

Newsletter November 2021

The ILB meeting held on 16 November 2021 at the Belfairs Woodland Centre was attended by 7 ladies and Kris Mee and there were four apologies. Apologies later received from Margaret and Hilary.

Zoom Meetings

20/10/2021 Ryan Clark. British Bees. This was a very interesting presentation with so many facts about the different species, colours, and habits of our bees. There were 31 attendees with 5 from Chelmsford and 18 from SEE, 9 Unknown.

Local Sightings Thanks to Anne Sanford who emailed before the meeting

Canvey Point - Guillemot's, Gannet's, Red Breasted Merganser, Razorbill and Great Skua.

Abberton - Great White Egret, Cattle Egret, Bewick's Swan.

Southend Airport Business Park - 2 Kestrel's sharing a lamppost and Stonechat.

The best places have still been Canvey Point and Abberton this month.

Frances – Great spotted Woodpecker on her feeder

Jane – Was surprised to positively identify a dunnock on her feeder. Unusual behaviour.!

Rita – Wickford Memorial Park 2 Green Woodpeckers.

Kris – Shoebury East Beach Wader roost at high tide Oystercatcher, Dunlin, Redshank, Sanderling, Ringed Plover, Turnstone.

Each species distinct in their own groups. Brent Geese on horizon floating on the water and a huge flock of Knot flying.

Margaret – Millennium Park, Barling Siskin and Great spotted Woodpecker on feeder. Redwing and one Fieldfare. This is a nice reserve with a very small car park and a shelter to watch birds from while eating a picnic.

Sue – Emailed to say, "I believe that one of the easiest nature reserves to visit in this area is Barling Millennium Park, it has an open bird hide now and also is not far to drive." She also said "What a lovely day weather wise, still bright and colours on the trees turning to gold. Saw jackdaws on the way home."

Walks Report

Wednesday 20/10/2021 Two Tree Island. Species count 43, 12 participants, including three ILB and two visitors.

Sunday 7/11/2021 EWT Thurrock Thameside Species count 31, 15 participants including 7 visitors.

People following our Facebook page are being attracted to the walks.

Events Report

There have been no events to report this month.

A.O.B.

One of the oak benches donated to Wallasea being put to good use by Local Group members, John and Norman, with thanks to Russ for taking the photograph.



It has been decided that the donation given to the LG by Waitrose will be spent on Hedging whips to provide screening and windbreaks for Wallasea. The variety of plants is unfortunately restricted by the salty nature of the soil they will be planted in. Kris is to liaise with Rachel and Rita about possible volunteers to help with planting.

Rita – told us that hides at Wat Tyler are now open 9-4.

Sue – queried what had happened about the 100's of trees that had been planted at Thames Chase? Unknown. She emailed to say "I looked up Thames Chase Community Forest, Pike Lane, Upminster. It has a large visitor centre, with cafe etc It lies either side of the M25 at Upminster. Bumph says that the area is heavily congested with traffic and roads all very fast. Don't fancy that.!

It is open 10-4 in the winter and has lots of things going on throughout the year. There are also listed several other areas of woodland in and around the same area. Rainham, Hornchurch; Dagenham and Romford; Brentwood; Aveley and Ockendon; Grays and Thurrock. Some adventurous persons may like to visit."

Kris – Has a pot of snowdrops which have been in flower for several weeks.

Several ladies are unhappy that there are currently no indoor meetings, only Zoom which without computer devices they are unable to do.

The Group Leader has been instructed by his consultant nephrologist to continue to shield so cannot attend events indoors. No one on the committee wishes to take on this role or be indoors in a crowd.

Many members no longer drive at night.

The group needs on average 50 members to attend a meeting to cover costs of the hall hire and speaker.

Still not many speakers are willing to speak to a large group in a small space.

Covid has not gone away, the hospitals are still overwhelmed and being double vaccinated and boosted does not prevent serious illness and long-term effects or even death. There is also a fourth wave on its way as Germany and Austria implement lockdowns. Each person must make their own decisions about their safety and the LG Committee have made their decision. If someone else wanted to organise indoor meetings this would be acceptable providing that there is no financial loss to the Local Group.

Zoom has proved popular. Speakers can be anywhere in the world.

No going out in the cold and no night driving. Photographs can be seen clearly, and volumes can be adjusted to suit. Comfort and tea breaks can be taken as required. Age is not a barrier. A gentleman of over 90 has mastered the technology and has attended every Zoom since the beginning.

Social interaction is missing but several small groups of friends are still managing to get together to see one another to walk, eat or birdwatch. The situation will be reviewed in the Spring and daytime picnics will be arranged for those who prefer when the weather is better. The last picnic was a great success and would have been much better attended if not for the petrol problems.

Bring laptops and tablets to the next ILB meeting for a practice Zoom. Please let me know if you are bringing an iPad so I can arrange for an iPad expert to attend also.

Forthcoming Events: -

The next Zoom will be

Thursday 25/11/2021 at 7:45pm. Wallasea by RSPB Site Manager Rachel Fancy. Only Click on the link provided on the day and time stated. It will not work before then.

Please consider donating a minimum of £3 per person to allow us to book Zoom speakers who charge a fee, without incurring a financial loss.

Please donate by Bank Transfer to

RSPB SEE LG, Sort Code **309079** Account Number **33710768**.

Important! Please put 'ZOOM & Initials' in the reference box.

Thank you for your support it is much appreciated.

The next Field Trips are

10:00am Monday 22 November at EWT Hanningfield Reservoir and

10:00am Sunday 5/12/2021 at EWT Chigborough Lakes/Heybridge Basin and

10:00am Wednesday 15/12/2021 at Stambridge Mill.

There are no Essex Wildlife Trust meetings arranged.

The **next ILB meeting** will be **14 December 2021** at Belfairs Woodland Centre.

This newsletter will be available on the local group website at: <http://www.southendrspb.co.uk> . Click on ILBs on the Menu Bar.

*If you no longer wish to hear from the RSPB South East Essex Local Group, please contact **Kris Mee 01702 525152** 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.*

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