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Neil & Ashley would like to welcome you to the first **Oriole Birding** newsletter which is full of information about everything to do with our new business. Future editions will be packed with up to date news of what's being seen on our holidays, new tours and availability and useful birding tips, we are sure you will find something of interest.

We are both extremely excited at the launch of our new venture and look forward to birding with you all in the not too distant future.

Our wide selection of holidays are suitable for all levels of birding ability and our genuinely small group sizes mean that you can enjoy superb birding in the company of like minded people in the knowledge that you will receive a friendly and personal service from your tour leader. We also feel that our group sizes give everyone an equal chance of seeing each bird.

You can find full details of each holiday, tour reports and testimonials on our website www.oriolebirding.com or you can contact us direct via email at info@oriolebirding.com or alternatively call us on **01656 645709** or **07971 983227** or mail us at :

84 Coity Road, Bridgend, CF31 1LT, Wales, UK.

THE NETHERLANDS

NEW YEAR GOOSE FEST



With excellent transport links to the UK and short travelling times, The Netherlands is an ideal destination for a short winter break. With large areas of the land lying at sea level and reclaimed for agricultural purposes, it provides suitable habitat for some huge concentrations of birds. The nutrient rich polders are home to many thousands of Greater White-fronted and Barnacle Geese, Northern Lapwing, European Golden Plover and Eurasian Curlew, while Red-breasted, Snow, Lesser Canada and Lesser White-fronted Geese are regular winter visitors in very small numbers, though an element of luck is certainly required to encounter any of them. Smaller numbers of Ruff, Ruddy Turnstone, Common Snipe and Dunlin can also be expected, while inevitably large numbers of raptors will also be present. Common Buzzard and Common Kestrel are ubiquitous throughout and we can also expect to encounter European Sparrowhawk, Northern Goshawk, Marsh and Hen Harriers, Peregrine and Merlin. Rough-legged Buzzard and White-tailed Eagle however may take a little more searching for. Snow Bunting, Brambling, Willow and Marsh Tit, Common Redpoll, Water Pipit, winter thrushes and in some years Bohemian Waxwing provide passerine interest. In addition, the many bodies of open water harbour uncountable numbers of wildfowl such as Eurasian Wigeon, Great Crested Grebe, Tufted Duck and Common Pochard. The delightful Smew, Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneye and Goosander are present in smaller numbers, while Great White Egrets stalk the reed fringed shallows and the trumpeting of small herds of Whooper and Bewick's Swans provide a wonderful atmospheric soundtrack to the marshes. Woodlands may hold Black Woodpecker, Hawfinch, Crested Tit, Firecrest, Eurasian Woodcock and Short-toed Treecreeper among others, while good fortune may provide us with the opportunity to see roosting Long-eared Owls. We should also encounter Europe's only Indian House Crows in the port at Hoek van Holland. The terrain is exceptionally easy and there is virtually no walking involved as many of the best sites are roadside, though of course it is likely to be cold and tracks could be muddy. You can expect to see approximately 100 species.

There are just seven places available on this tour which is led by Neil and Ashley from **16th - 20th January 2010. Tour Cost: £725.00. Single Room Supplement: £100.00**

For a copy of the full itinerary contact us at: **info@oriolebirding.com** or visit our website: **www.oriolebirding.com**

TOUR AVAILABILITY

With our new brochure due to land on your doormats in the very near future, here is some up to date information regarding tour availability for those tours with the least spaces. At this point most tours currently have places remaining, but as you can see, some are already very limited. If you see a holiday that particularly appeals to you, we would urge you to **BOOK EARLY** to avoid disappointment. In addition to assisting us with the planning of tour logistics, it also helps give a clear picture of which tours are likely to run and at what capacity meaning we are better informed to discuss this with you. We are able to hold provisional bookings for one week without deposit.

Tours currently with very limited availability are:

Cornwall Winter - One place.

Mallorca - Two places

Isles of Scilly/Cornwall - Always an extremely popular holiday. Filling up fast.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO Rainforest to Caribbean Coast

Owing to some unexpected hold ups in securing accommodation costs, we were unable to give a final costing for this tour in our brochure. We are now able to rectify this with a base cost of £3375.00 per person with a Single Room Supplement of £400.00. The tour will run from 10th - 25th February 2010 and will be led by Steve Cale and Newton George. Places are strictly limited to eight participants and you can expect to see approximately 225 species.



Silver-beaked Tanager Ashley Saunders

NOTICE REGARDING EXISTING BOOKINGS

If you have booked a holiday with either Celtic Bird Tours or Oriole Adventures that departs before 31st December 2009, your tour will be operated by those companies individually. Your tour balance is payable to the individual company that you have booked with.

Any tour that departs after 1st January 2010 will be operated by Oriole Birding, so please ensure that your deposit or balance payment is made payable to the new company. This also applies to any balances for 2010 holidays that are due on or before 31st December 2009. If you are uncertain about who to make your balance cheque payable to, please don't hesitate to contact us - we will be happy to advise you.

Multiple Bookings - should you decide to book more than one of our holidays, please remember to send a separate booking form and deposit for each tour.

YOUR FINANCIAL PROTECTION

When you buy an ATOL protected air package from Oriole Birding you will receive a confirmation invoice from us confirming your arrangements and your protection under our Air Tours Organisers License 6839. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid to us for an advance booking. For further information visit the ATOL website at www.atol.org.uk Not all holiday or travel services offered and sold by us will be protected by the ATOL Scheme. Please ask us to confirm what protection may apply to your booking.



SOUTH EAST BRAZIL

In addition to the tours featured in our new brochure, we have the opportunity to offer places on an additional tour to the rainforests of South East Brazil. The tour will feature up to eighty endemics out of a possible trip total of close to 300 species. Your tour leader will be Steve Cale who visited the region on a fact finding tour for us two years ago. Steve will be assisted by a local English speaking guide. There are just eight places available and the tour will provisionally run from 1st - 15th December 2010 at a cost of £2999.00 per person with a single room supplement of £250.00. The tour cost includes all accommodation at the renowned Serra dos Tucanos Lodge, all meals, return flight to Rio de Janeiro via Paris or Lisbon, all transportation in air conditioned mini bus in Brazil, services of leader, soft drinks and reserve and national park entrance fees. If you would like to pre-register your interest, please forward an email to us at the usual address info@oriolebirding.com. Alternatively, if you are attending the British Birdwatching Fair you can speak with Steve about this and the Trinidad holiday as well as seeing his exhibition. He's at Stand 5 in Marquee 5

Finally, if you don't wish to receive our newsletters or brochures, please send us an email and we will remove you from the distribution list.