

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

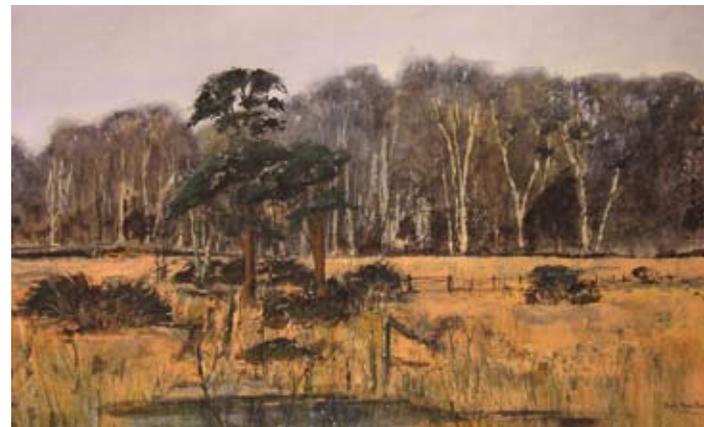
It was such a simple idea: An exhibition of paintings inspired by the reserves of the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. I approached the Trust, and we reached an agreement to stage the event at Gibraltar Point Reserve this October to commemorate the Trust's 60th birthday.

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

