

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 on the Green and there may well be 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 not listed below.

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 they occasionally do.
<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Canada goose	Occasional	Mostly overflying
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	mallard	Common breeding resident	Predation of ducklings is very high by stoats, weasels, etc.
<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 nycthemera</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, etc.
<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>Numenius arquata</i>	curlew	Occasional	Mainly nearby fields.
<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.

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<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	cuckoo	Mainly at woodland edge	Rarer lately.
<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>Alauda arvensis</i>	skylark	Regularly heard	Mostly nearby fields.
<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>	pie 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>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	common redstart	Frequent	Summer visitor
<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	stonechat	Occasional	Likes bushy habitat.
<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 communis</i>	common whitethroat	Summer visitor	Common
<i>Sylvia borin</i>	garden warbler	Summer visitor	Occasional (song record).
<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

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<i>Pica pica</i>	magpie	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>Corvus corax</i>	common raven	Regular	But only occasional
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	starling	Common	Large flocks but recently declined.
<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>Chloris chloris</i>	greenfinch	Used to be very common	Like many finches, has recently declined.
<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	goldfinch	Charms often seen	Resident.
<i>Carduelis spinus</i>	siskin	Occasional	Probably likes the damp woodland.
<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:

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

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

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

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

Sedge warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* – as whitethroat.

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

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.

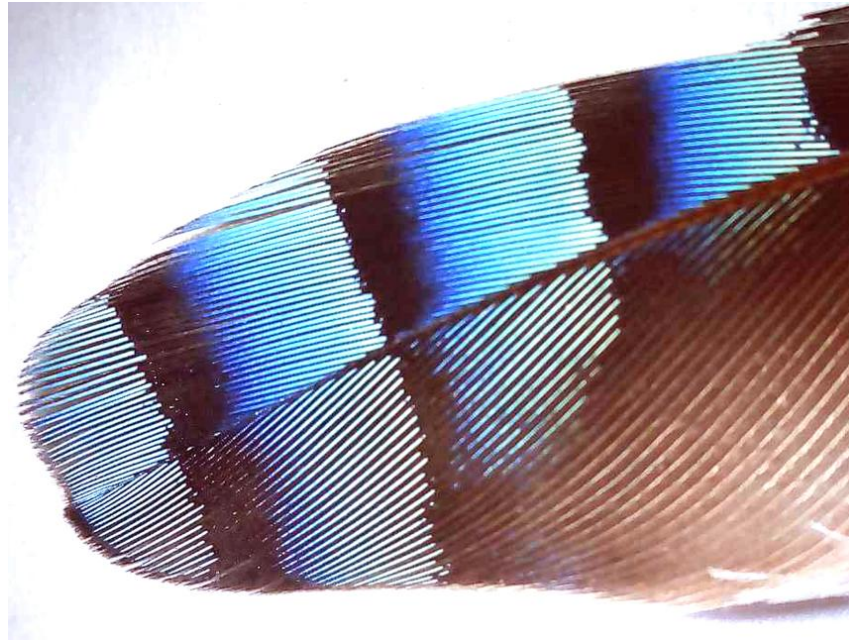
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Grey heron wandering around looking for a pond where there might be food.



Mute swans with their cygnets on the Green.



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