

Flora & Fauna recorded in September

Birds: Quite a quiet month. For many species the breeding period is over, and the moult is occurring, so the feathers are new and fresh and healthy ready for next year.

Some of the birds recorded are simply flying over, rather than actually “using” the woodland for roosting or nesting or even feeding. For example, a Little Egret was spotted - and although they are getting more common, we have not had one (or Grey Heron) settling here. Red Kites were frequent flyovers, and it may well be that we shall see them breeding here. Common Gulls also flew over.

Stock Doves and Woodpigeons were regulars, and it was good to have a Great-spotted Woodpecker drumming (probably food-seeking rather than a territorial display) in the middle of the month. Skylarks are regularly seen and heard in the adjoining fields – four on the 23rd of the month, for example.

Dunnocks and Robins were noted on most recorder visits, with the occasional Song Thrush and more frequent Blackbird. Chiffchaffs are certainly still calling, and Goldcrests were found in the Larch area particularly. Wrens – though very common – are not always easy to spot and most often they were recorded making short alarm calls from the hedgerows.

Great Tits, Blue Tits and the less frequent Coal Tit were all noted, as were occasional Long-tailed Tits, now beginning to flock together again. Nuthatches made themselves heard frequently and a few people were lucky enough to either hear or see Treecreepers, well camouflaged little birds with a call increasingly hard to distinguish as the listener gets older!

There were plenty of Jackdaws about and other corvids were also fairly frequently recorded: Magpie, Jay, Carrion Crow and the occasional flyover Rook.

House Sparrows were recorded nearer to human dwellings. Finally, Chaffinch and Goldfinch completed this month's bird list.

Insects: There are plenty of Ivy bees around, taking advantage of the autumn flowering Ivy. Common Darters were noted, and among the butterflies recorded were Brimstone, Small White, Green-veined White, Common Blue, Brown Argus (not very common so a good record), Comma and Speckled Wood. The regular butterfly survey group will have more to add!

Mammals: The only mammal recorded was – no great surprise! – Grey Squirrel

Thanks to everyone who compiles and/or sends in records of wildlife sightings. They are a valuable source of information.

Flora & Fauna recorded in August

A fairly quiet month. Most adult birds have now passed their breeding period and are dealing with their feather moult and regrowth. The weather (which has been a topic of conversation and anxiety for many humans) was not kind to the grass, and some of the shrubs were beginning to look weary, while a small number, including sloes, seemed to produce an extra-large berry crop.

Birds. Occasional sightings of fly-over Black-headed Gulls. Stock Doves and Woodpigeons were regularly recorded. Both Green and Great-spotted Woodpeckers were about. A very unexpected bird was a Grey Wagtail – but one was also seen in a neighbouring garden. More common were Dunnock, Robin and Blackbird – though there were not as many as might have been expected. The warblers Blackcap and Chiffchaff were noted. Also, Goldcrest, Wren and Great Tit and Blue Tit and their not closely related Long-tailed Tit which are now beginning to form into autumnal flocks.

Nuthatches are usually picked up first by their vocalisation and were fairly regularly recorded, with the occasional Treecreeper, which is more difficult to hear and to see! Finally, to the corvids: Jackdaw, Magpie and Carrion Crow but no Jay, and to the finches – just a Goldfinch recorded this month.

Mammals: Grey Squirrel and Fox and a deceased Common Shrew.

Insects: Among the butterflies were Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Common Blue, Brown Argus, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, Speckled Wood, Gatekeeper, Meadow

Brown and unexpectedly a Small Heath. The regular butterfly recorders will probably be able to add to this list.

Moths included Jersey Tiger and Yellow Shell Moth

Interesting plants: included Red Bartsia, Sweet Briar with plenty of rosehips, and Fleabane. The brambles are flourishing and a work party or two will be gathering to ensure that they do not completely take over!

Please keep sending in your records!

Flora & Fauna recorded in July

Birds: Birds of prey this month were Red Kite, Common Buzzard and Sparrowhawk. Stock Dove and Woodpigeon were very commonly reported but no Collared Dove this month. Two Swifts were reported flying over the Wood; this species, a visitor from Africa, will be leaving our shores in the next few weeks. Both Green and Great-spotted Woodpecker were seen/heard, the former often on the ground where it hunts its main prey – ants. Dunnock and Robin were regulars as was Blackbird. Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs are still singing; they are no longer just summer visitors – some of each species can now be found in the UK in winter months. Goldcrests are still calling from the larches and conifers and there have been many records of Great Tit, Blue Tit and the less frequently encountered Coal Tit. Long-tailed Tits are now often seen in small flocks, frequently still juveniles.

Nuthatch and the more obscurely camouflaged Treecreeper were recorded. Of the corvids we had Jackdaw, Magpie, Jay and Carrion Crow. Finally, to the finches and sparrows – just a Goldfinch! July is often a very quiet month with post-breeding moult making demands on the adults, and youngsters not making themselves too loud or visible.

Mammals: Grey squirrels and Rabbits were the most common, and there were also sightings of Roe Deer and Fox

Invertebrates: The following butterflies were noted on people's walks through the Woods: Brimstone. Large White, Small White, Green-veined White. Common Blue. Brown Argus. Holly Blue. Red Admiral. Painted Lady. Peacock. Silver-washed Fritillary. Comma. Speckled Wood. Marbled White. Gatekeeper. Meadow Brown. Ringlet. Purple Hairstreak. Nobody sent in a casual record of a Small Tortoiseshell – they have not been doing well. Those who do the regular butterfly transects will be able to add far more to the above list. Among the moths recorded were Jersey Tiger and Yellow Shell Moth.

Plants: This is not a list of all plants observed this month – just a few that stood out! Fleabane (yes, it was once used as a kind of insecticide to deter fleas and lice); Common Spotted-Orchids (now over), Tall Melilot, and Red Bartsia, a root hemiparasite that theoretically weakens other plants.

As always, please send in notes of what you see on your walks – common or rare – it's all important!

Flora & Fauna recorded in June

Birds: The two birds of prey species recorded in June were Red Kite and Common Buzzard. Stock Dove and Woodpigeon were regulars, but no Collared Doves noted this month. Skylarks were heard singing regularly in the adjoining fields. Dunnock (common but easily overlooked) and Robins were about, as were Song Thrushes and Blackbirds. The following warblers were heard fairly frequently: Blackcap – with its enchanting melodic song – Common Whitethroat, Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff.

Goldcrests were occasionally heard (not often seen!). Other species that were regularly recorded included Wren, Great Tit, Blue Tit and – less frequently – Long-tailed Tit.

Nuthatches are still calling regularly, and a few people were lucky to see/ hear Treecreepers, surely one of our best camouflaged small birds! Jackdaws were common as were Magpies and Carrion Crows. A couple of juvenile Jays were spotted on the 21st, and – to the surprise of the observer – a party of over 20 Rooks flew over the wood on the 13th. If only they would settle in their old haunts in the spring and re-start the rookery!

No Starlings or House Sparrows were noted, even near the human habitation bordering the Woods, but there were a couple of sightings of Chaffinch and Goldfinch.

Mammals: No deer recorded this month, but there were records of Grey Squirrel, Rabbit, a Common Shrew (deceased), and a Badger.

Butterflies: Large Skipper; Large White; Small White; Green-veined White; Holly Blue; Red Admiral; Painted Lady; Comma; Marbled White; Meadow Brown; Ringlet. The regular butterfly transect recorders will no doubt be able to add more species! (Peacock almost certainly). On the 20th one person recorded 20 Meadow Browns on a hour's walk!

Other Invertebrates recorded include Cinnabar Moth, Mottled Beauty (a moth, not a member of the Friends of Linslade Woods!), Silver-Y; Green oak Tortrix, and Banded Demoiselles.

Flora & Fauna recorded in May 2026

Quite a reduced list this month, maybe due to the vagaries of the weather, or maybe to fewer records from our regulars!

Birds: Stock Dove and Woodpigeon were regulars. A pair of Great-spotted Woodpeckers was seen. All fairly frequent: Dunnock, Robin, Song Thrush, Blackbird. Garden Warbler heard more often than were actually seen. Blackcap. Common Whitethroat. Great Tit, Blue Tit and Long-tailed Tit. Nuthatch frequently heard, and occasional records of the well-camouflaged Treecreeper. The corvids were noisily regular: Magpie, Jay, Carrion Crow, though no records of our former resident the Rook. House Sparrows often near to the edge of the wood and human habitation. Goldfinch. Greenfinch – much rarer nowadays, and even more unusual – a Bullfinch, a real rarity these days.

Mammals: Grey Squirrel, Rabbit, Roe Deer (though the list was increased by the appearance of a domestic cat!)

Butterflies: (Although the regular surveyors will no doubt be able to add to these): Brimstone. Green-veined White. Orange-tip. Common Blue. Holly Blue. Painted Lady. Peacock. Comma. Speckled Wood. Meadow Brown. You probably saw that Peacock was voted the nation's favourite butterfly, according to Butterfly Conservation's recent questionnaire. It's certainly very recognisable! Look out for Small Tortoiseshell – they haven't been doing very well.

One very colourful moth to look out for is the Cinnabar; it was recorded in the woods in May and is quite common. Its larval foodplant is Common Ragwort, and the caterpillars are easy to spot in their black and yellow stripes.

Flora & Fauna recorded in April 2026

Birds: A Pheasant was heard. Red Kites were about – 2 were seen interacting on 14th. A Buzzard was the only other raptor reported this month. A Lesser Black-backed Gull flew over.

Stock Doves and Woodpigeons were plentiful, but no Collared Doves. Both Green and Great-spotted Woodpeckers were about. Skylarks hovered and sang in adjoining fields.

Other "regulars" included Dunnock, Robin Song Thrush and Blackbird. Blackcaps were very noticeable, often singing loudly; high numbers of 12 and 14 individuals were recorded in the mid-month. A Common Whitethroat was seen on the field due to be built on by the Peabody company.

There were many singing/calling Chiffchaffs this month. Other species included Goldcrest, Wren, Great Tit, Coal Tit (often harder to find), and Blue Tit and Long-tailed Tits. Nuthatches and Treecreepers are always part of our woodland avifauna – though the latter can be difficult to see – and to hear!

The usual corvids were about: Jackdaw, Magpie, Jay and Carrion Crow and a single Rook were heard. Starlings and House Sparrows were met with nearer to human habitation. Finally, Chaffinch and Goldfinch completed the month's bird notes.

Mammals: Grey squirrel, Rabbit and Roe Deer

Butterflies: Those noted were Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Orange-tip, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, and Speckled Wood.

There will no doubt be much more information from the regular butterfly recorders.

Flora & Fauna recorded in March 2026

Birds: A Pheasant is a fairly unusual sighting – at least it should be safe from hunters in the wood! Red Kites and Buzzards were observed – usually picked up by ear in the first instance. No Sparrowhawks were noted this month, but they are certainly around; they are known to be quite secretive near their nest.

Stock doves and Woodpigeons were frequently reported but no Collared Doves this time. Green woodpeckers were heard but no Great-spotted Woodpeckers this month, whereas in previous months we have heard much drumming. Perhaps the cool weather kept the observers away! Skylarks were flying and calling over the adjoining fields. One somewhat curious - and possibly mistaken - report was of a Grey Wagtail – normally found near fast-flowing water!

As normal there were several notes of Dunnock, Robin, melodious Song Thrush and Blackbird, and a Redwing still about. Some species that used to be heralds of spring – Blackcap and Chiffchaff – are now regularly heard in the winter months. Other regularly observed species were Wren, Great Tit, Blue Tit and the harder-to-find Coal Tit. Long-tailed Tits will now be leaving their little flocks and pairing up.

Nuthatch and Treecreeper, both essentially birds of trees and woodland, were fairly regularly encountered. Their calls could not be more different! Most of the corvids were recorded by sight and sound: Jackdaw (many), Magpie, jay, Carrion Crow but nobody reported a Rook this month. Their breeding in the wood seems to be over for now but they are still likely to be flying over and calling with harsh noisy croaks.

Finally, the finches: Goldfinch, Greenfinch and the petite but colourful Siskin.

Mammals: Grey Squirrel, Fox and Rabbit.

Plants: There is a lot of Wild Arum growing. The Primroses and Cowslips are doing well along the ride near Rita's bench, and plenty of Garlic Mustard growing – one of the favourite plants for Orange-tip Butterflies to lay their eggs. And those Bluebells are beginning to look very encouraging!

Butterflies: Brimstone, Peacock, Comma – and Gill will be able to fill in more details as spring and warm weather arrive.

Please send in your wildlife sightings!

Flora & Fauna recorded in February 2026

Birds: A Pheasant was heard occasionally – a species originally introduced in the Middle Ages or possible in Roman times! Red Kites were regular passers-by, and an occasional Buzzard was noted. Stock Doves and Woodpigeons were regularly heard and seen – but nobody spotted a Collared Dove. Both Green and Great-spotted Woodpeckers were about, the latter now often heard drumming, a territorial indication. Skylarks were heard, usually from the fields to the west and north. Dunnocks do not make themselves obvious but there are plenty about, and also plenty of often-singing Robins. Song Thrushes were heard with their repeated but variable songs, and Blackbirds were commonly reported. Redwings were also seen – (but no Fieldfares?)

The small attractive Goldcrests were fairly frequent – 4 were recorded on one birdwatcher's walk. Wrens were common. Of the tit family there were regular records of Great Tit, Blue Tit and the conifer-loving Coal Tit; the unrelated Long-tailed Tit was also quite regularly seen and heard, often still in small flocks at this time of year. Nuthatches and the hard-to-spot Treecreeper were about.

In the corvid group there were frequent records of Carrion Crow, Magpie, Jay and Jackdaw, but this month nobody spotted or heard a Rook – a bird which was once a common and regular breeder in the wood. Starlings were fairly common, and in the finch family there were sightings of Goldfinches, Siskin, Chaffinch and the increasingly rare Bullfinch.

Mammals: Grey Squirrel of course! Rabbit and some deer marks – maybe Roe, maybe Muntjac, both of which are seen fairly regularly.

Butterflies: The only butterfly recorded this month was Brimstone but keep looking as the spring begins to approach.

Amphibians: Common Frogs and spawn were seen towards the end of the month.

Please keep looking and send in all your sightings. It may not be a rarity but we do need to know what is living in the wood

Flora & Fauna recorded in January 2026

Quite a brief list to herald the beginning of the new year. Probably the birds as well as the recorders were not out in force! Woodpigeon and Collared Dove were both observed, but no Stock Dove noted. Great-spotted Woodpeckers were about. Robins were also fairly frequent. Three members of the thrush family were recorded: Song Thrush, Blackbird and Redwing. There was a Chiffchaff, a bird we used to think of very much as a summer visitor, but now some are found still in the UK in the winter months. Wrens were heard fairly frequently. The three common members of the tit family were also recorded: Great Tit, Coal Tit and Blue Tit, as well as their very distant relative Long-tailed Tit (actually in the Babbler family, not a “real” tit at all)

The occasional Nuthatch was spotted, and the common corvids were also fairly frequent: Jackdaw, Magpie, Jay and Carrion Crow. No Rook this month? And no passing Raven? Finally finches: Chaffinch and Goldfinch and some Siskins.

Grey Squirrels were the only mammals recorded, except for a couple of casualties: a dead mouse and a deceased vole, both found on a very cold day.

Please help to build up our sightings for the coming year by sending in a note of what you’ve seen or heard. Birds, mammals, amphibians, plants – all welcome!

Please keep sending in your records – birds and other wildlife all welcome!