

WHISBY COACH TRIP

We had a good start to the day with our first significant tick in the B & M car park at Lichfield, the peregrine falcon, which was showing well on the cathedral spire. We arrived at Whisby in good time at 9.15 and quickly discovered a Mediterranean gull amongst the black headed gulls nesting on an island in the lake near the visitor centre.



There were 3 singing nightingales (worryingly 8 fewer than last year). However the bird on Coot Lake was a star performer (see photo). Not only was it singing well but it was easy to see hopping around inside a bush only a few feet from us, so we all got a good view of it. There was a garganey which most of us managed to see. There was a profusion of warblers all over the reserve; chiffchaffs, willow warblers, blackcaps, garden warblers, whitethroats, lesser whitethroats and reed warblers. Swifts, swallows and sand martins were plentiful. Whisby is a large reserve with a number of well-made trails around a

number of lakes, woodland and open areas. My group managed to walk nearly seven miles during the day and we did not even visit the northern section. There is an excellent visitor centre and café which offers a wide selection of food and provided a welcome break after our exertions walking around the reserve.

We finished the day having seen 60 species.

OCTOBER COACH TRIP TO RSPB DEE ESTUARY -BURTON MERE

Sunday 15th October

We are going to visit the RSPB Dee Estuary reserve on the Wirral, about 10 miles from Chester.

Birds include a variety of waders through the winter and migration seasons including significant numbers of black-tailed godwit, spotted redshank, greenshank and ruff. Many scarce migrant birds have been seen in previous years, including little stints, green, curlew and wood sandpipers. Winter also brings many ducks and geese including pintail, shoveller, teal, wigeon, and pink-footed geese. Birds of prey that can be seen over the marsh from the reserve include short-eared owls, hen harrier, marsh harrier, merlin, kestrel and peregrine falcon. There are large numbers of little egrets and in October 2016 they were joined by a number of Great White Egrets and Cattle Egrets.

There is a small visitor centre with toilets where you can get a hot or cold drink and confectionery. There are two main hides: the reception building and Marsh Covert hide, a smaller hide: the Inner Marsh Farm hide – and several viewpoints. There are five nature trails through woodland, reedbeds, pools and grazed pasture land. The Hillfort trail provides views over the Dee estuary and back across the Wetlands.

Please reserve your place with Heather tonight.

Cost for this trip will be £17 per head and the coach will leave the B&M car park at 7.30 am. It is approximately 100 miles to Burton Mere and will take about 2 ½ hours to get there.

There is free admission to Burton Mere for RSPB members, otherwise £4 for adults and £3 for concessions.

The RSPB is the country's largest nature conservation charity, inspiring everyone to give nature a home.

The RSPB is a registered charity: England and Wales no. 207076, Scotland no. SC037654.

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NEXT MEETING: 12th SEPTEMBER

Lions, Livingstone and The Great Rift Valley

Ben Waddams visited us in March 2015 and gave us a most enjoyable and entertaining talk on the wildlife of Shropshire where he lives. As well as being a wildlife photographer, he is also a wildlife artist, writer and film maker – an all-round naturalist! Tonight he is going to take us a bit further afield.

Join Ben on a trek up the spine of the African Continent from Victoria Falls to the summit of Kilimanjaro in the footsteps of the great Victorian explorers who have inspired him to travel many times to this part of the world in search of its people and wildlife.



“DON'T PUT YOUR FAGS HERE”

When I visited Chasewater Heaths railway station yesterday, there was a notice pinned to the cigarette tray by the entrance door asking customers not to use it as there are nesting blue-tits inside. I watched for a couple of minutes and both parents flew in and out and seemed unconcerned by people coming and going a few feet away.

2 NIGHTS FOR NIGHTJARS

We will meet as in previous years at the Whitehouse car park (postcode WS12 4PR) on Cannock Chase at 9pm. The two dates, in case the weather is unsuitable on the first date, are Tuesday 6th and 13th June. I will be there on both nights and hopefully we will see and hear these enigmatic visitors. There is also a very good chance of seeing Woodcock performing their roding flight and perhaps long eared owls. Put some warm clothes on as it can get quite chilly when the sun goes down and a torch may be useful to get back to the car park.

SUTTON COLDFIELD RSPB GROUP COACH TRIPS –

Sutton group are running coach trips to RSPB Lakenheath Fen on 21st May and RSPB Bempton Cliffs on 11th June. For further information and to book please contact Tony Green on 01827 750633 or tonygreen777@hotmail.co.uk.

LOCAL BIRDWATCHING WALKS AUTUMN/WINTER

The walks will last approximately 2 hours. Paths can be muddy so please bring appropriate footwear.

Either meet at the venue at 10.00am or contact me by phone (0121 353 6886) or email (dennis.muxworthy@btinternet.com) and we may be able to share transport from Lichfield B & M car park.

The programme of walks is as follows:

Monday 18th September

The Wolseley Centre, Rugeley

Meet at the reserve car park

Friday 20th October

Doxey Marshes, Stafford

Meet at the car park at the end of Wootton Drive ST16 1JR

Tuesday 28th November

Belvide reservoir (managed by the West Midland Bird Club)

Meet at the reserve car park. The WMBC request a donation of £3 from non-club members (collected on the day).

Thursday 14th December

RSPB Middleton Lakes

Meet at the reserve car park

SEE YOU ALL IN SEPTEMBER AND HAVE A GREAT SUMMER