

Notes on the Wadhurst Park Estate 2025 Bird Surveys

Weather

Winter 2024/25 passed generally without any weather extremes. There were no hard frosts and no torrential rain. February was dry and cold with occasional light frost and persistent northwest winds. March began sunny and sun and cloud continued throughout the month, with some warm days. April temperatures then reached 23 degrees at times, and there was no rain through to mid-month. The end of the month saw regular temperatures into the mid to high 20s. May saw a north wind through to mid-month, with mostly cold mornings. The weather then moved into an extremely dry and very warm period into the summer months, with occasional heatwaves reaching the low 30s.

Peak Registrations

Peak registrations over eight years of point count survey are shown below. As always, results are based solely on the highest number of registrations of a species on a single point count visit, so should not be taken as statistically accurate. However, they do indicate general trends over the seven seasons.

The Wadhurst Park surveys cover different sets of points in alternate years (Wadhurst Park South and Wadhurst Park Central), but the six points represented here (43; 40; 26; 20; 33 & 23) are included in both survey areas, so are visited annually, as is Batt's Wood.

Selected Species Notes

The two highlights of the bird survey season were the location of an active **lesser spotted woodpecker** nest in Six Acre Wood, and growing evidence of a **goshawk** territory in Batt's Wood. Ken Smith was invited to check out the woodpecker nest and we estimated three or four juvenile birds were present on the morning of 27th May. Other lesser spot records came from the usual areas around Lake Wood, but no further nests were located. The goshawk had been heard in Batt's Wood early season, and Brad had a sighting of a bird along the northern edge of the wood. A bird was then heard calling in central Batt's Wood on 20th May during a point count visit, suggesting an established territory.

Marsh tit once more showed a wide distribution on both Rolf's Farm and in Batt's Wood, although this is not wholly reflected in the point count data. However, mapped birds revealed at least three territories in Batt's Wood and four on the farm.

Spotted flycatchers were absent from Hampden Oast this season and were not located anywhere else across the point counts on Rolf's Farm. Two territories were found in Batt's Wood, which was encouraging.

There were **cuckoo** records from Batt's Wood on 1 May, and a bird was heard calling way off to the south of the wood in mid-May, but no records from the farm this season.

It was encouraging to see a significant increase in **chaffinch** numbers in Batt's Wood, and there was also a good spread of birds across Rolf's Farm this year.

Mistle thrush was recorded from both point count areas, and **song thrush** numbers remained stable on the farm, whilst increasing in Batt's Wood.

Garden warbler numbers continue to increase across Rolf's Farm.

Wadhurst Park Peak Registrations 2018 – 2025 (six points only)

Species	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Blackbird	19	22	20	22	18	21	20	22
Blackcap	7	7	9	9	10	10	12	13
Blue Tit	12	14	18	15	17	11	11	15
Bullfinch	3	-	-	1	2	-	-	-
Buzzard	-	-	1	-		-	-	-
Carrion Crow	7	7	12	9	9	10	6	8
Chaffinch	1	3	4	5	5	3	1	2
Chiffchaff	8	9	9	11	11	12	11	13
Coal Tit	3	2	2	1	1	3	1	-
Cuckoo	-	-	3	2	-	-	1	-
Dunnock	3	1	2	4	3	3	3	2
Garden Warbler	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	5
Goldcrest	1	2	1	1	3	2	1	1
Goldfinch	-	-	1	1	2	2	-	-
Great Spotted Woodpecker	7	6	5	8	6	1	2	2
Great Tit	9	7	9	11	12	4	7	7
Green Woodpecker	1	3	1	1	-	-	-	2
Hawfinch	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Jackdaw	7	5	7	10	10	7	3	2
Jay	1	2	2	1	4	1	2	1
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Linnet	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Long-tailed Tit	1	-	1	1	1	1	2	1
Magpie	2	3	4	-	4	1	-	-
Marsh Tit	2	2	1	1	5	1	1	1
Mistle Thrush	1	-	2	1	5	1	-	1
Nuthatch	4	1	2	3	4	4	2	3
Pheasant	14	13	12	13	8	7	8	12
Raven	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Robin	15	15	15	13	11	14	14	14
Rook	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Siskin	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Song Thrush	4	7	7	10	6	4	8	8
Spotted Flycatcher	-	1	-	1	-	1	2	-
Stock Dove	1	3	-	2	-	3	1	2
Tawny Owl	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Treecreeper	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	3
Willow Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Woodpigeon	14	12	17	18	14	16	11	12
Wren	15	20	21	15	19	16	18	18

Batt's Wood Peak Registrations 2018 – 2025 (no data for 2021)

Species	2018	2019	2020	2022	2023	2024	2025
Blackbird	24	26	22	20	27	28	26
Blackcap	20	19	18	20	15	12	20
Blue Tit	17	14	16	15	18	13	14
Bullfinch	2	2	2	-	-	4	2
Buzzard	-	-	5	1	-	1	-
Carrion Crow	9	11	17	11	7	11	14
Chaffinch	4	1	3	-	3	2	7
Chiffchaff	20	16	22	15	17	19	17
Coal Tit	9	10	8	3	6	6	1
Cuckoo	-	2	3	-	1	1	2
Duncock	3	2	1	-	1	1	1
Garden Warbler	4	4	5	3	3	3	3
Goldcrest	5	3	3	2	2	5	5
Goldfinch	1	-	1	-	1	P	1
Goshawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Great Spotted Woodpecker	10	11	9	4	7	5	8
Great Tit	8	16	10	5	9	7	7
Green Woodpecker	4	1	5	2	1	1	-
Jackdaw	6	4	1	3	1	1	1
Jay	5	3	5	3	1	1	-
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Long-tailed Tit	3	3	2	3	4	4	1
Magpie	2	-	1	1	-	-	-
Marsh Tit	2	3	3	2	1	7	4
Mistle Thrush	6	6	4	-	4	-	3
Nuthatch	1	2	3	1	1	3	2
Pheasant	13	9	8	8	11	9	11
Raven	2	-	-	2	-	2	-
Robin	29	28	36	29	37	28	31
Rook	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Siskin	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Song Thrush	4	11	20	16	8	8	12

Spotted Flycatcher	-	-	1	-	1	P	2
Stock Dove	5	4	2	2	3	6	3
Tawny Owl	2	-	-	1	-	-	-
Treecreeper	3	2	5	2	5	2	3
Willow Warbler	3	-	-	-	-	1	-
Woodpigeon	32	27	22	24	25	27	21
Wren	37	43	44	50	37	44	40

Mayfield College Transects 2025

Bird records along the transect this season were mostly more encouraging compared to 2023. The exceptions were just a single record for **marsh tit**, and the absence of **yellowhammer**. There was an unexpected male **reed bunting** on section 2, which was presumed to have come from the nearby lake to the north. **Bullfinch** was recorded from two sections. **Whitethroat** was recorded from a total of six transect sections, I believe the best tally so far since the transect was initiated. **Dunnoek** was also widespread this season, appearing on no less than seven sections.

Martin Allison

July 2025