

Friday 08/05/09 0945-1300 Woolston Eyes*Bright Breezy with a Few Showers Thrown in!*

Weir Lane was brimming with activity by 0945 and soon all had been served their papers leaving little else to do but move on into the Reserve.

The Basin/Weir area was virtually devoid of birds owing to the fact that the Wildfowl that occupy this area throughout the winter months had moved off to their breeding grounds both near and far but at least we were able to note the ubiquitous Canada Goose (an escapee from wildfowl collections of yore) and the commonplace (as far as stretches of water are concerned) Mallard before we set to grips with summer migrants.

Swifts skimmed above the tree-line along Weir Lane (these birds usually occupy the highest reaches of the skyline in their hunt for food--- mostly airborne spiders--- but in heavy rain bearing cloud these birds move to lower levels to pick up the emerging aquatic insects) whilst Whitethroat and Chiffchaff gave their all into proclaiming ownership of territories by issuing their non too musical songs.

We then crossed the bridge onto NO3 bed pausing to note a pair of Great Crested Grebes one of which was sat on their nest, which had been constructed within the branches of a Willow that was trailing into the water.

First glimpses into No3 bed from the South Platform gave Tufted Duck, Little Grebe and Pochard. Then after checking out the latest sightings recorded in the Logbook kept in the Sybil Hogg Hide we moved onto the pathway that circuits around the inside of the bed.

The recently extended East Scaffold Hide then sheltered the Team from the blustery Southwest wind whilst affording all views into both the Phragmites Reed bed (where we tried to pick out Reed Warbler) and the more open waters of the bed where we managed to espy Black Necked Grebes, when they weren't diving for their food (insects/larvae/amphibians and small fish).

We then carried on with our 'progress' around the pathway pausing at three more hides from which we noted several more species of birds including Lapwing, Bullfinch, Grey Heron and Reed Bunting.

Then came the time to retreat from this windswept/rain kissed day to the shelter of our charges. Dave