

Wildlife Walk – February 2022

Our second wildlife walk of the year took place on February 16th 2022 at the Park. While we had brilliant, warm and bright sunshine, it was very windy indeed and this probably put off many small birds, but we did see some good wildlife on the walk. Robins were very active, heard singing and seen in several places. It is possible that Robins may have already started breeding in this mild weather – I recall hearing of Robin chicks being seen in March last year - so we may see some evidence of this next month! We also had our first butterfly of the year, a Red Admiral flying along doing its best to look like a leaf in the wind. Canada Geese are back at the lake, although only 2 present at the moment. There is also a large flock of Black Headed Gulls in the Park and some are starting to gain their summer plumage. Very pleasing also to hear 2 Song Thrushes singing in the Park, another early breeder, and you should hear their song for the next few months. We also added a new bird to the Park list, the Yellowhammer. Sadly, views were not great with 2 birds flying overhead and not landing as we were walking behind the large mound. In addition, we saw a flock of around 10 finch-like birds fly over near the pavilion pond that were too fast in the wind to identify I would guess at Linnet as they seemed to be larger than Goldfinch, but not a positive ID. Finally, the Park is really wet and muddy after all the recent rain and wellies are recommended for anyone walking over there. Details of our sightings are below:

Birds: 17 species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Date	Total Count	Notes
Black-headed Gull	Chroicocephalus ridibundus	16/02/2022	65	Two distinct flocks, one in the fields along the road to the car park and one at the lake.
Canada Goose	Branta canadensis	16/02/2022	2	A welcome return for 2 birds at the lake
Carrion Crow	Corvus corone	16/02/2022	5	Usual birds flying around the park
Common Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus	16/02/2022	2	At the lake
Common Starling	Sturnus vulgaris	16/02/2022	12	2 near park gates, 6 over car park, 6 more near the pavilion
Common Wood Pigeon	Columba palumbus	16/02/2022	7	The lowest count for a few months - perhaps sheltering from the wind
Dunnock	Prunella modularis	16/02/2022	1	One singing in the hedges near the bridge
Eurasian Blue Tit	Cyanistes caeruleus	16/02/2022	5	A few singing in the hedges
Eurasian Coot	Fulica atra	16/02/2022	2	At the lake
Eurasian Magpie	Pica pica	16/02/2022	5	A few around the park
Eurasian Wren	Troglodytes troglodytes	16/02/2022	2	One singing near the teasel field and another near the large mound
European Goldfinch	Carduelis carduelis	16/02/2022	3	3 seen in the hedges approaching the large oak
European Robin	Erithacus rubecula	16/02/2022	13	Several seen and heard - very active today.
Great Tit	Parus major	16/02/2022	2	One heard from the boardwalk and another near the large mound
Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	16/02/2022	1	Just one resting at the back of the lake
Song Thrush	Turdus philomelos	16/02/2022	2	Nice to hear one in the far corner at the very back of the lake and another at the back of the large mound
Yellowhammer	Emberiza citrinella	16/02/2022	2	2 flew over at the back of the large mound. Very nice to add to the Park list.

Butterflies: 1 species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Date	Total Count	Notes
Red Admiral	Vanessa atalanta	16/02/2022	1	Seen flying along the hedgerow from the bridge to the large oak

Just a reminder of the remaining dates for the walks this year:

March – 16th

April – 20th

May – 18th

June – 15th

July – 20th

August – 17th

September – 21st

October – 19th

November – 16th

December – 14th

All starting at 10.30am from the Pavilion car park. Please note these dates in your diaries but as usual I will confirm by email / WhatsApp whether the walks will go ahead depending on weather etc.

Finally, dates have been agreed for other wildlife events e.g. Moth Night but a separate email will be issued confirming these.

The dates are also available on the [Friends of the Wick Country Park Website](#).

Martin Singleton