**Dawn Chorus Report 1st May 2022**

An overcast and increasingly chilly early morning didn’t deter four members of Lady Bay Bird Watchers help 19 enthusiastic and interested parties to watch and listen to 35 species of bird for a short walk through The Hook.

Dawn Chorus is all about sound and song and noise was already well underway at the meeting time of 05.45. The main ‘targets’ were the warblers and with The Hook playing host to 9/10 of the national breeding birds over the last few years, hope was high that at least 8 would be present. The first birds to be heard within the first 10 metres of the walk were Blackcap and Chiffchaff but with Wrens, Wood Pigeons, Collared Doves, Robins and Great Tits all deciding they wanted to be in on the act, it was not easy at times to distinguish their song. Further down the path Common Whitethroat joined the fray and gave superb displays and views. Their scratchy song was heard many times around the reserve during the walk and it was estimated that at least 10 individuals were involved.

Greenfinch took a while to get going but eventually at least six individuals were singing and just like the Whitethroats gave great views. Goldfinch also made a show with about six birds giving their bubbly song.

Garden Warbler and Willow Warbler began to sing but had moved to the far side of the reserve so their song was very difficult to distinguish as Blackcap and Wren continued their dominance of the proceedings. As the walk approached the central part of the reserve one of our rarer warblers, the Lesser Whitethroat, came towards us singing loudly and circled around us before disappearing to the east. The seventh warbler of the morning gave a special display and was very vocal; unfortunately we’re not allowed to publish its presence in any media outlets during the breeding season but those present will remember it for a long time. Unfortunately our expected eighth warbler, the Sedge Warbler, didn’t show up although they have been heard on the reserve this year. That was it for the warblers; seven is a pretty good number for such a small area.

The ‘jewel’ of the reserve was then heard giving its single call note – the Bullfinch and eventually one of the group found a beautiful male bird low in a Hawthorn tree.

The Tit family was present in small numbers with Great, Blue and Coal Tit all giving varied displays. Coal Tit is not that frequent on the reserve so it was nice to hear at least two individuals.

As we approached the end of the walk, Dunnock and House Sparrow were heard and seen and finally we were given a great send-off by at least three Reed Buntings.

The one bird that was there but didn’t really make its presence felt was the Blackbird – probably enjoys singing much earlier than the start-time.

Lady Bay Birdwatchers would like to thank Friends of The Hook for advertising and organising this event – a thoroughly enjoyable 90 minutes.

Full Bird List

Overhead

Cormorant, Grey Heron, Mute Swan, Canada Goose, Greylag Goose, Mallard, Black-headed Gull, Feral Pigeon,

Heard/Seen

Pheasant, Common Tern, Wood Pigeon, Collared Dove, Swallow, Wren, Dunnock, Robin, Blackbird, 1 Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Common Whitethroat, Garden Warbler, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Coal Tit, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Magpie, Jackdaw, Rook, House Sparrow, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Bullfinch, Reed Bunting.

If anyone would like more information on birdwatching in the area please contact Lady Bay Birdwatchers c/o keith.rainford@ntlworld.com or see their website [Ladybaybirdwatchers.wordpress.com](http://ladybaybirdwatchers.wordpress.com/)