

Idle Valley Nature Reserve – 17 June 2026

Our field trip in June was to the Idle Valley Nature Reserve near Retford, which is in the care of the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. It is one of the largest nature reserves in the East Midlands and consists of woodlands, lakes, marsh and a Beaver zone. The café overlooks one of the lakes where we found Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Herring Gulls, Cormorants, Greylag Geese, Canada Geese, Mute Swans, Tufted Ducks, Coots, Lapwings, an Oystercatcher, Pheasant, Reed Bunting and Long-tailed Tit. Overhead there were Swifts and Swallows, a Common Buzzard and Kestrel.

We then set off along the River Idle towards Chainbridge Lane and the woods were alive with the sound of bird songs. There were Robins, Wrens, Blackcaps, Willow Warblers, Garden Warblers, Chiffchaffs and Common Whitethroats, all of which were seen. In the reeds on the river side we saw Reed Warblers, Sedge Warblers, Linnets, Goldfinches and a Greenfinch and a Red Kite and Cuckoo flew over. When we arrived at Chainbridge Lane we crossed the river to look at a private lake and were surprised to find three pairs of Black-necked Grebes.



Reed Warbler, Idle Valley

We then returned to the reserve and went to a Viewing Point overlooking the Chainbridge Scrape. In this area there were Pochards, Gadwalls, Mallards, a Little Grebe, Great Crested Grebe, Grey Heron, Black-headed Gulls and Common Terns. A Marsh Harrier was spotted in the distance and Hobbies were flying over. Other birds seen during the day were Jackdaws, Carrion Crows, Rooks, Woodpigeons, Sand Martins, a Stock Dove, Little Ringed Plover, Sparrowhawk and Dunnock. This brought the total species seen to 52.

Ray Daniels
RSPB Lincoln Local Group