



LICHFIELD RSPB
FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

a million voices for nature

www.rspb.org.uk/groups/lichfield/

REX TRELFA 1930-2012

Most of us will remember Rex as the quietly spoken gentleman always on the door at RSPB meetings, usually addressing us as “madam” or “young sir” whatever our age. Rex always said he enjoyed being treasurer because he loved handling other people’s money as he had none of his own!

He had an extensive knowledge of wildlife, accompanying us on many of our “Get to Know Your Birds Walks” when both he and Dorothy put their lifelong experience to good use, passing on bird identification tips to the general public. He was also involved in a birding group with U3A where his depth of knowledge and mild manner earned him many friends.

At his funeral we were met at the church door by the evocative strains of a variety of RAF marches as a reminder of Rex’s time in the service and tributes were read by his sister and grandchildren. After the internment at Christchurch, there were refreshments at Mabel’s Tea Room, Curborough where we were treated to a digital display of Rex and family in their younger days. As a young man Rex was a keen racing cyclist and there were various pictures of him in his 1950’s riding gear eating up the miles on Midland roads while shots of family gatherings and holidays revealed Rex’s thorough enjoyment of these occasions.

At the family’s request, donations in memory of Rex were made to our local RSPB Group and a few days ago his elder son Jon handed me cheques and cash to the total of £450. The group committee is considering how best to use this considerable donation and members will of course be informed of any decision.

Rex Trelfa, a gentleman and a gentle man.

Bob

Every Little Helps.....

We’d like to thank Tesco Lichfield for providing several prizes for our raffle. We are working with Laura, their Community Champion, to promote our group and the wider work of the RSPB and we hope to have an in-store event in the spring.

Proceeds from our raffle go to RSPB to support conservation, the more donations we receive the more we can pass on. Do you know a local business who may offer a prize?

Why not pluck up courage and ask for a little support!

Benefit the RSPB and save yourself ££s, too!

When you book a cottages4you or Hoseasons holiday during 2012 you can save 5% on the cost and earn a donation of up to 8% for RSPB.

There are over 10,000 quality graded cottages in the UK, villas and gites in Europe and lodges, holiday parks and boats to choose from.

To book, visit www.rspb-leisure.co.uk, call 0845 2680 0939(cottages4you) and 0844 847 1130 (Hoseasons) and quote RSPB for your discount.

In the past 10 years £36,000 has been raised this way.

**LOOK LOCAL...A really interesting new website...well worth checking;
www.pipegreentrust.org**

TRIP TO OLD MOOR RSPB RESERVE

This trip was memorable for two main reasons - a luxury coach with matching crimson curtains and head rests and extremely strong winds. The latter so brawny that we were threatened with being moved off the M1 over the exposed Catcliffe link by Sheffield, though in the end a lower speed limit saved us that inconvenience.

On arrival at Old Moor, set in the coal measures of South Yorkshire, we were welcomed by one of the volunteer wardens - anxious glances were exchanged as she merrily advised us not to hang around beneath their nearby eco turbine in case the howling wind blew the blades off and decapitated someone! Fortunately the appearance of some smart Bullfinches and Tree Sparrows in the hedge opposite distracted us and we disembarked for a closer look. The turbine was indeed screaming and twisting like a dog trying to slip its lead so everyone scurried past sharpish into the visitor centre.

Old Moor is noted for its excellent visitor centre and restaurant which are in converted stone farm buildings. In fact the restaurant was so good more of us went straight there rather than to the nearest hide! There was the added attraction of views onto the bird feeding station which was almost as busy as the coffee bar. During the day Great -spotted Woodpecker, Willow Tit, and large parties of Long-tailed Tits were seen among many other species. A male Sparrowhawk took advantage of the feed in and helped himself to an unfortunate Greenfinch.

The reserve was fashioned from a series of subsidence pools which were the result of extensive coal mining in the past. It forms part of a number of linked nature reserves in the district. Although not particularly pretty to look at, the area has long been good birding country based around two major habitats, reedbeds and grassland.

There were plenty of hides situated at the water's edge giving very good views of wildfowl, perfect for the photographers and although the wind didn't help it was interesting to see how the wildfowl coped with the heavy weather. Generally they seemed unperturbed, dabbling and diving as they were bounced around by the crashing waves. There were very good numbers of Gadwall, Teal, Wigeon, a few Pintail and Shoveller with the diving fraternity represented by Goosander, Pochard, Tufted Duck and a pair of Goldeneye.

The Lapwings kept out of the wind for most of the day, staying put on terra firma, but a flock of about 40 Linnets busied themselves continually feeding, flying up into the full force of the wind but somehow managing to get back down to forage.

Things were generally much quieter on the reed beds although up to three Bittern had been seen on the reserve. A lone Little Grebe was seen from the Bittern hide and a Little Egret performed a brief fly past. One sharp-eared member heard the lone resident Cettis Warbler.

The only mammal sighting of note was a stoat hunting on the sunlit grassy bank giving one lucky young lad a great action photograph. Despite the adverse conditions a total of 57 species was logged, Old Moor proving an ideal venue under the circumstances as the hides offered protection from the elements and close views of our beloved birds.

Ben Reavey

NEXT MEETING PAXTON PITS

A look at the birds and wildlife of this reserve famous for its Nightingales, Hobbies and warblers.

Presented by James Bird