

# 2017 Spring Open Day

By kind invitation of Mrs Fleur Douetil ~  
Sunday 30th April saw about 30 members gather for the Spring open day at Busbridge Lakes in Surrey, coming from as far as Cornwall, Norfolk and Yorkshire.

Meeting on the terrace in front of the house, members were greeted by president John Richards and Ivor Parrish, with a welcome glass of bubbly. After introductions and catching up with old friends, members toured the grounds admiring a wide variety of birds in excellent condition. Black-necked swans with cygnets, Crowned cranes and Nene families were on show in side enclosures while Demoiselle cranes,



Oystercatchers and many species of geese and duck were free to wander amongst the visitors. An impressive sight, though not entirely welcome at Busbridge, was a pair of Egyptian geese perched 50 feet up a cedar tree. They certainly were striking, calling to draw attention to themselves and commanding position.



Waterfowl folk have plenty of experiences to share. Topics of conversation included the merits (or otherwise) of colour mutations and the dwindling number of large collections in the UK. How can we encourage a new generation of waterfowl enthusiasts? So many important considerations for the future of our hobby.

After the tour members returned to the open barn since the sunshine had given way to



light rain. Here an auction and raffle was held while members indulged in tea and cake. John did an excellent job of auctioning hatching eggs supplied by Ivor from his Copper Marans, Arucanas and Amerucanas. Some did some unintentional bidding, but accepted it with good humour! The raffle prizes included more of Ivors' hatching eggs, artwork and bottles of wine and gin which went down very well!

The afternoon ended with a vote of thanks from our president to Fleur for hosting and Ivor for organising the day. Many of the group reconvened at a local inn for supper to continue the camaraderie, whilst others had to press home for the evening feed.

**Members unable to make the open day it might like to check the website [busbridgelakes.co.uk](http://busbridgelakes.co.uk) to see if they can visit the collection on another of the six days each year it is open to the public. As was discussed on the day, these collections are getting fewer so visit them for inspiration while you can!**

