

The twenty second meeting of the ILBs' was held on 18 December 2018 at The Royal Oak, Great Stambridge Rochford where 20 ladies plus Kris & Graham Mee had a fabulous Christmas Meal. A big thank you goes to the sponsor of this year's goody bags.

Indoor Meeting 5/12/2018 thanks to Rita Merrick: -

Bill Coster presented his pre-recorded talk on Shetland Isles with excellent pictures, accompanied with music and bird calls, to help us differentiate between our own country's species. A special treat being the Red-necked Phalarope not often seen in its breeding plumage - the female is more spectacular than the male! Talk included Black Guillemot, Puffins, Great Skua, Arctic Terns beside our common birds.

Local Sightings: -

Ring tailed Hen Harrier, Marsh Harriers and Short-eared Owl have been seen regularly throughout December at Wallasea Yellow hammer at Fobbing Marsh/Coryton.

Field Trips -9/12/2018 EWT Tollesbury Wick, a cold, partly cloudy walk, eight people attended 52 species were seen. 17/12/2018 Stambridge Mill to the Trout Fisheries, a sunny, mild day, 14 people including 1 ILB attended but only 10 plus the ILB completed the whole walk. 54 species were seen including a gold crest in the hedge at the layby near the fisheries.

EWT meeting on 13 December was not the orchid talk expected but a thought-provoking presentation by Lauren Hollas, a volunteer for Surfers against Sewage ([www.sas.org.uk](http://www.sas.org.uk)). This organisation was started in May 1990 as a result of the chronic sewage pollution in the oceans. It is now recognised as one of the UK's leading marine conservation charities and deals with a wide spectrum from marine litter to climate change. "Not just surfers – not just sewage". Their mission is to "inspire, unite and empower communities to take action to protect oceans, beaches, waves and wildlife". This remit now includes rivers, creeks and inland waterways as these eventually feed into the sea. There are regular beach cleans at Southend and Benfleet Creek, and people are encouraged to do mini beach cleans of two minutes or more, bags, litter pickers at Saltwater Beach Café, Chalkwell. They also have a scheme to create plastic free communities of which there are none in Southend.

In November 21,000 volunteers of all ages took part in 487 beach, river and lake cleans and cleared 35.9 tonnes (8991 full bin bags) of plastic. This included more than 27,600 single use drinks containers providing invaluable data to be shared with the Government in a consultation on a new Deposit Return Scheme for all plastic drinks' bottles.

99% of plastic sinks to the sea floor, where the majority is microscopic, and is ingested by marine life. In seawater plastic absorbs chemicals like PCB's and DDT's which are linked to endocrine dysfunction and some cancers, and 1 in 3 fish caught for human consumption now contain plastic. Even if we don't eat fish or go to the beach, we all breathe and 70% of our oxygen is produced by marine plants. The plastic created will never go away so we need to stop using more.

Only the four P's should be flushed down the toilet – Paper, Pee, Poo and Puke. No earbuds, no wipes, no nappies, no sanitary wear, all of which contain plastic.

Forthcoming Events: -

The next indoor meeting will be Wednesday 2 January 2019 at the Belfairs Woodland Centre. A Year on my Local Patch by Simon Ginnaw.

The next field trip Monday 7th January 2019 at RSPB Wallasea. Meet at 12:00 midday.

Or Sunday 20th January 2019 at Southend Pier. Meet at 9:45am.

The next Essex Wildlife Trust meeting will be Thursday 24th January 2019 Graham Burnett, Permaculture Association 'Wildlife and Gardening' at the Belfairs Woodland Centre 7:45pm.

Any lady requiring transport to attend meetings or to go on any field trip please contact Kris Mee.

The **next ILB meeting** is scheduled for **15 January 2019** at the Belfairs Woodland Centre. Meet at 10:00am for a walk or 10:30am for coffee and a chat.

This newsletter will be available on the local group website at: [-http://www.southendrspb.co.uk](http://www.southendrspb.co.uk) . Click on ILBs on the Menu Bar.

Happy Christmas and a heathy new year to everyone.

See you in 2019

*If you no longer wish to hear from the RSPB South East Essex Local Group, please contact **Kris Mee 01702 525152 [krismee28@googlemail.com](mailto:krismee28@googlemail.com)** confirming your name and address and stating that you wish to unsubscribe from the RSPB South East Essex Local Group's communications.*

