

# Wildlife Walks in Gedling Country Park 2019

## February and March

**Saturday 2nd February** For the first two walks of the year, on a sunny but cold morning, a total of nine visitors joined Jenny and Rod Fillingham, Mark Tyler and Brian Cluff.



Male sparrowhawk

Immediately we saw a high-flying female sparrowhawk above us. In the trees by the Friends' container, great tits, goldfinches and dunnocks showed interest in the bird table seeds, then a kestrel glided over the Visitor Centre. The solar panels were quiet, but over them small groups of starlings were sighted flying north-east.



Kestrel hovers



Linnets

As we descended to the two ponds, linnets and pipits darted about the shrubs. For the black-headed gulls most of the ponds' surfaces were frozen, but we noticed the new nesting islands and the deeper water of the bottom pond—all the work of the Friends. At the end of the walks, several linnets were seen near cattle by the housing estate.



Mark at the bottom pond

**Saturday 2nd March** A larger group of 17 took the zig-zag path down through the wood, hearing



many skylarks near the new houses, all the way to the reed pond. Here, where the Friends had cleared some channels through the reeds, coots and moorhens were visible.



Viewing skylarks



Walking down to the bottom ponds we noticed raked earth at the path's edge, where badgers had dug for food. Two little grebes were visible on the shallow pond. Just over the small bridge here, we pointed out the narrow sloping path on which dingy skippers, small coppers and common blue butterflies would be soon basking in the afternoon summer sun.



Dingy Skipper

Further on, at the Park corner, a male and female kestrel briefly appeared, followed by about 14 meadow pipits. By the solar panels, Mark noticed a raven flip upside down, showing its diamond tail. A small yellow coltsfoot was just opening beside the path, not far from an emerging pussy willow. We couldn't see Lincoln Cathedral owing to tree growth. On the way back, Rod revealed the more sheltered area where the bees will be kept in future. In the willow walk, near the playground, several siskins flitted in the top branches, with bullfinches, goldfinches and chaffinches. Excellent views of turkeytail and deceiver fungi, then a tiny wren's nest, completed the walk under a blue sky. Spring was very close.



Pussy willow



Bullfinch



Turkey Tail



Wren's nest



Siskin