

Dear Friends of Crossness Nature Reserve,

Spring migration is underway at Crossness Nature Reserve, with Sunday 3rd April seeing some early migrants. Our first, and earliest, Sedge Warbler, was captured as part of the Dartford Ringing Group's bird monitoring activities for the national BTO scheme. Our earliest ringing record for Sedge Warbler prior to this was 13th April in 2009. Brent and Rainham also recorded Sedge Warbler on Sunday, so the Greater London area is certainly starting to see migrants dropping in.

A Willow Warbler also put in an appearance, singing in the Willow tree near the dipping platform in the Protected Area. There were a number recorded in the London area on Sunday, but the last time we had one this early, was five years ago, when a Willow Warbler was captured at Crossness on the very same day: 3rd April 2011.

The beautifully, elegant Wheatear are also back. Two were captured in this lovely photo by Ian Jackson at the weekend, and Ian also managed to get the Willow Warbler.



Other signs that spring has sprung include display flights of both Skylark and Meadow Pipit over the Cory Fields (unfortunately under development threat); 2 Little Ringed Plover on the West Paddock (pictured, courtesy of Ian Jackson); Chiffchaffs, Greenfinch and Dunnock are singing, and the Canada Geese seem to be claiming their usual spot on the wader scrape island.



SPRING BIRD WALK EVENT:

With all this action going on, you might be interested in a Spring Bird Walk event taking place at 9am on Sunday 24th April. Ralph and Brenda Todd will be leading the walk for us, and we are proposing to start at the nature reserve and then head south for a walk through the Crossness Southern Marsh to look for passerines, before heading back to the nature reserve for lunch. Please expect to be on your feet for 3 to 4 hours, and there is a small stile to climb as we come back along the southern boundary path from Belvedere Road.

If you are interested in attending this event, please book early, because we are restricting attendee numbers to a maximum of 20 to ensure a more enjoyable experience. There are many new members who might wish to take advantage of this introduction to the site. It's free, and a picnic-style lunch is provided in the bird hide at the end of the walk. We will meet at the Protected Area of the nature reserve, and I will be opening the Norman Road gates (Norman Road North, Belvedere, DA17 6JY – gates half way up on the left, past the green shed) for vehicular access at 9am. PLEASE DO BOOK YOUR PLACE via email/phone/text – thank you.

In the meantime, enjoy the start of Spring and I hope members get to see many more migrants.

Kind regards

Karen

Karen Sutton – Biodiversity Team Manager

Thames Water Crossness Nature Reserve
Crossness Sewage Treatment Works
Belvedere Road
Abbey Wood
London SE2 9AQ

Tel: 07747 643958

Email: Karen.sutton@thameswater.co.uk