

2016 Survey RSPB Report for Napsbury Park Residents Association

Foreword:

Welcome to the annual report by the NPRA in conjunction with our local RSPB group. We have decided to make this an annual report so that you can see the lovely birds that inhabit our lovely park throughout the whole year in one report. We list the birds that were spotted in two surveys, during May and November 2016. The RSPB visited site on four occasions to ensure that we had broad input to this survey. One species sorely missed this year was the swift population, dozens of which are usually seen doing their low flying acrobatics over the cricket pitch. Although a few swifts were seen in the nearby fields we can only assume that the majority had gone elsewhere and did not take kindly to the refurbishment of the Old Nurses Home (aka Napsbury Quarters, Little Nights). We do hope that we will be seeing them in greater numbers next year now that work on Napsbury Quarters has finished! Although multiple birds were seen of all the species spotted we only saw one greenfinch. This was unusual and the RSPB have agreed to provide us with some advice depending what their annual bird survey shows up when the results are released later this year.

Nesting boxes

You will notice when you walk the park that we have installed ten bird boxes with a mixture of small and large holes to attract different species. Last year we had boxes 7 & 8 attacked by woodpeckers and/or squirrels resulting in the nest being abandoned. We had to armour plate these two boxes this year to protect the chicks, and it worked!! Next year we will be replacing the current stock with ten new boxes some with open fronts to attract different bird species.



Armour plated: Box number 8



The new style boxes for 2017

Of the ten boxes this year all had been used with an even mix of inhabitants between great and blue tits, and one sadly with a dead chick in it. The poor thing just didn't make it. The current stock of boxes is now in poor condition so we will need to refurbish them and hang the new boxes instead. We will review the new boxes in autumn to see how well they were received.

Spring Survey – list of birds seen:

Great Spotted Woodpecker



Blue Tit



Buzzard



Carrion Crow



Robin



Jackdaw



Treecreeper



Starling



Nuthatch



Songthrush



Long-tail tit



Blackcap



Chaffinch



Chiffchaff



Dunnock



Greenfinch



Great tit



Goldfinch



Jay



House Sparrow



Magpie



Mistle Thrush



Mallard



Woodpigeon



Wren



Pied Wagtail



Whitethroat



Stock Dove



Kestrel



Other Species spotted were Rabbits, Squirrels, Holly Blue butterfly

Autumn Survey.

The following species were also observed during the Autumn survey and are already pictured above:

Blue tit

Carion Crow

Dunnock

Goldfinch

Great tit

House Sparrow

Jackdaw

Jay

Longtailed tit

Magpie

Robin

Songthrush

Starling

Woodpidgeon

Additional species spotted in Autumn were:

Blackbird



Blackheaded gull



Fieldfare



Goldcrest



Green Woodpecker



Redwing



Red Kite



Conclusion:

The bird life at Napsbury Park seems to be healthy although far fewer swifts were observed this year probably due to the restoration of the old Nurses home. Hopefully they will be back in greater numbers next year. One bird seemingly in plentiful supply this year was the splendid green woodpecker (see picture above) some of which were regularly seen feeding in the strip of long grass between the cricket pitch and Napsbury Quarters. Sadly, they disappeared when the grass was cut in late summer. One to look out for next year perhaps? Get those binoculars out!

Acknowledgements:

My thanks go to our local RSPB Walk Leader Colin Rose for his help in documenting the bird life here at Napsbury Park and to Clive Ireland for his assistance with the bird box maintenance.

Keith Loud – NPRA Wildlife Committee