

Friends of The Emm Brook (FOTEB) : Use of Nest Boxes, 2017 (Year 11)

The nest boxes along two sections of the Emm ('Riverside Walk' and 'Emmbrook Walk') were taken down, checked and cleaned in January 2018, and the results with comments are shown in the table.

Again most nest boxes (74 per cent, the same as last year) were used, mainly by tit species. One of the four tree creeper boxes had been occupied, probably by the intended species. Both owl boxes, one in each section of the river had been used, (as were both boxes in Holt Copse) almost certainly by tawny owls. Nuthatches had nested in one box along Emmbrook Walk.

The open-fronted nest box under a bridge in Riverside Walk had been used for the first time since 2014. Grey wagtails (but few other birds) like to nest in such places and is considered to be the most likely occupant.

Five tits' nests contained skeletons and/or more than one egg which is typical of most years, although fewer than last year. One nest contained a fully fledged coal tit chick, the first time this species has knowingly used a nest box put up by FOTEB.

Nest Box Type	Used	Not used	Comments
Small hole boxes	15	2	5 boxes with one or more skeletons and/or more than one egg. One fully fledged coal tit chick in a box along Emmbrook Walk. Along Emmbrook Walk one 'small hole box with spout' used by nuthatches, as was this design in Holt Copse in 2016 and 2017.
Open fronted	1	1	The used box installed under a bridge in Emmbrook Walk. Most probably used by grey wagtails because of its location.
Tree-creeper	1	3	Contents of the used box very wet; positive confirmation that it was used by tree creepers not possible, but likely. One box re-located and another re-positioned on the same tree.
Wren	1	1	The unused box found upside down; returned right way up.
Owl	2	0	Both boxes contained large amounts of the detritus usually found in these boxes. The front of the box along Emmbrook Walk cracked, so 'running repairs' made.
Total	20	7	74 per cent of the boxes used.

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FOTEB

April 2018