

Judith's Page Archives 2010 to 2014

2014 Round-up

In 2014 a total of 49 species of birds were recorded in and flying over the Woods, the same number as in 2013 – though the species list was not quite identical. There have been some unexpected omissions - no Tawny Owl? No Pheasant? And surely some Swallows and House Martins flew over? But as in all surveys, much depends on the observers being in the right place at the right time! So, please do send in your records of what you see – it may be a common bird, but you may be the only one who has recorded it!

The final year list:

Mallard, Cormorant, Red Kite, Sparrowhawk, Buzzard, Kestrel, Lapwing, Black-headed Gull, Common Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Stock Dove, Collared Dove, Woodpigeon, Great-spotted Woodpecker, Green Woodpecker, Cuckoo, Swift, Magpie, Jay, Jackdaw, Rook, Carrion Crow, Goldcrest, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Coal Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Skylark, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Blackcap, Garden Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Common Whitethroat, Nuthatch, Treecreeper, Wren, Starling, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Mistle Thrush, Fieldfare, Redwing, House Sparrow, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Lesser Redpoll, Bullfinch.

In addition to the four tit boxes along the main ride, we also now have a lovely hand-made Little Owl box, given to us by a local resident. Little Owls do not live in thick woodland, and prefer to hunt for food on open fields, so the box is on the west side of the “new” woodland on a large tree, close to the fields. See below:



Bird, Butterfly and Mammal records for November & December 2014

November was a quiet month for bird recording, though it is a pleasure to see that Goldcrests were observed. December brought our more birdwatchers: two separate sightings of a Kestrel on different days near the waterworks. The usual corvids were seen though there was no activity at the Rook nests by the end of the month; 13 nests survived the wind and gale, so keep looking out to see what is going on while the trees are still bare. All the common tits were reported (including Coal Tit which is under-recorded), and once again Goldcrests were seen on a couple of occasions. Nuthatches and Treecreepers (often lumped together in lists, though they couldn't be more different in shape, colour or call) were seen. Wrens, too – often heard more often than spotted. Winter thrushes – Redwings and Fieldfares - visited the woods where many resident and visiting Blackbirds were also observed. For the first time in a couple of months a Song

Thrush was spotted (on the 9th). The “usual suspects” were around: Robin, Dunnock, House Sparrow, and four members of the finch family, often in small flocks: Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch and Bullfinch.

2013 Round-up

The year got off to a very cold start with plenty of snow and bitter winds; the cold remained until early April so early breeders had difficulty finding sufficient insects for their growing youngsters. Many nests will have failed; not all species will lay replacement clutches, so this means that fewer adults will have been recruited into the breeding population in 2014.

However, many species were recorded breeding successfully – carrying nest material, carrying food to the young, or accompanying recently fledged youngsters as they learnt how to obtain food for themselves. Species seen actually exhibiting breeding behaviour included the diminutive Goldcrest, Coal Tit, Green Woodpecker, Great-spotted Woodpecker, and Rooks. Young Sparrowhawks were heard calling and a young fluffy Tawny Owl chick was seen on a branch in May. Of course many other species bred but it isn't always easy to see the evidence. Our summer visitors arrived late, and curiously nobody recorded a Lesser Whitethroat – which has a very distinctive rattle for a song. The overall bird species count was 50.

Our mammal list is never long – many small species are best found by trapping methods. However, we had Roe Deer- not a common species for this area - as well as Muntjac, Rabbit, Grey Squirrel and – even if the Moles kept hidden – there were molehills! There are active Badger setts, fewer than in the past, and sadly a young cub was found dead in the old wood, and many adults met their end on the Stoke Road.

Plants, too, were late – the Bluebells were scarcely out in early May whereas in 2014 they were virtually over by this date. We had a good count of Common Spotted-orchids and Bee Orchids.

Birds:

Blackbird; Blackcap; Black-headed Gull; Blue Tit; Bullfinch; Carrion Crow; Chaffinch; Chiffchaff
Coal Tit; Collared Dove; Common Gull; Dunnock; Fieldfare; Garden Warbler; Goldcrest;
Great Spotted Woodpecker; Great Tit; Green Woodpecker; Greenfinch; House Sparrow; Jackdaw;
Jay; Lesser Black-backed Gull; Lesser Redpoll; Long-tailed Tit; Magpie; Mandarin; Mistle Thrush;
Nuthatch; Pheasant; Red Kite; Redwing; Robin; Rook; Siskin; Skylark; Song Thrush;
Sparrowhawk; Starling; Stock Dove; Swift; Tawny Owl; Treecreeper; Whitethroat; Willow warbler;
Woodpigeon; Wren; Yellowhammer.

2012 Round up

Birds:

Blackbird; Blackcap; Black-headed Gull; Blue Tit; Bullfinch; Carrion Crow; Chaffinch; Chiffchaff;
Coal Tit; Collared Dove; Common Buzzard; Common Gull; Cormorant; Dunnock; Fieldfare;
Garden Warbler; Goldcrest; Goldfinch; Great Tit; Great-spotted Woodpecker; Green Woodpecker;
Greenfinch; Grey Heron; House Martins; House Sparrow; Jackdaw; Jay; Lesser Black-backed
Gull; Lesser Redpoll; Long-tailed Tit; Magpie, Mallard; Mistle Thrush; Nuthatch; Pheasant; Pied
Wagtail; Red Kite; Redwing; Reed Bunting; Robin; Rook; Siskin; Skylark; Song thrush;
Sparrowhawk; Starling; Stock Dove; Swallow; Swift; Tawny Owl; Treecreeper; Whitethroat; Willow
Warbler; Woodpigeon; Wren

Butterflies:

Brimstone; Comma; Common Blue; Gatekeeper; Green-veined White; Holly Blue; Large Skipper;
Large White; Meadow Brown; Orange Tip; Peacock; Purple Hairstreak; Red Admiral; Ringlet;
Speckled Wood

Mammals: Bank Vole; Common Shrew; Fox; Grey Squirrel; Mole; Rabbit

Plants: Common-spotted Orchid; Bee Orchid; Ragged Robin; Cornflower; Hogweed; Wild Carrot; Bluebell; Anemone; Primrose; Garlic Mustard

2011 Round up

Sometimes people ask why the monthly bird lists are not in alphabetical order; the answer is that, just as in flower identification guides, species are put in a particular order to show their relationship to each other in an evolutionary sense. As more and more work is done in laboratories using the latest sophisticated DNA techniques some of the older ideas about which species – or even which families - are closely related have had to change. If you look in a bird field guide from the 19th century – or even 50 years ago you'll find that birds are not in the order in which we now find them listed. For example it used to be thought that Long-tailed Tits were very closely related to the common tits, Blue, Great etc – well, they certainly look similar - but now it is known that they are in a separate family. More DNA work is being done all the time, so no doubt the current order will have a few tweaks before long.

Canada Goose; Mandarin; Mallard; Pheasant; Grey heron; Red Kite; Sparrowhawk; Common Buzzard; Black-headed Gull; Lesser Black-backed Gull; Stock Dove; Woodpigeon; Collared Dove; Cuckoo; Tawny Owl; Swift; Green Woodpecker; Great-spotted Woodpecker; Magpie; Jay; Jackdaw; Rook; Carrion Crow; Raven; Goldcrest; Blue Tit; Great Tit; Coal Tit; Skylark; Swallow; House Martin; Long-tailed Tit; Chiffchaff; Willow warbler; Blackcap; Garden Warbler; Lesser Whitethroat; Whitethroat; Sedge warbler; Nuthatch; Treecreeper; Wren; Starling; Blackbird; Fieldfare; Song Thrush; Redwing; Mistle Thrush; Robin; Dunnock; House Sparrow; Pied Wagtail; Chaffinch; Brambling; Greenfinch; Goldfinch; Siskin; Linnet; Lesser Redpoll; Bullfinch; Reed Bunting

If you want to find out any more about any of the above birds – or any bird on the British list, have a look at www.bto.org/about-birds/birdfacts. Plenty of video clips, recordings and photos – though some are not taken in the UK

Butterflies: Brimstone; Brown Argus; Comma; Common Blue; Gatekeeper; Green-veined White; Holly Blue; Large Skipper; Large White; Marbled Whites; Meadow Brown; Orange-tip; Peacock; Purple Hairstreak; Ringlet; Red Admiral; Small Tortoiseshell; Small White; Speckled Wood.

Mammals: Fox; Grey Squirrel; Mole; Muntjac; Noctule bat; Rabbit; Squirrel.

2010 Round up

A year of recording resulted in a grand total of 53 species – not bad at all for an area that is completely lacking in waterbodies. Despite the lack of standing water we still had a couple of water bird flyovers. Other more dramatic flyovers include Red Kite and Common Buzzard. The highlight of the year was surely the appearance of a Wood Warbler on 24th April; this scarce warbler was seen and photographed by several people. Another short-stay visitor was a Stonechat on 16th March.

Many different species bred in the woods, including tits, warblers (Blackcap, Willow Warbler, Garden Warbler, Chiffchaff, Common Whitethroat) and finches (we seem to have healthy populations of Bullfinch and Greenfinch). A Sparrowhawk family raised young, and of course the Rooks boldly announced their presence and had a very productive year. Winter visitors cheered up the grey cold days – Fieldfare, Redwing, small flocks of Siskin and Lesser Redpoll, and will be around in the area for another few months. Keep looking out and keep recording!

Birds: Blackbird; Blackcap; Black-headed Gull flying over; Blue Tit; Bullfinch; Carrion Crow; Chaffinch; Chiffchaff; Coal Tit; Collared Dove; Common Buzzard; Common Whitethroat; Dunnock; Fieldfare; Garden Warbler; Goldcrest; Goldfinch; Great-Spotted Woodpecker; Great Tit; Grey Heron (flyover); Greenfinch; Green Woodpecker; Herring Gull; Hobby; House Martin; House Sparrow; Jackdaw; Jay; Large Gull (probably Herring Gull- flyover); Lesser Redpoll; Lesser Whitethroat; Little Egret (an unexpected flyover); Long-tailed Tit; Magpie; Mallard (flyover); Mistle Thrush; Nuthatch; Pheasant; Pied Wagtail; Red Kite; Red-legged Partridge; Redwing; Robin; Rook; Siskin; Sparrowhawk; Skylark; Song Thrush; Starling; Stock

Dove; Stonechat; Swallow; Swift; Tawny Owl; Treecreeper; Whitethroat; Willow Warbler; Wood Pigeon; Wood Warbler; Wren; Yellowhammer.

Butterflies: Brimstone; Brown Argus; Comma; Common Blue; Essex Skipper; Gatekeeper; Green-veined White; Holly Blue; Large Skipper; Large White; Marbled White; Meadow Brown; Orange-tip; Painted Lady; Peacock; Purple Hairstreak; Red Admiral; Ringlet; Speckled Wood; Small Copper; Small Heath; Small White; Small Skipper; Small Tortoiseshell; White Admiral; White-letter Hairstreak.

Mammals: Brown Long eared Bats; Common Pipistrelles; Foxes; Grey Squirrels; Muntjacs; Noctule Bats; Rabbits; Soprano Pipistrelles.