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# LONDON BIRD REPORT

—  
NO.79 FOR THE YEAR 2014

PRODUCED BY THE LBR EDITORIAL BOARD



London  
Natural  
History  
Society

PUBLISHED MAY 2016

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## Links to files on the LNHS website

**Full and Short Gazetteers of Sites (see page 8)**

**Checklist and Guide (see page 239)**

On the London Bird Club webpage - scroll down to 'Bird Recording':

<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/ornithology1.htm>

## Rarities

As above. Click on the 'Rarities' link.

**Foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls (see page 185)**

**The Peregrine Falcon in Inner London (see page 189)**

On the Publications webpage:

<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/Publications.htm#LBR2014>

*Front cover: Sparrowhawk at Rickmansworth. (Andrew Moon)*

*Back cover: Yellow-legged Gull at Rotherhithe. (Richard Bonser)*

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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.



<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/ornithology1.htm>

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## LONDON BIRD REPORT FOR 2014

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

Chair of Editorial Board .....	Pete Lambert
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Editor: Papers .....	Mike Trier
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### Introduction

There are some minor changes in this report. Following the publication of Andrew Self's book *The Birds of London*, our Rarities Committee has made some changes to our Checklist. The Checklist now includes Snow Goose, Black Grouse and Black Guillemot, but no longer includes American Wigeon. Andrew's paper in this report explains the reasons for these changes (see page 203). We have also decided to separate records formerly reported as Walton Reservoirs into two sites: Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) and Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough). This follows changes to the Chelsea and Lambeth sections of these reservoirs.

As space permits this time, we have included indexes of common and scientific names at the back of the journal (see page 250). Notes for Contributors are on page 255.

We are sad to learn of the death of Gay Carr, who valiantly proof-read one section of Birds of the London Area in *LBR* 2012 while undergoing treatment for cancer.

It would be a great help in producing this report, if people would send us records as soon as they can. In particular, we would like all records to be with our Recorders as soon as possible after the end of the year to which they refer. We will not usually be able to include in the *LBR*, records received after March 31st in the year following. Records of birds which are rare in London will not be published without our Rarities Committee receiving full details (notes/description or photo). Our Checklist on pages 239-247 gives details of which species this applies to, and what details are needed, using the keys D, N or BBRC.

The LNHS uses three different kinds of recording area: a circle for its outer boundary, an Inner London rectangle, and the Watsonian vice-counties. There is sometimes confusion over the exact location of these, so the LNHS has commissioned GiGL to publish them on their website. You can now see all of these on the iGiGL map at:

<http://www.gigl.org.uk/online>, to check exactly which area your record is in.

The Editorial Board, which took over the production of *LBR* in September 2010, has managed to catch up with the backlog of reports now, but much of this work falls on

just a few people. We urgently need more people to help. In particular, we are looking for a new Editor of the Birds of the London Area section and for an Editor of the Remaining Sections (pages 1-27 and 239-248 of this report). Please contact me if you could help with this.

There are many uses of the word London in this report. Usually this refers to the LNHS recording area (see page 8 for details). But when we comment on Breeding Bird Survey data in London, we are giving figures for the smaller area used by the BTO for their collection of data. Details of this area are given on the BTO website at:

<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/regional-network/rn-directory>

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

### Acknowledgements

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

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

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

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

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## RARITIES COMMITTEE AND RECORDERS

### RARITIES COMMITTEE

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## RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS



<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/ornithology1.htm>

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

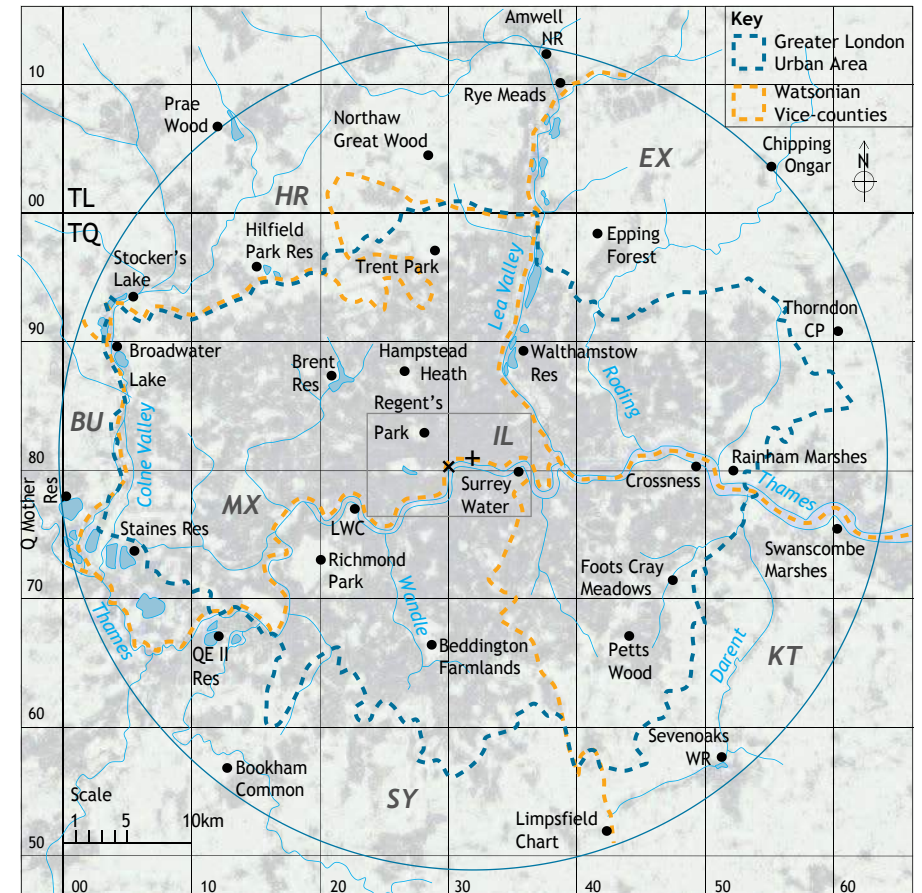
All records are welcome, from LNHS members and non-members alike. We would particularly like information on the local status of common species, breeding records, notes on passage (including first and last dates and main movements), regular counts of wintering populations, notes on behaviour, as well as details of unusual birds. Regular reports from the same sites are a great help in seeing population trends, and such reports, along with comments on changes in status, are always very welcome. Our Guide to Contributors of Records on pages 239 to 247, together with the Breeding Criteria on page 248, gives guidance on what information we would like for each species. Records should be sent to the appropriate Recorder listed on page 7 or to the Chair of the LBR Editorial Board. Please use site names as listed in our Gazetteer (see below) if you can, when sending in records. **If you send in details from sites not listed in the Gazetteer, please give an OS Grid Reference for the site.**

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

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

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

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



LNHS Area map with locations of some well-known bird-watching sites. Boundary sites give an indication of the extent of the LNHS Area. A grey background shows a built-up area. (Contains Ordnance Survey data ©Crown copyright and database rights 2012)

### Gazetteer of Sites



A mini-gazetteer of sites is listed on pages 10 to 14. All the main sites in this Report are included, and all the sites added to the Full Gazetteer this year are in *italic type*.

The Full Gazetteer is online at <http://www.lnhs.org.uk/ornithology1.htm> and lists open spaces and the names of towns, villages, etc. Neither Gazetteer lists streets; you should be able to locate these easily with a street map, but contact us if you have difficulty.

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

## MINI-GAZETTEER OF SITES



<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/ornithology1.htm>

Only sites mentioned in this Report are included below. Those in *italic type* are sites which have been added to the Gazetteer this year. A key to abbreviations is on page 27.

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

Abbey Wood (KT) TQ473790	Beechen Wood (HR) TQ028925	Canons Farm (SY) TQ248577
Acton (MX) TQ202801	Belhus Woods CP (EX) TQ570825	Cassiobury Park (HR) TQ090970
Acton Cemetery (MX) TQ205819	Belmont (SY) TQ210513	Castle Farm, Lullingstone (KT) TQ526636
Addington Hills (SY) TQ352644	Belmont Pastures LNR (SY) TQ256621	Cedars Park, Waltham Cross (HR) TL355010
Aimes Green, Claverhambury (EX) TL396030	Bentley Priory (MX) TQ155927	Cely Woods (EX) TQ560830
Albion Pools, Rainham (EX) TQ523826	Bethnal Green (IL/MX) TQ346825	Chadwell Heath (EX) TQ480880
Aldenhamp CP (HR) TQ170955	Betts Mead RG (SY) TQ322584	Cheam (SY) TQ245637
Aldgate (IL/MX) TQ337812	Blackthorn Wood (HR) TL263121	Chelsham Church (SY) TQ388591
Alexandra Park (MX) TQ300900	Blake Park (KT) TQ379665	Cheshunt GP (HR) TL370030
Amwell NR (HR) TL378128	Blunts Farm (EX) TQ464991	Cheshunt Res (N) (HR) TL352036
Angerland Common, S Hatfield (HR) TL219059	Bookham Common (SY) TQ130565	Chess Valley (HR) TQ052961
Ansley Berry Shaw (SY) TQ342600	Bovinger (EX) TL521052	Chessington Wood (SY) TQ175618
Arbrook Common (SY) TQ143632	Bowes Park (MX) TQ302914	Chevening (KT) TQ488577
Archway (MX) TQ294869	Brent Res (MX) TQ215870	Chiphouse Wood (SY) TQ260570
Ashburton Park (SY) TQ347669	Brickendon (HR) TL322080	Chipstead Downs (SY) TQ266572
Ashford Common (MX) TQ087697	Bricket Wood Common (HR) TL130010	Chorleywood Common (HR) TQ033963
Aspen Wood, Navestock (EX) TQ537994	Brixton (SY) TQ312750	Clapham (SY) TQ288757
Baker's Wood (BU) TQ028871	Broad Colney (HR) TL176031	Claybury Woods & Park (EX) TQ435912
Banstead Downs (SY) TQ252610	Broadley Common (EX) TL423072	Cobham Floods (SY) TQ106595
Barbican (IL/MX) TQ322817	Bronzeville Prison, Staines (MX) TQ055715	Cody Dock, Bow (EX) TQ386819
Barclay Park, Hoddesdon (HR) TL366083	Brook Farm OS (MX) TQ261946	Cole Green Tip (HR) TL265112
Barking Bay/Marsh (EX) TQ477820	Broxbourne Woods (HR) TL329073	College Park (MX) TQ224830
Barnes Common (SY) TQ224758	Buckingham Palace Gardens (IL/MX) TQ288796	Collier's Wood (SY) TQ271704
Barnes Common (SY) TQ222758	Bulphan Fen (EX) TQ633864	Colnbrook Landfill (BU) TQ025778
Batchworth (HR) TQ065938	Burgess Park (IL/SY) TQ335778	Compton Terrace Gdns (MX) TQ317845
Battersea New Cemetery (SY) TQ232672	Bury Farm (MX) TQ191942	Coopers Green GP (HR) TL201097
Battersea Park (IL/SY) TQ282772	Bury Lake (HR) TQ053938	Coopers Green Lane (HR) TL192096
Bay Pond, Godstone (SY) TQ353516	Bushy Park (MX) TQ160690	Copy Wood, Epping Green (EX) TL421048
Beddington Farmlands (SY) TQ290667	Butterfield Green (MX) TQ332857	Coram's Fields (IL/MX) TQ305822
Bedfont Lakes CP (MX) TQ078726	Butterfield Way (HR) TL283125	Cornmill Meadows (EX) TL380011
Beech Farm GP (HR) TL190086	Calcott Hall Farm, Brentwood (EX) TQ586949	Coulsdon Common (SY) TQ322569
	Caledonian Park (MX) TQ302847	Coursers Farm (HR) TL205046
	Canada Water (IL/SY) TQ355793	
	Cangsley Grove (HR) TL223032	

Coursers Road GP (HR) TL196038	Epsom Downs (SY) TQ219582	Grays Gorge (EX) TQ608789
Court Farm, Warlingham (SY) TQ344592	Esher (SY) TQ138647	Greenhill Gdns (HR) TQ258955
Crane Meadows (MX) TQ103760	Esher Common (SY) TQ135625	Greenland Dock (IL/SY) TQ361791
Cranford (MX) TQ105765	Fairlop Waters (EX) TQ459905	Greenwich Park (KT) TQ390775
Crayford Marshes (KT) TQ532775	Fairy Hill Park (KT) TQ431730	Grey Goose Farm (EX) TQ629807
Creekmouth, Barking (EX) TQ452827	Farthing Downs (SY) TQ299576	Gunnersbury Triangle NR (MX) TQ201787
Cricklewood (MX) TQ240857	Feltham (MX) TQ105730	Hackney Marsh (MX) TQ366861
Crossness (KT) TQ490808	Felthamhill Carr (MX) TQ105718	Hadley Green (MX) TQ245973
Crossway Lake NR (KT) TQ468812	Fernyhill Wood (MX) TQ279976	Hainault Forest (EX) TQ476932
Croxley Common Moor (HR) TQ082948	Fir & Pond Woods (MX) TL276011	Hall Marsh Scrape (EX) TL373017
Crystal Palace Park (KT) TQ347707	Firs Farm PF (MX) TQ327936	Halliwick RG (MX) TQ281908
Cuckoo Wood, Hazelwood (KT) TQ444622	Fishers Green Goosefield (EX) TL380038	Ham Creek Wood, Beckton (EX) TQ419810
Dagenham Chase (EX) TQ514858	Fishers Green Island (EX) TL376037	Hamm Court (SY) TQ066654
Dame Alice Owen's School (MX) TL240006	Foots Cray Meadows (KT) TQ478715	Hammersmith (MX) TQ232786
Darenth Valley GC (KT) TQ525613	Force Green (KT) TQ450554	Hampermill Lake (HR) TQ095942
Darrick & Newstead Woods LNR (IL/MX) TQ323821	Forest Gate (EX) TQ404853	Hampstead Heath (MX) TQ273866
Dartford Heath (KT) TQ516733	Forestdale (SY) TQ365626	Hampton Court Park (MX) TQ166676
Dartford Marshes (KT) TQ544774	Fortis Green (MX) TQ277894	Hampton Wick (MX) TQ175699
Davy Down (EX) TQ592803	Fortune Street Park (IL/MX) TQ323821	Harebreaks Wood, Watford (HR) TQ102992
Dollis Valley Walk (HR) TQ258935	Fox Wood, Ealing (MX) TQ183621	Harlesden (MX) TQ214835
Drury Lane Gdns (IL/MX) TQ305811	Foxholes GP (HR) TL341119	Harold's Park Farm, Claverhambury (EX) TL413044
Dryhill (KT) TQ549491	Franks Park (KT) TQ502786	Harrow (MX) TQ157882
Duck Wood (EX) TQ555923	Frays Valley LNR (MX) TQ055865	Hatch End PF (MX) TQ135912
Dulwich Park (SY) TQ335735	Frays Wildfowl Lake (MX) TQ056864	Hatch Wood (EX) TQ395935
Dungeo Hill (SY) TQ268593	French Street (KT) TQ459527	Hatfield Aerodrome (HR) TL205085
East Acton (MX) TQ217812	Friary Park (MX) TQ273927	Hatfield Park (HR) TL240080
East India Dock Basin (MX) TQ391808	Friern Barnet (MX) TQ280925	Havering CP (EX) TQ505930
East Sheen Common (SY) TQ195745	Frogmore Lakes (HR) TL150033	Hayes Common (KT) TQ405652
Ebbsfleet (KT) TQ611745	Fryent CP (MX) TQ194877	Hazelwood (KT) TQ446615
Eel Pie Island (MX) TQ165732	Furze Ground, Epping Forest (EX) TQ430987	Headstone Manor RG (MX) TQ140895
Eliot Pits, Blackheath (KT) TQ385763	Galleyhill Farm, Waltham Abbey (EX) TL397021	Hersham GP (SY) TQ128663
Ellenbrook Fields (HR) TL205090	Galleyhill Wood (EX) TL394034	Heston (MX) TQ131775
Elmers End (KT) TQ360687	Gallions Reach (EX/KT) TQ445801	High Breach (SY) TQ383575
Emanuel Pollards, Wormley (HR) TL256035	Garsons Farm (SY) TQ125639	High Canons, Borehamwood (HR) TQ207989
West End (HR) TL337064	Gatton Park/Lake (SY) TQ271525	High Elms (KT) TQ442632
Enfield Chase (MX) TQ290988	Glen Faba (EX) TL393088	Higher Denham (BU) TQ022874
Enfield Crematorium (MX) TQ346986	Globe Town (IL/MX) TQ360828	Highgate Cemetery (MX) TQ284871
Enfield Island Village (EX) TQ375983	Gobions Wood (HR) TL256035	Highgate Wood (MX) TQ283887
Epping Forest (EX) TQ420985	Godstone SP (SY) TQ345518	Hilfield Park Res (HR) TQ158959
Epsom Common (SY) TQ190605	Golden Gates Lake (EX) TQ600819	Hillingdon (MX) TQ078832
	Grand Union Canal, Black Jack's Lock (MX) TQ043903	Hilly Fields Park (MX) TQ323985
	Grand Union Canal, Coppermill Lock (MX) TQ041912	Hoddesdonpark Wood (HR) TL352084
	Grand Union Canal, Hanwell (MX) TQ145797	Hogsmill SW (SY) TQ197682

Holborn (IL/MX) TQ306813	Littlebrook Lake (KT) TQ553756	Mymmshall Wood, North Mymms (HR) TL225028
Holmethorpe SP (SY) TQ295515	Littleworth Common (SY) TQ148652	Nash (KT) TQ405638
Holt Wood (HR) TL121037	Lodge Farm, Nazeing (EX) TL429062	Natural History Museum (IL/MX) TQ267790
Holwell Hyde (HR) TL249122	London Wetland Centre (SY) TQ228770	Navestock (EX) TQ541983
Holyfield Hall Farm (EX) TL384038	London Zoo (IL/MX) TQ282834	Nazeing CP (EX) TL387057
Holyfield Lake (EX) TL378045	Long Running (EX) TQ434997	Nazeing Gate (EX) TL411051
Home Park (MX) TQ166676	Longfield (KT) TQ602688	Neasden (MX) TQ208859
Hooley (SY) TQ287563	Longfield Gallops (KT) TQ602697	New Cross Gate (SY) TQ361769
Hooley (SY) TQ287564	Longford (MX) TQ053775	New Denham (BU) TQ046849
Horsenden Hill (MX) TQ162844	Loughborough Junction Station (SY) TQ319759	New Hall Farm (EX) TL478105
Hounslow Heath (MX) TQ123745	Lower Clapton (MX) TQ355855	New Southgate RG (HR) TQ284930
Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (IL/MX) TQ274804	Lower Sydenham (KT) TQ359721	Newyears Green (MX) TQ071880
Ilford GC (EX) TQ426867	Lower Woodside (HR) TL247061	Norbury Park, Leatherhead (SY) TQ160537
Ingrebourne Valley (EX) TQ538843	Lucy Warren OS (HR) TL361077	Nork Park (SY) TQ236590
Inns of Court (IL/MX) TQ312810	Lullingstone Park (KT) TQ520645	North Greenwich Pier (KT) TQ399795
Island Barn Res (SY) TQ140670	Lynsters Farm (HR) TQ034920	North Harrow (MX) TQ135885
Jack's Hill (EX) TQ433993	Lynsters Lake (HR) TQ038916	North Mymms Park (HR) TL215045
Jersey Farm (HR) TL174097	Lyttelton PF (MX) TQ264887	North Sheen (SY) TQ194760
Joyden's Wood (KT) TQ500715	Maida Vale (IL/MX) TQ259828	Norththaw Great Wood (HR) TL285044
Jubilee Gdns (IL/SY) TQ307800	Maple Lodge NR (HR) TQ036924	Northbrook Park (KT) TQ401734
Kelsey Park (KT) TQ376688	Mar Dyke Valley (EX) TQ600805	Northholt (MX) TQ131845
Kemnal Manor College (KT) TQ447721	Marden Park Woods (SY) TQ369539	Northmoor Hill Wood (BU) TQ036891
Kempton NR (MX) TQ116706	Maxwell Park (HR) TQ200968	Northolt (MX) TQ133844
Kenninghall OS (MX) TQ350923	Meanwhile Gdns, N Kensington (IL/MX) TQ246821	Notting Hill (IL/MX) TQ245810
Kensal Rise (MX) TQ235831	Merton & Sutton Joint Cemetery (SY) TQ234671	Nyn Pond, Northaw (HR) TL278027
Kew Gardens (SY) TQ182769	Merton Abbey Mills (SY) TQ264697	Oaklands (HR) TL183082
King George V Dock (EX) TQ432803	Mile End (IL/MX) TQ363825	Oakleigh Park (MX) TQ270940
King George V Res (EX) TQ374964	Millfields Park, Clapton (MX) TQ356866	Old Oak Common (MX) TQ218823
King George VI Res (MX) TQ041732	Millhouse Farm, Bedmond (HR) TL108035	Old Spitalfields Market (IL/MX) TQ335819
King George's RG, Sidcup (KT) TQ458726	Millwall Docks (MX) TQ377795	Orsett Fen (EX) TQ628833
Knighton Wood (EX) TQ409931	Mogador (SY) TQ239529	Otford to Filston (KT) TQ521602
Knightsbridge (IL/MX) TQ277797	Molesey Heath (SY) TQ132672	Oxhey Hall (HR) TQ103943
Knockholt (KT) TQ467587	Mollands Lane GP (EX) TQ604820	Oxhey Lane Farm (MX) TQ131924
Lake Farm CP (MX) TQ091803	Montesole PF (MX) TQ114903	Oxhey Woods (HR) TQ105925
Lambeth (IL/SY) TQ311795	Montrose PF (MX) TQ208903	Oxleas Wood (KT) TQ445759
Lamorby Park (KT) TQ465731	Morants Court (KT) TQ501579	Oxshott Heath (SY) TQ139612
Leemouth (MX) TQ394807	Morden Hall Park (SY) TQ264687	Paddington (IL/MX) TQ267812
Leg O Mutton NR (SY) TQ218774	Mores Plantation (EX) TQ566968	Panshanger Park (HR) TL283130
Letchmore Heath (HR) TQ155977	Mossops Creek, Brimsdown (MX) TQ368966	Park Royal (MX) TQ195827
Lett's Green (KT) TQ459593	Mudchute Farm (MX) TQ381786	Penhill Park, Sidcup (KT) TQ470739
Leyton Flats (EX) TQ397885	Mycenae Gdns, Blackheath (KT) TQ401777	Pepys Park, Deptford (KT) TQ366784
Limpsfield Chart (SY) TQ431521		Perivale Wood (MX) TQ159836
Lion Gorge (EX) TQ599786		
Lippitts Hill (EX) TQ392976		
Litten LNR (MX) TQ144827		
Little Wormwood Scrubs (MX) TQ230820		

Phoenix School Farm (MX) TQ225807	(SY) TQ337592	South Norwood Lake (SY) TQ341693
Pimlico (IL/MX) TQ295785	(HR) TQ206960	South West Middlesex (MX) TQ121733
Pinch Timber Farm, Epping (EX) TL451048	(EX) TQ468827	Crematorium (KT) TQ615708
Upland (EX) TL451048	R Thames: Shepperton Lock to Chertsey Lock (MX) TQ065665	Southfleet (IL/SY) TQ321805
Pinden, Longfield (KT) TQ590693	R Thames: Thames Barrier to Dome (KT) TQ403792	Southwark Park (IL/SY) TQ352789
Pinner Green (MX) TQ118902	R Thames: Wapping to Canary Wharf (MX) TQ360808	Spa Fields (IL/MX) TQ313824
Pinner Memorial Park (MX) TQ120894	R Wandle: East Croydon to Wandsworth (SY) TQ267700	Spencer Road Wetland (SY) TQ279665
Pitshanger Park, Ealing (MX) TQ171825	Roding Valley Meadows NR (EX) TQ430943	St Bartholomew's Hospital (IL/MX) TQ319815
Platt's Eyot (SY) TQ133691	Roehampton (SY) TQ225745	St Botolph's Churchyard (IL/MX) TQ332815
Plumridge Wood (MX) TQ276994	Rose Hall Farm, Navestock (EX) TQ536981	St James's Park (IL/MX) TQ294798
Pollards Hill Wood, Maple Cross (HR) TQ023932	Ruislip Manor (MX) TQ100872	St Katherine's Dock (IL/MX) TQ340805
Poplar Dock (MX) TQ382803	Ruislip Woods (MX) TQ094890	St Mary Magdalene Church, Holloway (MX) TQ313850
Poyle Farm (BU) TQ030760	Rushett Farm (SY) TQ173608	St Mary the Virgin Church, Lewisham (KT) TQ379749
Poyle Poplars NR (BU) TQ030764	Rushmore Hill (KT) TQ476610	St Mary's Catholic Cemetery, Kensal Green (MX) TQ226825
Prae Wood (HR) TL121068	Russia Dock Woodland (IL/SY) TQ362797	St Pancras & Islington Cemetery, East Finchley (MX) TQ275906
Priest Hill NR (SY) TQ229616	Ruxley GP (KT) TQ473700	St Paul's Cray Hill CP (KT) TQ482687
Prince's Coverts (SY) TQ160610	Rye Meads (HR) TL383103	St Thomas' Quarters (EX) TL433001
Princes Park, Golders Green (MX) TQ244885	Saffron Green Meadows (HR) TQ222972	St Thomas's Church, Oakwood (MX) TQ297957
Pudding Mill Lane, Stratford (EX) TQ377836	Sawpit Spring, Chandler's Cross (HR) TQ060981	Staines Moor (MX) TQ033734
Purfleet Chalk Pits (EX) TQ566785	Selsdon Woods (SY) TQ362616	Staines Res (MX) TQ051731
Purley Beeches (SY) TQ330619	Sevenoaks WR (KT) TQ522570	Stanborough (HR) TL225110
Queen Elizabeth II Res (SY) TQ120670	Seventy Acres Lake (HR) TL374030	Stanborough Lakes (HR) TL230108
Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (EX) TQ381846	Sewardstone Marsh (EX) TQ379985	Stanmore Common (MX) TQ156940
Queen Mary Res (MX) TQ070695	Sheen Common (SY) TQ196746	Stanmore CP (MX) TQ173928
Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup (KT) TQ463710	Shepherd's Bush (MX) TQ228805	Stanstead Innings (HR) TL388112
Queen Mother Res (BU) TQ007768	Shoreham (KT) TQ518616	Stanwell Moor (MX) TQ034744
Queen's Park, Kilburn (IL/MX) TQ241833	Silver Street Cemetery, Goff's Oak (HR) TL329021	Stepney (IL/MX) TQ356817
Queen's Wood (MX) TQ288886	Silvermeade, Broxbourne (HR) TL371062	Stocker's Farm (HR) TQ052933
R Darent, Otford Road (KT) TQ526582	Silvertown (EX) TQ414798	Stocker's Lake (HR) TQ046935
R Thames: Laleham Park to Penton Hook Lock (MX) TQ050687	Skid Hill Farm, Biggin Hill (KT) TQ402598	Stonards Hill (EX) TL472022
Radlett Aero GP (HR) TL155035	Sleapshyde (HR) TL201068	Stone Marshes (KT) TQ568755
Rainham Marshes (EX) TQ525800	Smallford GP (HR) TL197071	Stonewood (KT) TQ591722
Rammey Marsh (MX) TQ374996	South Hampstead (MX) TQ263840	Stoney Wood Lake (MX) TQ204937
Ranston Covert (BU) TQ040888	South Herts GC (HR) TQ253944	Streatham Cemetery (SY) TQ270720
Ravenor Park, Greenford (MX) TQ140826	South Hill Wood, Bromley (KT) TQ394679	Streatham Common (SY) TQ305709
Regent's Park (IL/MX) TQ281828	South Lodge, Langleybury (HR) TQ077995	Streatham Vale (SY) TQ292704
Richmond Park (SY) TQ200730	Riddlesdown Quarry (HR) TQ057940	
Rickmansworth Aquadrome (HR) TQ057940		

Stroud Green (MX) TQ312880	Tokynnton (MX) TQ205845	Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough) (SY) TQ119681
Stubbers OPC (EX) TQ575845	Tollgate Wood, Hatfield (HR) TL217056	Wandle Meadow Nature Park (SY) TQ264710
Sundridge (KT) TQ410705	Tolworth Court Farm (SY) TQ200650	Wandsworth Common (SY) TQ275740
Surrey Water (IL/SY) TQ356800	Tooting Common (SY) TQ293720	Wanstead Flats (EX) TQ410864
Sutton's Farm, Sandridge (HR) TL192100	Tottenham Hale (MX) TQ342895	Wanstead Park (EX) TQ415875
Swan Lane OS (MX) TQ262934	Tottenham Marshes (MX) TQ354910	Warley CP (EX) TQ583925
Swanscombe (KT) TQ606745	Totteridge (HR) TQ246941	Warlies Park (EX) TL412017
Swanscombe Marshes (KT) TQ605760	Totteridge Valley (MX) TQ240930	Warlingham Court Farm (SY) TQ343594
Swiss Cottage (IL/MX) TQ267842	Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park (MX) TQ370823	Warren Farm Sports Centre, Hanwell (MX) TQ148794
Symondshyde Great Wood (HR) TL195110	Trent Park (MX) TQ290970	Warren Gorge (EX) TQ597794
Syon Park (MX) TQ173765	Trevereux (SY) TQ433509	Warren Hill (EX) TQ413952
Tatem Park (MX) TQ325928	Trinity Gdns, Poplar (MX) TQ374810	Waterlow Park (MX) TQ286872
Tattling End (BU) TQ020871	Troy Mill Lake (HR) TQ039905	Waterworks NR (EX) TQ363868
Teazlewood (SY) TQ158583	Tugmutton Common, Farnborough (KT) TQ437652	Wenlock Basin (IL/MX) TQ322832
Temple (IL/MX) TQ312809	Tulse Hill (SY) TQ315735	West End Common (SY) TQ125632
Temple Mills (EX) TQ380852	Turnham Green (SY) TQ200555	West Hyde GP (HR) TQ034913
Tenchleys (SY) TQ419512	Tyrrell's Wood (SY) TQ200555	West India Docks (MX) TQ376800
Thames Barrier (EX/KT) TQ415795	Tytenhanger GP (HR) TL191052	West Thurrock Marshes (EX) TQ583767
Thames Chase (EX) TQ584863	Unigate Wood, Streatham (SY) TQ309716	Westbourne Green (IL/MX) TQ251818
Thamesmere East Lake (KT) TQ465809	Upper Sydenham (KT) TQ345719	Whitechapel (IL/MX) TQ341815
Thamesmere Lakes (KT) TQ460807	Valentines Park (EX) TQ438878	Whitewebbs Wood (MX) TQ323997
Thamesview Golf Centre (KT) TQ483809	Vanbrugh Pits, Blackheath (KT) TQ397772	Whitings Hill OS, Arkley (HR) TQ231954
The Grapsome, Chessington (SY) TQ170636	Vauxhall Park (IL/SY) TQ304776	Willow Tree OS, Yeading (MX) TQ126820
The Hollies, Sidcup (KT) TQ460732	Verulamium Park (HR) TL138069	Willowbank (MX) TQ057853
The Ledges, Esher (SY) TQ122628	Vicarage Farm (MX) TQ304979	Wimbledon Common (SY) TQ227721
The Long Plantation (SY) TQ267562	Vicarage Road Stadium, Watford (HR) TQ107958	Winch Hill Wood (HR) TL116029
The Mores (EX) TQ561965	Victoria Park (IL/MX) TQ363840	Woooons Farm (HR) TQ033933
The Withey Beds LNR (HR) TQ078941	Waddon Ponds (SY) TQ309650	Wormwood Scrubs (MX) TQ221818
The Wood, Surbiton (SY) TQ182671	Walthamstow Forest (EX) TQ313912	Wraysbury GP (BU) TQ015735
Theobalds Park (HR) TL345005	Walthamstow Marshes (EX) TQ350878	Wraysbury Res (MX) TQ025745
Thorndon CP N (EX) TQ608912	Walthamstow Res (EX) TQ353890	Yardley Hill, Chingford (EX) TQ382958
Thorndon CP S (EX) TQ627903	Walton Downs (SY) TQ220573	Yeading Brook Meadows (MX) TQ105822
Thorpe Water Park (SY) TQ030681	Walton Heath (SY) TQ232540	Yiewsley Lake (MX) TQ050804
Tile Kiln Lane OS, Edmonton (MX) TQ323924	Walton Res (SY) TQ122685	
Titsey Wood (SY) TQ421542	Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (SY) TQ122698	



## REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2014

The year's highlights included London's third Blyth's Reed Warbler and Inner London's first Yellow-browed Warbler. Scarcities included the first Purple Heron since 2009, two Glossy Ibis, two Spoonbill records, two Spotted Crake records, the first Corncrake since 2010, the first Nightjars since 2009, both Grey and Red-necked Phalaropes, Sabine's and Bonaparte's Gulls, White-winged Black Tern, good numbers of Iceland Gulls, the highest number of Great Egrets, a Red-rumped Swallow, two Great Grey Shrikes and a Lapland Bunting. Raptor numbers increased, as did Little Egrets and Ring-necked Parakeets. It was a good year for sightings of Arctic Skua, Great Skua, Common Scoter and Brent Geese.

The first winter period was mild but wet and stormy at times. Numbers of hard-weather species such as Smew and Bittern were low, and there were less than 50 Waxwings. Stonechats were present in good numbers, and individuals of Spotted Redshank and Greenshank over-wintered. Spring was slightly warmer and less wet than normal. Notable breeding records included Marsh Harrier, Teal and Marsh Warbler at Rainham Marshes, Shoveler there and at London Wetland Centre and Oystercatcher at Q. Mary Res. Breeding records of raptors generally increased, with Hobby breeding again in Inner London. Little Egret nests increased, Egyptian Geese bred in record numbers and Ravens bred again in Kent. Declines of Willow Warbler and Tree Sparrow continued, and there were no confirmed breeding records of Marsh Tit.

After a quiet summer, autumn became unsettled in October and November. Highlights included an influx of Common Scoter in August, London's first August record of Great Egret, and good numbers of several passerines including Ring Ouzel, Spotted Flycatcher and Tree Pipit. October saw a notable passage of Brent Geese, an influx of Short-eared Owls and good numbers of Great Skua and Redwing. Starling passage was notable in late October and early November, though Woodpigeon numbers were about average. An arrival of Woodcock in November included several casualties in incongruous surroundings such as Moorgate and Bart's Hospital.

No Waxwings were seen in the second winter period. However, Bittern numbers were up, there were five wintering Dartford Warblers, increased numbers of Chiffchaff (including four Siberian) and Stonechat, and a Reed Warbler and Common Whitethroat showed an improbable liking for a traffic island in Leyton.

**January:** Year high counts included 47 Red-crested Pochard in Regent's Park, 67 Egyptian Geese at London Wetland Centre, seven Smew at Wraysbury GP and 2,200 Lapwing at Rainham Marshes. The year started with 15 Jack Snipe at Holmethorpe SP, 46 Kittiwake past Rainham Marshes and two Siskin in Bloomsbury, while a Great Northern Diver remained from 2013 at Walton Res, lingering in the area until mid-February. Another individual was at Staines from January to May. Two White-fronted Geese were at Rainham Marshes from 1st, finally seen at Belhus Wood CP on 16th. On 8th, Inner London saw six Siskin at Regent's Park and 80 Mute Swan at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens. The first Great Egret of the year was over Rainham Marshes on 12th. A Siberian Chiffchaff from 2013 lingered at the R Colne, being joined by a second bird from 13th. Caspian Gull numbers reached a peak of six at Rainham Marshes on 17th, with a Hen Harrier there on 20th, while a Glaucous Gull was at Beddington Farmlands.

On 30th, a Mediterranean Gull was at Tower Bridge. Two Waxwing in Reigate on 30th were followed by 30 at Hall Place Gardens on 31st.

**February:** The month saw year high counts of five Bittern at North Met Pit, 186 Great Crested Grebe at Q. Mary Res, 453 Golden Plover and 1,070 Wigeon at Rainham Marshes, 1,000 Common Gull at Wanstead Flats and 400 Fieldfare at Canons Farm. A Glaucous Gull was at Beddington Farmlands from 6th-8th. Two Iceland Gull were at Rainham Marshes on 21st, while a Hen Harrier was at Godstone on 26th.

**March:** Year highs included 27 Black-necked Grebe at Hilfield Park Res, 66 Goldeneye at Staines Res, 14 Ruff at Beddington Farmlands and (on 23rd) 22 Wheatear at Barking Bay. On 2nd, a Mediterranean Gull was at Victoria. On 7th, a Hen Harrier was at Rainham Marshes, while the year's first Garganey was at Crossness on 9th. On 13th, three Wigeon were in St James's Park and one in Regent's Park, where a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was seen on 16th. On 22nd, a Red-throated Diver was over QE II Res. On 24th, 815 Cormorant flew high over Tooting Common. A Siberian Chiffchaff was at London Wetland Centre from 24th, staying till April 1st. Seven Waxwing were at Longfield from 26th-28th. A Great Egret was at Rainham Marshes on 26th and one at Warren Gorge the next day. On 31st, a Spoonbill flew over Coulsdon.

**April:** An early Black Tern was at Island Barn Res on 4th. On 5th, three Ring Ouzels were at KGV Res and a Goshawk was at Jack's Hill. Osprey passage from 8th-10th featured ten birds. A Red-throated Diver was at Island Barn Res on 9th, while eight Common Scoter were at Rainham Marshes on 10th. On 19th, a year high four Mediterranean Gulls were at Crossness and a spring high 275 Sand Martins were at Rainham Marshes. Four Garganey were at Kempton NR on 20th, while three Blue-headed Wagtails were at London Wetland Centre on 22nd. On 23rd, 24 Pink-footed Geese flew over Swanscombe Marshes, the only record this year. On 26th, a Great Egret flew over Brent Res, while spring highs of 142 Common Terns were at Staines Res and of 50 Arctic Terns were at Walthamstow Res. Rainham Marshes saw records of Glaucous Gull and Arctic Skua on 27th, with two Common Cranes past Amwell NR and Rye Meads that day. On 30th, ten Hobby were at Seventy Acres Lake.

**May:** On 1st, two Great Egrets flew over Beddington Farmlands and two were at Rainham Marshes, then one was seen over Chafford Hundred the next day. On 5th, a Honey Buzzard was at Rotherhithe and three Little Terns were at QE II Res and London Wetland Centre. On 11th, a Red-rumped Swallow was at Southmere Lake while a House Martin x Swallow hybrid was at Staines Res. A Woodlark was at Oxhey Park on 12th, and a Cuckoo was at Holland Park on 14th. On 19th, two Temminck's Stints were at London Wetland Centre, with two also seen at Tyttenhanger GP from that day to 22nd. Two Spoonbill circled over Beddington Farmlands on 22nd. A Quail was at Bushy Park on 23rd, followed by a Red-legged Partridge in London E3 on 26th. A Blyth's Reed Warbler was a great find at Wanstead Flats on 29th. On 30th, a Bonaparte's Gull was at Staines Res and a Gannet flew over Island Barn Res. A Purple Heron and 14 Hobby were at Horton GP on 31st.

**June:** On 2nd, a Great Egret was at Belhus Woods CP. A Red-necked Phalarope graced QE II Res on 12th. The only White-winged Black Tern was at Walton Res on 19th. Two Turtle Doves were at Stanford Rivers on 22nd. A Nightjar found at a Buckinghamshire site on 24th remained until early July.

**July:** Year highs recorded this month included 155 Shelduck at Crossness, 163 Yellow-

legged Gulls at Rainham Marshes, 300 Pochard at Hilfield Park Res and 2,000 Swifts at London Colney. Common Sandpiper numbers peaked on 19th, with 92 birds including 28 at Q. Mother Res. A Mediterranean Gull was at Rotherhithe on 20th. On 26th, a Marsh Harrier flew over Hammersmith Cemetery, while on 31st a Glossy Ibis was at Beddington Farmlands.

**August:** Year highs this month included 2,031 Tufted Duck at Walthamstow Res, six Black Tern, 17 Bar-tailed Godwit and 800 Sand Martin at Rainham Marshes and 70 Corn Bunting at Longfield Gallops. On 2nd, a Great Egret flew over Ingrebourne Valley. A Spotted Crake found at Rainham Marshes on 4th stayed until September. On 6th, two Great Egrets were at Amwell NR and two were seen over Godstone later. A Glossy Ibis found at Crayford Marshes on 7th moved on to Beddington Farmlands, staying till 10th. On 11th, 20 Hobby were at Roding Valley Meadows. A Hen Harrier was at Rainham Marshes on 13th, and Wood Sandpiper numbers reached a peak of three there. The year's only Inner London Wood Warbler was at Regent's Park on 19th. On 22nd, 27 Whimbrel flew over Richmond Park, while nine Tree Pipits were at Bushy Park on 23rd. On 25th, two Arctic Skuas were at Q. Mother Res, with another at QE II Res. Rainham Marshes records include a Curlew Sandpiper on 29th and a Little Stint on 29th-30th, with 500 Common Terns there on the latter date. A busy day's migration on 31st saw peak numbers of Whinchat (including 11 at Wanstead Flats, ten at Richmond Park and four in Regent's Park), Common Redstart (31 including seven at Wanstead Flats) and Spotted Flycatcher (89 including 14 at Wanstead Flats and nine at Regent's Park). That day also saw a Grasshopper Warbler at Regent's Park and a Wryneck at Alexandra Palace, staying till September.

**September:** The month saw year highs of 440 Greylag Geese at Sevenoaks WR, 652 Teal at Crossness and 822 Cormorants at Staines Res. On 1st, two Curlew Sandpipers were at Rainham Marshes, followed by singles there on 4th and 5th; a single was also at Crayford on 6th. Single juvenile Cuckoos were at Regent's Park/Primrose Hill on 3rd and Victoria Park on 6th. A Wryneck at Wormwood Scrubs on 2nd was followed by one at Parkside Farm/Res on 6th and one at Q. Mother Res from 14th-15th. Single Arctic Skuas were at Rainham Marshes on 6th and 14th. Yellow Wagtail passage on 7th featured 102 birds across London, while the year's only Inner London Pied Flycatcher was at Lincoln's Inn on 9th. Another Great Egret was at Rainham Marshes from 8th to 9th, and there was also one over Beddington Farmlands on the latter date. On 11th, three Spotted Redshank were at Rainham Marshes, while 140 Meadow Pipits flew over Richmond Park. A Guillemot was on the Thames at Gallions Reach and Rainham Marshes on 15th; a further record was at Belvedere on 29th. A Corncrake was at Rye Meads on 19th. On 21st, a Sabine's Gull was at Q. Mother Res and a Yellow-browed Warbler was at Regent's Park, while 240 Meadow Pipits were at Rainham Marshes. On 22nd, nine Common Scoter were at Q. Mother Res and a Stonechat was in Regent's Park. Swallow numbers across London peaked on 24th, including 500 at Beddington Farmlands, with 847 House Martins also there; the next day saw 1,900 House Martins over Canons Farm. On 27th, a Woodlark was at Wanstead Flats, while a Nightjar found at Middlesex FB on 28th stayed till October 1st. A Little Stint was at Rainham Marshes on 29th-30th, and a Great Grey Shrike was at Ickenham Marsh on 29th. On 30th, a Spotted Crake was at Rye Meads, and a Long-eared Owl was at Rainham Marshes that day and the next.

**October:** Year highs included 59 Mandarin Duck at Black Park, 143 Snipe at Rye Meads, 68 Little Gulls at Rainham Marshes and 581 Shoveler at Staines Res. Single Little Stints



Brown A	Caldwell S	Charles PJ	Cook J	Curson L
Brown E	Callahan D	Charter J	Cook P	Curtin J
Brown GB	Callahan I	Chastell S	Cook R	Chastell S
Brown M	Callewaert A	Chastell SM	Cook RE	Cutting KAD
Brown S	Callf RM	Cheeseman A	Cooke J	Czajkowski I
Brown T	Calver R	Chen I	Coom A	Czapski S
Browne A	Cameron A	Chilton P	Coomes R	Dagley JR
Browne N	Campbell D	Chilton S	Cooper A	Daly J
Browne R	Campbell G	Chippendale S	Cooper B	Danella R
Brownsell T	Campbell MD	Chown PK	Cooper R	Darbyshire I
Bruce D	Canny G	Christopher R	Cope H	Darrell-Lambert
Bryant D	Capper D	Churches B	Cope R	DG
BTO WeBS Unit	Capper I	Clancy A	Corbet P	Darvill R
Bucket V	Carle I	Clancy T	Corfield GW	Daubeny L
Buckingham S	Carlill P	Clark BAJ	Corley P	David A
Budd B	Carlsson D	Clark D	Corner A	Davies BM
Budgeon D	Carpenter BR	Clark DN	Corrigan C	Davies C
Bugess D	Carpenter C	Clark FC	Cottingham FJ	Davies F
Bull K	Carr DG	Clark JM	Cotton DH	Davies G
Bull P	Carroll JAK	Clark N	Cousens A	Davies JW
Bulle U	Carter D	Clark R	Cousins D	Davies M
Bunce S	Carter N	Clarke A	Cousins R	Davies P
Bundril J	Carter PM	Clarke J	Cowell J	Davies R
Bunting A	Carter S	Clarke K	Cox A	Davies S
Burch J	Carter SJ	Clements B	Cox D	Davis AP
Burchell T	Cass J	Clements C	Cox G	Davis P
Burden M	Casselton PJ	Clements FA	Cox J	Dawson MD
Burdett R	Catchpole A	Clements-	Cox P	Dawton B
Burgess D	Catlin SA	Partridge A	Crabtree G	Day A
Burgess M	Cattell M	Clench K	Cramer K	Day B
Burgess R	CFBWBG	Cliffe P	Crandley E	Day D
Burgum N	Chaffe M	Coates A	Crawley S	De Keyser R
Burkett D	Chalmers S	Coath M	Crew E	Dean D
Burrowes-Smith P	Chambers B	Coldrey D	Cripps B	Dean K
Burrows A	Chambers H	Coleman D	Cripps RJ	Dee C
Burt DM	Chambers K	Coleman J	Crockford S	Dee J
Burton JF	Champion B	Coleman R	Croft N	Dee M
Bury I	Champness E	Collard M	Crossness LNR	DeGraeve M
Bushell J	Chandler F	Collard R	Crouch NC	Delaloye P
Butler J	Chanter B	Collier S	Crow T	Delpy M
Butler M	Chapman C	Collins C	Crowall J	Dench K
Butler T	Chapman CB	Collins D	Croydon Birders	Denison N
Butson P	Chapman D	Collins MJ	Croydon RSPB	Dent A
Buxton R	Chapman J	Collins P	Crump D	Dent D
Byle PAF	Chapman L	Collinson I	Cuff MJ	Dent J
Cadera J	Chapman N	Colmans J	Culham DA	Dent M
Cadwallender T	Chapman P	Colson R	Culley D	Dent MD
Caiden M	Chapman R	Combes D	Culshaw AJ	Dewes J
Caine G	Chapman TD	Commons A	Cumming DA	Dewey R
Caine T	Chappell B	Condon M	Cumming L	Dewhurst O
Cairns D	Charles G	Connor N	Cunningham M	Dickens J
Calderin J	Charles M	Cook F	Curran-White K	Dingain L
Caldwell C	Charles P	Cook FME	Curry J	Dives D

Dixon J	Edwards J	JE	Ferris P	Gammage L	Gorringe D	
Dixon M	Edwards P		Few J	Gandy D	Gosnell C	
Dobbie J	Eland M		Field J	Garbutt N	Gowdy S	
Dodd M	ELBF		Fisher J	Garcia E	Gower A	
Dodd N	Eldridge T		Fisher K	Gardener A	Gowers J	
Dodds A	Ellam C	CE	Fisher S	Gardiner A	Gowley R	
Dolton P	Elliott-Moustache		Fisher SL	Gardiner AH	Goyder D	
Donegan T	G		Fitz L	Gardiner G	Graham A	
Donovan J	Ellis IS		Flack I	Gardiner J	Graham P	
Dorey C	Ellis R		Flanagan T	Gardner N	NG	Gram G
Dorman A	Ellisden D		Flesher R	Gately D	Gramlick G	
Dorward J	Elmes J-P		Fletcher D	Gates NJF	Gramlick K	
Doubleday A	Elsden D		Flight S	Gately SJ	SJG	Granger-Taylor N
Dove A	Elsej NJC		Flinn G	Geary R	Grant I	
Dowding EJ	Elsoffer M		Floyd J	Geddes J	Gravatt J	
Dowle J	Elton P		Fogg S	Gedge D	Gravatt JC	
Dowley J	Elwell S		Folkerd G	Geldenhuis B	Gray A	
Dowman S	Emerson C		Follett PC	Gentry G	Gray J	
Downing A	Emmens R		Ford A	George CM	Gray P	
Downing AJ	English P		Ford AE	George S	Greasby RT	
Downing FT	Epstein B		Forder D	Gibbs A	Green A	
Drake S	Erickson-Hull D		Fordham J	Gibson A	Green AE	
Drew RJ	Etches C		Forgham J	Gibson T	Green B	
Drewitt EJA	Eustace-Roberts D		Forrest R	Giddens J	Green Grandad	
Driver P	Evans A		Forrester C	Giddens S	Green R	
Drummond L	Evans G		Foskett A	Giham R	Green T	
Dryburgh P	Evans H	HE	Foyle M	Gilbert J	Green TT	
Dryden R	Evans HW		Francik B	Giles P	Greenaway K	
D'Souza J	Evans L		Francik J	Gill E	Greenwood D	
du Feu LA	Evans LGR		Francis A	Gill G	Gregory D	
Duckett AR	Evans S		Francis R	Gill M	Griffin MA	
Duckworth NA	Everett CM		Franklin T	Gillard T	Griffiths T	
Dean D	Everington A		Fraser B	Gillard TE	Grimwade S	
Dumerin P	Everington P		Frearson S	Gillingham JKC	Gross RD	
Dummigan FJ	Evershed R		Free B	Gillings S	Guest K	KG
Duncan K	Facey R		Free J	Gilry A	Guiver J	
Duncan KP	Fagan B		Freeland-Haynes	Gisseleire Y	Gundersen J	
Dundas G	Fanning M		L	Given Q	Gwyn M	
Dunerin P	Farell K		Freeman S	Glanville C	Hack DF	
Dunne R	Farmer J		French N	Glen J	Hackett P	
Durnerin P	Farmer S		Friends of West	Goad AR	Hagglund P	
Dykes B	Farnes DE		Ham Park	Goddard AP	Haines B	
Dymond L	Farrar AR		Frost P	Goddard T	Haines W	
Dyson M	Farrell C		Fuller D	Godden A	Haines WG	
Eagles R	Faulkner BR		Fuller KA	Godden N	Hale D	
Earl S	Fearnside J		Fuller P	Godsmith DJ	Hale M	MHa
Earl T	Felder K		Fure A	Gomez A	Hall A	AHL
Earp M	Fell D		Furley C	Gompertz D	Hall AG	
East J	Fell J		Gabriel I	Gooding J	Hall J	
Edwards A	Feltham A		Gale J	Goodman P	Hall N	
Edwards D	Ferguson D		Gale S	Gordon J	Hall R	
Edwards E	Ferguson S		Galpin B	Gordon JD	Hall S	
Edwards EY	Fernando E		Galsworthy AC	Gore S	Hallam M	

Halley-Frame V	Hawkins P	PH	Holt D	Hyde P	Jones I
Halsey R	Hawtree JN		Holtby C	Hyland P	Jones PD
Halsey SA	Hay G		Holyome J	Ilett M	MIL
Hammond S	Haydon RM		Honey G	Imber E	Jones R
Hampson P	Hayes D		Honey M	Imison N	Jones RI
Hancock R	Haynes A		Honey Y	Ingman JB	Jones RJ
Hanlon J	Hazell C		Hood A	Innes A	Jordan D
Hannam J	Headon J		Hooper R	Innes RE	AI
Hardie AJ	Healey SJ		Hopkins P	Innsley H	REI
Harding C	CH	CH	Hopkins R	Inward D	Jordan M
Harding CD	Heathcote P		Hornby K	Iredale R	MJ
Harding G	Helm C		Horrobin D	Jack B	Joy N
Harding M	Hemming JH		Hough S	Jack J	Jupp C
Hare M	Hennessey D		Housley D	Jackman N	Jupp CR
Hargrave M	Henson G	GHn	Housley DJ	Jackson A	Kalli G
Hargrave S	Hepburn D		Houston J	Jackson B	Karunanayake K
Harlow J	Herbert C		Houston T	Jackson D	Kearney T
Harmsworth N	Herbert R		Howard C	Jackson ED	Keeble P
Harper B	Herridge J		Howarth I	Jackson I	Keeley D
Harris A	AHa		Howdon D	Jackson J	Keen R
Harris D			Howey S	Jackson N	Kehl I
Harris DG			Howie G	Jackson P	Kellett A
Harris DM	DMH		Herts Bird Club	Jacobs S	Kelly DJ
Harris K			Herts BNA	Jakeman T	Kempa M
Harris M			Hewett G	James G	Kennedy A
Harris NG			Hewitt R	James GA	Kennelly AD
Harris RG			Hicks M	James PJ	Kennelly T
Harris SM			Hider N	James T	Kent OS
Harris T			Higgins G	Jardine A	Kernahan G
Harris TJ			Higgs N	Jarrett S	Kerr K
Harrison A			Higgs P	Jarvis KM	Kerr M
Harrison B			Hiley M	Jasper C	Kerry M
Harrison D			Hilfield Reservoir	Javes S	Kersey N
Harrison DW			Bird Report	Jeffrey D	Khan N
Harrison H			Hill H	Jeffreys D	Kilby B
Harrison L			Hill J	Jeffreys T	Kilby R
Harrison P			Hill M	Jenkins P	Kilgour P
Harrison R			Hill T	Jenkins SJ	Kilgour R
Harrison S			Hillion E	Jenkins-Jones D	Kiln S
Harrow Nat Hist			Hills D	Jenner B	King B
Soc			Hinchcliffe Z	Jennings D	King D
Hart P	PHT		Hines T	Jennings S	King M
Hart PR			Hinton G	Jobbins D	Kitchen C
Hart R			Hoare J	Johnson A	Kitchen S
Hartmann B			Hoare MS	Johnson D	Kite P
Hartnett K			Hobbs DL	Johnson M	Klandorf H
Harvey S			Hobson A	Johnson S	Knight AR
Haselgrove D			Hodge C	Jones B	ARK
Haslem S			Hogg J	Jones C	Knight DC
Haslett N			Hollingdale J	Jones CDR	Knight G
Hatton WA			Holmes A	Jones CM	Knight R
Hawgood G			Holmes AL	Jones E	Knott N
Hawkins J			Holmes P	Jones GW	Knott S
					Knowlden G
					Koefoed-Nielsen
					C
					Kohn R

Kornjaca J	JK	Lewis SETL	Mann L	McGrath C	Moore P
Kree D		Leyland K	Mann T	McGrath D	Moore PD
La Pietra A		Liley N	Mantle P	Mcintyre R	Moore RC
Lacey H		Limb J	Manville P	McKee MJ	MMcK
Ladbrook R		Lin Y-H	Maple Cross	McKenzie J	Moore S
Laird A		Lindo D	Ringling Group	McLaughlin J	Moran NJ
Lamb A		Lindsay CA	Maple Lodge	McManus KJ	KJM
Lambert P		Ling D	Committee	McManus M	Morgan G
Lambert SR		Ling M	Marchant JH	McMaster E	Moriarty J
Lamsdell C		Linnell A	Marchant K	McNeil I	Morley G
Lamsdell CH		Lister I	Marett A	McSweeney JR	Morris C
Lamsdell D		Lister P	Mark H	McWalter D	Morris D
Lanfear J		Lloyd J	Mark W	Mead D	Morris DJ
Langley L		Lockton DJL	Maroevic FJ	FJM	Morris P
Lapworth G		Lodge C	Marriner N	Meadows A	AM
Last B	BL	Loeb J	Marsh B	Meadows K	Morrison D
Lathey PA		London Wetland	Marshall M	Meaton A	DMn
Laurie P		Centre	Marshall O	Melton D	Morton ER
Law JL		London Wildlife	Marshall P	Menzie SD	Morton GR
Law SJ		Trust volunteers	Marshall SK	Mercer S	Morton M
Lawler G		Lovatt AM	Martens D	Messenger M	Morton R
Lawler L		Love M	Martin H	Messenger P	Morton T
Lawrence N	NL	Love C	Martin J	Micklethwaite P	Moss C
Lawson AR	ARL	Lowen J	Martin JP	Middleton A	Moss J
Lawson MJ		Lowman DP	Martin P	Middleton R	Moss L
Lay SH		Lowman P	Martin R	Middleton S	Moss P
Layfield AR		Lucas R	Maskell JM	Mill Hill BS	Moule J
Lea D		Lulminster R	Maskell R	Millar A	JM
Leach D		Luscombe A	Mason A	Millar I	Moulton T
Lead M		Lux T	Mason C	Millen D	Mount L
Leadbeater L		Lycett I	Massey A	DMi	Munro B
Leahy B		Lyle T	Massey J	Miller A	Munro W
Leahy E		Lyness D	DLy	Miller B	Murdoch R
Leavett R		Lyons D	Matthews D	Miller D	Murphy N
Leckie G		Lyons S	Maxwell C	Miller DJP	Murray B
Lee A		Mac M	MM	Miller M	Murray DP
Lee T		Mackay A	May B	Miller-Smith S	Murray J
Leech D		Mackenzie-Davies	May M	Mills R	Murray J Snr
Leeke S		C	May N	Mills R	Murray K
Leerjet E		Mackie H	McBeath G	Minhinnick S	Murray RD
Legood P		Mackie J	McCafferty A	Minney M	Murray S
Leitch M		MacKinnon M	McCallum L	Mirza I	Musgrove A
Leppard A		Macpherson P	McCarthy A	Mitchell D	Musker C
Lethbridge J		Macrow FC	McCarthy D	Mitchell JW	Musker H
Leverington D		Maddison G	McCarthy M	Mitchell M	Nasir J
Levy J		Maeland X	McCormick A	Moates GK	Ndunge T
Lewis A		Magness I	McCormick J	Mogensen B	Neal D
Lewis E		Mahieu N	McCoy R	Moll N	Neal S
Lewis EA		Makengo J	McCulloch J	Monckton A	Neil H
Lewis H		Malahew P	McDonnell J	Moncy G	Ness R
Lewis M		Manfield F	McEwan C	Montier DJ	Netherwood MJ
Lewis P		Mann D	McGilvray K	Moon AV	AVM
Lewis S		Mann J	McGough D	Moore C	MJN
				Moore G	Neville L
				Moore KM	Newbold F
					Newbound PJ

Newham J	Osborn S	Petch L	Rainham Twitter	Rivoire JR
Newmark P	Osborne A	Petchey M	Ralph C	Roberts A
Newmark PA	Osborne L	Petley R	Ralph E	Roberts D
Newnham W	Osmond J	Petterson V	Ramsey S	Roberts M
Newson J	Osterley Park	Pharaoh D	Randall A	Robertson BD
Newton B	Birding Group	Phillips L	Randon N	Robertson DI
Newton D	O'Sullivan F	Phillips M	Rank M	Robertson RA
Nicholls B	Outhwaite L	Phillips TJ	Rankin J	Robinson MF MFR
Nicholls S	Outten M	Pia D	Rare Bird Alert	Robinson S
Nichols SC	Overy L	Piccolo T		Robson J
Nicholson H	Packer K	Pickering P	Rawcliffe G	Rocksborough-
Nicholson-Ross C	Page B	Picton J	Rawling P	Smith S
Nicholson-Ross G	Paice M	Pierce I	Rawling T	Rodriguez-Sinovas
Nick S	Paine M	Pierce S	Rawlings B	A
Nicolson G	Painter D	Pinkham D	Rawlings J	Roffey B
Nightingmy P	Palacios V	Pledge D	Rawlings ND	Rogers K
Noakes J	Palmer D	Podmore A	Rayment K	Rolfe MD
Nobbs BT	Palmer J	Polley D	RDNHS	Roman AJ
Noble K	Palmer JC	Poole C	Read D	Rome K
Norcott B	Palmer KJ	Popham EA	Read S	Root SM
Norcott D	Palmer M	Porritt D	Reding B	Rose C
North S	Papps S	Porter A	Redston A	Rose G
Northall N	Parker M	Posen S	Reed B	Rose I
Northam R	Parks R	Posen SG	Reed DM	Rose W
Norton J	Parr M	Potts L	Reed JD	Ross D
Nottage A	Parry M	Power R	Reed M	Ross P
Notton D	Partridge J	Power R	Reeves J	Rossiter BN
Nowers MD	Partridge K	Poynter S	Reeves S	Rossiter M
Nuckel B	Pashby C	Pratt NM	Regent's Park	Rowbotham I
Nugent F	Pask R	Prentice N	Birds blog	Rowe B
Nussbaumer D	Patel B	Preston N	Reid A	Rowe C
Nuttall R	Patel S	Price B	Reid J	Rowe T
NW London RSPB	Paterson S	Price G	Reid NHL	Rowing CGM
Oakenfull P	Patmore S	Price K	Rettke-Grover R	Roxbrough-Smith
Oakland M	Patterson V	Price N	Reveley J	S
Oakley R	Patteson N	Priestnall J	Reynolds A	Royston P
Oakley RH	Patteson V	Priestnall S	Reynolds JL	RSPB RSPB
Oakley T	Payman V	Pritchard DM	Reynolds M	RSPB Central
O'Brien M	Payne C	Pritchard J	Reynolds S	London Group
O'Connor P	Payne D	Privett KC	Rhodes P	Rubie A
O'Keefe S	Pearce N	Proddow SK	Rice E	Ruislip NHS
Oliver N	Pearce S	Purchase K	Richard T	Rumsby B
Oliver P	Pearson A	Purdey KL	Richards G	Runham L
Oliver PJ	Pearson R	Puritz J	Richards Z	Ruscoe M
Ollard L	Peck TJ	Putnam RHA	Richardson D	Russell G
O'Neil A	Peel A	Pyrah RJ	Richardson J	Russell L
Orchard M	Peeling J	Quail J	Riches G	Rutt PJ
O'Regan G	Peggs G	Quig A	Ridge J	Rutt S
Ormondroyd S	Peggs S	Quinn A	Ridley MJ	Rutter N
Orr-Ewing DC	Pentock P	Quinto-Ashman E	Riedlinger S	Ryall J
Orson N	Peresztegi J	Radcliffe S	Riggs RJ	Ryan L
Orwell T	Perfect E	Rae A	Rigelato R	Rycroft A
Orwin R	Perfect S	Rae R	Rimes DTR	Ryder G

Rye Meads	Simons M	Stallard B	Swann White J	Townsend A
Partnership RMP	Simonsson I	Stanley M	Swanson I	Townsend B
Rye Meads	Simpson R	Stanley R	Swanton R	Townsend D
Ringing Group	Skelton M	Stannard E	Sweetland A	Townsend P
Ryland C	Sketch PA	Stansfield RH	Sweetland J	Tragett B
Rylands K	Skinner A	Startup J	Sweetland T	Travers K
Salmon A	Skinner D	Startup S	Swinney E	Tregenza P
Satchell S	Skotnicki A	Stead R	Swinney S	Tregenza V
Savery R	Smith A	Stebbing S	Symons F	Trektellen.org
Saward K	Smith B	Steeke A	Szary S	Trenerry S
Sawtell G	Smith C	Steel R	Tanner A	Trevis B
Sayer A	Smith D	Steele AJ	Tanner C	Trew P
Scantlebury RL	Smith E	Stenson M	Tanner N	Trim C
Schofield M	Smith G	Stephens R	Taylor G	Trollope CE
Scott S	Smith GA	Stephenson A	Taylor I	Trout N S
SDBWS	Smith J	Stevens M	Taylor J	Tuck D
SE Herts RSPB	Smith K	Stevens P	Taylor K	Tuck R
Seal M	Smith KR	Stevens PJ	Taylor M	Tunnicliffe KS
Seale J	Smith KW	Stevenson P	Taylor N	Turner D
Searl R	Smith L	Stewart G	Taylor P	Turner J
Searle M	Smith M	Stewart I	Taylor R	Turner P
Self ASM	Smith MJ	Stewart KC	Taylor RC	Turner R
Selge J	Smith N	Stockwell B	Teece CR	Turner RM
Seligman PM	Smith P	Stockwell W	TeRNS	Tusa F
Sell P	Smith R	Stones A	Terry F	Tusa S
Sellwood J	Smith RH	Stones T	Terry JH	Tweed A
Sessions P	Smith S	Stowell D	Theobald RC	Twinn M
Setterfield K	Smith T	Street P	Thomas A	Twitter
Sewell T	Smout C	Stride I	Thomas BJ	Twycross M
Sharman K	Snowdon JJ	Stride S	Thomas P	Twyford N
Sharp C	Sorrell D	Stronge L	Thomas S	Tyler D
Sharp MB	Southcott M	Stroud A	Thomason E	Tyler P
Sharp PJ	Spall T	Stuart T	Thompson DJ	Tyler S
Shaw A	Sparkes B	Stubbs R	Thompson J	Tyrrell A
Shaw E	Speller T	Sullivan M	Thompson SL	Ulph R
Shaw G	Spence IM	Sulway D	Thorn V	Unite R
Shaw I	Spence L	Summerfield T	Thornhill R	Unwin P
Shaw MD	Spencer D	Sumner N	Thorpe S	Upstone M
Shearman A	Spencer P	Sunters H	Thrush P	Upton N
Sheehan MJ	Spencer PA	Surname L	Tilbrook J	Utteridge T
Shepherd L	Spicer M	Surrey Bird Club	Timms D	Utting D
Shepherd M	Spicer N		Timms M	Utton BM
Shepherd R	Spiller T	Surrey Bird News	Timms N	Vale M
Shepherd-Wells M	Spinks C	Surrey Birders	Tinlin TC	Valentine L
Sherlock B	Spooner SJ	Surtees S	Todd B	Vallas JC
Sherlock C	Spriggs M	Susan S	Todd R	Van Der Veen N
Sherriff R	Squire B	Sutees S	Tomczynski AB	Vaughan B
Shurwen J	Squires C	Sutton G	Tomkins J	Vaughan H
Shilland EM	Stachnicki IA	Sutton K	Tomkins T	Vaughan J
Shippey S	Stadlen N	Sutton P	Tomlin R	Vaughan L
Sian R	Stafford T	Swallow JL	Toohy K	Vaughan P
Simmonds Y	Stagg DL	Swan J	Topham S	Verlander N
Simms O	Stainthorpe E	Swan S	Torric D	Verrall AG

Vine GJ	Wasse J	JW	Whileman T	Willett J	Woodward I
Vowles G	Waters S		Whiskin B	Willett JD	Woodward ID
Waisman C	Watkinson C		Whitbread J	Williams C	Woodward JKA
Wakerling V	Watson C		Whitby M	Williams KA	Woodward R
Waldron J	Watson IR		White A	Williams RD	Woodward RK
Waldron P	Watson J		White A-M	Williamson H	Wooldridge D
Wales T	Watson M		White C	Williamson J	Woolfenden S
Walker A	Watts B		White G	Williamson V	Woollard S
Walker J	Watts C	CW	White GJ	Willis G	Woolley R
Walker K	Watts K		White J	Wills D	Woolley RH
Walker P	Watts M		White M	Wilson A	Woolmore K
Wallace L	Watts P		White R	Wilson B	Wormwood Scrubs
Wallace P	Watts PJ		White T	Wilson G	Bird Group
Waller D	Webb R		Whitehead S	Wilson IJ	Wragg A
Walsh JR	Webster PJ		Whitehouse H	Wilson M	Wren Wildlife
Wand H	Weil J		Whitelegg D	Wilson MA	Group
Wang E	Welland S		Whiteman P	Wiltshire M	Wright B
Wanstead Birders	Weller D		Whitney A	Windsor N	Wright BE
Wanstead	Weller R		Whittle M	Winn A	Wright C
Collective	Welsh Harp		Whyte G	Winn AC	Wright D
Warburton D	Conservation		Whytock R	Winstanley A	Wright KMH
Ward I	Group		Widdowson D	Wistow R	Wright T
Ward J	Welsh P		Wigley MW	Wistow S	Wyn-Jones H HWJ
Ward KRA	Wenham R		Wilcox M	Witherford S	Yates J
Ward P	West S	SW	Wilczur JPP	Witt J	Young C
Warden B	West V		Wildfowl &	Womack GP	Young G
Warden M	Westley G		Wetlands Trust	Wood D	Young I
Warden PC	Weston H		Wildlife Enquiries	Wood NA	Younger S
Warden R	Wheatcroft D	DW	Team	Wood T	
Wardill A	Wheeler M		Wileman T	Woodall R	
Warren D	Wheeler MJ		Wilkinson I	Woodham C	
Warrington S	Whele J		Wilkinson M	Woods H	

## BIRDS OF THE LONDON AREA, 2014

### WITH SOME ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS

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

The nomenclature of species in the systematic list of this report is based on the *Birds of Britain: the Complete Checklist*, Fourth Edition (Mitchell and Vinicombe, 2012). The sequence of species still follows *Birds of Britain: the Complete Checklist*, Third Edition (Mitchell and Vinicombe, 2010). A Checklist of Birds of the London Area appears on pages 239 to 247.

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

BBS	= Breeding Bird Survey	o/h	= overhead
CP	= Country Park	OS	= Open Space
FB	= Filter Beds	PF	= Playing Field(s)
fem	= female	PS	= Power Station
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	= immature, juvenile	R	= River
KGVI	= King George V	Res	= Reservoir(s)
KGVI	= King George VI	RG*	= Recreation Ground
LBR	= London Bird Report	SF/W	= Sewage Farm/Works
LNR	= Local Nature Reserve	SP	= Sand Pit(s)
NR	= Nature Reserve	WeBS	= Wetland Bird Survey
N, S, E, W	= North, South, East and West	WR	= Wildfowl Reserve

\* please note the allocation of RG to Recreation Ground (previously Ringing Group)

Observer abbreviations are shown only against records for species which are rare in the London Area. A list of all the observers who have contributed records for 2014 appears on pages 19 to 26. The abbreviation 'mo' used for some records, indicates 'many observers'. All running totals of rare or unusual birds that are provided in the systematic list refer to occurrences since 1900.

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

## Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

**Status:** common breeding resident.

The 113 breeding records (including nest-building) are slightly down on last year's 118, but with significantly higher records from the Inner London sector (see table below); the latest Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change since last year. There were no counts of over 100 birds this year, and counts of 50+ came from just seven sites (down from 13 last year), although the WeBS report for 2013/14 shows little change in the overall UK numbers in the last 14 years. There were no records from the usual stronghold of Harrow Lodge Park and regular peak counts and breeding records would be welcomed. Selected high counts are given below.

Mute Swan breeding records (incl. nest building)

Essex	Herts	Middx	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
16	25	32	7	15	18	113

**Herts:** Stocker's & Bury Lakes, 55 on Sep 7th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, 64 on Nov 9th. Home/Bushy Parks, 72 on Aug 24th. Ruislip Lido, 62 on Jun 27th.

*Mute Swan is a common sight in London. (Andrew Moon)*



**Bucks:** Horton GP, 90 on Oct 30th.

**Surrey:** Queens Promenade, 74 on May 30th.

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 80 on Jan 8th.

## Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

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

There were four records this year, all between December 27th and 29th. They involved about 11 birds, which is the lowest total since 2008.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, three from Dec 27th-28th (TBu, PH *et al*).

**Herts:** Rye Meads, five on Dec 29th (RMP).

**Middx:** Brent Res, two briefly on Dec 27th (ASMS). KGVI Res, one on Dec 28th (REI, AVN, KLP); this was probably the bird seen earlier at Thorpe Water Park.

**Surrey:** Thorpe Water Park, one NE on Dec 28th (DGDL).

## Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

**Status:** rare winter visitor.

There were just two records, both in the Hertfordshire sector, involving 25 birds. The first was in February and the second in December; the latter was a flock of 21 at Amwell NR, one of the largest ever seen in the London area. Not since the 1960s have there been flocks of this size, with the largest being 50 over Chessington on March 22nd 1963.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, 21 N on Dec 28th (BL). Moor Park GC, four W on Feb 28th (SCa).

## Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

**Status:** scarce winter visitor.

Just one accepted record for this species, which has now been recorded in each of the past seven years (see table below for number of recent records and birds). This flock of 24 on April 23rd was at a very unusual date. There don't appear to have been any April records before, although there have been some April records of wild goose sp.

Pink-footed Goose records 2008-2014: 22 records, 307 birds

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of records	5	2	9	3*	1	1	1
No. of birds	84	10	101	62*	25	1	24

\*there is some uncertainty in these totals as there were several wandering birds

**Kent:** Swanscombe Marshes, 24 E at 05:40 on Apr 23rd (DGDL).

## White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

**Status:** scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

This year was the poorest since 2009, with no new records at the start of the year, and just two at the end of the year. The two adults at Rainham Marshes at the end of 2013 stayed until January 9th and were also seen at Belhus Woods CP on January 8th, 11th and 16th. There were just two records in the second-winter period, a single at the London Wetland Centre on November 1st and ten at Rainham Marshes on December 18th.

White-fronted Goose records 2005-2014: 96 records, 1198 birds

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of records	1	16	8	4	3	20	25	12	5	2*
No. of birds	100	221	85	48	7	587	65	55	19	11*

\*also some over-wintering from 2013

### Grey goose sp

**Essex:** Walthamstow Marshes, seven WSW were described as “quite likely Pink-footed Geese but possibly White-fronted Goose” by the observer.

### Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

**Status:** common breeding resident, controlled.

A total of 77 pairs/broods this year is up on last year's tally of 61 and double the total of 38 from 2012. Figures can vary considerably from year to year, perhaps due to changing observer coverage, but comparisons with sites where breeding occurred in 2012, 2013 and 2014 seem to indicate little overall change; although both Sevenoaks WR and Walthamstow Res, which were last year's most productive breeding sites, reported fewer fledged goslings this year.

The highest count was 440 at Sevenoaks WR (lower than last year), but counts of 100 or more came from 20 sites (up from 15 last year). All breeding records are given below (no. of pairs/broods if known in brackets) along with some of the highest counts.

**Essex:** Fishers Green (2). Orsett Fen, 321 on Sep 3rd. Rainham Marshes (3); 323 on Jan 11th and 300 on Nov 17th. Walthamstow Res (21). Warren Gorge (3).

**Herts:** Amwell NR (1). Beech Farm GP (1). Lynsters Farm (1). Maple Cross, c200 on Sep 19th. Radlett Aero GP (1). Seventy Acres Lake (3). Stocker's Lake (1). Tyttenhanger GP (1). West Hyde (2); 170 on Aug 24th.

**Middx:** Longford (2). Springwell Lake (2)

**Bucks:** Horton GP (2); 340 on Dec 8th.

**Kent:** Crossness (1). Darenth Lakes (7). Sevenoaks WR (5); 440 on Sep 17th. Sundridge Park (1). Swanscombe Marshes (2). The Tarn, Mottingham (2).

**Surrey:** Holmethorpe SP, c300 on Oct 15th. London Wetland Centre (2). Painshill Park (1). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (3).

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2); 174 on Jun 25th. Regent's Park (1). Sands End (1). St James's Park (3); 110 on Dec 21st.

### Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

**Status:** occasional migrant and winter visitor.

This was an exceptional year, with perhaps 506 birds, the highest since c450 in 1997. Almost all were recorded at the end of the year, with only 31 seen in the first half of the year. The first record was a single on January 17th at Crayford Marshes, and the second on February 20th, when 19 flew over Rainham Marshes. There were four March records: two birds at Q. Mary Res and one at Rainham Marshes on 8th; one at Staines Moor on the 17th, which stayed until April 1st (also seen at KGV1 Res and Staines Res); and five E at Rainham Marshes on the 29th. A single at Staines Res on April 4th may have been the

Staines Moor bird. Unusually, there were two May records: one at Crayford Marshes on the 5th, and one at QE II Res on the 10th.

The main passage was in October, with perhaps 450 birds recorded. The first were 11 at Gallions Reach on the 4th, followed by one at Tyttenhanger GP on the 6th. There were daily records from 11th to 15th with a peak on the 14th involving up to 85 birds: ten at Crayford Marshes, 35 at Gallions Reach, 11 over Greenwich Park and 29 at Rainham Marshes. On the 15th there were records from seven sites, including up to 18 birds at Q. Mary Res, 13 at Holmethorpe SP and 12 over London Wetland Centre. There were no more until the 29th when perhaps 240 birds were seen, including 95 at Gallions Reach, 85+ over Greenwich Park, and 53 at Q. Mother Res (which included 32 previously seen over both Beddington Farmlands and Staines Res). The following day, 21 flew upriver at Grays, 12 were at Beddington Farmlands and six over Staines Res. From October 31st to the end of the year, there were counts on most days of up to four birds at the Lower Thames marshes or West London reservoirs, as well as six at Q. Mother Res on November 17th and 13 SE over Beddington Farmlands on the 21st. An unusual record away from the Thames or the reservoirs was a juvenile at Brayside Farm on December 12th, 14th, 23rd and 24th, feeding with Canada Geese.

### Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

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

We have split the records into winter wanderers and those believed to be resident/summer birds. The latter appear in App I, the rest are below. There were two groups, eight in November and then up to 47 seen in December at the West London reservoirs. After December 24th, these birds were not seen again and were thought to have moved to Oxfordshire as they did a couple of years ago.

**Surrey:** Island Barn Res, 33 on Dec 2nd and 47 over on 23rd (DMH). London Wetland Centre, eight on Nov 11th (JPPW). QE II Res, 47 over on Dec 6th (DMH). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), 47 on nine dates from Dec 2nd-24th (DMH).

### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

**Status:** very common, introduced breeding resident, controlled.

Despite well over 2,000 records being received, this species is still under-recorded. There were 175 breeding records (from 65 sites, including four in Inner London), well down on last year's 222 from 95 sites, but higher than the two years previous to that. The two most productive breeding sites last year, Walthamstow Res and Beddington Farmlands, both had lower figures this year. In addition, the highest count, of 498 moulting birds at Walthamstow Res, is well down on the 633 recorded there last year and the 733 from 2012. All this indicates a slight decrease locally although the Breeding Bird Survey shows a 36% increase in England from 2013-2014.

Breeding records of three or more pairs are given below (no. of pairs/broods in brackets), followed by the highest counts in most sectors. As has been the case in recent years, most of the largest counts were of mid-summer moulting groups.

**Essex:** Breeding records from five sites. Belhus Woods CP (5). Orsett Fen, 303 on Sep



*This flock of Barnacle Geese was seen flying over the Island Barn Reservoir in early December. (Dave Harris)*

22nd. Rainham Marshes (12). Walthamstow Res (50), 181 goslings hatched; 498 on Jun 5th. Wanstead Flats, 381 on Nov 29th.

**Herts:** Breeding records from 20 sites. Maple Cross, 420 on Sep 22nd. Rye Meads (9). Tyttenhanger GP (3); 268 on Sep 6th. West Hyde (3).

**Middx:** Breeding records from 13 sites. Brent Res (3). Grand Union Canal (Kensal Green) (3). Home Park, 159 on Oct 20th.

**Kent:** Breeding records from eight sites. Sevenoaks WR, 235 on Dec 3rd. Swanley Park (3 - all predated).

**Surrey:** Breeding records from 15 sites. Beddington Farmlands (13). London Wetland Centre, 349 on Dec 22nd. Oxted Sand Pit (3). Trevereux, 301 on Sep 6th was the highest ever count for this site.

**In Lond:** Breeding records from four sites. Buckingham Palace Gdns, 110 on Dec 10th. Regent's Canal (Lisson Grove - Islington) (5). Regent's Park (3); 117 on Jan 13th.

*Canada Goose. (Jonathan Lethbridge)*



### **Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca***

**Status:** increasing, introduced breeding resident.

This species continues its rise and spread. It was recorded at 244 sites this year, around 25% more than last year and nearly double the number in 2012. Breeding records too have increased, with the minimum 61 broods from 39 sites beating last year's 55 from 34 sites to become the highest ever annual total in the London area. Juveniles were also recorded at another eight sites where breeding was not proven.

The table below illustrates the increase in breeding numbers and the number of sites this bird is now reported from. Below are all breeding records, with the number of broods in brackets, along with selected high counts in each sector.

#### **Egyptian Goose breeding records 2004-2014**

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of broods/pairs	8	10	6	15	15	15	34	32	35	55	61
No. of sites	6	6	4	8	9	11	25	22	25	34	39

**Essex:** Corbets Tey (1). Holyfield Hall Farm, 22 on Dec 29th. Netherhall GP (1). Valentines Park (2). Walthamstow Res (2). Wanstead Park (1).

**Herts:** Stocker's Farm (1). West Hyde, 25 on Aug 28th.

**Middx:** Bedfont Lakes CP (1). Broadwater Lake (1). Bushy Park (1). Grovelands Park (2). Hampstead Heath (1). Home Park (4). Osterley Park (1). Q. Mary Res, 46 on Oct 4th. Wraybury Res (1).

**Bucks:** Langley Park (1). Q. Mother Res, 44 on Aug 3rd.

**Kent:** Danson Park (1). Lamorbey Park (1). Sevenoaks WR (2); 23 on Sep 17th. Southmere Lake (1).

**Surrey:** Clapham Common (1). Kew Gardens (2). London Wetland Centre (1); 67 on Jan 11th. Mitcham Common (1). Morden Hall Park (1). Painshill Park (1). Richmond Park (5+). Steven's Eyot (1). Teddington Lock (1). Thorpe Water Park (1). Tooting Common (1). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (1). Wandle Creek (1). Wandsworth Common (1). West End Common (1).

**In Lond:** Buckingham Palace Gdns (1). Chelsea (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (4); 62 on Sep 14th. Regent's Park (4); 52 on Mar 6th. St James's Park (5).

#### **2013 Alteration**

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, 200 on Feb 16th should have read 63 on Dec 28th.

### **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 broods recorded was 20, the highest for several years, but it appears only a few young survived. The table below shows the recent changes. Pairs were also recorded at 13 other sites in the breeding season where breeding was not proven. The highest count of 155 at Crossness on July 7th was up on last year's 140, but almost half the 2009 highest of 304 and BTO data shows a 26% drop in UK numbers in the ten years to 2012/13 (BTO WeBS report 2013/14). Breeding records, with known number of broods in brackets, are shown below, plus number of fledged young if known, and selected high counts.

## Shelduck breeding records 2006-2014

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of broods	7	11	13	16	13	15	7	13	20

**Essex:** Banbury Res (1). Barking Bay, 150 on Jul 5th. Rainham Marshes (6); 115 on Feb 16th. Walthamstow Res (2).

**Middx:** East India Dock Basin, site record of 34 on Feb 7th. Q. Mary Res (1), four young fledged. Staines Res (2), none of 14 ducklings survived.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res (1), two young fledged; 14 on Jun 7th.

**Kent:** Crossness (3), possibly 17 young hatched; 155 on Jul 7th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (1), 11 young. QE II Res (1).

**In Lond:** Regent's Park (1).

**Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata***

**Status:** introduced breeding resident, established and locally common.

The number of broods increased to 39, up from 25 last year and 19 the year before that. Greenwich Park had its first sighting since 2007. Overall numbers show a small increase compared with last year. All breeding records (no. of broods in brackets) and significant counts are given below.

**Essex:** Connaught Water (1); peak of 23 on Jan 22nd. Strawberry Hill Ponds (2); 34 on Feb 1st, 50 on Oct 24th, 28 on Dec 22nd.

**Herts:** Aldenham CP, 29 on Oct 12th, 22 on Dec 4th. Beech Farm GP (1). Coopers Green Lane (1). Panshanger Park (2). Woodside, Hatfield (1).

**Middx:** Albany Park, Enfield (1). Bentley Priory (2). Bushy Park, 22 on Oct 5th. Forty Hall (1). Grovelands Park (1). Oakmere Park (1). Q. Mary Res (3). Totteridge Valley (2). Trent Park (1), 44 on Jan 10th. Whitewebbs Wood (1); 21 on Jan 11th. Wildwoods, Enfield (2); 46 on Dec 23rd.

**Bucks:** Black Park (1); 27 on Feb 3rd, 59 on Oct 25th. Langley Park (1).

**Kent:** Kelsey Park, 22 on Nov 25th. Sevenoaks WR, nine on Feb 12th.

**Surrey:** Richmond Park (6); 21 on Oct 15th. Steven's Eyot (1). Trevereux (1). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (1). Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough) (1). Wimbledon Common & Putney Heath (1); 19 on Oct 13.

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1). Regent's Park, 20 on Oct 7th. Regent's Park, 37 on Dec 28th.

**2013 Alteration**

The sector section was incorrect in *LBR* 2013. The correct text is below.

**Essex:** Connaught Water (2), 79 on Jan 25th. Hainault Forest (1). Highams Park (1). Strawberry Hill Ponds (1); 26 on Oct 17th.

**Herts:** Cassiobury Park (1). Coopers Green Lane (1). North Mymms Park (1).

**Middx:** Bay Farm (1). Darlands Lake (1). Forty Hall (2). Grovelands Park, 21 on Nov 4th. Hampstead Heath, 33 on Dec 1st. Hampton FB (1). Middlesex University (1). Osterley Park, 34 on Nov 9th. Q. Mary Res (1). Trent Park (1). Whitewebbs Wood, 56 on Jan 26th. Wildwoods, Enfield, 41 on Oct 30th.

**Bucks:** Black Park (1); 31 on Jan 25th.

**Kent:** Kelsey Park, 24 on Jan 5th.

**Surrey:** Ham Lands (2). Kingston-upon-Thames (1). Leatherhead (1). Richmond Park (1); 22 on Dec 23rd. Wimbledon Common & Putney Heath (1).

**In Lond:** Regent's Park (2); 66 on Jan 19th.

**Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope***

**Status:** common winter visitor with occasional summer records.

Rainham Marshes again had the highest counts and these peaked in February following last year's peak in December. There were a few birds present during the summer including an injured male at Amwell NR. Numbers decreased at some sites but increased at others, so the overall numbers appeared similar to last year.

Monthly peaks from sites with counts of 100 or more are given in the table below. Other significant counts are given below the table.

Eurasian Wigeon	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Rainham Marshes	730	1070	233	6	3	4	3	5	26	-	400	600
HR Aldenham CP	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	66	232	146	158
Amwell NR	150	2	24	11	1	1	1	4	25	70	14	10
Hilfield Park Res	148	144	95	-	-	-	1	-	106	168	121	120
Radlett Aero GP	154	178	177	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	121	88
MX KGV I Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	235	9	-
Staines Moor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	218	100	-
Staines Res	302	308	210	2	-	-	-	2	30	120	267	328
BU Horton GP	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	140	178	116
KT Dartford Marshes	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	115	2
SY Richmond Park	39	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	100	82	60
Wetland Centre	52	60	37	4	-	-	-	-	40	59	64	121
Walton Res	250	130	152	10	1	-	3	-	-	86	100	170

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP, 68 on Jan 2nd, 30 on Dec 23rd. Cornmill Meadows, 65 on Feb 9th. Netherhall GP, 99 on Feb 15th.

**Herts:** Bowyer's Water, 58 on Jan 19th, 62 on Sep 17th. Stocker's & Bury Lakes, 90 on Jan 18th. Troy Mill Lake, 40 on Dec 3rd.

**Middx:** Kempton Park Racecourse, 72 on Dec 7th. Q. Mary Res, 95 on Mar 8th, 31 on Dec 10th.

**Bucks:** Arthur Jacob NR, 57 on Feb 25th. Wraysbury GP, 50 on Sep 12th.

**Kent:** Crossness, 43 on Jan 14th, 36 on Nov 13th, 31 on Dec 30th.

**Surrey:** Island Barn Res, 31 on Mar 13th.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, one on Mar 13th, two on Nov 27th. St James's Park, three on Mar 13th.

**Gadwall *Anas strepera***

**Status:** local breeding resident and common winter visitor.

Rye Meads had 18 broods this year, down from 21 in the previous year. The overall total of 36 broods was some nine broods fewer than last year. Horsenden Hill and Perivale



**Essex:** 27 broods from 10 sites.  
**Herts:** 76 broods from 22 sites.  
**Middx:** 39 broods from 23 sites.  
**Bucks:** Three broods from two sites.  
**Kent:** 25 broods from 11 sites.  
**Surrey:** 34 broods from 20 sites.  
**In Lond:** 22 broods from nine sites.

### Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

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

Wintering numbers show an increase for this year, with December counts of key sites up from 26 to 63 birds. The counts for April show an earlier spring departure this year, with the last on April 18th at Rainham Marshes. The first returning bird was at London Wetland Centre on August 8th, some two weeks earlier than last year. Again there were no records for Inner London.

The table below gives counts from key sites and below that all the records from other sites.

Northern Pintail	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Rainham Marshes	29	40	34	6	-	-	1	-	4	30	24	56
HR Rye Meads	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
MX Staines Res	1	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	1
SY Beddington Farmlands	3	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-
Wetland Centre	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	1	3	4	2	4

**Essex:** Dagenham Chase, two on Jan 25th. Fishers Green Goosefield, one on Jan 19th & 30th. Holyfield Lake, two on Jan 25th, Feb 1st & 16th, one on Dec 24th. Ingrebourne Valley, one on Oct 11th, 12th & 16th. KGV Res, one on Sep 29th. Langridge Scrape, one on Oct 12th and Nov 13th. Mar Dyke Valley, three on Nov 17th, Dec 1st, 9th & 22nd. Walthamstow Res, two on Mar 6th, one from Sep 28th to Oct 5th. William Girling Res, five on Feb 16th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, two on Mar 1st, singles on Sep 20th and Dec 6th. Hilfield Park Res, ten on Sep 19th. Stanstead Innings, one on Jan 18th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Mar 30th, and two on Oct 4th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, one from Dec 10th to year-end. KGVI Res, one on Sep 6th.

**Bucks:** Horton GP, one on Jan 11th, three on Mar 2nd. Q. Mother Res, two on Dec 29th.

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, one on Feb 19th, and two on Sep 17th. Sevenoaks WR, two on Mar 8th.

**Surrey:** Holmethorpe SP, one on Nov 27th. QE II Res, three over on Oct 5th. Thorpe Water Park, one on Jan 19th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), two on Mar 8th, one on Oct 4th, two on Dec 31st. Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough), two on Sep 29th.

### Garganey *Anas querquedula*

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

The first returning bird was on March 9th at Crossness (three weeks earlier than last year) followed on the 16th by one at Rye Meads. From April 2nd, there were records from

Walthamstow Res, Maple Lodge NR, Ingrebourne Valley, Q. Mother Res, Kempton NR, Kempton Park Racecourse, Hilfield Park Res, Sevenoaks WR, Amwell NR, South Norwood Lake and Rainham Marshes. Most of these didn't stay for long, but at Rye Meads there was a pair from April 8th to May 3rd, seen again on May 26th. Most of the records were of one or two birds, but there were four at Kempton NR on April 20th.

Returning birds appeared from July 12th at Rainham Marshes. There were lengthy stays at Rainham Marshes, Rye Meads, Beddington Farmlands and London Wetland Centre and they were also recorded at Amwell NR, Sevenoaks WR, Brent Res, Staines Res, Cornmill Meadows, Ingrebourne Valley, Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), Dagenham Chase, South Norwood CP and Roding Valley Meadows NR. There were October records at Rye Meads, Stocker's Lake, Beddington Farmlands and London Wetland Centre. The last of the year was one at Beddington Farmlands from October 10th which stayed into 2015.

### Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

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

Most of our wintering population had left by mid-April and returned from mid-August. There were, as in previous years, several sites with summering birds but this year they bred successfully at two sites: five pairs at Rainham Marshes produced three broods and there was one brood at London Wetland Centre. The count of 581 birds at Staines Res on October 12th is a large increase from last year's peak of 339 and is of international significance.

Monthly figures for the key sites are given in the table below. Significant records from other sites and Inner London are listed below the table. Breeding records give the number of broods in brackets.

Northern Shoveler	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Rainham Marshes	107	203	200	62	3	17	13	7	56	49	64	63
Walthamstow Res	6	-	9	2	-	-	-	7	167	6	-	20
HR Amwell NR	102	32	20	15	4	8	6	59	21	73	42	20
Rye Meads	112	120	200	45	4	7	12	28	122	65	58	70
Stocker's Lake	103	4	3	-	-	-	-	1	5	29	11	9
MX Brent Res	21	10	4	6	2	10	7	19	121	99	69	21
Staines Res	106	10	91	60	1	2	3	70	242	581	26	19
SY Wetland Centre	130	76	87	6	5	11	6	72	86	98	29	44
Beddington Farmlands	50	60	30	8	2	2	6	13	100	95	60	80

**Essex:** Hall Marsh Scrape, 33 on Feb 27th. Ingrebourne Valley, 36 on Oct 16th. Rainham Marshes (3). Wanstead Flats, 33 on Nov 27th.

**Herts:** Bowyer's Water, 34 on Jan 19th. Hilfield Park Res, 60 on Sep 19th. Seventy Acres Lake, 50 on Feb 21st, 66 on Nov 5th.

**Middx:** KGVI Res, 43 on Sep 7th. Q. Mary GP, 30 on Feb 22nd. Q. Mary Res, 35 on Mar 8th. Stain Hill Res, 49 on Jan 25th. Staines Moor, 80 on Sep 28th. Stoke Newington Res, 58 on Jan 12th.

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP, 48 on Jan 7th.



**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (1). Ingrebourne Valley (1). Rainham Marshes (7). Walthamstow Res (6).

**Herts:** Maple Lodge NR (1). Rye Meads (10).

**Middx:** Bedfont Lakes CP (1). Clissold Park (1). Kempton NR (1). Red House Res (1).

**Kent:** Thamesview GC (1).

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre (3). Richmond Park (2). Walton Res (3).

**In Lond:** Buckingham Palace Gdns (1). Regent's Park (2). St James's Park (4). Victoria Park (4).

### Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

**Status:** regular resident breeder and common winter visitor.

The post-breeding gathering at Walthamstow Res was, as usual, the highest total with 2,031 on August 3rd, down from 2,406 last year. The peak count in the first-winter period was 1,072 at Broadwater Lake on January 12th while Wraysbury GP had the highest numbers at the end of the year with 1,251 on November 20th. Both counts were higher than in 2013. The highest number in Inner London was again at Regent's Park with 252 in December, up from 213 in March last year. After an exceptional breeding season in 2013, numbers were down this year but remained around average for recent years. Reported broods fell from 232 last year to 173 with sites also down from 57 to 44. Both figures, however, were better than in 2012. Highest number of broods were at Rye Meads with 27 (down from 40) and Walton Res with 20. The biggest decline was at London Wetland Centre where numbers dropped from 67 in 2013 to 17. The table contains all peak monthly counts of 500 or above with the number of broods at the main breeding sites also included below.

Tufted Duck	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Walthamstow Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2031	-	-	-	-
HR Stocker's Lake	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500	-
MX Broadwater Lake	1072	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
KGV Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	573	-	-	-	-
Q. Mary Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	900	-	-	-
Staines Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	883	-	-	-	-
BU Horton GP	552	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wraysbury GP	660	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1251	1217	-
SY QE II Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	958	1068	-	-	-	-

**Essex:** 27 broods. Rainham Marshes (10), Walthamstow Res (10).

**Herts:** 46 broods. Rye Meads (27).

**Middx:** 22 broods. Bedfont Lakes (7).

**Kent:** three broods.

**Surrey:** 57 broods. London Wetland Centre (17), Walton Res (20).

**In Lond:** 18 broods. Regent's Park (8).

### Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*

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

A very poor year with 17 birds compared with 28 last year, itself the worst number since 2008 when only 18 were recorded. The fall in the number of sites was even more dramatic, from 15 to just four. Staines Res had the bulk of the birds.

**Essex:** Walthamstow Res, a drake from Dec 11th until end of year.

**Herts:** Seventy Acres Lake, a drake on Jan 1st.

**Middx:** Staines Res, imm drake from the beginning of the year until Mar 21st, which was joined by a second drake from Feb 28th to Mar 14th. A drake on Nov 16th remained into 2015, there were five drakes on Nov 26th and six drakes on 27th. On Dec 7th, there were three drakes and two females but just the one drake from Dec 8th into 2015.

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP, two on Jan 26th and four, including one drake, on Feb 16th.

### Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

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

An excellent year, with around 80 birds compared with a well below average 33 in 2013. Unusually, it was not the Thames but the West London reservoirs which this year had both the largest number of records and the highest number of birds. The peak count was nine at Q. Mother Res on September 22nd. About 40% of the records were between March 24th and April 7th, but it was early August which saw the most birds recorded in a single week. The drake at Sevenoaks WR on July 7th was the first inland record for Kent since 2003, when a bird was at the same site.

**Essex:** Gallions Reach, two on Apr 22nd and Oct 14th. KGV Res, five from Mar 31st to Apr 1st. Rainham Marshes, six on Apr 4th, eight on 10th, two on 11th, singles on 17th & 21st and two on 27th, then singles on Jul 11th & 26th and on Sep 20th-21st, two on Oct 14th (presumed same as Gallions Reach) and one on Oct 30th. Walthamstow Res, two from Apr 3rd-7th.

**Middx:** Q. Mary Res, two on Feb 19th. Staines Res, two from Mar 24th to Apr 4th, three on Apr 22nd, one on Jun 27th, two from Jul 28th to Aug 3rd, seven on Aug 10th, one on Aug 17th, one on Nov 6th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one on Jun 14th, seven on Aug 6th, nine on Sep 22nd, one on Oct 2nd and one on Nov 12th.

**Kent:** Crossness and Crayford Marshes, one on Apr 21st (presumed same as Rainham). Sevenoaks WR, one on Jul 29th.

**Surrey:** Island Barn Res, two on Apr 21st. QE II Res, singles on Jul 19th and Oct 15th.

### Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

**Status:** common winter visitor, occasional summer records.

Given the mild conditions in both winter periods, numbers held up reasonably well. Peak winter numbers were down with the highest count again being at Staines Res with 66 on March 3rd, compared with 76 in the same month last year. No other site reached 50 while five counts above this total were recorded in 2013. The maximum count at Wraysbury GP, another favoured site, was sharply down from 61 to 31. Fifteen or more birds were reported at ten sites, two more than last year. Birds were reported at Staines Res every month but May. Peak monthly counts over 15 are included in the table below followed by the only record for Kent and some high counts in Surrey. (Details of a presumed escaped female with young are in Appendix I.)

Common Goldeneye	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX KGV Res	-	-	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Walthamstow Res	16	-	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HR Amwell NR	16											
Bury Lake	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stocker's Lake	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
MX Broadwater Lake	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
KGVI Res	-	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Staines Res	52	57	66	43	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	26
Wraysbury Res	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BU Wraysbury GP	21	-	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31

**Kent:** Dartford Marshes, one from Dec 11th to year-end.

**Surrey:** QE II Res, peak of seven on Mar 1st. Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough), peak of 11 on Feb 9th.



### Smew *Mergellus albellus*

**Status:** winter visitor in highly variable but declining numbers.

A mild winter alongside the continuing trend in declining numbers meant a very poor year. There were no counts in double figures with the highest just seven at Wraysbury GP in January. This compared with a maximum of 17 at the same site in 2013, itself a low count. Cheshunt GP, Holmethorpe SP and Wraysbury Res were the only other sites to have counts of more than three birds. The overall numbers, as well as last and first seasonal dates, are distorted by what may have been the same suspiciously tame female recorded at several sites in Essex and Middlesex throughout the year. But discounting this presumed escape, there may have been as few as 30 birds in the first-winter period and just ten in December. Even as late as 2000, London hosted well over 100 birds. WeBS data (BTO website) highlights the national decline with numbers in England in the 2013/2014 winter a fifth of those in the winter of 1998/1999. The last record for the first-winter period was two at Hooks Marsh Lake on March 14th with the first returning birds at Holmethorpe SP on November 30th. Counts of three or more, or monthly peak counts from the main sites, are given below.

**Essex:** Hooks Marsh Lake, five on Feb 18th.

**Herts:** Friday Lake, four on Jan 17th and Feb 26th. Seventy Acres Lake, five on Feb 9th.

**Middx:** Wraysbury Res, four on Feb 16th.

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP, seven on Jan 25th, six on Feb 3rd and three on Dec 31st.

**Surrey:** Holmethorpe SP, three on Jan 5th and Nov 30th.

### Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

**Status:** scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A much better showing with about 30 birds, more than twice as many as last year's 13 and records from 11 sites compared with eight in 2013. The majority of the records were on the Thames as usual but there was a good spread of records inland. The highest count of eight was at West Thurrock Marshes on November 22nd when seven, likely to be the

same birds, were also seen further upriver at Rainham Marshes and four at Gallions Reach. More intriguingly, the same day also saw six arrive at Hilfield Park Res. All records are given below.

**Essex:** Gallions Reach, four on Nov 22nd and a single on Dec 27th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Apr 17th, Oct 19th, Nov 11th & 12th and seven on Nov 22nd. Walthamstow Res, one on Nov 7th. West Thurrock Marshes, eight on Nov 22nd (same as Rainham).

**Herts:** Hilfield Park Res, six on Nov 22nd.

**Middx:** Staines Res, fem on Oct 20th, drake from Nov 21st-30th joined briefly by a fem on 27th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, imm male and fem on Mar 24th and a male on Apr 24th.

**Kent:** Dartford Marshes, one on Nov 12th (presumed same as Rainham).

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, one on Nov 21st and two on Nov 28th. QE II Res, drake from Jan 15th until Feb 25th, with a pair on Dec 19th (presumed same as Walton Res). Walton Res, a pair on Dec 17th and one on Dec 30th.

### Goosander *Mergus merganser*

**Status:** regular winter visitor, very rare in summer.

The maximum count of 25 at Wraysbury Res on the last day of the year was three higher than 2013's peak total but, in general, numbers were down. Only six sites recorded a peak of more than ten compared with eight sites in 2013 and 13 the year before. KGV Res again had the first returning bird on September 7th (15 days earlier than last year) and the last departure on April 10th (four days earlier) at the main sites. A drake, however, was recorded over Stocker's Lake on May 16th and on the R Colne at West Hyde on the very late date of May 21st. Peak counts of over ten in each winter period and the Inner London record are given below.

**Essex:** KGV Res, peak of 17 on Mar 13th. Weald CP, 11 on Feb 25th.

**Middx:** Wraysbury Res, 16 on Jan 7th and 25 on Dec 31st.

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP, peaks of 14 on Jan 25th and 15 on Dec 31st.

**Surrey:** QE II Res, peak of 20 on Feb 2nd. Walton Res, 13 on Dec 17th.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, three over on Dec 29th.

### Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

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

With the eradication programme continuing, it is not surprising that both the number of birds and sites continue their dramatic decline. Just 13 birds (down from 19 in 2013) were recorded from five sites (eight last year). Brent Res again had the peak count with seven in September and October, down from ten last year. While the continued controversy over the culling may mean not all records are submitted, there can be no doubt the cull is working. The April 2014 bulletin for the UK Ruddy Duck Eradication Programme Project reported there were as few as 40 birds surviving from an estimated peak population of almost 6,000 in 2001.

**Essex:** South Park, Ilford, drake on Feb 11th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, one from Jul 6th, increasing to seven in September and October.

Following a cull in November, a pair survived, staying to the end of the year.

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, two drakes from Jun 26th until Nov 11th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), a pair on May 4th.

**In Lond:** St James's Park, drake from Feb 7th until end of year.

### Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

**Status:** breeding resident, of introduced origin.

The vast majority of records again came from farmland in Essex, Hertfordshire and Middlesex, where 68 sites provided records: breeding success was sporadically noted. Unusual records were received from Pinner Park Farm and Richmond Park, and from Bow, just outside the Inner London recording area. All breeding records are given below (nos. of pairs/territories in brackets), with high counts and other significant records.

**Essex:** Recorded from 15 sites, several in the breeding season. Bulphan Fen, 30 on Dec 30th. Claverhambury (2). Orsett Fen (9); brood of six juvs and a maximum of 76 on Oct 22nd. Waltham Abbey, ten on Mar 17th.

**Herts:** Recorded from 33 sites, several in the breeding season. Beech Farm GP (2). Broxbourne Woods (1). Elstree (1). Epping Green, 14 on Jan 16th. Essendonbury (1). Hilfield Park Res (1). Lemsford (1). Radlett (1). St Albans (1). Symondshyde Great Wood (1). Tyttenhanger Farm (2); four ads and five juvs. West End (1); 16 on Nov 29th. Woodhall Farm (1). Woodside, Hatfield, 15 on Nov 15th.

**Middx:** Recorded from 20 sites, several in the breeding season. Bow, one on May 26th in gardens at Tredegar Square, E3. Brayside Farm (1). Enfield Chase Area: Ferny Hill Farm, seven on Nov 24th; Park Farm (1); Parkside Farm (1); Rectory Farm (1); six on two dates. Pinner Park Farm, two from Mar 13th to Apr 12th were the first in recent years. Staines Moor, five records but none involved more than two birds; some birds were released and hunted by falconers. Totteridge Valley (2).

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one on Mar 7th.

**Kent:** Chevening, two on Apr 21st. Cudham, two on Sep 6th. Darenth Lakes, two on Oct 2nd and six on Nov 11th. Lullingstone Park, two on May 28th. Manor Farm, Dryhill, two on Mar 4th. Skid Hill Farm, Biggin Hill, two on Apr 20th. Swanscombe Marshes (1).

**Surrey:** Park Farm, Chessington (4). Richmond Park, an unusual record of one at Holly Lodge on Apr 23rd. Ridlands, four on Oct 27th. Rushett Farm (3); three males lekking on May 17th.

### Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

**Status:** breeding resident, declining.

Breeding was confirmed at just one site, the same as last year. Records came from ten sites and six sectors (ten sites and four sectors in 2013). All records are given below, summarised for Surrey.

**Essex:** Greensted, one on Jun 8th. Orsett Fen, 11 on Feb 17th and nine on Mar 4th.

**Herts:** Jersey Farm, two on Mar 8th. Stanborough Reedmarsh, five on Sep 13th.

**Middx:** Potters Bar, three on Aug 3rd.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, on Mar 19th a calling male was flushed and landed on the water for ten seconds before flying back to the bank!

**Kent:** Darenth Lakes, two on May 9th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, one on Mar 17th. Broombank, nine on Oct 15th. Cheverells Farm (6); thought to have been released in 2013.

### Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

**Status:** rare summer visitor.

There was just one record this year. The number of records has been declining since a peak of six in 2010 and 2011. (See table below for details.) The May date is typical, with May or June being the most likely months to find one; 24 of the last 40 records were in those months.

Common Quail records 2010-2014: **21 records, 22 birds**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of records	6	6	4	3	2
No. of birds	6	6	5	3	2

**Middx:** Bushy Park, one in SE corner on May 23rd at the Skylark protection zone from 06:50-07:15 (ARD).

### Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

**Status:** common breeding resident, of introduced origin.

There were records from 148 sites with over 40% in the Hertfordshire sector but it was difficult to ascertain breeding success. Unusually, there were records of males in streets in Hackney and Notting Hill. All breeding/territorial records (nos. of pairs/territories in brackets) are given below, with all high counts and other significant records.

**Essex:** Recorded from 22 sites, several in the breeding season. Gallions Reach, one on Apr 5th. Mar Dyke Valley (1+). Nazeing (1). Orsett Fen (8); 33 on Dec 8th. Rainham Marshes (2+). Walthamstow Marsh, max four on Aug 31st. West Ham Park, one on Mar 1st.

**Herts:** Recorded from 65 sites, many in the breeding season. Abbots Langley (1). Amwell NR (2+). Bedmond (1). Beech Farm GP (3). Broxbourne Woods (1). Bury Lake (1). Colney Heath (1). Croxley Common Moor (1+). Elstree (1). Essendonbury (1). Hatfield Aerodrome (2). Hunton Bridge (1). Lemsford (1). Maple Cross (1). Mill End (1). Newgate Street (1+); 41 on Sep 19th. North Mymms Park (1); 22 on Oct 25th. Panshanger Park (1+). Radlett (1). Rye Meads (1). St Albans (1). Stanstead Abbots (1). Symondshyde Great Wood (1). West End (1); 22 on Feb 15th. West Hyde (1). Woodhall Farm (1). Woodside, Hatfield (1+). Wormelybury (1).

**Middx:** Recorded from 23 sites, several in the breeding season. Greenford, a male on Apr 5th was the first site record. Home Park (10); 15 on Dec 5th. Horsenden Hill (1). Neasden, dead male on North Circular on Mar 23rd. Ten Acre Wood (2). Tottenham Marshes (2).

**Kent:** Recorded from 22 sites, several in the breeding season. Brookmill Park, fem on Dec 15th and 29th. Chipstead Lake, 15 on Nov 25th. Crossness (2+). Darenth Lake; present May to Sep. Greenwich Peninsula, male on Apr 4th. Manor Farm, Dryhill, 40 on Sep 1st. Oxleas Wood, male on Nov 4th. Sevenoaks WR (1+); ten on Nov 8th. Swanley Park; fem on Dec 10th was a site first. Swanscombe Marshes (15). Upper College Farm (1).



*Great Northern Diver, a long-stayer that just got better and better! (Andrew Moon)*

**Surrey:** Recorded from 13 sites, several in the breeding season. Banstead Wood, present February to October. Beddington Farmlands, male on 12 dates and pair on two dates in December. Canons Farm, present all year, peaks of 12 on Oct 15th and Nov 15th. Island Barn Res, male on several dates. London Wetland Centre, singles on Mar 11th and Oct 14th. Richmond Park, male on Mar 18th. Rushett Farm (2). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath; singles on Mar 5th and Apr 28th.

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Jun 2nd. St James's Park, male on Apr 24th.

### Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

**Status:** rare winter visitor and occasional migrant.

For the third year in a row, two new birds were seen. The Island Barn bird was only the second April arrival since 1990 (see table below), following the oiled bird seen the previous April on the Thames at both Rainham Marshes and Fulham.

**Surrey:** Island Barn Res, one on Apr 9th (DMH). QE II Res, one flew over high on Mar 22nd (DMH).

#### Red-throated Diver arrival dates 1990-2014: 67 birds/records

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	17	10	10	2	-	1	-	-	-	5	7	15

### Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

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

At the start of the year, there were records from Walton Res of a bird from 2013 (seen

later at Q. Mary Res), another at KGV Res and a third at Staines Res/KGVI Res. The last two could have both been from 2013, but might have been new birds. Two different juveniles arrived at the end of the year, both at West London reservoirs.

**Essex:** KGV Res, one on Jan 5th.

**Middx:** KGVI Res, one on Jan 25th and May 5th-18th (presumed to be same as Staines Res bird). Q. Mary Res, one on Feb 22nd and Mar 1st & 8th, the same as Walton Res below; juv on Nov 19th and Dec 6th. Staines Res, one on Jan 3rd and from Jan 25th to May 8th, juv from Nov 13th to Dec 13th, adult Dec 9th-31st.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, juv Nov 9th-11th (presumed to be same as Staines Res bird).

**Surrey:** Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough), one from 2013, from Jan 1st to Feb 17th.

### Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

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

At least 139 pairs/broods were reported, down from 156 last year. However, this fall can be accounted for by the lack of a count from the London Wetland Centre (16 pairs in 2013). Breeding records included a pair on a nest in Beddington Park (Surrey) on February 7th.

Records were received from 71 sites in January and February and from 70 sites in November and December. This represents a return to normal, after birds were observed at an unusually high number of sites in November/December 2013 (97).

A summary is given below, along with all breeding records from Inner London and those from the main sites elsewhere (no. of pairs in brackets), and notable counts.

**Essex:** 58+ pairs at seven sites. Rainham Marshes (43). Walthamstow Res (7 broods, 12 young).

**Herts:** 37+ pairs/broods at eight sites. Panshanger Park, 37 on Nov 9th. Rye Meads (24); 79 on Sep 6th.

**Middx:** 13-14 pairs at 12 sites. Stain Hill Res, 27 on Sep 5th.

**Bucks:** Chalfont Park (1 pair, 2 broods).

**Kent:** 5-8 pairs at five sites. Castle Lake, 12 on Jan 28th.

**Surrey:** 19 pairs/broods at 11 sites. Beddington Farmlands (4); 35 on Sep 6th.

**In Lond:** Battersea Park (1). Regent's Park (3), eight on Mar 29th. St James's Park (1). Victoria Park (1-2).



### Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

**Status:** common breeding resident and winter visitor.

Some 133 pairs/broods were reported from 62 sites, up from 103 last year, mainly as a result of increased

*Great Crested Grebe. (Jonathan Lethbridge)*

numbers reported from Herts (26+ from 17 sites in 2013). Numbers elsewhere were similar though an increase from 13 to 19 broods was noted at Walthamstow Res.

Nest building was observed at Regent's Park on January 22nd, but this nest was flooded on February 2nd.

Numbers at the more significant sites are shown in the table below. These showed a similar pattern to 2011 and 2013 with the highest counts in the autumn, though the peak count at Q. Mary Res was in February. In 2012, the peak at this site (338) also occurred in February.

A breeding summary for each sector and significant counts from other sites are given below the table. All breeding records for Inner London are listed.

Great Crested Grebe	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
MX KGV Res	19	14	13	49	36	26	21	16	41	45	14	7
Q. Mary Res	56	186	113	38	65	-	60	115	140	179	123	165
Staines Res	25	15	19	12	14	17	50	156	193	124	28	26
SY QE II Res	24	23	23	19	13	11	124	183	211	174	123	42

**Essex:** 30 pairs/broods at ten sites. Holyfield Lake, 60+ on Oct 19th. Walthamstow Res (19 broods, 39 young). W Girling Res, 40 on Jun 14th.

**Herts:** 51+ pairs/broods at 19 sites. Aldenham CP (5 broods). Hilfield Park Res (13+ broods); 75 adults on Aug 19th. Stocker's Lake (c6). Tyttenhanger GP (5-9).

**Middx:** 18 pairs at 13 sites. Brent Res (4).

**Bucks:** No breeding records. Wraysbury GP, 58 on Nov 20th.

**Kent:** 13 pairs/broods at eight sites. Sevenoaks WR (3+); 21 on Sep 20th and Oct 1st.

**Surrey:** Seven pairs at seven sites.

**In Lond:** 14 pairs. Battersea Park (2). Burgess Park (1). Canada Water (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (5). Regent's Park (5).

### Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

**Status:** scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Just one record this year, in December. The number of birds recorded during each of the previous ten years is shown in the table below.

Red-necked Grebe records 2005-2014: 24 records, 24 birds

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of birds	1	2	1	3	2	7	2*	3	2	1

\*plus one over-wintered from 2010

**Surrey:** QE II Res, adult from Dec 30th (DMH).

### Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

**Status:** scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

At the start of the year, one remained at Staines Res from 2013. Records in February and March at KGV Res and Q. Mother Res could have been the same bird, or two different ones. A second bird joined the Q. Mother bird at the end of March and two were then at

Staines Res until April 22nd. There was also one at Thorpe Water Park in April, although this could have been the same as the Staines bird. This means that at the start of the year there was at least one new bird and perhaps five. At the end of the year, there were two birds; one was at Staines Res on October 4th and the other at William Girling Res on December 6th. This is the lowest number of new arrivals in a year since 2008, when just two were recorded.

**Essex:** William Girling Res, one on Dec 6th.

**Middx:** KGV Res, one on Feb 23rd. Staines Res, one from 2013, Jan 3rd to Apr 22nd was joined by a second bird from Apr 13th to 22nd, one on Oct 4th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one on Mar 22nd, two on Mar 31st.

**Surrey:** Thorpe Water Park, one from Apr 4th to 12th.

### Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

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

At the main breeding site at Hilfield Park Res just a single brood was observed and one young fledged, though counts from April to June suggest many more pairs were present. Another pair fledged a single young at Rye Meads.

Numbers at the main wintering site at William Girling Res seem to have dropped slightly in recent winters, following three counts of 34 or more in 2011 (July, August and November). However, numbers remain well above the threshold of five birds required for the site to be considered of national importance. Details of all sightings are given with a summary for the main sites.

Black-necked Grebe	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX William Girling Res	15	14	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	18
HR Hilfield Park Res	2	11	27	24	17	14	5	6	2	-	-	2
MX KGV Res	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	1	1
Staines Res	3	3	5	2	1	1	2	2	5	5	5	6

**Essex:** KGV Res, 15 on Jan 19th and three on 25th, singles in April, August, September and November. Seventy Acres Lake, one on Apr 23rd. Walthamstow Res, one on Aug 31st.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, one from Aug 19th-23rd. Hilfield Park Res (1). Rye Meads (1). Tyttenhanger GP, one on Jul 25th.

**Middx:** Q. Mary Res, two on Sep 14th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, three on Mar 31st, one on Jul 19th.

**Surrey:** Holmethorpe SP, two on Mar 9th. Island Barn Res, three on Apr 12th. London Wetland Centre, two on May 13th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), juv from Sep 10th to Dec 31st, Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough), adult on Sep 17th.

### Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus*

**Status:** scarce visitor.

Two records this year, one fewer than last year. The May record is only the second record in this month since 2000; the October record is more usual. Of the previous 36 records, 21 have been in the autumn, although September is the month with the most records since 2000.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, juv on Oct 14th (DSm *et al*).

**Surrey:** Island Barn Res, adult SW on May 30th (RP, NL).

### Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

**Status:** increasing breeding resident and common on suitable waters elsewhere, especially in winter.

Breeding was confirmed at seven sites this year, although the number of nests was not counted at the main site at Walthamstow Res. Numbers elsewhere were similar to previous years. The large apparent increase at Q. Mary GP, where two nests were reported in 2012, is likely to relate to difficulties in observing the site from the adjacent reservoir rather than a real increase, and one observer has reported that this colony appears to be in decline.

Three colour-ringed birds were observed this year from three countries. The Estonian bird seen at East India Dock Basin in 2013 was present there intermittently until March 13th and returned again from September 23rd. A bird ringed in Aberdeen was seen at Rainham Marshes on February 22nd, and one with a Danish ring was at Island Barn Res on November 14th.

The table below shows monthly maxima at regularly counted sites with larger numbers (the Walton Res entry includes Knight and Beesborough Res only). Unusually high counts were reported in autumn from a number of reservoirs, mainly in the south-west where the same birds may have been observed at different sites on different dates. Some of these counts substantially exceed the level for national significance (350). Breeding records (no. of nests in brackets) and notable counts from other localities are shown below the table.

Cormorant	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX KGV Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	250	200	-	-	-
MX Q. Mary Res	17	25	10	26	12	-	51	617	0	0	10	7
KGV Res	3	5	6	4	4	2	3	744	7	10	12	2
Staines Res	1	3	2	5	3	4	2	264	822	400	89	6
Wraysbury Res	72	-	14	-	10	-	104	-	482	66	101	30
SY Island Barn Res	41	21	11	4	2	3	1	27	37	160	96	21
QE II Res	130	120	85	57	22	63	181	390	241	220	185	150
Walton Res	1	7	4	1	2	1	55	155	220	153	1	2

**Essex:** Walthamstow Res (bred), 365 on Sep 19th.

**Herts:** Amwell (25); 80 on Apr 29th. Stocker's Lake (1, abandoned).

**Middx:** Broadwater Lake (25). Q. Mary GP (c30).

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP (8). Q. Mother Res, 100 on Sep 4th, 204 W on Sep 20th, 135 on Oct 15th.

**Kent:** Crossness, 70 on Nov 17th.

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, 54 on Nov 9th. Molesey Heath, 120 over on Aug 22nd. QE II Res (2). Tooting Common, 815 high SW on Mar 24th.

**In Lond:** Battersea Park, 130 on Feb 4th. Limehouse, 100 on Thames on Feb 18th.

### Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

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

In the first-winter period there were records from only 11 sites (25 in 2013 and 20 in 2012), the lowest for several years. As usual most wintering birds departed by early March, although Rainham Marshes held a booming male during June. In the second-winter period birds were recorded from eight sites (nine in 2013, six in 2012). The first returning bird was at London Wetland Centre from October 19th, followed by a mini influx that led to birds being seen at three further sites on October 29th and 30th. The London Wetland Centre and the Lee Valley remain this species' winter strongholds in the London Area. All sites at which birds were recorded are given below, together with peak counts.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP, one on Jan 14th. Ingrebourne Valley, one on Jan 9th, two on Jan 15th, singles on Feb 9th and Mar 22nd; then singles on Oct 30th and Dec 29th. Rainham Marshes, singles from Jan 24th-27th then again on Feb 10th and Mar 11th; in June one was booming on several dates. Warren Gorge, one was seen on Jan 30th and Feb 3rd & 13th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, recorded from Jan 1st to Mar 24th, with two seen on Feb 26th and Mar 17th; singles on Oct 27th & 28th and Dec 19th & 29th. Maple Lodge NR, one on Jan 27th. North Met Pit, recorded Jan 9th to Feb 18th, with three on Jan 9th, two on Jan 20th and five on Feb 18th; singles on Nov 6th & 26th and two on Dec 17th. Rye Meads, one on Dec 15th. Seventy Acres Lake, recorded between Jan 1st and Feb 24th with two on Jan 5th & 8th and Feb 3rd; one on Oct 29th, then recorded from Nov 26th to Dec 28th with two on Dec 13th, 14th & 19th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, one from Oct 30th to Nov 2nd, then another on Nov 22nd. Stanwell Moor, one was observed flying in to roost on Feb 16th, 17th & 22nd.

**Bucks:** Horton GP, one was flushed from an area of dead docks on Feb 22nd.

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, up to three recorded regularly from Jan 1st to Mar 2nd; one recorded regularly from Oct 19th to Nov 18th, then up to two regularly seen to the year's end, with four on Dec 30th and three on 31st. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), one on four dates between Dec 13th & 24th.

### Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

**Status:** scarce breeder and visitor, increasing.

Records were received from 237 sites, a sharp rise on last year's 195 as this species continues to colonise the region, with large increases in the number of sites from Essex, Middlesex and Kent (see table below - equivalent numbers for 2013 are in brackets).

#### Sites recording Little Egret by sector

Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond
59(32)	52(56)	53(37)	13(8)	27(17)	32(42)	1(3)

Breeding was recorded at nine sites, three up on the previous two years, the new additions being: Mayesbrook Park in Essex; Broadwater Lake in Middlesex; and Verulamium Park in Herts. The LNHS is once again grateful to the BTO for making available the London data from its Heron survey. The table below summarises the annual increase in breeding since the first record at Walthamstow Res in 2006. The highest count away from breeding

sites came from Mar Dyke Valley, with 32 in early July. All breeding records are given below (no. of pairs/nests in brackets if known), as are notable counts.

#### Little Egret breeding 2006-2014

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of nest sites	1	2	1	2	2	5	6	6	9
No. of nests	1	3	3	9	12	22	36	36	45

**Essex:** Netherhall GP (6). Mar Dyke Valley, 32 on Jul 1st & 5th. Mayesbrook Park (1). Rainham Marshes, 30 on Jul 17th. Walthamstow Res (19), 19 broods and 54 young fledged (11 broods and 37 young in 2013). Warren Gorge (6), 14 young fledged; 37 on Mar 27th.  
**Herts:** Amwell NR (5). Stanborough Lakes, winter roost peaked at 27 on Dec 24th. Stocker's Lake (5). Verulamium Park (1), four chicks fledged and were ringed.  
**Middx:** Broadwater Lake (1); the roost peaked at 15 on Sep 23rd and Oct 11th.  
**Bucks:** Higher Denham, 15 on Jan 18th. Wraysbury GP (1).  
**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, 16 on Jun 22nd. Sevenoaks WR, the winter roost peaked at 14 on Dec 7th.

### Great Egret *Ardea alba*

**Status:** rare but increasing visitor.

There were 17 accepted records this year, involving 21 birds, the highest ever in one year. There was one January record, then spring records in March, April and May, followed by one in June. In the autumn there were three records in August (the first August records in London), then three singles in September, followed by two singles in November and one in December. There was also a late record from 2013.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP, one on Jun 2nd (RBs). Chafford Hundred, one flew NW over the A1306 at 11:30 on May 2nd (RBA). Ingrebourne Valley, one flew S at 06:20 on Aug 2nd (BG). Rainham Marshes, one flew S on Jan 12th at 07:30 (HV), one on Mar 26th (mo), two on May 1st (PSt, DSm), one on Sep 8th & 9th (CW, MHa, HV *et al*), one on Dec 6th (RBs, JW, VW, PSt). Warren Gorge, one left the egret roost at 05:30 on Mar 27th (RBs).  
**Herts:** Amwell NR, two were present on Aug 6th (AM) and flew off N at 06:40 on 7th (AHL). Rye Meads, one found on Nov 15th (AHa) was seen as it departed N at 06:56 on 16th.  
**Middx:** Brent Res, one flew E at 09:12 on Apr 26th (ASMS, AGV, RB).  
**Kent:** Sevenoaks WR, one on Sep 24th (MCh).  
**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, two flew NE around midday on May 1st (GWJ), one on Sep 9th (MJN), one flew S on Nov 24th (RBr). Godstone, two flew S at 11:15 on Aug 6th (PBr, DMi).

#### 2013 Addition

**Essex:** Orsett, one SE on Dec 4th (DGDL)

### Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

**Status:** common breeding resident.

A total of at least 381 nests was reported, a slight increase on the 352 in 2013. This is the first increase since 2009, although still leaving the total way below that year's recent high water mark of 523 nests (see table below).

#### Grey Heron nests 2005-2014

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of nests	412	356	456	473	523	472	437	367	352	381

Within the overall increase there were steep declines at Netherhall GP and Wraysbury GP, and no nests were recorded this year at Thorndon CP or Sevenoaks WR. However, on a more positive note six sites recorded nests this year where none were recorded in 2013. Details of all heronries at which nest counts were made are given below, with the number of nests and any notable changes from 2013 in brackets, followed by a few of the highest counts away from known heronries or outside the breeding period. The early stages of nest construction were also observed at a few other sites but these are not mentioned below as the nesting efforts did not progress any further. As in recent years, away from the main colonies the highest numbers were recorded at Beddington Farmlands. The LNHS continues to be grateful to the BTO for making available the London data from the long-running Grey Heron survey.

**Essex:** Ingrebourne Valley (4). Mayesbrook Park (3, none last year). Netherhall GP (25, down 13). Thorndon CP (no nests this year, 3 last year). Valentines Park (1). Walthamstow Res (30). Warren Gorge (7), 17 young fledged.  
**Herts:** Aldenham CP (2, none last year). Amwell NR (16). Frogmore Lakes (1). Stanborough Lakes (10, up 7). Stocker's Lake (27). Tyttenhanger GP (6, up 3). Verulamium Park (15).  
**Middx:** Boxer's Lake, Enfield (1, none last year). Brent Res, 14 on Feb 1st. Broadwater Lake (3). Frays Valley LNR (7, up 3). Home Park (1). Kempton NR (8, up 4). Little Britain Lake (14). Wildwoods (1).  
**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res (2, none last year). Wraysbury GP (2, down 13).  
**Kent:** Crossway Lake NR ('some', none last year). Manor House Gardens (3, none last year). Kelsey Park (20). Sevenoaks WR (1). Swanscombe Marshes (4).  
**Surrey:** Barn Elms Pond (1). Beddington Farmlands, several high counts, peaking at 40 on Jul 12th. Bookham Common (18, up 7). Brentford Ait (21). Corporation Island (10). Gatton Lake (28, up 7). Horton CP (5, down 3). Leg of Mutton NR (5, up 3). London Wetland Centre, peak count of 16 on Jan 17th. Morden Hall Park (17, up 2). Richmond Park (4, up 3). Sevenoaks WR (no nests this year, one last year). Thorpe Water Park (6, up 3).  
**In Lond:** Battersea Park (30). Regent's Park (22).

### Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

**Status:** scarce vagrant.

This is the first record since 2009 and, like all the London records so far, a single bird. Most are spring records like this, with 14 of the 26 records being in April, May or June. Unlike Great Egrets, the number of records doesn't seem to be increasing in recent years, as the table below shows.

#### Purple Heron records by decade 1956-2014: 26 records

Decade	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s
No. of records	2	2	8	5	3	5	1

**Bucks:** Horton GP, on May 31st one flew into an area without public access (CDRH).



*Above: Great Egret, in line with the national trend, is being seen more and more frequently. This bird was at Rainham Marshes. (Russ Sherriff)*

*Left: Little Egret numbers continue to rise. (Peter Alfrey)*

### Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

**Status:** rare vagrant.

For the third year in a row there were two records, one of which involved an individual seen at two sites on the same morning. They constituted the tenth and 11th records for London. This species seems to have become almost annual, with records in six of the past seven years. With the exception of June, birds have now turned up in every calendar month from March to November (see table below).

**Glossy Ibis arrival dates 1974-2014: 11 records, 12 birds**

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

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, one flew S at 09:00 on Aug 7th (SJC) and was presumably the same individual that landed at Beddington two hours later.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, one was present late morning on Jul 31st (MJN); one landed at 10:58 on Aug 7th and remained until 10th (MJN, DCa *et al*).

### Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

**Status:** scarce migrant.

After the increase to six records last year, this year there were just two, involving three birds. Both records were flyovers, one in March and one in May.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, two circled o/h at 15:25 on May 22nd (KG, RBr). Coulsdon, one flew S at 17:50 on Mar 31st (GMc).

### Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

**Status:** scarce visitor.

Just one record this year, an excellent Inner London record on a typical May date. Also one late record from 2013, this one in September.

Honey Buzzard arrival dates 2001-2014: **62 records, 64 birds**

Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
No. of records	4	18	3	2	11	22	2
No. of birds	4	20	3	2	11	22	2

**In Lond:** Rotherhithe, one on May 5th (RHB).

#### 2013 Addition

**Middx:** Shepperton one on Sep 4th (HE).

### Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

**Status:** scarce but increasing visitor.

Another quantum leap for this amazingly adaptable raptor, with over 2,000 records (up from 1,597 in 2013). Interestingly, the sightings from Essex, Bucks, Middlesex and Surrey roughly doubled, but there were only small increases for the other counties. This represents a catching-up process with the greatest 'jump' occurring in Middlesex, where reports rose from 141 (9%) in 2013 to 374 (18%) this year - perhaps they are 'overflow' birds from the adjacent Hertfordshire sector. Hertfordshire remains the premier county with 65% of all records, but perhaps it could be reaching saturation point. As has been the case in previous years, the months with the greatest number of records were March and April, with March just pipping April this year. Once again it is worth stating that this probably indicates passage through or across the area.

Red Kite sightings	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	137	185	341	280	206	188	121	108	136	128	64	130

Pleasingly, at least two pairs bred successfully in the Hertfordshire sector, with one pair raising one chick and the other two. It remains likely that this is just the tip of the iceberg and many more pairs probably breed undetected (probably the best sort of protection!). A wing-tagged bird seen at West Hyde, Hertfordshire, had been ringed as a nestling near High Wycombe in June 2009. The largest flocks were 18 feeding over a recently cut silage field near West Hyde on June 12th (a London record), 15 also feeding over a field at nearby Maple Cross on August 30th and 11 birds at Chiswell Green on June 23rd.

Red Kite by sector	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond
Sightings	131	1310	374	45	34	123	13
Percentage	6	65	18	2	2	6	1

**In Lond:** Blackfriars Bridge, one on May 11th. **Fulham Palace, one on May 25th.** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Apr 12th. Lincoln's Inn Fields, one on May 4th. Regent's Park, one on Mar 10th and two on Sep 15th.

### Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

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

Another excellent year for this colonising raptor with the second instance of breeding in London, this time at Rainham Marshes, where a single male fathered two families with separate females, successfully fledging three youngsters between them (one and two). Another pair were seen to display during the spring at nearby Swanscombe Marshes. There were about 330 sightings during the year, but the presence of breeding birds clearly distorts the species' true status across London, as there were almost daily sightings at Rainham Marshes throughout the year. Only about 66 of these sightings were away from Rainham and the nearby Thames-side marshes; the peak passage month was April with 18 sightings (away from Rainham) which obviously represents migrating birds. The largest count was of eight birds at Rainham Marshes on November 20th.

Marsh Harrier	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Records	27	21	31	25	28	26	27	26	29	27	29	33
Records (not Thames-side)	0	0	4	18	5	7	5	7	7	6	7	0
Individuals/month	6	3	9	21	11	12	8	14	10	11	14	9

**Essex:** Gallions Reach, singles on May 5th, Jun 15th, Aug 25th and Nov 15th. Gidea Park, one on Mar 19th. Ingrebourne Valley, singles on Apr 3rd, Jun 23rd, three on Dec 28th and one on 31st. Rainham Marshes, present throughout the year, with peak of eight in November. South Weald, one on Aug 23rd. Wanstead Flats, one on Aug 27th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, one on Apr 14th. Rye Meads, singles in March, April, June, July, September and November, involving about seven birds.

**Middx:** Hampstead Heath, singles on Sep 13th and Oct 12th. Kempton NR, singles on Apr 2nd and Aug 12th. KGV Res, one on Oct 14th. Staines Moor, singles on Sep 27th, and Nov 15th. Staines Res, one on Apr 20th. Stanwell Moor, one on Aug 31st. Tottenham Marshes, one on May 18th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, singles on Apr 3rd, 10th, 20th & 22nd and Oct 15th.

**Kent:** Blackheath, one on Jun 12th. Crayford and Dartford Marshes, singles in seven months of the year. Crossness, singles on Apr 27th, May 15th, 16th, and Jul 25th. Shooters Hill, one at Woodlands Farm on Oct 15th. Swanscombe Marshes, peak of three on May 3rd.

**Surrey:** Banstead Woods, one on Mar 30th and Apr 1st. Beddington Farmlands, singles on Apr 9th, Aug 2nd and Nov 19th. London Wetland Centre, singles on Apr 17th, May 4th, July 26th, Aug 5th, Sep 3rd, Oct 14th and Nov 11th. Morden Hall Park, one on Apr 3rd. Richmond Park, singles on Apr 26th and Sep 22nd.

**In Lond:** Hammersmith Cemetery, one on Jul 26th.



Red Kite sightings in London are continuing to increase. (Andrew Moon)

### Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

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

Eleven records this year, involving about eight individuals, compared with 12 birds in 2013. A single bird at Rainham on January 20th was the first, followed by another at Godstone on February 26th and then another at Rainham on March 7th. The first bird of the autumn was at Rainham on August 13th, then a longer-staying individual at the same site between October 14th and 31st. Further singles were seen at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) on October 16th and Weybridge on December 7th. Rainham Marshes remains

the premier site for this threatened raptor and one of few locations in London where a bird could winter. All birds were ringtails, unless stated.

Hen Harrier records 2010-2014: **38 birds**



Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of birds	18	4	6	12*	8

\* this count was given incorrectly as 10 in LBR 2013

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, singles on Jan 20th (MJo, DMn, HV), Mar 7th (ARK), Aug 13th (THn) and Oct 14th, 15th, Oct 25th and 31st (DSm *et al*).

**Herts:** Hatfield Aerodrome, one on Nov 13th (DW).

**Surrey:** Godstone, one on Feb 26th (JK). Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), one on Oct 16th (DMH, SJS). Weybridge, one on Dec 7th (SW).

### Harrier sp

**Herts:** Panshanger Park, a ringtail flew N on Apr 27th (CH *et al*).

### Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

**Status:** rare passage migrant.

Just one accepted record in Essex this year after three in 2013. Only a few of the remaining 23 reports across London were accompanied by descriptions. More descriptions would be welcome, particularly for those records listed in App III. The table below shows records in recent years.

Goshawk records 2004-2014: 13 records, 13 birds

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of records	0	3	0	3	0	0	2	0	1	3	1

**Essex:** Epping Forest: Jack's Hill, one on Apr 5th (RW).

### Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

**Status:** common breeding resident.

An excellent year with over 2,500 records (1,650 in 2013), for what is probably the commonest raptor in London. The overall distribution was little changed. Encouragingly the breeding situation improved hugely this year with a minimum of 44 pairs nesting successfully (up from a low of 15 in 2013). One pair raised a remarkable total of six juveniles and several other pairs fledged four youngsters. Prey items included: Blue Tit, Feral Pigeon, Collared Dove, Song Thrush, Goldfinch, Starling and a mouse. Interestingly, one bird was watched in a futile pursuit of a Kingfisher. The largest count was of six birds together over Wanstead Park on August 27th.

Sparrowhawk	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
Territories	10	16	8	0	3	12	2	51
Proved	7	13	4	0	1	8	1	44

**In Lond:** Records were received from: Battersea Park, Buckingham Palace Gdns (probably

bred), Chelsea, Hackney, Fulham Cemetery (one pair bred), Hammersmith Cemetery, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, Limehouse, Kensington, Mile End, Finsbury, Marylebone, Regent's Park, Rotherhithe, St James's Park, St Paul's Cathedral, Stepney, Stockwell, Vauxhall, Victoria Park and Wapping.

### Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

**Status:** scarce but increasing breeder, regular migrant/visitor.

Records of this species increased to nearly 3,000 this year (2,045 in 2013), eclipsing even the record increases of both Red Kite and Sparrowhawk. It remains the most widely reported raptor across London and there were increases in the Middlesex, Essex and Surrey sectors.

Pleasingly, the number of territories (34), as well as instances of successful breeding (15) increased from last year's disappointing totals. On the down side was the report that a tree was felled in Surrey that contained a Common Buzzard nest.

March and April remain the most favoured months; there were two significant spring passage peaks with 74 birds logged on April 9th and 76 on May 3rd. The largest count this year was 24 together over Wanstead Park on September 6th (a London record).

Common Buzzard	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
Territories	4	18	5	0	0	7	0	34
Proved	2	10	2	0	0	1	0	15

**Essex:** At least four pairs were on territory, with one pair nesting successfully (1 young). Rainham Marshes, 18 on Aug 22nd. Wanstead Park, 24 on Sep 6th.

**Herts:** A minimum of 18 territories were logged this year, of which at least ten bred successfully (5+ young). Rye Meads, 17 on Feb 16th.

**Middx:** Five territories, with two successfully rearing a total of five juvs. Hampstead Heath, 11 on Oct 5th. Staines Moor, 14 on Apr 9th.

**Surrey:** Seven pairs were on territory, with one pair successfully rearing two chicks. Beddington Farmlands, 22 on Apr 11th.

**In Lond:** Records of single birds (unless stated) were received from: Charing Cross, City Road, Hammersmith, Holborn, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, Regent's Park, where seen on 11 dates, with peaks of three on May 5th and four on Sep 28th, St James's Park, five sightings, with a peak of three on Sep 8th.

### Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

**Status:** scarce passage migrant.

A good total of about 47 records this year; allowing for likely duplication the number of individual birds seen was about 41. The first of the year was on March 16th over Hatfield (the earliest ever in London); further records followed on March 18th at Debden and March 24th at Amwell NR.

There were several clear peaks in April with four sightings on 8th (three birds), seven sightings on 9th (four birds) and four sightings (three birds) on 10th; another eight birds passed through by the end of May, followed by four mid-summer records.

Autumn passage commenced on August 9th with one at Rye Meads, four more birds

headed south by the end of August, then another ten in September and the last of the year at Broadwater Lake on October 10th. All records are single, unless stated.

**Essex:** Barking, singles on Apr 15th and Jun 10th. Beckton, Apr 15th. Debden, Mar 18th. Ingrebourne Valley, singles on Apr 8th and 10th. Leyton Flats, Sep 9th. Netherhall GP, Apr 9th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Apr 8th, 10th, 18th and Aug 23rd. Wanstead Flats, Apr 8th.

**Herts:** Aldenham CP, Apr 22nd. Amwell NR, singles on Mar 24th, Apr 9th and Sep 20th. Cheshunt GP, Jul 6th. Hatfield, Mar 16th. Maple Lodge NR, Apr 9th. Panshanger Aerodrome/Park, singles on Apr 22nd, Aug 31st, Sep 7th and 9th. Rye Meads, Apr 8th, 9th, 18th, Aug 9th and Sep 20th. St Albans, Apr 9th and Aug 17th. Stanstead Innings, Apr 8th. Tyttenhanger GP, Apr 6th and Sep 12th.

**Middx:** Belsize Park Gardens, May 14th. Bentley Priory, Sep 20th. Brent Res, Apr 10th. Broadwater Lake, Oct 10th. Chiswick, Jun 1st.

**Kent:** Greenwich Park, Apr 9th.

**Surrey:** Addlestone, Apr 10th. Beddington Farmlands, Sep 7th & 14th. Richmond Park, Sep 2nd.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, Apr 24th.

### Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

**Status:** common breeding resident.

The number of sightings again leapt forward this year with about 2,193 reports (up from 1,513 in 2013) which is very encouraging and although the number of territories (44) was little changed, the number of successful pairs rose to a more satisfactory 30, which fledged a minimum of 51 young. One pair at Cromer Hyde successfully fledged six juveniles: a remarkable total and testimony to the incredible skill and efficiency of their parents. About 75% of all sightings were evenly divided between Essex, Hertfordshire and Middlesex.

The site with the highest number of sightings was Wanstead Flats with 177 sightings, followed by Rye Meads with 136 and Tyttenhanger GP with 126. Prey items reported included mice, short-tailed field vole, Blue Tit and a dragonfly.

All Inner London sightings (listed below) were of single birds, unless stated.

Kestrel	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Totals
Territories	7	13	8	0	0	14	2	44
Proved	5	9	8	0	0	7	1	30

**In Lond:** Battersea Park, Jun 17th. Buckingham Palace Gdns, Jun 25th. Gresham Street, Mar 24th. Leicester Square, Aug 11th. Lincolns Inn Fields, Feb 2nd. Regent's Park, two pairs present, of which one pair bred successfully raising three juvs. St James's Park, May 12th, 23rd and two on Jul 2nd. Tower of London, Apr 8th and Aug 8th. Trafalgar Square, four on Mar 13th. Victoria, Sep 26th.

### Merlin *Falco columbarius*

**Status:** scarce migrant and winter visitor.

Thirteen records this year (probably involving about 11 birds), exceeds last year's total (but still falls well short of 19 in 2011 and 41 in 2010). Records were confined to the



Sightings of Buzzard are frequently driven by a commotion in the sky. (Peter Alfrey)

Osprey is always a great patch find in London. (Nick Croft)



Kestrel sightings are significantly up. (Andrew Moon)

beginning and end of the year and were evenly distributed across the area, although Thames-side sites predominated.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, singles on Jan 12th, Feb 2nd, 9th, Oct 27th, 30th and Dec 28th (mo).

**Herts:** Amwell NR, one on Oct 15th (BR).

**Middx:** Brent Res, one on Mar 16th (ASMS). Staines Res, one on Oct 25th (REI, KLP).

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one on Oct 23rd (CDRH).

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, singles on Jan 13th (KMJ) and Sep 26th (IS).

**Surrey:** Canons Farm, one on Sep 7th (SG).

### **Hobby *Falco subbuteo***

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

In terms of numbers this was another excellent year with just over 1,000 records; 28% from Hertfordshire, 24% from Essex and 23% Middlesex. The Essex total almost doubled, although half came from Rainham Marshes.

Although there were 20 territories (two up on last year) only nine pairs were known to have bred successfully (15 last year). A spell of very wet weather in August, when chicks are normally fledging, may have been a factor.

The first arrival was at the London Wetland Centre on March 29th, with the next at Northfleet on April 3rd, but then no more until one in the Totteridge Valley on 13th, followed by two more on 15th. There was a veritable deluge after this with another 60 birds arriving by the end of April. Spring gatherings were smaller than last year with peaks of ten on April 30th at Seventy Acres Lake and 14 at Horton GP on May 31st.

The only significant gathering during the autumn was of 20 birds at Roding Valley Meadows on August 11th. There were daily reports up until October 5th, and ten reports after this with the last of the year at Amwell NR on October 21st.

Hobby pairs breeding	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Totals
Territories	3	4	7	1	1	3	1	20
Proved	0	1	3	0	1	3	1	9

**In Lond:** Site A, a pair bred again. Holborn, one on Sep 28th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on May 8th, Aug 6th, Sep 3rd and two on 4th. Kennington, one on Jul 18th. Regent's Park, singles on Apr 15th, May 5th, Aug 16th, three on 27th, singles on 30th, Sep 3rd, 21st and 22nd with three on 23rd.

### Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

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

Another excellent year for this impressive falcon with 1,600 reports (up from just over 1,000 in 2013). The distribution across London, as always, tends to be heavily skewed towards nest sites, or nearby locations. Surrey provided 29% of the records, followed by Essex (18%) and Kent (15%). A detailed report of Peregrine Falcons in Inner London is in the Papers section on page 189.

Overall at least 25 pairs were on territory this year (up from 23 in 2013), of which 18 pairs bred successfully rearing 51 youngsters (a huge jump from 38 last year). Thanks to DJ and DMn for this information. The precipitous nest sites can lead to young birds falling while exercising their wings and if near water this can be disastrous; at least two juveniles drowned at reservoir nest sites this year.

The only proved kills were of Ring-necked Parakeet (several) and a Woodcock. Species that birds were seen pursuing (unsuccessfully) were more varied and included: Lapwing, Common Sandpiper, Grey Phalarope (two birds!), Woodpigeon, Little Owl and Short-eared Owl.

Peregrine Falcon	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of pairs present	4	4	6	5	13	15	19	22	28	23	21	25
No. of successful pairs	1	2	5	3	3	4	5	5	9	10	15	18
Juvs fledged	1	0	3	2	8	9	11	8	23	28	38	51

**Essex:** Five pairs bred and fledged at least 15 juvs.

**Herts:** A pair was suspected to have bred in the Watford area, but despite the fact that a juv was seen with an adult in late June, no nest site was located.

**Middx:** Two pairs bred and reared four juvs.

**Bucks:** One pair bred raising one youngster, another juv drowned.

**Kent:** One pair bred and fledged three juvs.

**Surrey:** Four pairs raised 13 youngsters; another juv drowned.

**In Lond:** Six pairs fledged 15 juvs.

### Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

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

Estimated numbers in the first and last four months of the year were 146 and 165 (in 2013, 131 and 141 birds respectively). Records came from 103 sites, which is up from last year's 89, and there were 17 breeding pairs reported from seven sites this year (just three from two sites last year). Regent's Park was the only Inner London record. It is likely that weather is the biggest factor affecting both numbers of wintering birds in London and their visibility. It would be interesting to know how many of the reports relate to birds seen as opposed to heard. All breeding records are given below (no. of pairs/territories in brackets) and high counts.

#### Water Rail winter totals of birds

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
First winter	48	35	19	1	10	33	1	147
Second winter	45	32	24	2	16	44	0	163

**Essex:** Hornchurch CP, nine on Feb 23rd. Ingrebourne Valley, nine on Feb 23rd, ten on Oct 16th. Mar Dyke Valley (1). Rainham Marshes (5). Wanstead Park (1); five on Dec 31st. Warren Gorge (1).

**Herts:** Amwell NR (1). Cheshunt Lake, four on Jan 25th. Hilfield Park Res, four on Jan 26th. Maple Lodge NR (1); six on Dec 15th. Rye Meads (7); eight on Oct 11th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, seven on Nov 4th. Broadwater Lake, seven on Dec 24th.

**Bucks:** Horton GP, three on Dec 7th.

**Kent:** Crossness, five on Oct 12th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, six on Oct 20th, 11 on Dec 13th. London Wetland Centre, two on Apr 4th, 16 on Dec 16th. Richmond Park, six on Dec 16th.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, one on Feb 18th.

### Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*

**Status:** scarce migrant.

It was a good year with two records as in 2013, bringing the total since 1989 to 20. They don't appear every year, as the table below shows. The arrival dates, in August and September, are typical, with 12 of the last 20 records being in those two months. The Rye Meads bird was only the second in the county of Hertfordshire since 1996 (2014 Herts Bird Report).

#### Spotted Crake records 1989-2014: 20 records, 20 birds

Year	1989	1996	1998	1999	2002	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2013	2014
No. of records	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	4	2	2

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, one from Aug 4th to Sep 2nd (DSm *et al*).

**Herts:** Rye Meads, one on Sep 30th (DLy *et al*).



*Peregrine goes from strength to strength in London. (Andrew Moon)*

### Corncrake *Crex crex*

**Status:** rare passage migrant.

This record is the first since 2010, the bird being flushed from a meadow. There have only been 31 records of this secretive crane from 1950 to 2014 and the numbers had been decreasing in each decade (see table below). This is part of a decline throughout Western Europe although, following conservation measures, their numbers have been increasing since 1993 in the UK (RSPB website). Perhaps we can expect more records now. The arrival date is typical with 13 of the 31 records from 1950-2014 being in September; August is the next most likely month for Corncrakes to turn up.

Corncrake records by decade 1950-2014: 31 records, 31 birds

Decade	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s
No. of records	11	8	5	3	2	0	2

**Herts:** Rye Meads, one on Sep 19th (AHa).

### Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

**Status:** very common breeding resident.

There was a welcome increase in reports for this very common but under-reported bird. They were noted at more sites this year (413 sites, up from 280 in 2013 and 153 in 2012) and also reported breeding at more sites (110 sites, up from 92 last year). The highest count was 164 at both Beddington Farmlands and Rye Meads - in 2013 it was also 164, at the London Wetland Centre. At least 253 pairs or broods were reported which is a lot

fewer than the 326 in 2013. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 24% decline from 1995-2013 in south-east England, so regular counts from sites would be very welcome. All breeding records of five or more pairs or broods are given below (number in brackets) along with peak counts.

**Essex:** Ingrebourne Valley, 100 on Oct 16th. Rainham Marshes, 60 on Feb 16th. Walthamstow Res (5).

**Herts:** Panshanger Park, 49 on Oct 12th. Rye Meads, 164 on Sep 6th. Rickmansworth Aquadrome, 43 on Jan 18th. Tyttenhanger GP (5); 41 on Dec 22nd.

**Middx:** Brent Park, 30 on Mar 28th. Brent Res, 71 on Sep 7th. Ruislip Lido, 30 on Jan 30th.

**Kent:** Bromley, 26 on Dec 29th. Danson Park, 34 on Dec 26th. Darenth Lakes, 24 on Mar 7th. Sevenoaks WR, 33 on Aug 10th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (27); 100 on Nov 8th. London Wetland Centre, 142 on Jan 19th. Morden Hall Park, 27 on Dec 30th. Richmond Park (20); 40 on Jul 1st. R Wandle: Butterhill to Morden Hall Park (40). R Wandle: Carshalton Ponds to Wandsworth, 164 on Dec 29th. Wimbledon Common (13).

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 38 on Dec 29th. Regent's Park, 26 on Oct 26th. St James's Park (5); 66 on Jan 12th. Victoria Park, 27 on Dec 13th.

### Coot *Fulica atra*

**Status:** very common breeding resident and winter visitor.

Coots were reported from 224 sites, down on 237 in 2013 but up from 144 in 2012. The highest count was 872 at Brent Res, higher than last year's 706 but still well below the 1,115 in 2011. The 706 last year was the lowest peak count reported in any issue from LBR 1990 onwards. At least 437 pairs or broods were reported from 106 sites, down from the 496 pairs or broods from 92 sites last year. BTO data suggests breeding numbers have been declining in the UK since the mid-2000s (BTO website). More regular counts from sites would be very welcome. All breeding records of ten or more pairs, nests or broods, and some Inner London breeding records, are given below (no. of pairs, nests or broods in brackets), as well as peak counts of over 200.

**Essex:** Connaught Water (12). Holyfield Lake, 500 on Oct 19th, Ingrebourne Valley, 200 on Nov 15th. Rainham Marshes (51); 282 on Feb 16th. Walthamstow Res (22).

**Herts:** Aldenham CP, 507 on Dec 4th. Amwell NR, 498 on Jan 18th. Bowyer's Water, 330 on Nov 13th. Bury Lake, 432 on Dec 7th. Hilfield Park Res, 329 on Jul 13th. Lynsters Lake, 239 on Dec 6th. Panshanger Park, 206 on Dec 7th. Rye Meads, 795 on Sep 6th. Stocker's Lake, 500 on Nov 10th. Troy Lakes, 539 on Oct 14th. Tyttenhanger GP (10).

**Middx:** Brent Res (11); 872 on Dec 7th. Home Park (27); 227 on Dec 14th. Horsenden Hill & Perivale (10). KGVI Res, 284 on Oct 12th. Q. Mary Res, 374 on Sep 7th. Staines Res, 403 on Aug 9th.

**Bucks:** Horton GP, 478 on Dec 31st. Wraysbury GP, 531 on Dec 31st.

**Kent:** Sevenoaks WR (11); 167 on Jan 13th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (32); 280 on Nov 8th. Richmond Park (14). R Wandle: Butter Hill to Morden Hall Park (21). Waddon Ponds (11).

**In Lond:** Battersea Park (25). Grand Union Canal (18). Regent's Park (21). St James's Park (26), 236 on Jan 12th.

## Common Crane *Grus grus*

**Status:** rare vagrant.

There was just one accepted record this year, involving two birds, in April. April and May are the most likely months for this species to appear, with 11 out of the 19 records since 1990 being in those two months. There were other reports (listed in App III) which have not yet been approved by our Rarities Committee.

### Common Crane arrival dates 1990-2014: 19 records, 28 birds

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

**Herts:** Amwell NR, two S on Apr 27th (JBa) which then landed briefly at Rye Meads before flying off S again (AHa, IC, PSu).

## Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

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

A year in which there were one or two interesting deviations from the recent pattern. January provided few records but the number of sites recording birds increased substantially in February and March: the majority of these, as might be expected, were along the Lower Thames, which also held the higher numbers. There were, however, no records in double figures, with no site recording more than six birds on any one day.

The breeding position showed a very welcome improvement. In 2013 the only site to confirm breeding was Amwell NR and this site came up trumps again for the sixth consecutive year. However, four more sites also confirmed breeding: three of these (Coursers Road, Stocker's Lake and Tyttenhanger GP) also in Hertfordshire. A welcome development was a first breeding record at Q. Mary Res in Middlesex. Breeding was considered possible, or birds were present during the breeding season, at five more sites.

As might be expected, there was a good scattering of records during July. Most of these were along the Lower Thames, with seven at Crossness on July 25th the highest count. Sightings reduced in August but included the highest count of the year, eight birds at Q. Mary Res on August 9th. Records for the last four months of the year proved few and far between, with four records at Rainham Marshes (the last on November 2nd), one September record at Crossness on the 2nd, the Regent's Park record in October (see below) and, last of the year, one at Leyton Flats on December 5th. These were all of single birds.

**In Lond:** Limehouse, one flying over Canary Wharf on Jul 28th. Regent's Park, singles on Feb 18th and Oct 25th. Rotherhithe, two E along R Thames on Jun 27th.

## Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

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

Unlike last year, there were no known attempts at breeding in 2014 and only two counts in double figures. The early scattering of birds in January along the Lower Thames virtually disappeared in February but there were more records throughout the area in March, with

a maximum of five at QE II Res on March 28th. For the remainder of the year, until December, there were only a small number of sightings, although the first record of two together at Brent Res since 1897 was of note. There were only three records in December but they were the highest counts of the year; ten at Swanscombe Marshes on the 6th followed by 22 at West Thurrock Marshes on the 8th and then the highest of the year, 44 on 28th at West Thurrock Marshes. All records are given below, summarised in some cases.

**Essex:** Cornmill Meadows, juv on several dates between Jul 27th and Aug 16th. Gallions Reach, two on Jun 15th. Ingrebourne Valley, one between Aug 19th and 25th. KGV Res, one on Apr 4th. Rainham Marshes, recorded in small numbers throughout the year (except October) with four on Jul 26th the highest. Roding Valley Meadows, one on Aug 20th. West Thurrock Marshes, eight on Nov 22nd, 22 on Dec 8th and 44 on Dec 28th.

**Herts:** Coursers Farm, four on Mar 8th. Tyttenhanger GP, four on Mar 8th (the Coursers Farm birds) and one on Mar 30th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, two on Jun 29th. Staines Res, three on Apr 17th and one on Sep 6th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, two on May 14th.

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, singles on Jan 10th and Sep 6th. Dartford Marshes, a single on Jan 7th. Swanscombe Marshes, one on Apr 12th and ten on Dec 6th.

**Surrey:** QE II Res, five on Mar 28th. Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough), one on Mar 29th and three on Apr 17th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), three on May 5th.

## Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

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

A not dissimilar pattern to 2013. The first bird of the year arrived at Thorpe Water Park on March 14th and by the end of the month birds were widely reported from a number of sites, the highest total being five at Staines Res on March 25th and 26th. Numbers remained steady throughout April; the highest total of the month was six at Rainham Marshes on the 25th.

The breeding position remained much as before, although no site produced a pair with two broods as happened last year.

Little Ringed Plover	Pairs confirmed breeding	Pairs probably breeding	Other pairs present May-Jun	Total
Essex	1	0	2	3
Herts	2	5	3	10
Middx	2	1	4	7
Bucks	1	0	0	1
Kent	1	1	1	3
Surrey	2	0	2	4
Total	9	7	12	28

Numbers began to slowly fall away during July but groups of five or more birds were recorded at three sites during the month, with Brent Res holding eight birds on July 6th and 12th. Rainham Marshes recorded up to six birds on several dates during August and there were also five at Wraysbury Res on the 4th. Perhaps appropriately, Rainham Marshes had the last record of the year, a single on September 5th.



Above: Small numbers of Little Ringed Plover continue to breed across the recording area.  
(Andrew Moon)

Right: Coot. (Jonathan Lethbridge)

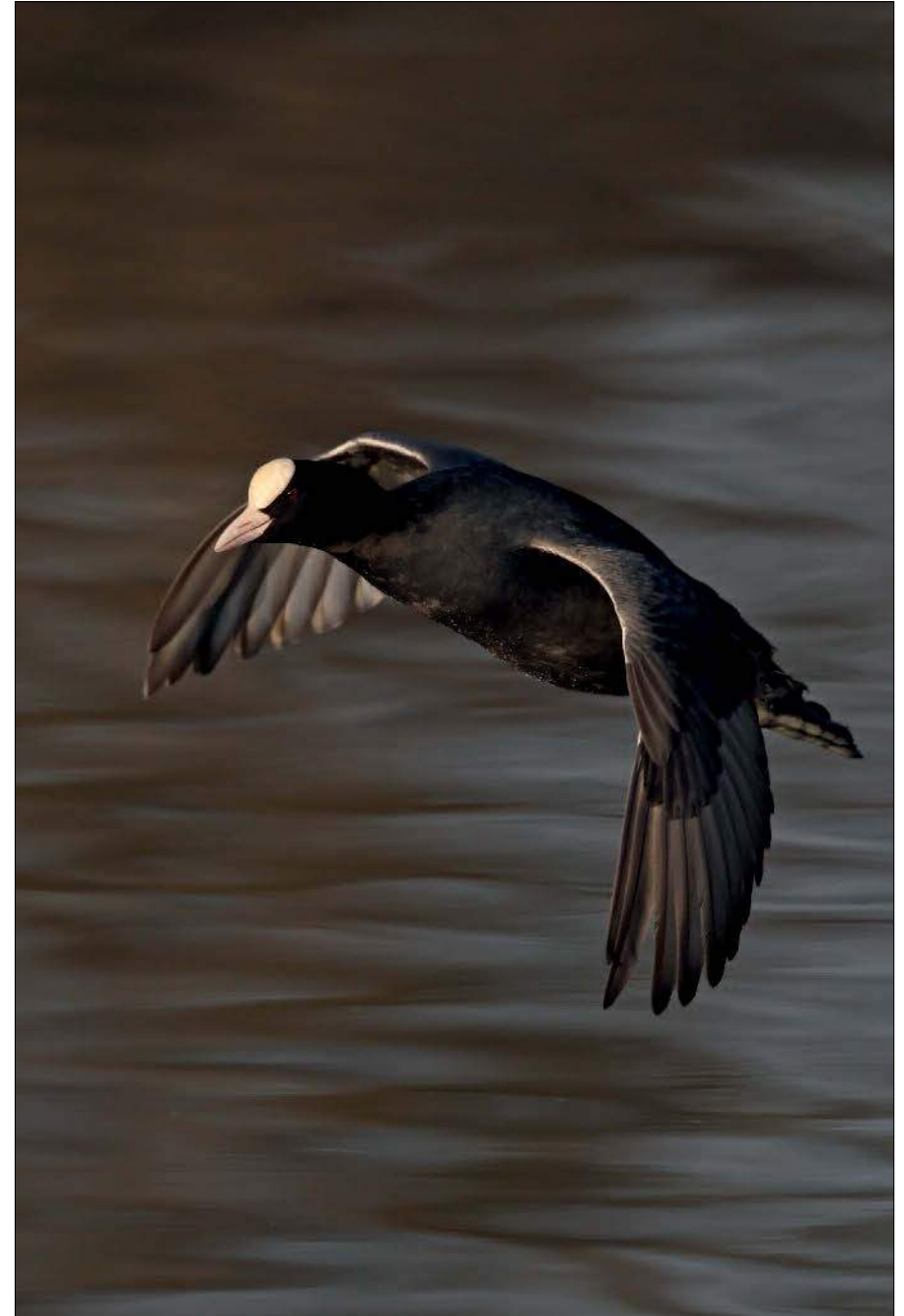
### Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

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

Numbers were generally low at the start of the year, with a peak of 20 at Rainham Marshes on February 1st. Apart from a bird at Rye Meads on February 7th, all the records in January and February came entirely from the Lower Thames. In March birds were more widespread, with individuals noted at Beddington Farmlands, London Wetland Centre, Thorpe Water Park and Tyttenhanger GP. Passage was quiet in April with only nine sites recording birds but May, as usual, was much busier: 17 sites had records, with Rainham Marshes, Amwell NR, Coopers Green Lane and Beddington Farmlands all recording double-figure totals.

It was a disappointing breeding season, with young only being recorded at Crossness. Breeding was thought possible at two other sites.

Passage picked up in August when birds were seen at many sites, mostly on the Lower Thames: the highest total was eight at Rainham Marshes on August 30th. Numbers improved throughout September and October, again mostly along the Lower Thames: with 30 at Rainham Marshes on October 3rd being the highest. November and December were a repeat of January and February, with all records apart from a single at Tyttenhanger GP



on November 22nd coming from the Lower Thames. The best of these was 30 at Rainham Marshes on November 14th.

### European Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

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

The picture for 2014 broadly resembled that for 2013, maintaining the slight improvement over 2012. Rainham Marshes remained the key site for this species in London and recorded the year's highest count of 453 on February 24th, but a couple of other sites also recorded totals in three figures that month. Numbers declined in March apart from the extraordinary total of 240 at Q. Mother Res on March 31st: this consisted of three separate flocks. After one at Rainham Marshes on April 20th there were no other records until one at the same site on July 12th. There were then only singles at six sites until September 21st but after that numbers picked up and by October 30th there were 125 at Mill End. Rainham Marshes dominated the last two months, the highest total being 350 on November 12th but there were also sizeable flocks present at Crayford/Dartford Marshes and Tyttenhanger GP.

**Essex:** Hall Marsh Scrape, 150 on Feb 3rd. Rainham Marshes, peak counts of 300 on Jan 24th, 453 on Feb 21st, 100 on Mar 1st, 350 on Nov 12th and 200 on Dec 9th. Wanstead Flats, 15 on Oct 13th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, 85 on Mar 17th. Theobalds Park Farm, 200 on Feb 1st. Hatfield, 100 on Nov 3rd. Maple Cross, 50 on Mar 15th & 26th. Mill End, 100 on Oct 28th. Oaklands College, 70 on Dec 31st. Rye Meads, 55 on Mar 23rd. Tyttenhanger GP, 143 on Dec 4th and 111 on Dec 7th. West Hyde, 80 on Nov 29th and 90 on Dec 30th. Woodoaks Farm, 72 on Mar 21st and 120 on Oct 28th.

**Middx:** Two at Staines Res on Mar 1st.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, 240 on Mar 31st.

**Kent:** Crayford/Dartford Marshes, 61 on Jan 5th, 63 on Feb 11th, 110 on Nov 14th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, six on Oct 13th & 14th.

### Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

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

Numbers were even lower than last year, with peak count of four birds. In January one remained at Rainham Marshes from 2013, with three there from January 31st to February 2nd. Spring passage began with a single at Rainham and Crayford Marshes on March 25th and continued until May 17th. Away from the Lower Thames, passage included one over London Wetland Centre on April 20th, two at Beddington Farmlands on April 22nd, two at Staines Res on April 26th, one at both Staines Res and Stanborough GP on May 5th, and then four at Staines Res on May 6th.

The trend continued for the remainder of the year, with autumn passage consisting of four birds, starting with one at Rainham Marshes on July 19th and followed by singles at Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) on August 8th, Rainham Marshes on September 2nd and at QE II Res on September 19th. Apart from the very unusual record of one flying W over the observer's house in Rickmansworth on October 25th, for the rest of the year, there were only four records along the Lower Thames (the last being two at Swanscombe Marshes on December 10th).

### Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

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

Around 118 pairs/territories were recorded this year. This is comparable with last year (115) and, given the overall status of this species in the country, not discouraging: there was a noticeable increase in Essex. The major territorial sites are listed below, with the number of territories in brackets. There were 19 counts this year of over 1,000 birds: all of these were at Rainham Marshes except for one count at Rye Meads (see below) and all but three were in January or February. High counts, selective for some sites, are given below.

**Essex:** 43 pairs/territories. Belhus Woods CP, 300 on Jan 16th. Rainham Marshes (39); 2,200 on Jan 30th, Feb 1st & 12th, 2,050 on Feb 16th, 1,300 on Dec 24th.

**Herts:** 26 pairs/territories. Amwell NR, 325 on Jan 18th, 300 on Feb 16th. Rye Meads, 1,000 on Jan 8th, 627 on Feb 6th, 570 on Nov 22nd. Tyttenhanger GP, 348 on Nov 29th & 30th, 542 on Dec 3rd.

**Middx:** Ten pairs/territories. Broadwater Lake, 117 on Jan 12th. Staines Res, 120 on Feb 8th, 110 on Nov 28th, 129 on Dec 5th.

**Kent:** Three pairs/territories. Crayford/Dartford Marshes, 600 on Jan 20th, 850 on Feb 11th, 550 on Dec 11th. Crossness, 400 on Jan 31st. Sevenoaks WR, 340 on Feb 1st, 373 on Dec 7th and 335 on Dec 17th & 20th.

**Surrey:** 36 pairs/territories. Beddington Farmlands (10); 108 on Oct 13th. London Wetland Centre (18), 70 on Feb 1st, 85 on Nov 25th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), 114 on Nov 29th, 155 on Dec 9th.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, two over on Nov 6th.

### Knot *Calidris canutus*

**Status:** passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers.

There were just 11 records of 25 birds in 2014, a big reduction on the two previous years (24 in 2013 and 35 in 2012). The first record of the year was seven at Rainham Marshes on February 15th and 16th. The first spring birds were four at the same site on March 29th. There were no more sightings until May 5th and 6th when there were records at several Lower Thames sites of the same group of three birds.

Autumn passage began at Staines Res, when a single bird flew through on July 28th. An adult described as confiding was at QE II Res on August 15th. A single bird was at Tyttenhanger GP on August 27th and another was at Crayford Marshes on September 23rd. This was followed by one at Staines Res on October 31st and finally, the only winter record, six birds at Swanscombe Marsh on December 6th.

### Sanderling *Calidris alba*

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

The first report of the species was not until April 27th when two were at Tyttenhanger GP. Spring passage then continued steadily until June 6th with the majority of records from the West London reservoirs. During this period there were at least 85 birds moving through with 11 at Rainham Marshes on May 10th and 11th, and 14 at KGVI Res on June 5th. There were four spring records from Rainham Marshes and 33 from the West London reservoirs. Of these, 16 records were at Q. Mother Res (peak of eight on May 23rd), nine



*Knot numbers were well down in 2014. This confiding bird was photographed at the QE II Reservoir. (Dave Harris)*

*West London led the way with Sanderling sightings this year, these at KGV I Reservoir. (Andrew Moon)*



at Staines Res (peak of three on May 24th-25th), three at KGV I Res (peak of 14 on June 5th) and three at QE II Res (peak of three on May 10th). Single birds were also reported from Wraysbury Res (May 13th) and Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (May 19th).

There were no further records until autumn passage started in Essex with two birds at KGV Res on July 27th. The following day, single birds were at Staines Res and Q. Mother Res. There were fewer birds on autumn passage than in spring with just 11 birds in total, all but one at the West London reservoirs. With the exception of two at Staines Res on July 31st, there were just five more reports of single birds at these two reservoirs until August 22nd. There was a single bird at Q. Mother Res on October 12th and another on the 16th. Another single bird was at Crossness on the same date. The last sightings of the year were two at Q. Mother Res on November 14th.

### **Little Stint *Calidris minuta***

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

There were records from just two sites involving up to seven birds, all in autumn. This pattern contrasts with 2013, when three out of four records were in the spring. Six of the records were from Rainham Marshes with one at Q. Mother Res.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, singles on Aug 29th-30th, Sep 29th-30th, Oct 1st, 3rd & 10th (mo).

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one on Sep 24th (CDRH).

### **Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii***

**Status:** rare passage migrant, predominantly occurring during May.

This species is less than annual and after no records last year, there were records from

*Temminck's Stint is a wonderful record for the Herts sector. (Andrew Moon)*



two sites. These probably involved the same birds, as the London Wetland Centre pair flew N at 07:55 and the Tyttenhanger GP pair were seen later in the day. This was the first record for Hertfordshire since 2002. The May dates are typical, with **26 of the last 37 London records** being in that month.

**Herts:** Tyttenhanger GP, two from May 19th-22nd; probably the same as the birds below (SBl *et al*).

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, two on May 19th (JPPW).

### Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

**Status:** rare passage migrant, mostly during September.

#### 2013 Alteration

Last year we said that there had been 17 records since 1990 and last year's record was only the second in July. There had in fact then been **35 records since 1991** and that record was the **third** in July since that time.

### Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

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

After a bumper year in 2013 with up to 24 birds being seen, things were back to normal this year. There were just five records of at most six birds, and as all these were from the Lower Thames and between August 29th and September 6th, possibly only two birds were involved.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, one on Aug 29th, two on Sep 1st, one on Sep 4th & 5th (mo).

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, one on Sep 6th (IS).

### Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

**Status:** very scarce late autumn and winter visitor.

This record, the first since 2012, was on a typical date. The table below shows the records since 1990.

Purple Sandpiper records 1990-2014: 18 records, 18 birds

Year	1991	1992	1997	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2011	2012	2014
No. of records	5	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one seen and photographed on Oct 13th (CDRH).

### Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

**Status:** common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Dunlin were as usual concentrated at the Lower Thames Marshes and the first table below shows the monthly peak counts at sites there. This table gives an indication of the range of sites used but not the total number of birds on the Lower Thames as there is clearly scope for duplication due to the close proximity of sites. Numbers here were similar to last year, and wintering flocks had left by early March.

#### Dunlin peak site counts along Lower Thames marshes

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marshes	750	1000	250	27	300	1000
Crayford/Dartford Marshes	1100	1000	360	8	250	200
Crossness	500	500	360	55	550	700
Barking Bay	10	500	-	3	-	-
Others	-	-	-	13	32	305

#### Dunlin records away from Lower Thames

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	3	3	6	9	16	2	12	8	7	7	3	6
No. of records	3	3	8	20	49	3	23	27	13	10	7	8
No. of birds	3	2	14	66	194	3	48	54	13	16	12	13

Birds were seen on the Lower Thames and other sites in all months. Away from the estuary a total of 66 birds passed through nine sites during April. The first noteworthy count in spring was a flock of 18 at Staines Res on April 12th followed by ten on 22nd. Numbers increased significantly in May when 194 birds passed through 16 sites away from the river. Notable May records were at least 35 at Staines Res on the 1st, 13 at Walton Res on 7th and 16 at Staines Res on 8th. There was a flock of 26 at Rainham Marshes on May 10th and 11th. Other sites recording more than five birds in May were Beddington Farmlands with eight, KGVI Res with 13, London Wetland Centre with nine, Q. Mother Res with 13, Tyttenhanger GP with nine and Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) with 13.

June was very quiet as usual with only four sightings in the whole of London. Autumn passage away from the river started with a total of 48 birds at 12 sites in July followed by 54 birds at nine sites in August reducing to 13 birds in September. Birds were present at Rainham Marshes throughout but in low numbers, nine on August 17th and 12 on September 23rd; the only other double-figure count in autumn was ten at Swanscombe Marshes on September 27th.

Returning winter flocks were first noted on November 7th with a count of 160 at Rainham Marshes.

### Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

**Status:** regular passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

The year started slowly and until March 7th there were just single birds at Crayford and Rainham Marshes. On March 8th, 14 were at Beddington Farmlands, the highest count of the year. Away from the Thames, in late April there were single birds at Amwell NR and Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), while the peak count was four at Rainham Marshes. By May 20th spring passage was over and the first returning bird was at London Wetland Centre on July 9th. The highest count from then on was eight at Rainham Marshes on July 19th. After mid-October, the only records were up to two at Rainham Marshes.

**Essex:** Dagenham Chase, one on Sep 18th. Fairlop Waters, one on Sep 14th. Ingrebourne Valley, four from Sep 16th-17th. Rainham Marshes, one in January and February, up to three in March, up to four in May, eight on Jul 19th, up to three from Jul 30th to Oct 16th, up to two in November and December.



*Dunlin is a common passage migrant for many London patches. (Dave Harris)*

**Herts:** Amwell NR, singles from Apr 22nd-26th and Aug 8th, up to two from Sep 14th-15th and from Oct 8th-9th. Rye Meads, singles on Aug 12th and Oct 10th-12th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, singles from Jul 12th-17th & 25th, Sep 6th-10th & 21st. Staines Res, singles on Sep 4th & 15th.

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, one from January to Mar 16th, with three on Mar 15th. Dartford Marshes, two on Oct 3rd. Crossness, one on Sep 18th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, 14 on Mar 8th, one on Aug 26th, two on Sep 7th. London Wetland Centre, singles on Jul 9th, Aug 25th and Oct 15th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), singles on Apr 26th and Sep 10th.

### Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Status: widespread but elusive winter visitor and passage migrant.

As in 2013 there were some high site maxima. There were 15 in a private area at Holmethorpe SP on January 1st and ten at Rye Meads on March 22nd. The last winter birds were on April 29th at London Wetland Centre. The first returning bird was at Rye Meads on September 17th. All records are given or summarised below, with the maximum recorded in brackets at either year-end for sites with two records or more.

Jack Snipe	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Essex	4	5	1	-	1	4	4	5
Herts	4	-	13	3	1	7	4	1
Middx	-	3	5	-	1	1	1	1
Bucks	10	1	1	-	1	3	4	5
Kent	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Surrey	23	7	7	2	1	3	3	6
Monthly total	42	16	27	5	5	18	16	18

**Essex:** Fairlop Waters, singles on Jan 19th and Feb 24th. Gallions Reach, one on Oct 29th. Netherall GP, one on Dec 23rd. Rainham Marshes (1:2). Walthamstow Res, one on Oct 4th. Wanstead Flats (0:1). Waterworks NR (0:2). West Thurrock Marshes, one on Dec 8th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR (3:1). Rye Meads (10:6).

**Middx:** Brent Res, one on Feb 18th. Kempton NR, one on Nov 15th. Staines Moor (1:1). Stanwell Moor (3:0). Ten Acre Wood, one on Oct 26th and Nov 30th. Vicarage Farm, one on Mar 4th.

**Bucks:** Horton (3:5). Wraysbury GP, one on Feb 25th.

**Kent:** Crossness, one on Jan 25th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (4:3). Hogsmill SW, one on Feb 19th. Holmethorpe SP, 15 on Jan 1st. London Wetland Centre (4:2). Richmond Park, one on Dec 6th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), one on Nov 15th. Wimbledon Common (1:1).

### Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

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

The highest peak counts during the first two months of the year were 86 at Rainham Marshes on January 29th; 65 at Horton on February 16th; 50 at Rye Meads on January 18th; 40 at Staines Moor on February 24th; 35 at Brent Res on February 3rd and 31 at Sevenoaks WR on January 5th. The highest count in March was just 22 at Beddington Farmlands on 1st after which numbers declined rapidly throughout the area although there were still 20 present at Rainham Marshes on the last day of the month. Wintering birds continued to diminish during April with occasional peaks indicating migrating birds dropping in, such as 61 at Rainham Marshes on 22nd. No more than three were seen at any one site during May and there were no signs of any breeding although a late bird was still present at Rainham Marshes on June 3rd.

Autumn migrants returned remarkably early with two at Cornmill Meadows and one at Brent Res on June 29th. Singles were also seen at a few other sites in the first half of July, after which numbers slowly began to increase at the regular sites with a high of 16 at Rainham Marshes on 30th. There was a more widespread passage during August and September, and peak counts were much higher with 73 at Rye Meads on September 24th and 50 in the Ingrebourne Valley the previous day. The highest counts of the year came in the final three months with 143 at Rye Meads on October 25th and 117 at Sevenoaks WR on November 28th, although Rainham Marshes could muster no more than 27.

Surprisingly, there were no records from Inner London this year.

### Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

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

Records came from 39 locations during the first two months of the year; these were all single birds apart from three at Fir & Pond Woods on February 13th and two at Rye Meads and Staines Moor on January 11th, and at Bedfords Park on January 21st. There was a small passage during March, mostly of single birds with two reported from both Wimbledon Common on 15th and from Whitewebbs Wood on 22nd. The only April record was at Bell Common on 5th. A very late migrant was seen at Walthamstow Res on May 3rd. There were no breeding records reported but sightings at two other locations in May probably

relate to breeding birds.

One bird at Mudchute Farm on July 21st was seen at an odd time of year as it was almost two months before the next autumn record, at Wey Meadows on September 6th. There was a typical widespread arrival from early November through to the end of the month with several birds found in urban areas and the odd unfortunate casualty picked up; there were records of two birds at three sites: Sewardstone Marsh on 20th, Banstead Wood on 29th and North Mymms Park on 30th. This continued into December with a peak of three at Staines Moor on 12th and two at both Amwell NR on 27th and at Banstead Wood on 21st.

**In Lond:** Charing Cross Hospital, remains found on Jan 8th, probably killed by a Peregrine. Moorgate, one found dead on Nov 12th. Regent's Park, singles on seven dates from Jan 11th to Mar 22nd; Nov 27th & Dec 13th. St Bartholomew's Hospital, one on Nov 26th. St James's Park, one on Nov 11th. Tower of London, one on Nov 27th. Whitechapel, one on Nov 29th.

### Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

**Status:** passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers.

In previous winters there have been large flocks of Black-tailed Godwits along the Lower Thames but in the first three months of this year the peak count was a measly four at Rainham Marshes on January 2nd, 19th and March 12th. Away from the Lower Thames a few migrants were seen in March with two at London Wetland Centre and Stocker's Farm, and singles at Rye Meads and Tyttenhanger GP all on 8th; and singles at London Wetland Centre on 17th and Beddington Farmlands on 20th. April was the peak month for spring migrants with birds seen at Beddington Farmlands, Brent Res, Staines Res, London Wetland Centre, Rye Meads, Horton GP, Walton Res and the Lower Thames. The only high counts in this month were 20 over Beddington Farmlands in two flocks on 7th, and 39 at Rainham Marshes on 25th.

The only birds in May were all at Crossness with one on 3rd and two on 16th. Records from Rainham Marshes of two on June 1st and three on June 3rd may have been very late spring migrants.

Autumn migrants began to trickle back during the second half of June with the first at London Wetland Centre on 19th followed by six at two other sites over the next ten days. There was a flurry on 30th with 26 birds including a flock of 22 at Walton Res. July started in a similar vein with 23 at Barking Bay/Rainham Marshes and continued through to mid-August with the largest numbers (35) along the river and odd birds appearing at other wetland sites across the area. Late August saw the peak numbers with flocks of 61 at Ingrebourne Valley on August 24th and 52 at Roding Valley Meadows NR on 20th. September flocks included 18 at Ingrebourne Valley on 6th; 16 at Dagenham Chase on 13th-14th; while on the Thames there were up to 28 at Rainham Marshes.

Apart from two singles in October (Walthamstow Res on 19th and Jersey Farm on 31st) all records during the last three months of the year were along the Lower Thames where the peak count was 400 at Erith from December 5th-10th.

### Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

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

The only winter record was one feeding by the Thames in the Crayford/ Dartford/Rainham

area on January 12th. Early spring migrants were at Crossness with one on April 9th and three the next day. The main migration started on April 20th with two at Rainham Marshes, one past West Thurrock Marshes and another at London Wetland Centre. On 21st two were seen at Q. Mother Res then later at Staines Res and another was at Rainham Marshes, where it remained until the next day. A single was briefly at Amwell NR on 25th followed by singles at Brent Res, Rainham Marshes and Walton Res on 26th along with 23 birds at Staines Res; another eight were at the same site the next day and one stayed at Rainham. Rounding off April were singles at KGV Res and Crayford Marshes on 29th and Beddington Farmlands on 30th. The passage intensified and 30 more were seen during the first week of May, mostly along the Lower Thames with a peak of five at Rainham Marshes on 5th-6th. Up to two were at Crossness on 8th-9th then no more were seen until 21st when there was one at Staines Res. This was followed by singles at London Wetland Centre from 23rd-25th and at Rainham Marshes on 31st.

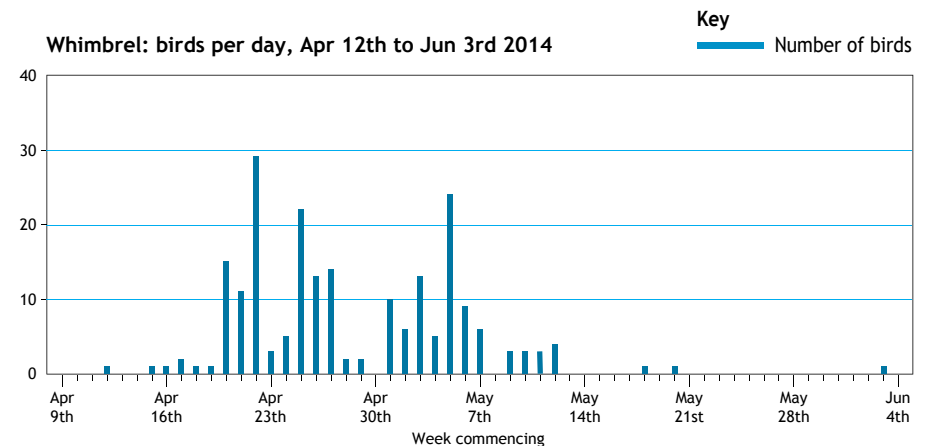
Autumn migrants began moving on July 27th when there were eight at Rainham Marshes. Apart from three at Beddington Farmlands on August 17th, all the rest of August's birds were also at Rainham Marshes with 17 on 27th and singles on 28th, 30th and 31st. A flock of 14 flew east past Crossness on September 19th after which there were just singles at Tyttenhanger GP on October 30th and London Wetland Centre on November 12th.

This looks like the best autumn passage since 2007, although the spring passage was fairly low compared with recent years.

### Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

**Status:** regular passage migrant.

There were around 202 spring migrants recorded between April 12th and June 3rd. The peak counts were 18 at Rainham Marshes on May 5th; 14 at QE II Res on April 25th; 12 at Beddington Farmlands on April 22nd; ten at Beddington Farmlands on May 1st; and nine at Rainham Marshes on April 20th. The last was a tardy bird at Walton Res on June 3rd. The chart below shows the daily totals.





*Black-tailed Godwit numbers were low in 2014. (Dave Harris)*

The first autumn migrant was at Rainham Marshes on July 5th and was followed by 112 until the last on September 3rd at Orsett Fen. This included large flocks of 27 over Richmond Park on August 22nd; 12 at Gallions Reach on August 25th and eight at Beddington Farmlands on July 19th.

### **Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata***

**Status:** winter visitor and passage migrant.

During the first two months of the year Curlews were only seen along the Lower Thames Marshes between Gallions Reach and Swanscombe; the highest counts were all at Rainham Marshes with a peak of 29 on January 3rd. Numbers declined rapidly from early March when the first birds were also seen away from the Thames. One, possibly the same bird, flew over KGV Res, Walthamstow Res and Wanstead Flats on 8th and another was at Q. Mary Res the same day; further singles were at Seventy Acres Lake on 14th, Rye Meads on 15th-16th, over Symondshyde Great Wood on 16th and Staines Res on 18th. An

exceptionally large count of 38 was made at Rainham Marshes on 21st with good numbers remaining in the area until mid-April. Elsewhere only one or two were seen at various sites apart from a flock of five over West Hyde on April 22nd until the last bird of spring at Swanscombe Marshes on May 17th.

The first bird of autumn arrived on June 13th at Rainham Marshes and a handful of others appeared during the second half of June and throughout July. Only singles were seen in August and September except for two at Swanscombe Marshes on September 27th. Numbers remained low until late October when up to 26 were counted at Rainham Marshes. All records during the last two months of the year were again from the Lower Thames apart from singles at Tottenham Marshes on November 4th; Trent Park on December 4th and London Wetland Centre on December 28th.

### **Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos***

**Status:** common passage migrant and localised winter visitor.

During the first three months of the year there were wintering birds at Bow Creek, Crayford Marshes, Dartford Marshes, East India Dock Basin and Walthamstow Res, with a peak count of three at Bow Creek on March 28th. There were also one-day records at London Wetland Centre, Poplar, Regent's Park, Rainham Marshes and Staines Res.

The main spring migration began in mid-April with the peak passage during the first

*This Common Sandpiper was a passage migrant in the Ingrebourne Valley. (Russ Sherriff)*



week of May. The highest count was eight at Brent Res on May 19th. Birds were seen virtually throughout June with no obvious break between the two migration seasons.

There was a build-up in numbers during July with a peak of 92 on 19th including 28 at Q. Mother Res and 11 at both Staines and Walthamstow reservoirs. Numbers remained high during the rest of the month at some sites with peak counts of 40 at KGV Res on 31st; 22 at Q. Mary Res on 27th; 18 at Brent Res on 26th; and 14 at Staines Res on 30th. August counts were generally lower with a maximum of 15 at both KGV Res on 24th and Staines Res on 6th. The September peak was 14 at Gallions Reach on 9th after which numbers tailed off significantly leaving a handful of over-wintering birds from late October onwards.

**In Lond:** Chelsea Bridge, two on Apr 30th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Jul 27th. Limehouse, three on May 21st. Regent's Park, singles on Mar 29th, Jul 18th and Aug 29th. Rotherhithe, one on May 10th. St James's Park, two on May 14th. Victoria Tower Gdns, singles on May 22nd and Jul 22nd.

### Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

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

This species was recorded at 44 sites during the first three months of the year, slightly down on the 49 locations of the last two years. The highest count was eight at Beddington Farmlands on January 19th; there were also six at Crossness on three dates in March. The main spring passage occurred in April with peaks of eight at Beddington Farmlands on 8th, six at London Wetland Centre on 16th and five at Ingrebourne Valley on 8th.

Birds were seen virtually throughout June, masking the end of spring and beginning of autumn but with an obvious increase as the month wore on. The highest counts were from July to mid-September; away from the main sites the maximum was nine at Brent Res on August 20th. Numbers decreased during October to mainly leave over-wintering birds.

Monthly maxima for the main sites are listed below.

Green Sandpiper	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Rainham Marshes	-	1	1	1	1	1	7	12	3	2	-	-
HR Rye Meads	4	3	1	2	-	2	12	13	13	6	4	5
SY Beddington Farmlands	8	4	4	8	-	5	11	17	8	9	5	3

### Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

**Status:** scarce passage migrant with occasional winter records.

The regular over-wintering bird was again present on the Lower Thames up to mid-April and then again from September to the end of the year. In addition, there was just one spring migrant and probably five in the autumn.

**Essex/Kent:** Crayford/Dartford/Rainham Marshes, one from 2013 to Apr 17th and Sep 5th to Dec 21st; also seen at Gallions Reach on Nov 23rd. Rainham Marshes, three on Sep 11th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, one from Mar 31st to Apr 2nd.

**Middx:** Staines Res, one on Aug 30th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, one from Aug 14th-30th. London Wetland Centre, one on Sep 8th was seen earlier the same day at Richmond Park.

### Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

**Status:** regular passage migrant, rare in winter.

The over-wintering bird at Crossness remained until April 18th. Five particularly early spring migrants were seen at London Wetland Centre on March 14th. Singles at Rainham Marshes on April 8th and 11th could have been the Crossness bird or migrants but two seen there on April 13th were certainly migrants. Passage of from one to three birds continued through to the end of May. The only June records were singles at Q. Mother Res on 6th and South Mimms on 22nd.

Autumn migration commenced on July 8th with two at Staines Res and one at Tyttenhanger GP. It continued through August with a peak count of six at Rainham Marshes. In September the peak count was five at Q. Mother Res on 13th. The highest count of the year was 14 at London Wetland Centre on October 6th; the same day there were three at Staines Res. The Crossness bird reappeared on October 7th and stayed until the end of the year.

### Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

**Status:** uncommon passage migrant.

Like last year, there were just five birds seen in spring: at Amwell NR on May 3rd, London Wetland Centre on May 6th and at Rainham Marshes on May 5th, 17th to 18th and 24th.

Autumn migrants began appearing from July 5th and a minimum of 13 birds were seen up until August 15th, compared with eight in 2013. Most records were from Rainham Marshes where up to two were seen between July 5th and 14th, followed by one from August 7th to 10th, two on 11th and 12th with three on 13th, one on 14th and finally two on 15th. Elsewhere there was one at Beddington Farmlands on July 10th; two at Brent Res from July 25th to 29th; one at Dagenham Chase from July 27th to August 10th with two on August 3rd; one at Gallions Reach on August 8th and one at Tyttenhanger GP from August 13th to 14th.

### Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

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

The highest wintering numbers at the main sites along the Lower Thames are listed below; there were also 234 at Greenhithe on October 24th. Away from the river the peak counts were 12 at Canons Farm on October 14th and ten at London Wetland Centre in April.

Common Redshank	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Gallions Reach	20	26	14	-	-	1	2	-	2	72	109	120
Rainham Marshes	220	323	100	30	11	35	16	11	38	300	140	170
KT Crayford Marshes	238	220	110	15	-	4	-	5	48	100	200	50
Crossness	30	50	25	17	-	2	4	4	95	200	100	92
Dartford Marshes	70	210	32	14	-	4	-	-	-	70	150	50
Swanscombe Marshes	77	30	31	11	-	-	-	-	-	23	-	110



*This Wood Sandpiper showed well at Dagenham Chase. (Russ Sherriff)*

Breeding records are listed below.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, 31 pairs bred.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, two pairs present, breeding attempt suspected but no young seen. Coopers Green Lane, pair probably bred. Rye Meads, pair probably bred. Tyttenhanger GP, pair probably bred.

**Middx:** Staines Moor, two pairs bred. Staines Res, pair displaying.

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, one pair bred.

### Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

**Status:** passage migrant and localised winter visitor.

Over-wintering birds were only seen at two sites on the Lower Thames marshes where they remained from January to at least late April; the peak counts were 11 at Swanscombe on March 16th and two at Rainham on January 28th.

There were ten spring migrants recorded during May: at Rainham Marshes on 5th; Q. Mother Res on 6th; three at Staines Res on 9th; Amwell NR on 10th; Q. Mother Res on 11th; Staines Res on 19th; Amwell on 21st; and Staines Res on 29th.

Autumn migrants began to arrive from mid-July with singles at three sites on 18th to 19th followed by a succession of records at Staines Res from July 18th to August 5th. There were two more at Rainham Marshes on July 28th. Four birds were scattered on

the West London reservoirs in mid-August then a small flock of four was seen flying around Staines Res on August 22nd; the same site had two further singles on August 23rd and September 6th. Singles were also seen at Rainham Marshes on September 1st and Brent Res on October 15th.

The only later records were all from Swanscombe Marshes in December with a peak of nine on 20th.

### Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

**Status:** rare passage migrant.

Following on from the two records in 2013, another was seen this year. Spring migrants are much rarer in London and this was just the fifth ever; it was found mid-afternoon and flew off a few hours later.

**Surrey:** QE II Res, male on Jun 12th (DMH).

### Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

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

Almost all records of this pelagic species in the London Area are in autumn and this year was no exception with sightings from three locations, probably involving only two birds. The first bird was found at Q. Mother Res where it was almost caught by a Peregrine at 11:45 and was not seen there subsequently. The same bird, or possibly a different individual, was seen at QE II Res briefly at 14:00 when it was also chased by a Peregrine and flew off north. Fortunately the third bird, at Beddington, was not noticed by any predator and remained for eight days. The table below shows the arrival dates of the 29 birds recorded since 1990.

Grey Phalarope arrival dates 1990-2014: 29 records, 29 birds

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of records	1	-	1	7	7	9	4

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, 1st-winter on Oct 14th (CDRH *et al*).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, one from Nov 8th-15th (NG *et al*). QE II Res, one on Oct 14th (DMH).

### Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

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

It was a good year for this species with eight records of ten birds. The spring record was most noteworthy, with all other records falling in the autumn period August 25th to October 14th. There was a relatively equal split of records between the R Thames (five records of five birds) and the West London reservoirs (three records of five birds).

**Essex:** Gallions Reach (GAJ, KJM), one past on Oct 14th. Rainham Marshes, singles past on Apr 27th (RSPB), Sep 6th (HV *et al*), Sep 14th (CE, NS) and Oct 3rd (PHt).

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, two dark morph adults on Aug 25th then flew SE (CDRH, MMck) and two (dark morph adult and juv) on Oct 14th before flying E (CDRH).

**Surrey:** QE II Res, pale morph adult on Aug 25th before flying off NE (DMH).

## Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

**Status:** regular but scarce migrant.

One of the most memorable events of the year was a record influx of this species in October, during a period of strong winds and heavy rain. An absolute minimum of 46 birds were seen this year, following two records in 2013 and four in 2012 (and a total of only 26 birds 1990-2013). Following two seen at Rainham Marshes on August 26th, all other records were confined to five days in October.

The first birds to be recorded were 11 through Rainham Marshes on October 13th, with presumably the remnants accounting for records between here and Gallions Reach until 17th. The next day, October 14th, saw peak numbers, including one over Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens, and unprecedented groups of 13 at Q. Mary Res and seven at QE II Res. Records from QE II Res and Rainham Marshes on October 17th were the culmination of the influx.

A detailed report of the 'Bonxie' influx is in the Papers section on page 208.

**Essex:** 13+ birds: Gallions Reach, four on Oct 14th (GAJ, KJM). Rainham Marshes, two on Aug 26th (PSt), 11 on Oct 13th (DSm, PSt, AT), four on Oct 14th (also seen at Gallions Reach) (DSm, PSt, AT), three on Oct 15th (DSm, AT, HV *et al*), five on Oct 16th (ASh, HV) and two on Oct 17th & 18th (PSt *et al*).

**Middx:** 15 birds: Brent Res, juv N on Oct 15th (AGV). Q. Mary Res, three at 13:50 increasing to 13 by 17:45 on Oct 14th (PBo, FJM, JQ), with two still present on Oct 15th (AVM, DJM *et al*). Staines Res, one on Oct 14th (RWa *et al*).

**Bucks:** two birds: Q. Mother Res, two on Oct 15th then flew NE (CDRH, MMCK).

**Kent:** at least four birds: Belvedere, three on Oct 14th (MFR). Crayford Marshes, one on Oct 14th and three on Oct 15th (IS). Crossness, four on Oct 14th (JKA), two on Oct 15th (SJC) and one on Oct 16th (MM). Dartford Marshes, two on Oct 15th (SJG).

**Surrey:** ten birds: Island Barn Res, two on Oct 14th (DMH). QE II Res, seven on Oct 14th and one on Oct 16th-17th (DMH).

**In Lond:** one bird: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one over on Oct 14th (RBA).

## Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

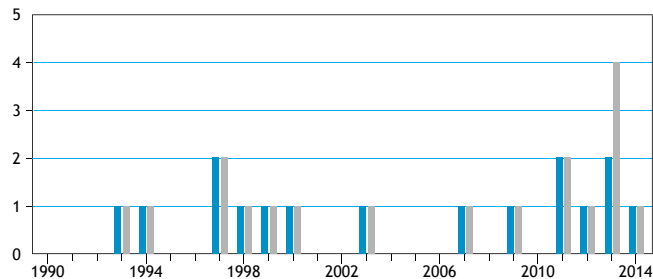
**Status:** rare autumn vagrant.

There was a single juvenile this year, seen for just half an hour by its lucky observer, and at the same site as an adult was recorded in 2013. This is the sixteenth record since 1990, and the September date is typical. In some instances this species can be associated

**Sabine's Gull**  
1990-2014  
16 records, 18 birds

### Key

- Number of records per year
- Number of birds per year



with overland passage of the following one, although this was not the case this year as only a single Kittiwake was recorded during the whole of September.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, juv from 07:50 to 08:18 on Sep 21st then flew off strongly ESE (CDRH).

## Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

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

It was a good year for this species with 117 birds compared with last year's total of 48 birds (and 118 in 2012). However, 85% of the records were confined to January and there were unusually no records in the second-winter period.

Inclement weather at the start of the year produced a movement along the R Thames at Rainham Marshes, peaking at 46 trailing a fishing boat on January 1st and further double figure counts of 17 on 2nd and 16 on 3rd. Two at Q. Mother Res on 4th, one at Wraysbury Res on 5th and an exhausted adult at Wanstead Flats on 7th were the only January records away from the R Thames.

February records comprised singles on two dates at both Beddington Farmlands and Staines Res, and April records came from Rye Meads on 4th and Beddington Farmlands on 24th. Q. Mother Res monopolised all May and June records with the exception of adults at Staines Res on May 23rd and London Wetland Centre on June 22nd.

Autumn passage was poor, with singles at Gallions Reach on August 10th and East India Dock Basin on September 19th followed by three birds on October 14th (at Island Barn Res, Q. Mary Res and Q. Mother Res) and the last bird of the year at Gallions Reach on October 15th. There were no inner London records this year.

### Kittiwake monthly records 2014

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	96	4	0	2	5	4	0	1	1	4	0	0

## Bonaparte's Gull *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

**Status:** rare vagrant.

The fourth record for London, and the first away from Crossness (with two there in 2012 and one in 2013). This year's record again falls within the May to July period, perhaps indicating an individual caught up in Black-headed Gull passage having over-wintered elsewhere in Europe or Africa.

**Middx:** Staines Res, 1st-summer, on May 30th (REI *et al*).

## Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

**Status:** very common winter visitor and passage migrant, increasing breeder.

There were at least 410 pairs recorded at ten sites (compared 446 pairs at 11 sites in 2013), with this species showing site fidelity to locations favoured in 2013. There were 168 pairs (and 206 young) recorded at Rye Meads (an increase of 79 pairs from 2013); only 73 pairs were at Staines Res (compared with 186 pairs in 2013) though success was up to 70 young (from 48 in 2013).

The highest single count was 13,000 at QE II Res on December 15th. There were 13 counts of 2,000 or more birds (29 in 2013 and nine in 2012), and peak counts along with



*For patch-workers away from the river, Kittiwake is an exciting find. (Nick Croft)*

breeding records are given below. Leucistic birds were recorded at Brent Res, Q. Mother Res, QE II Res, Rotherhithe, Staines Res, Tyttenhanger GP and Walthamstow Res. Colour-ringed birds emanating from Denmark, France and Germany were recorded.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, 2,000 on Mar 5th. Walthamstow Res (1), breeding failed.

**Herts:** Amwell NR (39). Hilfield Park Res (30); six counts of over 2,000 peaking at 8,000 on Oct 28th, Nov 2nd and Nov 29th. Maple Lodge NR (15). Rye Meads (168), 206 young. Stocker's Lake (8).

**Middx:** Home Park, 1,550 on Nov 29th. Staines Res (73), 70 young.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, 350 on Sep 4th. Wraysbury GP (2).

**Kent:** Dartford Marshes, 4,300 on Dec 11th.

**Surrey:** Hogsmill SW, 2,950 on Nov 16th. London Wetland Centre (24 nests, 38 young). Long Ditton, 2,150 on Nov 25th. QE II Res, 13,000 on Dec 15th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (50+), 195 young.

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 462 on Feb 25th. Regent's Park, 400 on Jan 13th.

### **Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus***

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

It was a good year with 420 birds recorded, following 177 and 408 in 2013 and 2012 respectively. The peak count was 68 at Rainham Marshes on October 13th and autumn passage dominated, with just over 20% of records from the traditional March to May passage this year (compared with over 70% in 2013).

### Little Gull monthly records 2014

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	9	1	27	61	10	2	0	8	3	296	3	0

Records in January and February were of singles with the exception of five at Hilfield Park Res and two at Q. Mother Res, both on January 30th. Spring passage started on March 31st when 20 were at Staines Res and continued into April, with most of the 61 birds on the West London reservoirs. There was no pronounced April passage, with seven at Staines Res on 4th the monthly maximum. The ten May birds were all singles except two at Belhus Woods CP on 9th.

There were two June records, a 1st-summer at Gallions Reach on 15th and an adult at Beddington Farmlands on 21st. Four out of the eight individuals recorded in August were at Gallions Reach on 25th, and the paltry September total of three birds included singles at Gallions Reach on 3rd and Staines Res on 5th and 7th.

*London refuse tips continue to attract large numbers of Gulls and a few determined birders! (Peter Alfrey)*



October provided over 70% of the year's records, with 296 birds recorded. There were only two single records until 13th, when the peak annual count occurred with a passage of 68 W at Rainham Marshes as well as 17 at Staines Res and 11 at Gallions Reach. The next day, 40 were at Staines Res and 43 went through Gallions Reach. By the 15th passage had slowed up and numbers at Staines Res dropped to ten by 18th and the last were seen on 21st. One over Staines Moor on 15th was only the third record for the site. Counts of over five birds elsewhere in October included 12 at Horton GP on 17th, seven at Q. Mother Res on 17th (presumably part of the flock at Horton GP) and six at Q. Mary Res on 14th and at Gallions Reach on 29th.

The three November records, singles at Rainham Marshes on 1st, Staines Res on 15th and Beddington Farmlands on 22nd, concluded the year as there were no records in December. There were again no Inner London reports this year.

### Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

**Status:** regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

It was an average year for this species by recent standards, with lower numbers than in 2013. The peak count was four at Crossness on April 19th (compared with a record 43 in 2013) and there were seven counts of three birds from four sites during the year. Records followed a now familiar pattern of birds at regular wintering sites and gull roosts in the winter, a spring passage of adults then predominantly juveniles being recorded from mid-July to September before regular wintering individuals reappear at sites.

Regular roost sites during the first-winter period included Hilfield Park Res, Q. Mother Res and Staines Res. Spring passage was not pronounced, though there was an increase in adults from April 9th to 20th. May and June records comprised singles except for pairs of adults at Brent Res on May 3rd, Rainham Marshes on June 1st and Staines Res on June 28th.

The first juvenile of the year was at Crossness on July 5th (nine days earlier than the first in 2013) with 25 further juveniles noted to the end of August. A juvenile being attended by its parent at Q. Mother Res on July 17th was the first time the observer had noted this behaviour here. Records in November and December were slightly up on the first-winter period, including regular adults at Burgess Park (seventh winter) and Valentines Park (15th winter) as well as a German-ringed bird at Wanstead Flats on November 7th. The table below shows the number of individuals recorded each month and the number of sites they were recorded at.

Mediterranean Gull records	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	16	19	16	19	3	11	29	17	8	16	20	17
No. of sites	13	9	14	7	2	8	16	10	6	11	14	12

**In Lond:** Burgess Park, regular adult again on Dec 7th. Rotherhithe, juv on Jul 20th. Tower Bridge, one on Jan 30th. Victoria, adult on Mar 2nd.

### Common Gull *Larus canus*

**Status:** common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Numbers recorded were greater than in 2013; there were 55 counts of 100 or more (from 23 sites), compared with 34 counts in 2013 and 27 in 2012. Nine counts of over 500

(compared with five in 2013 and one in 2012) included peaks of 1,000 at Wanstead Flats on February 8th and 20th. There were a further six counts of 500 or more birds from Wanstead Flats while elsewhere, the only count of 500 was at Hilfield Park Res on November 29th. There were no counts from Beddington Farmlands this year and regular counts would be welcomed from more sites.

Mid-summer records were typically scarce with 13 birds from six sites in May and 13 birds from nine sites in June; returning birds started from July 6th with the first juvenile recorded at Rotherhithe on July 19th. Details of counts of 100 or more are given below.

**Essex:** Fairlop Waters, 133 on Jan 19th. Havering CP, 150 on Feb 19th. KGV Res, 300 on Nov 11th. Roding Valley, 200 on Jan 3rd. Wanstead Flats, 1,000 on Feb 8th and Feb 20th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, 190 on Jan 19th. Hilfield Park Res, 500 on Nov 29th. Tyttenhanger, 170 on Dec 23rd. Woodside, Hatfield, 200 on Feb 8th.

**Middx:** Bay Farm, 100 on Feb 3rd. Brent Res, 314 on Jan 19th. Hackney Downs, 135 on Mar 9th. Horsenden Hill, 260 on Jan 18th. South Barvin Farm, 100 on Mar 6th. Staines Res, 250 on Mar 30th. Totteridge Valley, 300 on Feb 22nd and Nov 28th.

**Kent:** Penhill Park, Sidcup, 300 on Nov 28th. Sevenoaks WR, 100 on Mar 5th.

**Surrey:** Richmond Park, 150 on Nov 27th. Wimbledon Common, 250 on Jan 1st.

### Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

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

There were at least 27 confirmed breeding pairs (52 in 2013 and 29 in 2012) with 41 young seen. Although breeding pairs and young noted were down on 2013, there were no specific counts from some rooftop colonies including that at Heathrow Airport. The often inaccessible breeding locations for this species renders comprehensive recording an annual issue. With juveniles usually being noted from mid-summer onwards, a recently fledged juvenile with an adult in attendance at Q. Mother Res on March 10th was unprecedented. A leucistic bird was seen at Dartford Marshes on March 30th.

Numbers were slightly down on the previous year, and there were three counts of 300 or more birds (five in 2013 and one in 2012) and 20 counts of 100+ birds (27 in 2013 and 24 in 2012). The highest count was 940 at Hilfield Park Res on November 22nd (compared with 2013's high count of 790). All confirmed breeding records (no. of pairs/nests in brackets) are shown below, as well as peak counts of over 100 birds.

**Essex:** Walthamstow Res (12+), 22 young.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, 220 on Jan 4th. Hilfield Park Res, 940 on Nov 22nd. Rye Meads, 310 on Aug 5th. Watford (1), one young.

**Middx:** Brent Res (1), two young. Edmonton (1), two young. Heathrow Airport, small numbers presumed to have bred again near BA Cargo building. Horsenden Hill (1), one young. Isle of Dogs (3), five young. Stoke Newington Res (1), two young. Tottenham Marshes (1), two young.

**Kent:** Dartford Marshes, 175 on Jan 19th. Greenhithe, 150 on Oct 17th.

**Surrey:** Croydon, small numbers presumed to have bred near Whitgift Centre. Molesey (1), one young. Morden, 150 on Jan 14th. Worcester Park, 170 on Feb 13th.

**In Lond:** Blackfriars Bridge (1). Camden Town (2). St Paul's (2), three young.



### Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

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

Consistently recorded as London's commonest large gull, with cold weather stimulating larger numbers and roof-top colonies dominating during the breeding season. Despite changes in waste disposal techniques likely to cause a genuine decline in numbers, there is still a large element of under-recording of this species; for example there were no counts from Beddington Farmlands (with a 15,000 peak count in 2013) or any from Rainham Marshes of over 100 birds. Similarly, roof-top colonies and their inaccessible location make it difficult to confirm breeding. Reliable year-on-year trends continue, therefore, to be difficult to track.

There were only six counts of over 1,000 birds (12 in 2013 and 16 in 2012), with the peak count being 9,500 at QE II Res on November 26th. The number of counts of over 200 birds (49) was an increase on the 28 in 2013 (and comparative parity to the 43 and 56 in 2012 and 2011 respectively). The leucistic ringed bird 'SH1T' was again noted in Romford on February 19th, with further leucistic individuals at London Wetland Centre, Q. Mother Res and Teddington Lock. Listed below are all confirmed breeding records (no. of pairs/nests in brackets), as well as peak counts of over 500 birds.

**Essex:** Walthamstow Res (6), 10 young.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, 1,200 on Jan 4th. Hilfield Park, 670 on Nov 22nd. Rye Meads (1), no young.

**Middx:** Heathrow Airport, breeding occurred again in the vicinity of the BA Cargo building though numbers unknown. Isle of Dogs (10), 19 young. KGV Res, 800 on Dec 6th. Staines Res, 500 on May 16th. Wembley (3), 4 young.

**Kent:** Deptford (1), one young. Greenhithe, 1,200 on Oct 17th.

**Surrey:** Canons Farm, 800 over on Oct 5th. Croydon (1), three young. Portsmouth Road FB, 1,850 SW on Oct 9th. QE II Res, 9,500 on Nov 26th.

**In Lond:** Marylebone (2), three young. Regent's Park (2), four young.

### Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

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

It was another average year, with three counts of over 50 birds from two sites, compared with two from two sites in 2013 and six from four sites in 2012. The peak count was 163 from Rainham Marshes on July 25th (2013 and 2012 peaks of 116 and 145). Counts continue to be received sporadically, predominantly by a core of dedicated gull watchers, though in some instances they are lacking at key sites for peak months. Despite this erratic coverage, there was still a noticeable mid-July to September peak. It remains scarce in Hertfordshire, where it is largely a winter visitor, and five at Amwell NR on December 19th was the highest count. The first juvenile was seen at Rotherhithe on July 7th (seven days earlier than 2013 and 15 days earlier than 2012). The following table shows monthly maxima for all sites with high counts.

## Yellow-legged Gull monthly maxima

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Rainham Marshes	5	6	2	-	-	-	163	38	64	-	2	23
MX KGV Res	1	-	-	-	-	2	4	1	6	-	-	-
Wraybury Res	-	-	-	1	-	-	4	27	18	-	-	-
BU Colnbrook	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	8	-	2	2	-
Horton	-	-	-	1	-	-	29	40	-	4	2	-
Q. Mother Res	4	1	2	1	1	2	13	8	18	-	2	3
KT Crayford/Dartford	10	7	4	1	-	1	8	20	64	20	8	10
Crossness	1	-	2	-	-	3	3	3	3	10	2	2
Greenhithe	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	29	5	-

**In Lond:** Bankside, juv on Jul 30th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Jan 14th. St James's Park, adult on Feb 13th. Regent's Park, adult on Mar 13th and juv on Jul 29th. Rotherhithe, 1st-winter Mar 23rd, 2nd-summer May 3rd, 3rd-summer Jul 4th, juv Jul 7th to Aug 2nd with two on Jul 20th. Tower Bridge, 1st-winter on Jan 10th. Westminster, singles on May 7th and Nov 3rd.

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*

**Status:** scarce visitor mainly in winter.

A conservative estimate would put this year's total at 53 individuals (56 in 2013 and 75 in 2012). London continues to be a wintering stronghold for this species in Britain, although observer familiarity plays a major role in the distribution of records. The first-winter period (January to March) produced the most sightings, with Amwell NR seeing a rapid increase in records compared with 2013 while Beddington Farmlands, Crayford/Dartford Marshes, Rainham Marshes and the roost at Q. Mother Res continued to account for the majority of records. A Polish colour-ringed bird was seen at Dartford Marshes in January. The following provides an overview of records, though it is difficult to be sure of the exact numbers at some sites due to the wandering nature of London's gulls.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, 15+: at least nine seen Jan 8th to Mar 10th with a peak count of six on Jan 17th, 1st-summer on May 24th, three on Sep 5th, adult on Dec 6th and 1st-winter on Dec 30th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, at least ten: one 1st-winter recorded regularly in roost Jan 8th to Feb 5th, with three 1st-winters on Jan 25th and two on Jan 28th, near-adult on Feb 1st, another 1st-winter on Apr 7th; in the second-winter period a 1st-winter intermittently from Oct 17th with three (adult, 2nd-winter and 1st-winter) on Nov 23rd, three (2nd-winter and two 1st-winters) on Dec 10th and an adult and 1st-winter Dec 19th-27th.

**Middx:** KGV Res, two: adult Jul 21st & 25th (presumed returning bird) and 1st-winter on Nov 29th. Q. Mary Res, adult on Feb 22nd.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, ten: 1st-winter on Jan 19th & 20th, 1st-summer on Jun 1st, juv Aug 18th-30th with a second juv on Aug 30th, another juv Sep 20th-28th, 1st-winters on Nov 9th, 15th, 16th and three 1st-winters on Nov 23rd, 3rd-winter on Dec 4th and adult on Dec 19th & 28th.

**Kent:** Crayford and Dartford Marshes, at least nine: at least three 1st-winters recorded

intermittently from Jan 11th to Mar 30th, adult Jan 23rd to Feb 11th; five in the second-winter period with a 1st-winter on Oct 18th, 3rd-winter on Dec 14th and three (two 2nd-winters and a 1st-winter) Dec 21st-30th. Crossness, three: adult on Jan 1st, 1st-winters on Nov 8th and Dec 14th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, five: 1st-winter Jan 4th to Feb 7th with two on Feb 6th, one on Aug 7th, 1st-winter intermittently Dec 5th-31st and an adult on Dec 12th & 13th. Walton Res, adult on Nov 13th-26th.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides*

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

It was a good year for this species, with around 11 individuals (compared with six in 2013 and 31 in 2012). Typically the first-winter period was the best for records, with just one seen in November and December. Gull roosts in west and south London dominated records with up to three recorded at Beddington Farmlands while two at Rainham Marshes on February 21st was the peak count. Remarkably, a bird at Q. Mother Res in November had been ringed in Oslo, Norway in April 2012. We also have one additional record from 2012 below, making the total for 2012 now 32 birds.

**Essex:** Gallions Reach, 2nd-winter on Dec 21st (PD, GAJ). Rainham Marshes, two: juv intermittently from Jan 27th to Feb 22nd with two juvs on Feb 21st (NS, AT, HV *et al*).

**Herts:** Amwell NR, adult on Jan 26th (BR).

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, juv on Jan 13th, 3rd-winter (Norwegian-ringed) on Nov 17th. Horton GP, 3rd-winter on Nov 11th (same as Q. Mother Res bird) (CDRH *et al*).

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, juv from Jan 24th-25th (MSo *et al*). Dartford Marshes, juv on Feb 2nd (same as Crayford Marshes bird) (ARL).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, three: juv intermittently Jan 3rd to Feb 20th, 2nd-winter on Feb 6th & 12th (BFBG), 2nd-winter on Dec 29th (DCa). Island Barn Res, juv intermittently from Jan 14th to Feb 14th (DMH *et al*).

## 2012 Addition

**Middx:** Broadwater Lake, 2nd-winter on Apr 12th (JE).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

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

A similar showing to the previous year with three birds (three in 2013 and 2012), continuing this species' recent paucity of records compared with Iceland Gull. Remarkably, the Rainham Marshes record was the first there since 2011.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, one on Apr 27th (RSPB).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, 2nd-winter on Jan 20th (PRA *et al*) and adult from Feb 6th-8th (DCa *et al*).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

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

It was a good year for this species, with 15 counts of over 50 birds (five in both 2012 and

2013), the highest being 125 at Hilfield Park Res on November 22nd (170 in 2013 and 85 in 2012) There was no evidence of breeding this year, and the first juvenile noted was at Q. Mother Res on August 30th. An individual bearing a Norwegian ring was seen at Crossness on May 10th.

There continue to be issues with under-recording; there were no peak counts from Staines Res and high sector counts of seven and 30 from Middlesex and Kent respectively do not reflect the species' true status. Listed below are high counts for sites within each sector.

**Essex:** Leyton, 20 on Dec 26th. Rainham Marshes, 52 on Jan 13th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, 110 on Jan 27th. Hilfield Park Res, 125 on Nov 22nd.

**Middx:** Bow Creek, seven on Apr 22nd. Broadwater Lake, seven on Jan 13th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, 52 on Dec 28th.

**Kent:** Dartford Marshes, 25 on Oct 18th. Swanscombe Marshes, 30 on Aug 9th.

**Surrey:** Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), 85 on Dec 29th. Island Barn Res, 51 on Jan 7th.

**In Lond:** Blackfriars Bridge, five on Jan 26th. Regent's Park, six on Mar 4th.

### Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

**Status:** uncommon spring and autumn passage migrant.

The first record of the year was relatively late, on April 21st, at Staines Res. It was not until May 1st that another flew through Tyttenhanger GP. With three seen at QE II Res on May 5th - followed a few hours later by what was presumably the same trio briefly at the London Wetland Centre - and one or two at Staines Res the same day, an otherwise meagre spring passage came to a close.

Early post-breeding sightings were made at Rainham Marshes on July 12th and 18th, involving what may have been the same single bird. There was just one further autumn record, again at Rainham Marshes, on August 29th, when two birds were seen. With only 13 or 14 birds seen, it was barely a better year than 2013 for Little Tern and that was the worst year since 2006.

### Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

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

The earliest-ever bird for London, and the first of the year for the UK, arrived at Island Barn Res on April 4th. It was not until the more typical date of April 21st that more arrived, with four at both Rainham Marshes and KGV Res and another at Staines Res. One or two birds were then reported at Walthamstow Res, Staines Res, Amwell NR, KGV Res, Brent Res, QE II Res, Stocker's Lake and Gallions Reach up to May 9th, the highest count being three at Staines Res on May 3rd. On May 19th there were two at Brent Res and at Staines Res, with the last of the spring being singles at Staines Res on 23rd and 25th.

Autumn migrants appeared from July 18th when three were at KGV Res. Other July singles were at Staines Res the next day and at Rainham Marshes on 22nd. There were no more until three were at Gallions Reach on August 25th. There were then records almost every day until 30th, at Q. Mother Res, Staines Res, Rainham Marshes (with the peak count of six on 26th), Hilfield Park Res, Barking Bay and London Wetland Centre.



*An absolute stunner of a White-winged Black Tern! (Dave Harris)*

In September there were singles at KGV Res on 4th and at Staines Res on 5th and 7th. The remaining records were all in October: apart from one flying west over Staines Moor on 3rd, all the other records were at Rainham Marshes with one or two seen there from 14th to 26th.

### White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

**Status:** rare vagrant.

Found in London for the seventh year running, this year's record involved a pristine summer-plumaged adult which chose to spend its time in an area with restricted access.

**Surrey:** Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), an adult was found in the late afternoon on Jun 19th and remained until the next day (SBC).

### Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

**Status:** uncommon passage migrant, often in small flocks.

Spring passage was light with about 16 birds reported. The first one was at Q. Mother Res on March 25th. The next was on April 7th when one flew through Beddington Farmlands, followed the next day by two south over Long Running, Epping Forest. The next was one at Walthamstow Res on 12th, followed by one at Gallions Reach on 20th. Two southeast over Canons Farm on 23rd were a notable site record; on 24th, there was the only Inner London record of one at Regent's Park and another two visited Seventy Acres Lake. The last of the spring passage were five birds in early May: one at Q. Mother Res on 1st and two at QE II Res and at Walthamstow Res on 5th.

There were some possible failed breeders in early June at the West London reservoirs: three at Staines Res/KGV Res on 8th, which could have accounted for the one at Q. Mother Res. Autumn passage started on June 27th with two at Rainham Marshes followed by two at Amwell NR on July 1st. There were no more until mid-July with three at Rainham Marshes on 12th and one there on 18th, and one at Stanwell Moor on 24th. The next were in August beginning with three at Gallions Reach on 6th, two at Q. Mother Res and at the London Wetland Centre on 8th and a juv at Q. Mary Res on 10th. A week later, three were at Rainham Marshes on 16th, followed by one there on 27th. There were more records at the Lower Thames in the next four days, but then no more until seven birds on September 6th: two at Rainham Marshes, two at Beddington Farmlands, two at QE II Res (seen also at Island Barn Res and Walton Res) and one at Brent Res. There were another 15 birds in mid-September; three at Q. Mother Res and the rest at the Lower Thames, including a peak of five at Gallions Reach. The final record of the year was one over London Wetland Centre on September 25th.

### Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

**Status:** common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first arrival just scraped into March with five at Staines Res on 31st. After that records were almost daily although most counts were single-figure and none exceeded 15 until the second half of April, when 23 were at Rainham Marshes on 16th, 24 there on 19th, 39 at Gallions Reach on 20th and 49 at Staines Res on 22nd. The highest spring count was 142 at Staines Res on April 26th, although this had dropped to 74 the next day. Passage seemed to fizzle out around mid-May with just breeding birds remaining.

It was a better breeding year at some sites with welcome increases at Rye Meads, Stocker's Lake and Bedfont Lakes CP, but none bred at Maple Lodge NR and there were no reports from Amwell NR or Cheshunt GP. Overall 109 pairs bred, down on the 136 pairs last year. There were reports from four new sites: Coursers Farm, Q. Mary Res, Ruislip Lido and Surrey Water. All breeding records (with no. of pairs/nests in brackets), and some Inner London records are given below.

Autumn passage seemed to get underway in late July, with a gathering of 200 at Q. Mary Res on 27th being one indicator. A trickle of migrants was then evident on the reservoirs and along the River Thames with three-figure counts in August at Rainham Marshes (120 on 26th, 140 on 29th and 500 on 30th), Q. Mary Res (180 on 9th) and Gallions Reach (150 on 25th). After one at Tyttenhanger GP on September 22nd, the last birds of the year were two at Rainham Marshes on October 12th and one at Gallions Reach on 13th.

**Essex:** Walthamstow Res (12), 25 young.

**Herts:** Coursers Farm (1), one fledged. Rye Meads (14), eight young. Stocker's Lake (10).

**Middx:** Bedfont Lakes CP (24), 40 young ringed. Brent Res (3+?), 8+ young. Broadwater Lake (breeding). East India Dock Basin (11+), 11-15 fledged. Q. Mary Res (1). Ruislip Lido (4).

**Bucks:** Thorney CP (bred). Wraysbury GP (5).

**Kent:** Greenwich Peninsula (3), seven young.

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre (7). Richmond Park (3), five fledged from three broods. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth) (9).

**In Lond:** Greenland Dock, three over on Jul 14th. Limehouse, one on May 25th. Regent's Park, three on Apr 30th and Aug 6th, 14th & 15th. Stepney, two on Apr 30th. Surrey Water (1), one young. Shadwell Basin (1), no young seen.

### Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

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

A fairly routine arrival date of April 11th saw four birds at Gallions Reach, with one at the London Wetland Centre the next day. On April 15th, two flew through KGV Res and two were at Staines Res on 17th and 18th; on 19th there were 12 at KGV Res and 14 at Staines Res. Records were then almost daily until May 11th, with high counts of 50 at Walthamstow Res on April 26th, 32 at Rainham Marshes on 27th and 24 at KGV Res on May 1st. During this period, records away from the normal sites were two at Bushy Park on April 24th, one at Broadwater Lake on 26th, five over Rye Meads on 27th and two over Alexandra Park on 28th. After May 11th there were just three more spring records: singles at East India Dock Basin on 13th, Horton GP on 17th and Amwell NR on 28th.

Typically, autumn migration was less pronounced, heralded by a lone adult at Q. Mother Res on August 16th, followed by two (including a 2nd-summer) there on 23rd. From August 25th to 31st there were almost daily records, mostly along the Lower Thames, but there were 30 over London Wetland Centre on 26th. The only other double figure count then was 14 at Rainham Marshes on 29th. Gallions Reach had two on 25th then three on 27th and singles on 29th and 31st. Additionally, one flew upriver at Greenwich on 30th. The only September records were singles at Gallions Reach on 3rd and at both Rainham Marshes and Staines Res on 6th. This was followed by a late 1st-winter bird at Staines Res on October 13th.

### Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

**Status:** scarce autumn and winter visitor, subject to occasional winter influxes.

There were two records this year, assuming that the two Essex sightings referred to the same bird. Both records were in September which is now the month with the most frequent records since 1983 (excluding 1986 when between 90 and 126 birds were seen between February 13th and early March).

**Essex:** Gallions Reach, one on R Thames on Sep 15th (KJM *et al*). Rainham Marshes, one on Sep 15th (AT).

**Kent:** Belvedere, one on R Thames on Sep 29th (MFR).

### Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

**Status:** abundant feral resident.

The 2014 Breeding Bird Survey shows a 17% decline in the UK's Feral Pigeons between 1995 and 2013 although it is still the 5th most frequent species recorded in London by the 2014 RSPB Big Garden Watch. Records were received from 160 sites, continuing the upward trend of the past few years (31 sites in 2010). Breeding or probable breeding was reported from only nine sites, mostly railway bridges, and once again is obviously very under-reported. Peak numbers for sites with high counts and for all inner London sites are given below.

**Essex:** Barking Abbey, 250 on Jun 1st. Rainham Marshes, 300 on Jun 1st.



*This Sandwich Tern from KGV Reservoir in early June may have been a failed breeder.  
(Andrew Moon)*

*Unloved and under-recorded, the humble Feral Pigeon. (Jonathan Lethbridge)*



**Herts:** Tyttenhanger GP, 103 on Aug 17th. Watford, 120 on Dec 8th. West Hyde, 111 on Dec 3rd.

**Middx:** Broomfield Park, 150 on Nov 8th. Home Park & Bushy Park, 230 on Oct 10th.

**Kent:** Darenth Lakes, 240 on Jan 3rd.

**Surrey:** Berrylands, 250 on Dec 13th. Hogsmill SW, 167 on Jun 14th. Kingston-upon-Thames, 265 on Nov 15th. Norbiton, 182 on Nov 5th. Richmond Park, 180 on Oct 16th. South Norwood CP, 250 over on Jan 30th.

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 630 on Jan 22nd. Regent's Park, 400 on Jan 13th.

### Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

**Status:** breeding resident and passage migrant.

Although the number of sites with Stock Doves was much increased compared with last year (337 vs 248), the number of sites reporting pairs was approximately the same (51 vs 57) as was the number of pairs (147 vs 153). There were 22 sites reporting confirmed or probable breeding, which is more than double the number last year.

#### Stock Dove sites and pairs

	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Total
Sites	59	67	80	5	44	77	5	337
Sites with pairs	8	13	15	0	7	7	1	51
No. of pairs	13	26	34	0	33	40	1	147

Peak counts for sites with 50 or more birds, sites with five or more pairs (number in brackets) and all Inner London records are listed below. All records of 50 or more birds were during passage seasons either between September and November or between February and April, with October being the peak month - for example, Brent Res had a total of 268 over between October 4th and 11th.

**Essex:** Chafford Hundred, 190 flew south on Oct 31st. Chigwell, 100 on Mar 30th.

**Herts:** Bedmond, 50 on Oct 9th. Essendon, 55 on Nov 29th. Maple Cross, 200 on Mar 26th. Newgate Street, 110 on Oct 11th. Rye Meads (10); 70 on Mar 1st. West End, 55 on Nov 29th. Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross, 100 on Mar 15th.

**Middx:** Horsenden Hill and Perivale Wood (11). Osterley Park, 100 feeding on Oct 19th.

**Bucks:** Horton, 202 on Nov 3rd.

**Kent:** Darenth Lakes, 77 on Mar 7th. Greenwich Park (11). Sevenoaks WR, 70 on Sep 24th.

**Surrey:** Battersea New Cemetery, 105 on Oct 25th. Canons Farm, 300 on Sep 25th. Mayflower Park, 50 over on Oct 21st. Riddlesdown, 80 on Sep 26th. Wimbledon Common and Putney Heath (30). Worcester Park, 55 on Oct 21st.

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one to five between January and September. Regent's Park/Primrose Hill, peak of 28 on Apr 30th. St James's Park, one on Jun 14th. Victoria Park, peak of five on Sep 6th.

### Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

**Status:** abundant breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

According to the 2014 Breeding Bird Survey, Woodpigeons have increased by 54% in London

since 1995. There was though, a 10% decline in the UK from 2013-2014 which could be cause for concern. In the 2014 RSPB Big Garden Watch this species was recorded in 79% of London's gardens and had the highest mean number of birds per garden (2.83) of all species. It also migrates over London each autumn in larger numbers than any other species. Autumn passage was chiefly between October 22nd and November 6th and in the usual south/south-west directions, although counts of over 1,000 were also recorded at one site on November 24th and at four sites on November 29th. The numbers recorded on passage were average compared with the exceptional numbers of last year when nine sites totalled over 10,000 birds. Sites where more than 3,000 birds were counted in total are listed below; 11 other sites had more than 2,000.

#### Woodpigeon highest autumn counts

Site	Total	No. of counts	Highest count (date)
Chafford Hundred	23,000	5	8,000 (Oct 31st)
Brent Res	15,500	16	4,170 (Oct 22nd)
Mar Dyke Valley	9,000	1	9,000 (Nov 1st)
Richmond Park	6,227	5	3,100 (Nov 29th)
Greenwich Park	5,149	10	1,900 (Oct 27th)
Beddington Farmlands	4,624	3	3,200 (Nov 4th)
Regent's Park	3,400	3	1,700 (Oct 28th)
Wraysbury Res	3,089	3	2,083 (Oct 28th)

There were some high movements in January, with 1,600 N/NE at Q. Mary Res on 5th and 2,600 NE at Richmond Park on 19th. Feeding flocks of over 1,000 were reported from four sites this year, similar to last year: 1,300 at Orsett Fen on October 5th, 1,200 at Richmond Park on February 2nd, 1,000 at Upminster on October 22nd and at Trevereux on October 20th. Only three sites reported confirmed breeding - surely the tip of an iceberg - with a further 15 sites reporting probable breeding.

### Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

**Status:** common breeding resident, scarce in central London.

There has been a 7% decline in the UK from 2013 to 2014, according to the Breeding Bird Survey, but no significant change in London. We had reports from a similar number of sites as last year from all sectors, except for Surrey where we only had reports from 14 sites this year rather than 39 last year. They seem to be scarcer towards central London and were only reported from 29% of Greater London gardens in the RSPB Big Garden Watch. Below are breeding records (no. of pairs/territories in brackets), some of the largest counts, other records of interest and a summary of records for Inner London. More breeding records would be welcome.

**Essex:** Reported from 18 sites. Brook Farm (1). Gloucester Rd, E17 (1). Hangman's Wood (1); 42 on Dec 5th. Mar Dyke Valley (2). Rainham Marshes, 42 on Dec 23rd.

**Herts:** Reported from 63 sites. Amwell NR (1). Beech Farm GP (4). Elstree (1). Hatfield Aerodrome (3). Maple Cross (1). Maple Lodge NR (1). North Watford (1+). Rye Meads (7). Woodoaks Farm (1); 65 on Aug 27th.

**Middx:** Reported from 32 sites. Bedfont Lakes CP (2). Broomfield Park (1). Chase Green,

EN2 (1). Chase Road, N14 (1). Dalrymple Close, N14 (1). Grovelands Park (1). Hampstead Heath (1). Horsenden Hill/Perivale Wood (4). Lakeside, Enfield (1). Oakwood Park (1). Parkside Farm/Res (1). Pymmes Park (1). Rectory Farm (2); 45 on Sep 20th. River View, EN2 (1).

**Kent:** Reported from 20 sites. Crayford Marshes, 34 on Sep 23rd. Croom's Hill, SE10 (1). Darenth Lakes, 54 on Dec 12th. Greenwich Park (1).

**Surrey:** Reported from 14 sites. Hogsmill SW (1); 129 on Nov 8th & 9th. Waddon Ponds (1). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (1).

**In Lond:** Reported on one occasion each from three sites: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, Regent's Park/Primrose Hill, Rotherhithe.

### Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

**Status:** rare summer breeding visitor and scarce passage migrant.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows a continuing decline in England which is reflected in the declining numbers reported below. Following the 13% decline from 2012-2013, there was an alarming 36% decline from 2013-2014 with a precipitous 91% decline from 1995-2013. There was a report of two birds together at Stanford Rivers in Essex on June 22nd, so we may still have breeding in London. There were just nine birds reported on spring passage (16 last year) and five on return passage (up from three last year).

The first spring passage bird was on April 9th at Roding Valley Meadows and was followed by one north over Brent Res on 23rd. In May, Brent Res had two more north flyovers of singles, on 4th and 5th, after which there were singles at Walthamstow Res on 6th, at Broxbourne on 10th, south at Tottenham Marshes on 14th and south over Erith on 22nd. June produced one fly-over at London Wetland Centre on 5th and one bird at Stanford Rivers on 21st with two on 22nd. The five returning birds, all singles, were at Moor Park GC on July 26th, Wanstead Flats on August 24th, south over Regent's Park on 26th and at Wanstead Flats on 29th followed by a late record at Upshire on October 2nd.

### Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

**Status:** naturalised breeding resident, increasing in range and numbers.

There were reports from around 640 sites this year, a huge increase over last year's 237. The increase was across all sectors but was most marked in Kent (c100 compared with 19 last year) and Middlesex (c175 compared with 46 last year). This follows the spread into Hertfordshire and Essex noted in LBR 2012 and seems to indicate a further spread across the London area. In the 2014 RSPB Big Garden Watch, Ring-necked Parakeets were recorded in very nearly half the gardens in Greater London and the species was the seventh most abundant. The Breeding Bird Survey reports the highest ever counts in London. There were only 52 reports of breeding and considering that 30 of these were from Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath more reports of breeding would be very welcome. There were reports of this species mobbing Red Kite, Grey Heron and Sparrowhawk.

Peak roost counts are given below; Danson Park had not been used as a roost until this year. There was no roost count from Berrylands SF this year. The roost count previously referred to as Waterworks NR (in Essex) appears now to be at adjacent Hackney Marsh (in Middlesex). More roost counts would be welcome.

Peak roost counts of Ring-necked Parakeet		2014
EX	Mar Dyke Valley	157
KT	Danson Park	940
MX	Hackney Marsh (previously Waterworks NR)	1,840
	Wormwood Scrubs	1,500
	Stanwell/Ashford area	"many thousands"
SY	Mitcham Common	3,900

Other high counts for each sector are listed below. At many of the sites the birds were either flying over on the way to a roost or were temporarily gathered at a pre-roost site.

**Essex:** Reported from c65 sites. Walthamstow Res, 100 on Aug 25th. Wanstead Flats, 200 on Sep 6th.

**Herts:** Reported from c100 sites. Watford, 44 N on Oct 23rd.

**Middx:** Reported from c175 sites. Brent Park, 500 N on Nov 2nd. Bushy Park, 3,500 SW on Sep 11th. Q. Mary Res, 490 SE on Oct 22nd. Willesden, 500 on Dec 21st.

**Bucks:** Reported from eight sites. Wraysbury GP, 26 on Dec 24th.

**Kent:** Reported from c100 sites. The Tarn, Mottingham, 350 over on Feb 6th.

**Surrey:** Reported from c160 sites. Beddington Farmlands, 1,000 on Sep 13th. Ham 1,450 on Oct 10th. Kingston-upon-Thames, 3,500 over on Sep 11th. Morden Hall Park, 1,430, mostly NE on Oct 16th. Richmond Park, 1,430, mostly NE on Oct 16th. Steven's Eyot, 1,550 SW on Sep 9th.

**In Lond:** Reported from 32 sites. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 100 on Apr 24th.

### Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

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

Although the 2014 Breeding Bird Survey showed a 68% decline from 1995-2013 in England, there was also a 29% increase for England since 2013. This may be why there was an increase in the number of London sites recording Cuckoos with records from 143 sites-the highest for at least five years. This increase was across the year with 122 sites having April or May records (82 last year), 45 having June records (30 last year) and 18 having July to October records (15 last year). In most cases the records are for just a day or two, indicating a bird on passage, but at about a dozen sites there were records over a sustained period raising the possibility of breeding. These included Hatfield Aerodrome, Rainham Marshes and Rye Meads where females as well as males were reported. It is difficult to confirm breeding of cuckoos but probable breeding was reported from eight sites. All records were of one to three birds except for four on June 9th and 11th at Rainham Marshes. The only Inner London records were of a calling adult in Holland Park on May 14th, and juveniles in Regent's Park/Primrose Hill on September 3rd and in Victoria Park on September 6th.

The first records were on April 3rd from both London Wetland Centre and Surbiton, and from April 9th there were daily records almost until the end of June. There were only nine records in July (with the first juvenile at Tyttenhanger GP on July 19th), eight in August and five in September up to 19th. There was then a juvenile at Rye Meads from October 5th to 11th.

### Sites where Cuckoo were reported

	Spring (Apr-May)	Summer (Jun)	Autumn (Jul-Oct)
Essex	21	10	3
Herts	44	15	5
Middx	16	5	5
Bucks	3	2	0
Kent	11	6	0
Surrey	26	7	3
In Lond	1	0	2

### Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

**Status:** rare breeding resident and scarce winter visitor.

Birds were recorded at 44 sites, down from 52 in 2013 and slightly up from 42 in 2012. There were sightings throughout the year with some seen in the summer period at sites with no reports of breeding and a few of these had more than a single bird. Details are shown in the table below. Five pairs were confirmed to have bred; two in Essex, three in Hertfordshire and one also probably bred in Kent equalling the number in 2013 which was the best year since 2007 (five confirmed breeding and seven probable).

### Sites where Barn Owl were reported

	Winter (Jan-Apr)	Summer (May-Aug)	Winter (Sep-Dec)
Bucks	-	1	-
Essex	4	8	4
Herts	14	5	6
Middx	2	3	4
Kent	1	2	1
Surrey	1	1	2

### Little Owl *Athene noctua*

**Status:** localised breeding resident, introduced to UK in the 19th century.

Records were received from 113 sites, an increase from 2013 (85 sites) and similar to 2011 (115 sites). Only 16 pairs were reported to have bred (37 in 2012), although birds may have bred at several other sites where pairs were present and were seen on many dates throughout the breeding season. More than two birds were observed at several other sites. Breeding estimates are given below.

**Essex:** Reported from 31 sites. Roding Valley Meadows NR (1).

**Herts:** Reported from 28 sites. Chess Valley (1). Munden Estate (1). Oak Hill Wood (1). Panshanger (1). Stocker's Farm (1). Tyttenhanger GP (1). Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross (1).

**Middx:** Reported from 21 sites. Bushy/Home Park (1). Horsenden Hill and Perivale Wood (1). Marble Hill Park (1). Rectory Farm (1). Stanwell Moor (1).

**Kent:** Reported from nine sites

**Surrey:** Reported from 21 sites. Canons Farm, probably bred; present all year and five seen on Sep 25th. Richmond Park (1).

**In Lond:** Reported from three sites (two in 2013). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1).

### Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

**Status:** common breeding resident in the outer parts of the London Area, scarce towards the centre.

Reported from 151 sites, up from 128 in 2013 and 96 in 2012. There were 24 confirmed breeding records from 18 sites (15 breeding records in 2013), although this species is clearly under-recorded. Birds were present during the breeding season at many other sites with two or more birds at 24 sites. The number of sites at which they were recorded is shown below together with estimates of breeding pairs.

**Essex:** Reported from 24 sites.

**Herts:** Reported from 38 sites. Bottom Wood (1). Bury Lake (1). Maple Lodge NR (1). Moor Lane/Moor Park GC (1). Rickmansworth (1). Rye Meads (1). The Commons LNR (1).

**Middx:** Reported from 36 sites. Abney Park Cemetery (1), four owlets fledged, but fem found dead. Horsenden Hill (1). Oakwood (1). Trent Park (1).

**Bucks:** Reported from one site.

**Kent:** Reported from 12 sites.

**Surrey:** Reported from 36 sites. Richmond Park (1). Wimbledon Common & Putney Heath (6).

**In Lond:** Reported from four sites. Buckingham Palace Gdns (1), two juvs seen on two dates in March. Holland Park, one on Nov 27th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1), three juvs seen on several dates in May. Regent's Park (1), one juv on Aug 21st.

### Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

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

Recorded at three sites, which is down from six sites in 2013 but up from one in 2012. All records were in Essex where one pair bred and with two single migrants in autumn.

**Essex:** Site A (1). Belhus Wood CP, one on Oct 10th & 14th (JM, RBs). Rainham Marshes, one on Sep 31st and Oct 1st (RSPB).

### Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

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

Birds were reported from 29 sites, up from 18 in 2013 and slightly lower than 39 in 2012. Birds were seen in at least eight months of the year, but none in the summer period. There was a big influx in mid-October with reports from 12 sites on 15th; there were reports from only six sites in the first half of the year but 25 sites in the second half. The highest counts were only two birds at Beddington Farmlands and at Staines Moor.

**Essex:** Dagenham Chase, one on Nov 2nd. Fairlop Waters, one on Nov 30th and Dec 6th & 30th. Gallions Reach, one on Oct 15th and Nov 15th. Grays, on Nov 2nd. Gunpowder Park, one from Oct 25th-27th. Ingrebourne Valley, one on Oct 15th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Jan 19th, Mar 29th & 30th, Oct 18th and Dec 28th. Walthamstow Res, singles on Apr 21st and Sep 29th. Wanstead Flats, singles on Sep 22nd & 30th, Oct 15th & 20th and Nov 20th. Waterworks NR, one on Oct 15th. Wormwood Scrubs, one on Oct 24th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, one on Jan 5th.

**Middx:** Kensal Green, one on Oct 16th. Parkside Farm/Res, one on Apr 22nd. Q. Mary Res, one on Oct 15th. Staines Moor, singles on 19 dates with two on Oct 15th and Dec 10th & 13th. Stanwell Moor, one on Feb 18th. Ten Acre Wood, one on Nov 24th.

Tottenham Marsh, one on Nov 30th. Wormwood Scrubs, one on Oct 24th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, singles on Oct 14th, 16th & 17th and Nov 17th.

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, one on Jan 4th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, two on Oct 15th & 19th, singles on Nov 3rd & 25th. High Breach, one on Nov 18th & 20th. London Wetland Centre, one on Oct 15th. QE II Res, singles on Oct 10th and Nov 10th. Richmond Park, singles on Oct 11th, 15th & 18th and Nov 9th. South Norwood CP, one on Oct 31st. Wimbledon Common, one on Oct 15th.

**In Lond:** Maida Vale, one on Oct 15th, attacked by a Peregrine.

### European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

**Status:** rare passage migrant, occasionally breeding.

These are the first records since 2009; one churring in late-June on the edge of London and one returning bird.

**Middx:** Middlesex FB, one from Sep 28th to Oct 1st (mo).

**Bucks:** Site A, one from Jun 24th to Jul 7th, with churring and wing clapping on Jun 29th.

### Common Swift *Apus apus*

**Status:** common, though probably declining, breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first arrivals were singles at Ellenbrook Fields and Hatfield Aerodrome on April 17th. Small numbers were then reported until April 22nd when they were seen at many sites with 36 at Staines Res. There were 1,500 at Staines Res on May 10th and 2,000 at London Colney on July 8th. Leucistic or partially albino birds were seen at KGV Res and Hilfield Park Res. The last of the year was at Broomfield Park on September 8th. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no statistically significant change in London from 2012 to 2013, but a 56% decline from 1995 to 2013. Breeding records are given below (with numbers of pairs in brackets), together with peak counts.

**Essex:** Chingford (1). Grays (2). Orsett (1). Rainham Marshes, 800 on May 11th and 24th.

**Herts:** Hertford (1). Maple Cross (1). St Albans (1). London Colney, 2,000 on Jul 8th.

**Middx:** Archway (1+). Ashford (1). Horsenden Hill and Perivale Wood (1). Staines Res, 1,500 on May 10th & 11th.

**Kent:** Blackheath Standard (7+). Greenwich (1). New Eltham (1).

**Surrey:** Chessington (1+). Kingston-upon-Thames (1). Limpsfield Chart (2+). London Wetland Centre, 1,000 on May 27th. Surbiton (1). Wimbledon (1).

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 75 on May 8th. Westminster, 100 on May 28th.

### Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

**Status:** locally common breeding resident with additional birds in winter.

They were recorded at 280 sites, a significant increase on 2013 (212 sites) and 2012 (151 sites). Four or more seen together at 17 sites (six in 2013); Belhus Woods CP, Rainham Marshes, Wanstead Park, Warren Gorge, Amwell NR, Rye Meads, Seventy Acres Lake, Stocker's Lake, Sevenoaks WR, Brent Res, Enfield Lock, Longford, Q. Mary Res, Egham Hythe Lake, Hogsmill SW, Kingston-upon-Thames and Morden Hall Park. There were many records of single birds and there were 23 pairs confirmed breeding and at least another 13 possibly bred, which is an increase on 2013 (15 confirmed breeding). The number of



*Tawny Owl can often be seen roosting during the day. (Tony Coombs)*

*Long-eared Owl is a rare bird in London, and breeding sites are withheld. (Shaun Harvey)*



*Kingfisher is doing well in the London recording area. (Tony Coombs)*

sites where they were recorded is shown below for each county, with confirmed breeding records and all records for Inner London.

**Essex:** Recorded at 57 sites. Alexandra Lake, Thurrock (1). Belhus Woods CP (1). Grays Gorge (1). Ingrebourne Valley (1). Rainham Marshes (1), two broods fledged. Walthamstow Res (1). Warren Gorge (1).

**Herts:** Recorded at 55 sites. Brookmans Park (1). Hilfield Park Res (1). Rye Meads (1), at least two broods fledged. Sopwell Mill (1). Stocker's Lake (1). Tyttenhanger GP (1).

**Middx:** Recorded at 65 sites. Brent Res (1). Home Park (1). Stanwell Moor (1). Whitewebbs Wood (1).

**Bucks:** Recorded at four sites.

**Kent:** Recorded at 27 sites.

**Surrey:** Recorded at 62 sites, Hogsmill SW (1). London Wetland Centre (1). Richmond Park (1). Spencer Road Wetland (1).

**In Lond:** Battersea Park, one on Jul 12th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Oct 23rd. Limehouse, singles on Jan 12th, Oct 18th, and Dec 10th & 12th. Mile End, Regent's Canal, one on Feb 17th and Nov 11th. Regent's Park/Primrose Hill, singles on Mar 2nd, Aug 15th & 24th and Sep 8th & 24th. Rotherhithe, singles on Jan 12th and Nov 29th. Russia Dock Woodland, one on Sep 2nd. St James's Park, singles on 44 dates. Wapping Canals, singles on Oct 17th, Nov 11th and Dec 11th, with two on Dec 27th.

### Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

**Status:** scarce passage migrant.

There were four records this year, one fewer than last year. All were autumn birds, which is the mostly likely time to see them. They arrived very close together, three in the seven days from August 31st to September 6th and the last eight days later. The table below shows recent numbers.

Wryneck records 2005-2014: 42 records, 42 birds

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of records	4	5	0	10	3	4	6	1	5	4

**Middx:** Alexandra Park, one from Aug 31st to Sep 2nd (HWJ *et al*). Parkside Farm/Res, one on Sep 6th (RMC). Wormwood Scrubs, one on Sep 2nd (RN).

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one from Sep 14th-15th (CDRH, MMcK, RHS).

### Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

**Status:** common breeding resident.

Records came from 278 sites, which is identical to 2013. There were 96 breeding pairs, lower than the 115 in 2013 and 154 in 2012 and this may reflect the Breeding Bird Survey results below. However, the true figure is probably higher, as there were many records of birds present throughout the breeding season at other sites. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 33% decrease in London between 2013 and 2014 although a 52% increase between 1995 and 2013. Breeding estimates are given below (no. of territories in brackets) for sites with two or more pairs, all records for Inner London and peak counts.

**Essex:** Recorded from 62 sites. Belhus Woods CP (3), seven juvs from three broods; 13 present on Jul 7th. Rainham Marshes (2).

**Herts:** Recorded from 42 sites. North Mymms, eight on Jul 26th. St Albans, eight on Apr 7th.

**Middx:** Recorded from 60 sites. Home Park (11). Horsenden Hill and Perivale Wood (7+).

**Bucks:** Recorded from three sites.

**Kent:** Recorded from 42 sites. Greenwich Park (3). Lullingstone Park (3). Sevenoaks WR, 11 on Jul 23rd.

**Surrey:** Recorded from 19 sites. Esher Common (2). Molesey Heath (2). Wimbledon Common & Putney Heath (18).

**In Lond:** Buckingham Palace Gdns, singles on May 7th and Jun 25th. Hammersmith Cemetery, recorded on ten dates from September to December. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (3). Mile End Park one on Sep 12th. Regent's Park/Primrose Hill (1), two juvs seen. St James's Park, singles on Apr 3rd and Oct 10th. Victoria Park, singles on six dates.

### Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

**Status:** common breeding resident.

Recorded at 295 sites, slightly fewer than in 2013 (305) and there were 157 confirmed breeding pairs. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London from 2013 to 2014, but an increase of 71% from 1995-2013. Breeding estimates are given below

(no. of territories in brackets) for sites with two or more pairs, all records for Inner London and peak counts.

**Essex:** Recorded from 62 sites.

**Herts:** Recorded from 82 sites. Beech Farm GP (3). Bricket Wood Common (2+). Hoddesdonpark Wood (7); 14 on Mar 9th. Northaw Great Wood (3). Wormley Wood (22); 15 on Dec 15th.

**Middx:** Recorded from 65 sites. Bushy Park, 14 on Mar 12th. Home Park (5). Horsenden Hill and Perivale Wood (7+). Wormwood Scrubs (2).

**Bucks:** Recorded from five sites.

**Kent:** Recorded from 42 sites. Bexley Woods (2). Fooks Cray Meadow (4). Greenwich Park (3+). High Elms (3). Sevenoaks WR, seven on Mar 21st.

**Surrey:** Recorded from 30 sites. Esher Common (2). Wimbledon Common & Putney Heath (c50).

**In Lond:** Recorded from nine sites. Battersea Park one on Jan 7th. Buckingham Palace Gdns (1). Hammersmith Cemetery, one or two on nine dates in Jan, Feb, Sep and Dec. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (3), two juvs on Jul 11th. Meath Gardens, one on Jan 6th. Mile End Park, one on Oct 23th. Regent's Park peak of seven on Dec 25th, three of them drumming. St James's Park, one on Oct 2nd. St John's Wood, one on Apr 4th. Victoria Park (1).

### Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

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

A small improvement this year with reports from 48 sites (40 in 2013), although this is many fewer than the 71 in 2011. Reports from the majority of sites were of single birds. Breeding was probable at only one site (two in 2013) although breeding may also have occurred at Richmond Park, a previously regular breeding site, where up to three were reported during seven months of the year. There was one Inner London record, the first since 2010. All records are given below.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP, singles reported January to April and September to December. Buckhurst Hill, one in a garden on Mar 10th. Celys Wood, two on Feb 24th and 26th and Mar 1st. Chingford Plain, one on Sep 6th. Cornmill Meadow, one on Apr 26th. High Beach, one on Jan 8th. Mar Dyke Valley, one on May 22th. Rainham Marshes, reported on five dates in September and three dates in October. Sewardstone, one on Apr 23th. Sewardstone Marsh, one on Mar 24th. Thames Chase, two on Feb 26th. Thorndon CP North, one on Jan 25th and Mar 19th. Woodford Green, one on Nov 6th.

**Herts:** Bencroft Wood, one on Nov 29th. Brickendon, one on Jul 31st and Dec 13th. Gobians Wood, one on Dec 21th. Hertford, one on Feb 26th. Merry Hill, one on Mar 6th. Moor Park GC, two on Apr 14th. Northaw Great Wood, one on Oct 4th. Rickmansworth, one on May 30th, Jun 19th and Sep 28th. Stocker's Farm, one on Mar 11th. Stocker's Lake (1). Verulamium Park, one on Mar 15th. Wormley, one on Nov 29th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, one on Apr 2nd and Oct 22nd. Bushy Park, one on Mar 7th and two on Mar 22nd. Horsenden Hill and Perivale Wood, pair on Mar 22th and one on Mar 23th. Ruislip Woods, one on Mar 9th. Tottenham Marshes, one on Mar 29th. Totteridge Valley, one on Feb 1st and May 4th. Trent Park, one on Mar 6th. Whitewebbs Park, singles on Oct 10th and Dec 30th.

**Bucks:** Black Park, two on Mar 10th and one on Mar 12th.

**Kent:** Sutcliffe Park, one on Jul 20th.

**Surrey:** Banstead Woods, one on May 30th and Apr 8th. Beddington Farmlands and Mitcham Common, one to two on several dates between Jan 22nd and Apr 16th. Kew, one on Apr 21st. Richmond Park, seen on 23 dates in the year with peak count of three. Breeding not confirmed this year. Thames Ditton, one on May 12th, 14th & 19th and Nov 11th.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, one on Mar 16th.

### Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

**Status:** scarce passage migrant and occasional rare breeder.

For the seventh consecutive year there was no confirmed breeding and, indeed, no records from previous breeding sites. Single birds were seen at just five sites, one fewer than last year. There was one spring record and four in autumn although, unusually only one of these was in October. From 2007-2013, 29 of the 53 records were in October.

**Essex:** Wanstead Flats, one on Sep 27th (NC).

**Herts:** Oxhey Park, one singing as it flew over on May 12th (IB).

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one over on Oct 19th (CDRH).

**Kent:** York Avenue, Sidcup, one over on Nov 6th (IS).

**Surrey:** Chelsham Church, one over on Nov 10th (BJT).

### Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

**Status:** common breeding resident and passage migrant.

This year just two sites recorded winter flocks in excess of 50, one down on last year. Noteworthy, though, was the persistent flock at West Hyde late in the year, which peaked at 400 in winter cereal on November 24th. The number of breeding territories was almost identical to last year (at least 204 from 59 sites, compared with 205 from 62 sites in 2013). The main concentrations were at Rainham Marshes, where there were 28 territories (up from 24), Orsett Fen (21, as in 2013) and Richmond Park (19, an impressive increase from eight in 2013). However, more than half of all territories (110) were at just seven locations. Breeding was confirmed at eight sites, one up on last year. Autumn passage was mostly in October, as is usual, but only small numbers were involved, 40 over Dagenham Chase on 27th being the biggest single day count. Details below give the number of territories for each sector and some breeding details and high counts.

**Essex:** 67 territories from seven sites (up from 65 last year at six sites). Grey Goose Farm (4). Ingrebourne Hill (3). Orsett Fen (21). Rainham Marshes (28). Wanstead Flats (7).

**Herts:** 39 territories from 19 sites (down from 45 last year at 27 sites). Beech Farm GP (6). Hatfield Aerodrome (8). Oaklands College (3+). Symondshyde Great Wood (4).

**Middx:** 38 territories from 15 sites (up from 33 last year at 13 sites). Bushy Park (11). Home Park (9). Ten Acre Wood (3).

**Kent:** 13 territories from five sites (marginally up from 12 last year at five sites). Cudham (3). Swanscombe Marshes (5).

**Surrey:** 47 territories from 12 sites (down from 49 last year at ten sites). Canons Farm (3). Richmond Park (19). Riddlesdown (15).

**In Lond:** Regent's Park/Primrose Hill, one over on Oct 27th and six over on Oct 28th.

### Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

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

The first sighting of spring was on March 3rd, six days earlier than in 2013 and this year at Dagenham Chase and at Mar Dyke Valley. In complete contrast to 2013's interrupted spring passage, sightings were almost daily from March 12th with 102 counted on 20th, including 50 at Hilfield Park Res. Daily totals increased thereafter, with big totals on April 12th (170 at Hilfield Park Res), 18th (200 at Staines Res and 160 at Rainham Marshes) and 19th (275 at Rainham Marshes, the biggest count of spring).

Breeding numbers overall were a little up on 2013 but this increase was not reflected at every site for which we have records. For example, occupied nests at the London Wetland Centre fell from 26 to five.

Late summer feeding flocks numbered 500 at Rainham Marshes on July 11th and 100 at Walthamstow Res on 23rd. Return passage got underway in early August and continued until early October. The numbers involved were larger than in 2013 and the peak numbers were earlier: four out of the five day counts of 100 or more were in August (in 2013 all were in September). The biggest of these was 800 at Rainham Marshes on August 27th. The last record was at the Leyton Flats on October 10th. Confirmed and probable breeding counts are given below, along with all Inner London sightings.

**Essex:** River Roding, Barking (8).

**Herts:** Tyttenhanger GP (35+). West Hyde (1).

**Middx:** Limehouse Cut (3).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (1). Hogsmill SW (4). London Wetland Centre (5). Oxted SP (59). Raven's Ait (1+).

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, six on May 10th. Mile End Park, four on May 28th and singles on Jul 2nd, 4th & 16th. Regent's Park, two on Apr 25th. Rotherhithe, Convoy Wharf (1). Victoria Park, up to 15 on five dates between May 2nd and Jun 1st, with four on Jul 5th. Victoria Tower Gdns, two on Apr 28th.

### Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

**Status:** common summer visitor and passage migrant, breeding confined to rural areas.

Spring passage began with one at the London Wetland Centre on March 20th, a more typical date after the very late start in 2013 (April 2nd). There was a general arrival at many sites in the second week of April but spring passage remained light. There were counts of 100 or more at four sites, compared with six in 2013 and 21 in 2012. The largest of these was 200 at Canons Farm on May 14th, remarkably the same site and date as in 2013.

Post-breeding congregation and return passage was noted from the second week of August but numbers were not as large as in 2013. There were 30 counts of 100 or more, starting with 200 at Rye Meads on August 22nd. Thereafter, 'big days' were on August 26th and 31st, and on several dates in September: 430 over Richmond Park on 2nd, 350 at Rainham Marshes on 5th, 400 at Canons Farm on 9th, 500 at Hampstead Heath on 21st and 500 over Beddington Farmlands on 24th. The heaviest passage was on the last date (one day later than in 2013), with 100 or more also counted at Wanstead Flats,

Walthamstow Res, Canons Farm, London Wetland Centre, Richmond Park and South Norwood CP.

Breeding was confirmed or probable at 19 sites, many at traditional locations. The confirmed breeding at Rainham Marshes was the first there since the establishment of the RSPB Reserve, while the two broods at Wimbledon Common were the first there since 1982. Sites where breeding was confirmed or probable, and Inner London highlights, are given below, with the number of nests in brackets, where known.

**Essex:** Brook Farm (1). Mark Dyke Valley (4). Rainham Marshes (1). Sewardstone Marsh (2).  
**Herts:** Chess Valley (1). Holt Farm (1). Newgate Street (14+). Oaklands College (3). South Oxhey (2). Stocker's Farm.

**Middx:** Home Park (1). Strayfield Road (3). Trent Park (1).

**Kent:** **Foots Cray Meadows.**

**Surrey:** Barwell Court Farm (4). Queens Promenade (1). Rushett Farm (2). Treverex (4). West End Common (4). Wimbledon Common (1).

**In Lond:** Limehouse Basin, six N on May 14th. Regent's Park, 20 on Apr 20th and 100+ on Sep 21st. Most IL records are on spring or autumn passage so two in St James's Park on Jun 9th and two at Regent's Park on Jun 17th were unusual.

### House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

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

Spring passage was more typical than in 2013. The first record of the year was over the northern approaches to the Blackwall Tunnel on March 18th, a full ten days earlier than last year. Only a trickle of birds was noted until April 7th when there were about 50 at Hilfield Park Res and sightings were daily from 12th, when there were 100 at Broadwater Lake. There were only six counts of 50 or more on spring passage, with the vast majority of birds passing through between mid-April and mid-May.

Post-breeding concentrations included 100 at the London Wetland Centre on August 15th, 200 at Walthamstow Res on August 17th and 100 at Rye Meads RSPB on August 26th. During return passage in September there were 11 site counts of 100 or more, compared with 36 in 2013. The main concentration was between September 21st to 26th, with 847 through Beddington Farmlands on 24th and 1,900 over Canons Farm the following day. A total of 157 over the former site on October 14th was a big late count. The last record was at Sidcup on the very late date of November 25th, compared with October 22nd in 2013 (the latest ever was on December 12th).

There were a minimum of 200 confirmed or probable breeding records from 41 sites, compared with figures of 142 and 31 respectively last year. But this year we had an accurate count at Walthamstow FB for the first time which accounts for the increase. Otherwise it still seems that the decline in breeding numbers in the capital continues. Hopefully, the survey organised by the BTO in 2015 will help provide a truer indication of this possibly under-recorded species' status. All breeding records are given below with the number of nests in brackets.

**Essex:** 119+ breeding records, 11 sites. Bradley Common (1). Chafford Hundred (4). Chingford, Mandeville Court (32). Chingford Station (3). Grays (3). Ockendon Hall (4).

Orsett (4). St George's Hospital, Ingrebourne Valley (10). Walthamstow FB (61). Wanstead Flats (5). Warren Gorge (3).

**Herts:** 19+ breeding records, nine sites. Abbots Langley (1+). Chorleywood (3). Colney Heath (1+). Hatfield, Woodside (probable). Moor Lane (8). St Albans (1). Stocker's Farm (1+). Watford (2). Wormley (1).

**Middx:** 31+ breeding records, ten sites. Ashford Hospital (1+). Chiswick Mall (1+). Fulham Reach (2). Hammersmith (1). Hendon (19). Regent's Canal (3). Ruislip Lido (1+). Staines, Riverbridge School (1+). Stanwell (1+). Stanwell Moor (1+).

**Kent:** 15 breeding records, three sites. Bexley, Parkhurst Rd (1+). Greenhithe (10+). Lullingstone Park (4).

**Surrey:** 14+ breeding records, six sites. Home Park (1). New Addington (1). Oxted (1). Sanderstead (2). West End Common (8).

**In Lond:** Two breeding, one site. Knightsbridge (2).

### Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*

**Status:** rare vagrant.

This is the 18th record for London, following two in 2013. Eleven of these have been in May and so this is a typical date. The table below shows recent records. This one turned up amongst a large group of hirundines which the observer was checking while waiting for a supermarket to open on a Sunday! It stayed for about three hours meaning several others could rush to see it.

Red-rumped Swallow records 2000-2014: 9 records, 9 birds

Year	2000	2003	2007	2009	2011	2013	2014
No. of birds	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
No. of records	1	2	1	1	1	2	1

**Kent:** Southmere Lake, one on May 11th (RHB *et al*).

### Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

**Status:** passage migrant and scarce, seriously decreasing breeding summer visitor.

Spring passage was well down on 2013, involving just 12 birds compared with 26 last year. The first was at Gallions Reach on March 30th. There were then five birds in April and six in May with the last on May 10th at Wanstead Flats.

In marked contrast, the number of autumn migrants was dramatically up on recent years, with at least 97 birds compared with 29 in 2013. The first was on August 3rd at Rye Meads. The records included nine in Bushy Park on August 23rd and records at Wanstead Flats on 17 days involving one to three birds. The last was one at Hampstead Heath on October 24th. There were no territorial records for the third consecutive year.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, singles on Aug 19th, 27th & 31st, and Sep 8th.

### Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

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

There were three winter flocks of 50 or more, the same number as in 2013: 75 at Staines



*Red-rumped Swallow was an excellent find at Southmere Lake, Thamesmead, in early May. (Richard Bonser)*

Moor in January; 60 at West Hyde in November; and 60 at Q. Mother Res in December. Spring passage began around March 10th and was light, as last year. In fact, there were only two site counts of more than 50 during spring passage: 65 over Brent Res on March 16th and 60 at Q. Mother Res on April 1st.

Autumn passage began in the last week of August. It was not especially heavy and was particularly concentrated on September 11th (including 140 over Richmond Park) and September 21st (including 240 at Rainham Marshes). There were 35 records of 50 or more birds; of these, nine were of 100 or more (compared with six in 2013).

There were breeding reports from 12 sites (three more than last year), but at the sites where we have records from both 2013 and 2014 there was no evidence of any significant change. The Breeding Bird Survey showed no significant change in England last year (although a 14% increase for the UK as a whole) and from 1995-2013 there was a 43% decline in SE England. This is the first time for several years that we have had reports from Staines Moor (which had the most pairs) and regular reports from here would be very welcome.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes (2). Wanstead Flats (4).

**Herts:** Broad Colney (1). How Wood (1).

**Middx:** Bushy Park (1). Home Park (2). Staines Moor (12). Wormwood Scrubs (5).

**Kent:** Greenwich Peninsula (2).

**Surrey:** Nore Hill (3). Richmond Park (2). Riddlesdown (2).

### Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

**Status:** passage migrant and winter visitor.

Numbers were lower than last year at Rainham Marshes with a peak of 14 (32 in 2013 and 19 in 2012). The last bird of the first-winter period was at Crayford Marshes on March 29th, while one at Q. Mother Res on September 16th marked the start of 'typical' autumn passage. Monthly maxima for the five locations with records in four or more months of the year are shown below, followed by other records.

Rock Pipit	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EX Rainham Marshes	14	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	9	3
Walthamstow Res	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	1
KT Crayford Marshes	2	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	-
Swanscombe Marshes	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	4

**Essex:** Barking Bay, three on Dec 25th. Gallions Reach, one on Nov 2nd. KGV Res, one on Oct 3rd. Walthamstow Marshes, three on Oct 13th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, one on Oct 14th.

**Middx:** KGVI Res, two on Oct 12th. Staines Res, present from Sep 29th to Nov 24th with six on Oct 11th. Wraysbury Res, one on Oct 5th-6th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one on Feb 25th, then present from Sep 16th to Oct 24th, mostly one bird but seven on Oct 15th.

**Kent:** Belvedere, R Thames, one from Dec 27th-29th. Crossness, singles on Mar 13th, Oct 19th and Dec 13th, 21st & 30th. Dartford Marshes, three on Nov 1st, eight on Nov 27th and one on Dec 11th. Greenhithe/Swanscombe, three on Jan 1st. Greenwich Peninsula, one on Jan 12th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, one on Oct 14th & 18th. London Wetland Centre, one on Jan 6th, two on Jul 9th, two on Sep 28th and three on Oct 1st. QE II Res, singles on Mar 28th, Oct 10th, 16th, 21st, 22nd & 24th, and Nov 5th. Walton Res, one on Oct 19th & 22nd.

*Rock Pipits enjoy London's many reservoir banks in winter. (Dave Harris)*



### Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

**Status:** regular but localised winter visitor and passage migrant.

Recorded from 19 sites, seven of which had birds in both winter periods. Early in the year the best sites were Rainham Marshes, Staines Moor and Beddington Farmlands, and the last bird was at Rye Meads on April 19th. The first bird of autumn was at Horton on October 12th and Staines Moor, KGVI Res and Staines Res were the best late-year locations. There were no Rainham records in the second-winter period. All records are given below, some summarised.

**Essex:** Barking Bay, one on Dec 25th. Rainham Marshes, recorded until Mar 20th with three on Jan 5th; none in the second-winter period. West Thurrock Marshes, singles on Jan 23rd and Dec 8th.

**Herts:** Rye Meads, singles on Feb 1st, Mar 1st, 14th, 15th & 29th and Apr 19th. Stocker's Lake, one on Jan 6th.

**Middx:** Bushy Park, two NW on Apr 9th. KGVI Res, singles on Jan 8th & 19th; then from Nov 9th, with four on that date. Staines Moor, present until Apr 4th with seven on Jan 20th; then from Oct 15th, with six on Nov 28th. Staines Res, two from Dec 28th. Stanwell Moor, two on Mar 25th and one on Oct 30th.

**Bucks:** Horton, singles on Jan 2nd, Oct 12th and Dec 24th.

**Kent:** Belvedere, one on Mar 2nd. Crayford Marshes, singles on Jan 19th & 22nd, Feb 13th & 26th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, present until Apr 1st with four on Mar 8th; up to three present from Oct 18th. London Wetland Centre, singles on Oct 15th & 30th, and Nov 1st.

### Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

**Status:** common passage migrant and decreasing, now scarce, breeder.

The first record was of two at Mill Hill on March 28th, a typical date, and passage continued until the start of June, with the main concentration being in the third week of April. Passage was lighter than last year, with only two counts of ten or more, the highest being 20 at the London Wetland Centre on April 22nd.

Autumn passage exceeded that of the spring, as it did last year. A bird was at the London Wetland Centre on June 30th but passage proper did not get underway until the second half of July and it did not pick up until August 20th when there were 30 at KGV Res. Between then and September 18th there were 26 counts of ten or more, compared with 19 in 2013. There were 30 at Woodlands Farm, Maple Cross, on September 14th but the two peak dates were September 7th (102 across London) and 8th (91). The last bird was at Staines Res on November 1st.

There were more reports of breeding this year (nine pairs at six sites). All breeding records, and Inner London sightings, are shown below.

**Essex:** Epping Upland (1). Lodge Farm, Nazeing (2). Orsett Fen (3).

**Herts:** Hatfield Garden Village (1). Stanstead Abbots (1). Tyttenhanger GP (1).

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, singles on Apr 15th & 29th, then records on 12 days from Aug 12th to Sep 28th, with three over on Sep 8th.

### SUB-SPECIES: Blue-headed Wagtail *M. f. flava*

**Status:** passage migrant, more commonly seen in spring than in autumn.

There were two records, involving four birds, all in a typical time-frame in spring. Most London records are of single birds, so three together was notable.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one on May 17th.

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, three on Apr 22nd.

### Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

**Status:** common breeding resident and passage migrant.

There were 47 records of confirmed or probable breeding, higher than last year's 36. The number of breeding records for the Kent sector increased from two to six but otherwise numbers changed little, although sites changed a lot. Wintering concentrations were smaller than in 2013, with 12 at R Wandle on December 29th and 11 at Rye Meads on January 1st. Spring passage was very light, with 12 at the London Wetland Centre on March 14th the biggest count. Light passage was noted at several sites on September 22nd to 23rd, including seven at Regent's Park on the second date, and there were 12 at Hogsmill SW on October 12th. Confirmed or probable breeding records are listed below.

**Essex:** Walthamstow Res (3).

**Herts:** Croxley Common Moor (1). Hilfield Park Res (1). Loudwater (1). Lynster Lake (1). Rye Meads (3). Verulamium Park (1). West End (1). West Hyde (1).

**Middx:** Broadwater Lake (1). Enfield Lock (1). Finsbury Park (1). Horsenden Hill (1). Parkland Walk LNR (1). Pymmes Park (1). Shepperton (1). Stoke Newington Res (1).

**Kent:** Castle Lake (1). Darenth Lakes (1). Ladywell Fields (2). Lewisham (River Ravensbourne) (1). Lullingstone Park (1).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (1). Ewell (1). Hogsmill SW (1). Queens Promenade (1). R Hogsmill (Kingston) (1). Richmond Park (1). R Wandle: Butter Hill to Morden Hall Park (7). R Wandle: Carshalton Ponds to Wandsworth, 12 on Dec 29th. Teddington Lock (1).

**In Lond:** Barbican, an adult was seen carrying food in April, a juv was present in May and an adult was feeding three young in a nest in July. Chelsea Bridge, an adult was feeding a juv in July. Clerkenwell, an adult was collecting food in early May. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1). Limehouse Basin, a male was feeding a recently fledged juv in June. Westbourne Green, an adult was seen carrying food by the Grand Union Canal in May.

### Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

**Status:** common breeding resident and winter visitor.

There were 33 confirmed or probable breeding records, two more than last year. There were no particularly large roosts in either winter period. Visible migration counts at Brent Res produced a peak of 18 over on October 28th. Other indications of autumn passage were 60 over Holmethorpe SP on October 15th and 28 at Roding Valley Meadows on October 28th. Roost counts of 50 or more and confirmed or probable breeding records are listed below.

**Essex:** Brook Farm (1). Harold Wood SW, 100 on Dec 31st. Mar Dyke Valley (1). Orsett Fen (1). Rainham Marshes, 55 on Nov 28th.

**Herts:** Coursers Road (1). Essendon (1). Hertford, 100 on Dec 16th. Hilfield Park Res (1). Newgate Street (1). Radlett (1). Rye Meads (2); 70 on Mar 1st. Stocker's Farm (1). Watford, 100 on Oct 25th. Welwyn Garden City, 320 on Nov 30th.

**Middx:** Brent Res (1). Chase Green (1). Hampton High Street (1). Home Park (1). Horsenden Hill (1). Park Farm, Enfield (1). Staines Moor, 50 on Feb 5th. Staines Res (1). Trent Park (1). Vicarage Farm (1).

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res (1 Pied x White).

**Kent:** Bexleyheath, 265 on Feb 26th. Eynsford (1). Greenwich Park (1). Sevenoaks WR (1). Woolwich (1).

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre (1). Queens Promenade (1). Richmond Park (1). Teddington Lock (1). West End Common (1). Wimbledon Broadway, 150 on Jan 10th.

**In London:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2).

### SUB-SPECIES: *White Wagtail M. a. alba*

**Status:** passage migrant, more commonly seen in spring than in autumn.

There were only 53 records this year, much lower than the last two years. Spring passage was from March 9th to May 13th involving 45 birds, but almost half the birds were at Q. Mother Res. A female bred at this site, details below. Autumn passage was better than last year, with eight birds seen from September 4th to October 19th. Counts of three or more and passage dates at key sites are listed below.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, recorded on four dates between Mar 9th and Apr 18th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, recorded on Mar 13th & 26th then almost daily from early Apr to mid-May, with 20 on Apr 10th & 13th. One fem bred with a male Pied Wagtail and produced four young, which were still present in early Sep.

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, recorded on Apr 12th, May 8th & 9th and Oct 1st.

### *Waxwing Bombycilla garrulus*

**Status:** uncommon but sometimes numerous irruptive visitor.

With no invasion in the winter of 2013/14 there were just three records involving 39 birds all in the first-winter period. Only the Longfield birds stayed more than a day. All records are listed below.

**Kent:** Hall Place Gardens, 30 on Jan 31st (JDW). Longfield, seven from Mar 26th-28th (DGD *et al*).

**Surrey:** Reigate, two on Jan 30th (SBC).

### *Wren Troglodytes troglodytes*

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

This ubiquitous, but under-recorded, species can find a home in a wide variety of habitats, as diverse as reed beds and coastal cliffs, so it is not surprising that it is widely distributed within the London Area. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 19% increase on 2013 figures in London, with a 34% increase in the UK as a whole. This is reflected in the records received with many sites reporting an increase in the number of territories. Breeding records are given below for sites where ten or more territories or singing males (number in brackets) were recorded, along with some of the higher counts.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (19). Mar Dyke Valley (27). Orsett Fen (15). Rainham Marshes (66).

**Herts:** Beech Farm GP (17). Bury Lake (21). Chess Valley (12). Chorleywood Common (21). Hatfield Aerodrome (11). Northaw Great Wood (19). Rye Meads (65).

**Middx:** Home Park (52).

**Kent:** Darenth Lakes, 52 on Mar 7th. Sevenoaks WR, 40 on Jun 27th.

**Surrey:** Arbrook Common (12). Beddington Farmlands (59). Esher Common (16). Molesey Heath (26). The Ledges, Esher (21). West End Common (17).

**In Lond:** Battersea Park (1). Buckingham Palace Gdns (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (4); 12 on Oct 12th. Lincoln's Inn Fields (2).

### *Dunnoek Prunella modularis*

**Status:** abundant breeding resident.

Like many common species, Dunnocks are under-recorded with few observers submitting estimates of breeding territories or counts of high numbers. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since 2013, although there was a 21% increase in the UK from 1995-2013. An interesting breeding record from Inner London was of a pair nesting in a roof garden on the eighth floor of the Unilever building, near Blackfriars Bridge. Breeding records are given below for sites where ten or more territories or singing males (number in brackets) were recorded, along with some of the higher counts.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (15). Mar Dyke Valley (20). Orsett Fen (17). Rainham Marshes (15).

**Herts:** Rye Meads (41). Stocker's Lake, 30+ on Nov 14th.

**Middx:** Wormwood Scrubs (10).

**Kent:** Darenth Lakes, 23 on Mar 7th. Greenwich Park (13).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (16). Molesey Heath (11).

**In Lond:** Blackfriars Bridge (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (3). Limehouse, eight on Jan 12th. Wyvil Estate, Stockwell (1).

### *Robin Erithacus rubecula*

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

Despite being one of the most popular birds in the UK, and recently unofficially voted 'Britain's National Bird' in a well-publicised poll, this is another species that is poorly represented by the records received. The Breeding Bird Survey shows that Robins are doing well in London, with a 79% increase since 1995 (well above the 11% increase for the UK as a whole during the same period). Breeding records are given below for sites where ten or more territories or singing males (number in brackets) were recorded, along with some of the higher counts.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (17). Mar Dyke Valley (16). Orsett Fen (13). Rainham Marshes (21).

**Herts:** Bury Lake (13). Northaw Great Wood (15). Rye Meads (35).

**Middx:** Home Park (53). Wormwood Scrubs (16).

**Kent:** Darenth Lakes, 80 on Sep 19th. Sevenoaks WR, 75 on Sep 20th.

**Surrey:** Arbrook Common (13). Beddington Farmlands (27). Berrylands, 85 on Aug 27th. Esher Common (16). Ham Common, 91 on May 4th. Hogsmill SW, 85 on Oct 4th. Long Ditton, 120 on Sep 28th. Molesey Heath (15). The Ledges, Esher (18). Tolworth, 108 on Sep 27th. West End Common (25).

**In Lond:** Battersea Park, 11 on Jan 7th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (4); ten on Feb 13th and Oct 12th. Larkhill Park, Stockwell (1). Lincoln's Inn Fields (1).

### Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

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

There were 21 breeding territories reported this year, a drop from last year's 25. Around 18 other birds were also noted although some of these may also have established territories unrecorded. The first bird of the year was on April 8th at Warley Place NR and the last was on September 19th at Fishers Green. All records are given below with numbers of territories in brackets.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP, one on Aug 4th. Cely Woods, one from May 4th-9th. Fishers Green Island (9). Grays Gorge, singles on May 23rd, Jun 6th and Aug 5th. Ingrebourne Valley (1). Netherhall GP, singles on Apr 22nd and May 17th. Rainham Marshes, one on May 19th. Thames Chase, one on May 4th. Warley Place NR, one on Apr 8th.

**Herts:** Cheshunt GP (3). Rye Meads, one on May 4th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, one on Apr 26th. Rammey Marsh, one on Apr 15th. Tottenham Marshes, one from Apr 29th to May 9th.

**Kent:** Dartford Marshes, one on Apr 22nd and two on 23rd. Otford, one on May 6th. Swanscombe Marshes, one on Apr 27th and two on 28th.

**Surrey:** Bookham Common (8). Honor Oak, one on May 21st. Hooley, one on Jun 7th. London Wetland Centre, one on Apr 24th. Riddlesdown, one on Apr 10th.

### Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

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

Three breeding pairs were reported this year compared with two last year but with a further 21 singing males recorded there may well have been further breeding pairs as they can often be tricky to locate, particularly those in the City of London where access is limited. Breeding records are summarised in the following table and records from other sites are given below.

Black Redstart	Pairs proved breeding	Other pairs present	Additional singing males
Essex	-	-	1
Middx	-	2	4
Kent	-	-	1
Surrey	-	-	3
In Lond	1	-	12

**Essex:** Bow, one from Oct 24th to Nov 1st. KGV Res, one on Oct 17th. Leyton Jubilee Park, one on Mar 1st. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, one on Jul 6th & 25th. Rainham Marshes, singles from Jan 15th-30th, Sep 20th and Dec 16th-28th. Royal Albert Dock, one on Jun 30th. Three Mills, one on Jul 2nd. Walthamstow Marshes, singles on Apr 5th and Aug 13th. Walthamstow Res, one on Apr 20th.

**Herts:** Brickendonbury, one on Apr 30th. Hilfield Park Res, one on Sep 9th. Maple Cross, one on Sep 17th. Redwell Wood Farm, one on Mar 8th.

**Middx:** East India Dock Basin, singles on Jan 10th and May 14th. Park Farm, Enfield, one

from Oct 15th-20th. Wraysbury Res, one on Mar 20th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, singles from Mar 26th-28th, Apr 28th and Dec 19th-25th. Thorney CP, one on Aug 31st.

**Kent:** Halstead, one on Oct 30th. Northfleet, one on Apr 22nd. Oxleas Woods, one on Apr 23rd. Swanscombe Marshes, one on Dec 4th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, one on Dec 13th. Canons Farm, one on May 2nd. Godstone, one on Jul 3rd. Hogsmill SW, one on Mar 22nd. London Wetland Centre, one on Nov 12th. New Malden, one on Mar 22nd. QE II Res, one on Jan 19th. R Wandle, one on Jun 1st. Tandridge, one in November. Dungeon Hill, one on Apr 4th. Worcester Park, one on Mar 28th.

**In Lond:** Fulham, one on May 7th.

### Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

**Status:** passage migrant.

Compared with the bumper crop of 126 in 2013, only 30 spring migrants were seen this year which was about par. The first was on April 3rd at Bedfont Lakes CP and passage finished on May 9th at Wanstead Flats apart from a tardy bird at London Wetland Centre on June 12th. The peak dates were April 10th and 13th with four birds on each day.

Autumn migrants were recorded between July 1st and October 19th with a total of 133 seen by the time of the last two at Stocker's Farm. The peak day was August 31st when a total of 31 birds were seen including seven at Wanstead Flats.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, singles on Aug 14th, 23rd-24th, two on Aug 27th, one on Aug 28th, three on Aug 29th, two on Aug 30th and three on Aug 31st.

### Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

**Status:** regular passage migrant and former breeding summer visitor.

The first arrival was on the typical date of April 16th with a single bird at Roundshaw Downs. Passage peaked in the second week of May but was light with most sites recording only one or two birds, with a peak count of four at Gallions Reach on May 11th. The last spring bird was at Coopers Green Lane on May 19th. There were about 84 spring birds (85 in 2013) recorded at 29 sites (32 in 2013).

In autumn there were two early birds at Wormwood Scrubs on July 22nd, before more followed on August 5th. Passage increased in late August with 29 sites reporting them on 31st when there were 11 at Wanstead Flats and ten at Richmond Park. The Richmond Park count had increased to 14 by the next day, and there were 11 at Staines Moor on September 6th. There were much larger numbers in the autumn passage than in spring. Passage continued later this year, with the last bird at Walton Res on November 8th.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, one on Aug 23rd and four on 31st, two on Sep 3rd, three on 8th and one on 12th. The total of four is the largest count there since the 1960s.

### European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

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

Wintering numbers were higher than in 2013 with birds present in January at 20 sites (ten in 2013) and a peak count of six at both Staines Moor and Rainham Marshes. There



Britain's new 'national bird', the Robin, is under-recorded. (David Fajula)

was little change in February, and by March birds were beginning to depart with a peak count of only three at Swanscombe Marshes. In April birds were only reported at three sites, but breeding was later confirmed at two of these. During May, there was also a male at Rainham Marshes and a juv was then at nearby Crossness, so it is possible a third pair may have bred at the Lower Thames.

The first returning bird was one at Canons Farm on August 18th. Passage began in earnest at the end of August and by September birds were widespread across 52 sites with a peak count of 18 at Staines Moor. In October there were counts of 20 at Richmond Park, 14 at Staines Moor and 13 at Beddington Farmlands. These autumn records included the first records at Blackheath for a long while, perhaps 100 years, and the first at Alexandra Palace since 2010. The biggest change though was in wintering birds at the end of the year, when birds were present at 26 sites, much increased from the ten sites last year. We noted in *LBR* 2011 the declining wintering population and perhaps they are now recovering. Breeding season and all Inner London records are given below.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, one on May 3rd.

**Kent:** Swanscombe Marshes (1), with two juvs seen.

**Surrey:** Richmond Park (1), with three juvs seen.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, one on Sep 22nd, two on Oct 10th and two on Nov 6th.

### Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

**Status:** common passage migrant and very occasional breeding visitor.

Spring passage started on the typical date of March 11th with a bird at Beddington Farmlands and really got going from March 22nd when there were reports from 18 sites. This year the passage was steady but unspectacular with five double figure counts; these included 22 at Barking Bay on March 23rd and 14 at Rainham Marshes on May 3rd. Passage

reduced from early May with the last on May 21st at Q. Mother Res.

Autumn migration commenced with a returning bird at Richmond Park on July 22nd and the peak period was from mid-August to early September. Surprisingly, there was only one count in double figures, ten at Wanstead Flats on August 31st. There were a number of early October records, several staying for a few days, and the last was at Q. Mary Res on November 5th.

There were ten reports of 15 birds between April 12th and May 16th showing characteristics of the race *leucorhoa*. These were at Canons Farm, Colnbrook Landfill, London Wetland Centre, Q. Mother Res, KGV Res, KGVI Res, Wimbledon Common and Rainham Marshes.

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Apr 12th, two on Sep 23rd. Lord's Cricket Ground, one on Sep 25th. Regent's Park, one on Mar 21st and three on Mar 22nd, then up to two in autumn from Aug 9th to Sep 23rd. Victoria Tower Gardens, one on Apr 28th.

No LBR would be complete without a photo of a Wheatear, the herald of spring.  
(Andrew Moon)



### Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

**Status:** regular passage migrant, but never common.

The first arrival was one at Walthamstow Res on March 31st followed by another on April 1st at Kelvedon Hatch. There were then sightings across a number of sites, mostly singles, including a male that stayed at Crossness for eight days, as well as three at KGV Res on 5th. The main passage was between April 17th and 22nd, with singles at Beddington Farmlands, Tottenham Cemetery, Fairlop Waters and Staines Moor on the 18th; other single sightings were at Rainham Marshes, Bushey Bank, KGV Res and Skid Hill. There were two at Thorndon CP South on the 22nd. The last was at Q. Mother Res on April 28th, which was earlier than the last few years when sightings stopped in May. There were about 27 individuals at 16 sites.

It was a very good autumn passage with at least 53 birds at 25 sites compared with the seven individuals last autumn. The first was at Wimbledon Common on September 24th, with consistent sightings through October including peaks of six on October 14th at Wanstead Flats and five at Dagenham Chase on October 22nd and there were several lingering birds. The last of the autumn passage were singles at Canons Farm and at Wormwood Scrubs on October 26th.

### Blackbird *Turdus merula*

**Status:** abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

As usual this species is very under-recorded, especially regarding breeding evidence. The Breeding Bird Survey in London shows no significant change between 2013 and 2014 and sites where we have territorial estimates for both years also show no significant change. But for the period 1995-2013, the Breeding Bird Survey shows a 27% decline in London although a 21% increase in the UK as a whole. More breeding counts would be welcomed, as well as any records suggesting autumn movements. Breeding records are given below at sites where five or more were recorded (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), as well as the higher Inner London counts.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (8). Orsett Fen (5). Wanstead Flats, 40 in January. Rainham Marshes (18). Mar Dyke Valley (11).

**Herts:** Hatfield Aerodrome (7). Loudwater, 47 on Nov 19th. Northaw Great Wood (10). Rye Meads (27).

**Middx:** Bedfont Lakes CP (5). Brent Res, 18 on Jan 5th. Home Park (43).

**Kent:** Darenth Lakes, 53 on Dec 14th. Greenwich Park (19).

**Surrey:** Arbrook Common (11). Beddington Farmlands (22). Ham Common 53 on May 4th. Molesey Heath (16). The Ledges, Esher (10). West End Common (13).

**In Lond:** Hammersmith Cemetery, 35 on Jan 18th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (3). Limehouse, 22 on Jan 12th. Victoria Park, 26 on Jan 1st.

### Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

**Status:** regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

As often, there was a difference between the numbers seen at the start of the year compared with the numbers at the end of the year; this year more were seen at the start of the year. Of the 31 counts of 200 or more birds, 25 were in January or February, but

the highest count was only 400, well below the 1,192 at Staines Moor in January 2013. At the start of the year, the highest weekly counts were in the second week of January and then in the first week of March; the latter presumably due to birds passing through on their way to breed. There was a sharp drop in records from mid-March with the last on April 24th at Staines Moor.

Returning birds appeared from October 10th at St Albans and Warren Gorge with most arriving at the end of October. The highest weekly counts were in December, the highest being 260 at Stanstead Abbots on 5th. High counts for each sector are given below.

**Essex:** Orsett Fen, 264 on Feb 17th. Upminster, 300 on Jan 23rd.

**Herts:** Stanstead Abbots, 260 on Dec 5th. Tyttenhanger Farm, c300 on Mar 14th. Tyttenhanger GP, 320 on Feb 17th.

**Middx:** Staines Moor, 200+ on Dec 13th.

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP, 80 on Feb 21st.

**Kent:** Dartford Marshes, 200 on Dec 10th. Swanscombe Marshes, 250 on Dec 10th.

**Surrey:** Canons Farm, c400 on Feb 1st. Cheverells Farm, c300 on Nov 18th.

**In Lond:** Victoria Park, 33 on Mar 1st.

### Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

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

The Breeding Bird Survey for London shows a 20% increase from 2013-2014 and there has been an increase in territories at some of the sites where we have records for 2014 and 2013. There were few records from Kent this year. Below are breeding records for sites where five or more were recorded (no. of territories/singing males in brackets), plus all Inner London breeding records and some of the higher counts.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (10). Mar Dyke Valley (5). Orsett Fen (6). Rainham Marshes (6). Wanstead Flats, 50+ on Oct 14th.

**Herts:** Beech Farm GP (5). Hatfield Aerodrome (6). Northaw Great Wood (7). Rye Meads (15).

**Middx:** Hampstead Heath, 50 on Oct 15th. Home Park (12). Horsenden Hill (17). Tottenham Marshes (18). Wormwood Scrubs (15).

**Kent:** Longfield Gallops, 27 on Oct 16th. Sutcliffe Park, 28 on Dec 25th.

**Surrey:** Arbrook Common (5). Epsom Common (10). Molesey Heath (9). Richmond Park, 120 on Oct 31st. West End Common (5). Wimbledon Common (c40).

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (3). Regent's Park, 18 singing on Jan 25th.

### Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

**Status:** common passage migrant and winter visitor.

This year was remarkable for the concentrated passage of Redwings in mid-October; all 15 counts of 500 or more birds were in the four days from October 13th to 16th. Apart from that, numbers were generally higher at the start of the year than at the end; of the 19 counts of 200 or more that weren't in mid-October, 13 of these were at the end of the year.

At the start of the year the highest weekly counts were in the first week of January and numbers dropped off quickly after mid-March. The highest count in April was 15 at



*Ring Ouzel passes through London in small numbers, mostly in autumn. (Nick Croft)*

Totteridge Valley and the last was on April 27th at Woodside, Hatfield.

The first returning bird was on September 12th at Rye Meads but numbers remained low until the period October 13th to 16th. The total of all the records for October 14th was 20,826 giving some idea of the scale of movement, with the highest count on that date being 4,000 at Collier Row. Few of these seem to have stayed in the London area, with 366 at Wraysbury Res on October 27th being the highest count after this passage. In December the highest count was 195 at Chipstead Lake on 5th. High counts for each sector are given below.

**Essex:** Collier Row, 4,000 on Oct 14th. Sewardstone, c2,350 NW on Oct 14th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, 1,200+ on Oct 14th, mostly W in afternoon.

**Middx:** Pinner Park Farm, 412 on Jan 21st. Wraysbury Res, 366 on Oct 27th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, 150 SW in three flocks on Oct 23rd.

**Kent:** Greenwich Park, 850+ on Oct 14th, mostly o/h.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, 1,569 on Oct 14th. Richmond Park, 950 SW in three hours on Oct 14th.

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 2,700 W on Oct 14th in 90 minutes.

### **Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus***

**Status:** common breeding resident.

The Breeding Bird Survey in London showed no significant change this year; at sites where we have records for both 2013 and 2014, breeding numbers appear stable. However there was a 55% long-term decline from 1995-2013, so more breeding counts would be welcome.

Below are breeding records for sites where two or more were recorded (no. of

territories/singing males in brackets), plus all Inner London breeding records and some of the higher counts.

**Essex:** Hangman's Wood (2). Leyton Flats (2). Mar Dyke Valley (5). Wanstead Flats, 19 on Aug 8th.

**Herts:** Beech Farm GP (2). Hatfield Park, 34 on Aug 27th. Newgate Street, 32 on Sep 14th.

**Middx:** Home Park (5). Horsenden Hill and Perivale Wood (4-5). Oakwood Park (2); 16 on Aug 8th. Parkside Farm/Res, 41 on Jul 18th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, 13 on Sep 18th.

**Kent:** Greenwich Park (6+); 21 on Aug 27th. Swanley Park (2).

**Surrey:** Clapham Comon, 20 on Sep 16th. Wimbledon Common, 12 on Aug 19th.

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (4); 15 on Dec 13th. Larkhall Park, Stockwell (1). Queen's Park, Kilburn (1).

### **Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti***

**Status:** scarce migrant and winter visitor, but increasing breeder.

After last year's noted general decrease it was pleasing to see quite a turnaround in numbers with this hard to see and harder to prove breeder. It was recorded from nearly twice as many sites as 2013 and with a threefold increase in recorded breeding. Territorial estimates (no. of territories in brackets), and peak counts are given below with records summarised for Essex, Hertfordshire and Kent.

**Essex:** Beam Valley CP, three on Apr 19th. Belhus Woods CP (4). Creekmouth, Barking, three on Mar 30th. Dagenham Chase, three on Apr 19th. Fishers Green, four on Mar 4th. Golden Gates Lake, five on Nov 26th. Hooks Marsh Lake, three on May 11th. Ingrebourne Valley (29); 30 on Oct 16th. Mar Dyke Valley (5). Netherhall GP (7). Rainham Marshes (30). Walthamstow Res (1). Waterworks NR (1). Also recorded at Barking Bay, Beckton, Cornmill Meadows, Dobb's Weir, Enfield Island Village, Hall Marsh Scrape, Harold Wood SF, Holyfield Lake, KGV Res, Orsett Fen and West Thurrock Marshes.

**Herts:** Amwell NR (2-3). Bury Lake (1). Cheshunt GP (4). Maple Lodge NR (1). Panshanger Park, four on May 16th. Rye Meads (24). Stanstead Innings, five singing birds on Sep 5th. Also recorded at Broxbourne GP, Cheshunt GP, Hertingfordbury, Stocker's Lake, Troy Mill Lake and West Hyde.

**Middx:** Bedfont Lakes CP (2), was first breeding record for site. Brent Res (1). Broadwater Lake (1). Heathrow Airport (1). Staines Moor/Stanwell Moor (6+). Also recorded at Bushy Park, East India Dock Basin, Harmondsworth Moor, Longford, Middlesex FB and Tottenham Marshes.

**Bucks:** Horton GP, one on Mar 5th & 21st and Apr 3rd, two on Apr 27th & 28th, one on Nov 24th. Wraysbury GP, recorded on 13 dates between January and April with a maximum of five on Mar 27th; also on eight dates between September and December with five on Nov 9th.

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, ten on Mar 30th. Crossness (7). Dartford Marshes, ten on Oct 3rd. Swanscombe Marshes, ten singing birds on Mar 22nd and Apr 5th. Also recorded at Darenth Lakes, Ebbsfleet, Greenhithe, Littlebrook Lake, Northfleet, Ruxley GP, Thamesmere West Lake and Upper College Farm.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, one on eight dates between September and December.

Cow Common, two Apr 14th, one Apr 18th, May 5th & 17th and Dec 31st. Holmethorpe SP, one on Nov 16th, Dec 6th & 21st. Island Barn Res (1). London Wetland Centre (5+). Morden Hall Park (1). Also recorded at Mayflower Park and Molesey Heath.

### Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

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

Recorded from slightly fewer sites than 2013 but the first bird arrived over a week earlier, on April 4th at East End Green; another four arrived over the next week. The autumn was somewhat better than 2013 with five birds in August, including an unusual Inner London record at Regent's Park on the 31st and three in September, the last at Crayford Marshes on September 17th. Territorial estimates (no. of territories in brackets) and all other records are given below.

**Essex:** Brook Farm, Upminster, one between Jul 13th-16th and Aug 1st. Cornmill Meadow, one on Apr 24th and Jun 29th. Dagenham Chase, two on Apr 24th and one on May 4th. Ingrebourne Valley, one on Apr 21st. Mar Dyke Valley, one on Jul 17th. Netherhall GP, one on May 17th. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, one on Jul 21st. Rainham Marshes (5).

**Herts:** Amwell NR (1). Bowyer's Water, one on May 17th. East End Green, one on Apr 4th & 9th. Hatfield Aerodrome, one on Jul 27th. Panshanger Park, one on Apr 23rd, two on Apr 24th. Rye Meads (2).

**Middx:** Darlands Lake, one on Apr 14th. Longford, one on Jul 4th. Rammey Marsh (2). Staines Moor (2). Trent Park, one on Aug 30th. Uxbridge, one on Apr 25th.

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, singles on Sep 5th, 6th & 17th. Swanscombe Marshes, one on Apr 28th.

**Surrey:** Island Barn Res, one on Aug 20th. London Wetland Centre, one on Apr 7th, 10th, 11th & 26th. Richmond Park, one on Aug 15th.

### Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

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

After last year's out-of-character late arrival, 2014 was more in line with recent springs with the first bird being noted at Rainham Marshes on March 28th. This was followed by daily occurrences from March 31st and migration peaked during the third week of April. Breeding at the main London site, Rainham Marshes, was up to 116 territories compared with 92 the previous year. Autumn passage started strongly with birds being recorded from 23 sites in September. After that there was just one at Rainham Marshes on October 14th, followed by what appears to be the latest record ever, at London Wetland Centre on November 24th. Below are breeding records of two or more (no. of territories in brackets), some high counts and all records for Inner London.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes (116). Roding Valley Meadows NR (2). Walthamstow Marsh (4). Walthamstow Res (8).

**Herts:** Rye Meads (57).

**Middx:** Staines Moor, seven on May 17th. Stanwell Moor, seven on May 2nd.

**Kent:** Swanscombe Marshes (4).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, 12 on Sep 9th.

**In Lond:** Hoxton, one at Regent's Park Canal on May 13th. Regent's Park, one on Apr 5th. Russia Dock Woodland, one on Sep 2nd.

### Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

**Status:** rare vagrant.

One of the outstanding finds of the year, being only London's third record. The previous records were at Canary Wharf in October 2001 and at Fishers Green in June 2003. 2014 proved to be a record year in Britain for the species with 19 recorded in the spring alone, but nonetheless it is still a very rare bird inland. Found in the morning, singing from dense scrub, it remained into the evening allowing many to add this species to their London list. Further details of this bird are in the Papers section on page 200.

**Essex:** Wanstead Flats, one on May 29th (NC *et al*).

### Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

**Status:** rare summer visitor and passage migrant.

This year again saw two singing males at Rainham Marshes, but breeding was confirmed this year. The first was on May 19th with two singing in June, one definitely paired and the other thought likely to be so, the last sighting reported was on July 11th. This is the first confirmed breeding **since** 2001, although breeding was suspected in 2002. All records are shown (no. of territories in brackets).

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes (2) (mo).

### Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

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

The first spring arrival was at Rainham Marshes on April 1st, the next at Rye Meads on the 9th and they were recorded virtually daily from then on. The peak of spring migration was in the last few days of April through to about the second week of May. Breeding records appeared to be similar to last year, the only noticeable big change being at the London Wetland Centre which saw a decrease to 12+ territories from last year's 72. Autumn movement really got going in August continuing through to September 13th, after which passage wound down. There were just five birds recorded in October; singles at Kempton NR and Leyton, with three at Rye Meads. Leyton became the temporary home to one bird that seemed to be attempting to winter, being seen almost daily from November 16th through to December 28th. There were also unusually late birds at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park on November 16th and at the London Wetland Centre on December 13th. Below are breeding records of two or more (no. of territories in brackets) and all records for Inner London.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (4). Mar Dyke Valley (2). Netherhall GP (7). Orsett Fen (5). Rainham Marshes (146). Walthamstow Marshes (3). Walthamstow Res (18). Wanstead Park (2). Warren Gorge (5). Waterworks NR (10).

**Herts:** Beech Farm GP (2). Bury Lake (3). Rye Meads (97). Stanborough Lakes (2). Tyttenhanger GP (4).

**Middx:** Bedfont Lakes CP (29). Bushy Park (3). East India Dock Basin (3). Horsenden Hill (6). Kempton NR (4). Springwell Reedbed (5). Stoke Newington Res (2). Tottenham Marsh (3).

**Kent:** Crossness (15). North Greenwich Pier (5). Sutcliffe Park (6). Swanscombe Marshes (27).



Marsh Warbler last bred in London in 2001.  
(James Lowen)

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (13). Esher Common (2). London Wetland Centre (12+). Mayflower Park (6). Richmond Park (7).

**In Lond:** Burgess Park, one on Jun 15th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2). Mile End Park, one on May 30th, singles on Jun 2nd & 7th, two on Jul 4th and one on the 8th. Regent's Park (2). Rotherhithe, one on May 2nd, two on the 4th. St James's Park, singles on May 12th & 29th-30th, one on Jul 4th. Victoria Park, one on Jun 1st.

### Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

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

The year started reasonably well with a minimum of 111 recorded during January and February (compared with 135 in just January 2013 alone). At the close of the year at least 125 were seen in November and December. Birds started appearing at new sites as early as the beginning of March but migration proper seemed to get underway in the third week of March and peaked during the third week of April. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 17% increase in London since 2013 continuing the long term trend. Autumn passage is a prolonged affair but some high counts shown below are perhaps indicative of the main period. Breeding records of five or more (no. of territories in brackets), high autumn counts and a summary of Inner London records are given below.

**Essex:** Mar Dyke Valley (13). Orsett Fen (9). Rainham Marshes (18). Walthamstow Res (8).

**Herts:** Beech Farm GP (11). Hilfield Park Res, 39 on Aug 31st. Rye Meads (36).

**Middx:** Home Park (31). Horsenden Hill (39). Q. Mary Res, 100 on Sep 6th. Stanwell Moor (5). Tottenham Marshes (27). Wormwood Scrubs (10).

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP, 40 on Sep 1st.

**Kent:** Bexley Woods (6). Greenwich Park (8+).

**Surrey:** Addington Hills (5+). Arbrook Common (10). Beddington Farmlands (17). Bookham Common (26). Farthing Downs (5). Molesey Heath (35). New Addington (8). Selsdon Park (5). The Ledges, Esher (12). West End Common (13). Wimbledon Common (c90).

**In Lond:** Camley Street Natural Park (1), Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1), Regent's Park (3); 14 on Aug 23rd. St James's Park (1-2). Records also from Barbican, Battersea, Battersea Park, Buckingham Palace, Burgess Park, Globe Town, Green Park, Hammersmith Cemetery, Lambeth, Limehouse, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Marylebone, North Kensington, Putney, Rotherhithe, Russia Dock Woodland, Shadwell Basin, St Paul's Cathedral and Victoria Park.

### Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

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

The year's first turned up on April 5th at Walthamstow Marshes. Another seven appeared in the following week but the main arrival was from the 4th week of April through to the 2nd week of May. Breeding was reported at just 29 sites (fewer than in 2013 and 2012), but with 92 territories (higher than in 2013 and 2012). Nine sites recorded birds in September, and the last of the year was at Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park on October 2nd. Below are all breeding records (no. of territories in brackets) and a summary of records for Inner London.

**Essex:** Chigwell (1). Netherhall GP (8). Wanstead Flats (2).

**Herts:** Bury Lake (1). Chess Valley (1). Hatfield (1). Lynster's Lake (1). Radlett (1). Rye Meads (22). Stanstead Abbots (1). Stocker's Lake (1). Troy Mill Lake (1).

**Middx:** Brent Res (3). Broadwater Lake (1). Finsbury Park (1). Fir & Pond Woods (1). Home Park (3). Horsenden Hill (1). Maple Lodge NR (1). Tottenham Marshes (2). Totteridge Valley (1). Trent Park (2). Tyttenhanger GP (1).

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP, 20 on Apr 27th.

**Kent:** Sevenoaks WR (1).

**Surrey:** Bookham Common (7). Epsom Common (2). Molesey Heath (5). West End Common (1). Wimbledon Common (19).

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, singles on four dates in July, up to two birds on 21 dates in August and singles on Sep 2nd & 5th. Russia Dock Woodland, one on Sep 2nd.

### Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

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

Spring arrival, with the exception of quite an early bird at Balls Park on March 27th, was back to more normal timing, birds arriving daily from April 9th and peaking in the third week of April. After a modest rise last year breeding numbers were somewhat down, with 45 records from 32 sites (2013 59+ records from 38 sites). Autumn passage started in earnest around mid-August. Birds were recorded virtually daily during September, from 42 different sites. But just two birds were reported in October, both on the 4th. One was at Horsenden Hill and the other, at Woodford Green, was a pale sandy-backed bird considered to be one of the eastern races. All breeding records (no. of territories in brackets), some high counts and Inner London records are shown below.

**Essex:** Lion Gorge (1). Orsett Fen (1). Rainham Marshes (4). Roding Valley Meadows NR (1). Walthamstow Marshes (1). Wanstead Flats (5); 15 on Aug 16th. Warren Gorge (1).

**Herts:** Beech Farm GP (1). Brookmans Park (1). Hatfield (1). Hatfield Aerodrome (1); nine on Aug 23rd. North Mymms Park (1). Rye Meads (3). Tyttenhanger GP (1).

**Middx:** Brent Res (1). Brunel University (2). Darlands Lake (1). Holly Hill Farm (1). Horsenden Hill (2). Newyears Green (1). Park Farm (1). Ten Acre Wood (4). Tottenham Marshes (2). Yeading Brook Meadows (1). Wormwood Scrubs (3).

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP (1).

**Kent:** Kemsing (1). Swanscombe Marshes (2).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (1). Bookham Common (2). Island Barn Res (1). Rushett Farm (1). Teddington Lock (1).

**In Lond:** Vauxhall, one on Apr 22nd. Mile End Park, one on May 12th. Regent's Park, one on Apr 24th; up to three on nine dates in August, one on Sep 8th, two on 10th and one on 19th.

### Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

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

Although there were no records in December last year, for the third year running, there was a January record: at Hertford on 24th. Presumed spring records started from March 5th at Crossness and then at a further five sites through till the end of March but daily sightings were not recorded until April 8th. Passage peaked in the first week of May. Breeding numbers seemed similar to the previous year. Birds were widely reported throughout September but at only three sites in October. More unusually, up to two birds were recorded on most days from the middle of November up until December 22nd on a traffic island at Leyton. This was at the same site as the Reed Warbler mentioned above. Below are breeding records of ten or more (no. of territories in brackets), some high counts and a summary of records for Inner London.

**Essex:** Mar Dyke Valley, 49 on Jul 14th. Netherhall GP (20). Orsett Fen (19). Rainham Marshes (74). Wanstead Flats, 40 on Aug 6th, 7th & 16th.

**Herts:** Beech Farm GP (13). Rye Meads (24).

**Middx:** Horsenden Hill (17). Tottenham Marshes (16). Wormwood Scrubs (18); 40 on Jul 22nd.

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP, 35 on Sep 1st.

**Kent:** Crossness (10). Foots Cray Meadow (15+). Swanscombe Marshes (16).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (41). Bookham Common (15). Canons Farm (9). Molesey Heath (32). Wimbledon Common (33).

**In Lond:** Mile End Park, singles on five dates in May and two dates in July. Regent's Park, one on Apr 29th, Jul 28th & 31st then up to six throughout August and up to three on six dates in September, the last on the 23rd.

#### 2013 Addition

**Essex:** Sewardstone Marsh, one on Nov 1st.

### Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*

**Status:** rare breeding species, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Still remains an Amber List species due to a large decline in the 1960s after severe winters, since when it has made a steady recovery.

Last year's wintering bird at Richmond Park was not recorded at the beginning of 2014, in fact no birds were seen in London until one was found, again at Richmond Park, in October. The second winter proved to be quite productive with five birds at four sites but still a far cry from the 13 sites in 2009. All records are given below.

**Middx:** Bushy Park, one on Nov 14th & 28th. Staines Moor, one from Nov 15th to Dec 16th.

**Bucks:** Colnbrook Landfill, one on Nov 9th & 16th.

**Surrey:** Richmond Park, one from Oct 29th to Dec 29th, with two on Nov 4th.

### Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

**Status:** scarce passage migrant.

There were perhaps three records this year, including the first records for Inner London. The only other years with three records have been 2009 and 1994. Given the huge increase

in national records (in five of the years between 2000 and 2012 there were influxes of over 1,000), this is a bird that should be looked for in all suitable habitats in London during the autumn. All records are given below.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, up to two from Oct 19th-29th (BR, Mil *et al*).

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, one on Sep 21st, with presumably another from Oct 17th-27th (GHn, DJ *et al*).

### Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

**Status:** scarce passage migrant and former breeding summer visitor.

There were five birds in the spring (fewer than the nine last year) but five in the autumn was the same total as last year. Overall this year's figures are better than those for 2011 or 2012 but there is no sign of the decline slowing. All records are given below.

**Essex:** Bedfords Park, one on May 25th. Belhus Woods CP, one from Aug 18th-20th. Valentines Park, one on Apr 21st. Wanstead Flats, one on Aug 17th.

**Middx:** Broadwater Lake, one on May 17th. Hampstead Heath, one on Aug 31st. Totteridge Valley, one on Aug 13th

**Surrey:** Banstead Wood, two on May 11th.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, one on Aug 19th.

### Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

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

Recorded wintering in January and February at 49 sites (47 last year) but with a high count of just eight (17 last year) at Troy Mill Lake/Broadwater Lake on January 12th. The second-winter period was more productive with birds being seen at 94 sites (74 last year) and a high count of seven at Troy Mill Lake on December 29th. Spring passage was underway around the second week of March, peaking between the end of the month and the middle of April. For the 11 sites where we have data for 2013 and 2014, breeding numbers were up 23% on average. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year but an increase of 21% in England from 2013-2014. Below are breeding records of five or more (no. of territories in brackets), some high counts and a summary of records for Inner London.

**Essex:** Mar Dyke Valley (5). Netherhall GP (15). Rainham Marshes (12). Wanstead Flats, 40 on Aug 25th.

**Herts:** Rye Meads (21).

**Middx:** Home Park (5). Tottenham Marshes (22). Totteridge Valley, 26 on Apr 11th. Wormwood Scrubs (8).

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP, 20 on Apr 13th & 22nd and Sep 29th.

**Kent:** Foots Cray Meadow (16).

**Surrey:** Addington Hills (5). Arbrook Common (10). Barwell Court Farm (7). Bookham Common (28). Canons Farm (5). Esher Common (9). Hutchinson's Bank (5). London Wetland Centre, 50 on Sep 14th. Molesey Heath (20). Queen Mary Res, 40 on Sep 13th. Riddlesdown (10+). Selsdon Wood (5). South Norwood CP (6+). South Norwood Lake (9). The Ledges, Esher (5). West End Common (6). Wimbledon Common (45).

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Apr 12th, Sep 13th-14th, with three on 24th



*Chiffchaff.* (Jonathan Lethbridge)

and further singles on 28th, Oct 12th and Nov 6th. Regent's Park, recorded January to March with a high count of 18 on Mar 21st, then from Aug 21st to Dec 13th, with 40 on Sep 22nd. Records also from Barbican, Battersea Park, Bethnal Green, Camley St Natural Park, Hammersmith Cemetery, Holland Park, Limehouse, Rotherhithe, Russia Dock Woodland, St Botolph's Churchyard, St Katherine's Way, St James's Park, Victoria, Victoria Park.

#### **SUB-SPECIES: Siberian Chiffchaff *P. c. tristis***

**Status:** rare winter visitor and passage migrant.

The Stocker's Lake bird from 2013 was still there at the start of the year and, from January 13th to 26th, two were present along the Colne Valley. In March there was one at London Wetland Centre. At the end of the year there were singles at four sites. This would be six new birds this year, the highest total since 1991 when there were eight. All records are given below.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, one on Dec 14th (MJ), 28th (JR, KD) & 31st (RSPB).

**Herts/Middx:** Broadwater Lake, Stocker's Lake and Troy Mill Lake, one or two from Jan 2nd-26th, then one on Dec 24th, 27th & 29th (mo).

**Bucks:** Horton GP, one on Dec 7th (CDRH).

**Kent:** Foots Cray Meadows, one from Dec 19th-31st (IS, SJG).

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, one from Mar 24th to Apr 1st (BW, RK, ASa, Al, JPPW).

#### **Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus***

**Status:** common and widespread passage migrant, declining as a breeding species in the London Area and UK-wide which has caused it to be Amber listed.

After four consecutive years with winter records, there were none this year. The first was

on March 14th at the London Wetland Centre, although it was nearly two weeks before arrivals were recorded daily. Spring passage peaked around the middle of April. Mixed singers were recorded at Rainham Marshes and Whittings Hill OS. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 7% decline in England this year and our breeding records also declined: there were only 19 sites reporting territories (down from 37 last year) and the total number of territories was down to 38 (from 45+ last year). The autumn passage was heaviest at the end of August and trailed off significantly after the first week of September. There were just four October records, the last at Wimbledon Common on the 16th. Below are all breeding records (no. of territories in brackets) and a summary of records for Inner London.

**Essex:** Lippits Hill (3). Netherhall GP (2). Orsett Fen (1). Pages Wood (8). Thames Chase (4). Wanstead Flats (1).

**Herts:** Amwell NR (1). Beech Farm GP (3). Essendonbury (1). Rye Meads (4). Stanstead Abbots (1). Tyttenhanger GP (1).

**Middx:** Grovelands Park (1). Middlesex FB (1).

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP, five on Sep 1st.

**Kent:** Sevenoaks WR (1).

**Surrey:** Banstead Wood (1). Barwell Court Farm (3). Epsom Common (1). Limpsfield Chart, no territorial birds for the first time in 30 years. London Wetland Centre (1).

**In Lond:** Hammersmith Cemetery, one on Sep 14th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Sep 9th. Limehouse, one on Sep 27th. Regent's Park, only one in spring on Mar 31st but several in autumn with peak of 25 in August and the last on Sep 12th. Southwark, one on May 9th. St James's Park, one on Aug 11th. Victoria Park, one on Sep 6th.

#### **Goldcrest *Regulus regulus***

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

There were 96 territories reported this year (161 in 2013). Numbers fell for the second year running and are now at about the same level as they were in 2008 after several years of increase (peaking at 226 in 2012). This species is prone to fluctuations, especially depending on the severity of the winter but the pattern may well be due to variations in reporting. Numbers in Essex, Kent and Middlesex were similar but there were large falls in Hertfordshire, Inner London and Surrey (there was no breeding count for Wimbledon Common and Putney Heath where there were 31 territories last year). The Breeding Bird Survey show a 21% increase in England. All records of breeding (pairs/singing males/territories of two or more) are given below (in brackets) with peak counts for each sector and a summary for Inner London.

**Essex:** Eight pairs. Belhus Woods CP, 13 on Oct 14th. Grays Cemetery (2). Hangman's Wood (2).

**Herts:** 17 pairs. Chandler's Cross, 13 on Nov 19th. Northaw Great Wood (5).

**Middx:** 32 pairs. Alexandra Park, 15 on Oct 4th. Home Park (2). Horsenden Hill (2). Trent Park (5).

**Bucks:** Black Park, ten on Feb 3rd & 10th.

**Kent:** Six pairs. Greenwich Park (4+). Lamorbey Park, 20 on Oct 10th.

**Surrey:** 33 pairs. Banstead Wood (2). Esher Common (3). Hogsmill SW (5). Long Ditton, 18 on Sep 28th. Sanderstead (4). West End Common (2).

**In Lond:** One on Jun 9th at St James's Park was the only one reported during the breeding season. Reported from ten sites outside the breeding season.

### Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

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

They were reported from 65 sites during the year (57 in 2013) with similar numbers in the two winter periods. The low number of sites from Hertfordshire is perhaps surprising.

Firecrest	Essex	Herts	Middx	Bucks	Kent	Surrey	In Lond	Totals
Jan-Mar no. of sites	13	3	6	0	3	7	1	33
Oct-Dec no. of sites	7	1	8	0	9	7	1	33
Jan-Dec no. of sites	16	5	15	0	11	14	4	65

During January to March, there were six sites with birds reported for a prolonged period: Banstead Downs, Bedfords Park, Grovelands Park, Leyton Flats, Middlesex FB and Trent Park. There were three wintering at Middlesex FB on January 14th and three at Warley Place NR on January 16th. Two were recorded at ten other sites.

There was little evidence of passage with six in April and two in May. There were no reports in June and July.

The first birds of the autumn were at Leyton Flats on August 20th and Walthamstow Marshes on August 21st. In September, birds were reported from nine sites. From October, there were seven sites with birds reported for a prolonged period: Leyton Flats, Longford, Monken Hadley Common, Oxleas Wood, Sidcup, Sydenham Hill Wood and Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park. There were three at Sydenham Hill Wood and Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park with two at 12 other sites.

### Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

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

In spring, they were reported from 25 sites (29 in 2013) with the first on April 23rd at Blackheath Village. Most records related to single birds that were sometimes seen on more than one day and involved a minimum of 34 birds (33 last year).

There was one confirmed breeding pair in Middlesex and nest building was observed at two sites in Hertfordshire. Last year, there were three, possibly four, breeding pairs. Between mid-June and early July, birds were seen at five sites that might have related to breeding birds.

In autumn, the first returning bird was probably on July 19th at Hatfield Park with the last on October 12th at Victoria Park. Passage was most pronounced between August 23rd and September 6th. They were reported from 108 sites (55 in 2013) with many staying for more than one day and many sightings of more than one bird. With such good numbers, it was impossible to estimate the exact number of birds involved but it was clearly well over 300 (203 in 2013). On August 31st, 89 birds were reported, probably the highest one-day total for a number of years.

All records showing signs of breeding, number of sites in spring/autumn, counts over ten or highest in the sector and a summary of Inner London records are given below.

**Essex:** Spring five sites, autumn 35 sites. Dagenham Chase, 12 on Aug 31st. Wanstead

Flats, 14 on Aug 31st. Weald CP, 12 on August 24th.

**Herts:** Spring four sites, autumn 14 sites. Essendon Country Club, one nest building on May 31st. Amwell NR, four on Aug 17th. Lower Woodside, one nest building on May 31st.

**Middx:** Spring ten sites, autumn 32 sites. Alexandra Park, eight on Sep 6th. Vicarage Farm, pair successfully raised four juvs.

**Bucks:** Autumn four sites. Colnbrook Landfill, three on Aug 31st.

**Kent:** Spring two sites, autumn seven sites. Chevening, two on Jul 4th.

**Surrey:** Spring four sites, autumn 12 sites. London Wetland Centre, three on Sep 6th.

**In Lond:** Hammersmith Cemetery, one on Sep 4th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Sep 7th. Regent's Park, seen most days between Aug 12th and Oct 4th with a peak of nine on Aug 31st. Victoria Park, five on Sep 6th and one Oct 12th.

### Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

**Status:** passage migrant in variable numbers.

There were two spring records this year (seven last year): a male at Holmethorpe SP on April 10th and one at Bedfords Park on May 25th.

The first bird of the autumn was on the early date of July 31st at Wanstead Flats, which was probably the same bird that was seen until August 3rd. The next bird was on a more usual date of August 19th at Banstead Wood. There were four more records in August: Wanstead Flats (24th), Trent Park (30th), Dagenham Chase (31st) and Walthamstow Marshes (31st). In September, after one at Belhus Woods CP on 1st, there were eight records between 4th and 9th (4th at Mayesbrook Park, Pinner Park Farm; 5th at Wanstead Flats and West Ham Park; 6th at Greenwich Ecology Park; 7th at Walthamstow Marshes; and 9th at Upshire and the only Inner London record at Lincoln's Inn). The last records were at Leyton (13th), Alexandra Lake in Thurrock (14th) and Trent Park (15th). All records relate to single birds so there were 18 birds on autumn passage in total (20 last year).

### Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

**Status:** rare autumn and winter visitor, very rare breeder.

There were records from nine sites (ten in 2013) with birds seen at three sites in the first-winter period and at nine sites in the second-winter period. Five pairs bred at Rainham Marshes where birds were seen throughout the year. Other long-staying birds were at Amwell NR (January to March), Beddington Farmlands (October to December) and London Wetland Centre (January to March). All records are given below, summarised in some cases.

**Essex:** Enfield Island Village, fem on Oct 14th. Mar Dyke Valley, an adult and juv on Aug 2nd and two on Nov 17th. Rainham Marshes, seen throughout the year where five pairs were considered to have two broods. Sewardstone Marsh, fem on Oct 15th (same as Enfield Island Village bird).

**Herts:** Amwell NR, one seen from Jan 5th to Mar 9th.

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, calling on Oct 14th. Swanscombe Marshes, six males and a fem on Sep 27th, calling on Oct 25th and Dec 6th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, up to three from Oct 19th to Dec 30th. London Wetland Centre, one on several dates between Jan 10th to Mar 11th, two on Oct 23rd and one on Dec 13th, 19th & 29th.

### Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

**Status:** common and widespread breeding resident.

There were at least 176 pairs reported this year, down from 216 last year. Most sectors showed a fall but it was particularly marked for Middlesex (24 down from 50). For the sites where we have data for both 2013 and 2014 there is little sign of change. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 14% increase for England. All records of breeding (pairs/singing males/territories of three or more) are given below (in brackets) with peak counts for each sector and a summary for Inner London.

**Essex:** 24 pairs. Belhus Woods CP (4). Mar Dyke Valley (4); 40 on Jul 5th. Rainham Marshes (7). Wanstead Flats, 40 on Jul 30th.

**Herts:** 30 pairs. Northaw Great Wood (5). Rye Meads (10). St Albans, 60 on Oct 10th.

**Middx:** 24 pairs. Home Park (8). Horsenden Hill (5); 52 on Oct 25th. Bushy Park, 65 on Jan 19th.

**Kent:** 12 pairs. Greenwich Park (5-6). Sevenoaks WR, 25 on Nov 26th.

**Surrey:** 83 pairs. Beddington Farmlands (3). The Ledges, Esher, 30 on Nov 23rd. Molesey Heath (3). Sydenham Hill Wood, a white-headed individual from Dec 19th-27th was never seen well, but was probably an aberrant British bird or intergrade rather than a Northern Long-tailed Tit. Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (60).

**In Lond:** Three pairs and reported from 11 sites. Battersea Park (2). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (bred); 30 on Aug 19th. St James's Park (1). Victoria Park, ten on Jan 1st.

### Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

**Status:** abundant breeding resident.

The number of territories/pairs reported was fewer than last year (352 compared with 441); however, there were changes between sectors with increases in Hertfordshire, and decreases in Kent, Surrey and Middlesex. Vagaries in reporting are likely to be responsible with no counts from several sites that had high numbers last year. The Breeding Bird Survey showed no significant change in London between 2013 and 2014. There were three very high counts of 100 or more with one relating to Inner London. All records of breeding (pairs/singing males/territories of more than 15) are given below (in brackets) with peak counts for each sector and a summary for Inner London.

**Essex:** 50 pairs. Leyton Flats, 50 on Sep 12th. Mar Dyke Valley (20); 47 on Dec 9th.

**Herts:** 141 pairs. Hoddesdonpark Wood, 56 on Feb 13th. Northaw Great Wood (26). Rye Meads (25). Tyttenhanger GP (15). Wormley Wood, 49 on Feb 10th.

**Middx:** 39 pairs. Brent Res, 200 on Aug 25th. Home Park (32); 44 on Dec 28th.

**Kent:** 14 pairs. Sevenoaks WR, 42 on Jan 12th.

**Surrey:** 105 pairs. Long Ditton, 64 on Dec 29th. Richmond Park (44); 100 on Dec 30th.

**In Lond:** Reported from 17 sites. Battersea Park, Chelsea, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns and Larkhall Park, Stockwell all reported breeding. There was a very high count of 112 at Victoria Park on Sep 6th.

### Great Tit *Parus major*

**Status:** abundant breeding resident.

The number of territories/pairs reported was 325 (452 last year). Like Blue Tit, it is

under-reported. There were declines in all sectors, except Hertfordshire. The Breeding Bird Survey in London showed a 22% decline between 2013 and 2014. All records of breeding (pairs/singing males/territories of more than 12) are given below (in brackets) with peak counts for each sector and a summary for Inner London.

**Essex:** 46 pairs. Mar Dyke Valley (13); 52 on Jun 5th. Belhus Woods CP, 49 on Jun 2nd.

**Herts:** 150 pairs. Hoddesdonpark Wood, 60 on Feb 13th. Northaw Great Wood (25); 41 on Jan 9th. Rye Meads (34).

**Middx:** 29 pairs. Home Park (19), 46 on Jul 26th.

**Kent:** 12 pairs. Darenth Lakes, 28 on Mar 7th. Greenwich Park (10+). Sevenoaks WR, 24 on Jan 25th.

**Surrey:** 87 pairs. Beddington Farmlands (29). Long Ditton, 37 on Sep 28th. Molesey Heath (12); 36 on Feb 16th.

**In Lond:** Reported from 18 sites. But only Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns and Larkhall Park, Stockwell reported breeding. There was a high count of 56 at Victoria Park on Sep 6th.

### Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

**Status:** common breeding species.

The number of territories/pairs showed a slight decrease (115 compared with 124 last year). The Breeding Bird Survey showed an 18% increase for England between 2013 and 2014. All records of breeding (pairs/singing males/territories of two or more) are given below (in brackets) with peak counts for each sector and a summary for Inner London.

*Nuthatch seems to be doing well in our area. (Russ Sherriff)*



**Essex:** Three pairs. Thorndon CP, eight on Jan 25th.

**Herts:** 18 pairs. Hoddesdonpark Wood, 13 on Mar 9th and Dec 31st. Northaw Great Wood (6). Symondshyde Great Wood (2). Wormley Wood, 13 on Feb 10th.

**Middx:** 21 pairs. Brent Res (2). Trent Park (4); six on Jan 14th, 20th and Mar 29th. Whitewebbs Wood (2).

**Kent:** Eight pairs. Foots Cray Meadows (2). Greenwich Park (3-4). Manor Farm, Dryhill, seven on Mar 4th.

**Surrey:** 61 pairs. Banstead Wood, 12 on Jan 19th and Feb 16th. Canons Farm (6). Esher Common (4). Ham Common (3). New Malden (5). Portsmouth Rd FB (2). Queens Promenade (2). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (40).

**In Lond:** Reported from Buckingham Palace Gdns; Hammersmith Cemetery where bred; Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns where three territories; Regent's Park; St James's Park where holding a territory.

### Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

**Status:** localised and declining breeding resident and scarce winter visitor.

Birds were reported from 34 sites (27 in 2013) with 17 being between March and July (20 in 2013). There were no sites where breeding was confirmed but it was suspected at Northaw Great Wood. Of the 17 potential breeding sites, 11 relate to birds seen on a single day. Birds were reported from 16 sites in Surrey (18 in 2013), 14 sites in Herts (four in 2013 but 15 in 2012) and two sites in Kent and Essex. There were several sites (Sevenoaks WR, Banstead Wood, Hutchinson's Bank and Selsdon Woods) where there were multiple sightings last year but only one or no sightings this year. There was a high count of 11 at Mickleham. The Breeding Bird Survey showed a 32% decline for England between 1995 and 2013. A summary of records for all sites is given below.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, one on Mar 23rd. Upminster, one on Aug 8th & 10th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, seen on four dates in January, Mar 31st, Jun 29th then regularly from Sep 27th to the end of the year with three on several dates. Batchworth, one on Feb 19th. Bencroft Wood, two on Mar 16th. Broxbourne Woods, one on Oct 22nd. Cole Green, two on Dec 14th. Essenden, one on Jan 12th. Leavesden Green, one on Mar 1st. Loudwater, one on Aug 1st. Northaw Great Wood, seen throughout the year with two singing males on Mar 21st and Apr 3rd. Panshanger, one on Sep 3rd. Rickmansworth Aquadrome, one on Feb 19th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Apr 12th. Wormley Wood, up to three on Mar 10th, Apr 8th and Nov 24th.

**Kent:** Knockholt/Cudham, six on Nov 18th. Sevenoaks WR, one on Apr 2nd.

**Surrey:** Ansley Berry Shaw, one on Mar 7th and two on 28th. Banstead Wood, one on Mar 9th. Beddington Farmlands, one on Nov 15th. Bookham Common, one unless otherwise stated on Feb 3rd, 6th (2), Mar 19th (3), Oct 30th and Nov 30th. Cobham, one on Dec 30th. Juniper Bottom, three on Feb 9th. Juniper Hall, two on Mar 1st and one on 2nd. Kings Wood, one on Apr 4th. Lumberdine Wood, two on Apr 28th and one in October and November. Marden Park Woods, one on Nov 3rd. Mickleham, 11 on Jan 10th. New Addington, one on Apr 30th. Norbury Park, Leatherhead, two on Jan 2nd and one on Mar 27th. Riddlesdown, one on Apr 4th & 10th, Sep 26th and Nov 6th. Selsdon Woods, two on Jan 27th.

### Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

**Status:** common breeding resident.

There were at least 91 pairs/territories reported this year, which was similar to last year (92 pairs). This total is undoubtedly an underestimate; birds were reported from 232 sites (211 last year). All sectors, except Surrey, showed an increase in the number of sites. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 6% increase for England between 2013 and 2014. All records of breeding (pairs/singing males/territories of two or more) are given below (in brackets) with peak counts for each sector and a summary for Inner London.

**Essex:** 39 sites, one pair. Dagnam Park, seven on Dec 31st. Warley Place NR, seven on Jan 16th. Long Running, Epping Forest, seven on Jan 14th.

**Herts:** 64 sites, 20 pairs. Bricket Wood Common (3). Cassiobury Park, 20+ on Mar 16th. Hoddesdonpark Wood, 18 on Mar 9th. Northaw Great Wood (2); 14+ on Mar 15th.

**Bucks:** One site. Black Park, six on Mar 12th.

**Middx:** 58 sites, 22 pairs. Bushy Park (2). Fishpond Wood LNR (2). Horsenden Hill (2). Little Beechill Wood (1). Monken Hadley Common (3). Ruislip Woods, seven on Mar 9th. Trent Park (2); seven on Jan 27th.

**Kent:** 31 sites, five pairs. Greenwich Park (3-4). High Elms, six on Mar 9th.

**Surrey:** 37 sites, 39 pairs. Banstead Wood, 12 on Jan 5th. Barwell Court Farm (2). Kings Wood (2). Richmond Park (3, presumably an underestimate since there were 24 pairs in 2012). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (24).

**In Lond:** Buckingham Palace Gdns, one on Jun 25th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2).

### Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

**Status:** common breeding resident.

There were at least 46 pairs/territories reported this year, down from 69 last year. The decline may reflect changes in reporting (there was no count this year from Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath where there were 27 territories in 2013). It is good to report breeding from Essex and Kent where none were reported last year and there was an increase in Middlesex. They were reported from a total of 187 sites (137 in 2013) with 77 between March and July (82 in 2013). The Breeding Bird Survey showed a 10% increase in England for 2013-2014. All records of breeding (pairs/singing males/territories of two or more) are given below (in brackets) with peak counts for each sector and a summary for Inner London.

**Essex:** 30 sites, three pairs. Bedfords Park, three on Jan 1st and Sep 21st. High Beech, Epping Forest, three on Jan 8th. Larks Wood (2), a welcome return where last year they were no longer considered regular. Warley Place NR, three on Jan 16th.

**Herts:** 51 sites, 12 pairs. Cassiobury Park, 10+ on Mar 16th. Hoddesdonpark Wood, 11 on Mar 9th. Northaw Great Wood (3); eight on Mar 21st. Wormley Wood, ten on Mar 10th.

**Middx:** 43 sites, 20 pairs. Home Park (2). Longford, eight on Feb 25th. Monken Hadley Common (3). Grovelands Park (1). Totteridge Valley (2). Trent Park (5); six on Feb 27th and Mar 28th.

**Bucks:** Five sites.

**Kent:** 21 sites, one pair. Sevenoaks WR, up to four seen throughout the year but no reports of breeding.



Above: Great Grey Shrike - a great find in London. (Andrew Moon)

Left: Tree Creeper territories declined in 2014. (Nick Croft)

**Surrey:** 35 sites, nine pairs. Banstead Wood, six on Mar 19th. Canons Farm (2+). Richmond Park seen throughout the year but no reports of breeding (23 territories in 2012). West End Common (2).

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (probably breeding). Regent's Park, one on Aug 20th & 27th and Sep 5th.

### Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

**Status:** rare passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were two records, which is unusual in recent years. Between 2000 and 2014 there have been single records in seven of those years, no records in five of those years and two records in just three of those years. Both these records were in the autumn, which is the most likely time for them to be seen; 11 of the 25 records since 1990 were in late September or October.

**Middx:** Ickenham Marsh, juv/1st-calendar bird on Sep 29th (AVM).

**Bucks:** Colnbrook Landfill, 1st-winter bird on Oct 20th (CDRH).

### Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

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

The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 13% decline in the UK from 2013-2014 but our records show no similar decline. The notes below list all records with evidence of breeding pairs (no. of pairs in brackets) and some of the higher counts. There were reports from 12 sites in Inner London, about the same as last year, and all are given below.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (4); 16 on Oct 13th. Havering-atte-Bower, 12 on Oct 12th. Leyton Flats, 15 on Oct 10th. Mar Dyke Valley (4). Wanstead Park, 15 on Mar 16th.

**Herts:** North Mymms Park, 11 on Sep 30th. Rye Meads, 12 on Sep 13th. Tyttenhanger GP, ten on Sep 30th. Woodside, Hatfield, ten on Sep 13th.

**Middx:** Home Park (4). Horsenden Hill and Perivale Wood, ten on Jan 11th. Stanwell Moor, 15 on Sep 25th. Tottenham Marshes (2).

**Bucks:** Horton GP, 18 on Sep 18th.

**Kent:** Darenth Lakes, 14 on Oct 2nd. Greenwich Park (2-3).

**Surrey:** Canons Farm, 25 on Sep 27th. Hogsmill SW, 12 on Sep 27th. London Wetland Centre, 22 flew over on Sep 22nd. Long Ditton, 12 on Mar 14th. Richmond Park, 20 on Oct 14th. The Ledges, Esher (2). West End Common (3). Wimbledon Common (c15).

**In Lond:** Barbican, one on Oct 12th. Buckingham Palace Gdns, two on Dec 11th. Hammersmith Cemetery, two on Nov 12th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (bred); eight on Nov 19th. London Wall, one on Apr 24th. Maida Vale, one on Apr 6th. Regent's Park, ten on Oct 3rd. St James's Park, one on Mar 2nd. St John's Wood, one on Jan 31st. Stepney, one from Feb 17th to Mar 31st. Victoria Park, four on Jan 4th. Wapping Canals, two on Oct 17th.

### Magpie *Pica pica*

**Status:** abundant breeding resident.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 17% increase from 2013-2014 and a long-term 34% increase in London from 1995-2013. We receive few breeding estimates and more would be welcome. High counts and breeding counts of two or more are given below, except for Inner London, where all breeding counts are given.

**Essex:** Chafford Hundred, 54 on Jan 13th. Grays Gorge, 48 roosting on Nov 2nd. Mar Dyke Valley, 34 on Jan 17th. Roding Valley Meadows NR, 76 roosting on Feb 5th. Strawberry Hill Ponds, 78 on Dec 22nd. Warren Gorge, 75 on Dec 15th.

**Herts:** Confirmed breeding groups at Chess Valley, Chorleywood, Croxley Common Moor, Maple Cross and West Hyde. Bushey Hall GC, 38 on Dec 15th. Cassiobury Park, 30 on Mar 16th. Essendon, 22 on May 25th. Hatfield, 28 on Feb 12th. Hilfield Park Res, 26 on Mar 16th. Rickmansworth, 28 on Dec 31st. Rye Meads, 40 on Dec 14th. Tyttenhanger GP, 23 on Mar 18th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, 20 on Mar 16th. Bushy Park, 25 on Sep 20th. Home Park, 31 on Nov 29th. Horsenden Hill and Perivale Wood, 21 on Nov 1st. Pinner Park Farm, 38 on Apr 10th. Teddington, 32 on Sep 10th. Vicarage Farm, 30 in July and in September. Wormwood Scrubs, 30 on Sep 30th.

**Bucks:** Colnbrook Landfill, 33 on Oct 25th.

**Kent:** Chipstead Lake, 50 on Nov 25th. Darenth Lakes, 58 on Nov 11th. Greatness Pits, 35 on Jan 19th. Greenwich Park, bred, but no count made. R Darent, Otford Road, 37 on Feb 14th. Sevenoaks WR, 30 on Jan 25th and Feb 12th.

**Surrey:** Berrylands, 39 on Dec 13th. Elmbridge, 29 on Dec 19th. Hogsmill OS, 49 on Oct 4th. Hogsmill SW, 23 on Oct 15th. London Wetland Centre, 38 on Jan 16th. Long Ditton, 29 on Oct 26th. Molesey Heath (7); 23 on Dec 26th. New Malden, 27 on Dec 31st. Richmond Park, 29 on Oct 16th. Steven's Eyot, 27 on Dec 3rd. Tolworth, 45 on Sep 27th. Tooting Common, 40 on Feb 3rd.

**In Lond:** Battersea Park, seven on Jan 28th and Mar 27th. Buckingham Palace Gdns, 13 on Dec 10th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (bred); 11 on May 25th. Regent's Park, eight on Jan 16th. St James's Park, seven on Jan 12th. Victoria Park, 22 on Feb 1st and 13 in single flock on Nov 7th. West Smithfield (1).

### Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

**Status:** common breeding resident and passage migrant; much scarcer in the inner suburbs and city centre.

Jackdaws are now the fifth most common species recorded in the Breeding Bird Survey in the UK and the breeding population has increased by 72% in south-east England since 1995 (BTO website, BBS data). Not all counts make clear whether they are feeding, passage or roost counts but there seem to be fewer passage counts again this year. High roost or feeding counts are given below, with some breeding records and all Inner London records.

**Essex:** Bedfords Park, 800 on Jan 1st. Clay Tye Wood, 700 roosting on Feb 13th and Dec 9th. Hangman's Wood (4). Holyfield Hall Farm, 500 on Oct 19th. Holyfield Lake, 300 on May 2nd. Mar Dyke Valley (9).

**Herts:** Breeding was reported at Chess Valley, Holt Farm and Northaw Great Wood. Maple Lodge NR, 500 pre-roost on Dec 6th, 1,000+ roosting on Dec 20th. Rye Meads, 283 on Feb 24th. West End, 350 on Jul 5th. West Hyde, 300 on Aug 28th.

**Middx:** Bedfont Lakes CP, 800 on Nov 30th leaving roost. Brent Res, 350+ flying to roost on Feb 24th. Home Park/Bushy Park area, 570 on Jul 9th flying to roost. Pinner Park Farm, 278 on Jul 24th. Staines Res, 500 on Oct 11th to roost.

**Kent:** Chipstead Lake, 200 on Jan 7th flying towards roost at Sevenoaks WR. Greenwich Park (10-15). Sevenoaks WR, 1,100 roosting on Dec 7th.

**Surrey:** Hogsmill SW, 440 on Jul 12th. New Malden, 257 on Dec 31st. Norbiton, 292 on Jul 2nd. Queens Promenade, 300 on Sep 11th pre-roost. Richmond Park, 740 on Dec 30th. Rushett Farm, c350 on Aug 15th. Wimbledon Common, 250 on Nov 19th. Worcester Park, 380 on Sep 6th.

**In Lond:** Canal Reach, King's Cross, 70 on Feb 26th and eight on Mar 10th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, two on Jan 8th, five on Feb 11th, four on Feb 13th and two on Mar 5th. Regent's Park/Primrose Hill, recorded Jan 2nd, four dates in March and 14 dates from Aug 24th to Dec 28th; highest count 14 N on Oct 5th. Tower Bridge area, one on Mar 29th.



*In late autumn Jays gather food to store for the coming winter. (Jonathan Lethbridge)*

### Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

**Status:** common breeding resident in the outer part of the London Area, much scarcer in urban localities.

There were very few rookeries reported. From 1995 to 2013 there has been a 13% decrease in the English breeding population (BTO website, BBS data). Regular counts from rookeries would be very welcome. For much of the London Area Rooks are just occasional fly-overs, often being stated as scarce. Details of all rookeries are given below, with the number of nests in brackets, followed by some of the highest counts in each sector and all the records from Inner London, which have increased from last year's single record.

**Essex:** Brook Farm, Upminster, 47 on Sep 6th. Clay Tye Wood (47); 400 on Feb 13th, Nov 17th and Dec 9th at roost. Golden Gates Lake, 280+ on Sep 27th. North Weald, 115 on Nov 15th. Roding Valley Meadows NR (10). Stapleford Tawney, 260 on Jun 25th.

**Herts:** Chiswell Green (8). Micklefield Green (16). Sawpit Spring, Chandler's Cross (16). Tyttenhanger GP, 50 on Dec 22nd. West Hyde, 60 on Aug 27th.

**Middx:** Totteridge Valley, 40 on Jan 28th and 30 on Dec 11th.

**Kent:** Darenth Lakes, 35 on Mar 7th.

**Surrey:** Canons Farm, 35 on Sep 11th. Norbury Park, 25 on Jan 30th. Titsey (8), down from 13 last year.

**In Lond:** City Road EC1, one on Nov 21st. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Dec 15th. Regent's Park, one N on Mar 29th. St James's Park, one on Oct 1st.

### Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

**Status:** abundant breeding resident.

Abundant throughout the London Area, this species is becoming more common in London. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 39% increase in London from 1995-2013, while in the UK as a whole there was an increase of 18% from 1995-2013. In the long-running survey of gardens in Croydon it was reported in 93% of participating gardens in 2014, up from 87% in 2013. However, we receive relatively few records and more nesting counts would be welcome, especially from inner areas. More roost counts from sites would also be welcome. All breeding records of five or more are given below, with number of nests/territories in brackets, together with the highest counts elsewhere.

**Essex:** Bedfords Park, 120 on Jan 1st. Belhus Woods (6). Walthamstow Res (6). Wanstead Park, 334 on Dec 6th.

**Herts:** Chess Valley, 24 on Jan 1st. Great Amwell, 24 on Sep 3rd. Lemsford, 23 on May 31st. Maple Cross (6); 23 on Sep 28th. Otterspool, 25 on Jan 10th. Radlett, 30 on May 14th. Rye Meads, 40 on Feb 15th and Jul 19th. Tyttenhanger, 100 on Mar 27th. Watford, 41 on Sep 16th. West End, 25 on Apr 16th. Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross, 80 on Apr 1st. Wormleybury, 28 on May 2nd.

**Middx:** Home Park (6), 310 on Oct 20th. Horsenden Hill and Perivale Wood, 1,202 on Jan 25th. KGV Res, 80 on Dec 29th. Southall, 100 on Sep 25th. Wormwood Scrubs, 275 on Oct 7th.

**Kent:** Blackheath, 125 on May 7th. Crossness South Marsh, 60 on May 7th. Danson Park, 94 on Aug 1st. Greatness Pits, 120 on Jan 19th. Sevenoaks WR, 150 in Feb.

**Surrey:** Arbrook Common (6). Hogsmill SW, 142 on Jun 14th. London Wetland Centre, 123 on Dec 3rd. Molesey Heath, 99 on Jan 17th. Rushett Farm, c150 on Aug 15th. Wimbledon Common, 800+ on Jan 22nd.

**In Lond:** Battersea Park, 150 on Nov 8th. Brompton Cemetery, 30 on Nov 9th. Chelsea, 75 on Nov 2nd. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (bred). Limehouse, 24 on Jan 12th. St James's Park, 109 on Nov 11th. Victoria Park, 46 on Jan 1st.

### Raven *Corvus corax*

**Status:** scarce, but increasing visitor.

They were reported from 69 sites this year. More pairs have been reported rather than singles, but most records are still single birds flying over. We are now listing records for Essex and Hertfordshire only where two or more birds were seen, as the number of records has increased so much, but all other records are given below. A pair bred in Kent again, fledging three young.

**Essex:** Recorded from 20 sites. Gidea Park, two on Feb 13th. Greensted, two on Jun 8th. Hall Marsh Scrape, two on Feb 2nd. Lee Valley, two on Sep 7th. Purfleet, two on Nov 12th. Rainham Marshes, one or two seen during the year. Romford GC, two on Feb 13th.

**Herts:** Recorded from 19 sites. Amwell NR, peak of three on Dec 5th. Hilfield Park Res, two on Jan 6th. Oaklands College, two on Apr 5th. Rickmansworth, two on Mar 3rd. Scotsbridge Meadows, two on Feb 16th. Seventy Acres Lake, two on Feb 7th. Tyttenhanger GP, two on Sep 14th. Verulamium Park, two on Jul 29th. West Hyde, two on Dec 15th. Wildhill, Hatfield Park, two on Jul 15th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, one on Oct 12th. Fir & Pond Woods, one on Sep 11th. Home Park, one on Dec 5th.

**Bucks:** Black Park, singles on Mar 27th and Dec 3rd. Chalfont Lodge, one on Jun 10th. Colnbrook Landfill, two on Nov 14th. Denham CP, one on Nov 25th. Q. Mother Res, max of two seen during the year. Wraybury, two over on Mar 23rd.

**Kent:** Site A (1). Bromley, one on Mar 15th. Crayford Marshes, two on Feb 28th and singles on Mar 15th & 17th. Dartford, singles on May 16th and Oct 16th. Kemsing, one on Jun 28th. Northfleet, two on Apr 20th. Sevenoaks WR, two on Apr 16th, singles on Mar 15th and Apr 27th. Stonewood, two on Oct 1st. Sutcliffe Park, one on Jan 5th.

**Surrey:** Banstead, one on Oct 30th. Banstead Wood, one on Apr 6th. Beddington Farmland, two on Mar 4th and Oct 30th. Beddlestead Valley, four on Mar 13th. Canons Farm, three on Sep 27th. Cobham, two on Apr 29th. Clapham, two on Apr 12th. South Nutfield, two on Dec 26th. Treverex, two during December.

### Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

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

The London decline of the Starling continues, with the Breeding Bird Survey showing a 54% decrease in London from 1995 to 2013 (50% decline for UK). The regular Croydon garden survey recorded them in 82% of participating gardens this year, down from 98% in 1995. However, they are still seen in numbers across London with substantial flocks reported in autumn and winter. Passage over London was noticeable this year from October 26th to November 6th, but from fewer sites, the largest movements being on October 28th when 2,330 flew over three sites. We get few records of counts of breeding pairs and would welcome more so that we could monitor the decline. Some of the highest counts and migrating flocks are given below.

**Essex:** Breeding was reported at Belhus Woods CP, Brook Farm, Chafford Hundred, Grays, Hangman's Wood, Mar Dyke Valley and Orsett Fen. Leyton, 400 on Aug 25th. Leyton Flats, 300 on Oct 15th. Rainham Marshes, 4,000 on Jan 17th. Walthamstow Marshes, 300 on Feb 8th. Wanstead Flats, 5,000 on Oct 13th.

**Herts:** Breeding was reported at Croxley Common Moor, Essendon, Hatfield, Holt Farm, Maple Cross, North Mymms Park, Oaklands College, South Oxhey and West End. Beech Farm GP/Hatfield Aerodrome, 240 on Jun 6th. Maple Cross, 200 on Sep 4th. Rye Meads, 680 on Oct 12th. Tyttenhanger, 380 on Oct 18th. West End, 250 on Feb 15th. West Hyde, 300 on Oct 19th.

**Middx:** Brent Res, 970 over on Oct 28th. Bushy Park, 500 on Aug 23rd, signs of breeding population. Heathrow Airport, c500 on Feb 1st. Home Park (3); 445 on Oct 20th. Horsenden Hill and Perivale Wood (3). Staines Moor, 1,578 on Oct 26th. Staines Res, 550 on Sep 1st. Stanwell Moor, 1,000+ on Jun 23rd coming to roost. Wormwood Scrubs, 600 on Oct 27th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, 177 on Oct 5th.

**Kent:** Crossness, 1,000+ on Aug 8th. Greenwich Park, 1,160 on Oct 28th migrants moving west. Longfield Gallops, c300 on Jun 8th. Penhill Park, Sidcup, 400 on Nov 28th. Swanscombe Marshes, 1,000+ on Aug 9th.

**Surrey:** Addlestone (6). Beddington Farmlands, 2,000+ on Aug 16th. Canons Farm, 300 on Oct 18th. Hogsmill SW, 520 on Aug 9th. Kingston-upon-Thames, 320 on Jul 9th. London Wetland Centre, 440 fly-over on Nov 6th. Richmond Park, 400 on Jul 26th.

**In Lond:** Battersea Bridge, 1,000 on Nov 24th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 150 on Nov 30th. Regent's Park, 250 on Aug 25th. Regent's Park/Primrose Hill, 160 on Oct 28th. Victoria Park, 107 on Jun 1st. Wyvil Estate (1), council refurbishment has removed the long-established sites.

### House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

**Status:** breeding resident, declined severely since 1990s, and still showing a decrease in breeding populations.

The House Sparrow's decline has continued to cause concern in urban areas around the country, although since 1995 UK numbers have generally declined in the east, but increased in parts of western Britain; London however, continues to show the greatest decline in breeding numbers. The Breeding Bird Survey showed a 72% decline in London from 1995 to 2013. In the regular Croydon garden survey, they were reported in 50% of participating gardens, up from 44% last year but well down on the 91% in 1995. There is clearly variation across the London Area with some sectors showing some growth while others are still showing a decline. More breeding records, especially from urban areas, would be welcome. Below we list sites where breeding was reported, some of the largest counts, other records of interest and a summary of records for Inner London, with breeding and territory counts in brackets.

**Essex:** Breeding was reported at Chafford Hundred, Grays, Mar Dyke Valley, Orsett Farm and Warren Gorge. Brook Farm, Upminster, 103 on Aug 9th-10th and Dec 1st. Grays, 109 on Oct 3rd. Rainham Marshes, 150 on Aug 14th. Stifford Clays, 116 roosting in hedge on Oct 20th. Walthamstow Res, 115 on Oct 31st.

**Herts:** Confirmed breeding at Beech Farm CP, Cheshunt GP, Hatfield, Maple Cross and Woodside, Hatfield. Essendon, 80 on Aug 4th. West End, 80 on Aug 4th. Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross, 40 on Sep 17th.

**Middx:** Highbury, 30 on Mar 1st. Mudchute Farm, 30 on Sep 29th. Northolt, 40 on Feb 1st. South Harrow, 45 on Aug 9th. Tottenham, 30 in Feb and Nov. Wormwood Scrubs, 60 on Sep 23rd.

**Bucks:** Arthur Jacob NR, seven on Feb 25th. Q. Mother Res, six on May 16th.

**Kent:** Breeding was reported at Blackheath and Greenwich. Brookmill Park, 50 on Jul 27th. Chipstead Lake, 40 on Nov 25th. Cornmill Gardens, 30 on Aug 3rd. Crossness, 50 on Jul 9th. Cudham, 34 on Oct 26th. Darenth Lakes, 35 on Mar 7th. Swanley Park, 30 on Aug 4th. Tugmutton Common, Farnborough, 40 on Jan 9th.

**Surrey:** Breeding was reported at Brixton, Chessington, Kingston-upon-Thames, Long Ditton, Molesey Heath, New Malden, Norbiton, Sutton, Teddington, Tolworth, Walton-on-Thames, West End Common and Wimbledon Common. Berrylands, 76 on Dec 13th. Canons Farm, c80 on Aug 23rd. Kingston-upon-Thames, 69 on Jun 7th with juvs. Morden Hall Park, 40 on Aug 2nd. New Malden, 65 on Apr 20th. Rushett, Farm, c100, mainly young, on Aug 1st. Thames Ditton, 54 on Mar 23rd. Tolworth, 90 on Sep 27th.

**In Lond:** Bethnal Green, six on Feb 6th. Fulham, six on Jul 24th including fledglings.

King's Cross, six on Mar 30th. Larkhall Park, Stockwell (12). Limehouse, 41 on Oct 18th. Mile End, ten on Jul 22nd. Putney, ten on Nov 26th. Regent's Canal St Pancras, 19 on Dec 27th. Regent's Park, 14 on Apr 19th. Rotherhithe, 80 on Nov 29th. St James's Park, 20+ on Oct 12th. Stockwell, 40 on Nov 24th being fed regularly. Tower of London, 20 on Jul 14th with juvs. Vauxhall (5). Victoria, seven on May 14th. Wapping, c15 on May 20th. Wyvil Estate (2), council refurbishment has filled in the long established sites.

### Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

**Status:** scarce breeding resident, confined to a few sites in London Area. UK population recovering, following severe decline since the late 1970s.

Breeding continues at the two regular sites but numbers were down again at both of them. The Breeding Bird Survey shows an increase in numbers in England from 2013, but there are no reliable figures for SE England or London. The recent BTO Atlas data showed a decline in SE England, and from our evidence this decline continues. The table below shows recent figures for breeding. All records are given below, summarised for breeding sites.

Tree Sparrow breeding 2010-2014

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Beddington: no. of pairs	80	71	61	9	1
Beddington: young hatched	624	607	385	42	n/c
Herts: no. of pairs	13*	11	6	8	5
Herts: fledged young	66	49	61	40	25

\*The count for the number of pairs in Herts in 2010 has been corrected in this table. Apologies for the previous error in LBR 2013.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, one on Feb 3rd.

**Herts:** Colney Heath, nine on Dec 8th. Coursers Road, 31 on Jun 23rd. Rye Meads, four on Apr 26th. Tyttenhanger Farm/Tyttenhanger GP (5).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (1); eight on Dec 26th.

### Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

**Status:** common breeding resident, augmented by continental influxes in autumn and winter.

There were only nine records of 100 or more Chaffinches in 2014, a lot fewer than the 17 records in 2013, but there were only five such records in 2012. Numbers stayed low throughout the year. The main autumn migration was between October 18th and November 1st, during which one notable record was of 130 birds over Regent's Park on October 27th.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows a small fall of 5% in the UK between 2013 and 2014, and similar slight falls were shown in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch and the regular garden survey in Croydon. The latter reported them in 80% of participating gardens, compared with 88% in 2013.

An increase in records by observers on Chaffinch breeding was very welcome, after the requests in recent years in the LBR for more reports. Breeding records of five or more birds and high counts are given below, summarised in some cases.

**Essex:** Long Running, 80 on Jan 14th. High Beach, 70 on Jan 5th. Orsett Fen (16). Walthamstow Marshes, 90 on Jan 19th, 82 on Feb 8th.

**Herts:** Beech Farm GP (11). Bury Lake (12). Chess Valley (6). Hatfield Aerodrome (9). Mill End (6). Northaw Great Wood (19+). Rye Meads (17); 180 on Oct 25th. Symondshyde Great Wood (9). Tyttenhanger GP (6); 80 on Nov 8th. Watercress LNR (15+). West Hyde (13).

**Middx:** Brent Res, 102 on Oct 26th. Hampstead Heath, c150 on Oct 25th. Horsenden Hill, 75 on Oct 25th. KGV1 Res, 96 on Oct 26th. Staines Moor, 135 SW 11:00-12:00 on Oct 26th. Wraysbury Res, 341 on Oct 19th.

**Bucks:** Black Park, 50 on Feb 19th.

**Kent:** Greenwich Park, 130 flew W on Oct 28th. Swanscombe Marshes, 285 flew W on Oct 25th.

**Surrey:** Canons Farm, 75 on Oct 25th. London Wetland Centre, 53 on Oct 25th. Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (30).

**In Lond:** Battersea Park, three on Mar 27th. Hammersmith Cemetery, seven on Jan 12th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, seven on Oct 12th. Limehouse, three on Jan 12th. Regent's Park, 71 on Mar 12th, 130 mainly W on Oct 27th. St James's Park, nine W on Oct 23rd. Victoria Park, ten on Jan 1st. Wapping, six on Jan 10th.

### Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

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

There were fewer records this year than last year and there were only three counts of ten or more birds, compared with four in 2013. Numbers were higher in October, with 35 at Wanstead Flats on October 13th and seven over Richmond Park on 15th. The last birds of spring were three seen at KGV Res on April 9th, and the first of the autumn was at the London Wetland Centre on September 26th. After this, there were regular records of small numbers until the end of December. Counts of two or more birds are given below, except for Inner London where all records are given.

**Essex:** Broadstrod, Epping Forest, six on Feb 1st. Gallions Reach, two on Oct 26th. High Beach, three on Jan 5th. Jack's Hill, six on Apr 5th. KGV Res, three on Apr 9th. Wanstead Flats, 15 on Oct 13th, six on 20th and 35 on 22nd.

**Herts:** Verulamium Park, two on Dec 30th.

**Middx:** Alexandra Park, two over on Oct 22nd. KGV1 Res, two on Oct 15th. Ramney Marsh, two on Oct 25th.

**Surrey:** Banstead Wood, two on Jan 5th. Beddington Farmlands, two on Nov 1st. Headley Heath, two on Oct 30th. London Wetland Centre, six on Jan 13th. Mickleham, three on Oct 19th. Richmond Park, seven over on Oct 15th. Sanderstead, three over on Oct 17th.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park/Primrose Hill, six over on Oct 17th. Victoria Park, one on Nov 1st.

### Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

**Status:** common breeding resident and passage migrant.

The Breeding Bird Survey in London shows a continuing decline of 28% since last year, with a 32% decrease from 1995 to 2013. The regular Croydon garden survey reported them in 52 gardens (70%) this year, which was well down from 82% last year. There was only one flock of 70 or more birds reported to us in 2014 following none in 2013, only

one in 2012 and seven in 2011. This indicates still further the decline of this species in the London area, probably due to the effects of trichomonosis. The only good news was that the BTO 2014 Garden BirdWatch found Greenfinches in an average of 42% of gardens, compared with 33% in 2013, a welcome increase. Birds are still feeding in gardens, with one in Loughton having up to nine coming to sunflower hearts. Breeding records of three or more (no. of territories in brackets) and counts of 20 or more are given below, summarised in some cases, and Inner London records of three or more.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (3). Leyton Jubilee Park, 24 on Oct 12th. Lion Gorge (3). Loughton, up to nine in a garden. Mar Dyke Valley (3). Orsett Fen (4). Rainham Marshes (9); 21 on Jan 13th. Wanstead Flats, 20 on Oct 22nd.

**Herts:** Amwell NR (3); 20 on Feb 16th. Beech Farm GP (6). Oaklands College (3). Rye Meads (5). Verulamium Park, 20 on Nov 12th.

**Middx:** Bedfont Lakes CP (3+). Brent Res, peak of 47 on Oct 12th. Hampstead Heath, 25 on Oct 24th and on Nov 6th. Home Park (8). Horsenden Hill & Perivale (8). Wormwood Scrubs, peak of 40 on Mar 21st. Wraybury Res, 67 on Aug 7th.

**Kent:** Greenwich Park (3+). Woodlands Farm, Shooters Hill, 20 on Oct 18th.

**Surrey:** Alexandra RG & Allotments (4). Beddington Farmlands (13). Hogsmill SW, peak of 29 on Oct 11th. London Wetland Centre, 47 on Sep 1st. Mayflower Park, 20 on Oct 14th. Molesey Heath (15). Wimbledon Common & Putney Heath (20).

**In Lond:** Aldgate, three on Mar 21st. Hammersmith Cemetery, peak count of six on Dec 7th. Limehouse, seven on Jan 12th. Regent's Park, c40 on Aug 5th and c70 over on Aug 16th.

### Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

**Status:** breeding resident and passage migrant, now common throughout the year.

The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change in London since last year. The regular Croydon garden survey reported Goldfinches in 65 gardens (88%), similar to last year's 87%. There were eight flocks of 100 or more reported to us, compared with five in 2013, ten in 2012 and 14 in 2011. The BTO 2014 Garden BirdWatch found Goldfinches in an average of only 26% of gardens, compared with 49% last year, a large decrease. Breeding records of three or more (no. of territories in brackets) and higher counts are given below and some Inner London records.

**Essex:** Cornmill Meadows, 70 on Oct 23rd. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, 50+ on Jul 21st. Rainham Marshes (18); 80 on Aug 27th.

**Herts:** Chorleywood (4). Newgate St (3). Rickmansworth, peak count of 55 on Nov 14th. Rye Meads, peak count of 70 on Mar 1st. Stocker's Lake, 60 on Oct 15th. Tyttenhanger GP, peak count of 100 on Sep 4th. West Hyde, 62 on Aug 29th.

**Middx:** Home Park (10). Horsenden Hill/Perivale Wood (8). Northolt & Greenford CP, 100 on Aug 10th. Staines Moor, peak of 119 on Nov 15th. Wormwood Scrubs, 110 on Jul 22nd. Wraybury Res, 220 on Oct 27th.

**Bucks:** Colnbrook Landfill, peak count of 90 on Sep 1st. Q. Mother Res, 60 on Jan 30th.

**Kent:** Chipstead Lake, 90 on Nov 25th. Crossness, peak count of 60 on Sep 19th. Sevenoaks WR, peak count of 70 on 30th.

**Surrey:** Hogsmill SW, peak count of 100 on Oct 11th. Kingston-upon-Thames, 68 on Nov 15th. Norbiton, 98 on Nov 5th. Richmond Park, peak count of 150 on Oct 11th.

Riddlesdown, 60 on Nov 27th. Rushett Farm, c70 on Aug 1st. Steven's Eyot, 65 on Nov 3rd. Worcester Park, 60 on Oct 8th.

**In Lond:** Albert Square, Stockwell, 35 spooked by a Sparrowhawk on Aug 14th. Hammersmith Cemetery, peak count of c30 on Nov 25th mobbing a Sparrowhawk. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, five on Feb 13th. Limehouse, peak count of five on Mar 22nd. Regent's Park, peak count of 27 on Mar 1st. Victoria Park, peak count of 16 on Nov 1st. Victoria Tower Gdns (1). Wapping, six on Jan 6th. Wyvil Estate, Stockwell (2).

### Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

**Status:** common winter visitor and passage migrant; rare breeder although increasingly regular in summer.

Numbers were much higher at the start of the year than at the end of the year, something commented on by four observers. There were only four counts of 100 or more birds this year, and they were all in January and all at Sevenoaks WR; at the end of the year the peak count was 40. Most had gone by the end of April. There was one reported in Willesden Green on May 11th and then two reports of juveniles at feeders in Hertfordshire. From June to September there were reports from only 12 sites. They were more noticeable from October but the highest count was only 40, and most counts were much lower. The notes below record high counts for each winter period, other notable sightings and all Inner London records.

**Essex:** Fishers Green, 50 on Jan 18th. Hall Marsh Scrape, 50 on Jan 17th. Weald CP, 40 on Feb 25th.

**Herts:** Stocker's Lake, peak of 70 on Feb 6th.

**Middx:** Bushy Park, 50 on Feb 1st. Longford, peak of 40+ on Nov 21st and Dec 7th.

**Bucks:** Black Park, 20 on Mar 10th. Denham, 20 on Jan 11th. Wraybury GP, 20 on Jan 25th.

**Kent:** Sevenoaks WR, peak of 200 on Jan 22nd.

**Surrey:** Arbrook Common, 40 on Jan 12th. Richmond Park, c50 on Jan 2nd.

**In Lond:** Bloomsbury, two on Jan 1st. Regent's Park, six on Jan 8th.

### Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

**Status:** common but declining breeding resident and passage migrant.

There were fewer large flocks this year (17 of 100 or more, compared with 27 last year), but with the peak count similar (600 compared with 625). There were 60 breeding pairs, a decrease on the 89 pairs in 2013, but we get very few records of breeding and more would be welcomed. The Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant change from 2013-2014 but a 45% decline in SE England from 1995-2013. All records of breeding (no. of breeding pairs, singing males/territories in brackets) are given below, with high counts and all Inner London records.

**Essex:** Orsett Fen (1). Rainham Marshes (30); 205 on Sep 21st. Walthamstow Res (1).

**Herts:** Bedmond, 200 on Oct 9th. Beech Farm GP (2). Hatfield Aerodrome (5). West Hyde (1).

**Middx:** Bushy Park (1). Horsenden Hill (1). Parkside Farm/Res (1). Staines Moor, 113 on Oct 15th. Vicarage Farm (2). Wormwood Scrubs (10).

**Bucks:** Wraybury GP, 55 on Sep 1st.



*Goldfinches regularly come to garden feeders in winter. (Andrew Moon)*

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, 100 on Nov 12th. Swanscombe Marshes (probably bred). Upper College Farm (2+).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (1). Canons Farm (2+); 600 on Jan 3rd. Epsom Common (2).

**In Lond:** Bloomsbury, one on Oct 27th. Regent's Park, up to three flying over on four dates in March and up to four on four dates in autumn.

### **Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret***

**Status:** passage migrant and winter visitor; former breeding resident.

This was another year when fewer Redpolls appeared in London. There were fewer records this year (682 compared with 768 last year) and there were no counts of 100 or more. At the start of the year the highest counts were 50 in January and 27 in February. Almost all had gone by the end of April and there were just four May records.

The first returning bird was on September 28th at Rye Meads, followed by more general passage from mid-October, with records from 21 sites by the month end. Numbers at the end of the year were a little higher than at the start of the year with peaks of 60 in November and 30 in December. High counts and Inner London records (summarised for Regent's Park) are shown below.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods, 47 on Jan 16th. Buckhurst Hill, 22 on Jan 13th. Ingrebourne Valley, 25 on Feb 11th. Waltham Abbey, 50 on Jan 11th. Wanstead Flats, 25 on Jan 8th.

**Herts:** Broxbourne Woods, 60 on Nov 22nd. Northaw Great Wood, 26 on Nov 30th. Watercress LNR, 20+ on Dec 10th.

**Middx:** Bushy Park, 50+ on Jan 30th. Fortis Green, c20 on Mar 9th in a garden. Stain Hill

*Siskin is a common winter visitor to London. (Andrew Moon)*



Res, 20 on Jan 18th & 25th.

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP, 14 on Jan 2nd.

**Kent:** Sevenoaks WR, 15 on Jan 5th.

**Surrey:** Esher Common 25 on Mar 30th. Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath, 20 on Nov 17th and 30 on Dec 6th.

**In Lond:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Feb 26th. Regent's Park, peaks of three on Feb 15th and Dec 3rd. Russia Dock Woodland, two on Jan 12th.

### Mealy Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

**Status:** scarce irruptive winter visitor.

In line with the number of Lesser Redpolls, there were just 20 records of Mealy Redpoll this year involving about 27 birds, which is similar to 2013. The most records, with one to two birds on seven dates, came from a garden in Woodford Green, with birds on five dates from both London Wetland Centre and Trent Park. The highest count was four at both Stocker's Lake and a garden in Fortis Green. All of the records were in the first-winter period, with the last on March 26th. All records are listed below.

**Essex:** Buckhurst Hill, singles on Jan 4th, 6th & 15th. Loughton, one on Jan 26th. Upminster, one on Feb 11th. Wanstead Flats, one on Jan 5th. Wanstead Park, one on Jan 7th, two on Mar 11th, and one on Mar 22nd. Woodford Green, one on Jan 10th, 20th & 29th, two on Jan 31st and Feb 1st, one on Feb 21st and Mar 4th.

**Herts:** Colney Heath, one on Feb 2nd. Stocker's Lake, four on Jan 19th.

**Middx:** Bushy Park, one on Jan 19th and two on Mar 6th. Fortis Green, four on Mar 9th. Greenford, one on Jan 12th. Northolt and Greenford CP, one on Jan 4th. Q. Mary Res, singles on Jan 11th & 13th. Trent Park, singles on Feb 25th & 28th, two on Mar 8th, singles on Mar 24th & 26th.

**Bucks:** Black Park, two on Feb 19th.

**Kent:** Sevenoaks WR, one on Jan 20th.

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, singles on Feb 8th, 9th, 13th, 16th & 19th.

**In London:** Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Feb 26th.

### Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

**Status:** irruptive visitor, rare breeding species (usually following irruptions).

This year 31 records from 20 sites, down from the 87 from 49 sites in 2013, with overall numbers of birds also down. Birds were recorded mainly during the first-winter period, with the peak numbers in March. All records are given below, summarised in some cases.

**Essex:** Ingrebourne Valley, one on Mar 30th. Weald CP, 12 on June 15th.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, two on Mar 4th and one over on Mar 11th. Bencroft Wood, seven on Mar 2nd. Broxbourne Woods, eight on Jan 25th, recorded on five dates in March, with peak of seven on Mar 10th. Hatfield Park, two on Mar 19th. North Watford, one on Sep 8th. Symondshyde Great Wood, two on Mar 12th and three on 16th. West End, five on Feb 15th.

**Middx:** Hampstead Heath, one over on Aug 9th. Staines Moor, four over on Mar 31st.

**Bucks:** Black Park, recorded on five dates in February and March, with peak of six on Feb 10th. Iver Heath, one over on Feb 27th.

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, one W on Jan 31st.

**Surrey:** Black Pond, one on Mar 31st. Esher Common, seven on Apr 16th. Limpsfield Chart, three on Mar 10th. North Downs GC, three S on Mar 15th. Redhill, two W on Feb 24th. Richmond Park, one S on Mar 23rd.

### Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

**Status:** fairly common breeding resident.

There were records from a lot more sites this year, although just over 70% of these were of one or two birds only. There were 27 breeding pairs, similar to last year, but there were records from 104 sites during the breeding season, so more evidence on breeding would be welcome. The Breeding Bird Survey shows a 12% increase in England from 2013-2014. All breeding records (no. of pairs/territories in brackets), are given below, together with high counts and all Inner London records.

**Essex:** Recorded at 54 sites. Belhus Woods CP, eight on Dec 4th. Fishers Green (1). Lippitts Hill, ten on Jan 5th. Stanford Rivers, juv on Jun 22nd may have bred nearby.

**Herts:** Recorded at 72 sites. Beech Farm GP, nine on Dec 21st. Hatfield Aerodrome (1). Hilfield Park Res (1). Lower Woodside (1). North Mymms Park, nine on Jan 18th. Rickmansworth (1). Rye Meads (3); nine on Nov 8th. West End, nine on Oct 18th and Dec 6th. West Hyde (1). Woodoaks Farm, Maple Cross (1).

**Middx:** Recorded at 46 sites. Bedfont Lakes CP (1). Bicentenary Gardens, Brunel University, two juvs on Jun 15th may have bred nearby. Horsenden Hill (7). Longford (2); ten on Jan 14th, eight on Jul 17th and Aug 16th. Ruislip Lido, six on Nov 23rd. Ten Acre Wood, Yeading, six on Oct 5th. Totteridge Valley (2); six on Sep 23rd. Trent Park (1). Vicarage Farm (1). Whitewebbs Park (1).

**Bucks:** Recorded at Thorney CP, Woodlands Park and Wraysbury GP.

**Kent:** Recorded at 22 sites. Chipstead Lake, five on Oct 29th. Dartford Heath, five on Dec 31st.

**Surrey:** Recorded at 44 sites. Ashted Common (2). Banstead Heath, seven on Oct 29th. Banstead Woods, 14 on Dec 4th and 16 on 21st, 12 on Feb 1st and nine on Aug 1st. Fetcham, juv on Jun 28th may have bred nearby. Island Barn Res, seven on Dec 26th. Riddlesdown, seven on Nov 6th.

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, one on Sep 3rd and two on Oct 28th.

### Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

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

There were 20 records from nine sites, with Bencroft Woods and Whippendell Woods having the only long-stayers. There were again no breeding records, the last breeding record was in 2008. All records are shown below together with a late record from 2012.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, one on Oct 25th. South Weald Cricket Club, one on Nov 1st.

**Herts:** Bencroft Woods, recorded from Mar 1st to Apr 3rd, with peak of 15 on Mar 15th. Chandler's Cross, one on Mar 12th. Whippendell Wood, eight on Mar 5th, one on 8th and two on 12th.

**Middx:** Alexandra Park, two N on Oct 15th. Wormwood Scrubs, two NE on Oct 5th was the first record for the site.



*Bullfinch. (Andrew Moon)*

**Kent:** Swanscombe, one on Apr 5th. Greenwich Park, one SW on Oct 14th.

**2012 Addition**

**Essex:** Woodford Green, one in a garden on May 4th.

**Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus***

**Status:** rare autumn and winter visitor.

A typical year after a blank last year and the first well-twitched individual for several years.

**Essex:** Wanstead Flats, one well-twitched individual from Oct 16th-17th (NC *et al*).

**Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis***

**Status:** scarce autumn and winter visitor.

An average year with three records involving probably two individuals on typical dates and at typical sites.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, flighty fem/imm along north bank from Nov 2nd-4th (CDRH); another fem with less white in wings than previous bird on Nov 23rd which flew E towards Wraysbury Res (CDRH).

**Middx:** Staines Res, one from Nov 13th to Dec 24th (considered the same as the second Q. Mother bird) which was much photographed and well-twitched (KLP *et al*).

**Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella***

**Status:** widespread but declining breeding resident, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

A minimum of 71 territories/singing males (77 in 2013) though there were several additional sites where birds were present during the breeding season. About half of this total came

*This Lapland Bunting was seen by quite a few visitors to Wanstead Flats and seemed very unconcerned by all the attention it was getting! (Jonathan Lethbridge)*



from Hertfordshire and a quarter from Essex. All breeding records are given with the no. of breeding pairs/territories in brackets, and high counts for the sector except for Middlesex where all records are given.

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (1). Chigwell (1). Holyfield Hill Farm (1). Ingrebourne Valley (2+); 23 on Feb 7th. Nazeing (2+). Netherhouse Farm (1). Orsett Fen (7). Pages Wood (3). Stanford Rivers (2+). Thames Chase (3). Upminster (1).

**Herts:** Bedmond (2+). Beech Farm GP (1+). Brookmans Park (1+). Cole Green Tip (1+). Coursers Farm, 15 on Nov 22nd. East End Green (1). Essendon (2). Essendonbury (3+). Hatfield Aerodrome, 23 on Jan 5th record site flock. Hazelwood (1+). Maple Cross (1+). Mill End (1+). Newgate Street (1+). North Mymms Park (1+). Potters Crouch Plantation (1+). Radlett (1). Ridge (2). Rye Meads, 20 on Jan 11th. West End (3+); 14 on Jun 6th. West Hyde (3+); c100 feeding on Dec 30th. Woodoaks Farm (2).

**Middx:** Brent Res, one over on Nov 5th. Crews Hills, two on Mar 2nd. Enfield Chase Area: Ferny Hill Farm, 13 records Jan-Mar and Nov-Dec with peak of eight on Dec 17th; South Lodge Farm (1); Vicarage Farm (3); 28 on Dec 22nd. Rammey Marsh, one on Dec 30th. Ten Acre Wood, two on Jun 14th. Tottenham Marshes, two on Jan 2nd, an unusual site record. West Hampstead, one on Feb 15th in an extremely unusual location below feeders in garden.

**Kent:** Cudham (1); four on Dec 14th. Kemsing, three on Feb 14th. Knockholt, four on Nov 18th. Lullingstone Park (1). Otford, 12 on Oct 7th. Otford to Filston (1); eight on Feb 6th.

**Surrey:** Canons Farm (2); 25 on Dec 20th. Cheverells Farm, 13 on Jan 10th. Farthing Downs (2+). Holmethorpe SP, 20 on Dec 4th. London Wetland Centre, one NW on Oct 27th. Moorhouse, present all year. Park Farm, Chessington (1). Redhill (2). Ridlands (1). Rushett Farm (1+); eight on Aug 1st. Treverex (3).

### Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

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

There were a minimum of 179 singing males/territories (160 in 2013), probably due to more complete data from some sites. As in 2013 Essex, Herts and Surrey provided over 75% of breeding season records. All breeding records are given below with the no. of breeding pairs/territories in brackets, and peak counts

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP (2). Cornmill Meadows (8). Ingrebourne Hill (4). Mar Dyke Valley (1). Netherhall GP (2). Orsett Fen (5). Rainham Marshes (40). Roding Valley Meadows NR (1+). Sewardstone Marsh (1+). Upminster, 16 on Feb 7th. Walthamstow Res (2).

**Herts:** Amwell NR (10); 30+ on Dec 6th. Beech Farm GP (3). Bury Lake (1+). Croxley Common Moor (3). Hatfield Aerodrome (2). Hilfield Park Res (2). Lynsters Lake (1). Maple Lodge NR (1). Panshanger Park (3). Rye Meads (19+). Stocker's Lake (2). Tyttenhanger GP (2). West Hyde (1).

**Middx:** Brent Res (3). Bushy Park (1+). East India Dock Basin (1). Enfield Chase Area: Parkside Farm (1); Vicarage Farm, 12 on Dec 15th. Home Park (1+). Horsenden Hill (2). Northolt & Greenford CP (1). Q. Mary GP (1). Staines Moor (8+). Stoke Newington Res (2). Ten Acre Wood (3). Tottenham Marshes (1). Totteridge Valley (1). Wormwood Scrubs (1).

**Bucks:** Wraysbury GP (3+); peak of nine on Apr 13th.

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes, peak of 12 on Mar 5th. Crossness (3+). Greenwich Peninsula (2). Sevenoaks WR (1). Sutcliffe Park (1). Swanscombe Marshes (5).

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands (2); 20 on Dec 6th. Esher Common (1). London Wetland Centre (6). Mayflower Park (1). Molesey Heath (1). Portsmouth Road FB (1). Richmond Park (8); 34 on Aug 31st. South Norwood CP (2+). Wey Meadows (1). Wimbledon Common/Putney Heath (1).

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, singles on Jan 11th & 26th, Apr 30th and Nov 24th.

### Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

**Status:** declining and increasingly localised breeding resident.

Recorded from 16 sites this year, up from six in 2013. Again at least ten territorial males as in 2013 though recorded in summer from two further sites. This year we have records from Longfield Gallops, on the edge of our recording area, with an amazing 70 birds in August. All records are given below, summarised in some cases, with no. of breeding pairs/territories in brackets. (Photo on page 249.)

**Essex:** Aveley, one on Mar 10th. Belhus Woods CP, one on Jun 23rd. Hayes Hill Farm, one on Oct 17th & 21st. Orsett Fen (2). Rainham Marshes (2).

**Herts:** Amwell NR, one on Dec 22nd. How Wood, one on Jul 6th. Rye Meads, one on Jul 25th. West Hyde (1+); max four on Apr 15th. Woodoaks Farm, male singing Apr 14th.

**Middx:** Vicarage Farm, one on five dates from Dec 13th-31st.

**Kent:** Crayford Marshes (3); eight on Mar 10th. Dartford Marshes, four on Nov 27th. Longfield Gallops (2+); 70 on Aug 12th. Lullingstone Park, one on Sep 21st. Swanscombe Marshes, one on Sep 27th.

## 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 Bushy Park.

### Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

**Herts:** Bowyer's Water, one on Jan 3rd & 19th, Feb 17th, Mar 14th and Apr 23rd. Bury Lake and Stocker's Lake, one recorded all year.

**Middx:** Ruislip Lido, one on Feb 22nd.

**Surrey:** Claremont Landscape Garden, one on Apr 21st and Dec 30th.

### Ross's Goose *Anser rossii*

**Essex:** Orsett Fen, one on Sep 3rd.

### Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, one over on May 8th. Richmond Park, one on Mar 24th.

### Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*

**Essex:** KGV Res, one on Dec 26th had an orange ring on its left leg.

### Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

It is difficult to be sure how many birds were involved in the sightings below. The Hertfordshire records could all be just one bird and the Home Park bird could have been one of the Surrey birds. The two birds at Steven's Eyot and Teddington Lock were most likely the same.

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, one on eight dates from Jan 4th-15th.

**Herts:** Essendon, one on Apr 8th. Hertingfordbury, one on Apr 18th. Panshanger Park, one on Apr 24th. Radlett Aero GP, one on Apr 14th. Tyttenhanger GP, one from Jun 20th to Jul 23rd and from Oct 1st to Dec 30th. Verulamium Park, one on Aug 1st & 24th and Sep 3rd.

**Middx:** Home Park, one on Oct 20th.

**Kent:** Crossness, one on Jan 15th. Dartford Marshes, one on Jan 23rd.

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, singles on Jan 13th and Mar 22nd. QE II Res, two over on May 19th, one over on Oct 17th & 31st. Steven's Eyot, two on Jul 11th, 17th & 21st and one on Sep 8th. Teddington Lock, two from Jul 1st-18th. Thorpe Water Park, one on Dec 18th. Walton Res (Chelsea & Lambeth), two on Apr 20th and Jun 5th & 27th. Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough), one over on Aug 29th. Walton-on-Thames, one on Jun 6th at Walton Bridge.

### Cackling Goose *Branta hutchinsii*

**Essex:** Rainham Marshes, one on Apr 22nd.

**Herts:** Bury Lake, one on Dec 21st. Lynsters Farm, one on Jan 3rd & 9th and Jul 23rd.



*Doubtless an escape, but Cackling Goose is now on the British list. This bird was at Beddington. (Peter Alfrey)*

Maple Lodge NR, one over on Jul 21st & 22nd. Stocker's Lake, one on Dec 19th.

**Kent:** Kelsey Park, one on Apr 18th & 24th. Sevenoaks WR, one on Apr 13th.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, one on Apr 25th.

### Australian Shelduck *Tadorna tadornoides*

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, two on Jun 25th.

### Wood Duck *Aix sponsa*

**Essex:** Valentines Park, one on Apr 20th & 21st.

**Herts:** Barclay Park, Hoddesdon, a fem on Aug 14th. Panshanger Park, a male on Apr 26th. Stanborough Lakes, a fem on Apr 16th.

**Middx:** Hampstead Heath, a male on Mar 5th, 9th & 29th.

**Kent:** Crystal Palace Park, a male on Oct 6th, 25th & 26th.

**Surrey:** Bookham Common, two from Jan 7th to Feb 18th and again on Nov 9th.

### Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

**Essex:** Connaught Water, one to two on Jan 25th-27th, May 30th, Jun 15th and Dec 21st-22nd.

**Surrey:** QE II Res, one from Jun 17th to Sep 13th.

### Bahama Pintail or White-cheeked Pintail *Anas bahamensis*

**Essex:** Connaught Water, a male on Jan 4th, 15th & 21st, Jun 2nd, Nov 11th, 14th & 20th.

### Ringed Teal *Callonetta leucophrys*

**Essex:** Connaught Water, three from Jan 25th-27th; two on Feb 2nd & 19th, Apr 28th and May 5th; three on Nov 1st and two on Dec 26th.

### Maned Duck or Maned Goose *Chenonetta jubata*

**Essex:** Connaught Water, one on Feb 23rd. Hooks Marsh Lake, one on Dec 29th. William Girling Res, two on Jun 14th.

**Herts:** Seventy Acres Lake, one on Dec 29th (presumably the same as the Hooks Marsh Lake bird above.).

### Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

**Essex:** Valentines Park, one on Apr 20th & 21st.

**Herts:** Amwell NR, one on six dates between Jan 1st and Jul 10th. Seventy Acres Lake, one on Apr 24th and Dec 31st.

**Kent:** Kelsey Park, two from Jan 9th-13th and on Mar 3rd. The Tarn, Mottingham, male present all year and fem from January to April.

### Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

**Middx:** Springwell Lake, a fem with a blue ring, was found in May with seven young and presumed to be an escape. Only one young apparently survived with four seen being taken by pike.

### Smew *Mergellus albellus*

**Essex/Middx:** A fem, presumed to be of captive origin, was at various sites in NE London from March to August.

### White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*

**In Lond:** St James's Park, one soaring over the lake on Oct 9th.

### American White Ibis *Eudocimus albus*

**Kent:** Sevenoaks WR, a juv from Nov 19th to end of year.

### Common Peafowl or Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus*

**Essex:** Belhus Woods CP, one on Mar 16th.

**Herts:** Hatfield Aerodrome, one on Jul 27th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Jan 12th and then on 11 dates from Mar 16th to Jun 22nd. West Hyde, three on Aug 30th. Woodside, Hatfield, one on Apr 5th, May 31st, Jun 21st and Aug 9th.

### Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus*

**In Lond:** Regent's Park, one at Primrose Hill Bridge on Jul 29th, believed to be from the nearby Snowdon Aviary.

### Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris*

**Herts:** Newgate Street, one on Jan 2nd. West End, two in January and April, then pair with three chicks on Sep 7th.

### Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

**Kent:** Foots Cray, one over on Mar 27th. Oxleas Wood, one on Jan 6th.

**Surrey:** Trevereux, adult in January and with a juv from previous year on Mar 9th, but not seen after May 12th. This adult has been present for over six years and bred with a Common Buzzard in at least five years.

### Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo*

**Essex:** Walthamstow, one on Mar 9th.

### Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*

**Essex:** Wanstead Flats, one on Nov 6th.

### Cockatiel *Nymphicus hollandicus*

**Herts:** Hilfield Park Res, one over on Mar 23rd.

**Middx:** Tottenham Marshes, one over on Aug 12th.

**Bucks:** Horton GP, male flying around on May 21st.

**Surrey:** Beddington Farmlands, one on Oct 26th.

### Lovebird sp

**In Lond:** Rotherhithe, one flew along the Thames on Jul 8th.

### Peach-faced Lovebird or Rosy-faced Lovebird

#### *Agapornis roseicollis*

**Surrey:** Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough), one flushed on Jun 29th.

### Budgerigar *Melopsittacus undulatus*

**Essex:** Wanstead Park, one on Nov 2nd.

**Middx:** Brent Res, one on Jun 24th.

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one E on Nov 15th.

**Surrey:** Banstead Wood, one over on Jul 10th. Berrylands, one on Mar 1st. QE II Res, one on Mar 7th.

### Blue-crowned Parakeet *Aratinga acuticaudata*

**Kent:** Beckenham, in a garden in Hayes Way, five on Feb 12th and two on 22nd, five on Mar 2nd and two on 9th & 14th, one on Apr 1st, three on Aug 7th and Sep 9th, four on Nov 11th and one on Dec 7th. Kelsey Park, two on Apr 8th.

### Monk Parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus*

Reported again from the usual two areas of Borehamwood and Mudchute Farm. The Eltham record is unusual, although these could be from the Mudchute Farm colony.





*Young Goldeneye in London are very unusual, however this bird was ringed and a presumed escape. (Andrew Moon)*

**Herts:** Borehamwood, 18 on Jan 26th, then breeding colony of 12 pairs on May 28th and 18 again on Dec 4th & 8th. South Oxhey, one in a garden with Ring-necked Parakeets on Jun 11th.

**Middx:** Millwall Docks, at least six in streets south of docks on Nov 17th. Mudchute Farm, seen throughout most of the year to Oct 30th with peaks of 13 in March.

**Kent:** Eltham, four at the Leathersellers Sports Ground on Mar 21st.

### Eastern Rosella *Platycercus eximius*

**Middx:** Coppetts Wood, one on Mar 13th.

### Blue-fronted Amazon *Amazona aestiva*

**Surrey:** Stoneleigh, one on Jan 28th, Feb 10th and May 5th.

### White-cheeked Turaco *Tauraco leucotis*

**Essex:** Wanstead Flats, one on Jun 24th.

### Canary *Serinus canaria*

**Middx:** East India Dock Basin, one singing on Jan 24th.

**Kent:** Belvedere, one at R Thames on Aug 16th & 17th.

## APPENDIX II: HYBRIDS

The following records relate to wild or feral hybrids. All are reported as described by the observers. It would be helpful if observers could send photographs of hybrids, where available. Records of hybrid Canada Geese and of Mallard are not reported here. All others are listed in order of the first named species involved.

### Bar-headed Goose x Greylag Goose

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, one from Dec 2nd to year-end.

### Barnacle Goose x Greylag Goose

**Kent:** Sevenoaks WR, one on Feb 5th & 15th.

### Shelduck hybrid

**Surrey:** Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough), two on Mar 17th.

### Ruddy Shelduck x Shelduck

**Essex:** Gallions Reach, two on Jul 4th.

**Kent:** Crossness, two on Jul 5th & 6th. Two on Sep 4th, 5th & 20th looked like different birds.

### Speckled Teal x Yellow-billed Pintail

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, one on Sep 12th.

### *Aythya* hybrids

*Aythya* hybrids are listed below under the described type, where such a description is given.

### Red-crested Pochard x Tufted

**Middx:** Bushy Park, male on Jan 31st, Mar 7th, Oct 3rd, 9th, 10th & 23rd, Nov 7th, Dec 4th & 16th.

**Surrey:** Teddington Lock, male on May 9th (presumed to be same bird as above).

### Pochard x Tufted

**Bucks:** Horton GP, male on Oct 8th & 16th (same as Q. Mother Res). Q. Mother Res, male on Oct 2nd & 4th. Wraybury GP, male on Nov 28th & 30th and Dec 1st & 12th.

### Pochard hybrid

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, one on Nov 6th.

### Red-crested Pochard x Mallard

**Surrey:** Island Barn Res, one on Apr 21st.

**Tufted x Pochard**

**Surrey:** QE II Res, one on Mar 15th. Walton Res (Knight & Beesborough), one on Mar 13th and Sep 8th & 16th.



**In Lond:** St James's Park, male on Feb 7th and Dec 10th.

**Scaup x Tufted**

**Middx:** Brent Res, one from Jan 11th to Feb 3rd and on Apr 27th.

**Aythya hybrid**

**Bucks:** Horton GP, one on Nov 19th.

**Gyr Falcon hybrid**

**Middx:** East India Dock Basin, one circling with a Peregrine Falcon on Jul 2nd. Wembley, one on a roof at 07:00 on Sep 4th.

**Lanner Falcon hybrid**

**Essex:** Leyton Jubilee Park, one on Oct 12th.

**Herring Gull x Lesser Black-backed Gull**

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, 3rd-winter on Nov 16th.

**Caspian Gull x Yellow-legged Gull**

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, 1st-winter on Feb 8th, Apr 18th and Dec 22nd.

**Glaucous Gull x Herring Gull**

**Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, 1st- or 2nd-winter on Dec 19th.

**Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, one on Apr 12th.

**House Martin x Swallow**

**Middx:** Staines Res, one on May 11th.

**APPENDIX III LIST 2014****Non-proven**

The following records were submitted to the LNHS but have not been accepted, either by the British Birds Rarities Committee or by our Rarities Committee.

**2013**

Purple Heron	Woodford Green	Jun 4th
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**2014**

Whooper Swan	Alperton	Jan 11th
Black-throated Diver	Staines Res	Jan 24th
Great Egret	Kingston-upon-Thames	Nov 23rd
Black Stork	Isle of Dogs	May 15th
White Stork	Totteridge Valley	Jun 3rd
Honey Buzzard	Hampstead Heath	Aug 31st
Honey Buzzard	Ruislip Woods	Aug 30th
Black Kite	Clapton	Jun 23rd
Hen Harrier	Kempton NR	Jul 31st
Mertlin	Cranford CP	Mar 30th
Merlin	Staines Moor	Feb 3rd, 7th & 23rd
Common Crane	KGVI Res/Staines Moor	Sep 16th
European Nightjar	Bushy Park	May 6th
Red-breasted Flycatcher	Kensal Town	Sep 19th
Willow Tit	Stocker's Lake	Oct 15th
Golden Oriole	Fox Wood, Ealing	Jun 21st

**Non-submitted records**

The following records have been reported but to date no details have been received by the LNHS. Photos and descriptions (or notes where appropriate) for any of these records would be welcomed, so that in due course they may be published as accepted records.

**2014**

Bewick's Swan	Sevenoaks WR	Dec 28th
Whooper Swan	Holyfield Lake	Oct 25th
Whooper Swan	Walthamstow Res	Dec 28th
Bean Goose	Rainham Marshes	Sep 5th
Pink-footed Goose	Rainham Marshes	Sep 17th
Pink-footed Goose	Greenhithe	Apr 23rd
Pale-bellied Brent Goose	Wraysbury Res	Nov 9th
Ferruginous Duck	Dagenham Chase	Mar 30th-Apr 2nd
Common Eider	Staines Res	Apr 27th
Night Heron	Rainham Marshes	Jun 12th
Great Egret	Newbury Park	Mar 12th
Great Egret	Maple Cross	Apr 17th
Great Egret	Tythenhanger GP	Sep 27th
Great Egret	West End	Aug 11th
Great Egret	Swanscombe Marshes	May 17th
Great Egret	Kingston-upon-Thames	Nov 23rd
Great Egret	Walton Res	Sep 9th

Spoonbill	Cornmill Meadows	Mar 31st
Spoonbill	Elm Park	Aug 14th
Spoonbill	Rainham Marshes	Apr 17th
Spoonbill	Finsbury Park	Sep 4th
Spoonbill	Staines Moor	Mar 30th
Spoonbill	York Ave, Sidcup	Sep 2nd
Spoonbill	Banstead	Jun 9th
Spoonbill	Chertsey	May 27th
Spoonbill	London Wetland Centre	Jul 8th
Honey Buzzard	Fishers Green	Sep 6th
Honey Buzzard	Rainham Marshes	May 4th
Honey Buzzard	Romford	Apr 19th, Aug 21st, 22nd & 31st
Honey Buzzard	Wanstead	Jun 30th
Honey Buzzard	Wanstead Flats	Aug 27th
Honey Buzzard	Wanstead Flats	Sep 6th
Honey Buzzard	Hampstead Heath	Aug 31st
Honey Buzzard	Sevenoaks	Aug 27th
Honey Buzzard	Brookscroft, Croydon	Aug 27th
Honey Buzzard	Richmond Park	May 19th
Honey Buzzard	Regent's Park	Sep 12th
Black Kite	Radlett	Apr 12th & Aug 1st
Black Kite	West Kingsdown	May 29th
Black Kite	Chertsey Meads	Apr 11th
Hen Harrier	Panshanger	Mar 25th
Hen Harrier	Beddington Farmlands	Aug 30th
Hen Harrier	London Wetland Centre	Sep 3rd
Montagu's Harrier	Hoddesdon	Aug 20th
Montagu's Harrier	Banstead Wood	Aug 12th
Goshawk	Belhus Woods CP	Sep 15th & 22nd
Goshawk	Chingford	Oct 20th
Goshawk	Long Running	May 30th
Goshawk	The Warren	Oct 2nd
Goshawk	Woodford Green	Apr 14th & Nov 7th
Goshawk	Gallions Reach	Aug 20th
Goshawk	Hayes Hill Farm	Oct 21st
Goshawk	Little Warley Common	Apr 2nd
Goshawk	Rainham Marshes	Sep 10th
Goshawk	Roding Valley Meadows NR	Mar 30th
Goshawk	Romford	Apr 19th & Aug 21st
Goshawk	Cassiobury Park	Mar 18th
Goshawk	Willowmead	Dec 8th
Goshawk	Longford	Jan 14th
Goshawk	Crystal Palace Park	Aug 31st
Goshawk	Beddington Farmlands	Mar 7th
Goshawk	West Norwood	Aug 31st
Goshawk	London Wetland Centre	Mar 7th, 27th & May 4th
Rough-legged Buzzard	Cely Woods	Dec 13th
Rough-legged Buzzard	Sevenoaks WR	Apr 5th
Rough-legged Buzzard	Redhill	Nov 9th
Red-footed Falcon	Hooks Marsh Lake	May 17th
Merlin	Bedfords Park	Sep 15th
Merlin	Gallions Reach	Sep 22nd & Oct 29th
Merlin	Leyton	Dec 13th

Merlin	Orsett Fen	Nov 12th
Merlin	Brent Res	Dec 3rd
Merlin	Beddington Farmlands	Oct 14th
Merlin	London Wetland Centre	Sep 1st
Merlin	Mickleham	Mar 26th
Common Crane	Brentwood	Jun 6th
Common Crane	KGVI Res	Sep 16th
Common Crane	Colney Heath	Oct 1st
Pomarine Skua	Rainham Marshes	Oct 14th
Arctic Skua	Staines Res	May 10th
Caspian Gull	KGVI Res	Jun 7th
Iceland Gull	East India Dock Basin	Feb 9th
Iceland Gull	London Wetland Centre	Apr 1st & Nov 13th
Glaucous Gull	Rainham Marshes	Feb 16th
Roseate Tern	Rainham Marshes	Aug 29th
Razorbill	Tilbury Docks	Sep 29th
European Nightjar	Richmond Park	Sep 18th
Hoopoe	Wanstead Park	Jun 22nd
Wryneck	Belhus Woods CP	Aug 30th-31st
Wryneck	Beddington Farmlands	Aug 16th
Wryneck	Richmond Park	Aug 18th, 30th & 31st
Wryneck	Blackfriars	Aug 27th
Short-toed Lark	Rainham Marshes	Jul 20th
Richard's Pipit	Gallions Reach	Oct 19th
Richard's Pipit	Rainham Marshes	Sep 14th
White Wagtail	London Wetland Centre	Dec 11th
Yellow-browed Warbler	Monken Hadley Common	Nov 27th
Yellow-browed Warbler	Kew	Dec 12th
Yellow-browed Warbler	St Botolph's Churchyard	Sep 24th
Siberian Chiffchaff	Rainham Marshes	Nov 24th
Siberian Chiffchaff	Crayford Marshes	Mar 16th
Siberian Chiffchaff	Buckingham Palace Gardens	Dec 11th
Willow Tit	Stocker's Lake	Oct 15th
Willow Tit	Pilgrims Fort, Caterham	Dec 4th
Golden Oriole	Danson Park	May 18th
European Serin	Lloyd Park	May 1st
Lapland Bunting	Rainham Marshes	Jan 8th
Snow Bunting	Staines Res	Dec 25th

### Records still in circulation

The following records are still being considered either by the British Birds Rarities Committee or by our Rarities Committee.

#### 2013

Purple Heron	Woodford Green	Jun 4th
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#### 2014

Honey Buzzard	Leyton	Jun 8th
Merlin	Molesey Heath	Jan 2nd
Pectoral Sandpiper	Beddington Farmlands	Oct 13th
Olive-backed Pipit	Wanstead Flats	Sep 26th

## FIRST AND LAST DATES OF REGULAR MIGRANTS

Summer Migrants	Arrival	Departure
Garganey	Mar 9 Crossness	Oct 10 Beddington Farmlands
Osprey	Mar 16 Hatfield	Oct 10 Broadwater Lake
Hobby	Mar 29 London Wetland Centre	Oct 21 Amwell NR
Little Ringed Plover	Mar 14 Thorpe Water Park	Sep 5 Rainham Marshes
Eurasian Whimbrel	Apr 12 Staines Res	Sep 3 Orsett Fen
Little Tern	Apr 21 Staines Res	Aug 29 Rainham Marshes
Black Tern	Apr 4 Island Barn Res	Oct 26 Rainham Marshes
Sandwich Tern	Mar 25 Q. Mother Res	Sep 25 London Wetland Centre
Common Tern	Mar 31 Staines Res	Oct 13 Gallions Reach
Arctic Tern	Apr 11 Gallions Reach	Oct 13 Staines Res
Turtle Dove	Apr 9 Roding Valley Meadows	Oct 2 Upshire
Common Cuckoo	Apr 3 London Wetland Centre/Surbiton	Oct 11 Rye Meads
Common Swift	Apr 17 Ellenbrook Fields/Hatfield Aerodm	Sep 8 Broomfield Park
Sand Martin	Mar 3 Dagenham Chase/Mar Dyke Valley	Oct 10 Leyton Flats
Swallow	Mar 20 London Wetland Centre	Nov 11 KGV Res
House Martin	Mar 18 Blackwall	Nov 25 Sidcup
Tree Pipit	Mar 30 Gallions Reach	Oct 24 Hampstead Heath
Yellow Wagtail	Mar 28 Mill Hill	Nov 1 Staines Res
Nightingale	Apr 8 Warley Place NR	Sep 19 Fishers Green
Common Redstart	Apr 3 Bedfont Lakes CP	Oct 19 Stocker's Farm
Whinchat	Apr 16 Roundshaw Downs	Nov 8 Walton Res (Chel & Lambeth)
Northern Wheatear	Mar 11 Beddington Farmlands	Nov 5 Q. Mary Res
Ring Ouzel	Mar 31 Walthamstow Res	Oct 26 Canons Fm/Wormwood Scrbs
Grasshopper Warbler	Apr 4 East End Green	Sep 17 Crayford Marshes
Sedge Warbler	Mar 28 Rainham Marshes	Nov 24 London Wetland Centre
Reed Warbler	Apr 1 Rainham Marshes	Dec 28 Leyton
Garden Warbler	Apr 5 Walthamstow Marshes	Oct 2 Greenwich Peninsula Ecol Pk
Lesser Whitethroat	Mar 27 Balls Park	Oct 4 Horsenden Hill/Woodford Grn
Common Whitethroat <sup>w</sup>	Mar 5 Crossness	Dec 22 Leyton
Wood Warbler	Apr 21 Valentines Park	Aug 31 Hampstead Heath
Willow Warbler	Mar 14 London Wetland Centre	Oct 16 Wimbledon Common
Spotted Flycatcher	Apr 23 Blackheath Village	Oct 12 Victoria Park
Pied Flycatcher	Apr 10 Holmethorpe SP	Sep 15 Trent Park

<sup>w</sup> excludes winter records

Winter Migrants	Departure	Arrival
Smew	Mar 14 Hooks Marsh Lake	Nov 30 Holmethorpe SP
Goosander	May 21 West Hyde	Sep 7 KGV Res
Bittern <sup>s</sup>	Mar 24 Amwell NR	Oct 19 London Wetland Centre
Jack Snipe	Apr 29 London Wetland Centre	Sep 17 Rye Meads
Rock Pipit	Mar 29 Crayford Marshes	Sep 16 Q. Mother Res
Water Pipit	Apr 19 Rye Meads	Oct 12 Horton
Fieldfare	Apr 24 Staines Moor	Oct 10 St Albans/Warren Gorge
Redwing	Apr 27 Woodside, Hatfield	Sep 12 Rye Meads
Brambling	Apr 9 KGV Res	Sep 26 London Wetland Centre

<sup>s</sup> excludes summer records

## RINGING REPORT

PAUL ROPER

Ringing in London is carried out by a range of groups, partnerships and individuals. 2014 has become a pivotal year in improving the accuracy of figures, with the BTO now providing data via their website broken down into recording areas rather than counties. Firstly, I would like to thank all ringers over the years (including 2014) who have returned data to enable this report to be written; but from 2014 onwards the data can be extracted direct from the BTO website, and ringers will not need to submit their totals.

This will also mean that, in the future, scientific comparisons on ringing data between years may possibly have some meaning - assuming effort is consistent. Numbers of many species ringed vary year on year due to a range of factors such as ringer effort and coverage or weather conditions, which can have a marked effect on catching success and final totals for any year. For these reasons, many changes in species figures in this type of report are not a reflection on population levels but more often ringer activity. A good reflection of population levels is through Constant Effort Sites (CES) and there are a number running in the London Area; the data is pooled nationally and can be found on the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) website:

[www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/surveys/ces](http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/surveys/ces)

The BTO online data for ringing in the UK, now being given as the London Area (the LNHS recording area) for 2014, shows a total of only 26,894 birds ringed and 16,585 birds recovered, retrapped or caught by another ringer. Detailed information on birds ringed and recovered can be found for the London Area:

New birds ringed

<http://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/results2014/ringGBLO2014.htm>

Ringed birds recovered

<http://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/results2014/recGBLO2014.htm>

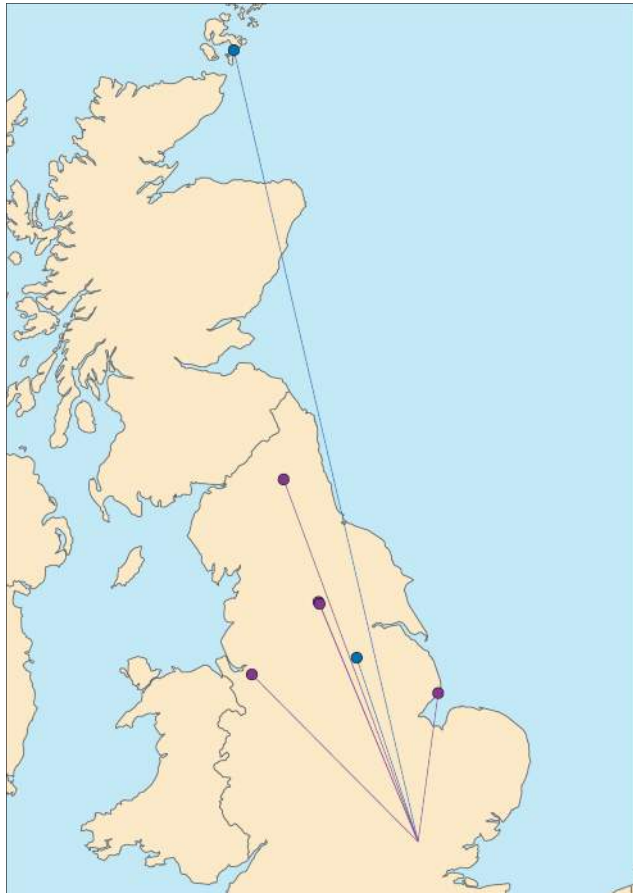
The total number of birds ringed in the London Area in 2014 which have been submitted amounts to 26,894. The BTO website splits the totals into the following: Pullus, Juvenile, Adult, Unaged, Retrapped and Recovered. For the purpose of this report, Juvenile and Adult totals have been merged into full-grown as one column in Table 1. Annual totals are given for three years also in Table 1.

Numbers of wildfowl ringed took a dip in 2014 - probably a reflection of lower numbers at Rye Meads through the summer months when traditionally ducklings have been caught. Wader totals appear to have taken a bit of an upturn with good numbers of Lapwing, Snipe and Jack Snipe, although Green Sandpipers are down on 2013. Birds of prey are ringed in small numbers: of note are the ten Peregrine nestlings, one Hobby and three Buzzards. It may not be long before Red Kite appears on the London list. Although activity by the North Thames Gull Group continued at Rainham in 2014, large-gull numbers are reduced, particularly Herring and Lesser Black-backed. Barn Owls had an excellent year in 2014 and this is reflected in the total of 57 ringed. With the development of roosts of hirundines at Rye Meads, the numbers of particularly Swallow and Sand Martin have taken a massive leap. House Martin catches rely on weather

### Yellow-legged Gull and Caspian Gull movements to and from the London Area

- Resighting location of a Yellow-legged Gull ringed in the London Area
- Resighting location of a Caspian Gull ringed in the London Area
- Ringing location of Caspian Gulls resighted in the London Area

(Garganey Consulting)



### Sand Martin and Swallow movements to the London Area

- Sand Martin ringing location
- Swallow ringing location

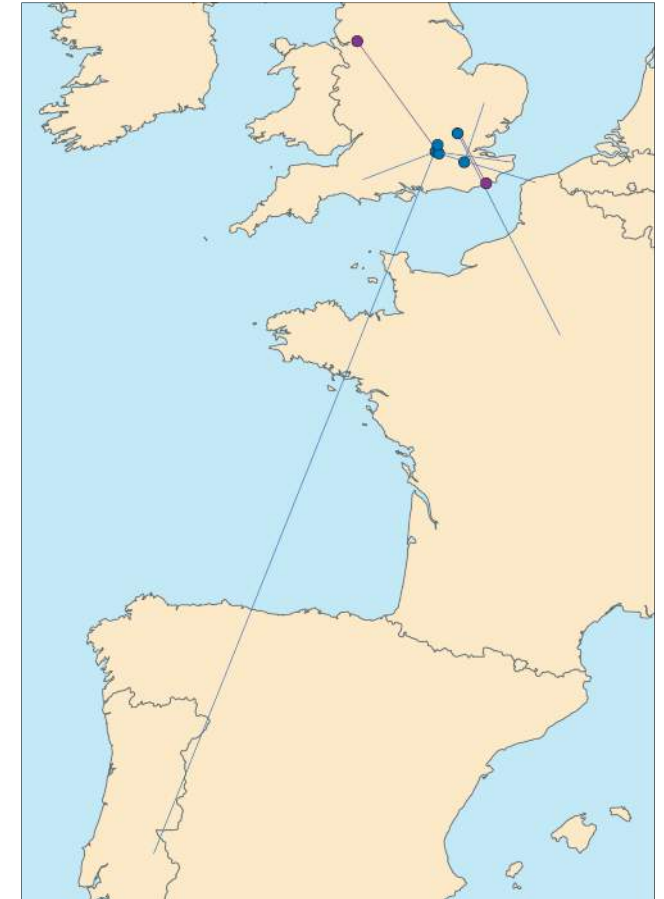
The end of the line with no dot is the recovery location

(Garganey Consulting)

### Blackcap movements to and from the London Area

- London Area ringing location of bird recovered elsewhere
- Ringing location of bird recovered in the London Area

The end of the line with no dot is the recovery location



(Garganey Consulting)

conditions to be correct for catching and it appears in 2014 these conditions did not materialise when ringing was possible. A welcome return to the ringing list was seven Spotted Flycatchers and also of note were four Redstart, two Stonechats and a Whinchat. Cetti's Wabler totals were over double those of 2013, and this is almost certainly a good indication of the continued increase in this species. Six Firecrest and a single Bearded Tit are also of note, as is an apparent increase in Bullfinch - although it is unclear if this is due to under-reporting in previous years. Full details of all species submitted are given in Table 1.

### Recoveries and Controls

A number of interesting recoveries have been reported during the year; a small selection of these are listed below along with some maps showing some species of note. As mentioned on page 179, all recoveries in the London Area can now be found on the BTO website at <http://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/results2014/recGBLO2014.htm>

Table 1. Species totals of birds reported as ringed in the London Area during 2014

FG = full-grown; pul = nestling (pullus); Rt/Rc = retrapped/recovered

Species	Ringed in 2014			Rt/Rc			Total		
	pul	FG	Total	2014	2013	2012	2014	2013	2012
Mute Swan	38	210	248	1484	267	136			
Greylag Goose	2	6	8	34	12	5			
Canada Goose	30	79	109	179	154	228			
Egyptian Goose	9	50	59	24	17	31			
Mandarin	0	13	13	6	2	5			
Gadwall	2	2	4	5	32	24			
Teal	0	7	7	0	28	50			
Mallard	4	30	34	14	50	80			
Shoveler	0	1	1	0	1	0			
Pochard	0	0	0	0	5	6			
Tufted Duck	3	5	8	0	44	29			
Cormorant	0	0	0	0	1	10			
Little Egret	7	6	13	75	11	15			
Grey Heron	43	0	43	4	16	18			
Little Grebe	1	6	7	0	6	8			
Gt Crested Grebe	0	0	0	0	0	3			
Sparrowhawk	0	21	21	0	7	13			
Buzzard	3	0	3	0	0	0			
Kestrel	42	3	45	2	6	9			
Hobby	0	1	1	1	0	0			
Peregrine	10	0	10	1	5	8			
Water Rail	0	3	3	8	5	3			
Moorhen	0	21	21	15	37	24			
Coot	6	36	42	21	49	38			
Litl Ringed Plover	0	0	0	0	1	0			
Ringed Plover	3	0	3	0	0	0			
Lapwing	24	1	25	0	0	1			
Woodcock	0	0	0	0	0	2			
Dunlin	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Jack Snipe	0	12	12	2	7	0			
Snipe	0	32	32	2	14	0			
Com Sandpiper	0	2	2	0	5	5			
Green Sandpiper	0	4	4	463	16	0			
Redshank	2	0	2	0	0	0			
Blk-headed Gull	173	412	184	446	400				
Common Gull	0	1	1	24	9	53			
Lsr Black-bkd Gull	0	2	2	6	2	39			
Herring Gull	0	35	35	74	274	351			
Yellow-lgd Gull	0	1	1	5	0	2			
Caspian Gull	0	0	0	4	2	0			
Gt Black-bkd Gull	0	2	2	2	2	5			
Common Tern	108	0	108	29	24	24			
Stock Dove	20	3	23	0	12	7			
Woodpigeon	4	51	55	9	51	32			
Collared Dove	2	14	16	0	5	15			
Ring-nk Parakeet	0	33	33	3	69	301			
Cuckoo	0	0	0	0	1	0			
Barn Owl	54	3	57	9	2	11			
Little Owl	0	1	1	2	5	6			
Tawny Owl	15	0	15	1	1	6			
Nightjar	0	1	1	0	0	0			
Swift	4	30	34	0	1	305			
Kingfisher	0	67	67	33	21	21			
Wryneck	0	1	1	0	0	0			
Grn Woodpecker	0	43	43	33	12	26			
G Sp Woodpecker	0	88	88	298	43	67			
L Sp Woodpecker	0	0	0	0	0	1			
Skylark	0	3	3	0	0	0			
Sand Martin	65	119	184	1	26	1			
Swallow	188	1253	1441	16	30	51			
House Martin	0	32	32	0	211	73			
Tree Pipit	0	1	1	0	0	0			
Meadow Pipit	0	303	303	4	119	57			
Yellow Wagtail	0	1	1	0	0	0			
Grey Wagtail	30	10	40	3	12	8			
Pied Wagtail	8	2	10	1	25	1			
Waxwing	0	0	0	0	3	0			
Wren	0	573	573	286	304	286			
Sptd Flycatcher	4	3	7	0	0	0			
Robin	35	1034	1069	611	424	473			
Nightingale	0	0	0	0	0	1			
Black Redstart	0	0	0	0	1	0			
Redstart	0	4	4	0	1	3			
Stonechat	0	2	2	0	2	0			
Whinchat	0	1	1	0	0	0			
Wheatear	0	0	0	0	2	1			
Dunnock	7	853	860	645	347	326			
Blackbird	26	751	777	370	360	466			
Fieldfare	0	24	24	0	10	12			
Song Thrush	4	312	316	89	155	160			
Redwing	0	256	256	4	77	63			
Mistle Thrush	7	3	10	0	0	6			

Species	Ringed in 2014			Rt/Rc			Total		
	pul	FG	Total	2014	2013	2012	2014	2013	2012
Cetti's Warbler	5	102	107	134	36	16			
Grasshr Warbler	0	3	3	0	1	1			
Sedge Warbler	79	583	662	168	583	298			
Reed Warbler	114	1036	1150	418	888	624			
Blackcap	1	2702	2703	346	1005	1066			
Garden Warbler	0	337	337	64	109	78			
Lsr Whitethroat	0	87	87	17	44	15			
Whitethroat	8	697	705	185	410	213			
Wood Warbler	0	0	0	0	1	0			
Chiffchaff	10	1433	1443	225	839	645			
Willow Warbler	6	201	207	20	179	127			
Yel-brwd Warbler	0	0	0	0	1	1			
Goldcrest	1	318	319	115	109	338			
Firecrest	0	6	6	0	1	5			
Bearded Tit	0	1	1	0	0	3			
Long-tailed Tit	0	756	756	540	250	263			
Blue Tit	1713	2253	3966	1610	1939	2102			
Great Tit	1230	1398	2628	1297	1268	1215			
Coal Tit	0	88	88	41	34	49			
Marsh Tit	0	0	0	0	5	2			
Nuthatch	6	16	22	17	11	28			
Treecreeper	0	58	58	28	18	22			
Gt Grey Shrike	0	0	0	0	0	1			
Magpie	20	33	53	8	37	36			
Jay	0	66	66	11	20	58			
Jackdaw	9	29	38	8	5	9			
Carrion Crow*	3	1	4	0	7	6			
Starling	5	1483	1488	1545	293	273			
House Sparrow	0	151	151	18	106	100			
Tree Sparrow	25	31	56	4437	35	342			
Chaffinch	5	281	286	22	245	342			
Brambling	0	0	0	0	2	2			
Greenfinch	0	388	388	34	407	465			
Goldfinch	0	840	840	52	483	643			
Siskin	0	107	107	11	191	64			
Linnet	0	63	63	0	15	16			
Common Redpoll	0	7	7	4	7	1			
Redpoll Sp	0	0	0	0	9	0			
Lesser Redpoll	0	93	93	47	182	378			
Bullfinch	4	121	125	27	27	33			
Yellowhammer	0	26	26	0	28	8			
Reed Bunting	32	134	166	50	107	76			
<b>Total</b>	<b>4325</b>	<b>22569</b>		<b>13826</b>					
		<b>26894</b>			<b>14375</b>				

\* or Hooded Crow

## Key to symbols used:

ad	Adult	M	Male	VV	Ring or colour marks
F	Female	pul	Pullus/Nestling		read in the field
J	Juvenile	R	Caught and released by a ringer	X	Found dead
				+	Shot or killed by man

EURING Codes for the age of the bird when ringed.	2	Current calendar year or any age older	
0	Not aged	3	In First calendar year
1	Pullus/Nestling	4	Second calendar year or older
1J	In first calendar year and close to nest	5	In second calendar year

The first line shows the ring number, the age (and sex) when ringed, and the date and site of original ringing; the second line the status, date and site of subsequent recovery or recapture including the distance (1km = 0.625 miles) and number of days between original ringing and final recovery. Dates are in the format dd/mm/yy.

## Peregrine Falcon

GN96933	1F	01/06/2006	Chichester Cathedral, West Sussex
	VV	03/07/2014	Southall, Middx; 80km NNE; 2954d
GR38675	1	22/05/2014	Site Confidential, near Barking, Essex
	X	18/08/2014	Bradwell on Sea, Essex; 61km ENE; 88d

### Sedge Warbler movements to and from the London Area

- London Area ringing location of bird recovered elsewhere
- Ringing location of bird recovered in the London Area

The end of the line with no dot is the recovery location



(Garganey Consulting)

#### Coot

GC87114	4	11/12/2010	Hyde Park, In Lond
	VV	04/02/2014	Groningen, The Netherlands; 496km ENE; 1151d

#### Yellow-legged Gull

GR92818	5	22/02/2014	Rainham Tip, Essex
	VV	27/02/2014	Blaringhem, Département Nord, France; 179km ESE; 5d
		09/04/2014	
		& 28/04/2014	Préverenges, Vaud, Switzerland; 720km SE; 65d

#### Caspian Gull

GG61151	3	10/11/2007	Rainham Tip, Essex
		12/05/2014	
		& 15/05/2014	Roof in Gatovo, Minsk Oblast, Belarus; 1871km E; 2378d

#### Starling

LH09525	4M	17/12/2013	Eastcote, Middx
	Sick	08/09/2014	Šilute, Klaipeda, Lithuania; 1504km ENE; 265d

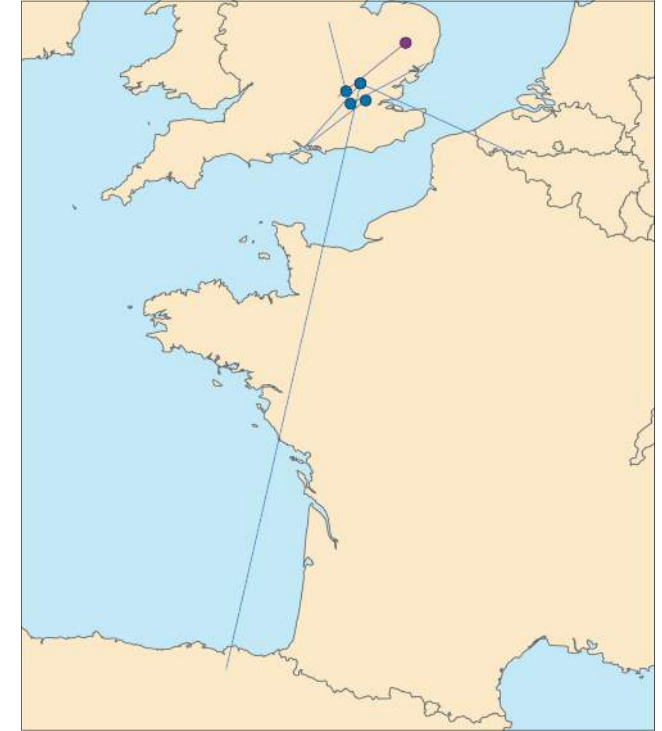
#### Common Redpoll

NOS HE13655	3M	12/10/2013	Herdla Fuglestasjon, Askøy, Hordaland, Norway
	R	19/02/2014	Black Park Country Park, Bucks; 1060km SSW; 130d

### Reed Warbler movements to and from the London Area

- London Area ringing location of bird recovered elsewhere
- Ringing location of bird recovered in the London Area

The end of the line with no dot is the recovery location



(Garganey Consulting)

### Reporting a ringed bird

The BTO relies on people reporting ringed birds, so if you find a bird wearing a ring or have read metal or colour ring details in the field, please report these to:

BTO Ringing Unit, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 2PU  
or online at [www.ring.ac](http://www.ring.ac)

### List of contributors

The compiler gratefully acknowledges the information received from the following: A. G. Beasley, S. Christmas, Dartford Ringing Group, D. Harris, Hersham Ringing Group, North Thames Gull Group, P. Oakenfell, M. Reed, P. Roper, D. Ross, Runnymede Ringing Group, Rye Meads Ringing Group, R. Sanderson, J. Swan, R. Taylor and B. Trevis.

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

A spreadsheet of the year's records from Alan Gibson is posted on the LNHS website at: <http://www.lnhs.org.uk/Publications.htm#LBR2014>



## THE BREEDING BIRD SURVEY IN LONDON

IAN WOODWARD, BTO NORTH LONDON CONTACT

The *BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey (BBS)* was introduced in 1994 to provide a measure of the population changes of our common and widespread birds. One-kilometre squares were chosen at random by BBS organisers at the BTO. Each square is allocated to a volunteer, who makes two early-morning transect walks between April and June, separated by at least four weeks. The survey is repeated each year, following the same route. All birds observed are counted; not just those known to be breeding. By comparing counts of birds made on the same squares in successive years, it is possible to measure population changes.

Where species are sufficiently widespread, changes in population can be measured at regional level as well as at national level. This report covers the London government office region, and therefore does not represent the entire LNHS area.

In 2014, a total of 107 squares were surveyed in the London region (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Number of squares covered over the most-recent ten years.

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
91	103	118	108	110	104	98	97	111	107

In 2014, no new species was seen (or heard) for the first time on BBS walks in London, so the total seen on London squares remained at 135 species. A total of 12 Little Egret was the highest ever recorded for this species - the previous high had been just three. The highest ever counts were also made for two non-native species which continue to increase rapidly in the London area, Ring-necked Parakeet (706) and Egyptian Goose (50). The most abundant species counted was Feral Pigeon (2,961 individuals), followed by Woodpigeon (2,778), and then Starling (2,319).

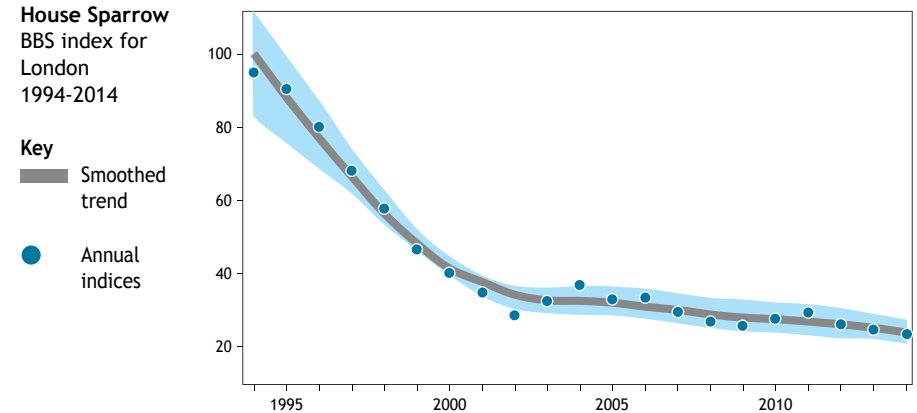
Table 2 shows the population changes in London between 2013/2014 and 1995/2013\*, compared with the change found nationally over these periods. The criterion for inclusion in the table is that a species occurs in an average of 30 squares per year over the survey period from 1994 to 2014, which is considered to be the minimum number to provide reliable trends. As a result of the low number of squares covered in the early years of the survey, we can report on only 27 species, with no new species being added to the report in 2014.

Fourteen species show a statistically significant increase in London between 1995 and 2013, with the increase for Blue Tit no longer being significant. Six species show a significant decrease in London: Swift; Starling; Blackbird; Song Thrush; Mistle Thrush; and House Sparrow. The decline for Feral Pigeon is no longer significant.

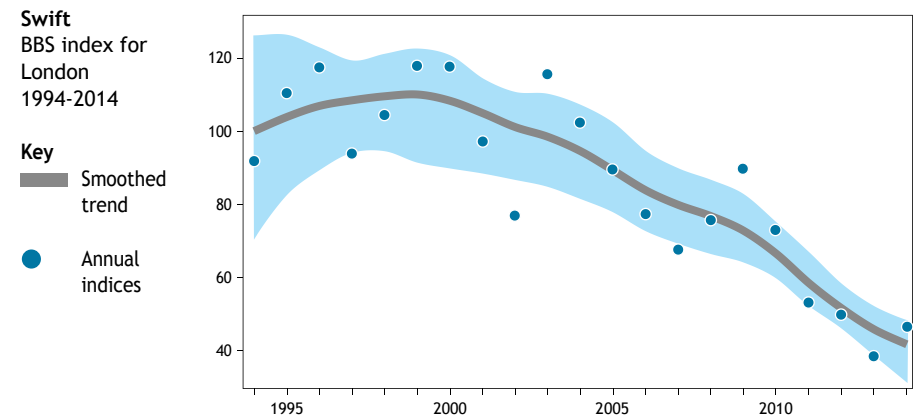
Seven species showed statistically significant population changes between 2013 and 2014. Three were decreases (Green Woodpecker, Great Tit and Greenfinch) and four were increases (Magpie, Blackcap, Wren and Song Thrush). The increase for Song Thrush followed a statistically significant decrease between 2012 and 2013.

\*See explanation under Table 2.

The graphs for two of London's declining species show how their main declines occurred at different times. In the case of House Sparrow (Fig. 1) the biggest population decreases occurred in the 1990s and numbers have been comparatively stable in the 21st century, although, worryingly, the graph suggests that a slight downward trend continues. In contrast, Swift numbers (Fig. 2) remained stable in the early years of BBS, but the steep decline which began around 2000 has continued ever since.



**Figure 1:** Graph showing the BBS trend for House Sparrow in the London government office region. The grey line is the smoothed trend, the blue dots represent the annual indices.



**Figure 2:** Graph showing the BBS trend for Swift in the London government office region. The grey line is the smoothed trend, the blue dots represent the annual indices.

**Editorial note:** The BBS index tables are based on the annual population changes, with 1994 set to the nominal figure of 100 and subsequent values calculated accordingly. A detailed account of the methodology is on the BBS pages of the BTO website:

<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/bbs/research-conservation/methodology>

**Table 2.** Population changes in numbers of birds in the BTO's London region compared with the United Kingdom. (lcl=lower confidence limit; ucl=upper confidence limit; figures in blue type are statistically significant). The long term trend has been smoothed. As smoothing involves truncation of the end points this trend is labelled as 1995/2013, even though the survey period covered is from 1994 to 2014.

	Sample size	Change 2013/2014	Change 2013/2014	Change 1995/2013	Change 1995/2013	Change 1995/2013	Change 1995/2013
	London	London	UK	London	London lcl	London ucl	UK
Mallard	42	-15	-1	-16	-37	33	14
Feral Pigeon	70	-3	4	-24	-35	0	-17
Woodpigeon	80	10	-10	54	22	89	37
Collared Dove	51	-10	-7	4	-23	43	11
Ring-necked Parakeet	38	3	43	>10,000	-	-	1,181
Common Swift	58	21	-17	-56	-70	-37	-42
Green Woodpecker	30	-33	-12	52	4	113	31
Great Sp Woodpecker	36	-13	0	71	30	103	136
Magpie	78	17	6	34	9	65	-1
Jay	39	-25	-13	-12	-40	24	24
Carrion Crow	79	-1	2	39	11	76	18
Blue Tit	78	-8	2	16	-1	38	4
Great Tit	73	-22	-4	115	81	181	39
Long-tailed Tit	31	29	22	65	15	159	10
Chiffchaff	31	-4	21	152	70	275	90
Blackcap	44	17	14	154	102	235	143
Wren	73	19	34	29	11	53	8
Starling	77	-5	6	-54	-63	-41	-50
Blackbird	80	2	5	-27	-37	-14	21
Song Thrush	49	20	14	-34	-49	-16	8
Mistle Thrush	33	0	19	-55	-73	-29	-31
Robin	77	-6	7	79	53	130	11
Dunnock	60	15	2	20	-10	54	21
House Sparrow	67	-3	4	-72	-80	-59	-3
Chaffinch	55	-4	-5	118	63	253	7
Greenfinch	60	-28	-14	15	-16	62	-32
Goldfinch	46	2	4	357	192	608	111

**Editorial note:** 'Sample size London' is the mean number of squares per year on which the species was recorded over the course of the BBS survey (1994-2014 for the 2014 paper). The figures in the remaining columns are percentages. Writing explanatory text would be complicated, to convey something that is both accurate and concise, so interested readers should visit the BBS pages on the BTO website:

<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/bbs>

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## THE PEREGRINE FALCON IN INNER LONDON

DAVID JOHNSON

<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/Publications.htm#LBR2014>



### Abstract

Following the recovery of the Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* in south-east England from the 1980s onwards, this species expanded its range westwards along the Thames in the 1990s and it was only a matter of time before the Peregrine would breed in Inner London (the Inner London recording area of the LNHS). When I spoke to the late Derek Ratcliffe about Peregrines breeding in Central London he said, "They should flourish as they have all they need; tall buildings to nest on and a plentiful supply of food in the form of the Feral Pigeon." Having been involved with Peregrine Falcons for over 30 years - either flying or observing them - it was wonderful to see them in London in the late 1990s. This paper deals with the issues that arise for the Peregrine in the truly urban environment of Inner London from 2001-2014.

### Breeding pairs

The first pair of Peregrines to breed in the LNHS recording area (the 'London Area') was at Docklands in 1998. It was not long before a pair bred in Inner London at Battersea

*Adult male on his lookout perch at the Tate. (David Johnson)*



Power Station, in 2001, where three young were successfully reared. Since that first breeding success Peregrines have gradually spread out, and in 2003 a second pair attempted to breed at a site near Regent's Park. The eggs mysteriously disappeared that year, but in 2004 this pair successfully reared two young. It was intriguing to see that the off-duty bird liked perching on the tower of the Tate Modern, by the river, even though this was about three miles away. Territories in the early days were huge, as there were so few pairs that there was no competition for nest sites. In 2005, hopes for the Regent's Park site were dashed when the birds did not return and there was no real indication as to where they might have gone. However, during a watch from the top of St Paul's Cathedral, a Peregrine eventually appeared and was visible until it disappeared into a very promising looking crevice on a distant tall building.

Further investigation revealed that this was the chosen nest site and that the female had already laid two eggs on a flat, hard ledge. She soon deserted this site because the eggs rolled around so badly that she could not incubate them. Instead, she laid the remainder of the clutch on a pile of bailing rope and debris she found high up on a ledge on the Old Bailey. Incubation there went on for seven days until one of the birds' talons got caught up in the 'nest' material and dragged it over the edge, where the eggs smashed. Incredibly, the very next day she was back at the Regent's Park site, where she soon laid a second clutch and duly brought off three young, but this was the last year they bred at Regent's Park. Since they seemed to prefer the Tate site, provision was made for the birds to make a proper scrape in the hope that they would breed successfully in 2006, and this is exactly what happened. The pair went on to rear 28 young in their 12 breeding seasons together from 2003 to 2014: a magnificent achievement.

Three years later a third pair occupied a site at Vauxhall and their first breeding success was in 2010, fledging four young. This pair spends the non-breeding season on the Houses of Parliament. A further pair became established at Charing Cross Hospital (Fulham) that year and they duly fledged three young in 2011. A pair was found breeding on the east side of the city in 2012 and a new pair bred in the west of the Inner London area in 2014, rearing three young. All these pairs have been faithful to their nest sites, which are becoming traditional.

At the time of writing there are seven pairs of Peregrines in Inner London, six breeding (as detailed above) and one non-breeding pair. These non-breeding birds are on territory in the western part of the area but have not yet found a nest site where, a) the owners want them on their building or b) ledges suitable for egg laying are available. Instead they have laid on unsuitable surfaces such as window ledges and concrete paving slabs where there is not any material to make a shallow depression (scrape) to keep the eggs together.

If the eggs can roll around, the female cannot incubate them properly; she may incubate only one egg out of the three or four, and when there is a nest relief the male could, and does, incubate the 'wrong' egg, leaving the warm egg to go cold resulting in breeding failure.

In Inner London, Peregrines start incubation in March with the chicks fledging in early June. Juveniles disperse naturally, and there is no evidence of one being aggressively chased away. Occasionally a juvenile may still be hanging around in October/November but it will go before the next breeding season starts. The juveniles will usually disperse around August/beginning of September.

### Analysis of breeding Peregrine pairs and young fledged in Inner London, 2001-2014

BAT = Battersea Power Station

CXH = Charing Cross Hospital

TAT = Tate Modern

UND = Undisclosed

VAU = Vauxhall area

YBF = young birds fledged (0=failed)

Year	Site A BAT	Site B TAT	Site C VAU	Site D CXH	Site E UND	Site F UND	Total YBF	Total breeding prs
2014	3	2	3	1	3	3	15	6
2013	2	2	0	3	2	-	9	5
2012	0	1	4	4	2	-	11	5
2011	0	2	3	3	-	-	8	4
2010	0	2	4	0	-	-	6	4
2009	0	3	0	-	-	-	3	3
2008	0	4	-	-	-	-	4	2
2007	3	4	-	-	-	-	7	2
2006	0	3	-	-	-	-	3	2
2005	3	3	-	-	-	-	6	2
2004	0	2	-	-	-	-	2	2
2003	1	0	-	-	-	-	1	2
2002	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	1
2001	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	1
Total	18	28	14	11	7	3	81	

Sometimes individuals from one brood may drift into another pair's territory and accidentally they can become adopted. When the juveniles become stronger and more confident on the wing, they fly further away from the nest site exploring the area around them. This is when they meet up with other exploring juvenile Peregrines and, as the juveniles all look the same, the adults of the territory they go to do not know that their family has increased. With the density of Peregrines in Inner London becoming greater and territories getting smaller, this will occur more often. This happened in June 2012 when the male juvenile from the Tate site went east and joined another family, and he occasionally came back to the Tate site with another juvenile Peregrine. This will occur in June when the juveniles are fresh on the wing but, come July, new juveniles drifting into these areas will often get chased out of the territory by the resident juveniles who now see them as intruders.

### Nest site complications

The types of building in Inner London on which the Peregrines have chosen to breed are varied, and include power stations, office buildings, churches, hospitals and residential tower blocks. Experience has shown that, in order to ensure that the birds have a peaceful and successful breeding season, it is often essential to meet the owners of buildings, contractors, maintenance engineers and sometimes the Metropolitan Police Wildlife Crime Unit, to reach a clear understanding of what is needed.



As a Schedule 1 Species, the Peregrine is well protected by law, but when people in residential tower blocks are told that they cannot go near the nest site between January (when the breeding cycle begins) and the end of July (when the juveniles are strong on the wing) they are not easily persuaded to accept breeding birds on their building.

Generally, if maintenance work is done outside the breeding season - from August to January - it should give contractors sufficient time to do their work. Thanks to their co-operation, a lot of breeding attempts succeed which would otherwise fail.

### Nest site suitability

Given all the tall buildings in Inner London and the number of new ones planned, Peregrines should be able to find new sites in the future but their success will depend on various factors. It is essential that the birds are not encouraged on to unsuitable buildings, where they may attempt to breed but they will fail to fledge successfully. Unfortunately, well-meaning people often suggest putting up Peregrine nesting boxes or trays on unsuitable buildings because of their desire to 'give something back to nature' and likewise building developers can misguidedly believe that this is a means of fulfilling a need to make provision for biodiversity on new constructions.

Particularly important is whether there will be enough (or any) perches and landing places for the young when they fledge. The current practice of facing new tall buildings



*Eggs: This site failed due to lack of substrate (nesting material). There is very little to keep the eggs together. (David Johnson)*



*Left: An adult female feeding a large juvenile. (Tony Duckett)*

*Above: Juveniles ready to fledge: three males and one female. (Tony Duckett)*

with glass means they do not provide any potential landing ledges. All may be well until the juveniles make their first flight when after typically flying 60-70 metres from the security of the nest site they realise that they are going away from all they know. They then turn back only to find that they have lost height and - with no ledge to give them refuge - they will crash land and be at the mercy of cars, foxes or people (some of whom may have the best of intentions but will pass the bird into the wrong hands).

When the building is made of brick or concrete a young bird can sometimes cling to it wondering what to do. As they have not yet learnt that their tail is designed for braking, turning or slowing down, they usually hit the building quite hard. If they survive - and some do not, especially if it is a glass building - they slide down and usually end up on the ground.

If an urban nest site can be carefully monitored at the critical fledging time, a fallen juvenile can be placed on a tall roof near by or perhaps even on the nest site roof. It will take this particular bird a day or two to get over the shock and try again. Usually this 'cooling off period' seems to do the trick, because when it makes a second attempt its flight will be more powerful, longer and with quicker wing beats. Such birds seem to have learnt very quickly to stay up high and instead of panicking, as they do on their first flight, they think about where they are going and try to land properly. After three days their landings are reasonably good



*This juvenile desperately clings to the side of the building. (Phil Wallace)*

as they have learned how to use their tails for stalling before landing. Occasionally they get over-confident and overshoot a landing perch but then they simply fly around and land normally somewhere else. These problems are more serious for urban Peregrines than for those that breed at the more traditional cliff sites, where the young birds can more easily find perching places on rocks, gorse, bracken etc, and learn to scramble and flap their way upwards until they find a secure perch.

Traditional stone-built churches have the potential to be some of the best nest sites for urban Peregrines in the future, providing they are high enough. This is because they can offer a well-protected nest site with lots of perches for the juveniles and they usually have the advantage of not being subject to the normal disturbances of modern life (eg window-cleaning, and lift- and aerial-maintenance).

### Size of territory

Originally the size of a Peregrine's territory in Inner London was between five and eight square kilometres (two and three square miles). With the number of tall structures to nest on and the abundant food supply (primarily the Feral Pigeon) these territories will get smaller with the increasing density of the population. At the moment, there are already two pairs which nest just under 1.5 kilometres (1 mile) from each other and both pairs have bred successfully in the same year. In Inner London, especially north of the river Thames, there is room for further pairs of Peregrines to establish territories.

### Intruders

The number of Peregrines in Inner London is increasing, and this can be seen by the number of Peregrine 'intruders' that fly into occupied territories in February, March and April. There appears to be a very healthy reservoir of Peregrines waiting to take over when an opportunity arises, and serious aggression can sometimes occur. In 2013, for example, the Tate pair chased an intruding male into a building where he became stuck. He was rescued, taken to a vet and released the following day. At another site, in March 2014, an adult male got caught in pigeon netting whilst being chased and had to be taken to a wildlife hospital. Within 24 hours a new male took his place and was soon soaring above the nest site with the adult female.

### Prey taken by Peregrines in Inner London

The predominant prey species that the Peregrine feeds on in Inner London is the Feral Pigeon, which accounts for around 80% of all prey seen caught in the air or of prey remains found. The other birds taken are a wide variety of species ranging in size and weight from a Mallard to a Goldfinch. The habitat that the Peregrine hunts over - although urban - has large and small parks with trees, lakes and the River Thames. Migrant birds use the river as a flyway on migration and the river naturally attracts ducks, waders, gulls and terns. Peregrines, wherever they are, seem to like being near to large water bodies - be it estuaries, lakes, reservoirs or rivers - probably because it offers them a wide variety of prey species. A male was observed trying to catch bats over Regent's Park lake in the evenings, and one catch was confirmed by a resident (who lived by the nest ledge where the birds bred in 2004 and 2005) when he saw the male carry a bat to the ledge one evening.

These species were identified from the remains found at nest, roost or cache sites and by prey actually seen to be caught between 2003 and 2014:

Eurasian Wigeon	Common Gull	Redwing
Eurasian Teal	Herring Gull	Mistle Thrush
Mallard	Common Tern	Jay
Pheasant	Arctic Tern	Jackdaw
Little Grebe	Feral Pigeon	Starling
Moorhen	Stock Dove	House Sparrow
Oystercatcher	Woodpigeon	Chaffinch
Ringed Plover	Collared Dove	Greenfinch
European Golden Plover	Ring-necked Parakeet	Goldfinch
Grey Plover	Common Cuckoo	Reed Bunting
Northern Lapwing	European Nightjar	
Dunlin	Common Swift	Other prey remains found,
Common Snipe	Kingfisher	including various escaped
Woodcock	Green Woodpecker	cage birds, were:
Black-tailed Godwit	Great Spotted Woodpecker	Bat <i>Pipistrellus</i> sp.
Bar-tailed Godwit	House Martin	Budgerigar
Eurasian Whimbrel	Dunnock	Lovebird
Common Redshank	Blackbird	Cockatiel
Black-headed Gull	Fieldfare	Parrot
Little Gull	Song Thrush	Parakeet

### Hunting Techniques

The author has witnessed 110 successful kills by Peregrines in Inner London, plus over 80 hunting expeditions that have resulted in a kill which was obscured by buildings. Some of these have been really spectacular. Different hunting techniques are used.

**Still hunting** In this, the commonest technique, the Peregrine is perched high up on a crane, church or other tall structure where it has an excellent all-round view. It waits patiently until some Feral Pigeons pass below, letting them reach a point about 100 metres away. Now the falcon is ready to attack. It launches itself, flying rapidly downwards and gaining speed by pumping its wings really hard. It aims directly at its prey, coming up into the chosen victim's blind spot which is behind and slightly below the bird. The impact can be spectacular with feathers flying everywhere. Should the Feral Pigeons see the Peregrine before it has got into position, they rapidly jink out of the way, flying down as fast as they can to the safety of the rooftops. This happens more often than might be expected since Feral Pigeons are very adept at avoiding attacks. The disappointed Peregrine will just return to its perch to wait for another opportunity and - with so many Feral Pigeons about - this is never long in coming.

**Flushing** In another technique the Peregrine will fly along a building or under a bridge, deliberately flushing Feral Pigeons in the hope that there is an easy one to catch. This may be a sick bird, one heavy in moult or a recently fledged one.

**Co-operation** Occasionally the Peregrines will co-operate, one chasing the victim and pushing it into the path of the other. The intended victim may not even notice the second Peregrine, having all its attention focused on its pursuer.

*Adult female on Marylebone Church feeding on a Feral Pigeon. This was the female from the Tate pair, 2003-2014. (Tony Duckett)*



**Night hunting** This has been recorded in Inner London by the prey remains of nocturnal migrants being found at nest and cache sites. The Peregrine, as in other well-lit cities around the world, uses the light pollution to see its victims.

**The stoop** This is the most celebrated hunting technique. It is rarely observed as it requires a lot of dedicated watching. The best time is on a warm, cloudy day: the warmth will allow the Peregrine to soar to a great height and the clouds will make it easier to follow as it drifts around, 'waiting-on' for a bird to pass below. These conditions also make it possible to follow the whole flight. When the Peregrine has its prey lined up it will start its dive, first pumping its wings to accelerate then closing them tight to its body and travelling at immense speed. Just when it seems that it cannot go any faster, it hits turbo - and then the speed is truly unbelievable. On one occasion, when a Peregrine soared up into the clouds, the Met Office confirmed the cloud base as being at 1,200 metres (4,000 feet). For it to see its moving prey from this height against a background of buildings, grey streets, and moving cars and people, and to judge the distance involved, the Peregrine's eyesight must be truly remarkable.

### Ringing

At some sites the chicks are colour-ringed whilst at other sites they are not. Much depends on the attitude of the residents, building owners and managers, and what type of building the birds have chosen to breed on. Where they have bred on a disused building there is not usually a problem with ringing as it does not affect anyone. This contrasts greatly with sites where the residents and managers regularly demand to know why they must not disturb the birds whilst the ringers can. Since the ringing process takes about 15-20 minutes, the same time that it takes to clean the windows, the whole thing seems (in the eyes of the residents) hypocritical.

It is not advisable to colour-ring Peregrines at secret and sensitive nest sites. Peregrine persecution can make it imperative that the location of some sites does not become public knowledge. Through the internet people who have read the colour-ring number can, with a little bit of research, find out where and when the bird was ringed. Before you know it, it is all over social media sites giving away the secret nest location to the very people from whom you were trying to keep it a secret.

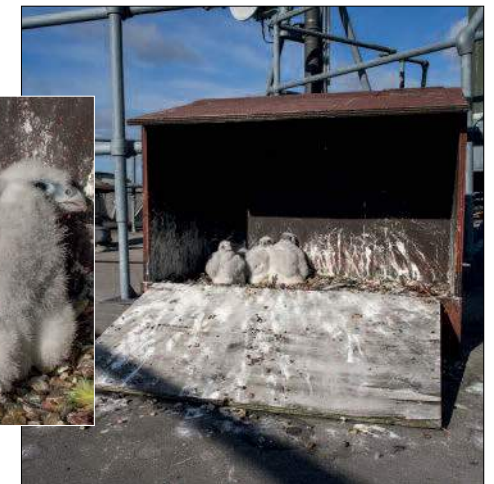
There have only been a few sightings of colour-ringed Peregrines in Inner London. These were either arriving or dispersing. In 2007 a female (ringed that year at a site in



*This adult female in Hampshire was ringed at Vauxhall in 2012 and is the first record of a London-ringed Peregrine breeding in 2014. (Richard Jacobs)*

East Sussex) arrived at Charing Cross Hospital and she is still one of the resident adults. A male ringed at Vauxhall in 2010 spent the winter in West Ealing. He was seen again in October 2011 with a female at a site just outside Inner London. A male ringed at the Tate site in 2012 spent the winter of 2013 at Alexandra Palace. Excitingly, a female ringed at the Vauxhall site in 2012 was found breeding in Hampshire in 2014. There she laid four eggs; three hatched, but sadly all three chicks died. This is the first record of a London-ringed Peregrine breeding. Hopefully she will be successful in 2015.

*Four healthy chicks in a nest box on a roof in Inner London. (Stuart Harrington)*



## The future

In Inner London all Peregrines breed on man-made structures and often in close proximity to people. When Peregrines either choose or return to nest sites it is in the depths of winter in January or February when no one is out on the roof-tops or balconies. When the weather improves from April onwards (when the birds are breeding) people come out and that means disturbance.

At the moment there is a small dedicated band of volunteers who monitor and watch over nest sites. These people arrange meetings with building owners and companies who have the need to work on or near the nest building. It is important to have a good relationship with site owners. My concerns for the future are when this small band of dedicated Peregrine enthusiasts disappears. Who will pick up the responsibilities of making sure everything is running smoothly for the upcoming breeding season? From where I am sitting writing this I can see no one. It is the same people doing the work to ensure everything is in place for the breeding season, be it nest boxes/trays being erected or repaired, new substrate being put in them, tidying up last season's nesting mess (droppings, pellets and prey remains), informing building owners they have Peregrines on their building, arranging meetings and being there at that most critical and stressful time when the juveniles fledge in case any come down to street level and have to be rescued.

Overall there are 40 pairs of Peregrines in the LNHS recording area. Not all of these will breed and out of those breeding pairs not all will be successful. Even though 40 pairs sounds a lot, we should not get complacent about its status in London. Persecution is still a problem for this species in the UK, and it only takes a few companies and residents where the birds breed on their property to say, 'we don't want them here anymore'. Buildings where birds have bred can be demolished (this is happening now) and very good and successful nest sites can be lost forever.

I believe the Peregrine will always be in London but its continued breeding success depends on all of us.

The Peregrine inspired me into the world of nature and triggered my love of birds. Its beauty, grace, strength and incredible speed as its anchor shape sweeps through the sky still gives me a great deal of joy, as much now as it did when I saw my first wild bird back in the 1980s. I hope it can inspire the next generation as well, as this bird will always be under threat and needs all the friends it can get. I encourage you to join this bird in its truly wild state and enjoy watching its mastery of the air.

## Addendum: The spread of the Peregrine Falcon nationwide

The Peregrine Falcon, traditionally, is a bird of mountains, moorlands and coastal cliffs and was found on the coasts of southern England and in all suitable habitats in northern and western Britain. Exceptionally, they bred on man-made structures: Salisbury Cathedral in the late 19th Century, a church steeple in Norfolk in the 20th Century, and occasionally on quarry faces.

In 1939 the total number of breeding pairs was estimated to be 1,471: 819 pairs in Scotland, 359 in England and 293 in Wales. There was an estimated 13% decline during WWII, when many birds and young were killed to protect military carrier pigeons from becoming prey. Then followed a period of recovery until 1956, when the introduction of

toxic organochlorine pesticides resulted in a population 'crash' to just 445 pairs by 1971. After these substances were banned, a further recovery began and the population grew to 730 pairs by 1981 and 1,184 by 1991.

By this time, as numbers were getting back to normal, Peregrines began using man-made habitats such as tall buildings and quarries much more regularly, and this really opened the way to their nationwide expansion. Starting in Merseyside in 1989, the use of man-made sites took time to develop; but in 1994 the spread began, with Peregrines nesting in Leicestershire, Worcestershire and Oxfordshire for the first time. Indeed, a range expansion of 200% took place between the 1968-72 Bird Atlas (Sharrock) and the 2007-11 Bird Atlas (Balmer *et al.*).

Meanwhile, originating from Devon in 1985, Peregrines settled in Dorset and the Isle of Wight, before reaching Sussex and Kent in 1989/1990. They too were soon attracted to high buildings, such as power stations in North Kent, and by 1998 had become an increasingly frequent sight in the London Area as they prospected sites along the Thames.

Nesting in Inner London first occurred at Battersea power station in 2001, and by 2014 a total of seven pairs were present in the Inner London area with another 33 pairs on territory in the remainder of the LNHS Recording Area.

## Acknowledgements

Many thanks to: Denis Corley who is always a great help with everything involving the Peregrine; Stuart Harrington and Adrian Morgan for their comments during the draft stage; Rose Farmer for her reviewing, comments and typing; the photographers who allowed me to use their images, without which this article would be the poorer; and all those people who put in a tremendous amount of time watching the birds at the critical fledging stage who by so doing have helped the Peregrine to succeed in London. Thanks also to Andrew Moon for his helpful comments and suggestions on the proofs.

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## BLYTH'S REED WARBLER AT WANSTEAD FLATS, JUNE 29TH 2014 - THE THIRD FOR LONDON



NICK CROFT

May had started off where April hadn't quite finished, with the late arrival of our last Spring migrants; namely Whinchat, Tree Pipit, Reed and Sedge Warbler, Common Tern, Cuckoo and Spotted Flycatcher. Then the weather got nicer and the birding worse.

Just because you had a few new migrants to whet the appetite you go out thinking there could be more! The thought that there might just be one more interesting migrant can keep you going to the end of the month. Then comes June and by that time any inland patch birder is already casting envious eyes to reports coming from coastal sites, and to make matters worse, especially those just out of reach of a well-planned-out smash and grab/tick and run. Still Wanstead Park and Flats are at their glorious best at this time of year; the trees in full leaf, the air thick with scent of honeysuckle, elder and freshly mown grass. Time for one more patch tick before the dragons, damsels and butterflies become the objects of desire and the inevitable torpor of June?

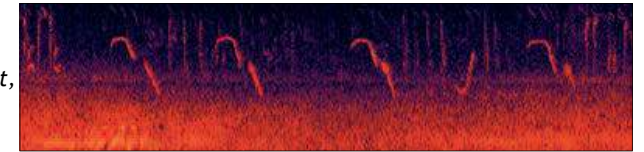
The weather had changed again by the end of the month as a tongue of low pressure had been pushing in from the near continent over the previous days, dumping good birds on the coast from Dorset, up the east coast to the western isles - Shetland of course taking the lion's share.

*If only... Blyth's Reed Warbler, Acrocephalus dumetorum, singing male in good habitat, Mosina, Tartu County, Estonia. (Rein Kuresoo)*



Sonograms of Blyth's Reed Warbler song:

Top: David Darrell-Lambert, London Borough of Redbridge, England (May 29th 2014).



Bottom: Stuart Fisher, Punkaharju, Savonlinna, Southern Savonia, Finland (June 29th 2014).



Oblivious to the weather patterns we just know the grottier the weather the better the birding, though we probably grumbled at one or other of our collective meetings at the end of Long Wood that we could have done with this weather earlier and no good would come of it now. Come the change in weather our luck changed too. Big time! A change of luck that will be what this May/Spring/Year will be remembered for (at least amongst Wanstead birders). And that piece of good fortune came in (I would say shape, but few if any saw anything of the elusive bird) the astonishingly beautiful song of a Blyth's Reed Warbler on the morning of the 29th. The improbability of it all reflected in the national weekly summary reports from the big two sightings services: Bird Guides 'most sensationally'; and RBA 'more remarkably still' shared the incredulity that a small brown bird with a great voice should be found in Wanstead.

... and true enough it was most sensationally and more remarkably lucky. If I hadn't thought I had heard a Willow Warbler I would not have gone via the fairground copse to Jubilee Pond and then on to Cat & Dog Pond. If there I hadn't heard the singing Reed Bunting I would have not been out of position on my return to the SSSI, and if it hadn't been for the lack of decent birds I would have probably not have gone to check the heather patch and heard our unlikely visitor. But I did and it did.

Luckily for me, I had heard the Warham Greens bird in full song in Norfolk a couple of years back, and luckily for me, as it happened I had just found a singing, local, Marsh Warbler a few days earlier with which to compare. I was left with BRW - the clincher for me the 'high low' phrase (see Dave Darrell-Lambert's sonogram above) - but I hadn't had any conclusive views.

**"Anybody about today? May have an interesting warbler!"**  
**"Has elements of Blyth's Reed Warbler."**

The bird was just a few feet from me, yet had been completely invisible. Being situated near the busy Central Road didn't help much, the sound of traffic masking some of the delicate phrases emanating from the thicket. Yes, I played a lure, and as quick as you like it appeared at the top of the bramble, and as quick as it had come it vanished again into the thick vegetation.

Things hadn't improved when Dan Hennessy turned up (luckily on holiday), or later Bob Vaughan (day-off), or Marco Johnson (semi-retired) though we did get to see it was an acro with a greyer tinge to the back than you'd expect on a Reed Warbler; none of

them had heard a singing Blyth's before. Luck was again on hand when Stuart Fisher, his interest roused by the flurry of excited texts, made a slight detour on his way between jobs. His broad grin confirmed our deliberations. The news could be released.

My phone went into melt-down as we trooped around the broom and bramble hiding-place of our illustrious singer; a notorious one-day wonder and major blocker for many London listers; and, as only the third record for London, I imagine a good number turned up after I had to leave for work. Someone (who shall remain nameless), a lone dissenter, tried to say it was a Marsh Warbler; luckily many a better birder than I put him straight.

I can only imagine the profanity that erupted from Tim Harris, having left his phone at home, on reading my texts on his return from work. Happily the bird was still singing, though more intermittently as night fell, when of course it did a bunk. That didn't stop a small and optimistic crowd from turning up at day break. Funny thing birding: I felt I'd let these people down in some way; and as for the euphoria of finding such a good bird? It was good, but not as good as spotting my first Rook on the patch. Lucky it was a spring bird, and singing any other time of the year it would have been just another Reed Warbler, not that I've anything against Reed Warblers...

### Previous London records

In early October 2001, an unstreaked *Acrocephalus* was discovered at Canary Wharf, in the Docklands area of Greater London. Andy Middleton and Ken Murray were fairly certain that it was a Blyth's Reed Warbler and Andy took extensive video footage of the bird. Unfortunately, coming just after the September 11th terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York, and because Canary Wharf itself had already been mooted as a potential target for a terrorist attack, they were not allowed to release the news. The grabs from the video confirm that they had indeed found a Blyth's Reed Warbler.

On June 16th 2003 at Fishers Green, a singing male was recorded, but it was only after its departure that its identity was confirmed from the 11 minutes of recorded song.

### Acknowledgements

With thanks to Dave Darrell-Lambert for allowing me the use of his recordings which can be heard on the Wanstead birding blog, Xeno Canto and Dave's own website:

<http://wansteadbirding.blogspot.co.uk/p/stus-sounds-of-wanstead.html>

[http://birdbrainuk.com/BBUK/Blog/Entries/2014/5/30\\_Another\\_good\\_London\\_Bird.html](http://birdbrainuk.com/BBUK/Blog/Entries/2014/5/30_Another_good_London_Bird.html)

Thanks also to Rein Kuresoo of NaTourEst Wildlife Tours, Estonia (<http://natourest.ee>) for permission to reproduce his photo.

Nick Croft, Flat 2, Romford Road, Forest Gate, London, E7 9HY

## CHANGES TO THE LONDON AREA LIST AND PUBLISHED RARITIES

ANDREW SELF

### Introduction

The recent book *The Birds of London* (Self, 2014) reviewed all records of rare and scarce birds. Historical records, ie prior to 1900, were brought together for the first time in one publication. Records since 1900 were also reviewed and those that differ or were omitted from previous LNHS publications such as *The Birds of the London Area* (LNHS, 1964) and *London Bird Reports* are documented in this paper along with historical records for species which are new to the London Area. All of these records have been assessed by either the London Bird Club Rarities Committee or, for national rarities, the *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

#### 1. Snow Goose

Swanscombe Marsh, 17 flew East on Mar 1st 1980

A flock of 17 flew past Swanscombe Marsh and were seen later the same day at Cliffe, Kent. The flock consisted of 13 adults and four immatures, all of which were white-morph birds. The same combination was subsequently found in Holland from April 18th-26th along with one blue-morph; one of the white-morph adults was colour ringed and this was traced to Canada. The Dutch authorities treated this flock as being wild birds and there have since been many other records of wild Snow Geese wintering there. The Kent Ornithological Society also accepted the flock at Swanscombe and Cliffe as being wild birds.

This record was published in the *London Bird Report* for 1980 along with the comment that "this species' status in the London Area remains in the category of "presumed escape"" and referred to the flock of 18 wild birds in Holland as being "of interest".

This species was overlooked when the Species Checklist of Birds of the London Area 1900-89 was published in the *London Bird Report* for 1989 and also from *Rare Birds in the London Area 1900 -1991* (Hardwick and Self).

Accepted by the LBC Rarities Committee as a flock of wild birds and therefore added to the Checklist of Birds of the London Area.

#### 2. American Wigeon

Surrey Docks, male on Aug 29th 1973

Surrey Docks, pair on Sep 5th 1975, male again from Sep 9th-15th

Originally accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee and published in 1973 and 1975 *LBRs*, and also in *Rare Birds in the London Area* (Hardwick and Self).

Reviewed by BBRC (*Report on rare birds in Great Britain in 2013*, Hudson *et al*) and now considered to be escapes; this species has therefore been removed from the London Area List.

### 3. Ferruginous Duck

Staines Reservoir, a pair on Sep 24th 1928.

This record was published in *British Birds* (Vol 22, p 144) and listed as an accepted record in *The London Naturalist* Ornithology Report for 1928 (predecessor to the *LBR*).

Glegg (1935) did not accept the record as "fully authenticated" and it was also not specifically mentioned in *The Birds of the London Area* although it does say "Ferruginous Ducks have appeared more frequently in other parts of the country and there seems no reason why some of those seen in our Area should not have been wild ones."

Accepted by the LBC Rarities Committee.

### 4. Black Grouse

Ticehurst (1909) stated that they used to breed at Brasted Chart although no date was given; this is in the London Area and had been overlooked in previous checklists of the birds of the London Area.

Accepted by the LBC Rarities Committee and added to the Checklist of Birds of the London Area.

### 5. Black Stork

Amwell, one flew over on Jun 4th 2002.

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee and subsequently published in the 2002 *LBR*. The finder has since confirmed that the bird remained north of the viewpoint and did not cross south into the London Area.

The LBC Rarities Committee voted to remove this record from the stats as it was not seen in the London Area.



### 6. Red-footed Falcon

Beckenham, on May 20th 1932.

This record was originally accepted by the Kent Ornithological Society. It was not listed in the 1932 *LBR* or in *The Birds of the London Area* and was presumably overlooked. KOS no longer counts this record, as it occurred in Greater London and they no longer use the London Boroughs in their recording area.

Accepted by the LBC Rarities Committee.

### 7. Common Crane

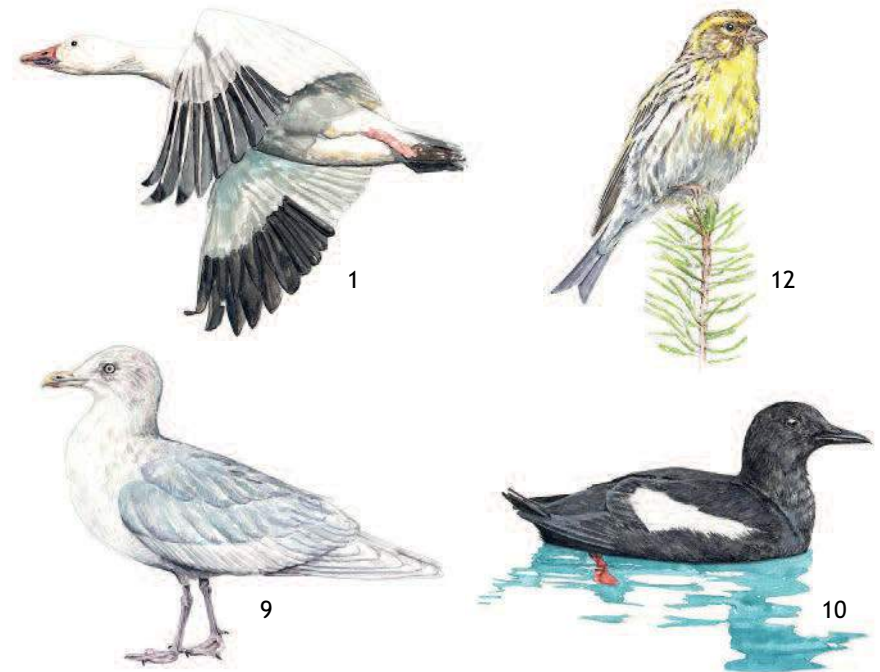
Rainham, on Jul 19th 1957

The *LBR* for 1957 states this bird was an immature and that "enquiries as to whether it might have escaped from captivity brought negative results." However, *Birds of Hertfordshire* (Sage, 1959) details a presumed escaped juvenile Common Crane seen in the Radlett area on July 4th and 6th 1957 which may relate to the Rainham bird.

Prior to the 1970s Cranes were very rare in the UK and an immature in July in the London Area would be an exceptional record; for example, there are only three records of Crane in the 1950s in Kent, none of which were in the summer months.

The LBC Rarities Committee agreed that this record should be treated as an escape.

*Species recorded prior to 1900 that have been accepted by the LBC Rarities Committee (numbers refer to those in the text). Snow Goose, Black Grouse and Black Guillemot were added to the Checklist, and American Wigeon was removed from it. (Dawn Painter)*



## 8. Long-tailed Skua

Easneye, Sep 1937

*The Birds of the London Area* (LNHS) lists one found dead "on the extreme fringes of our Area." However, Easneye falls wholly outside of the London Area and there are no details of exactly where this bird was found.

The LBC Rarities Committee voted to remove this record from the stats as it was not proven to have occurred in the London Area.

## 9. Iceland Gull

Barn Elms Res on Apr 15th 1939

Staines Res from Dec 25th 1939 to Jan 16th 1940 & again from Feb 11th-18th

Lonsdale Road Res on Dec 15th 1941

Hammersmith Bridge from Dec 26th 1941 to Jan 18th 1942 & again from Feb 7th to Mar 23rd (also in Kensington Gdns on Mar 8th); then again from Jan 2nd to Feb 28th 1943

Hammersmith Bridge from Dec 5th-31st 1942 (different to above)

Thames & Lonsdale Road Res from Nov 17th-25th 1943

Brent Res on Dec 18th 1943

The above records were accepted and published in various *LBRs*. At the time, the identifying features of Iceland and Glaucous Gulls were poorly known until G.T. Kay wrote a paper on identifying these gulls in *British Birds*.

Richard Fitter in *London's Birds* (1949) wrote "on reviewing the records...as published in the *London Bird Report* and *British Birds*, I find that in no case is any identification detail given which would enable us to determine, in the light of Kay's article, which species were seen." He adds that the Kensington Gardens bird in February and March 1942 was seen well enough to be sure of its identification as Iceland Gull. Fitter also remarks that "in the winter of 1941-42 when three Iceland and two Glaucous Gulls were reported from London, unusual numbers of Glaucous Gulls were seen all down the East Coast of Great Britain".

*The Birds of the London Area* referred to a small number of Iceland Gulls seen in the spring of 1939 and the following winter as well as three in the winter of 1941-42. It also noted that other birds were "reported subsequently, but at about this period it came to be realised that the identification of the Iceland Gull was more difficult than had been made clear by the *Handbook*."

The LBC Rarities Committee accepted Fitter's conclusions and rejected all claims of Iceland Gull from 1939-43 except for the well-documented bird in Kensington Gardens in February and March 1942.

## 10. Black Guillemot

Lambeth, found dead on Thames prior to 1900.

This record was documented in *Birds of Surrey* (Wheatley) but it had never been previously published in any LNHS publication and was omitted from all checklists of the birds of the London Area.

Accepted by the LBC Rarities Committee and added to the Checklist of Birds of the London Area.

## 11. Pallas's Sandgrouse

Hendon, flew over on Sep 23rd 1907

There was an invasion of this species into the UK in 1906-08 although this is the only accepted record from 1907. It was accepted by Glegg and published in his book, *Birds of Middlesex* (1935). It is also listed as an accepted record in Birdguides' *Online Rare Birds*.

*The Birds of the London Area* refers to the record but adds that "in subsequent publications this observation is omitted, presumably on account of the lack of detail". However it doesn't specifically state whether the record is acceptable or not.

The LBC Rarities Committee has accepted this record.

## 12. Serin

Dollis Hill, male on Nov 13th 1951

This was found by Eric Simms and published in square brackets in the 1951 *LBR* "from the description of plumage and note there is no doubt of its identity. It would not allow close approach, but the possibility that it was an escape cannot be ruled out." It was not published in *The Birds of the London Area*.

This was the first record in the London Area since 1900 (there was one 19th century record) so it is likely a cautious approach was taken - there are other records of firsts for London that were also square-bracketed. This would appear to be similar to a 'holding category' but it was never reviewed following later accepted records. Since then they have become much commoner in the UK and there are 24 other accepted records in the London Area. There are no records of escapes at that time in London.

The LBC Rarities Committee has accepted this record.

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## THE BONXIE INFLUX IN LONDON IN OCTOBER 2014

ANDREW MOON

### Introduction

This paper documents the remarkable invasion of Bonxies that took place, primarily in London, during October 2014. It also discusses the possible causes behind this event, as well as speculating as to the origins of the birds involved. At least 44 birds were recorded, which almost doubled the previous total in our area.

### Account

The Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*, perhaps colloquially better known as simply 'Bonxie', is the largest and most predatory of all the skuas; although its food items are principally fish, it often obtains this by scavenging or simply through food-piracy from birds up to the size of a Gannet. It also shows no compunction in killing other birds and mammals - this includes birds up to the size of Great and Lesser Black-backed Gull and even Grey Heron.

The breeding range lies entirely within the northern hemisphere, with a huge 50% of the world population breeding along the north-west coasts of Britain and Ireland, most of which are on Shetland and Orkney; elsewhere there is a substantial population on Iceland with smaller numbers in the Faroes, Svalbard and Norway. The British population was estimated at about 9,634 pairs in 2004 (with the world total being about 16,000 pairs), but it may well have increased since then. Birds will normally return to the breeding colonies between late March and April and then disperse southwards from late

*Adult Bonxie over Rainham on 17th October. (Russ Sherriff)*



August onwards, many no doubt passing along British and Irish coasts; wintering takes place predominantly between the Iberian and north African coasts, with some young birds moving as far south as the Cape Verde Islands and even the coasts of Brazil. Small numbers also winter off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland.

Considering that the British population was almost extinct in Scotland around 1900, they made a remarkable recovery by doubling their population every decade until the 1970s. More significantly, their range had expanded by 111% between the 1968-72 Atlas (Sharrock) and the 2007-11 Atlas (Balmer *et al*), so the population would seem to be still growing.

### Status in London prior to 2014

Just five birds in the first half of the 20th Century reflected its vagrant status during this period and only three more followed up until the 1980s. A sudden jump of about 20 birds during the 1980s, including about seven after the Great Storm in 1987, rapidly changed London birders' perspective of the status of Bonxie in the area; six birds were seen together over King George V Reservoir in September 1989.

Twelve more were seen in the 1990s, including a flock of four past Dartford Marsh in September 1994; 14 more birds followed between 2000 and 2013, bringing the overall total of birds seen in London up to approximately 53.

Slowly but surely this huge skua has become an increasingly regular, but still rare, visitor to our area since 1980, quite probably as a result of the relatively recent population increase. It remains a matter of supposition as to where these birds were originating from, although several records along the Lower Thames provide some evidence of an arrival route upriver from the east.

*Weather synopsis for mid-day 14th October 2014 - see overleaf. (Reproduced by kind permission of UK Weather Forecast Ltd - [www.ukweatherforecast.co.uk](http://www.ukweatherforecast.co.uk))*



Autumn has always been the favoured period of occurrence, with the peak month previously being September.

### General weather synopsis between 12th and 18th October 2014

**Sunday 12th October:** A fairly small, compact and developing low pressure system situated over the Bay of Biscay moved north towards the UK, with cold, or even raw, east or north-easterly winds along its northern flank right along the North Sea coast (further north towards the west coast of Norway, these winds would have been from the north or even north-east). A ridge of high pressure situated off the east coast of Ireland would at the same time move east over Britain bringing more settled weather.

**Monday 13th October:** The low pressure system now moved north-east up the English Channel and across south-east England bringing with it a period of heavy rain (many areas across London had over one inch of rain); significantly, the weather pattern in the northern North Sea (largely north of East Anglia) was mostly clear (and rain-free) with fresh or strong east or north-easterly winds.

**Tuesday 14th October:** The low became relatively slow moving and was only centered just to the north-east of East Anglia, bringing heavy rain along its northern flank down the east coast of northern England; on its southern flank over London, the winds had become very light west or north-westerly with extensive, patchy mist and poor visibility. Perhaps more significant, from an ornithological perspective, was that the centre (the 'eye of the storm') of this low pressure system slowly moved north-east right over London, resulting in a huge area (150 miles across) of stasis, or just very light winds circulating anticlockwise around it.

**Wednesday 15th October:** The low had moved east across the southern North Sea and was over the Low Countries/NE Germany, allowing the light west or north-westerly airflow and poor visibility to continue over south-east England and East Anglia, with further spells of rain along an occluded front moving north-east through the area.

**Thursday and Friday 16th & 17th October:** A very large low pressure system situated over the North Atlantic was moving east towards Britain, introducing a milder south-westerly airflow on its south-east edge (over London).

### Movement of Bonxies along the east coast of England during this time, as well as other inland records (away from London)

(No significant movements were reported from any Atlantic or Irish Sea coasts of western Britain and Ireland between 12th and 18th October 2014.)

**12th October:** No movements of Bonxies were reported anywhere along the east coast of Britain.

**13th October:** A dramatic turnaround from the previous day (with the advent of fresh to strong, onshore, east or north-easterlies) with impressive passage counts from North Sea watchpoints, including: 250 from Spurn (N.Yorks), 180 from Sandilands (Lincs), 98 from Saltburn (Redcar & Cleveland), 90 from Flamborough (N.Yorks), 57 from Grimston (Norfolk) and 42 from the River Nene mouth (Lincs), of which a flock of 12 birds flew south inland. More interestingly, a single flock of 14 birds 'dropped

out of the cloud' at Cliffe (Kent) and headed off east. There were smaller counts from other watchpoints, but significantly the only report from the south coast was 15 past Dungeness (Kent).

**14th October:** A significant decline from the previous day's high counts with 45 past Cley and 39 past Sheringham (Norfolk), 20 from Newbiggin-by-the-sea (Northumberland), with the next best count being ten from Mucking (Essex) and six from Cliffe ('dropped out of the cloud' and headed off east), both sites just outside the London Area. Inland reports came from (all singles unless stated): Brogborough (Beds), Carsington Water (Derbs), three at Draycote Water (Warks), two at Grafham Water (Cambs), two at Grimsbury Reservoir (Oxon), Sandy (Beds), Rutland Water (Rutland) and Standlake (Oxon).

**15th October:** Counts increased again as winds picked up again along the Yorkshire coast with peak counts of 32 past Flamborough and 32 past Filey. The only inland reports came from Draycote Water and Carsington Water (same as 14th) and Chew Valley Lake (Somerset).

**16th, 17th and 18th October:** There were no counts from east or south coast watchpoints (other than three past Dungeness on 17th) and inland birds still lingered at Chew Valley Lake and Draycote Water.

### Bonxie arrival in London

#### 13th October

Rainham Marshes (EX) - a group of 11 birds were watched 'dropping out of the low cloud' between 14:00 and 15:00; they appeared to arrive from the north-east and circled over the River Thames for a few minutes before climbing back into the cloud and leaving to the south-west (upriver). The observers considered the cloud base to be as low as 50 metres and it was raining at the time.

#### 14th October

Staines Res (MX) - one found at 07:00 stayed for most of the day and was subsequently seen to kill and eat a Coot.

Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (IL) - one flew over Buck Hill at 09:35.

Rainham Marshes\* - four in Aveley Bay 'mid-morning' (10:17).

Q. Mary Res (SY) - three birds at 13:05 were soon joined by an additional five birds. This flock of eight had increased to an incredible total of 13 birds by 17:45.

Gallions Reach (EX/KT)\* - one at 13:35, then up to four intermittently until 15:00, which then flew downriver.

Crossness (KT)\* - one at 13:30, followed by three (maybe four) different birds, all of which eventually flew off downriver by 15:35. These birds were the same as the Beckton individuals and probably the same as the Rainham birds. One bird was seen to kill a Black-headed Gull, and this was consumed by two others as well.

QEII Res (SY) - seven birds from 13:50 until 16:30 at least; were seen to chase large gulls coming in to roost.

Crayford Marshes (KT)\* - one bird from 11:35 to 11:40 (almost certainly one of the Rainham/ Crossness birds).

Island Barn Res (SY) - two birds from 15:50 to 17:00 at least (different from the QEII birds); these also 'chased and harassed the large gulls coming in to roost'.

Belvedere (KT)\*, three birds on the River Thames.

\* presumably involving the same birds

#### 15th October

Q. Mary Res - two birds present at dawn; remained all day and were also seen pursuing large gulls.

Q. Mother Res (BU) - two birds flew in from the east at 08:14 and left to the north-east at 09:22.

Brent Res (MX) - one flew high north at 08:59.

Crossness\* - two flew downriver at 08:28 and one flew upriver at 09:10.

Rainham Marshes\* - three still on the River Thames.

Dartford Marshes (KT)\* - two birds drifted downriver.

\* presumably involving the same birds

#### 16th October

Crayford Marshes\* - three off Crayford Ness on the River Thames at 13:00.

Crossness\* - one flew upriver at 16:50.

Rainham Marshes\* - five birds still present.

QEII Res - one from 15:28 until dusk.

\* presumably involving the same birds

#### 17th October

Rainham Marshes - two birds still present.

QEII Res - one still present until 07:34, but had gone by midday.

#### 18th October

Rainham Marshes - two birds still present.

### Arrival and Dispersal

The first birds to be seen during the influx were the flock of 11 birds at Rainham which dropped out of the cloud from the north-east and then headed off south-west. The birds at Queen Mary Res on 14th appeared first in the south-eastern corner, suggesting a

*Adult and sub-adult Bonxies at Queen Mother Reservoir on 15th October. (Michael McKee)*



*Adult Bonxie at Staines Reservoir on 14th October. (Andrew Moon)*

south-east arrival route, and the two birds at Queen Mother Res on 15th were seen to fly in from the east (and left to the north-east). The Brent Res sighting involved a bird flying due north. With the exception of the birds along the Thames in east London (from Beckton to Rainham) which seemed to be roaming up and down the river, no other birds were seen arriving. The large group over Rainham on 13th may well have fragmented before re-grouping in south-west London, although equally they could be entirely different birds.

### Behaviour

Although the birds in London were perhaps disorientated, they clearly put their predatory nature to good use with the bird at Staines promptly killing and eating a Coot and another at Crossness killing a Black-headed Gull, which was then promptly consumed by a squabbling group of three Bonxies. At both Queen Elizabeth II Res and Queen Mary Res the birds were watched repeatedly chasing and generally harassing large gulls; whether this was purely for fun or simply an attempt to seek food is not known, but is more likely to be the latter. One of the birds at Rainham was watched flying on to the lagoons on the RSPB reserve to bathe before returning to the river.

When more than one bird was present they invariably stuck together in a group and indeed they probably acted as a magnet when other birds appeared - for instance, the birds at Queen Mary Res on 14th increased from three, to eight, and then finally to 13 and were invariably sitting as a group out in the middle of the reservoir. If one or more of the birds left to give chase to another bird they would then always return to re-join the flock once the pursuit was over.

## Origins

Several recent studies on the winter distribution and foraging activity of Great Skuas, following the use of geolocators, has provided a fascinating insight into the areas where different populations of this species spend the winter months. The studies were based on the placement and then recapture of birds between 2008 and 2011, and the breeding sites used were on Iceland, Svalbard and Foula (the last-named holds the largest breeding colony in Scotland). It became clear that the Shetland (Foula) birds were spending most of the time off the coasts of north Africa and Iberia, whilst the Icelandic birds seemed to prefer the west Atlantic coasts off Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Greenland. The Svalbard birds, whilst favouring the north Africa and Iberia coasts as well as off the west coast of Ireland, were also recorded tracking across the Atlantic to Newfoundland.

There is very little data on the direction that birds take from their breeding colonies to their wintering grounds, although variable numbers are seen from both the North Sea and Atlantic coasts from regular seawatching points, as well as specific pelagic boat trips. From a purely geographical viewpoint, it is perhaps more likely that birds from the Norwegian, as well as the Shetland and Orkney populations are more likely to follow the east coast of Britain south when they leave their breeding grounds. This is of course pure conjecture, but it might provide some indication as to where the 'London' birds originated from.

## Ageing of the birds

Apart from the Brent Res bird, which was aged as a juvenile, all the other birds that were seen well were conclusively found to be adult-types - many of which seemed to be in active wing-moult. Logically, it might be thought that juveniles would have been most prone to disorientation on passage, however there is some evidence that juveniles migrate south earlier than the adults (Olsen *et al*), which documented a Shetland-ringed juvenile that was recovered from Fuerteventura, Canary Islands on 30th August. The presence of so many adult birds might suggest that there was an element of pre-determination with regard to their appearance in London - they may have deliberately been migrating overland to shorten their route (as other skua species are known to do).

## Discussion

There seems little doubt that a large 'pool' of Bonxies that had streamed past the east coast watch-points of northern England on 13th with a strong following wind were suddenly becalmed when they were robbed of that tailwind as they headed south towards the Thames estuary (into the centre of the low pressure system) where they were met by poor visibility and relatively light or variable winds. At least 250 birds flew past Spurn that day and even if most, or all, of these birds were seen from other seawatching headlands then at least 250 birds could have been milling around in the Thames estuary; in reality it seems likely that far more than 250 birds could have become 'stranded' in Thames Estuary.

It would be convenient to assume that some of the birds seen heading inland at the mouth of the River Nene (Lincs) on 13th could have found their way into London, but it is perhaps more likely that these birds were the cause of some of the sightings in the centre of England (Draycote, Grafham and Rutland Water etc).

There is some anecdotal evidence that flocks of Bonxies can simply appear by dropping through low cloud cover; for instance at Cliffe, Kent, Paul Larkin (pers comm) has witnessed this behavior several times, although he considers that most birds then head off east (and not west into London). Conversely, at Allhallows, Kent, Andrew Verrall (pers comm) who sea-watched here during the 1970s states that he often observed Bonxies thermalling up high, some of which headed off west towards London. The initial flock at Rainham 'dropped out of the cloud', before heading off south-west and disappearing back into the low cloud.

The exact point of departure from the coast of the Bonxies prior to their arrival in London is again a matter of pure conjecture, although it seems likely that some of the original birds at Rainham may have continued inland. Rather strangely though, there were no sightings anywhere along the River Thames between Rainham and the west London reservoirs; most notably, the London Wetland Centre did not report any sightings (which is unusual, considering how intensively it is watched), although one bird was seen at Kensington Gardens. Certainly the cluster of birds between Island Barn, Queen Elizabeth II and Queen Mary Reservoirs suggests that birds could well have loosely been following the River Thames inland. If one opts for a more northerly source of origin, ie The Wash/mouth of the River Nene, why were there not more birds in the Midlands and none (other than the Brent bird) in north London or Hertfordshire/Buckinghamshire?

While it would be easy to dismiss this influx as being the result of 'disorientation', rather than a deliberate choice to head inland, the truth probably lies somewhere in between. Adult birds are probably less likely to become disorientated than juveniles which are migrating for the first time, but on the other hand the adults are better equipped to feed *en route* if they do find themselves at inland localities.

Any estimation of the true number of birds involved in the London influx is going to be very questionable and is, in many ways, a matter of speculation. A minimum total is perhaps easier to reach than a maximum. The two birds at Island Barn were different from the seven at Queen Elizabeth II, making nine in all, and the eight birds at Queen Mary were different from these birds, making a definite 17 at these three waters. As to whether the seven birds at QEII (up to 16:30 at least) moved over to Q. Mary (from 17:45) late in the afternoon will not be known, but my suspicion is that they did not, making an overall total of 22 birds. Likewise, I feel that the Staines and Queen Mother birds were also different, bringing the total in west London to a phenomenal total of 25 birds, with the very late QEII bird on 16th making this 26.

The number of birds in east London is rather more difficult to assess; for instance, if there was a flock of 11 birds on 13th which only appeared for a few minutes, how many other flocks were drifting around unseen? It is of course possible that these birds did subsequently appear in west London, but my inclination is to count them separately and then assume that subsequent birds were probably part of a loose group of up to five birds that then lingered along the River Thames for several days and gave rise to many sightings from different localities. This brings the east London total to a minimum of 16. If we add into the equation the Brent Res and Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens sightings, we would reach a final staggering total of 44 birds; my feeling is that this is realistic, rather than excessive.



Seven Bonxies at Queen Elizabeth II Reservoir on 14th October. (Dave Harris)

An ultra-conservative, or maybe a pessimist's, view would probably produce an absolute minimum count of 34 (or 28 if one assumes that the Rainham birds then appeared in west London).

At the end of the day, this memorable influx has effectively almost doubled the total of all of London's previous total of Bonxies - no wonder that the fortunate few who were lucky enough to be able to witness this event will remember it for ever.

### Other species

Although there was a considerable passage of Pomarine Skuas along the east coast at the time (highest counts were 28 off Spurn and Canvey on 13th and 31 off Filey on 14th), none were seen inland. Up to 70 Little Gulls at Rainham on 13th did reflect a good coastal passage further north, but up to 800 past Cley and 335 past Sheringham on 14th only produced 40 at Beckton. Interestingly, reports of Short-eared Owls flying in off the sea in East Anglia were reflected in London, with at least ten birds being reported, and this is a species that often appears during spells of low winds and poor visibility.

### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the many observers around London whose sightings of these marvellous birds enabled a comprehensive picture of this influx to be constructed. Many have responded promptly to my appeals for further information about their sightings, as well as my additional requests for details about localised weather conditions, particularly John Archer, Paul Boulton, Dave Harris, Chris Heard, Ken Purdey, Russ Sherriff, Andy Tweed and Andrew Verrall. I would also like to thank Paul Larkin for his thoughts on skua movements, based on many years of seawatching at Cliffe, as well as for providing information of his sightings at the time of the influx.

I am particularly grateful to Rob Innes for showing considerable interest in this article (despite not seeing any birds during the influx!) and providing me with extensive information from the Skuas and Jaegers of the World publication (Olsen *et al*), as well as providing considerable input and comments during the proof stage, all of which have immeasurably improved the content of the finished article.

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### Appendix

Actual weather reports by observers from around London:

**13th October:** Rainham: Low cloud (down to 50 metres), raining around the middle of the day at least

**14th October:** Q.Mother Res: gentle WSW, heavy overnight rain, followed by overcast conditions and a very low cloud-base; drizzle all day

Beckton: overcast, but dry; little wind

QEII Res: 'pretty grim', poor visibility, raining up until mid-afternoon at least; light winds

**15th October:** Q.Mother Res: heavily overcast, with 'mizzle' reducing visibility (continuation of previous day)

Q.Mary Res: very overcast with poor visibility, which was less than 1 mile for most of the day

Brent Res: Overcast, pretty bad light, high grey cloud cover; wind light SE

**16th October:** QEII Res: still overcast, but largely dry

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## REMINISCENCES OF A LONDON BIRDER

ANDREW MOON

So much water has passed under the bridge since I first started birding in the late 1960s that is difficult to know where to start. Not only has the whole fabric of the countryside changed, almost beyond recognition in some places, but the birdlife itself is almost unrecognisable from its former self. Indeed I would suggest that bird distribution has changed more in the last 50 years, than it had in the previous 200 years or more. Whilst many species have been lost without trace, in many cases they have been replaced and even augmented by the arrival of other species. Birdwatching has now become a spectator sport along with all the paraphernalia that goes with it: pagers and smart phones are now widespread, allowing for the instant dissemination of news of rare and scarce birds resulting in the rapid assembly of crowds at appropriate localities; these days birds that are photographed are often instantly displayed on Twitter or other social media feeds. All those years ago none of this modern technology was available, the only phones available were landlines and if you were out birdwatching you probably wouldn't hear of new birds until you got home again; it was then a case of not so much what you knew but more a case of who you knew. As one became well known in local birding circles you added your name to the 'grapevine network'. It was remarkable how quickly news could be dispersed by a single phone call, as the recipient would invariably then phone another half a dozen other birders and so it would pass down the line. Generally, if an unusual bird didn't stay for more than a few days it would never be seen by any more people other than the original finder, and quite often we would 'twit' unusual birds in London based on news that was at least several days old.

The 1970 *London Bird Report* was compiled from the records of a mere 378 observers (which was a lot more than many county reports at that time), but by way of a contrast the 2013 *LBR* received records from about 1,600 observers - an astonishing turnaround! Equally, a very rare bird in London would perhaps attract a crowd of, maybe, 20-30 birders - but nowadays that figure really could be thousands. The London list has advanced from 309 species in 1970 to 367 today. Interestingly, whilst most of these new species are rare, scarce or even extralimital vagrants, there is one species that, I think, epitomises expansionism, at least in terms of my birding career: Cetti's Warbler - it first arrived in the UK in 1961, was first seen in London in 1975 and then proved to have bred in 1980; by 2009 there were about 70 territories across the London Area. It is astonishing to think that Cetti's Warbler was largely confined to the shores of the Mediterranean up until about 1900. Of course there have been many other 'invaders' such as Little Egret and Collared Dove, but Cetti's is the only passerine to really have imprinted itself across London since I started birding and amazingly, as a resident, it has survived the worst of the British winters.

### Optics

The late, great, Roger Tory Petersen, the architect of the modern field guides, wrote a foreword to *Where to watch birds* by John Gooders (1967) stating that this book 'has long been awaited by the *field glass fraternity*'. The term 'field glass' was, however,



*Little Auk, Wraysbury Res, February 1983. (Andrew Moon)*

soon to be discarded into the dustbin of history and replaced by binoculars, telescopes or simply optics, but the term very much describes the situation when this book was published and the state of play when I first started 'birding'. My first pair of binoculars was a rather ancient pair of 8x30s, along with my grandfather's World War I draw-tube brass-and-glass telescope; the latter, despite its rather cumbersome nature was an excellent starting point even if it did mean you had to rest the scope on the fence around a reservoir, or simply lie down and rest it on your crooked leg. In those days we made light of any inconvenience and it was just something else to be conquered. In the early 1970s I moved on to Zeiss Diallyt 10x40 binoculars, which were almost revolutionary 'roof-prisms' - a design that allowed 'straight-through' vision, as opposed to the old dog-leg design of the original Porro prism binoculars. These were effectively lighter, more compact and easier to use and in fact they were so good I have never departed from this design. After a few years of using the brass-and-glass telescope I moved on to a Hertel & Reuss draw-tube telescope, this was significantly better as it had a 25-60x zoom facility which allowed you to zoom into and 'enlarge' the bird in question, although the clarity at the higher magnifications was less than perfect, so about 45x was as good as it got! The next step up was the cleverly designed 30 x 75 Optolyth draw-tube telescope which had a much larger objective lens (75mm), although a fixed magnification of 30x which, although it didn't allow any 'zooming', more than made up for this with its massively increased clarity and definition. However, woe betide any moisture getting on to the draw-tube as it would soon fill up with condensation inside the lens making it effectively unusable until it could be allowed to dry out in the airing cupboard!

Tripods were completely non-existent in the birder's armamentarium in the early days, although I do remember seeing some rather large and extremely cumbersome wooden tripods on occasions. At Staines Res it was easy to make use of the original telescopes by resting them on the railings that fringed the causeway; elsewhere if there was nothing to rest the telescope on, then you simply lay down and rested it on your leg and hoped you didn't lie in anything unpleasant! It wasn't until the 1980s that tripods made an appearance; although they were rather flimsy initially, they still allowed a much steadier view through your telescope. It would be quite unusual these days to see birders using telescopes without an accompanying tripod.

Nowadays, of course, we largely take for granted the amazing quality of our optics with very high quality glass being used for the lenses, as well as vastly superior quality coatings to reduce glare and improve low light definition. Tripods have also moved on from the rather cumbersome and unstable early designs (which were rather prone to collapsing) to superb, lightweight carbon-fibre models which are extremely sturdy and much easier to carry around.

### Photography

Like binoculars and telescopes, cameras and lenses have followed a similarly logarithmic route to their current brilliance. Although I did have a single-lens reflex camera (one that allows you to use different lenses) from about 1973, I didn't really use it for local birding photography until the late 1970s and even then I nearly always used black-and-white film, as colour film was considerably more expensive. The current digital equipment available is staggeringly advanced compared with its distant analog predecessors. The advent of digital photography early in the 21st century began an unstoppable avalanche, which has burgeoned into a situation where many birders carry cameras and telephoto lenses around with them all the time. Indeed, many simply take pictures through their telescopes (digiscoping) or even use mobile (smart) phones placed on to their telescopes or binoculars.

### Recording

When I started birding everything that you saw had to be committed to paper as there was, quite simply, no alternative. Consequently you had to have a pretty efficient way of filing and cataloguing your sightings, initially in notebooks and then by transferring to files or card indexes that would allow extensive cross-referencing. Nowadays, of course, most people keep their own records on computers which enables very easy and much more rapid searching for either sites, dates or more simply species. The British Trust for Ornithology has developed the most amazing resource for bird records called BirdTrack which is a countrywide database into which anyone can simply add their own sightings; in addition virtually all ringing recoveries in the UK are now available online, as well as Wetland Bird Survey and breeding survey records, all of which allows a very rapid assessment and response to annual declines of bird species.

### Ups and Downs

As a young birder living in London (based in Rickmansworth) I was fortunate to have a car, as it meant that travelling around the many London sites was significantly easier;

however, whilst there were many fewer cars on the roads back then, it still took a long time to travel from west to east across the London area. Motorways were effectively non-existent then and indeed work on the M25 motorway didn't even start until 1975 and wasn't completed until 1986. As many readers will know, having at least four or five lanes on the M25 is no guarantee of travelling anywhere fast and it often takes me longer to travel to Staines by car than it did nearly 45 years ago!

One of the most dramatic changes in the landscape between then and now has been the massive transformation of farming and farming practices. Hundreds of miles of dense hedgerows have been grubbed up, so as to turn lots of smaller plots in to just one massive field, consequently destroying nesting habitat for countless species of birds. The nature of farming these days now invariably involves the deposition of huge quantities of herbicides, pesticides and fertilisers on to the land to ensure that the grown crop is a pure monoculture, which effectively prevents the growth of weeds (and therefore weed seeds), as well as insect life, thus reducing any food available for small chicks. The practice of 'set-aside' (a European Union policy initiated in 1992, but largely phased out by 2008) did help for a while, but even that is a now mostly a distant memory. It is hardly surprising that farmland bird species have plummeted in the last 40 years. In west London both Red-legged and Grey Partridges were a common sight at many localities (none have been present now for many years), and Yellowhammer and Corn Buntings have virtually disappeared although a few pairs just about maintain a toe-hold in south-west Herts; nevertheless, this is a far cry from the days past when up to 200 Corn Buntings and 30 Yellowhammers frequently roosted at the Springwell Reedbed. Willow Tits were pretty abundant along the Colne Valley in the 1970s, indeed I recorded the species quite regularly in my garden at the time, along with Tree Sparrows; Marsh Tits were less common, but

*Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Perry Oaks, September 1981. (Andrew Moon)*





*Dipper, River Lea, near Stanborough, March 1981. (Andrew Moon)*

they were still easily seen near by in Whippendell Woods. My last local observation of Willow Tit was in 1990 (now long extinct in London) and my last Marsh Tit in 1993.

Garden birding has also been transformed. The habit of putting food out for birds, although not unusual 45 years ago, is now so widespread amongst birders and non-birders alike, that it has transformed gardens into a fantastic refuge and food resource for birds. Whilst House Sparrows have now largely vanished from my garden, on the plus-side Goldfinches are now ever-present, Bullfinches are common, Siskins and Lesser Redpolls are seasonally numerous, Nuthatches and Great Spotted Woodpeckers are abundant, as well as Ring-necked Parakeets - the status of all these birds has changed beyond recognition. Perhaps on the down-side, Woodpigeons, Magpies, Carrion Crows and gulls are also now common 'garden' birds, which never used to be the case. All these species have adapted to take advantage of the ever-present food in suburban (and rural) gardens.

The fortunes of birds of prey have also blossomed. Remarkably, I didn't record my first London Sparrowhawk until 1977; of course, they are now abundant across all habitats, but especially in gardens. Hobbies were not uncommon, but are now far commoner. Perhaps more remarkably, I didn't see my first London Red Kite until as late as 2004, but since then they have become (for me) a common 'garden' bird with multiple sightings every day; they still remain fairly scarce in east London, but it is only a matter of time before they spread inexorably across London. Although I saw my first London Common Buzzard in 1978, I didn't see many more until 2000, but during the early years of the 21st century their status has burgeoned. Peregrines were always scarce birds in London, but since they first bred in

2001 they have gradually spread and, with the help of carefully located nest boxes, about 18 pairs bred successfully in 2014. Conversely Kestrels are perhaps less common than they were, but are still nevertheless widespread.

Wetland birds have suffered mixed fortunes. Ruddy Ducks have come and gone - the latter courtesy of DEFRA. Smew have largely gone and, although numbers do increase in cold winters, they never approach the counts of old (although they were already declining before I started birding). From my personal peak count of 205 Goosanders at Queen Mary Reservoir in January 1985 numbers have continued to decline and nowadays even double-figure flocks are unusual; in contrast Goldeneye (although peaks counts are slightly lower) are still widespread and quite numerous. Diving and dabbling ducks have both largely remained unchanged in terms of both distribution and numbers: Gadwall were scarce in the 1970s but gradually reached their peak in the 1980s and 1990s (my peak count was 464 at Wraysbury GPs in January 1998) and have declined slightly since then; Teal and Wigeon numbers tend to fluctuate depending on weather conditions and Shoveler, whilst still numerous, are not as common this century as they were in the 1990s (my peak count was 1,134 in November 1998 at King George VI Res). Little Egrets were unknown in London 45 years ago, but nowadays are a common sight along most watercourses and wetlands in London and indeed are breeding at quite a few localities.

Wading birds have largely declined with marshland birds such as Snipe, Redshank and Lapwing faring worst, although Ringed and Little Ringed Plovers are not far behind; drained wetlands and less wasteland being responsible respectively.

### Local Birding

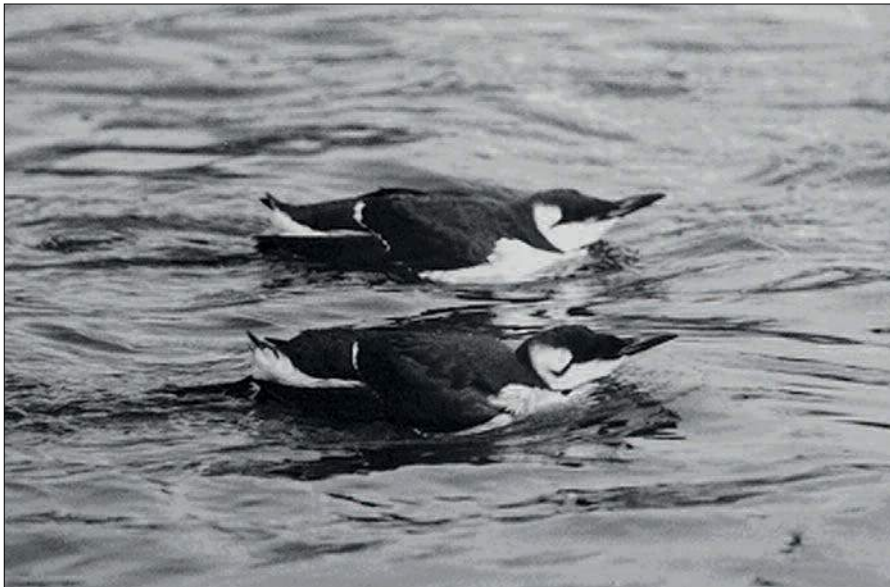
The local ornithological encyclopaedia, as far as I was concerned, was *The Birds of the London Area*, published by the London Natural History Society (LNHS) in 1957. It was an absolute mine of information and I was soon able to locate a second-hand copy of the updated 2nd edition (1964). Not only did it outline many prime birding localities around London, it also provided a two-part map to ensure that every reader knew exactly where the boundaries of the London Area lay. To me (being based in west London) one site in particular stood out: Perry Oaks sewage farm which already had a list of at least 33 species of wader, including four American species, and the black-and-white photos of Lesser Yellowlegs and Baird's and Pectoral Sandpipers were simply mouth-watering!

This was something about which an inexperienced birder in 1970 could only dream. Needless to say, one of my first priorities was to try and obtain a permit to allow access to this premier site - particularly after reading the quote in John Gooders's book: 'most autumns usually attract an outstanding rarity' - enough to make a birdwatching novice salivate! I duly applied to the GLC and was eventually sent a permit. Perry Oaks featured a large number of low concrete-edged settling beds into which sewage effluent was pumped to allow it to settle. In addition, there were at least a dozen large settling beds with five-to-six-metre-high banks, again to be filled with effluent. Over a period of time the liquid sludge soon settled to allow a layer of sludge 'mud' to develop, which in turn attracted waders and other birds to feast on the abundant insect life. Given the proximity to the terminals and runways at the very adjacent Heathrow airport, it was astonishing how much access we were allowed - in short, we were allowed to go anywhere without restriction, even up to the very edge of the runways as the aircraft

trundled past. Sadly, this favourable situation didn't last, and my last visit was in 1985 after which only one birdwatcher was allowed access. The site is now buried beneath Heathrow Terminal 5! Sadly, since then there has been precious little wader habitat in west London, except when Staines Reservoir has been drained. Fortunately, the latter has been drained quite frequently over the years and this has allowed me to amass a total of 43 species of waders in the immediate area.

One of the most eye-watering facts that I gleaned from *The Birds of London Area* was that the British record count of 144 Smew was at Brent Reservoir in 1956 (which still stands). Although numbers had declined considerably by 1970, I was still able to travel over there and log 15 birds as a 'life' bird. Subsequently, of course, for at least the next 30 years the west London waters, which were to become my local patch, were amongst the most favoured by these superb sawbills. As has been the case with many sites around London the habitats have seldom been improved and in many cases have considerably worsened. Wraysbury GPs is a case in point. In my early years many of the extensive pits were being actively excavated and provided a constantly changing scene which was attractive to many birds; in addition, with Health & Safety being non-existent in those days, we were able to wander around the site without any restriction! Nowadays many of the pits are inaccessible and many of the others have extensive tree growth around the margins preventing satisfactory viewing - essentially they are not as attractive as they once were, nor as accessible. Smew reached their peak at Wraysbury with a count of 41 in January 1997, but it was the freezing spell in early 1987 that provided the most vivid memories of this graceful duck with a count of a single flock of 52 birds at Queen Mary Reservoir, along with a remarkable collection of 162 Goosander (albeit a far cry

*Guillemot, River Thames at Barnes, March 1986. (Andrew Moon)*



from the record London count at QE II Res of 850 birds in January 1963). During this time both basins at Staines were completely frozen and even Queen Mary was partly frozen; disappointingly, this latter location is no longer an attraction to many wildfowl because of extensive dredging over the last 20 years which means it is far too deep for them to feed; at the time of writing (November 2015) the central boom is being removed, which will only exacerbate its unattractiveness and sterility.

Sadly, many of the most attractive sites were simply scrub, wasteland or better still, active rubbish dumps that proved irresistible to many species because they were covered in wet areas or pools as well as abundant weeds and provided plenty of cover. Nowadays these habitats are all conveniently catalogued as 'brownfield' sites and are diminishing fast. Poyle, near Staines, encompassed all three of these habitat types and I was fortunate to discover Glaucous Gull, Hooded Crow and, best of all, a spring-plumaged Little Bunting there in 1978 - sadly the site now lies buried beneath the M25 motorway!

Rainham Marshes has always been one of the best known birding sites in London, and its attraction has increased considerably since it was taken over by the RSPB and actively managed as a bird reserve. But 45 years ago it was dominated by a large number of raised lagoons into which silt, dredged from the River Thames by the Port of London Authority, was dumped to settle. Whilst it remained in a rather sludgy condition for many years it proved irresistible to large numbers of waders and wildfowl. Then, over a further period of many years, it dried out completely and was colonised by large numbers of sea-asters and other annual weeds and proved to be a major attraction to passerines, including up to 50 Twite and 200 Bearded Tits. Rainham Marshes is an essential venue for London listers; it was also a near guaranteed site for Hen Harriers in winter. In addition to the lagoons, the inaccessible eastern section comprised the Purfleet shooting range which is now included in the RSPB reserve.

### Best Days

Looking back over over 45 years of birding in London it is easy to recall certain highlights and some amazing spells of birding, quite often as a result of the prevailing weather conditions: either severe gales and storms or simply extreme cold. One over-riding conclusion regarding the most memorable occasions is that they almost certainly could not have been predicted in advance - a factor that makes birding one of the most appealing and challenging of hobbies!

### November 1978

Although a few Short-eared Owls had been seen across London, there was no suggestion that anything out of the ordinary was happening. A very dull, misty day began with the long-staying Ferruginous Duck at Little Britain Lake and then we moved on to Perry Oaks where we were astonished to amass a total of eight Short-eared Owls. We moved on to Staines Moor where we logged another seven birds, and a further six were seen on rough ground at Poyle - a remarkable 21 birds. We weren't finished yet, though, as nearby Wraysbury GPs notched up two more and finally another one was seen at Staines Res to reach a grand total of 24 birds. During the winter of 1978/79 London played host to about 85 of these marvellous owls.

### September 1981

A routine visit to Perry Oaks proved to be fairly dull, until we reached the final bed to be checked. A nice collection of Ruffs and a Wood Sandpiper was excellent, but a smaller Ruff-like bird amongst them (the size of a Ringed Plover) with scaly upperparts attracted interest. After sneaking up on it we were able to confirm that it was a juvenile Buff-breasted Sandpiper - London's third and the second for this site. Astonishingly, on a later stop at Staines we discovered a Leach's Petrel - we were on a roll! Remarkably, we counted 39 Black-necked Grebes at Staines the following day, sadly a total never to be repeated in London.

### August 1982

A routine after-work visit to Kempton East Res (before it was a nature reserve) produced a nice total of four Wood Sandpipers, as well as a good selection of commoner waders. Nearby Queen Mary revealed a smart juvenile Kittiwake; we then moved on to Staines and spent most of the time counting Black-necked Grebes - at least 18 were seen. Just after 20:00 I heard a single, loud 'kaark' call, rather like a quieter version of a Grey Heron. Two birds were approaching from the north: one was obviously a Black-headed Gull (seen without binoculars); the second bird was further away and on looking through my bins - it was only about 80 metres away... it was a Caspian Tern! I shouted to Pete Naylor to get on to it, and it carried on flying past us, getting as close as 50 metres before carrying on over the road towards King George and we watched it until it was lost from sight. This large, almost Herring-Gull-sized tern with a solid black crown, black outer primaries and huge, blood-red bill held at 45 degrees to the horizontal, along with its powerful, leisurely wing-beats (with most of the power on the downstroke) left nothing to the imagination. It called a few more times on its way south. It was one of those occasions when words almost seem superfluous.

### February 1986

A prolonged cold spell resulted in the freezing over of many waters across London; even Staines Res froze over completely, along with many gravel pits. We had already amassed a record London count of 823 Wigeon at King George VI on February 8th, but by the next day it looked like most of the wildfowl of the area had congregated on King George and the counts were astounding: 481 Mallard, 1,568 Teal, 1,020 Pochard, 355 Tufted Duck and about 800 Wigeon - the overall total was a minimum of 4,374 ducks!

### March 1986

Cold weather and persistent easterly winds in late February had already resulted in the arrival of about a dozen Guillemots into London. A fortuitous visit to check the River Thames in east London on March 1st was immediately successful with a Red-throated Diver at West Thurrock, then two Guillemots were found at Rainham, along with two Pomarine Skuas and a remarkable collection of six Red-throated Divers. The following day a drive along the Thames, starting at Kew, produced a Guillemot at the first stop at Kew Bridge; we then worked our way eastwards with constant stops, and by the time we reached Vauxhall Bridge we had amassed eight more Guillemots. A truly remarkable influx.

### January 1987

Although the year had started out on a mild note, by the 10th temperatures had plummeted and remained sub-zero for nearly two weeks. Our first opportunity to venture out around the reservoirs was on the 17th and we came up trumps with a Red-necked Grebe, Black-throated Diver and Red-breasted Merganser at Queen Mother, followed by a Great Northern Diver and Red-necked Grebe on Island Barn, Slavonian Grebe on QE II, a huge flock of ten Scaup along with 142 Goosander on Queen Mary, and the day was rounded off with a Red-necked Grebe at Staines and a Slavonian Grebe at Wraysbury. The following day was very different and started with a surprise summer-plumaged Guillemot at Wraysbury as well as a count of 59 Goosander, then, near by, four Bewick's Swans had dropped in at Queen Mother. A relocation to east London produced a Red-necked Grebe at West Thurrock and then about 15 Twite, 50 Corn Buntings and a Hen Harrier at Rainham. A very productive weekend of winter birdwatching!

### October 1987

The night of the Great Storm saw myself and several others travelling down overnight (unaware of the true severity of the storm) to Penzance to catch the boat to the Scilly Isles the next day to see a Hermit Thrush. Needless to say, we were absolutely mortified later that day when we started to receive reports of large numbers of seabirds, especially Sabine's Gull, scattered around the London area. By a quirk of fate we were able to leave the islands the following day (a Sunday), and quickly travelled back home (but not before darkness had fallen). The next day (18th) we completed a circuit of the west London reservoirs with the following (breathtaking) results: at Queen Mother there were two Sabine's Gulls, then Queen Mary hosted one Grey Phalarope and three Sabine's Gulls; moving on to King George VI we were astonished to discover a flock of seven phalaropes (six Grey and one Red-necked) and yet another Sabine's Gull. This was birding nirvana!

The following day four Slavonian Grebes and a Grey Phalarope had arrived at Queen Mother and three Sabine's Gulls remained at Queen Mary; we then made a lengthy diversion to the River Thames at Barking in east London where another five Sabine's Gulls were feeding around the outflow (down from nine the day before). This was one birding weekend that will remain in the memory for ever.

### September 1995

The forecast for September 2nd was for an extensive band of rain to cross the area on a SE wind, before veering west and bringing a sunny afternoon. I decided to wait until the promised clearance before heading out. A circuit of Wraysbury Res in the late afternoon, where water levels were very low with extensive muddy margins, produced a Garganey, a Ruff, six Greenshank and good numbers of common waders, along with huge numbers of hirundines - about 5,000 in all, of which House Martins (3,000) were most numerous. Not a bad list for this site. I moved on to King George VI Res, which also had low water levels revealing about five metres of pale concrete banks all round (no mud was visible). I arrived at the south end at about 17:30. By this time the light conditions were excellent and I was able to scan most of the banks with my Questar checking through the numerous wildfowl that were present. At about 18:10 I spotted a plover towards the north-east corner: my initial impression was of a small Golden Plover

in faded summer plumage, showing a striking white supercilium, white sides to the breast and a rather dainty gait - rather like a small Grey Plover. I realised that it could be an American Golden Plover, but at 1,600 metres range it was too far away. I relocated to the north end and soon refound the bird in the same place, but it was still about 800 metres away... I needed closer views to clinch its identity. I quickly walked along the north bank but had gone no more than 200 metres when I flushed a large number of Lapwings and ducks (none of which I had bothered to look at!). A loud, persistent and rather trilling 'prrrrt' 'prrrrt' from amongst the flock immediately reminded me of Pectoral Sandpiper - I quickly located a wader flying amongst the flock that looked like a small Ruff. After flying around for a while it settled on the bank about 70 metres away and I was able to confirm its identification. This was ridiculous!

After calling for back-up (before my chunky mobile phone battery died) I managed to get within 400 metres, but although I could see that it was long-legged and long-winged, it was too far away to be sure of the primary extension. Having seen a Pacific Golden Plover very well at Elmley a few days before I was well versed in the ID features of American Golden Plover. I realised that we needed to flush the bird to clinch the call and see the dusky underwing so we dropped down below the bank and came up close to where we thought the bird was - unfortunately we were too close and it flew directly away from us, however it also called immediately: a disyllabic 'chur-lee', but then several more calls more like a Spotted Redshank - 'chu-weet'. It flew off and landed on the northern shore and conveniently held its wings aloft to allow us to see the dusky auxiliaries. A first for London.

### January 2013

Staines Moor was proving very attractive during the month with a Barn Owl on show on many evenings, as well as up to six Short-eared Owls, and the adjacent King George VI reservoir was playing host to both Red-throated and Great Northern Divers. Nevertheless on the 28th, I was unprepared to suddenly discover that a Black-throated Diver had also joined them and rather strangely it was shadowing the Great Northern almost constantly. For a brief time all three divers were within metres of each other - although not perhaps unusual along the coast, it was certainly a unique sight in London.

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## THE BIRDS OF THE WARREN, BEXLEYHEATH, 1988-2014

ANDREW S. WALLER

### Introduction

The Warren (TQ493746) is a beautiful remnant of open oak woodland with an unusual associated grass plateau, hidden within the suburbs of Bexleyheath. It is about 4.6 hectares (11 acres) in size, including the short mown grass expanse down the slope, and is bounded mainly by Midhurst Hill, Broomfield Road and Rochester Drive.

The 1862 Old Ordnance Survey Map (Alan Godfrey) shows Warren Wood, as it was called then, being much bigger and extending to Gravel Hill. Warren Farm was located just to the west and the woodland itself was surrounded by fields and open land. Approximately two thirds of this woodland to the east of the existing remnant has been unfortunately destroyed in more recent times for housing and the associated infrastructure.

There is open access at this remaining woodland site. It is managed by the London Borough of Bexley and is a Site of Borough Importance Grade II.

### Recording

The bird recording by me for this site covers the years 1988 to 2014, when I lived next to the woodland for many years, and in more recent times, when I have managed to visit the site around my work. In total, 47 bird species have been recorded during this

*A view of the interior of the Warren, showing the open oak woodland character, with various grass species present on the woodland floor. (Andrew S. Waller)*



period. The bird fauna at this small site has very much followed the fortunes of the national populations for particular species, both positive and negative. I can remember seeing the last Bullfinches and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers within this woodland, which is hard not to get nostalgic about nowadays, given the decline of both of these fascinating bird species. Tawny Owl had also been heard by a late neighbour of mine some decades ago at the edge of The Warren, but not seen or heard since, also reflecting the decline in this charismatic owl species.

But on the positive side, House Sparrows are still present at the edge of The Warren in good numbers as are Starlings. A Sparrowhawk was recently seen this year by a friend and colleague (L. Aldrich, pers comm) and Song Thrushes are a regular sighting in the wood and on the plateau.

### Systematic List

**Canada Goose:** 70 geese flew over the wood in two groups on Oct 8th 2000.

**Mallard:** Flying over the woodland sometimes, probably from Hall Place.

**Cormorant:** Flyover species over the wood. Seen since 1996.

**Grey Heron:** Regularly seen flying over the woodland or visiting garden ponds from 1990 onwards. Probably from Hall Place often.

**Sparrowhawk:** Seen regularly since 1996, when one chased a Blue Tit over the wood. (Most recently seen soon after the end of the study period during Spring 2015, within the woodland, and with droppings underneath.)

**Kestrel:** Seen hunting over the woodland and adjacent gardens since 1988. Once seen at edge of the wood trying to catch a Starling, which then escaped, after the Kestrel was disturbed. A pair present sometimes hunting over the woodland.

**Black-headed Gull:** Flyover species seen since 1988.

**Common Gull:** Flyover species seen since 1988.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** Flyover species over the wood, first noted in 1996.

**Herring Gull:** Flyover species seen since 1993.

**Feral Pigeon:** Seen in small numbers flying over the woodland in all years.

**Stock Dove:** Breeding species in the woodland. First noted from 1992 onwards.

**Woodpigeon:** Regularly breeding species since 1988, in the woodland.

**Collared Dove:** Regularly breeding species at edge of the site since 1988.

**Ring-necked Parakeet:** First seen at wood edge on Apr 20th 2001. Breed now here.

**Tawny Owl:** One male noted at night hooting during the 1980s, visiting the edge of the wood. Was perched on a house adjacent to the woodland.

**Swift:** Flyover species over the wood since 1988.

**Green Woodpecker:** Quite regularly seen in the wood, from 1996.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker:** Regular breeding species in the woodland, noted since 1993. One pair normally seen.

**Lesser Spotted Woodpecker:** Breeding species in the woodland in some years. First seen on Sep 11th 1992, this being a male foraging on dead elm branches in the woodland edge. The last bird ever seen by me on Jan 13th 2001 at the wood edge.

**Swallow:** 1600+ birds seen on Sep 26th 1999, over the wood, in a mass movement.

**House Martin:** Flyover species since 1988. Up to 17 over site on Sep 28th 1996. 1200+ birds seen with Swallows on Sep 26th 1999, over the wood.

**Pied Wagtail:** Often seen in the winter on the plateau or the grassed area around the site since 1990.

**Wren:** Regular breeding species in the wood during survey period. A maximum of two to three territories noted in the woodland.

**Dunnock:** Regular territory at the woodland since 1988. One pair noted normally.

**Robin:** Regular breeding species in the woodland since 1988. Two territories noted in the woodland.

**Blackbird:** Regular breeding species in the woodland since 1988. One to two territories noted in the woodland.

**Fieldfare:** Noted since 1991, as a winter visitor.

**Song Thrush:** Regular breeding species since 1988, one territory present in the woodland.

**Redwing:** Noted since 1992, as a winter visitor. 40 birds noted on Jan 26th 1996.

**Mistle Thrush:** Seen on the plateau often since 1988.

**Blackcap:** Regular breeding species, noted since 1996. One to two territories in wood.

**Chiffchaff:** Regular breeding species in the woodland. First noted on Apr 21st 1992, with a bird picking off insects in a conifer in garden next to woodland edge. Maximum of one territory noted in the woodland.

**Long-tailed Tit:** Regular breeding species. Young sometimes seen in gardens.

**Blue Tit:** Regular breeder, since 1988. Three to four territories present in the woodland.

**Great Tit:** Regular breeder, since 1988. Two territories present in the woodland.

**Coal Tit:** Regular breeder, noted since 1991. Seen in gardens too sometimes.

**Nuthatch:** Present only rarely in the woodland since 1988. In 2001 too.

**Jay:** Regular breeding species in the woodland, since 1988.

**Magpie:** Breeds annually in the woodland. 20 birds noted in the wood on Dec 19th 1990.

**Carrion Crow:** Breeds annually in the woodland. Often one nest in a large oak.

**Starling:** Seen in the wood and on the plateau since 1988. Highest number of 23 birds noted on Jan 21st 1992.

**House Sparrow:** Present at the edge of The Warren and adjacent gardens since 1988. Breed on houses adjacent to wood, as well as forage within the wood edge, with highest number of 16 birds noted on Feb 15th 1994.

**Chaffinch:** Regular breeding species in the woodland. Often one pair noted.

**Greenfinch:** Seen in the woodland in some years since 1989.

**Goldfinch:** Seen at the woodland edge in some years, including 1991 onwards.

**Bullfinch:** First noted in the woodland from 1990, this being a single female. A male bird noted on May 6th 1991 in the wood. A pair noted together at the woodland on Jan 19th 1993. Last birds seen by me on May 31st 1994, these being a male and female together.

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## A BREEDING BIRD SURVEY OF BARNES COMMON AND PUTNEY LOWER COMMON

JAN WILCZUR

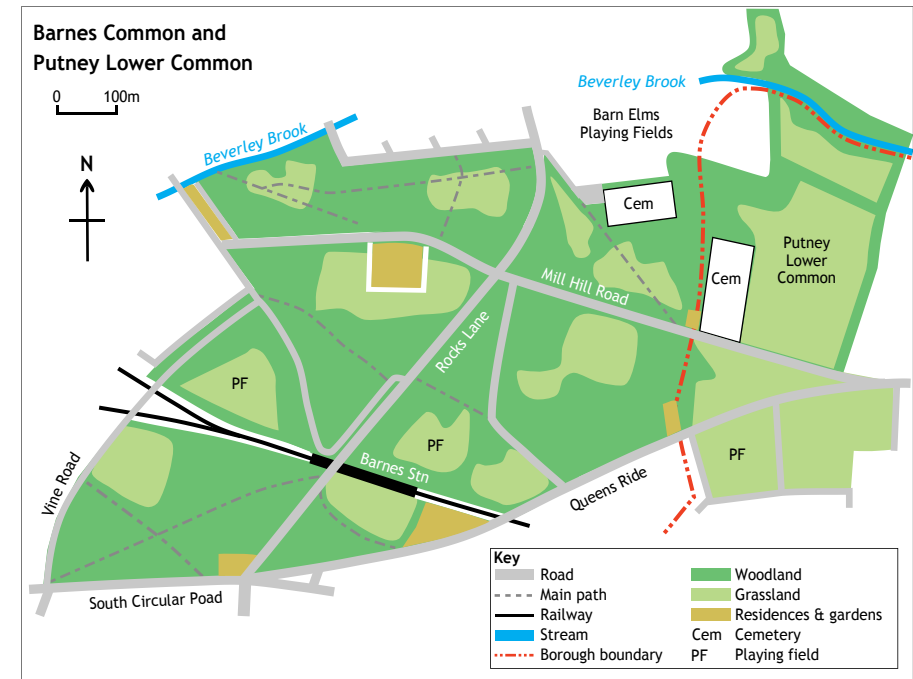
### Introduction

Barnes Common is an area of unenclosed Common Land situated in south-west London, eight kilometres from Charing Cross (Grid ref TQ222758). It is designated as Metropolitan Open Land and a Conservation Area, as well as being a Local Nature Reserve and Site of Nature Conservation Importance. The Common is owned by the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral, acting through the Church Commissioners, and was managed, at the time, by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. The Friends of Barnes Common, a local not-for-profit organisation, advised and assisted but have now taken over management of the site. The Common's 51 hectares comprise a range of habitats including broad-leaved woodland, scrub, and dry-acid and semi-natural grasslands. There are also a disused cemetery and some sports pitches.

As a result of its urban setting it is criss-crossed by roads, illuminated tarmac paths, bisected by a railway and lies under a flightpath to Heathrow Airport. Nevertheless, it is also part of a substantial area of green space in this part of London. Barn Elms playing fields and wetlands lie to the north, to the south are Putney Heath and Wimbledon Common. A golf course and Richmond Park are to the south-west.

Putney Lower Common is a smaller area of 17 hectares, adjoining to the east. It lies within the Borough of Wandsworth and is administered by the Wimbledon and Putney

*Green Woodpecker, Barnes Common (Jan Wilczur)*



*Map of Barnes Common and Putney Lower Common*

Commons Conservators. Mainly consisting of improved grassland it also has a small area of scrub, a small cemetery and a cricket pitch. A small area of woodland is contiguous with that of Barnes Common.

Beverley Brook, a tributary of the River Thames, runs along parts of the northern boundary of both Commons and joins the River a kilometre to the east. A narrow strip of woodland runs alongside the Brook across from Putney Lower Common.

### Habitats

Most of Barnes Common is covered in broad-leaf woodland amounting to 40 hectares. It consists of mainly oak with ash, birch, horse chestnut and invasive sycamore. The shrub layer contains mainly holly but there is also some elder, blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel and yew. The understorey is mainly bramble with ivy. In addition there are some scrub areas of gorse and broom and a few stands of regenerating elm persist. Much of the Commons are free-draining and acidic due to the underlying Thames Terrace gravels, so giving rise to the presence of dry-acid grassland. This nationally threatened habitat has been reduced in extent to only 5 hectares. There are also areas of semi-natural grassland. Beverley Brook, a small stream with a little marginal vegetation, flows along the northern boundary of the Commons. The result is a range of diverse habitats in a moderately sized area. Barnes Common is also botanically renowned for the presence of Burnet Rose.

## History

The Commons were used for hundreds of years as rough grazing and probably by drovers on their way to market. The Dean and Chapter of St Paul's was granted the land in 925 and the boundaries of Barnes Common were established in the late 16th Century following disputes with Putney residents over grazing. In the 18th and 19th Centuries, residential development, and road and railway building significantly impinged upon the Commons. They were more open in character and contained areas of wetlands, ponds and an additional stream. By 1898, when W. H. Hudson published his *Birds in London*, much of the area surrounding Barnes Common was still market gardens and orchards. He wrote of the Common, "...many birds, however, come to it, attracted by its open heath-like character. Here the skylark and yellowhammer may be heard, as well as the commonest resident songsters..." At the end of the Second World War there were still only isolated trees and planted avenues, but self-generating woodland spread to occupy most of Barnes Common. Putney Lower Common, however, remains largely open.

Barnes Common might be considered anonymous in ornithological terms if it were not for the extraordinary occurrence of a Common Nighthawk, the North American counterpart of the Nightjar. Found in October 1984, it was the first American land-bird to be recorded in the London Area. The bird was discovered moribund, taken to a local vet then correctly identified by a birdwatcher. This record is detailed in the *London Bird Report* no.49 (1984) p72.

## Management

The Friends of Barnes Common, a small group of dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers, largely undertake habitat management work. They are restoring and increasing the area of dry-acid grassland: woodland work includes thinning holly, creating glades and removing non-native trees, and litter removal requires constant effort. Their sensitive and small-scale management is perhaps a model for such work on a site of modest size containing a diverse range of habitats.

Richmond Borough undertake a mowing regime for the semi-natural grassland to maintain botanical interest, regularly mow the areas of improved grassland and carry out large-scale tree-work. A delicate balance has to be achieved in providing an amenity for the local population as well as maintaining and enhancing the biodiversity of the Commons, which are regularly used by the public - in some parts quite heavily.

The Commons are two of many such green spaces that exist in the London Area, both being typical in their nature: one containing an interesting range of natural and semi-natural habitats, the other mainly a bland expanse of amenity grassland. Neither appear to have been the subject of ornithological surveys, at least not published in the *London Bird Report*. The author has lived close to them for much of his life and visited them occasionally during this time, first to play there as a child then to walk across them on his way to birdwatch at the nearby Barn Elms Reservoirs. Some personal recollections of the birds seen on those visits are given in the Appendix.

In 2010 a breeding bird survey was carried out on both Barnes and Putney Lower Commons, the results of which are listed below. They show a typical range of woodland species, for which a regional and national context is established in significant cases. The

Commons, especially Barnes, act as a locally important refuge for some Red- and Amber-listed species, such as Song Thrush, which appears to have been largely lost from local residential areas.

NB For a few of the common species the results differ slightly from those published in the *London Bird Report* No. 75 for 2010. In the Report the total number of territories for both Commons were given. These figures included a short stretch of Beverley Brook, part of Barn Elms playing fields, which is omitted from this paper.

## Systematic List

### Key

Species name in **bold** = breeding territories recorded, defined by at least a lingering singing male.

Species name in **bold italic** = either bred in the immediate vicinity of the Commons or was regularly recorded during the breeding season.

Figures in brackets = numbers of territories on Barnes Common (1st figure) and Putney Lower Common (2nd figure).

**Conservation status** is indicated by the following:

Red = highest conservation priority because of severe decline in breeding numbers and/or contraction of breeding range.

Amber = medium conservation priority because of a number of criteria including moderate decline in breeding numbers and/or contraction of breeding range; a rare breeder nationally with less than 300 pairs.

Green = species not showing either of the above status are assumed to have this one, which refers to species that occur regularly in the UK and do not qualify under the criteria for the above classifications.

Introduced = not native to the UK and either escaped and bred in the wild or deliberately released.

Schedule One = having the highest legal protection during the breeding season.

RBBP = rare as a breeder in the UK and monitored by the Rare Breeding Bird Panel.

**Sparrowhawk** (1, 0): A pair bred successfully, fledging at least two young.

**Kestrel**, Amber: A pair bred successfully on the disused Putney Hospital, adjacent to the east of Putney Lower Common. Birds were regularly seen on Barnes Common.

**Moorhen**: Three birds were seen on Beverley Brook, perhaps indicating the presence of two pairs, although it was not established whether they bred. Some parts of the Brook were inaccessible.

**Stock Dove**, Amber: A few birds were regularly seen just east of Barnes Station but it was uncertain whether any breeding territories were held. It seems likely this species will soon breed on the Common given the increase in the local population.

**Woodpigeon** (65, 6): The fifth commonest species in the survey, its abundance reflecting the 68% increase measured by the London Breeding Bird Survey 1995-2009 (London BBS).

**Ring-necked Parakeet** (3, 0), Introduced: A few pairs of this problematic and rapidly increasing species were present - the London population has increased eight-fold over the last 15 years. Plentiful in Richmond Park nearby, it remains to



*Song Thrush, Barnes Common (Jan Wilczur)*

be seen whether numbers will increase and impact the native woodland birds of the Commons.

**Tawny Owl:** Not surveyed but a calling male appeared to hold territory in the north-western part of Barnes Common.

**Kingfisher,** Amber and Schedule One: Birds were found along Beverley Brook and perhaps a pair was present although breeding was unproven.

**Green Woodpecker** (5, 0), Amber: A small population of this ground-feeding woodpecker was found presumably taking advantage of ant-hills in the acid grassland.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** (12, 2): Evenly distributed across the Commons. The London BBS showed a 122% increase for this species since 1995.

**Wren** (109, 11): The commonest species found in the survey, seemingly occurring in high densities in the woodland with the most understorey. Numbers have increased in London by 47% over the last 15 years.

**Dunnock** (13, 0), Amber: The majority of territories were found in the more mature woodland with dense understorey, in the south-west part of Barnes Common.

**Robin** (82, 7): The fourth commonest species with a similar pattern of distribution to the Wren. Has increased markedly in London - 81% between 1995 and 2009.

**Blackbird** (55, 7): Found mainly in the more wooded western half of Barnes Common. The recent 18% decline in London is at odds with the national increase.

**Song Thrush** (8, 0), Red: A small, but notable population of this threatened species occurs mainly in the western woods of Barnes Common. This is a locally important site given that this once widespread garden bird has all but disappeared from residential areas. The London BBS recorded a 31% decrease.

**Mistle Thrush** (4, 1), Amber: The various sports pitches and open grassland inevitably attract this species, but its London population has nearly halved in the last 15 years; part of a continuing national decline.

**Blackcap** (31, 3): Distributed across the Commons occupying even small pockets of woodland. It has presumably benefited from the increase in woodland on Barnes Common. The London BBS shows a doubling in the population which is also growing nationally.

**Common Whitethroat** (0, 2), Amber: Two singing males were present in the small area of scrub in the northern part of Putney Lower Common.

**Common Chiffchaff** (11, 1): Not as numerous as Blackcap, occurring mainly in the larger tracts of woodland in the north and west parts of Barnes Common. There is no indication for London, but the UK population continues to increase in numbers.

**Goldcrest** (2, 1): Two of the territories were found in the cemeteries which contain pines and other conifers.

**Long-tailed Tit** (12, 6): Numbers of this species may fluctuate markedly according to the severity of winter weather. It was surprisingly absent from some areas, otherwise found to occupy scrub and more open woodland.

**Blue Tit** (82, 9): The third most common species in the survey, similar in abundance to Great Tit. The London BBS reported a 40% increase even though the national population was more or less stable over this period.

**Great Tit** (83, 10): The second commonest species and sharing a similar pattern of distribution as Blue Tit. In accordance with a rise in the UK population the London BBS showed a 132% increase.

**Coal Tit** (3, 0): Surprisingly scarce, not even found in the cemeteries alongside the Goldcrests, the other conifer-dependent species

**Nuthatch** (7, 0): Found mainly in the well wooded western half of Barnes Common.

**Jay** (13, 1): The larger areas of woodland contained the most birds. The London BBS gives a 22% increase, in line with a similar one for the UK.

**Magpie** (19, 2): As with Jay, commonest in the western half of Barnes Common and showing a similar increase in London, although the national population has decreased slightly.

**Carrion Crow** (4, 3): The larger areas of semi-natural grassland at Putney Lower Common seemed more attractive to this species. The 58% increase in the London population since 1995 far outstrips that for the UK.

**Chaffinch** (6, 2): Found mainly in the fragmented woodland at the eastern side of Barnes Common. The London BBS gives a 164% rise in population whereas that of the UK has recently stabilised after a long period of increase.

**Greenfinch** (3, 2): Only found in the scrub and woodland strip alongside the eastern stretch of Beverley Brook.

**Goldfinch** (1, 1): A couple of singing males recorded. More likely to be found in the surrounding gardens than on the Commons.

## Appendix

Other species that either once occurred or appeared regularly at the Commons in the breeding season.

**Hobby**, Schedule One and RBBP: A pair bred in 2008 and 2009 on Barnes Common fledging three young in each year. Unfortunately they were not present in the survey year. Remarkably they nested close to a road and in a busy part of the Common. They were perhaps attracted to the area by the presence of the wetlands a kilometre to the north where there is a colony of Sand Martins. The decline of this colony may explain the subsequent disappearance of the pair.

**Feral Pigeon**, introduced: Was once common in the surrounding residential areas and fed on the adjacent grasslands of the Commons. It was not recorded at all during the survey.

**Lesser Whitethroat**: A pair bred, at least into the 1980s, in an area of dense scrub and bramble on Putney Lower Common which was subsequently removed.

**Willow Warbler**, Amber: Perhaps bred on Barnes Common in the 1980s when this species was widespread on Wimbledon Common to the south.

**Treecreeper**: Notably absent from the survey. Given its unobtrusive nature perhaps a pair passed by undetected. Certainly present in years past.

**Jackdaw**: Birds occasionally overflowed the Commons during the survey, probably commuting between Barn Elms and Wimbledon Common and Richmond Park.

**Starling**, Red: Small numbers were seen during the survey feeding on the grassland of Putney Lower Common. They were presumably birds breeding in the adjacent residential area. This species has undergone a severe national decline.

**House Sparrow**, Red: Once so common in the area it was probably largely ignored but almost certainly visited the Commons. Only a few small isolated colonies remain in Putney, at least, and these birds appear to be largely sedentary in the breeding season.

**Bullfinch**, Amber: Another species, which after occurring on Barnes Common in the 1980s, disappeared from here and altogether from this part of south-west London.

## Acknowledgements

Rupert Kaye kindly read and commented on a draft of the paper. The Friends of Barnes Common may be contacted through their web-site [www.barnescommon.org.uk](http://www.barnescommon.org.uk) and the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators at [www.wpcc.org.uk](http://www.wpcc.org.uk).

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## 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 now 369, with the addition of Snow Goose, Black Grouse, and Black Guillemot and the removal of American Wigeon. Of these, the 13 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.

All records of ornithological interest, from LNHS members and non-members alike, are welcomed by the Society's Ornithological Records Committee. 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 Records Committee 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.

### Key:

- A = all records.  
 B = all breeding records.  
 BBRC = full description required; form available from Recorders.  
*British Birds* Rarities Committee makes the decision.  
 D = full description required; form available from Recorders.  
 F&L = first and last dates for any site.  
 MM = dated monthly maximum counts.  
 N = brief notes required (how identified, view, distance, etc); form available from Recorders.  
 NR = all records from sites where bird not seen regularly.  
 P = passage movements.  
 S = all records between mid-May and mid-July.  
 ST = annual statement of status at a site.  
 T = all territory counts.  
 W = records outside breeding season.

Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Bewick's Swan	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>	A, N
Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	A, N
Bean Goose	<i>Anser fabalis</i>	A, D
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	A, D
White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	A
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Snow Goose	<i>Anser caerulescens</i>	A, D (unless obvious escape)
Red-breasted Goose*	<i>Branta ruficollis</i>	BBRC

Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	A
Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	A, N
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	MM, B, ST
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>	A
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	MM, NR, B, S
Mandarin Duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>	A
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	A
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	MM, NR, S, B
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	MM, NR, S, B
Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas carolinensis</i>	A, D
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	MM, B, ST
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	A
Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>	A
Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>	BBRC
Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	MM, NR, S, B
Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>	A
Common Pochard	<i>Aythya farina</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	A, D
Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	A, D
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	A
Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	BBRC until 2015, when A,D
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	A, N
King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>	BBRC
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	A, N
Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	A
Velvet Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>	A, D
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	A
Smew	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>	A
Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	A
Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	A
Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	A, B, ST
Black Grouse*	<i>Tetrao tetrix</i>	A, D
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	A
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	A
Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	A
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	A, N
Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>	A, N
Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>	A
Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	BBRC
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	A
Slavonian Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	A
Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	A
Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	A, D
Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	A, D

Balearic Shearwater	<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>	A, D
Barolo Shearwater	<i>Puffinus baroli</i>	BBRC
European Storm-petrel	<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>	A, D
Leach's Storm-petrel	<i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i>	A, D
Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	A, N away from Lower Thames
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	A
Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	A
Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>	BBRC
Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	A, D
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	BBRC
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	A, D
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	A, D
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	A, D
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	BBRC
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	A, D
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	BBRC until 2013, then A,D
Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	A, D
Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	A, D
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	A, D
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	A
White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	A, D
Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	A
Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	A, D May-Sep records away from Lower Thames
Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	A, D
Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	A, D
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	A
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Rough-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>	A, D
Golden Eagle*	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	A, D
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	A
Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>	BBRC
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	A, D
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	A, N away from Lower Thames
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Gyr Falcon	<i>Falco rusticolus</i>	BBRC
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	A
Spotted Crane	<i>Porzana porzana</i>	A, D
Little Crane*	<i>Porzana parva</i>	BBRC
Baillon's Crane	<i>Porzana pusilla</i>	BBRC
Corncrake	<i>Crex crex</i>	A, D
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	MM, B, ST
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	MM, B, ST

Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>	A, D
Great Bustard*	<i>Otis tarda</i>	BBRC
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	A
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	BBRC
Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	A
Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>	A, D
Cream-coloured Courser*	<i>Cursorius cursor</i>	BBRC
Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>	BBRC
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	A
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	A
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	BBRC
Kentish Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	A, D
Dotterel	<i>Charadrius morinellus</i>	A, D
American Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis dominica</i>	A, D
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	BBRC
European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	A
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	A
Sociable Lapwing	<i>Vanellus gregarius</i>	BBRC
White-tailed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus leucurus</i>	BBRC
Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	MM, NR, P, B
Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	A
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	A
Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>	BBRC
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	A
Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>	A, D
White-rumped Sandpiper	<i>Calidris fuscicollis</i>	A, D
Baird's Sandpiper	<i>Calidris bairdii</i>	BBRC
Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>	A, D
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>	BBRC
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	A
Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>	A, D
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	MM, NR, P, S
Broad-billed Sandpiper	<i>Limicola falcinellus</i>	BBRC
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	<i>Tryngites subruficollis</i>	A, D
Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	A
Jack Snipe	<i>Lymnocyptes minimus</i>	A
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	MM, NR, P, S
Great Snipe	<i>Gallinago media</i>	BBRC
Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>	BBRC
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	A
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	A
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	A
Eurasian Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	A
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	A
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	A
Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	BBRC
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	A
Solitary Sandpiper	<i>Tringa solitaria</i>	BBRC

Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	A
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	A
Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>	BBRC
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	BBRC
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	A
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	MM, NR, P, S
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	A
Wilson's Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus tricolor</i>	BBRC
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	A, D
Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>	A, D
Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	A, D
Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	A, D away from Lower Thames
Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	A, D
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	A, D
Sabine's Gull	<i>Xema sabini</i>	A, D
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	A
Bonaparte's Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus philadelphia</i>	BBRC
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	MM, B, ST
Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>	A
Laughing Gull	<i>Larus atricilla</i>	BBRC
Franklin's Gull	<i>Larus pipixcan</i>	BBRC
Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>	A
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	MM, ST
Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>	A, D
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	MM, B, ST
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	MM, B, ST
Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	A
Caspian Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>	A, D away from Lower Thames, W London reservoirs or Beddington
Iceland Gull	<i>Larus glaucooides</i>	A, D away from Lower Thames, W London reservoirs or Beddington
Glaucous-winged Gull	<i>Larus glaucescens</i>	BBRC
Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	A, D away from Lower Thames, W London reservoirs or Beddington
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Sooty Tern	<i>Onychoprion fuscatus</i>	BBRC
Bridled Tern	<i>Onychoprion anaethetus</i>	BBRC
Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	A
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	BBRC
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	BBRC
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	BBRC
Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	A
White-winged Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	A, D
Sandwich Tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	A
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	MM, NR, B, F&L, P, ST
Roseate Tern	<i>Sterna dougallii</i>	A, D
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	A
Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	A, D away from Lower Thames

Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>	A, D
Black Guillemot*	<i>Cepphus grylle</i>	A, D
Little Auk	<i>Alle alle</i>	A, D
Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	A, D
Pallas's Sandgrouse	<i>Syrhaptes paradoxus</i>	BBRC
Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	MM, B, ST
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	MM, B, ST, P
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	A
Ring-necked Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	A, F&L
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	BBRC
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	A
Scops Owl*	<i>Otus scops</i>	BBRC
Snowy Owl	<i>Bubo scandiacus</i>	BBRC
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	A
Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	A
Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>	A
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	A
Tengmalm's Owl*	<i>Aegolius funereus</i>	BBRC
European Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	A, N
Common Nighthawk	<i>Chordeiles minor</i>	BBRC
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	MM, B, P, F&L, ST
Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>	A, D
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	T
European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	A, D
European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	BBRC
Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	A, D
Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	A, D
Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	T
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	T
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>	T
Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>	A, D
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	BBRC
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	A
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	A, B, P, W
Shore Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	A, D
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	MM, NR, B, F&L, P, ST
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	MM, NR, B, F&L, P, ST
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	MM, NR, B, F&L, P, ST
Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	A, D
Richard's Pipit	<i>Anthus richardi</i>	A, D
Tawny Pipit	<i>Anthus campestris</i>	A, D until 2015, when BBRC
Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	BBRC until 2013, then A, D
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	A
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	MM, NR, B, W, P, ST
Red-throated Pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>	A, D until 2015, when BBRC

Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>	A
Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>	A
Buff-bellied Pipit	<i>Anthus rubescens</i>	BBRC
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	A
Citrine Wagtail	<i>Motacilla citreola</i>	BBRC until 2015, when A,D
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	MM, NR, B, W, ST
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	MM, NR, B, ST
Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>	A
Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	A, D
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	MM, T, ST
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	MM, T, ST
Alpine Accentor*	<i>Prunella collaris</i>	BBRC
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	MM, T, ST
Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	A
Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>	A, D
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	A
Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	A
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	A
European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	A
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	A
Desert Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i>	BBRC
Grey-cheeked Thrush	<i>Catharus minimus</i>	BBRC
Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	A
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	MM, T, ST
Naumann's Thrush	<i>Turdus naumanni</i>	BBRC
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	MM, NR, F&L, P
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	MM, NR, P, T, ST
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	MM, NR, F&L, P
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	MM, NR, P, T, ST
American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	BBRC
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	A
Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	A
Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>	BBRC
Aquatic Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i>	A, D until 2015, when BBRC
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	MM, NR, T, F&L, ST
Paddyfield Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus agricola</i>	BBRC
Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>	BBRC until 2015, when A,D
Marsh Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>	A, D
Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	MM, NR, T, F&L, ST
Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>	A, D
Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>	A, D
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	MM, NR, F&L, T, B, ST, W
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	A, F&L, T
Barred Warbler	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>	A, D
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	MM, NR, F&L, T, B, ST
Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	MM, NR, F&L, T, B, ST
Dartford Warbler	<i>Sylvia undata</i>	A

Subalpine Warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>	BBRC if identified to subspecies, otherwise A, D
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	BBRC
Eastern Crowned Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus coronatus</i>	BBRC
Pallas's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i>	A, D
Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	A, D
Hume's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus humei</i>	BBRC
Radde's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus schwarzi</i>	A, D
Dusky Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	A, D
Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	A
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	MM, NR, F&L, T, ST, W
Iberian Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus ibericus</i>	BBRC
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	A, F&L, T
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	MM, NR, T, ST, W
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	A
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	A
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	A, D
Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	A
Bearded Tit	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>	A
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	MM, NR, T, ST, W
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	MM, T, ST
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	MM, T, ST
Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>	A, D
Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>	MM, NR, T, ST
Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montana</i>	A, D
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>	A
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	T
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	T
Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	BBRC
Penduline Tit	<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>	BBRC until 2015, when A,D
Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	A, D
Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>	BBRC
Isabelline Shrike	<i>Lanius isabellinus</i>	BBRC
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	A, D
Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>	BBRC
Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	A, D
Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>	A, D
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	MM, NR, B, P, ST
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	MM, B, ST
Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>	BBRC
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	MM, NR, B, P, ST
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	MM, NR, B, P
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	MM, B, ST
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Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	A
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	MM, B, P, ST
Rose-coloured Starling	<i>Sturnus roseus</i>	A, D
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	MM, NR, B, P, ST

Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	A
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	MM, B, P, ST
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	A
European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	A, D
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Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	MM, NR, B, P, ST
Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>	MM, NR, P, S
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	MM, NR, B, W
Twite	<i>Carduelis flavirostris</i>	A, D
Lesser Redpoll	<i>Carduelis cabaret</i>	MM, NR, P, S
Mealy Redpoll	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>	A
Arctic Redpoll	<i>Carduelis hornemanni</i>	BBRC if identified to subspecies, otherwise A, D
Two-barred Crossbill*	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>	BBRC
Common Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	A
Parrot Crossbill*	<i>Loxia pytyopsittacus</i>	A, D
Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	A, D
Pine Grosbeak*	<i>Pinicola enucleator</i>	BBRC
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	A, B, ST
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	A
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Pine Bunting	<i>Emberiza leucocephalos</i>	BBRC
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Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	A, D
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Rustic Bunting	<i>Emberiza rustica</i>	A, D until 2015, when BBRC
Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	A, D
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	MM, NR, T, P, ST
Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>	BBRC
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	A

In addition to the above, full descriptions are required for all species assessed by the British Birds Rarities Committee. Description forms are available from the Chair of the Editorial Board or Recorders on request. All records of escapes are also welcomed by the Society. All records of hybrids and birds showing plumage aberrance are also required.

### Subspecies

All records of subspecies/races are wanted. Full descriptions are required for the following: White Wagtail in autumn; Yellow Wagtail races other than *M. f. flavissima* and spring records of Blue-headed Wagtail; Siberian Chiffchaff; Northern Willow Warbler; Continental Coal Tit and Northern Bullfinch. For other subspecies please provide your reasons for assigning the record to a particular subspecies/race.

## BREEDING CRITERIA

When sending in breeding records, please enter: 'possible breeding', 'probable breeding' or 'confirmed breeding' in the Comments section on the electronic records form according to the definitions below. Additional information can 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.



*Corn Bunting was recorded at 16 sites in 2014 - up from six in 2013. (Andrew Moon)*

## INDEX OF SPECIES - COMMON NAMES

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This index lists the scientific name of each species in the systematic list, together with its page number - in roman type. Page numbers of illustrations and photographs are in *italic type*. Papers on a particular species have the page number in **bold type**.

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The Society publishes ornithological and other natural history records for the area within 20 miles of St Paul's Cathedral. As well as Ornithology, other interests in natural history are catered for through the Society's Sections which record and study the major groups of flora and fauna, and the habitats in which they are found. Meetings organised by each Section are open to all members.

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## NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The Editorial Board welcomes papers, short notes, photographs and drawings relating to the ornithology of the London Area and will be pleased to advise authors on the acceptability of material at draft stage if desired.

**PAPERS** should be submitted to the Papers Editor: Mike Trier, 38 Maury Road, London N16 7BP, email: miketrier@waitrose.com, tel: 020 8806 7656.

**Texts** should be sent as RTF or MS Word file attachments to an email. The dates of all records included should be no later than the nominal year of publication. Printed text (hard copy) can be scanned; please contact the Papers Editor first before submitting it.

**Style** English names of birds require initial capitals except after a hyphen, but group names, animals and flowers do not. Scientific names should be in italics, but only the first (generic) name should have an initial capital; their use in the text is optional. Dates should take the form Jan 1st 2004; numbers under 11 should be spelt out in text; fractions should be decimalised. Full points should be omitted from well-known initials, such as BTO, LNHS and RSPB, and also from 'eg', 'ie' and 'et al'. Speech quotation marks should be double; all others should be single. Systematic lists within papers should be in the order of Checklist of Birds of the London Area, and in the following format for economy of space:

**Common name:** Description etc.

Scientific name (except optionally in the Ringing Report) is not required.

References to publications should be given in full, with the name spelt out and in italics, and in the following style:

HARRISON, J., & GRANT, P.J., 1976. *The Thames Transformed*. London.

MOON, A.V., 1988. The influx of Sabine's Gulls and other Seabirds in October 1987. *London Bird Rep.* 52: 121-132.

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