



### **Burton Mere Wetlands, Sunday 8 December 2013**

Seven people participated in this field trip. Starting at the RSPB reserve where we saw wintering thrushes, a Stonechat, Peregrine, Merlin, Dunlin and a Little Stint plus a good number of wintering duck. Also present were Pink-footed Geese, 5 Barnacle Geese and Greylags.

Afterwards we moved to Denhall lane where we looked over the marsh and had lunch. A couple of Whooper Swans went down well with the coffee. Then on to the Harp pub not for a drink but to see some Ring-tailed Hen harriers. A Kestrel and a Merlin were also seen.

Finally to the baths car park at Parkgate where we had good views of the Great White Egret and numerous Little egrets plus more Hen Harriers and another Merlin.

Paul Kenyon

### **Burton Mere Wetlands and the Dee Estuary, 18 March 2014**

A record group of 20 members met at the RSPB Reserve. Early rain gave way to strong winds. The morning was spent on the reserve and after lunch some of the party visited Parkgate and Thurstaston CP to bring our list to 43 species.

Highlights at BMW were the many Avocets together with duck and waders, plus a first spring Chiff-chaff.

Parkgate had one wind-blown Hen Harrier plus close up views of Fieldfare, Redwing and over a hundred Starling in the horse paddock.

The feeders at Thurstaston added Coal Tit, Greenfinch and Bullfinch but strong winds made bird watching difficult down on the beach.

Harold Fielding

### **Burton Mere Wetlands, Tuesday 17 February 2015**

Twelve members met at the RSPB reserve visitor's centre in bright, breezy weather.

Views across from the centre included the expected duck, geese and waders - highlights being a Water Rail being chased across open ground by a Moorhen and a single Greenshank.

The next hide had excellent views of several Stonechats.

From here we took the recently opened path to the old Inner Marsh Farm Hide. There was no sign of the Long-eared Owl reported to be roosting near the hide.

Finally, we visited Burton Point, a newly opened area across the railway line, with panoramic views over the Dee Estuary.

Our total bird count was 45.

Harold Fielding

### **Burton Mere Wetlands, 15 March 2016**

On a bright Spring morning 14 members met at the Visitors Centre. Our list quickly grew, including 40 Avocets, Black-tailed godwits, Redshank, Lapwing, Oystercatcher. Ducks included Shelduck, Gadwall, Shoveler and Tufted.

Other species around the Centre were a Water Rail and a Stoat. Elsewhere on the Reserve we had Little Egret, Great White Egret, Heron (eating frogs), Hen Harrier and Sparrow Hawk.

On the way to Burton Point, we had Linnet, Redwing, & Fieldfare.

Our last observation was an unexpected Red Kite which flew over the Reserve, bringing our total to 52 species.

Harold & Valerie Fielding

#### **RSPB Burton Mere Wetland, Sunday 11th December 2016**

Seven members attended the trip to BMW and Burton Marsh. Overcast but otherwise rain free day. A scan of the reserve provided excellent views of three Marsh Harriers and a couple of buzzards. A Merlin alighted on a distant post but was moved on by a Kestrel. A visit to the feeding station provided views of the now less common Greenfinch. At the back of the reserve in the distance both whooper and Berwick swans fed on the grassy areas.

A walk towards Marsh Covert hide produced some woodland birds which included Greater Spotted Woodpecker, nuthatch and the usual tit flock. Fleeting glimpses of Cetti's warbler were seen as they flew from reedbed to reedbed. Once inside the hide we were treated to our first view of a Hen Harrier (ringtail). Many Black Tailed Godwits were here along with a Ruff.

On to Denhall lane where we saw Little Egret then to Neston where we had lunch. Here we had good views of a Short eared owl hunting, another ring tailed Hen Harrier and Marsh Harrier. Also distant views of Peregrine and Merlin. A Kestrel alighted close by giving us yet another bird of prey. Great white egrets are a familiar sight here and we weren't disappointed.

Finally, onto Parkgate where we had a Male Hen Harrier and another Peregrine.

Not a bad day out with a total of 57 species seen.

Paul Kenyon

#### **Mere Wetlands RSPB Reserve, Tuesday 21st February 2017**

Sixteen members met at the Visitor Centre where there was lots of activity including Avocets, Marsh and Hen Harrier, Buzzard, Black Tailed Godwits Whooper Swans, several Barnacle Geese with the Pink-footed Geese.

Walked to Burton Point, with several Great White Egrets and Little Egrets in view.

A move to Parkgate added no new species as the rain set in!

Fifty species recorded.

Harold & Valerie Fielding

#### **Burton Mere Wetlands RSPB, 16th January 2018**

Despite a varied forecast, we had a record 22 members join us at the Burton Mere Wetlands reserve, a new reserve for many. The visitor centre was warm and comfortable with a comforting log fire burning brightly and we saw plenty of Teal, Shoveler, Little Egret plus a Peregrine and Marsh Harrier. We walked to the Marsh Covert hide, released a trapped robin from inside the hide and saw lots of Curlew and Gadwall. Due to the high winds and windchill most didn't go as far as Burton Point but returned via the ponds where we got Siskin. After eating our sandwiches in the visitor centre, some of us went to Parkgate Old Baths carpark where the cold and windchill made our stay short. Nevertheless, we got Great White Egret, Kestrel and Hen Harrier. 42 species total.

Stephen Williams

### **Burton Mere Wetlands RSPB, 15th January 2019**

A record number (23) of members visited RSPB Burton Mere Wetlands on a mild, part sunny dry day for our first visit of 2019. Unfortunately, there was some clearance work on the meadows behind the main lagoon with bonfires sending smoke across our view. So we decamped upwind to the Marsh Covert Hide where a Water Rail was spotted and lots of Wigeon. On the way we looked hopefully through the screens for Bearded Tits (spotted yesterday in the logbook) but no luck. The reedbed has grown substantially since our last visit giving great cover for the birds meaning we heard Cetti's Warbler but couldn't see it! I had to depart at this point for cardiac rehab so handed over the reins to Derek Todd and Ian Bunker. There were sightings of Snipe, Stonechat and Linnet.

The group split into two and some members went on to Parkgate spotting a Short-eared Owl really close chasing a Marsh Harrier!

Ian recorded a magnificent total of 47 species.

Stephen Williams/Ian Bunker

### **Burton Mere Wetlands, 15th December 2019**

Ten MCOS members met at RSPB Burton Mere Wetlands.

Large numbers of wild fowl were present including Canada, Greylag and Pink-footed Geese, Pintail, Shoveler, Gadwall, Shelduck, Wigeon, Tufted, Mallard and Teal Ducks. [Grab your reader's attention with a great quote from the document or use this space to emphasize a key point. To place this text box anywhere on the page, just drag it.]

Waders included Black-tailed Godwit, Redshank, Oyster Catcher and Curlew. Herons; Great White Egret, Little Egret and Grey. Raptors; Marsh Harrier, Sparrow Hawk, Kestrel, Common Buzzard, Other birds of note were Siskin, Great-spotted Woodpecker, Redwing, Raven and Nuthatch.

After lunch the group moved on to Denhall Quay. Large numbers of wildfowl were seen in flight with Great and Little Egret also present. A male Hen Harrier gave some superb views as it hunted on the marsh in front of the group. Gulls included: Great Black-backed, Herring, Common and Black-headed.

With rain moving in the group then moved on to Parkgate.

With the weather improving a Short-eared Owl showed well and gave a super photo opportunity as it sat on a log at fairly close distance. Another male Hen Harrier, Merlin and Peregrine Falcon were also seen. With the light fading the group called it a day. Fifty-five species were seen. The bird of the day was a Male Hen Harrier.



Short-eared Owl  
(digiscoped by Ian  
Bebbington)

Graham Haspey

### **Burton Mere Wetlands and Parkgate, 17th January 2020**

Twenty two members turned out for a cloudy but dry day at the RSPB Burton Mere Wetlands reserve. This is always a good reserve with a comfortable and warm visitor centre where those who don't want to walk round the reserve can stay and still get good birds. We immediately got a Great White Egret paddling close by with a Little Egret adjacent to see the differences. Lots of usual waterfowl and a Marsh Harrier hunting on the marsh. Other members got a Hen Harrier. On the way to the first hide we were lucky to get a fleeting glimpse of a Water Rail before it vanished into the reeds. After our sandwiches, half the party drove to Parkgate baths for views over the Dee estuary. Ian Bunker found a Merlin at distance. Later we saw a Hen Harrier being attacked by a Merlin which drove it off, brave bird! Lots of Pink-footed Geese resting on the grass. We walked further on

towards the golf course, before turning back and getting some close Redwing on the deck. Paul and Joe stayed on and bagged four Short-eared Owls with close views making them birders of the day! Total species count was 44.

Stephen Williams

### **Burton Mere and Parkgate, 12 December 2021**

Eight members met up at BMW RSPB with the sun starting to come out. Discussion centred around the drive through Puddington and a certain field containing 50 Little Egret, 5 Great Egrets and a single Cattle Egret. Plenty of Ravens, Jackdaws, Redwings and a couple of Mistle Thrushes on the nearby fields. We set off and headed towards the feeders. Three Great Spotted Woodpeckers were active on or near the feeders with an unexpected Corn Bunting on the overhead wires. Being such a sunny morning, it was singing part of its song which clinched identification. We examined the pools opposite the main hide where we saw our first Marsh Harrier. Plenty of the usual ducks and waders. Onwards to Denhall Lane where we had lunch. More Marsh Harriers, Merlin, Peregrine and a glance to Denhall Quay provided a good view of a Short-eared Owl. Next, to Burton Cliffs where a Little Owl was located.

Over to Parkgate for the final 2 hours where a Barn Owl was seen and an amazing grey male Hen Harrier came in to roost. Seven species of raptor and three species of owls seen. A total of 73 species seen.

Paul Kenyon

### **Burton Mere Wetlands, 25 January 2022**

Sixteen members met at RSPB BMW on a very cold but dry day. Unfortunately, they were clearing some reeds near the Visitor Centre with bonfires which meant that the big pool usually packed with birds was empty. So, we viewed the large field by the e [Grab your reader's attention with a great quote from the document or use this space to emphasize a key point. To place this text box anywhere on the page, just drag it.] ntrance that was packed with great birds, Egyptian Geese, Mistle Thrush, flock of Curlew, Redwing amongst others. We saw a Marsh Harrier in the air with talons down on the way to Marsh Covert Hide where we got lots of water birds. We then did the longish trek to the newly refurbished Border Hide along the excellent boardwalk. Simon spotted a Stonechat on the return (see his pic). 43 species and a good count despite the bonfires!



Stonechat

Stephen Williams

### **Burton Mere and Parkgate, 16th October 2022**

Eight members of the Society met in the car park at Burton Mere Wetlands on a nice sunny morning. Even before entering the reserve proper we had a view of Cattle Egret in the distance courtesy of Richard Sturman. We were alerted by the call of three Whooper Swans on the Scrape. By the time we got on the reserve these two species had disappeared. Firstly, we headed to the feeding station via the Bunker hide where 6 Redwings flew over and the first Chiffchaff was recorded. Back to the centre and several waders were recorded. Ruff, Black-tailed Godwit, Redshank seen here. All the time skeins of Pink-footed geese were flying over from their roost to the feeding grounds. A Marsh Harrier was seen quartering the Marsh on several occasions.

Off to Bridge pool and the screen there, where we saw Snipe and a solitary Avocet plus lots of duck not quite in winter plumage. Then the walk to the Border hide along the boardwalk looking for any migrating warblers plus ever present Cetti's Warblers. Several Chiffchaffs were located by call not song but were quite visible. The Border hide produced several species of wader as per the scrape at the centre but around here several species of dragonfly and butterflies were also seen such as the temperature. Back to the centre and lunch.

On to Denhall lane where we walked down to Burton point looking for the Little Owl but with no luck. The Marsh produced a Peregrine and sightings of Marsh Harriers, Kestrels and many Great Egrets and Meadow Pipits. Finally, we went to Parkgate where we saw sightings of Merlin and Marsh Harriers some of the latter probably being those located around Burton point. A couple of large flocks of Linnets seen here.

In all 69 species were counted.

**Paul Kenyon**

### **Burton Mere Wetlands, 10th December 2023**

Seven people participated in this field trip. On the way down Puddington lane a number of Cattle Egrets and Little Egrets were seen in the fields. A few skeins of Pink feet went over with smaller ones of Greylags. It was raining when we arrived with no waders present. Eventually as the rain subsided the waders started to build up with Redshank, a Spotted Redshank and Black tailed Godwits. We also had good views of a pair of female Marsh Harriers. Off to Bunker hide and the feeding station to see Greenfinches. We then walked down to Marsh Covert hide to see some of the duck, Gadwall, Shoveler, Teal, Tufted duck and Curlews. On the walk we heard Cetti's Warbler calling. Finally, down to the Bridge screen for views over the reserve.

Lunch was taken and then down to Denhall Quay where we had sightings of a grey Male Hen Harrier and two more ringtail Hen Harriers. and at least 5 Marsh Harriers. A couple of Merlin were also here plus a Buzzard. Small passerines included Stonechats plus Meadow pipits. Snipe were being disturbed by the Dog walkers. Finally, to Parkgate and the baths car park. Quite a few Great White Egrets plus a flock of Linnets. Up to 10 Marsh Harriers here with a young Peregrine chasing Lapwings. Sadly, no Owls.

A total of 61 species were seen.

**Paul Kenyon**

### **RSPB Burton Mere Wetlands, 16th January 2024**

Nine hardy members braved snowy conditions for today's visit to BMW. Following overnight snow, the weather was fine and sunny with a cold wind blowing off the marsh.

Arriving at the visitor centre at 10am we found the main pool completely frozen over and other than two lonely Redshanks there were no birds whatsoever to be seen. Undaunted we headed to the Bunker hide and had good views of Fieldfare and Redwing on the adjoining field plus a Great Spotted Woodpecker on the feeders and flocks of Pink-footed Geese and Black tailed Godwits flew over. Walking back along the track we had close ups of a Song Thrush and Meadow Pipit and a Bullfinch was seen on the fence.

We then walked to the main hide where again most of the pool was frozen but there were spectacular views of both Peregrine and Sparrowhawk and distant views of Teal, Shoveller and Shelduck. Heading onto the Border hide we saw a small flock of Curlew and had excellent views of an over-wintering Chiffchaff. The pool here was partially melted and there were good numbers of Wigeon, Lapwing, Teal and Shoveller. One lucky pair also saw a Pintail. Walking back to the visitor centre we also had a great closeup of a Goldcrest.



Chiffchaff



Fieldfare



Song Thrush



Peregrine

Several members made full use of the new cafe and reported that the soup was well up to standard. Overall, an excellent trip with 52 species seen, including five raptors - Sparrowhawk, Peregrine, Marsh Harrier, Kestrel and Buzzard. Thanks to Simon Smith for the images of birds seen.

Ged Petch