

Going wild at Welney

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Yesterday was ideal for an afternoon of birdwatching with some photography thrown in. We were at the Wetlands and Wildfowl Trust's Welney reserve, near Ely.

Let's start with butterflies, although these pictures were actually taken a week ago, as no butterflies were so cooperative yesterday, even if they were around. This is a peacock butterfly:



And, in the middle of this image is an orange-tipped butterfly, with its wings closed, which shows just how well camouflaged it is:



And then it opened its wings to show off its glory. I especially like these butterflies at this time of the year:



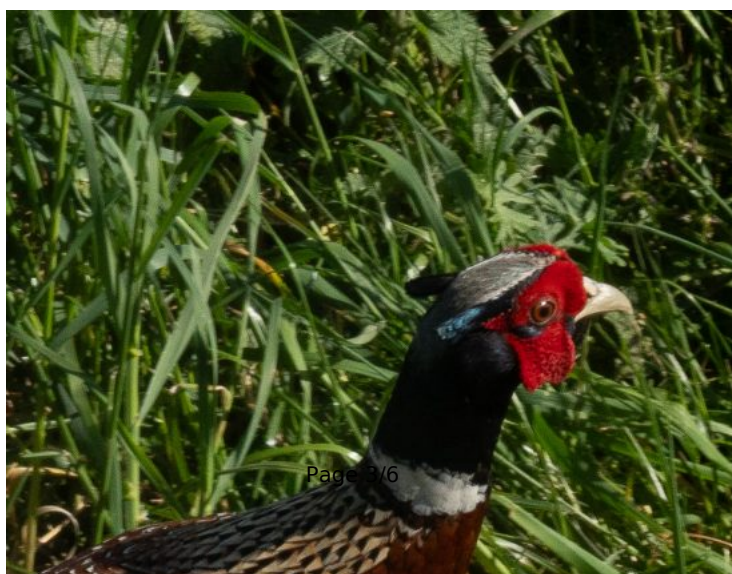
Summer residents at Welney include cows, brought in to graze the land that is flooded in the winter, but which is a meadow in the summer. These were on a bank, appearing to be on the horizon:



At the special request of one reader, this is a second view of them by the drain that is integral to control of water in this area:



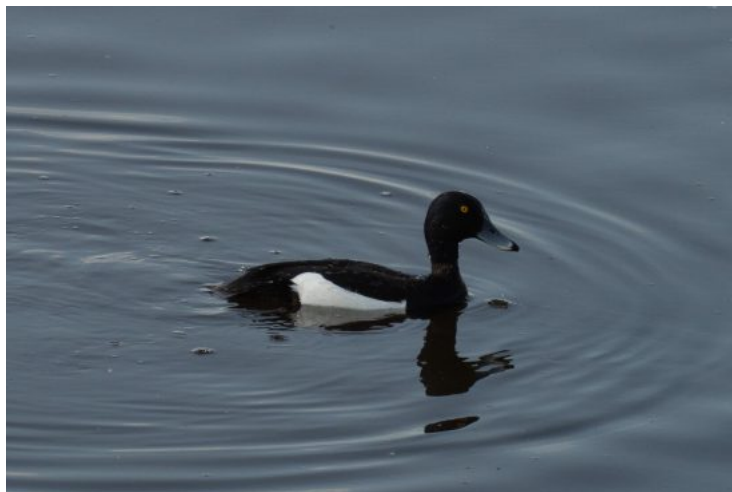
There are other imports, including pheasants:



Dominating what is called The Lady Fen are avocets, who are breeding in some numbers (and I am aware that I have pushed this image to its limits):



Other residents include tufted ducks:



There is also an increasingly successful black-tailed godwit breeding programme. This one was striding out to take on a herring gull that had appeared and was, presumably, threatening other eggs or chicks:



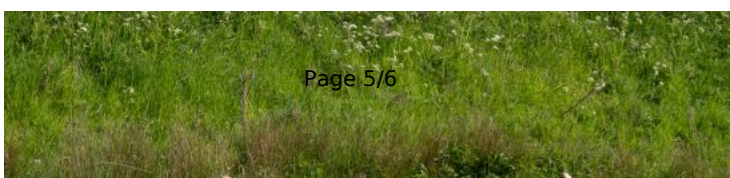
More familiar is a heron:



And then I noted this bullrush, which looks incredible in close-up:



It was one of a number:



Time out is necessary and worthwhile.