

Big Garden Birdwatch



with the

FRIENDS of WEST HAM PARK



WE ♥ WEST HAM PARK

The RSPB event takes place 29-31 January 2021. You can find all you need to take part, either in the park or in your garden, at [rspb.org.uk/birdwatch](https://www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch).

Lockdown means we are unable to hold our usual guided birdwatch to help you get started, so if you have never really looked at birds before, here are some tips on what to watch out for in the park.

Let's start with the birds that are easiest to see.

PIGEONS

There are two sorts of pigeon in the park: **Wood Pigeons** (far right) are mostly grey with a big white patch on either side of their neck.

Feral Pigeons (right) are smaller than Wood Pigeons, and have lots of different markings. They are mostly grey but you might see brown, white and other colours. This kind of pigeon used to be kept by people for their meat and eggs, and lots of them escaped to live as wild birds.



SEAGULLS

In the mornings you may see a big flock of seagulls on the sports pitches. There are four different sorts visiting the park. Most of them will be **Common Gulls** (left) but you might see some larger ones

with darker backs, which are **Lesser Black-backed Gulls**

(above right). There may also be **Black Headed Gulls** (overleaf far right) which in



winter only have a small black spot on their heads, and **Herring Gulls** (right) but you will need to look carefully with binoculars to spot the differences.



PARAKEETS

The noisy green parrots are **Ring Necked Parakeets**. They are originally from the north of India, and were brought to Britain as pets. Lots of them have escaped and are very happy here.



BLACKBIRDS and THRUSHES

Look out for them on the open grass areas and in the schools' garden opposite the playground.



Male **Blackbirds** are black (far left), and females are brown (left). You may also see a larger bird with a spotted chest, which makes a noise like a rattle as it flies off.



This is a **Mistle Thrush** (right). There may also be some **Redwings** (far left) and **Fieldfares** (left) birds a lot like a thrush, which come here from the frozen Arctic for the winter.

STARLINGS

If you see a flock of black-looking birds, they will be **Starlings** (right) If the sun is on them, their feathers are speckled with white and shine in green and purple colours as they reflect the light.



CROWS and MAGPIES



Crows (far left) are the largest of the black-coloured birds you will see. **Magpies** (left) are their black-and-white cousins.

There are lots of other birds in the park, and we have seen 45 different kinds (species) since we started keeping records in 2011. We see at least 20 different species every month. Some that you may see are Blue Tits, Great Tits, Goldfinches, Robins, Jays, Great Spotted Woodpeckers and House Sparrows. The House Sparrows live up to their name, and are always seen around the Park Lodges.

We hope you enjoy your birdwatching visit to the park. Good luck!