

2016 Open Day in the North-west

Cheshire

11th September 2016

Reflections on organising a BWA Open Day

On a visit to Rosemary Sharpe, Rosemary asked if I would arrange an Open Day in the north west. I agreed and it seemed a long way off but the time soon came round and with the help of fellow ornamental breeders, in this area, an Open Day was arranged.

Our day started with a visit to Phyllis Darlington with an excellent spread of home made cakes, tea and coffee. After introductions and a warm welcome from Phyllis and her family everyone was let loose to walk around the gardens and waterfowl enclosure with its wonderful waterfall and many species of ducks.



Phyllis has been breeding waterfowl for a number of years and her enthusiasm for her waterfowl shows in her superb collection and look well in her landscaped waterfowl area. Members were also able to enjoy the wonderful gardens surrounding the house which she keeps in immaculate condition herself with immaculate lawns and the wide variety of shrubs, plants and flowers. Time there passed all too quickly and everyone had to drag themselves away to an excellent Sunday lunch at The Hunters Lodge Hotel.





After lunch we made a change to our original planned visit to visit our collection at Brook House Farm. We went to Trevor Bona's collection set in two acres of grounds, with a variety of ponds. Trevor gave a guided tour, not only imparting his knowledge of waterfowl but also on the many plants, trees and shrubs in this wonderful setting. Not only waterfowl but cranes are able to wander freely around the grounds. It was a great opportunity to see many of the birds that normally would not be found in collection, like the Jankowskis Berwick Swans, Black Spur Winged, Mellors Ducks, African Comb Duck to name a few, together with his collection of cranes - Stanley, Grus-Grus, Canadian Sandhill and Whitenaped.

Without the help of other waterfowl breeders locally in our north west area the day would not have been possible. Our thanks not only go to Phyllis and Trevor but also to Pete Walker who did so much behind the scenes and with parking on the day, as well as imparting his knowledge of waterfowl breeding to visitors. Also our thanks to Sue Maddox, another waterfowl breeder in our group, for helping with the refreshments at Trevor's. The night before my wife Joyce was baking and making sandwiches to take to Trevor's and I thought that I would be eating sandwiches and cakes for several days after, but fortunately everyone tucked in and enjoyed the refreshments before leaving. It was a very enjoyable day with an enthusiastic group of fellow ornamental waterfowl breeders.

We would also like to thank a local artist, Patrick Whalley, who has an interest in waterfowl, and brought with him a picture to raise funds for the BWA. This I auctioned and after some keen bidding went to Morag.

I would also like to thank, BWA President, John Richards and his wife, who travelled all the way up from Cornwall to give his support.

Unfortunately due to the change in programme there was no time to visit our collection as originally planned but if anyone is in the area and would like to visit to see our collection and the system of breeding we use please give us a call.

From our group of breeders here in the Middlewich/Crewe and Nantwich area we thank you for coming and hope you had an enjoyable day.

John and Joyce Crowe.

