



Annual Report 1998

Sheepwash Urban Park

NO.15



With 110 species of birds recorded, this was 15 species less than 1997. No new species of bird were recorded this year. The total list now stands at 172. The highlights included Common terns breeding for the first time, although the young mysteriously disappeared. Sandwich Terns were seen here for the first time in 13 years. Wader passage was poor with only 1 redshank recorded this year. Work is currently being done to create a wader scrape area to hopefully improve the habitat.



**Report compiled by
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**Report production by
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Birds of Sheepwash Urban Park 1998

1. GREAT CRESTED GREBE :- *Podiceps Cristatus*

Status : A regular breeding species

Recorded in every month. Two pairs attempted to breed with one pair successful in raising 1 chick. Seven birds were recorded on 19th February.

2. LITTLE GREBE :- *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Status : Resident breeding species. Although tends to be scarce in December.

3 pairs bred in the marsh areas . Double brooded.

Monthly maxima:

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
2	2	6	1	6	12	7	10	5	4	2	-



3. CORMORANT :- *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Status: Recorded annually in small number.

A huge increase in records this year, 2 in January, one on 11/1, and 25/1. From 2nd April one or two were recorded daily with six on 10th August.

4. SHAG : *Phalacrocorax aristoteus*

Status : Rare winter visitor.

One on 31st October the only record for the year.

5. GREY HERON :- *Ardea cinerea*

Status: Recorded all year. A species increasing in the park.

Ten on 10th July was a good number. Birds were seen collecting twigs, but no nest building took place on the park.

6. MUTE SWAN :- *Cygnus olor*

Status : Resident. Attempts to breed most years

Recorded all year. 1 pair nested unsuccessfully. A maximum of 19 birds were seen on the 2nd of February.

7. WHOOPER SWAN :-

Cygnus cygnus

Status : Very scarce feral visitor

One feral visitor on the 19th of July.
The only record this year.



8. PINK- FOOTED GOOSE :- *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Status : Rare mainly feral visitor

One feral bird on 24th February.

9. GREYLAG GOOSE :- *Anser anser*

Status : Scarce feral visitor not recorded annually

Ten on 24th February. One on 5th April with 6 on 6th April, were the only records of this feral visitor.

10. CANADA GOOSE :- *Branta Canadensis*

Status : Common resident breeder.

Present all year . Bred with 29 goslings being counted.

The goslings encountered heavy predation losses this year with at least 3 falling to common crows, some were also killed by children. Only six young survived to fledge. 120 on 11th January and 150 on 7th October were the highest counts.

11. BARNACLE GOOSE :- *Branta leucopsis*

Status : Scarce feral visitor

Single birds were seen on 15th January, 31st January, 1st, 6th-10th February, 21st April and 3rd June. Presumed to be the same individual seen at Sandwell valley quite regularly.

12. SHELDUCK :- *Tadorna tadorna*

Status : Recorded almost annually in small numbers

Two on 1/12 till 5/12, the only record of this annual visitor to the park.

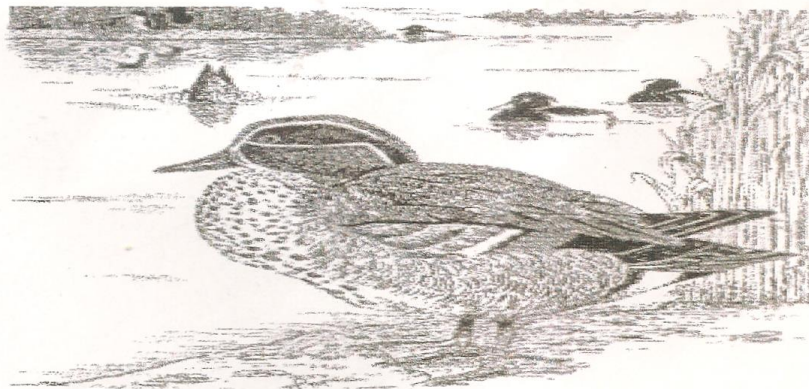
13. WIGEON :- *Anas penelope*

Status : Scarce but fairly regular winter visitor in small numbers averaging 2-3 records per annum. Largest party recorded has been of 5 birds in 1986.

One female on 4th September. Seven on 27th September and two on 23rd November.

14. TEAL :- *Anas crecca*

Status : Annual winter visitor in small numbers. Mainly present from early August to the end of April.



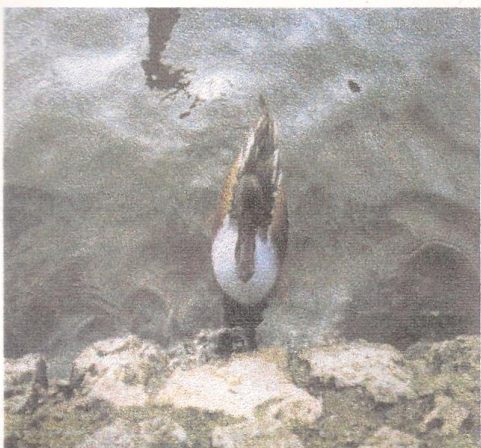
Monthly Maxima :

Month :	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Totals:	27	20	20	6	6	2	3	6	22	30	32	-

15. MALLARD :- *Anas platyrhynchos*

Status : Common resident

Ten broods were recorded this year with one of 18 surely a record! Counts of 60 on 10/1 and 90 on 29/9 were the highest counts of the year.



16. SHOVELER :- *Anas*

Clypeata.

Status : Formally quite a scarce visitor, but now a regular winter visitor.

Largest party recorded is 11 birds in 1996.

Recorded in small numbers from January till 20th April, and from October-December. Eight were seen on 1st December

17. POCHARD :- *Aythya ferina*

Status : Regular winter visitor in small numbers. Mainly present from mid October to late March.

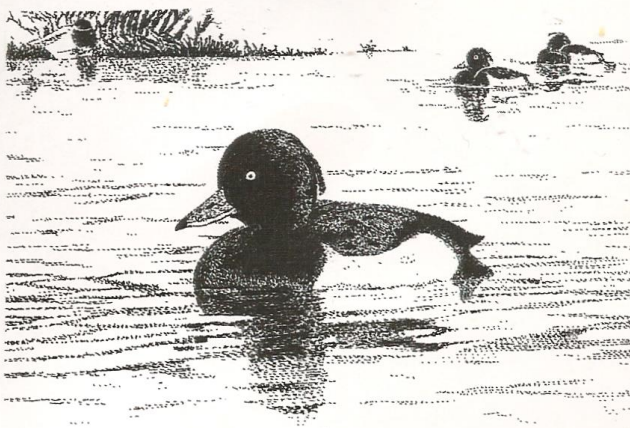
Monthly maxima :

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
27	29	12							1	2	8	14

18. TUFTED DUCK :- *Aythya fuligula*

Status : Resident. Breeds in small numbers most years.

Bred one brood of 2.



Monthly maxima	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	20	22	12	4	2	2	2	2		2	-	4

19. GOOSANDER :- *Mergus merganser*

Status : Formerly scarce visitor. Now due to large numbers wintering in nearby Sandwell Valley, wandering birds are discovering Sheepwash.

1 on 18/1, 1 on 29/3, 4 on 15/11, 1 on 1/12 and 1 on 24/12

20. SPARROWHAWK :- *Accipiter nisus*

Status : Resident in the area

Recorded in all months of the year

21. KESTREL :- *Falco tinnunculus*

Status : Resident . Breeds in the area.

Some decline noticed this year.

22. HOBBY:- *Falco subbuteo*

Status : Passage migrant recorded in most years.

Single birds recorded on 5/6, 15/7, 3/8, 22- 24/8 and 1 on 1/9.

23. PEREGRINE :- *Falco peregrinus*

Status: Scarce visitor.

1 on 11/6. Still remains a scarce visitor

24. WATER RAIL :- *Rallus aquaticus*

Status : Regular winter visitor in small numbers.

Present from January till 5th April, and 4th October till years end., with a maximum of 3 birds..

25. MOORHEN :- *Gallinula chloropus*

Status : Resident breeding species.

Successful breeding season. Broods seen on all pools. A good success rate on The Haines Branch Walkway area of the park, where there are no coots to dispute territories with.

26. COOT :- *Fulica atra*

Status: Common resident

The first brood was seen on 28/3.
Winter numbers seem to be down on previous years.



27. LITTLE RINGED PLOVER :- *Charadrius dubius*

Status : Regular summer visitor.

The first on 29/3. Last seen on 1/8 . 6 on 12/6 was the highest number.
Formally bred at Sheepwash, but a lack of suitable areas make it difficult for birds to find nest sites.

28 RINGED PLOVER :- *charadrias hiatica*

status: Scarce not always annual visitor.

One on 31/5 the only record.

29 GOLDEN PLOVER :- *Pluvialis apricaria*

Status : Scarce but annual visitor.

Recorded in January and February with 44 on 17/1 and 80 on 7/2, 90 on 14/10 and 200 on 23/10.

A regular flock of 200 were present in November and there were 530 on 17/12

30. LAPWING :- *Vanellus vanellus*

Status: Resident and regular winter visitor

One pair bred on a island on the pump house pool, raising 1 chick. 70 were seen on 1/1 and 90 on 17/1. 32 on 21/9 and 25 on 15/10 were the highest numbers recorded.



31 DUNLIN :- *Calidris alpina*

Status : Annual visitor in small numbers.

Very scarce this year with 1 on 28/9, 1 on 6/11 and 1 on 1/12

32. JACK SNIPE :- *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Status : Regular but scarce visitor

One on 2/4 and 1 on 8/11 were the only records. Probably under recorded for this hard to find species.

33. COMMON SNIPE:- *Gallinago gallinago*

Status: Common winter visitor and passage migrant

Recorded from January to April, with 16 on 7/2, 17 on 3/3, 23 on 24/3 and 10 on 3/4.

Other records were 1 on 6/9, 18 on 21/11 and 19 on 5/12.

34. WOODCOCK :- *Scolopax rusticola*

Status : Uncommon winter visitor

One on 2/1, 1 on 10/11 and 1 on 25/12 were the only records.

35. CURLEW :- *Numenius arquata*

Status : Scarce but virtually an annual visitor, records usually of flyover birds.

One on 23/3 and another on 28/11 are average for this species.

36. REDSHANK :- *Tringa totanus*

Status : Scarce but annual visitor

One on 6/4 was the only record this year. This is the worst season ever for this wader at Sheepwash. Although this species has suffered a decline in recent years. The growth of trees around the waters edge makes this bird feel unsafe against predators.

37. GREENSHANK :- *Tringa nebularia*

Status: Annual visitor in small numbers

Three on 12/8 was the only record this year.

38. GREEN SANDPIPER :- *Tringa ochropus*

Status : Scarce passage migrant

Singles on 15/4, 10/8, 13/8 and 27/8. A good year for this species at Sheepwash.

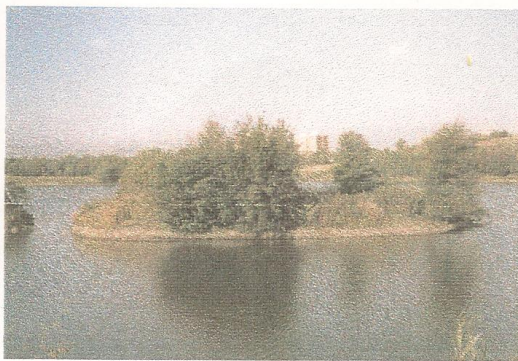
39. COMMON SANDPIPER :-

Actitis hypoleucos

Status: Regular spring and autumn passage migrant in small numbers

The first on 16/4, the last on 19/9.

A maximum of 3 on 17, 18/4.



40. BLACK-HEADED GULL :-

Larus ridibundus

Status : Common winter visitor, scarcer during the summer

Recorded all year



41. COMMON GULL :- *Larus canus*

Status : Scarce but annual visitor in small numbers.

One on 11/1, 1 on 1/2, 1 on 9/10 and 15/10 , and finally 1 on 20/11. Usually seen in cold snaps

42. LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL :- *Larus fuscus*

Status : Regular winter visitor, scarcer in the summer

Recorded in every month with 60 on 15/10, 200 on 20/11 and 300 on 1/12.

43. HERRING GULL :- *Larus argentatus*

Status : Regular winter visitor in small numbers

No large numbers this year with 10 on 1/1 and 10 on 1/12 the highest numbers.

44. GREAT BLACK- BACKED GULL :- *Larus marinus*

Status :Very scarce annual visitor .

Two on 1/1, 1 on 31/1 and 1 on 8/2.

45 KITTIWAKE:- *Rissa tridactyla*

Status: Scarce visitor in Autumn/Winter.

One immature bird on 13/9 the only record .

46. COMMON TERN :- *Sterna hirundo*

Status : Scarce annual visitor.

One pair bred on the rocky island of the pumphouse pool. Two chicks were seen and were at an advanced stage when they suddenly disappeared ; predation or disturbance by children swimming onto the islands the likely cause. A second pair were displaying and nest prospecting on 26/6 but disappeared after a few days.

47 SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvichensis*

status : Very scarce migrant.

Two on 26/9, 1 adult and 1 juvenile and also 2 adults on 27/9 were the first records for 13 years for this large tern ! Coincided with a large inland passage.

48 BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

status : Scarce passage migrant.

One on 11/5 and another on 14/5.

49. FERAL PIGEON :- *Columba livia*

Status : Common resident

Small numbers seen throughout the year.

50 .STOCK DOVE :- *Columba oenas*

Status : Uncommon, declining species at Sheepwash.

Small numbers seen from January to April and recorded in July and August.

51. WOOD PIGEON :- *Columba palumbus*

Status : Common resident

Seen throughout the year and breeds in the park. Numbers of upto 50 are usually seen.

52. COLLARED DOVE :- *Streptopelia decaocto*

Status : Common resident

Common in the park and surrounding gardens. Has started to breed in the park itself. Usually it nests in local gardens. A species increasing in the area.

53. CUCKOO :- *Cuculus canorus*

Status : Very scarce visitor, not recorded annually but averaging one or two records when it does occur

One on 2/6 the only record.

54. SWIFT :- *Apus apus*

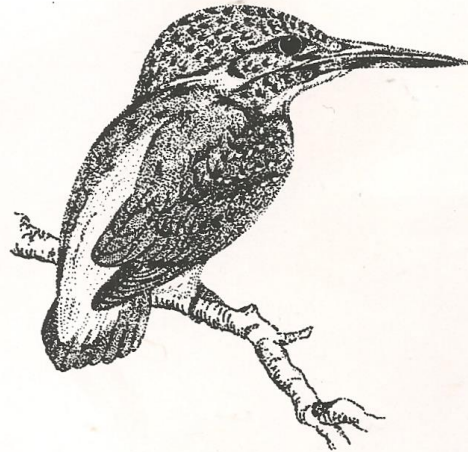
Status : Common summer visitor, breeding in the local area

The first birds were seen on 23/4. The last one on 15/9. 100 on 4/8 was the highest count.

55. KINGFISHER :- *Alcedo atthis*

Status : Regular autumn and winter visitor. Occasional breeder.

Recorded in all months except March/ April/ May. Probably did not breed in area this year..



56. GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER:- *Dendrocopus major*
Status : Annual visitor mainly in the autumn and winter period.

One on 25th January then one seen in May. Seen also from July till November..

57. SKYLARK:- *Alauda arvensis*
Status : Resident , breeding in small numbers

Recorded from 13/2 till November. 1 pair bred in the park. Thought to be successful this year.

58. SANDMARTIN:- *Riparia riparia*
Status : Regular annual passage migrant in small numbers

13 on 28/3 were the first seen. 12 on 2/4, 4 on 7/5, 1 on 17/6 and 3 on 21/7 the last date.

59. SWALLOW:- *Hirundo rustica*
Status : Annual passage migrant.

First date 19/4. Last two on 15/10. 50 on 7/5 and 55 on 6/9 were the highest counts. An adult and 2 juveniles on 18/6 indicates local breeding.

60. HOUSE MARTIN:- *Delichon urbica*
Status : Common summer visitor, breeding in the surrounding area

First recorded date on 21/4. Last date 16/9, when a party of 100 went through. Parties of 70 went through on 4/9 with 80 on 8/8 and 80 on 12/9. Approximately 10 nests were found in a nearby street. They used to breed under the eaves of houses in the Great Bridge, Denbigh areas to the Greets Green area. A large decline in breeding numbers is apparent.

61. TREE PIPIT:- *Anthus trivialis*
Status : Recorded nearly every year though a scarce migrant.

Singles on 29/4, 6/9 and 19/9.

62. MEADOW PIPIT :- *Anthus pratensis*

Status : Resident species.

One pair attempted to breed. Disturbance levels are high at nest sites. Recorded all year in small numbers. 70 went through on 19/9.

63. YELLOW WAGTAIL :- *Motacilla flava*

Status : Scarce passage migrant, formally bred

Dismal year for this species at Sheepwash. 1 on 14/4, 1 on 3/5 and 1 on 4/5. Two were seen on 9/5. No Autumn birds recorded.

64. GREY WAGTAIL :- *Motacilla cinerea*

Status : Resident breeding bird.

Remained a bit scarce this year. Not thought to have bred in the area this year.

65. PIED WAGTAIL :- *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Status : Resident, breeds locally, becoming very scarce.

This species has suffered a huge decline in numbers in the area. One pair was thought to have bred locally.

WHITE WAGTAIL :- *Motacilla alba alba*

Status : Scarce spring passage migrant

Two records this year. One on 15/4 and 1 on 21/4.

66. WREN :- *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Status : Common resident

Under recorded as usual , but birds found in all suitable areas of the park.two were singing on 5th July.

67. DUNNOCK :- *Prunella modularis*

Status : Common resident

Under recorded but one of the commonest species of the park. 5 males were singing on 8/2.

68. ROBIN :- *Erithacus rubecula*

Status : Common resident, breeding in the park

69. BLACK REDSTART :- *Phoenicurus ochrurus*

Status : Scarce visitor.. Possibly bred in 1985.

For the third year running another immature bird turned up on 15/7.

70. WHINCHAT :- *Saxicola rubetra*

Status : Passage migrant .

A good passage this year , 3 on 24/4, 3 on 25/4, singles on 28 and 29/4, 2 on 30/4 and 1 on 2/5.

Return single passage birds on 11/8, 3/9 and 2 on 27/9

71. STONECHAT :- *Saxicola torquata*

Status : Winter visitor. Regular site on rough ground near River Tame on Tividale side of railway line.

A Wintering male from January till March. A male returned on 23/10 till years end and a female around the ex allotment site on 13,15/3.

72. NORTHERN WHEATEAR :-

Oenanthe oenanthe

Status : Regular passage migrant.

A steady spring passage with the first on 23/3. Single birds were seen daily through April. The last Spring bird on 16/5.

Autumn passage concerned birds on just 2 dates, singles on 23/8 and 6/9.



73. RING OUZEL :- *Turdus torquatus*

Status : Scarce passage migrant.

Just 1 recorded, amale on 29/3.

74. BLACKBIRD :- *Turdus merula*

Status : Common resident and winter visitor.

75. FIELDFARE :- *Turdus pilaris*

Status : Winter visitor, not always common. .

Singles were seen on 23/3 and 16/4, with 50 on 22/11. One or two birds were seen in December.

76. SONG THRUSH :- *Turdus philomelos*

Status : Scarce resident .

Recorded all year, at least one pair bred in the park, wiuth adults seen feeding juveniles. A party of 6 on 20/9 were migrants.

77. REDWING :- *Turdus iliacus*

Status : Regular winter visitor in small numbers

Small numbers recorded in January, February, March, and October. 30 flying through on 10/11 added to odd birds in December.

78. MISTLE THRUSH :- *Turdus viscivorus*

Status : Resident with one or two pairs breeding locally

Five on 1/1 was the most recorded.

79. SEDGE WARBLER :- *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Status : Passage migrant, formally bred.

Numbers down for the third year running. Singles were seen on the following dates: 25/4, 2/5, 17/5, 3/8, and on 27/9.

80. REED WARBLER :- *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Status : Summer visitor, breeding most years

Three males were singing in May. Bred, last birds seen in August.

81. LESSER WHITETHROAT :- *Sylvia curruca*

Status : Summer visitor. First breeding record in 1996.

A good year with 3 males singing in May and June. An adult and 2 juveniles were seen on 19/7.

82. COMMON WHITETHROAT :- *Sylvia communis*

Status : Common summer visitor

Numbers were down from last year. 3 males singing on 25/4. Last date , 2 on 1/9.

83. GARDEN WARBLER :- *Sylvia borin*

Status : Scarce migrant

Singles on 25/4, 3/5, 29/7, 5/8, and 2 on 2/9.
Remains scarce in the area with no sign of breeding.

84. BLACKCAP :- *Sylvia atricapilla*

Status : Common summer visitor and occasional winter visitor

The first of the year was on 29/3. The last a male on 6/11. Bred in the park. Family parties were about in June. Seven males were heard singing on 25/4.



85 CHIFFCHAFF:- *Phylloscopus collybita*

status : Summer visitor, Occasional Winter visitor.

Recorded in all months of the year, and bred this year with a family party being seen on 16/6

86. WILLOW WARBLER :- *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Status : Common summer visitor

The first bird was seen on 31/3 and the last on 1/10. Bred in the park with family parties being seen. Some decline in numbers from last year, with 13 singing on 25/4.

87. GOLDCREST :- *Regulus regulus*

Status : Winter visitor in small numbers

Recorded from January till 4/4 with 10 being seen on 1/1 and from 3rd October until the years end.

88. SPOTTED FLYCATCHER :- *Muscicapa striata*

Status : Scarce summer visitor on passage

The only record this year was of 1 bird on 22/8.

89. LONG-TAILED TIT :- *Aegithalos caudatus*

Status : Resident breeding species

Present all year with 3 pairs seen nest building on 15/3. A family party were seen on 12/5.

90. WILLOW TIT :- *Parus montanus*

Status : Scarce resident and breeding species

A single bird was seen from January till March at Brades Hall with 1 on 7/6 the only record. Wet springs and perhaps predation at nest sites by grey squirrels maybe causing this species to decline rapidly at Sheepwash.

91. COAL TIT :- *Parus ater*

Status : Scarce visitor recorded most years

One on 25th October the only record.

92. BLUE TIT :- *Parus caeruleus*

Status : Common resident

Although a wet spring affected the breeding success of this species, there were still quite a few parties to be seen.

93. GREAT TIT :- *Parus major*

Status : Common resident

Under recorded in the park. A few pairs bred in Sheepwash and the surrounding gardens.

94. JAY :- *Garrulus glandarius*

Status : Scarce autumn and winter visitor.

Only 2 records this year , 1 on 14/1 and 1 on 26/9.

95. MAGPIE :- *Pica pica*

Status : Common resident

Breeds in the park. With large roosting flocks , a count of 65 on 31/1 and 80 on 6/2.

96. JACKDAW :- *Corvus monedula*

Status : Scarce visitor, most records involve birds flying over

Three on 14/2, 1 on 15/2, 4 on 21/3 1 on 23/3, 4 on 27/5, and 9 on 25/10.

97. ROOK :- *Corvus frugilegus*

Status : Scarce visitor with records involving birds flying over

Flyover birds on 25/1, and 2 on 19/11

98. CARRION CROW :- *Corvus corone*

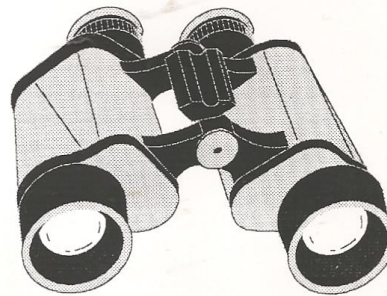
Status : Resident

One pair bred in the park building their nest on an electric pylon.

99. STARLING :- *Sturnus vulgaris*

Status : Resident

Breeds on local housing estates. A sharp population decline for this species very noticable. Still common but numbers very low. 80 on 7/3, and 80 on 26/8 were the largest flocks counted.



100. HOUSE SPARROW :- *Passer domesticus*

Status : Common resident

Breeds in the local area. No large numbers recorded. Perhaps a lack of breeding sites contribute to this species' decline.

101. CHAFFINCH :- *Fringilla coelebs*

Status : Scarce visitor, mainly Winter.

Present all year, with 2 singing on 19/4, and 2 on 1/5. Breeding probably took place. No large Winter flocks recorded with 20 on 8/2 the highest count.

102. BRAMBLING :- *Fringilla montifringilla*

Status: Scarce Winter visitor

Just 1 record, a single on 25/12 at the Newtown end of the park

103. GREENFINCH :- *Carduelis chloris*

Status : Resident- breeding species.

Bred in the park with family parties being seen. No large winter flocks recorded.

104. GOLDFINCH :- *Carduelis carduelis*

Status : Resident in small numbers

Recorded all year , with perhaps 1 pair in the area. Declining in the area with 1 on 31/1 and 5 on 8/11 the highest counts.

105. SISKIN :- *Carduelis spinus*

Status : Regular winter visitor

30 on 1/1. Had declined to 3 by 19/3. Returned on 18/10 with 5.

106. LINNET :- *Carduelis cannabina*

Status : Resident with 1 or 2 pairs breeding

80 on 17/1, 25 on 8/2, 40 on 6/3 and 25 on 1/11 were the highest counts.

107. REDPOLL :- *Carduelis flammea*

Status : Regular visitor mainly in the winter

Present from January till 1st May. and from 2th September till years end. With 22 on 22/3, 15 on 30/4, 10 on 1/5, second period 14 on 1/11..

108. BULLFINCH :-

Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Status : Resident breeder, increasing numbers.

Present all year. 1 or 2 pairs in the area. 7 on 14/2 and 5 on 7/12 were the highest counts.

109. YELLOWHAMMER :- *Emberiza citrinella*

Status : Scarce visitor

Only 1 record , a single on 1/11.

110. REED BUNTING :- *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Status : Resident, breeding in small numbers

3 males were singing in Spring, and family parties were seen.

Also reported were a **buzzard** on 16/1, and 2 **ruff** briefly on the wader scrape area in September.

A **bar headed** goose on 22/3 and 28/3

BUTTERFLIES

SPECIES	FIRST DATES RECORDED
1. BRIMSTONE <i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	19/3
2. COMMA <i>Polyonia c- album</i>	19/5
3. PEACOCK <i>Inachis io</i>	10/1
4. SMALL TORTOISESHELL <i>Aglais urticae</i>	13/2
5. SMALL WHITE <i>Artogeia rapae</i>	5/6
6. SPECKLED WOOD <i>Pararage aegeria</i>	22/4
7. ORANGE TIP <i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>	8/5
8. GREEN -VEINED WHITE <i>Artogeia napi</i>	19/3
9. COMMON BLUE <i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	18/5
10. LARGE SKIPPER <i>Ochlodes venatus</i>	21/6
11. SMALL HEATH <i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	6/6
12. MEADOW BROWN <i>Maniola jurtina</i>	5/7
13. SMALL SKIPPER <i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	15/7
14. GATEKEEPER <i>Pyronia tithonus</i>	16/7
15. SMALL COPPER <i>Lycaena phlaeus</i>	9/8
16. RED ADMIRAL <i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	18/7
17. HOLLY BLUE <i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	17/5
18. LARGE WHITE <i>Pieris brassicae</i>	13/5
19. GREEN HAIRSTREAK <i>Callophrys rubi</i>	17/5
20. PAINTED LADY <i>Vanessa cardui</i>	4/9

