

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2018

Our new 2018 programme is available tonight so if you have not yet picked one up, please get one from the table at the back of the room. If you know someone who may be interested in coming to our group meetings or events, please take extra copies.

In January, I will need to start contacting speakers for our 2019 meetings as they often get booked by other groups and organisations over a year in advance and can be difficult to contact early in the year as many of them are engaged to lead tours abroad. If there are any subjects you would like covered and which would be of interest to all, or any speakers you can recommend, please let me know.

NEXT MEETING: 9th JANUARY

Inspired by Birds – Peter Holden MBE

Humans have been inspired by birds since the dawn of time: sometimes as food, sometimes as fashion and sometimes the subjects of fine art or music. In this talk Peter will travel back and look at how men and women viewed birds, and consider some of the objects, images and other works of art and science they created. The talk will include film from the RSPB archives, recordings from the BBC and the very best 'nature writing' from the RSPB library...as well as some available from Amazon!

Peter was on the RSPB staff for more than 40 years. Initially he ran the RSPB's junior membership, during which time he devised the Big Garden Birdwatch. Later he headed The RSPB's volunteer programme and then People Engagement which was responsible for developing activities such as 'Aren't Birds Brilliant' and 'Date with Nature' which connected large numbers of people with local wildlife. For many years he advised Blue Peter and often appeared in their garden! In 1994–5 he joined Bill Oddie in a BBC 1 series called Bird in the Nest and he has contributed to Springwatch. Peter has co-authored more than a dozen books, including the RSPB Handbook of British Birds and, most recently, Birds: A Hidden World. Peter was awarded an MBE for services to Nature Conservation in 2009.

FACEBOOK GROUP

It has been suggested we should use Facebook to promote our group activities with a wider audience that is different to those of us already attending our meetings. A number of other RSPB local groups already use Facebook to do this.

We hope to set up a Facebook group early in the New Year and I will encourage you to join the group and post contributions and photographs. The more it is used by all of us, the more successful it will be and also help us to attract more people to join our group. We would welcome the support of any of you who already use Facebook.

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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LOCAL BIRDWATCHING WALK: THURSDAY 14th DECEMBER

RSPB Middleton Lakes

Our next visit is on Thursday to Middleton Lakes.

We will be meeting at the Reserve car park 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 see me this evening or contact me either by phone on 0121 353 6886 or email (dennis.muxworthy@btinternet.com).

LOCAL BIRDWATCHING WALKS WINTER/SPRING 2018

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:

Thursday 25th January

Beacon Park/Pipe Green

Meet at Bunker's Hill car park, off Lower Sandford Street, Lichfield.

Friday 16th February

Croxall Lakes

Meet at the reserve car park.

Monday 12th March

Kingsbury Water Park, Bodymoor Heath

Meet at Broomey Croft car park. £3 per car. Post code is B76 0EE (This is not the main entrance)

Tuesday 24st April

Brandon Marsh

This is the headquarters of the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, near Coventry. This reserve contains large areas of pools created by gravel extraction. It consists of reedbeds, willow carr, grassland and woodland. There are seven bird hides throughout the reserve. Membership is free for Wildlife Trust members (you need to take your membership cards) or £2.50 for adults (£1.50 concessions).

I suggest we plan to have a 3 hour visit rather than the usual 2 hours as it is a large reserve and a bit further than normal to travel to.

Thursday 3rd May

RSPB Coombes Valley

Meet at reserve car park which is off the A523 Ashbourne to Leek road, three miles east of Leek. Just before Bradnop, turn left up the minor road (and across a railway line) to Apesford (signposted to RSPB Coombes Valley) - the reserve is on the left after a mile. Postcode is ST13 7EU.

The main part of the reserve is in the bottom of a valley reached by following a path down a fairly steep hill, which it is necessary to climb back up afterwards. There is a good chance of seeing pied flycatchers and redstarts as well as various warblers.

BIG GARDEN BIRDWATCH 2018 - The 2018 big garden birdwatch takes place on the weekend of 27 – 29 January. The RSPB is keen to spread the word and get as many people as possible, particularly those who have not done so before, to participate. Further details can be found at www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch.