

Birds of the
ROSCI0120 Nature Reserve
Tâmpa & Dealul Melcilor
Braşov, Romania
Record of Sightings
Winter 2024/25

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1. Introduction

This report presents bird sightings recorded by one observer in the ROSCI0120 nature reserve during the winter season of 2024/25, from November to February. The reserve comprises Tâmpa (955 m) and Dealul Melcilor (712 m), two natural topographic features jutting out from the extensive forest habitat of the Postăvaru Massif into the city of Braşov, Romania.

For a description of the habitat in the area under study and for a glossary of bird names in English, Latin, Romanian and German, the reader is referred to [last year's report](#).



The view eastwards in November from the meadow above Treptele lui Gabony (Gabony's Stair) on Tâmpa. The neighbourhood of Răcădău is visible directly below. The Piatra Mare massif is seen under cloud at the back right.

2. Data Collection & Processing

Bird sightings were recorded by a single observer during the period from November 2024 to February 2025. The records were filed as checklists on <https://ebird.org>. Binoculars (8x42) were utilised to aid visual identification. To avoid any possible misidentification, the observer has preferred to record birds which were seen rather than merely heard. The submitted counts for each species are rough (conservative) estimates as to the numbers seen, tending on the low side to avoid over-counting (when a bird was noticed to occur inside a flock, as tends to be the case with goldfinch, bullfinch, etc., audible cues were sometimes used to attempt to estimate the number of individuals present – again these tend to be low estimates reflecting the number of individuals which could be directly sensed).



Looking down towards Şaua Tâmpei (Tâmpa Saddle) from the relatively open slopes to the south-west of the summit on New Year's Day (2025). With an abundance of young pine (Pinus sylvestris), this is a good area during winter to observe conifer-preferring species such as coal tit, crested tit and even crossbill, which occasionally descend from the spruce forests of the upper mountain reaches during a cold spell. The summit of Mt. Postăvaru is visible back right.

To analyse and present the data, the checklists were downloaded from [eBird](#) as CSV files and loaded into Pandas dataframes in a Python Jupyter notebook. As the urban area is not the subject of this study, sightings of birds observed over the city from inside the reserve were removed from the dataset. To achieve a balanced dataset, the few records corresponding to birds which were merely heard but not seen on a given day were also removed. The curated dataframes were processed to produce the tables and charts presented in this report.

The tables below provide a summary including the starting time, date and duration of the birdwatching excursion documented by each checklist.

Checklist	Date	Location	Start	Duration
S201651977	07/Nov/2024	Dealul Melcilor	10:00	3:30
S201741289	08/Nov/2024	Dealul Melcilor	06:40	4:30
S202025122	10/Nov/2024	Tâmpa	13:30	3:30
S202237541	12/Nov/2024	Tâmpa	09:15	2:00
S202481278	13/Nov/2024	Tâmpa	15:30	1:30
S203648296	26/Nov/2024	Dealul Melcilor	07:50	3:00
S203771138	27/Nov/2024	Tâmpa	13:45	3:00
S203847556	28/Nov/2024	Dealul Melcilor	12:10	2:00
S204284278	02/Dec/2024	Dealul Melcilor	12:50	2:30
S204434632	04/Dec/2024	Dealul Melcilor	10:40	2:00
S204527081	05/Dec/2024	Tâmpa	14:30	2:30
S205085303	11/Dec/2024	Tâmpa	12:30	4:00
S205480536	15/Dec/2024	Dealul Melcilor	14:30	1:15
S206307510	23/Dec/2024	Tâmpa	13:40	3:00
S206608972	26/Dec/2024	Tâmpa	10:30	3:30
S207442895	01/Jan/2025	Tâmpa	12:30	3:00
S207655883	02/Jan/2025	Tâmpa	11:45	3:00
S208712290	10/Jan/2025	Dealul Melcilor	14:30	1:30
S209464854	16/Jan/2025	Dealul Melcilor	07:45	2:30
S209587546	17/Jan/2025	Dealul Melcilor	10:30	3:00
S210262822	22/Jan/2025	Dealul Melcilor	14:50	1:40
S210900271	27/Jan/2025	Tâmpa	15:45	1:15
S211802285	03/Feb/2025	Dealul Melcilor	10:50	2:00
S211839991	03/Feb/2025	Tâmpa	15:15	2:00
S212761161	10/Feb/2025	Dealul Melcilor	13:00	2:00
S212887638	11/Feb/2025	Tâmpa	14:15	2:30
S214397009	19/Feb/2025	Tâmpa	13:30	2:30
S214780120	22/Feb/2025	Dealul Melcilor	09:15	2:15

Location	# Checklists	Start (Mean)	Duration (Mean)
Dealul Melcilor	14	11:05	2:24
Tâmpa	14	13:17	2:39

Note: The checklists may be accessed by replacing the final part of the URL with the checklist ID as follows: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S201651977>

3. List of Sightings & Summary Statistics

The table below presents bird species which were identified by this observer in each respective area during the interval under study. Entries corresponding to birds which are incidental to the area under study, being rather birds of the urban habitat, have been coloured **grey**.

Common Name	Tâmpa	Dealul Melcilor
Common Buzzard		✓
Sparrowhawk		✓
Feral Pigeon	✓	
Grey-headed Woodpecker		✓
Great Spotted Woodpecker	✓	✓
Middle Spotted Woodpecker		✓
White-backed Woodpecker	✓	
Black Redstart		✓
Mistle Thrush		✓
Blackbird	✓	✓
Goldcrest	✓	✓
Wren	✓	✓
Great Tit	✓	✓
Coal Tit	✓	✓
Blue Tit	✓	✓
Crested Tit	✓	
Marsh Tit	✓	✓
Long-tailed Tit	✓	✓
Nuthatch	✓	✓
Treecreeper	✓	✓
Jay	✓	✓
Raven	✓	✓
Chaffinch	✓	✓
Brambling	✓	✓
Goldfinch	✓	✓
Siskin		✓
Bullfinch	✓	✓
Hawfinch		✓
Crossbill	✓	

Location	# Species
Dealul Melcilor	25
Tâmpa	21
Total	29

The bar charts in the sections below convey an impression as to how regularly and in what numbers a given bird species has been observed in each respective area.

The first bar chart in each section (fig. 3.1.1, 3.2.1) depicts the number of field trips resulting in the sighting of a species, expressed as a percentage of the total of 14 field trips (a score of 100% means that the species was observed during every field trip, while a score of 50% means that the species was observed 7/14 times). The second bar chart (fig. 3.1.2, 3.2.2) depicts the cumulative number of sightings of each species over all field trips.

Neither graph necessarily conveys an accurate impression as to the actual numbers with which each species occurs inside the reserve. Instead, the graphs illustrate the frequency with which birds of a given species tend to be *seen*. For example, the wren is likely to be very numerous on Tâmpa but as it tends to hide itself amid piles of branches and in thickets, it has likely been substantially under-reported.



A wren photographed on Tâmpa in November.

Dealul Melcilor

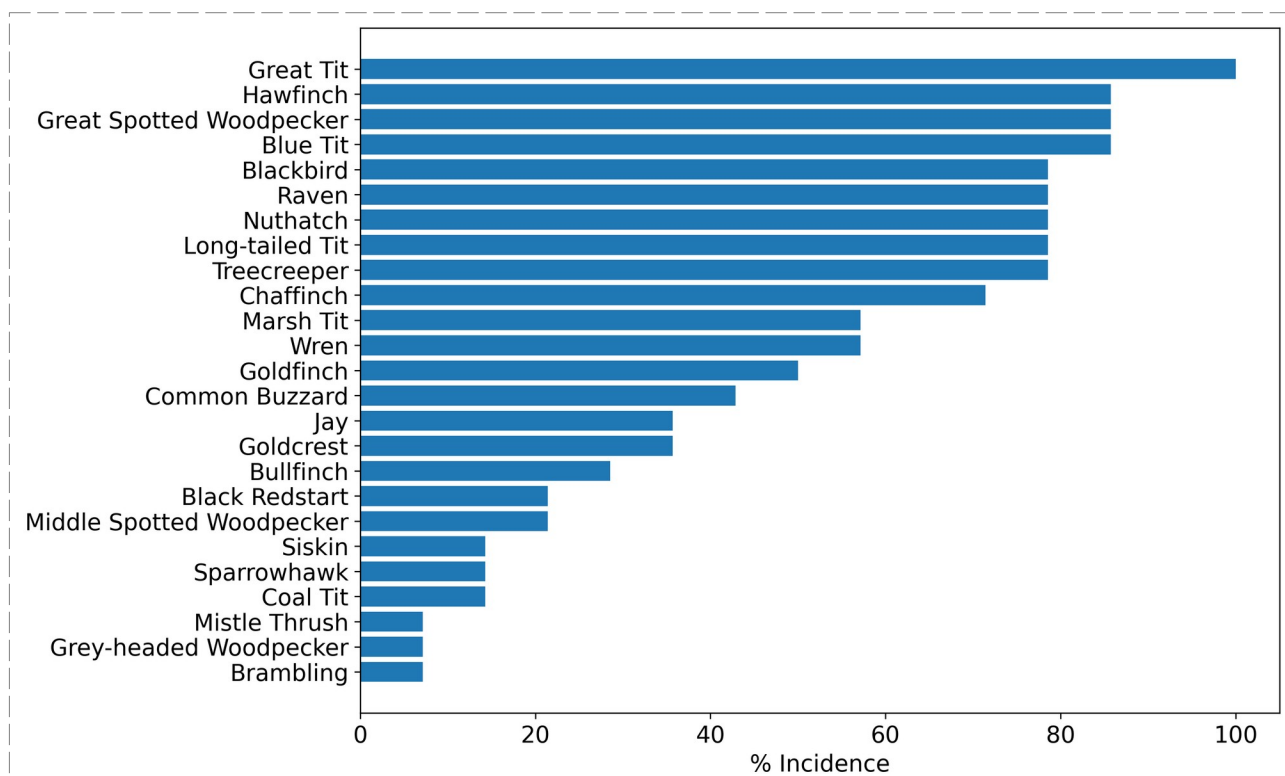


Fig. 3.1.1

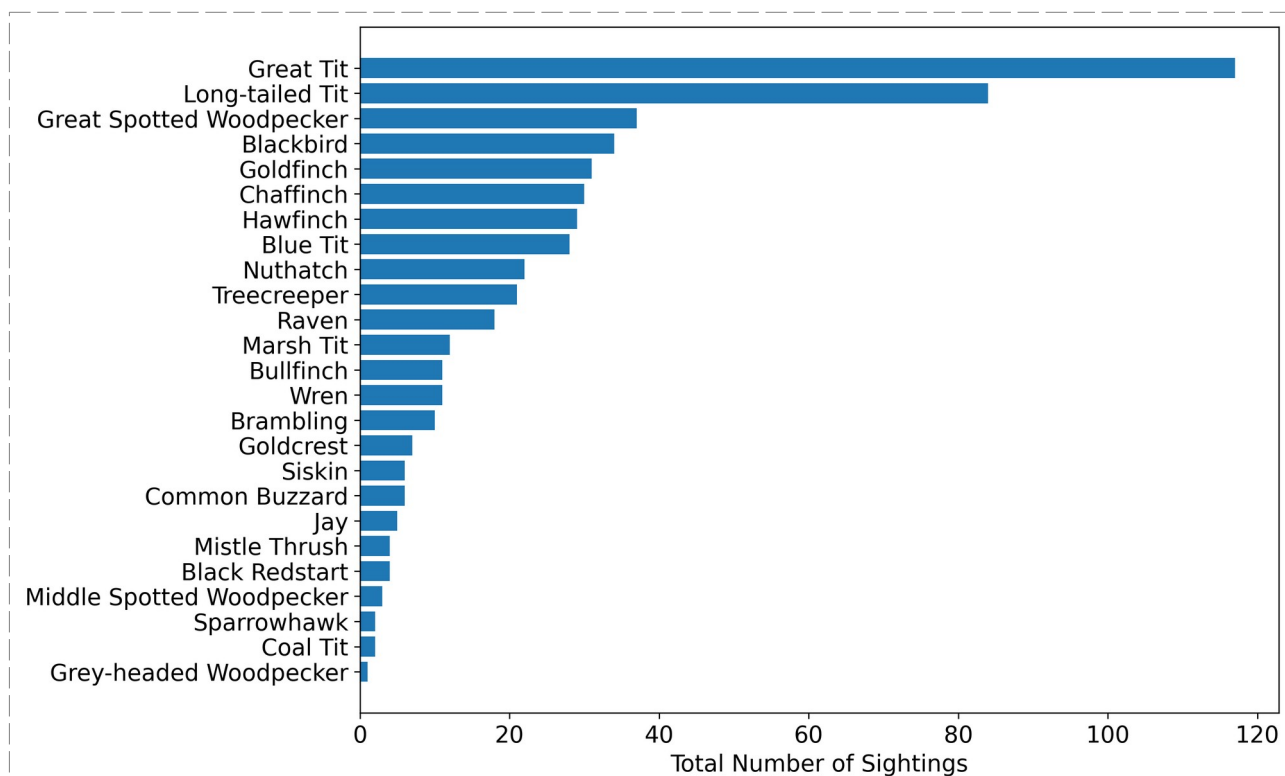
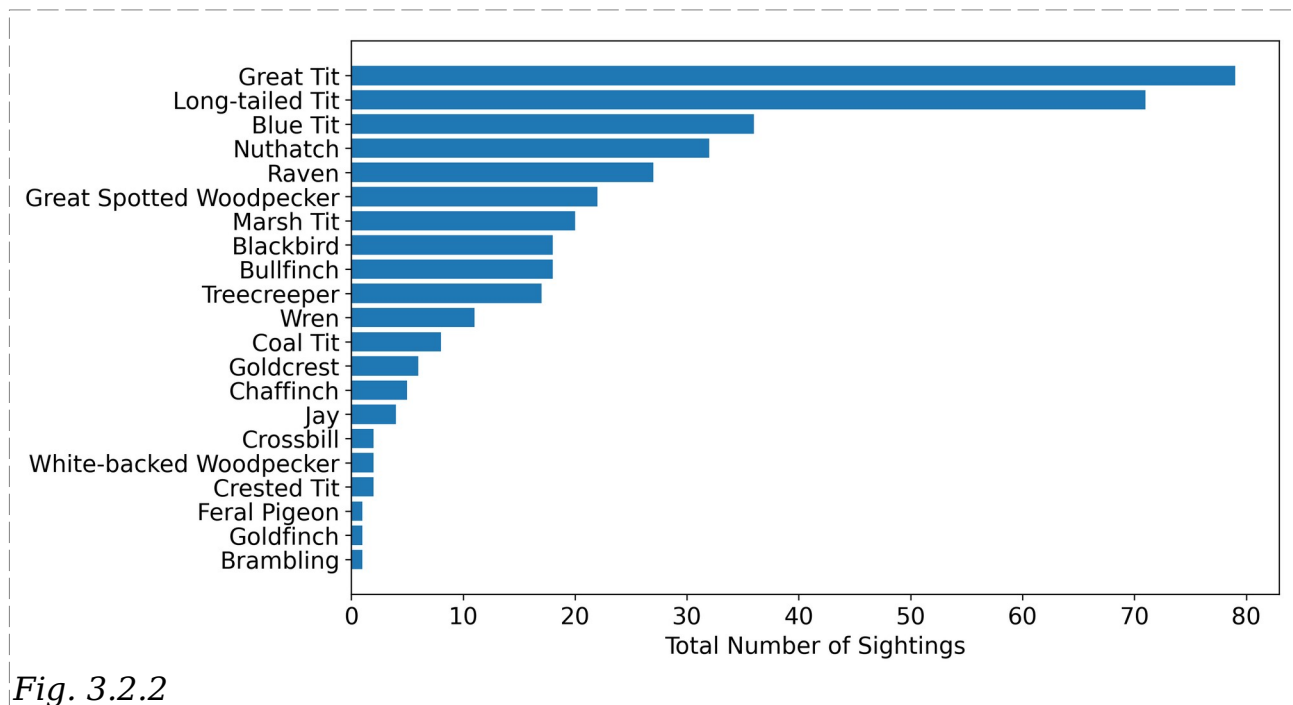
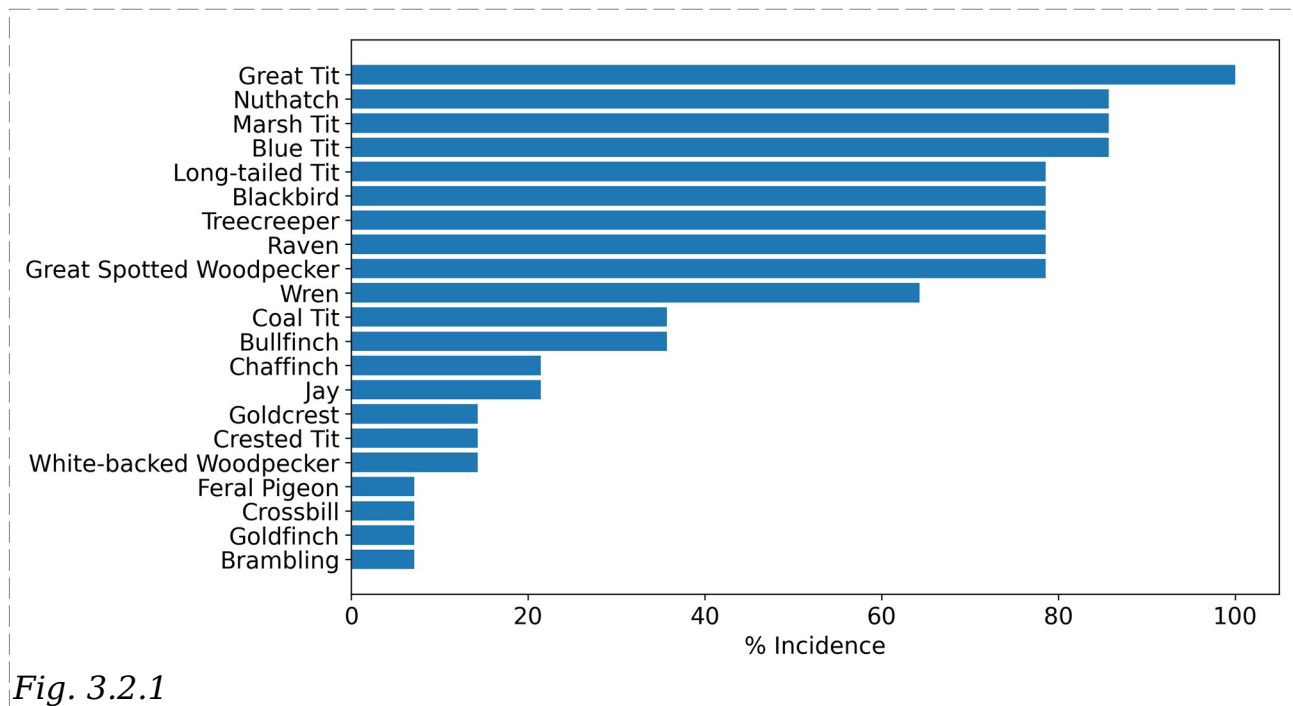


Fig. 3.1.2

Tâmpa



4. Discussion

Interestingly, during the interval under study, 25 bird species were reported on Dealul Melcilor, while 21 species were reported on Tâmpa. Aside from possibly black redstart, there is no particular reason to believe that any of the species which were observed only on Dealul Melcilor do not occur on Tâmpa as well. It must be said nonetheless that something about Dealul Melcilor seems to be especially appealing to birds. In fact, Dealul Melcilor is the best site located within easy reach of Braşov known to this observer where, under the right conditions, sightings of such a variety of woodland birds can be obtained with relative ease. The hill packs multiple habitats into a small and compact area which is easy to survey; mixed woodland containing lowland and upland typical tree species, extensive cliffs at the old quarry, open areas of grass and scrub and even a small area of wetland. In addition to common and widespread European woodland bird species, the area also appeals to hawfinch and goldfinch, and in spite of the smallness of the territory and its proximity to the urban area, a common buzzard or two have made themselves at home there, and probably a sparrowhawk as well. Goldcrest and bullfinch spend the winter, while mistle thrush were observed as they made a short stop on passage while migrating from higher to lower ground. Red squirrel were seen in abundance.

With a scarcity of surface water, Tâmpa is drier than Dealul Melcilor. Due to its larger area and the nature of the terrain, Tâmpa is less easy to survey comprehensively. With a mixture of lowland and upland typical tree species, including substantial numbers of conifer (e.g. *Pinus sylvestris*, *Larix decidua*) and an abundance of scrub, the area has much to offer common European woodland bird species, as well as conifer-preferring species such as goldcrest, coal tit, crested tit and occasionally even crossbill. Undisturbed by substantial forestry operations, Tâmpa's forest habitat provides a winter refuge for white-backed woodpecker. Red squirrel and roe deer were also seen.



A young roe deer, photographed on Tâmpa in January.

5. Omissions

Information concerning the sightings of some owls, game birds and birds of prey may be redacted from these [reports](#) until such time as the trafficking and hunting of birds ceases to be a problem (if applicable).

6. Bibliography

The following resources have proved useful over time to aid in the identification of birds, trees and wild flowers in the field.

“Collin’s Bird Guide” by Lars Svensson, Killian Mullarney and Dan Zetterström (2021).

“Romania – A Bird Watching and Wildlife Guide” by James Roberts (2000).

“Dendrologie” by Florin Clinovschi (2005).

“Flora Mică Ilustrată a Republicii Populare Romîne” by I. Prodan and A.L. Buia (1961).

<https://www.meetsun.ro/lorile-earpatalor-flori-pe-eulori> - Claudia Gican (2008-).

The topographic data cited in S.1 ‘Introduction’ were obtained from the following sources.

“Harta de Drumeție: Postăvaru, Piatra Mare, Baiului (Colecția Munții Noștri)” - Schubert & Franke (2020).

<https://en.mapy.cz/> - Seznam.cz a.s., et al. (2024).