



TOUR REPORT
NORFOLK SPRING MIGRATION
11TH – 14TH MAY 2023

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FRIDAY 12TH MAY – *Overcast and wet with strong northerly winds, 10C*

Not the best days weather for the start of our Spring migration tour with a freezing northerly blasting down the North Sea, but we made the best of it and enjoyed a great selection of birds today! We started out at Titchwell, only two minutes from our accommodation base, and were soon walking out along the West Bank path listening to **Cetti's Warblers** braving the weather with their explosive song. A Great Reed Warbler had been present yesterday but there was no sight or sound of it this morning sadly, so we pushed on to the freshmarsh and noted our first **Avocets**, a quartering male **Marsh Harrier**, **Common Terns**, **Brent Geese** and many more. We wanted to squeeze a visit to the beach in before the band of rain arrived, though it was so cold there that once we'd seen some shoreline **Sanderlings** we were keen to head back to the shelter of Parrinder! Here we had a great hours birding with three Little Gulls right outside the hide, one being a fine summery adult. Three **Spoonbills** were present too, with a full-crested adult dropping right outside the hide and feeding within just a few yards of us. Waders were few but we saw a couple of **Dunlin**, and compared **Ringed Plover** and **Little-ringed Plover** almost on the same patch of mud. **Sandwich Tern**, **Mediterranean Gull**, **Curlew** and a few **Swifts** were some of the other species noted.

We walked back quickly with the wind behind us and headed next to nearby Choseley where for the past three weeks, a trip of **Dotterel** numbering up to seven birds had been about. It was down to two now, and we found them very distantly right in the far corner of a big tilled field. The rain was belting down and with the wind as well, this was challenging viewing – we decided to come back later! At Thornham, we had a similar battle with the elements but managed some brief views of a **Wood Sandpiper** on the floods there, and excellent views of a fine drake **Garganey**.



Little Gull – a fine adult at Titchwell

We altered our plan for the afternoon somewhat and decided to head for Holkham, have lunch there and then walk through the pinewoods which would be out of the wind. It was indeed lovely and sheltered here and we watched a **Chiffchaff** singing in the open, had a close view of a **Goldcrest**, and scope views of two **Grey Partridges**. **Spoonbills** were very much in evidence too and we must have had a dozen sightings of birds flying over, to and from their nesting colony. Washington Hide added a superb **Marsh Harrier**, and a **Great White Egret** which drifted through. A **Bittern** boomed and a lone **Pink-footed Goose** was out on the marsh. At the west end, we watched over the grazing marshes and had great views of a single **Cattle Egret** in breeding finery, among the cows.

There was ample time at the end of the day to return to Choseley to try for better views of the **Dotterel**. The rain had long since passed and by parking the van at an angle we were able to tuck alongside with the scopes and get out of the wind too. The result was far superior views, with the white supercilium and breast band now clearly visible. One was more contrasting with a darker russet belly than the other, so we guessed a pair. A nice end to what had been a good day considering!

SATURDAY 13TH MAY – *Overcast and cold in light Northerly winds, 10C*

We headed south to the Brecks today with high hopes for a big improvement in the weather as sunshine and rising temperatures had been forecast. The reality though was somewhat different with overcast skies all day and drizzle as we headed south! It didn't stop us having a great day though and with **Corn Bunting** picked up en route in the fens, we arrived at our first site around 10am to look and listen for **Nightingales**. It was Baltic as we got out of the van but that didn't stop **Lesser Whitethroat**, **Willow Warbler** and **Garden Warbler** from singing, with especially good scope views of the latter being a real treat. The **Nightingales** were quiet at first but as soon as one burst into song then there were suddenly 3-4 males bouncing off each other and going full tilt into their incredibly powerful songs. One hopped up in the open on some dead branches but after that brief glimpse we had to wait a while before we nailed one signing in the open which everyone got great views of in the scope. A loud bubbling call alerted us to the presence of a female **Cuckoo**, which then flew past being pursued by a calling male.



Nightingale in full flow, 13th May

Next up was the excellent Lakenheath Fen reserve and a cacophony of warbler song awaited us here – **Chiffchaff, Common Whitethroat, Blackcap, Cetti's Warbler, Sedge Warbler** and **Reed Warbler** all on offer. From Joist Fen viewpoint, we saw up to five **Hobbies** hawking over the reeds and as we came away, a **Bittern** did a fantastic long flight from behind us and off towards the river. More **Cuckoo** sightings were had on the way back, though generally the cold was keeping most bird activity pretty low.

After a late lunch, we headed into the forest to try some spots for one or two 'specials'. At the first, we could hear our target bird singing as soon as we got out of the van and a short walk had us enjoying great views of a **Tree Pipit**, belting out his song from the top of a solitary monolith in the middle of a clearing. As we scoped him, a **Woodlark** burst into song, and we soon found this also perched on a dead tree behind us. It was superb to hear this songster in full flow, though it soon took to the air and headed off distantly over the pines.

With some time left in the day we headed around to Lynford to see if we could pick up a **Firecrest**. The car park area was busy and noisy so we took a short walk and soon found a **Firecrest** singing close to the road. With patience we all had superb views as it flicked around in a holly before uncharacteristically sitting motionless in one spot for a minute without moving! Treecreeper was also seen well here, and this proved to be about our last action of the day. We did take a protracted drive around some rural roads on the way home to look for Stone Curlew, having failed to see any earlier in the day, but we weren't successful. **Grey Partridge, Yellowhammer** and lots of Brown Hares were to be seen though. Back to the hotel around 6pm then after a long and productive day in the field.

SUNDAY 14TH MAY – *Overcast in light winds, sunshine later, 15C*

A superb last day saw us head onto the heath first thing to have a look for a couple of the speciality birds to be found there. It was still cold and overcast as we set off on our walk round, but with no wind at all it was pretty good for listening for calls. This was indeed how we located our first target, with the soft 'tcheeer' of a **Dartford Warbler** emanating from the coconut-scented gorse. Over the next 20 minutes we had superb views of a male foraging among the gorse blooms right at the tops of the bushes, and calling softly to an unseen female. Leaving the Dartfords, we scanned a rough tilled strip in the heather and spotted two **Woodlarks** walking unobtrusively just a few yards away from us – superb views and better than the fairly brief view yesterday.



Dartford Warbler



Woodlark

As we dropped down to the coast the clag was still reluctant to clear, but there was sufficient visibility to head out to Dauke's Hide and look for a brace of **Temminck's Stints**. A juvenile **Bearded Tit** (first of the year) perched up for us from the boardwalk as we wandered through the reedbed, and both **Reed** and **Sedge Warblers** were signing along the route allowing for some good vocal comparisons. From the hides, we found the furtive **Temminck's Stints** typically picking around quietly on the muddy fringes. To begin with one was on Pat's Pool and the other on Simmond's Scrape, but one then flew erratically and joined the other, indulging in a short bout of display with tails fanned and wings quivering! A female **Garganey** was swimming around at the back with a Teal and was nice to see, after the striking drake we had seen at Thornham previously.

East Bank would be our last walk after lunch – which we enjoyed in the sunshine at last! It was a cracking walk, with a **Bittern** making a fantastic long flight across Pope's Marsh and dropping in the reeds. **Bearded Tits** showed really well, with a male being particularly showy right next to the path. A male **Ruff** in full regalia was extremely smart, though unfortunately it flushed when the **Bittern** came lumbering out of the reeds again and flew right past us! **Black-tailed Godwits** and a single **Golden Plover** were other waders noted, before we reached the beach for a quick seawatch. **Sandwich Terns** were raucous and flying right over us, while more distantly a line of **Gannets** were heading purposefully east, no doubt on a fishing trip from Bampton. Four **Little Terns** were a real highlight here, flying along the surf and chattering to each other – cracking birds! This wrapped things up and we headed back to the hotel, arriving there about 1530.



Bittern flight at Cley



Bearded Tit in the reeds off the East bank



Little Tern feeding along the surf line at Cley

#	Common Name	Scientific Name		11	12	13	14	
1	Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>			▪			
2	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>			▪		▪	
3	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>			▪	▪	▪	
4	Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>			▪			
5	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>			▪	▪	▪	
6	Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>			▪		▪	
7	Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>			▪	▪	▪	
8	Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>			▪		▪	
9	Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>			▪	▪	▪	
10	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>			▪	▪	▪	
11	Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>						
12	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>			▪	▪	▪	
13	Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>						
14	Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>			▪	▪	▪	
15	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>						
16	Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>			▪		▪	
17	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>			▪	▪	▪	
18	Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>						
19	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>						
20	Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>						
21	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>						
22	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>				▪		
23	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>			▪	▪		
24	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>			▪	▪	▪	
25	Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>						
26	Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>						

#	Common Name	Scientific Name		11	12	13	14	
27	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>				H		
28	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>				•		
29	Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>			•		•	
30	Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>				•	•	
31	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>			•	•	•	
32	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>			•	•	•	
33	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>			•	•	•	
34	Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>					•	
35	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>			•	•	•	
36	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>						
37	Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>						
38	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>			•	•	•	
39	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>						
40	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>						
41	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>			•	•	•	
42	Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>			•	•	•	
43	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>						
44	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>					•	
45	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>			•	•	•	
46	Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>						
47	Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>						
48	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>			•	•	•	
49	Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>			•		•	
50	Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>			•	•	•	
51	Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>					•	
52	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>						
53	Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>			•		•	
54	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>			•			
55	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>						
56	Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>			•			
57	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>						
58	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>			•		•	
59	Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>						
60	Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>						
61	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>			•		•	
62	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>						
63	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>					•	
64	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>			•			
65	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>			•			
66	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>						
67	Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>						
68	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>			•			
69	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>						
70	Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>			•		•	
71	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>			•			
72	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>						
73	Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>						
74	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>			•	•	•	
75	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>			•			

#	Common Name	Scientific Name		11	12	13	14	
76	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>			▪			
77	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>			▪			
78	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>			▪		▪	
79	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>			▪		▪	
80	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>						
81	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>			▪		▪	
82	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>					▪	
83	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>			▪			
84	Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>						
85	Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>						
86	Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)	<i>Columba livia</i>						
87	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>				▪		
88	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>			▪	▪	▪	
89	Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>						
90	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>				▪	▪	
91	Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>				▪	H	
92	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>						
93	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>						
94	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>						
95	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>						
96	Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>			▪	▪	▪	
97	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>						
98	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>				H	▪	
99	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>						
100	Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>			▪	▪	▪	
101	Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>				▪		
102	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>						
103	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>				▪		
104	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>				▪	▪	
105	Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>			▪	▪	▪	
106	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>				▪	▪	
107	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>			▪	▪	▪	
108	Coal Tit	<i>Pariparus ater</i>			▪	▪		
109	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>						
110	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>			▪			
111	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>			▪	▪	▪	
112	Bearded Tit	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>				▪	▪	
113	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>				▪	▪	
114	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>				▪	▪	
115	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>			▪	▪	▪	
116	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>				▪		
117	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>			▪	▪		
118	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>			H	H		
119	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>			▪			
120	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>				▪	H	
121	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>			▪	H	H	
122	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acro. schoenobaenus</i>				▪	▪	

#	Common Name	Scientific Name		11	12	13	14	
123	Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>				▪	▪	
124	Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>						
125	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>				▪	H	
126	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>				▪		
127	Barred Warbler	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>						
128	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>				▪	H	
129	Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>				▪	H	
130	Dartford Warbler	<i>Sylvia undata</i>					▪	
131	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>				▪		
132	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>			▪	H		
133	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>			▪	▪	H	
134	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>						
135	Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>				▪		
136	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>			▪	▪	▪	
137	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>						
138	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>			▪	▪	▪	
139	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>						
140	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>			▪			
141	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>			▪			
142	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>			▪	▪	▪	
143	Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>						
144	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>						
145	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>						
146	Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>						
147	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>						
148	Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>						
149	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>			▪	▪	▪	
150	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>				▪		
151	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>						
152	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>			▪	▪	▪	
153	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>			▪		▪	
154	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>				▪		
155	Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>						
156	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>			▪	▪		
157	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>						
158	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>						
159	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>					▪	
160	Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>					▪	
161	Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>						
162	Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>						
163	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>			▪	▪	▪	
164	Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>				▪		
165	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>				▪		
166	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>				▪	▪	
167	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>				▪	▪	
168	ADDITIONAL SPECIES							
169	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>				▪		