



TOUR REPORT
NORFOLK SPRING MIGRATION
29TH APRIL – 2ND MAY 2024

www.oriolobirding.com

info@oriolobirding.com

MONDAY 29TH APRIL

We met this evening at your hotel, for our welcome chat and for dinner. The latter soon dispelled any doubt that you would be wonderfully well fed throughout your tour.

TUESDAY 30TH APRIL – *Clear and sunny, though with a moderate cool breeze*

Aware that there had been a significant movement of migrant birds in the previous days, this morning we went straight to the Whincover sea wall which leads out to the west end of Burnham Overly Dunes. This was a great decision as we saw good birds throughout our long morning's walk. There were **Common Whitethroats** singing in the hedges either side of top of the track and a **Lesser Whitethroat** singing from deep in a bush. Where the marshes began, we had wonderful views of displaying **Sedge Warblers**, though the **Reed Warblers** and **Cetti's Warblers** we heard remained hidden. Indeed, despite hearing many of both, we never saw either species on the tour!

A **Mediterranean Gull** flew over us, with several **Black-headed Gulls**, its wings glowing in the morning sunshine. To our east, we could see a distant **Common Sandpiper** feeding along the edge of a flood, while a small number of **Northern Wheatears** could be seen feeding in the short grass. Also here a couple of **Pink-footed Geese** were feeding with **Greylags**, having clearly decided not to migrate to Iceland this year. A **Cattle Egret** hunted for insects among cows and a pair of **Marsh Harriers** floated over distant reed which was half-hiding a **Great Egret**.

A **Whimbrel** was feeding in the saltmarsh west of the bank, where a fine **Grey Plover** was sporting breeding plumage. High above us several **Common Swifts** shot past while **Little Terns** fed in the saltmarsh creeks and **Eurasian Spoonbills** flew overhead, back to their colony.

We turned west to Gun Hill, past a wonderfully vocal flock of **Dark-bellied Brent Geese**. We saw **Stonechats** and **Reed Buntings** in the Shrubby Seablite at the top of the marsh but by now the wind had picked up and was keeping birds hunkering in the vegetation. The only migrant we saw at Gun Hill was a brief **Willow Warbler** though our visit was far from wasted as we were treated to the thrilling sight of a **Red Kite** escorting a first summer **White-tailed Eagle** off the premises.

There was little to see in the rest of the dunes – except a flyby **Eurasian Hobby** – so, delighted by an excellent morning, we headed to Lady Anne's Drive for coffee from The Lookout and our delicious packed lunches. Here we had excellent views of **Black-tailed Godwits**, **Redshank**, **Lapwings**, a **Mistle Thrush** and plenty of ducks.

Following lunch we continued east to North Point Pools, though there was nothing new here for us to see. We made the decision to head west to Thornham, close to our hotel, making a stop on the way at Choseley where I had seen a **Corn Bunting** in song on my way to collect you in the morning. (He was sadly not in song in the afternoon, nor on any of our subsequent visits, though we did see several **Yellowhammers** here on one visit). As we walked along the Thornham sea wall we could hear a **Eurasian Cuckoo** singing. On a flood which was quietly purring with the calls of **Natterjack Toads**, we saw a pair of **Little Ringed Plovers** and a pair of **Garganey**. Having seen so much, with enormous grins on our faces, we returned to your hotel.

WEDNESDAY 1ST MAY – *Clear and sunny, with a moderate cool breeze*

This morning we headed west to NWT Holme Dunes where a singing **Lesser Whitethroat** greeted us as soon as we got out of the vehicle. We walked past The Paddocks, seeing plenty of common resident birds. Further west, in the saltmarsh north of the golf course, we heard a flyover **Western Yellow Wagtail** and a **Tree Pipit** but could see neither bird. We did, however, see a **Willow Warbler** in a patch of scrub and plenty of song-flying **Meadow Pipits**.

Walking east along the coast path, we heard plenty of singing **Cetti's Warblers** and saw several **Sedge Warblers**. A **Willow Warbler** sang very obligingly from an exposed perch, though a singing **Grasshopper Warbler** hunkered in a damp depression, staying out of the breeze. Looking north to the sea we saw a pair of **Common Terns** and several **Sandwich Terns**. Perhaps the butterflies were the biggest highlight of our visit though. Both **Green Hairstreaks** and **Wall Browns** were extremely obliging here.

From Holme we drove east to RSPB Titchwell Marsh, which can be relied on for birds at any time of year. In the reedbed we were charmed by several **Bearded Tits**, while **Reed Buntings**, **Reed Warblers**, **Sedge Warblers** and **Cetti's Warblers** all sang. There were plenty of **Mediterranean Gulls** on the scrapes, both breeding on islands among **Black-headed Gulls** and flying overhead, giving their wonderful yelping calls. As always in spring and summer, **Avocets** were common, as were ducks including **Common Pochard**, **Tufted Duck**, **Gadwall**, **Northern Shoveler** and **Eurasian Teal**. From the Parrinder Hide we added **Turnstone** and **Ringed Plover** to our list and we had superb views of **Sandwich Terns**. In the creeks and pools of the saltmarsh we saw **Grey Plover** and athletically feeding **Spoonbills**, while on the beach we found a **Bar-tailed Godwit** and a posse of **Sanderlings** among more numerous **Oystercatchers**. As we walked back to the visitor centre we stopped to admire a **Ruff** by the path.

With the wind now quite strong and quite cool, we thought we would head inland to Dersingham Bog. While not seeing **Woodlark** or **Tree Pipit**, both of which breed here, we saw several families of **Stonechats**, **Shelducks** by the pools, **Buzzards** and **Red Kites** and – still a very scarce bird in Norfolk – a **Raven**. Again an insect was a real highlight here: a **Green Tiger Beetle** which allowed us excellent views on a bank by the path.

From Dersingham we returned to your hotel.

THURSDAY 2ND MAY – *Clear and sunny, with a moderate cool breeze*

Having seen many excellent birds in West Norfolk, we made our longest single journey this morning, east to Kelling Heath. A **Garden Warbler** was in song in the Blackthorn scrub by the car park, though only a few of us managed to see him. We had better luck with **Woodlarks**, which were singing high over the heath. Following a careful search we had exquisite views of a pair of **Dartford Warblers**, while another **Woodlark** flew past at eye level.

Thrilled with the birds we had seen here, we moved down to the coast and NWT Cley Marshes, where we ate lunch (watching a **Hobby** overhead). From the central hides we saw **Avocets**, **Marsh Harriers**, a **Common Sandpiper** and territorial **Little Ringed Plovers** (chasing the sandpiper). We

were among the very last people this spring to see the celebrated **Long-billed Dowitcher** which has spent the last two winters at Cley.

Determined to see **Western Yellow Wagtails**, we checked every group of cows between Salhouse and Cley Beach. We found a **White Wagtail** in the Eye Field but could find no yellows anywhere.

As we drove back to your hotel, we heard news that the long-staying first-year **Red-breasted Goose** had appeared (after several days' absence) with **Dark-bellied Brent Geese** in Thornham Harbour. As this was very close to your hotel we hurried to Thornham. The goose looked stunning in the afternoon light and was a new bird for several of you. A member of NWT staff who was passing told us that just a little further along the bank a **Wood Sandpiper** could be seen. It would have been rude not to walk a few hundred yards further. When we arrived the sandpiper was nowhere to be found, though observers assured us it had been feeding at their feet just moments before. Scanning the distant flood we saw several **Common Snipe**. Just as we found a very distant **Wood Sandpiper**, the original bird appeared at our feet, in immaculate spring plumage.

Elated, we walked back to our vehicle, passing the spot where half an hour before we had seen the **Red-breasted Goose** and where there was already no sign of it, to the chagrin of a birder who had arrived after us.

With so many excellent birds shared, we returned to your hotel where a thoroughly enjoyable tour came to an end.

Oriole Birding Tour - 29th April to 2nd May 2024								
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	29	30	1	2		
1	Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>		s	s	s		
2	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>		s	s	s		
3	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>		s	s	s		
4	Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>		s				
5	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>		s	s	s		
6	Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>		s				
7	Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		s	s	s		
8	Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>		s				
9	Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>		s	s			
10	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>		s	s	s		
11	Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>		s				
12	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		s	s	s		
13	Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>						
14	Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>		s	s	s		
15	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>						
16	Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>		s	s			
17	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>		s	s			
18	Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>						
19	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>						

#	Common Name	Scientific Name	29	30	1	2
20	Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>				
21	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>			s	
22	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>		s	s	s
23	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>				
24	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>		s	s	s
25	Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>				
26	Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>				
27	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		s		h
28	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>				
29	Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>		s	s	
30	Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>				
31	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		s	s	s
32	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		s		
33	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		s	s	s
34	Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>				
35	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		s	s	
36	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>		s		
37	Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>				
38	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		s	s	s
39	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>				
40	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>				
41	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>		s	s	s
42	Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		s	s	s
43	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>				
44	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		s	s	s
45	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		s	s	s
46	Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>				
47	Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oediconemus</i>				
48	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>		s	s	s
49	Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		s	s	s
50	Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		s	s	s
51	Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>				
52	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		s	s	s
53	Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>			s	
54	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>		s	s	s
55	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>		s	s	s
56	Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		s	s	s
57	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>			s	
58	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>		s	s	s
59	Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>			s	
60	Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>				
61	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>			s	
62	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>				
63	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>				
64	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>			s	
65	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>				s
66	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>				
67	Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>				s
68	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		s		s

#	Common Name	Scientific Name	29	30	1	2
69	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>				
70	Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		s	s	s
71	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>				s
72	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>				
73	Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>			h	
74	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>			s	s
75	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>		s	s	
76	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>				s
77	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>				
78	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>		s	s	s
79	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>		s	s	s
80	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>		s		
81	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>			s	
82	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>		s	s	s
83	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>			s	
84	Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>				
85	Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>				
86	Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)	<i>Columba livia</i>		s		
87	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>		s	s	s
88	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		s	s	s
89	Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>				
90	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		s	s	
91	Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>		s	s	
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>		s		
97	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>				
98	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>				
99	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>				
100	Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		s	s	s
101	Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>		s		s
102	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>				
103	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>			s	
104	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>		s	s	s
105	Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>		s	s	s
106	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>		s		s
107	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>		s	s	s
108	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>			s	h
109	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>				
110	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		s	s	s
111	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		s	s	s
112	Bearded Tit	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>			s	
113	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>				s
114	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>		s	s	s
115	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		s	s	s
116	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>		s		s

#	Common Name	Scientific Name	29	30	1	2
117	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>		s	s	s
118	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>		h	h	h
119	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>			s	s
120	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>		s	s	h
121	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		s	s	s
122	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>		s	s	s
123	Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>		h	h	h
124	Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>			h	
125	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		h	s	h
126	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>				s
127	Barred Warbler	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>				
128	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>		h	s	h
129	Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>		s	s	s
130	Dartford Warbler	<i>Sylvia undata</i>				s
131	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>				
132	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>			h	h
133	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		s	s	h
134	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>				
135	Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>			s	
136	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		s	s	s
137	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>				
138	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		s	s	s
139	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>				
140	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>				s
141	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>		s		
142	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		s	s	s
143	Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>		s		
144	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>				
145	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>		s	s	s
146	Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>		s	s	
147	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>			s	s
148	Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>				
149	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>		s	s	s
150	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>			h	
151	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>				
152	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		s	s	s
153	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		s	s	s
154	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>			h	
155	Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>				
156	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		s	s	s
157	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>				
158	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>		s	h	h
159	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>			s	
160	Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		s	s	s
161	Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>		h		
162	Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>				
163	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		s	s	s
164	Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>				

#	Common Name	Scientific Name	29	30	1	2
165	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>				
166	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>			s	
167	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>		s	s	s
168	ADDITIONAL SPECIES					
169	Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>		s		
170	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>		s		
171	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>		s		
172	Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>				
173	Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>				
174	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba alba</i>			s	
175	Red-breasted Goose	<i>Branta ruficollis</i>				
#	OTHER WILDLIFE		29	30	1	2
1	Brown Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>		s	s	s
2	Chinese Water Deer	<i>Hydropotes inermis</i>		s	s	
3	Reeves' Muntjac	<i>Muntiacus reevesi</i>		s	s	
4	Natterjack Toad	<i>Epidalea calamita</i>		h		h
5	Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>		s	s	
6	Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>		s	s	s
7	Orange-tip	<i>Anthocaris cardamines</i>		s	s	s
8	Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>		s		s
9	Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>		s		
10	Peacock	<i>Aglais io</i>		s	s	
11	Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>			s	s
12	Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>			s	
13	Comma	<i>Polygonia c-album</i>				s
14	Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>				s
15	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>				s
16	Green Longhorn	<i>Adela reaumurilla</i>			s	
17	Latticed Heath	<i>Chiasmia clathrata</i>				s
18	Green Tiger Beetle	<i>Cicindela campestris</i>			s	