



Update No. 13

Jan 2015

The Good, the Bad, and the Sad

Chairman's message.

First the good. 2014 was, in many ways, a good year for Birding For All. Throughout the year... largely due to the efforts of our social media team more people joined up than for many years.

The British Bird Fair also saw changes with efforts made to make our stand more accessible and inviting. As ever it was fantastic to meet members, sign up new ones and help spread the word about ensuring all reserves maximise their potential to *all* visitors. The BBF is also our one time to meet and catch up with our patrons... many pictured in this update.

We had a good year when it came to working with service providers. A number of reserves now sport new paths, hides and other improvements created with our input.

Now the bad, on the minus side one or two organisations are not listening to their members and cannot see the benefits of better access. We also need MORE input from members willing to assess reserves – details elsewhere in Update.

Funds raised were lower than before; raffle receipts were particularly disappointing... when prize values far outweigh money raised its time to re-think – details elsewhere in Update.

Lastly the sad, our membership obviously includes some older birders and we have heard of the sad news of some who are no longer with us. It was also saddening to hear of the death of Derek Moore one of our newer patrons a remarkable man – his obituary is elsewhere in Update.

Despite the bad and the sad we are hoping that 2015 is our best ever year and that you readers will tell us how you want the BFA to be!

Bo Beolens - Chairman/Founder



BIRDING FOR ALL

Registered Charity no 1091755

Promoting Barrier Free
Access for all Birders

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LATEST NEWS

- We now have some Social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook (see inside for more details)
- Best Practices document now available for download as a PDF—ideal for reserve wardens.
- New Patrons added including the lovely Iolo Williams — more details inside.



Iolo Williams meeting volunteers (Phil & Zoe) at the British Bird Fair

NEW PATRONS



Tristan Reid and daughter

At the British Bird Fair 2014 we were lucky enough to convince four more, well known, birders and naturalists to join our ranks as patrons. They are, in no particular order:

Iolo Williams, (pictured Top) welsh naturalist and TV presenter. Iolo was very quick to agree to join our cause once Phil (who spends a lot of time helping out at Conwy RSPB) explained what we were all about.

Clinton Banbury, Clinton is a well known artist in the birding

world, his comical cartoons have graced the pages of a number of RSPB calendars over the years and are a real breath of fresh air.

Tristan Reid, (pictured left) most British birders will know Tristan, if for nothing more than in his alter ego as the Inked Naturalist, his work in getting huge numbers of tattoos aimed at raising money for Turkey's wildlife. As well as for his 1000 miles in memory of Martha that will make him well known to many.

Neil Glenn, (pictured right collecting his prize, he became a patron later) writer and tour guide, most people will know him for his guide to Norfolk, but it's hard to miss him at the Bird Fair as he seems to be forever running around.

Thank you to all of our new patrons, your support is most welcome.

Bird Fair Raffle Results

This years big winners at the British Bird fair were:

- * Mrs S Arlow (Swarovski Bins)
- * Neil Glenn (Opticron Scope)
- * Gary Carter (Original Water-colour)
- * Graham Jones (Signed Books)
- * R Keye (Hen Harrier Day T-Shirt)

Congratulations to all our winners.



First Prize Winner



Second Prize Winner



Third Prize Winner



2015 Raffle Prizes

We already have our prizes for this year, and here they are:

- * Swarovski CL Companion 8x30 binoculars (rrp £830)
- * Opticron Telescope 50 ED45 (rrp £299) with x45 wide angle eyepiece (rrp £99)
- * Bill Oddie original Drawings
- * Commissioned Painting by Ian Griffiths
- * Behind the scenes tour of Elmley national nature reserve (Kent)
- * Stack of Signed Books

Tickets are £1 each (but what value if you win!).

This year we are selling tickets outside of the bird fair, we no longer wanted those of you who are unable to make the bird fair to miss out.

If you would like some tickets for yourself, or better to sell to your friends, please contact us at:

bo@fatbirder.com

SOCIAL MEDIA

After the British birdwatching fair in 2013, one thing was pretty clear; Birding For All needed a better web presence.

While our website was informational there was no interactivity with our members, and so it was that I took charge and quickly set up social media accounts - [@birdingforall](https://twitter.com/birdingforall) (Twitter) and www.facebook.com/birdingforall (Facebook) - Our followers and likers on social media are slowly growing and this has allowed us to communicate far more with our members, including some live tweeting and posting from 2014's British Bird Fair (limited only by

poor 3G service).

Of course the website has had a few tweaks as well. Notably we've added a membership sign up form (something missing) which can also be used to update your details if they have changed.

We want to be able to keep in contact with all our members, in the best ways possible so please do take the time to alter details if they have changed and don't forget to link up with our Facebook or twitter profiles.

*Contributor: Ashley Beolens .
ashley.beolens@birdingforall.com*

NEW BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

Over the course of 2014 Birding For All completed the work on a best practice guide (detailing accessibility) for reserve managers and wardens.

This ten page document (available for download from our website or Facebook page) is designed to give reserve managers the details of how we believe reserves should be being setup in order to allow excellent levels of access for all.

The booklet includes details on:

- * **Hides.** Detailing, wheelchair access, leg room, ledge height, viewing slot and removable benches;
- * **Footpaths.** Including surfaces, widths, gradients, boardwalks and overhangs;
- * **Ramps.** Detailing gradient, width, platforms and surface.

- * **Gates.** Detailing various versions
- * **Benches.** Including ideal placement and types.
- * **Parking.** Including details on view points and active monitoring.

The actual release was timed to coincide with the British Bird fair at Rutland, so as to allow us to actively hand out a number of copies directly to nature reserve managers.

So far we have had nothing but good feedback and hopefully it will become a "go to" guide.

We urge you to Please pass on this information to your local nature reserves

*Contributor: Ashley Beolens .
ashley.beolens@birdingforall.com*

DEREK MOORE OBE OBITUARY



Derek Moore, who sadly passed on October 23rd aged 71, was for three decades one of the pioneers of modern nature conservation in Britain and one of our recent (2013) Patrons.

He will be remembered for his robust but jovial manner, his visionary approach to safeguarding wildlife and their homes, and a deeply held belief that nature can and should be central to our lives.

He influenced several generations of younger conservationists, including the TV naturalists Chris Packham and Mike Dilger.

Born in Beccles, Suffolk, on New Year's Day 1943, and educated at the town's Sir John Leman Grammar School, Moore became interested in birds as a child. He was encouraged by a chance encounter with an ornithologically inclined schoolmaster, G B G Benson, who in those more innocent days regularly took him birdwatching at weekends.

In his spare time he helped build the famous "Scrape" at Minsmere, the first example of the creation of a new habitat from scratch – a revolutionary idea Moore later advocated himself.

In the mid-1980s, Moore was asked to apply for a new role as the first professional director of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust (then the Suffolk Trust for Nature Conservation). He was unsure about taking on the new challenge, which meant halving his salary. He left the decision up to the redoubtable Beryl, who encouraged him to accept what he always described as his "dream job", which he began on his 42nd birthday.

Moore also pioneered the concept of habitat offsetting, when he forced the developers of the container port at Felixstowe to compensate for loss of saltmarshes by building a nature reserve next door – again, standard practice today.

In 2001, at the age of 58, Moore took on one last professional challenge: to merge the two neighbouring wildlife trusts of West Wales and Glamorgan. This involved leaving his beloved Suffolk and heading for pastures new; he and Beryl settled in mid-Wales, where he immediately began finding rare and unusual birds for the area. They also spent time at their second home in southwest France, where he enjoyed more exotic birdlife including bee-eaters and little bustards.

Just over a year before his death, he finally published his memoirs:

Birds: Coping with an Obsession. A no-holds barred account of the challenges of modern nature conservation, and his birding exploits around the world, it had forewords by both Bill Oddie and Chris Packham.

Both hailed Moore as a maverick and rebel who worked within the conservation establishment to make things happen – making a real difference to Britain's wildlife.

Moore remained a passionate birder to the end. Even as he lay in his hospital bed in Carmarthen, he managed to see almost 40 different species through the window – proof, if any were needed, that birds would always be his first and last love.

Beryl, their children Jeremy and Bronwen, and grandchildren Morris, Tara and Holly, survive him.



Derek Moore OBE.

Derek Raymond Moore, conservationist and birder: born Beccles, Suffolk 1 January 1943; OBE; married Beryl (one daughter, one son); died Carmarthen 23 October 2014.

Originally printed in the Guardian newspaper but altered slightly for here.

CONWY RSPB RESERVE

RSPB CONWY,
CONWY,
LL31 9XZ
Phone Number: 01492 584091
Email: conwy@rspb.org.uk
Website: rspb.org.uk

Access (Transport)

By car; The reserve is right next to junction 18 of the A55.

By rail; Llandudno Junction station is less than a mile away. A map to the reserve is on posters at the station.

By bus; the nearest bus stop is the number 27 at Tesco, just over the roundabout from the reserve.

Parking & Toilet Provision

There is a large car park at the reserve with 8 blue badge spaces, a spacious accessible toilet in the Coffee Shop, only a short walk from the car park. There are also toilets on the outside of the Coffee Shop.

Opening Hours

The shop and visitor centre is open every day (except Christmas Day) from 9.30 am-5 pm. The coffee shop is open from 10 am-4.30pm

Admission Charges

Members: free.
Non-members: adults £3,
concessions £2, children £1.50.
Family ticket £6.50.

Habitat & Facilities

There is a visitor centre which also contains a shop, where you can buy all sorts of wildlife related items, books, bird food etc. You can pick up a map of the reserve here and there are always staff and volunteers on hand to answer questions. There are 3 hides on the reserve which are all accessible and the Lookout, a straw bale building opened in 2013. It often hosts art & photo exhibitions and gives the

some fabulous scenic views.

There are a lot of different habitats packed into a fairly small area, including a reed bed, a wide estuary, shallow lagoons with islands for breeding birds, small woodland areas which, becomes more bushy, and scrubby.

Description of Trails

The majority of the trails have been well upgraded over the last couple of years. They are a quite firm and very easy for wheelchair users to push along. There is a boardwalk which was rebuilt in recent years and is very easy to move on. The paths do get a little rougher as you get towards the Conwy estuary but are still manageable for an active wheelchair user.



Description of Hides

Tal-y-Fan is the first hide you come to after leaving the Coffee Shop. It gives views of the mountain the hide is named after and the magnificent Conwy Castle. The hide is in two halves, the right hand side has newly lowered windows, giving a wonderful view. The wall connecting the two halves of the hide has viewing slots at different heights. The left side of the hide has fairly high windows.

On leaving this hide you arrive at:

Carneddau hide, again named after the mountains you can see

from here. Either side of the hide has viewing screens with holes again at different heights. The hide itself has four low windows for birding the lagoon and its islands.

Continuing along the path by the Conwy estuary you come to:

Benarth Hide named after the woodland across the river. It is up a slope which unfortunately can't be altered as it is part of the essential flood defence. As with all this reserve's hides it has easy, level entry and good viewing.

Target Species

(Depending on Time of Year)

Grey Heron, Little Egret, Mute Swan, Mallard, Tufted Duck, Moorhen, Coot, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Robin, Chaffinch, Bullfinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Dunnock, Pied Wagtail, Blackbird, Starling, Buzzard, Kestrel, Sand Martin, House Martin, Swift, Swallow, Wren, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Cormorant, Curlew, Oystercatcher, Lapwing, Snipe, Black-tailed Godwit, Common Sandpiper, Teal, Gadwall, Goldeneye, Wigeon, Red-breasted Merganser, Kingfisher.

Local rarities have included: Garganey, Scaup, Jack Snipe, Green Sandpiper and Grey Phalarope.

*Contributor: Phil Gatley
Phillip.gatley@sky.com*





BIRDING FOR ALL

Reserve Websites:

FOWLMERE

[http://www.rspb.org.uk/
discoverandenjoynature/
seenature/reserves/guide/f/
fowlmere/](http://www.rspb.org.uk/discoverandenjoynature/seenature/reserves/guide/f/fowlmere/)

LACKFORD LAKES

[www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/
reserves/lackford-lakes](http://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/reserves/lackford-lakes)

SCULTHORPE MOOR

[http://hawkandowl.org/
sculthorpe](http://hawkandowl.org/sculthorpe)

Contributor: Brian Anderson

*email:banderson1550539@aol
.com*

EAST ANGLIA RESERVE ASSESSMENT

In this edition of the newsletter I wish to share with readers my assessment of three East Anglia nature reserves that are very accessible from a wheelchair point of view and, just as importantly, the situation for those nature lovers unable to walk any great distance, continuously.

I am a fulltime, ageing, wheelchair user and so, as I get older, I am finding it more difficult to tackle uneven paths and inclines so, on behalf of Birding for All I have started to visit sites to assess their accessibility both for wheelchair use and walkers.

RSPB FOWLMERE



RSPB Fowlmere Nature Reserve

RSPB Fowlmere is a small nature reserve built around a chalk stream and reed beds. There are 3 hides, and a circular walk, along some boardwalk, of 2-3km can be done to include all the three hides. There is a decent size car park and a small picnic area next to it.

Being owned by the RSPB one would expect that access issues have been taken care of and I can confirm this to be the case.

With fellow trustee – Phil Gatley – we managed to push ourselves all

The three reserves I can report on in this edition I have personally assessed and can confirm that all the hides are accessible with generally good wheelchair viewing apertures from the hides, and have slopes to the hides with inclines that have acceptable limits for manoeuvring a wheelchair.

The three nature reserves described here are Fowlmere RSPB reserve, Fowlmere nr. Cambridge, Lackford Lakes Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, and Sculthorpe Moor Hawk & Owl Trust, Fakenham, Norfolk.

the way around the reserve and enter the hides o.k. with the exception of one of the hides which required a flight of stairs to climb up.

The paths are all firm gravel and, subject to a further assessment, the seating along the paths looked adequate.

The only drawback to a visit is that there were only portaloo toilets which can be a problem for some wheelchair users, but I was told that sometime in 2015 a new building is to be erected that will include adequate facilities.

Once again a report for our website is in preparation but I want to revisit the site and incorporate the latest information.

Finally, comments and advice would be welcomed from members and other readers.

LACKFORD LAKES

This nature reserve is near Bury St. Edmunds and has been developed around old gravel pits over many years. It has very little in the way of boardwalk but all the paths are of firm gravel which would not degrade in wet weather.

For a lone wheelchair user, who is reasonably fit, the paths are all manageable except there may be added difficulty when crossing a couple of footbridges as they slope quite steeply down to the bridge, and of course, rise steeply the other side. I don't think I could manage them alone. If someone is pushing a wheelchair then there would not be a problem.

For the walkers there are a number of seats around the reserve but in my initial assessment more could be provided as the recommended distances between seats are not in

line with best practice. Large parts of the reserve comprise a large lake and an adjoining sailing lake so the pathways around the reserve are not too long for a carefully assessed walking visit.

Once again a hide at Lackford has been improved by raising its level and providing a gentle slope to the entrance door. This is the Steggall's hide and, once again, I will look forward to my next visit to view from it. My last visit to the hide was a disappointment because the viewing slot was too high. At the time of the last visit, in the summer of 2014, this was the only hide out of eight accessible hides that caused problems.

My access report on Lackford Lakes for our website is still in preparation and will be the next item I include on the website.

SCULTHORPE MOOR


This nature reserve on the edge of Fakenham is partly woodland and reed bed and is completely traversed by boardwalk and so is very easy to push a wheelchair around. So a reasonably fit wheelchair user can feel confident, on his own. With someone to push the wheelchair there is no problem. The reserve is not so large as to be a daunting distance for a pusher.

For the walkers I was able to prevail on a member of staff at the reserve to measure distances between the seating dotted around the boardwalk. Generally speaking these distances were within acceptable limits and precise measurements can be checked on the 'Birding for All' website by


navigating to 'Sculthorpe Moor on the reserves pages

In the spring I am looking forward to viewing from a new hide that has been constructed overlooking some reed beds. The boardwalk has been extended to this hide and what makes it unusual is that the hide is raised higher than normal so that a wonderful panoramic view is experienced. Hopefully, the sloping needed to access this higher level will be within wheelchair incline limits. I will update the website when I next visit the reserve.


Much more information is provided on the 'Birding for All' website and also the Hawk and Owl Trust website.



BIRDING FOR ALL



Lackford Lakes



Sculthorpe Moor

Contributor: Brian Anderson

email: banderson1550539@aol.com

BIRDING FOR ALL NEEDS YOU

Birding for all is looking for a couple of volunteers, for specific roles.

Currently we have need of volunteers in the following areas:

Newsletter Editor

This role has been done by the current officers over the years, but we would really like someone who has experience in producing excellent newsletters.

They will need experience gathering articles, formatting newsletters, and generally wrangling contributors.

This is of course a voluntary role.

If you are interested please contact Bo Beolens at bo@fatbirder.com for further details.

Deputy Treasurer

Brian Anderson has been a fantastic treasurer and has done the work by himself for all these years, and now it is time for him to have some support in this role, so we are

looking for a deputy to step up and lend a hand.

Preferably with experience in this type of role or accountancy, you will be aiding Brian in dealing with the charities accounts.

This is of course a voluntary role.

If you are interested please contact Bo Beolens at bo@fatbirder.com for further details.

General Volunteers

We are of course always on the look out for people who can help in other ways, especially in reviewing your local Nature Reserves!

If you can get to your nearest nature reserve and take a look at it from an accessibility point of view then we would love your feed back.

There are forms and pointers for what to look for are available from our website. Or you could use the best practice PDF if that suits you better.



Birding For all volunteers at the British Bird Fair 2014 meeting Jonathan Scott



BIRDING FOR ALL

Potential Birding For All Trip.

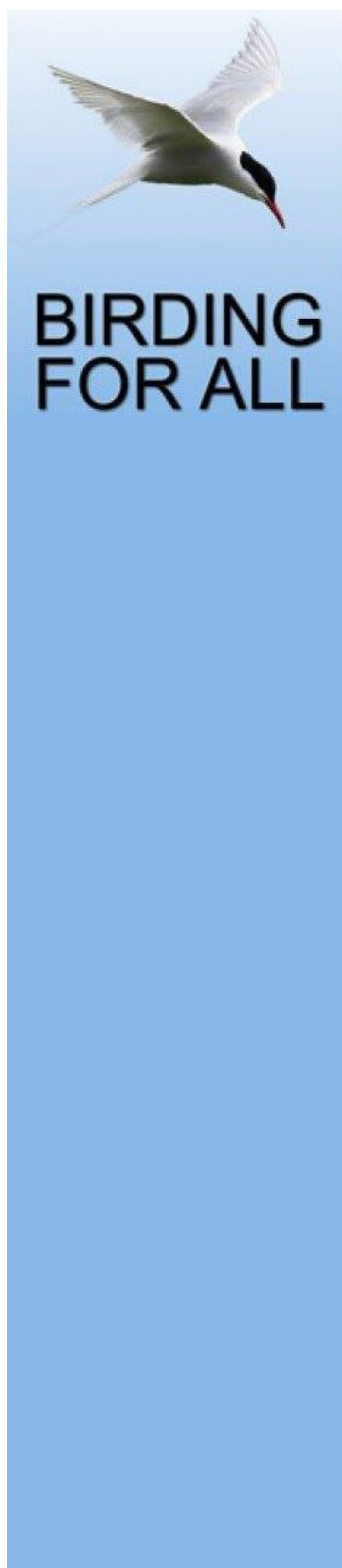
Are you interested in a Birding For All Trip to Extremadura in Spain?

With potential birds: Bee Eaters, Azure-winged Magpie, Blue Rock Thrush, Booted Eagle, Great Spotted Cuckoo to name but a few.

We are considering running a Birding For All trip to Extremadura, Spain, next year 2016, but before we can arrange anything we need to know numbers,.

So if you may be interested then please contact:

Bo Beolens: bo@fatbirder.com



FROM THE TREASURER

Income & Expenditure—April 2013 to March 2014

| <u>Income</u> | <u>Amount (£)</u> | <u>Expenditure</u> | <u>Amount (£)</u> |
|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Bank Interest | 1.35 | Administration | 287.75 |
| Bird Fair Sales | 324.00 | Bird Fair Costs | 2871.76 |
| Donations | 3239.81 | Depreciation | 721.15 |
| Raffle Ticket Sales | 500.00 | | |
| Total Income | £4065.16 | Total Expenditure | £3880.66 |
| Net Income | £184.50 | | |

Balance Sheet 31 March 2014

| <u>Assets</u> | <u>£</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Bank Account | 2445.03 |
| Debtors | 628.94 |
| Total Assets | £3073.97 |
| Liabilities | |
| Accumulated Reserves | 2889.47 |
| Add net income for the year | 184.50 |
| General Fund | 3073.97 |
| Total Liabilities | £3073.97 |



FROM THE TREASURER

BIRDING FOR ALL

(formerly the Disabled Birders Association up to the 4th November 2009)
(Registered Charity No.1091755)

Annual Report

For the year ending 31st March 2014.

This year's annual accounts – as at the 31st March 2014 - shows that we had a total income of £4,065 (last year £1,111) which includes £629 in respect of Gift Aid tax reclaims from the Inland Revenue.

Expenditure came to a total of £3,881 (last year £3,645). This figure includes Bird Fair costs of £2,872 (last year £2,888), £288 on Administration and £721 on depreciation of display equipment which has now been written off as having no residual value.

There was small excess of income over expenditure of £184 (last year expenditure excess amounted to £2,544). The total reserves were increased to £3,074, as compared with last year's reserves balance of £2,889.

Brian Anderson
Trustee and Treasurer
Birding for All

CONTACTS

Chairman

Bo Beolens
bo@fatbirder.com

Treasurer

Brian Anderson, ACIS
banderson1550539@aol.com

Membership & Social media manager

Ashley Beolens
ashley.beolens@birdingforall.com

Members are fully protected under the auspices of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the charities' registered number is Z9186175

Birding For All is a registered charity no. 1091755

Website: www.birdingforall.com

Twitter: @birdingforall

Facebook: www.facebook.com/birdingforall

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Membership Form

| | |
|---|--|
| Title | |
| Forenames | |
| Surname | |
| Address | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Post Code | |
| E-Mail Address: | |
| Full name in block capitals please, as we require your first name(s) to claim back tax from the Inland Revenue | |
| Disability (If any) | |
| | |
| Signed | |
| Date | |
| Please return this form to: Birding For All, c/o The Treasurer, 2 Miller's Croft, | |
| Great Dunmow, Essex. CM6 3AY | |
| GIFT AID DECLARATION | |
| I want Birding For All (Charity No.1091755) to treat all donations I have made since the 1st April 2010 and for all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise as Gift Aid donations. | |
| Donation £ | |
| NOTES: 1. You must pay an amount of income tax and/or Capital Gains tax at least equal to the tax the charity reclaims on your donations in the tax year (currently 25p in each £1 you give). 2. You can cancel this Declaration at any time by notifying the charity. 3. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and Capital Gains equal to the tax the charity reclaims, you can cancel your Declaration (see Note 1). 4. If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self-Assessment Tax Return. 5. If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief ask the charity, or local Tax Office for Leaflet IR65 6. Please notify the charity if you change your name or address. | |
| | |
| Signed | |