



Marshside/Mere Sands, 13 October 2013

Eight people came to the outdoor meeting but it was a very quiet affair due to the lack of any substantial water. Pink-footed Geese were in abundance and a few ducks, Black-tailed Godwits and a couple of Little Egrets but generally very quiet until we went past Banks Marsh where a Great White Egret flew by. Mere Sands nature reserve was also very quiet with only a few duck species seen along with the Canada Geese. Afterwards several of us went for a walk around Martin Mere on the walk around the perimeter. It was really good with good numbers of Geese and Whooper Swans. Also, a female Peregrine was on the ground eating its kill.

Paul Kenyon

Mere Sands & Martin Mere, Tuesday 21 January 2014

A group of 8 met at the Lancashire Wildlife Trust Reserve, before moving on to Martin Mere for lunch. The combination of woodland, open water and grazing marsh produced an excellent total of 56 species.

Highlights at Mere Sands were Kingfisher, Goosander, Grey Wagtail, Tree Creeper, Nuthatch and Great Spotted Woodpecker.

Martin Mere had over 1000 Pink-footed Geese, Whooper Swans and Lapwings. 9 species of duck occupied the lake, with single Ruff, Snipe, Black-tailed Godwit and Oystercatcher around the pool.

The feeders attracted Reed Bunting and Tree Sparrow and a single Marsh Harrier hunted the marsh.

After a cold cloudy day, heavy rain arrived just as we left the reserve.

Harold Fielding

Mere Sands and Martin Mere, Tuesday 14 October 2014

Eleven members met at the Lancashire Wildlife Trust Reserve at 10.00 a.m. The reserve, a good mix of woodland and wetland provided the usual range of birds, with Tree Sparrows, Long-tailed Tits and Nuthatch on feeders and a good selection of duck on the lake.

Working parties on the reserve ensured we didn't see the hoped-for Kingfisher but we did see a Water Rail.

Three more members were waiting at Martin Mere. The big event was the 25,000 Pink-footed Geese, with the number still building. The first Whooper Swans had arrived, with around 100 feeding on potatoes and small flocks moving on and off the reserve.

The pool edges proved attractive to waders with Ruff and Snipe showing well amongst the Lapwings. Buzzard and Kestrel were on the reserve together with a wing-tagged male Marsh Harrier from Norfolk, giving excellent views.

A good days birding with a total of 55 species recorded.

Harold Fielding

Mere Sands and Martin Mere Reserves, 12th January 2016

Only 8 Members met at the Lancashire Wildlife Trust at Rufford. The reserve is well sheltered woodland with several lakes viewed from 5 hides. Goosander headed the duck count with Teal, Golden Eye, Shoveler, Gadwall, Tufted Duck, Shelduck and Great Crested Grebe. The woodlands

gave us Tree Sparrow, Nuthatch, Bullfinch, Redpoll, Jay, Goldfinch with Redwing and Fieldfare in the adjacent field.

Moving on to Martin Mere, we inspected the new hides which overlook the Swan Lake. Many Whooper Swans and Pink-footed Geese flew in to join the 3.00 p.m. feed. Over a hundred Shelduck joined the feeding frenzy, packed together on the bank below the hide.

We also had Buzzard, Marsh Harrier, Barn Owl, Tawny Owl and Short-eared Owl, giving a total of 50 birds.

Harold & Valerie Fielding

Mere Sands and Martin Mere, Tuesday 15th November 2016

Rain on the way but dry for our visit to Mere Sands, the Lancashire Wildlife Trust Reserve near Rufford. Thirteen members enjoyed the woodland birds and the walk round the lake. Top bird was the Kingfisher, with several sightings together with male and female Goosander and a good selection of duck. Another good sighting was the Red-legged Partridge and a Water Rail.

Moving on to Martin Mere for lunch we were joined by 4 more members. We had excellent close views of a Kingfisher and of Whooper Swans, Pink-footed Geese and Tree Sparrows. We saw Marsh Harrier but levels of waders was disappointing with only Ruff and Lapwing showing.

All in all a good days birding with a total 53 species.

Harold & Valerie Fielding

LWT Mere Sands Wood Nature Reserve and WWT Martin Mere, 19th November 2019

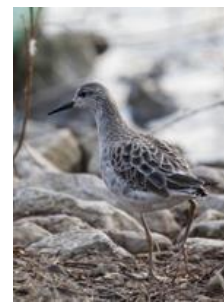
Fourteen members arrived at Mere Sands Wood Nature Reserve, near Rufford run by Lancashire Wildlife Trust on a cold morning but dry. We found that the renovations to the Visitor Centre had overrun, and a pile driver started thumping away! So we decided to walk away from the building noise around the outskirts of the mature woodland and were rewarded by views of Treecreeper and Nuthatch. There were comfortable hides to look over the lakes and we got the usual tally of waterfowl including a female Goosander. Sadly, no Kingfisher, but it had been seen earlier by some keen photographers who had staked it out. On to Martin Mere Wetland Centre and we needed bowls of hot soup to warm up! We headed for the hides and masses of waterfowl were seen, Pintail, Greylag, Wigeon and Pochard. We returned to the Discovery Hide for the 3pm feeding and it was mayhem as they devoured a whole barrowload of food! Amazing sight with great close views of Ruff. This was a fitting end to our day out. Thanks to Simon Smith for the great photos. Total species count was 41.



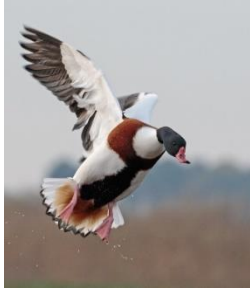
Goldcrest



Goldcrest



Ruff



Shelduck



Grey Heron



Whooper Swan

Images courtesy and copyright of Simon Smith.

Stephen Williams

Mere Sands Wood Nature Reserve and RSPB Marshside, 11 October 2022

Fourteen members met up at Mere Sands Wood Nature Reserve near Rufford on a cloudy but dry day. The visitor centre had been much improved since our last visit and now has a good *looking* café. We walked a circular trip round the lakes visiting all the hides and found Red-legged Partridges in the nearby field which were very hard indeed to spot. See Simon Smith's excellent photo.



Red-legged Partridge



Roe Deer



Pied Wagtail

Pink-footed Geese were seen coming over in flocks. At the end of the walk, we surprised Roe Deer out in the open in the field but they soon disappeared. Our next location was to be WWT Martin Mere, but a case of Avian Flu had been discovered and the centre was closed. So, plan B was Marshside RSPB where we had our sandwiches in the Sandgrounders hide looking out over the marsh. A few Black-tailed Godwit were on the margins, Lapwing and lots of Pink-footed Geese plus the usual waterfowl. Opposite the hide next to the sand washing plant we saw a Stonechat displaying on top of a bush. Later, Paul also bagged a Merlin and Marsh Harrier at the same location then Golden Plovers at Bank's Marsh. Group total 45 species.

Stephen Williams