



Friends of West Ham Park

West Ham Park Bird Survey – Annual Report 2023

By Lyndsay Jones for the Friends of West Ham Park

In 2023 we recorded a total of 32 species, a full list is included with this report, and shows which months each species was present. The numbers are the maximum number seen each month. 12 species were present every month. No new species were added to our overall total, since 2008, of 46 species, some of which were “once only” sightings.

2023 has seen some changes to the survey team, resulting in an incomplete survey for some months. I am now very pleased to be able to welcome two new members, both called Peter. Your help will be greatly appreciated. These changes mean that any reduction in numbers from previous years is not necessarily significant.

Last year we noted that soil compaction could be responsible for the lower numbers of birds which feed primarily on the sports pitches. Compaction and loss of water causes stress to the trees. The park has been able to purchase a spiking machine which drives spikes 20cm into the ground and should improve rain penetration and soil quality. It will be interesting to see whether the large flocks of gulls return. Very few have been seen in 2023. We also recorded no *Green Woodpeckers* at all, this bird feeds primarily on ants and was seen regularly until 2021.

We recorded fewer summer visitors (birds, not people !) than previous years, but again this may be explained by reduced survey visits. Summer visiting *warblers* may be present only briefly, and are also quite hard to spot and identify.

We recorded *Redwings* only once, in January. Winter visitors are affected by the weather in their northern breeding grounds, which may not have been cold enough to push them as far south as West Ham Park.

We continue to have large numbers of *Feral Pigeons*, which our visitors often feed in the garden area. Groups of over 100 are regularly counted. *Magpies*, *Crows*, *Blue Tits*, *Great Tits*, *Wood Pigeons*, *Ring-necked Parakeets* and *House Sparrows* are also maintaining good numbers.

Many thanks to the bird watching team, past and present, your time and diligence are really appreciated. Our records go forward to the London and national databases, as well as being a record of the change to a more natural management scheme for the park. More native hedge planting is now being planned, and more areas left to grow long grass and wildflowers, which should benefit all species.

SPECIES	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackbird	7	5	6	8	12	10	7	4	6	9	5	6
Blackcap	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Blue Tit	31	30	35	23	22	20	21	22	18	22	14	13
Chaffinch	5	3	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chiffchaff	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Coal Tit	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Collard Dove	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Crow	11	8	20	17	5	8	9	25	25	18	23	22
Dunnock	2	-	-	-	3	2	-	1	2	2	-	-
Feral Pigeon	178	145	176	92	98	110	97	75	133	121	168	115
Garden Warbler	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Goldcrest	1	-	-	4	-	-	-	1	-	6	-	-
Goldfinch	6	5	4	3	2	-	-	7	-	-	4	7
Great Tit	26	28	19	15	16	23	14	15	16	24	22	27
Green Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GS Woodpecker	3	2	1	1	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2
Gull - Black Hded	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gull - Common	24	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	11
Gull - Herring	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gull - Lesser BB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heron	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
House Sparrow	17	18	20	24	11	14	6	15	6	10	12	6
Jay	1	3	3	1	-	1	-	2	-	2	3	6
Long Tailed Tit	13	2	2	4	-	8	9	-	2	13	12	-
Magpie	18	18	23	24	18	10	20	17	15	18	18	22
Mistle Thrush	6	1	4	4	6	3	1	3	-	6	1	4
Mallard	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nuthatch	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pied Wagtail	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Redwing	12	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parakeet	20	16	16	4	11	8	12	26	16	16	21	27
Robin	6	12	10	10	12	7	7	9	13	9	2	3
Sparrowhawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Starling	18	20	22	29	23	5	-	30	-	-	26	-
Wood Pigeon	60	40	55	43	27	18	19	39	32	34	37	47
Wren	3	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	3