

Birds and other wildlife recorded in December 2025

Quite a short list this month –perhaps a reflection of both human and avian behaviour!

A Common Pheasant was unexpected – though they are to be found roaming nearby fields. Red Kites were commonly seen and heard. Another overhead sighting was Black-headed Gull. Stock Dove and Woodpigeons were fairly common – a flock of over 13 of the latter was found on the 17th of the month. Great-spotted Woodpeckers were about and were heard drumming, usually a territorial sign. Dunnocks and Robins were fairly frequently recorded. Song Thrushes were heard singing on several occasions and their Scandinavian cousin the Redwing was also encountered.

Goldcrests, one of the UK's smallest birds was fairly frequent, especially near the larches and conifers. Other regulars were Wren, Great Tit, Coal Tit (not all that commonly found), Blue Tit and Long-tailed Tit. Nuthatch was fairly frequently found, and Treecreepers were also about – very hard to see as they merge into the tree bark with their camouflaging brown-grey back. The corvids were regulars – though no Rook was recorded. Jackdaws were frequent, as were Jays and Carrion Crows. A group of 4 Magpies was found on the 11th feasting on a dead Rabbit. No Starlings or House Sparrows were recorded. Finally, to the finches: Chaffinch, Redpoll, Goldfinch and Greenfinch.

The only mammals recorded were unsurprisingly Grey Squirrels and Rabbits (live ones!)

Please send in your sightings! It is very important to record the wildlife in the wood. I'm shortly to compile the whole list for 2025 but now keep your eyes and ears open for 2026!

Birds and other wildlife recorded in November 2025

Birds: Red Kites soared regularly, and Common Buzzards were also seen; Sparrowhawks were recorded twice. Two species of gull: Black-headed and Herring. Woodpigeons were frequent but no Stock Doves or Collared Doves were noted this month. Great-spotted Woodpecker was about but no Greens noted. Skylarks flew and sang from adjoining fields, while, from within the woods there were Dunnocks, Robins, occasional Song Thrushes, Redwing and – the first this winter – a Fieldfare on the 13th.

A Chiffchaff was heard – still in singing mode – also on the 13th. Goldcrests were about as were the common tits: Blue Tit in good numbers, Great Tit and the not-so frequent Coal Tit. Small flocks of Long-tailed Tits have been recorded. Nuthatch and Treecreeper were around the trees, the latter often very difficult to spot in their sombre camouflage! And some of the corvids were present – Jackdaw, Carrion Crow, Jay and Magpie – but no Rooks observed this month; keep your ears and eyes open! Starlings were recorded in some numbers and small flocks of some of the finches were noted mid-month: 15 Chaffinches, 10 Goldfinches and – a group of Greenfinches. It would be rewarding to be able to add Bullfinch to these numbers; they seem very hard to find nowadays!

Mammals: Unsurprisingly – Rabbit, Grey Squirrel and Roe Deer.

A single butterfly record was sent in – Red Admiral. It may feel like winter, but several species of butterfly such as Peacock, Brimstone and Comma, do overwinter as adults so you may still find them in flight or sheltering. Let us know if you do!

Finally - keep an eye out for winter flowering plants; White Dead-nettle and White Campion are to be found. Some gardens are finding that flowers that traditionally bloom in early spring are showing plentiful flowers now (My own winter-flowering Clematis, normally blooming in January or February is in flower and being visited by a number of noisy Buff-tailed Bumblebee queens). The old woodland is of course known as "Bluebell Wood" and it is remarkable that *Bluebell shoots* have already been recorded growing under the leaf litter in mid-November.

Birds and other wildlife recorded in October 2025

Birds: A Little Egret was an unusual "flyover", but Red Kites were frequently seen and often heard. Woodpigeons were frequent but – no Stock Dove this month? Great-spotted Woodpeckers were about but nobody found a Green Woodpecker. We must all try harder!

Robins and Blackbirds were reported regularly as were one of the smallest of the UK birds, Goldcrest. Wrens and Great Tits and Blue Tits were plentiful, and there were some small flocks of Long-tailed Tits about. There were four species of corvid: Jackdaw (in abundance), Magpie, Jay (often detected first by its harsh calls), and Carrion Crow. No Ravens recorded this month, though they breed fairly locally – long gone are the days when you had to travel a long way to see a Raven! Goldfinches were frequent – but none of the other finches was recorded! Not a Chaffinch, and (unsurprisingly) not a Bullfinch!

Mammals: Grey squirrels fairly frequent, and a Fox was a rare sighting.

Other sightings: A Common Frog, a Speckled Wood (though no doubt more butterflies were seen by the regular surveyors. Some rather spectacular puffballs were also seen; now is the time for fungi; do have a look and see what you might identify!

Thanks again for the sightings – but we need more people out there sending in records. You don't need to be a warden or a volunteer – or a specialist! Please send in your records!

Birds and other wildlife recorded in September 2025

Thanks for the wildlife sightings! We have had one or two new people sending in reports so that helps greatly to show the wealth of the wildlife in the woods. Please keep sending your records in; even if it's a record of something you think may be very common – it adds to our knowledge of what's about!

Birds: Red Kites were frequently observed majestically soaring overhead and there was the occasional Buzzard. Gulls do not use the wood, but they too fly overhead and both Black-headed and Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen. Stock Doves were recorded and many Woodpigeons. Great-spotted Woodpecker was around but nobody had a Green Woodpecker this month.

Robins and Blackbirds were noted and – our most common warbler for now – Chiffchaffs - were regularly noted; 13 were recorded on one visit in the middle of the month. Goldcrest, one of our smallest birds, was recorded, as were Wren and the regular tits: Great Tit, Blue Tit and the not closely related Long-tailed Tits, which were seen in small flocks during the month. No Coal Tits seen? Coniferous specialists, so we ought to find them! Look around the larches. Nuthatch and the often hard-to-spot Treecreepers were recorded.

All the expected corvids were recorded often in large numbers: Carrion Crows, several Jays, Rook (4 on the 18th of the month) Jackdaws a-plenty, and a Raven. Starlings were around as were Chaffinch (not as common as once...), Goldfinches and that rare bird, the Bullfinch. Some notable missing species – those which are usually found closer to human habitation – were House Sparrow and Collared Dove.

Mammals: Grey Squirrel and Rabbit

Butterflies: The butterfly recorders will have more information, but the casual records were Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Comma and Speckled Wood

Plants: Field Pansy and White Campion still in bloom, and it was unexpected to find a very small clump of Thyme-leaved Speedwell

Please send your records in!!

Birds and other wildlife recorded in August 2025

August was a quiet month- for birds and also, it seems, for recorders! It really is important to send in your records of what wildlife you see or hear; apart from building up an interesting picture of what we share our wood with; it is important to have records of wildlife to refer to when there are threats of nearby building and development.

Red Kites were fairly frequent; the only other bird of prey recorded was Sparrowhawk – on many occasions the slightly nerve-wracking cry of a juvenile was heard – proof that they are breeding in our wood. Stock Dove and Woodpigeon were regulars – but no woodpeckers noted! Robin, Song Thrush and Blackbird were all recorded, as were Chiffchaffs (the only warbler this month), Wren, Great Tit, Coal Tit and Blue Tit. A flock of Long-tailed Tits was around on the 13th. Three corvids were recorded: Jackdaw, Magpie and Carrion Crow. Not a single finch, House Sparrow, Dunnock....

Grey Squirrel was noted, and a possible Roe Deer, but the only other mammal was a black cat!

The butterfly recorders will have systematic lists of what they saw on their routes, but the casual sightings are also helpful in building up the picture: Large White, Small White, Comma, Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown and Gatekeeper. There have been a few sightings of Jersey Tiger – not a butterfly but a rather spectacular moth!

Birds and other wildlife recorded in July 2025

Birds: A quiet month! Many birds have now finished breeding and no longer need to keep up their territorial singing/calling. Some are of course still feeding young and being careful not to draw attention to the nest sites. And many humans are on holiday and making fewer visits to the woods! Red Kites were often seen circling and calling over the woods and nearby areas. The Sparrowhawks bred again this year and the noisy and plaintive cries of the young can still (early August) be heard. Stock Doves and Woodpigeons were common, but nobody recorded a Collared Dove. Great-spotted Woodpeckers were around, as were the regular Dunnocks and Robins. Song Thrush and Blackbirds were also recorded fairly often.

Three species of warbler: Garden Warbler, Chiffchaff and Blackcap. Blue Tit and Long-tailed Tit were noted but nobody recorded a Great Tit! The elusive Treecreeper was found, however. The corvids were a little more obliging: Jackdaw, Magpie, Jay (including juveniles) and Carrion Crow, but no Rooks heard or seen. They have certainly moved to new nests beyond the woods in the last year or two, but they will still be using the area. Not a single finch of any species was recorded. People doing garden bird surveys are probably noticing a similar shortage of birds – but they will return, so keep looking out and listening for them as the year moves on.

Butterflies: Many sightings of butterflies have been noted on a casual basis, and the regular butterfly surveyors have no doubt had a busy time this month. Those noted by observers not on their actual surveys were: Small Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Brown Argus, Common Blue, Holly Blue (2nd brood), Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, Speckled Wood, Marbled White, Gatekeeper and Ringlet - a very good and varied list!

Moths: The moth of the month has to be Jersey Tiger.

Some interesting plants: Fleabane, Common Knapweed – loads of it and often covered with bumblebees and other insects. Meadowsweet. Red Bartsia – an annual that is parasitic on the roots of other plants for water and minerals – is common. Very unexpected was Betony, a plant in the dead-nettle family, with slightly showy reddish/purple flowers; never found it here before!

We may soon start gathering plants records on a more regular systematic basis – Watch this space!

Birds and other wildlife recorded in June 2025

Birds: A Grey Heron was an unexpected flyover! There are records of three raptors overhead: Red Kite (probably daily), Common Buzzard and Sparrowhawk. Stock Dove and Woodpigeon were regulars, but nobody recorded Collared Dove this month. Great-spotted Woodpeckers were about but this month no Green Woodpeckers noted (perhaps the anthills are drying up!). Skylarks were recorded in adjoining fields. Robins were common and there were sightings of juveniles. Song Thrushes were heard on several occasions. Of the warblers we had: Garden Warbler, Blackcap and Chiffchaff fairly regularly, other smallish passerines were: Goldcrest, Wren, Great Tit, Blue Tit and Long-tailed Tit. Nuthatch and the often difficult-to-spot Treecreeper were found. The corvids are not usually so difficult to spot, especially as their calls are very distinctive: Jackdaw, Magpie, Jay, Rook and Carrion Crow were all recorded. Finally a rather small group of "others": House Sparrow, Chaffinch, Greenfinch – but no records of Goldfinch. (They are certainly not in my garden in their usual numbers – breeding, moulting)

A few mammals were recorded: Grey Squirrel, Fox, Muntjac, and a possible Stoat.

Plenty of butterflies, and our transect organiser will have more scientifically accurate details in the survey records. Casual records include the three Skippers, Brimstone, three Whites, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Peacock, Comma, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Ringlet. Other interesting insects and other species include Scarlet Tiger moths, Crab spider, Honey bee, White-tailed Bumblebee and Early Bumblebee.

Plants. Finally, it is good to see that – after the ceasing of the cutting of the seeded triangle area near Alwins Field entrance, it is now showing a good display of Common Knapweed, Lady's bedstraw, some Cornflower and other species. Elsewhere in the open areas the Red Bartsia and the Enchanter's Nightshade are doing well.

Birds and other wildlife recorded in May 2025

Birds: Look up as well as down when recording what is using the area of the wood – this month we had Mute swans, 2 Greylag Geese and a Grey Heron flying over! Less unexpected and actually quite frequent were Red Kites and Buzzards. A Pheasant was around near the old wood; at least it's safe from the shooting brigade even if not exactly a native. Stock Doves, Woodpigeons and Collared Doves were fairly regular usually nearer to human habitation. Both common woodpeckers, Green and Great-spotted, were recorded, and Skylarks sang in adjoining fields.

Dunnocks, often quite shy, were around, as were Robins, Song Thrushes and Blackbirds. Several warblers were also recorded: Garden Warbler (usually sounding a little frantic and once described as a Blackcap on a high!), Blackcap, Chiffchaff and Lesser Whitethroat. Listen out for Willow Warblers and their musical gentle descending song. Goldcrest – usually associated with conifers- was recorded as were Wrens and the common tits: Great Tit, Blue Tit, Coal Tit (also in the coniferous areas) and the distantly related Long-tailed Tit. Finally, the finches: Chaffinch, Goldfinch, and Greenfinch – once heavily declining because of easily transmissible disease, but may be recovering slightly.

Mammals: "The usual suspects" Grey Squirrel, Rabbit, and now quite frequent - Roe Deer

Butterflies: Those taking on the Butterfly transects may well be able to add other species to this list, but so far, the following records have been made: Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Orange-tip, Small Copper, Common Blue, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, Speckled Wood. Look out for Meadow Browns and Marbled Whites – they should be around soon.

Birds and other wildlife recorded in April 2025

BIRDS: Red Kites were frequently seen and heard over the woodland. Common Buzzard was seen, but no other birds of prey recorded. Stock Doves and Woodpigeons were fairly frequent, but nobody recorded Collared Doves. Both Green and Great-spotted Woodpeckers were heard and seen. Dunnocks and Robins were fairly common. Song Thrush was heard and the species has bred, though sadly a youngster was found deceased – probably too soon out of the nest. Blackbirds were frequent. Three warblers were recorded: Blackcap, the first record of Willow Warbler on the 1st, and plenty of Chiffchaffs citing their own name!

Goldcrest and Wren were heard calling and singing, and the commoner tits were also about: Great Tit, Coal Tit and Blue Tit – and their distant relative the Long-tailed Tit. Blue Tit was observed investigating one of the boxes. The corvids were represented by many Jackdaws, some Jays and Carrion Crows, but there was only one record of a Rook; we used to have such a thriving rookery but rookeries are often quite mobile and the birds seem to prefer to be nearer the waterway this year. Goldfinch and greenfinch were both recorded but there have been no notes of Chaffinch this month.

OTHER WILDLIFE: There are now several people systematically carrying out Gill's butterfly transects, which is really good. There are also individual records of the following this month: Brimstone, Large White, Small White and Green-veined White. Orange-tip; Holly Blue, Small Tortoiseshell; a very early Painted Lady; Peacock; Comma and finally Speckled Wood.

Birds and other wildlife recorded in March 2025

BIRDS: Several sightings of Red Kites soaring overhead – always an uplifting view. Buzzards were also seen but neither Sparrowhawk nor Kestrel. Keep looking – and listening. Stock Doves were fairly regular – including some displaying individuals, and of course there were Woodpigeons, though nobody reported Collared Doves. Green and Great-spotted Woodpeckers were around, and there were several records of the latter species drumming, a sign of spring and a territorial note.

Commonly observed species were Dunnock, Robin, Song Thrush and Blackbird; the "winter thrushes" will have departed. Blackcaps –once very rare at this time of year, but now more frequent – were recorded, and

every tree seemed to hold a singing Chiffchaff! Other common species were Wren, Great Tit, Coal Tit and Blue Tit – the latter seen investigating one of the nest boxes.

Nuthatch and Treecreepers were noted, the latter usually quite hard to spot in its quiet camouflaged movements. The common corvids were around, the jackdaws often in small flocks; Rooks, Magpies, Jays and carrion crows were also recorded. Finally, the finches; only two this month – Chaffinch and Greenfinch

MAMMALS: Grey Squirrel and Rabbit and the increasingly familiar Roe Deer. It is only about a decade ago that the sight of a Roe Deer in the area was very unexpected.

BUTTERFLIES: Brimstone; Green-veined White; Red Admiral; Small Tortoiseshell (which is good news as they had a poor year last year); Peacock; Comma. There will be plenty more records as the spring progresses and the butterfly surveys flourish.

OTHER SPECIES: Buff-tailed Bumblebee; Dotted Bee-fly; Frog spawn

Birds and other wildlife recorded in February 2025

Red Kites were fairly regular, and Common Buzzard was recorded on one occasion. Three gull species were recorded passing over: Black-headed, Herring Gull and Lesser Black-backed. Stock Doves were seen, including a displaying male on the 2nd and Woodpigeons were fairly frequent. Both Green and Great-spotted Woodpeckers were recorded, with the latter species drumming early in the month. Skylarks were singing in the adjoining field – signs of spring are around!

Many of the regular species were recorded this month: Dunnock, Robin, Song Thrush, Blackbird – and a Mistle Thrush, an early breeder. Redwings were seen on a couple of occasions – including a flock of 29 on the 2nd. No Fieldfares were recorded, however.

Chiffchaff was recorded - once only a summer visitor but now recorded more often in our colder seasons.

More usual were sightings (or hearings) of Goldfinch, Wren and the usual tits: Great Tit, Blue Tit {already showing signs of pairing up very early in the month), and Long-tailed Tits. Nuthatch and Treecreeper - a difficult species to see and hear (especially as one gets older!) The usual corvids were about: Jackdaw (at least 8 on the 2nd of the month, Jay, Magpie, Rook and Carrion Crow – and a Raven flew over on the 29th. Starlings and House Sparrows were recorded, the latter usually near to human habitation around the edges of the wood. Finches: Chaffinch, Goldfinch, Greenfinch (maybe making something of a comeback nationally after a lot of disease problems), Siskin was heard on the 28th and Bullfinches were also seen.

Other taxa: Of course, Grey Squirrel was about, as were occasional Rabbits. Both Roe Deer and Chinese Water Deer were spotted. Frogspawn was detected in Rory's Pond, by the latter part of the month!

Birds and other wildlife recorded in January 2025

We don't often record geese in or over the Woods, but a flock of Greylags, and a lone Mallard were noted early in the month. Other flyover birds more associated with wetlands were Black-headed and Herring Gull. The usual Stock Dove, Woodpigeon and Collared Doves were all recorded; it may be chilly early February as I write but the doves and pigeons can now be seen displaying and 'singing'. Birds of prey seen were Red Kites and Common Buzzard. No Sparrowhawks.

Both common woodpeckers were about – Great-spotted and Green – both often encountered by ear rather than by eye The usual corvids were about: up to 15 Magpies on one visit, plenty of Jackdaws, which are often seen in the adjoining field, Carrion Crow and Rooks. 2 Ravens were also seen passing over; this is a species we would once have had to travel quite a way to see – now it breeds quite locally – maybe in our woods one day?

Coal Tit, Blue Tit and Great Tit were all recorded – now (early February) some may be beginning to get into breeding mode, so look out for pairs. Long-tailed Tits are also abandoning flocks and may be in pairs or smaller numbers. The common but small and often elusive Goldcrest was recorded, as were the often vocal, Wrens and Nuthatches. Blackbirds were common and there were plenty of Redwings in the adjoining fields, possibly joined one day by some Fieldfares. Robins were commonly seen, and the occasional House Sparrow nearer to human habitations. Also recorded were Dunnock, Chaffinch, Greenfinch and Goldfinch.

As for mammals – it was a case of the “usual suspects” this month – Grey squirrel and Rabbit.

Please keep sending in your records – birds and other wildlife all welcome!