

# Bird Watching Group

## Visit to Slimbridge Wildfowl and Wetland Trust Reserve 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

We arrived at Slimbridge by coach and started off with mince pies and a drink of mulled wine as we left the coach, thanks to Hilary.

We were also met by members of the WWT who gave us a talk on the history of the trust and what to see at the reserve. It was founded at Slimbridge by Peter Scott in 1946 then known as the Severn Wildfowl Trust. There are now 9 WWT reserves across the country.

There were 23 three of us in the group. Some of us decided to bird watch seeing the wild birds around the reserve, especially the winter visiting geese, swans and ducks. Others decided to go on a conducted walk and spend more time viewing the collection birds.

Those in the bird watching group started at the Estuary Hide overlooking the Severn Estuary. On the way there and on the estuary we saw:- water rail, moorhen, coot, mallard, pheasant, Canada goose, bar-tailed godwit, barnacle goose, lapwing, woodpigeon, crow, black-headed gull, herring gull, lesser black-backed gull, common redshank,



Bewick's swan, mute swan, blue tit, chaffinch, and reed bunting. Also, cormorant, common crane, grey heron, shelduck, and greylag goose.

On the way back to the centre we dropped in to a number of hides seeing new birds including:- Pintail, wigeon, pochard, jackdaw, meadow pipit,



*Bewick's swan (John Foulds)*

*Water rail (John Foulds)*

blackbird, common teal, tufted duck, common snipe, shoveller, Egyptian goose, knot, and black-tailed godwit.



*Teal (Rob Nicholas)*

Most of the group met at the centre cafe at lunch time. After lunch the bird watching group visited the other half of the reserve passing through the collection birds.

Outside the collections our new birds for the day were:- goldfinch, great tit, gadwall, robin, dunnock, common buzzard. stonechat, and long-tailed tit. 44 wild birds were seen in total.

Report: John Foulds

Those of us who chose a more leisurely walk around the reserve enjoyed a tour given by Fen Marshall. We saw numerous birds in the collection, including a variety of flamingos from different parts of the world displaying various shades of pink. Others that were of interest were the pintails, smews and eider ducks, as well as the avocets.

At the end of our tour we were captivated by the antics of two North American otters.

After lunch some of us walked to the hides to view the wild birds and try and see the kingfishers and water rail. Sadly, neither appeared. Another group visited the Scott House Museum, Peter Scott's former home.

Hilary Brown