

## OPEN DAY - 12 JULY 2015

It was a warm overcast day with some drizzly showers. But in spite of the weather, we enjoyed a steady stream of visitors and were pleased to meet so many families with enthusiastic youngsters. A lot of work had gone into preparing the site and the exhibits.



**BIRD SPOTTING** was fun throughout the day. Several Friends with telescopes and binoculars helped visitors see the resident birds, including: several Grey Herons; Green Sandpipers; Great Crested Grebes; Mandarin and Greylag and Canada Geese. Passing treats included: Red Kite; Kingfishers and a Common Sandpiper perched with a Green Sandpiper on the rail in front of the hide. We also had a full set of hirundines: Swallows; Swifts; House Martins and Sand Martins flying around. We enjoyed the joy of the children looking through a scope for the first time and the pleasure of all those getting novel close views of the various birds.

The display of the **HISTORY of The LOCAL IRON WORKS** from Roman to Tudor times generated considerable interest and discussions. People reflected on local place names that include "furnace" and "hammer" as well as diggings and ponds that remain from the old industry. Remnants can still be found around the shores of the reservoir. Further information can be found in the [About Weir Wood](#) section in our web site.



The refreshments went down well too.

**MOTHS** captured overnight were resting peacefully in their display boxes for viewing in a separate tent. Most of us do not realise how many different moths we have around us and what intriguing names many of them have. A good variety were on show and proved to be very popular. Special thanks to **Paul Clarke** for his help in providing many of them. An illustrated note on the moth display can be found in the [News](#) section of our web site.



**Whillet's Meadows** were opened up and the rare opportunity to explore them was appreciated by the visitors. Paths cut through the grass led to the pond dipping and the bird ringing. Posters showing likely butterflies, moths and flowers added to the enjoyment and interest.



The **BIRD RINGING** station and nets were set up by the reed bed. Some attractive birds were caught, including: a kingfisher; a treecreeper; a wren and both male and female bullfinches. The visitors were fascinated to see the birds up close and to watch the measuring and ringing process. In particular, the Reed Warblers looked so small in the hand and too delicate to migrate to Africa and back.



Kingfisher



Kingfisher



Reed Warbler

This the record for the ringing session.



Marsh Tit

**Reed Warbler:** 7 new adults, 2 juveniles and 1 retrap of a bird ringed as a juvenile on the open day last year.

**Bullfinch:** 2 new adults - 1 male and 1 female

**Robin:** 1 new adult



**Blackcap:** 1 new adult male and 1 juvenile  
**Wren:** 1 new adult  
**Tree-creeper:** 1 juvenile  
**Marsh Tit:** 1 new adult female  
**Great Tit:** 1 juvenile  
**Kingfisher:** 1 retrap of a female caught last year on the open day as a juvenile  
**Chiffchaff:** 1 new adult female

**POND DIPPING** is always popular. The animals that come up from the hidden world are strange and often surprising when they are identified. All ages of dippers enjoyed catching and trying to work out what they had caught. Several snakes and slow worms were found under the warming sheets. They were kept for a while in a tank so that visitors could enjoy close views.



Young Newt and Blood Worm



Damselfly Larvae - probably Large Red

Thanks very much to **Goughs Pet Store** in East Grinstead who kindly loaned us their large Gazebo for use at our event.

Many thanks to all the Friends of Weir Wood Nature Reserve and all the volunteers who worked so hard to make the open day a success.

**We look forward to seeing you at the Open Day next year.**