

November 2011 Sightings at Wormwood Scrubs



House Sparrow (R. Kennedy)

The slowdown...

The winter lull occurred earlier than usual at The Scrubs as it commenced from this month and not in January as in recent winters. We are not discussing the lack of abundance of birds. No, it was more a case of a lack of birders. This was a big shame because we are just a handful of species away from hitting the mystical 100 for the year. With no new species for the year discovered this month the chances of achieving our goal during December are drastically diminished.

Despite the low turnout of birders we still recorded our largest group of **Egyptian Geese** and one of the biggest flocks of **Greylags** on record. We also possibly recorded our largest gathering of **Long-tailed Tits** and a very healthy number of **House Sparrows** leaving their Braybrook Street roost. Curiously, no Kestrels were reported.

Let's end the year with a big bang.....and not a whimper!

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Cormorant

One was reported on the 13th. This seabird is definitely becoming scarcer in our airspace.

Grey Heron

A single bird was reported on the 18th.

Greylag

Eight headed over on the 22nd and was one of our biggest flocks ever recorded.

Canada Goose

The only reports submitted were of six on the 13th and around 14 on the 18th.

Egyptian Goose

Our largest flock on record, containing seven birds, circled The Scrubs on the 8th. With their successful colonisation of the nearby Royal Parks in full swing it is therefore understandable that a few of them would want to stretch their wings and explore the neighbourhood.

Mallard

The only report for the month was the two that flew over on the 22nd.

Sparrowhawk

An immature was seen on the 22nd.

Peregrine

A bird was seen on the 1st and it or another frequented the Hammersmith Hospital tower on the southern border of The Scrubs on the 8th.

Lapwing

A small flock of 13 headed west on the 6th and a singleton passed through on the 8th.

Snipe

Three were encountered on the 22nd.

Black-headed Gull

At least 95 were on the pitches on the 13th along with over 25 overhead.

Common Gull

At least 15 were present on the 11th.

Herring Gull

Small numbers were around during the month.

Lesser Black-back

Nine were reported on the 13th.

Stock Dove

One was recorded on the 13th

Wood Pigeon

Last month's moderate passage continued into November with the first big flock of over 450 birds flying southwest in an hour noticed on the 2nd. The

3,000 that headed southwest in several wavering groups on the 6th dwarfed that flock. A further 320 flew through on the 18th.

Rose-ringed Parakeet

No significant counts were made this month.

Green Woodpecker

Our regular bird(s) continued to be seen during November.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

The first bird of the month was seen in Scrubs Lane Wood on the 13th. A few sightings were made thereafter with three being seen on the 19th.

Skylark

The odd bird was seen during the month invariably flying over. The maximum count was at least six birds on the 6th.

Meadow Pipit

Small numbers were counted with no more than five on any one day, which was reflected this time last year.

Pied Wagtail

A couple was seen during the month.

Grey Wagtail

A single bird headed over on the 18th.

Wren

At least 10 were around on the 16th.

Dunnock

Only two were found on the 16th.

Robin

A good count of 14 plus was made on the 16th.

Stonechat

Last month's bird persisted until the 1st.

Song Thrush

A few were noted during the month and a singing bird was heard on the 22nd.

Redwing

The biggest flock consisted of around 25 birds on the 6th.

Fieldfare

The biggest flock was around 40 that headed through on the 6th. In total around 71 birds flew over during the month.

Mistle Thrush

Two headed over Martin Bell's Wood on the 16th.

Blackbird

Over 20 were counted on the 2nd.

Goldcrest

As with last month, up to three birds roamed our meager woodlands within tit flocks.

Great Tit

At least nine birds were found on the 13th.

Blue Tit

Only seven were encountered on the 13th.

Long-tailed Tit

A flock of around 18 was found on the 13th and one of our biggest counts ever came on the 22nd when at least 37 were counted.

Magpie

Fourteen were counted on the 13th.

Jay

A singleton was seen on the 13th.

Jackdaw

An unfortunate individual was watched being harassed by over 20 parakeets on the 10th.

Carrion Crow

The maximum count this month was just 65 birds on the 13th.

Starling

The biggest count was of around 250 migrants heading high west and north on the 10th.

House Sparrow

Low numbers were seen around the vicinity of Braybrook Street during the month. However, dawn visits paid because it gave Scrubbers a chance to witness the fairly large number that roost in the bushes adjacent to Braybrook Street. This roost is one of the biggest in London. On the 22nd at least 120 were counted leaving it.

Chaffinch

The biggest count of terrestrial birds was around six on the 2nd although up to 18 were around on the 16th.

Linnet

Around five were noted on the 2nd.

Lesser Redpoll

This finch has rapidly become an expected part of the winter avifauna with small numbers usually picked out in flight. On the 11th four were located on the tops of roadside trees along Old Oak Common Lane.

Goldfinch

At least 20 were present on the 13th and 16th increasing to at least 22 on the 22nd.

Greenfinch

Slightly higher numbers than the last couple of years were counted this month with a maximum on 10 seen on the 2nd. Could this species be finally recovering from its recent dramatic decline?

Siskin

At least two birds went over on the 16th.

Bullfinch

Following on from last month's surprise find of a small flock, a female lingered in Chats Paddock from the 6th until the 10th and was seen again on the 28th. The original crew of a male and two females were caught up with again in Chats Paddock, their favoured haunt, on the 19th.

Reed Bunting

Two birds were seen on the 18th.

2011 Year List

- 1. Cormorant**
- 2. Little Egret**
- 3. Grey Heron**
- 4. Mute Swan**
- 5. Greylag**
- 6. Canada Goose**
- 7. Egyptian Goose**
- 8. Shelduck**

9. Mallard

- 10. Shoveler**
- 11. Teal**
- 12. Red Kite**
- 13. Common Buzzard**
- 14. Sparrowhawk**
- 15. Kestrel**
- 16. Hobby**
- 17. Peregrine**
- 18. Quail**
- 19. Ringed Plover**
- 20. Lapwing**
- 21. Bar-tailed Godwit**
- 22. Woodcock**
- 23. Snipe**
- 24. Black-headed Gull**
- 25. Common Gull**
- 26. Mediterranean Gull**
- 27. Herring Gull**
- 28. Lesser Black-back**
- 29. Great Black-back**
- 30. Common Tern**
- 31. Feral Pigeon**
- 32. Stock Dove**
- 33. Woodpigeon**
- 34. Collared Dove**
- 35. Turtle Dove**
- 36. Swift**

- 37. Rose-ringed Parakeet**
- 38. Green Woodpecker**
- 39. Great Spotted Woodpecker**
- 40. Skylark**
- 41. Sand Martin**
- 42. Swallow**
- 43. House Martin**
- 44. Meadow Pipit**
- 45. Tree Pipit**
- 46. Pied Wagtail**
- 47. Yellow Wagtail**
- 48. Grey Wagtail**
- 49. Wren**
- 50. Dunnock**
- 51. Robin**
- 52. Nightingale**
- 53. Common Redstart**
- 54. Northern Wheatear**
- 55. Whinchat**
- 56. Stonechat**
- 57. Song Thrush**
- 58. Redwing**
- 59. Fieldfare**
- 60. Mistle Thrush**
- 61. Blackbird**
- 62. Ring Ouzel**
- 63. Garden Warbler**
- 64. Blackcap**

65. Lesser Whitethroat
66. Common Whitethroat
67. Sedge Warbler
68. Reed Warbler
69. Willow Warbler
70. Chiffchaff
71. Goldcrest
72. Spotted Flycatcher
73. Coal Tit
74. Great Tit
75. Blue Tit
76. Long-tailed Tit
77. Nuthatch
78. Jay
79. Magpie
80. Jackdaw
81. Carrion Crow
82. Starling
83. House Sparrow
84. Chaffinch
85. Brambling
86. Linnet
87. Lesser Redpoll
88. Goldfinch
89. Greenfinch
90. Siskin
91. Bullfinch
92. Yellowhammer

93. Reed Bunting

93 species for the year thus far

(93 species in November 2010 & 94 in November 2009)