

Travelling Naturalist Trip List New Forest

July 7th – 10th 2008

Monday July 7th

Weather: a fine evening after a day of torrential rain.

Yew Tree Bottom, 2100

The week got off to a good start when a brace of Grey Partridges flew across the road just in front of the van not far from the hotel. Reaching Yew Tree Bottom we probably saw a Hobby but it disappeared behind some trees before we could confirm it. As dusk fell the first Nightjar was heard singing and shortly after was seen well on a power line. The same bird then gave us a close fly-past, close enough to see the white markings on its wings. Not long after this bird flew off into the night another shape appeared on the telegraph pole. This time it was a Little Owl, the first time we have seen one at this site.

The walk back produced to more sightings, a Glow-worm and a large female Common Toad.

Tuesday July 8th

Weather: light showers and sunny spells in a fresh westerly wind.

Rhinefield, 0910

An unplanned stop to investigate a sighting from the van produced some good views of a male Silver-studded Blue and allowed us to discover some of the typical heathland plants of the Forest such as Milkwort and Eyebright.

Acres Down, 0930

As we left the car park we could hear Chiffchaffs singing and Siskins calling overhead. The climb up the hill was interrupted by a stop to admire some fine examples of The Blusher, an *Amanita* fungus closely related to the Death Cap. From the top of the hill we enjoyed the superb view of the western reaches of the forest. A family of Redstarts gave us good views as they chased a Stonechat around the Holly and Birch trees. 2 slightly larger birds disturbed by them turned out to be Woodlarks but gave only brief and distant views before they disappeared into the heather.

Further on the view was even more extensive allowing us to see the distant hills of the Isle of Wight. A Hobby was the first of 4 species of raptor seen here with Kestrel, Sparrowhawk and Buzzard all showing up over the Forest. A Dartford Warbler gave a brief burst of song, as did a distant Blackcap. Wetter parts of the heath here had good numbers of Bog Asphodel and Cotton-grass.

Lunch was taken at a lily-covered pool waiting for the sun to come out and wake up the dragonfly population. Eventually this did happen with Emperor, Broad-bodied Chaser and Azure Damselfly all giving close views. A young duck hiding at the far edge of the pond was most likely a Mandarin but unfortunately its parents did not show up.

Walking back to the car park we found large numbers of Common Sundews and had good views of Marsh and Coal Tit, with Blue and Great Tits close by.

Keyhaven, 1500

At high tide and in a blustery wind we had a long walk before we could shelter and examine the roosting waders. 7 species of wader were seen: Curlew, Whimbrel, Redshank, Greenshank, Lapwing, Oystercatcher and Black-tailed Godwit. Sandwich and

Common Terns passed by on their way to their breeding colonies near Hurst Castle. Little Egrets were much in evidence with one particular bird feeding right in front of us.



We had just started to walk back when a huge flock of Lapwings took to the air. The cause of their fright was soon evident when an enormous female Peregrine appeared flying towards us carrying a bird - presumably a Lapwing.

Brockenhurst, 2100

Our search for owls drew a blank but we did see our first Fallow Deer of the week and found several of the Forest's characteristic marsh plants including Marsh Pennywort and Marsh St John's Wort.

Wednesday July 9th

Weather: Wet all morning and afternoon, wet and windy in the evening.

Denny Wood, 0930

Ignoring the severe weather warnings we set out from Beaulieu Road Station on the Travelling Naturalist's annual pilgrimage to Denny Wood. This year everything was much wetter than usual and not a single insect was seen, apart from a couple of wasps inspecting an old hornets' nest. The flowers couldn't hide from us though (actually that's not true – the Wild Gladiolus managed to hide very successfully) and we found a number of new species for the week including Bog Myrtle and Bogbean. A pair of Snipe in full display flight was the ornithological highlight, and pretty nearly the only birds seen all morning. The real stars were the fungi though, with the lichens a close second.



Artist's fungus
Ganoderma europaeum



Panellus spp?



Waxcap?



Puffball
Calvatia utriformis

After lunch back at the hotel we were all still drying out so we decided to avoid another soaking and instead spent a fascinating afternoon at the New Forest Centre in Lyndhurst.

Poundhill Enclosure, 2000

We had just got nice and dry when it was time to go out in the pouring rain again and see some deer. Gemma the Forestry Commission Ranger allowed us to use the private hide so we could watch the Fallow Deer with their young feeding in Queens Meadow. We nearly had to turn back when we found that the Blackwater river had overflowed its banks and flooded the path leading to the hide, but Gemma found us a way round the flood. Several more Fallow Deer were seen from the bus on the way back.

Thursday July 10th

Weather: Sunny intervals with occasional light showers

Rhinefield Ornamental Drive, 0930

The Big Trees Trail allowed to see plenty of big trees, mainly Coastal Redwoods and Douglas Firs with 2 very impressive Sequoias. A party of 20 or more Crossbills were found at the top of one of the firs and gave great views through the telescope. A variety of plants and fungi were seen but the highlight was a bright yellow slime-mould, probably *Fuligo septica*.



Bolderwood, 1130

After looking at the herd of Fallow bucks we stopped in an area of giant Beech trees to have lunch. Several Silver-washed Fritillaries were feeding on the brambles as were one or two early Gatekeepers.

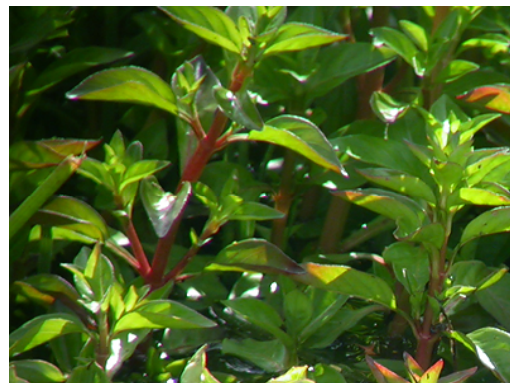
After lunch we stopped at a likely-looking cleared area and found a Woodlark which for the first time this week gave us some good views. A couple more Crossbills were here too.

Knightwood Oak, 1430

Apart from a very large Oak tree we saw the only Raven of the trip, flying over the car park.

Hatchet Pond, 1500

We finished off with some serious botanising adding Hampshire Purslane (see right) and Lawn Chamomile to the list. Our final sighting was of a recently-emerged Common Darter on its first flight, one which lasted just 30 seconds before a very skillful male House Sparrow intercepted it in mid-flight!



It certainly seemed a very wet week but in retrospect we actually had just one really wet day and two largely dry ones with plenty of nice warm sunshine. The list shows the great variety of wildlife that we managed to find, not forgetting the great food at the hotel. So all in all a very memorable week. I can't wait until October and the chance to see the Forest in its autumn colours!

See you all again soon I hope,

Bob Ford, July 2008

© **The Travelling Naturalist Wildlife Holidays 2008**



Birds:

Cormorant	KEYHAVEN
Little Egret	KEYHAVEN
Grey Heron	KEYHAVEN
Mute Swan	KEYHAVEN
Shelduck	KEYHAVEN
Mallard	KEYHAVEN
Sparrowhawk	ACRES DOWN
Buzzard	BROCKENHURST
Kestrel	ACRES DOWN
Peregrine	KEYHAVEN
Hobby	ACRES DOWN
Grey Partridge	BROCKENHURST
Moorhen	KEYHAVEN
Coot	KEYHAVEN
Oystercatcher	KEYHAVEN
Snipe	BISHOP'S DYKE
Lapwing	KEYHAVEN
Black-tailed Godwit	KEYHAVEN
Whimbrel	KEYHAVEN
Curlew	KEYHAVEN
Redshank	KEYHAVEN
Greenshank	KEYHAVEN
Black-headed Gull	ACRES DOWN
Herring Gull	ACRES DOWN
Great Black-backed Gull	KEYHAVEN
Sandwich Tern	KEYHAVEN
Common Tern	KEYHAVEN
Wood Pigeon	ACRES DOWN
Stock Dove	ACRES DOWN
Collared Dove	BROCKENHURST
Green Woodpecker	ACRES DOWN
Great Spotted Woodpecker	ACRES DOWN
Little Owl	YEW TREE BOTTOM
Nightjar	YEW TREE BOTTOM
Woodlark	ACRES DOWN
Swift	ACRES DOWN
Sand Martin	KEYHAVEN
Swallow	BISHOP'S DYKE
House Martin	BISHOP'S DYKE
Meadow Pipit	ACRES DOWN
Grey Wagtail	ACRES DOWN
Pied Wagtail	BROCKENHURST
Wren	ACRES DOWN
Dunnock	ACRES DOWN
Robin	ACRES DOWN
Redstart	ACRES DOWN
Stonechat	ACRES DOWN

Blackbird	ACRES DOWN
Song Thrush	BROCKENHURST
Mistle Thrush	BOLDERWOOD
Dartford Warbler (heard)	ACRES DOWN
Whitethroat	KEYHAVEN
Blackcap (heard)	ACRES DOWN
Chiffchaff	ACRES DOWN
Goldcrest	ACRES DOWN
Marsh Tit	ACRES DOWN
Coal Tit	ACRES DOWN
Blue Tit	ACRES DOWN
Great Tit	ACRES DOWN
Nuthatch	RHINEFIELD
Treecreeper	RHINEFIELD
Raven	RHINEFIELD
Jay	BROCKENHURST
Magpie	KEYHAVEN
Jackdaw	KEYHAVEN
Rook	KEYHAVEN
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
Crossbill	RHINEFIELD
Reed Bunting	KEYHAVEN

Butterflies:

Silver-washed Fritillary	BOLDERWOOD
Meadow Brown	ACRES DOWN
Ringlet	RHINEFIELD
Speckled Wood	RHINEFIELD
Gatekeeper	BOLDERWOOD
Silver-studded Blue	DENNY WOOD
Large Skipper	ACRES DOWN

Moths:

Silver Y	BROCKENHURST
----------	--------------

Dragonflies:

Azure Damselfly	ACRES DOWN
Common Darter	HATCHET POND
Broad-bodied Chaser	ACRES DOWN
Emperor	ACRES DOWN
Southern Hawker	BOLDERWOOD

Other insects:

Wood Cricket (heard)	ACRES DOWN
Glow-worm	YEW TREE BOTTOM

Mammals:

Rabbit	KEYHAVEN
Roe Deer	BROCKENHURST
Fallow Deer	QUEEN'S MEADOW
Pipistrelle	YEW TREE BOTTOM

Amphibians:

Common Toad	DENNY WOOD
-------------	------------

Notable Plants:

Agrimony
Alkanet
Bell Heather
Bilberry
Bird's-foot
Bog Asphodel
Bog-myrtle
Bogbean
Bracken
Bur-reed
Bugloss
Butcher's-broom
Bird's-foot-trefoil
Common Heather
Common Mallow
Creeping Willow
Cross-leaved Heath
Douglas Fir
Dwarf Thistle
European Larch
Fiddle Dock
Floating Sweet-grass
Greater Bird's-foot-trefoil
Green Alkanet
Hard-fern
Heath Bedstraw
Honeysuckle
Hop Trefoil
Lady-fern
Lesser Skullcap
Lesser Spearwort
Lousewort
Lucerne
Marsh Pennywort
Marsh Ragwort
Marsh Samphire
Marsh St John's-wort
Meadow Thistle
Milkwort

Musk-mallow
Purple-loosestrife
Round-leaved Crowfoot
Round-leaved Sundew
Rowan
Lucerne
Sand Spurrey
Scots Pine
Sea Rocket
Sea-kale
Selfheal
Sessile Oak
Silver Birch
Silverweed
Small Cudweed
Sneezewort
Tormentil
Trailing St John's-wort
Vervain
Water-pepper
Water-purslane
White Beak-sedge
White Clover
Wild Carrot
Wood Spurge
Wood-sorrel
Yellow Loosestrife
Yew
Yorkshire-fog

Fungi:

Varicoloured Bracket
Artist's Fungus
Stinkhorn
Puffball
The Blusher
Horse Mushroom