

RSPB Langford Lowfields – April 2019

Sightings

- The first swallows returned in early-April;
- Lots of sand martins catching insects over the reedbed;
- A Mediterranean gull;
- A red kite drifting slowly over the reserve;
- Black-tailed godwit;
- 88 whooper swans;
- Bearded tits – we hope they breed again this year;
- Little-ringed plovers;
- Up to 25 avocets – a new record count for the site;
- Common scoter;
- 3 shore larks which were present until mid-March;
- Great crested grebes building nests;
- Great white egret;
- Yellow and white wagtails;
- Other Spring migrants including house martin, singing chiffchaff, blackcap, willow warbler.

Work Party News

This month the work party have been planting hedging plants along the western boundary of phase 1, they have also been making fish shelters for phase 3.

A fishy business

A bittern has boomed at Langford annually since 2017 but has so far failed to lure in a lucky lady. There's a good chance our low fish biomass means Langford is not yet an optimal home for raising baby bitterns. We're aiming for 10kg of fish per hectare, but our latest survey revealed only 4kg/ha. The new outfall sluice however provides a fish-friendly connection to the river and we also recently boosted fish stocks further when we received 1000 roach from local fishing lake Mill Dam Fishery. Roach love reedbeds and bitterns love munching on roach. Finger's-crossed for baby bitterns soon! A bittern was heard booming at the north end of Phase 1 in February, however issues with the outfall sluice, meant that water levels raised quickly over the space of a few days, this would have been off-putting from a bittern's perspective and although it has since been heard on Phase 2, we are keen to know if anyone sees or hears a bittern on site.

Photo shows volunteer Graham Underwood and Langford Warden, Jenny releasing roach into the reedbed.



There is also an exhibition on at the University of Nottingham Museum showcasing recent archaeological finds from across the East Midlands and it includes some finds from Langford Quarry

<https://www.lakesidearts.org.uk/museum/event/4054/current-archaeology-in-the-east-midlands.html>

Bird boxes & refreshments

We continue to offer birdboxes for a donation of £10. There are still opportunities to volunteer with us, on the Beach Hut, in a meet and greet role. Get in touch if you feel you could offer a few hours a week for this – 01636 893611. Limited food and drink is available on site – see the volunteer at the Beach Hut!

Guided Walk – May 2019

Our next guided walk is the 'Dawn Chorus' and will be held on Sunday 12 May 2019 at 7-10am. Please call us on 01636 893611 to book a place. Prices are: Adult Non Member £10.00; Adult Member £8.00 / Child Non Member £5.00; Child Member £4.00.

Wider RSPB News: Pin Badge boxes

Our community fundraising volunteers are the local face of the RSPB. Last year, in the Midlands, the team raised an incredible £101,000 in donations from our pin badge and collection boxes, and almost £1.3 million nationally. Could you help us raise even more for nature?

The Community Fundraiser Volunteer role is suitable for those with little expendable time but a passion to do their bit for wildlife. We will support you to place 1 or more pin badge boxes in your local area, the donations from your boxes will need banking every 4-6 weeks, and the pin badges will need topping up. You will then report the income on our user friendly online system and place an order for any additional stock you may need. This can all be done in a time to suit your other commitments. Simple!

If you are interested in finding out more about the role get in touch with Harriet Dufficy, Community Fundraising Officer, harriet.dufficy@rspb.org.uk