

Monday 01/11/10 0945-1315 Woolston Eyes Nature Reserve*Dry and Overcast to start but Much Brighter Later*

The start of our amble was this time delayed not by traffic but by the need to appease the WEA 'Mammon of Paperwork' but this was done in the usual good spirit that flows through Team Monday and once signatures and secrets were recorded for posterity we moved off towards our morning venue.

Our journey then linked into our previous fieldtrip for we soon encountered the end of the now defunct Runcorn Latchford Canal that we had walked along on our visit to Moore and whilst absorbing this historical connection we discussed the finer points of differentiating Grey (Grey Back/Yellow under parts) from Pied (simply dark grey to black above /white under parts) Wagtail. The Weir gave a distracting background drone whilst I droned on about the basin area and it few birds, which included a winter plumaged Great Crested Grebe.

Then we made it onto the West Bank of No2 bed 'gaining' panoramic views of the mist clad Warrington! From this vantage point we also noted Cormorant, Gadwall (white wing flash on male and female), Tufted Duck (contrasting Black and White (male) 'contrasting shades of dark brown (female) and the ever present Mallard.

Our progress could have been likened to a train journey made in India where stops and starts punctuate the trip on a regular basis but at least we had an excuse for birds were being incremented onto our day list if only gaining some by call alone but No3 Bed was finally reached once we had gained the North Shore of the Ship Canal. Views from the south bank platform added Teal to our bird list and Phragmites (the common reed that would occupy all of the open water if it wasn't managed) to our plant list.

We then moved into the centre of the bed and following the clearly laid out pathway we checked out the Scaffold Hide and then moved onto the well appointed Morgan Hide (funding to build gained from the good old Landfill Tax that we first mentioned at Moore---therefore reminding us conservationists that to fill your dustbin with rubbish is a GOOD thing!).

Then we finally took our ease and added a good mix of species to our list including Snipe, Willow Tit and Pochard. Another bit of exploration gave the Winter Bird seed area, the Wildflower Meadow and a Badger Sett before we set off back homeward obviously pausing along the way for lunch always waits for yet another bird to note! Dave