

Coach Trip to Cabragh Wetlands in Tipperary

Saturday 14th March 2015

Ten members turned up for this coach trip, most of them suitably attired in their willies, which were definitely needed, and outdoor gear, at 9am and took the hour and a half trip through lovely sunshine to the Cabragh Wetlands Trust. We were met at the centre by Adam and Michael, who provided tea/coffee and biscuits and who showed us around the centre, which was undergoing construction of the new part and renovation of their old building. We were most impressed with the very large viewing area overlooking most of the wetlands.



Adam spoke in glowing terms about Tom Grace, the driving force behind the project, and all the other members who help to keep it going. One of their aims is to preserve the wetlands but in order to do this they need to expand their ownership of the surrounding land, to ensure its viability into the future.

It is an evolving project, they encourage students to use this area to do their studies (PhD's etc) on the ecology to find out exactly what species are there and what they need to do to preserve it. They source native seeds where necessary to plant up areas. One thought they have is to plant an Oak Woodland but this would only be achieved over a few generations, as Adam said "You can plant trees but only time will tell if it will become a woodland". There is a plan to put in a longer walkway so that it will be accessible most of the year to wheelchair users, schools and members of the general public, who might like to explore the various habitats. The pond nearest the centre is

manmade but the rest of the water is natural, some coming from 6 natural springs which come up through the limestone base and the rest comes from flooding of the nearby River Suir. They have an agreement with local traveller families who graze their horses and ponies in a field which helps to stop the growth of bushes and trees; therefore the land ecology is held in check in that area.



The Wetlands have 15 different habitats including ponds, reed swamps, hedgerows, streams and wildflower meadows. After a lovely and copious lunch of homemade soup and sandwiches, we walked through lots more of this fantastic site. We also visited a large hide which gave a view of the river and more of the wetlands. We all contributed to the many species (list below) we saw and had pointed out to us by Adam & Michael. We visited nearby Holycross Cathedral on the way home as we were so near it. The weather was very kind to us with lots of sunshine and not too cold. It was a very enjoyable day.

Species list.

Mallard, Shoveler, Teal, Little Egret, Grey Heron, Peregrine Falcon, Water Rail, Moorhen, Lapwing, Curlew, Snipe, Wood Pigeon, Pied Wagtail, Dunnock, Robin, Stonechat, Blackbird, Wren, Blue Tit, Magpie, Rook, Hooded Crow, Starling, House Sparrow, Chaffinch, Redpoll, Reed Bunting.
Bank Vole.
Alder, Marsh Marigold, Summer Snowflake, Yellow Iris, Rosebay Willowherb, Red Bartsia.
Frogspawn.