

2015 Summer Survey Report for

Napsbury Park Residents Association

Foreword:

Welcome to the summer 2015 report by the RSPB that lists the birds that were on site at Napsbury Park during June 2015. You may not remember, but during June it really was flaming! Even as early as 9.30am the birds were heading for the shadows due to the heat making them difficult to spot. It appears that the smaller birds cope less well with temperature swings. Hence they head for the shady undergrowth, leaving the field to some of the more resilient larger species. We have included pictures of the lovely birds that we found in our park in this document and I hope that you enjoy reading it. Now October is here it is time to take those nest boxes down, clean and replace them in time for next year's brood!

Once again our thanks go to the local RSPB group, particularly Colin Rose who has given valuable assistance to enable us to help our resident bird life.

This October the NPRA is to start working with the London Colney Hedgehog Rescue who do a wonderful job helping ill and injured hedgehogs. Our early discussions have revealed that the garden fences that were erected when our houses were built really are a problem for our hedgehog community. Hedgehogs are far better off living in gardens but the fences restrict their movement, usually leaving them to live in open areas of the park where they are more at risk from predators as well as strimmers and lawnmowers!! Apparently cutting one or two CD sized holes in the ground level fence panel can really help in this regard. One of our early initiatives will be to offer residents advice on how to make their gardens more accessible and suitable for our precious hoggy friends. More information to follow soon.

Keith & Clive– NPRA

Introduction and Summary

I had arranged to meet with Keith Loud and Clive Ireland in mid-summer to check the birds and wildlife in and around the park grounds. We started from Keith's home around 10:30am on 24th June it was a very warm day, there were many butterflies around and a few dragonflies over the open areas and along the paths.

Checking some of the bird boxes, showed signs of bird activity with droppings on and around the entrance hole, the young would have fledged by now and have dispersed around the grounds with their parents occasionally feeding them.

Looking up into the tree tops there were small groups of birds feeding in the shade, due to the heat most likely to fly down to gardens for a refreshing drink or bath, some will use the flower beds to dust bath. Most of the tit species were keeping out of the heat, but carrion crows, jackdaws, magpies, starlings,

blackbirds, chaffinches and robins were feeding around trees and bushes. Swifts, swallows and a few house martins were flying over open the areas and fields. By mid-day the heat was increasing and the birds were seeking shade and getting difficult to spot so we and went home for the day.

Due to the shortened first visit due to the heat, we arranged a second visit on 30th June at 09:30am, Keith was unavailable so I met with Clive, and walked around the north perimeter path. As we had started early, there was more activity. Tits and finches were flying to and from gardens, a blackcap was seen flying between bushes and small trees with a wren. I heard a whitethroat singing, as we approached we watched as it flew from some brambles in a field to a small tree by the path and back again, as if to try to encourage young birds to leave the nest. We watched for a while but moved on and as the heat was building up, a small flock of goldfinches passed over head and a green woodpecker was heard.

On the way back stopped off at Clive's house for a drink and sit in the shade for a short time, while there watched a pair of goldcrests feeding on the tree at the back. Whilst making our way past the building works at the former nurses home a fox casually walked past the end of the hoarding and disappeared behind some brambles. On hearing a bullfinch looked up above was male and female sitting on a branch in the oak tree with some great tits. I then left the site as the heat was building and the birds were heading for the shade.

Wildlife observed over two days:

Carrion crow



Swift



Whitethroat



Jackdaw



Blue tit



Goldfinch



Magpie



Great tit



Goldcrest



Blackbird



House Sparrow



Bullfinch



Starling



Long tailed tit



Greenfinch



Robin



Dunnock



Blackcap



Red Kite



Wren



Black headed gull



Chaffinch



Swallow



Lesser black backed gull



Other birds heard on the walk:

Green Woodpecker



Nuthatch



Coal tit:



Other wildlife observed:

Grey squirrels

Fox

Butterflies observed:

Emperor butterfly,

Broadbodied Chaser,

Large White,

Meadow Brown

Orange Tip

Speckled Wood

Peacock.

Conclusion:

I hope that this short report on the summer wildlife remains helpful to assist in monitoring the wildlife of Napsbury Park in its beautiful surroundings.

The population of smaller species like tits and finches seem to have done very well due to the bird boxes provided by the NPRA and there are useful log piles dotted about which are a useful habitat for smaller animals and insects. Likewise woodpeckers and nuthatches are doing very well. No hedgehogs were seen on the walk as these are mostly nocturnal and are more likely to be found in and around resident's gardens.

Acknowledgements:

My thanks go to Keith and Clive for meeting me and assisting with the survey of the summer birds and wildlife around Napsbury Park.

Kind Regards

Colin Rose

R S P B St Albans Local Group,

Wildlife Walks Leader.