

Kew is a wonderful place to watch birds. The varied plant collections and rich invertebrate fauna support over 40 species of bird which breed in the Gardens annually while at least 30 more visit regularly in season. The presence of a small collection of captive birds and the provision of birdfeeders have the effect of making many wild birds a little less cautious than they would usually be enabling the watcher to get good views of species which are normally elusive elsewhere.



## Kew information sheet K17

### Where to watch birds at Kew

#### Queen's Cottage Grounds

The Cottage Grounds are managed to encourage wildlife. They are rich in native trees, shrubs and wildflowers which in turn support a very diverse invertebrate fauna. Birds which benefit from this abundant source of food and nesting sites include Chiffchaffs, Blackcaps, Great Spotted Woodpeckers, Treecreepers and Nuthatches. Look down the grassy rides to see Green Woodpeckers burying acorns in the turf during late summer and autumn. In winter the bird-feeders are popular with Blue, Great and Coal Tits while captive pheasants feed on the ground underneath.

#### Greylag geese (Christina Harrison)



#### Rhododendron Dell

This sheltered stretch of cover is good for close views of tits, Robins and the beautiful captive Golden Pheasants which approach visitors hoping for food. In winter look up in the trees for a glimpse of Goldcrests and Siskins which often travel through the Gardens, feeding as they go, in mixed flocks of commoner species like the tits or Chaffinches.

#### King William's Temple

The dense plantings around the Temple provide nesting sites for the delicate, acrobatic Long-tailed Tits and for Blackcaps. Wrens nest in the Ivy and in spring Chiffchaffs can be heard singing in the shrubs nearby.

#### Riverside Walk

Numerous Herons can be seen feeding along the margins of the River Thames or roosting in the trees above. Cormorants are common and can be seen fishing singly in mid-stream or in flocks drying their plumage in the trees. Sparrowhawks and Kestrels can be seen in the patches of open sky between the branches and flocks of up to 20 Ring-necked Parakeets criss-cross the River overhead. In autumn Wood Pigeons can be seen gorging themselves on acorns in the Holm Oaks while Jays gather theirs and bury them in the grass nearby.

#### The Lake

The collection of captive waterfowl is joined by many wild birds which rapidly become quite trusting in the expectation

Above: **Nuthatch**  
(Stephen Dalton/NHPA)

of food, especially in winter. Up to 70 Coots and 50 Moorhens overwinter on the Lake, Mallard and Tufted Ducks are common as are Pochard. Mute Swans bred in 2001 and again in 2002 after an absence of some years. Great Crested Grebes and Little Grebes can be seen especially in spring. The highlight of a walk around the Lake in summer is likely to be the flash of vivid blue as a Kingfisher carries a fish back to its perch.

**Tawny owl** (Peter Gasson)



## List of Kew birds

This includes all the species which have been recorded since 1980 and follows the commonly used Voous sequence.

### Status symbols

**R** = resident  
**B** = breeding  
**W** = winter visitor  
**S** = summer visitor  
**M** = migrant passing through in spring and autumn

Little Grebe **RB**  
 Great Crested Grebe **RB**  
 Red-necked Grebe **W** Two records of birds on the Thames, visible from the Gardens.  
 Cormorant **R**  
 Shag **W**  
 Grey Heron **R**  
 Mute Swan **RB**  
 Whooper Swan **W** A single record of a bird flying over the Gardens.  
 White-fronted Goose **W** A single record of a bird flying over the Gardens.  
 Greylag Goose **R** Captive birds are also present.  
 Canada Goose **RB**  
 Shelduck **W**  
 Mandarin **R**  
 Wigeon **W**  
 Gadwall **W**  
 Teal **W**  
 Mallard **RB**  
 Garganey A single record only (August)  
 Shoveler **W**  
 Pochard **R**  
 Tufted Duck **RB**  
 Common Scoter A single record from the Thames  
 Goldeneye **W**  
 Goosander **W**  
 Ruddy Duck A single record  
 Honey Buzzard A single record  
 Red Kite Two records of birds flying over.  
 Sparrowhawk **RB**  
 Buzzard A single record.  
 Kestrel **RB**  
 Merlin A single record.  
 Hobby **M**  
 Pheasant **RB**  
 Water Rail A single record only.  
 Moorhen **RB**  
 Coot **RB**  
 Oystercatcher **M**  
 Little-ringed Plover A single record.  
 Golden Plover A single record of a bird flying over.  
 Lapwing **M** Seen annually flying over the Gardens.  
 Dunlin A single record.  
 Snipe **W**  
 Woodcock **W**  
 Whimbrel A single record (August)  
 Curlew A single record (March)  
 Redshank A single record.  
 Greenshank Two records.  
 Green Sandpiper A single record.

Common Sandpiper A single record.  
 Black-headed Gull **R**  
 Common Gull **WM**  
 Lesser Black-backed Gull **R**  
 Herring Gull **WM**  
 Iceland or Glaucous Gull A single record only  
 Great Black-backed Gull **W**  
 Kittiwake **W**  
 Sandwich Tern **M** Four records of birds seen along the Thames.  
 Common Tern **S**  
 Little Tern A single record (August)  
 Guillemot **W**  
 Feral Rock Dove **RB**  
 Stock Dove **SB**  
 Wood Pigeon **RB**  
 Collared Dove **MB**  
 Turtle Dove **M**  
 Ring-necked Parakeet **RB**  
 Cuckoo **M**  
 Little Owl **M**  
 Tawny Owl **RB**  
 Swift **S**  
 Kingfisher **SB**  
 Green Woodpecker **RB**  
 Great Spotted Woodpecker **RB**  
 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker **RB**  
 Skylark **WM**  
 Sand Martin **S**  
 Swallow **SB**  
 House Martin **S**  
 Meadow Pipit **M**  
 Yellow Wagtail **M**  
 Grey Wagtail **R**  
 Pied Wagtail **RB**  
 Wren **RB**  
 Dunnock **RB**  
 Redstart A single record (April)  
 Wheatear **M**  
 Ring Ouzel A single record (October)  
 Blackbird **RB**  
 Fieldfare **W**  
 Song Thrush **RB**  
 Redwing **W**  
 Mistle Thrush **RB**  
 Sedge Warbler **M**  
 Reed Warbler **S**  
 Lesser Whitethroat **S** Has bred twice  
 Whitethroat **M** Only two records  
 Garden Warbler **M**  
 Blackcap **SB**  
 Chiffchaff **SB**  
 Willow Warbler **SM**  
 Goldcrest **RB**  
 Firecrest **WM** Only three records  
 Spotted Flycatcher **SB**  
 Red-breasted Flycatcher A single record (November)  
 Pied Flycatcher **M** 4 records  
 Long-tailed Tit **RB**  
 Coal Tit **RB**  
 Blue Tit **RB**  
 Great Tit **RB**  
 Nuthatch **RB**  
 Treecreeper **RB**  
 Jay **RB**  
 Magpie **RB**  
 Jackdaw **R**

Rook A single record  
 Carrion Crow **RB**  
 Starling **RB**  
 House Sparrow Once common but no recent reports.  
 Chaffinch **RB**  
 Brambling **M**  
 Greenfinch **RB**  
 Goldfinch **RB**  
 Siskin **W**  
 Linnet **SB**  
 Redpoll **WM**  
 Bullfinch **RB**  
 Hawfinch A single record (April)  
 Yellowhammer A single record  
 Reed Bunting A single record

### Great Tit bathing (Peter Gasson)



### Great spotted woodpecker (Peter Gasson)

