

Weeting Heath & Lakenheath 9/6/18

Andrew reported:

33 of us arrived at Weeting Heath, greeted by hordes of singing Skylarks, and a flyby Green Woodpecker. Normally the heat haze is an issue; today it was the tall vegetation, a result of undergrazing by the disease-ravaged rabbit population. The East hide had Lapwing, Stock Dove, Skylark, Buzzard. From the West hide, the 'target bird' - 2 Stone Curlew, hard work, but eventually seen by all. Also Curlew, Lapwing, and a Red-Legged Partridge on a post. There were some lovely things in the moth trap: including pine and small elephant hawk moths, and a buff-tip.

Lakenheath was knee-deep in 'scratchy' Reed Buntings, with Whitethroat and Blackcap. Cuckoos called continuously. We saw several flying including, unusually, a brown female making the bubbling call. From the first hide we heard /saw a Kingfisher, our first Hobby hunting low over the reedbeds, Reed Warbler, Oystercatcher, and a large flock of Mallard. There were Bearded Tits pinging and flying around the Mere Hide. We also had great views of a male Marsh Harrier displaying: wings folded, diving dramatically with its feet dangling, followed by a mid-air food pass to the female. In this stretch, several views of Bittern flying low to and from their nests. From the viewpoint, good views of several Marsh Harriers and Hobbies, another Kingfisher, singing Sedge and Cetti's Warblers, Common Tern, Cormorant and Grey Heron. Returning along the riverbank, a Great Spotted Woodpecker, on the pools there were Shelduck, Gadwall and Shoveler, with numbers of Mute Swans, several Swifts and a couple more Hobbies.



On Twitter Dilshan posted his photo of the Bittern with the comment:

"Big thanks to @BirdsMBS for putting together some fantastic trips. Lakenheath was a great way to end the season and today despite the cloud cover I managed decent shot of this Ghost."

This was much liked and re-tweeted including by Charlie Farrell who commented:

"Yes it was a great trip, and the Bittern views were even better than I managed at Minsmere. Great photo too!"