



Bird Watching in Fairfield

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Bird Habitat

Birds may be categorised by their habitats, which provide them with food and shelter. The normal classification is:-

- Woodland ✓
- Farmland ✓
- Wetland ✓
- Upland —
- Coastal —



Some upland breeding birds over-winter in Fairfield.

Marshy land

Orchard

Wet
pasture

Cattle
grazing

Woods

Ponds

Arable

Hay
meadow



Winter Visitors – Flocking Thrushes

Fieldfare are mostly of Scandinavian/Russian origin. They are the same size as Mistle thrushes, but have a grey head.



Redwing are small like Song thrushes, but have a strong superciliary eye-stripe and a red underwing.



Fieldfare in Willow tree
(9/11/2014)



Redwing next to Pony
Wood
(2/3/2015)

'Our' Thrushes



Song Thrush in Cherry Tree



Mistle Thrush

Snipe

Snipe are medium sized wading birds with short legs and long straight bills. 90% of those in the UK are from abroad.

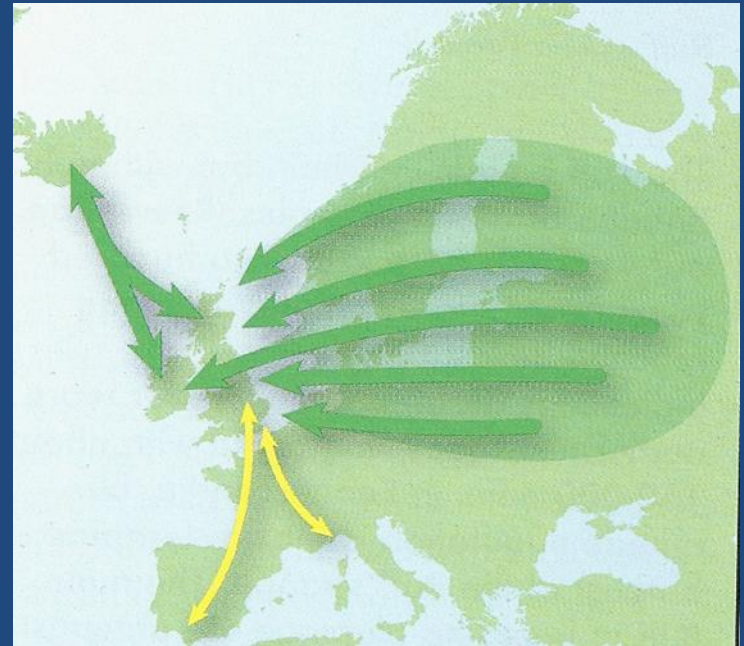


They are upland breeding birds that over-winter here and we have 70-105 here between September and March/April.

Overwintering Here



Snipe



Woodcock



Jack Snipe

Finches - **Linnet**

A small, slim finch, that feeds on seeds and insects. Males are attractively marked with crimson foreheads and breasts.

They have an undulating flight, usually twittering as they fly and may be seen in large flocks during the winter.



Pony Wood (30/1/2015)

Linnets

We've had as many as ~120 linnets in Fairfield around the Pony and Little Wood areas.



It is our use of bird-friendly mix around the arable crop that has sustained them!



Birds of Spring and Summer

In Spring birds have gained their breeding plumage and are generally easier to identify. Many will be coming to nest here from Africa (e.g. Swallows, House Martins, Swifts, Chiffchaff, Willow Warblers).

Others may be passing through on longer journeys and treating Fairfield as a service station (e.g. Wheatear)!



Out of Africa



Most warblers

— Equator

Swifts

Swallows

Swallows, Swifts and House Martins



Swallow

Apr-Oct



Swift

May - Sept



House Martin

Apr-Oct

Swallows

Migrating swallows cover 200 miles a day, mainly during daylight, at speeds of 17-22 miles per hour. Total journey 5,500 miles.



- 50% of adults don't return
- 80% of juveniles don't return

Warblers

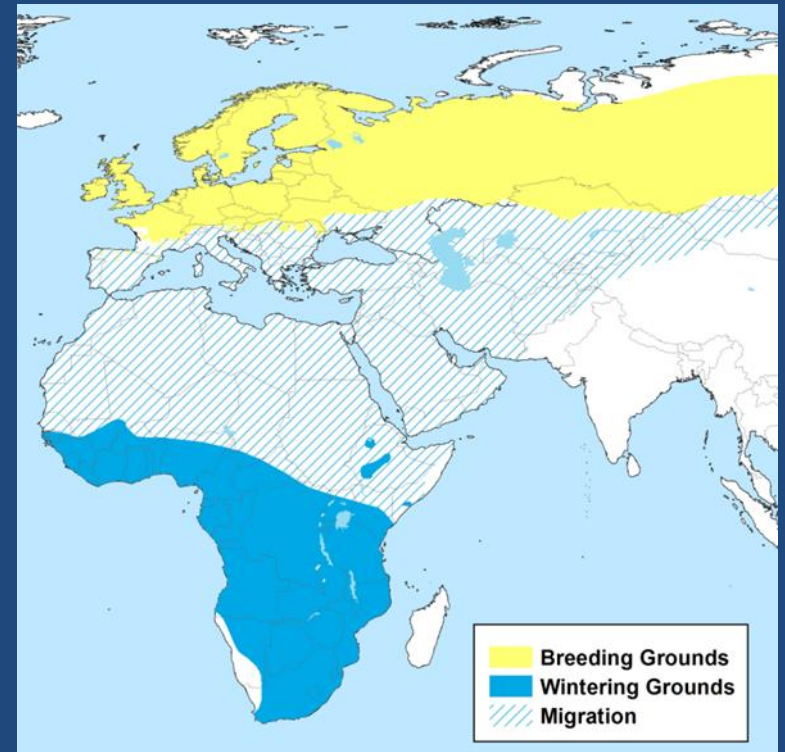
Warblers are insectivorous, and most come here from Africa for Spring and Summer.



Chiffchaff



Willow Warbler



More Warblers



Blackcap



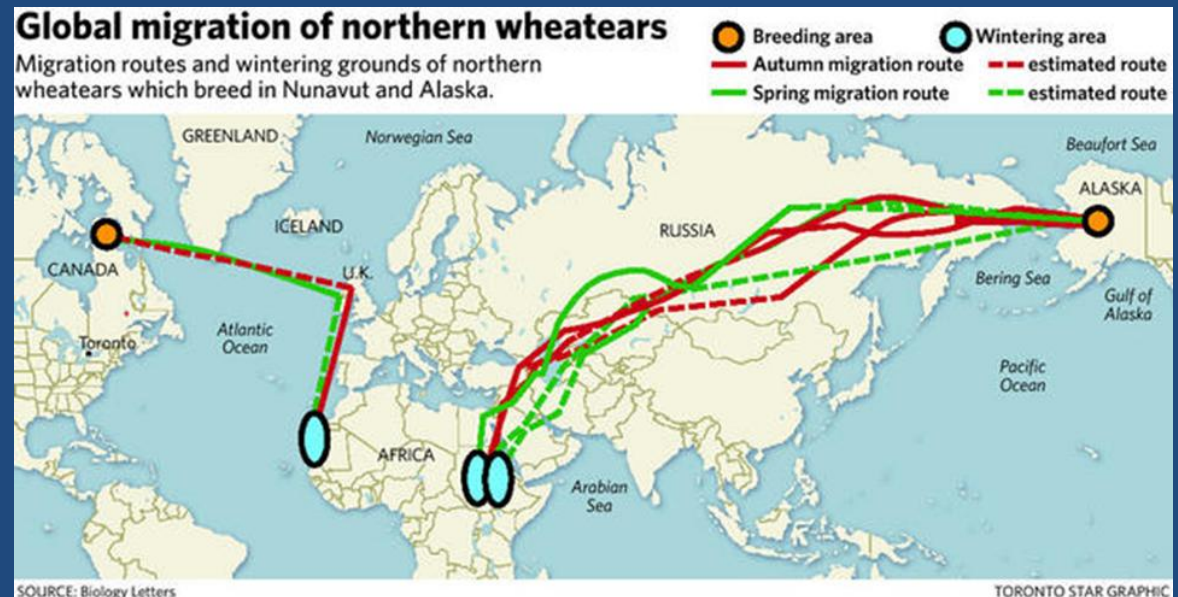
(Lesser) Whitethroat

Wheatears

These handsome birds winter in sub-Saharan Africa and migrate huge distances either NW to Canada or NE to Alaska.



In spring last year we had two dozen in Fairfield, presumably Canada-bound!



Birds that may Nest here

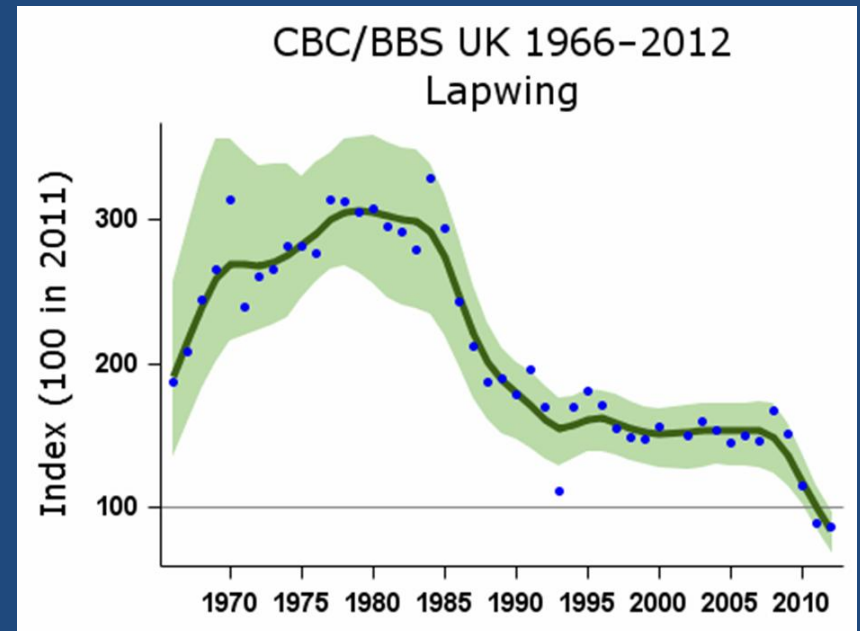
There are several red-listed target birds for Fairfield, that we should look out for!

- Lapwing
- Grey Partridge
- Tree Sparrow
- Starling

Lapwing

Lapwing are ground-nesting birds that breed on wet pastures or farmland. They feed on insects, spiders and earthworms.

Their prime habitat is a mosaic where grass and spring tillage fields are close together.



Lapwing



Lapwing in Arable
Crop (5/6/2014)



Last year lapwings bred and there were two pair of chicks. This is a success story as lapwings have not bred here for many years!

Tree Sparrow



Tree Sparrow



House Sparrow



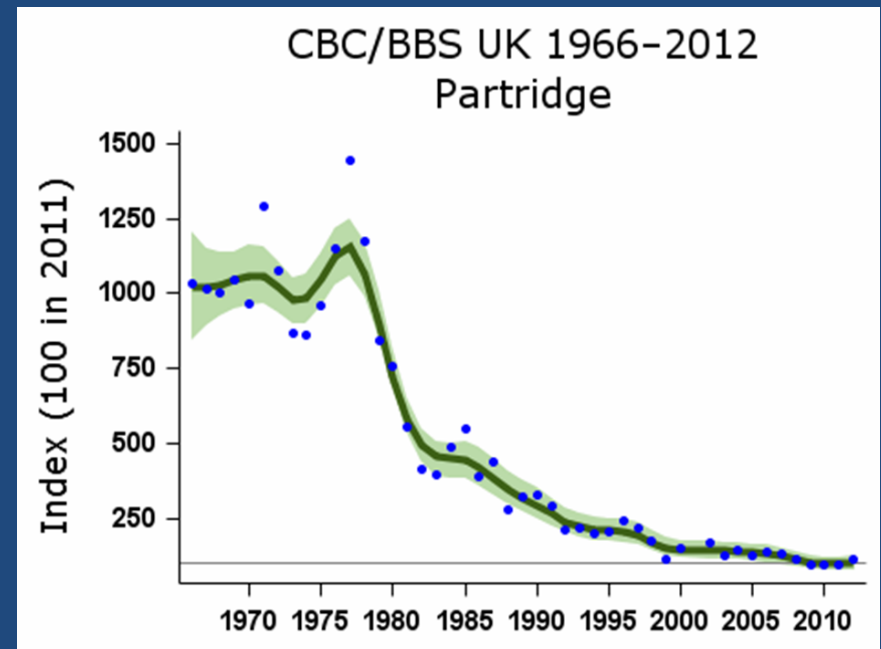
Tree Sparrows have not nested in Fairfield, but a pair were in our garden Oct-Dec.

Grey Partridge

The Grey partridge is a medium-sized, plump gamebird which is found in lowland arable areas. It feeds on seeds, shoots and leaves.



They have declined greatly with agricultural intensification.



Grey Partridge in Fairfield

Last year we had a pair of grey partridge nesting in the west field, but they did not seem to raise chicks.

Last August we released 4 chicks into the arable field.



Other Birds we might See

- Crows
- Starlings
- Sparrows
- Finches
- Buntings
- Dabbling Ducks
- Rails
- Tits
- Woodpeckers
- Birds of Prey

Crows



Jay



Carrion Crow



Magpie



Jackdaw

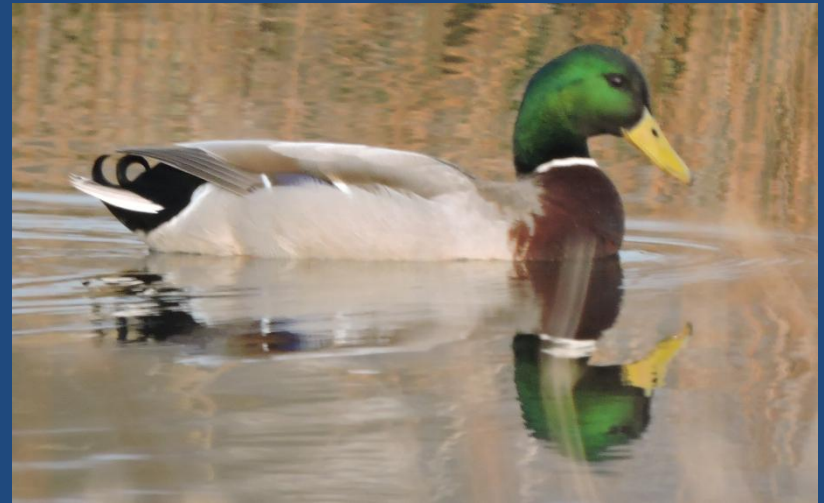
Starling



Slightly smaller than a blackbird and very social bird.

Starling in Orchard

Dabbling Ducks



Mallard (School Pond)



Teal

Rails

See it on
School Pond



Moorhen



Water Rail



See it near Lucy
Brook

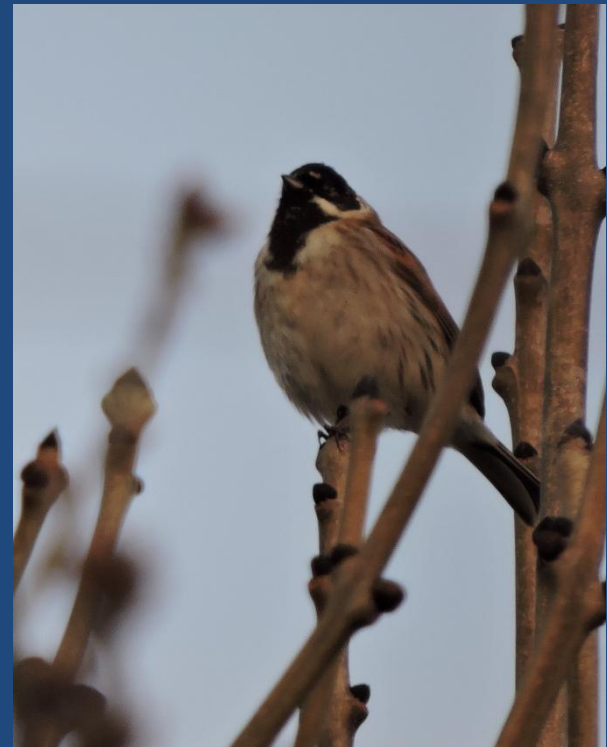


Coot

Reed Bunting

Reed buntings are predominantly farmland and wetland birds. They feed on insects in Summer and seeds the rest of the year.

Male Reed Bunting
in the Orchard
(17/3/2015)



Finches



Bullfinch



Greenfinch



Chaffinch

Goldfinch



If you have not seen these,
buy some binoculars!



Goldfinch feeding on Birch catkins
(15/2/2015)



Tits



Blue Tit



Great Tit



Coal Tit



Long-tailed Tit

Birds of Prey



Buzzard



Kestrel



Male
Sparrowhawk

Great Spotted Woodpecker



You may hear it
drumming!

THE END



We end with a Little Owl that we would like to attract into Pony Wood!









Sparrows



Tree Sparrow (6/11/2014)





Crows - Jay



European Jay in Apple Tree (6/11/2014)

Crows - Jackdaw



These birds live in our chimneys and say 'chack'.

Jackdaws in West Field



Crows - Magpies



Magpie near School Pond