

Checklist of the Birds of Donington and Albrighton Nature Reserve



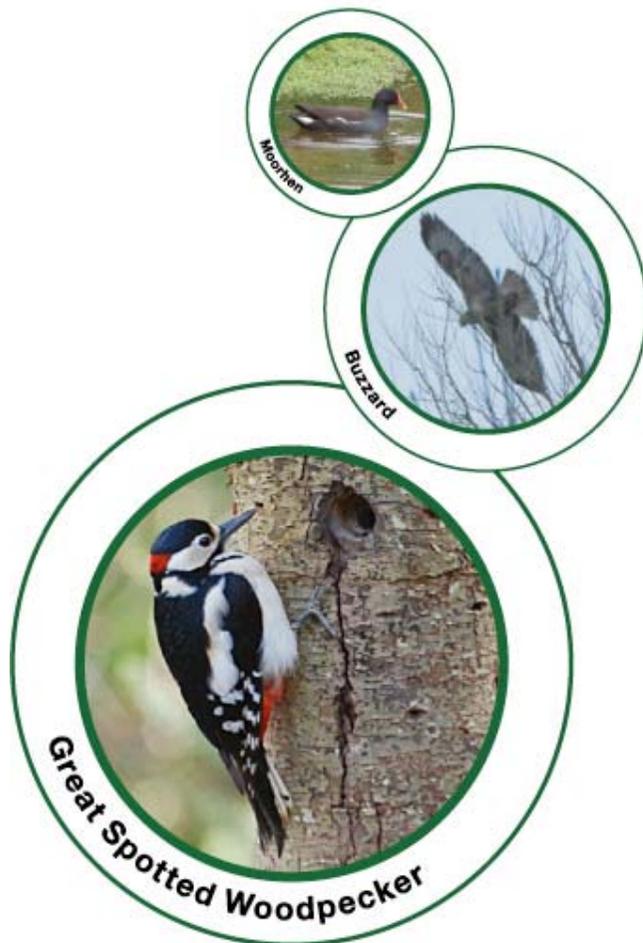
Introduction

This checklist was originally drawn-up in August 2011 in order to help inform the planning process for the Nature Reserve Management Plan for 2011 – 2016. The species summaries given here are largely based on:

- a) personal observations and experience of the area since 1982.
- b) observations gained from other reputable local amateur ornithologists.
- c) records published in a simple checklist form, (i.e. with no additional details), as part of the first Nature Reserve Management Plan in July 2000. These records will be referred to in the present document by the code 'NRMP 2000 '

The Donington and Albrighton Nature Reserve bird list currently stands at 97 *species*, of which about 30 have been recorded as breeding. Although none of these are especially rare, the presence of all three British woodpeckers is of some interest and also a range of birds of prey. In addition, there can be very few places within Shropshire which has such a diversity of bird life in a comparatively restricted area and which is at the same time very close to an urban centre.

Ken Chapman, Albrighton, April 2012



Full Species List



Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*): very occasional visitor in winter to Donington Pool.

Lesser White-fronted Goose

(*Anser erythropus*): has occurred, but as an 'escape' from wildfowl collections. (NRMP 2000)

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*):

no resident birds but individuals or small groups can turn up on Donington Pool at almost any time of the year, though rarely remaining for any length of time

Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*):

has occurred, but very infrequently, and almost certainly in the form of 'escapes' from waterfowl collections and associating with Canada Geese.

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*):

all year round resident; several pairs breed every year. Hybridises freely with other ducks on the Pool, so 'pure' Mallards are almost the exception.

Common Teal (*Anas crecca*):

recorded in NRMP 2000, presumably as a very scarce winter visitor to the Pool

Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*):

has occurred, but very rarely, and almost certainly as an 'escape' from waterfowl collections (e.g. December 1988)

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*):

occasional winter visitor to the Pool

Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris rufa*):

Scarce resident in the area and occasional birds stray onto the reserve from adjacent farmland

Common Pheasant

(*Phasianus colchicus*): Resident and breeds in some years.

Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*):

occasional winter visitor to the Pool in very small numbers.

Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*):

recorded in NRMP 2000, presumably as a very infrequent winter visitor to the Pool

Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*):

regular visitor in all months of the year, preferring the quieter stretches of the Humphreston Brook upstream from the Pool

Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*):

becoming more common nationally and in recent years has been seen in the Albrighton district, over-flying the Reserve area on at least one occasion.

Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*):

from its previous rare status, within the last fifteen years has become a common local sight, though less so in the Winter. Birds regularly use the trees on the Reserve as a day-time or night-time roost. Has bred very close to the Reserve but no confirmed breeding records within the Reserve as yet.

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Eurasian Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*):

Resident - as with Common Buzzard, has become much more regularly seen, but more often in Winter than at other seasons. Breeding has been confirmed within the Reserve itself – e.g. adults feeding young Spring 2011

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*):

a very rare visitor from more suitable breeding localities in the wider area. Just one or two records within the last ten years, of over-flying individual birds.

Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*):

Resident in the general area, but much less common recently than in the past, reflecting national trends. Has bred within the Reserve. Occasional birds seen passing over.

Eurasian Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*):

Summer migrant – regular records of odd individual birds. Not known to breed in the immediate area, but it is possible that this increasingly common bird might do so in the future.

Water Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*):

recorded in NRMP 2000, presumably as a very scarce winter visitor

Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*):

Resident in small numbers around the Pool and the Humphreston Brook. Breeds – several pairs.

Eurasian Coot (*Fulica atra*):

Resident in small numbers on the Pool – one or two pairs only. Breeds most years.

European Golden Plover

(*Pluvialis apricaria*): listed in NRMP 2000, probably only as a 'fly-over' from wintering flock on nearby Cosford airfield.

Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*):

listed in NRMP 2000, probably as a 'fly-over' from wintering flocks in the local area.

Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*):

listed in NRMP 2000, probably as a scarce winter visitor to the Pool margins or damp meadow area.

Black-headed Gull

(*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*): familiar Winter visitor in small numbers, scavenging bread intended for the ducks on the Pool.

Common Gull (*Larus canus*):

listed in NRMP 2000. Status as for Black-headed Gull, but much more scarce.

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*):

listed in NRMP 2000. A very occasional winter visitor to the Pool.

Lesser Black Backed Gull

(*Larus fuscus*): occasional visitor to the Pool in Winter

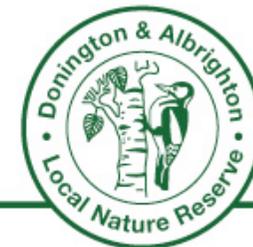
Feral Pigeon (*Columba livia*):

occasional visitor, especially in Winter

Stock Dove (*Columba oenas*):

resident in the area and occasional visitor to the Reserve from adjacent farmland

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Wood Pigeon (*Columba palumbus*):

familiar and common throughout the year, with largest numbers present in Winter roosts. Breeds – several pairs.

Eurasian Collared Dove

(*Streptopelia decaocto*): familiar and common throughout the year, preferring the margins of the Reserve bordering gardens on the Albrighton side. Breeds.

European Turtle Dove

(*Streptopelia turtur*): listed in NRMP 2000, but has become nationally very scarce, with no recent records for the Reserve.

Common Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*):

Scarce Summer visitor. Much less common nationally than in past years but calling birds recorded annually in very small numbers.

Tawny Owl (*Strix aluco*):

Previously a resident breeder within the Reserve though numbers seem to fluctuate from year to year. Has apparently been absent in recent years (2010 to present)?

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*):

Resident - has bred near to the Reserve in recent years and may visit the Reserve margins to hunt.

Little Owl (*Athene noctua*):

listed in NRMP 2000, but no further details available. No recent records.

Common Swift (*Apus apus*):

Summer visitor. Breeds in increasingly small numbers in Albrighton and Donington and small parties feed on insects over the Pool and neighbouring Reserve woodland on Summer evenings.

Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*):

an infrequent Winter visitor to the Pool and Humphreston Brook. (e.g. one reported by workmen, February 2012)

Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*):

Resident in the area, using local pastures to hunt for ants and other insects. May breed within the Reserve boundaries in some years.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

(*Dendrocopus major*): Resident and breeds – perhaps one or two pairs each year.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

(*Dendrocopus minor*): Resident. An elusive bird which is becoming nationally very scarce, but which is present on the Reserve, relying on the presence of the many old, dead or dying trees. The Reserve is thus one of the few places in the country where all three British woodpeckers occur.

Common Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*):

listed in NRMP 2000, probably as a 'fly-over' or very occasional visitor to the grassed area of the Reserve, in Winter.

Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*):

scarce visitor in Summer, feeding on insects over the Pool.

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*):

scarce visitor in Summer, feeding on insects over the Pool.

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House Martin (*Delichon urbica*):

Summer visitor. Small and declining numbers breed in scattered colonies in Albrighton village. Birds use the Reserve for feeding on insects and perhaps for gathering mud for their nests.

Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*):

listed in NRMP 2000, probably as a scarce winter visitor to St. Cuthbert's Meadow

Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*):

most often noted in the Winter around the Pool margins. Breeds locally.

Yellow Wagtail

(*Motacilla flava flavissima*): listed in NRMP 2000, presumably as a very scarce Summer visitor or migrant.

Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*):

occasional wandering birds visit the Brook and Pool in late-Autumn and Winter

White-throated Dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*):

occasional wandering birds have been recorded along the Humphreston Brook in past Winters , but no recent records.

Dunnock (Hedge Accentor)

(*Prunella modularis*): common resident. Breeds.

European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*):

common resident. Breeds.

Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*):

scarce resident. Perhaps one or two pairs only.

Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*):

visitor in small numbers in Winter, though larger numbers may be seen over-flying the Reserve.

Mistle Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*):

scarce resident. Perhaps one or two pairs only.

Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*):

visitor in small numbers in Winter, though larger numbers may be seen over-flying the Reserve.

Common Blackbird (*Turdus merula*):

familiar and common breeding resident.

Common Redstart

(*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*):

listed in NRMP 2000, presumably as a scarce visitor or migrant on Spring or Autumn passage.

Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*):

listed in NRMP 2000, presumably as a scarce Summer migrant.

Blackcap (*Sylvia borin*):

Summer migrant which breeds in small numbers across the Reserve – possibly six to ten pairs.

Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca*):

listed in NRMP 2000, presumably as a scarce Spring or Autumn migrant

Common Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*):

Summer migrant. May breed in some years.

Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*):

Summer migrant. One or two pairs may breed in the woodland area of the Reserve.

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Common Chiffchaff

(*Phylloscopus collybita*): Summer migrant. A few pairs breed – more common than Willow Warbler.

Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*):

regularly seen in small numbers in Winter months especially in Yews alongside the Donington pool. May occasionally breed.

Eurasian Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*):

familiar and common resident. Breeds throughout the Reserve area.

Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*):

recorded in NRMP 2000, presumably as a scarce migrant in Spring or Autumn.

European Pied Flycatcher

(*Ficedula hypoleuca*): recorded in NRMP 2000, presumably as a very scarce migrant in Spring or Autumn.

Great Tit (*Parus major*):

familiar and common resident. Breeds throughout the reserve area – estimate 10 to 20 pairs.

Coal Tit (*Periparus ater*):

familiar resident in small numbers. Breeds in conifer-rich areas near the Pool and gardens adjacent to the Reserve - estimate 2 to 3 pairs.

Marsh Tit (*Poecile palustris*):

has occurred in the past but apparently no recent records

Willow Tit (*Poecile montanus*):

has occurred in the past but no recent records of this nationally declining species

Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*):

familiar and common resident. Breeds throughout the Reserve, often making use of nest-boxes – estimate 15 to 20 pairs.

Long-tailed Tit (*Aegithalos caedatus*):

resident and breeds in small numbers – perhaps only one or two pairs in most years.

Eurasian Nuthatch (*Sitta europea*):

resident – one or two pairs only. Preferred area is in the tops of the large trees around the Pool area.

Eurasian Treecreeper (*Certhia familiaris*):

resident in small numbers. Breeds – perhaps one to three pairs.

Common Magpie (*Pica pica*):

occurs especially on the Reserve margins, adjacent to local gardens.

Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*):

Autumn and Winter visitor to the wooded parts of the Reserve, but infrequent and in small numbers.

Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*):

Resident and breeds locally, sometimes using holes in old trees on the Reserve.

Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*):

resident in the area. Seen over-flying and occasionally feeding in St. Cuthbert's Meadow.

Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*):

Resident and breeds locally but rarely recorded from within the Reserve boundary.

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Common Raven (*Corvus corax*):

has become much more frequent in the area in recent years, reflecting national patterns of expansion. Regularly overflies the Reserve and has been seen to settle briefly in tall trees of the woodland area.

Common Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*):

Resident, but, in line with national patterns, is becoming a more uncommon bird. A few pairs may nest within the Reserve in old trees.

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*):

see Common Starling.

Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*):

recorded in NRMP 2000, presumably as a scarce winter visitor. No known recent records of a species which has become nationally very uncommon.

Common Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*):

Resident but much less widespread than in the past. One or two pairs probably breed and slightly larger numbers occur in Autumn and Winter.

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*):

recorded in NRMP 2000, presumably as a scarce winter visitor.

Common Redpoll (*Carduelis flammea*):

small to medium sized flocks occur in most Winters, the birds feeding on the seeds of Alders. So far, only the British race, *C.f.cabaret*, the Lesser Redpoll, has been identified amongst these flocks.

European Goldfinch

(*Carduelis carduelis*): mostly a Summer visitor in very small numbers. One or two pairs may breed.

Eurasian Siskin (*Carduelis spinus*):

Winter visitor in small numbers, feeding on Alder seeds. Less numerous than in the past.

European Greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*):

much less common than in recent years but a few birds are resident and breed.

European Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*):

a scarce and infrequent visitor, mostly in Winter

Common Reed Bunting

(*Emberiza schoeniclus*): recorded in NRMP 2000, presumably as a scarce winter visitor.

Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*):

recorded in NRMP 2000, probably as a winter visitor only. Suitable breeding habitat (tall hedgerows) does exist on the Reserve but there are no recent records of this nationally-declining species.

Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*):

recorded in NRMP 2000, probably as a scarce winter visitor. Has become a nationally very scarce farmland species.