

Fairfield Nature Reserve Breeding Birds 2017

Somewhat of a downturn this year with numbers of breeding pairs down in many cases (e.g. Song Thrush, Wren, Blackcap) although the variety of encountered over four survey visits (44 species) remained reasonably good.

Of those 44, three were clear-cut passage migrants (Wheatear, Whinchat and Siskin) and one species was very much on the breeding 'wish-list' in the form of a fly-over Curlew. Gladly, the category of house-nesting birds that benefit from Fairfield's foraging grounds (House Sparrows, Swallows, House Martins, Starlings, Swifts and Jackdaws) all remain on-site at similar levels to former survey years.

That occasional breeder, Linnet was not recorded this season. However the local status another farmland species, Stock Dove seems to be consolidating with an encouraging two pairs.

The red-listed Grey Partridge again found habitat in the southern parts of the site to its liking, with a pair found there on three out of four visits- suggesting that management is paying dividends for this threatened species. There was no evidence of nesting success but hopefully this only a matter of time.

The first visit (late April) yielded promising Lapwing sightings the arable field (two to three males and a female were active there) but disappointingly by the end of the survey season the species was absent, with no indication as to why.

Similarly a pair of Oystercatchers was displaying here early on but with no further developments.

A pair of Shelducks appeared to have nested this year, as evidenced by an agitated female in suitable habitat in June.

Mixed fortunes then as we look to spring/summer 2018 and beyond.

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