

BIRDS OF THE BROUGHTON AREA

100 species of birds which may be seen within five miles of Broughton

Garden Birds

Blackbird

Female dark brown

Song Thrush

Sings from the top of a tree in the Spring

Robin

Almost the only species to sing in winter

Wren

Nuthatch

More common in the last ten years as its range is moving north

Chaffinch

Goldfinch

Often up to ten at our bird food

Bullfinch

Quite rare but occasionally seen

Greenfinch

Used to be a regular on our bird table but wiped out by a virus

Siskin

The smallest finch. Very common here, mainly seen in winter

Linnet

Redpoll

A rare visitor. Up to four stay a few days and then move on

Blue Tit

Great Tit

Coal Tit

Long tailed Tit

Often seen in family parties of 6 or 8. They feed quickly and then go

House Sparrow

Numbers declining nationally but quite common again here

Tree Sparrow

Whole crown is purple not grey like House Sparrow

Hedge Sparrow

Known as a Dunnock. Feeds on crumbs dropped from the bird food

Greater Spotted Woodpecker

Drumming noise can be heard for miles in the Spring

Treecreeper

Easily overlooked. Feeds as it climbs. Occasionally on our birdfeeders

Jackdaw

Smaller than a rook. Noisy. Often in flocks of 10 to 20

Starling

Sometimes in enormous flocks known as murmurations



Summer Visitors to the Garden

Pied Wagtail	Some may stay all year round
Grey Wagtail	Usually close to water. Also seen in the hills
Spotted Flycatcher	Mainly a woodland visitor. Numbers seriously declining
Pied Flycatcher	Rare but has nested
Garden Warbler	A rather rushed scratchy song
Willow Warbler	
Sedge Warbler	
Chiff Chaff	Usually the first warbler to arrive in Spring. Distinctive repetitive song
Blackcap	Male has distinctive black cap while the female's is brown
Whitethroat	
Swallow	
House Martin	
Swift	Seen swooping over Broughton. I am not sure where they nest
Collared Dove	Increasingly common
Hawfinch	Very rare but have been seen locally

In the Fields

Pheasant	Exotic males court several females in the spring
Red Legged Partridge	There used to be some Grey Partridges but none seen for years
Rook	Nests in big flocks in beech trees. A big roost near Merlindale
Carrion Crow	Known locally as a Hoodie and some grey ones are seen
Magpie	Spreading south from Edinburgh but I have never seen one here
Lapwing	More of a summer visitor. Nests in the fields and then form flocks
Barn Owl	Mainly nocturnal but sometimes seen in daytime
Tawny Owl	More common than Barn Owl and a very different call
Long-eared Owl	One reported locally a few years ago
Common Gull	Following the plough
Herring Gull	Much larger than the Common Gull
Lesser Black-backed Gull	
Black headed gull	Hundreds used to nest in the marsh beside the road at Muirburn
Woodpigeon	
Yellowhammer	Much rarer now than they used to be
Green Woodpecker	Very rare as we are at the northern limit of their range

Winter Visitors to the Fields

Fieldfare

Arrive in October in flocks. Note their “chack” call

Redwing

Much smaller and the red under their wing can be hard to see

Waxwing

Seen in Peebles last year. I hope to see one here sometime!

Pink footed Geese

Large flocks sometimes in fields along the road to Biggar

Grey Lag Geese

Mostly seen in huge skeins passing overhead

On the Hills

Golden Eagle

Sometimes seen here but more being introduced to the Borders

Peregrine

Very uncommon

Kestrel

Frequently hovers. Fewer than there used to be

Sparrowhawk

Also seen in gardens chasing easy prey on bird feeders

Merlin

The smallest of the falcons

Goshawk

Hen Harrier

More in the woods than the hills

Hobby

A rare summer visitor

Buzzard

The commonest of our raptors with distinctive “mewing” cry

Red Kite

Seen for the first time this year on several occasions.

Raven

The largest crow with a very deep croak

Curlew

Comes to nest in the Spring but winters on the coast

Snipe

Red Grouse

Black Grouse

Nationally rare but quite a few nearby. Once seen from an A701 car

Meadow Pipit

The favourite nest for the Cuckoos to use

Summer Visitors to the Hills

Cuckoo

Rarer than it used to be but still a welcome sound of Spring

Stock Dove

Scarce but some pairs seen

Wheatear

Distinctive white rump with black inverted T

Stonechat

Whinchat

Perches on the very top of small bushes

Ring Ouzel

The size of a blackbird but surprisingly a migrant

Golden Plover

Redstart

Mainly on the edge of woods

Dotterel

Passing through in April to their highland haunts

On the River

Osprey	More further downstream but may feed near here
Mute Swan	Most years there is a family on the river at Dawyck
Mallard	Usually a pair but sometimes a big flock
Goosander	The largest duck with dramatic white plumage> Nests here
Reb Breasted Merganser	A much smaller “sawbill” – the fisherman’s enemy!
Goldeneye	Occasional visitors
Tufted Duck	More usual on hill lochs
Teal	Often in huge flocks of 100 or more
Grey Heron	Also seen feeding in fields
Cormorant	Another feeder on scarce young salmon and trout
Kingfisher	Rare but believed to nest locally
Dipper	Also seen up the burns with its distinctive white chest
Moorhen	
Little Grebe	Usually present on a loch at Stobo
Reed Bunting	

Summer Visitors to the River

Sand Martin	The first of the migrants to arrive – usually late March
Oystercatcher	Nests near the river but sometimes in other unusual places
Common Sandpiper	Seen darting across the river with rapid wing beats
Ringed Plover	

In the Woods

Woodcock	A few breed here but mainly a winter visitor from the north
Brambling	Chaffinch-like winter visitor, often seen under beech trees
Jay	Often heard before it is seen. Unusual flight
Goldcrest	The smallest of our birds. Usually in the tops of fir trees
Crossbill	One appeared once in our garden but maybe more in the woods

This list includes birds that I have seen in nearly forty years living here or know to exist locally. They are not arranged in a proper scientific order but I hope more helpful to show where they might be found. If anyone would like to add to this list I would be delighted to hear from them.

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