

# The Birds of Barcombe Parish

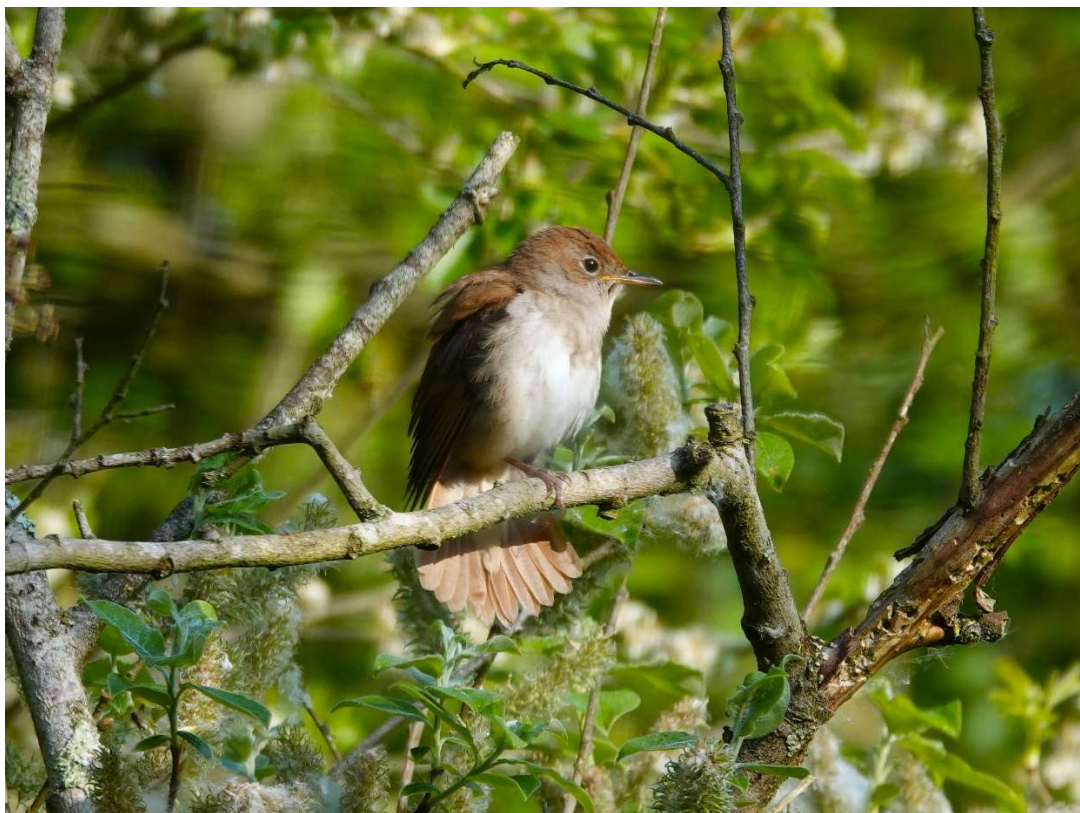


Simon Linington





**A monthly Wetland Bird Survey at Barcombe Reservoir on 18 June 2018,  
with (l-r) David Lang, John Gowers, Clive Dickson, Patrick Austin and Robin Pepper**



**A Nightingale, one of the 'star' bird species of Barcombe Parish, on the old railway  
track north of the village on 27 April 2025**



## Introduction

This booklet aims to document the 209 species of wild and naturalised bird recorded in Barcombe Parish, East Sussex up to the end of August 2025. It includes my near-daily personal observations from our garden since moving to Barcombe in April 1999 and countless birdwatching visits to Knowlands Farm & Wood, 475 visits to Barcombe Reservoir (totalling 645 hours), 150 survey visits to the Sutton Hall Estate (from May 2022 to present) and hours walking the many footpaths that cross Barcombe Parish. It also draws heavily on information from other sources particularly from the databases of both the Sussex Ornithological Society and the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre. Over the years, the late David Lang and the late Robin Pepper (both local vets) contributed considerable valuable information, particularly about Barcombe Reservoir and Scobell's Farm, respectively. Access to David Lang's old notebooks provided some of the records.

In order to help document the species found in the Parish, I have tried to show photos of as many species as possible. All of the images (139 species) were taken by me and nearly all from 2015 on. The pictures were taken with bridge cameras (Panasonic FZ330 then Sony RX10iv) and some may not really be of publishable quality. Nevertheless, they were all (but the last one) taken *within the Parish*. I hope the document is of interest.

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## Barcombe Parish

The civil Parish of Barcombe (approximately 6 km north to south and 3.5-4 km west to east and at 17.81km<sup>2</sup> representing just 1% of the land area of East Sussex) is located in the Low Weald and is fortunate in having a diversity of habitats that support resident and visiting bird species.

As the map on a following page shows, most of the eastern side of the Parish boundary runs along the River Ouse and its western edge is bounded by the road from the Rainbow Inn to Town Littleworth. It is quite a rural parish with the population of 1,493 (2021 census) centred on Barcombe Cross with smaller settlements around St Mary's Church (the old part of Barcombe), Barcombe Mills, Spithurst and Town Littleworth. As elsewhere in southern England, housing development is a threat to its rural character and wildlife.

The Parish is well served by public footpaths that cross its farms and woodland. Of special interest is Knowlands Farm & Wood which has been managed sympathetically for wildlife; sightings from there feature widely in this document. Much of the north of the Parish is covered by the Sutton Hall Estate, which although very much a working estate, has some really interesting areas for birds and is crossed by some nice footpaths. These include those from Dallas Lane through Agmond's Wood and on to Sutton Hall Weir, from Agmond's Wood up over High Field to Blunt's Green and Overs Bridge, and Blunt's Lane (from near the Anchor Inn). Two disused railway tracks cross the Parish derived from the track that used to run up from Lewes and splits at Culver Farm. One track runs north east through Barcombe Mills (towards Uckfield) and the other northward through the west edge of Barcombe Cross (originally joining the Bluebell Railway at Sheffield Park). Where accessible, both can be good for viewing birds in the Parish but the latter, in particular, has an excellent population of breeding birds.



**Knowlands Wood, 19 April 2019**



**View north from the public footpath over High Field on the Sutton Hall Estate, 2 April 2024**

The River Ouse is a significant feature of the Parish and two of its tributaries cross the area, the Bevern and the Longford Stream. There are also a good number of ponds and even small lakes within the Parish though by far the most important area of water is Barcombe (Mills) Reservoir, managed by South East Water. The reservoir has an impressive bird list. Building started on it in 1964 and it was flooded in 1966 from when it has a near-continuous set of waterfowl records (latterly, through the Wetland Bird Survey, WeBS, and since closure to anglers and birders in 2007, this has been facilitated by South East Water). The reservoir was extended in 1971 (see Shrubb, 1979) and all but a small part of its overall area lies inside the Parish. The reservoir has ***no public access*** but birds flying over the reservoir can be viewed from the footpath that runs alongside the River Ouse. Additionally, there is a small farm reservoir below Barcombe Village Hall though, at present, this also is closed to the public.

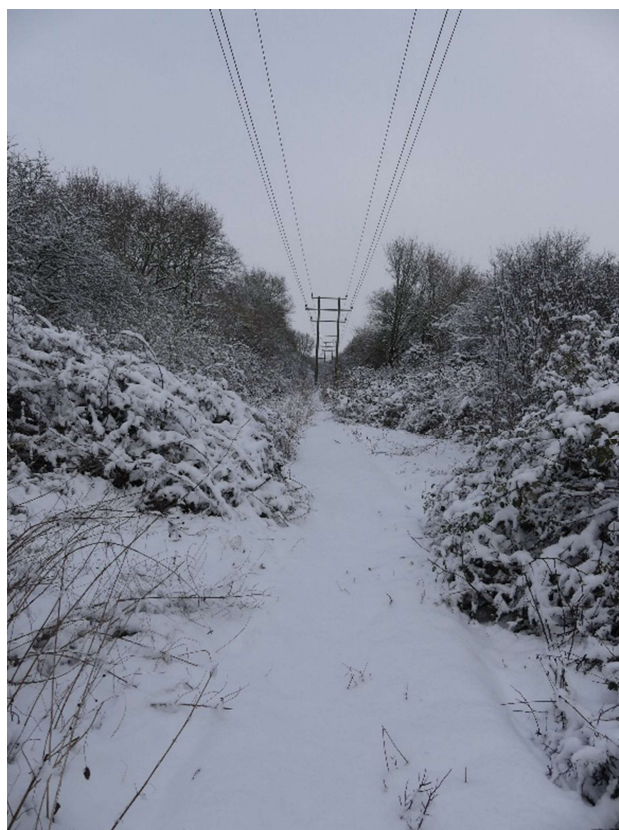


**Knowlands Farm pond, 6 September 2020**





**Sam Pottier (a SE Water ecologist) on a Wetland Bird Survey at a partially frozen Barcombe Reservoir, 16 December 2022**



**The disused railway track north of Barcombe in the snow, 27 February 2018**

One part of the habitat mix within the Parish that should not be overlooked are the many gardens that are valuable for breeding and visiting birds. By keeping a close eye on what passes through and over our Barcombe garden, I've managed to list 112 species which is quite a respectable total for an inland site in Sussex.

Relatively few of the 261 Sussex civil parishes (105 in East Sussex and 156 in West Sussex) have documented their bird populations. One that has is Henfield in West Sussex. This has a remarkable and vibrant recording community. Like Barcombe Parish, it also has significant wetland both with Henfield Levels and the Sussex Wildlife Trust's reserve at Woods Mill. Therefore, it is probably not surprising that the number of species recorded is broadly similar with 194 species around Henfield to the end of 2024 (Paul Cole, pers. comm.). Included in this list are 18 species not found in Barcombe's list. The number of bird species in any area will be influenced by the types of habitat (particularly aquatic), human population density and birding coverage. Interestingly, the importance of water is illustrated by the fact that Warnham Parish in West Sussex, which also has a lively group of wildlife recorders, once would have boasted a similar number of species to Barcombe and Henfield. However, because Warnham Nature Reserve was lost to the parish during a Government reorganisation, the species total is thought to be close to 125 (David Bridges, pers. comm.).

Civil parish	Land area km <sup>2</sup> *	Population (2021)*	Bird species
Barcombe	17.81	1,491	209
Henfield	17.29	6,179	194
Warnham	19.81	2,049	125 (est.)

\*See for instance: <https://www.citypopulation.de/en/uk/southeastengland/admin/>



## Place names used in this document

For simplicity, in this document both 'Barcombe' (proper) and 'Barcombe Cross' are referred to as '**Barcombe**'.

Barcombe Parish has two reservoirs. The small farm one located below Barcombe Village Hall (and at the time of writing, with no public access) is referred to as '**Barcombe village reservoir**'. South East Water's Barcombe Mills Reservoir (strictly no public access) is referred to as '**Barcombe Reservoir**'. The majority of the latter lies within the Parish. It seems reasonable to assume that all birds seen at this site visit the Parish during part of their stay.

Barcombe Parish also has two disused railway tracks (though not all with public access; some stretches that are used by the public require due care and sometimes get overgrown). Unless stated, all references to the '**Old railway track**' relate to the 1.5 km stretch that runs northward from just west-north-west of the village as far as the Secret Campsite to the north-west of Knowlands Wood. This is owned by UK Power Networks. '**Sidehills**' refers to the track and adjacent areas south-east of the village and has a variety of owners. Both components of this track are referred to as the 'wildlife corridor' by the Barcombe Community Wildlife Group.

Barcombe New Water Treatment Works (WTW) is located just west of the south-west corner of Knowlands Wood and is visible from a footpath that runs along its northern edge. It is referred to as the '**New WTW**'. The old works is located just north of the village (from the end of School Field road) and is referred to as the '**Old WTW**'. Neither have public access but can be viewed from nearby.

'**Wild About Barcombe**' is a children's play and nature area located below the main Pump House Field allotments and adjacent to Barcombe recreation ground's lower playing field.

Other specific place names are primarily as shown on Ordnance Survey Maps.

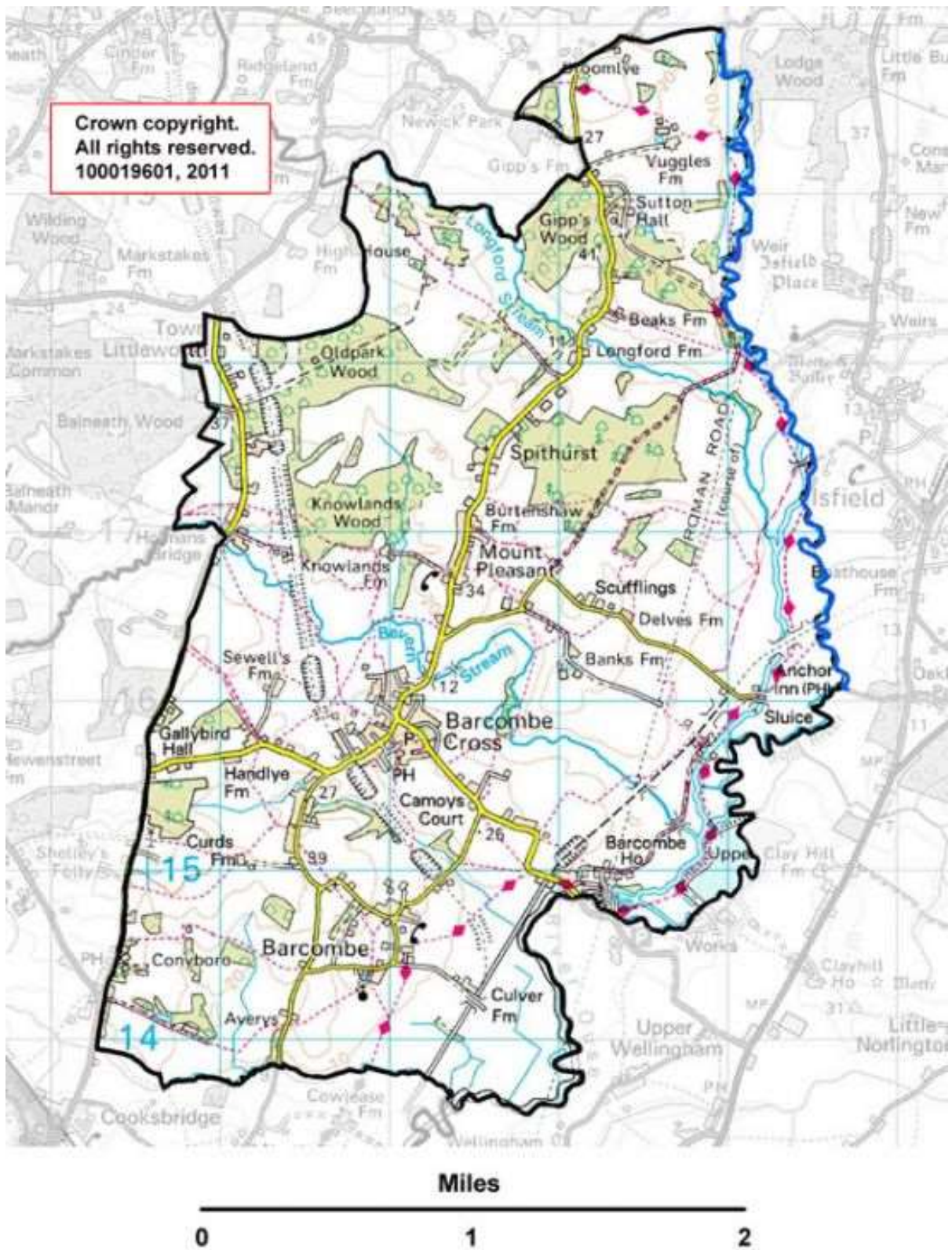
## Bird names and systematic order within this document

For wild and naturalised species, the English bird names and the order in which they are shown follows that of the Birds of Sussex (2014). Analysis of DNA has resulted in changed relationships between species to those given in the once widely used Wetmore order and with which older birders, such as myself, will be more familiar. Even since 2014, the order has changed again, for instance, with falcons split off from other birds of prey and finding themselves wedged between woodpeckers and shrikes. Nationally and hence in Sussex, English names have been changed over the years to reflect the occurrence of similar, related species both in the UK but also more widely. Hence, Swallow and Cuckoo have become *Barn Swallow* and *Common Cuckoo* to distinguish them, for instance, from Red-rumped Swallow and Great Spotted Cuckoo. The escapes are shown in alphabetic order.

## Abbreviations

<b>BCWG</b>	Barcombe Community Wildlife Group
<b>SOS</b>	Sussex Ornithological Society
<b>SxBRC</b>	Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
<b>WeBS</b>	Wetland Bird Survey (a national survey organised by the British Trust for Ornithology)
<b>WI</b>	Women's Institute (their 'Barcombe Records' publication of 1999, detailing life in the Parish over the centuries, contains some interesting historical references to birds seen locally)
<b>WTW</b>	Water Treatment Works





Map of Barcombe Parish (ref. Barcombe Parish Council website)



## Acknowledgements

Thanks go to fellow birders with whom I've spent many happy hours birding within the Parish. In particular, I'm grateful to the late David Lang, the late Robin Pepper, John Gowers, Clive Dickson and Mark Mallalieu and, further back in time at Barcombe Reservoir, John Holt, James Grover, Peter Wilson and Bob Edgar.

Huge thanks go to Nick and the late Harriet Lear for allowing public access to Knowlands Wood and for the work done to ensure wildlife flourishes there and on the farm. Also for their support, sharing of sightings and general enthusiasm about wildlife. Also, John Hayhurst is thanked for sharing his Knowlands observations.

John & Catherine Sclater and Ruth & James Wallis have been very kind in inviting me to survey the Newick & Sutton Hall Estates for wildlife, from 2022 on, and for providing encouraging feedback on my reports. During this time, it has been a great pleasure to get to know them and some of the estate workers who've provided me with many of their sightings, especially Kevin Francis, Russell Jeary and Roy Booth.

Thanks go to South East Water, and in particular Emma Goddard and Richard Dyer who were instrumental in facilitating continued access to Barcombe Reservoir for the monthly Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) when the reservoir closed for angling and birding in 2007. This survey provides a continuous record of bird numbers at the reservoir since 1966. SE Water's ecologists have enthusiastically attended and supported the counts and great thanks go to Patrick Austin, Sam Pottier and their co-workers who've stood-in on occasion, most recently Sam Hills. Further back in time, thanks go to the then water bailiffs, David Wickens, Tom Todd and Roger Norman.

Considerable thanks are due to Bob Foreman of the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC) for providing data to 2023 from the SxBRC database (primarily but not exclusively composed of SOS records), to Mark Mallalieu for providing data from the SOS database for an earlier iteration of this document, and to John Newnham who does an exceptional job of maintaining the SOS database and also for his advice regarding the recent extract. The input of records to the above databases by a great many birders over the years is very much acknowledged. The SOS database comprises 37,895 records from 285 observers for Ordnance Survey grid squares covering the Parish. Of these, the late David Lang, the late Robin Pepper, John Gowers and I account for nearly half. Since 2000 alone, about 140 people have submitted a total of over 7,000 records to the SOS and I would particularly like to thank Robin Denison-Pender, John Gowers, CMV Wright and M Green, who along with me account for 70% of those. For reasons of space, it has not been possible to credit observers throughout the document except in a very few cases, mainly where records are not to be found within the SOS and SxBRC databases, and I apologise for this.

Since 2021, I have enjoyed being part of the Barcombe Community Wildlife Group (BCWG), members of which post their sightings and news on Facebook. Many thanks to the growing number of members for their observations and encouragement. In particular, thanks go to Therri Lahood for setting up and moderating the Facebook site.

Many thanks to Paul Cole and Val Bentley for their help in providing information about the birds in Henfield Parish and to David Bridges for doing likewise about Warnham Parish. Finally, many thanks to Mark Mallalieu for comments on the final draft, to my wife, Isabelle, for help with proof-reading, and to Barcombe Parish Council for hosting this document on their website.

## References

- Barcombe Records (1999). The Women's Institute (1999). Local publication.
- David Lang's bird notebooks (briefly in my possession and now in the SOS Archives).
- Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre and Sussex Ornithological Society databases.
- Sutton Hall Estate (2011). Internal report of bird species seen on the estate.
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## Birds in Barcombe Parish

In analysing the data, a number of things became apparent and help reinforce perceptions while birding in the Parish. Many of the resident species seem to be doing quite well though some of the farmland species, although present, are not thriving. For species that have spent our winter in Africa and either migrate here for breeding or pass through on their way to breeding grounds further north, the picture is quite mixed. Some, such as Chiffchaff and Blackcap, seem to arrive in number though a few individuals of these two species now spend the winter here. However, others such as the Common Cuckoo now appear in lower numbers and others, not at all, such as Turtle Dove. Numbers of birds on passage has also reduced markedly, e.g., the hirundines (Barn Swallows and martins). In contrast, a few species that would have been unknown a few decades back such as Little Egret and Mediterranean Gull are now seen with some regularity.

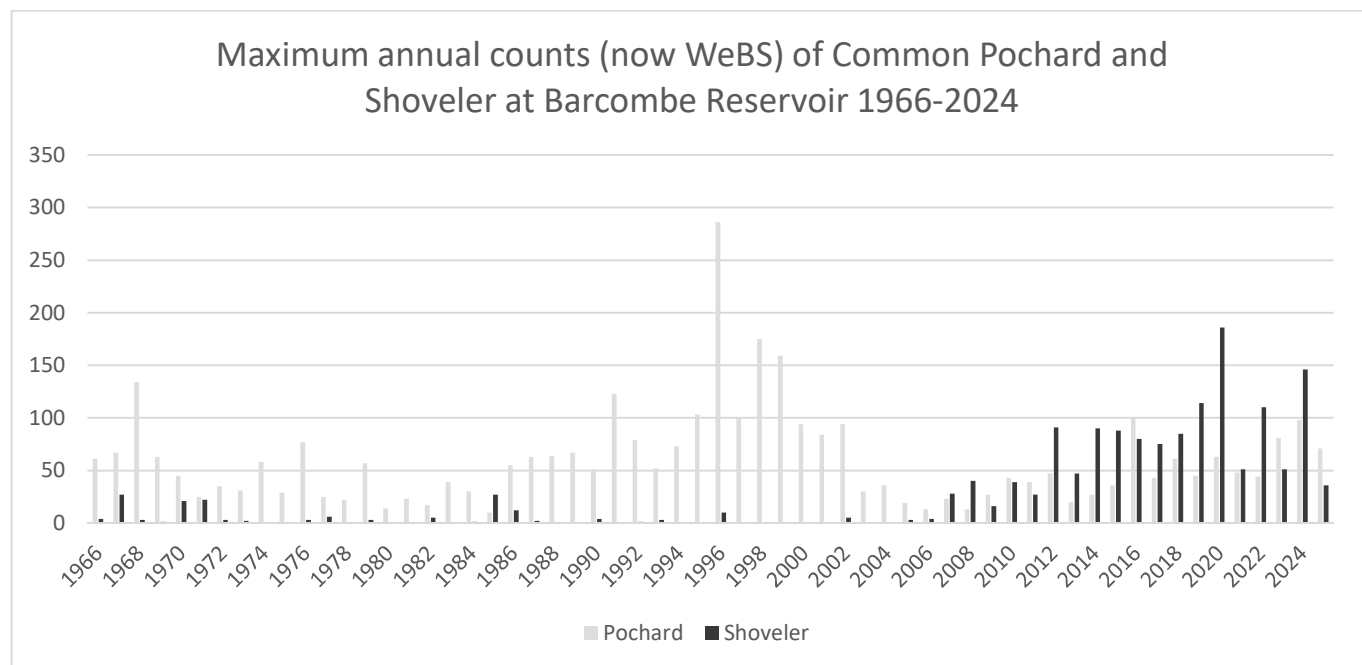
What is also noticeable is the reduction in unusual birds, particularly waterfowl species, seen at Barcombe Reservoir. To some extent, this can be attributed to the closure of the reservoir to visits (under permit) by anglers and birders in about 2007. Despite the lack of general access, South East Water kindly facilitate access once a month for counters as part of the national Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) that provides an unparalleled continuous record of the waterfowl, gulls and other species there since 1966 (see Lang, 1995). Some of the absence of unusual species may also relate to changed wintering patterns. With milder winters, species are not now driven off the Continent by bad weather or if they are, because their populations are smaller than once was the case, individuals have a reduced chance of being seen. In Shrubb (1979), Bob Edgar notes that 133 species had been recorded at the reservoir. That figure has now risen to 186 species of wild or naturalised bird (see Annex 1) making it a key site for birds in the Parish. When Bentley Wildfowl Collection (a few kilometres away) was functioning, it would not be unusual to find escaped wildfowl at the reservoir and some of these are listed after the systematic list of wild and naturalised species.



**Six species of waterfowl (Canada & Greylag Geese, Mallard, Shoveler, Eurasian Teal and Tufted Duck) at Barcombe (Mills) Reservoir on a Wetland Bird Survey visit, 19 October 2020**



The following chart of Common Pochard and Shoveler maximum annual counts at Barcombe Reservoir gives an indication of the longevity of the survey work there that is now part of the national WeBS effort. The two species have changed their wintering pattern at the reservoir. Undoubtedly, this will reflect changed food sources. With the reservoir no longer stocked with fish, there has been a decline in Common Pochard, a diving duck. In contrast, numbers of Shoveler, a surface feeder or 'dabbling' species, have increased that may reflect reduced water levels due to silt (that builds up periodically). However, changes in wintering distribution and reduced levels of disturbance are also likely to be factors.

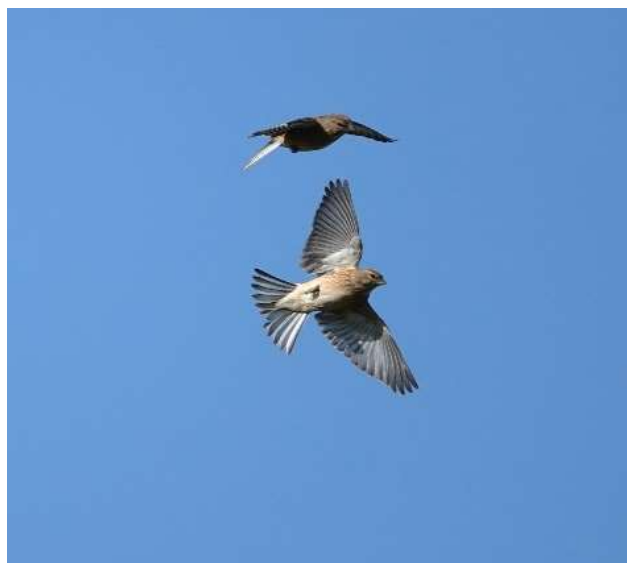


With respect to farmland birds, currently, the Parish holds on to some species that have been lost elsewhere, though in reduced numbers to previous decades. These include Skylark that still can be found singing over most of the larger arable fields, Yellowhammer, Linnet and, in summer, Common Whitethroat.



**A Skylark in song flight over a field at Knowlands Farm, 2 March 2024**

With the right encouragement (as is happening on some farms and estates), numbers can be boosted. A spectacular example of this occurred in three fields at Knowlands Farm (where the farm management is carried out by the Newick & Sutton Hall Estates) during the winter of 2024/5. The fields had been put down to a mix of plant species to provide seeds for wild birds. It is amazing how Linnets and Chaffinches discovered these three fields and at its peak, numbers had risen to well over 1,200 of the former and in excess of 300 of the latter.



**Linnets, Knowlands Farm, 5 October 2024 (left) and 22 December 2024 (right)**

The Parish holds a good variety of raptors and both Buzzard and Red Kite are now familiar sights. This wasn't always the case. Kestrels still breed in a number of localities and are a delight to see as they hover in search of voles and mice.



**A male Kestrel carrying a vole near Agmond's Wood, 14 June 2023**



The Parish is also visited by a good range of summer visitors that breed here such as Garden Warbler (photo) or are passage migrants such as Whinchat. Most migration to, from and through the area goes on unnoticed though many will note the first sounds of the Cuckoo and Chiffchaff in spring.



**An adult and three young Garden Warblers at Knowlands Farm, 20 June 2021**

Some of the migrant species, such as Barn Swallow, take part in epic journeys and most winter well south of the Sahara and down as far as South Africa.



**Two juvenile Barn Swallows at Knowlands Farm, 29 August 2022, ahead of their first flight to Africa**



One migrant species that holds a special affection for local people is the Common Nightingale and the Parish is blessed, at least at present, in having a healthy population along the old railway track that runs both north and south of the village with a number of other scattered territories.



**A Common Nightingale carrying oak leaves for its nest. Old railway track north of Barcombe, 5 May 2021**



**An unusual photo of a Common Nightingale singing out in the open. Old railway track north of Barcombe, 5 May 2024**

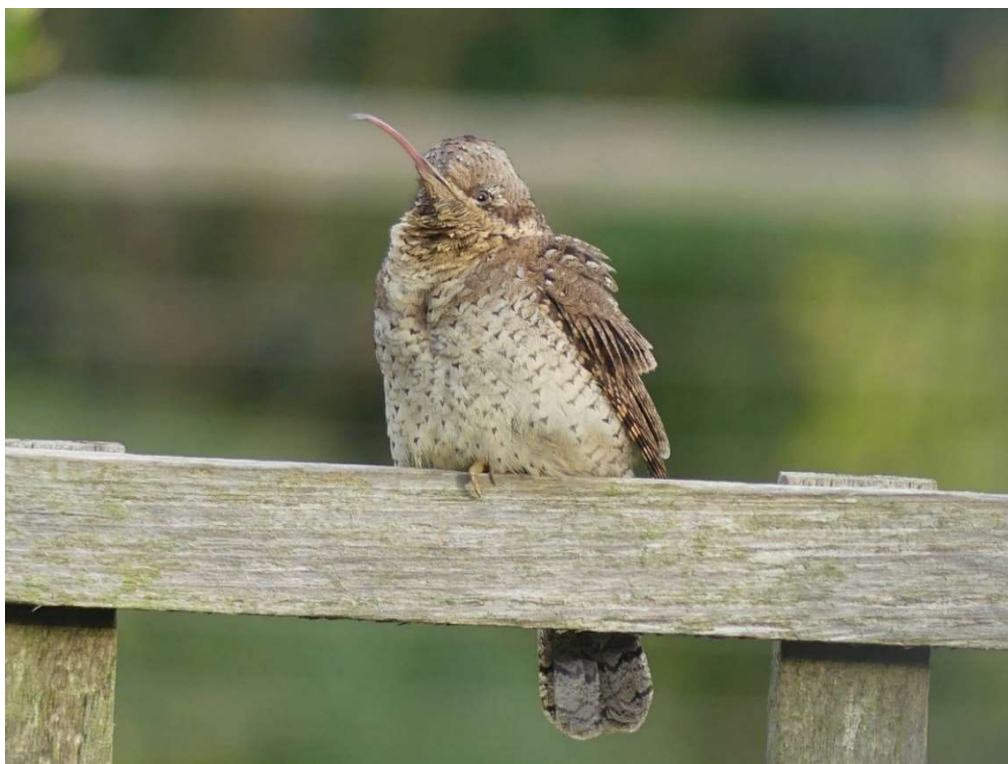


Just occasionally, the Parish is visited by more unusual migrants. Examples include the Siberian Chiffchaff, an eastern race of our more familiar Chiffchaff, present in January 2021 at Barcombe new WTW near the south west corner of Knowlands Wood. It is a much less green bird than the usual Chiffchaffs with pale under-parts, dark legs and a dark 'beady' eye. A handful occur in Sussex each year.



**Siberian Chiffchaff at Barcombe new WTW, 3 January 2021**

A Wryneck turned up in our Barcombe garden in November 2022. The few that occur in Sussex each year normally occur in August and September so a November sighting is exceptional.

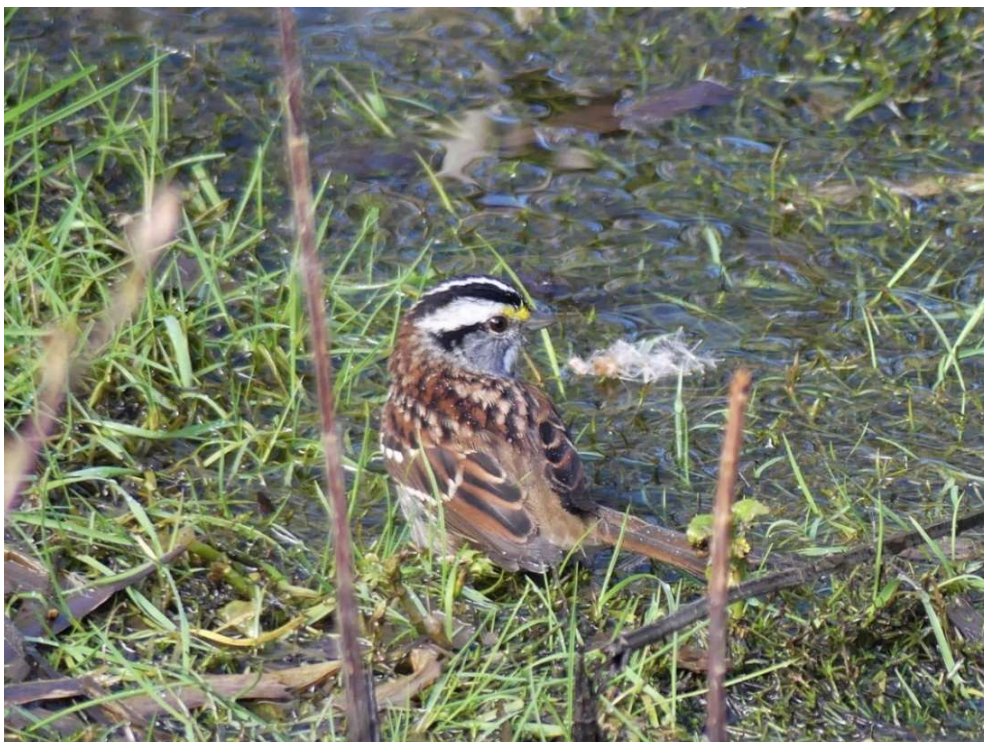


**A Wryneck showing *only part* of its incredibly long tongue in Barcombe, 11 November 2022**

The most celebrated ornithological event to date was probably the visit by a North American White-throated Sparrow from 3 February to 18 April 2021. Initially found by Catherine and Robert Anscombe in their Barcombe garden near the Recreation Ground during a BCWG House Sparrow survey, it later moved to the nearby 'Wild About Barcombe' area below the main allotments. It was found at the time of Covid social distancing and necessarily attempts were made to limit news of its presence. With the bird information online networks deciding to lift the news embargo in April, the bird attracted several hundred birdwatchers and photographers (a 'twitch'), some travelling many hours. A full account of this bird (the second for Sussex and the 54<sup>th</sup> for Britain) can be found in the Sussex Bird Report 2021.



**The socially distanced White-throated Sparrow 'twitch' at the 'Wild About Barcombe' site, 17 April 2021**



**White-throated Sparrow (adult male) at the 'Wild About Barcombe' site, 19 March 2021**



Perhaps some of the most spectacular bird events in the Barcombe year are the southerly movement in late autumn of Woodpigeons, sometimes in their thousands, and also the evening roosting flights of hundreds of Jackdaws from late summer through to early spring.

Just occasionally, there are other spectacles such as the flock of 178 Brent Geese flying south over Barcombe, calling, on 13 November 2022 which was part of a wider passage noted over Sussex that day.



**A Brent Goose flock of 178 birds flying south over Barcombe, 13 November 2022**

## Systematic list of bird species recorded in Barcombe Parish

Please note that some of the areas referred to are private with no public access, e.g., Barcombe Reservoir. The information below relates to over 26 years of my personal observations and draws heavily on records in both the SxBRC database to the end of 2023 and records from the SOS database to present, plus those from some additional quoted references (see page 8) that help cover some of the pre-digital record keeping. The status of species, as of 2025, are purely my opinion based on experience and the available data. Where possible, I've tried to separate out my records on these databases from observations made by others. I've put the sightings seen only by others in *italics*. Some of my sightings relate to birds found by others and that I merely saw.

Gauging status is not always straightforward but: **Common** = species that are likely to be encountered on a half-day walk around various habitats in the Parish at the right season (51 species, 24.4% of 209 total); **Scarce or local** = species seen regularly but that are never common in the Parish or that only occur very locally (44 species, 21.1%); **Unusual** = species seen less than annually or not for many years (77 species, 36.8%). For real rarities, the number of occurrences is noted (32 species, 15.3%). Some of these are unusual inland, some are rarities in Sussex (acceptance has been adjudicated by the SOS) and some are national rarities (that have been ratified by the British Birds Rarities Committee). There are then four species (Corncrake, Nightjar, Red-backed Shrike and Woodchat Shrike) for which only very old reports exist (i.e., before modern record keeping). Additionally, one species (Willow Tit), present as recently as 2009, sadly, is now considered extinct in Sussex. In some cases, it is apparent that records are not in the official record, despite having merit, or there is uncertainty as to whether they occurred just within or just outside the Parish boundary. These are listed separately below the main list.

Evidence of breeding includes anything from birds singing for prolonged periods during the spring right through to confirmed breeding with fledged young. It can be assumed that species noted as 'resident', usually nest within the Parish.

### Mute Swan

Status: scarce or local

This is a very familiar resident species that regularly breeds, e.g., at Barcombe Mills near the River Ouse. Occasional gatherings have been noted, especially in winter, including a flock of 27 in fields near the Anchor Inn on 9 January 2000 and 33 *feeding on a young rape crop at Barcombe Mills on 29 February 2000*. More recently, there were 15 at Barcombe Reservoir on 20 June 2023.

### Bewick's Swan

Status: unusual

All records of this winter visitor from the Arctic tundra come from Barcombe Reservoir with the highest counts being 18 on 20 January 1979, 32 on 16 February 1985, 10 on 12 January 1986 and 12 on 12 & 18 January 1987. A bird colour-marked at Slimbridge, Gloucestershire in January 1982 was *seen at the reservoir on 18 February 1985* (James, 1996). Wintering numbers have subsequently declined both here and more widely across Sussex. The most recent record at the reservoir was of *two on 5 January 2002*.

### Whooper Swan

Status: two occurrences

There are only two records of this winter visitor from northern Europe and Iceland. *Two were at Barcombe Reservoir on 30 September 1973* (Lang, 1995) *and there were five (three adults and two immatures) there on 24 January 1987*.

### Pink-footed Goose

Status: two occurrences

*One was at Barcombe Reservoir on 3 December 1978* (Lang, 1995) *and 1 January 1979*. It is possible that these two records relate to the same bird.





**Mute Swan, Barcombe Reservoir, 11 October 2021**



**White-fronted Goose, Barcombe Mills,  
25 January 2021**

### **White-fronted Goose**

Status: unusual

All records of this species, that arrives to spend the winter from the Arctic tundra, come from either Barcombe Reservoir or nearby Barcombe Mills. At the reservoir, *there were 35 on 28 December 1969, up to 57 between 22 November 1985 and 1 January 1986, and 20 on 29 November and 6 December 1998.* There have also been several records of smaller numbers at the reservoir. In fields at Barcombe Mills, there were up to 13 between 22 December 2020 and 25 January 2021.

### **Greylag Goose**

Status: common

This naturalised goose is now widespread both as a resident and a visitor. It has bred in the Parish e.g., at Barcombe Reservoir. The largest count was one of over 269 at Barcombe Reservoir on 11 August 2025.

### **Canada Goose**

Status: common

This goose introduced into the UK from North America several centuries ago is a widespread resident and visitor. It has bred in a number of locations. The largest counts at Barcombe Reservoir were *733 on 12 November 1987* and 560 on 21 August 2023.



**Greylag Goose, Knowlands Farm Pond, 14 March 2022**



**Canada Goose, Sutton Hall Estate, 2 May 2023**

### **Barnacle Goose**

Status: scarce or local

A feral flock is regularly in fields at Barcombe Mills from late summer through to early spring and recently has numbered about 40-50 though a maximum of 83 was recorded in 2002. It is uncertain where the flock spends the summer. For a period, the flock was joined by two hybrid geese then just one (probably Emperor x Barnacle).

### **Brent Goose**

Status: unusual

Small numbers of this wintering goose from the Arctic tundra have been recorded at Barcombe Reservoir over the years but more impressive have been the flocks headed over south or south west on migration during late autumn. These include *200 over Scobell's Farm on 12 November 1995*, and over our Barcombe garden: 150 on 16 October 1999; 200 on 15 October 2000; 130 on 2 November 2013; and 178 on 13 November 2022 (see page 16).



**Barnacle Goose (feral flock), Barcombe Reservoir,  
18 November 2019**



**Brent Goose (with Eurasian Teal to left),  
Barcombe Reservoir, 15 February 2016**

### **Egyptian Goose**

Status: common

This introduced species is an increasing resident in Sussex and based on current trends could become as numerous as Greylag and Canada Geese in the next decade or two. *Five were present at Barcombe Reservoir on 20 October 1974* then there were no more records until 2007. It is mainly seen at Barcombe Reservoir and Barcombe Mills but is increasingly seen more widely in the Parish and now breeds here. The highest counts were of 22 adults and two young at Barcombe Reservoir on 10 June 2024 and 26 there on 11 August 2025.

### **Common Shelduck**

Status: unusual

This striking, black and white species has mainly been seen at Barcombe Reservoir with larger counts being *13 on 28 August 1995, 12 on 13 & 14 January 1996, 23 on 30 March 1996 and eight on 3 April 2001*. Also seen flying over our Barcombe garden on three occasions with three on 25 December 2002, six on 16 May 2004 (previously seen that day at Barcombe Reservoir) and three on 4 November 2006.

### **Mandarin Duck**

Status: scarce or local

This introduced species (the drake is quite an exotic-looking bird) is now resident and nests in trees or nest boxes and is encountered, for example, at Knowlands Farm (where it has bred), Barcombe Reservoir and the Sutton Hall Estate. A female with two large young was at Knowlands Farm on 5 July 2020.





**Egyptian Goose, Barcombe Mills, 28 March 2023**



**Mandarin Duck (adult female on right and two juveniles), Knowlands Farm, 5 July 2020**

### **Eurasian Wigeon**

Status: scarce or local

This duck is regular at Barcombe Reservoir in variable numbers during the winter but much larger counts were made in the previous century including *1,222 at Barcombe Reservoir on 1 February 1970* (Lang, 1995). More recently, the recent peak count was 94 on 16 January 2011. Also a flock was heard flying over Barcombe on the evening of 28 March 2013. *There are also records from the Sutton Hall Estate.*

### **Gadwall**

Status: scarce or local

The drake of this outwardly drab species is really beautifully marked when seen well. It is a regular in small numbers at Barcombe Reservoir mainly during the winter (the maximum count is 74 on 16 February 2014) and *it has been recorded on the Sutton Hall Estate.*



**Eurasian Wigeon (with two Shovelers & a Gadwall),  
Barcombe Reservoir, 16 December 2024**



**Gadwall (male), Barcombe Reservoir, 17 February 2025**

### **Eurasian Teal**

Status: scarce or local

This small duck is regular at Barcombe Reservoir mainly during the winter with a maximum of 277 on 12 February 2012. Occasional individuals have been seen at Knowlands Farm (including seven on 4 January 2023) and on the Sutton Hall Estate (including a drake on the unusual date of 2 June 2024 with two nearby on 10 August 2024). Also unusual was a pair at Barcombe Reservoir on 27 May and 23 June 2025.

## **Mallard**

### Status: common

This is the most frequently encountered duck in the Parish and is both a resident and a visitor. It is regular at Barcombe Reservoir throughout the year but peaking in late autumn and winter. It is also regularly seen throughout the Parish, breeding in suitable habitat including gardens on occasion (see photo taken at our neighbour's pond). The maximum counts at the reservoir have been *700 during the winter of 1970/1* (James, 1996), *620 on 12 December 1978 and 590 on 30 December 1995*. The highest recent count there was 283 on 16 December 2022.



**Eurasian Teal (male), Knowlands Farm,  
17 November 2018**



**Mallard (female & duckling), Barcombe, 3 May 2018**

## **Pintail**

### Status: unusual

A scarce though beautiful duck with most records from Barcombe Reservoir in winter. *The maximum count there was 10 on 16 March 1996*. Also two flew over Barcombe on 23 March 2001. *There are also records from the Sutton Hall Estate.*

## **Garganey**

### Status: unusual

This duck is a summer visitor to the UK (spending the winter in Africa) and has been seen occasionally on migration at Barcombe Reservoir. When the reservoir was filling soon after construction, *there were 16 on 4 September 1966* (Lang, 1995) – an exceptional count. *Other records there comprise six (three pairs) on 29 March 1981, one on 16 May 1984, one on 14 March 1986 and one on 25 July 2001*. There was then a drake there on 2 May 2010.

## **Shoveler**

### Status: scarce or local

This duck with a large spatulate bill is a regular at Barcombe Reservoir especially in winter but seems to be increasing with the highest counts from 2012 onward (see chart on page 9). The maxima there were 186 on 13 January 2020 and 146 on 21 October 2024. *There are also records from the Sutton Hall Estate.*

## **Red-crested Pochard**

### Status: unusual

An adult female was at Barcombe Reservoir in August 2009 and three drakes were there on 18 November 2019. These are probably of naturalised origin from within Britain though wild birds from abroad are possible.





**Shoveler (three males, two females),  
Barcombe Reservoir, 17 March 2025**



**Red-crested Pochard (three males with Canada Geese  
in background), Barcombe Reservoir,  
18 November 2019**

### **Common Pochard**

Status: scarce or local

This diving duck is regular at Barcombe Reservoir especially in winter though numbers are much reduced in recent years (see chart of WeBS counts on page 9). Regardless, the reservoir remains one of the most important Sussex sites for this species. There were three figure counts (WeBS and others) there until 2003 with a maximum of 407 on 28 December 1996. The highest count since has been 98 on 15 January 2024. A hybrid (x Tufted Duck) was noted in October-December 2004 and in October and November 2009. Away from the reservoir, an unusual sighting was *three at Barcombe village reservoir on 30 May 2021* (Robin Denison-Pender).

### **Ring-necked Duck**

Status: two occurrences

This nationally rare duck from North America was seen at Barcombe Reservoir in December 2000 / January 2001 (up to two, a male joined by a female) and in January 2003 (a female). As with any unusual wildfowl, there is always a small question mark over their origin due to potential escapes from captive collections.

### **Tufted Duck**

Status: scarce or local

This is the commonest diving duck and both a resident and a visitor. It is regular at Barcombe Reservoir with maxima of 123 on 22 January 1997 and 118 on 22 August 2016. It has bred there on occasion. Very occasionally also seen at Knowlands Farm, on the Sutton Hall Estate and at Barcombe village reservoir.

### **Greater Scaup**

Status: unusual

This diving duck was seen Barcombe Reservoir on 1 January 1989; 28 November 1993; December 1996 – February 1997 (up to three); 21 November 1999, 9 & 10 February 2002; 17 March 2002; 10 & 17 October 2004 and 7 November 2014. It has now become extremely scarce in Sussex.

### **Common Eider**

Status: two occurrences

There are two records of this diving sea-duck at Barcombe Reservoir, *a drake on 25 October 1988 and 13 on 16 December 1995 with four there next day.*



**Common Pochard (three males), Barcombe Reservoir,  
17 February 2025**



**Tufted Duck (two males), Barcombe Reservoir,  
13 May 2024**

### **Long-tailed Duck**

Status: unusual

Not surprisingly, records for this diving sea-duck within the Parish only come from Barcombe Reservoir. *Up to two were present during 28 November 1993 - 4 April 1994. Singles were also present during 23 November 2003 – 3 January 2004 and 5 November 2005 – 1 May 2006. Finally, one was there on 17 April 2011.*

### **Common Scoter**

Status: unusual

This diving sea-duck has been seen at Barcombe Reservoir as follows: *three on 6 April 1970 and one on 28 January 1996* (Lang, 1995); *one on 21 March 1997*; and a drake on 17 October 2004.

### **Goldeneye**

Status: unusual

This diving duck was recorded at Barcombe Reservoir in 32 of the years 1980-2018 but not since. This reflects a county-wide decline. Usually seen singly, there were *eight on 6 January 2000*. Although most often seen in winter, other records include *one at Barcombe Reservoir on 11 August 1982* (James, 1996), two at the reservoir on 23 August 2009 and one there on 22 September 2013.

### **Smew**

Status: unusual

All records in the Parish of this 'sawbill' diving duck have been at Barcombe Reservoir in winter: *one on 13 February 1972; two on 5 February 1982; one on 25 January 1985* (Lang, 1995); *five on 23 February 1985; one on 31 December 1988; one on 17 February 1991, one on 17 December 1995; up to two between 19 January and 3 February 1996; one on 29 December 1996; one on 8 January 1997 and two ('redheads' i.e., females / immature males) on 18 & 19 January 2009*. As in the rest of south-east England, this species has become increasingly rare over the past few winters.

### **Goosander**

Status: unusual

All records but one of this 'sawbill' diving duck have been at Barcombe Reservoir in winter. Recorded in 19 of the winters between 1988 and 2012, *with larger counts being seven on 27 November 1988, 17 on 12 January 1997 and seven on 16 February 1997*. Since 2012, there have been four on 14 November 2016, one on 13 February 2017 and two on 9 March 2021. *One on 18 November 2021 was near the River Ouse.*





**Goldeneye (female / immature), Barcombe Reservoir,  
15 February 2016**



**Goosander (male), Barcombe Reservoir,  
14 November 2016**

### **Ruddy Duck**

Status: unusual

This diving duck from North America escaped from captive collections in the late 1940s, became fairly widespread but is now nearly extinct in UK after a nationwide cull (it was considered to be a genetic threat to the closely-related and rare White-headed Duck in Spain). It was seen in 24 years between 1977 and 2009 at Barcombe Reservoir with a maximum count of four. The last was a single on 17 October 2009.

### **Red-legged Partridge**

Status: common

This resident game-bird has been seen more frequently in the Parish in recent years presumably as the result of game-shooting releases.

### **Grey Partridge**

Status: unusual

This gamebird was probably once common in the Parish ('partridge', presumably this species, is described as 'common' in 1953 – see WI, 1999) but has now declined as it has in much of Sussex. *Most recent records were of two near Barcombe Reservoir on 1 June 2015, two at Barcombe on 21 October 2018 and two in a stubble field near Barcombe on 6 April 2020* (Robin Denison-Pender, SOS website).

### **Quail**

Status: unusual

This is an unusual small gamebird that visits Sussex from the Continent / Africa in small numbers each summer. It has a distinctive 'wet-my-lips' call given from deep cover within crops. *Two were south-east of Barcombe on 28 June 2015. There are also records from the Sutton Hall Estate.*

### **Common Pheasant**

Status: common

This is a common breeding resident with numbers augmented by releases for game-shooting.

### **Red-throated Diver**

Status: unusual

This species is usually seen along the Sussex coast in winter or on passage and tends to be driven inland by bad weather or illness. *Singles at Barcombe Reservoir were on 1 January 1989 (Lang, 1995), 4 February 1996, 13 March 1996, 23 February 1997 and 20 October 2006. One was on the River Ouse next to Barcombe Reservoir on 28 March and 4 April 2004.*



**Red-legged Partridge, near Boast Lane, 13 May 2020**



**Common Pheasant (two males fighting),  
Knowlands Farm, 17 April 2020**

### **Black-throated Diver**

Status: two occurrences

As with the previous species, this is an unusual bird to see inland. *One was at Barcombe Reservoir on 3 December 1985 (photo in the Birds of Sussex, 2014) and a juvenile was there from 19-25 November 1990.*

### **Gannet**

Status: one occurrence

One individual of this seabird *was found dead under power lines near Barcombe on 13 January 1995* and presumably had been storm-driven.

### **Cormorant**

Status: common

This species is a visitor to the Parish and has mainly been seen at Barcombe Reservoir with the largest counts being *120 on 31 December 2000* and *135 on 21 September 2020*. It is also regularly seen in small numbers flying over the Parish especially during the winter.

### **Shag**

Status: three occurrences

Singles of this Cormorant relative were *at Barcombe Reservoir on 17 March 1991, 17 January 1993 and 22 November 1995*. The latter was an immature. Inland records are unusual.

### **Bittern**

Status: two occurrences

Singles of this secretive brown heron were *at Barcombe Reservoir on 6 January 1974 (apparently seen from four foot range by a Mr Harrison-Smith of Herstmonceux according to David Lang's notebooks) and at Barcombe Mills on 11 January 1985*. It is mainly seen in Sussex during hard winter weather.

### **Little Egret**

Status: scarce or local

This attractive small white heron is an increasing visitor to the Parish and there is a small breeding colony further south in the Ouse Valley. It may be encountered along streams or seen flying over, usually singly but occasionally two, three or even four (as on *19 August 2024 at Barcombe Reservoir* and on *10 January 2025 along the Bevern at Knowlands Farm*) are seen together. Although a couple of hundred metres outside the Parish boundary, *ten were in a field at Holmans Bridge on 26 February 2007* with six still there on *5 March 2007*.





**Cormorant, Knowlands Farm, 23 August 2023**



**Little Egret, Barcombe village reservoir, 16 April 2022**

### **Great White Egret**

Status: one occurrence

*One was seen by John Sclater and others on the Sutton Hall Estate on 27 January 2024. This species is likely to be encountered more frequently in the future because, as has happened with Little Egret, and is happening with Cattle Egret, numbers are increasing nationally.*

### **Grey Heron**

Status: common

This is a regular visitor seen in or over the Parish, usually singly and occasionally visiting garden ponds and even perching on houses in Barcombe. Larger counts include *seven at Barcombe Reservoir on three occasions and eight near Anchor Lane on 18 January 2006*. There are small breeding colonies further south in the Ouse Valley and near Uckfield plus a large colony at Weir Wood Reservoir. There is the suggestion from records on the SxBRC database that it may on occasion breed in the Parish.

### **White Stork**

Status: unusual

*An unringed bird was at Handlye Farm, Barcombe on 14-16 August 2005 (David Lang's notebooks). This pre-dates the release programmes at the Knepp Estate near Horsham, West Sussex and at Wadhurst Park, East Sussex. Nevertheless, earlier escapes cannot be fully ruled out though this bird is likely to have been a wild bird from abroad. The releases from the above estates started in 2018 and account for most of the subsequent sightings around the Parish that have been noted on the SxBRC database, the BCWG Facebook pages and through personal communication. One, presumably a released bird, was perched on a house in Barcombe Mills overnight on 15/16 August 2024.*

### **Little Grebe**

Status: scarce or local

This small grebe (or 'Dabchick') is occasionally resident but more often a visitor to the Parish. Records have primarily been from Knowlands Farm (where it has bred), Barcombe Reservoir (maximum counts of eight on *16 September 2007* and *23 August 2009*) and, infrequently, the Sutton Hall Estate (where it may have bred in 2025).

### **Great Crested Grebe**

Status: scarce or local

This grebe is a regular visitor to Barcombe Reservoir, often peaking in autumn, though *with a maximum count of 46 on 17 December 1994*. It has bred at the reservoir occasionally. Elsewhere, one on Barcombe village reservoir on 8 May 2023 was unusual.



**Grey Heron, Knowlands Farm, 17 March 2018**



**White Stork, Barcombe, 16 January 2022**



**Great Crested Grebe, Barcombe Reservoir,  
27 May 2025**

**Red-necked Grebe**

Status: one occurrence

*One was at Barcombe Reservoir from 11 November to 26 December 1989.*



### **Slavonian Grebe**

Status: unusual

One was at Barcombe Reservoir on 23 December 1978 (Lang, 1995), on 23-24 November 1985 (David Lang notebooks) and on 5, 7 & 21 December 1997. However, James (1996) notes *eight there up to 1993*; the difference is probably accounted for by records submitted on paper before computerisation by SOS and hence not readily accessible.

### **Black-necked Grebe**

Status: unusual

This medium-sized grebe occurs with reasonable regularity at Barcombe Reservoir. Records there are of singles unless stated: *on 10 March and 24 April 1996; between 28 August and 12 September 1996; on 5 September 1998; on 31 July 1999; on various dates in November / December 1999; during 7-12 April 2004; on 29 May 2005; on 23 December 2007 (two); on 18 December 2011 and 2 January 2012 (two); on 11 October 2021; and on 20 November 2023. One was at 'Barcombe Mills' on 16 January 1997.*



**Little Grebe, Knowlands Farm, 17 March 2018**

### **Honey-buzzard**

Status: unusual

This is a buzzard-sized raptor (though more closely related to the kites than buzzards) that migrates to the UK each summer in extremely small numbers. Sussex has a small but healthy population. Three south over Barcombe on 2 October 2000 were part of a larger than usual passage of this raptor over the UK. There were a number of sightings in the area during 2003 including one over Scobell's Farm on 7 June. One flew over Barcombe Reservoir on 16 August 2015, *two were just within the parish boundary near the River Ouse at Isfield on 18 September 2019* and two were seen from Barcombe then flew over Knowlands Wood early evening of 25 July 2022. There have been a few sightings of birds in 2023 and 2024 that were probably birds visiting from a nest site well outside the Parish. A male in the Parish during late summer 2025 was considered to be an unpaired bird.



**Black-necked Grebe, Barcombe Reservoir,  
11 October 2021**



**Honey-buzzard (adult male), near Anchor Lane,  
16 August 2023**

### **Red Kite**

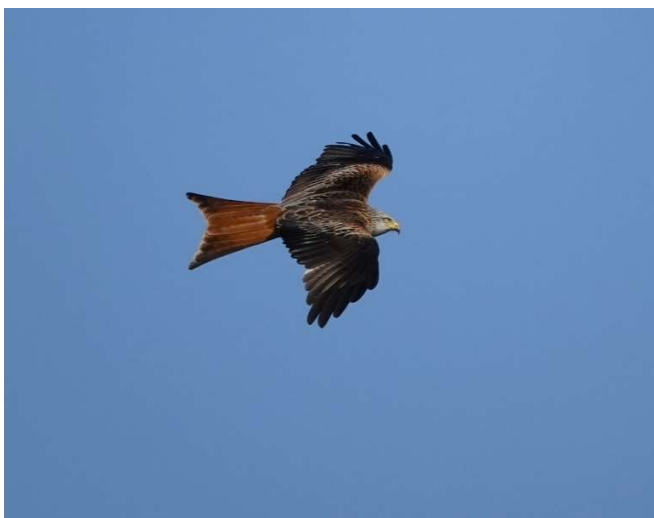
Status: common

Following a release programme in the Chilterns in 1990, this raptor has become quite common across much of south east England, breeding widely. This is reflected in the Barcombe Parish sightings. *An early record was one on 13 January 1995* and now it is seen nearly daily within the Parish including over Barcombe with perhaps up to three pairs breeding in the area. It is starting to rival Buzzard in the frequency of sightings. Perhaps the most spectacular sighting was of 28 (*and perhaps over 40 seen earlier in the day by Kevin Francis*) following the plough on the Sutton Hall Estate on 2 May 2025. Roving parties of immature Red Kites have become a feature of springs in southern England but this gathering was exceptional locally.

### **White-tailed Eagle**

Status: unusual

The release programme on the Isle of Wight that started in 2019 accounts for the two sightings to date. *A young male (G274) was tracked by transmitter and roosted in woodland near Spithurst on 20 June 2020.* There were two seen from Anchor Lane mobbed by local Common Buzzards on 5 May 2022. Undoubtedly, there will be more sightings now that birds originating from the release now breed in Sussex.



**Red Kite, Sutton Hall Estate, 2 May 2025**



**Marsh Harrier (female or immature), Barcombe Mills,  
24 August 2021**



### **Marsh Harrier**

#### Status: unusual

There are just seven records of this once nationally rare, but now more widespread, raptor. *Singles were at Barcombe Reservoir on 14 August 1987, 13 September 1994, 15 December 2002 and 20 August 2005.* A female flew over Barcombe on 23 May 2003 and one, probably a juvenile, was around stubble fields between Hayes Lane and the disused railway line at Barcombe Mills on 24 August 2021, presumably a late spring migrant and an autumn one, respectively. Finally, one, probably a juvenile and also on autumn migration, was seen near Old Park Field on the Sutton Hall Estate on 23 August 2025. It was continually mobbed by the local Rooks.

### **Hen Harrier**

#### Status: unusual

There are 18 SxBRC records of this fine raptor in the Parish. Additionally, it is included in a 2011 list of species seen on the Sutton Hall Estate. Sadly, it suffers persecution across some of the northern moors where it breeds in the UK. Nearly all of the Barcombe Parish records have been in the winter. Records since the Millennium comprise a smartly-plumaged adult male (which is pale bluish-grey with black wing tips) over Barcombe on 3 February 2002 (seen from our kitchen window!) then all single 'ringtails' (females or immature males) unless stated: *near Agmond's Wood on 3 January 2005* (David Lang's notebooks); low over Barcombe Reservoir on 19 March 2005; *over stubble at Spithurst on 27 January 2009*; over Barcombe Mills on 19 December 2010; over Barcombe on 7 January 2012; *at Barcombe Reservoir on both 2 February and 9 March 2012*; *at Barcombe on 21 December 2014*; and north of Knowlands Wood (an adult male) on 7 March 2021. Most recently, an adult male that flew west over Church Farm and eventually north west over Old Park Wood was on the unusual date of 23 August 2025.

### **Goshawk**

#### Status: unusual

This a large and powerful raptor that has rapidly increased in Sussex over the past decade. The UK population appears to have its origin in escaped falconers' birds that have naturalised over many generations though there may also be immigration of wild birds from the Continent. *A juvenile female was at Barcombe Reservoir on 14 September 1998.* David Lang's notebooks then report *one over Barcombe on 23 April 2000 and one at Agmond's Wood on 1 May 2005.* There were then no records in the Parish until early 2022. Single individuals have been recorded subsequently at various wooded sites suggesting that the species may be starting to establish itself in the Parish. Although its key prey items of Woodpigeons, corvids and Grey Squirrels are plentiful, the limitation to establishment may be blocks of woodland containing large conifers that have minimal disturbance.

### **Sparrowhawk**

#### Status: scarce or local

This is a regularly seen but fairly scarce resident. It almost certainly breeds in several places within the Parish most years and, for instance, several young were heard in Knowlands Wood on 26 July 2024. Although this species normally preys on small birds following a low-level, lightning-fast strike, a male killed a Collared Dove (which is a very large item of prey for the small male) in the driveway of our Barcombe garden on 17 April 2020 and a juvenile female killed a Woodpigeon on a neighbour's lawn on 1 October 2021.

### **Common Buzzard**

#### Status: common

The improving fortunes of this large, resident raptor both around Barcombe but also Sussex are best illustrated by the fact that I recorded none from our Barcombe garden between late April and early October 1999 and, in 2000, none until 5 August. Nowadays, the species is seen daily in weather conditions suitable for soaring and often in small numbers (and occasionally in double figures). The species breeds widely across the Parish. The largest count was of 31 within a single view on the Sutton Hall Estate near Agmond's Wood on 10 September 2022 though John Sclater remembers seeing between 40 and 50 over the Sutton Hall Estate in February about 20 years ago.



**Sparrowhawk (adult male) Barcombe, 17 April 2020**



**Hen Harrier (adult male), Church Farm,  
23 August 2025**



**Sparrowhawk (juvenile female), Barcombe,  
1 October 2021**





**Goshawk (juvenile), Church Farm, 24 July 2024**



**Buzzard, Knowlands Farm, 14 October 2023**

### **Osprey**

Status: unusual

There are at least 24 records of this fish-eating raptor within the Parish. Most have been seen on spring and autumn migration. The first was *at Barcombe Mills on 6 October 1956* when the species was very rare in the UK. Since then, its national fortunes have improved with widespread pairs in Scotland and now elsewhere in Britain. Most records have been from Barcombe Reservoir and Barcombe Mills but others comprise singles: *over Scobell's Farm on 31 August 1997; over Knowlands Farm on 12 October 1988; fishing at Barcombe village reservoir on 26 October 2008* (David Lang's notebooks); flying south at Barcombe on 29 August 2009 (a nice garden tick!); near Sutton Hall Weir on 14 June 2023; *at Barcombe on 6 May 2024*; over Knowlands Farm on 3 September 2024; and *over Spithurst on 15 August 2025* (Clare Saxby).

### **Kestrel**

Status: common

A regularly-seen resident species (the 'windhover') though in small numbers. A few pairs usually breed in the Parish each year. For instance, a nest with chicks in an oak tree was noted near Barcombe on 30 June 2019 and four, probably a family party, were at Barcombe Mills on 13 August 2000.



**Osprey, near Sutton Hall Weir, 14 June 2023**



**Kestrel (adult male), Knowlands Farm, 18 July 2020**

### Red-footed Falcon

Status: one occurrence

An adult female was present around fields between Barcombe Reservoir and The Anchor Inn between 30 May and 4 June 2015. This national rarity was found by a visiting birdwatcher and greatly enjoyed from 31 May until its departure, by locals, others from across the county and some from even further afield. It shared the area with up to two Hobbies.

### Merlin

Status: unusual

This small falcon of open countryside is quite an unusual autumn or winter visitor to the Parish with 23 SOS records (though possibly with some duplication). It has also *been seen on the Sutton Hall Estate and was noted as 'uncommon' in 1953* (WI, 1999). Most birds seen have been females or immature males though adult males have been seen on occasion, e.g., a very smart one near The Anchor Inn on 28 December 1999.

### Hobby

Status: scarce or local

This attractive, Kestrel-sized falcon is a summer visitor and passage migrant that probably breeds somewhere in the Parish most years. For instance, a pair with (two) fledged young was seen in one location during September 2022 and another with at least one fledged young was seen in August 2025. From our garden in Barcombe, first sightings are usually between late April and early June with the earliest on 22 April 2015. None were seen there in 2014 and the latest recorded in autumn within the Parish was on 12 October 2017. Four hawking insects just to the east of Barcombe on 29 August 2005 were thought to comprise a family party. There was an interesting sighting of an adult and a first year bird perched on the west wall of Barcombe Reservoir on 10 June 2010.



**Red-footed Falcon (adult female), Barcombe Mills,  
3 June 2015**



**Hobby (adult) in trees beside Barcombe Reservoir,  
24 May 2021**

### Peregrine

Status: scarce or local

Singles (and rarely, pairs) of this impressive falcon are seen every few months in most years though there were no sightings reported in 2018. The frequency of sightings is dependent upon the proximity of breeding pairs not far from the Parish.

### Water Rail

Status: unusual

A surprisingly scarce species though listening out on winter evenings might reveal more. *There have been a few records from Barcombe Mills and Barcombe Reservoir, the most recent from the latter between 17 December 2000 and 7 January 2001.* One was seen beside the road near Holmans Bridge (very edge of the Parish) on 14 January 2009. The most recent records have been from the *Sutton Hall Estate* and Knowlands Farm. At the latter, singles were noted on 9 April 2019 (Nick Lear), 1 and 17 January 2021, and during 1-5 January 2022.





**Peregrine (adult), Barcombe, 27 March 2020**



**Water Rail, Knowlands Farm, 1 January 2022**

### **Corncrake**

Status: very old records only

This species, labelled as 'Land Rail', is described as '*uncommon*' in the *Parish in 1953* (WI, 1999). One contributor to the latter document (Mr Leslie Churches) remembered seeing *two at Delves Farm* (Anchor Lane).

### **Moorhen**

Status: common

This familiar bird of ponds is widespread but in small numbers (though in double figures on occasion). A number of pairs breed in the Parish. There have been a few sightings in our Barcombe garden on 30 July 2000, 1 May 2003, 9 November 2005 and 19 July 2010. In addition, birds have been occasionally heard calling at night in flight there as they circuit nearby territory with records on 31 December 2020, 26 April 2021, 13 April 2022, 23 May 2022 and 11 May 2024.

### **Coot**

Status: scarce or local

By far the majority of records come from Barcombe Reservoir where birds are present throughout the year, occasionally breeding, but with a marked winter increase. The maximum count there has been 252 on 16 October 2005. Coots are occasionally encountered elsewhere, e.g., Knowlands Farm, Barcombe village reservoir and the Sutton Hall Estate. As with Moorhen, it has been heard calling while flying at night over our Barcombe garden on 21 April 2015, 11 April 2019, 4 April 2020 and 11 May 2024.



**Moorhen, Knowlands Farm, 1 October 2024**



**Coot (adult and three chicks), Barcombe Reservoir, 23 June 2025**

### **Oystercatcher**

Status: unusual

At Barcombe Reservoir, singles of this distinctive wader have been seen *on 28 February 1998, 18 August 1998, 16 March 2000, 1 September 2003, 25 July 2006 and 1 May 2021*. One was at 'Barcombe' on 4 September 2013. It has been recorded nesting just south in the Ouse Valley, e.g., in 2024.

### **Avocet**

Status: two occurrences

Singles of this once rare elegant black and white wader with an up-tilted bill were *at Barcombe Reservoir on 20 June 2005 and 19 April 2009*.

### **Little Ringed Plover**

Status: unusual

This summer visitor to the UK is occasionally seen as a spring and autumn passage migrant at Barcombe Reservoir. The maximum count has been six on 18 July 2004. The most recent records were singles on 20 April 2014, 21 March 2022 and 27 May 2025.

### **Ringed Plover**

Status: three occurrences

At Barcombe Reservoir, there were singles of this mainly coastal species on *25 May 1978, 11 March 2002 and 11 May 2002*.

### **Golden Plover**

Status: unusual

Previously, this was a fairly regular species in winter at Barcombe Reservoir with maximum counts of *200 on 3 December 1979 and 30 November 1986* along with a few other sightings of birds flying over the Parish. Since *3 December 2006 when one flew over Barcombe Reservoir with a Lapwing flock*, there have only been just two records in the Parish, possibly reflecting milder winters. A flock of 21 flew south near Red Bridge on 5 February 2012 and two flocks totalling 59 flew south over Knowlands Farm during cold weather on 11 December 2022.



**Little Ringed Plover, Barcombe Reservoir,  
21 March 2022**



**Golden Plover, Knowlands Farm, 11 December 2022**

### **Grey Plover**

Status: one occurrence

*One was at Barcombe Mills on 23 November 1993.*



## **Lapwing**

### Status: scarce or local

The Lapwing, "Green Plover" or "Peewit" is a regular winter visitor, though previously much more numerous, and an intermittent very scarce breeder within the Parish. The four-figure winter counts were nearly all prior to the Millennium and at Barcombe Reservoir with the highest being *4,000 on 19 February 1979; 2,500 on 31 January 1988 and 3,000 on 9 January 2000*. There have been no four figure counts there since 1,000 on 18 December 2004 and only nine three-figure counts subsequently, the highest being *200 on both 16 January 2005 and 25 November 2007*, and 275 on 24 January 2022. Away from Barcombe Reservoir, *200 over Scobell's Farm on 9 December 1999* and 230 over the Sutton Hall Estate on 19 February 2023 have been some of the largest counts. This is a species that is sometimes caught up in cold weather movements though these have been infrequent in recent years. One or more pairs usually tries to breed in the Parish most years though success is often limited due to the unwelcome attention of Carrion Crows and other predators of the eggs and young. Displaying birds and others excavating nesting scrapes have occasionally been seen in spring within fields south of Knowlands Wood. *Lapwings previously bred at Barcombe Reservoir*. More recently, a large young bird on the wall of the reservoir on 18 June 2018 suggests they may still occasionally do so. Nearby, in fields along Blunt's Lane near the Anchor Inn, *two breeding pairs were present in the 2019 breeding season with one successful on the second attempt* (James Wallis). More recently there, up to about four pairs have attempted to breed on set-aside prepared by the Sutton Hall Estate with three full-grown juveniles accompanying a pair of adults on 3 June 2023 (SL) indicating some success. Although birds were present there on occasion in the 2024 and 2025 seasons, there was no substantiated evidence of breeding success.

## **Knot**

### Status: unusual

There are no recent records but David Lang (1995) described it *as a scarce passage migrant at Barcombe Reservoir*.

## **Little Stint**

### Status: unusual

The four records of this small wader were, unsurprisingly, all from Barcombe Reservoir: *one on 22 September 1973* (Lang, 1995); *up to seven juveniles between 19 and 29 September 1996; at least three in September 1998*; and three tame adults in summer plumage on 11 June 2005 which were presumed to be late spring migrants. The latter allowed approach to within five metres.

## **Dunlin**

### Status: unusual

An occasional visitor to Barcombe Reservoir usually singly with the most recent record in 2010. There was an exceptional record of 27 there on 16 January 2000 (SL). Away from the reservoir, one was seen over Barcombe on 20 February 2000 and one near the old railway track north of Barcombe on 14 January 2011.

## **Ruff**

### Status: unusual

There are only four records of this wader, all at Barcombe Reservoir: *two when the reservoir was first flooded on 4 September 1966* (David Lang's notebooks); *and singles on 2 January 1977; 5 May 1985; and 17 February 1991*.

## **Jack Snipe**

### Status: unusual

This small Snipe which only flushes when nearly underfoot is rarely recorded though may be commoner than reflected by the sightings. It is described as *a scarce winter visitor at Barcombe Reservoir* by David Lang (1995). *One was near Barcombe on 4 January 2002, one was by the Bevern on 7 January 2010* (David Lang's notebooks), *one was at Knowlands Farm in February 2019* (Nick Lear) *and two were at Barcombe Mills on 12 April 2021*. *The species has also been recorded in the past on the Sutton Hall Estate and was described as 'fairly common' within the Parish in 1953* (WL, 1999).

### Common Snipe

Status: scarce or local

'Drumming' display flights indicative of breeding *were noted at Longford Farm, Spithurst during 1978-1980*. It is now fairly regular in winter in damp grassland along the River Ouse including that immediately west of Barcombe Reservoir. At the latter, the maximum count was 22 when they were disturbed by a fox on 13 March 2011. Near the Anchor Inn, a large count was of 57 on 19 January 2023. Birds are occasionally seen on spring and autumn migration such as *11 on the concrete wall of Barcombe Reservoir on 23 August 2021*. They are also noted away from the River Ouse and are regular at Knowlands Farm where the maximum count was 22 on 23 December 2022. Other sightings have come from Scobell's Farm and over Barcombe. At the latter, nine that flew over our garden on 8 February 2022 was an unusual sighting. Additionally, four flew north-west there in frozen conditions on 1 January 2002.



Lapwing (juvenile), near Anchor Lane, 3 June 2023



Common Snipe, Knowlands Farm, 8 April 2018

### Woodcock

Status: scarce or local

The species was seen on 'roding' territorial flights *at Spithurst during the 1978-1980 breeding seasons*. It is now a regular winter visitor in small numbers at Knowlands Wood and on the Sutton Hall Estate. Larger counts at the former include four on both 30 January and 2 February 2019. *The latter occasionally boasts larger numbers*. Also sometimes seen elsewhere such as at *Scobell's Farm*, on the boundary of Barcombe Reservoir (*on 1 February 1987 noted in David Lang's notebooks and on 10 January 2009*) and around Barcombe where one was seen in flight from our kitchen window at dusk on 2 November 2016.

### Black-tailed Godwit

Status: two occurrences

This large wader with a long straight bill and long legs was seen *at Barcombe Reservoir in March 1968* when the reservoir was drained (Lang, 1995) *and one was there on 1 August 2005*.

### Bar-tailed Godwit

Status: two occurrences

Singles of this wader were at Barcombe Reservoir *on 18 May 1992 and 28 April 1996*.



## Whimbrel

### Status: unusual

There are ten records of this spring and autumn passage migrant which looks like a small, dark Curlew. *One was at Scobell's Farm on 15 May 1995; two were at Barcombe Reservoir on 28 April 1996; another flew over Scobell's Farm calling on 24 July 2000; one was heard over Barcombe on 3 September 2002; a flock of nine flew south-west over Knowlands Farm on 27 April 2003; one was at Barcombe Reservoir on 28 April 2004; an impressive flock of 18 flew south-west calling over our Barcombe garden on the evening of 11 August 2004; 10 were at Barcombe Reservoir on 21 April 2006; another impressive flock of 25 flew north-east calling near Barcombe on 23 April 2022; and one was in a field at Anchor Lane on 16 April 2025.*



**Woodcock, Knowlands Wood, 20 January 2020**



**Whimbrel (flock headed north-east), Barcombe, 23 April 2022**

## Curlew

### Status: unusual

There are only six records of this large wader that is more familiar on the coast (though it previously bred on Ashdown Forest) with *one flying south over Barcombe Reservoir on 21 November 1993, singles there on 5 November 1995 and 10 February 2002, one at Barcombe Mills on 15 June 2007, one flying west over Scobell's Farm on 22 July 2007 and one at Barcombe on 27 April 2016.*

## Common Sandpiper

### Status: scarce or local

A regular visitor on passage to Barcombe Reservoir with occasional (though not recent) double figure counts with a maximum of *21 on 12 August 2007*. Very occasionally seen away from the reservoir, for example, *four on the River Ouse on 19 May 1989* and one at Sutton Hall Weir on 18 April 1993. It has a distinct manner of flight with shallow flicks of fairly rigid wings. It also usually calls on taking flight.

## Spotted Sandpiper

### Status: one occurrence

One of these North American vagrant waders was *at Barcombe Reservoir from 3 to 12 November 1977.*

## Green Sandpiper

### Status: scarce or local

A regular visitor on passage and in winter to Barcombe Reservoir, usually singly but occasionally more, with five on three dates: *2 January 1977; 19 September 1999; and 9 April 2006*. Occasionally encountered elsewhere such as Knowlands Farm or the Sutton Hall Estate. Heard over our Barcombe garden on 5 August 2003 and one was seen flying over there on 19 August 2012.



**Common Sandpiper, Barcombe Reservoir,  
24 August 2020**



**Green Sandpiper, Barcombe Reservoir, 14 April 2025**

### **Spotted Redshank**

Status: unusual

*Described as scarce on passage at Barcombe Reservoir by David Lang (1995). There have been none recently.*

### **Greenshank**

Status: unusual

There have been sightings of singles (occasionally more) on passage at Barcombe Reservoir with *five on 14 April 2003* and no records since 2016. The species is occasionally recorded elsewhere: a fine flock of nine flew south-west giving their distinctive 'chu chu chu' call over our Barcombe garden early evening on 5 September 2004; one flew south over the River Ouse at Barcombe Mills calling on 7 August 2005; one was at Knowlands Farm on 6 September 2009; *one was over Spithurst on 12 March 2011 and one was at Barcombe on 31 August 2021.*

### **Wood Sandpiper**

Status: unusual

There have been just six records of this passage wader. At Barcombe Reservoir, singles were present *on 10 May 1989; from 31 July to 3 August 2002; on 13 August 2006; on 29 July 2007; and on 5 August 2019. Additionally, one was seen near Vuggles Farm on 17 August 2002.*

### **Common Redshank**

Status: unusual

This wader previously bred near the River Ouse *with two pairs noted on 16 May 1976*. Since then, singles (or exceptionally two, e.g., on 10 March 2013) have been seen occasionally on passage at Barcombe Reservoir, most recently on 25 March 2019.

### **Turnstone**

Status: unusual

Records of this usually coastal wader were at Barcombe Reservoir with *one on 6 May 1967, one on 4 May 1974* (David Lang's notebooks), *12 on 8 December 1991* (David Lang's notebooks), *and one on 26 April 1992.*

### **Grey Phalarope**

Status: one occurrence

A single of this unusual small wader that feeds while floating on water was *at Barcombe Reservoir on 23-24 November 1985*. Breeding in the Arctic and usually spending the winter in the Atlantic off Africa, they are sometimes brought inland by autumnal storms while on their passage south.





**Wood Sandpiper, Barcombe Reservoir, 5 August 2019**



**Common Redshank, Barcombe Reservoir,  
25 March 2019**

### **Kittiwake**

Status: unusual

There have been just four records of this gull that is usually seen along the coast (for instance, it breeds at Splash Point, Seaford) but occasionally brought inland during rough weather. All four records were at Barcombe Reservoir: *a first winter bird on 31 December 1989; a dead adult on 12 January 1991; a juvenile from 2-9 August 1998; and an adult and a first winter bird on 1-2 April 2023.*

### **Black-headed Gull**

Status: common

Common during the winter around the Parish with occasional counts of 1,000 or more at Barcombe Reservoir where there is a regular roost. *An albino bird was present at the reservoir on 25 October 1989.* There were 600 with other gulls at Church Farm (north of Knowlands Wood) on a field sprayed with slurry on 6 March 2022. Because it breeds well away from the Parish, sightings are infrequent during the breeding season.



**Kittiwake (first year), Barcombe Reservoir, 2 April 2023**



**Black-headed Gull (juvenile), Knowlands Farm,  
29 August 2022**

### **Little Gull**

Status: unusual

David Lang (1995) stated that this small gull was *an occasional passage migrant, usually in the autumn to Barcombe Reservoir.* There are twelve records since 1991, all at Barcombe Reservoir. Most have been records of singles with the exceptions being: six on 21 April 2000; five on 22 October 2000; two on 4 November 2006; and two on 16-17 February 2014. There have been no sightings since the latter record.

### Laughing Gull

Status: one occurrence

One first-summer bird was at seen at Barcombe Reservoir on 29 & 30 July 2006. This North American gull is rare nationally and the sighting was part of an influx into the country during the year. The individual had previously been seen at Arlington Reservoir and a photo of it while there can be found in the Birds of Sussex (2014).

### Mediterranean Gull

Status: unusual

*One was at Barcombe Reservoir on 2 January 1971* (Lang, 1995) when this species was still rare in the UK. There were then no records until 2002 by which time the species had become much more widespread in Sussex and elsewhere. Sightings are often with other gulls (especially Black-headed Gulls). Since 2002, records have become more frequent in the Parish with larger counts being: three (two adults and a first year) over Barcombe calling on 24 May 2015; a flock of at least five over the village recreation ground on 17 April 2017; three at Barcombe Reservoir on 19 March 2018; 10 feeding with other gulls on a slurry-treated field at Church Farm on 6 March 2022; and at least five in a large gull flock near Vuggles Farm on 9 March 2025.

### Common Gull

Status: common

This gull is common during the winter around the Parish with maximum counts of 1,000 at Barcombe Reservoir on 30 January 2000 and 700 on 16 December 2024 (both SL). There were 150 on a slurry-treated field on the Sutton Hall Estate on 30 January 2022. It is rarely, if ever, seen during the late spring and early summer.



**Mediterranean Gull (adult just left of centre in Black-headed Gull flock), Church Farm, 6 March 2022**



**Common Gull (adult), Barcombe, 26 December 2016**

### Lesser Black-backed Gull

Status: scarce or local

This gull is regularly seen, though nearly always in small numbers and usually at Barcombe Reservoir, flying over the Parish or with other gulls (especially Herring Gulls) in recently cultivated fields. Totals of *20 on 1 March 1999*, *50 on 9 October 2002* and *20 on 28 October 2006 at Barcombe Reservoir* are by far the largest counts in the Parish. It tends to be seen more frequently than the Greater Black-backed Gull.

### Herring Gull

Status: common

Along with the Black-headed Gull, this gull is the one seen most frequently around the Parish, sometimes in large flocks and especially feeding in recently cultivated fields (such as 1,000 at Knowlands Farm on 19 April 2024) and in winter, flying over the Parish to roost or on feeding flights. The species bathes and roosts at Barcombe Reservoir and larger counts include *900 there on 28 August 2008* and *1,100 on 19 January 2021*. In the past few years, there has been a trend for a few individuals to remain around Barcombe but, so far, nesting on buildings has not been attempted. They are occasionally now seen at the new WTW.





**Lesser Black-backed Gull (adult with Herring Gull to left), Knowlands Farm, 28 August 2018**



**Herring Gull (adult pair), Barcombe, 1 March 2017**

### **Yellow-legged Gull**

Status: unusual

This Southern European counterpart of the Herring Gull is probably overlooked in the Parish. It tends to be most frequent in late summer. The adults have a darker grey colour above and yellowish rather than pinkish legs and feet but the younger birds are more difficult to separate from Herring Gulls at a similar age. There are just seven documented records for the Parish: *one at Barcombe Reservoir on 12 July 2003; two in a ploughed field with other gulls at Spithurst on 25 August 2010; an adult at Barcombe Reservoir on 7 December 2014; a juvenile at Barcombe Reservoir on 24 August 2020; a juvenile in a field at Knowlands Farm on 29 August 2022; a juvenile at Barcombe Reservoir on 21 August 2023; and a juvenile with other gulls in a recently ploughed field near Anchor Lane on 4 October 2023.*

### **Caspian Gull**

Status: one occurrence

One (considered to be a 4<sup>th</sup> year bird) was found by the expert eye of Jacob Everitt in a gull roost at Barcombe Reservoir on 17 January 2021. It is highly likely that this species, which differs in a fairly subtle way from Herring and Yellow-legged Gulls, could be overlooked in winter gull flocks at the reservoir.

### **Iceland Gull**

Status: one occurrence

One first winter individual of this 'white-winged gull' that breeds in Greenland and northern Canada was at Barcombe Reservoir on 18 February 2007.

### **Great Black-backed Gull**

Status: scarce or local

This large and powerful gull is occasionally seen flying over the Parish and at Barcombe Reservoir though in small numbers and mainly in winter. The largest counts by some margin are *24 at Barcombe Reservoir on 20 January 2002* and *26 there on 15 January 2012.*

### **Little Tern**

Status: two occurrences

This tern is unusual inland (and also now quite scarce along the coast) but *one was at Barcombe Reservoir on 11 July 1980 and another was there on 23 April 2001.*



**Yellow-legged Gull (juvenile), Knowlands Farm,  
29 August 2022**



**Great Black-backed Gull (adult), Barcombe Reservoir,  
20 December 2021**

### **Black Tern**

Status: unusual

This 'marsh tern' is described as *a regular passage migrant at Barcombe Reservoir* by David Lang (1995). All sightings from 1989-on have come from Barcombe Reservoir: *two on 7 May 1989; six on 25 April 1991; up to four between 30 August and 2 September 1992; one on 2-3 June 1994; one on 27 August 1994; 13 on 16 September 1994 and one two days earlier; one on 18 May 1995; one on 14 September 1997; up to four during 9-13 September 1998; one on 28 August 2000; one from 3-5 May 2003; and one on the very late dates of 7-13 November 2005.* This latter bird was eventually found dead in an emaciated state by the water bailiff. With hindsight, the exceptionally late date should have prompted an identification check for American Black Tern. There have been no subsequent records.

### **White-winged Black Tern**

Status: one occurrence

The only record of this rare and attractive 'marsh tern' was *one at Barcombe Reservoir on 19 May 1984*. A photo of it is in the *Birds of Sussex* (2014).

### **Common Tern**

Status: unusual

This species was seen in 14 of the 19 years between 1992 and 2010 and usually in ones or twos on spring or autumn passage at Barcombe Reservoir. There was an exceptional record of *78 there in force 8 south-south east winds on 30 August 1992 with 15 still there next day. Four were at the reservoir on 17 November 1996 and three were there on both 31 July 2002 and 28 July 2004.* Away from the reservoir, *three were seen at Scobell's Farm on 31 August 1997*, one (assumed Common) flew over our Barcombe garden on 25 April 2003 and two were at Knowlands Farm pond on 21 July 2018.

### **Arctic Tern**

Status: two occurrences

There are just two records of this tern on passage at Barcombe Reservoir *with up to five during 11-16 September 1994 and one on 24 April 2023.*

### **Feral Pigeon**

Status: scarce or local

These pigeons derive from wild Rock Doves (which still survive in the wilder parts of the British Isles) and some still closely resemble them. They are occasionally in residence around Barcombe or seen flying over but most are likely to be seen around and on farm barns in the area.





**Common Tern, Knowlands Farm, 21 July 2018**



**Arctic Tern, Barcombe Reservoir, 24 April 2023**

### **Stock Dove**

Status: common

A widely seen or heard resident but rarely in any numbers and tends to be quite shy. The highest counts have been: 40 at Barcombe Reservoir on both 22 October 1995 and 7 October 2006 and at Knowlands Farm on 21 April 2024; 50 at Knowlands Farm on 26 April 2022; and at least 93 in fields west of the old railway track north of Barcombe on 27 April 2025. Small numbers fly over amongst the large Woodpigeon movements in early November. This tree-hole nesting species breeds widely across the Parish and sometimes in owl boxes. A juvenile was seen bathing in our garden pond at Barcombe on 8 September 2020.



**Feral Pigeon, Barcombe, 6 August 2025**



**Stock Dove, Barcombe Mills, 5 April 2022**

### **Woodpigeon**

Status: common

This is an extremely common resident species and increasingly seen, and even nesting, in gardens. The generally southerly movements over Barcombe early morning in the first half of November can be spectacular. For example, an estimated 19,000 flew south-east over Barcombe on 5 November 2017 in just 45 minutes and thousands flew over during 1-4 November 2006. There was an unusual spring gathering of about 200 in a newly-sown field just west of the old railway track (north-west of Barcombe) on 11 April 2020.

### **Collared Dove**

Status: common

A widely seen resident in relatively small numbers. *The largest count was of 104 at Barcombe Reservoir on 30 September 1995.* It breeds fairly widely in the Parish and its display flight is a regular sight around Barcombe.



**Woodpigeon, Barcombe, 4 April 2020**



**Collared Dove, Barcombe, 4 October 2024**

### **Turtle Dove**

Status: unusual

One of the most depressing stories of Barcombe's (and indeed the UK's and Europe's) birdlife. Up to and including 2005, it was regularly seen and heard during the summer months within the Parish including over Barcombe. *In 2006, one was singing at Scobell's Farm between 18 May and the end of June.* In 2008, there was just one sighting (Knowlands Farm) and in 2009 one was over Barcombe village. *In 2010, there were several records from Scobell's Farm and, in late July, confirmed breeding at Barcombe Reservoir when an adult and a young bird were seen.* One was at Bank's Farm on 5 June 2011 and singles were near Gallybird on 21 June 2012 and 2 September 2013. *One was in Barcombe on 6-7 July 2020* and finally, a pair (the male in song) were in suitable habitat and feeding on a recently-manured field near Dallas Lane on 2 May 2022 but sadly not subsequently. This attractive summer visitor with its distinctive purring song, once a familiar sight and sound of the English countryside, may possibly recover at some point though at present its fortunes do not look promising. Sadly, it remains persecuted along much of its migration route to Africa.

### **Common Cuckoo**

Status: scarce or local

This is probably one of the best known summer visitors given the male's distinctive song. It is just about holding on within the Parish but is not now very common and in some years only seen or heard infrequently. In other years, a vocal singing male on the move may give the impression that the species is more numerous than it actually is. During the last 26 springs (sadly, excluding 2025 when none were recorded), the average date first noted from our Barcombe garden was 30 April (earliest 13 April 2018 and the latest 1 June 2015). *Elsewhere, the earliest arrival was 30 March 1995 in Barcombe* (the only March record, reported by David Lang) *and 5 April 2009 at Scobell's Farm.* An absence of sightings of juveniles suggests that breeding is now rarely successful in the Parish. The most recent juvenile seen was at Barcombe Reservoir on 28 August 2000, though a bird in Knowlands Wood on 3 August 2021 was most likely to be one. The latter record was the only one seen later than June since that 2000 record though there are three September records in the late 90s. Interestingly, *a female was watched being chased away from a Dunnock's nest in Barcombe on 18 May 2019.* The WI's Barcombe Records (1999 quoting 1953) *lists this species as 'common'.*





**Turtle Dove (pair and a Stock Dove), Dallas Lane,  
2 May 2022**



**Common Cuckoo, Knowlands Farm, 13 May 2020**

### **Barn Owl**

Status: scarce or local

This familiar 'white owl' breeds in the Parish but is encountered relatively infrequently unless close to a nest site; even then, they can be very secretive. Occasionally seen in the daytime during the breeding season and also during cold winter weather when hunting becomes imperative. More often, it is seen in car headlights at night on roads around Barcombe. On a few occasions, birds have been seen flying high over the village. It has bred in nest boxes, e.g., at Barcombe Reservoir (next to the River Ouse), Camoys Court Farm and at Knowlands Farm.

### **Little Owl**

Status: scarce or local

This small, fierce-looking owl has bred in the Parish (e.g., in a nest box at Barcombe Reservoir) and may possibly still do so but there has been a marked recent decline. There were no official records in 2019 and it was seen at just one site near the Anchor Inn (a long used site) in 2020 and 2021, now no longer occupied (the owls have possibly been ousted by Jackdaws). There have been just two subsequent sightings, one a few 100m outside the Parish boundary and *another just inside the eastern boundary* and both in 2024. Previously, the strident call was heard regularly around Barcombe at night and, in the spring, its plaintive song. There has been a steady decline across Sussex. One possible explanation may be that during some recent drier summers they have had difficulty finding earthworms, a significant prey item. Competition with Jackdaws for nest holes may be another factor.



**Barn Owl, Knowlands Farm, 2 March 2021**



**Little Owl, Barcombe Reservoir, 13 February 2017**

### **Tawny Owl**

#### Status: common

This widespread resident with a well-known hoot is heard much more frequently than seen. For instance, it is a familiar sound late on clear, winter nights around Barcombe. It is also sometimes heard hooting during the daytime in woodland. Most daytime encounters seem to be during the late breeding season and birds are often given away by the noise of mobbing birds. *A winter roost of one or two was regular in various trees at Scobell's Farm between 2000 and 2012.* Its nesting distribution seems quite widespread within the Parish and it has been recorded using a nest box, e.g., *two owlets in a box at Knowlands on 17 May 2005.*

### **Long-eared Owl**

#### Status: unusual

*One or two used to roost some years back in Knowlands Wood (Nick Lear) and some used to roost in winter many years ago on the Sutton Hall Estate (Kevin Francis).* One was seen in flight along the old railway track north of Barcombe on 10 December 2000.

### **Short-eared Owl**

#### Status: unusual

One was flying high over Barcombe Reservoir on 19 October 2002. *Another was flying high and mobbed over Barcombe on 24 December 2019. There are also records from the Sutton Hall Estate.*

### **Nightjar**

#### Status: very old records only

This species is described as '*rare*' within the Parish in 1953 (W1, 1999).

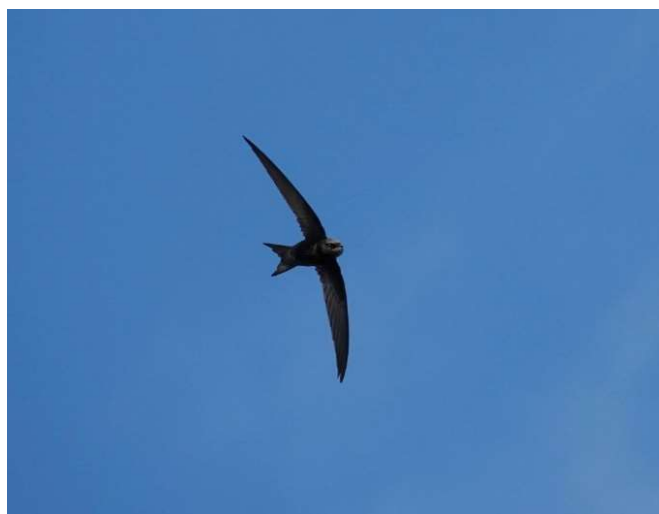
### **Common Swift**

#### Status: common

This very aerial summer visitor that winters in southern Africa is decreasing with just a few or none (depending on the year) arriving from Africa to breed under household eaves in Barcombe. During the last 27 springs, the average first arrival date over our Barcombe garden has been 29 April (earliest 18 April 2015 and the latest 10 May 2014). There is some indication that first arrivals were getting later up to 2014 but from 2015 to 2024, there has been great variability year on year. Many of the sightings now may relate to birds feeding over the village or Barcombe Reservoir from elsewhere, e.g., Lewes and other nearby villages. Higher counts in recent years at Barcombe Reservoir include about 500 on 27 May 2007, at least 500 on 20 June 2010 and 250 on 24 May 2021. A total of about 250 flying east over Barcombe on the evening of 27 July 2014 was a good count. The last of the year over the Parish are usually in August; September records are unusual.



**Tawny Owl, Knowlands Wood, 17 April 2021**



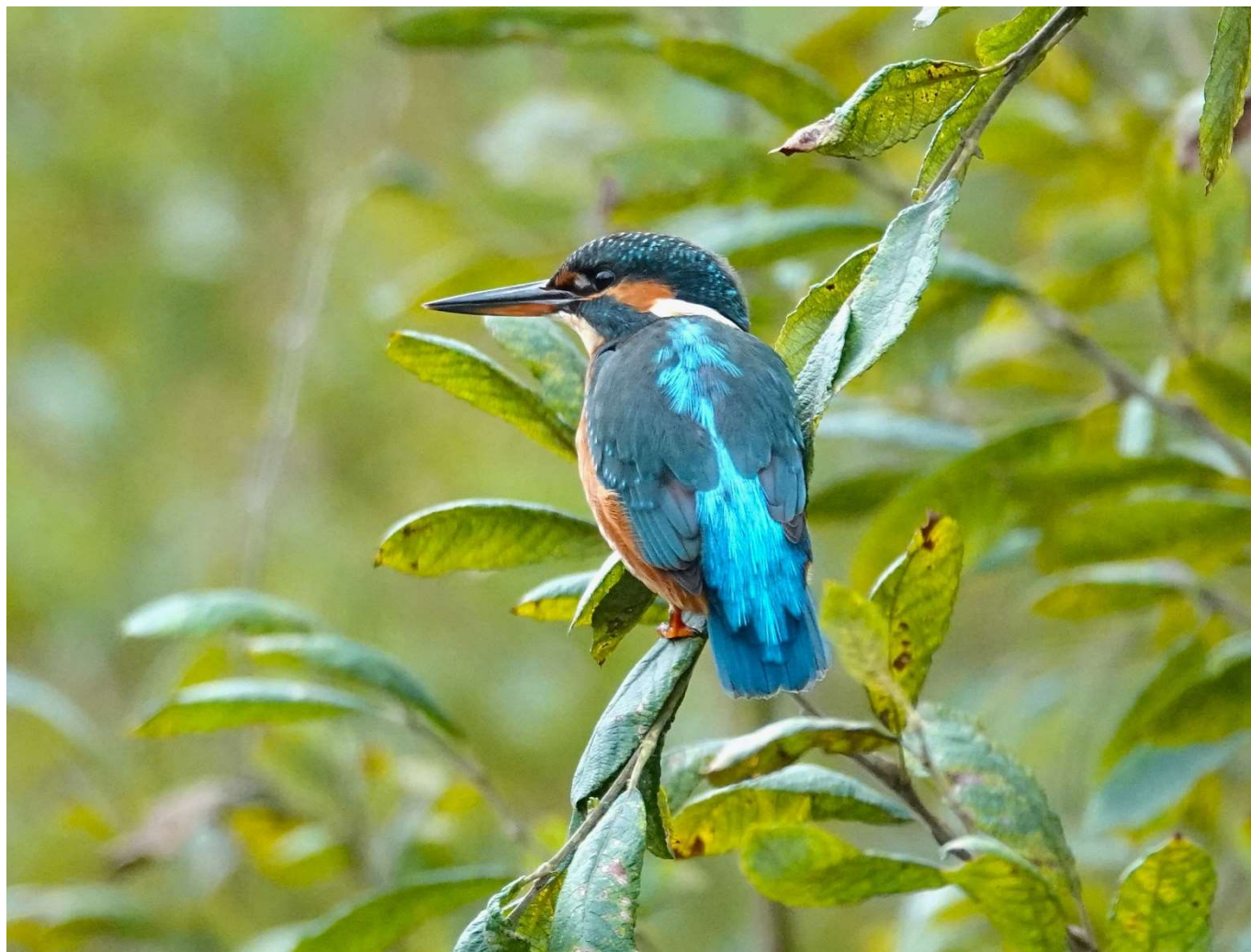
**Common Swift, Barcombe Reservoir, 10 June 2024**



### **Kingfisher**

#### Status: scarce or local

This brightly-coloured species is quite scarce though they have been slightly more evident in recent years. Its current breeding status is uncertain but it has bred at Barcombe Mills and also just outside the Parish and may occasionally escape notice doing so on less visited waterways. An adult and a juvenile together on the Sutton Hall Estate on 2 June 2025 strongly indicate local breeding. Both Knowlands and the Sutton Hall Estate account for many of the recent sightings, including two on occasion. Once regular at Barcombe Reservoir, it has been seen there less frequently in recent years though there were sightings on four dates in 2022. An occasional visitor to gardens in Barcombe when heavy rain stirs up waterways making fishing difficult.



**Kingfisher (female), Knowlands Farm, 1 October 2024**

### **Hoopoe**

#### Status: one occurrence

Just one record of the exotic-looking and very scarce (usually spring) vagrant from Europe. *One was at Barcombe Mills on 29 May 2013.*

### **Wryneck**

#### Status: unusual

This beautifully-marked woodpecker-relative has been seen in recent times on four occasions during its autumn migration south though it probably bred in the area a century or more ago (*there are references to it as 'rare' in the Parish in 1953, and mention of its old country name of the 'Cuckoo's mate', WI, 1999*). *One was at Barcombe Reservoir on 1 September 2003 and another was seen by Kevin Francis at Sutton Hall during 5-23 August 2005. One was at Barcombe on 4 September 2013 and an extremely late individual, feeding on the lawn in our Barcombe garden and also in at least one other nearby garden during 4-15 November 2022, was the latest ever to be recorded in Sussex.*





**Wryneck, Barcombe, 11 November 2022**

### **Green Woodpecker**

Status: common

A fairly widespread resident, the 'Yaffle' (or locally, 'Gally Bird') is quite often heard in woodland or encountered during its visits to lawns to feed on ants during wet conditions. Almost certainly breeds regularly in suitable woodland across the Parish, e.g., one excavating a nest hole at Sidehills on 2 April 2021 and regular reports of juveniles. Five were noted in Knowlands Wood on 21 July 2019.

### **Great Spotted Woodpecker**

Status: common

This black and white woodpecker is a widespread resident breeder as indicated, for instance, by six drumming in Knowlands Wood on 30 March 2019. One was feeding young in a nest hole near Blunt's Green on the Sutton Hall Estate on 5 June 2021. It is also a frequent visitor to garden bird feeders. This is very much an arboreal species and is rarely seen on the ground (unlike the Green Woodpecker) but a juvenile was feeding on our lawn in Barcombe on 10 June 2022. Drumming can be heard from the first half of December (e.g., at Knowlands Farm on 11 December 2022 and 14 December 2024) and continues well through the spring. Interestingly, this species was described as 'rare' in 1953 (WI, 1999).





**Green Woodpecker (female), Barcombe, 4 May 2017**



**Great Spotted Woodpecker (female), Barcombe, 27 March 2022**

### **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker**

#### Status: unusual

This small black and white woodpecker *was noted as 'uncommon' in the 1953 list of bird species* quoted by the WI (1999) which is interesting in comparison to the Great Spotted Woodpecker that was considered 'rare'. More recently, it has been recorded from *Barcombe Mills, Barcombe Reservoir, Barcombe, Scobell's Farm, Knowlands Wood, Spithurst, Deadmantree Hill* and the *Sutton Hall Estate* but there have been no documented sightings since 2017. Consequently, it may be extinct in the Parish though they have large territories and are quite secretive. They give a much softer, rather more prolonged drumming than the previous species and birds were heard drumming *at Barcombe on 31 March 1996* (David Lang's notebooks), *at Barcombe Place on 28 January 2003* (David Lang's notebooks) and *Agmond's Wood on 12 March 2011*. Using static sound recorders in suitable locations elsewhere in Sussex has proved successful in locating calling or drumming birds where none were thought to exist and may be the way forward of locating these birds in the Parish (Mark Mallalieu pers. comm.). Sightings in our Barcombe garden mainly related to dispersing juveniles, that may have indicated local breeding, with: one on 1 July 2000; one on 17 June 2001; two on 26 June 2001; one on 7 July 2012; and one on 29 June 2013 with two there next day. Relatively recent sightings in or around Knowlands Wood include *one possibly two on 27 November 2010* (Nick Lear), *a male and a female on 2 December 2010* with the female still there next day (in snowy conditions), and a female (presumed the same as the latter) was nearby at Knowlands Farm on 2 December 2017.

### **Golden Oriole**

#### Status: one recent occurrence

The WI publication (1999) notes that *a Miss Grantham saw one on the Town Littleworth Road in 1954 and that a Mrs Bicknell saw one both in the grounds of Barcombe Place and near Spithurst Church in 1957*. More recently, *one was singing (sound recorded) and seen by Nick Gant in Barcombe on 2 May 2017*. Interestingly, this latter excellent local record was at the edge of Barcombe Place cf. one of the 1957 reports.

### **Red-backed Shrike**

#### Status: very old records only

The WI publication (1999) quotes its 1953 predecessor *as listing 'Shrike' as a rare species among the birds of the Parish*. It seems reasonable to assume that this referred to Red-backed Shrike, a species that was probably fairly familiar to locals up to the middle of the Twentieth Century due to it nesting widely but sparingly across southern England (it last bred in Sussex in 1968). Had it been the then much rarer Great Grey Shrike, it would surely have been referred to more specifically. Consequently, it seems reasonable to include this species in the Parish list of species. Additionally, Nick Lear remembers mention of *Red-backed Shrikes at Beeches Wood next to Knowlands Farm* before he moved there.

### Great Grey Shrike

Status: three occurrences

In David Lang's notebooks, there are two sightings made by him. *One was in the copse west of the main works at Barcombe Reservoir on 6 December 1998 and one was at Barcombe Mills (near the old railway station) on 2 March 2006. One at High Field between Burtenshaw's Wood and Blunt's Green on 28 October 2018* was observed by David Williams and others. This species, always scarce in winter, has declined in recent years to the status of a significant county rarity.

### Woodchat Shrike

Status: very old record only

One was noted in the SxBRC database as being present *in Barcombe Parish on 2 May 1901*, a fairly classic time of the year for this over-shooting spring migrant from the Continent.

### Magpie

Status: common

This is a very common and familiar breeding resident. Although quite an attractive species when the plumage is seen well in good light, it is also quite destructive, robbing nests and taking young birds. They will sometimes gather in double-figure groups, e.g., 12 south of Knowlands Wood on 12 January 2022 and 11 at Dallas Lane on 2 March 2023.



**Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (female), Knowlands Farm, 2 December 2017**



**Magpie, Barcombe, 29 May 2021**

### Jay

Status: common

Jays are fairly common breeding residents, predominantly of woodland where they're more often heard than seen. Numbers are augmented in some autumns by Continental birds. For instance, two were seen regularly flying over our Barcombe garden on 15 September 2018, carrying green acorns (presumably to bury for recovery later in the winter). To this end, another was observed digging up buried acorns from the same garden on 28 October 2024. The most recorded together *was six flying over Barcombe Reservoir on 7 April 2010*.



## Jackdaw

### Status: common

This small member of the crow family is a very common and familiar breeding resident, nesting on buildings and in tree holes, and sometimes taking over owl boxes. From late summer and through winter, there is a dusk movement of birds south over the Barcombe area to their roost in woodland near Glyndebourne (though whether this location is still used hasn't been checked recently) e.g., 1,000 on 19 October 2018, 1,300 on 4 January 2019, 1,670 on 23 February 2019, 1,000 on 28 November 2020 and 900 on 1 January 2022. Some birds seen in the Parish have a degree of white in their plumage, e.g., one seen with a large amount of white in its wings in our Barcombe garden on 26 October 2019.



**Jay, near Dallas Lane, 3 October 2024**



**Jackdaw, Barcombe, 5 April 2020**

## Rook

### Status: common

This is a very common breeding resident. The noise from rookeries in the last days of winter is a real harbinger of spring though later in the season when the young are begging for food, the sound can be quite deafening! Rookeries include those in Barcombe around School Hill (expanding with a small offshoot, initially of a single nest in 2023, then eight nests in 2024 and six in 2025, at the top of oaks off School Lane) and a larger one (of about 50 nests in 2022) at Barcombe Mills. A small rookery (seven nests in March 2022) in a conifer at Bridgelands was ousted by Ravens that nested in the tree in 2023. Larger gatherings include 200 in fields next to Barcombe Reservoir on 23 June 2013 and also *250 there on 26 February 2021*.

## Carrion Crow

### Status: common

A very common breeding resident. The largest gathering noted *was 50 at Barcombe Reservoir on 26 March 2011*.

## Hooded Crow

### Status: unusual

This species *has been recorded on the Sutton Hall Estate. Additionally, one was seen at Clay Hill, just outside the Parish boundary, on 16 February 1985 (Sussex Bird Report)*.

## Raven

### Status: scarce or local

The first records of this, the largest of the crow family, were not until 2007 and since then Ravens have increased within the Parish and pairs are seen regularly as has happened in the rest of inland Sussex. It breeds either in the Parish or nearby most years and the rolling display flight is now seen fairly frequently. Ravens nest quite early in the year and there was a family party of five north of Knowlands Wood on 30 May 2020 and later, on 18 July 2020, seven were seen mobbing a Buzzard at Knowlands Farm. In 2023, a pair nested at the top of a conifer in Bridgelands on the edge of Barcombe and raised two young.



**Rook, Barcombe, 24 March 2021**

### **Goldcrest**

#### Status: common

This is Britain's smallest bird (along with its close relative, the Firecrest) and is only about 9cm long, weighing the same as a 20p coin. It is a fairly widespread (in small numbers) breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. That it survives overnight hard winter frosts is a miracle. It nests in conifers and is usually detected, by those with sufficiently good hearing, by its high-pitched song. Outside the breeding season, it can be found more widely in deciduous woodland, scrub and gardens, usually singly and regularly in mixed parties of birds such as Blue, Great and Long-tailed Tits.

### **Firecrest**

#### Status: unusual

This close relative of the Goldcrest is altogether more strikingly marked and has much greater contrast between the bright green upper-parts and the whitish under-parts. Although increasing in Sussex as a breeding bird, it remains a fairly scarce species in Barcombe Parish. Early records comprised singles at: *Barcombe Reservoir on 1 November 1995; Camoys Farm on 27 February 1996; Barcombe on 29 September 2002; Scobell's Farm on 4 October 2002; and at Barcombe on both 12 December 2002 and 1-4 August 2004*. There were then none reported until *one was at the new WTW on 1 January 2016*. This was followed by one on the old railway track next to Knowlands Wood on 23 December 2017, one at Barcombe New WTW on 23 February 2019, one nearby on 1 January 2020, one in our Barcombe garden on 2 January 2020 and singles in both Knowlands Wood and *Barcombe on 18 January 2020*. More recent records suggest that it may be changing from a scarce winter or passage visitor to a breeder in the Parish with *one at Barcombe on 15 April 2021* and one, found by Therri Lahood, singing in her garden near the old railway bridge on the south-western approach to Barcombe in early June 2023. Other recent records include *one that was dazed entering a local house on 27 October 2021* (Emma Burnett – BCWG Facebook site) and one on the old railway track near Knowlands Farm on 8 December 2023.





**Carrion Crow, Knowlands Farm, 22 April 2019**



**Raven, Barcombe, 28 January 2019**



**Goldcrest, Sutton Hall Estate, 22 October 2023**



**Firecrest, Knowlands Wood, 18 January 2020**

### **Blue Tit**

#### Status: common

A very common and familiar breeding resident that can be found widely across the Parish including in gardens where it is a frequent occupier of nest boxes. Family parties of this species gather together in late summer and join other tit species. About 100 were seen flying across our Barcombe garden on 24 August 2023. Large parties can be encountered in woodland especially in winter.

### **Great Tit**

#### Status: common

A very common and familiar breeding resident that can be found widely across the Parish including in gardens. Its 'teacher, teacher' song is a familiar sound of early spring.

### **Coal Tit**

#### Status: common

A fairly common breeding resident though less familiar than either Great or Blue Tit. It will visit garden feeders especially in winter. Although often associated with conifer woods, there are usually small numbers present in Knowlands Wood (predominantly deciduous woodland).



**Blue Tit, Barcombe, 5 March 2022**



**Great Tit, Dallas Lane, 30 January 2022**

### **Willow Tit**

Status: considered extinct in Sussex

David Lang's notebooks record two at *Deadmantree Hill* on 5 April 1996 and two at *Agmond's Wood* on 5 April 1998. It was present as recently as 2009 on the *Sutton Hall Estate* (2011 report). Unfortunately, this species is now considered to be extinct in Sussex.

### **Marsh Tit**

Status: unusual

This is currently quite a scarce bird in the Parish. There are records of singles from *Spithurst* in both 1980 and 1981, *Barcombe* in 1981, *Scobell's Farm* on 14 September 1996 and 24 June 1997, and *Agmond's Wood* on 7 November 2003. The species is in David Lang's 1995 list of species seen at *Barcombe Reservoir* and Nick Lear notes that a pair was breeding in *Knowlands Wood* until about 20 years ago. There were then no records until one was near Sutton Hall Weir (just inside the Parish boundary) on 20 January 2020 then two just outside the Parish off Town Littleworth Road on 15 December 2021 followed by a pair with one in song (unusual given the date) in damp woodland on the Sutton Hall Estate on 8 December 2022. One was heard in *Agmond's Wood* on 19 August 2022, one was at *Barcombe* on 30 April 2023, two were in a large tit flock at *Knowlands Wood* on 2 July 2023 and one was on *Dallas Lane* next to *Burtenshaw's Plantation* on 23 August 2023. There were then sightings in damp woodland on the Sutton Hall Estate on both 14 January 2024 and 20 March 2024 and at *Dallas Lane* next to *Burtenshaw's Plantation* on 15 September 2024. Finally, another was in the same damp woodland on the Sutton Hall Estate on 2 February 2025.



**Coal Tit, Knowlands Wood, 20 March 2022**



**Marsh Tit, Sutton Hall Estate, 14 January 2024**



## Woodlark

### Status: unusual

The WI publication (1999) notes that this was *'uncommon' as a species in the 1953 list of Barcombe bird species* but there were then no reports in the Parish until recently when there have been increases elsewhere in Sussex. Four flew west over Spithurst Churchyard calling on 6 November 2021. One flew up and away east calling from stubble at Knowlands Farm (south of the concrete tractor bridge) on 16 November 2021. There was a flock of about eight in Old Park Field on the Sutton Hall Estate on 15 November 2023. It appears to be breeding just outside the Parish with singing birds in early spring 2023 and 2025.

## Skylark

### Status: scarce or local

Most large arable fields in the Parish have at least one singing male of this famous songster during the breeding season and the species, although not common, seems to be holding its own. This species is resident but with numbers augmented in winter. Larger winter counts include: 20 at Barcombe Reservoir on 9 December 2001; 25 at Knowlands Farm on three dates - 17 November 2019, 11 December 2022 and 8 December 2023; 30 near Barcombe Reservoir on 15 January 2024; and 22 at Samlands in Anchor Lane on 26 November 2024.



**Woodlark, Sutton Hall Estate, 15 November 2023**



**Skylark, Knowlands Farm, 8 July 2022**

## Sand Martin

### Status: scarce or local

This close relative of the Barn Swallow and House Martin is seen on spring passage (usually in small numbers) and on early autumn passage (sometimes even as early as July). By far the majority of sightings of this species come from Barcombe Reservoir where they have sometimes occurred in number with *1,000 in September 1996, 1997 and 1998, and 800 in September 2009*. More recently, counts have been more modest with the highest being 250 on 11 September 2017 and only a few double figure counts since then. The species is occasionally seen elsewhere on passage including Barcombe, Knowlands Farm and the Sutton Hall Estate. A notably early arrival was one at Barcombe Reservoir on 13 March 2023.

## Barn Swallow

### Status: common

This well-known summer visitor is still a widespread breeder in the Parish though there seems to have been an overall decline during the past few years. It is also a widespread passage migrant. During the last 27 years, the average first arrival date over our Barcombe garden has been 17 April (earliest 22 March and the latest 8 May). Larger counts on migration include *a minimum of 1,000 passing over Scobell's Farm on 22 September 2001, 300 at Barcombe Reservoir on 30 September 2007, 1,000 at Barcombe Reservoir on 2 May 2010, 250 at Barcombe Reservoir on 15 May 2017 and an estimated 500 over Knowlands Wood on 13 September 2019*. There are sometimes late birds into November, e.g., *one at Scobell's Farm on 11<sup>th</sup> in 2000, eight flying east over Barcombe on 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2011 and three near Barcombe on 1<sup>st</sup> in 2020*.



**Sand Martin, Barcombe Reservoir,  
11 September 2017**



**Barn Swallow, Knowlands Farm, 21 May 2019**

### **House Martin**

Status: common

This summer visitor, which once commonly nested in Barcombe, appears to have been lost as a breeding species in the Parish following a disastrous crash in numbers during 2018 though there is the possibility that the species may yet recover and three were seen attempting to nest (unsuccessfully) in the High Street on 14 May 2025. Apart from in Barcombe and its outskirts, it previously nested elsewhere such as above the entrance to one of the buildings at Barcombe Reservoir and there have been attempts by South East Water to encourage them back to that site. It is a widespread passage migrant though now in reduced numbers. During the last 27 years (but excluding an abnormally late appearance in 2023), the average first arrival date over our Barcombe garden has been 23 April (earliest 2 April and the latest 10 June). Large gatherings over Barcombe Reservoir sometimes occur on migration, e.g., *1,500 on 8 May 1985, 500 on 12 September 1993, 500 on 13 September 1998, 1000 on 28 May 2000 and 500 on 2 May 2010*. However, since then, the maximum has been 250. Elsewhere, *at least 600 flew over Scobell's Farm on 22 September 2001 and 500 flew south west over Barcombe on 7 October 2008*. More recently, there were gatherings of about 400 at Knowlands Farm on *13 September 2019 and 6 September 2020*. Late records include one over Barcombe on 8 November 2009.

### **Cetti's Warbler**

Status: unusual

One was heard giving its distinct, explosive song at Barcombe Reservoir on 24 April 2023 and subsequently either there or at nearby Barcombe Mills through to 2025. Another was heard near Sutton Hall Weir on 25 September 2023. This resident warbler species has been gradually expanding its range within the Ouse Valley.

### **Long-tailed Tit**

Status: common

This is a common breeding resident of the countryside but occasionally visiting gardens and even bird peanut feeders when several will cling to the feeder with their long tails sticking out in all directions. It has even been known to nest in our Barcombe garden. Apart from the breeding season, this species tends to form flocks and will readily join up with other tit species. Such flocks are usually picked up by their calls and are always on the move and wary of predators such as Sparrowhawks. A flock of 30 were seen in Knowlands Wood on 12 December 2010.

### **Wood Warbler**

Status: two occurrences

*There was one at Barcombe Reservoir on 17 August 1986 (Lang, 1995) and one there on 27 August 2000.*





**House Martin, Barcombe Reservoir,  
11 September 2017**



**Long-tailed Tit (carrying cobwebs for its nest),  
Knowlands Wood, 20 March 2022**

### **Chiffchaff**

#### Status: common

This is a reasonably common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant and also now a regular winter visitor in small numbers. Its distinctive 'Chiff-chaff' song is one of the first signs of spring though autumnal passage migrants and even birds in mid-winter may give a half-hearted rendition. Larger gatherings of birds establishing territories in spring include 12 in song along the 1.5km of old railway track north of Barcombe (with one in song at the new WTW) on 18 March 2022 and eight in song along the track on 8 April 2023. There were eight in song within Knowlands Wood on both 16 April 2017 and 21 April 2020, nine on 7 May 2021 and eight on 5 May 2022. A total of about 50 were at Barcombe Reservoir on 25 August 2013 indicative of autumn passage. Being an insect eater, this species survives our winters most often near water treatment works and a good count was of six at the new WTW on 7 January 2021 during cold weather. It will also visit gardens.

A Siberian Chiffchaff, which is an eastern race of the Chiffchaff, was seen at the new WTW on 3, 4 and 10 January 2021 (photo on page 14). Compared with the drab greenish colours of the Chiffchaff, this race is distinctly brown above and white beneath with a 'beady' black eye. A few are found in Sussex most winters.

### **Willow Warbler**

#### Status: scarce or local

This summer visitor and passage migrant, that arrives in April from Africa, has declined in southern Britain (though described as '*uncommon*' way back in 1953 (WI, 1999)) and its delightful descending song is now heard rather infrequently in local woodlands. Of those heard in recent years, a number have mixed their song with that of the Chiffchaff (a not unknown phenomenon). These were ones on the old railway track north of Barcombe in spring 2019 and in Agmond's Wood in both in spring 2022 and spring / summer 2024. Birds are fairly scarce on passage in April and May and in August and early September (with recent records from Knowlands Farm and Wood, Barcombe Reservoir, Barcombe village and Agmond's Wood). The large autumnal passages noted at Barcombe Reservoir seem to be a thing of the past, e.g., 150 on 1 September 1996, 25 on 16 & 31 August 1998, 40 on 22 August 1999 and 25 on 12 August 2007.

### **Blackcap**

#### Status: common

This warbler is a regular breeding summer visitor in moderate numbers, e.g., 11 in song along the 1.5km of the old railway track north of Barcombe on 11 April 2020, at Knowlands Wood on 21 April 2021, and along the old railway track on 15 April 2022, plus 13 present at Knowlands Wood on 2 June 2021. Also a winter visitor in very small numbers (e.g., in gardens) and a passage migrant. The bulk of the spring arrivals are in early-mid April. The song is one of the more attractive of the warblers and often goes on well into the summer when other species have gone silent. The song is quite similar to that of the Garden Warbler but more pronounced with distinct fluty notes and much less hurried.



**Chiffchaff (with nest material), Dallas Lane,  
13 April 2023**



**Willow Warbler, Knowlands Farm, 7 September 2024**

### **Garden Warbler**

Status: scarce or local

This is a rather drab-looking warbler (which has the appropriate, if perhaps unfair, scientific name of *Sylvia borin*!). It has a beautiful song and is a regular breeding summer visitor and passage migrant in small numbers. It is usually seen between mid-late April and late August (*though with one September record in 1996 and another in October 1998*). They tend to be thinly scattered across suitable woodland areas (usually those in an early stage of tree growth) and scrub such as that along the old railway track to the north of Barcombe. More recent counts include five in song within Knowlands Wood on both 15 May 2016 and 27 April 2020 with also five in song on the old railway track on the latter date. Additionally, there were eight territories in Knowlands Wood on 7 May 2021 and five in song at Agmond's Wood on 9 May 2023. Although not regular in gardens (despite their English name), they will occasionally visit them on passage. In our Barcombe garden, birds have been seen most recently in August 2021 and 2023. Family parties have been noted at *Scobell's Farm on 21 June 1998 and 6 June 2000* and at Knowlands Farm on 20 June 2021 (when an adult was seen feeding three young – see photo on page 12).



**Blackcap (male), old railway track, 16 April 2017**



**Garden Warbler, old railway track, 18 May 2021**

### **Lesser Whitethroat**

Status: scarce or local

This is a regular breeding summer visitor and passage migrant in very small numbers arriving in mid-late April and leaving in August - September. The rattling song is quite distinctive and a good way to find the birds because they usually remain in dense cover. Higher counts include four along the 1.5km of the old railway track north of Barcombe on 6 May 2020 and five in song at Knowlands Farm on 20 April 2024. *A family party was seen at Scobell's Farm on 28 June 1997 and juveniles just out of the nest were seen there on 17 June 2002.*



### **Common Whitethroat**

#### Status: common

This regular summer visitor and passage migrant in fairly small numbers seems to be just about holding its own as a breeding species in the Parish though possibly not to the extent of the *eight territories noted at Scobell's Farm on 1 June 1996*. Singing birds are widely distributed along hedgerows and scrub through the Parish and can usually be found at Knowlands Farm (e.g., seven on 5 May 2021 and five in song on 6 May 2023), on the Sutton Hall Estate and at sites such as the edge of Barcombe village reservoir. Birds arrive about mid-April and leave in August – September. This species often gives its song in a display flight.

### **Dartford Warbler**

#### Status: one occurrence

There was a really exciting record of one seen by John Hayhurst and Nick Lear *in a hedgerow at Knowlands Farm on 6 and 7 February 2023*. Although most frequently associated with heathland such as on Ashdown Forest, this resident warbler species regularly disperses in autumn or winter and when doing well (during a sequence of mild winters) can on occasion be found in less usual locations often associating with other small birds.



**Common Whitethroat, Knowlands Farm, 12 July 2020**

### **Sedge Warbler**

#### Status: unusual

This is quite a scarce passage migrant to the Parish, not recorded every year and with no records in the years between 2009 and 2020. There have been no confirmed breeding records since 1986 though single birds were in song at Barcombe Reservoir on *15 June 2003*, *27 May 2006* and *14 June 2009* and so may have been breeding. Recent records of birds on passage include one in song along the old railway track beside Knowlands Farm on *14 April 2020*, one in a bean field at Knowlands Farm on *9 August 2020*, *one at Barcombe Mills on 5 May 2021*, one at Knowlands Farm on *14 April 2023* and one in song there on *25 April 2024*.





**Lesser Whitethroat, old railway track, 1 May 2018**



**Sedge Warbler, Knowlands Farm, 25 April 2024**

### **Reed Warbler**

Status: scarce or local

This is a summer visitor and passage migrant that arrives in mid-late April and that nests in reeds and dense riverside vegetation. One or two (occasionally up to four) can usually be heard singing each spring and summer around Barcombe Mills (next to Andrew's Cut) and Barcombe Reservoir (usually at its settling beds though at one time also in a small reedbed that once existed in the south east corner of the reservoir). On passage, it can be seen or heard more widely, e.g., Knowlands Farm, the old railway track north of Barcombe and in Blunt's Lane near the Anchor Inn. One was in our Barcombe garden on 25 September 1999.



**Reed Warbler, Barcombe Mills, 25 May 2023**



### **Nuthatch**

#### Status: common

This is a fairly common breeding resident and often first detected by its distinctive calls. It is seldom seen in more than ones or twos. Found in deciduous woodlands, hedgerow trees and gardens, it is renowned for its ability to both climb up tree trunks and vertically down them. It will readily visit peanut feeders. It also has the distinctive habit of narrowing the entrance to its nest holes using mud (e.g., seen in Agmond's Wood in May 2023).

### **Treecreeper**

#### Status: scarce or local

A much more unobtrusive species than the Nuthatch, this is a fairly scarce breeding resident found mainly in deciduous woodland but sometimes, when joining a mixed tit flock, in hedgerow trees and even gardens. Unlike the Nuthatch, it spirals up tree trunks but not down them, preferring to start the next ascent on a nearby tree. Nests are usually located where a tree branch has split or under large pieces of peeling bark. The high-pitched descending song is often the first sign that a pair are present. Other indications are pairs circling around trees together as noted at *Scobell's Farm on 4 July 1999* or at Knowlands Wood on 28 February 2021. *A family party of five were seen at Scobell's Farm on 17 June 2005.*



**Nuthatch, Wild About Barcombe, 14 March 2021**



**Treecreeper, Knowlands Wood, 18 March 2018**

### **Wren**

#### Status: common

A widespread and familiar resident species. After the Goldcrest and Firecrest, our smallest bird at about 10cm. Larger counts include 12 singing males along the 1.5 km of the old railway track north of Barcombe on 19 April 2019, 16 singing males in Knowlands Wood on 21 April 2020 and *25 noted early morning there on 2 June 2021.*

### **Common Starling**

#### Status: common

This is a fairly common breeding resident. Family parties join up after the breeding season and later on in the autumn and winter, numbers are augmented by incoming birds from elsewhere in Britain and Europe. It is probably not as common as it was several decades ago. Flocks of up to 100 are recorded in winter but one of 300 flying over Barcombe on 7 November 2023 was more unusual.

### **Blackbird**

#### Status: common

A familiar and common resident species augmented by incoming birds in winter and regularly frequenting gardens. It tends to start singing a bit later into the spring than the Song Thrush. Usually seen singly or in low numbers, with the double figure counts recorded usually representing surveys over wide areas.



**Wren, Barcombe, 6 April 2020**



**Common Starling, Barcombe, 6 May 2022**

### **Fieldfare**

Status: common

A common winter visitor to farmland (and occasionally gardens) sometimes in large numbers and often with Redwings, arriving in late October and usually leaving in March but some years in April. As with Redwing, numbers arriving from Scandinavia vary each winter. This large thrush, with a grey top to its head and grey rump, has a harsh chacking call that often alerts you to its presence when flying over. Larger counts have included *500 at Barcombe Reservoir on 16 April 1995, 250 at Scobell's Farm on 29 March 1996 and 250 at Barcombe on 2 March 2011*. Since 2020, counts have rarely exceeded 100 possibly due to milder winters on the Continent.



**Blackbird (male), New WTW, 10 January 2021**



**Fieldfare, Barcombe, 28 February 2018**

### **Song Thrush**

Status: common

A common resident species whose numbers are augmented in the winter by visiting birds. It is one of the first to start singing in the year. It seems to have recovered from the crash in its numbers some years back with them reported widely during a Barcombe Community Wildlife Group survey in February 2021 (see Appendix 2 map of February 2021). Nine were in song in Knowlands Wood on 21 April 2020. Other large counts include *10 at Barcombe Mills on 14 January 2017, 10 at Barcombe Reservoir on 19 October 2020, 15 along the old railway track on 1 November 2020 and 10 together at Knowlands Farm on 12 February 2021* taking advantage of churned-up frozen ground. It often becomes rather unobtrusive immediately after the breeding season.



## Redwing

### Status: common

A common winter visitor from Scandinavia to farmland and woods (and occasionally gardens) sometimes in large numbers, arriving in mid-late October and usually leaving in March or early April. For those with good hearing, their high-pitched call can be heard as they pass overhead on autumn nights. Their twittering sub-song is regularly heard among gatherings during late winter and early spring. They are often seen in fields or hedgerows with Fieldfares and, sometimes, similarly-sized Song Thrushes (from which they can be distinguished by their pale stripe over the eye and reddish flank patches). Larger numbers noted in recent years include 200 just north of Knowlands Wood on 18 March 2018, 500 near St Mary's Church on 18 January 2021, 150 in Knowlands Wood on 13 January 2022 and 140 flying east over Barcombe on 21 October 2022.



**Song Thrush, Old Railway Track, 7 August 2020**



**Redwing, Knowlands Wood, 27 February 2018**

## Mistle Thrush

### Status: scarce or local

A scarce resident species (see Appendix 2 map of February 2021) with a beautiful, haunting song heard in late winter and early spring. It also gives a loud rattling alarm call if disturbed or when either mobbing a predator or defending a berry-laden bush in winter from competitors. This large thrush is often only encountered every few months within the Parish. Usually seen singly or in pairs but family parties of this species gather together in mid-late summer which may account for sightings at Barcombe Reservoir of 32 on 29 August 1998, 22 on 13 August 2000 and 29 on 11 August 2002. A more recent gathering there was 15 on 19 July 2015.

## Spotted Flycatcher

### Status: unusual

This delightful summer visitor and passage migrant in very small numbers was regularly present in the Parish during the summer (with occasional proof of breeding) up to and including 2007. Numbers of records then dipped markedly with none in 2014 and 2017 and only a single bird on passage at Barcombe Reservoir in 2018 (on 7 September), so it was assumed that the species had been lost locally. Since 2019, numbers have picked up and an encouraging number have been seen with the strong suggestion of breeding at Spithurst during this period *with five there on 14 June and 1 July 2024 (including fledged young)*. However, it is uncertain whether a fully-grown juvenile being fed by an adult near Spithurst Churchyard on 24 August 2019 was the result of local nesting or both were on migration together. On passage, six at Knowlands (three each at the Wood and Farm) on 13 September 2019 was a good record as were three on Knowlands Farm on 16 August 2020, *five at Barcombe on 28 August 2022*, four on the Sutton Hall Estate on 27 August 2023, four near Burtenshaw's Plantation on 30 August 2023, and three also near Burtenshaw's Plantation on both 25 August and 12 September 2024.



**Mistle Thrush, Knowlands Wood, 7 April 2024**



**Spotted Flycatcher, Spithurst, 24 August 2019**

## **Robin**

### Status: common

A widespread and familiar resident species that is often quite tame. As with many of our well known garden birds, numbers are augmented by incoming Robins during the autumn and winter. Examples of breeding season counts include 15 singing in Knowlands Wood on both 7 May 2021 and 5 May 2022, and eight singing along a 1.5km stretch of the old railway track north of Barcombe on 25 April 2023. Its song can be heard during much of the year and is particularly obvious in autumn when other birds have stopped singing. It will also sometimes sing at night.



**Common Nightingale, old railway track north of Barcombe, 30 April 2022**



## **Common Nightingale**

### Status: scarce or local

This summer visitor with a celebrated song is one of the jewels of the Parish. Numbers of singing males seem to have increased in recent years. Some of this increase is almost certainly real and some due to increased interest and recording (not least by the BCWG). Sussex is nationally important for this species and within Sussex, Barcombe Parish is one of the top locations. In spring 2025, there were Nightingales singing within 24 sites in the Parish (see map in Appendix 3). Of these, 10 were along the 1.5km stretch of old railway track north of Barcombe with another three nearby at Bridgelands / Wild About Barcombe, another six either on the old railway track south of the village or very close (e.g., at Sidehills) and five elsewhere in the Parish. The numbers through time on the old railway track north of Barcombe are instructive. Based on personal observations there, the number of singing males were estimated to be: singles in each year during 2009-2012; two in 2013; five in 2014; three in 2015; four in both 2016 and 2017; five in 2018; six in 2019; at least six in 2020; six in 2021; five in 2022; seven in 2023; and eight in 2024. Being a linear feature, the birds spread themselves along the length of the track and defend their stretch by moving to sing against rivals, sometimes by as much as 100m from the centre of their territory. Over recent years, in addition to the track north and south of the village, sites have included the pit beside the road at Avery's, next to Barcombe village reservoir, Knowlands Wood, Spithurst, Burtenshaw's, near The Anchor Inn, Overs Bridge and a few other sites on the Sutton Hall Estate. Nightingales usually arrive during the first two weeks of April from their African wintering grounds but as early as 2 April in 2022 (at Sidehills). The males then sing during both daylight and night-time hours though perhaps less frequently by day as the breeding season progresses. It is possible to hear Nightingales on still nights from around Barcombe village including from our garden near the school. Most individuals are fairly secretive but one or two occasionally show well and even at close range if pre-occupied with singing against a rival. Just occasionally, they can be seen carrying nest material (see photo on page 13). By about mid-June they are substantially silent other than giving croaking alarm calls if disturbed. After mid-June, they are extremely elusive and it is a rare event to see young, as they remain well hidden, but a very recently fledged bird was seen on the edge of the old railway track just south of Knowlands Wood on 14 June 2020. July records are few and far between and by late in that month, birds will be preparing to head south. One was calling from a hedgerow at Knowlands Farm on 10 August 2025.

The future of Nightingales will depend on maintaining a degree of vegetation succession along the old railway track. At present, the birds experience relatively little disturbance from passers-by and most locals know not to do anything to disturb the breeding birds. 'Singing with Nightingales' night-time events based at Knowlands are well organised and there is no evidence of these causing disturbance. However, recent proposed developments on the edge of the village will necessarily increase foot-fall and light pollution. This could impinge on the future Nightingale population as, of course, would development along or close to the old railway track.

## **Pied Flycatcher**

### Status: unusual

This neatly-plumaged flycatcher has been seen on a number of occasions in the Parish on migration. Singles were: *at Scobell's Farm on 26 August 1995, 26 April 1997 (a male), 26 August 1997, 19 & 21 September 2004; near the Anchor Inn on 14 August 2004; and at Barcombe Reservoir on 2 September 1996, 25 August 1997, 24 August 2002, 30 August 2004 and 28 August 2005.* More recent records include one at Knowlands Farm on 16 August 2020, *one below the new village hall on 8 September 2020*, one in our Barcombe garden on 12 August 2022 (arriving with a male Common Redstart), *three at Barcombe on 28 August 2022* and one in Dallas Lane on 23 August 2023.

## **Black Redstart**

### Status: unusual

This is an unusual passage migrant and winter visitor to the Parish, most often seen on or around buildings. Among occasional other reports, it has been seen at: *Barcombe Reservoir on 18 November 1979 and 13 March 1983* (Lang, 1995); *Scobell's Farm on dates between 19 and 26 March 1994; Barcombe Reservoir on 5 April 1998, 12 March 1999 and 3 January 2000; Scobell's Farm on 5 April 2001; Knowlands about 10 April 2022; The Willows, Barcombe on 30 October 2022; Barcombe Mills on 7 January 2024; and Barcombe on 21 March 2025* (David Tiffin, BCWG Facebook pages).



**Robin, 'Wild About Barcombe', 1 April 2021**



**Pied Flycatcher, Knowlands Farm, 16 August 20**

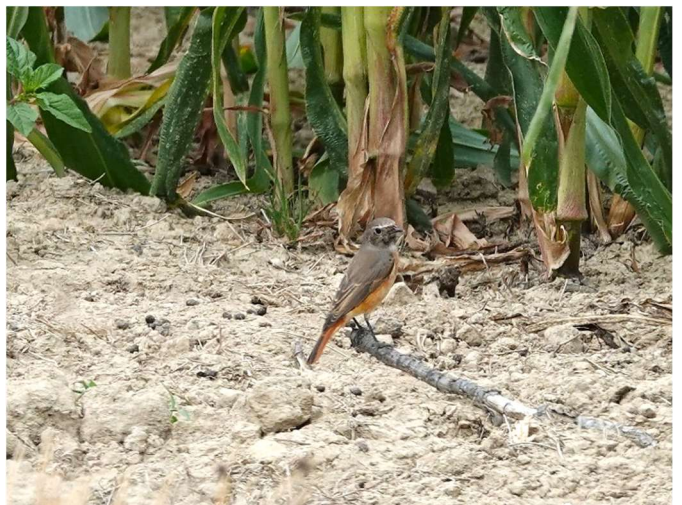
### **Common Redstart**

Status: unusual

A relatively infrequent passage migrant mainly when southbound in autumn (just one spring record since 1990). *In addition to very old records, it has been seen in only seven of the 18 years between 2000 and 2017 (total of eight individuals).* Since then there was: one at Knowlands Farm on 6 September 2018; one at Barcombe Reservoir on 16 September 2019; one near Sewell's Farm on 12 September 2021; one in our Barcombe Garden on 12 August 2022; one at Barcombe Reservoir on 10 October 2022; two at Knowlands Farm during 3-7 September 2024; and one (a male) at Old Park Field on the Sutton Hall Estate on 23 August 2025.



**Black Redstart, Barcombe Mills, 7 January 2024**



**Common Redstart (male), Old Park Field,  
23 August 2025**

### **Whinchat**

Status: unusual

Whinchats are seen on passage, most usually in the early autumn. They are slightly more frequent than Wheatears and occasionally more than one is reported. Knowlands Farm and Barcombe Reservoir are favoured locations. Although there were no records between 2005 and 2013, and just two records in 2015 and one in 2018, they have been recorded annually since 2020 when four were at Knowlands Farm on 6 September. Less usual records include a very smart spring male next to Barcombe Reservoir on 25 April 2015 and three on the Sutton Hall Estate on 31 August 2022.



### European Stonechat

#### Status: unusual

Not a particularly common bird in the Parish though seen most years and usually in autumn or winter. Often seen singly but also regularly in pairs. A count of ten in rough pasture near The Anchor Inn on 7 October 2022 was exceptional. Three were in the uncultivated field below the new Village Hall on 10 March 2023. Key sites have been Barcombe Mills and Reservoir, Knowlands Farm and various sites on the Sutton Hall Estate.



**Whinchat, Knowlands Farm, 6 September 2020**



**European Stonechat (male), Barcombe Mills,  
30 October 2021**

### Northern Wheatear

#### Status: unusual

This migrant passes through the Parish most years but is never common and usually only singles are seen. Records of multiple birds have all been at Barcombe Reservoir or nearby with *six on 1 September 1990, three on both 30 August 1992 and 25 August 2013 and with two on four other dates*. The species was recorded in 17 of the years between 1990 and 2009. There was then the 2013 record (above) but none until 2020. Recent records include singles at: Knowlands Farm on 16 April 2020, 5 September 2020, 10 September 2021 and 5 April 2022; *near Sewell's Farm on 19 August 2022*; near the Anchor Inn on both 16 August 2023 and 20 April 2024; at Knowlands Farm on 8 May 2024; at High Field (between Burtenshaw's Plantation and Blunt's Green) on 16 April 2025; and at Old Park Field on 23 August 2025. Additionally, *one was just outside the Parish between Bridge Farm and Upper Wellingham on 17 April 2020* (Bernard Booth).

### Dunnock

#### Status: common

This species also known as the 'Hedge Sparrow' is a widespread if sometimes inconspicuous resident species. It is a regular visitor to gardens. Although it has fairly subdued grey and brown plumage, its song is rather pleasant and one of the first to be heard in early spring.

### House Sparrow

#### Status: common

A fairly common and very familiar breeding resident mainly, though not exclusively, associated with farms and houses. A survey by the BCWG in February 2021 (see Appendix 2) indicated that an anecdotal decline over the previous couple of decades appeared to be in reverse. A total of 75 at Barcombe Reservoir on 16 September 2019 was a good count. There were also 37 in a hedgerow south of Knowlands Farm on 11 January 2021, a regular haunt.



**Northern Wheatear (male), Old Park Field,  
23 August 2025**



**Dunnock, Barcombe, 9 April 2020**

### **Tree Sparrow**

Status: unusual

This rather neat-looking sparrow was once quite common in parts of the Parish but has now been lost, as it has from much of Sussex (Shrubb, 1979, notes that it was increasing across the county up to 1973 from low numbers in the 1930s). Although found in mainly rural habitat, it will congregate around habitation, and predominantly does so in some of its range abroad. Previously, it was found around Barcombe Mills and Barcombe Reservoir *but even by 1994, it was described by one observer as 'now rare' at the reservoir*. Large counts at Barcombe Reservoir include 100 on 29 December 1976 and 200 on 18 February 1979. At least four adults were observed feeding newly fledged young at Barcombe Mills on 4 June 1996. Since the Millennium, there have only been just three records, all of singles, at Scobell's Farm on 27 March 2000, at Barcombe Reservoir on 10 October 2004 and at Scobell's Farm on 3 March 2015.

### **Yellow Wagtail**

Status: unusual

This summer visitor *once bred at or near Barcombe Reservoir with records up to 1986 and then 1991*. It is now a scarce passage migrant within the Parish and most records have come from Barcombe Reservoir where none of the highest counts have been recent: 171 on 23-24 April 1989 (James, 1996); 30 on 12 September 1993; up to 50 during 31 August to 2 September 1996; and 24 on 31 August 1998. The highest recent count there was of seven on 12 April 2021. Elsewhere, there have been scattered records from across the Parish including Barcombe Mills, Scobell's Farm (e.g., six on 2 September 2003), Spithurst, the new WTW (one on 1 September 2013), Barcombe (e.g., two flying south east calling on 24 August 2011 and one west calling on 9 April 2021) and the Sutton Hall Estate (one among cattle on 1 September 2024). The Continental race *flava* (Blue-headed Wagtail) has been noted on a few occasions at Barcombe Reservoir with singles on 7 May 1974 and 21 April 1978, and two there on 18 May 1985.

### **Grey Wagtail**

Status: scarce or local

This wagtail with yellowish underneath, particularly under the tail, is often mistaken for the Yellow Wagtail but is greyish (rather than olive) above and the males have a black throat in breeding plumage. It occurs widely across the Parish and a few pairs usually breed near water, e.g., at Barcombe Reservoir and at Sutton Hall. Although resident, its numbers are augmented on passage and in winter. It is a regular visitor to our garden pond in Barcombe during autumn. At Barcombe Reservoir, the highest counts, reflecting good breeding seasons, include 15 on 1 September 1996, 20 on 4 August 2002, 17 on both 3 and 18 July 2003. Recent counts there have not exceeded seven.





**House Sparrow (male), Barcombe, 21 May 2023**



**Pied Wagtail, Barcombe new WTW, 18 January 2020**



**Yellow Wagtail (two males), Barcombe Reservoir,  
12 April 2021**



**Grey Wagtail, Knowlands Farm, 18 December 2021**

### **Pied Wagtail**

Status: common

This species regularly nests in the Parish including, in May 2020, under solar panels on our neighbours' Barcombe house. Although a resident species, its numbers are augmented on passage and in winter. Larger counts include *150 coming in to roost at Barcombe Reservoir on 2 December 2001, 100 in a bare field north of Cooksbridge but just inside the Parish boundary on 26 January 2003 and 75 at the new WTW on 2 January 2017.* There were also 38 on Barcombe recreation ground on 28 August 2011. The Continental subspecies *alba* (White Wagtail) is rare, but probably under-recorded, with nearly all records to date coming from Barcombe Reservoir where there were singles on *4 April 1994, 1 May 1994, 27 September 2000, 12 May 2001, 5 April 2003 (SL), 23 April 2006 and 20 May 2019. One was also at Spithurst on 11 May 2014.*

### **Tree Pipit**

Status: unusual

Surprisingly, there are just three records of this summer visitor with *singles at Scobell's Farm on 15 September 1995, at Barcombe Reservoir on 14 April 1996 and just west of the Town Littleworth Road but still within the Parish boundary, on 30 September 2007.*

### **Meadow Pipit**

Status: scarce or local

This rather inconspicuous species occurs in small numbers mainly in winter and on passage at sites such as the new WTW, Knowlands Farm (maximum of 100 on 10-11 December 2022), *Scobell's Farm* (maximum of 50 on several dates) and Barcombe Reservoir (maximum of 40 on 23 October 2005). Additionally, small numbers are sometimes seen flying over Barcombe on passage.

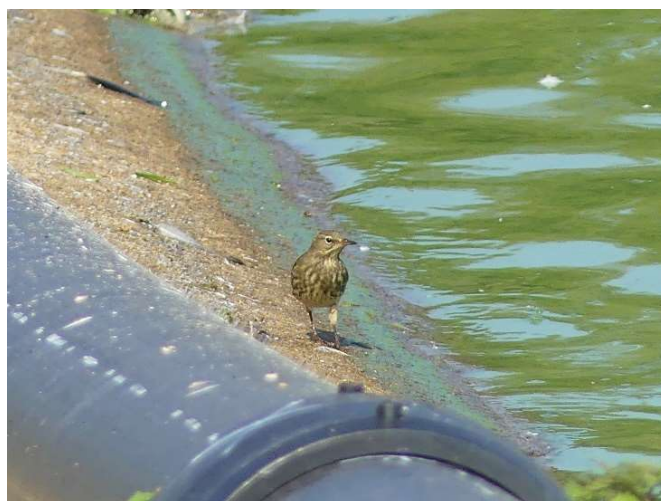
### **Rock Pipit**

Status: two occurrences

Inland records of this species are very unusual in Sussex. At Barcombe Reservoir, *one was present on 9 and 15 October 1992* and two were there on 21 September 2020.



**Meadow Pipit, New WTW, 5 December 2020**



**Rock Pipit, Barcombe Reservoir, 21 September 2020**

### **Water Pipit**

Status: unusual

Nearly all records of this close relative of the Rock Pipit come from Barcombe Reservoir. *One was there on 26 March 1967, up to four were present during the winter of 1982/3 and another was there on 17 March 1989. Singles were there on 6 October 1991 and 6 April 2000.* One was then seen during the winters of 2004/5 – 2010(/11) and was assumed to be the same bird returning each year. If this was true, it would have been at least 6.5 years old when last seen, a considerable age for such a passerine. There is also one report from *Barcombe Mills on 9 March 2008*.

### **Chaffinch**

Status: common

This is a widespread though sparsely-distributed breeding resident finch. The spring-plumaged male is a fine-looking and much-underrated bird. In winter, it gathers in flocks augmented by visitors. In recent decades, these winter flocks have mainly been in double figures but three-figure counts comprise *250 in a recently cultivated field within the Parish on 18 March 2011* and over 300 with Linnets in fields sown with a mixture of seed-bearing plants to attract wild birds at Knowlands Farm during the winter of 2024/5. One winter roost is located in the conifers around the edge of the new WTW, e.g., 25 in to roost there on 13 January 2022.

### **Greenfinch**

Status: common

The Greenfinch remains a fairly common breeding resident around Barcombe where its bat-like display flight in spring is still a regular sight though it is scarce elsewhere in the Parish. A juvenile not long out of the nest was in our Barcombe garden on 14 May 2021. Numbers are likely to be augmented slightly in winter though there have been no significant winter flocks in recent years. The largest count was *30 way back on 12 July 1997 at Banks Farm* though there were 10 both at Barcombe on 7 December 2019 and within the gathering of finches at Knowlands Farm on 21 December 2024.



### **Brambling**

Status: unusual

Surprisingly, there have been rather few records of this finch in the Parish. It is an autumn and winter visitor and almost certainly under-recorded. David Lang (1995) noted that *it is an 'occasional winter visitor' to Barcombe Reservoir*. There are records of it *at the Sutton Hall Estate* and the SxBRC database lists *a single at Blunt's Green on 18 January 2006 and 20 there on 24 January 2006*. Up to 2024, there were 13 other records, mainly of single birds but with *two at Scobell's Farm on 16 November 2003 and 12 at Barcombe on 9 January 2019*. Interestingly, at Knowlands Wood, where Chaffinches are regular in winter, there was just one record (a single on 18 March 2018). During the winter of 2024/5, there were several records of up to two Bramblings with the Chaffinch flock (see that species) at Knowlands Farm. It is presumed that one of these (a female) was the one that visited our neighbours' garden in Barcombe on 14 March 2025.



**Chaffinch (male), Anchor Lane, 22 April 2020**



**Brambling (female) with Chaffinch (above),  
Knowlands Farm, 16 March 2025**

### **Goldfinch**

Status: common

This finch is a very common breeding resident often forming small flocks after breeding, the numbers of which are augmented by autumn and winter visitors. Larger flocks include 200 near Spithurst on 31 December 2001, 70 at Scobell's Farm on 12 April 2002 and 50 near Anchor Lane on 3 August 2023. It is one of our most brightly-patterned passerines (though the young lack the distinctive red, white and black pattern on the head) and readily attracted to thistle seed-heads. It can be found widely around the Parish and is a regular visitor to gardens.



**Greenfinch (male), Barcombe, 6 March 2020**



**Goldfinch (juvenile), Barcombe, 10 May 2021**

### **Siskin**

#### Status: unusual

Siskins are infrequent autumnal passage migrants and winter visitors (through to early spring when males may be heard in song occasionally) with sightings from Barcombe, Barcombe Reservoir, Knowlands Wood and several other sites, especially damp woodland and along the River Ouse. The largest counts have mainly come from Barcombe Reservoir (especially the alders along the western edge next to the river) with 50 on 22 November 1991, 12 October 1997 and 4 December 2005. More recently, there were 30 there on 13 September 2015. One of the easiest ways to pick up this small finch as it flies over is by its distinctive call.

### **Linnet**

#### Status: scarce or local

Linnet is a fairly sparsely-distributed breeding resident of farmland with its numbers augmented by winter visitors. In the breeding season, one or more pairs can usually be found at Knowlands Farm and in several sites on the Sutton Hall Estate, e.g., along Blunt's Lane. Interestingly, it has twice attempted to nest in our Barcombe garden (on the side of a garden shed in 2000 and in a conifer near the front door in 2021). The largest counts were 100 in a field next to Barcombe Reservoir on 15 February 2016 and 91 in trees near High Field (between Burtenshaw's Plantation and Blunt's Green) on 28 November 2020. Then there was an exceptional gathering (even by county standards) during the winter of 2024/5 at Knowlands Farm in fields sown with a mixture of seed-bearing plants to attract wild birds. Numbers built from 63 on 22 September 2024, to 167 on 5 October, to 694 on 24 December and finally peaked at 1,209 (counted from a photograph but almost certainly didn't include all those present) on 4 January 2025. As the seed became consumed, numbers tailed off dramatically with only eight present on 18 January 2025.



**Siskin (male), Near Sutton Hall Weir,  
22 November 2023**



**Linnet (female with nest material)  
In our Barcombe garden, 8 May 2021**

### **Lesser Redpoll**

#### Status: unusual

This species is an infrequent winter and autumnal passage migrant in small numbers. It is usually found in stands of birch or alder but sometimes more widely including our Barcombe garden. Most records have been from Barcombe (mainly flying over giving their distinctive calls), Barcombe Reservoir, Knowlands and the Sutton Hall Estate. Records have been of single birds or small parties but larger gatherings include 40 at Barcombe Reservoir on 5 February 1995 and 25 at Scobell's Farm on 17 March 1995. It is occasionally seen on spring passage, e.g., one in our Barcombe garden on 8 April 2016, two at Barcombe Reservoir on 15 April 2018 and two there on 12 April 2021 (in a small 'fall' of birds).



## Common Crossbill

### Status: unusual

With only comparatively small blocks of conifers within the Parish, it is not surprising that this specialist at removing seeds from conifer cones is scarce around Barcombe. Its numbers fluctuate in Sussex each year with occasional 'eruptions'. There appear to be only eight documented records. *A female was at Barcombe Mills on 3 May 1998.* There were then three flying over Barcombe on 17 August 2003, four flying over there on 8 July 2012 and four likewise on 17 October 2013. A female was seen in flight from High Field (between Burtenshaw's Plantation and Blunt's Green) on 3 February 2019, then there were two flying over Barcombe on 21 June 2020 and two *near Barcombe on 11 July 2020* (Robin Denison-Pender, SOS website). Finally, three flew over calling near Agmond's Wood on 2 August 2025. *There are also other records from the Sutton Hall Estate.*

## Bullfinch

### Status: scarce or local

The male of this species is a particularly smart-looking bird that is a relatively scarce breeding resident. Bullfinches are notoriously shy and rarely approachable before they take flight. The old railway track north of Barcombe is a reliable site to see this species where small flocks are sometimes seen, e.g., eight on 15 February 2018, *10 on 29 September 2019 and 15 on 1 November 2020.* A male was seen giving the bowing display and a gentle piping call to a female there on 13 April 2016. Juveniles are occasionally encountered and are often the only evidence of breeding in the area. This species will regularly visit gardens, particularly during the winter. Two birds showing diseased feet (sadly, an all too common occurrence in finches) were seen in our Barcombe garden in January 2025.



Lesser Redpoll, Dallas Lane, 16 March 2024



Bullfinch (male), Knowlands Farm, 12 March 2022

## Hawfinch

### Status: unusual

This is a large, well-marked finch with a very powerful beak (even capable of cracking cherry stones) that is an irregular visitor to the Parish and then when it turns up, very scarce. It is also extremely secretive. It will sometimes perch at the tops of trees, particularly before going to roost (which they do quite early in the afternoon). More often it is seen in flight or, by those with sufficient hearing, picked up by their soft call. The species is described *as being 'uncommon' in 1953* (WI, 1999). *Two were seen at Barcombe on 8 August 1988.* There was an exceptional national influx from the Continent during the autumn of 2017 and winter of 2017/18 which was heralded locally with one flying over our Barcombe garden on 30 October 2017 and two over next day. Locally, they were attracted by the high density of fruiting hornbeam in Knowlands Wood and by other fruiting shrubs in the area. Favoured sites were the old railway track north of Barcombe, Knowlands Wood and Knowlands Farm with the highest count being one of 18 at the latter site on 26 November 2017. One was seen in Barcombe on 4 & 5 January 2018 and one was at St Mary's churchyard on 7 February 2018. The last was at Knowlands Farm on 18 March 2018. There was then another, though smaller, influx during the winter of 2021/2 with the first, locally, being two at Knowlands Wood on 29 November 2021. Numbers peaked at 15 within the wood on 7 January 2022 and the last two of the influx were seen there on 12 March 2022. A further bird in the company of Fieldfares (they will follow thrushes to pick up undigested hard fruit both from their droppings or that has been regurgitated) was on the very edge of the Parish north of Sutton Hall Weir on 22 November 2023.



**Hawfinch (female / immature), Knowlands Wood, 4 February 2018**

### **Snow Bunting**

#### Status: two occurrences

There are just two records of this very scarce winter visitor which, when it turns up in Sussex, is much more usually found along the coast. *One was at Barcombe Reservoir on 6 December 1968 (Lang, 1995) and one was there on 9 October 1977.*

### **White-throated Sparrow**

#### Status: one occurrence

The discovery of a male of this striking North American sparrow on 3 February 2021 in their Barcombe garden by Catherine & Robert Anscombe during a BCWG House Sparrow survey was one of the rarity highlights of Barcombe Parish's ornithological history (see also page 15). It stayed until 18 April 2021, spending the latter part of its stay in the 'Wild About Barcombe' area below the Pump House Field allotments and was seen by both local birders and those travelling from very much further afield. Towards the end of its stay, it was heard singing on regular occasions. While it is feasible that it flew across the Atlantic, it was most probably ship-assisted and is only the second for Sussex following a previous one at Beachy Head in 1968. There had been only 53 records ever in Britain prior to this one. More details of the discovery and sightings can be found in the 2021 Sussex Bird Report.





**White-throated Sparrow (male), Wild About Barcombe, 19 March 2021**

### **Yellowhammer**

Status: scarce or local

This once widespread resident farmland bird is still just hanging on in the Parish, despite dramatic declines nationally, and is now sparsely distributed during the breeding season, e.g., on Knowlands Farm and on the Sutton Hall Estate. Consequently, its 'little bit of bread and no cheese' song remains a welcome sound on a spring or summer walk in the Parish. There are sometimes larger gatherings in winter and spring such as flocks of 25 at Knowlands Farm on both 17 April 2016 and 17 November 2019, 45 on 1 January 2020, 40 on 2 March 2024 and 25 on 29 March 2024.

### **Reed Bunting**

Status: scarce or local

This resident bunting breeds in one or two locations near the River Ouse such as besides Andrew's Cut at Barcombe Mills and in fields besides Blunt's Lane. *Ten pairs were noted at the Barcombe Mills site on 1 June 1980* but now there is usually only a single pair there. It is slightly more common in winter and may be found with Yellowhammers and finches on farmland at Knowlands and on the Sutton Hall Estate. There were double figure counts at some locations up to 2003, e.g., *35 at Barcombe Reservoir on 1 November 1978 and 25 on 21 March 1980*. Since then, counts have been in single figures and most recently of fewer than five individuals.

### **Corn Bunting**

Status: unusual

This large bunting is normally associated with downland during the breeding season though flocks gather lower down in the Ouse Valley in winter. David Lang (1995) noted that *it had been recorded at Barcombe Reservoir*. There is also a more recent record *of one at Barcombe Mills on 17 June 2018*.





**Yellowhammer (male), Knowlands Farm,  
26 March 2022**



**Reed Bunting (female / immature),  
Barcombe Reservoir, 7 September 2018**

## Other wild species

These are species that are not included in the records of the Sussex Ornithological Society (for a variety of reasons) or whose occurrence was just outside the Parish boundary or there is uncertainty about the exact location in relation to the boundary (for instance, the Barcombe Parish boundary lies close to both Cooksbridge and Isfield). These species have not been counted in the bird list of Barcombe Parish though some obviously may merit it.

### Night Heron

*One was shot at Cooksbridge prior to 13 May 1816 (SxBRC database).*

### Cattle Egret

*One was at Double Barns Farm on the Newick side of Barcombe Parish on 17 February 2022 (Robin Denison-Pender). It is likely that this species will occur in Barcombe Parish before long given its rapid rise within Sussex.*

### Purple Heron

One was seen at Knowlands Farm on 2 May 2011 (Nick Lear) but not included in SOS records.

### Crane

*There were 18 over Isfield on 4 November 1963 during a large invasion of this species (SxBRC database).*

### Great Snipe

This species was described as '*rare*' in 1953 within the WI's Barcombe Records (1999) which noted *that Mr Leslie Churches remembered one being shot on marshy land near Knowlands in 1939*. With presumably much more shooting in the hundred years before 1953, it is likely that because specimens were examined in the hand, these observations are genuine. Additionally, most records of this species in the UK pre-date modern birdwatching. Now a major rarity, is difficult to know whether to include this species in the main list or not.

### Ring-necked Parakeet

*One was seen at Barcombe on 5 November 2021 (Charlie Deacon via BCWG Facebook site).* This should probably be noted in the main list above. However, although widely naturalised in parts of the UK (including London), it is not certain whether this was an escape or one from the nearest naturalised populations (e.g., in Surrey). Thankfully, this species has not yet become established in the broader area or in the Parish.



**Alpine Swift**

*One was at Isfield in 1904 (SxBRC database).*

**Roller**

*One was shot at Isfield on 12 June 1870 (SxBRC database).*

**Crested Tit**

*One was seen at Sutton Hall on 28 December 2000 during severe weather (John Sclater) but not included in SOS records. While it might seem unlikely, it is important to point out that the observer is extremely familiar with this species in Norway. The species occurs just across the Channel.*

**Great Reed Warbler**

*One was at Barcombe Reservoir in spring 1984 (Bob Edgar) but not included in the SOS records.*

**Escaped species**

Unless stated, these species were recorded at Barcombe Reservoir. Many relate to presumed escapes from nearby Bentley Wildfowl collection when it was open prior to 2018. Obvious hybrid wildfowl are excluded from this list.

<b>American Wigeon</b>	<i>A male at Barcombe Reservoir on 18 June 1995 was presumed to be an escape</i>
<b>Australian Wood Duck</b>	
<b>Bahama Pintail</b>	
<b>Bar-headed Goose</b>	
<b>Black-necked Swan</b>	
<b>Black Swan</b>	
<b>Blue Snow Goose</b>	
<b>Carolina Duck</b>	
<b>Chilean Teal</b>	
<b>Chiloe Wigeon</b>	
<b>Chinese Spotbill</b>	
<b>Cuban Flamingo</b>	
<b>Emperor Goose</b>	
<b>Farmyard Goose</b>	
<b>Great White Pelican</b>	<i>One was at Knowlands Farm pond on 9 November 2000</i>
<b>Helmeted Guinea fowl</b>	
<b>Maned Goose</b>	
<b>Red-breasted Goose</b>	<i>One in fields west of Barcombe Reservoir on 13 March 2011 - a presumed escape</i>
<b>Red-crested Pochard</b>	
<b>Ring-necked Parakeet</b>	<i>Two (escaped from captivity) were seen around Barcombe throughout August 2004</i>
<b>Ringed Teal</b>	
<b>Ross's Goose</b>	
<b>Rosy-billed Pochard</b>	
<b>Ruddy Shelduck</b>	<i>One was present at Barcombe Reservoir on 18 &amp; 29 July and 15 August 2010</i>
<b>Sharp-winged Teal</b>	
<b>Snow Goose</b>	
<b>White-cheeked Pintail</b>	
<b>Wood Duck</b>	
<b>Yellow-billed Teal</b>	

## Appendix 1. List of wild and naturalised species recorded in Barcombe Parish

The Knowlands list also includes Church Farm and the old railway track (owned by UK Power Networks) adjacent to Knowlands Farm and Wood. The Sutton Hall list may include a few recorded on the adjoining Newick Estate.

A total of 112 species has been noted in or from our Barcombe garden with an annual average of 69 species (and a range from 59 to 74).

		Status	Photo in document	Seen by SL in Parish	Seen from SLs garden	Barcombe Reservoir	Knowlands	Sutton Hall Estate
			A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Mute Swan	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Bewick's Swan	Unusual				1		
3	Whooper Swan	Two occurrences				1		
4	Pink-footed Goose	Two occurrences				1		
5	White-fronted Goose	Unusual	1	1		1		
6	Greylag Goose	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
7	Canada Goose	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
8	Barnacle Goose	Scarce or local	1	1		1		
9	Brent Goose	Unusual	1	1	1	1		
10	Egyptian Goose	Common	1	1		1	1	1
11	Common Shelduck	Unusual		1	1	1		
12	Mandarin Duck	Scarce or local	1	1		1	1	1
13	Eurasian Wigeon	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1		1
14	Gadwall	Scarce or local	1	1		1		1
15	Eurasian Teal	Scarce or local	1	1		1	1	1
16	Mallard	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
17	Pintail	Unusual		1	1	1		1
18	Garganey	Unusual		1		1		
19	Shoveler	Scarce or local	1	1		1		1
20	Red-crested Pochard	Unusual	1	1		1		
21	Common Pochard	Scarce or local	1	1		1		
22	Ring-necked Duck	Two occurrences		1		1		
23	Tufted Duck	Scarce or local	1	1		1	1	1
24	Greater Scaup	Unusual		1		1		
25	Common Eider	Two occurrences				1		
26	Long-tailed Duck	Unusual		1		1		
27	Common Scoter	Unusual		1		1		
28	Goldeneye	Unusual	1	1		1		
29	Smew	Unusual		1		1		
30	Goosander	Unusual	1	1		1		
31	Ruddy Duck	Unusual		1		1		
32	Red-legged Partridge	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
33	Grey Partridge	Unusual		1		1		1
34	Quail	Unusual						1
35	Common Pheasant	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
36	Red-throated Diver	Unusual		1		1		
37	Black-throated Diver	Two occurrences				1		



			A	B	C	D	E	F
38	<b>Gannet</b>	One occurrence						
39	<b>Cormorant</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
40	<b>Shag</b>	Three occurrences				1		
41	<b>Bittern</b>	Two occurrences				1		
42	<b>Little Egret</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
43	<b>Great White Egret</b>	One occurrence						1
44	<b>Grey Heron</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
45	<b>White Stork</b>	Unusual	1	1	1		1	1
46	<b>Little Grebe</b>	Scarce or local	1	1		1	1	1
47	<b>Great Crested Grebe</b>	Scarce or local	1	1		1		
48	<b>Red-necked Grebe</b>	One occurrence				1		
49	<b>Slavonian Grebe</b>	Unusual				1		
50	<b>Black-necked Grebe</b>	Unusual	1	1		1		
51	<b>Honey-buzzard</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
52	<b>Red Kite</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
53	<b>White-tailed Eagle</b>	Unusual		1				1
54	<b>Marsh Harrier</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1		1
55	<b>Hen Harrier</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
56	<b>Goshawk</b>	Unusual	1	1		1	1	1
57	<b>Sparrowhawk</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
58	<b>Common Buzzard</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
59	<b>Osprey</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
60	<b>Kestrel</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
61	<b>Red-footed Falcon</b>	One occurrence	1	1				
62	<b>Merlin</b>	Unusual		1	1	1		1
63	<b>Hobby</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
64	<b>Peregrine</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
65	<b>Water Rail</b>	Unusual	1	1		1	1	1
66	<b>Corncrake</b>	Very old records only						
67	<b>Moorhen</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
68	<b>Coot</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1		1
69	<b>Oystercatcher</b>	Unusual				1		
70	<b>Avocet</b>	Two occurrences				1		
71	<b>Little Ringed Plover</b>	Unusual	1	1		1		
72	<b>Ringed Plover</b>	Three occurrences		1		1		
73	<b>Golden Plover</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	
74	<b>Grey Plover</b>	One occurrence				1		
75	<b>Lapwing</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
76	<b>Knot</b>	Unusual				1		
77	<b>Little Stint</b>	Unusual		1		1		
78	<b>Dunlin</b>	Unusual		1	1	1		
79	<b>Ruff</b>	Unusual				1		
80	<b>Jack Snipe</b>	Unusual				1	1	1
81	<b>Common Snipe</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
82	<b>Woodcock</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
83	<b>Black-tailed Godwit</b>	Two occurrences				1		
84	<b>Bar-tailed Godwit</b>	Two occurrences				1		
85	<b>Whimbrel</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
86	<b>Curlew</b>	Unusual				1		
87	<b>Common Sandpiper</b>	Scarce or local	1	1		1		1
88	<b>Spotted Sandpiper</b>	One occurrence				1		
89	<b>Green Sandpiper</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1

			A	B	C	D	E	F
90	<b>Spotted Redshank</b>	Unusual				1		
91	<b>Greenshank</b>	Unusual		1	1	1	1	
92	<b>Wood Sandpiper</b>	Unusual	1	1		1		1
93	<b>Common Redshank</b>	Unusual	1	1		1		
94	<b>Turnstone</b>	Unusual				1		
95	<b>Grey Phalarope</b>	One occurrence				1		
96	<b>Kittiwake</b>	Unusual	1	1		1		
97	<b>Black-headed Gull</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
98	<b>Little Gull</b>	Unusual		1		1		
99	<b>Laughing Gull</b>	One occurrence		1		1		
100	<b>Mediterranean Gull</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
101	<b>Common Gull</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
102	<b>Lesser Black-backed Gull</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
103	<b>Herring Gull</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
104	<b>Yellow-legged Gull</b>	Unusual	1	1		1	1	1
105	<b>Caspian Gull</b>	One occurrence				1		
106	<b>Iceland Gull</b>	One occurrence		1		1		
107	<b>Great Black-backed Gull</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	?	1
108	<b>Little Tern</b>	Two occurrences				1		
109	<b>Black Tern</b>	Unusual		1		1		
110	<b>White-winged Black Tern</b>	One occurrence				1		
111	<b>Common Tern</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	
112	<b>Arctic Tern</b>	Two occurrences		1		1		
113	<b>Feral Pigeon</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	?	?	1
114	<b>Stock Dove</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
115	<b>Woodpigeon</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
116	<b>Collared Dove</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
117	<b>Turtle Dove</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
118	<b>Common Cuckoo</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
119	<b>Barn Owl</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
120	<b>Little Owl</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
121	<b>Tawny Owl</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
122	<b>Long-eared Owl</b>	Unusual		1			1	1
123	<b>Short-eared Owl</b>	Unusual		1		1		1
124	<b>Nightjar</b>	Very old records only						
125	<b>Common Swift</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
126	<b>Kingfisher</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
127	<b>Hoopoe</b>	One occurrence						
128	<b>Wryneck</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1		1
129	<b>Green Woodpecker</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
130	<b>Great Spotted Woodpecker</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
131	<b>Lesser Spotted Woodpecker</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
132	<b>Golden Oriole</b>	One recent occurrence						
133	<b>Red-backed Shrike</b>	Very old records only					?	?
134	<b>Great Grey Shrike</b>	Three occurrences				1		1
135	<b>Woodchat Shrike</b>	Very old record only						
136	<b>Magpie</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
137	<b>Jay</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
138	<b>Jackdaw</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
139	<b>Rook</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
140	<b>Carrion Crow</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
141	<b>Hooded Crow</b>	Unusual						1



			A	B	C	D	E	F
142	<b>Raven</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
143	<b>Goldcrest</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
144	<b>Firecrest</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	
145	<b>Blue Tit</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
146	<b>Great Tit</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
147	<b>Coal Tit</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
148	<b>Willow Tit</b>	Extinct in Sussex						1
149	<b>Marsh Tit</b>	Unusual	1	1		1	1	1
150	<b>Woodlark</b>	Unusual	1	1			1	1
151	<b>Skylark</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
152	<b>Sand Martin</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
153	<b>Barn Swallow</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
154	<b>House Martin</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
155	<b>Cetti's Warbler</b>	Unusual		1		1		1
156	<b>Long-tailed Tit</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
157	<b>Wood Warbler</b>	Two occurrences				1		
158	<b>Chiffchaff</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
159	<b>Willow Warbler</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
160	<b>Blackcap</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
161	<b>Garden Warbler</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
162	<b>Lesser Whitethroat</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
163	<b>Common Whitethroat</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
164	<b>Dartford Warbler</b>	One occurrence					1	
165	<b>Sedge Warbler</b>	Unusual	1	1		1	1	
166	<b>Reed Warbler</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
167	<b>Nuthatch</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
168	<b>Treecreeper</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
169	<b>Wren</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
170	<b>Common Starling</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
171	<b>Blackbird</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
172	<b>Fieldfare</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
173	<b>Song Thrush</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
174	<b>Redwing</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
175	<b>Mistle Thrush</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
176	<b>Spotted Flycatcher</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
177	<b>Robin</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
178	<b>Common Nightingale</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1		1	1
179	<b>Pied Flycatcher</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
180	<b>Black Redstart</b>	Unusual	1	1		1	1	
181	<b>Common Redstart</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
182	<b>Whinchat</b>	Unusual	1	1		1	1	1
183	<b>European Stonechat</b>	Unusual	1	1		1	1	1
184	<b>Northern Wheatear</b>	Unusual	1	1		1	1	1
185	<b>Dunnock</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
186	<b>House Sparrow</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
187	<b>Tree Sparrow</b>	Unusual		1		1		
188	<b>Yellow Wagtail</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	?	1
189	<b>Grey Wagtail</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
190	<b>Pied Wagtail</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
191	<b>Tree Pipit</b>	Unusual						
192	<b>Meadow Pipit</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
193	<b>Rock Pipit</b>	Two occurrences	1	1		1		

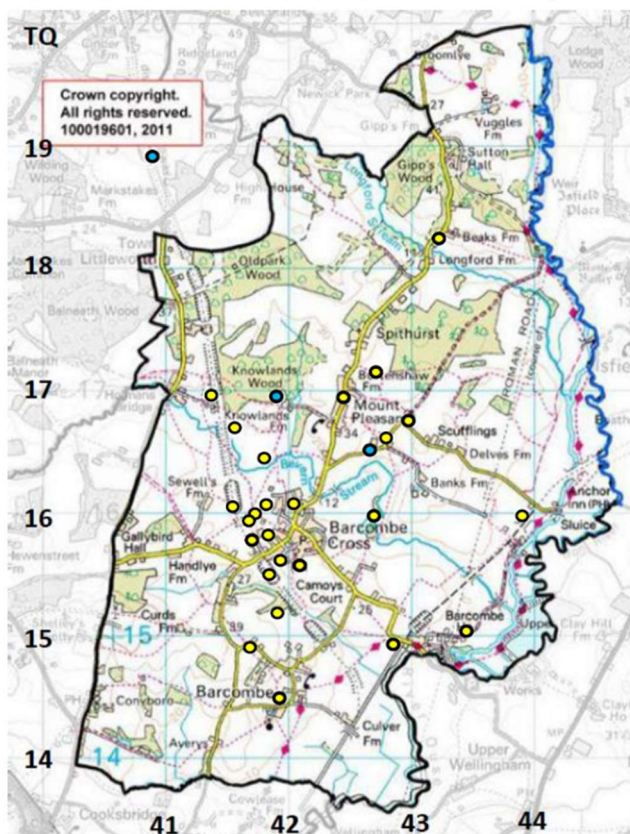
			A	B	C	D	E	F
194	<b>Water Pipit</b>	Unusual		1		1		
195	<b>Chaffinch</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
196	<b>Brambling</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
197	<b>Greenfinch</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
198	<b>Goldfinch</b>	Common	1	1	1	1	1	1
199	<b>Siskin</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
200	<b>Linnet</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
201	<b>Lesser Redpoll</b>	Unusual	1	1	1	1	1	1
202	<b>Common Crossbill</b>	Unusual		1	1			1
203	<b>Bullfinch</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
204	<b>Hawfinch</b>	Unusual	1	1	1		1	1
205	<b>Snow Bunting</b>	Two occurrences				1		
206	<b>White-throated Sparrow</b>	One occurrence	1	1				
207	<b>Yellowhammer</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
208	<b>Reed Bunting</b>	Scarce or local	1	1	1	1	1	1
209	<b>Corn Bunting</b>	Unusual				1		
			<b>139</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>133</b>

## Appendix 2. Results of the BCWG survey in February 2021 for Song Thrush, Mistle Thrush and House Sparrow

It is accepted that none of these surveys are complete for the Parish but are centred on Barcombe.

### Song Thrush (yellow) and Mistle Thrush (blue)

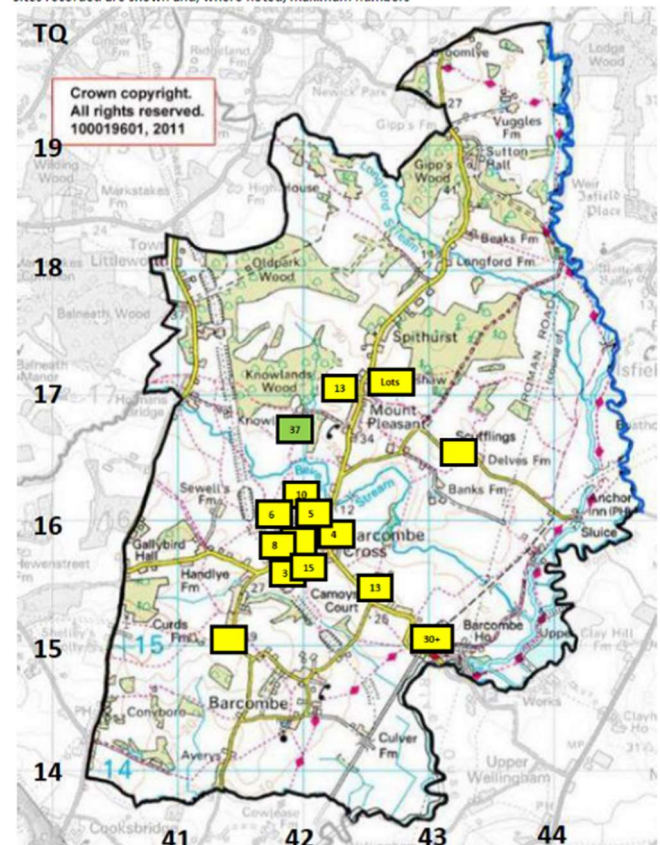
Song Thrushes (yellow) and Mistle Thrushes (blue) in song – Barcombe Parish – February 2021



### House Sparrow showing maximum numbers

House Sparrow– Barcombe Parish – February 2021

Sites recorded are shown and, where noted, maximum numbers





### Appendix 3. Map of singing Nightingales in spring 2025

Compiled with help from the BCWG.



Common Nightingale, Sidehills, 21 April 2023



***And finally, spot the bird!***



***This one of a different bird just outside the Parish is rather easier!***





