



Leighton Moss, Sunday 18 November 2013

Nine MCOS members met on a damp overcast morning. Moving off to the public and lower hides the group paused to view the grit trays on the causeway where Bearded Tit have been seen, alas not on this occasion. From the public hide the group were treated to views of Otter hunting in open water close to the reed beds. While most of the group moved on to the lower hide one lucky member of the group, who remained in the public hide, had good views of Bittern. From Lillian's hide a female Long-tailed Duck and Marsh Harrier were showing well. On the way to the Grisedale and Tim Jackson hides, Marsh Tit and Kingfisher were seen. From the Grisedale hide a Marsh Harrier was seen hunting over the reed beds.

As you would expect good numbers of duck were seen from all of the hides.

Moving on to the Allen and Eric Morecambe Hides good numbers of Black-tailed Godwits and Lapwings were present together with Redshank and a single Ruff. Kingfisher and a pair of Whooper Swans were also present. On the way back to the car park the group were treated to an aerial display from a large flock of Starlings, a fitting end to an enjoyable day. The bird list for the day totalled 53 species.

Graham Haspey

Leighton Moss, Sunday 16 November 2014

Fourteen members turned up for the meeting. We recorded 64 species. Highlights were excellent views of Bittern from the Public hide, Bearded Tit from the Causeway grit trays, Otter swimming in open water from the Lower hide, Great White Egret from the Eric Morecambe hide. Other species of note: Spotted Redshank, Kingfisher, Golden and Grey Plover, Marsh Tit and Marsh Harrier.

Graham Haspey

Leighton Moss, 22nd November 2015

Due to severe weather warnings the scheduled visit to Leighton Moss was postponed until Sunday 22nd November.

Five members of the society met on a cold bright morning. Advice on the RSPB web page was to 'bring your wellies'. It soon became very clear why this advice had been given! After walking a couple of hundred metres along the causeway we were standing in 4"-6" of water while hoping to see Bearded Tit at the grit trays. None were seen but soon after, while walking down towards the Public Hide, a group of approx. 8-10 Bearded Tit were seen at a distance of no more than 5mts. These were fantastic views and considered to be probably the best seen by members present.

There were surprisingly few birds to be seen from the Public Hide but a single Otter hunting fish lifted spirits. A Marsh Harrier and two Sparrowhawks were seen at distance.

On the way to the Public Hide Marsh Tit were seen at the feeding station and once in the hide two Otters were seen swimming at speed against the far reed beds. There were better numbers of ducks and waders here.

Moving on to the Tim Jackson Hide the paths were extensively flooded but accessible with care. From this hide there were fairly large amounts of ducks present and remarkably a large dog Otter appeared, out of the water and in front of the hide.

From the Grisedale Hide large numbers of Teal were present. At least two Marsh Harriers were

hunting in the area which made the Teal very flighty. Of interest, after leaving the Grisedale Hide a Stoat was seen running along the path and due to the high water levels it had to swim a section of the flooded path.

After lunch the group moved on to the Eric Morecambe Hide where two Kingfishers gave excellent views. Good numbers of waders were also present, including two Greenshank. A Red-breasted Merganser was also present albeit briefly. Moving on to the Allen Hide good numbers of ducks were seen along with a few geese. Of interest one of the Greylag Geese had a red neck ring which suggests it was a wild migrating bird rather than a feral resident.

After leaving the reserve the group stopped off at the nearby Warton Crag. This is a well know site for Peregrine falcon and a male Peregrine was soon found, roosting at an old nest site and showing very well. This ended a very enjoyable day.

List of birds seen:

Green Woodpecker, Greater Spotted Woodpecker, Nuthatch, Redwing, Chaffinch, Bullfinch, Blackbird, Collared Dove, Wood Pigeon, Pheasant, Robin, Jackdaw, Carrion Crow, Reed Bunting, Grey Heron, Mallard, Bearded Tit, Marsh Harrier, Pink-foot Goose, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Wren, Goldfinch, Siskin, Marsh Tit, Teal, Greylag Goose, Gadwall, Shoveler, Pied Wagtail, Cormorant, Coot, Wigeon, Long-tailed Tit, Starling, Goldcrest, Chiffchaff, Redshank, Kingfisher, Little Egret, Curlew, Lapwing, Shelduck, Red-breasted Merganser, Sparrow Hawk, Pintail, Greenshank, Great Crested Grebe, Fieldfare, Peregrine Falcon.

Graham Haspey

Leighton Moss RSPB, Sunday 13th November 2016

Nine members met at the reserve and the group moved off to the Causeway Hide where large numbers of wildfowl were seen. A great White Egret was present feeding in the margins of the pool while two Marsh Harriers were hunting over the area, causing the duck flocks to be rather flighty.

Moving on to the Lower Hide there were good views of Redpoll, Siskins and Marsh Tit in the wooded area. From the hide a drake American Wigeon was showing well amongst the large numbers of ducks present. Two Otters were seen feeding in the pool giving the group excellent views.

On the way back along the causeway the group paused at the grit trays with perfect timing as a Bearded Tit appeared allowing the group excellent views.

After lunch the group visited the other three hides on the reserve where further excellent views of Great White Egret and Little Egret were seen along with a wide selection of wildfowl. While viewing the reserve from the tower a Water Rail was seen moving between clusters of reed.

The group moved on to the Morecambe and Allen hides where good numbers of waders were present including Dunlin, Golden Plover and Lapwing. A Kingfisher was mobile around the pools and gave good views from its feeding posts.

A total of 65 species of birds were seen during the day, highlights were American Wigeon, Bearded Tit, Marsh Tit and Marsh Harrier.

Graham Haspey

Leighton Moss RSPB, 12th November 2017

Eight MCOS members turned up for a cold but sunny visit. The group moved off to the causeway where the grit trays were located for Bearded Tit. Unfortunately, no birds were seen by the group but there had been good sightings earlier in the morning. Moving on to the Public hide large numbers of wild fowl were present, these included Pintail, Gadwall, Shoveler and Goldeneye. Star birds from this hide were three Cattle Egrets. On the walk down to the Lower hide there were excellent views of Marsh Tit while Siskin, Bullfinch and Tree Creeper were also present. When walking back to the car park for lunch, a Merlin flew overhead which brought the raptor species count to four.

After lunch, on the way to the Tim Jackson hide, a Water Rail dashed across the path and quickly disappeared into the reed bed. From the hide the 'bird of the day' was seen. A single Jack Snipe was showing very well and constantly demonstrated its diagnostic 'bobbing' movement.

Before moving on to the Morecambe hides Great White Egret and Little Egret were seen. From the path to the Allen hide a large flock of finches were seen feeding along the hedgerows, included in the flock were four Brambling. From the hide large numbers of wild fowl were seen including, Pink-foot Geese, and a Kingfisher was enjoying the afternoon sun while resting along the fence line. Species count for the day was 69.

Graham Haspey

Leighton Moss RSPB Reserve, 17 November 2018

Eight members met at the reserve car park. The visit began at the Eric Morecambe hide where large numbers of wildfowl and waders were present. An American Wigeon was the target bird which was quickly found. Other birds of note were Little Egret, Black-tailed Godwit, Pintail Duck and Greenshank.

Moving on to the main reserve the group first visited the Grisedale and Tim Jackson hides. Hunting juvenile Marsh Harriers created some panic amongst the large numbers of ducks present. A small group of Common Snipe were seen resting on the bank of the Grisedale pool. From Lilian's hide large groups of wildfowl were again seen. Other birds of note were Great White Egret and Little Grebe.

After Lunch the group moved off to the Lower Hide. On the pathway to the hide Marsh Tits were seen at regular intervals. From the path a Great Grey Shrike was seen, albeit at some distance. Additionally, Sparrowhawk and Green Woodpecker were seen. From the lower hide, Goldeneye, Shoveler Duck and Great Crested Grebe were seen. While walking back to the Public Hide, Tree Creeper and Goldcrest were seen in the scrub areas. Other raptors spotted were Kestrel and Common Buzzard.

On the insect front, a Common Darter and a Red Admiral butterfly were seen which indicates just how mild the weather has been recently.

A couple of nice bonus birds, two Cattle Egrets, were seen in a roadside field on the way from the reserve. This rounded off a very enjoyable day.

A total of 54 species were recorded.

Graham Haspey

Leighton Moss, 10th October 2021

Four members of MCOS met at Leighton Moss on a sunny and mild morning. First stop was the grit trays along the path to the Grisedale Hide. On arrival seven Bearded Tits were on the trays giving superb views. Both adults and juveniles were present. On the way to the hide there were Cetti's Warblers calling with a very brief view of a single bird. From the hide, small numbers of waterfowl were present with a Marsh Harrier viewable on a distant bush. On leaving the hide Bullfinches flew overhead. Stopping off at the tower viewpoint a Red Deer was feeding in the reeds.

Moving on to the lower hide, Water Rail were heard calling. Along the path to the hide Marsh Tit, Siskin and Goldcrest were seen. From the hide, larger numbers of waterfowl were seen with a single Whooper Swan. From the public hide very few birds were seen.

After lunch the group moved on to Lillian's Hide where upwards of two hundred Black-tailed Godwits were present at very close quarters. Allen and Morecambe Hides were the final stop of the day. Very large numbers of waders were present. Greenshank and Spotted Redshank being the best of the bunch. On the path from the hide to the car park, a Chiffchaff was seen ending a very enjoyable day. Total of species for the day was sixty-one.

Graham Haspey

Leighton Moss, 13 November 2023

Eight MCOS members met at Leighton Moss on an overcast breezy morning. The feeding stations behind the visitor's centre were busy with frequent visits from Blue Tits, Great Tits, Coal Tits and Chaffinches. Moving on to Lillian's hide large numbers of waterfowl were present, including Teal, Pintail, Shoveller, Gadwall, Pochard, Wigeon, Mallard and Tufted Duck. Great White Egret, Little Grebe and Marsh Harrier were also seen.

The grit trays along the Causeway failed to show any Bearded Tit, probably too breezy. From the public hide an Otter was seen swimming in 'porpoise' mode which was quite unusual. From the Lower hide Snipe and Greylag Goose were the only new species seen. On the way back for lunch, Marsh Tit gave some excellent views. Rain was forecast from mid-afternoon so the group moved to the Eric Morecambe hide. Greenshank, Goosander, Little Egret, Curlew and Kingfisher were present. In total, 54 species were seen.

Graham Haspey.