

Bedfont Lakes, Tuesday 21st November 2023

This is the list of birds that were seen by some of us – many flew briefly never to be seen again, high up in the trees, across the lake or in the foliage!

Blackbird, Coot, Cormorant, Carrion Crow, Tufted Duck, Dunnock, Gadwall, Canada Goose, Egyptian Goose, Greylag Goose, Great-crested Grebe, Grey Heron, Jay, Kingfisher, Mallard, Magpie, Ring-necked Parakeet, Pochard, Robin, Shoveler, Mute Swan, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Cetti's Warbler, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Green Woodpecker

We were quite a large group this morning on a reasonably dry, but cloudy day. It only began to drizzle on our way back. We were shown round by two rangers – Steven and Cameron. Steven had walked the site earlier so was able to point out things of interest or any unusual sightings to look out for. As we had arranged a group visit, we were able to access the private site which is not usually available to non-members.

The whole site was dominated by very noisy Ring-necked Parakeets who were seen flying across in large groups and perching up high in the tall willow trees, making a large variety of different calls.

We stopped at a small clearing where several bat boxes had been placed on the trees. Steven told us that three varieties of Pipistrelle bats lived on the site – the common, soprano and Nathiusus. The Nathiusus is slightly larger than the, much more commonly found, other two varieties. Although the pipistrelle is the most common bat in Britain it has been declining in recent years, so it is good to know that they are breeding here. The site is also a good site for grass snakes and other reptiles.

As we were standing looking around the loud call of a Cetti's Warbler was heard in the reeds. Then the call of a Great Spotted Woodpecker. It was seen briefly at the top of a tree but then flew off. As we walked further along towards a lake a Grey Heron flew across. We had different views across the lake and saw Tufted Ducks, Gadwall, Pochards and a Cormorant. Sadly again, a Kingfisher only gave some of us a brief appearance as it flew across.

Near the playground three juvenile Mute Swans were parading proudly along. Another view of the lake showed us 7 more Swans, 4 juveniles and 3 adult. There were Mallards interspersed with Coots and Tufted Ducks. A Pochard who seemed asleep was perched on a branch near the water's edge, very well hidden as he was so still. Another bird who was also nearly invisible was the Grey Heron on the Tern raft who just stood completely immobile. There were two Cormorant at the edge of the lake near the reeds. Two Great-crested Grebes, which we think were an adult and a juvenile, kept diving and reappearing somewhere later in the lake. A Magpie flew over the lake.

Near one of the hides we saw a strange fungus on the dead wood of the fence which we were told was King Alfred's Cake

As we moved away from the lake toward the hill a Green Woodpecker gave its call. A flock of several Canada Geese along with 3 Greylag Geese were grazing on the field. One Greylag was

moving along all on its own at the top of the hill. We had another brief look at the lake and again there were Mallards, Tufted Ducks and Coots swimming together. An Egyptian Goose strutted across the path behind us. Stephen T spotted a Shoveler swimming along at the far side of the lake.

And, a Robin posed beautifully on a post.

Walking back, we could hear lots of sounds of various Tits, but were soon able to see groups of Long-tailed Tits together with Great and Blue Tits flying in and out of the foliage and to the other side of the path. And right at the end of our walk a Jay was hopping about on a grassy mound near the car park.



Nathusius' Pipstrelle bat (Google)



King Alfred's Cake fungus (Google)



Group (JR)



Group (JR)



The Lake (JR)



Posers (JR)



Robin (JR)



Swans (JR)