

Newsletter 13

The thirteenth meeting of the ILB's was held on 20 March 2018 at Belfairs Woodland Centre and 11 ladies plus Kris Mee attended.

Indoor Meeting:- Chris Ward's talk about garden birds was very entertaining and we were told that the male blackbirds seen with yellow beaks are likely to be resident and the male blackbirds with brown beaks are thought to be Scandinavian if not juvenile. When dunnocks mate it takes 1/10 of a second and Chris does not wish to come back as a dunnock. If a pair of blue tits have ten chicks who each eat 50 caterpillars a day and take 20 days to fledge that isa lot of caterpillars!!

Local Sightings:- Eight shorelark were seen on Wallasea on 23 February and yesterday, 19 March, there were four white fronted geese, one pink footed goose and a scaup. In Gunners Park on 12 March a serin was seen and yesterday two little gulls. Four hawfinch were reported in Pound Wood in the tree tops south of the main path on 18 March.

Outings:- The walk at South Fambridge was cancelled because of the snow but three hardy people turned up anyway and saw 33 species. The walk at Warley Place yesterday was cold but 12 people including 2 ILB attended and 22 species were seen including buzzard, coal tits and nuthatches. The daffodils however were under the snow and a bit droopy.

Fourteen ladies so far have signed up for the lunch at the Royal Oak on Thursday 19 April at 1pm and thirteen have not yet responded. If you wish to join us please could you let me know as soon as possible with your menu choices and a cheque for £20.

The ladies were told that from April this year RSPB reserve managers would be able to identify projects for which funding is required. Local groups could then donate to one of these projects or fund-raise for a project specifically. The local group is thinking of having a quiz night later this year so with this in mind perhaps the ILBs could enter a team or three.

There are now 39 ILBs in the group so the administrative work has increased. It is a concern that the work is all the sole responsibility of one person. It was agreed that several ladies would undertake small tasks to help.

It was also suggested that ladies who attend the coffee morning each be asked about places they have visited or sightings that may be of interest to the rest of the group.

After the ladies had left Alison explained about swift boxes that are being made which will be fixed to the woodland centre. It is hoped that these boxes will transmit swift calls to encourage the birds to use them and cameras with a feed to the EWT website. Red tape, unfortunately, may prevent this all being achieved before the swifts arrive in May. Alison has sponsorship for two boxes and wondered whether the ILBs would like to be involved. Plaques will be put up inside the centre with the names of the sponsors so although the group cannot be identified as RSPB it could be named as The ILBs. There may be a possibility of purchasing a swift box from the maker for domestic use later.

The next indoor meeting is Wednesday 4 April at the Belfairs Woodland Centre and unfortunately the speaker has cancelled so unless Jenny can secure an alternative Graham will be the stand-in.

The next walk is at EWT Abberton Reservoir Monday 16 April meet at Layer Breton Causeway at 10.00am. There is a visitors' centre with café and toilets on the reserve.

The next Essex Wildlife Trust meeting is the AGM on Thursday 23 March and the speaker has also cancelled but Graham is unable to step in for this due to a prior arrangement.

Any lady requiring transport to attend Indoor meetings or to go on any field trip or to get to an EWT Meeting please contact Kris Mee.

The **next ILB meeting** is scheduled for **17 April 2018** 10:00am for a walk or else 10:30am at the Belfairs Woodland Centre, Eastwood Rd North, Leigh on Sea, which can be reached from Eastwood Road North on the 29 bus.

Alight at the Co-op and continue along Eastwood Rd North, past the traffic lights and the Green House Restaurant and turn right down the track on the bend before the children's playground and the three flags. It is safer to cross the road at the traffic lights and not on the bend. The Belfairs Woodland Centre is at the end of the track where there are also car parking spaces.

This newsletter will be available on the local group website at :-<http://www.southendrspb.co.uk> . Click on ILBs on the Menu Bar