

MBS Two Tree Island 19 October 2019

Nine of us, including the outing leader Jean, made our various ways to Fenchurch Street for the 9.28 train to Leigh-on-Sea. An exchange of texts revealed that Chairman Steve was apparently on the same train and, like us, in Carriage C though nowhere to be seen. He did indeed emerge from the other end of the train and we soon joined others who'd got an earlier train. Just after 10.30 there were 20 of us crossing over to the path leading to Two Tree Island. No 21, who'd got a later train, joined us on the bridge to the Island.

We put in the programme that it's a 10-minute walk from the station. In fact it took us half an hour to reach the bridge onto Two Tree Island but we do start birdwatching once we're on that path opposite the station. We soon spotted a huge flock of Brent Geese so could look forward to closer views from the Island. We noted Black Headed Gulls, Magpies, Crows and Wood Pigeons, a few Jays, a Pied Wagtail. When a bird trilled as it flew over with a bouncy flight, I was pleased my tentative suggestion, based on Andrew's ID and explanations at Pagham the week before, was confirmed by another section of our group identifying it as a Skylark. We also looked over into a pool with Mallard, Coot, Moorhen and Teal. And several tinkling, fluttering flocks of Goldfinch accompanied us along the path.

From the bridge we saw a Little Egret, a Lesser Black-backed Gull and more Teal. Knowing the tide was still far out and having heard that the hides had been vandalised, we first went to the eastern section, part of the Leigh National Nature Reserve. Here we saw Great Tit and Blue Tit on the feeders and admired a flowering Toadflax. We had Long-tailed Tits, Robins and a Dunnock. We heard Cettis Warbler, Chaffinch, Wren and some heard and saw Chiffchaff. We were delighted on this sunny autumn day to see 2 Comma Butterflies and several Red Admirals.

We decided to stop for an early lunch taking advantage of 4 benches at the tip of the Island looking out to Southend Pier and the better views of the Brent Geese flocks. 12.15 we were on the move again past the tits on the feeders and the butterflies (where we lost one of the photographers) back towards the road then along a grassy track to the Jetty. From here, thanks to John Mac's scope, we saw Oystercatcher, Curlew and possible Plovers and Dunlin.

We eventually reached the bench and plastic chairs marking the site of the Lagoon Hide. From here we saw ducks and waders in ever-increasing number while our human numbers gradually decreased as people started making their way to pub, cafe or station. Wigeon, Shoveler and Mallard, Curlew, Lapwing, Redshank and a dozen Greenshank, Godwits, 3 very smart-looking Grey Plover, a few Ringed Plovers and – highlight for some of us – about 50 Avocets. A few people managed to pick out a Knot and a Turnstone.

On the path back to the station we added Cormorant, Meadow Pipit and a Common Gull conveniently posing alongside a Black-headed Gull for comparison. We had seen two Stonechat earlier but to most of us they were simply silhouettes. In a delightful end to an enjoyable Local Outing we had two excellent views of a female Stonechat perched in the sunlight.

MBS Local Outing to Two Tree Island 19 October 2019 Sunny day. 21 people. Jean Clarke leading.

tax order	SPECIES 48	NUMBER	COMMENT
1	Brent Goose	x	Large flocks
2	Canada Goose	x	Seen only by one or two people
14	Shoveler	x	
16	Wigeon	x	
17	Mallard	x	
19	Teal	x	
52	Little Egret	x	
55	Cormorant	x	
66	Moorhen	x	
67	Coot	x	
70	Oystercatcher	x	
72	Avocet		50
73	Lapwing	x	
75	Grey Plover		3
76	Ringed Plover	x	
81	Curlew	x	
83	Black-tailed Godwit	x	
84	Turnstone	x	
85	Knot		1
89	Dunlin	x	
97	Redshank	x	
99	Greenshank		12
101	Black-headed Gull	x	
105	Common Gull	x	1 clearly identified alongside a Black Headed Gull
110	Lesser Black-backed Gull	x	
140	Green Woodpecker	H	
127	Woodpigeon	x	
148	Jay	x	
149	Magpie	x	
152	Carrion Crow	x	
157	Blue Tit	x	
158	Great Tit	x	
161	Skylark	x	
166	Cetti's Warbler	H	
167	Long-tailed Tit	x	
169	Chiffchaff		3
180	Wren	x	
183	Starling	x	
185	Blackbird	x	
191	Robin	x	
197	Stonechat	x	Some silhouette views but on homeward path 2 good females
199	House Sparrow	x	
200	Dunnock	x	
203	Pied Wagtail	x	
204	Meadow Pipit	x	
207	Chaffinch	H	
213	Linnet	x	
217	Goldfinch	x	Several flocks
221	Reed Bunting	x	

Comma Butterfly, Red Admiral Butterfly