

# Field Trip Report

## Sherwood Forest, Budby Common and Rufford Hall

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> February 2025 07:30 to 15:30  
Attendees: 12  
Sunrise: 07:30  
Hightide: na  
Weather: (07:30): Overcast with light rain, Temp 1 deg C, Wind 2mph E  
(12:30): Overcast, Temp 3 deg C, Wind 7mph SE  
Species Count: 28

### Part I

Local information had indicated that the best time to pick up Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (LSW) was before 9am, hence the early meeting time which required a very early start for those travelling down from East Lancashire. As the Sherwood Forest visitor's car park was closed at this early time, we met at a layby on the B6034. The weather was not promising as we walked off into the forest in the direction of The Major Oak, which was where members of the group had seen LSW the previous year. As the light improved there was increasing woodland bird activity, and we had good views of Great Spotted Woodpecker, Green Woodpecker and Marsh Tit, but despite searching for two hours there was no sign of the hoped for LSW.

### Part II

After admiring (if that is the right word) The Major Oak and with the weather deteriorating, we decided to walk on to Budby Common in the hope of finding Woodlark. However, with the drizzle turning to light rain and the light becoming poorer the hoped for Woodlark were not found, and all we saw was a damp Kestrel sitting in a tree. We then decided to return to the cars (by a circuitous route) and drive to the Sherwood Forest visitor centre, for refreshment and to warm up. With the weather slightly improving we now travelled to Rufford Hall, in the hope of finding Hawfinch.

### Part III

After paying the charge of £6 per car, we parked in the car park and began scanning the trees for Hawfinch, which unfortunately appeared to be absent. However, a flock of Redwing gave good views in an adjacent field. The group then set off on a short walk around the grounds of the hall and the walled garden. By 2pm we felt that we had exhausted the birding possibilities, and it was time to finish the trip...at this point (with

a cry of “Hawfinch” from a couple of the group) a female Hawfinch appeared at the top of a tree above our heads. The bird flew towards the staff car park with the ELOC birders in hot pursuit, where we were rewarded with good views of male and female Hawfinch, both in the trees and under the staff cars.

With a long drive back to East Lancashire, it was now time to finish this outing. The weather had been challenging, and we had ‘dipped’ on two of our hoped for species, but we had finished on a positive note with the Hawfinch and, as always, the companionship of the group had made for an excellent day out.

Many thanks go to Nigel and Glenn for their work in preparing and leading the trip.

### Species List

Greylag Goose  
Stock Dove  
Woodpigeon  
Black-headed Gull  
Lesser Black-backed Gull  
Grey Heron  
Buzzard  
Great Spotted Woodpecker  
Green Woodpecker  
Kestrel  
Jay  
Magpie  
Jackdaw  
Carrion Crow  
Coal Tit  
Marsh Tit  
Great Tit  
Long-tailed Tit  
Goldcrest  
Wren  
Nuthatch  
Mistle Thrush  
Redwing  
Blackbird  
Robin  
Dunnock  
Chaffinch  
Hawfinch