

RSPB Langford Lowfields – June 2018

The wild bird crop near the car park has been re-sown with a combination of seeds including linseed, millet, kale and sunflower. These are all seed-heavy plants and looking ahead to the winter, they should provide a good source of food for seed-loving species such as finches and buntings, when the cold weather sets in and food in the wider countryside is harder to come by. A new wild bird area was also cultivated and sown near the large pylon that also sits close to the car park.

We had a glossy ibis on site at the end of May. These are very nomadic birds which tend to wander a lot, particularly the juveniles. They are most often found in southern Europe, but are becoming more frequent visitors to the UK, this was however possibly only the 4th to ever turn up at Langford. With its distinctive curlew-like bill and glossy feathers, it brought a touch of the exotic to the site for the few days it was here, feeding close to the viewing screen, looking for insects, frogs and toads in our amphibian pools. Other unusual birds to have turned up recently include an Arctic skua, a common scoter, black terns and a once common but now threatened turtle dove, that purred for a few weeks in a patch of scrub on the reserve boundary.

The north end of the reserve is currently closed as some remediation work needs to be carried out on the recently installed outfall sluice. High water levels during the winter put the structure to the test and some repairs and upgrading works need to be carried out on it. At the moment we are keeping visitors away from what is effectively a building site, but hope to have the whole reserve open again by the end of July.

Our volunteers have created a new bug hotel up by the Beach Hut. This is already luring in a good range of insects, which will make a home in the logs, leaves and sticks that are in the hotel. These are simple but effective structures to build and provide an excellent home for nature, you could even have a go at building a smaller version in your back garden. Sticking with insects, lots of butterflies are on the wing at Langford now, pick a sunny day and amongst the wildflowers and alongside the public footpath you should see a good range of species, including, if you're lucky, a painted lady, a long-distance migrant that makes its way to the UK every summer.

We have some bird boxes available – a suggested donation of £10.00 per box – made by one of our long term Langford volunteers, John. Call the office on 01636 893611 if you are interested.

Forthcoming Events!

We are running our second event at Langford in July. This is a Butterflies & Wildflowers Guided Walk on **Saturday 7 July 2018 10am-1pm**. Our Site Manager, Joe, will be joined by an RSPB enthusiast in this subject and together they will lead you on a walk around the reserve identifying species.

This event can be booked (and payment made) via Eventbrite.co.uk. You should search for the name of the event in the UK. The prices are listed on the site. If you are unable to use Eventbrite, please contact 01636 893611 to reserve your space and pay on the day.

There are visitor welcome volunteer roles still available – you don't have to be a bird expert to help out on the reserve, just be interested in the site and have a few hours to spare during the week or on a weekend. Get in touch if you feel you would like to discuss this further – 01636 893611.