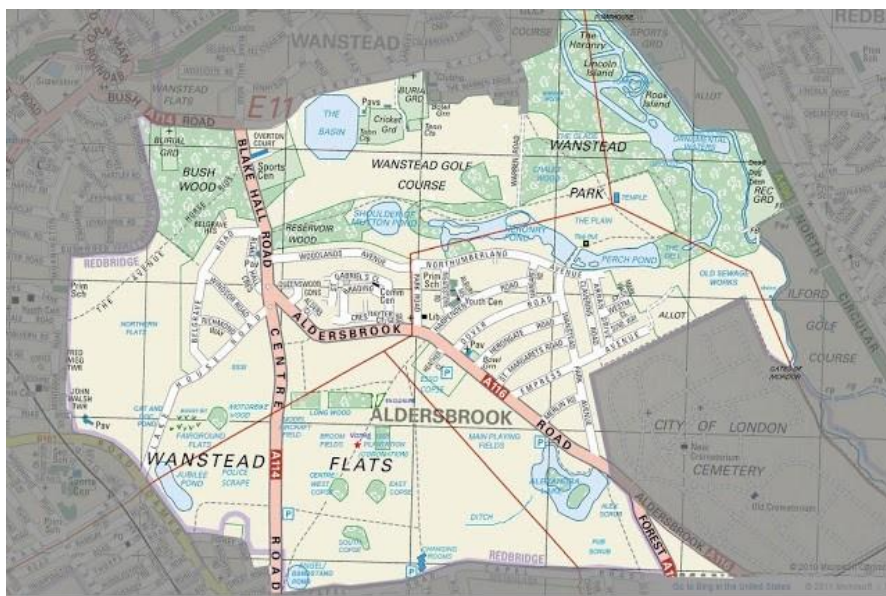


The Birds of Wanstead 2013



The Birds of Wanstead 2013



Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all who made this record year possible, for the thousands of hours spent out on the patch in all weather and the help in accumulating the data needed to put this report together. We are very lucky to have so many dedicated patchworkers that have made this one of London's most covered sites – and the results speak for themselves.

I would also like to thank Tim Harris and Jonathan Lethbridge for their help in putting this report together and to Jono, Ed Wilcox and Tony Brown for letting me use some of their photographs.

Next year it is hoped that we will add Leyton Flats to the report in a return to what was covered in past reports (that can be viewed on the blog see details below). It only remains for me to wish everyone birding in the area good luck and good birding.

Nick Croft, February 2014

<http://wansteadbirding.blogspot.co.uk/>
<http://www.thecowboybirder.com/>
<http://www.wansteadbirder.com/>
<http://loadabullfinch.blogspot.co.uk/>
<http://www.wrengroup.org.uk/component/content/?view=featured>
<http://www.wansteadwildlife.org.uk/index.php/component/content/?view=featured>

Cover: Golden Plover on the Police Scrape; Jonathan Lethbridge



THE BIRDS OF WANSTEAD 2013

Tim Harris

A total of 135 bird species were seen in and over Wanstead Park and Wanstead Flats in 2013. That figure is more than in any previous year.

This partly reflects the excellent habitats of our local ‘patches’ and their position at the southern extremity of Epping Forest. But it is also a credit to the tireless efforts of the Wanstead Birders team, whose numbers have also increased. On only handful of days was there not at least partial coverage of the area by at least one birder. At the height of spring and autumn migration there were often more than 10 birdwatchers working the scrub, grassland, lakes and woodland.

So what of the highlights? If accepted by the London Records Committee, both Bared Warbler and Quail – which turned up on Wanstead Flats within a few days of each other at the end of August – will be first records for our area. The Black Redstart found near Alexandra Lake on 11 April was the first record for about 40 years. March witnessed the second Stone-Curlew on the Flats in three years, while in the autumn the third Wryneck in four years established Wanstead Flats as the most regular site in London for the species. It also deserves this accolade for several other birds, including Pied Flycatcher, for which there were seven sightings in August alone.

In spring, passage was more concentrated than usual, not least because spring was so late in arriving. I will not forget searching for the year’s first Northern Wheatear in a blizzard in late March! On 15 April there were 10 Common Redstarts and at least 25 Northern Wheatears on the Flats; I encountered a flock of 19 of the latter near Coronation Copse – awesome. Another stand-out date was 24 August when the aforementioned Quail was found, and a possible Corncrake was also found. That was one that got away.

Nor should we ignore the more ‘mundane’ species. early in the year saw a site-record WeBS count of more than 250 Gadwall in Wanstead Park but this was blown away in December with more than 350 birds, representing well over 1 percent of the UK’s wintering population and making the Park a site of national importance for the species. Another record count was of 150 Jackdaws going to roost in December.

It was not all good news, however. There was only one sighting of Lesser Spotted Woodpecker in the year; where have they gone? And Skylark breeding numbers on the Flats declined further; more needs to be done to protect the status of this iconic songbird. Finally, an apology: every month I upload the WeBS waterbird counts to the BTO website but foolishly this year I didn’t keep a separate record so the only WeBS counts in the report are for December. I will be more efficient in 2014, when the report will also include records for Snaresbrook.

Thanks for all those whose sightings have contributed to our knowledge of the area’s avifauna.

Tim Harris



The systematic list

Mute Swan

Resident, breeding in small numbers

Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 19 in Wanstead Park.

Greylag Goose

Resident, breeding in small numbers

Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 3 in Wanstead Park.

Canada Goose

Resident, breeding in small numbers

Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 50 in Wanstead Park.

Egyptian Goose

Regular visitor

Shelduck

Annual seen flying between the Walthamstow reservoir complex and the river: 2 (14/3); 2 (25 & 27/4); 3 (11/5); 2 (21/6)



Jonathan Lethbridge



Jonathan Lethbridge

Gadwall

Apart from the Summer months the commonest duck on site

An exceptional year. The WeBS count of 258 in Wanstead Park on 10/2 was a site record. In late year this was exceeded again with a WeBS count of 363 on 15/12, these numbers remaining until the year end.

Teal

Scarce winter visitor

Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 10 in Wanstead Park.

Mallard

Resident, breeding in small numbers

Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 114 in Wanstead Park.

Shoveler

Fairly common winter visitor

Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 20 in Wanstead Park.

Wigeon

Regular winter visitor

As one of the commoner wintering ducks in the UK it is perhaps surprising we get so few records, however birds that do turn up tend to stick around a few days on the larger water bodies. First 2013 birds: 2 on the Alex (17th January)

Red-crested Pochard

Rare visitor

A single juvenile bird was seen on the Heronry from the 17-24th September

Pochard

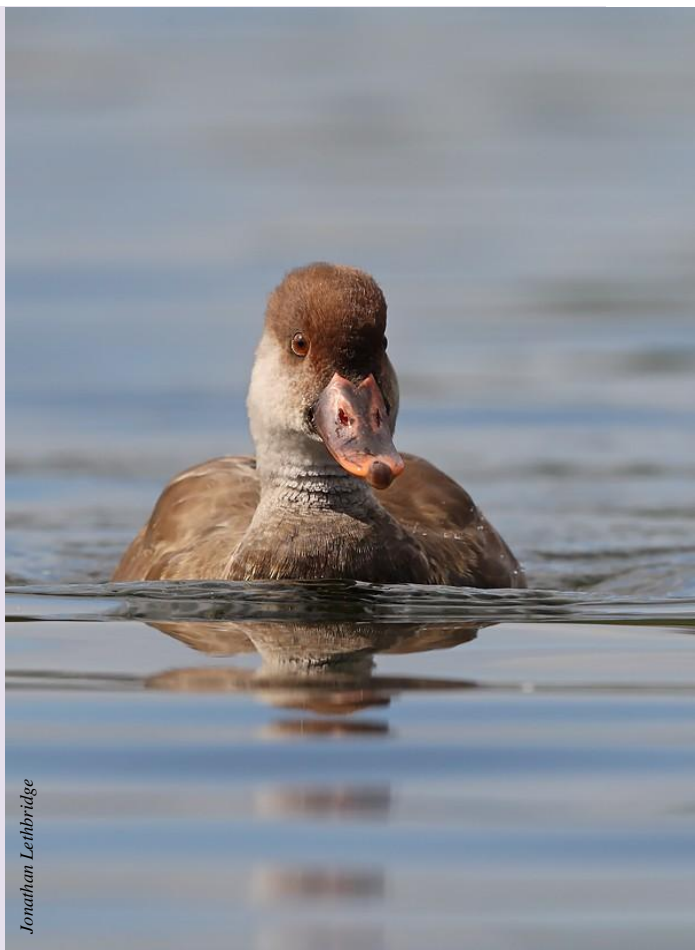
Fairly common winter visitor

In spring there were still 3 on Alexandra Lake on the late date of 11/5. Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 41 in Wanstead Park.

Tufted Duck

Resident, with numbers increasing significantly in winter

Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 75 in Wanstead Park.



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Common Goldeneye

Rare winter visitor

Four birds flying between Perch and the Shoulder of Mutton on the 20th February (3 males) were the year's only record

Goosander

Rare visitor

Only the one record this year of 1-2 birds flying over the SSSI on the 19th January

Smew

Rare visitor

A female seen briefly on the River Roding on the 17th January, was this year's only record

The systematic list

Quail

Extremely rare visitor

One flushed from the grass between Long Wood and Centre Copse on the 24th August is the one and only record

Little Grebe

Resident, breeding in small numbers

This year it appeared that all our pairs went for the late breeding strategy with varying amounts of success, one as late as September. By the end of the Autumn birds disperse from Alex and the water bodies in the park, to the river and further afield.

Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 10 in Wanstead Park.

Great Crested Grebe

Resident

A pair tried un-successfully to nest twice on Heronry, but both times the nest failed and one of the pair also was taken, presumably by Mink. A third bird on Perch briefly joined up with the remaining bird but with no result. A pair on the Basin managed to raise one youngster.

Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 1 in Wanstead Park.

Cormorant

Regular visitor

A regular visitor in small numbers to Wanstead Park; and a daily fly-over, probably commuting between the Thames and Walthamstow Reservoirs.



Little Egret

Increasingly frequent visitor

Up to 5 birds have been noted on a flooded golf course this spring, can be seen daily depending on the height of the Roding

Great White Egret

A flyover on Wanstead Flats on April 3rd 2013, perhaps indicative of the nation-wide trend in reports, was the first for four years. A second report is of a bird heading up the Roding seen from the North Circular on the 26th July

Grey Heron

Regular visitor; formerly bred

Regularly feed on ponds in Wanstead Park in small numbers.

Red Kite

Rare visitor

Just the two sightings this year, which when considering the increase in number of reports from the east of London is surprising and disappointing : 8th and 24th April

Sparrowhawk

Resident

Ones and twos are regularly seen, especially over Wanstead Flats. The species bred somewhere between Shoulder of Mutton and Heronry, the only known nest site this year

Marsh Harrier

Scarce passage migrant in spring and autumn

One sighting of a female/juvenile type over the flats on the morning of the 20th March

Common Buzzard

Passage migrant in spring and autumn

A good year for Buzzard, with birds being noted most months and in some cases involving more than one or two birds

Kestrel

Scarce resident

There could be 2 pairs in the area, certainly a group of 3 birds was seen in the early autumn on Wanstead Flats



The systematic list

Hobby

Summer visitor

Presumed to have bred by the Temple this year, with reports of one juvenile being seen, however with the cold spring it was not a good year for their food prey. First returning bird 4th May

Peregrine Falcon

Regular visitor

Almost monthly occurrences of this enigmatic falcon. It is suspected that there are two ranges which intersect over the site. More likely to be seen over the Old Sewage Works and western Flats



Corncrake

A possible flushed in the enclosure before disappearing into a large bramble patch, though not confirmed (24th August)

Water Rail

Winter visitor

The regular bird on the western end of Perch, disappeared before the end of 2012, which led to the fear it might have been a meal for a Heron or Mink. However 2 birds were found together on the Shoulder of Mutton on and after the 1st March. Two “sharming” birds returned in the Autumn to the same pond by mid November.



Moorhen

Common resident

Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 11 in Wanstead Park (a gross underestimate).

Coot

Very common resident

Coordinated waterbird count on 19/12 produced a total of 161 in Wanstead Park.

Little Ringed Plover

Rare visitor

A female took up residence on the Jubilee, while work was being done on the pond, from the 1st – 5th April, but was more likely to be seen feeding around the flooded areas of the Police Scrape. Later 2 birds were seen in flight, calling, over Long Wood on the 12th May



Jonathan Lethbridge



Lapwing

Scarce visitor in cold weather

2013 was probably numerically their best year yet with c. 300 birds recorded, notably 107 (17th January); 124 (19th January); 100 + (9th March), however few if any records after July

Golden Plover

Scarce visitor in cold weather

A number of records of small groups this year. Three birds stayed for 3 days on the Police Scrape from the 24th March, which considering the location is staggering. Further singles reported in the Spring (19th January; 11th February), however only 1 autumn record (25th December)

Common Snipe

Regular winter visitor

Record day counts of up to 10 birds have been noted on the flats, and on one such day 7 birds were flushed from the boggy bit of the SSSI (24th January)

Jack Snipe

Extremely rare visitor

A bird was seen on the 29th September, 2013 again in the area of the Alex, part of a local influx that day.

Woodcock

Winter visitor

There are one or two birds that regularly take up residence in the area over the winter period, however they can be seen going or coming from their roosts, just about anywhere. Again the Old Sewage Works is one of the favoured areas with birds flying from and to the golf course

The systematic list

Common Sandpiper

Passage migrant

Not a good year for Sandpiper of any description this year. However, when they finally turned up it was a group of 5 birds on the Heronry on the 20th July. Later singles were noted on the 30th July; 8th and 10th August

Green Sandpiper

Very scarce passage migrant

Just the one record of a calling bird (not seen), in flight going west from the Alex on the 1st September

Redshank

Rare visitor

8th August 2013, one heard calling over Alex and towards Manor Park, while this is the only record currently, possible calling birds have been noted on a number of occasions without being seen. Subsequent to this record being added comes a report by the Essex Field Club of a Redshank over the flats in April 1983

Oystercatcher

Rare visitor

On 23rd October, 2013 one was heard over the western flats very early in the morning

Curlew

Very rare visitor.

Nine birds flew over the Flats on March 9th 2013.



I'd had a rather good weekend, finding Wheatear on my birthday for the first time. Not just any Wheatear, the first one in Wanstead for the year.

I often find the first one, but it's a rare set of circumstances that mean that they wait until late March to arrive and nobody finds one before I do. So, happy days and I was quite content with the weekend already. Back out on the Flats the following day couldn't quite reach the same heights, and so I headed home quite quickly. Returning via the broom fields I noticed a bird flying ahead of me, relatively low, just to the south of Long Wood. It looked fairly long-winged, and was one of those birds that immediately screamed "good!" It jinked briefly showing strikingly black and white wings, at which point I was pretty certain it was a Stone-curlew, despite quite how unlikely that might be. That said, Wanstead Flats has hosted a bird before, and the time of year was broadly correct. Confident in my ID I rang Dan who I knew to be on the Flats already (perhaps releasing rare waders), and then rang Nick and others. I was then of course struck with massive self-doubt, and started running to see if I could clinch it, which really I hadn't yet done. By now the bird had appeared to cross Centre Road and disappeared, but as I too crossed the road it got up again and circled around Motorcycle Wood, reappearing out the other side to joyful clicks of my shutter! Now 100% proven, I waited until various local birders pitched up and then we all went looking for it, initially without success. About an hour later the bird was seen in flight again as it circled the SSSI one last time and then went off high north. This time I actually saw it through my bins!

As mentioned above, remarkably this was the second bird in three years, and I also saw the first one. I couldn't believe that it could happen again, but just like Wryneck..... what a patch!

Stone-Curlew:

Very rare visitor.

This year a bird was seen in and around the SSSI and broom fields on March 24th 2013 by a number of people.



Jonathan Lethbridge

The systematic list



Black-headed Gull

Resident, with numbers increasing in winter

Common Gull

Winter visitor

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Regular visitor in small numbers

Herring Gull

Regular visitor in very small numbers



Yellow-legged Gull

Rare visitor

Not a good year with only a handful of records from the mid-end of October and maybe only concerning the one bird. There have undoubtedly been more, including juveniles/first winter birds on the patch

Great Black-backed Gull

Rare visitor

Records most likely from the winter periods. The first on 1st January and the latest from the 25th December

Kittiwake

Rare visitor

One seen flying west on the 25th March was the first for 2 years, but then on the 13th the same or another bird circled over the Alex for about half an hour before heading off again high and west.



Mediterranean Gull

Winter visitor

Looked like it was going to be a bad year for Med sightings with none in the Spring and early Autumn, however the returning Valentine's Park bird finally appeared on the 23rd October, and was regularly seen in the large gull roost by Alex for the next 2 months. On a separate occasion 2 first winter birds were also noted in this roost

Common Tern

Summer visitor

As with last year, birds were seen regularly on the Heronry in the late Spring/early summer (15th May onwards), also taking fish off with them somewhere north-west of here. It would appear that there is a good chance that they would breed in the park if there was provision made for them.



Feral Rock Dove

Common resident

Stock Dove

Resident breeder

Woodpigeon

Abundant resident and autumn passage migrant

Autumn passage was marked on a few days, with over 1,000 birds being involved

Collared Dove

Resident breeder

Turtle Dove

Rare passage migrant

1 sighting only, of a bird flying south east over Shoulder of Mutton on the 8th June

Ring-necked Parakeet

Annoying resident

Cuckoo

Very scarce passage migrant

Not a bad year all things considered. An adult bird was recorded in the SSSI on the 11th May, with further reports of calling birds coming from the park and the old sewage works. A juvenile was seen on the flats on the 7th September, and from the 16th-26th (probably the same bird throughout)

Little Owl

Resident breeder?

The last sighting of this bird was on the 1st January on the flats, until reports of a bird back in its hole in Centre Copse were confirmed on the 28th December

Tawny Owl

Scarce resident

Short-eared Owl

Scarce visitor

We looked to be heading for a record year for SOEs, however, and rather bizarrely, all our records came from the 2nd winter period and early spring. Interestingly on two occasions the bird in question was either looking to roost or had roosted in the area: (1st February; 12th March ; 24th April and a surprisingly late bird on the 4th May)

Common Swift

Common summer visitor

The first of spring were over the Flats on 24/4 and in May and early June large gatherings could be seen over most of the site, numbering many hundreds of birds (c. 450+ birds on the 31st May).

Kingfisher

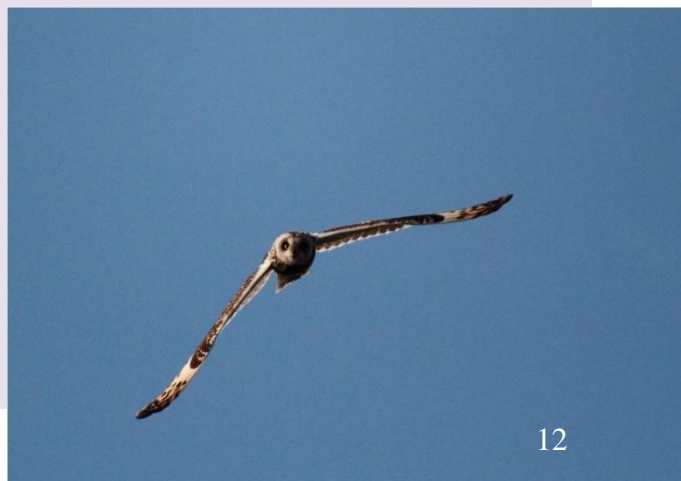
Regular visitor and possible breeder

Again a rubbish year for the poor Kingfisher. Early high river levels meant that any attempts at breeding would have been doomed. Sightings subsequently down this year and none reported from the flats at all, which would have probably involved young birds dispersing.

Waxwing

Rare winter visitor

Another Waxwing winter, with reports mainly from the flats and from Forest Gate: 9th January, 17 (21st January); 16 (23rd January); 20 (11th February); 9 (21 February); 30 (6th March); 7 (Horace Rd 13-14th March); 27 (17th March)





Wryneck

Scarce passage migrant in Autumn

The third bird in four years was spotted by a visiting birder on the 3rd of September in the broom fields to the south of Long Wood. It was refound a couple of days later in the same area and stayed, while elusive, for the better part of a week



The systematic list



Green Woodpecker

Resident breeder

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Resident breeder

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

Very scarce visitor and former breeder

Only one bird seen this year, a worrying trend reflected locally and nationally.

Wryneck

Scarce passage migrant in Autumn

Skylark

Breeds in small numbers, winters and occurs as a passage migrant, especially in autumn.

Survey work in spring and early summer found 7 singing males on a regular basis in the area between Centre Road and East Copse on Wanstead Flats. There were also infrequent sightings of singing birds in the southern part of the SSSI and the rough grass south of Alexandra Lake. These may or may not have been birds from the 'core' population so it is safe to assume just 7 territories, a decline on recent years. *In late Autumn/Winter counts of up to 19 birds have been recorded from the Police Scrape*

Woodlark

Scarce passage migrant

The only record from the Pub Scrub on 19th March.

Sand Martin

Summer visitor

The earliest returning Hirundine nationally, here the first were recorded on the 11th April. It appears these birds might be breeding along the river at Barking, however they are rarely seen in the Old Sewage Works.

Swallow

Passage migrant

The first birds reported on the 9th April and the latest on the 23rd October (2 birds over the flats)

House Martin

Summer breeding locally

The first returning birds came through on the 13th April. Birds again nested just off the Aldersbrook Road, however it is unclear how many pairs were involved, certainly not as many as last year, however by the end of the Summer over 10 birds could be seen hawking around the area daily. Towards the end of September a couple of days of mass movement occurred with hundreds of hirundine (mainly Swallow and House Martin) were enjoyed by those lucky enough to witness it.



Jonathan Lethbridge



Tree Pipit

Scarce passage migrant in spring and, especially, autumn

Spring just held the one bird, which was reported over the course of a few days in the SSSI and Long Wood area, from the 31st March. In the Autumn a number of birds stayed for a few days, with a late bird reported in the SSSI in mid October.

18-19th April (SSSI); 22-25th August (Long Wood); 31st August; 4-7th September (2-3 birds); 9th & 21st September;



Meadow Pipit

Resident breeder and passage migrant

Breeds in small numbers, winters and occurs as a passage migrant in spring and autumn.

There were at least 8 song-fighting males in the SSSI and the area east of Centre Road in April.

A high count of 50 birds was recorded on the 13th of September



Jonathan Lethbridge

Rock Pipit

Rare visitor

A fairly annual flyover, but only 1 reported this year from the 19th April

Yellow Wagtail

Scarce passage migrant in spring and, especially, autumn

The first returning birds on the 16th April, however the Autumn passage was better with birds on a daily basis

Grey Wagtail

Resident, with increased numbers in winter

It appeared it would be a write off for this year for these birds, however a pair with one youngster was seen on a number of occasions in and around Heronry

Pied Wagtail

Resident

For most of the year you would be hard pressed to find one of these birds on the patch, even though they are common in Forest Gate, however in Autumn numbers are drawn to the flats by the cutting of the long grass. Pre-roost counts of around 20 have been noted on the Police Scrape



Wren

Abundant resident

Dunnock

Common resident and passage migrant

Nightingale

Passage migrant

A probable reported from the Ornamentals on the 16th April and then a bird seen flying out of Long Wood on the 3rd September and seen again the following day. It was also heard doing a bit of sub-song. Later information suggested this bird might have been around for a few more days than first thought. A probable female type was seen by the Ornamental Waters on the 16th April.

Robin

Abundant resident and passage migrant

Common Redstart

Passage migrant in spring and autumn

A record 10 birds were found on a spring “fall” on the flats alone on the 15th April, which skewed the figures somewhat. Autumn in comparison was fairly poor by our, now, exacting standards

Black Redstart

Rare passage migrant

The first bird for 40 years was found by the Alex on the 11th April, it was subsequently re-found by Centre Copse on the 13th

Whinchat

Passage migrant in spring and autumn

Wanstead Flats remains one of the best places in London to see these wonderful little chats, however they are wary and be very elusive. In the Autumn 5 birds took up residence for most of September (6 on the 1st), with the last birds being recorded early in October

Stonechat

Winter visitor

Again not a good year for this former winter resident. Sightings in both the Autumn and Spring (19th March and 17th-26th October)



Northern Wheatear

Passage migrant in spring and autumn

A wonderful spring when over 100 Wheatear days were notched up with a record high of 27 + birds suddenly appearing on the 15th and again on the 26th April. Autumn numbers were way down, with only one adult male being recorded amongst the first winter juveniles and females.



Ring Ouzel

Very scarce passage migrant

One spring record from the 15th April, but up to 3 birds in the Autumn. Only one bird was sighted in the Park this year.

Blackbird

Common resident and passage migrant



Fieldfare

Passage migrant in autumn

Large numbers were found after the thaw in March feeding on cleared areas in the SSSI, however Autumn passage has been small with the largest recorded flock so far of 30

Song Thrush

Resident breeder

Redwing

Passage migrant in autumn

A couple of large Redwing counts from the Autumn of [...] and [...] respectively. In December and January numbers build up in the Park, especially in cold weather when several hundred can be found.

Mistle Thrush

Resident breeder



The systematic list



Reed Warbler

Passage migrant and former breeder

A record number of singing and passage birds this year, with up to 3 males singing on the Shoulder of Mutton, however due to destruction of habitat and the late spring, none bred.

Sedge Warbler

Passage migrant

This year almost all the records were from the Spring, with a number of singing individuals in and around Long Wood and the Alex (24th April onwards), only one report from the Autumn of a bird in reeds by the Roding: 26th -29th April; 7th July



Grasshopper Warbler

Passage migrant

No records this year

Blackcap

Common summer breeder and scarce winter visitor



Barred Warbler

Extremely rare Autumn passage migrant

A bird seen on 3 occasions on the flats in association with Common Whitethroat, is the first record for the site, though they have been seen locally in the last few years, the last being found at East India Dock last year. A report will be sent to the London Report Committee

Garden Warbler

Scarce summer visitor

Singing males were reported from the SSSI, Shoulder of Mutton, Bush Wood, and a long staying bird in the Old Sewage Works, however it appears unlikely that any of these bred. Autumn numbers were good with regular birds seen on the flats

Lesser Whitethroat

Passage migrant (and possible local breeder?)

A bumper year for singing males, however since most of these were still singing by mid-summer it appears very few attracted a mate. The males will stop singing when they have mated. One bird was still singing by the Alex in September. First returning birds from 19th April

Common Whitethroat

Common summer visitor

Perhaps not as good a year as 2012, the area still holds an important population of the birds in a London context



Dartford Warbler

Rare visitor

No reports

Chiffchaff

Common summer visitor; some overwinter

The first bird returning bird of the year was heard on the 5th of February, though this might have been an over-wintering individual. Latest sighting on the 25th December of 2 calling birds in the Old Sewage Works

Willow Warbler

Passage migrant in spring and autumn, possibly breeding

Returning birds from the 10th April. Singing birds were reported consistently from the SSSI and Bush Wood, though it is unclear whether nesting was attempted. Regular Autumn passage

Goldcrest

Localised resident

Numbers so far this Autumn have been way down with single figure counts from the park and Bush Wood, but that may be more to do with the mild weather than population trends, though in the Spring a count of 15 + was achieved across the Park and Flats on the 15th February.

Firecrest

Regular winter visitor

Four birds were reported in Bush Wood at the end of last year, however sightings this spring and autumn have only been of 2 birds. One report from Reservoir Wood in the spring. And one in the Dell on the 3rd January

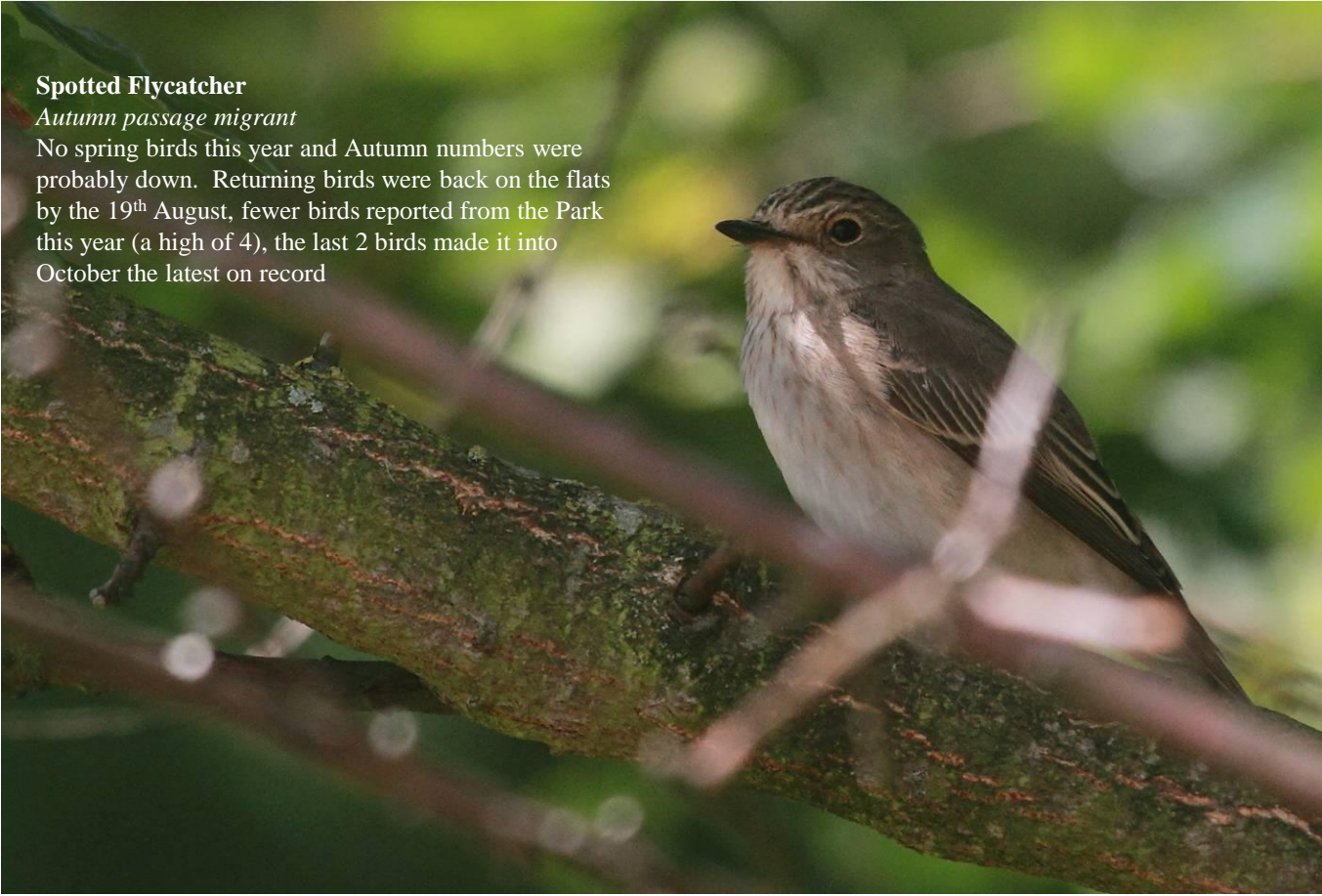


The systematic list

Spotted Flycatcher

Autumn passage migrant

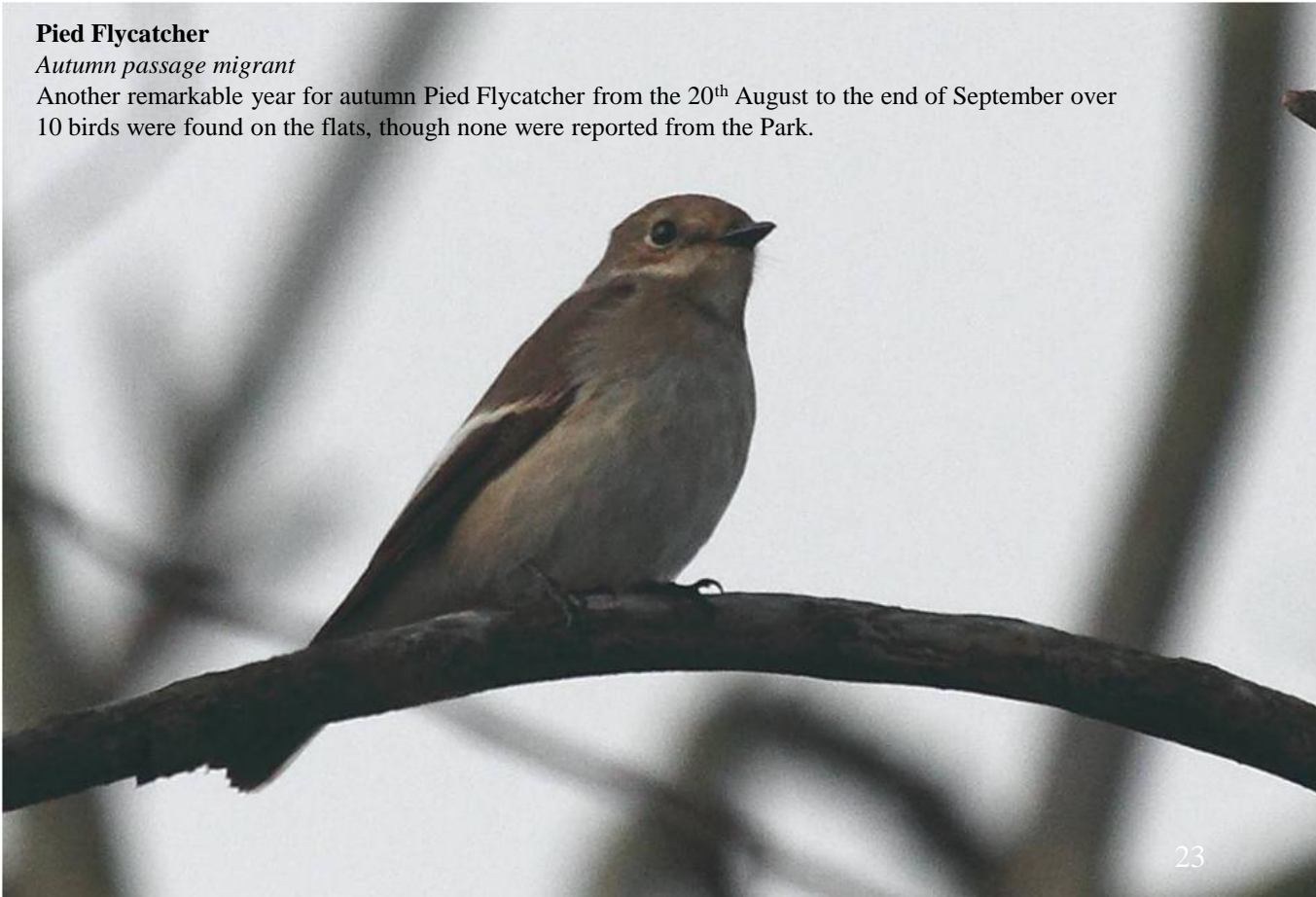
No spring birds this year and Autumn numbers were probably down. Returning birds were back on the flats by the 19th August, fewer birds reported from the Park this year (a high of 4), the last 2 birds made it into October the latest on record



Pied Flycatcher

Autumn passage migrant

Another remarkable year for autumn Pied Flycatcher from the 20th August to the end of September over 10 birds were found on the flats, though none were reported from the Park.



Long-tailed Tit

Abundant resident

Blue Tit

Abundant resident

Great Tit

Abundant resident

Coal Tit

Scarce resident

Birds reported from most places on the patch, but again only in singles or pairs.

Nuthatch

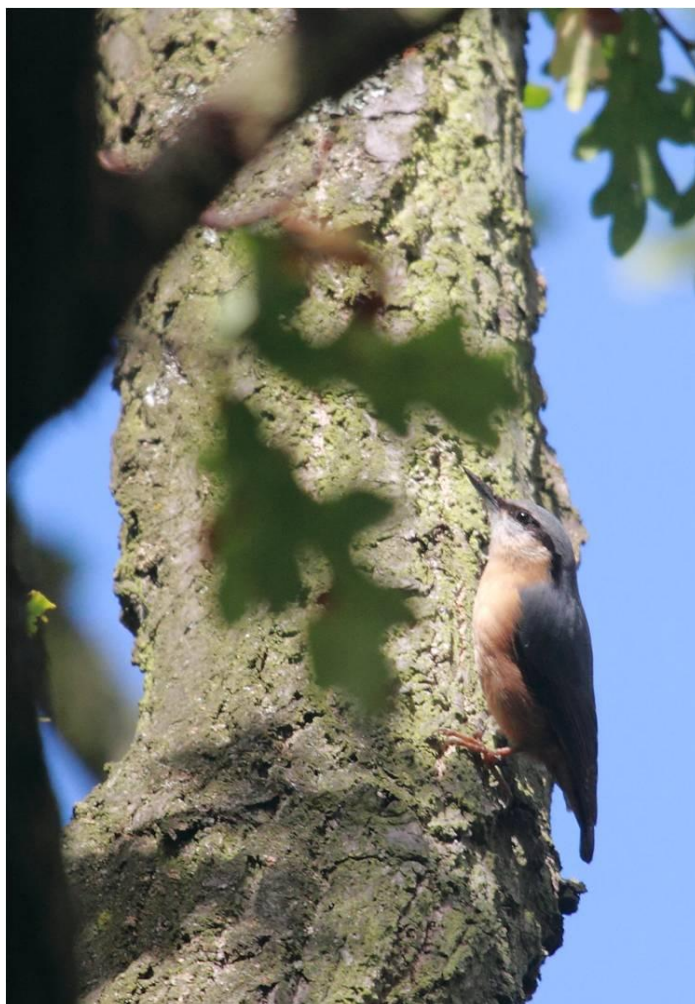
Scarce visitor and former breeder

Wintering birds from last year gave hope of breeding in Bush Wood, where most reports came from. However it is not clear whether any attempt was made.

Treecreeper

Rare visitor; former breeding species

2 birds in Bush Wood from the 10th November could stay through to the new year, and are the first sightings in 2 years



The systematic list



Jay

Common resident

Magpie

Common resident

Jackdaw

Increasing resident

A record high of 150 birds going to roost on the Wanstead Golf Course

Carrion Crow

Common resident

A large night-time roost forms on the golf course outside the breeding season.

Rook

Rare

A bird on the 8th March by the Alex

Starling

Common resident and passage migrant, numbers increasing in winter

House Sparrow

Resident, much reduced in numbers



Brambling

Passage migrant

A few birds recorded in the Spring from 23rd January onwards. A record high of 5 birds noted on the 10th October feeding in Long Wood and the Esso Copse. Other sightings on the 25th January; 24th & 29th October

Chaffinch

Resident, breeding in small numbers; numbers build in autumn

Greenfinch

Common resident

Good numbers on the flats by the Alex, Long Wood and SSSI. During the late Summer up to 60 birds could be counted across the flats, centred on the SSSI, Long Wood and the Alex scrub.

Goldfinch

Quite scarce visitor

Large flocks in winter feeding on the London Plane Trees on the flats (40+ on the 2nd January and 56 on 30th September).

Siskin

Winter visitor

Numbers appear to be down on recent years. In the second winter quarter there were good numbers in the park, but this Autumn very few birds have been noted in their usual haunts and others only in passage over the flats. First Autumn sighting on 13th September

Linnet

Quite scarce visitor

Record counts have been noted on the Police Scrape of up to 42 birds on occasions as the Autumn progresses.



The systematic list

Lesser Redpoll

Winter visitor and passage migrant

Following last years low counts, we were expecting more birds feeding on the good birch seed harvest, but again the mild weather maybe holding things back.

Mealy Redpoll

Calling birds have been seen in the SSSI and Old Sewage Works, suggesting this form may have been overlooked in the past

Common Crossbill

Rare visitor

Only 3 late summer/autumn reports of flyovers from the park area

Hawfinch

Very scarce visitor

A bird was picked up in flight over Leyton Flats on the morning of the 15th November and was possibly heard sometime later calling once over Bush Wood. No other reports this year

Bullfinch

Scarce visitor

If anything fewer sightings than in previous years. The best place to see these birds remains the Old Sewage Works, though a couple of birds have been heard on the flats





Yellowhammer

Rare visitor

Fewer records than last year and confined to the Spring. First bird on 2nd January, and subsequently a couple of reports from the east end of Long Wood

Reed Bunting

Scarce resident and former breeder

This year's findings suggest that the Reed Bunting is no longer a resident, with no summer sightings. Numbers for the winter are also down on previous





1	Robin (1-Jan)	58	Little Owl	114	Garden Warbler (28-Apr)
2	Blackbird	59	Herring Gull	115	Cuckoo (11-May)
3	Song Thrush	60	Yellowhammer (2-Jan)	116	Lesser-spotted Woodpecker (13-May)
4	Carrión Crow	61	Widgeon (2-Jan)	117	Common Tern (15-May)
5	Black-headed Gull	62	Teal (2-Jan)	118	Turtle Dove (8-Jun)
6	Goldfinch	63	Nuthatch (3-Jan)	119	Crossbill (17-Jul)
7	Cormorant	64	Firecrest (3-Jan)	120	Common Sandpiper (20-Jul)
8	Common Gull	65	Grey Wagtail (4-Jan)	121	Redshank (9-Aug)
9	Magpie	66	Little Egret (4-Jan)	122	Spotted Flycatcher (19-Aug)
10	Meadow Pipit	67	Bullfinch (6-Jan)	123	Pied Flycatcher (20-Aug)
11	Feral Dove	68	Woodcock (6-Jan)	124	Quail (24-Aug)
12	Wood Pigeon	69	Tawny Owl (6-Jan)	125	Barred Warbler (28th- Aug)
13	Lesser Black-backed Gull	70	Waxwing (9-Jan)	126	Green Sandpiper (1st-Sep)
14	Great Tit	71	Lapwing (15-Jan)	127	Nightingale (3-Sep)
15	Egyptian Goose	72	Smew (17-Jan)	128	Wryneck (3-Sep)
16	Pied Wagtail	73	Kingfisher (18-Jan)	129	Red-crested Pochard (17-Sep)
17	Blue Tit	74	Linnet (19-Jan)	130	Jack Snipe (29-Sep)
18	Duncock	75	Golden Plover (19-Jan)	131	Yellow-legged Gull (15-Oct)
19	Wren	76	Goosander (19-Jan)	132	Oystercatcher (23-Oct)
20	Canada Goose	77	Common Buzzard (21-Jan)	133	Mediterranean Gull (23-Oct)
21	Tufted Duck	78	Brambling (23-Jan)	134	Mealy Redpoll (6-Nov)
22	Coot	79	Short-eared Owl (1-Feb)	135	Treecreeper (10-Nov)
23	Mute Swan	80	Chiffchaff (5-Feb)		
24	Mallard	81	Goldeneye (20-Feb)		
25	Kestrel	82	Water Rail (1-Mar)		
26	Grey Heron	83	Peregrine Falcon (3-Mar)		
27	Shoveler	84	Blackcap (6-Mar)		
28	Starling	85	Curlew (8-Mar)		
29	Common Snipe	86	Rook (8-Mar)		
30	Collared Dove	87	Shelduck (14-Mar)		
31	Green Woodpecker	88	Stonechat (19-Mar)		
32	Mistle Thrush	89	Woodlark (19-Mar)		
33	House Sparrow	90	Marsh Harrier (20-Mar)		
34	Lesser Redpoll	91	Northern Wheatear (23-Mar)		
35	Greenfinch	92	Stone Curlew (24-Mar)		
36	Chaffinch	93	Kittiwake (25-Mar)		
37	Great Spotted Woodpecker	94	Tree Pipit (31-Mar)		
38	Goldcrest	95	Little Ringed Plover (1-Apr)		
39	Greater Black-backed Gull	96	Great White Egret (3-Apr)		
40	Reed Bunting	97	Red Kite (8-Apr)		
41	Long-tailed Tit	98	Swallow (10-Apr)		
42	Ring-necked Parakeet	99	Willow Warbler (10-Apr)		
43	Redwing	100	Black Redstart (11-Apr)		
44	Stock Dove	101	Sand Martin (11-Apr)		
45	Fieldfare	102	House Martin (13-Apr)		
46	Skylark	103	Ring Ouzel (15-Apr)		
47	Sparrowhawk	104	Whinchat (15-Apr)		
48	Greylag Goose	105	Common Whitethroat (15-Apr)		
49	Moorhen	106	Common Redstart (15-Apr)		
50	Jackdaw	107	Yellow Wagtail (16-Apr)		
51	Gadwall	108	Lesser Whitethroat (19-Apr)		
52	Jay	109	Rock Pipit (19-Apr)		
53	Siskin	110	Hobby (21-Apr)		
54	Little Grebe	111	Sedge Warbler (24-Apr)		
55	Coal Tit	112	Common Swift (24-Apr)		
56	Common Pochard	113	Reed Warbler (26-Apr)		
57	Great-crested Grebe	114	Garden Warbler (28-Apr)		



Mute Swan: Common resident breeder found on all the local ponds.

Bewick's Swan: There is one record of a bird on the Basin in the winter of 1947.

White-fronted Goose: A flock of 50-60 birds flew over the Flats on Jan 28th 1979. More recent records are of a juvenile on Jubilee on December 3rd & 10th 2007, and a flock of c100 birds over the Flats as part of a wider cold-weather movement on December 22nd 2011.

Greylag Goose: Small numbers of feral birds can usually be found around Alexandra Lake on the Flats, where they mix with the Canadas, sometimes with dire results.

Canada Goose: A large flock of c200 birds is resident on Wanstead Flats. Small numbers breed in the Park.

Barnacle Goose: Single feral birds are sometimes seen associating with the Canada Geese on the Flats.

Brent Goose: Very irregular, small flocks sometimes seen as part of wider cold-weather movements in London.

Shelduck: Single birds or pairs very occasionally seen flying over the area. Last sighting of a pair circling near Alexandra Lake on April 27th 2012.

Egyptian Goose: Once relatively rare, a pair are seemingly now resident in the Park, and are most often seen near the tea hut. As of 2011, more birds seem to have moved into the area, with up to eight regularly seen on the Basin, and four regularly on Wanstead Flats.

Mandarin Duck: A rare visitor from further north in Epping Forest. The most recent record is of a pair on the Ornamental Waters on March 11th 2012. More recently a pair in the fortifications on the 11 March 2012, which stayed for several weeks

Mallard: Resident breeder.

Pintail: Very rare here. There is a record of a pair on October 10th 1963, and then a female on the Ornamental Waters on February 1st 1975.

Gadwall: A regular winter visitor, numbers can reach three figures but are normally around 60 birds. The majority are on the Ornamental Waters. In 2013 a record count of over 350 birds was noted making this site one of national importance for wintering Gadwall

Shoveler: Winter visitor in small numbers c.30 +.

Wigeon: Rare but annual visitor, typically in cold weather, usually of single birds or small parties.

Teal: Irregular winter visitor during cold weather, appears to be increasing in numbers. More likely to be seen in the Park, or around Alexandra Lake.

Garganey: Occasionally seen on spring passage. Last seen in 2009.

Pochard: Winter visitor, peaking at c50 birds.

Red-crested Pochard: A pair were present on Heronry from January 9th to February 12th 2009. In 2013 a single juvenile bird stayed on the Heronry from 17th September to the 24th

Tufted Duck: Winter visitor in larger numbers, usually around 60, though can peak close to 100. Found on all the ponds. In hard weather they retreat to the Thames. Small numbers also present as a resident non-breeder.

Scaup - one very old record of seven or eight birds on the Basin in 1929. A repeat is overdue!

Common Scoter: A drake was found on the Basin on May 25th 1959, and another, moribund, at the same location on December 23rd 1961.

Goldeneye: Rare visitor. A female was on Alexandra Lake from November 20th to December 24th 1977. Another female was on Alexandra Lake on March 23rd 1999, and yet another female arrived on Heronry during hard weather on November 2nd 2009, and stayed until the end of December. Two females that stayed only for about three hours on October 15th 2012 - also on Heronry, and most recently four birds, three males and a female, spent the February 20th 2013 on the Perch Pond.

Goosander: Rare but possibly annual visitor, associated with hard weather. There is a record of a redhead on January 28th 2011, first found on the Ornamental Water, and the following day on Perch, and most recently, on February 9th 2012, 4 drakes and a duck were on the Basin briefly - just some of approximately 20 birds noted passing through Wanstead during a cold snap.

Smew: Very rare. There are two records, the first of a female on the Ornamental Waters on November 13th 2006, and the latest, of two females together on the Roding from February 8th 2012 for about a week.

Ruddy Duck: A very occasional visitor, however the effectiveness of the cull means that the last record was of a pair on Heronry on July 14th 2007. Prior to this, 2 pairs bred on the Flats in 2003.

Pallas' Sand Grouse - several records from the invasion summer of 1863, and a bird shot on Wanstead Flats in July 1864. About time for the next one....

Red-legged Partridge: A pair bred in the Old Sewage works in 1977, however since then the only records are from the SSSI; a pair from February to May 2004, and then two birds near the SSSI on March 16th 2006.

Grey Partridge: Last reported as being present in 1981, and unfortunately very unlikely to occur again.

Pheasant: Once present in small numbers in the vicinity of the Old Sewage works in the late 1970s, there were no further sightings until a male took up residence in the SSSI from February 7th 2010 until at least April 26th. In 2011, a bird was heard to call from the Cemetery.

Quail: one flushed from the grasslands to the east of centre path on August 24th, 2013, unfortunately not refund

Red-throated Diver: Extremely rare occurrences of disoriented birds, the most recent of a bird recovered dead on the Flats on February 11th 1964, though previously there is a record of a live bird from 1930, and before that, one in January 1887 on the Basin.

Black-throated Diver - a very old record of a bird in Wanstead Park in 1881.

Black-necked Grebe: Very rare, the only record is of one present in Wanstead Park from April 24th to 29th, 1981.

Little Grebe: Breeding resident in small numbers.

Great Crested Grebe: Regular visitor in small numbers. Two pairs failed in 2011, but were successful on Heronry in 2012. The Basin, Heronry and Perch Ponds are favoured.

Gannet: On May 1st 1981, an adult on Shoulder of Mutton was taken to KGV but was found dead on May 3rd. More recently a bird flew west over Wanstead Park as part of a larger influx into London airspace on September 25th 2010.

Cormorant: Common as a flyover on Wanstead Flats, presumably from the Walthamstow Reservoirs to the river. A few birds generally to be found on Perch Pond or the Ornamental Waters.

The historical site list

Bittern - there is mention of a record in 1885 (Buxton) of a bird killed on the Roding.

Little Egret: Increasingly common in small numbers, with most sightings coming from the River Roding in the summer months. Maxima count of seven birds in August 2009 when the Heronry Pond had particularly low water levels.

Great White Egret: A record from the Old Sewage Works on April 5th 2009, and more recently of a brief flyover on Wanstead Flats on April 3rd 2013, perhaps indicative of the nation-wide trend in reports.

Cattle Egret: One in Wanstead Park on May 10th 1998 was only the second record for London.

Grey Heron: Regularly seen flying over, and fishing on the water bodies in Wanstead Park. It is not uncommon to see four in a day.

Osprey: One historic record of one in the Park fishing on Perch Pond, and very recently from Wanstead Flats, a fly-over early in the morning of September 7th 2011.

Red Kite: Increasing passage migrant, especially in spring. Three records of flyovers from 2010, two from 2011, and five in 2012. The final two weeks of March are consistently the best.

Black Kite: A bird reported over Wanstead Park on October 17th 2010. *

Buzzard: Occasional visitor and passage migrant in spring. There were 18 birds recorded in 2010, including ten in the period from April 11th to May 22nd. In 2012 sightings had surpassed this previous total by April.

Honey Buzzard: Extremely rare. A bird over the Park on September 23rd 2000 was part of the large national influx. More recently, a bird reported over Wanstead Flats on September 16th 2010. *

Marsh Harrier: A single record on May 8th 2011, seen from the Old Sewage Works, with another on August 26th 2012 seen from the Lake House Scrub, and on March 20th 2013.

Sparrowhawk: Breeding resident in small numbers.

Goshawk: Records from both the Park and the Flats in 2010 and 2011. *

Kestrel: Resident in small numbers. Breeding suspected.

Hobby: Breeding summer visitor in small numbers.

Peregrine: Scarce, but sightings increasing. Birds are resident in neighbouring boroughs.

Merlin: Two records from 2010, both from Wanstead Flats. Subsequently a male was seen over the flats on the 19th November 2013 (all now accepted by the London Recording Committee)

Corncrake: Reported in 1909 as being a common summer visitor in the area.

Water Rail: There are records of wintering birds in Wanstead Park as far back as the 1970s. A bird regularly winters on the Perch Pond, and others have been seen on Heronry, The Dell, and by the Roding in recent years.

Moorhen: Common breeding resident.

Coot: Common breeding resident. Counts of over 200 not uncommon.

Oystercatcher: A single bird flying east over the Flats on November 12th 2011 was the only record, and was heard only. On 23rd October, 2013 one was heard over the western flats very early in the morning

Stone-Curlew: A single bird flying over the Broom Fields on the Flats on April 5th 2011, present again April 6th, was the first record. Almost improbably, another was seen in approximately the same area on March 24th 2013.

Little Ringed Plover: Rare spring passage migrant, occasionally seen on the banks of Alexandra Lake in March or April. The most recent record was on April 1st 2013, on Police Scrape, of a female that stayed for almost a week

Ringed Plover: A single bird heard calling over the Flats at dusk on November 5th 2011 and one heard on the morning of the 2nd December, 2012 over Angel Pond

Dotterel: a record of two birds shot on Wanstead Flats in about 1885 (Glegg)

Golden Plover: A rare visitor, usually of one or two birds flying over in hard weather, though a flock of 20 on February 3rd 2006 are notable. A group of six over Alexandra Lake on February 5th 2012, again during hard weather. The latest record is of three birds on Police Scrape on March 25th 2013, following two the previous evening on the football pitches.

Grey Plover: The only record is of a lone bird flying over the Flats on the morning of February 9th 2012, during a period of hard weather.

Lapwing: Uncommon in hard weather, though summer movements of failed breeders are sometimes seen. Records are usually of single birds or small flocks flying over, though very occasionally they land. On a snowy February 5th 2012 an astonishing 373 birds were recorded, with one flock totalling over 100 birds.

The historical site list

Robin: Common breeding resident.

Nightingale: One sang briefly near the Plain in the Park on April 25th 2010. A bird was seen to fly out from Long Wood on the 3rd September, 2013 and was seen the next day in the vicinity of the Vis-Mig point and Long Wood's enclosure, later reports suggest this might have been around for a few days in the vicinity and one was reported in the Spring on the southern Ornamental waters

Black Redstart: Two records, of a bird on the Golf Course on 11th October 1981, and then an immature male that stayed for three days on Wanstead Flats from April 11th 2013.

Common Redstart: Passage migrant on Wanstead Flats in both spring and autumn, with records concentrated in April, and then late August to early October. The peak is typically in the final week of August and first week of September, with birds favouring the Hawthorn scrub around Alexandra Lake and Long Wood, as well as the Lake House Scrub.

Northern Wheatear: Passage migrant on Wanstead Flats, particularly in spring. Any time from mid-March to the end of April, returning again from mid-August to the beginning of October. **Very Lovely Birds.**

Whinchat: Annual passage migrant, sometimes in some numbers, from mid-August to the end of September, with the occasional bright spring bird. The Broom Fields on the Flats is the best place to look, and is capable of holding birds for several days.

Stonechat: Declining winter visitor on the Flats, with birds also recorded on passage.

Song Thrush: Common breeding resident, especially in the Park.

Redwing: Winter visitor and autumn passage migrant, with maximum counts generally of birds migrating south during October.

Mistle Thrush: Breeding resident. In autumn large family groups can be found feeding on the football pitches on the Flats.

Fieldfare: Winter visitor and autumn passage migrant, with maximum counts generally of birds migrating south during October.

Blackbird: Common breeding resident.

Ring Ouzel: Scarce but reliable passage migrant on the Flats. The broom fields and the area immediately north of Long Wood are the most likely spots to encounter them early in the morning, with a marked peak in records from the end of September and beginning of October.

Garden Warbler: A scarcer visitor, mainly passage birds in early autumn, but may breed. Any bit of scrub can hold them.

Blackcap: Common summer breeder, occasional winter resident.

Whitethroat: Common summer breeder.

Lesser Whitethroat: Passage migrant, sometimes in good numbers, and possible summer breeder.

Barred Warbler: A bird seen first on the 28th August, 2013 in a Hawthorn between the Alex/Pub scrub, following a possible at the west end of Long Wood earlier that week. Subsequently re-found on the 5th September (2 observers). That's 2 pints please Mr Lethbridge!

Dartford Warbler: The only record is of a male in the Broom Fields for several days from October 31st 2009.

Sedge Warbler: Scarce visitor, usually on autumn passage. Last record of a bird by Alexandra Lake in September 2012. 2013 was a good year for sightings on the Flats with up to 5 birds present on Autumn passage

Cetti's Warbler: The only known record is of a single bird heard in the south-west corner of the Perch Pond on April 3rd 2008.

Grasshopper Warbler: Possibly some old records, however recently the only record is of a single and elusive bird in the scrub east of Alexandra Lake for a few days in late August 2011.

Reed Warbler: Scarce summer breeder, with more birds seen on autumn passage, where they can turn up in any area of scrub. At least five birds recorded in 2010, some of them singing. 2011: The pair on the Shoulder of Mutton successfully raised two broods.

Willow Warbler: Uncommon summer visitor, declining. 2011: A pair bred in the SSSI rearing 4 chicks. It's not clear whether the summer bird in the glade successfully bred. Most often seen on autumn passage.

Wood Warbler: Very rare on passage, the historic picture was no doubt better.

Chiffchaff: Common breeding summer visitor, a few birds overwinter.

Goldcrest: Breeding resident, though only in certain areas. Bush Wood, Reservoir Wood and Chalet Wood have the densest populations. Numbers strongly seasonal and fluctuate year by year.

Firecrest: Rare but annual winter visitor, favouring Bush Wood, Reservoir Wood and the area near the Grotto.

Wren: Common breeding resident.

Spotted Flycatcher: Four breeding pairs were reported back in 1981, but in common with the decline of the species elsewhere in the UK, it is now only recorded on passage, though annually, with the final week of August being the best. Wanstead Flats is probably the best place in London for them; the area around Alexandra Lake has hosted as many as eight birds simultaneously.

Red-breasted Flycatcher: The only known record is from the Park on September 4th 1968.

Pied Flycatcher: Rare passage migrant in autumn, but not even annual. In 2011 there were two birds, one on August 24th in Long Wood, the other in the Broom Fields four days later. The 2012 season surpassed all expectations with five or six birds recorded in August. 2013 was the best ever year with birds seen in August and September with possible more than 10 birds involved

The historical site list

Ring-necked Parakeet: First reported from Wanstead Park as early as 1985, only in the last few years has this become a resident bird. Small numbers breed around the Ornamental Waters and in West Copse on Wanstead Flats, but larger flocks can be seen flying north over the Flats every morning, returning south in the evening.

Cuckoo: Rare passage migrant, once more regular. A record from the Park on August 20th 1999, one from the Old Sewage Works in April 2002, and latterly of a bird flying over Wanstead Tube Station on May 9th 2010. One was reported heard in the SSSI May 2011, while a young bird was picked up near Alexandra Lake in July, its apparent downy state implying that it might have been raised nearby. A late bird was seen near Long Wood on September 1st 2012.

Short-eared Owl: Very rare visitor, with two historic records, one from near the Roding on December 22nd 1980, and the other from Bush Wood on May 12th 1985. However four recent records, from the Flats on September 13th 2010, from Bush Wood on October 2nd 2010, from the Flats on October 6th and 21st 2012, February 1st 2013 and March 12th 2013 give hope that they may be seen more often.

Tawny Owl: Breeding resident in small numbers.

Barn Owl: A few historic records from the 1970s, however a pair were resident in Wanstead Park throughout 1993.

Little Owl: One or two pairs are thought to breed in the copses on Wanstead Flats, but were not seen after the winter of 2010/11 until the 1st January 2013 when one was seen just south of Long Wood

Swift: Summer visitor.

Nightjar: From an account in 1893, it appears that this species used to be found on Wanstead Flats occasionally.

Hoopoe: A single record of a bird on April 30th 1976, from Wanstead Park.

Kingfisher: Regular visitor to the Roding, where they almost certainly breed. Also seen on Ornamental Waters, and Perch Pond, where they formerly bred, as a record from 2002 testifies. Occasional records also from Wanstead Flats.

European Bee-eater: An account in 1885 (Buxton) of a bird observed somewhere in Wanstead, possibly one of the islands on the Ornamental Water.

Green Woodpecker: Breeding resident. Common in the Park and on the Flats.

Great Spotted Woodpecker: Breeding resident, and our most numerous woodpecker.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker: A few pairs breed in Wanstead Park, mainly around the Ornamental Water. They are frequently observed around the Dell. In 2010, a pair also bred on Wanstead Flats. Not looking good for this species, only one was seen in 2013

Wryneck: Once the stuff of dreams, there are now two records in the last three years! The first is of a well-twitted bird that took up temporary residence east of Alexandra Lake from September 17th to 24th 2010, having first been found near Long Wood on the 16th; the second is of a bird found on August 25th 2012 in the Lake House Scrub, and which was again well twitted and stayed until the 30th. The third bird of modern times was seen in the area of Long Wood from 3rd September, 2013 on and off for about a week

Skylark: Resident breeder on Wanstead Flats, with the greatest numbers east of Centre Road. This is the closest breeding population to central London. Keep out of the long grass!

Woodlark: Annual but very scarce migrant: A record from the Golf Course in the summer of 1967, and more recently a record of four birds flying north over the SSSI on December 16th 2010. A single bird was reported over the Flats and once in the Park over several days in the autumn of 2011, and another flew south over the Flats on October 11th 2012. 2013's only record was from the 19th March.

Sand Martin: Scarce summer visitor, though there can be good passage days.

Swallow: Passage migrant, sometimes in large numbers.

Red-rumped Swallow: The only record is of a bird in Wanstead Park on June 4th 1975.

House Martin: Uncommon summer visitor, though there can be good passage days.

Rock Pipit: Rare visitor, sometimes heard in flight over Wanstead Flats.

Meadow Pipit: Breeding resident on Wanstead Flats, with numbers augmented during autumn passage.

Tree Pipit: Scarce passage migrant on Wanstead Flats, typically in autumn.

Water Pipit: One bird on Alexandra Lake on the 18 March 2011.

Richard's Pipit: A report of one from 2006 appeared in Steve Connor's London Year List and was reported on Birdguides. A possible was reported in 2012, but was not accepted by the London Committee

Pied Wagtail: Uncommon breeding resident. Generally found around the margins of Jubilee Pond and Alexandra Lake.

Yellow Wagtail: Passage migrant in spring and autumn, they rarely linger, and most records are of calling birds flying over. Commoner when cattle grazed the Flats, which ceased in 1996.

Grey Wagtail: Scarce breeding resident, with numbers swelled by passage birds moving in late autumn.

Waxwing: The winter of 2010/11 was an excellent one for this species, with several sightings of multiple birds. The largest flock recorded was 43 in late February.

Duncock: Common breeding resident.

The historical site list

Dunlin: A juvenile spent the entire day of April 21st 2010 on Jubilee Pond, and was extremely approachable. There are two previous records, one also on Jubilee Pond on February 6th 1979, and one on Alexandra Lake from August 31st to September 3rd 1980

Wood Sandpiper: Rare passage migrant, occasionally seen on the banks of Alexandra Lake in summer or early autumn.

Green Sandpiper: Very scarce autumn passage migrant, heard rather than seen. One took a liking to the River Roding and was seen on more than a few occasions between Nov-2011 and April 2012

Common Sandpiper: Scarce passage migrant, more numerous in early autumn. Alexandra Lake and Heronry most likely locations.

Redshank: 8th August 2013, one heard calling over Alex and towards Manor Park, while this is the only record currently, possible calling birds have been noted on a number of occasions without being seen. Subsequent to this record being added comes a report by the Essex Field Club of a Redshank over the flats in April 1983

Greenshank: A record from September 15th 1985, when a bird was seen briefly on Heronry. Subsequently a bird was heard calling as it circled over Alex on the morning of the 7 September 2012

Curlew: Very rare visitor. 12 flew over the Park on August 21st 1971. More recently, nine birds flew over the Flats on March 9th 2013.

Whimbrel: Rare passage migrant, sometimes seen mid-summer as a fly-over. A record of two birds on the Flats on May 6th 1999, with a few fly-overs since. The last record was on September 2nd, 2011. A flock of 33 were reported flying east, over Forest Gate but seen from the flats, in tight formation on 23-April-2012

Black-tailed Godwit: A flock of six reported from Shoulder of Mutton pond on August 21st 2010, and two flying over Wanstead Flats on on July 31st 2012 in poor weather.

Woodcock: Scarce winter visitor, usually in hard weather.

Snipe: Winter visitor, with a few birds generally present in the SSSI.

Jack Snipe: A single record of a bird on Heronry from October 26th 1979 was the only known record until a bird landed on a frozen Alexandra Lake on February 5th 2012. A bird was seen on the 29th September, 2013 again in the area of the Alex, part of a local influx that day.

Grey Phalarope: A bird on Heronry on November 14th 1963, and before that, a bird killed on Wanstead Flats on November 21st 1888, with another shot in Wanstead Park on October 5th 1875.

Ruff: A very rare visitor. Records of two birds from February 1st to 10th 1976, initially on Alexandra Lake and subsequently rarer further afield, and the last record, of a single bird on Heronry on August 31st 1980.

Black-headed Gull: Resident, with significant increase in winter. Counts of 400+ not unusual on the Flats in winter. During flooding caused by heavy rains on Wanstead Flats on February 28th 2010, an estimated 2000+ birds were present.

Common Gull: Winter visitor. The commonest Gull on the Flats in winter, with counts of 500+ not unusual. 1000+ present on February 28th 2010.

Kittiwake: Rare vagrant. There is a record of a bird flying over the Shoulder of Mutton Pond on August 19th 2011, part of a larger influx of storm-driven birds. In 2013, again as part of a London-wide influx, there were two records, both from Wanstead Flats, on 25th March and April 13th 2013.

Mediterranean Gull: Rare, but with a glut of records from 1996 to 1998, with birds in each winter period. More recently an adult was on the Flats on July 6th 2010, and also from February 11th to 27th 2011, and then also on February 5th 2012.

Herring Gull: Regular in small numbers on the Flats in winter, with larger numbers flying over to and from the Chingford Reservoirs. The largest count was of 82 on February 28th 2010.

Yellow-legged Gull: Scarce visitor on the Flats, usually in late summer.

Caspian Gull: A bird seen briefly on one of the football pitches on February 26th 2011 is the only known record. Decidedly rare away from the Thames *

Great Black-backed Gull: Scarce visitor on Wanstead Flats, usually as a flyover, most probably to and from the roosts on the Chingford Reservoirs. A record of 41 on the Flats on October 7th 2001 is exceptional.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Regular visitor to Flats in small numbers, the commonest large Gull. Peak count of 50 on October 1st 2010.

Black Tern: A record of a bird on the Basin on May 2nd 1926.

Common Tern: Scarce summer visitor, single birds can sometimes be seen feeding on the larger water bodies, small flocks may fly over the Flats on migration.

Arctic Tern: The only record is of three birds flying over the Flats, calling, on August 28th 2011.

Little Auk: A bird found dead in Wanstead Park in 1962.

Feral Rock Dove: Common breeding resident.

Stock Dove: Relatively common breeding resident. There can be large roosts on the islands on the Ornamental Waters.

Wood Pigeon: Common breeding resident.

Collared Dove: Breeding resident.

Turtle Dove: Rare passage migrant.

The historical site list

Great Tit: Common breeding resident.

Coal Tit: Increasing in numbers, though far from common. Birds are present in Reservoir Wood, the Lake House Estate, and in Aldersbrook Wood.

Marsh Tit: Once a breeding bird, with five nests recorded in 1977, the last observation was in 1978.

Willow Tit: Once a breeding bird, the last breeding record was in 1976, and the last known sighting on January 2nd 1984 in Wanstead Park.

Blue Tit: Common breeding resident.

Long-tailed Tit: Common breeding resident.

Nuthatch: Inexplicably absent from Wanstead Park, where the habitat would appear to be ideal. The odd bird is found each year, but is not resident. Most recently three have been seen in Reservoir Wood from September 2012, prompting hopes of a recolonisation.

Treecreeper: Went unrecorded for many years until a bird was found in Reservoir Wood in 2009. Since then single birds have been found in Wanstead Park, however as with Nuthatch, it is a mystery, given the suitability of the habitat, why there should be so few birds. In 2013 a pair was located in Bush Wood from 10th November onwards

Great Grey Shrike: A record from Wanstead Park on April 4th 1971, and a female trapped and ringed in the Old Sewage Works, October 22nd 1977.

Red-backed Shrike: Probably bred in the Old Sewage Works up until about 1950. A juvenile trapped and ringed in the Old Sewage Works on November 1st 1980 is the only subsequent record.

Magpie: Common breeding resident.

Jay: Breeding resident in small numbers, with increased numbers in autumn.

Jackdaw: Common and increasing resident, with good numbers on the Flats near Alexandra Lake, and a growing roost near the Golf Course.

Rook: Rare, with just four known records. The first was of a bird flying over Wanstead Park on November 3rd 1976, another of a bird flying over a garden near the Flats on June 14th 2009, one over Alexandra Lake on March 25th 2012, and another at Alexandra Lake on March 9th 2013.

Crow: Common breeding resident.

Hooded Crow: Historic records from Wanstead Flats in the 1950s, and during the hard winter of 1962/63, but none in the modern era.

Raven: A nest was seen in the Heronry in Wanstead Park in 1833 or 1834 (Gurney)

Starling: Common breeding resident, with numbers increasing during winter, when congregations of over 1000 can occur.

House Sparrow: Breeding resident in small numbers.

Tree Sparrow: A recent record in 2010 of a bird visiting a garden feeder adjacent to the Park is the only one since 1985. Prior to this they were regular in the Old Sewage Works, but declined when this ceased operation in 1978.

Chaffinch: Resident breeding bird in small numbers. Larger numbers seen on passage.

Brambling: Autumn passage migrant in very small numbers.

Linnet: Scarce visitor, mainly seen in spring. The Old Sewage Works has the most records, with the largest number seen being 28 on March 6th 2010. In 2013 a record count of 42 birds was noted on several days on the Police Scrape in the first Winter period

Lesser Redpoll: Winter visitor in small numbers, generally in small concentrated flocks, though sometimes upwards of 50. The SSSI is a favoured area, though they can be seen anywhere.

Mealy Redpoll: Winter visitor overlooked because they are a bit of an arse to pin down. Two birds over the SSSI on the 6th November and one again over the western flats on the 14th November, 2013, but there have been more.

Goldfinch: Resident, breeding suspected but not proven. Larger numbers in winter.

Greenfinch: Common Resident, breeds in small numbers.

Siskin: Regular winter visitor, with flocks of c40 often found in the Dell. Also observed on autumn passage.

Bullfinch: Occasionally seen in the Old Sewage Works, were once more widespread, for instance 6 in the Park on January 1st 2002.

Hawfinch: Present in the Park during the 1960s, I have been able to find a record of 3 birds on May 3rd 1963, with another in 1964. Slightly more recently, a record of a single bird flying over the Park on October 6th 1985. Recent sightings over the Esso Copse October 22-24th, 2012 concern one or possibly two birds.

Common Crossbill: Rare visitor, almost always as a fly-over, and even then only in good Crossbill years.

Reed Bunting: Breeding resident either side of Centre Road on the Flats. The SSSI holds the most birds.

Lapland Bunting: As part of an national influx in October 2010, single birds flew over the Flats on three dates. from the Flats on November 19th 1938 was the only known record until a first winter female was flushed from the long grass on Wanstead Flats on the morning of November 7th 2011, part of a small London influx.

Yellowhammer: Once more common, now a rare passage migrant in small numbers. The latest record is of a sub-adult male on March 1st 2011 near the Cat and Dog Pond on the Flats and more recently in the Autumn of 2012 and I heard calling on the 2nd January 2013.

Corn Bunting: Used to breed on Wanstead Golf Course before the 1960