



TOUR REPORT
NORFOLK BRECKS
26TH – 29TH MARCH 2026

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FRIDAY 27TH MARCH – overcast and drizzly, heavier rain arriving late afternoon. 10C

The forecast for our first full day was for a cool and rainy day so we opted to spend it on the coast and wait for brighter weather to target the Breckland specialities. Sure enough, it was drizzling when we climbed out of the van at Stiffkey Floods. We wandered down to the pools and were pleased to see that the long-staying trio of **Glossy Ibis** were still present, if a little distant at the back of the pools. There were plenty of **Black-tailed Godwits** too, and we picked out single **Ruff** and **Snipe**. The ducks and waders made for a spectacular sight as they were flushed a few times by **Marsh Harriers** and **Red Kites**.

We made our way over to Holkham Freshmarsh next and parked up at Lady Anne's Drive. As we pulled up we could see a few smart **Pintail** with some close **Wigeon**, **Shoveler** and **Teal**, and a dozen **Pink-footed Geese** were still quietly feeding to the east. We wandered down to the Joe Jordan Hide, and on reaching the hide, we immediately began seeing **Spoonbills** commuting to and from the heronry. A few **Russian White-fronted Geese** were among some **Greylags**, and the flat light made for excellent viewing conditions. We continued scanning and saw a herd of cattle cresting a grassy slope, soon followed by at least five **Cattle Egrets** which kept landing out of view then popping back up in flight when the cows moved. Good numbers of **Avocets** were present on the pools and a nice bonus came in the form of a **Green Sandpiper** which showed briefly before walking out of view. Back at the van for lunch, several hundred **Barnacle Geese** were flushed by some **Red Kites** and circled the marshes a few times. They may be feral but it still made for quite the sight and sound! Two **Great White Egrets** completed the set of herons too.



Russian White-fronted Geese

Having eaten lunch, we made the relatively short journey around the Titchwell Marsh. The rain had eased and we arrived to find excellent viewing conditions. Before heading out to the Freshmarsh we had a look at the resident **Tanwy Owl** which was facing the opposite way

to usual and its face was visible which isn't always the case with this bird! Just as we reached the marshes, three **Swallows** flew west which were a year tick for all. As of late, the **Mediterranean Gulls** were conspicuous and we had great looks at them, particularly from Parrinder Hide. Close waders included **Avocets**, **Black-tailed Godwits** and **Ruff**, and at least two **Little Ringed Plovers** were scuttling about. A **Sandwich Tern** was also resting among the gulls.

We carried on to the beach, hoping the weather would continue to hold off. There were thousands of gulls foraging on the shoreline, and we picked up **Knot** and **Grey Plover** for the trip list. The sea was very quiet though, and we only saw a couple of **Red-breasted Mergansers** on the saltwater lagoon as we walked back. Unusually close views were possible though, and they looked a little out of place diving among **Pochards**! The rain was soon back with a vengeance though, so we hurried back to the van, damp but happy after a great first day of birding.

SATURDAY 28TH MARCH – *bright and breezy with a few showers in the afternoon. 11C*

It was a bright start to the day, and we were up early for our attempt at seeing **Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers**. Arriving on site before 8am, we were met with positive news from birders already leaving so walked down to their favoured area as quickly as we could. It took less than five minutes for the female to fly in to its now favoured broken tree branch, but typically it hid out of view behind the branch before flying off again! Thankfully she was soon back and we all had a good view. In fact, she visited the branch every 15 minutes or so in the 90 minutes we stood there, and we had some superb, prolonged views as she prospected a potential nest hole. At least four **Crossbills** were also showing regularly with the light really catching the red plumage of the males. Two **Kingfishers** darted past behind us and we heard a couple of singing **Marsh Tits** as we walked back to the van. A **Woodlark** was also singing from a nearby clearing but had gone quiet by the time we got there, and there was no further sign. Still, it had been a great start to the day!



Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

Keen to carry on our good fortune, we headed to a raptor watchpoint to look for Goshawks. We arrived to find plenty of **Buzzards** up already and a few **Red Kites** were circling too. We had a bit of a wait before we picked up a young **Goshawk** circling over the trees, but, once we did, we were able to watch it for a good few minutes even alongside a **Buzzard** at one point when it provided an excellent comparison. Having had our fill, we drove around to a nearby pig farm where we were soon onto several **Stone Curlews** hunkered in the grass. The scope views were really good, and a nice bonus came in the form of a pair of **Grey Partridge** nearby. Plenty of **Lapwing** and **Oystercatcher** were present too.



Stone Curlew

It was soon time for lunch, and we called in at Brandon Country Park for some hot drinks. Feeling refreshed, we made our way over to Mayday Farm in the hope of some Woodlarks or finches. It turned out to be a bit quiet here today but we did see a few flyover Siskins and a couple of Crossbills. There were lots of birds singing in the nice weather too, including **Coal Tits**, **Goldcrests** and **Chiffchaffs**. One of the **Chiffchaffs** gave us some nice close views in a blackthorn hedge as we walked back to the van.

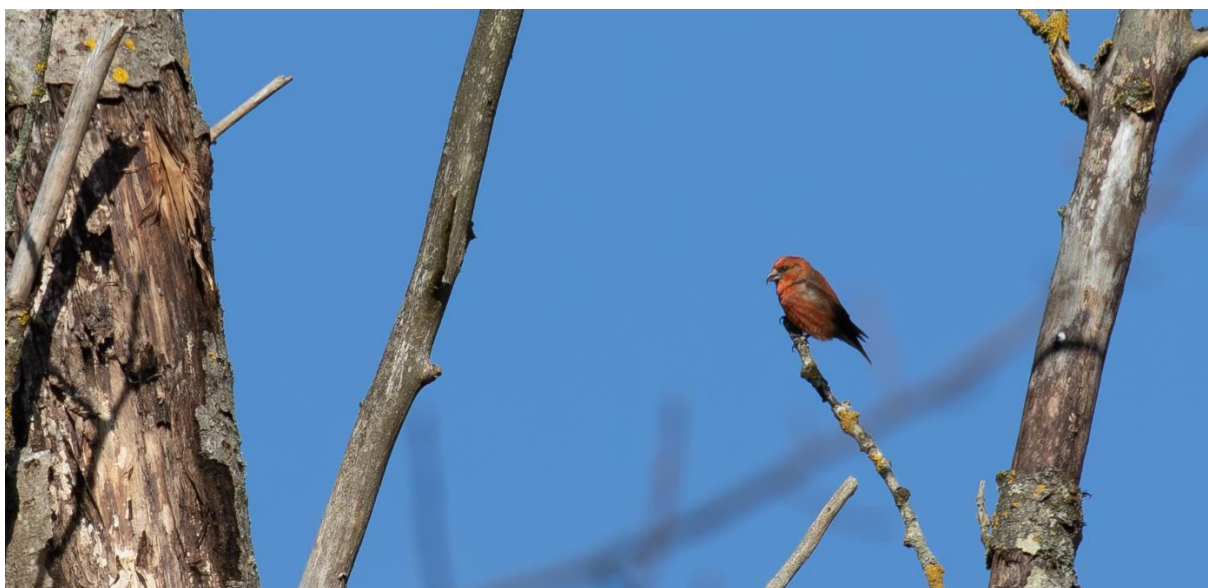
We headed back towards Lynford Arboretum but called at some nearby fields and heathland on the way. This produced a couple of trip ticks in the form of a large flock of **Fieldfares** and a pair of **Stonechats**, plus a single **Curlew** stood by the road. We were soon at the arboretum but had to hide in the café for a few minutes as a particularly heavy shower passed over. Several **Goldcrests** were singing once we were able to continue walking towards the paddocks, and a couple of **Mistle Thrushes** perched up nicely when we arrived. Unfortunately, the Hawfinches weren't playing ball today but we did have a few other nice birds. Perhaps the highlight was a **Marsh Tit** which gave us some close views right in front of where we were stood, and we also noted **Nuthatch**, **Siskins** and yet more **Crossbills**! It really was a nice way to end an excellent day of Breckland birding.

SUNDAY 29TH MARCH – *cool and overcast morning with some rain in the afternoon. 10C*

We'd done well with seeing most of our target species yesterday, so decided to spend our final morning birding the RSPB reserve at Lakenheath Fen. It was a cool and cloudy morning when we began scanning the Hockwold Washes on the north side of the reserve. A couple of Garganey had been seen here in previous days, so we did our best to scan the ducks in the hope of finding them. Colin got a brief view of what looked like the drake **Garganey** in flight with a small group of ducks, but they flew into the distance and out of view. There were plenty of **Shoveler** to scan through and smaller numbers of **Wigeon** and **Teal**. Two **Kingfishers** gave us a nice flypast, a **Great White Egret** was feeding along the river, and a single **Whooper Swan** fed among a herd of **Mute Swans**.

We carried on walking westwards along the Little Ouse and began to hear **Common Cranes** calling from the area of the Joist Fen Viewpoint so made the long walk out there. Unfortunately, they had gone quiet by the time we made it out there although we enjoyed watching a dozen or so **Marsh Harriers** making light work of flying on the breeze. Several **Water Rails** called from the reeds as we walked back to the visitor centre, and we were soon on our way to Cavenham Heath where we hoped to see Woodlark having heard them yesterday but not managed to see one.

Arriving at Cavenham, we ate our lunch and were soon out of the van for our final birding of the trip. We walked along the track where a strong and very cold breeze had picked up and made for a gloomy afternoon. There wasn't a huge amount of bird activity, although we enjoyed watching several **Eurasian Curlew**, one of which was displaying. We also picked up a single **Stone Curlew** sheltering from the wind in some heather, and a flock of at least 150 **Fieldfares** flew over calling. Several Stonechats were scattered across the heath, and we finally got lucky with a **Woodlark** as one silently landed in a birch tree right next to where we were stood. It was carrying food, so, after a quick look through the scopes, we gave it space to attend what was presumably its nest hidden in the heather. It was a great way to end the tour!



Crossbill

ORIOLE BIRDING NORFOLK BRECKLAND AND COASTAL MARCH 2026

*Species order, names and taxonomy follows - Gill, F and D Donsker (Eds). 2018. IOC World Bird List (v 8.1).
<http://www.worldbirdnames.org/>*

#	Common Name	Scientific name	27	28	29	Coments
	Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)					
1	Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	X			
2	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	X		X	
3	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	X		X	
4	Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	X			
5	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	X	X	X	
6	Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>	X	X	X	
7	Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	X		X	
8	Mandarin Duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>				
9	Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>				
10	Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	X		X	
11	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	X		X	
12	Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	X		X	
13	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	X	X	X	
14	Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	X		X	
15	Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	X		X	
16	Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	X		X	
17	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	X		X	
18	Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>				
19	Velvet Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>				
20	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>				

21	Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>				
22	Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>				
23	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	X			
Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)						
24	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	X	X	X	
25	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>		X		
26	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	X	X	X	
Gaviidae and Procellariidae (Divers and Shearwaters)						
27	Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>				
28	Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>				
Podicipedidae (Grebes)						
29	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	H		H	
30	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>			X	
31	Slavonian Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>				
Threskiornithidae and Ardeidae (Spoonbills, Herons, Egrets and Bitterns)						
32	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	X			
33	Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	X			
34	Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>				
35	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	X		X	
#	Common Name	Scientific name	27	28	29	Comments
36	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	X		X	
37	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>	X			
38	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	X		X	
Sulidae and Phalacrocoracidae (Gannets, Cormorants and Shags)						
39	Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>				
40	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	X		X	
Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)						
41	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>		X		
42	Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>		X		

43	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	X		X	
44	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>				
45	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	X	X	X	
46	Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	X	X	X	
	<i>Rallidae (Rails, Coots and allies)</i>					
47	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>			H	
48	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	X	X	X	
49	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	X	X	X	
	<i>Burhinidae, Recurvirostridae and Charadriidae (Thick-knees, Avocets, Plovers and Allies)</i>					
50	Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>		X	X	
51	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	X	X	X	
52	Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	X			
53	Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	X	X	X	
54	Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>				
55	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	X			
56	Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>				
57	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	X			
	<i>Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)</i>					
58	Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	X	X	X	
59	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>				
60	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	X			
61	Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	X			
62	Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	X			
63	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>	X			
64	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	X			
65	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>				
66	Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>				
67	Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	X		X	
68	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	X			

69	Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	X		X	
70	Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>				
<i>Laridae (Gulls and Terns)</i>						
71	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	X	X	X	
72	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>	X			
73	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	X	X	X	
74	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>				
75	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>				
76	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	X		X	
#	Common Name	Scientific name	27	28	29	Comments
77	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	X	X	X	
78	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	X			
79	Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>				
80	Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>				
<i>Columbidae and Cuculidae (Pigeons, Doves and Cuckoos)</i>						
81	Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)	<i>Columba livia</i>			X	
82	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>		X	X	
83	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	X	X	X	
84	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>			X	
<i>Tytonidae and Strigidae (Owls)</i>						
85	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>				
86	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	X			
87	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>				
88	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>				
<i>Alcedinidae and Picidae (Kingfishers and Woodpeckers)</i>						
89	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		X	X	
90	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>		X		
91	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		H		
92	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>		H	H	

	Falconidae (Falcons)					
93	Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	X	X	X	
94	Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>				
95	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>				
	Lanidae and Corvidae (Shrikes, Crows, Jays, and Magpies)					
96	Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>				
97	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		X		
98	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	X	X	X	
99	Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	X	X	X	
100	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	X	X	X	
101	Carriion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	X	X	X	
	Paridae and Panuridae (Tits and Reedlings)					
102	Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>		X		
103	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>		X		
104	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	X	X	X	
105	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	H	X	X	
106	Bearded Tit	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>				
	Alaudidae (Larks)					
107	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>		H	X	
108	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	X	X	X	
109	Shore Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>				
	Hirundinidae (Swallows)					
110	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	X			
111	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>				
112	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>				
	Scotocercidae, Aegithalidae and Phylloscopidae (Bush Warblers, Bushtits and Leaf Warblers)					
113	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	H		X	
114	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		X	X	
#	Common Name	Scientific name	27	28	29	Comments

115	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	X	X	X	
	<i>Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers)</i>					
116	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>			H	
117	Dartford Warbler	<i>Sylvia undata</i>				
	<i>Regulidae (Kinglets)</i>					
118	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>				
119	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	H	H		
	<i>Troglodytidae, Sittidae and Certhiidae (Wrens, Nuthatches and Treecreepers)</i>					
120	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	X	X	X	
121	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>		X		
122	Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>		H		
	<i>Turdidae and Sturnidae (Thrushes and Starlings)</i>					
123	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	X	X	X	
124	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>				
125	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	X	X	X	
126	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>		X	X	
127	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>				
128	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	X	H		
129	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>		X		
	<i>Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)</i>					
130	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	X	X	X	
131	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>		X	X	
132	Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>				
	<i>Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)</i>					
133	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>				
134	Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>				
	<i>Prunellidae (Accentors)</i>					
135	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	X	X		
	<i>Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)</i>					

136	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>				
137	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	X	X	X	
138	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	X			
139	Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>				
140	Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>				
	<i>Fringillidae (Finches)</i>					
141	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	X	X		
142	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>				
143	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>				
144	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>				
145	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>				
146	Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>				
147	Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		X		
148	Redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>				
149	Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>		X		
150	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	X	X	X	
151	Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>		X		
	<i>Emberizidae (Old World Buntings)</i>					
			27	28	29	Comments
152	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>				
153	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>				
154	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	X		X	
155	Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>				
156						
157						
	Additional species		27	28	29	Comments
159	Russian White-fronted Goose		X			
160	Whooper Swan				X	
161						

#	Other Wildlife				
1	Brown Hare		X	X	X
2	Grey Squirrel		X		X
3	Muntjac		X		X
4	Rabbit			X	X
5					