

# New Forest 2006

## Monday 3 - Thursday 6 July 2006

### Trip Report

#### Leader:

Bob Ford

**One of the hottest weeks we have experienced in the New Forest, so of course we saw an abundance of insects, but also plenty of birds including Barn Owl, Woodcock, Nightjar, Mandarin Duck and - the surprise of the week - 45 Eider!**

#### Monday July 3<sup>rd</sup>

Weather: Dry with high cloud in the evening, wind calm.

We started the week's birdwatching at Yew Tree Bottom as night began to fall, just the right time to see Nightjars. We had hardly left the car park before we heard the first one and we soon had prolonged but distant views of it sat on a tree singing. As we were listening to it a squeak was heard behind us and a Woodcock appeared and flew pretty much right over our heads before it continued its roding display flight off into the forest. Walking back to the car park we found a Glow-worm in the bracken and were able to examine it at close quarters with the light of our torches.

#### Tuesday July 4<sup>th</sup>

Weather: Hot sunshine all day.

We braved the heat wave armed with lots of water and explored Acres Down near the village of Emery Down. Birds were hard to find in the heat but we did get brief views of a family of Redstarts and a very mobile pair of Woodlarks, one of which conveniently perched on a tree just in front of us for a few seconds. Meadow Pipits and Stonechats were more co-operative sitting on the tops of bushes and a young Willow Warbler let us have good views of it feeding in the birches.

The pond was alive with dragonflies in the midday heat – mainly Broad-bodied Chasers with several Emperors and singles of Golden-ringed Dragonfly and Common Darter. Common Blue Damselflies were everywhere and we also found a mating pair of Large Red Damselflies. Silver-studded Blues were out on the heath where we also found some interesting plants such as Sundew and Bog Asphodel.

Lunch was had in the shade at Rhinefield, after which we enjoyed a walk round the Arboretum where we saw Giant Redwoods and Douglas Firs along with many much smaller plants including Hard Fern, Tutsan and Common Cow-wheat. An enormous Wood Ant nest was tracked down by following a highway of ants. Butterflies were out in numbers with White Admiral the star find but plenty of Silver-washed Fritillaries and Large Skippers as well. A buck Roe Deer was a most attractive sight as it quietly browsed amongst the trees.

With the temperature at last beginning to drop slightly we risked a trip to the sunny Hatchet Pond, a site famous for dragonflies and rare plants. We added Black-tailed Skimmer and Blue-tailed Damselfly to the list and may have had a brief glimpse of a Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly, but in such hot weather they were just not keeping still enough. Plants here included the very rare Hampshire Purslane along with Lawn Chamomile, Water Plantain and Bog Bean. In one of the muddy patches we found a tiny Toad, just transformed from its tadpole stage. The real rarity of the afternoon was a juvenile Mediterranean Gull which appeared briefly with the Black-headed Gulls on the pond.

After dinner we had a very pleasant walk just outside the hotel to look for owls. Some noisy Blackbirds showed us where to look and sure enough there was a fine Barn Owl sat in the allotments. On the way back we saw a few bats but couldn't really be sure what species they were.

### Wednesday July 5<sup>th</sup>

Weather: Very warm again, with thundery rain in the morning.

After watching the torrential rain all through breakfast we decided to head for the coast to try to find some dryer weather. Keyhaven was still wet but not nearly so bad so we donned waterproofs and headed out for the coastal marshes. In light rain that we hardly noticed we saw lots of birds with particularly close views of Black-tailed Godwits. Curlew, Redshank and Greenshank were also seen well but the Little Ringed Plovers which are a regular breeder here were not so close. Seabirds were also much in evidence with Common, Little and Sandwich Terns and a range of gulls including the rare (but getting more common) Yellow-legged Gull and a very early Common Gull. A Grey Heron was seen grappling with its catch, adding Common Eel to the Travelling Naturalist fish list for the first time.

As the rain stopped and the sun came out the temperature shot up into the high 20's again and the butterflies started to appear in numbers. Several Marbled Whites were seen along with dozens of Small Skippers, one of which turned out to be an Essex Skipper – the first seen on one of these trips.

Lunch was taken alongside the harbour in pleasantly warm conditions, after which we drove off to the other side of the marshes at Pennington. Here we saw several Whitethroats and a Fox around the car park with more Whitethroats further along the path. Reaching the sea wall a real surprise was in store for us in the shape of a summering flock of Eider – 45 in all and a totally unexpected sight at this time of year.



*Essex Skipper – note the black tips to the antennae*



*Poundhill Enclosure at night*

After dinner we joined Paul Hibberd of the Forestry Commission for an evening deer walk at Poundhill Enclosure. A Roe Deer was located in the trees as we drove down the track. From the hide overlooking Queens Meadow we were treated to the sight of a herd of female Fallow Deer with plenty of young fawns. A family of Canada Geese were stood in a wet part of the meadow and were joined later by a pair of young Mandarin Ducks. We had to search outside the meadow for Red Deer, but did eventually find one out on the heath. The walk back to the bus gave us brief views of Nightjar and Woodcock. A bright star near the moon was suspected as being Jupiter, which was confirmed when we found some of its many moons through the telescope.

**Thursday July 7<sup>th</sup>**

Weather: Cloudy with warm sunny spells.

For our final morning we drove to Shatterford Bottom car park near Beaulieu and walked down to Bishop's Dyke, seeing Silver-studded Blues, Stonechats and a Dartford Warbler along the way. A visiting entomologist showed us his catch of flies obtained from the mire nearby. More Redstarts were seen flitting around the trees and a Green Woodpecker gave us a fine view as it fed on ants on the ground.

Reaching the trees of Denny Wood we found several Wood Crickets hopping around the leaf litter. Both Nuthatch and Treecreeper were seen here and dead Beech tree held some fine specimens of *Ganoderma*, the Artist's Fungus. More Silver-washed Fritillaries were seen feeding on Bramble blossom and a Stock Dove provided a constant "hoo-hoo" in the background. A patch of Butcher's Broom was found under the huge Oak and Beech trees.

Walking back through the heathland to the bus we disturbed quite a few pale moths, a species known as the Brown Silver-line. A caterpillar of the much larger Emperor Moth was found walking along the path in front of us.

For our lunch stop we walked into Bolderwood amongst some very majestic Beeches. Marsh and Coal Tits could be heard calling in the trees above us.

Finally we made a brief stop to see the herd of Fallow Deer bucks at the Bolderwood viewpoint. Today they were joined by a small flock of Stock Doves and a Goldcrest which was heard but not seen.

Hope to see you all again soon, either back in the New Forest or in Dorset.

**Bob Ford**

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**Birds:**

Cormorant	KEYHAVEN
Little Egret	KEYHAVEN
Grey Heron	KEYHAVEN
Mute Swan	PENNINGTON
Canada Goose	KEYHAVEN
Shelduck	KEYHAVEN
Mallard	PENNINGTON
Mandarin Duck	QUEEN'S MEADOW
Eider	PENNINGTON
Buzzard	BROCKENHURST
Kestrel	ACRES DOWN
Pheasant	ACRES DOWN
Moorhen	PENNINGTON
Coot	KEYHAVEN
Oystercatcher	KEYHAVEN
Little Ringed Plover	KEYHAVEN
Lapwing	KEYHAVEN
Black-tailed Godwit	KEYHAVEN
Woodcock	YEW TREE BOTTOM
Curlew	KEYHAVEN
Redshank	KEYHAVEN
Greenshank	KEYHAVEN
Mediterranean Gull	PENNINGTON
Black-headed Gull	ACRES DOWN
Common Gull	PENNINGTON
Herring Gull	ACRES DOWN
Yellow-legged Gull	KEYHAVEN
Great Black-backed Gull	KEYHAVEN
Sandwich Tern	KEYHAVEN
Common Tern	KEYHAVEN
Little Tern	KEYHAVEN
Wood Pigeon	ACRES DOWN
Stock Dove	BOLDERWOOD
Collared Dove	BROCKENHURST
Barn Owl	BROCKENHURST
Green Woodpecker	DENNY WOOD
Great Spotted Woodpecker	RHINEFIELD
Nightjar	YEW TREE BOTTOM
Wood Lark	ACRES DOWN
Skylark	KEYHAVEN
Swift	ACRES DOWN
Sand Martin	KEYHAVEN
Swallow	PENNINGTON
House Martin	PENNINGTON
Meadow Pipit	ACRES DOWN

Grey Wagtail	QUEEN'S MEADOW
Pied Wagtail	ACRES DOWN
Wren	ACRES DOWN
Duncock	ACRES DOWN
Robin	ACRES DOWN
Redstart	ACRES DOWN
Stonechat	ACRES DOWN
Blackbird	ACRES DOWN
Song Thrush	RHINEFIELD
Mistle Thrush	DENNY WOOD
Dartford Warbler	DENNY WOOD
Whitethroat	PENNINGTON
Blackcap	ACRES DOWN
Chiffchaff	ACRES DOWN
Willow Warbler	ACRES DOWN
Goldcrest	BOLDERWOOD
Long-tailed Tit	RHINEFIELD
Marsh Tit	BOLDERWOOD
Coal Tit	RHINEFIELD
Blue Tit	ACRES DOWN
Great Tit	PENNINGTON
Nuthatch	DENNY WOOD
Treecreeper	DENNY WOOD
Jay	RHINEFIELD
Magpie	PENNINGTON
Jackdaw	PENNINGTON
Rook	PENNINGTON
Carrion Crow	ACRES DOWN
Starling	KEYHAVEN
House Sparrow	KEYHAVEN
Chaffinch	DENNY WOOD
Greenfinch	ACRES DOWN
Goldfinch	KEYHAVEN
Linnet	ACRES DOWN
Siskin	ACRES DOWN
Bullfinch	ACRES DOWN
Reed Bunting	KEYHAVEN

**Butterflies:**

Red Admiral	KEYHAVEN
White Admiral	RHINEFIELD
Silver-washed Fritillary	ACRES DOWN
Marbled White	KEYHAVEN
Small Heath	KEYHAVEN
Meadow Brown	ACRES DOWN
Gatekeeper	KEYHAVEN
Ringlet	RHINEFIELD
Brimstone	ACRES DOWN
Small White	ACRES DOWN
Silver-studded Blue	ACRES DOWN
Small Skipper	KEYHAVEN
Essex Skipper	KEYHAVEN
Large Skipper	ACRES DOWN

**Moths:**

Brimstone	ACRES DOWN
Brown Silver-line	DENNY WOOD
Cinnabar	KEYHAVEN
Scarlet Tiger	BROCKENHURST
Emperor	DENNY WOOD

**Dragonflies:**

Large Red Damselfly	ACRES DOWN
Blue-tailed Damselfly	PENNINGTON
Common Blue Damselfly	ACRES DOWN
Common Darter	ACRES DOWN
Keeled Skimmer	DENNY WOOD
Black-tailed Skimmer	PENNINGTON
Broad-bodied Chaser	ACRES DOWN
Emperor	ACRES DOWN
Hawker spp	ACRES DOWN
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	ACRES DOWN

**Other insects:**

Wood Cricket	DENNY WOOD
Common Green Grasshopper	ACRES DOWN
Pond Skater	BOLDERWOOD
Great Water Boatman	PENNINGTON
Capsid Bug	KEYHAVEN
Shield Bug	DENNY WOOD
Whirligig Beetle	ACRES DOWN
Soldier Beetle ( <i>Rhagonycha fulva</i> )	KEYHAVEN
Ground Beetle	QUEEN'S MEADOW
Glow-worm	YEW TREE BOTTOM
Solitary Bee ( <i>Andrena</i> )	DENNY WOOD
Wood Ant	RHINEFIELD
Conopid Fly	DENNY WOOD
Dolichopodid Fly	DENNY WOOD
Horse Fly	DENNY WOOD

**Spiders:**

Wolf Spider ( <i>Agelena labrynthica</i> )	DENNY WOOD
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**Mammals:**

Fox	PENNINGTON
Rabbit	PENNINGTON
Grey Squirrel	BROCKENHURST
Roe Deer	RHINEFIELD
Fallow Deer	QUEEN'S MEADOW
Red Deer	QUEEN'S MEADOW

**Amphibians:**

Toad	PENNINGTON
Frog	DENNY WOOD

**Fish:**

Silver Eel	KEYHAVEN
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**Plants:**

Hard Fern	RHINEFIELD
Bracken	ACRES DOWN
Douglas Fir	RHINEFIELD
Giant Redwood	RHINEFIELD
Scots Pine	common
Sycamore	BROCKENHURST
Birch	common
Beech	common
Pedunculate Oak	common
Turkey Oak	RHINEFIELD
Bog Myrtle	DENNY WOOD

Lesser Spearwort	common
Round-leaved Sundew	ACRES DOWN
Sea Beet	KEYHAVEN
Glasswort	KEYHAVEN
Hastate Orache	KEYHAVEN
Sea Purslane	KEYHAVEN
Annual Seablite	KEYHAVEN
Marsh St John's Wort	ACRES DOWN
Tutsan	RHINEFIELD
Mallow	PENNINGTON
Holly	common
Gorse	common
Common Vetch	PENNINGTON
Bramble	common
Tormentil	common
Dog Rose	common
Hawthorn	common
Water Purslane	DENNY WOOD
Hampshire Purslane	PENNINGTON
Ivy	BROCKENHURST
Marsh Pennywort	DENNY WOOD
Japanese Knotweed	PENNINGTON
Creeping Willow	BROCKENHURST
Thrift	KEYHAVEN
Sea Lavender	KEYHAVEN
Bog Pimpernel	DENNY WOOD
Centaury	KEYHAVEN
Foxglove	common
Common Cow-wheat	RHINEFIELD
Bogbean	PENNINGTON
Cross-leaved Heath	common
Ling	common
Bell Heather	common
Bilberry	ACRES DOWN
Water Mint	PENNINGTON
Common Water-Plantain	PENNINGTON