

Dorset

Monday 7 - Thursday 10 May 2007

Trip Report

Leader:

Bob Ford



Our hotel on the shores of the Fleet

Tuesday May 8th

Weather: hazy sunshine most of the morning with a cold north westerly wind.

Fleet, 0900

We started by walking south from the hotel along the shores of the Fleet lagoon. One of the first birds seen was a Whitethroat which later gave excellent views as it sang from the very top of an Elder bush next to the hotel. A Chiffchaff was singing from the nearby trees but could not be located. On the waters of the Fleet itself we found a Whimbrel and several Oystercatchers. A pair of Sandwich Terns flew up and down most of the morning and may actually have been several pairs moving up the coast. The fields held numerous Skylarks and a pair of Stonechats, with a single Brown Hare starting off our mammal list. The edges of the fields supported a good range of flowers in the cabbage family (crucifers) including Charlock, Black Mustard, Wild Radish, Wild Turnip and Hedge Mustard. A Crow Garlic bulb was tasted and found to be very good indeed!

Herbury, 1000

After a welcome break of tea and biscuits on the patio of the hotel we walked out again, this time in a northerly direction towards the headland known as Herbury Gore. A single Bar-tailed Godwit was the only wader seen but this was made up for by the very confiding and beautiful 1 male Reed Bunting. On the shoreline we found some more interesting plants including Sea Milkwort and Shrubby Seablite. Plants of culinary interest included Marsh Samphire and Marsh Mallow.

Radipole, 1430

Probably the best bird here was the Bearded Tit that gave us a fleeting glimpse as it flew across a path in the reeds, but we managed a better view of a Cetti's Warbler, although still only in flight. As usual there was a good range of wildfowl here including plenty of Ruddy Ducks, Shelduck and Gadwall. Flowers were attracting our attention as much as the birds here, the Yellow Flag Irises being particularly gorgeous at this time of year. A Grey Heron in front of the north hide caught a very fine Rudd – a new addition to the Travelling Naturalist fish list!



Yellow Flag Iris at Radipole

Wednesday May 9th

Weather: dull with intermittent light rain and a blustery westerly wind.

Portland Bill, 0930

No Puffins but good views of Guillemots, Razorbills and Kittiwakes with a few fulmars in flight. Offshore was the occasional Gannets and a Whimbrel was spotted as it flew past. Walking back to the bus we saw a few Rock Pipits and a very smart Wheatear.

Verne Naval Cemetery, 1100

Giving up the sea-watching in disgust at the lack of birds, we tried this famous site, always good for a migrant or two. In this morning's blustery conditions we had to be content with listening to their song and hardly saw a single bird. A good range was heard though, the star bird being a Wood Warbler singing in the sycamores around the cemetery. We also heard Blackcap, Whitethroat and Lesser Whitethroat.

Ferrybridge, 1200

Lunch here was had in front of a mixed flock of Dunlins and Sanderling, with a Raven cruising past very close to the bus. Walking out to Portland Harbour we found Sandwich and Common Terns over the sea and some very special plants including the shingle specialists Sea Holly and Sea Sandwort.

Lodmoor, 1400

This proved to be the most birdy site of the day with a long list of new species including Sand Martin, Little Egret and Black-tailed Godwit. The Common Terns were a very popular sight as they displayed and chased each other all over the reserve.



Sea Sandwort



Common Tern

Thursday May 10th

Weather: as yesterday with rain increasing through the afternoon.

Wareham Forest, 1030

For most of us probably the highlight of the week – just think what it would have been like in good weather! We had to work hard for our birds but after a couple of hours of searching we had seen good views of Buzzard, Tree Pipit, Chiffchaff and Cuckoo with reasonable sightings of Redstart, Siskin and Goldcrest.

Durlston Country Park, 1330

The constant rain here kept all birds out of sight although we did hear some very close Lesser Whitethroats. We were really here for the plants though and found some real stars including Green-winged Orchid, Adders-tongue Fern, Rough Hawkbit and a few gone-over Early Spider Orchids.

Looking forward to our next trip out together - in better weather!

Bob Ford

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Birds – 88 species

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|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Little Grebe | Lodmoor, Radipole |
| Great Crested Grebe | Radipole |
| Fulmar | Portland Bill |
| Gannet | Portland Bill |
| Cormorant | Portland Bill, Radipole |
| Shag | Portland Bill |
| Grey Heron | Lodmoor, Fleet, Radipole |

Little Egret	Lodmoor
Mute Swan	Lodmoor, Radipole
Canada Goose	Lodmoor, Radipole
Shelduck	Lodmoor, Radipole
Mallard	Lodmoor, Radipole
Gadwall	Lodmoor, Radipole
Shoveler	Lodmoor
Tufted Duck	Lodmoor, Radipole
Pochard	Lodmoor, Radipole
Ruddy Duck	Lodmoor, Radipole
Kestrel	Ferrybridge
Buzzard	Lodmoor, Wareham Forest
Pheasant	Fleet
Moorhen	Lodmoor, Radipole
Coot	Lodmoor, Radipole
Oystercatcher	Portland Bill, Lodmoor
Ringed Plover	Ferrybridge
Bar-tailed Godwit	Fleet
Black-tailed Godwit	Lodmoor
Whimbrel	Fleet, Portland Bill, Lodmoor
Sanderling	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Dunlin	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Turnstone	Portland Bill
Black-headed Gull	Radipole, Lodmoor
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Radipole
Herring Gull	various sites
Great Black-backed Gull	Portland Bill
Kittiwake	Portland Bill
Sandwich Tern	Ferrybridge, Fleet
Common Tern	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Little Tern	Ferrybridge
Guillemot	Portland Bill
Razorbill	Portland Bill
Wood Pigeon	various sites
Collared Dove	various sites
Swift	various sites
Green Woodpecker	Wareham Forest (heard)
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Wareham Forest (heard)
Cuckoo	Wareham Forest
Skylark	Fleet, Portland Bill
Swallow	various sites
House Martin	various sites
Sand Martin	Lodmoor
Rock Pipit	Portland Bill
Meadow Pipit	Fleet, Portland Bill
Tree Pipit	Wareham Forest
Pied Wagtail	various sites
Duncock	various sites
Wren	various sites (heard)
Robin	various sites
Stonechat	Fleet
Wheatear	Portland Bill

Blackbird	various sites
Song Thrush	Lodmoor
Mistle Thrush	Wareham Forest
Cetti's Warbler	Lodmoor, Radipole
Reed Warbler	Lodmoor, Radipole (heard)
Sedge Warbler	Lodmoor, Radipole (heard)
Whitethroat	various sites
Lesser Whitethroat	The Verne, Durlston (heard)
Blackcap	Wareham Forest (heard)
Wood Warbler	The Verne (heard)
Chiffchaff	Wareham Forest
Goldcrest	Wareham Forest
Blue Tit	various sites
Great Tit	various sites
Long-tailed Tit	Wareham Forest (heard)
Bearded Tit	Radipole
Magpie	various sites
Jackdaw	various sites
Rook	various sites
Raven	Fleet, Ferrybridge
Carrion Crow	various sites
Starling	various sites
House Sparrow	various sites
Chaffinch	various sites
Greenfinch	various sites
Goldfinch	various sites
Linnet	various sites
Siskin	Wareham Forest
Reed Bunting	Fleet

Mammals – 2 species

Rabbit	Lodmoor, Portland Bill
Brown Hare	Fleet

Fish – 1 species

Rudd	Radipole
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Butterflies – 1 species

Small White	Fleet
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Moths – 1 species

The Lackey	The Verne
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Notable Plants

Stinking Iris	Fleet
Black Mustard	Fleet
Hedge Mustard	Fleet
Charlock	Fleet
Sea Radish	Fleet
Barren Brome	Fleet
Soft Brome	Fleet

Marsh Mallow	Fleet
Crow Garlic	Fleet
Eel-grass	Fleet
Annual Seablite	Fleet
Shrubby Seablite	Fleet
Pyrenean Cranesbill	Radipole
Yellow Flag	Radipole
Shining Cranesbill	The Verne
Wild Clary	Portland Harbour
Common Toadflax	Portland Harbour
Sea Holly	Portland Harbour
Sea Sandwort	Portland Harbour
Common Birdsfoot	Wareham Forest
Birdsfoot Trefoil	Durlston Country Park
Horseshoe Vetch	Durlston Country Park
Adders-tongue Fern	Durlston Country Park
Bulbous Buttercup	Durlston Country Park
Small-flowered Buttercup	Durlston Country Park
Pale Flax	Durlston Country Park
Rough Hawkbit	Durlston Country Park
Beaked Hawsbeard	Durlston Country Park
Yellow Rattle	Durlston Country Park
Cowslip	Durlston Country Park
Eyebright	Durlston Country Park
Cotton Thistle	Durlston Country Park
Early Spider Orchid	Durlston Country Park
Early Purple Orchid	Durlston Country Park
Green-winged Orchid	Durlston Country Park