

Harebreaks Wood dawn chorus walk, 9 April 2011

Superb weather made for a very pleasant walk followed by a great breakfast in excellent company. Here is a list of the 29 species recorded on the day:

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* – a group of five birds flew over at the football pitch.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* – A distant pair flew over the houses near the football pitch.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* – One was heard crowing as we left the church car park, possibly from the nearby allotments.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* – We heard a bird give the typical ‘frank’ calls as it flew over the wood.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* – Birds were heard calling over the wood and four were seen on the playing fields near the A41.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia* – Several were noted flying over.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas* – Birds were singing and at least two pairs were seen in suitable breeding sites.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus* – Common, seen and heard in numbers. Birds seemed to be feeding on buds or blossom in the cherry trees.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* – A singing bird was in the oak trees near the play area.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis* – A calling bird refused to show as we returned to the church hall.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* – We heard a drumming bird but it did not persist for long.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* – Common and singing well throughout the wood.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula* – Singing in good numbers, and seen on occasions.

Blackbird *Turdus merula* – This beautiful songster was one of the star performers. There are obviously many pairs holding territory in the wood.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* – A distant bird was singing and one flew up as we approached the football pitch.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* – At least two singing males were heard.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* – A single male of this summer visitor was heard and seen near the central clearing in the wood.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* – Very common, calling birds were seen throughout the wood.

Great Tit *Parus major* – Common. The typical ‘saw-sharpener’ song was noted on several occasions.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea* – At least two males were holding territory, with one seen close to last year’s nest site.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius* – A pair was seen and heard, with a bird also seen carrying nest material into an ivy-covered tree.

Magpie *Pica pica* – At least one pair present in the wood.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula* – A pair was seen early in our walk.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus* – Very common in the wood with around 16 nests noted in two groups.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* – One was seen flying over the playing fields.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* – Several pairs were seen around the play area.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* – Several singing birds heard.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris* – A singing bird was heard near the road.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* – One was singing from the top of a tree on our return to the church car park.

Harebreaks Wood is within tetrad TQ19E. A list of the birds that have been seen in this 2 x 2km square can be found on The Herts Bird Club Atlas website at <http://www.hertsatlas.org.uk/2008/TQ19E.shtml>.

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