

Friends of Barnfield Sandbeds

Birds

The important thing when you are looking for birds is to walk slowly and quietly, looking and listening all of the time. Look for birds flying overhead, singing or feeding in the trees, feeding on the ground or, usually, flying off as you approach

See if you can spot any of these birds with the help of a few clues; see the text to the right of each bird photo.

PLEASE NOTE:

It is illegal to interfere with nests or eggs. Please leave them alone and do not frighten the birds.

Birds egg collecting is also illegal.

Barnfield Sandbeds is the home of many species of birds.

Please respect their privacy and we will all be rewarded with many birds, to enjoy seeing and hearing in the future.

Thank You

On the following pages we have put together a worksheet with many of the Birds that can be found in the Barnfield Sandbeds. There is a photograph, and the name of the species, to help with identification - and a place for you to write in the date you saw them.

The photographs on the following pages are by kind permission of the North East Wildlife web site or photographs taken by Members of the Friends of Barnfield Sandbeds.

Copies of this work sheet and many others are available on our web site at www.friendsofbarnfieldsandbeds.co.uk

The work sheets are presented in Adobe Reader PDF format which may be viewed from the website or printed out as required. If you see any birds not included on the following pages we would like to know about it so we can add it to our list. Please e-mail us –

info@friendsofbarnfieldsandbeds.co.uk

<p>Blackcap</p>	<p>When Seen</p>
	<p>From March to July, you can often hear a blackcap singing his loud, rambling song in the Sandbeds. It is not easy to see them for they are shy birds and usually live in thick cover. Only the male bird has a black cap; the female and young all have brown caps.</p> <p>Most blackcaps leave for tropical Africa in August or September but, in recent years, some have chosen to stay and brave our cold winters.</p>
<p>Chiffchaff</p>	<p>When Seen</p>
	<p>Another summer migrant to listen out for is the chiffchaff which gets its name from its monotonous song. This is just two notes repeated over and over – “tsip tsap, tsip tsap” – often sung from high on a tree. Being a greenish colour, they are not easy to spot among the leaves but they are constantly on the move so , pinpoint where the song is coming from and then look for a movement</p>
<p>Cuckoo</p>	<p>When Seen</p>
	<p>All old country people listen for the song of the cuckoo in April as a sign the summer is on the way. The male birds arrive first from their winter sojourn in Africa and take up a territory, announcing their presence to any passing female. The female has a rather delightful bubbling song which you only hear in Spring. Sadly, there has been a serious decline in the numbers of cuckoos so we will be very lucky if we have one in Barnfields.</p>

<p>Dunnock</p>	<p>When Seen</p>
	<p>The dunnock is a resident bird, present all year round and can be found in many habitats where there are bushes, shrubs and low vegetation. It spends much of its life on or near the ground, searching for insects. They are one of several species of birds predated by cuckoos. The female cuckoo lays a single egg in the dunnock's nest. The young cuckoo hatches first and promptly tosses all the dunnock's eggs out of the nest so that the adult dunnocks spend all their energy feeding him.</p>
<p>Blue Tit</p>	<p>When Seen</p>
	<p>I'm sure that everyone can recognise a blue tit for they are common visitors to our gardens. They are a friend to the gardener for they eat tiny caterpillars and green fly which destroy plants. Along with great tits, they will be the birds most likely to occupy the nest boxes with holes.</p>
<p>Bullfinch</p>	<p>When Seen</p>
	<p>The adult male bullfinch is unmistakable with his bright red underparts and black cap. The female is a much duller version but both show a white rump as they fly away. Listen carefully for their soft call – “pew, pew” as you walk around the top part of the Sandbeds. Unfortunately, this beautiful bird is very destructive for it attacks the buds of fruit trees and flowering shrubs, so it is not a friend of the gardener.</p>

Greenfinch	When Seen
	<p>Apart from bright yellow wing patches, the greenfinch is pretty much green all over. They are common birds which regularly visit garden feeders. They have two kinds of song to listen out for – a long drawn out wheezy sound and a pleasant little song with trills and whistles and twitters.</p>
House Martin	When Seen
	<p>House martins do not actually live in the Sandbeds but can often be seen, during the summer months, flying overhead as they search for insects. As their name suggests, they make their mud nests under the eaves of houses. They are summer migrants which spend the winter months in Africa and return to this country in spring to breed. You can distinguish house martins from swallows and swifts because they are the only ones with a white rump.</p>
Swallow	When Seen
	<p>Swallows also fly over the Sandbeds catching insects on the wing. They have a longer forked tail than the martins and also a red chin. They are also summer visitors and I think that one of the most joyous sounds in nature is the excited twittering of newly arrived swallows on the telephone wires.</p>

Jay**When Seen**

The jay is more often heard than seen for, as soon as it spots an intruder into its territory, it flies off with loud squawking. If you do catch sight of one, you will notice its conspicuous white rump. They are most well known for their habit of hiding acorns in the autumn. They have an excellent memory, being able to remember where they hid most of them.

Wren**When Seen**

The wren is a tiny little bird with a big voice. The wren doesn't show itself for long, so you have to be quick to catch a glimpse of this little plump, round bird with a cocked up tail dashing from one thicket to another. The male wren makes several nests and invites the female to choose her favourite which she will line with feathers before laying her eggs in it.

Nuthatch**When Seen**

The nuthatch is a noisy bird with several different calls which echo through the woodland. Look for them creeping up and down the tree trunks and along the branches. They are looking for grubs and insects hiding under the bark and often choose to eat upside down!