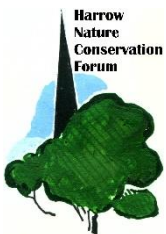


Wood Farm
Nature Reserve
Bird Report 2020



Introduction

This is the first of what we hope will become annual reports about the bird life of Wood Farm.

Situated near the summit of Stanmore Hill, and with a mix of open grassy habitat, shrubby cover and surrounded by woodland, it is very attractive as a stopover spot for migrant birds, particularly in autumn. It also has a good range of resident and wintering species.

This report aims to document the occurrence of wild birds at the site. This is to serve two purposes:

- To encourage systematic recording of birds and the establishment of a dataset that can inform conservation and habitat management decisions.
- For general interest. With a vastly increased number of visitors during the Coronavirus pandemic of 2020, we want to open people's eyes to the interesting birdlife on their doorstep and ultimately enthuse readers to take action to help wildlife conservation.

Overview of the site

Wood Farm is a 22 hectare nature reserve in Stanmore, in the London Borough of Harrow. Formerly a working farm and rubbish dump, the site was handed over to Harrow Council in 2015 and designated a reserve. Thereafter, the charity Harrow Nature Conservation Forum began management on behalf of the council.

A small car park is available for public use, from which an all-weather gravel path leads to the panoramic London viewpoint, a feature with bench seating, which attracts many visitors. From this point, visitors can follow a sign-posted circular path round the reserve. The car park opens at 10am and is locked at 8:30pm in summer and 4:30pm at other times, but check signage on-site for accurate information. Visitors can also walk up from Stanmore Station, through Stanmore Country Park, via Kerry Avenue.



Looking south from the London Viewpoint

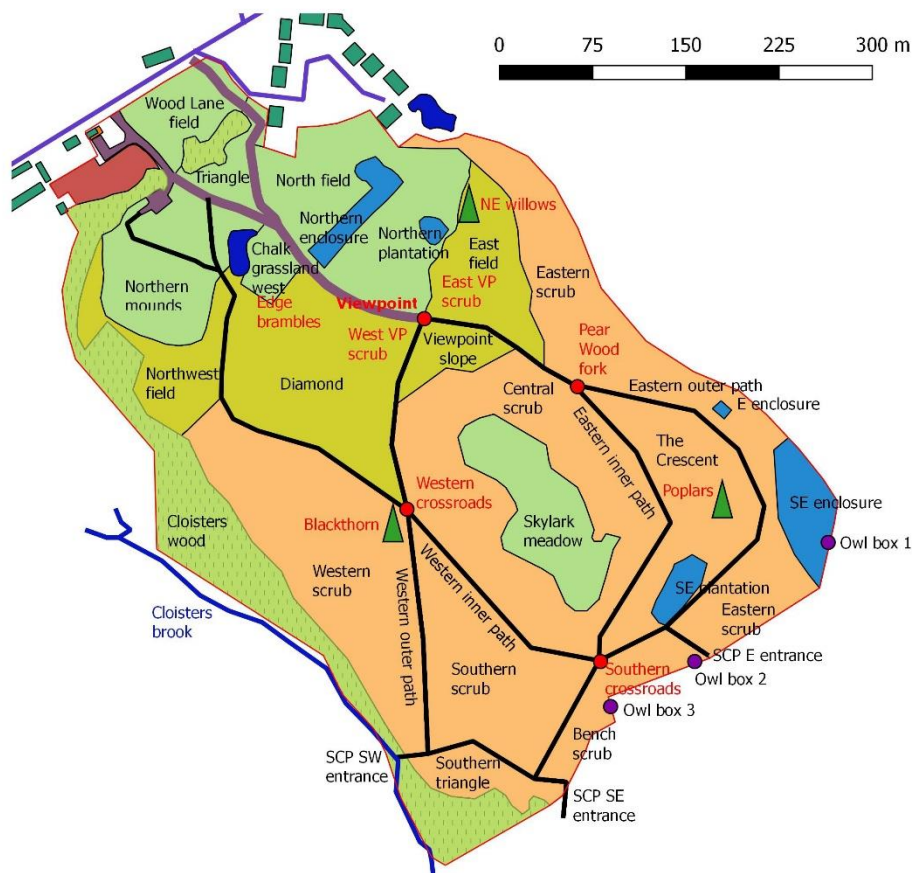
Wood Farm forms an important part of the Greater Stanmore Country Park nature reserve complex: Pear Wood sits to the east and Stanmore Country Park to the south, giving the reserve a wooded edge. The vast and mostly open environment creates a highly valuable and underrepresented habitat in the north London area – it provides space for a great range of scrub and grassland

associated wildlife to feed, breed and shelter throughout the year. Aside from birds, Wood Farm is used by a huge array of other species: from butterflies, bees and other pollinating insects to mammals, including bats, stoats and badgers, as well as grass snakes and newts.

The reserve's main habitats are rough grassland interspersed with scrubland; comprising bramble, blackthorn and other regenerating trees, here, much of the management involves stepping back to let nature take control. However, most of the grassland areas to the north of the site are managed on rotation, being cut once every few years, whilst one area, designated a wildflower meadow, is cut annually. Within the centre of the site, an area of grassland, Skylark Meadow, lies reasonably well-enclosed by bramble. The majority of the reserve sits atop the clay cap, placed post-landfill, though the best wildflower meadows grow where the farm buildings once stood. A wildlife pond close to these meadows can also be explored. Some of the fenced zones near the bordering reserves demarcate sapling plantation, where copses will grow, softening the boundary between woodland and grassy scrub.

The site is managed by volunteer wardens supported by a management committee. Through the production of this report, it is the hope of the committee that, in addition to the recording of birds, a wider audience can be engaged with the wildlife of Wood Farm.

Map and location information



Vehicular entrance: [///digs.cook.admits](http://digs.cook.admits). NGR: TQ 168 935. Nearest post code: HA7 4LG

Scope of this report

This report primarily covers records of birds seen within the Wood Farm reserve boundary. Since the site is contiguous with Pear Wood and Stanmore County Park, many observers will visit those areas as well, and human boundaries are of no importance to birds. The report therefore includes some interesting records from the adjacent areas, but, where this is the case, it is indicated in the text in the species accounts.

The principal data sources for this report are the personal records of visiting birdwatchers. Since September 2020, Tony Blake has been undertaking a systematic monthly site survey. This involves walking a set route around the site and noting all the birds seen. This will become the method for recording evidence of breeding. Some older records have also been drawn from the Harrow Nature Conservation Forum's list of species recorded on its sites.

Wood Farm is an excellent location for observing bird migration. Many species migrate unseen, at night. However, it is possible to observe visible migration for several daytime migrant species. For example, sitting at the London viewpoint on a morning in October in lightly cloudy or clear weather is ideal for this, and Wood Farm is excellent for watching passing thrushes, finches and pipits. This type of observation is colloquially known as "vizmig" and necessarily means seeing species that pass through the site's airspace without landing. These are an integral part of birdwatching at Wood Farm and such flight records are included in this report.

Format of this report

The heart of this report is a systematic list of the species recorded at Wood Farm in 2020. The species are presented in the taxonomic order used by the International Ornithological Congress (IOC)¹. The text aims to cover the following key points:

- Summary of status at Wood Farm.
- Overview of occurrence of the species in 2020. This aims to highlight any notable patterns to sightings and the highest count of the year. Highlights about breeding success are included where known.

The decision to produce this report was taken in autumn 2020, in part following what was a very good autumn for migrant species. Coverage in the early part of the year was limited, and this was exacerbated by the Coronavirus related restrictions from March into the early summer. This means that this report reflects an uneven pattern of observation. For future years, we hope to have more consistent data from around the year.

Species names use the British English vernacular name from the IOC list. The scientific name is shown alongside to remove any ambiguity.

¹ IOC list v7.3 www.worldbirdnames.org/new/ioc-lists/master-list-2/

2020 highlights

Observations were limited in the first half of the year, a factor exacerbated from March by Coronavirus restrictions. The few notable sightings before May were of **Stonechats** on 19th January and 7th March, a **Kingfisher** seen at the pond on 19th February and a **Reed Bunting** on 7th March. The first post lockdown visit was on 17th May and that produced a singing **Garden Warbler** and a passage **Wheatear**.

Good numbers of **Whitethroat** were present throughout the breeding season, with 14+ seen on 20th June, including some young birds. That date also produced one of the best sightings of the year, a **Cuckoo**.

A **Skylark** seen flying from the ground on 20th July gives some hope that the species may return to breed if disturbance levels permit.

A **Sand Martin** seen on 12th August was the first site record – it appeared in a flock of **Swallows** as a thundery atmosphere pushed the birds to a low altitude.

Two **Tree Pipits** seen on the morning of 18th August, a wonderful sighting in their own right, and one which heralded a golden period of late summer and early autumn migration watching at the site. A **Yellow Wagtail** flew over on 23rd August and the site's first records of **Redstart** were a female on 31st August and a male on 5th and 6th September. **Willow Warblers**, sadly now only known in the area as a passage migrant, were in Pear Wood on 14th and 31st August and a **Lesser Whitethroat** was seen on 6th September. The first **Whinchat** appeared on 5th September with two present the next day. Further **Wheatears** were seen on 6th, 27th and 28th September. September was also remarkable for an influx of **Stonechats**. Two were seen on 13th and numbers increased with a confirmed six, and possibly as many as nine, on 28th. One of the most unexpected sightings was on 27th September when a **Snipe** flew up from the Skylark Meadow and two others were seen 30 minutes later heading north west.

Autumn visible migration counts included an impressive 570+ **Redwings** through on 11th October, eight **Mistle Thrushes** on the same date and 72 **Chaffinches** on 17th October.

A flock of **Lesser Redpolls** roamed the site from mid-October to mid-December, peaking at around 30 birds on 13th December.

Another surprising sighting was of a single female **House Sparrow** on 1st November. Although they must have been common at the site in the past, the species is essentially absent today.

The year's final surprise was a young **Mute Swan** which circulated the site on 13th December and briefly appeared interested in landing on the pond before moving on.

This overview shows the site's attractiveness to migrant birds. However, for many visitors it is the familiar birds that are the most important – and there were regular sightings of **Red Kites**, **Buzzards**, **Kestrel**, **Goldfinch** and **Green** and **Great Spotted Woodpeckers** as well as summer **Whitethroats**.

List of observers

Tony Blake (TB)	Mark McManus (MMcM)
Reuben Braddock (RB)	Neil Marchant (NM)
Josh Kalms (JK)	

Sightings from a wider pool of observers are welcome. Please send any records to: woodfarmbirds@gmail.com If you post any sightings on Twitter, please consider using the hashtag: *#woodfarmbirds*

Photographs

A selection of photographs of birds taken at Wood Farm is included in the systematic list. All photos were taken at Wood Farm by Tony Blake. All except for the Red Kite, Robin and Whitethroat were taken in 2020. If you have photos taken at the site, preferably in 2021, that you would like to consider for inclusion in next year's report, please send them to: woodfarmbirds@gmail.com

Cover photo: Redwings, passing through in October.

Tony Blake, member of Greater Stanmore Country Park Management Committee and Josh Kalms, Wood Farm Volunteer Warden.

Systematic list

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Occasionally encountered, generally as a flyover sighting. Two records in 2020 – two on 20th Sept and two on 1st Nov.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

One site record only – a young bird (first winter plumage) circling over the pond on 13th Dec. It clearly decided the water area was too small for its needs and moved on after a few minutes.



The Mute Swan that circled the site on 13th Dec

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

This common duck is only likely to be recorded as a flyover, and the site's first record was in 2020, with a single bird seen in flight on 17th May.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

This familiar duck of parkland lakes is frequently recorded flying over, presumably moving between local ponds and other water bodies. The maximum count this year was of a female and four males flying west together on 17th Oct.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

This introduced game bird favours the long grassy areas at Wood farm, and is seen in small numbers, normally when disturbed. There were records in 2020 in May, October and November with a maximum of two birds seen. More study is needed to determine its status.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Occasionally seen flying over or at the lake in Pear Wood. The only 2020 records were from “vizmig” observations with one north on 6th Sept and one north west on 17th Oct.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Occasionally seen flying over – these records may relate to birds moving between the large water bodies in the area (they occur at both Hilfield Park and Brent Reservoirs, as well as lakes in the Colne Valley). Records show a peak in the autumn. Singles were recorded on 11th and 17th Oct and two on 20th Dec.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Regularly present, year-round. Three records in 2020 of single birds on: 17th and 24th May and 20th Dec. This showing is likely to represent under recording.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

This majestic raptor is an increasingly frequent sight from Wood Farm, reflecting the spread of birds from its reintroduction in the Chilterns. 2020 records were all of single birds and were in May, August, September, October and December.



A Red Kite glides over the site

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Regularly seen around the site at all times of year. Most records are of singles, with occasional small groups seen on spring migration. In 2020 only single birds were seen.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Regularly heard and sometimes seen at the pond. 2020 records were in August and November, but this probably reflects observer coverage rather than actual occurrence.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

The first Wood Farm site records were on 27th Sept (TB and JK). To the astonishment of the two observers, one flew from Skylark Meadow and two others were seen flying north west around 30 minutes later. A modest passage of Snipe was noted at various London sites around this date² so it was very pleasing to see Wood Farm as part of this web of observations.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Regularly seen in flight over the site and large numbers are seen flying over on winter evenings. These birds are heading to the large gull roost at Hilfield Park Reservoir.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Regularly seen flying over the site. In 2020, the maximum daytime count was three birds on 20th Dec. Numbers increase on winter evenings when birds fly over on their way to roost at Hilfield Park Reservoir. There is no count data of these roost flights as yet.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Regularly seen flying over the site. In 2020, the maximum daytime count was three birds on 10th Aug. As with Herring Gull, numbers increase on winter evenings when birds fly over on their way to roost at Hilfield Park Reservoir. There is no count data of these roost flights as yet.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Small numbers of birds are present year-round and are likely to breed nearby. They are often seen perching in the trees at the south and north of the site. Four birds were seen on 8th Nov.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Very common resident species and expected to be encountered on any visit to the site. Larger numbers can be seen in parts of London flying west or south west in late October/early November as part of a visible autumn migration. In 2020, a flock of 26 was noted flying south west on 11th Oct, but

² See informal records here: https://londonbirders.fandom.com/wiki/September_2020

no counts were made on the peak migration days later in the month. Woodpigeon migration is certainly something to look out for from the London viewpoint on a bright late October morning.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

This is a now a familiar suburban garden species, but is surprisingly scarce at Wood Farm. Single birds were seen flying over Wood Farm on 27th Sept and 20th Dec.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

There was one record in 2020 of a male on 20th June (RB). This is an excellent record - the species has declined greatly in southern England in recent years so any occurrence now is noteworthy. It was recorded regularly in the past from Pear Wood – most recently in 2012. It presumably also occurred at Wood Farm, though there are no documented historic records.

Swift *Apus apus*

Regularly seen over and from the site from late spring to the end of July. Views may be distant, but small flocks can often be seen from the London viewpoint, hawking insects to the south. The first 2020 record was of three birds on 17th May (a late first sighting date, owing to Coronavirus visiting restrictions) and the final sighting was of two birds on 26th July. Around 10 birds were seen on 24th May.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

One record of a bird seen at the pond on 19th Feb (NM). This is a good record, although Kingfishers are occasionally noted at the Pear Wood fishing lake.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Regularly seen year-round and probably breeds in the wooded areas around Wood Farm. Drumming, which is a form of territorial display, is often heard in spring and a juvenile was seen on 23rd Aug. Most records are of single birds, but two were seen on 25th October.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

This species can be seen, or its “yaffle” call heard, on most visits at any time of year. It probably breeds at or near the reserve and a juvenile was seen on 10th Aug.



A juvenile Green Woodpecker foraging on the parched ground

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

A Kestrel is a regular site, hovering while looking for prey in the grassy areas of the reserve. One was noted with prey in its talons on 20th Dec.



A Kestrel on a warm summer's evening

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

This small falcon has been occasionally recorded in late summer. There was one record in 2020 – a bird seen distantly over Pear Wood on 13th Sep.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

To date there are two records of this charismatic falcon, but an increase in occurrence in the north west London and southern Hertfordshire area means that under-recording is likely. A male was seen on 13th Dec.



Peregrine dashing across the site

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameria*

The screeching of the growing population of this naturalised species is ever present. At least a handful of birds can be seen on a visit at any time of year and larger flocks are sometimes seen. The maximum 2020 count was of around 35 birds on 11th Oct.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Present in small numbers and is often seen at the reserve perimeter flying between the trees. Often seen singly, but two birds were noted on 10th Aug.

Magpie *Pica pica*

A common resident species that can be expected to be seen on any visit to the site. The highest count of the year was six on 11th Oct.

Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula*

Present throughout the year but most common in autumn when there is sometimes a small visible west / south west passage. The maximum 2020 count was of 33 individuals on 11th Oct. 10 were seen on 20th Dec mobbing a Buzzard.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

A resident species and a few individuals should be seen on most visits, often gently foraging in the grassy areas. The highest 2020 counts were of six individuals on 11th Oct and 13th Dec.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Occasionally seen, normally flying over the site. A single bird was seen in 2020 on 7th Mar, and was noted in the tops of dead trees to west of site (JK).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Not yet recorded at Wood Farm but sometimes seen at Pear Wood, where one was noted in a mixed tit flock on 23rd Aug.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

A common resident species. Five were seen at Wood farm on 8th Nov, but larger numbers can be seen in Pear Wood – many were present in a large mixed tit flock there on 14th Aug.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Resident and regularly seen at Wood Farm. As with Blue Tit, larger numbers can be seen in Pear Wood – and many were present in the large mixed tit flock noted there on 14th Aug.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Skylarks were historically recorded at Wood Farm, for example with two to three singing birds in May 2001. Today it is encountered mainly in small numbers as an autumn flyover passage migrant, whose presence is often first betrayed by its call. 10 individuals were counted on the morning of 11th Oct (four of them heard only). There were also two records of birds seen on the ground – a brief view of a bird on 20th July, before it was disturbed by dog walkers and then a bird which flew up from Skylark Meadow, and then headed south west, on 25th Oct.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

The first site record for this species was in 2020 – a single was seen among a small flock of Swallows on 12th Aug (TB).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Occasionally seen throughout spring and summer, sometimes skimming over the surface of the pond. There is a peak of records during autumn passage. Around 15 were forced low over the site on 12th Aug by thundery weather and 10 flew south west on 13th Sept.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Erratically seen in spring, summer and on autumn passage. There were two records of single birds in 2020 – on 24th May and 11th Oct.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Probably present at or around the site all year round, but most records are from late summer to early winter. Several were seen in the large mixed tit flock in Pear Wood on 14th Aug and 14 were on Wood Farm on 8th Nov.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

This species is now encountered only as a passage migrant in spring and autumn. In 2020, one was in Pear Wood in the large mixed tit flock on 14th Aug. Another was calling in Pear Wood on 31st Aug.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

This warbler is the first summer visitor to arrive at the site and is common from spring well into the autumn, when numbers rise with passage migrants. Five to six birds were noted on two dates in August. The final record was of a bird calling on 11th Oct.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

A common summer visitor which is present well into September. Numbers peak in August. The highest 2020 count was of around five on 8th Aug and the final record was one on 27th Sept.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

This species was noted for the first time at Wood Farm in 2020, although it has previously been seen at Pear Wood. One was singing on 17th May and another was seen on 26th July.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

A scarce spring and autumn passage visitor to Wood Farm. The only 2020 record was on 6th Sept (MMcM).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

The scratchy song of the Whitethroat is the spring and early summer sound of Wood Farm. This warbler loves the mixed scrub on the site and is common from late April to early September and

several pairs breed. Around 15 individuals were seen on 10th Aug and the final 2020 record was on 5th Sept.



A Whitethroat in song flight

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Occasionally seen and regularly present in Pear Wood. One record in 2020, on 23rd Aug.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident and probably breeds at the site. Records from 2020 were only in October, November and December, which shows the need for the more robust coverage that regular surveys will bring. The highest count was three on 8th Nov.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Resident and often heard first, then seen, around the perimeter of the site. Breeds in Pear Wood and two juveniles were noted there on 14th Aug.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Most frequently accounted during vizmig observations in the autumn. In 2020, however, birds were seen in spring, with five on 17th May and two on 24th May. The first autumn passage bird was seen on 5th Sept and the last on 8th Nov. The highest count was 15 heading north on 17th Oct.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Present at the site throughout the year, but numbers increase in the autumn and winter with the arrival of Scandinavian birds. Maximum counts were of at least nine on 17th Oct and 8th Nov.



Blackbirds in November – likely to be recent arrivals from Scandinavia

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

An autumn passage migrant and winter visitor. Numbers vary and can be influenced by weather. They were slow to arrive in autumn/early winter 2020 and we only have one record, a single bird on 17th Oct.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

An autumn passage migrant and winter visitor. Large numbers can be seen passing through on a predominantly westerly or north westerly trajectory in October and early November. High counts included at least 570 on 11th Oct and 200 on 17th Oct (TB). The highest winter count was around 50 birds on 13th Dec.



A Redwing passing through Wood Farm airspace in October

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Can be seen in small numbers year-round. A Thrush seen flying low from shrubs is most likely to be of this species. The highest count was four on 22nd Nov. Two were singing on 29th Nov.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Can be seen year-round, but with largest counts in autumn when passage migrants drop in. They are often in the grass or treetops near the Wood Lane entrance. The highest count in 2020 was eight birds which exploded from the treetops on 11th Oct.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Possibly present year-round but our records show that they are either absent or stay hidden from mid spring to mid-summer. It may be that a lot of the birds seen in autumn and winter move into gardens to breed. Our understanding will develop with the systematic surveys that are now underway. The highest 2020 count was five on 8th Nov.



A Robin on a bright winter's day

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

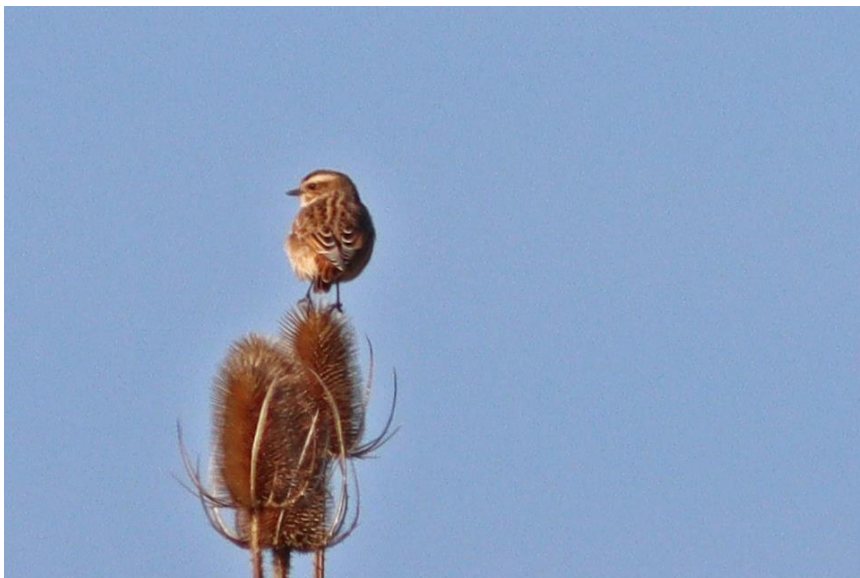
There was a strong passage through the London area in the late summer of 2020 and Wood Farm was part of this, with the site's first records of this species. A female was seen on the evening of 31st Aug (TB) and a male was present from 5th to 6th Sept (TB and MMcM).



The male Redstart on the second day of its stay in September

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

A late summer and early autumn migrant, in small numbers. Four records in 2020: one on 5th Sept; two on 6th Sept; one on 27th Sept and 28th Sept.



Whinchat – one of several seen in the Skylark Meadow in late summer

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Autumn migrant and occasional winter visitor. One bird was present on 19th Jan and 7th Mar. Autumn passage was exceptional, in line with other parts of London. The first two autumn migrants were seen on 13th Sept. At least four (and possibly eight) were seen on 27th Sept; and between six and nine on 28th Sept. The final record of the year was a single on 17th Oct.



Stonechat in September when there was a large passage

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

A regular spring and autumn migrant but in small numbers. One was seen on 17th May – the late spring date and its relatively bright underpart colouration suggest it may have been of the Greenland race *leucorhoa*, but this cannot be claimed with certainty. There were autumn records on 6th, 27th and 28th Sept.



The May 2020 Wheatear

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

A calling bird on 1st Nov was a huge surprise (TB). House Sparrows are not seen at Wood Farm, although they presumably occurred before the decline that has affected the species in the London area in the last 30 years. This female was heard calling by the gate at the south of Skylark Meadow. It briefly appeared in brambles. There were no further sightings.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

A regular resident species which can be expected to be seen or heard on any visit. The maximum 2020 count was three on 31st Aug and 8th Nov.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

This species has so far been recorded twice, each time as a flyover migrant in autumn. There was one record in 2020 – a bird was heard to call three times on 23rd Aug, but was not seen (TB).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Occasionally seen flying over the site. There was one record in 2020, on 27th Sept.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Occasionally seen flying over the site. There was one record in 2020, on 11th Oct.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A regular spring and, particularly, autumn migrant. There were no spring 2020 records, probably due to lack of observer coverage. Autumn passage was first noted on 5th Sept, with eight birds heading north west. The highest count was around 20 birds on 27th Sept, some of which were seen on the ground in Skylark Meadow. Small numbers were regularly seen into late November and the last record of the year was one on 29th Nov.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

One of the sightings of the year was of two 18th Aug (TB). This was at the start of a notable passage through the London area. There were no more Wood Farm records but we must look out for them in future years.



One of two Tree Pipits present on 18th August

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Mainly known at Wood Farm as an autumn passage migrant when it can sometimes be seen in small flocks flying over, normally heading north west. Occasional records at other times of year. In 2020, the highest count was of 72 birds over on 17th October, a few of which dropped into trees to rest.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A resident in small numbers and probably breeds in the woodland around the site. Its presence is normally betrayed by its discreet soft call often leading to a binocular view of a white rump on a bird flying away. Most 2020 records were of single birds, but two were seen on 20th Dec.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Currently only seen as autumn flyovers in small numbers. Greenfinch populations have declined in recent years due to an avian disease, *trichomonosis*. They were surely more common in the past and will hopefully return.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

One of the joys of Wood Farm is its small population of Linnets which roam around the bushes giving trilling calls and a pleasant jangly song. In past years they have been absent in mid-winter, but present from March to late November, and are assumed to breed on site. In 2020 high counts were

10+ on 20th June and eight on 8th Nov. Up to four birds were seen on two dates in December raising the possibility of some of the population staying for the whole winter.

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*

An occasional autumn and winter visitor, normally in small flocks. A flock was present from mid-October to mid-December. The first sighting was of 10 birds on 11th Oct and numbers built to around 30 at the last sighting on 13th Dec.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Frequently encountered at Wood Farm and recorded in all months of the year, except May and June. This suggests it may not breed at the site, but, as young birds are seen from late summer, it is likely to breed nearby. High 2020 counts were of around 20 birds on 5th Sept and 13th Dec and 30 birds on 22nd Nov.

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

This species can sometimes be seen in autumn and winter, often as a flyover, although flocks have been seen in the past around the lake in Pear Wood. 2020 records were all in September, when good numbers were seen on the move across the London area. Four headed south west on 6th; six were seen on 27th and three were near the Wood Lane entrance on 28th.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

An occasional winter visitor noted in all but one of the last five years and an individual was present for several weeks in autumn 2019. There were two records in 2020 – singles on 7th Mar and one seen perched in trees by the pond on the foggy morning of 29th Nov.

List of species recorded at Wood Farm

The species listed below have all been recorded in or from Wood Farm (so this list includes birds seen flying over). The “last recorded (year)” column excludes Pear Wood records. For example, Willow Warbler is shown as last occurring in 2017 – its last Wood Farm occurrence, even though it was seen in Pear Wood in 2020.

An additional 15 species have been recorded in Pear Wood, which has a longer recording history, but not at Wood Farm³.

Species	Scientific name	Last recorded (year)
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	2020
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	2017
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	2020
Mandarin Duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>	2018
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	2020
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	2020
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	2020
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	2020
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	2020
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	2020
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	2020
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	2020
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	2020
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	2018
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	2020
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	2020
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	2018
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	2020
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	2020
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	2020
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	2020
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	2020
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	2020
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	2016
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	2020
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	2020
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	2020
Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	2020
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	2020
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	2020
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	2020
Ring-necked Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	2020
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	2020

³ Tufted Duck; Goosander; Coot; Woodcock; Common Tern; Tawny Owl; Lesser Spotted Woodpecker; Coat Tit; Marsh Tit; Grasshopper Warbler; Goldcrest; Treecreeper; Nightingale; Tree Sparrow; Hawfinch.

Species	Scientific name	Last recorded (year)
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	2020
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	2020
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	2020
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	2020
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	2020
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	2020
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	2020
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	2020
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	2020
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	2020
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	2020
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	2017
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	2020
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	2018
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	2020
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	2020
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	2020
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	2020
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	2020
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	2020
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	2020
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	2020
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	2020
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	2020
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	2020
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	2020
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	2019
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	2020
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	2020
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	2020
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	2020
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	2020
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	2020
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	2020
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	2020
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	2020
Pied/White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	2020
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	2020
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	2020
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	2020
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	2020
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	2020
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	2020
Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	2020
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	2020

Species	Scientific name	Last recorded (year)
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	2020
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	2020

We are eager to plug any gaps in this list of species already recorded and hope the continued birding at the site will produce some new additions. If you are aware of sightings of a species not covered here, please e-mail with details: woodfarmbirds@gmail.com