

# Spring Survey Report for Napsbury Park Residents Association

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## Introduction and Summary

Following enquiries to RSPB Headquarters, Keith Loud asked the RSPB St Albans Local Group to help with the Residents Association initiative to increase the environmental friendliness of the grounds of Napsbury Park. After a short survey of the grounds in January 2014 Colin Rose and Peter Antram provided a report entitled *Report and Wildlife Suggestions for Napsbury Park Residents Association, 17 January 2014*. This included a description of the site, a summary of the birds and other wildlife present and suggestions for improving the, already good, attractiveness to wildlife.

Since then the Residents Association has made contact with the charity *Swift Conservation* and other interested parties with the intention of including nesting boxes for swifts, a severely endangered species, during the refurbishing of the derelict buildings of the former nursing home when this eventually takes place. Nesting boxes for smaller birds have also been provided around the site. Reports from residents indicate that at least two of these boxes have been used by blue tits this year even though they were installed after the time at which nest building would normally have started.

This short report records the birds observed during a brief follow up walk round the park in early June 2014.

Peter Antram, former Group Secretary, RSPB St Albans Local Group.  
28 June 2014

## Wildlife observed

Please note these are the results of observations made during short walks round the park in January and early June, 2014 and observations reported by residents. We are counting as present birds seen "over the fence" in neighbouring fields or in the sky nearby. The two sets of observations are shown together to allow for comparison.

Pheasant	H	
Buzzard		S
Woodpigeon	S	S
Collared Dove	S	
Green Woodpecker	S	
Great Spotted Woodpecker	S	
Wren	S	S
Dunnock		S
Robin	S	S
Blackbird	S	S
Fieldfare	S	
Song Thrush	S	H
Redwing	S	
Mistle Thrush	S	
Blackcap		H
Chiffchaff		S
Long-tailed Tit	S	
Blue Tit	S	S
Great Tit	S	S
Coal Tit		S
Nuthatch	S	
Treecreeper	S	
Jay	H	S
Magpie	S	S
Jackdaw	S	S
Rook		S
Carrion Crow	S	S
Starling	S	S
Chaffinch	S	S
Greenfinch		H
Goldfinch	R	
Linnet		S
Bullfinch		S
Fox	S	
Grey Squirrel	S	
Hedgehog	R	
Speckled Wood Butterfly		S

### Table key:

S = Seen during the survey  
H = Heard during the survey  
R = Reported by residents.

### Notes:

Most of the birds present in the winter would be expected to be present also in the spring and vice versa, even though we did not see or hear them all on our short walks.

The expected winter exceptions are fieldfare and redwing, which are winter visitors which migrate northwards for the summer months.

Blackcap and chiffchaff are the other way round; they spend our winter in Africa and come here to breed in our summer. It was good to see linnets on the neighbouring fields as these are on the list of critically endangered species.

The summer sighting of a pair (a male and a female) of bullfinches on the site was also rewarding as these have also suffered declines.

The number and spacing of calls of chaffinches and robins, both territorial in the breeding season, lead us to conclude that there are several pairs of each breeding within the park.

## **Suggestions**

Suggestions carried forward from our earlier report remain relevant and are not repeated here.

## **Conclusion**

I hope that this short report remains helpful with your ambitions to improve the wildlife friendliness of Napsbury Park and its surroundings. This spring survey has shown that the park is attracting some of the summer migrating bird visitors; there are probably more we did not see on our short walk. There appears to be lots of breeding among the smaller bird species, including possibly a pair of bullfinches both rare and beautiful.

## **Acknowledgements**

My thanks go to Keith and Richard for meeting us and showing us round the grounds. Thanks also to Colin Rose, RSPB St Albans Local Group, Wildlife Walks Leader for help with the surveys.