September and five in October, the last being on 29th (September 23rd last year).

All records are given below.

Essex: Barking Bay/Marsh, one on Apr 24th. Belhus Woods CP, one on May 20th. Dagenham Chase, one on Oct 29th. Green Lane Fisheries, one on Oct 24th. Hangman's Wood, South Ockendon, one on May 29th. KGV Res, one on Sep 24th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Apr 6th, Jun 8th, Aug 27th & 28th and Sep 10th. Walthamstow Wetlands, singles on Apr 19th, Oct 14th & 25th. West Thurrock Marshes, one on Sep 8th.

Herts: Stanborough GP, one on Apr 5th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Apr 18th. Capel Manor College, one on Sep 6th. Hampstead Heath, one on Sep 7th. Hornsey, one on Apr 4th. Kempton NR, one on Apr 27th. Poyle, one on Apr 19th. Staines Moor, one on Apr 15th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, one on Apr 15th.

Kent: East Wickham OS, one on Aug 22nd. Riverhead, one on May 20th. Sevenoaks WR, singles on Aug 30th & 31st. Sidcup, one on Oct 1st.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Apr 1st. Buckland SP, one on Apr 9th. Epsom Downs, one on May 13th. Holmethorpe SP, one on Sep 7th. Island Barn Res, one on Sep 9th. Leg O Mutton NR, one on Aug 31st. Putney, one on May 4th. Richmond Park, singles on Apr 21st and Sep 14th. Tadworth, one on Apr 30th.

In Lond: Regent's Park, one on Sep 1st. Westminster, one on Apr 11th.

Honey-buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Status: scarce visitor.

After a blank year, there was one accepted record in August at Rainham Marshes. In autumn, September is the month with the most records followed by August. There are a number of other records listed in App III for which descriptions would be very welcome.

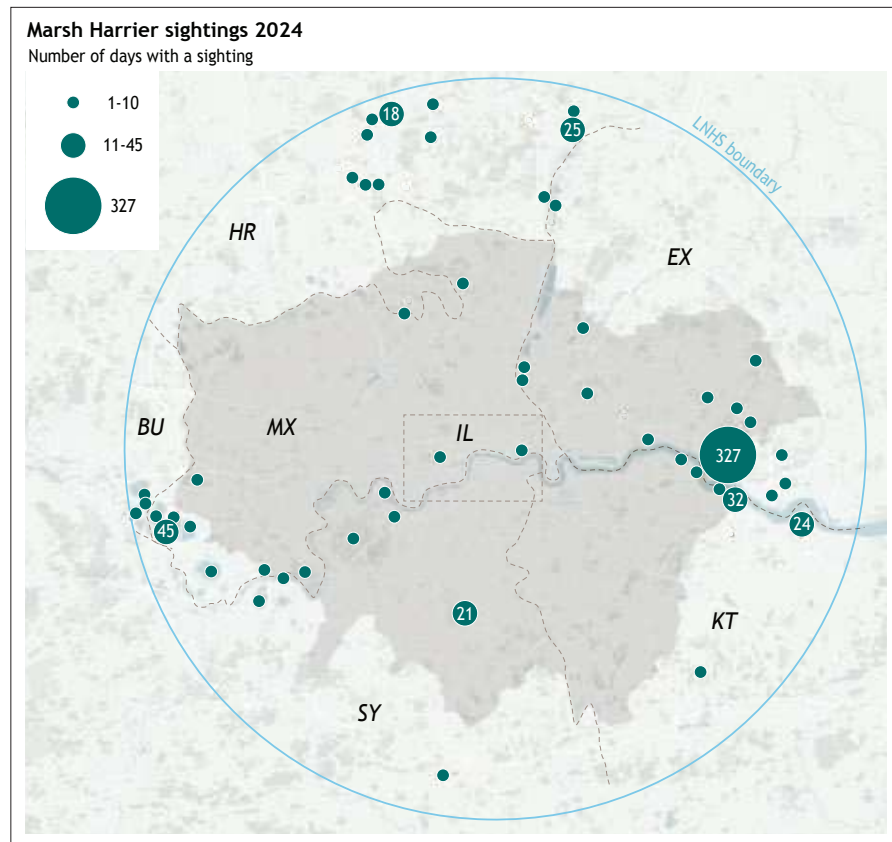
Honey-buzzard arrival dates 2001-2024: 75 records, 77 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	-	-	-	4	20	4	5	11	28	3	-	-
No. of birds	-	-	-	4	22	4	5	11	28	3	-	-

Essex: Rainham Marshes, male on Aug 27th (R Sherriff).

This Honey Buzzard, very rarely seen in London, was photographed in August at Rainham Marshes. (Russ Sherriff)





In Lond: Reported from two sites (none). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Mar 13th. Jubilee Gdns, one on Mar 31st.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

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

This year, there were four one-day records, down from at least eight last year but in line with numbers since 2000 (see table). There are another two reports that appear in App III for which descriptions would be very welcome.

Hen Harrier records 2015-2024

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
No. of records	5	15	4	9	10	2	3	3	8+	4
No. of birds	5	15	4	10	10	2	3	3	8+	4

All records are given below.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, 'ringtail' on Nov 25th (C Quinn). Walthamstow Wetlands, male S on Oct 2nd (S Levy).

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, 'ringtail' N on Apr 27th (R Evershed).

Kent: Crayford Marshes, 'ringtail' on Nov 3rd (A Lawson).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

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

This year, there were over 6,800 records (6,200 last year). As usual, the number of records peaked in spring (see table below). There were 27 counts of 15 or more from 15 sites (19 counts from seven sites in 2023) with three counts of 40 or more: 85 going to roost at a site in the Bucks sector on January 10th, 62 going to roost at a site in the Herts sector on December 16th and 45 at Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross on June 5th.

Red Kite records by month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	676	584	916	813	625	590	393	427	421	505	425	469

Red Kite by sector	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond
Sightings	686	2662	1784	180	518	968	46
Percentage	10	39	26	3	8	14	1

Despite increases in the number of sightings in 2024 and the number of sightings in June compared with 2023, the number of reported territories was lower with 23 (28 in 2023). However there was a small increase in the number of confirmed breeding pairs, from three in 2023 to five in 2024.

Red Kite breeding pairs	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
Sites in June	43	84	62	7	21	54	5	276
Territories	2	10	7	1	1	2	0	23
Confirmed	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	5

In Lond: 54 sightings from 16 sites (23 sightings from 19 sites in 2023) represents a doubling in the number of sightings compared with 2023. There were records in every month of the year, except December. Nearly all sightings were of single birds; but there were seven over University College London on April 23rd - the highest number seen in Inner London (five in June 2021).

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Status: rare vagrant with birds from reintroduction schemes.

This year, two birds were seen, one of which was reported from two locations (none in 2023). The tag on the Island Barn Res bird was read and had been released from the Isle of Wight in 2021; the bird at the London Wetland Centre was presumed to be an Isle of Wight release.

Two White-tailed Eagles were spotted this year in London, including this immature at Island Barn Reservoir in March. (David Harris)



Surrey: Island Barn Res, imm (G542) S at 15:00 on Mar 16th (DM Harris). London Wetland Centre, one W on Sep 18th (K Paton). Sandown Park, imm at 15:05 on Mar 16th (D Spragg) (same as Island Barn Res).

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

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

There were 72 territories reported this year (66 territories in 2023, 79 in 2022 and 65 in 2021), and the number of pairs proved breeding was 16 (20 pairs in 2023, 15 in 2022 and 29 in 2021). The annual variation in these figures probably reflects changes in reporting and interpretation rather than changes in abundance. The Herts sector held the highest totals of territories and proved breeding, in contrast with the previous year when the highest totals were reported from the Essex sector. The highest total of minimum fledged young was also reported for the Herts sector (ten), compared with 2023 when the highest total was for the Surrey sector (eight fledged young).

Buzzard	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
Territories	13	21	16	0	5	17	0	72
Proved	2	10	1	0	0	3	0	16
Young fledged (min.)	5	10	0	0	0	5	0	20

In the first half of the year, there were 29 counts of ten or more from 17 sites with 24 counts between March 8th and May 17th. There were three counts of 30 or more: 40 flew south-west at Richmond Park on March 26th, 34 flew south at Putney on March 30th and 30+ at Richmond Park on May 7th. In the second half of the year, there were 11 counts of ten or more from eight sites with eight counts between September 4th and October 17th. There were five counts of 20 or more: 37 flew north (including 32 in ten minutes) at Beddington Farmlands on September 4th and may have been some of the 25 that flew north at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on the same day; and three counts from Richmond Park, 30+ on October 11th, 20+ on September 14th and 28th.

In Lond: Reported in every month of the year, except January, from 20 sites (16 last year). Most were singles with 25 at Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (see above), six at Victoria Park Gardens on Aug 30th and four at Regent's Park on Apr 8th and Sep 4th.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Status: common winter visitor; scarce breeder.

Reported numbers in the first and last four months of the year were 174 and 191 (154 and 151 in 2023). Records came from 124 sites (compared with 116 last year), including six sites in Inner London (up from four last year). Probable or confirmed breeding was recorded at six sites with ten pairs but there were many more reports of singing males during the breeding season.

Water Rail: winter totals of birds

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	InLond	Total
First winter	52	37	16	3	20	42	4	174
Second winter	50	38	29	1	21	45	5	189



Water Rail numbers were slightly up this year, with breeding reported at six sites. This one is trying out ice skating at Dagenham Chase. (Russ Sherriff)

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.

Essex: Fairplay Farm, Upminster (1). Rainham Marshes, 11 on Feb 10th. Walthamstow Marshes, seven on March 8th. Walthamstow Wetlands, six on Nov 15th and Dec 27th. Warren Gorge (1). West Thurrock Marshes (1).

Herts: Amwell NR, six on Nov 16th. North Met Pit (3). Rye Meads (3); six on Nov 16th & 25th.

Middx: Brent Res, six on Jan 13th. Staines Moor, seven on Nov 11th.

Kent: Swanscombe Marshes, five on Dec 26th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, six on Jan 18th, London Wetland Centre (1); peak of 18 on Dec 15th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), six on Oct 26th.

In Lond: Battersea Park, one on Dec 29th. Hoxton, one injured bird on Nov 13th was taken into care and recovered. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Nov 26th. Kennington, one on Jan 8th. Regent's Park, one reported each month from January to May and November to December. Russia Dock Woodland, two on Feb 24th.

Corncrake *Crex crex*

Status: rare passage migrant.

There were two accepted records in October in Hertford and Shoreditch, albeit only one was seen alive. There have been three previous records this century: August 2010, September 2014 and October 2017.

Herts: Hertford, remains found beneath a Peregrine nest on Oct 24th (A Day).

In Lond: Shoreditch, juv grounded but evaded capture on Oct 3rd (A Miller per P Redmond).



Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Status: very common breeding resident.

Moorhens were reported from 332 sites (compared to 863 in 2023, 300 in 2022), including 24 in Inner London (62 last year). The reason for these changes is almost certainly reporting differences. Evidence of breeding was reported from 132 sites (136 sites last year), including 15 in Inner London (12 last year). The BBS shows a 33% increase in London from 2013-2023.

Below are breeding records (in brackets) from sites with five or more pairs/territories and peak counts from sites with 40 or more.

Islington had a very unusual visitor in October - a Corncrake! (Photo supplied by Paula Redmond)



A Coot with her chick at Maple Lodge Nature Reserve. (Liam Harper)

Essex: Mar Dyke Valley, 48 on Oct 4th. Hollow Pond, 44 on Dec 24th. Walthamstow Wetlands, 100 on Oct 29th. Warren Gorge, 49 on Dec 18th.

Herts: Rye Meads, 60 on Sep 20th. Verulamium Park, 50 on Nov 13th.

Middx: Home Park (8 territories). Town Park, Enfield, 50 on Jan 20th. Stanwell Moor, 43 on Jan 20th. Walpole Park, 41 on Jan 21st.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (23 territories); 70 on Nov 25th. London Wetland Centre (25); 110 on Jan 14th. R Wandle: Butter Hill to Morden Hall Park, 50 on Mar 23rd. R Wandle: Carshalton Ponds to Wandle Creek, 156 on Dec 30th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 50 on June 7th. Regent's Park, 44 on Dec 11th.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Status: very common breeding resident and winter visitor.

Coots were reported from 364 sites this year (767 last year), including 28 in Inner London (93 last year). Like Moorhen, the reason for this decrease is likely to be reporting differences. Breeding was reported at 185 sites (178 last year). The BBS shows a 27% decline in the South East from 2013-2023. The highest count was 1,200 at KGV Res on January 13th, compared to a high count of 749 in 2023.

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: Belhus Woods CP (7). Dagenham Chase (7). Highams Park (7). Holyfield Lake, 678 on Nov 22nd. KGV Res, 1,200 on Jan 13th. Mar Dyke Valley (5). Rainham Marshes, 441

Middx: Ten pairs/territories. Sloemans Farm, 104 on Jan 19th. Staines Moor (3). Staines Res, 110 W on Feb 11th. Stanwell Moor (3)

Bucks: Horton Brook Quarry, 120 on Nov 10th. Q. Mother Res, 220 on Jan 26th.

Kent: Five pairs/territories. Crayford Marshes, 200+ on Jan 1st. Crossness, 111 on Jan 14th and 105 on Dec 10th. Sevenoaks WR, 620 on Jan 14th and 184 on Nov 25th.

Surrey: 16 pairs/territories. Beddington Farmlands (5). London Wetland Centre (4); 101 on Dec 31st. Thorpe Water Park, 141 on Jan 14th. Wey Manor Meadows (3).

In Lond: Burgess Park, two circled the lake on Nov 8th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one low over the Long Water on Jan 29th. Primrose Hill, one over on Nov 13th.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

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

It was another fairly poor year for this declining winter visitor to the London Area, with just 99 records in total with 50 of these from the Essex sector. The highest counts were suggestive of spring passage with 80 seen distantly from Stanborough GP on March 22nd and counts from Little End, Ongar in the last few days of March and early April, which included 250+ on March 31st and 80+ on April 3rd; the latter being the last sighting of

Golden Plover numbers have been declining in the last few years. This one was photographed at the QEII Reservoir in December. (David Harris)



the spring. The first autumn record was of six at Rainham Marshes on August 3rd. In total there were just 22 counts of 20 or more, including only four of at least 50.

The majority of records each year now seem to involve birds passing overhead, including nocturnal records, or short stays during migration or because of cold weather movements. A wintering flock was again present at Fairlop Waters/ Hainault Farm during the second winter period though, and fairly regular reports in the St Albans, Hatfield and Welwyn area of Hertfordshire suggests that area is still being used. Theobalds Park Farm, another previously regular wintering site again produced records in January, but the site is being prepared for development.

Essex: Reported from 11 sites. Fairlop Waters, 22 on Jan 9th and on 15 dates from Nov 8th to Dec 31st with a peak of 27 on Dec 27th. Little End, Ongar, 35+ on Mar 31st, 250+ on 31st, 80+ on Apr 3rd and 50+ on Oct 23rd. Rainham Marshes, up to two on Mar 10th & 13th, six on Aug 3rd and 14 dates from Oct 13th to Dec 28th with a peak of 16 on Nov 14th.

Herts: Reported from eight sites. Nashe's Farm, St Albans, 14 over on Mar 16th. Stanborough GP, feeding flock of 20 from Jan 16th-18th, 34 over on Feb 4th and 80 over on Mar 22nd. Theobalds Park Farm, 21 on Jan 13th & 16th.

Middx: Reported from two sites. Hanwell, six flew W on Oct 18th.

Kent: Reported from two sites. Barn End & Shirehall Farms, Wilmington, 19+ on Jan 19th.

Surrey: Reported from seven sites. Canons Farm, 42+ W at 12:05 on Jan 13th. Rushett Farm, a feeding flock of 22 on Jan 13th.

In Lond: Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, one flew W at 07:53 on Nov 18th.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

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

As usual, there were small numbers recorded from six sites on the Lower Thames during January to March. The vast majority of these were of one or two, but larger numbers were present between January 7th and 13th, with peak counts of 15 at Dartford Marshes on 9th, seven at Rainham Marshes and 11 at West Thurrock Marshes both on 12th. There were also three at Crayford Ness on January 21st. In November and December, up to two were seen at Rainham Marshes and West Thurrock Marshes, except for the highest number of the year, 34 at Rainham Marshes on December 20th.

In spring, 12 sites, including seven away from the Thames, produced records of about 40 individuals between March 16th and June 8th. There was then one at Barking Bay/ Marsh on June 30th, which was potentially the first returning migrant, but no more were seen until nine or ten passed through seven sites, including five away from the Thames, between August 28th and October 27th.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

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

In the first three months of the year, there were records of up to 11 birds from sites on the Lower Thames in the Essex and Kent sectors and a single bird visited Stanborough GP on March 10th. Spring migration then saw about 270 pass through the London Area between April 5th and June 16th, with most records indicating that birds were moving

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

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

After there were no records during 2023, two individuals in the autumn of 2024 were welcome even though they did not linger.

Early in the morning on August 2nd, two flew downriver past Grays Riverside. Another individual was seen almost as fleetingly at Crayford Marshes on September 6th when it briefly touched down on the mud with a flock of Ringed Plovers and Dunlin.

A Sanderling photographed in Walthamstow Wetlands. (Eugene Dillon-Hooper)



Essex: Grays Riverside, two E at 7:35 on Aug 2nd (R Barnes).

Kent: Crayford Marshes, one on Sep 6th (I Stewart).

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Status: rare passage migrant, predominantly occurring during May.

The first record since 2021 of a previously annually occurring passage wader. The date and location are both very typical.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on May 11th (S Levy, B Rumsby, A Self *et al*).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

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

A total of just 69 birds this year compared to 124 in 2023. There were 50 in spring and 19 in autumn, including a late bird in November.

Spring passage began on April 27th with two at Rainham Marshes and another five birds during the first half of May. The main passage occurred during the last two weeks of May with peaks of five at both Barking Bay on May 22nd and Q. Mother Res on May 26th, four at Stanborough GP on May 22nd and three at Rainham Marshes on May 26th. There were three further records in early June including the year's highest count of ten at Barking Bay on 8th.

Returning birds started to arrive on July 13th with one at QE II Res and another three four days later. The following week there was one at Staines Res and two at Rainham Marshes. The rest of the autumn passage remained fairly light with a peak of just four at Q. Mother Res on August 24th; the last birds were on September 14th at Barking Bay and Rainham Marshes, except for one at Q. Mother Res on November 4th.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Status: common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Wintering numbers on the Lower Thames declined sharply from a peak count of 1,800 in 2023 and 1,851 in 2022 to 1,000 in 2024. Since 2000, numbers have always been 1,000 or more with the highest count being 5,000 in the winter of 2002/03.

Dunlin peak site counts along Lower Thames marshes

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Rainham Marshes	1000	560	12	40	200	500
West Thurrock Marshes	870	-	-	-	-	45
KT Crayford/Dartford Marshes	800	327	40	-	120	300
Crossness	1000	-	10	26	800	300
Erith	250	600	-	1	300	500
Swanscombe Marshes	300	3	1	-	6	52

Away from the river there were fewer records than last year with a light passage in both spring and autumn, likely a consequence of fine settled weather that allowed migrants to fly straight over. The highest counts were 60 flying over Canons Farm on a foggy morning on February 17th and 12 at both Stanborough GP on April 28th and QE II Res on May 18th.

Dunlin records away from Lower Thames

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	5	4	12	12	12	3	6	10	4	3	12	4
Minimum no. of birds	5	66	40	60	79	6	14	23	18	4	30	4

In Lond: Bloomsbury, one sound recorded on Dec 3rd.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

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

A total of 11 birds this year compared to ten in 2023 and nine in 2022; six were in spring with five in autumn. The largest flock was four at Stanborough GP in May.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, singles on May 18th, Sep 1st and Nov 5th-9th.

Herts: Coursers Road GP, one on Sep 14th. Stanborough GP, three on May 21st and four on May 22nd.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Aug 29th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on May 22nd. QE II Res, one on Sep 29th.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

Status: rare vagrant.

The wader highlight of the year. It was the third ever record for the London Area and the first since 1987 so it enabled many birders to add this North American wader to their London lists. It was also a first for Rainham Marshes with the two previous records both being in the Staines area. On the second day of its stay, it flew across the river at midday towards Dartford Marshes and was not seen again. All three birds arrived in October (4th, 11th and 30th).

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one from Oct 30th-31st (D Smith *et al.*).

A Little Stint, a scarce passage migrant, was photographed in September at the QEII Res. (David Harris)



Long-billed Dowitcher photographed flying past a Canada Goose at Rainham Marshes - this North American vagrant was the wader highlight of the year. (Russ Sherriff)

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

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

Much more widespread during the first two months of the year than last year with records from 49 sites compared to 38 sites in 2023. The highest count was 17 in the Ingrebourne Valley on New Year's Day flying to roost after spending the night feeding in fields; the highest count since 2000 is 18 in January 2019 at Richmond Park. Elsewhere, there were seven at Cely Woods on January 10th and February 2nd and five in Richmond Park on January 29th.

With migrants starting to head back north in March, there were records from 34 sites, again higher than last year's total of 30. The only count above two was three at Cely Woods. As usual, several were seen in Inner London. The only migrant in April was at Totteridge Valley on the 24th.

Roding birds were recorded at three sites: Ashted Common, the neighbouring Newton Wood and Prince's Coverts, all in the Surrey sector. There was also one at Ash Wood on May 13th, which may relate to potential breeding.

Early returning migrants were seen at Wanstead Flats on August 31st and Bonnetts Wood on September 20th while there were records from a further four sites in October. November saw the main influx, and 56 sites recorded birds in the last two months of the year - about average for the last few years. The highest count was again in the Ingrebourne Valley with 13 flying to roost on December 1st, five at Bonnetts Wood and four in Richmond Park.

In Lond: Guildhall, one on Dec 4th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Mar 30th. Regent's Park, one on Mar 6th. Spitalfields, one found dead on Nov 25th. St Luke's, one on Dec 12th. St Paul's Cathedral, one on Feb 26th. Tate Community Gdn, one on Mar 5th. Victoria, one taken into care on Oct 18th. Victoria Park, one found dead on Mar 21st.



This first summer Franklin's Gull is only the third record for London. It remained on the Thames for five days in July, photographed here at Crossness, before heading to Surrey and Bucks. (Richard Bonser).

Kent: Crossness, 1st-summer from Jul 13th to 17th (C Ellam *et al*).

Surrey: QE II Res, 1st-summer on Jul 18th (DM Harris).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

Status: regular winter visitor, passage migrant and has recently bred. **RBBP**

It was a decent year, with good numbers of wintering birds recorded in both winter periods and a flurry of midsummer juveniles, although the now predictable April passage period that comprised 143 birds was somewhat subdued, the second lowest total since 2019. A second peak in June was significantly more pronounced than previous years and with 123 of 139 birds being from Kent, post-breeding or failed breeding from the Medway colonies seems the most likely explanation.

There were 11 counts of ten or more birds this year (compared with six in 2023 and two in 2022), seven of these from Kent and four from Essex sites. The peak count of 48 at Longfield on June 25th (compared with 25 in 2023) did not fit the recent pattern of April producing the annual high count although early and late spring passage was dominated by sites in the east of the London Area. There was a good pulse of juveniles recorded in July following the year's first at Q. Mother Res on 14th, three days earlier than in 2023. There were again no breeding records, with the species having last bred in 2022.

Mediterranean Gull records

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	26	31	55	143	28	139	61	12	15	10	24	33
No. of sites	20	19	20	18	6	13	15	7	8	7	15	18

In Lond: Seven birds at six sites. Battersea PS, one on Jul 21st. Burgess Park, one on Nov 29th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Feb 15th and adult on Sep 3rd & 7th. Potters Fields Park, adult on Oct 8th. Tate Modern, adult on Mar 14th. Victoria Park, adult on Jan 3rd.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Status: common winter visitor and passage migrant.

It was an average year with 116 counts of 100 or more birds (from 32 sites), compared with 103 (from 32 sites) in 2023 and 75 (from 27 sites) in 2022. There were eight counts of 500 or more birds (compared with 14 in 2023 and two in 2022). This year's maximum count was a healthy 4,600 at Nazeing GP on January 11th, comparing favourably to the 2023 maximum of 1,000 at KGV Res. Numbers at Wanstead Flats, traditionally the best site for the species, were low for a second successive year with 730 on February 6th the highest count there.

The first juvenile was seen at Q. Mother Res on July 9th, over two weeks earlier than last year's first juvenile. Apart from lingering first-summer in low single figures on the Thames, wintering birds departed in the first few days of April and started returning in the last couple of days of August.

Below are the details of peak counts from sites with 100 or more (50 in Inner London).

Essex: KGV Res, 150 on Dec 29th. Nazeing GP, 4,600 on Jan 11th. Parsloes Park, 146 on Dec 23rd. Roding Valley Meadows NR, 300 on Feb 12th. Wake Valley Pond, 100 on Dec 21st. Wanstead Flats, 730 on Feb 6th. William Girling Res, 414 on Feb 11th.

Herts: Amwell NR, 410 on Feb 6th. Barnet, 132 on Feb 14th. Hilfield Park Res, 1,600 on Jan 27th and 1,500 on Dec 31st. Rye Meads, 300 on Nov 15th. Stanborough GP, 100 on Jan 28th.

Middx: Brent Res, 140 on Dec 24th. Bushy Park, 120 on Jan 30th. Home Park, 280 on Mar 8th. Potters Bar, 150 on Feb 27th. Q. Mary Res, 4,100 on Jan 14th. Staines Res, 200 on Jan 20th. Totteridge Valley, 250 on Dec 15th. Yeading Brook Meadows, 210 on Dec 22nd.

Kent: Crayford Ness, 179 on Mar 17th. Kemnal Woods, 100 on Mar 3rd. Lamorbey Park, 200 on Feb 10th. Sidcup, 150 on Feb 14th.

Surrey: Island Barn Res, 115 on Mar 14th. Marden Park Woods, 330 in fields on Mar 3rd. Norbury Park, Leatherhead, 126 on Dec 16th. Priest Hill, 130 on Dec 29th. QE II Res, 400 on Feb 16th. Richmond Park, 300 on Feb 16th. Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough), 205 on Jan 14th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 100 on Dec 21st. St James's Park, 50 on Dec 20th. Tate Modern, 76 on Mar 14th. Wapping, 50 on Feb 13th.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Status: rare passage migrant.

A single adult at Richmond Park on August 14th was the only record this year. There have been 22 records since 2000; an average of one a year. Most have been in spring with only three records in August.

Roseate Tern records 2015-2024: 8 records, 10 birds

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
No. of records	1	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	0	1
No. of birds	1	0	1	0	1	1	4	1	0	1

Surrey: Richmond Park, adult present on Upper Pen Pond on Aug 14th (P Pentek).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Status: common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first spring record was one at Walthamstow Wetlands on March 29th (March 28th in 2023, March 29th in 2022, April 4th in 2021); the only sighting in March. In April, there were two at Rainham Marshes on 2nd and then sightings every day for the rest of the month with the first double-figure count of 11 at Staines Res on 9th and the highest counts, both at Rainham Marshes, of 100 on 25th and 208 on 27th. Birds were seen on every day in May with the highest count of 150 at Rainham Marshes on 3rd. Birds were also seen on every day in June with high counts of 56 on 7th and 59 on 9th, both at Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park.

An estimate of 77 pairs bred at 15 sites, a decline from 83-88 pairs at 20 sites in 2023, 107 at 17 sites in 2022, and 95 at 15 sites in 2021. There were double-figure counts of c20 pairs at Staines Res, c15 pairs at Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park and ten pairs at

Walthamstow Wetlands. Two pairs bred at Woodberry Wetlands for the first time. There was no breeding at the former stronghold of Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) where the colony was devastated by avian influenza in 2023 and also at Rye Meads for the first time since colonisation in 1972.

Autumn passage is difficult to distinguish from post-breeding groups. Counts of over 100 include 100+ at Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park on August 17th, 100 at Rainham Marshes on August 31st and 152 at West Thurrock Marshes on September 1st.



This Common Tern was photographed in July at Walthamstow Wetlands. (Sam O'Donnell)

The highest count of autumn was 181 at Barking Bay/Marsh on August 17th. In October there were single birds at London Wetland Centre on 2nd, Dagenham Chase on 9th, and QE II Res on 10th, three at Rainham Marshes on 13th, and one at Walthamstow Wetlands on 23rd. The last record of the year was at Richmond Park on October 29th.

Below are breeding numbers (pairs shown in brackets) with all records for Inner London.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (1), two fledged. Dagenham Chase (1), young seen. Rainham Marshes (6+). Walthamstow Wetlands (c10).

Herts: Amwell NR (4), 6 young. Seventy Acres Lake (2+), young seen. Stocker's Lake (7), young seen.

Middx: Brent Res (3), young seen. Staines Res (c20), at least five fledged. Woodberry Wetlands (2), two fledged.

Kent: Crossness (2), 3+ fledged young. Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park (c15), 27 recently fledged young. Sevenoaks WR (1), two fledged.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre (1). Richmond Park (2).

In Lond: Brompton Cemetery, one over on Aug 31st. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on May 31st, two on Jul 3rd, one on 7th, nine on 18th, two on 23rd, and two on 28th. Lambeth Bridge, one on Jul 23rd. Limehouse, one on Jun 4th. St James's Park, singles on Jul 6th, 12th, & 21st, Aug 12th and Sep 9th. Tower Bridge, one on Jul 22nd.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Status: regular spring and autumn passage migrant, often in small flocks with numbers varying annually.

The first spring migrants were three at Rainham Marshes on April 8th (April 1st in 2023, April 7th in 2022, April 16th in 2021) followed by one at Wraysbury GP and three at Staines Res on April 9th. They were then seen most days in April with some very high counts of 220 at Staines Res on the 23rd, the highest count of the year, 130 at KGV Res on 27th and 90 at Rainham Marshes also on 27th. In May, they were seen most days until the 14th after which there were just four records, all on 22nd: two at Barking Bay/Marshes, two at Rainham Marshes, one at Staines Res and one at Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough). The monthly peak was 50 at Rainham Marshes on the 3rd. There were no reports in June this year.

Autumn passage began with one at Q. Mother Res on July 2nd followed by singles at Staines Res on July 6th and 11th, four at Barking Bay/Marsh on 12th, one the following day and one at QE II Res on 22nd. Higher numbers were reported towards the end of August with one at Barking Bay/Marsh on 17th, 15 at Staines Res on 25th, then at Rainham Marshes - five on 27th, 25 on 30th and 50 on 31st. Double-figure counts in September were 14 at Rainham Marshes on 2nd, 34 at Barking Bay/Marsh on 5th, 50+ at Rainham Marshes also on 5th and 11 at Barking Bay/Marsh on 6th. The last record was five at Staines Res on September 23rd (November 10th in 2023, October 9th in 2022 September 14th in 2021).

(St James's Park); the highest being 1,040+ there on October 8th.

In respect of breeding records, the 2024 figures were very similar to the previous year. Breeding was confirmed at 11 sites (one up from 2023) and 76 sites recorded probable or possible breeding (ten down).

Below are peak counts from sites recording 150 or more birds (200 in Inner London).

Essex: Beckton Creekside NR, 160 on Feb 4th. Grays, 200 on seven dates throughout year. Rainham Marshes, 157 on Jul 4th. Walthamstow, 200 on Jan 7th. Wanstead Flats, 300 on Jan 16th. West Ham Park, 157 on May 1st.

Herts: Ellenbrook Fields, c200 on Dec 28th. White Heath Farm, Harefield, 150 on Feb 9th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, 213 on Oct 13th. Archway, 250 on Aug 11th. Brent Res, 164 on Sep 8th. Finsbury Park, 270 on May 26th. Hammersmith, 150 on Oct 30th. Isleworth, 180 on Nov 6th.

Kent: Crystal Palace Park, c200 on Jan 19th. Erith Reach, 190 on Jan 19th. Greenwich Park, 150 on Aug 20th. Kelsey Park, c200 on Sep 10th. Swanscombe Marshes, 300 on Nov 4th.

Surrey: Canons Farm, c200 on Jan 22nd. Carshalton Ponds, 200 on Jan 13th, Dec 3rd & 9th. Croydon, c200 on Oct 22nd. Kingston-upon-Thames, 360 on Dec 15th. New Malden, 200 on Dec 20th. Tooting, 168 on Nov 2nd.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 500 on Nov 26th. Paddington Green, 200 on Feb 22nd. Regent's Park, 300 on May 15th. Soho, 300 on Sep 24th. South Bank, 250 on Feb 8th & 29th. St James's Park, monthly peaks of 560 on Jan 30th, 680 on Feb 28th, 560 on Mar 25th, 560 on Apr 25th, 600 on May 28th, 540 on Jun 18th, 780 on Aug 29th, 720 on Sep 17th & 30th, 1,040 on Oct 8th, 680 on Nov 11th. Victoria Park, 200 on Oct 5th & 28th. Weavers Fields, 200 on May 24th.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Status: breeding resident and passage migrant.

In 2024, Stock Doves were reported from 867 sites, a slight increase on the 2023 total of 833 and providing further evidence of the substantial rise in the London Area in recent years of this species. However, sites holding confirmed or probable breeding pairs/territories dropped from 82 to 55 and the number of pairs at those sites from 155 to 115. The BBS shows an increase of 58% in the South East from 2013-2023; given the increase in this species it is hard to reconcile these figures: possibly reporting/interpretation differences?

Also of interest is the fact that, although all the evidence supports the continued spread of this species, only nine sites recorded counts of more than 100 birds (18 in 2023) and only one site recorded 300 birds (Horton Brook Quarry on November 27th). This is in marked contrast to last year, when there were two counts of over 1,000 birds, although it should be noted that both of these flocks were flyovers.

Stock Dove: sites and pairs

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
Sites	120	146	163	11	142	239	46	867
Sites with pairs	15	6	9	1	6	15	3	55
No. of pairs	22	22	18	1	29	21	3	115



A Stock Dove looking contemplative in Wandle Park, Colliers Wood. (David Element)

Below are peak counts from sites with 50 or more birds (25 for Inner London).

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley, 100+ on Dec 4th. Lee Valley Riding Centre, 59 on May 26th. Manor Farm, Upminster, 137 on Aug 28th. Orsett Fen, 133 on Feb 22nd. Pinches Trust, 60 on Aug 31st. Walthamstow Marshes, 50 on Apr 7th.

Herts: Aldenham, 60+ on Sep 22nd. Bishop's Wood, 50 on Aug 5th. Coopers Green GP, 50 on Aug 3rd. Letchmore Heath, 72 on Jun 6th. North Mymms Park, c100 on Feb 3rd. Potters Crouch, 138 on Mar 31st. Praewood Farm, 60 on Apr 4th. Tyttenhanger GP, 200 on Apr 28th. Wildhill, c90 on Dec 23rd.

Middx: Knightscode Farm, c60 on Mar 12th. Osterley Park, 70 on Nov 2nd. Park Farm,

Herts: Reported from 44 sites. Hatfield Park (1). Mymmshall Wood, North Mymms, five on Aug 31st. Potters Crouch Plantation (1). Rye Meads (1).

Bucks: Reported from two sites.

Middx: Reported from 53 sites.

Kent: Reported from 42 sites. Shrewsbury Park, four on Sep 24th.

Surrey: Reported from 69 sites. Juniper Top, eight on Oct 10th. Putney Lower Common (1). Richmond Park (8+). Stambourne Woodland Walk (1). Weybridge (1).

In Lond: Reported from six sites. Battersea Park (1), two young fledged, one on Aug 15th and up to two in October and December. Holland Park, one on Jan 29th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Jan 20th and Dec 27th. Kensington, one on May 11th. Regent's Park, one on Aug 29th. St James's Park, one on Sep 10th.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Status: localised breeding resident.

Records were received from 107 sites, more than in 2023 (99) and 2022 (100). Breeding was confirmed from ten sites with 25 pairs (eight pairs in 2023) and at least another 26 pairs probably bred (five in 2023), giving a total of 51 pairs (13 in 2023 and in 2022). This year's breeding results were much higher because a comprehensive survey was carried out at Richmond Park, which found 37 territories with at least 16 broods comprising a minimum of 29 young. A previous survey in 2008 found 30 territories with 18 pairs confirmed to have bred. Apart from specific surveys, any annual variation may be due to differences in and the interpretation of breeding status. 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. It is unclear whether any real change has occurred during recent years but no decline appears to have occurred at Richmond Park. The BBS shows a decline of 52% from 2013-2023 in England,.

The number of sites where they were reported for each sector with confirmed breeding pairs (number in brackets), high counts from sites with four or more birds outside the breeding season and all records from Inner London are shown below.

Essex: Reported from 14 sites. Bonnetts Wood (1). Walthamstow Wetlands (1). Wanstead Flats, four on Oct 14th.

Herts: Reported from 19 sites. Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross (1).

Middx: Reported from 29 sites. Pitshanger Park, Ealing, four on Feb 15th. Totteridge Valley (1); nine on Mar 3rd. Walpole Park (1).

Bucks: Reported from one site.

Kent: Reported from eight sites.

Surrey: Reported from 31 sites. Canons Farm (1). Holmethorpe SP (1). Richmond Park (16+); five on Sep 28th. Slyfield Farm, Fetcham (1).

In Lond: Reported from five sites. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1), one or two reported in every month except April, May and August. Kensington, one on May 3rd. London Zoo, one on Jul 24th. Marylebone, one on May 15th. Regent's Park, one or two throughout January to May and September to December, probably bred.



A Little Owl, photographed in November in Richmond Park. (Liam Harper)

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

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

There was just one record in January at a site where breeding has been attempted in the past (three or four birds at two sites in 2023, eight birds at four sites in 2022 and eight birds at three sites in 2021).

Kent: Site B, one roosting on Jan 7th.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

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

There were reports from 30 sites, the same as in 2023 (30) but more than in 2022 (18). Between January and March, they were seen at 13 sites and between September and December, they were seen at 15 sites.

The Lesser Spotted Woodpecker is a scarce and declining species, with records from only 24 sites this year. This one was photographed in Richmond Park in March. (Joe Downing)



2020). They were seen at more sites north of the Thames (six in Essex, eight in Herts and one in Middlesex) than south of the Thames (two in both Kent and Surrey). This year, breeding was confirmed at three sites; all in Essex, which was the highest confirmed number since 2011 (there was one confirmed in 2023 and two pairs probably bred in 2022). Most records were of single birds with two or more birds being reported at two of the breeding sites and at Richmond Park (four in 2023, two in 2022 and three in 2021), although at Richmond Park, both were reported as females. Birds were recorded in all months of the year and were present at the largest number of sites in May. The peak occurrence in the year appears to be later than in previous years and there were more summer records.

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	3	3	6	7	8	3	1	2	3	1	1	3

Essex: Site A (1), juv seen in June and July. Site C (1+), pair seen carrying food, another pair present. Site D (1), juv seen in June. Clay Tye Wood, one drumming on Apr 29th. Pages Wood, one on May 6th. Wake Valley Pond, one on May 26th.

Herts: Cassiobury Park, one on Jan 10th. Moor Park GC, Northwood, one drumming on Jan 14th. Northaw Great Wood, one drumming on Apr 4th. Panshanger Park, one on Sep 8th. Radlett, singles on Jun 16th and Sep 4th. Stanborough GP, male on Mar 11th. Troy Mill Lake, one on Feb 28th.

Middx: Isleworth, one on Mar 19th. Potters Bar, one on May 30th.

Kent: Foots Cray Meadows, singles on Apr 16th and May 13th. Joyden's Wood, one on Dec 23rd.

Surrey: Richmond Park, up to two on 30 dates from Feb 7th to May 17th, singles on Aug 14th, Oct 3rd, Nov 9th, Dec 15th & 21st (all records where sex is noted were of one or two females). Tolworth Court Farm, one on May 10th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Status: common breeding resident.

Birds were reported from 1,151 sites, more than the 1,066 sites in 2023 and 840 sites in 2022. There were 89 confirmed breeding pairs with at least another 54 territories making a total of 143 confirmed or probably breeding (144 in 2023 and 122 in 2022). Breeding is undoubtedly under-recorded as birds were present at many sites throughout the year and there were no territory counts from some of the sites where they are usually reported. The BBS shows an increase of 89% in London from 1995-2023.

Below is the number of sites where they were reported for each sector, with breeding records for sites where two or more pairs were reported (no. of pairs confirmed and/or probably bred in brackets), some of the higher counts and a summary of records for Inner London.

Essex: Reported from 186 sites. Hainault Forest CP, 10 on Mar 14th. Thorndon CP South (6). Walthamstow Wetlands (2).

Herts: Reported from 159 sites. Maple Lodge NR (2). St Albans (2). Wildhill, 11+ on May 23rd.

Middx: Reported from 266 sites. Hampstead Heath (3). Millfields Park, Clapton (2).

Bucks: Reported from 16 sites.

Kent: Reported from 186 sites. Beckenham Place Park, 12 on Jun 13th. Foots Cray Meadows (3). Petts Wood and Hawkswood NT (2).

Surrey: Reported from 278 sites. Arbrook Common (3). Ashted Common (6). Banstead Wood (7). Canons Farm (2). Littleworth Common (6). Molesey Heath (2). Oxshott Heath (2). The Ledges, Esher (4). West End Common (2).

In Lond: Reported from 60 sites. Brompton Cemetery, up to three from March to May. Burgess Park, one on nine dates from Jan 22nd to May 31st with three on Jan 31st and one on Dec 12th & 26th. Holland Park, three on Mar 9th and Apr 28th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1), recorded in every month of the year with seven on Mar 26th. Primrose Hill (1). Regent's Park (1), recorded in every month of the year with six on Sep 21st & 25th. Russia Dock Woodland, recorded in every month except March. Southwark Park, recorded in every month except April. St James's Park, recorded in every month of the year.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Status: common breeding resident.

Birds were reported from 808 sites, more than the 750 in 2023 and 619 in 2022. There were 29 confirmed breeding pairs plus another 50 territories making a total of 79, down from 85 in 2023 and 93 in 2022. Breeding numbers were probably higher than reported as birds were present during the breeding season at many other sites. The BBS shows a decrease of 41% in London from 2013-2023.

Below is the number of sites where they were reported for each sector, with breeding records for sites where two or more pairs were reported (no. of pairs in brackets), some of the higher counts and a summary of records for Inner London.

Essex: Reported from 153 sites. Ingrebourne Valley, eight on Jan 7th. Thorndon CP South (5).

Herts: Reported from 135 sites. Bedmond (2). Tyttenhanger GP, eight on Jul 28th.



This wonderful photograph of a Green Woodpecker shows its colourful plumage well, especially contrasted against the grey background. (Liam Harper)

Middx: Reported from 182 sites. Bushy Park, nine on Feb 11th. Home Park (8); ten on Feb 10th.

Bucks: Reported from 14 sites.

Kent: Reported from 120 sites. Beckenham Place Park, nine on Aug 7th & 14th. Fots Cray Meadows (2). Lullingstone Park (2).

Surrey: Reported from 193 sites. Canons Farm (2). Oxshott Heath (2). Richmond Park, nine on Jul 22nd.

In Lond: Reported from 11 sites. Battersea Park, up to two from February to April and December. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, recorded in every month of the year with five on Mar 30th and four on several dates. Regent's Park (1), recorded in every month of the year with four in January and March.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Status: uncommon breeding resident.

Kestrels were reported from 763 sites, a substantial increase from the 679 in 2023. The number of confirmed breeding pairs was 33, compared with 20 in 2023 and 25 in 2022. The total number of additional territories was 55 (53 in 2023 and 85 in 2022). These figures fluctuate from year to year, and the changes may be at least partly due to

differences in reporting. The highest count was 20 at London Wetland Centre on March 4th and April 1st.

As usual, the vast majority of prey items noted were small rodents and insects.

Kestrel	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Totals
Territories	22	13	18	1	11	20	3	88
Proved	8	4	8	0	5	6	2	33

In Lond: Reported from 28 sites, compared with 35 in 2023.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Status: scarce migrant and winter visitor.

There were 25 accepted records from 11 sites this year, compared with 12 records from eight sites last year. The Lower Thames accounted for 12 records (11 from Rainham Marshes) where we have not given the observer for clarity and where no description is required. Other records appear in App III for which descriptions would be very welcome.

Essex: Barking Bay/Marsh, one on Aug 31st. Mar Dyke Valley, one on 5th Mar (R Barnes). Rainham Marshes, singles on Jan 31st, Mar 6th, Aug 26th & 28th, Sep 1st, 12th, 18th & 20th, Oct 15th, Nov 1st & Nov 12th.

Herts: Mill Green, one on Nov 2nd (A Miller). Stanborough GP, male on Feb 22nd & 23rd (R Evershed, B Fagan), female on Mar 12th (R Evershed) and juv on Sep 16th (R Evershed). Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross, female on Jan 21st & 24th (S Carter).

Kent: Shirehall Farm, Wilmington, female on Mar 17th (I Stewart).

Middx: KGVI Res, one on Mar 12th (RE Innes), Staines Moor, one on Jan 13th (RE Innes)

Surrey: Headley Heath, female on Oct 26th (S Gale, G Hay). Richmond Park, one on Oct 27th (R Kaye, P Pentek).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Status: breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. **RBBP**

Records were received from 271 sites this year, compared to 309 in 2023. Between June and July, the species was reported from 126 sites, with multiple sightings on given days from 48 of these. Breeding was confirmed from 18 sites, compared with 12 in 2023. The number of additional territories was 26, compared with 20 in 2023, but many sites lacked consistent coverage, so it is difficult to accurately evaluate the breeding season.

The first bird of the year was at Ongar Park Wood on March 30th (March 23rd last year). The largest spring count was 11 at both Rainham Marshes on May 4th and Rye Meads on May 5th. Autumn passage saw birds recorded every day through August and September, with the largest count being five at Wanstead Flats on August 20th, and five at Staines Moor on September 15th. Sightings fell away rapidly in October, with the last bird recorded on the 28th at Rainham Marshes.

Hobby	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Totals
Territories	9	5	11	1	5	11	2	44
Proved	4	1	5	1	0	6	1	18

In Lond: 18 records from two sites with one confirmed breeding at site A.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Status: rare passage migrant.

A single bird stayed for four days on Staines Moor in September, the most common month to see this rare passage migrant. One record a year is in line with the recent average.

Red-backed Shrike arrival dates 1990-2024: 42 records, 42 birds

Month	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
No. of records	8	5	6	6	14	2	1

Middx: Staines Moor, a 1st winter/juvenile from Sep 14th-17th (RE Innes, K Purdey et al).

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*

Status: rare vagrant.

Two birds were seen, the first sightings of this species in the London Area since one in Richmond Park in 2005. They are only the third and fourth records this century and the 14th and 15th records since 1934.

The first record was a first-summer male at Beddington Farmlands for a single day in April and the second was an adult bird present for two days at Rainham Marshes in May,

*This Woodchat Shrike was one of two seen in the LNHS Area, the first records since 2005. This photograph was taken at Rainham Marshes in May.
(Richard Bonser)*



described and photographed by many observers. April and May are the most common months to see this rare vagrant.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, female from May 3rd-4th (RSPB et al).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, first-summer male on Apr 12th (M Bravery et al).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

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

There were 21 reports of confirmed breeding at 19 sites, in line with last year, and the 42 reports of probable breeding was slightly above the average of recent years. In addition, observations of non-breeding birds tended to be higher, particularly in the Inner London and Middlesex sectors. A pair at Springwell Lake were seen mobbing a Tawny Owl and two in Trent Park mobbed a perched Buzzard in the company of a Magpie.

Below are records for sites where breeding was confirmed or territories surveyed (in brackets), and peak non-breeding counts of ten or more (five or more in Inner London). Breeding records are likely to be under-recorded so territories and confirmed number should be considered as minima.

Essex: Bonnetts Wood (1), Cely Woods (1). Manor Farm, Upminster (1). Mar Dyke Valley (3), ten on Sep 16th. Walthamstow Marshes (1). Walthamstow Wetlands (1).

Herts: Cassiobury Park, ten on Sep 28th. Eastbury, 11 on Oct 7th. Ellenbrook Fields, 11 on Sep 20th and Oct 4th. Munden Estate, 20 on Sep 28th. Pynesfield Lake (1). Rye Meads (1 territory). Seventy Acres Lake (1); ten on Oct 13th. Tyttenhanger GP, 11 on Oct 20th. Wildhill, ten on Oct 7th.

Middx: Abney Park Cemetery, ten on Mar 16th. Alexandra Park (1). Boxer's Lake (1). Hampstead Heath, 25 on Sep 21st. Home Park (4 territories). Lammas Park, Ealing (1). Queens Wood, 14 on Apr 16th. Totteridge Valley, 25 on Oct 11th. Trent Park (1); 14 on Oct 15th. Whitewebbs Wood (1). Wormwood Scrubs, 12 on Sep 28th.

Bucks: Langley Park, ten on Oct 6th.

Kent: Beckenham Place Park (1). Elmstead Wood, ten on Oct 16th. Riverhead (1). Sevenoaks WR, 19 on Jul 3rd.

Surrey: Addlestone (1). Arbrook Common (1+ territories). Ashted Common (3 territories); 12 on Oct 18th. Banstead Wood, 20+ on Sep 21st. Bookham Common, 12+ on Mar 21st. Canons Farm, 20+ on Oct 3rd. Kew Gdns, 17 on Oct 15th. Molesey Heath (1+ territories). Richmond Park, 51 on Sep 28th. Riddlesdown, 14+ on Sep 26th. Tulse Hill (1). Wandsworth Common (1).

In Lond: Reported from 78 sites (62 in 2023). Battersea Park, six on Sep 22nd. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 12 on Jan 19th. Hammersmith Cemetery, five on Jan 15th. Regent's Park (1); 21 on Oct 2nd. Russia Dock Woodland, seven on Jan 9th and Jun 22nd. St James's Park, five on April 25th. Victoria Park, eight on Oct 5th.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Status: abundant breeding resident.

The highest count was 130 at the roost at Barn Hoppitt in January. This was the first

35 on Apr 6th. Limehouse, 40 on Sep 30th. Regent's Park (bred); 46 on Apr 8th. St Katherine Dock's (bred). St John's Garden (bred). Tate Modern (2). Weavers Fields (bred).

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Status: rare autumn and winter visitor, scarce breeder. **RBBP**

Birds were reported at ten sites (11 in 2023). Birds were seen at three sites in the first two months of the year and at seven sites in the last two months, also similar to 2023.

Breeding was confirmed at Rainham Marshes but there were no estimates of the number of breeding pairs there (ten in 2023 and seven in 2002). Two birds were present at Swanscombe Marshes in May where they bred last year.

All records are given below, summarised for some sites.

Essex: Dagenham Chase, one on Oct 21st. Mar Dyke Valley, one on Nov 13th. Rainham Marshes (bred); seen in every month, with 14 on Oct 25th.

Herts: Rye Meads, up to four from Oct 23rd-26th and one on Nov 9th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, one on Dec 20th. Crossness, singles on Jan 2nd, Sep 4th, and Oct 4th, down from 13 dates in 2023. Swanscombe Marshes, two on May 2nd & 5th, two on Sep 13th, one on Oct 11th and three on Dec 11th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, pair on five dates from Nov 1st to Dec 3rd, male on five dates. Hogsmill OS, pair on Oct 27th. London Wetland Centre, up to two from Jan 4th to Apr 7th and Nov 9th to Dec 29th.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

Status: scarce passage migrant and former rare breeder. **RBBP**

There were eight records of ten birds at eight sites (eight at seven sites in 2023, four at four in 2022). For the seventh year running, there was no confirmed or probable breeding. Apart from one spring and one winter sighting, all were in September and October. Singles were seen at two sites on September 29th. All records were of singles apart from three at Rainham Marshes on October 5th.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, three W on Oct 5th (S Levy). Wanstead Flats, one SE on Sep 28th (R Vaughan *et al*).

Herts: North Mymms Park, one SW on Sep 29th (R Evershed).

Middx: Hampstead Heath, one on Oct 11th (N Lindstrom). Hanwell, one E on Sep 29th (D Brasier).

Kent: between Otford to Filston, one S on Dec 5th (D Campbell).

Surrey: Colley Hill, one SW on Oct 4th landed briefly (S Gale). QE II Res, one on May 9th observed on the ground for ten minutes (DM Harris).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Status: common breeding resident and passage migrant.

There were 17 winter flocks of 50 or more at just five sites (compared with 16 at 14 sites in 2023). Eight of these were in the first winter period. The highest count was 255+ at Canons Farm on January 8th.

A minimum of 407 territories was counted or suspected (compared with 341 in 2023



Skylark numbers were at their highest in 15 years this year. This one was seen in Staines Moor. (Joe Downing)

and 303 in 2022) from 107 sites (73 in 2023 and 81 in 2022). These are the highest counts for territories and sites for at least 15 years, partly a reflection of increased observer coverage, especially in the Essex and Kent sectors. The largest number was at Orsett Fen (38 territories).

Once again, autumn passage was very light with 70 SW at Canons Farm on Oct 30th, the only count larger than 50.

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

Essex: 169 territories at 23 sites (116+ at 14 in 2023). Brook Farm, Upminster (6). Fairlop Waters (8). Fairplay Farm, Upminster (12). Fen Lane, Upminster (11). Hainault Farm (12). Hainault Forest: regeneration area (5). Manor Farm, Upminster (9). Orsett Fen (38); 52 on Mar 24th. Patmore's Field, Sewardstone (5). Rainham: Stone Barges (6). Rainham Marshes (10); 65 on Mar 20th. Warley Street (6). West Horndon (12+).

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (2). Cely Woods (1). Dagenham Chase (2). Fairlop Waters (1). Manor Farm (2). Rainham Marshes, 19 on Sep 7th. Sewardstone Marsh (1).
Herts: Birch Wood (1). Broxbourne Woods (1). Chiswell Green (1). Ellenbrook Fields, four on Apr 18th. Frogmore Lakes (1); four on Apr 21st. Hilfield Park Res, five on Apr 14th. Redwell Wood Farm, four on Aug 25th. Seventy Acres Lake (1). St Albans (2). Watford, four on Mar 18th.
Middx: Hackney Marsh (1). Hampstead Heath (1); 15 on Aug 18th. Totteridge Valley (1).
Bucks: Langley Park (1). Wraybury GP, three on Mar 31st.
Kent: Crayford Marshes, four on Apr 18th & 19th. Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park, four on April 1st. Long Reach SF, four on Jun 6th.
Surrey: Ashted Common (2). Banstead Wood (1). Richmond Park, 17 on April 10th. Wimbledon Common (1).
In Lond: Reported from 17 sites. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, seven on Apr 18th. Regent's Park, six on Apr 11th.

Chiffchaff Phylloscopus collybita

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

Birds were reported from 147 sites in the months of January and February of 2024, marking a further increase from the 126 in 2023. This continues the rising trend as this number has increased from 58 in 2018. The highest counts in this period were 41 at Troy Mill Lake on January 22nd, 30 at Broadwater Lake on January 11th and 20th, at Beckton Creekside NR on January 28th, and at Walthamstow Wetlands on February 28th.

At sites where we have breeding evidence this and last year: 20 show an increase, 12 no change and 12 a decrease. The BBS shows a 65% increase in London from 2018-2023, so this is in line with the records we received over the course of 2024.

In November and December, birds were recorded at 194 sites this year, an increase from the 138 in 2023. High counts were at Walthamstow Wetlands, with 29 on November 2nd, and 24 birds at Rye Meads on December 14th. These numbers are reminiscent of previous high counts for these months.

Below are breeding records for sites where five or more pairs were reported (no. of territories in brackets), some high counts, and a summary of all Inner London breeding records:

Essex: Belhus Woods (7+). Bonnetts Wood (8). Cely Woods (7). Mar Dyke Valley (12). North Weald Bassett (6). Orsett Fen (11). Rainham Marshes, 48 on Aug 30th. Walthamstow Marshes (17). Walthamstow Wetlands (11+). Wanstead Flats (c16). Wanstead Park (5). Waterworks NR (7+).
Herts: Colney Heath (6+). Frogmore Lakes (18). Rye Meads (32), 80 on Sep 21st. Stocker's Lake (6+). Troy Mill Lake, 41 on Jan 22nd.
Middx: Hatherop Conservation Area (6). Home Park (27). Hounslow Heath (10). Staines Moor (7+). Tottenham Marshes (37). Totteridge Valley (10); 40 on Sep 24th.
Bucks: Wraybury GP, 16 on Mar 31st.
Kent: Foots Cray Meadows, c30 on Sep 7th. Scadbury Park (12).
Surrey: Arbrook Common (10). Ashted Common (44). Banstead Wood (20+). Beddington



Chiffchaff singing at the Grey Towers Allotments in Hornchurch. (Russ Sherriff)

Farmlands (15); 49 on Sep 16th. Bookham Common (7+). Buckland SP (8). Canons Farm (9+). Esher Common (10). Headly Heath (14). Holmethorpe SP (9). Littleworth Common (6). London Wetland Centre (14). Molesey Heath (19). Richmond Park (10+). The Ledges, Esher (17). West End Common (12).
In Lond: Battersea Park (3). Burgess Park (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2). Mile End Park (1). Regent's Park (2+); 19 on Mar 20th. Russia Dock Woodland (1+). Southwark Park (1). Victoria Park (1+).

Essex: 79 sites. 12 territories. Bentley, seven on Nov 28th. Hainault Forest CP, eight on Mar 8th. Leyton Flats (5). Thorndon CP South (3).

Herts: 113 sites. Five territories. Northaw Great Wood, nine on Feb 14th and Jun 6th, 14 on Aug 30th.

Middx: 130 sites. 16 territories. Hampstead Heath, eight on Feb 19th. Totteridge Valley, seven on Apr 1st and eight on Aug 8th. Trent Park (2).

Bucks: 11 sites. One territory.

Kent: 115 sites. 13 territories. Beckenham Place Park, eight on Jan 4th. Bexley Park Woods (2). Fooths Cray Meadows (2). Keston Common, 11 on Mar 3rd, eight on Mar 23rd and nine on Dec 15th. Riverhead (2).

Surrey: 198 sites. 33 territories. Banstead Wood (16); 14 on Nov 26th. Bookham Common (2). Broadwater Farm, Weybridge, eight on Apr 11th. Canons Farm (4).

In Lond: Seven sites. Two territories. Battersea Park, up to three throughout the year. Holland Park, singles on Jan 29th and Jun 1st. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns up to two from January to April and one on Aug 25th. Regent's Park (2). Russia Dock Woodland, one on Feb 3rd. St James's Park, singles on Jun 21st, Nov 2nd & 10th. Victoria Park, up to two from January to May.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Status: common breeding resident.

Reports came from 341 sites, which is an increase compared to recent years (317 in 2023, 214 in 2022). There were 33 territories, down from the 41 territories reported from last year, and the 39 in 2022. In Inner London, they were reported from seven sites (7 in 2023, 3 in 2022).

Below are sector totals for the number of sites where reported and number of territories (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus some of the higher counts and Inner London records.

Essex: 66 sites. Two territories. Ongar Park Wood, eight on Feb 24th and six on Apr 2nd. Thorndon CP South (2).

Herts: 68 sites. Seven territories. Cassiobury Park (1). East End Green Landfill (1). Foxholes GP (1). North Mymms Park (1). Northaw Great Wood (1); 15 on Mar 16th, nine on Mar 17th and six on Mar 20th. Rye Meads (1).



A fantastic photo of a Treecreeper with an unfortunate money spider. (Liam Harper)

Seventy Acres Lake (1).

Middx: 54 sites. 13 territories. Bushy Park (1). Grovelands Park (1). Hampstead Heath (1); six on Jan 7th and eight on Jun 1st. Home Park (1). Monken Hadley Common (1). Ruislip Woods, six on Jun 24th. Totteridge Valley, seven on Jun 9th and six on Aug 1st. Trent Park (6). Whitewebbs Park (2).

Bucks: Four sites. No territories.

Kent: 54 sites. Three territories. Chislehurst Common (1). Riverhead (1). Sevenoaks WR (1).

Surrey: 88 sites. Seven territories. Ashted Common (1). Beverley Brook, six on Dec 30th. Buckland SP (1); six on Sep 6th. Esher Common (1). Headley Heath (1). Richmond Park (1). The Ledges, Esher (1). West End Common (1).

In Lond: Seven sites. One territory. Battersea Park, one on Jun 16th. Bunhill Fields Burial Ground, one on Jan 14th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1). Meanwhile Gdns, North Kensington, one on Jan 20th. Regent's Park, singles on May 5th & 11th and Jun 10th. Victoria Park, one on Jan 12th. Weavers Fields, one on May 28th.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Status: common, but continued declining, breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

This year, the largest flock was an estimated 5,960 going to roost at Rye Meads on November 13th. This is the largest flock since 8,000 at Rainham Marshes in 2011. Large flocks were once again seen going to roost at the old landfill at Rainham Marshes, where there were peaks of 3,000 in July and 5,000 in November.

Passage over London was light this year. It was most noticeable from October 24th to November 13th. The peak date was November 1st with a summed total of 1,340 flying across four sites. Additional migration records stating the numbers and direction of travel would be welcome for future years.

The BBS shows a decrease of 38% in London from 2013-2023.

Below are some of the highest counts and some breeding records.

Essex: KGV Res, 1,500 on Nov 30th and 1,000 on Dec 9th. Rainham Marshes, monthly peaks of 500 on Jan 13th, 600 on Feb 4th, 650 on Mar 13th, 200 on Apr 6th, 3,000 on Jul 28th, 1,000 on Aug 3rd and 5,000 on Nov 29th. Orsett Fen (7). Wanstead Flats, 250 NW on Nov 1st. Walthamstow Wetlands (10). West Horndon, 1,080 on Jan 7th.

Herts: Rye Meads, eight counts of over 1,000 (five over 3,000) in November with peak of 5,960 on 13th. Tyttenhanger GP, 2,500 on Aug 16th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, 313 NW on Nov 13th. Heathrow Airport, 750 on Jul 23rd. Home Park (4); 500 on Feb 10th & 19th. Totteridge Valley, 313 SW on Nov 3rd.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, 1,500 on Aug 19th. Riverhead (6).

Surrey: Arbrook Common (19). Beddington Farmlands, monthly peaks of 500 on Jan 3rd, 1,000 on Jul 14th, 500 on Oct 12th and 400 on Nov 4th. Little Woodcote, 130 W on Oct 25th. Richmond Park, 1,045 on Nov 1st. Slyfield Farm, Fetcham (10).

In Lond: Breeding noted at the following locations: Blackfriars Bridge, Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, King's Cross Station, Paddington Green, Regent's Park, St James's Park, Tate Modern, Tower of London and Vauxhall Pleasure Gdns.

London Area, and high counts of six were recorded at Wanstead Flats on August 30th and Hampstead Heath on September 1st. The last bird of the year was at Alexandra Park on October 10th.

Below are breeding records (no. of pairs in brackets), number of sites with records in spring/autumn, highest counts in the sector and all Inner London records.

Essex: Spring five sites, autumn 17 sites. Wanstead Flats, six on Aug 30th. Thorndon CP South (1).

Herts: Spring two sites, autumn 15 sites. Park Wood, Potters Crouch, three on Aug 25th. Whippendell Wood (1).

Middx: Spring three sites, autumn 12 sites. Hampstead Heath, six on Sep 1st.

Kent: Spring four sites, autumn five sites. Sevenoaks WR, two on Jul 14th and Aug 1st.

Surrey: Spring four sites, autumn 13 sites. Richmond Park, two on Aug 18th and 28th.

In Lond: Spring three sites, autumn eight sites. Brompton Cemetery, one on Aug 25th. Camley Street Natural Park, one on Aug 7th. Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, one on Aug 26th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Apr 29th, May 4th & 6th, Aug 18th & 24th. Lincoln's Inn Fields, one on May 26th. Regent's Park, singles on Aug 17th & 18th, two on Aug 25th, 28th & 30th and Sep 4th. St James's Park, one on Sep 1st. Tate Modern, one on Aug 28th. Vauxhall Park, one from Sep 12th-14th. Weavers Fields, one on May 28th.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Status: abundant breeding resident with influxes in autumn and winter.

This year, 40 sites reported ten or more breeding pairs, very similar to the 35 from last year, though with a very different list of sites represented and, once again, probably a reflection of fluctuations in recording effort. The BBS shows an increase of 91% in London from 1995-2023.



Below are breeding records for sites where ten or more pairs were reported (no. of territories/singing males in brackets).

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (13). Roding Valley Meadows NR (10). South Ockenden (15). Walthamstow Wetlands (10). Warren Gorge (10).

Herts: Ellenbrook Fields (10). Goff Oak (27). Rye Meads (47).

Middx: Alexandra Park (12). Brent Res (12). Home Park (46).

Kent: Crayford Marshes (10). Otford (11). Sevenoaks WR (15).

Surrey: Alexandra RG & Allotments (23). Ashted Common (40). Banstead Wood (60).

*A lovely Robin perching in Barnes in April.
(Peter Gasson)*

Beddington Farmlands (57). Berrylands (15). Canons Farm (30). Esher Common (20). Green Lane RG (12). Kew Gardens (10). Kingston Cemetery (19). Kingston-upon-Thames (42). Littleworth Common (10). London Wetland Centre (26). Long Ditton (15). Long Ditton RG (13). Molesey Heath (20). New Malden (42). Norbury Park, Leatherhead (10). Surbiton (54). Surbiton Cemetery (13). Sydenham Hill Wood (15). The Ledges, Esher (10). Wandsworth Common (17). West End Common (10).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (10). Regent's Park (30).

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Status: breeding summer visitor in small numbers, scarce passage migrant.

There were 19 breeding territories reported this year, higher than the single digits reported in recent years. Concentrated in the Surrey and Essex sectors, 12 sites reported territorial birds, a welcome diversification from the handful of sites it had been reduced to. As well as long-staying singing males, stronger indications of breeding were also seen, with pairs observed at three sites, and food-carrying at one location. Overall, 37 sites submitted records (up from 16 and 17 in the last two years).

The first record of the year was a singing male at Tyler's Common on April 7th, a fairly typical date, and the last was at Rainham Marshes on August 7th, representative of a very brief and light autumn passage.

All records are given below (with records from adjacent sites combined), with numbers of territories in brackets.

Essex: Beam Valley CP, one on May 1st. Belhus Woods CP (2). Brook Farm, Upminster (1). Codham Hall, one on Apr 26th. Dagenham Chase, one on Apr 29th. Fen Lane, Upminster, one on Jun 23rd. Fishers Green Island (3). Gunpowder Park, one on Apr 22nd. Manor Farm, Upminster, one on Apr 18th. Netherhall GP, one on May 25th. Rainham Marshes, singles on May 13th & 19th and Aug 3rd & 7th. Sewardstone Marsh, one on May 9th. South Ockendon (1). Tylers Common (3). Wanstead Park (2).

Herts: Panshanger Park, one on May 18th.

Middx: Hampstead Heath, one on Apr 14th. Whitewebbs Wood, one on Jul 15th.

Kent: Combe Bank Lake, one on Apr 30th. Crayford Marshes, one from Apr 18th-19th. Crossness, one on May 11th. Ebbsfleet, one on Apr 21st. Swanscombe Marshes, one on Apr 17th.

Surrey: Ashted Common (1). Bookham Common (1). Chessington (1). Holmethorpe SP, one on May 11th. Horton CP (1). Island Barn Res, one on Apr 7th. Long Ditton (2). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (1).

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Status: passage migrant in variable numbers.

For the second year in a row, spring passage was extremely light, with only three records of single birds, all in April: a male at QE Olympic Park on the 6th, a male at Totteridge Valley on the 7th and a female at Brockwell Park on the 11th.

During autumn passage around 41 birds were recorded from 30 sites (augmented by an additional 12 heard overhead during nocturnal migration), an increase from 25 birds at 23 sites in 2023. The earliest returning bird was at Regent's Park on August 8th, and

migration peaked on September 7th with eight sites recording single birds. The last birds were two at Battersea Park on September 20th.

Pied Flycatcher totals in spring and autumn 2014-2024

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Spring records	3	13	6	2	1	0	6	4	2	3
Autumn records	36	22	16	33	45	64	28	110	23	41*
Total records	39	35	22	35	46	64	34	114	25	44*

*including 12 noctmig records

Below are all Inner London sightings.

In Lond: Battersea, two on Sep 20th. Brompton Cemetery, one on Sep 8th. Primrose Hill, one on Sep 10th. Regent's Park, singles on Aug 13th and Sep 15th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

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

RBBP

This year was the first year since 2020 with no confirmed breeding in the London Area, and the species was also far less widespread than in recent years. Three pairs were reported, and a further 14 singing males, 12 fewer than the 29 possible or confirmed territories last year. No juvenile birds or other evidence of rearing young were reported. However, outside the breeding season birds were recorded at 54 sites, back to a fairly typical distribution after last year's slump to 35 sites.

Breeding records are shown in the table and records for other sites are given below.

Black Redstart	Pairs proved breeding	Other pairs present	Additional singing males
Essex	-	1	1
Middx	-	-	2
Kent	-	-	-
Surrey	-	-	-
In Lond	-	2	11

Essex: Beckton Creekside NR, singles on May 6th, Jul 13th, Oct 18th-20th, two on Nov 16th and one on Dec 31st. Eastbrookend CP, one on May 18th. KGV Res, singles on Jan 5th, Apr 11th, Aug 7th, two on Oct 24th and one from Nov 30th to Dec 4th. Lee Valley Riding Centre, one on Mar 20th. Leytonstone, one on Oct 30th. Pilgrims Hatch, one on Nov 4th. Pudding Mill Lane, Stratford, one on Mar 22nd. QE Olympic Park, one on Sep 24th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Jun 29th and Oct 16th.

Herts: Gobions Wood, two on Nov 4th. Hoddesdon, two on Oct 31st. St Albans, one from Jan 1st to Mar 17th. Stanborough GP, one on Nov 9th. Stocker's Lake, one on Jan 4th.

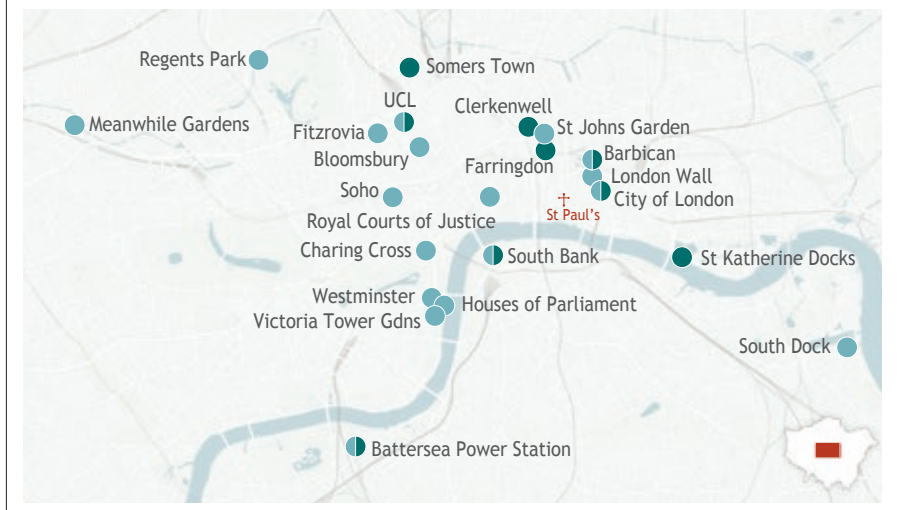
Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Apr 11th, two on Apr 12th, singles on Apr 18th and Nov 29th. Oakmere Park, one on Mar 30th. Park Farm, Enfield, one on Oct 17th. Q Mary Res, one on Mar 17th. Staines Res, one on Mar 17th. Wembley Stadium, one on Nov 16th. West Hampstead, one on Mar 7th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, singles on May 24th and Nov 9th.

Kent: Church House Gdns, Bromley, one on Nov 12th. Crossness, singles on Jul 1st, Oct

Black Redstart locations with sightings 2024 - Inner London

● First winter period 2024 (Jan-Mar) ● Second winter period 2024 (Oct-Dec) ● Both winter periods 2024



25th and two from Nov 28th-30th. Erith, one on nine dates from Feb 13th to Mar 5th. Greenwich Peninsula, one on Oct 25th. Orchard Estate, one on Dec 30th. Sidcup, one on Nov 2nd.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Oct 30th. Chelsham, one on Nov 13th. Dulwich Upper Wood, one on Apr 17th. King George's Park, one on Dec 31st. Little Woodcote, one from Nov 5th-6th. London Wetland Centre, singles on Oct 3rd & 12th and Nov 25th. Richmond Park, one on Oct 5th. Wandsworth, one on Dec 31st.

In Lond: Reported from 18 sites from January to March (one last year) and nine sites from October to December (three last year) with most records from South Bank/Tate Modern, one on 20 dates from Jan 25th to Mar 21st and Oct 15th.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Status: passage migrant and former breeding summer visitor

Slightly heavier than average spring migration saw approximately 48 birds recorded at 33 sites. The first bird, a single at Brent Res on April 1st, was earlier than most years, and the last migrant was one at Bushy Park on May 17th.

Autumn passage, while heavier than spring, was among the quietest in recent years, with around 60 birds recorded at 26 sites. The earliest autumn record, a juvenile at Colnbrook on August 4th, was "still spotty", likely dispersed from a breeding location not too geographically distant. The highest single site count was five birds at Wanstead Flats on August 30th, with eight birds in total across the city on that date and on August 28th. The last bird of the year was one on Chingford Plain on September 27th.

The table shows spring and autumn birds since 2015, and below are all Inner London sightings.

Redstart totals 2015-2024

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Spring	33	120	53	23	25	16	49	12	69	48
Autumn	120	100	83	79	74	126	58	124	105	60

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Apr 7th, two on 9th, one on 10th and two on May 1st. Regent's Park, two on Aug 28th and singles on Aug 29th and Sep 4th.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Status: regular passage migrant and former breeding summer visitor.

Spring migration was slightly lighter than average, with 31 sites recording approximately 67 birds. The earliest bird was at Wormwood Scrubs on April 9th, and the latest at Upper College Farm on May 25th, both fairly typical dates for the species.

While autumn migration began early, with a male at Alexandra Park on July 13th, it remained a trickle for most of August, only hitting double figures for the first time on the 28th (in most years numbers tend to climb from around the 10th). Total passage was lighter than usual, with only 71 sites recording birds, but peaked on September 9th with a very respectable 44 birds across the London Area. The highest single site count was, however, fairly low, with 11 at Richmond Park on September 6th. Passage ended with the two latest records since 2017, one at Rainham Marshes on October 27th and November 1st, and one at Beddington Farmlands on November 12th.

In Lond: Regent's Park, one on Sep 14th.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

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

The distribution of wintering birds, recorded at 60 sites in January and 79 in February, exceeded that of most recent years, when between 45 and 60 sites per month has been

A Whinchat at QEII Reservoir in April. (David Harris)



Stonechat photographed at Walthamstow Wetlands in December. (Sam O'Donnell)

the norm. The maximum count of individuals across the London Area was an exceptional 140 on February 18th, with relatively low numbers in March that may suggest an influx of birds migrating unusually early to their breeding grounds, perhaps influenced by the warmer spell in mid-February.

Only two sites reported breeding, down from three last year. Breeding was confirmed at Richmond Park with eight pairs (two more than in 2023) fledging at least 32 young. Bushy Park also reported a pair present all season, and which were seen carrying nesting material, but no fledged birds were reported.

Autumn passage was moderately heavy, with 102 sites recording birds. It peaked on October 11th with 98 birds at 19 sites, on which date Richmond Park also had the highest single site count of 28. By the end of the year distribution had fallen to a typical 41 sites in December, with the highest daily count being 30 birds on the 3rd.

Below are breeding records (no. of territories/pairs in brackets), some high counts for each sector and all Inner London records.

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley, 14 on Feb 18th. Rainham Marshes, 21 on Feb 19th and 16 on Oct 31st. Wanstead Flats, 27 on Feb 18th.

Middx: Bushy Park (1); 23 on Oct 13th. Staines Moor, 15 on Feb 20th.

Kent: Dartford Marshes, 15 on Oct 26th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 15 on Feb 18th. London Wetland Centre, 13 on Feb 17th. Richmond Park (8), 32+ young; 27 on Feb 18th and 28+ on Oct 11th.

In Lond: Burgess Park, one on Feb 15th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Mar 9th & 18th. Regent's Park, five on Feb 16th, two on 17th, singles on Feb 28th, Mar 4th, Sep 4th & 13th, three on Oct 4th, singles on Oct 23rd and Nov 22nd.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Status: common passage migrant and very occasional breeding visitor.

The first record of spring was one at Warley Street on March 11th, a very typical date. After trickling through for a week and a half, numbers increased to double figures on March 21st, remaining mostly high until April 30th. Birds were recorded at 93 sites (86 in 2023, 76 in 2022 and 122 in 2021) and passage peaked with 91 birds on April 19th. As in 2023, there was an unusually sharp cut-off at the end of April, with only single digit counts per day in May (in most years numbers remain high until mid-May). The last bird



There were a number of additional sites where birds were present during the breeding season. The Essex, Herts and Surrey sectors accounted for 84% of the breeding records.

Below are all breeding records (no. of pairs/territories/males in brackets), some unusual records and some of the higher counts.

Essex: Reported from 57 sites, 30+ pairs. Barking Bay/Marsh (2). Beam Parklands (1). Brook Farm, Upminster (1). Codham Hall (1). Fairplay Farm, Upminster (2), two juvs on Jul 17th. Fen Lane, Upminster (1). Hooks Marsh Lake (1). Ingrebourne Valley, 30 on Jan 7th & 14th. Leyton Flats, one on Mar 30th. North Weald GC (1). Orsett Fen (2+), bred. Rainham Marshes (11+); 22 on Nov 1st. Roding Valley Meadows NR (1), bred. Walthamstow Marshes (1+), fledged young seen. Walthamstow Wetlands (4+). West Horndon (1).

Herts: Reported from 44 sites, 36+ pairs. Broxbourne (1). Coopers Green GP (1). Coursers Road GP (1). Croxley Common Moor (1). Ellenbrook Fields (1+); ten on Apr 27th. Frogmore Lakes (1). Hilfield Park Res (2). Maple Lodge NR (1). Munden Estate (1). Otterspool (1). Royal Veterinary College, Potters Bar (1); first potential breeding for site. Rye Meads (15); 20 on Jan 13th. Seventy Acres Lake (2). Stanborough GP (1+); 14 on Mar 17th. Stocker's Lake (2). Tyttenhanger GP (4).

Middx: Reported from 36 sites, 14+ pairs. Alexandra Park, two on Oct 24th and singles on 27th & 29th. Bow Locks, one on Feb 26th and two on Mar 7th. Brent Res (2+). Broadwater Lake (1). Broomfield Park, singles on Feb 20th & 23rd and Nov 21st. Bushy Park (1). Hammersmith, one on May 22nd. Hampstead Heath, one on Nov 12th. Kempton NR (1). Lordship Lane RG, two plus on Jan 4th with singles on Jan 18th and Feb 7th. Northolt & Greenford CP, singing male on Mar 15th. Staines Moor (8+), juvs on Aug 4th; peak of 15 on Nov 26th. Ten Acres, Yeading (1+). Wormwood Scrubs, up to two on six dates from Jan 10th to Feb 21st with four on Feb 4th and one on Sep 7th.

Bucks: Reported from three sites, one pair. Denham (1).

Kent: Reported from 13 sites, six plus pairs. Crayford Marshes (1). Crossness (2+), eight on Jul 28th. Crystal Palace Park, one on Oct 5th. Dartford Marshes (1+). Greenwich, one on Dec 29th. Sevenoaks WR (1); ten on Dec 14th. Swanscombe Marshes (1+).

Surrey: Reported from 28 sites, 49+ pairs. Beddington Farmlands (4); 15 on Jan 14th and Mar 3rd. Buckland SP (2). Cobham Floods (1), two juvs on Aug 28th. Esher Common (1). Fetcham Mill Pond (1). Holmethorpe SP (1). London Wetland Centre (9); 12 on Mar 3rd. Putney Heath, one on Jan 1st. Richmond Park (23); 19 on Jun 15th. Slyfield Farm, Fetcham (1), juvs on Jul 9th. South Norwood CP, singing male on Mar 10th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (5+), juvs on May 20th. Wey Manor Meadows (1). Wimbledon Common, two on Dec 31st.

In Lond: Reported from three sites, one pair. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Mar 7th and May 7th-8th. Primrose Hill, two on Oct 22nd and three on 27th. Regent's Park (1); reported on 14 dates between Mar 17th and Jun 13th with a pair in suitable habitat.

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: Black Park, singles on Apr 7th and Jun 9th.

Fulvous Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor*

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, seven on Jan 10th and three on Jan 15th.

Red-breasted Goose *Anser ruficollis*

Middx: Q. Mother Res, one on Jul 21st.

Surrey: Painshill Park, singles on Mar 20th and Apr 10th.

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

Essex: Brook Fark, Upminster, one on Aug 7th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on 14 dates from Jun 13th to Jul 24th.

Emperor Goose *Anser canagicus*

Herts: Coursers Road GP, one on Sep 8th. Hilfield Park Res, one from Jun 9th-21st.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Jun 12th.

Herts: Stanborough GP, one from May 16th-18th.

Middx: Staines Res, two on Jun 11th.

Swan Goose *Anser cygnoides*

Middx: Boxers Lake, Enfield, one on Feb 18th (reported as present for several months).

Oakwood, one on Jan 21st. Pickett's Lock, two on May 20th.

Surrey: Ewell Court Park, one on Mar 7th & 11th. Hogsmill OS, one on Feb 10th. R Wey

Navigation: Coxes Lock to New Haw Lock, two on Mar 25th.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Middx: Bedfont Lakes CP, one on Oct 13th

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Essex: Fishers Green Island/Holyfield Marsh, one on Dec 15th. Holyfield Marsh, one on Dec 1st. Rainham Marshes, one on Feb 24th.

Herts: Seventy Acres Lake, one on Dec 15th (probably same bird as Fishers Green Island).

Middx: Shepperton, singles on Feb 14th, Jul 9th and Sep 7th, present on Dec 22nd.

Kent: Danson Park, one on seven dates from Jan 1st to Feb 21st.

Surrey: R Thames: Weybridge to Walton-on-Thames, one on Jan 28th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on many dates from Jan 2nd to Dec 28th and two on May 19th and Nov 7th.

FIRST AND LAST DATES OF REGULAR MIGRANTS

Summer Migrants	Arrival	Departure
Garganey	12 Mar Stanwell Moor	16 Sep London Wetland Centre
Osprey	1 Apr Beddington Farmlands	29 Oct Dagenham Chase
Little Ringed Plover	14 Mar Stanborough GP	6 Sep Dagenham Chase
Whimbrel	3 Apr Three sites	22 Sep Q. Mother Res
Sandwich Tern	5 Apr KGV Res	3 Oct Rainham Marshes
Little Tern	23 Apr Staines Res	28 Aug Rainham Marshes
Common Tern	29 Mar Walthamstow Wetlands	29 Oct Richmond Park
Arctic Tern	8 Apr Rainham Marshes	23 Sep Staines Res
Black Tern	25 Apr Staines Res	3 Oct Staines Res
Turtle Dove	3 May Ingrebourne Valley	no autumn records
Cuckoo	3 Apr Broadwater Lake	19 Sep Rainham Marshes
Swift	26 Mar London Wetland Centre	30 Sep Maple Cross RG
Hobby	30 Mar Ongar Park Wood	28 Oct Rainham Marshes
Sand Martin	23 Feb KGV Res	8 Oct Waterworks NR
Swallow	19 Mar Staines Res	7 Nov Wraysbury
House Martin	23 Mar Stocker's Lake	24 Oct Nutfield
Wood Warbler	13 Apr Rainham Marshes	no autumn records
Willow Warbler	10 Mar Cray Valley GC	1 Nov Rainham Marshes
Sedge Warbler	24 Mar Staines Moor	28 Sep Rye Meads
Reed Warbler	31 Mar London Wetland Centre	17 Oct Tate Modern
Grasshopper Warbler	6 Apr Epsom Common	14 Sep Beddington Fm/Holmethorpe SP
Garden Warbler	7 Apr St James's Park	4 Oct Limehouse Basin /Rainham Marshes
Lesser Whitethroat	8 Apr Rainham Marshes	16 Oct Barking Bay/Marsh
Whitethroat	1 Apr Walthamstow Wetlands	4 Oct Dartford Marshes
Ring Ouzel	20 Mar KGV Res	10 Nov Barking Bay/Marsh
Spotted Flycatcher	29 Apr Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns	10 Oct Alexandra Park
Nightingale	7 Apr Tyler's Common	7 Aug Rainham Marshes
Pied Flycatcher	6 Apr QE Olympic Park	20 Sep Battersea Park
Redstart	1 Apr Brent Res	27 Sep Chingford Plain
Whinchat	9 Apr Wormwood Scrubs	12 Nov Beddington Farmlands
Wheatear	11 Mar Warley Street	27 Oct Walthamstow Wetlands
Yellow Wagtail	31 Mar Three sites	21 Oct Walthamstow Wetlands
Tree Pipit	6 Apr Wanstead Flats	18 Oct Trent Park

Winter Migrants	Departure	Arrival
Smew	01 Apr KGV Res	22 Nov Stanstead Innings
Goosander	26 Apr Walton Res (Knight & Bessborough)	01 Jul QE II Res
Bittern	17 Mar London Wetland Centre	19 Sep Seventy Acres Lake
Jack Snipe	24 Apr Beddington Farmlands	09 Sep Hilfield Park Res
Fieldfare	18 Apr Wanstead Flats	01 Oct Canons Farm
Redwing	29 May Walthamstow Wetlands	17 Sep Cely Woods
Water Pipit	29 Apr Beddington Farmlands	06 Oct Rainham Marshes
Rock Pipit	22 Mar Rainham Marshes	16 Sep West Thurrock Marshes
Brambling	21 Apr Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth)	21 Sep Rainham Marshes

PAPERS ABOUT BIRDS IN THE LONDON AREA



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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 2024.

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 2013-2024 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 2024'

Previous page: This photograph really exemplifies the Feral Pigeon's status as the urban bird par excellence. (Joe Downing)

RINGING REPORT

DANIEL WHITELEGG

In London, bird ringing is undertaken by a range of groups, partnerships and individuals covering a wide variety of sites throughout the capital. Full details of ringing in 2024 can be found on the BTO website at: <https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/ringing/publications/online-ringing-reports>

The number of individuals ringed per species varies year to year due to a range of factors such as ringing effort, coverage and/or weather conditions. This means that any variation in the species totals reported here are not necessarily a reflection on population trends but rather ringer activity. Constant Effort Sites (CES), of which there are multiple running in the London area, provide much better indication of population levels and trends. The resulting 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>

All totals are provided in Table 1; annual totals are also given for the previous two years to enable comparison.

Overview

A total of 98 species (21,812 individuals) were ringed in 2024 across London, including 55 species of passerines (20,347 individuals) and 43 species of non-passerines (1,465 individuals). Although overall ringing activity remains well below pre-Covid levels (pre-2020), when an average 6,000 more birds were ringed annually, 2024 showed signs of increased effort. In the context of a poor breeding season for most birds, this was a respectable return. However, species totals remained lower than usual (5 fewer species than pre-covid averages). Only in 2021 (95, lowest on record) and 2016 (97) were there fewer species ringed than in 2024. No new species were added to the all-time London ringing list.

Some of the biggest changes in ringing totals included Chiffchaff and Blackcap which, after relatively poor numbers in 2023, saw the largest increases (+760 and +516 respectively). Some species showed major fluctuations between years: for instance, the drop



Image 1. One of two Yellow-browed Warblers ringed in London during the autumn of 2024, the first ringed in London since 2020. This individual was ringed at LWT Walthamstow Wetlands. (Danni Banks)

THE BREEDING BIRD SURVEY IN LONDON, 2024

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 during the breeding season, once in spring and once in early summer, recording birds along predetermined transects. From these data, trends in breeding bird populations are calculated at the national level and regional levels for England. A summary of the results is provided each year in an annual report (eg see Heywood *et al*, 2025 for the 2024 report). Details of the survey can be found on the BTO website (BTO, 2024), and the reports can be freely downloaded for all years since 1994.

A summary of these trends for Greater London can be found (for most years) in the London Bird Report (Coleman, 1991-2001; Woodward, 2004-2020; Hillier & Arnold, 2025; Arnold & Hillier, 2024; Arnold & Schalz, 2023). Greater London is the smallest region in England for which trends are reported. For this reason, it is surveyed in very few squares, making bird population trends relatively difficult to assess. 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. Since the Covid pandemic, the number of 1km squares surveyed has slowly increased, reaching 99 in 2024, the highest number since 2017 and approaching pre-2018 efforts (Table 1).

Table 1. Number of 1km squares surveyed in Greater London over the last ten years. These numbers may differ slightly from earlier articles due to revisions of submitted data.

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
106	103	106	96	88	37	81	87	98	99

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

Trends have been determined for 34 species. Of these, Canada Goose, Feral Pigeon, Stock Dove, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Ring-necked Parakeet, Magpie, Chiffchaff and House Sparrow showed significant increases over a five-year period starting from 2018; while Swift, Grey Heron, Green Woodpecker, Jay, Blue Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Starling, Song Thrush, Mistle Thrush, Blackbird, Chaffinch and Goldfinch showed significant decreases. Canada Goose and Magpie have joined the list of significantly increasing species, whilst Jay, Blue Tit and Goldfinch have joined the list of significantly declining species (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*, 2025). If a cell in the table is blank, then no trend for that period could be determined.

Table 2. Bird population trends for the Greater London region. Sample is the mean number of 1km squares covered during the time period indicated, excluding 2020. Change is the percentage change in population over the three periods: 1-year, 10-year and 28-year periods. Statistically significant changes are shown in bold, with those for the 5-year trend in blue. The two species in brackets are colonial nesting species, for which trends are not readily determined by the BBS; the results for these species should therefore be treated with caution. Data from *BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey*.

London Trends	28-year trend (1995-2023)		10-year trend (2018-2023)		5-year trend (2013-2023)		1-year trend (2023-2024)
	Sample	Change	Sample	Change	Sample	Change	Change
Canada Goose			30	24	25	44	-14
Mallard	43	-29	48	-15	41	-2	8
Swift	57	-70	57	-35	50	-30	-14
Feral Pigeon	75	-10	87	16	83	16	-9
Stock Dove			34	128	36	84	22
Woodpigeon	85	38	98	-8	91	-6	-8
Collared Dove	52	-33	56	-32	50	-10	-1
Moorhen (Cormorant)			34	33	31	24	-4
(Grey Heron)			24	-7			5
Great Spotted Woodpecker	41	89	25	-27	20	-29	-1
Green Woodpecker	30	-12	50	17	49	32	3
Ring-necked Parakeet	30	-12	32	-41	26	-30	28
Jay	53	38091	87	130	86	37	-1
Magpie	41	-38	45	-30	41	-26	-30
Jackdaw	83	50	97	15	90	12	10
Carrion Crow			42	31	41	14	4
Blue Tit	84	51	97	5	90	-3	4
Great Tit	84	-7	96	-19	90	-11	-8
Long-tailed Tit	80	114	94	-5	88	-2	-11
Chiffchaff	33	-22	39	-55	31	-52	29
Blackcap	37	252	50	49	47	65	8
Wren	52	200	70	21	69	0	14
Blackcap	79	34	93	6	87	-1	12
Starling	52	200	70	21	69	0	14
Song Thrush	80	-72	89	-38	81	-24	-4
Mistle Thrush	51	-47	57	-12	50	-15	3
Blackbird	31	-83	28	-64	21	-56	-11
Robin	85	-66	97	-53	89	-49	-11
House Sparrow	83	91	97	8	90	6	-1
Dunnock	71	-62	79	34	72	14	-12
Chaffinch	64	-15	74	-25	65	-28	-9
Greenfinch	53	-60	54	-82	35	-68	-23
Goldfinch	54	-68	45	-71	34	-24	-22
	57	364	82	4	77	-21	-12

THE BREEDING RECORD OF THE IBERIAN CHIFFCHAFF IN REGENT'S PARK, 2022

DAVE JOHNSON

On May 4th 2022 in my capacity as Regent's Park Wildlife Officer, I was carrying out my fortnightly Park bird survey. As I entered the Cricket Pen I heard what I thought was a Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* singing from one of the pine trees; I only heard the first part of the song, and this it did only once. I went to check it out and was surprised to only see what appeared to be a Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*. The bird then started to sing fully and suddenly I realised it was not a Tree Pipit: the bird in view was in fact an Iberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus ibericus*. I quickly phoned Tony Duckett, Rose Farmer and Adrian Morgan who I knew were all birding in the Park. I then recorded it singing and sent the recording in a tweet to Rare Bird Alert. They confirmed the bird's identity and subsequently put the news out on the Rare Bird information services. This was a remarkably rare bird to visit the Park and it was watched by numerous people who came from far and wide to see it during its stay.

The following day it was aggressively chasing away a male Common Chiffchaff into whose territory it had entered. He was successful, as the Common Chiffchaff flew into the nearby Wetland Pen to set up his new territory. The Common Chiffchaff could be heard singing from there and never entered the Cricket Pen again. The Cricket Pen is an area enclosed by a metal railing fence to keep out dogs and the public and is about the

Adult male Iberian Chiffchaff enjoying the morning sun. (Tony Duckett, below left and Dave Johnson, below right.)



*Above left: Adult male Iberian Chiffchaff with a freshly fledged juvenile.
Above right: Adult female Chiffchaff with recently fledged young. (Dave Johnson)*

size of a football pitch. It was managed for wildlife by Tony Duckett and myself. The Pen contains silver birch, hawthorn, hornbeam, alder, oak, elm and Monterey pine with the ground cover being bramble, rough grassland and cow parsley. The area is ideal for warblers, with both Blackcap and Whitethroat breeding there.

Surprisingly, on May 8th the Iberian Chiffchaff left the Cricket Pen and started to sing 120 yards away near the rear of the Park's Nursery. I presumed that this new area was part of his extended territory as he would often return to the Cricket Pen to sing. When singing he was nearly always on the highest point of a tree. The new area consisted of poplar, oak, horse chestnut and alder trees with an elder and privet hedge bordering the Nursery. The Iberian Chiffchaff preferred an area where there was bramble, cow parsley, goosegrass and rough grassland. This area is part of the Park's wildlife corridor where cutting only takes place once a year in November.

Twice I got lucky and saw the Iberian Chiffchaff displaying briefly to the female Common Chiffchaff at that location. The display I saw was when the bird was at head height and he would glide down to the Chiffchaff and land near her with his wings quivering. No doubt there was more to the display than I could observe as the birds would move behind vegetation and out of view. In the days after seeing the display the female Chiffchaff became extremely elusive and would be hard to locate, but the Iberian Chiffchaff was very easy to find because he was singing nearly all the time. He would start the beginning of the day in the Cricket Pen then by 9am he would be singing by the Nursery where he would spend the rest of the day.

MONITORING SWIFTS IN NORTH LONDON

MIKE PRIAULX
ISLINGTON SWIFTS

Introduction

Islington Swifts Group was founded in 2016, after I successfully attempted to protect nesting Swifts from adjacent building works, but discovered that Swifts had little protection and were seriously endangered.

I had been interested in wildlife since childhood but it was not a major part of my life as an adult. Hackney Swifts Group already existed, and I thought Islington could do the same. I started by installing Swift boxes on my balcony, not realising at the time that despite being high up, these boxes were unlikely to be successful due to a lack of a long drop beneath. I wrote an article for the De Beauvoir Association, and I was put in touch with some roofers who started fitting boxes for me.

Initially they would do just a few at a time, but we were soon fitting perhaps 10-20 each month and numbers started to grow. Initially it was just Islington and Hackney, and then this expanded through word of mouth to Camden, then Haringey, Enfield, Waltham Forest and as far as Redbridge - although we realised that actually those places aren't as far as they seem on a map or when taking a very indirect tube journey!

Initial results

We found that small birds would use the boxes - especially House Sparrows and Great Tits, with the occasional Blue Tit and - on one occasion - Coal Tits. Some older boxes host Starlings, but we tend to install boxes that exclude them, as Starlings are aggressive towards Swifts and will take their nesting sites; so I encourage people to install dedicated boxes for Starlings on trees instead, to avoid this conflict.

Use of boxes by Swifts proved elusive to confirm initially, but in Highbury in May 2019 the first pair moved in to a box that we had installed only the previous July, so we assume a pair had an opportunity to see the box and line it up for the following year... complete speculation but it seems possible! I later spotted two boxes in Islington that had been occupied for several years; and by chance I met the person who had installed them (and since moved away): apparently they were installed during a loft extension that excluded an existing pair of Swifts. It took a couple of years, but they did eventually return (or perhaps a different pair, we'll never know) and nest in the boxes; and they attracted another pair to be their neighbours. We also found out that three home-made boxes in Enfield EN2 had been occupied for a few years too, after initial

Swifts statistics 2017 to 2025

Year

Cumulative totals of swift boxes installed by my groups in north London

Cumulative totals for nestboxes occupied by Swifts in north London

(although later informed that 5+ were occupied but unrecorded until later)

Recorded arrival dates in Islington



Common Swift Apus apus in flight. (Robert Booth)

occupation by Starlings. The home owner had reduced the size of the entrance hole to exclude the Starlings (they can't generally enter a hole of 28mm height, but Swifts can).

Types of nest box

Following these pioneers there has been a gradual expansion, with boxes near to occupied boxes being most effective - presumably Swifts are learning from others. All the first occupied boxes were Model 30 boxes, with a single roof sloping at 30 degrees. However, since then, almost every type of box has at least once been occupied - flat-roof boxes, Zeist boxes with a two-part roof, boxes with the entrance hole underneath, timber, Woodcrete, plastic...

Some home owners have played pre-recorded calls from below the box to attract Swifts, and this definitely seems to work - not for everyone, but the calls seem effective compared to silence.

Lessons learnt

There have been hotspots that develop where several boxes are occupied, building up numbers each year. These include Mildmay and nearby Highbury East in Islington, and Kentish Town. Planning requirements in Hackney and Islington require Swift boxes or bricks in new developments. Swifts bricks are preferable as they are permanent and

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	< 2017-2020: 237 >			262	334	374	470	542
0	2	3	5	13	16	21	30	36
						+12bricks	+12 bricks	+12 bricks
5 May	21 Apr	1 May	20 Apr	2 May	4 May	29 Apr	27 Apr	26 Apr

Islington Swifts have been arranging walks in north London from the beginning, from Camden to Redbridge. Numbers are usually limited to 30 and are often fully booked, although wet weather has occasionally meant that we had only a few attendees (but we have always seen Swifts!). We usually see a few nest sites on each walk too, and we record these on the RSPB Swift Mapper website and leave a flyer for the occupants for information - many occupants are unaware of the significance of Swifts, or even unaware they are nesting in their building, so this can help reduce the number of nests blocked permanently or temporarily through ignorance.

At wetlands and reservoirs, any time can be good for viewing Swifts - poor weather is often advantageous, as birds look for the easiest pickings.

In urban areas, warm and calm weather is preferable, and the peak time for viewing Swifts is near dusk, as adults prepare to roost in their nest sites and juveniles are attracted to low levels for their 'banging' behaviour - where they fly close to, and sometimes 'bang', the eaves with their wings.

These adults and juveniles form spectacular screaming parties, when their characteristic 'screaming' call is at its most intense.

Facts and figures

Maximum recorded speed of 69.3mph, the world's fastest recorded bird in level flight.

15,000-mile migration round trip (typical distance for Swifts breeding in London).

Estimated 59,000 pairs in 2016 (BTO Breeding Bird Survey).

Decline of 68% in the UK from 1995 to 2023 (BTO Breeding Bird Survey).

Fledglings fly solo directly to Africa within a day of leaving the nest.

Typically pair for life but migrate separately and spend winter apart.

Breeding adults return to same nest site each year.

Live for up to 21 years (oldest recorded individual through recovery of freshly-dead ringed bird).

Flying continuously for typically at least three to four years when it first nests.

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Oxford UMNH Swift Diary (2025): <https://www.oumnh.ox.ac.uk/swifts-diary-2025>

RSPB Swifts page: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/swift>

Swift brick petition (2023): <https://petition.parliament.uk/archived/petitions/626737>

Swift Conservation: <https://swift-conservation.org/>

Swifts Local Network (SLN): <https://actionforswifts.blogspot.com/p/sln.html>

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THE PEREGRINE IN LONDON - AN UPDATE

STUART HARRINGTON

Introduction

A paper by David Johnson published in the 2014 London Bird Report described the rapid expansion of the resident Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* population within Inner London since the early 2000s. It detailed some of the factors, both positive and negative, affecting the species' existence in an urban setting. This paper gives an update on the status of the Peregrine Falcon in London - both within Inner London and the wider LNHS recording area. It examines some of the changes that have occurred over a ten-year period, identifying trends and challenges affecting the ongoing success of this species.

Juvenile female Peregrine at a nest in Southeast London in 2025. (Justin Sneddon)



The Peregrine's adaptation to the urban environment has the power to inspire a deeper connection with nature. Its growing visibility in urban areas should not dull our sense of wonder, nor allow the memory of its near-extinction to fade. The accessibility of this iconic species in our everyday surroundings should be regarded as a privilege - each sighting should be valued as a reminder of both its resilience and our responsibility for its continued success.

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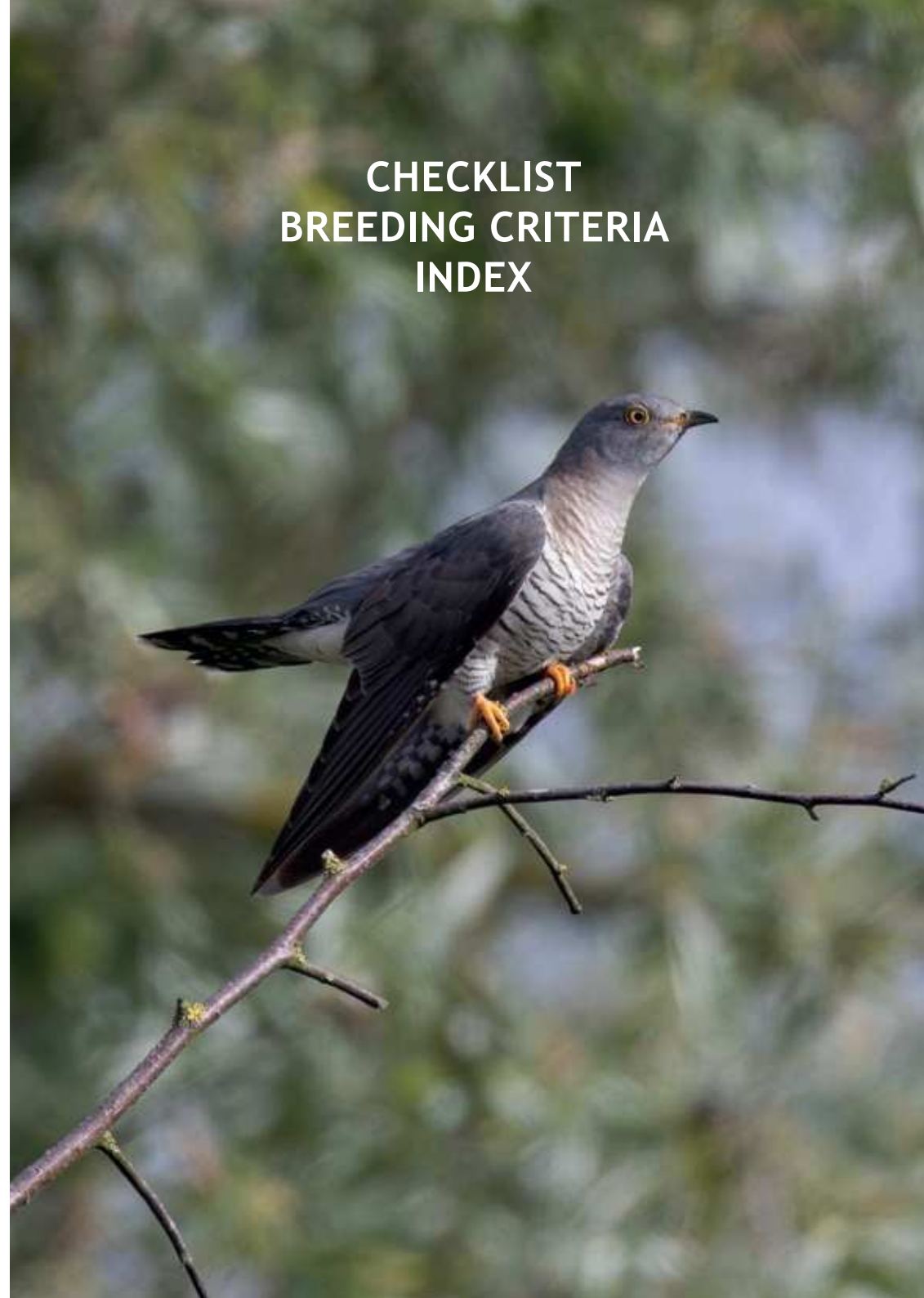
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CHECKLIST BREEDING CRITERIA INDEX



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

The total number of species recorded in an apparently wild state in the London Area in historic times is 373. 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.

A definitive guide to reporting Rarities is on our website (see page 5).

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.

Previous page: There was a slight upward trend in Cuckoo numbers this year with the number of sites increasing from 184 to 197. This bird was spotted in Harmondsworth Moor. (Joe Downing)

Key to records required:

A	= all records.	N	= brief notes required (how identified, view, distance, etc); form available on LNHS website (see Details of an Unusual Bird on page 5).
B	= all breeding records.	NR	= all records from sites where bird not seen regularly.
BBRC	= full description required; form from www.bbrc.org.uk . British Birds Rarities Committee makes the decision.	P	= passage movements.
D	= full description required; form available on LNHS website (see Details of an Unusual Bird on page 5).	S	= all records mid-May to mid-July.
F&L	= first and last dates for any site.	ST	= annual statement of status at a site.
MM	= dated monthly maximum counts.	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>	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

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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