

The Birds of Monkwood Green by Dr Christopher J Betts PhD FBNA MRSB MEnvSc

April 2026

This is a list of the avifauna I have recorded at Monkwood Green since 1985. There is considerable ornithological interest recorded on the Green, but I am sure there are other species that can be added to the list. Please let me know at christopherbetts@bettsecology.com if you have seen any on the Green.

| Scientific Name | Vernacular Name | Frequency | Notes |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|
| <i>Cygnus olor</i> | mute swan | Breed on the large north-western pond | Breeding recently has failed due to attacks by a dog or dogs. |
| <i>Anser anser</i> | greylag goose | Overflying regularly | I have never seen one land on the Green although I suspect the occasionally do. |
| <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> | mallard | Common breeding resident | Predation of ducklings is very high buy stoats, weasels, <i>etc.</i> |
| <i>Alectoris rufa</i> | red-legged or French partridge | Occasional visitor | May breed in the general area. |
| <i>Perdix perdix</i> | grey partridge | Has become uncommon but still seen occasionally | Breeds in the area |
| <i>Phasianus colchicus</i> | pheasant | Regular visitor | Bred for shooting and some always escape the guns. |
| <i>Lophura nychemera</i> | silver pheasant | I saw one in 2024/5 | Presumably an escapee. |
| <i>Ardea cinerea</i> | grey heron | Frequent visitor | Eats my goldfish! |
| <i>Milvus milvus</i> | red kite | Regularly seen | Seen overflying only |
| <i>Buteo buteo</i> | common buzzard | Frequent | Preys on rabbits, voles, <i>etc.</i> |
| <i>Accipiter nisus</i> | sparrowhawk | Fairly frequent | Have seen it catch small birds |
| <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> | goshawk | Occasionally seen at woodland edge | Nests in Monkwood |
| <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> | kestrel | Frequent | Often seen perched on the electricity wires watching for prey. |
| <i>Falco subbuteo</i> | hobby | Rare | I have seen one hunting along the boundary ditch along our drive. |
| <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> | moorhen | Regular visitors to the ponds | The breed in our garden at the edge of the Green most years. |
| <i>Fulica atra</i> | coot | Not as common as the moorhen but we see them in some years | I am not sure if they breed on the Green but there is no reason why not on the large pond. |
| <i>Scolopax rusticola</i> | woodcock | Only in passage on the Green | In Monkwood. |
| <i>Columba oenas</i> | stock dove | Occasional | In Monkwood. |
| <i>Columba palumbus</i> | wood pigeon | Common | Permanently present. |
| <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> | collared dove | Frequent | Often seen around the Green and on local roads. |
| <i>Streptopelia turtur</i> | turtle dove | We had these lovely birds on the Green every year in the 1980s/90s | No longer seen. |
| <i>Cuculus canorus</i> | cuckoo | Mainly at woodland edge | Rarer lately. |

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| <i>Strix aluco</i> | tawny owl | Common | Breed regularly in a large oak tree at edge of the Green. |
| <i>Tyto alba</i> | barn owl | Regular visitor | Often seen hunting over the Green. |
| <i>Athene noctua</i> | little owl | Typically perches on tall poles | Much less common now. |
| <i>Alcedo atthis</i> | kingfisher | Visits the Green's ponds | Common along local brooks. |
| <i>Picus viridis</i> | green woodpecker | Always around | They love the anthills. |
| <i>Dendrocopos major</i> | great spotted woodpecker | Common at residents' bird tables | They have nested in our garden. |
| <i>Dendrocopos minor</i> | lesser spotted woodpecker | Fairly regular visitor | Often unnoticed. |
| <i>Hirundo rustica</i> | barn swallow | Common until recently | Almost none seen in 2025. |
| <i>Delichon urbicum</i> | house martin | Common until recently | As swallow, none seen in 2025. |
| <i>Anthus pratensis</i> | meadow pipit | Occasionally seen | Probably frequent. |
| <i>Motacilla alba</i> | pieb wagtail | Frequent | Likes to hunt local roofs for insects. |
| <i>Motacilla flava</i> | yellow wagtail | Occasional | Not often seen. |
| <i>Erithacus rubecula</i> | robin | Very common | Always present. |
| <i>Prunella modularis</i> | dunnock | Very common | Numbers resident throughout the year. |
| <i>Turdus philomelos</i> | song thrush | Common | Breeds in hedgerows. |
| <i>Turdus iliacus</i> | redwing | Sometimes several in winter | Winter migrant. |
| <i>Turdus viscivorus</i> | mistle thrush | Common, but less frequent recently | Large amounts of mistletoe grow on the Green. |
| <i>Turdus pilaris</i> | fieldfare | Winter visitor | As redwing. |
| <i>Turdus merula</i> | blackbird | Always present | Breeds here. |
| <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i> | blackcap | Common | Nests low in bushes. |
| <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i> | willow warbler | Occasional/regular | Summer visitor. |
| <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i> | chiffchaff | Common | Summer visitor. |
| <i>Regulus regulus</i> | goldcrest | Occasional | Probably often unseen. |
| <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i> | wren | Always present | Breeds here. |
| <i>Muscicapa striata</i> | spotted flycatcher | Was common, not seen for several years | Used to breed here – sadly no more. |
| <i>Parus major</i> | great tit | Common resident | Breeds here. |
| <i>Parus ater</i> | coal tit | Common | Resident. |
| <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i> | blue tit | Very common resident | On everyone's bird table. |
| <i>Poecile palustris</i> | marsh tit | Frequent | Resident. |
| <i>Poecile montanus</i> | willow tit | Frequent | Resident. |
| <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i> | long-tailed tit | Common resident | Breeds here |
| <i>Sitta europaea</i> | nuthatch | Common resident | Breeds here |
| <i>Certhia familiaris</i> | treecreeper | Common | Regularly seen |
| <i>Pica pica</i> | maggie | Very common | Resident |
| <i>Garrulus glandarius</i> | jay | Always around | Breeds in Monkwood |
| <i>Corvus monedula</i> | jackdaw | Common | Breeds in our old chimneys |
| <i>Corvus frugilegus</i> | rook | Frequent visitor | There are local rookeries |
| <i>Corvus corone</i> | carrion crow | Common | Resident breeder |
| <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> | starling | Common | Large flocks but recently declined. |

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| <i>Passer domesticus</i> | house sparrow | Common | Recent decline in numbers. |
| <i>Passer montanus</i> | tree sparrow | Frequent | Resident. |
| <i>Fringilla coelebs</i> | chaffinch | Common resident | Fewer recently. |
| <i>Carduelis carduelis</i> | goldfinch | Charms often seen | Resident. |
| <i>Chloris chloris</i> | greenfinch | Used to be common | Like many finches, has recently declined significantly. |
| <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i> | bullfinch | Frequent | Eats fruit tree buds. |
| <i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i> | hawfinch | Occasional | Mainly in Monkwood. |
| <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i> | reed bunting | Frequent | Not seen so much recently. |
| <i>Emberiza citrinella</i> | yellowhammer | Frequent along hedges | Used to be more common. |

Rare vagrants

A red phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius* seen in early Autumn 2004, presumably blown inland by gales.

A grasshopper warbler *Locustella naevia* heard on the Green in June 2000.

Golden oriole *Oriolus oriolus*. One visited in summer 2024 causing much twitcher interest.

Other birds in the area

I have not myself recorded these on the Green but may well visit occasionally. Any records would be appreciated.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Herring gulls *Larus argentatus* overfly frequently but I have not seen them land.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* used to be heard many years ago.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis* heard locally but I have not seen one on the Green.

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* – I have heard them in Wyre Forest but not in Monkwood area.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* – probably visits occasionally but I have no certain record.

Garden warbler *Sylvia borin* – probably here in summer but I have no confirmed record.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis* – probable summer visitor to the Green but no confirmed record.

Sedge warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* – as whitethroat.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina* – likely but I have not seen one.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus* – probable occasional visitor.

A few photos (© the author)



Buzzard with a captured grey squirrel at the side of the Green.



Well-grown moorhen chicks with mum. Note the large lily-trotter feet.



Long-tailed tits' nest in hedge at edge of Green.



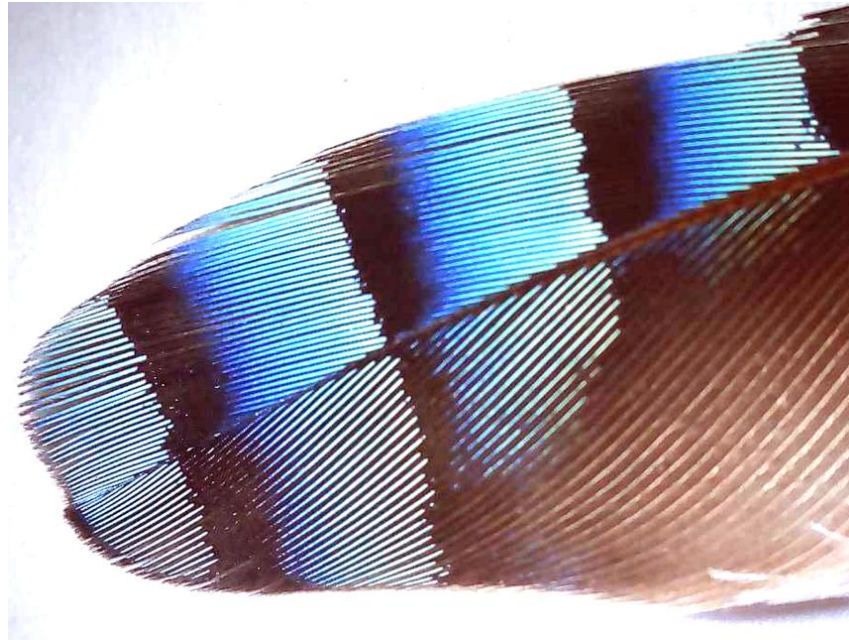
Juvenile tawny owl hatched in an oak tree at the edge of the Green, perched in the author's garden.



Grey heron wandering around looking for a pond where there might be food.



Mute swans with their cygnets on the Green.



Beauty of a jay's wing feather found on the Green.