

RSPB Langford Lowfields – March 2019

Bearded tits are being seen regularly from the boardwalk with up to 8 being seen at any one time. We are now keeping our fingers crossed that at least one pair will stay around to breed again at Langford. Bearded tits are heavily dependent on reedbeds for feeding and nesting and to date, Langford Lowfields is the only recorded place in Nottinghamshire where they have bred.



© Roger Bennett

The earliest ever record of an avocet in Nottinghamshire was recorded at Langford on 20th January and butterflies put in an early appearance during the warm February with peacock (15th), brimstone (16th) comma and red admiral (19th) all being seen.

Channels and glades have been cut in dense areas of reed to provide increased bittern feeding and viewing opportunities. Patches of reed have been cut just above the water level to provide nesting areas for black-headed gulls. 100 pairs nested last year and provided a very noisy show for visitors.

Also seen recently are water rails, chiffchaff, avocets, green sandpiper, stonechat, little grebe, cetti's warbler and tree creepers.



Long tailed tit



Yellowhammer



Roe Deer



Kestrel

There are a number of bird species that breed at Langford which love nesting on gravel covered islands, these include common terns, oystercatchers and little-ringed plovers. We have 2 gravel covered islands in the area of water in front of the Beach Hut and braving the wind and choppy waters, our volunteer team recently rowed and waded out to give them a bit of a spring clean. Black plastic was laid on the islands and this was then covered in gravel. Vegetation was also removed to ensure the islands are nice and clear. Clay pipes have been arranged on the islands to give small chicks places to hide.

The face of the sand martin bank needs to be prepared each year. The bank is made up of layers of compacted sand and the martins create a fresh nest hole each year, so the front 1m or so of the bank is removed after the nesting season to ensure that come the following year, a nice clean sandy face awaits them. The face of the bank had been covered in black plastic all winter to prevent plants growing on it and to keep the rain off it. It also acted as an additional barrier in case any very determined rabbits managed to get through the rabbit-proof fence. The black plastic was removed at the beginning of March and to our huge relief the face of the bank was still looking perfect. With sand martins already being seen in the county it shouldn't be long before they start burrowing into our bank again.

Two new benches have been put up on the reserve, one at the southern and one at the northern end of the Phase 1 part of the site. These provide excellent views out across the reedbed. With the gravel-covered islands sitting just below the southern bench, in recent days a bittern could be heard booming from the northern bench. Excitingly a new stile has also gone in, this crosses the western boundary fence of the site and allows visitors to gain access to the Trent Valley Way at a point close to Cromwell Weir. It also gives the opportunity to follow the TVW and get views out across the newly restored Phase 3 part of the site. A good variety of birds are being seen out there at the moment including great white egrets, avocets, ringed plover and water pipits.

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