

Titchfield Haven

The Titchfield Haven visit on the 17th October attracted 9 club members, who all met up in the car park behind the yacht club at Hill Head. The morning started off still and calm with the tide at its lowest. The group scanned the shoreline and as well as the large number of gathered Brent Geese found all the usual waders, and were successful in tracking down a sleeping Ringed Plover amongst the pebbles. At the harbour several members managed to catch sight of a Kingfisher perched on one of the groynes on the seaward side of the harbour wall. Moving onto the reserve we did the boardwalk side during the morning, finding a small party of Chiffchaff around the visitor centre, and 2 more Kingfishers along the River Meon. As it was still calm before the tide change a small flock of about 5 Bearded Tits were seen from the Suffern hide, moving along the tops of the reeds, but as the tide changed the wind picked up, the temperature dropped and these were not seen again. Whilst in the Meadow Hide we were told about a Dartford Warbler feeding on thistles in front of the Knights Bank Hide so we made a dash down there to catch up with this before lunch. After a few moments of waiting, it rather kindly popped right up in front of us and moved away down the fence line, but everyone managed to see it. Lunch was back at some rather nice new picnic tables near the car park overlooking the shore.

After lunch and with the tide at its highest we went over to the scrapes to see what waders had been pushed in. The first hide provided very good views of at least six Snipe, and a good number of Black-tailed Godwits, Oystercatcher, Lapwing, Starlings, Wigeon and Teal. We moved round to two other hides but did not add anything additional to the species list, before making our way back to the cars and journey home. In the end the total number of species recorded reached 53, and despite a chilly wind by the end of the afternoon I think everyone enjoyed a pleasant day at the reserve.

Jon Wilding