

## Bude Aqueduct full length walk

We have never before attempted to walk the whole of the accessible length of the Bude Aqueduct Trail. So, this was a challenge waiting to be taken.

On Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April, four of us started from Lower Tamar Lake at 10:30 with the intention of half time picnic lunch at Dexbeer Bridge.

The weather was kind to us, fairly cool but dry. Our friends were equipped with a phone application that played a recording of Willow or Marsh Tits via a small portable speaker. Both species are recorded in the area, but definitive identification relies on either very close, almost in hand observation or hearing their calls. BTO particularly want definitive records to establish correct distribution mapping.

There were occasional sightings of either species, but none were definitive. Many other species showed themselves and early spring flowers were everywhere. Bluebells and Primroses were still showing, but newly opened Wood Anemone and Wood Sorrel were a delight to see as were the occasional Cuckoo flowers and Lesser Periwinkle. We saw a solitary Peacock butterfly which apart from Pond skaters and Whirligig beetles on Dunsdon Reserve was the only insect life we saw.



**Wood Anemone**

Mammals, usually so elusive were well represented with a couple of Roe Deer seen off the walk in a field but also Grey Squirrel and Rabbits making a guest appearance. Birds were the main species especially with our friends' ability to easily identify birds by their calls. We had a very creditable total of 34 species recorded. All the finches were seen – Goldfinch, Chaffinch, Bullfinch and Greenfinch. Spring visitors were there both Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff. Raptors were represented by a Kestrel and Buzzard high above the woods sparring with each other – coming together and drifting apart for quite a few minutes.



**Roe Deer**

Although quite narrowly confined through a farm, the permissive path was not to be missed probing almost to the Holsworthy road, we went through the cautionary sign advising that we should not deviate from the path all the way to the final – Stop sign.

This is a walk well worth completing, but perhaps not on every visit!

We were probably 4 hours walking, but shuffling vehicles to have one at each end of the walk – well Lower Tamar Lake and Vealand Reserve - and stopping to listen and identify all that we saw makes it a big commitment.



**Marsh Marigold**



**Wood Sorrel**