

## Phoenix Park Ground Nesting Bird Survey 2018

### Methods

- A review was completed of the OPW commissioned report 'The Birds of the Phoenix Park, County Dublin: Results of a Repeat Breeding Bird Survey' which we completed for you in 2015.  
<https://www.birdwatchireland.ie/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=PDNnAh9R18M%3D&tabid=1484>
- Based on the results of this work, the main focus for the survey focused on Skylark (the main ground-nesting species), as there were good numbers recorded during this survey work. As you will see detailed in the report, Skylark numbers were most prevalent in sections SW9 (Fifteen Acres) see Figure 1. Based on the results of this work the following areas were surveyed for ground nesting birds:
  - Fifteen Acres
  - Papal Cross
  - Polo Ground
  - Farmleigh
  - Ashtown Gate
  - Chapelizod Gate
- The park was separated into survey sections according to habitats. See Map 1 for Survey Sections.
- The survey focused on recording breeding ground-nesting birds, with a particular emphasis on Skylark and Meadow Pipit.
- Vantage point counts were completed at various points of each survey section, from points which provided good view of each section (See Maps 2, 3 & 4). Where necessary at larger sites, the fieldworker walk through meadow areas to help detect birds.
- The presence of all ground nest bird species, seen and heard, were recorded on the maps (See Maps 2, 3 & 4)
- The following species codes were used:
  - S: Skylark
  - PH: Pheasant
  - MP: Meadow Pipit.
- For each species recorded the highest level of breeding evidence for each species was recorded. A full list of breeding evidence codes used can be found here:  
<https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/u36/downloads/breedingcodes.pdf>

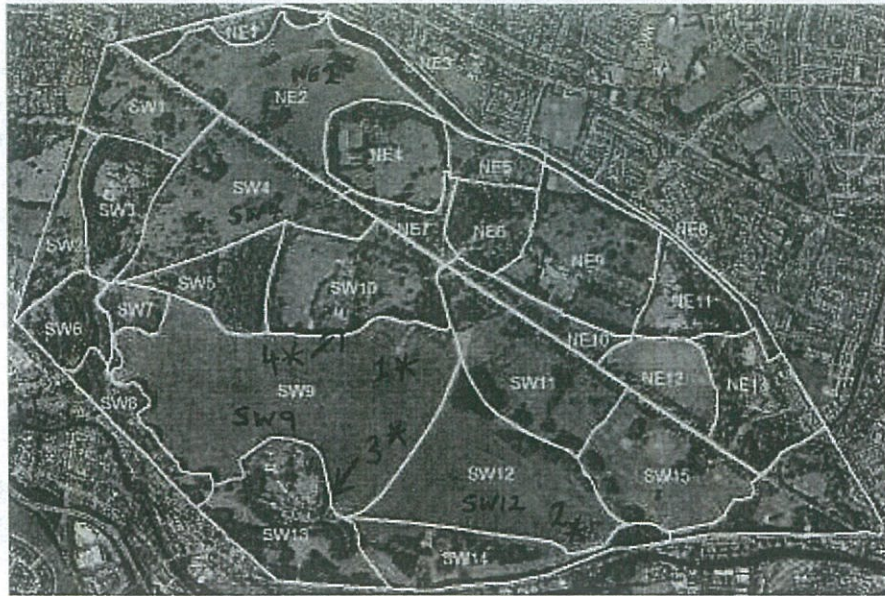


Figure 1. Bird survey sections.

All sections of the park were visited two times, once during the early breeding season (1<sup>st</sup> May to 20<sup>th</sup> May) and a second visit during the late breeding season (21<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> June). This timing is designed to maximize recording of residents and early migrants, which tend to be more easily detected on the first visit, and later migrants, which are more abundant in the second visit. Most survey work was carried out between 06:00 and 09:00 hours to coincide with maximum bird activity, but to avoid concentrated song activity at dawn.

#### Field methods

The field methods closely follow a method set out by Chamberlain *et al.* (2007). During each visit, observers walked along a survey route which took them to within 50m of every point in all sections. Playing fields (or similar areas of short grass) were surveyed from a greater distance (within 100m of every point). A field-map of each section was provided, with a grid, 50m x 50m overlain (e.g. Fig. 2). All species seen and heard were recorded directly onto the maps, and bird totals were later summarised. Birds flying over and obviously not interacting with the park were recorded separately. Observers also searched for owl pellets under suitable trees.

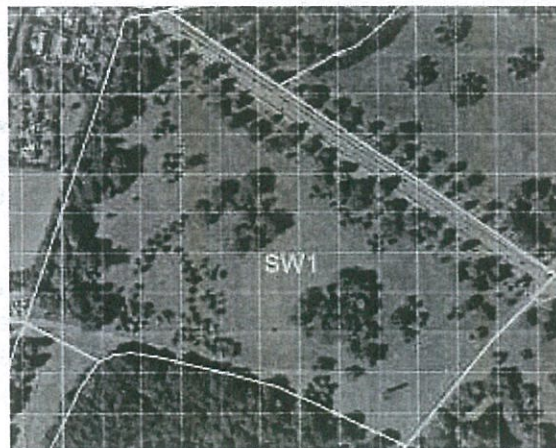


Figure 2. An example of a survey section (SW1) with the 50m grid overlain.

SW4 & NE2



SW12 & SW9

Day 2 14.07.18



# SW12 & SW9

