

Wick Country Park – Wildlife Sightings – 2022

Introduction

Starting in 2020, it was decided to carry out a monthly wildlife walk in the Wick County Park, generally on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, depending on weather, holidays etc. The aims of the walk are:

1. To enjoy the park, it's wildlife and get some fresh air.
2. To record and count the wildlife we see/hear, namely: birds, butterflies, dragonflies, mammals and anything else of note, e.g. moths and reptiles.
3. To gain a greater understanding of what wildlife lives in and/or uses the park, and monitor any changes in their populations.
4. To promote the wildlife of the park to the Friends and general public via the Website and Facebook etc.

Methodology

We will walk roughly the same route each month, covering the most likely wildlife friendly habitats of the park. The number of each individual species seen or heard is recorded to gain some idea of abundance/population. We will also attempt to record whether a species is breeding in the park.

As you will all realise, it is impossible to count 100% of any of the wildlife in the park but over time, by carrying out a regular count, we will be able to record most of the wildlife that exists in the park and get a rough estimate of their numbers. However, for some species, e.g. nocturnal species, a more targeted approach may be needed, i.e. specific night time walks or events. One such event is the annual "moth night", which began in 2021 and we now have records of the species identified at this event. We have also held evening bat watches and a wildlife picnic.

Reporting

Each month, an email report will be issued, recording the wildlife identified that month. Then at the end of the year, an annual report will be issued. This report will compare year to year, highlighting any noticeable differences between the years.

All bird records will be sent to the Essex Bird Recorder, as part of the wider monitoring of UK bird populations. Similarly, all butterfly, moth and dragonfly records will be sent to the Essex recorders for these orders of insects. Mammals have not been included in this process at the moment, mainly because we see so few, but this may be something to consider in the future, especially in respect of bat species.

Species Recorded in 2022

Below are the detailed lists of all the wildlife seen/heard during 2022, compared to the 2021 details set alongside.

Birds 2022 – 56 Species

Summary of Birds recorded in WCP - 2022							
Number of Species	56	Visits	13				
		2022			2021		
Common Name	Scientific Name	Max Day Count	No of Sightings	% of Visits	Max Day Count	No of Sightings	% of Visits
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica	15	5	38%	12	4	33%
Black-headed Gull	Chroicocephalus ridibundus	65	10	77%	300	9	75%
Canada Goose	Branta canadensis	19	8	62%	52	9	75%
Carrion Crow	Corvus corone	16	13	100%	10	12	100%

Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	0	0	0%	2	2	17%
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	9	10	77%	10	10	83%
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	1	1	8%	0	0	0%
Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	2	3	23%	3	3	25%
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	6	7	54%	4	4	33%
Common Gull (Mew Gull)	<i>Larus canus</i>	1	1	8%	10	2	17%
Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	2	2	15%	30	3	25%
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	0	0	0%	1	2	17%
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	1	1	8%	0	0	0%
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	8	13	100%	8	12	100%
Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	0	0	0%	1	1	8%
Common Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	6	5	38%	6	5	42%
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1	1	8%	0	0	0%
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	15	7	54%	42	9	75%
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	2	2	15%	5	1	8%
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	1	2	15%	0	0	0%
Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	3	3	23%	3	3	25%
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	25	13	100%	52	12	100%
Duncock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	4	8	62%	5	5	42%
Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	8	7	54%	6	4	33%
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	14	12	92%	35	12	100%
Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	1	1	8%	0	0	0%
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	4	7	54%	3	5	42%
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	5	11	85%	5	11	92%
Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	2	8	62%	3	4	33%
Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	16	13	100%	12	12	100%
Eurasian Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	3	1	8%	0	0	0%
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	1	1	8%	0	0	0%
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	0	0	0%	1	4	33%
Eurasian Wren (British)	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes indigenus</i>	6	8	62%	8	10	83%
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	14	12	92%	27	11	92%
European Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	5	5	38%	4	5	42%
European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	7	5	38%	1	1	8%
European Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	4	9	69%	20	1	8%
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	17	12	92%	23	12	100%
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	1	1	8%	2	1	8%

Goldcrest	Regulus regulus	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Great Cormorant	Phalacrocorax carbo	6	1	8%	3	3	25%
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Dendrocopos major	1	2	15%	3	3	25%
Great Tit	Parus major	6	6	46%	9	8	67%
Grey Heron	Ardea cinerea	2	1	8%	1	2	17%
Greylag Goose	Anser anser	3	1	8%	2	1	8%
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus	6	3	23%	9	6	50%
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Larus fuscus	1	3	23%	6	4	33%
Lesser Whitethroat	Sylvia curruca	2	4	31%	0	0	0%
Little Egret	Egretta garzetta	0	0	0%	1	1	8%
Little Grebe	Tachybaptus ruficollis	0	0	0%	1	1	8%
Long-tailed Tit	Aegithalos caudatus	22	9	69%	19	6	50%
Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	12	9	69%	8	12	100%
Mute Swan	Cygnus olor	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Northern Lapwing	Vanellus vanellus	4	1	8%	0	0	0%
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus	2	1	8%	0	0	0%
Redwing	Turdus iliacus	30	2	15%	16	3	25%
Rock Dove (Feral)	Columba livia 'feral'	15	3	23%	3	1	8%
Rook	Corvus frugilegus	20	1	8%	11	1	8%
Sedge Warbler	Acrocephalus schoenobaenus	0	0	0%	1	1	8%
Song Thrush	Turdus philomelos	3	4	31%	1	3	25%
Spotted Flycatcher	Muscicapa striata	1	1	8%	0	0	0%
Stock Dove	Columba oenas	3	2	15%	3	4	33%
Tufted Duck	Aythya fuligula	0	0	0%	2	1	8%
Western Jackdaw	Coloeus monedula	3	1	8%	6	1	8%
White Wagtail (Pied)	Motacilla alba yarrellii	2	2	15%	1	1	8%
Yellowhammer	Emberiza citrinella	2	1	8%	0	0	0%

Including the wildlife picnic, we recorded birds on 13 visits during 2022 and identified 56 bird species, which is an increase of 3 compared to 2021 and our highest annual total so far. It was also a good year for new birds added to the overall “park list”, with 10 new species added! These were: Common Buzzard, Common Kingfisher, Common Snipe, Common Tern, Eurasian Bullfinch, Eurasian Siskin, Northern Lapwing, Peregrine Falcon, Spotted Flycatcher, and Yellowhammer. Some of these were real surprises but others expected, and I will look at each of them now.

Common Buzzard – very surprised it has taken us this long to get a Buzzard on the list as they are quite common in the area but at long last, we have recorded one.

Common Kingfisher – a great sighting at the lake. Kingfishers have been seen very occasionally in the past and probably visit the lake and streams regularly. I suspect the fishermen get more sightings being sat still in one place for many hours.

Common Snipe – a big surprise and something I would never have expected. During the December cold spell when many waters were frozen, wading birds such as Snipe must have been moving around looking for feeding areas. This one was feeding in the long grass at the bottom of a tree. A great sighting for the park.

Common Tern – Common Terns have regularly been seen fishing the lake but not on our visits until this year. Lovely birds and great watching them catch fish from the lake.

Eurasian Bullfinch – I suspect we have at least one pair of Bullfinches in the park and many sightings have been reported. However, only this year have we caught up with them on our walks, although I am still waiting for a decent view!

Eurasian Siskin – another bird that is seen in the park annually, usually during April migration, that we finally caught up with. A nice little bird that will be feeding in the alders along the boardwalk, when it is here.

Northern Lapwing – a bit surprised that we haven't seen Lapwings before now, but these were seen overhead in December. As with the Snipe, they were probably looking for ice free water during the cold spell.

Peregrine Falcon – these falcons have been breeding in Wickford for a few years now so could become a fairly regular sighting. Two were heard and then seen overhead displaying “claw to claw”. An exciting bird for the park list but the pigeons will not think that.

Spotted Flycatcher – a big surprise sighting of a much declined UK and Essex bird. This bird was feeding in the hedgerows with a flock of Goldfinch and will have been on migration south from its breeding ground further north. First one I have ever seen in Wickford.

Yellowhammer – two birds were seen overhead in February. Yellowhammers are present in the Dollymans Farm area, which is adjacent to the park, and also breed in Wickford along the river crouch towards Battlesbridge. We can probably expect to see them occasionally in the park.

Looking at comparisons between 2021 and 2022, I have a few observations for some species. **Canada Goose** numbers were down on 2021 and on some visits there were no Canada Geese at the lake. Where they go and why we will perhaps never know. Is it all the disturbance at the lake or the low water levels during the drought, or some other factors we are totally unaware of? We will see what happens in 2023. Numbers of **Common Chiffchaff**, saw a small increase and they were present in the park for longer than 2021. This is mirrored in the rest of the UK, with many now over-wintering here. Possibly a winner in respect of climate change. Sadly, **Common House Martin** show no sign of recovery. We only saw them on 2 occasions last year both involving just 2 birds. There used to be a large colony at Fanton Hall in previous years, but I am not sure this still exists. **Common Swift** is also struggling and as per Common House Martin, we only saw them on 2 occasions in 2022, involving 2 birds on each. However, my local Shotgate birds seem to be increasing, so perhaps all is not lost. Similar to Common Chiffchaff, another short distance migrating warbler, the **Eurasian Blackcap** seems to be doing well in the park, with numbers slightly up on 2021 and again staying longer in the park than in previous years. This species also now over-winters in the UK. The **European Greenfinch** is thankfully showing some signs of recovery from the terrible disease that much reduced its numbers. We saw a high of 7 birds on one visit compared to just 1 single bird in the whole of 2021. Let's hope this trend continues. Sadly, its cousin the **Common Chaffinch** continues to struggle with few birds seen in 2022. It looks like a long struggle ahead for this species. 2022 saw a welcome return of the **Lesser Whitethroat** with at least 2 birds present for at least 4 months. Hopefully, they successfully bred last year. And finally, one of my favourites, the Song Thrush, looks to be doing well in the park with numbers slightly up on 2021. A lovely bird and a great singer.

You may recall that in last year's report I estimated that around 22/23 bird species were breeding in the park but with nearly 70 species now recorded in the park what do the rest of them use the park for? Some species breed in the area and use the park for feeding, e.g., House Sparrow, Starling, and Common Tern. Some are winter visitors e.g., Redwing, Fieldfare, and the large mixed flocks of gulls around the lake. We will also have Blackbirds and Robins coming here in winter from Northern Europe. We also have birds using the park as a feeding station on their migrations North and South e.g., Siskins and Spotted Flycatcher. We can now also add another category, using the park as a refuge during bad weather e.g., Common Snipe. So, the park is used in many ways by lots of bird species and in my view is much more important than we realise.

Finally, here is the total summary of all the birds seen in the park over the last 3 years:

Total Summary of Birds recorded in WCP - All Years				
Number of Species	68	Visits	36	
Common Name	Scientific Name	Max Day Count	No of Sightings	% of Visits
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica	15	13	36%
Black-headed Gull	Chroicocephalus ridibundus	300	30	83%

Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	52	28	78%
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	16	36	100%
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	2	3	8%
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	10	28	78%
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	1	1	3%
Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	3	9	25%
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	6	16	44%
Common Gull (Mew Gull)	<i>Larus canus</i>	10	5	14%
Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	30	7	19%
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1	3	8%
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	1	1	3%
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	8	35	97%
Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	1	1	3%
Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	1	1	3%
Common Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	6	13	36%
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1	1	3%
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	42	26	72%
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	11	6	17%
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	1	2	6%
Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	5	9	25%
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	52	36	100%
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	5	18	50%
Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	8	14	39%
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	35	35	97%
Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	1	1	3%
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	8	16	44%
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	5	31	86%
Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	4	14	39%
Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	16	36	100%
Eurasian Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	3	1	3%
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	1	2	6%
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	1	5	14%
Eurasian Wren (British)	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes indigenus</i>	10	25	69%
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	27	33	92%
European Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	5	17	47%
European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	7	12	33%
European Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	20	15	42%
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	23	35	97%
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	30	3	8%
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	1	1	3%
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	6	6	17%
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	3	7	19%
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	9	21	58%
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	3	4	11%
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	3	4	11%
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	9	13	36%

Lesser Black-backed Gull	Larus fuscus	6	9	25%
Lesser Whitethroat	Sylvia curruca	2	6	17%
Little Egret	Egretta garzetta	1	1	3%
Little Grebe	Tachybaptus ruficollis	1	1	3%
Long-tailed Tit	Aegithalos caudatus	22	22	61%
Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	12	31	86%
Mute Swan	Cygnus olor	1	1	3%
Northern Lapwing	Vanellus vanellus	4	1	3%
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus	2	1	3%
Redwing	Turdus iliacus	40	6	17%
Rock Dove (Feral)	Columba livia 'feral'	15	6	17%
Rook	Corvus frugilegus	20	3	8%
Sedge Warbler	Acrocephalus schoenobaenus	1	1	3%
Song Thrush	Turdus philomelos	3	12	33%
Spotted Flycatcher	Muscicapa striata	1	1	3%
Stock Dove	Columba oenas	3	8	22%
Tufted Duck	Aythya fuligula	3	2	6%
Western Jackdaw	Coloeus monedula	21	3	8%
White Wagtail (Pied)	Motacilla alba yarrellii	2	3	8%
Yellowhammer	Emberiza citrinella	2	1	3%

Our list is now up to 68, which is very much more than I imagined when we started this off. Of course, it will get more difficult each year to add new birds to the list and I doubt very much that we will add as many as 10 new birds again but the joy of doing these walks is that you never know what might turn up.

The list above shows the largest daily count of birds seen during all of our walks and the number of times that species has been seen. The percentages can be viewed as the likelihood of seeing that species on a visit to the park, although the seasons need to be taken into consideration here as many of the birds will only be seen at certain times of year e.g., Common Whitethroat has been seen on 25% of our walks but in winter the likelihood of seeing this bird will be nil as it's a summer migrant.

Butterflies – 19 Species

Summary of Butterflies recorded in WCP - 2022							
Number of Species	19	Visits	11				
				2022		2021	
Common Name	Scientific Name	Max Day Count	No of Sightings	% Sightings	Max Day Count	No of Sightings	% Sightings
Brimstone	Gonepteryx rhamni	2	1	9%	1	1	8%
Brown Argus	Aricia agestis	0	0	0%	3	1	8%
Comma Butterfly	Polygonia c-album	5	3	27%	3	2	17%
Common Blue	Polyommatus icarus	3	2	18%	2	2	17%
Essex Skipper	Thymelicus lineola	0	0	0%	6	2	17%
Gatekeeper	Pyronia tithonus	122	2	18%	13	2	17%
Green-veined White	Artogeia napi	1	1	9%	5	1	8%
Holly Blue	Celastrina argiolus	5	3	27%	1	1	8%
Large Skipper	Ochlodes venatus	1	1	9%	3	1	8%

Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	5	4	36%	10	4	33%
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	8	1	9%	17	1	8%
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	55	3	27%	135	4	33%
Orange Tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>	3	1	9%	1	1	8%
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	1	1	9%	0	0	0%
Peacock Butterfly	<i>Inachis io</i>	6	2	18%	2	3	25%
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	2	3	27%	3	2	17%
Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>	0	0	0%	2	1	8%
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	2	1	9%	2	1	8%
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	2	1	9%	6	2	17%
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>	5	2	18%	1	3	25%
Small White	<i>Artogeia rapae</i>	7	2	18%	25	4	33%
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>	6	6	55%	9	6	50%
White-letter Hairstreak	<i>Strymonidia w-album</i>	0	0	0%	2	1	8%

We saw 19 species of butterfly in 2022 compared to 22 in 2021. Just one new species was added this year, a very shabby looking Painted Lady very early in the year, that had somehow over-wintered in the UK. We missed a few species this year that we have seen in the past and sadly this included the Brown Argus. This is a very small butterfly and could easily be missed. We also did not identify an Essex Skipper, although we probably saw a few of them – a tricky species unless you get a good look at their antennae. Ringlet and Small Copper are two others we missed, the latter for the last 2 years. Finally, we did not go looking for the White-letter Hairstreak this year but surely, we will catch up with this in the park someday.

In respect of numbers, Gatekeeper were present in very large numbers this year, while Meadow Brown numbers were down on 2021. These are the most abundant butterflies in the park and great to see in the summer months. Speckled Wood is the butterfly you are most likely to see in the park, especially in shaded areas behind the lake, where it is present for more than half of the year.

Our overall total for the park is now 24 – see below:

Total Summary of Butterflies recorded in WCP - All Years				
Number of Species	24	Visits	34	
Common Name	Scientific Name	Max Day Count	No of Sightings	% Sightings
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	2	3	9%
Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>	3	2	6%
Comma Butterfly	<i>Polygonia c-album</i>	5	6	18%
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	6	7	21%
Essex Skipper	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>	6	3	9%
Gatekeeper	<i>Pyronia tithonus</i>	122	6	18%
Green-veined White	<i>Artogeia napi</i>	6	6	18%
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	5	6	18%
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes venatus</i>	3	3	9%
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	23	11	32%
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	17	4	12%

Meadow Brown	Maniola jurtina	135	10	29%
Orange Tip	Anthocharis cardamines	3	3	9%
Painted Lady	Vanessa cardui	1	1	3%
Peacock Butterfly	Inachis io	6	7	21%
Red Admiral	Vanessa atalanta	3	6	18%
Ringlet	Aphantopus hyperantus	6	2	6%
Small Copper	Lycaena phlaeas	2	1	3%
Small Heath	Coenonympha pamphilus	2	2	6%
Small Skipper	Thymelicus sylvestris	6	5	15%
Small Tortoiseshell	Aglais urticae	5	6	18%
Small White	Artogeia rapae	25	10	29%
Speckled Wood	Pararge aegeria	9	17	50%
White-letter Hairstreak	Strymonidia w-album	2	1	3%

I am hoping that one day we will get a colony of Purple Hairstreak in one of the oaks and we will get a Clouded Yellow one year (I have seen one in the park in the past) and we will see what 2023 brings.

Dragonflies – 6 Species

Summary of Dragonflies/Damselflies recorded in WCP - 2022					
Number of Species	6				
		2022		2021	
Common Name	Scientific Name	Max Day Count	No of Sightings	Max Day Count	No of Sightings
Azure Damselfly	Coenagrion puella	1	2	0	0
Black-tailed Skimmer	Orthetrum cancellatum	4	1	7	1
Blue-tailed Damselfly	Ischnura elegans	7	3	4	2
Brown Hawker	Aeshna grandis	0	0	1	2
Common Blue Damselfly	Enallagma cyathigerum	0	0	10	2
Common Darter	Sympetrum striolatum	3	1	5	2
Emperor (Blue) Dragonfly	Anax imperator	0	0	1	1
Large Red-eyed Damselfly	Erythromma najas	0	0	3	1
Migrant Hawker	Aeshna mixta	3	2	5	2
Willow Emerald	Chalcolestes viridis	2	2	0	0

Only 6 species were recorded in 2022 but this included 2 new species for the park list, both damselflies. **Azure Damselfly** will be breeding here but is tricky to separate from Common Blue so has remained off the list until this year. The **Willow Emerald** is a recent colonist from Europe and is rapidly expanding in the UK. Having seen several in the area, it was great to finally catch up with this one.

We now have a total of 10 species seen in the park, but I think we are still missing a few that breed in the park/area, e.g., Banded Demoiselle and Large Red Damselfly, and hopefully we will add some more new species in 2023.

Mammals – 3 Species

Summary of Mammals recorded in WCP - 2022					
Number of Species	3				
		2022		2021	
Common Name	Scientific Name	Max Day Count	No of Sightings	Max Day Count	No of Sightings
Common Pipistrelle	Pipistrellus pipistrellus	27	1	1	1
Red Fox	Vulpes vulpes	0	0	3	1
Eastern Grey Squirrel	Sciurus carolinensis	2	2	2	4
Soprano Pipistrelle	Pipistrellus pygmaeus	2	1	0	0

No new mammals were added to the list during 2022. The highlight was the Bat Night in early August where we identified a very large number of Common Pipistrelle feeding over the lake and along the hedgerows. I am sure other bats are present in the park and we could identify these someday. I am surprised that we have not seen a Hedgehog yet but perhaps there is just too much disturbance for them, even during the night!

Our total remains at just 4 and unless we do something drastic, such as setting traps for small mammals, the total will only increase slowly. Next year we will hold another bat night/evening walk and perhaps we will also see/hear mammals during the moth night.

Moths – 12 Species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Date	Count	Sighting	Status
Anania crocealis	Anania crocealis	01/07/2022	1	1	Adult
Bright-line Brown-eye	Lacanobia oleracea	01/07/2022	1	1	Adult
Buff Ermine	Spilosoma luteum	01/07/2022	1	1	Adult
Common Emerald	Hemithea aestivaria	01/07/2022	1	1	Adult
Common Footman	Eilema lurideola	01/07/2022	2	1	Adult
Common Rustic	Mesapamea secalis	01/07/2022	1	1	Adult
Common Wainscot	Mythimna pallens	01/07/2022	2	1	Adult
Heart And Dart	Agrotis exclamationis	01/07/2022	1	1	Adult
Lunar-spotted Pinion	Cosmia pyralina	01/07/2022	1	1	Adult
Marbled Minor	Oligia strigilis	11/06/2022	1	1	Adult
The Magpie	Abraxas grossulariata	01/07/2022	1	1	Adult
The Spectacle	Abrostola tripartita	01/07/2022	1	1	Adult
				12	

We identified 11 moth species during our moth night, despite the cold weather on the night, and a moth landed on a beer bottle during our spring picnic (Marbled Minor)! Our total list now stands at 33 species. There will be many more species present in the park – if we get the right weather for the moth night the results could be spectacular. Thanks again to Colin for bringing along all the equipment for the moth night and we will try again in 2023.

Additional Targeted Visits

In addition to the monthly walks, the following will take place in 2023:

1. **Moth Night.** This has become a successful and entertaining event and will continue in 2023 – Friday 30th June has been pencilled in. We will also do some star gazing.

2. **Bat Watch/Night Walk.** We will go on an evening walk sometime early August as per last year to test out our bat detectors and ID skills!
3. **Late Spring Picnic.** This was a very pleasant day, despite the gale force wind and a few birds and butterflies were seen, together with a new moth. The plan is to sit by the lake for a couple of hours and see what happens. A similar event will be held in 2023.

The dates for these events will be confirmed by me and displayed on the website.

Recap 2022

Yet another successful year of wildlife walks and we have seen lots of fabulous creatures in the park. It was a year of surprises, and my favourite moments were:

1. Seeing a Spotted Flycatcher in the park. This is a bird of western oak woods and to see one here on our doorstep was great.
2. A Kingfisher at the lake - fantastic. Would love to see this more regularly.
3. Finally, seeing Common Tern fishing the lake and getting some half decent photos.
4. Seeing the Willow Emerald at long last.

I hope we can see similar things in 2023 and looking forward to seeing you all during the year.

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