

Wildlife Walk, Wick Country Park, January 20th 2021

Last week, Marie and I put on our wellies and waded through the park to carry out the monthly wildlife count, and it proved to be a surprisingly good day with lots to see.

As we walked through the park gates we saw a couple of Blackbirds in the bushes on the right and the first of many Blue Tits together with 2 Great Tits. The usual small family of Crows were active along the road and Robins were singing in the hedgerows. In the park itself, more Robins and Blue Tits were in the bushes and hedges again with a few Great Tits. At the bridge, a nice flock of Long Tailed Tits flew across – the first of 3 flocks we saw. Moving across the field we saw a couple of Redwings in flight and the usual Crows, Magpies and odd Wood Pigeons in the grass. A Green Woodpecker was heard calling from the hedgerow and we then saw it flying into a tree fairly close for good views. It then flew across the field to catch up with 2 more on the ground and 1 in a tree which we had not seen. 4 Green Woodpeckers all together – brilliant! While we were watching these a couple of Stock Doves flew over and a Jay flew across the field in the opposite direction. We also saw a Squirrel here.

Moving to the lake, we saw the usual Canada Geese, Coots, Moorhens and Mallards before we started to count the Black Headed Gulls.....I counted at least 185 but with a few flying around this was probably under-estimated and there are probably 200+ Black Headed Gulls in the park at the moment. A new record count for us anyway. Amongst these gulls were at least 10 Common Gulls and a single Lesser Black Backed Gull. I couldn't find a Mediterranean Gull in this lot but it's worth looking every time – we will get one soon!

Walking around the back of the lake, Robins, Blue Tits, Great Tits and Long Tailed Tits were all singing and active in the bushes together with a single Chaffinch and a couple of Goldfinches. We did not add any more species to the list until we passed the pillbox and walked back into the main field where a male Sparrowhawk flew overhead giving fairly good views. A Cormorant also flew very high over the field here. Then a flock of around 12 Redwing surprised us flying off from the mound. We also saw another Squirrel here. Back at the pavilion a little Wren was in the garden and we spotted a Pied Wagtail on the road. The final addition to the list were a few Starlings in their usual place near the main gates. Overall, a really good day with lots of common birds seen and very good views of Green Woodpeckers and Sparrowhawk.

Birds – 26 Species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Date	Total Count
Black-headed Gull	Chroicocephalus ridibundus	19/01/2021	185
Canada Goose	Branta canadensis	19/01/2021	8
Carrion Crow	Corvus corone	19/01/2021	8
Common Blackbird	Turdus merula	19/01/2021	8
Common Chaffinch	Fringilla coelebs	19/01/2021	1
Common Gull (Mew Gull)	Larus canus	19/01/2021	10
Common Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus	19/01/2021	2
Common Starling	Sturnus vulgaris	19/01/2021	5
Common Wood Pigeon	Columba palumbus	19/01/2021	3
Eurasian Blue Tit	Cyanistes caeruleus	19/01/2021	15
Eurasian Coot	Fulica atra	19/01/2021	2
Eurasian Jay	Garrulus glandarius	19/01/2021	1
Eurasian Magpie	Pica pica	19/01/2021	8
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	Accipiter nisus	19/01/2021	1
Eurasian Wren (British)	Troglodytes troglodytes indigenus	19/01/2021	1
European Goldfinch	Carduelis carduelis	19/01/2021	2
European Green Woodpecker	Picus viridis	19/01/2021	4
European Robin	Erithacus rubecula	19/01/2021	12
Great Cormorant	Phalacrocorax carbo	19/01/2021	1
Great Tit	Parus major	19/01/2021	7
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Larus fuscus	19/01/2021	1
Long-tailed Tit	Aegithalos caudatus	19/01/2021	19
Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	19/01/2021	5
Redwing	Turdus iliacus	19/01/2021	16
Stock Dove	Columba oenas	19/01/2021	2
White Wagtail (Pied)	Motacilla alba yarrellii	19/01/2021	1

Mammals – 1 Species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Date	Total Count
Eastern Grey Squirrel	Sciurus carolinensis	19/01/2021	2

Walk schedule for 2021

(Although when we can actually meet up again is uncertain at this stage)

Wednesday 17th February

Wednesday 17th March

Wednesday 21st April

Wednesday 19th May

Wednesday 16th June

Wednesday 21st July

Wednesday 18th August

Wednesday 15th September

Wednesday 20th October

Wednesday 17th November

Wednesday 15th December

At present, March looks like the earliest possible date for a re-start but all we can do is wait and see. Anyway, these dates are in my diary and we will see how things progress.

Hope to see you all soon.

Regards

Martin