**PORTSUNLIGHT RIVER PARK 2022**

**1. Mute Swan**

There was no breeding this year though a pair were present on the 14.3. A male was regularly

present from the 10.5-20.6. Then 7 birds, all sub-adult were on the lake from the 28.6 – 6.7 until

the rapidly falling water-level saw them go.

**2. Pink-footed Goose**

Skeins regularly fly over the park between late September and early March as the birds move

between the Lancashire Mosses and the Dee Estuary.

**3. Greylag Goose**

2 flew low over the park, 11.3.

**4. Canada Goose**

3 pairs were seen regularly on the nearby mudflats off Shorefields in the early part of the year.

A pair bred on the lake producing 8 goslings but these were rapidly predated and none survived.

A flock of 31 flew over the park, 23.5. During the autumn up to 8 were often to be seen on the

mudflats.

**5. Shelduck**

Often to be seen on the nearby mudflats, the Mersey and sometimes on the lake, the highest

count was 60 on the 9.3. By late spring there were usually 8 pairs around, one often on the lake.

The only sign of successful breeding was of 8 tiny ducklings near the tide-line, 22.6; they all

appeared to survive. Small numbers were present until late autumn.

**6. Ruddy Shelduck**

A male was present either on the lake or the nearby mudflats between 19.5 – 6.6.

**7. Mandarin Duck**

This species breeds in nearby Dibbinsdale and 2 to 3 birds were regularly on the Dibbin between

late March and early July.

**8. Wigeon**

2 males were on the lake between the 4 – 8.7.

**9. Gadwall**

A male was on the lake from, 6.6 – 24.6 when it was joined by 2 females.

**10. Teal**

A common visitor outside the breeding season either on the lake or the tide-line and mussel-beds.

Numbers peaked at around 80 in late January the fell rapidly by late March. The first returning

birds were a pair on the lake, 1.7. The autumn saw birds either on the tide-line or the Dibbin

because the lake had completely dried up in the summer. Heavy rains in the autumn enabled

the lake to slowly fill up and by late November over 90 teal were counted on the lake.

**11. Mallard**

Up to 4 birds were regularly on the lake in the early part of the year. A female with 8 ducklings

were present, 25.3. Birds come to the lake during their moult and by late June there were over 30

present. A female with 8 ducklings was on the lake 29.6.

**12. Pintail**

A winter visitor- the highest count was of 41 on the tide-line, 19.1. Numbers fell and the last spring

sighting was of a pair on the Mersey, 31.3. Early October saw a pair on the tide-line and by late

November there were 32.

**13. Shoveler**

There was a maximum of 7 birds to the end of March. 3 birds were present from mid-November as

water returned to the lake.

**14. Tufted Duck**

A male was on the lake from 30.5 – 6.6.

**15. Common Scoter**

Seen from Mersey View Walk a bird was seen flying low and then landing on the Mersey, 8.7.

**16. Pheasant**

A male was regularly recorded around the northern edge of summit, 5.10 – 16.11.

**17. Cormorant**

Small numbers seen on most visits to the park.

**18. Little Egret**

The first record of the year was of a single bird feeding on the edge of the nearby saltmarsh, 30.5.

During September there were up to 3 birds present sometimes feeding in the Dibbin depending on

the tide-level.

**19. Grey Heron**

Single bird sightings scattered throughout the year; regularly flying over the park, sometimes on

the mudflats and occasionally feeding in the Dibbin.

**20. Little Grebe**

As in previous years birds started to establish breeding territories by late February and by March

there were 3 pairs; however, there was no evidence of breeding success and the last sighting of a

single bird was 28.6.

**21. Great Crested Grebe**

A single bird was fishing in the Mersey close to Mersey View Walk, 9.9.

**22. Sparrowhawk**

Regularly seen throughout the year -16 sightings . Birds were seen carrying prey away from the

park, suggesting that they bred nearby but not in the park this year.

**23. Buzzard**

Occasionally seen flying either over or near the park.

**24. Water Rail**

Generally heard calling outside the breeding season with at least 3 around the reedbed. I saw an

adult on the mud, 8.7. and a reputable birder told me that he had seen a young bird at that time.

This confirms breeding but suggests that this secretive bird may have bred in past years.

**25.** **Moorhen**

At least 3 pairs were on the lake. 2 chicks were seen 28.6.

**26. Coot**

A pair was present in January, later to be joined by two more. Each successfully raised at least one

brood (there were 5 older juvenile birds by 12.7.) The species was absent from late summer to

the late autumn when the lake dried up.

**27. Oystercatcher**

A fairly common sight on the mudflats and mussel-beds outside the breeding season. Up to the end

of February 40+ were usually present at low tide then numbers rapidly decline. By September

birds return. A flock of 73 were on the edge of the tide-line, 29.11.

**28. Grey Plover**

Three records of single bird out on the mudflats: 24.3, 22 & 23.6.

**29. Lapwing**

A single bird was on the muddy area of the lake from 18 – 21.3 & then 2 birds from 24.6 – 2.7.

**30. Ringed Plover**

Small numbers were recorded on the nearby mudflats in the spring: 8 late March, up to 8 mid-

March & 7 mid-May. There was a more marked autumn passage from September to mid-October

which peaked at a flock of 70+ , 13.9.

**31. Curlew**

The first two months of the year regularly saw up to 32 on the mudflats. On high tides the birds

fly off to nearby cleared land by the Dibbin where they were easier to count from the summit.

Birds move off in the spring though additional birds use the Mersey mudflats as they migrate

to their breeding grounds. Returning birds start arriving back in late June. There were up to

27 birds from mid-September onwards.

**32. Black-tailed Godwit**

Numbers rise in late-winter and early spring with birds roosting/feeding on the mudflats & the lake

Spring records Late summer records

No. Date No. Date

1 17.1 1 28.6

17 21.1 160 10.7

115 26.1 90 12.7

250 28.1 40 12.9

35 3.2

95 7.3

170 9.3

215 11.3

170 16.3

There were scattered records in the late autumn of less than 10 birds.

**33. Turnstone**

A fairly common visitor mainly feeding on the mussel-beds and the tideline with up to 16 seen

regularly in January and early February. The autumn saw birds appearing from early October

with 28 being the maximum count.

**34. Knot**

5 were seen flying low over the Mersey close to Mersey View Walk, 19.10.

**35. Dunlin**

Fairly modest numbers (maximum 17) were recorded from mid-January to early February. Two were

seen 13.5. and from mid-November up to 5 were usually feeding on the tideline with the redshanks.

**36. Common Sandpiper**

A regular passage migrant usually to be found on the muddy sides of the Dibbin: 1 (23.3), 2 (9.5),

2 (4-12.7) then 1 (9.9-21.11).

**37. Green Sandpiper**

A single bird frequented the muddy area of the lake, (3-12.7).

**38. Redshank**

The most numerous of the visiting waders, usually to be found on the mudflats or the mussel-beds,

outside the breeding season. The highest count was 300+ (19.1) then numbers rapidly decline in

the latter half of March until only one was recorded by the end of that month. Birds started to

return in June- 3 (21.6) and by mid-July over 80 were present. By the late autumn there were

regularly 250+.

**39. Snipe**

Small numbers can be seen around the edge of the lake in the reeds from early September to late

March. Usually up to eight are present though an indeterminate number are in the salt-marsh.

**40. Sandwich Tern**

2 were seen off Mersey View Walk ( 30.6 ), then a single bird was over the river ( 8.7 ).

**41. Common Tern**

2 were seen flying over the Mersey close to the park ( 21.5 ).

**42. Black-headed Gull**

The most numerous gull with typically 250+ on the mud-flats and mussel-beds outside the breeding

season. Birds move off to their breeding grounds from mid-March before starting to return from late

June. The highest winter count was of 400+ (21.11).

**43. Mediterranean Gull**

Single birds were regularly seen usually with roosting Black-headed and Common Gulls out on the

nearby mudflats close to Shorefields, from early July to late October.

**44. Common Gull**

Up to 20 are present in the winter months but rise to 60+ in February indicating some passage

movement before disappearing to their breeding grounds. Birds start to trickle back in June & July.

Poor weather conditions with high winds saw up to 35 birds present.

**45. Lesser Black-backed Gull**

35-40 are usually present outside the breeding season but unlike other gull species numbers rise in

late March to 65+ and over 100 in late June. Up to 4 birds present in the winter were of the

intermedius race ( i.e. of eastern European origin ).

**46. Herring Gull**

Seen throughout the year though during the breeding season most of the 60-90 birds present are

non-adults. Adult numbers vary from 50-100 according to the tides in the winter months.

**47. Great Black-backed Gull**

Small numbers, typically 1 – 5, are present outside the breeding season.

**48. Feral Pigeon**

A fairly common bird breeding on land adjacent to the park. Flocks of 15-20 birds regularly feed

across the summit. There were fewer birds present from late September.

**49. Stock Dove**

Seen in small numbers (up to 5) regularly around the park throughout the year.

**50. Woodpigeon**

A common resident with some 25 breeding pairs.

**51. Collared Dove**

There were two breeding sites: by the centre and the Shorefield Steps/Water Plant area. Birds

were recorded throughout the year.

**52. Swift**

Up to 5 could be seen flying over the park from early May to July.

**53. Kingfisher**

5 sightings of single birds on the Dibbin from mid-June to early October.

**54. Great Spotted Woodpecker**

From late May to early July birds were regularly seen and heard due to post-breeding dispersal.

Regular sightings in September/October were probably indications of passage movement.

**55. Kestrel**

A pair successfully bred, raising two birds in a nest-box close to the park.

**56. Peregrine**

Only one record - a male was seen making two unsuccessful swoops over a wader flock (18.11).

**57. Magpie**

A common and visible resident with some 5 breeding territories. A party of up to 14 is usually

around the north end of the summit.

**58. Jay**

Regularly heard and occasionally seen in the park. Birds are more visible in September/October

when they collect acorns. A pair bred in the wood.

**59. Jackdaw**

A regular visitor to the park from nearby Port Sunlight especially in May when adults hunt

for insect food on the summit. There is also some visible migration as birds fly over the park

especially in the autumn – 104 flying west late October.

**60. Carrion Crow**

A resident with 3 breeding pairs. Large numbers can be seen feeding on the mudflats at low-tide

e.g. 52(7.3) & 58 (3.10).

**61. Raven**

Single bird sightings were regularly made in February and March.

**62. Goldcrest**

A visitor mostly outside the breeding season. At least two were present from January – March. The

Autumn saw four pairs scattered around the park though 12 were present (18.10) indicating a fall

**63. Blue Tit**

A common resident with at least 5 pairs. The first juvenile birds were seen 30.6. The largest winter

flock was of 12 birds (17.1).

**64. Great Tit**

A resident species with some 4 pairs.

**65. Coal Tit**

A bird was in bushes and trees near the lake from 9-11.11.

**66. Skylark**

Two birds were singing territorially from 3.2. then 3 from 22.2. This was the maximum number

of pairs heard though there were probably multiple broods since birds were still singing by

mid-July. There is visible migration in the autumn as calling birds fly over regularly from

late September to mid-November.

**67. Sand Martin**

Two were flying over the lake,13.5 and a single bird 21.6.

**68. Swallow**

Several birds were seen over the Dibbin and around the Dock Road North entrance to the

Park from early May onwards suggesting two territories; however, no young birds were

ever recorded suggesting breeding failure. There was a single bird over the lake,12.7 and

passage migration in the autumn ( 2- 11.9 & 2- 13.9 ).

**69. House Martin**

There was no breeding on two sites close to the park ( Dock Road North & Bolton Road East ).

The first record was of a single bird over the land, 13.5. The next record was of 10 feeding

over the summit, 20.5. From late May up to 7 were seen regularly collecting mud from

mudflats. Some 20 birds were over the summit, 12.9 and the last record was 11 over the lake, 15.9.

**70. Cetti’s Warbler**

Present throughout the year though secretive when outside the breeding season. First heard

singing from 3.2 there were 4 pairs around the park. A juvenile bird was seen 1.6.

**71. Long-tailed Tit**

At least 5 breeding pairs though not all were successful. The party of young was seen close to the

Lake, 5.6. There were subsequently at least 2 mobile flocks around the park for the rest of the year.

**72. Chiffchaff**

A common summer breeding species with at least 7 pairs. 2 were singing from, 14.3 and 7 by 23.3.

Birds continued to sing through the summer, evidence of either multiple broods or breeding attempts

and there were birds calling around the lake until 12,10. A single bird was in the bushes adjacent

to the lake from the 18-23,11.

**73. Willow Warbler**

First heard singing 31.3 and by early May there were 4 well-established territories. 2 were still

singing -23,6 when a juvenile bird was also seen. A single bird probably on passage was seen 28.9.

**74. Blackcap**

First heard singing 24.3 and soon there were at least 8 territories with birds singing until the end

of June. Birds were noticeably feeding up on elderberries during September. A late record was of

a single female, 18.10.

**75. Lesser – Whitethroat**

A bird singing near the lake ( 27.5 ) was the only record.

**76. Whitethroat**

There were at least 13 territories by mid-May and up the 6 were still in song by mid-July.

**77. Reed Warbler**

From mid-May there appeared to be at least 9 territories around the reed-bed of the lake

and an isolated one in a small area of reed close the Mersey View Walk.

**78. Wren**

The most numerous breeding species of bird with an estimated total of some 40 pairs.

**79. Starling**

A fairly common breeding bird in the urban area adjacent to the park but tending to be only

present from early-May to early-June when birds collect food for their young on the summit

**80. Blackbird**

A common resident with passage movement in the autumn. Probably 20 breeding pairs. The first

juvenile bird was recorded on 25.5.

**81. Song Thrush**

12 territories had been established by early February. 5 birds were still singing by the start of July.

There was some passage movement in September though birds were generally much more

skulking by the late autumn.

**82. Redwing**

Only three records: 6 birds were in hawthorns near the lake, 17.1 and birds were heard calling 19.1

& 7.3.

**83. Mistle Thrush**

Single birds were seen flying over the park on 3.6 & 4.7.

**84. Robin**

A common resident and also winter visitor. There were at least 12 breeding pairs by the late spring

and 2 very young juveniles were near the lake 21.5. By mid-October 21 singing birds were

establishing their winter territories.

**85. Whinchat**

An occasional but annual passage migrant. A female was on the summit 10.5 & 19.5.

**86. Stonechat**

A male was present around the northern end of the summit from late January to early February

and a male was seen 17.3.

**87. Wheatear**

A large female ( Greenland Race ) was on the summit 13.5.

**88. Dunnock**

A common but rather secretive resident. There were an estimated 15 territories by mid-March.

**89. House Sparrow**

Although a fairly common breeding bird in the urban areas adjacent to the park the bird is not

present in the park for much of the year. One was singing within the park close to the Shorefield

Steps from mid-March and 4 were seen together 31.5.

**90. Grey Wagtail**

Present throughout the year with 2 breeding territories either within or very close to the park.

Birds are around the Dibbin and the Water Plant/lake areas usually. A juvenile was feeding on the

Dibbin 3.6. There is some visible migration from mid-September & October.

**91. Pied Wagtail**

An irregular visitor to the park but the appearance of a pair with 2 advanced juveniles on the grassy

area by the Centre from 17.6 onwards suggest that breeding took place either in or close to the

park. October saw 3 records of birds flying over the park as they moved south.

**White Wagtail**

The continental race can sometimes be seen flying over in October as they move south. There

were 3 records: 4 – 9.10, 1 – 12.10 & 1 – 13.10.

**92. Meadow Pipit**

A visitor outside the breeding season with small mobile flocks of 10/15 birds scattered over the

summit. Birds are present from mid-September to late March. There is also visible migration

taking place in September.

**93. Chaffinch**

Small scattered flocks of 20+ are usually present from October to late March. They tend to

frequent the bushes around the lake, Mersey View Walk and the Dibbin. Over 45 were present

1.10. There were two records, both of females near the lake in the summer ( 3 & 24.6 ).

**94. Bullfinch**

A breeding resident with at least 4 pairs. A juvenile bird was seen 30.5.

**95. Greenfinch**

Present throughout the year though numbers rise during the breeding season. The first song was

heard 22.1. Some 20 birds were singing by 10.5. and 2 were still singing in early July.

**96. Linnet**

An irregular visitor outside the breeding season. By May there were 4 established territories.

4 juveniles were seen 10.7. Small numbers were around the edge of the summit during September

to mid-October.

**97. Lesser Redpoll**

1 was in the willows by the lake, 25.3.

**98. Goldfinch**

Present throughout the year though numbers can vary considerably. By mid-May there were an

estimated 24 breeding pairs. The first juveniles appeared 30.5. A good food supply of various

plant seeds saw a mobile flock of 70+ roaming the park in September. Smaller flocks were present

until at least the end of November.

**99. Siskin**

Attracted to the alder seeds, this species is essentially a passage migrant and winter visitor.

A flock of up to 7 were usually near the Centre, from 7 – 21.3. A single bird flew over 28.6 &

3 birds were present from early October onwards.

**100. Reed Bunting**

A resident species with up to 5 breeding territories. Singing was heard from 29.2 and the first

juvenile was seen 26.5.

The above data was made from 96 visits made between 17.1 – 31.3, 9.5 – 12.7 & 9.9 – 29.11.

Estimation of the number of breeding pairs of species in the park:(\* failure)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| 1. Canada Goose |  |  | 1 |  |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1. Mute Swan |  |  |  |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |
| 1. Mallard | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 1. Tufted Duck | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Little Grebe | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |  |  |  | 2\* |
| 1. Water Rail |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |
| 1. Moorhen | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| 1. Coot | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| 1. Woodpigeon | 18 | 18 | 18 | 22 | 20 | 20 | 30 | 25 |
| 1. Collared Dove | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 1. Magpie | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. Jay | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1. Carrion Crow | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| 1. Blue Tit | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 5 |
| 1. Great Tit | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. Skylark | 5 | 5 | 5 | 11 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| 1. Swallow | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1? | 2 \* |
| 1. Cetti’s Warbler |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 4 |
| 1. Long-tailed Tit | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| 1. Chiffchaff | 2 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| 1. Willow Warbler | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| 1. Blackcap | 4 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 8 |
| 1. Lesser Whitethroat |  |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  |
| 1. Whitethroat | 13 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 12 | 15 | 13 | 13 |
| 1. Sedge Warbler |  | 2 | 1 | 1 |  | 2 | 2 |  |
| 1. Reed Warbler | 8 | 8 | 6 | 10 | 6 | 10 | 7 | 9 |
| 1. Grasshopper Warbler |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |
| 1. Wren | 18 | 20 | 23 | 41 | 25 | 26 | 40 | 40 |
| 1. Starling | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Blackbird | 14 | 7 | 4 | 20 | 7 | 12 | 9 | 20 |
| 1. Song Thrush | 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 12 |
| 1. Robin | 16 | 9 | 15 | 13 | 10 | 11 | 13 | 12 |
| 1. Dunnock | 18 | 12 | 22 | 12 | 14 | 10 | 23 | 15 |
| 1. House Sparrow |  |  | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 1. Grey Wagtail | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |  | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| 1. Meadow Pipit | 1? | 1? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Chaffinch | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 |  |  | 1? |  |
| 1. Bullfinch | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| 1. Greenfinch | 8 | 4 | 4 | 12 | 11 | 21 | 20 | 20 |
| 1. Linnet | 9 | 7 | 6 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 10 | 4 |
| 1. Goldfinch | 7 | 4 | 6 | 20 | 12 | 20 | 12 | 24 |
| 1. Reed Bunting | 4 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 |