



## ***RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY***

### **Chairman's Christmas Walk and Lunch**

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023  
Weather: Heavy Rain  
Walk Leader: Theresa Holden  
Attendees: 10 plus 11 at the Alice Lisle pub

This years Chairman's Christmas Walk was held at Blashford Lakes, in heavy rain. We met at Tern Hide car park and immediately took shelter in Tern Hide, some of us then ventured out to walk over to Woodland Hide. They soon returned back absolutely soaked so the decision was taken to retreat to The Alice Lisle Pub at Rockford Green, Highwood Lane just east of Blashford Lakes and overlooking Rockford Lake. Its where our lunch had been booked, we were joined by a further eleven non walking members for the meal.

Blashford Lakes is a 159-hectare (390-acre) nature reserve north of Ringwood, which is managed by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust in partnership with New Forest District Council and landowners Wessex Water and Bournemouth and West Hampshire Water. It is an internationally important site for thousands of wildfowl and woodland birds, as such it has SSSI, Ramsar, SPA and SINC protection status. The lakes are surrounded by willow, birch and alder woodland, as well as grassland. The site has six bird hides and 8km of rolled gravel paths. The landscape of the reserve has changed dramatically, in less than 100 years it has been farmland, a WWII airbase, motor racing circuit, sand and gravel pits and today is an important nature reserve and water reservoir.

Unfortunately due to the adverse weather conditions not much was seen.

<b>Birds</b>
Great White Egret
Cormorant
Mallard
Grey Heron
Shoveller
Pintail
Coot
Blue Tit
Great Tit
Nuthatch
Blackbird
Robin