

RSPB BRANCHES OUT INTO SHERWOOD FOREST

I received news last week from the RSPB about a new reserve which is being created in Sherwood Forest which is not too far from Lichfield.

The RSPB is leading a consortium which, subject to final negotiations, is going to develop and manage a Visitor Centre and National Nature Reserve at Sherwood Forest, with a target opening date in late 2017. The site covers an area of over 400 hectares of heathland and woodland and is one of the biggest blocks of inland heath in the Midlands.

Another new reserve in the East Midlands near Newark on Trent is Langford Lowfields.

The RSPB is working in partnership with Lafarge Tarmac to restore a sand and gravel quarry on the River Trent into the biggest reedbed in the East Midlands. The habitats are developing rapidly, with over 40 hectares of reedbed now planted and a three hectare mature woodland.

Highlights can include bitterns, short-eared and barn owls, and starling murmurations in the winter. In summer, you could see hobbies, cuckoos, 10 species of warbler and an abundance of sand martins, as well as 18 species of butterflies.

Langford Lowfields is still a working quarry, but reserve trails at the north of the site are open for public access.

COACH TRIP TO MARTIN MERE and MARSHSIDE

Sunday 18th October

We still have a few places left for our coach trip to Martin Mere and Marshside on Sunday. The pink-footed geese have already arrived from Iceland and the first influx of Whooper swans arrived on 7th October. There should be lots of wildfowl and waders.

Cost for this trip is £15 per head. Group admission price to Martin Mere for non WWT members is £9.43 (concessions £6.92).

The coach will pick us up at 7.30 at the B & M car park as usual.

BIRDWATCHING HOLIDAYS

I have received brochures and leaflets for birdwatching holidays in 2016 from two of our sponsors, Speyside Wildlife and Focus Optics, which are available at the back of the room tonight.

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 LOCAL BIRDWATCHING WALK- FRIDAY 6th NOVEMBER

Belvide reservoir (managed by the West Midland Bird Club)

For those of you who have not been here before it is well worth a visit as it is one of the best reserves in the West Midlands with several hides overlooking the reservoir. It is home to a wide variety of waterfowl, gulls and woodland birds. I have obtained a permit for us to visit the reserve and the WMBC requests a donation of £3 from non-club members (collected on the day).

Go to junction 12 of the M6 on the A5 from Cannock. Continue west along the A5 and after approximately 3 miles, turn left onto Horsebrook Lane signposted Brewood, Codsall and Homestead Caravan Park, about 200 yards before reaching the Bell Inn. Take the second right onto Shutt Green Lane (half mile) signposted Homestead Caravan Park. After passing the caravan park, the car park is on the right after about 200 yards. A code is required to open the gate to the car park so I will get there at 9.30 to open the gate. Postcode is ST19 9LX.

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.

NEXT MEETING: 10th NOVEMBER

It's a funny way to make a living

We welcome back Michael Leach who has visited us several times over the last 10 years.

He is a full time wildlife photographer and author and has travelled to all 7 continents and worked with many of the world's most charismatic animals - polar bears in the Arctic, gorillas in central Africa, lemurs in Madagascar, sperm whales in the mid-Atlantic, monkeys in the Amazon, penguins in the Antarctic and elephants in Kenya.

He will explain the basics of his art in this revealing, humorous introduction to the realities of professional wildlife filming, and how to coax animals into the right spot and convince them that no-one is watching. He uncovers cunning, underhand tricks-of-the-trade that produce amazing photographs. Be prepared to have some illusions shattered!

DON'T FORGET

To sort out your favourite wildlife photographs from the last 12 months to display at the December meeting. Please make sure the subject matter is wildlife or landscape based and mounted on card so they can be presented on our display boards. Please note this year that we would like photographs to be no larger than 8" x 12" (A4 size) to give everyone a fairer chance of winning when we are selecting our favourite photo.

SUTTON COLDFIELD RSPB GROUP NOVEMBER COACH TRIP

Sutton group are running a coach trip to RSPB Rye Meads, Hertfordshire on 15 November. For further information and to book please contact Tony Green on 01827 750633 or tonygreen777@hotmail.co.uk