

Friday 120506 Woolston Eyes 0945-1330

Dry Warm Sunny with almost more Sun than we could cope with!
Habitat = A site of Special Scientific Interest granted for the number of Wildfowl that use the area. Tree lined open water and scrub filled areas.

The eager beavers of the group soon whisked the paperwork out of my hands and I returned the compliment by whisking our team onto the reserve.

Views across the basin area from the weir gave *Pochard*, *Shelduck* and a territorial male *Mute Swan* which approached with it's wings raised as it reminded us that we were near to it's nesting site.

A slight diversion to peer into No2 bed from one of the viewing screens revealed *Black Headed Gulls* on nests and a mix of wildfowl that were taking advantage of the recent flooding of this area (due to new dredgings being pumped onto this still active deposit bed).

We then moved along the west bank of No2 bed taking in views across to No3 bed and into the loop of the Mersey that meanders through the area, pausing to watch a pair of *Great Crested Grebes* busily nest building whilst we were serenaded by *Willow Warbler* and *Blackcaps*.

The bridge across to No3 bed was then crossed taking us into the heart of the Reserve and onto the South Bank viewing platform in order to savour the views north across the reed clad water. *Ruddy Duck* and *Gadwall* occupied the water whilst *Black Headed Gulls* filled the air.

Our steady progress along the well defined pathways of this area led us to the Tower Hide and after an easy scramble up the ladder our team soon found a number of *Black Necked Grebes* to fix our gaze in wonder at these attractive and rare (for the UK) grebes.

Terra firma then had it's own attraction and drew us to the centre hide for more views of this reserve's speciality grebes plus a nice mix of birds including a nesting *Canada Goose*.

A *Cuckoo* then led us a merry dance as it tantalisingly called from the tree line on the Western edge of the bed revealing only it's 'siren' like call to our eager observers. Then the call of lunch led us back to Weir Lane in order for us to digest this interesting visit over presumably substantial (and well earned) lunches. Dave