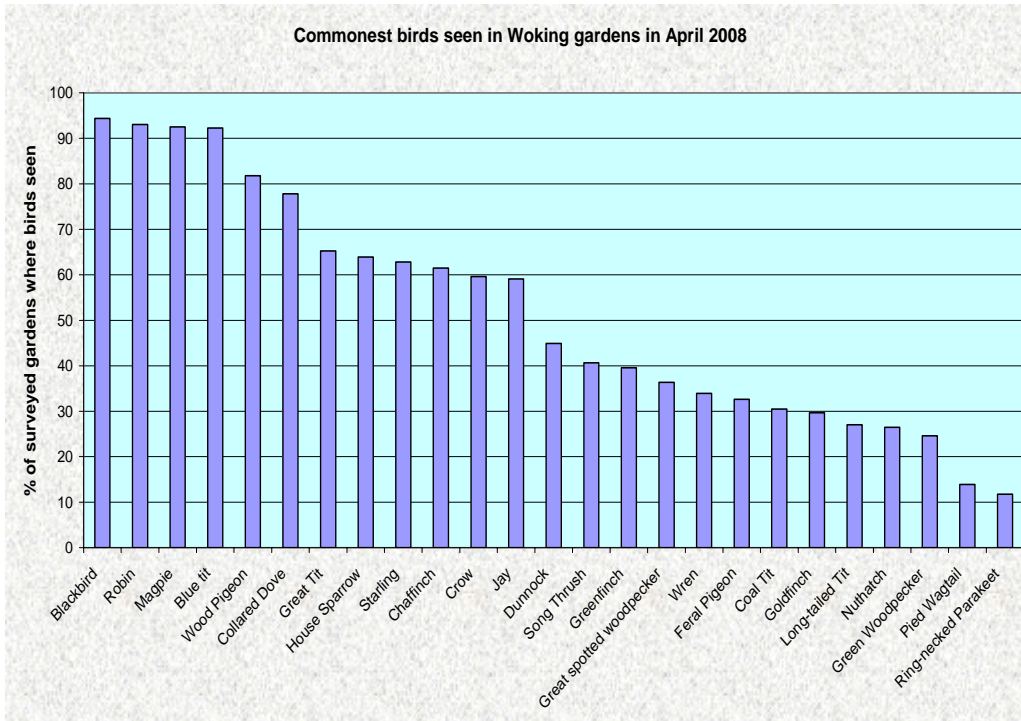


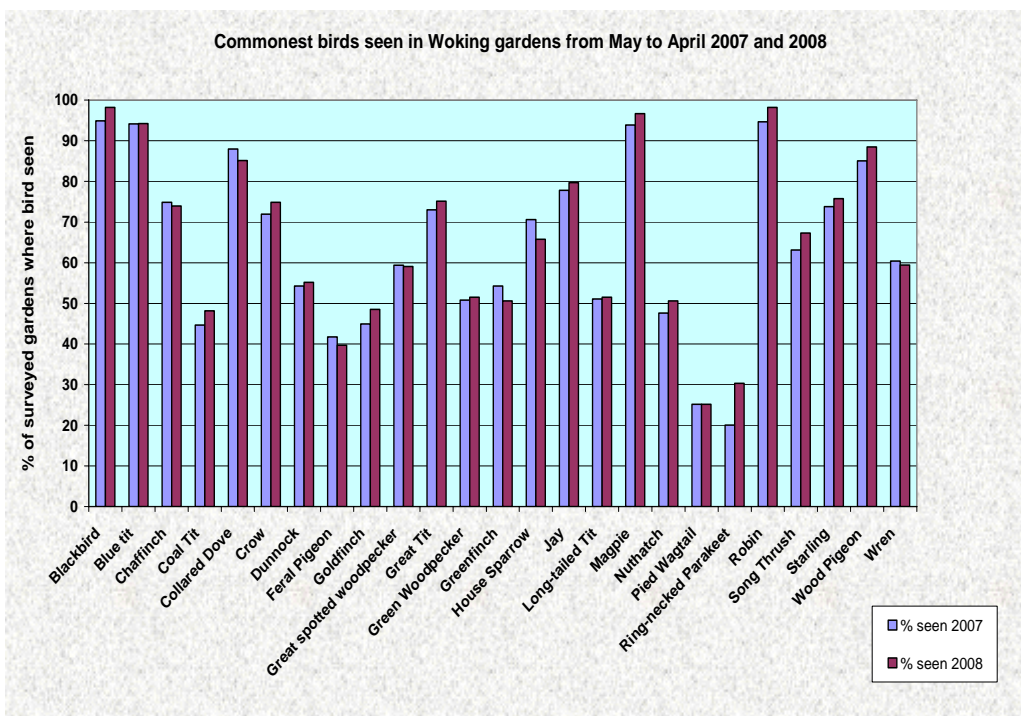
## Woking Garden Wildlife Watch - Results 2008

Woking Local Agenda 21 have now processed the second Gardening For Life (GFL) annual Woking Garden Wildlife Watch survey and once again we were delighted with the interest generated, with 330 people returning the survey forms, the majority (72%) of whom were new participants. Thank you to everyone who recorded the birds and animals over April and the previous year, especially the residents that had filled in both years surveys. There were some surprising results - the percentages of birds seen were



very similar as shown in the first graph, though we expected quite different patterns as the weather in April 2007 was exceptionally warm and sunny while April 2008 was very cold and wet. However, it would appear that birds, like people, have to go on with their lives in a similar location regardless of the weather!

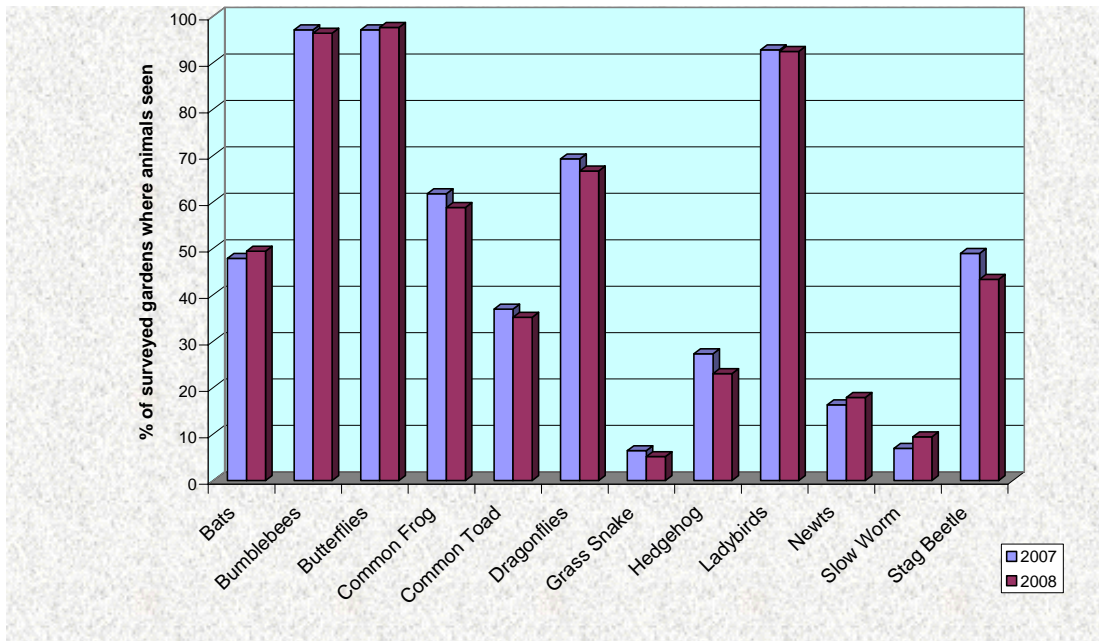
The comparison for 2007 and 2008 is shown in the second graph and again shows close similarities. In line with national trends, surveyors show decreases in house sparrows and increases in goldfinches. More residents are putting out bird food, including in the nesting season. This increase is good for birds in general, but perhaps we ought to encourage more specialised nest boxes for house sparrows?



The selected species and insects section of the survey showed only slight changes in percentages indicating the consistency of the results in spite of having many new surveyors. We hope the larger reductions of hedgehogs and stag beetles will not prove to be the future trend. One very definite trend

is the increase in comments about the numbers of harlequin ladybirds seen with them very much in excess of the 2- and 7-spot native varieties. (See [www.harlequin-survey.org](http://www.harlequin-survey.org) for national changes)

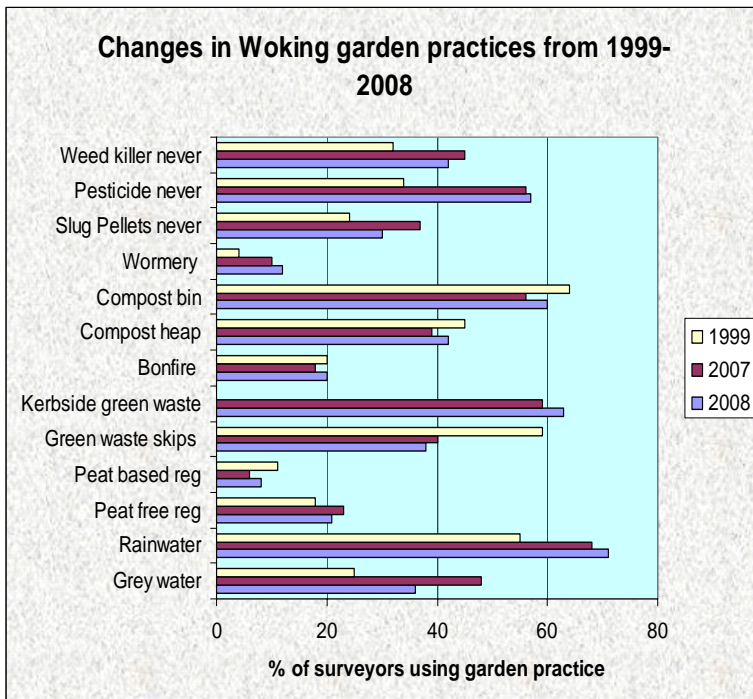
Selected animals seen in Woking Gardens from May to April in 2007 and 2008



Analysis of the results of Woking Borough on a ward by ward basis showed the numbers of surveyors in each ward varied considerably so we cannot make meaningful comparisons between all the ward areas.

To compare the surveyor's comments about garden practices, again the weather had to be taken into account. More people installed water butts after the dry summer of 2006 so more rain-water is being collected but the volume of rain we suffered last summer meant that collecting grey-water was less necessary. It is pleasing to note that pesticide use is still much less than in 1999 and more composting

and kerbside green waste use is reported. Sadly there has been a slight reversion to more use of peat based products which threatens precious moorland habitats. Poor labelling of products can lead to confusion. Also weed killer and slug pellets have not continued to decline in use. Poisoned slugs and snails are toxic to thrushes and hedgehogs which can help to control these pests. Try using organic methods or collecting slugs and snails after rain and kill them gently by putting them in a plastic bag in the freezer.



We hope you will enjoy watching out for garden wildlife throughout the year and and join in next year's survey.