



Friends of the River Crane Environment

Birds of the Lower Crane Corridor

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The following bird list has been compiled from informal records of bird species noted in the immediate vicinity of the Lower Crane Corridor. The list is informal and I would greatly appreciate any information or comments from anyone who has recorded bird species in the area concerned so that the value of the list can be enhanced.

Geographical scope

This list relates to bird records from the Lower Crane Corridor, here on referred to as **the corridor**, and defined to be the stretch of the River Crane and its surroundings from the A314 east of Hounslow Heath to the A310 north of Twickenham centre. This 4-kilometre stretch of the river passes through a variety of habitats that fall into fairly well defined sections, here defined to be:

Crane Park West:	Crane Park east of A314 and west of A316
Crane Park East:	Crane Park east of A316 and west of Meadway
Kneller Gardens:	Parkland east of Meadway and west of Mereway Road
Mereway:	Disused Mereway Allotments east of Mereway Road and west of the railway crossing
Crane ford:	East of railway crossing and west of A310

Sources

Information is based on informal records primarily by myself since July 2001, although several local observers have also contributed historical information and occasional records. Records include those from formal surveys of Crane Park East and Kneller Gardens conducted for the British Trust of Ornithology London Bird Project, and observations by members of the London Wildlife Trust at the Nature Reserve in Crane Park West.

Abundance

Abundance is an **informal estimate** based on the likelihood of an experienced observer recording a particular species on a walk through the area on a typical day in the appropriate season. Abundance is based on the following scale:

Very common:	Almost guaranteed to be recorded
Common:	More likely to be recorded than not recorded
Fairly common:	Likely to be recorded on about half of all typical visits
Uncommon:	Less likely to be recorded than not recorded
Rare:	Very unlikely to be seen: at most a few sightings in a given year

Note that abundance does not directly imply numbers of birds present in the area - just the likelihood of recording each species. Comments on numbers, where appropriate, are made in the following notes.

Bird list

Little Grebe	Uncommon winter visitor to the Crane, with up to four birds observed on quiet backwaters in both Crane Park West and East during the coldest months.
Great Crested Grebe	Rare visitor to the Crane, but common on the nearby Thames.
Cormorant	Uncommon resident in the corridor itself, although fairly common in flight over the corridor, and very common on the Thames.
Grey Heron	Fairly commonly almost anywhere along the length of the corridor, although only one or two birds are likely to present at any given time.
Mute Swan	Generally uncommon resident, with single birds more likely than family parties.
Greylag Goose	Rare, with most records likely to be feral birds.
Canada Goose	Uncommon on the corridor itself, with most records involving birds flying over the corridor from the Thames, where they are very common.
Mandarin Duck	Uncommonly observed on the river in Crane Park West, both singly and in pairs. Presence throughout the year not yet confirmed.
Mallard	Very common resident on the River Crane, although the true wild status of most birds is uncertain due to hybridisation with domestic ducks.
Shoveler	Rare visitor to the Crane, with one record of four birds from about 1990.
Tufted Duck	Rare visitor to the Crane (for example one pair at the Meadway Bridge on 03/06/03), although common on the nearby Thames.
Sparrowhawk	Uncommon resident in woodland areas (particularly Crane Park), although this is an easily overlooked species.
Kestrel	Uncommon resident, with infrequent recent records from Crane Park, both East and West. Also recorded above the golf course to the south of Crane Park, observed in the late 1990's around Craneford, and around Kneller Gardens in summer 2003.
Hobby	Rare summer visitor with isolated recent records above both Craneford (2001) and Kneller Gardens (July 2002, July 2003).
Water Rail	Rare winter visitor to the reedbed in the Nature Reserve in Crane Park West, with several isolated records.
Moorhen	Very common resident on the river and surrounding banks along the full length of the corridor.

Coot	Rare visitor to the Crane, with one record of a single bird just downstream from the Nature Reserve in Spring 2003.
Common Sandpiper	Rare along the length of the Crane, with occasional records of single birds.
Black-headed Gull	Common winter visitor, especially so on playing fields (such as Kneller Gardens) and around the A316, although uncommon at other times of year.
Herring Gull	Fairly common winter visitor in the corridor itself with a few birds often present around playing fields (such as Kneller Gardens), and common in flight overhead. Outside the winter months they become uncommon in the corridor and fairly common overhead.
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Similar to Herring Gull, except generally in fewer numbers.
Feral Pigeon	Very common, but local, resident with small colonies well established at several major bridges over the Crane.
Stock Dove	Rare visitor, with just one record of a single bird present in Crane Park East on consecutive days in May 2002.
Wood Pigeon	Very common resident throughout the corridor. By far the most abundant species during winter surveys of Crane Park East, where over 100 birds are easily observed in this section alone.
Collared Dove	Common resident throughout the corridor.
Tawny Owl	Uncommon breeding resident in the wooded areas of the corridor (especially Crane Park), although obviously under recorded by informal observation.
Swift	Very common summer visitor in the skies above the corridor, arriving in late April.
Kingfisher	Fairly common resident in Crane Park West, although uncommonly seen along the river throughout the corridor.
Rose-ringed Parakeet	Common residents, with several pairs breeding in Crane Park and possibly Kneller Gardens. Very common in flight over the corridor, with particularly large flocks passing over at either end of the day, travelling between feeding grounds and their Thames roosts.
Green Woodpecker	Fairly common resident in small numbers throughout the area, commonly recorded in spring, but more difficult to observe or hear at other times of year (although likely to be present).
Great-spotted Woodpecker	Common resident, with good numbers present throughout the corridor (especially Crane Park and Kneller Gardens).
Skylark	Rare visitor, with one record from Craneford in the late 1990's.
Barn Swallow	Rarely observed in spring and autumn passage over the corridor, with annual records over Craneford.

House Martin	Apparently uncommon summer visitor in the corridor itself (occasional records from Craneford and Crane Park West and East), but locally common in several locations in the immediate surroundings (for example over Twickenham station and Church Street, Twickenham).
Pied Wagtail	Fairly common resident in open areas throughout the corridor, most often observed on grassy areas or in flight overhead.
Grey Wagtail	Uncommon resident in the corridor, although fairly common in nearby Thames locations (including Twickenham riverside). At least one pair normally winter in the vicinity of the Nature Reserve in Crane Park West, and may breed.
Wren	Very common resident throughout the area, particularly in thick scrub close to the banks of the river and in Mereway.
Dunnock	Very common resident throughout the area, with particularly high numbers in Mereway.
Robin	Very common resident, with a notable influx noted during winter surveys of Crane Park East and Kneller Gardens.
Song Thrush	Common resident, particularly in Crane Park, although not present in particularly large numbers.
Redwing	Common winter visitor, with small flocks normally encountered along the corridor, particularly in Crane Park, during the winter months.
Mistle Thrush	Fairly common resident, although only in small numbers, with several territories established in Crane Park and Kneller Gardens.
Blackbird	Very common resident throughout the length of the corridor.
Blackcap	Common summer visitor to the corridor, with good numbers present in Crane Park East surveys. Also observed uncommonly in the corridor throughout the winter, with regular records from both Crane Park East and Kneller Gardens.
Whitethroat	Locally fairly common summer visitor to Craneford and Mereway in small numbers, where there is evidence of breeding. In May 2003 birds were singing in at least three locations close to the river in Crane Park West (including the Nature Reserve) and one was seen in Crane Park East.
Reed Warbler	Rare summer migrant to the reedbed in the Nature Reserve in Crane Park West in the last few years, where has apparently bred successfully.
Willow Warbler	Rare summer migrant, with only a few records from spring passage birds.
Chiffchaff	Generally a common summer visitor, although only locally present in reasonable numbers - for example, only fairly common in Crane Park East, but common in Mereway.
Goldcrest	Common resident throughout the wooded areas in the corridor, although easily overlooked from late spring through to late autumn.

Spotted Flycatcher	Rare visitor, possibly only as a spring passage migrant although status needs confirming - recent records from Craneford (2001) and Crane Park East (April 2003).
Great Tit	Very common resident throughout the corridor.
Coal Tit	Fairly common resident in the corridor, although only present in relatively small numbers. For example, never recorded on formal surveys of Crane Park East or Kneller Gardens, and yet single birds observed daily in a garden adjoining Crane Park East.
Blue Tit	Very common resident and one of the most abundant species throughout the corridor.
Long-tailed Tit	Fairly common resident, although mobile throughout the corridor. Appears to be breeding at both Mereway and Craneford.
Nuthatch	Locally fairly common resident in Crane Park West, but only in very small numbers. Rare at other locations in the corridor - for example one record from Craneford (late 1990's), one bird sighted in Crane Park East on several occasions in July 2003.
Treecreeper	Rare visitor to the corridor - only one record so far from Craneford in the late 1990's, although probably more common than that suggests.
Magpie	Common resident throughout the corridor.
Jay	Fairly common resident, especially in Crane Park, but in relatively small numbers.
Jackdaw	Uncommon resident along the corridor itself, although commonly observed flying over the corridor, especially at either end of the day.
Carrion Crow	Common resident throughout the corridor.
Starling	Common resident in open areas along the corridor, showing a strong preference for playing fields and open grass. Very common in Kneller Gardens during the winter months.
House Sparrow	Common resident, although extremely localised. Uncommon in Crane Park, but fairly common at Meadway and common in Craneford. Small colonies throughout the area, such as at Kneller Gardens and Meadway.
Chaffinch	Fairly common resident in the wooded areas of the corridor, but only present in small numbers.
Goldfinch	Common resident in more open areas of the corridor, but only present in relatively small numbers. Much more visible during the winter months, when quite sizeable flocks can be encountered almost anywhere along the corridor.
Greenfinch	Common resident throughout the corridor, with good numbers present in spring in both Crane Park and Mereway.

Siskin

Locally common winter visitor throughout the corridor, with flocks of up to 50 birds often present in Crane Park in mid-winter, gradually dispersing until early April, when they appear to leave the area.