

I got out yesterday to Welney Wetlands and Wildlife Trust, just over the border into Norfolk from where I live in Cambridgeshire.

The place was wet. In summer, this whole area is a meadow with the odd pond or two. Now it's part of the Ouse Washes and is doing its job of holding vast quantities of water that would otherwise flood the fens.



The pylon line in the background was designed by my father. I'm not sure whether that counts as a legacy.

It was a day for ducks, of course:



Those mallards looked great in the winter light.

The pochards were out in force:



There is not a female amongst that lot. Almost all of them have the sense to winter in Spain. The males are in Norfolk.

It wasn't just ducks though:



And if you think that lot are just the common house sparrow, the one with the black cheek mark on the bottom left is a tree sparrow - a speciality at Welney and very rare now. Note the lovely chocolate head as well.

But the birds of the day were undoubtedly lapwings and golden plover, which were murmuring with each other.

This was amazing, and maybe a mile distant:

This is enlarged:



The lapwing are at the bottom and the smaller golden plover are above. They always do it that way. I have no idea why - and have not found an answer.

One of the exciting features of lapwing murmuring is when they turn and reveal their white bellies:



That is blown up a lot - but I don't care - this was an amazing sight. I reckoned there were maybe 5,000 lapwing in the air and 3,000 golden plover.

A great birdwatching session. Nature is a great restorative.