

Birds On And Around The Pond



Waddon ponds are fed by springs which provide clean and clear good quality water which support a range of different birds, ducks and geese. They find their food in the water and the grassland. They nest and shelter in the reeds and trees.

A **Little Grebe** looks like a duckling but is in fact a fully grown bird. The little grebe or 'Dabchick' is a diving bird, feeding on small fish and aquatic insects. It readily dives when disturbed, surfacing unseen some distance away.



Little Grebe

Moorhen and **Coot** share a similar body shape and colour but Coots are black with a white beak and shield above the beak, whereas Moorhens have a yellow and red beak and remarkable green legs.



Moorhen



Coot

Mallards have long been hunted for the table, and almost all domestic ducks come from this species.

Kingfisher are small unmistakable bright blue and orange birds which hunt for fish over still or slow moving



Kingfisher

Canada geese, are common birds at Waddon Ponds, with a black head and neck and a large white throat patch. They form large social groups which graze in the park, as their natural food consists of grass, seeds, roots and leaves. After the nesting season geese undergo an annual "moult", a 4-5 week flightless period, between mid June and late July, when they shed and re-grow their outer wing feathers.

Swans are seen from time to time and usually appear in pairs. They are monogamous, meaning they pair for life. They eat plants and tubers which they find in

the water. Unlike other geese and ducks the male swan assists with nest building, sits on the eggs and shares looking after the young swans called cygnets.

Grey Heron are un-mistakable: tall, with long legs, a long beak and grey, black and white feathering. They often stand with their neck stretched out, looking for food – like small fish or frogs.

Mallard ducks are the most easily identifiable - the male with its distinctive green head and black tail curl, the female with its brown speckled feathers.

water. They nest in holes along river banks and fly fast and low over the water. Males and females look very similar. The birds have very sharp eyes to spot their prey – fish – from branches overhanging the water.

Black-headed gull, is not a 'sea' gull as they are most often found inland. Black-headed gulls are sociable, quarrelsome, noisy birds, usually seen in small groups or flocks, often gathering into larger groups where there is plenty of food.



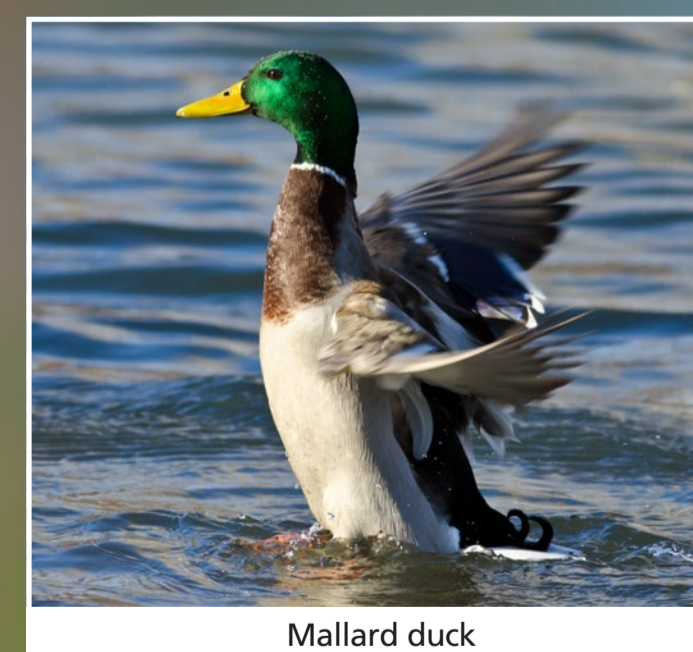
Canada goose



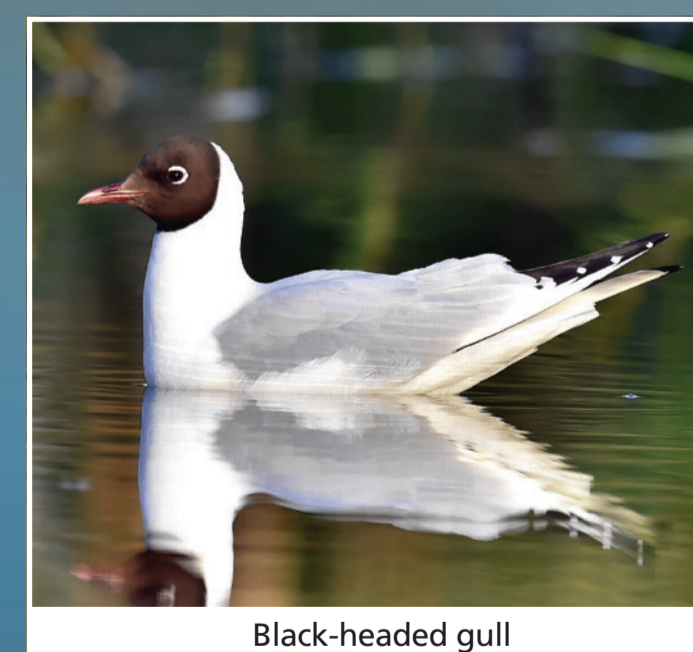
Swan



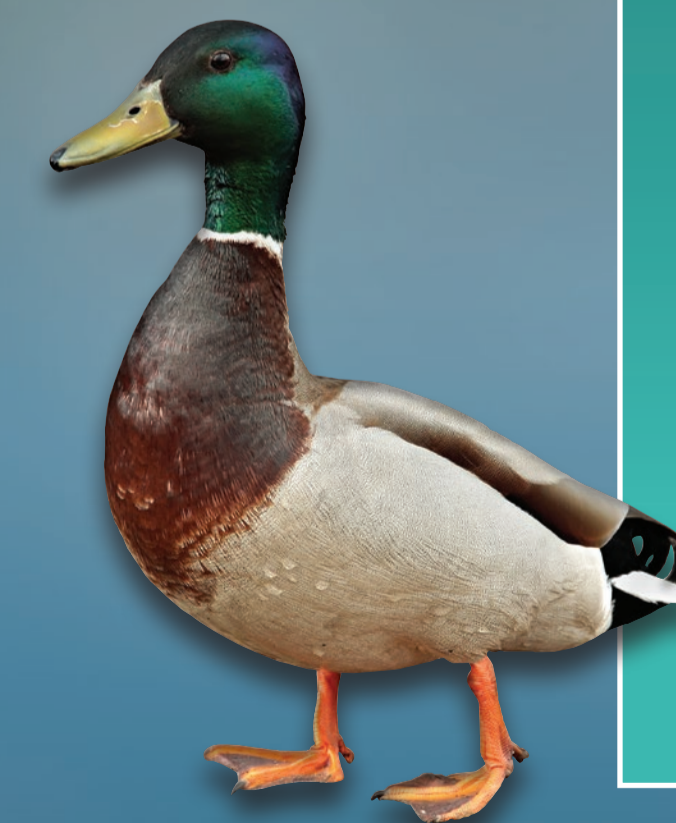
Heron



Mallard duck



Black-headed gull



Mallard duck

FEEDING THE DUCKS

All the ducks and geese find plenty of food in the water and surrounding park land.

Going to the park to feed the ducks has a long tradition and is – for many people - a way to connect with nature, however bread is not healthy for ducks and geese, it makes them unwell and disturbs natural behaviour patterns. To support local ducks and geese please feed them with small amounts of grains and special floating bird food, sold in pet shops. This will keep all the birds healthy.

If they are not hungry please don't leave excess food for 'later' as this will attract rats.

For more information about the River Wandle and how to get involved visit:

Wandle Valley Regional Park
www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk

Croydon Council:
www.croydon.gov.uk