

# Wild Places of Lincolnshire

Wildlife reserves are wonderful places to paint – as **Bob Armstrong** discovered in a year-long project to document the work and landscapes of the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

**I**t was such a simple idea: An exhibition of paintings inspired by the reserves of the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. I approached the Trust, and we reached an agreement to stage the event at Gibraltar Point Reserve this October to commemorate the Trust's 60th birthday.

Lincolnshire is a large county with a very varied landscape including peatlands, woodlands, meadows, heath and fen, not to mention a 100-mile coastline. The Trust's reserves reflect this diversity.

I started painting early in the new year, eventually completing 22 paintings, constantly aware that each had to have a sense of place. I worked in mixed media – watercolour, ink, acrylic, pastel and charcoal. One painting of a wild day on the coast was completed in inks over a wash of tea, this being my 10-year-old granddaughter's suggestion. We're never too old to



**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE** *After the Harvest in Kirkby Moor; Linwood Warren; Charcoal Burners at Moor Farm; Country Gate in Hatton Meadows; Dark Pool at Linwood Warren.*




learn! My approach to painting Linwood Warren was fairly typical of all the paintings. I only had a simple sketch to work from but concentrated on the bleached winter colours of this wet heath and the distant birch trunks, white against the backdrop of a deciduous

**One painting had a wash of tea, my 10-year-old granddaughter's suggestion**

wood. To create the trees I glued tissue paper on to mountcard and for the foreground other random pieces of paper were glued down with PVA. I used

thin masking fluid to suggest the birches and painted the distance with watercolour and the foreground with acrylic inks, adding a sky with pastel. As a final touch I painted the Scots pines with stronger colours.

I had wonderful moments, seeing foxes and deer, woodland flowers, the saltmarsh ablaze with colour and meadows full of butterflies. It was the birds, though, that made the biggest impact – a singing nightingale, a red kite over the fen and a huge flock of black-tailed godwits waiting for the tide to turn.

This collection is a testament to the dedication of the wardens and volunteers who maintain these precious green spaces for us to enjoy. 

**See the paintings in the visitor centre at Gibraltar Point, Skegness, 17 October – 21 November. [www.bobarmstrongartist.co.uk](http://www.bobarmstrongartist.co.uk)**

