

## WINTER WILDLIFE HIGHLIGHT

Nadia Archer, who came to talk to us last month about Sherwood Forest, has sent me the following item about a wildlife highlight on our doorstep. This made me think that we often go long distances to see wildlife and overlook things that are happening nearby.



*One of the best wildlife spectacles at this time of year is watching a heronry. I visited Middleton Lakes last week and happily enjoyed watching these beautiful and a bit awkward looking birds flying to and fro from the treetops. They make large nest platforms out of branches in treetops. Middleton Lakes has an impressive heronry which boasted 33 nests last year; it is very impressive seeing these huge grey birds scattered throughout the crown of a few giant trees. I watched as birds flew off and reappeared carefully carrying branches to add to their already*

*impressive nests, making them as secure as possible; after all over the coming weeks, they will need to support a growing family of large and sometimes clumsy chicks. Herons lay their eggs early on in the season and they will probably be on eggs in the next couple of weeks. Last year the birds were sitting on eggs during the 'beast from the east'. In addition to the grey herons, the roost has also been attracting up to 80 little egrets and 9 great white egrets. Quite the wildlife spectacle, and close to the carpark and easy to spot without optical equipment, making it a brilliant nature spectacle for all visitors.*

*Nadia Archer*

## COACH TRIP TO RSPB YNYS-HIR

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May**

It will be five years since our last visit to Ynys-hir so we have decided to go back in May.

There are a mixture of habitats to be explored at Ynys-hir. Stunning Welsh oak woodland which in spring has breeding pied flycatcher, redstart, wood warbler and lesser spotted woodpecker as well as the early spring flowers such as bluebells. The estuary saltmarsh and lowland wet grasslands support breeding lapwing and redshank. Other areas to explore include freshwater pools, reedbeds and peat bog. Birds to be seen here include grasshopper warblers and water rail.

There are three waymarked trails, visiting the saltmarsh and estuary, the oak woodland and wetland. There are five bird hides. There is a small visitor centre where hot beverages and light refreshments such as cakes and flapjacks are available.

Therefore please reserve your place tonight.

Cost for this trip will be £17 per head.

Free admission to Ynys-hir for RSPB members, otherwise £6 for adults.

RSPB England is part of the RSPB, the UK'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.

**Dennis 0121 353 6886**

[www.rspb.org.uk/groups/lichfield](http://www.rspb.org.uk/groups/lichfield)



**RSPB Lichfield Local Group**

[dennis.muxworthy@btinternet.com](mailto:dennis.muxworthy@btinternet.com)

# LOCAL BIRDWATCHING WALK: FRIDAY 15<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY

## Branston Water Park

We will be meeting at the main car park next Friday at 10am for an approximate 2 hour visit. Please come along if you can and share your birdwatching skills with us.

If anyone requires a lift from Lichfield please contact me either by phone on 0121 353 6886 or email (dennis.muxworthy@btinternet.com).

## NEXT MEETING: 12<sup>th</sup> MARCH

### Inspired by Birds Part 2 – Peter Holden MBE

What is it about birds that has inspired humans in food, fashion, art and music? Birds have inspired Roman mosaics and medieval wood carvings, illuminated manuscripts and the music of composers such as Handel and Sibelius. We not only learn more about music and art, we also learn something about the ways birds were viewed by past generations in this follow up to Peter's first well-received talk last year.

Peter is a renowned ornithologist, conservationist and author of more than a dozen books. He also devised the Big Garden Birdwatch and has contributed to various BBC TV programmes.

## SHOW THE LOVE CAMPAIGN – CLIMATE CHANGE

The RSPB is one of over 130 members of The Climate Coalition and sister organisations, Stop Climate Chaos Scotland and Stop Climate Chaos Cymru. Together they are the UK's largest group of people dedicated to climate action.

Climate change is already affecting much of the wildlife we love. Warmer seas are causing some seabirds to struggle to find food, and unseasonably wet weather has seen the nests of some wetland birds washed away, devastating populations. Meanwhile birds traditionally found in warmer climates, such as egrets, are becoming more common in the UK.

The RSPB is asking members to support this campaign. You can get more information on:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/campaigning/climate-change-effects-on-nature-and-wildlife/show-the-love/>

**3<sup>rd</sup> STAFFORDSHIRE BIRDERS' CONFERENCE** – This event facilitated by Geoff Sales, the RSPB North Staffs Local Group Leader, is taking place on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March at Oulton Village Hall, Kibblestone Road, Oulton near Stone. It starts at 10 am and there are a series of talks on various birding topics. If you are interested there are some leaflets at the back of the room with more information.

**SUTTON COLDFIELD RSPB GROUP COACH TRIPS** – Sutton group is running a coach trip to RSPB Old Moor in South Yorkshire on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> February. For further information and to book please contact Tony Green on 01827 750633 or [tonygreen777@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tonygreen777@hotmail.co.uk)