



ORIOLE BIRDING



TOUR REPORT **NORFOLK SHOREBIRDS** **23RD – 26TH AUGUST 2021**

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TUESDAY 24TH AUGUST - *Sunny spells in moderate North-easterly winds, 20C*

With excellent meteorological conditions over the weekend for an arrival of Scandinavian migrants, we had high hopes for the tour in continuing North-easterly winds that passerines could be very much on the agenda, as well as waders! With this in mind we started down at Stiffkey Greenway and spent a couple of hours walking west along Warham Greens to look for migrants. With a big tide the saltmarsh was flooded and so there were plenty of birds to see on this side too, including several large flocks of **Golden Plovers**, six **Greenshank** and two very smart **Whimbrel**. A small group of juvenile **Bar-tailed Godwits** flew in low calling too, and then headed off west towards Wells. The bushes were fairly quiet, though we were moving small numbers of Common Whitethroats ahead of us as we walked slowly along. By the time we reached the whirligig, everything had gathered up in the roses and elders there and we had six **Lesser Whitethroats** in one bush! Watching the back of the scrub quietly we had some good views of the two whitethroat species together, plus several Blackcap. Two **Yellow Wagtails** flew low over us calling and a **Sparrowhawk** gave superb views as it flushed out of the main pit and circled up in front of us, scattering a huge flock of Starlings.



Red-backed Shrike at Gramborough Hill

Salthouse was our next stop, where a juvenile **Red-backed Shrike** had been found the previous afternoon on Gramborough Hill. A small crowd of birders were gathered but reported the shrike was elusive – though we actually saw it within seconds of walking up, perched in the open in an elder bush. True to form though it did then disappear for a while, but soon showed again and then gave itself up by perching close to us on a buddleia. Over the next half hour, we saw the bird really well as it sallied after bees and other insect prey from the scattered bushes. A beautiful bird and classic August drift migrant on the north-easterly airflow. Two **Hobby** came powering in from the sea, sending the local Sand Martins towering up into the sky – they came in over our heads and quickly off inland at a terrific speed. A **Wasp Spider** was also seen here, quite a spectacular beast!

Cley next, and after lunch we headed out to the main hides to get stuck into some waders. It was really excellent, with cattle having churned up Simmond's Scrape and seemingly having improved its appeal for birds. Three juvenile **Little Stints** were picking around on the mud, and two flocks of Dunlin, almost all juveniles, totalled about forty birds. **Green Sandpiper**, juvenile **Ruff** and a single Golden Plover were also on this pool but the best of the birding was to be had on neighbouring Pat's. Along the reed edge here we had a gorgeous juvenile **Wood Sandpiper**, picking along the edge with several young Ruffs of various sizes and levels of colour intensity. A peachy juvenile **Curlew Sandpiper** then wandered into view and there were more Dunlin and hundreds of Black-tailed Godwits too. This included some beautiful fresh juveniles, looking really immaculate in their orange and gold garb. While watching along the reed edge at the myriad waders, it was almost inevitable that we would see some **Bearded Tits**, and indeed two bright ginger juveniles appeared and were hopping around on the mud at the base of the reeds. A moulting adult **Spotted Redshank** was also seen, and a Marsh Harrier drifted by – not a bad haul!

East bank wrapped things up for us today, and there were plenty more birds to see here. A **Little Gull** on The Serpentine was still lingering, having been hanging around here for a week or so. Two each of Green and **Common Sandpiper** were also seen, plus there were **Snipe** everywhere – really fantastic to see. On nearby Arnold's Marsh, we enjoyed listening to the Sandwich Terns still with their scaly backed young in tow, and more waders here included about thirty Dunlin, four pristine juv Bar-tailed Godwits and a **Greenshank**. We had to take shelter in the hide as a squall of rain hurried in off the North Sea, dropping a salmon-fronted juvenile **Knot** in the process. Better still, two adult **Arctic Skuas** then cruised in off the sea and flew off west over the marsh, providing a fantastic finale to a great day!

WEDNESDAY 25TH AUGUST – *Overcast day with light Northerly winds, 18C*

A tougher day today, with six miles walked but relatively few migrants noted despite a drizzly start to the morning bringing plenty of promise! We headed down to Burnham Overy to walk out to the dunes, hoping for one or two migrants in the scrub. The walk out was fairly quiet, other than a **Yellow Wagtail** flying low over us, but once we reached the seawall the big marsh tide had covered everything and so there was plenty of activity of displaced birds. Several flocks of Golden Plover where wheeling about, looking superb in the gin-clear light. Two smart summer **Grey Plovers** dropped in too, and a **Whimbrel** flew up calling from the Sea Lavendar. Once we reached the dunes, a **Whinchat** on the fence was a nice addition, but other than that the boardwalk bushes were very quiet. Heading east, we notched five each of Common and **Lesser Whitethroat**, a Blackcap, a single **Wheatear** and a couple of Chiffchaff. Gazing across from the west end of the pines, we saw a juvenile **Spoonbill** in flight, but that was about it. The long walk back was punctuated though by five **Whinchats** now together on the new fence east of boardwalk – new arrivals, or just a gathering together of birds spread across the area, we weren't sure.

Next up was Wells North Point, an excellent wetland where after lunch, we enjoyed some superb close up views of waders. This included loads of **Snipe**, probing away in the wet grassy margins in fantastic light. Several **Ruffs** included lots of dapper fresh juveniles, and a **Green Sandpiper** (one of three present) bobbed beautifully in the open only a few yards away. Black-tailed Godwits remained further back, where a single **Spoonbill** slept, and we saw a superb male Marsh Harrier quartering a wheat field. The now semi-resident **Common Crane** showed very well, wandering around in the field among the Greylags!

Wells Woods rounded off our day, as we got stuck into the large tit flock roving around the edge of the dell. The light was tricky as it was very dull, and the birds were not very obliging! They wouldn't really settle anywhere where we could get any prolonged views, but several **Willow Warblers** were

seen, looking bright yellow against the scruffy, khaki Chiffchaffs. A **Pied Flycatcher** was seen a couple of times by Ashley but wouldn't sit for the group, and we also saw a few Blackcaps. A quiet day, but one or two nice highlights and again lovely warm weather for being out and about!



Brown Hare at Wells, 25th August

THURSDAY 26TH AUGUST – Strong NNE winds, rain showers, 14C

An earlier start today as we took a packed breakfast and headed for Snettisham to catch the high tide. With a fresh Northerly behind it, we knew there would already be a lot of water in by the time we arrived about an hour before high tide, and in fact almost the entire mud area was covered as we trundled down the shingle. Huge flocks of **Knot** could of course be seen wheeling around over the estuary, and the shingle beaches were thronged with Sanderling, Dunlin and Ringed Plover. An **Arctic Skua** powered north into the wind (the first of three seen) and then a **Peregrine** blazed in and had a go at the swirling **Knot** flocks. A shower of rain was bustling in off The Wash though so we dived straight into Shore Hide, trying to beat the inevitable crowds. To begin with, there weren't any birds roosting on the closer islands, with just a few thousand godwits (!) on the furthest island to the north and large numbers of Oystercatcher on the slope to the south. Ten **Spotted Redshanks** were seen (one juv., the rest all grey winter adults), and a **Little Tern** flew past, supplementing the many Common Terns present. Eventually large numbers of Knot came piling in, flying right past the hide in long rippling ribbons and crowding onto the godwit island first, but then filling the closer island giving some fantastic views. There were good numbers of Dunlin with them too but we weren't able to pick anything out among them. A fabulous russet and gold juvenile **Black-tailed Godwit** of the race *islandica* and a great comparison of streak-backed **Bar-tailed Godwit** with the plainer Black-tails, was great to see.

Heading back out into the elements, the tide was reluctant to ebb with the wind behind it, but we walked north to check the roosting beaches where there were some stunning fresh juv **Sanderling** among the sleeping Dunlin and Ringed Plovers. Three Turnstones were shovelling the rotting seaweed at the top of the beach, and three **Spoonbills** flew north. Large flocks of Shelducks were on the water, and a single Great Crested Grebe was also seen. A decent haul, but with more rain coming 'in off' we opted to head back to the van and head off to Titchwell.

With the works ongoing on the freshmarsh, we knew things would be disturbed to a degree but there were still lots of birds to see and we enjoyed more great wader watching here. The closest compartment was mainly full of gulls and common ducks, but a flock of **Golden Plover** wheeled in and there were plenty of young Ruffs about. A subadult **Caspian Gull**, probably 4th calendar year, was preening at the back before flying out towards the beach – its combination of black eye, sloping head, long and slender greenish toned bill and mid-grey back being useful pointers. From Parrinder, we fared better on waders with a flock of about 150 Dunlin visible, along with a juv **Curlew Sandpiper** and at least one **Little Stint**. A **Turtle Dove** flying north sadly didn't hang about, and other species noted included **Greenshank** and **Yellow Wagtail**. A decent end to the tour, which we wrapped up then at around 3pm.

#	Common Name	Scientific name	24	25	26	
1	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	▪		▪	
2	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	▪	▪	▪	
3	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	▪	▪	▪	
4	Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>		▪	▪	
5	Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	▪	▪	▪	
6	Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>				
7	Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	▪	▪	▪	
8	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	▪	▪	▪	
9	Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	▪	▪		
10	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	▪	▪	▪	
11	Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>		▪		
12	Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	▪	▪	▪	
13	Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>		▪		
14	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>		▪		
15	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>				
16	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>				
17	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>				
18	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	▪			
19	Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>				
20	Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>				
21	Sooty Shearwater	<i>Ardenna griseus</i>				
22	Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>				
23	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		▪		
24	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>			▪	
25	Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>		▪	▪	
26	Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>				
27	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	▪	▪	▪	
28	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>				
29	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	▪	▪	▪	

30	Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	■			
31	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	■	■	■	
32	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	■			
33	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	■	■	■	
34	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	■	■	■	
35	Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		■	■	
36	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>				
37	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	■	■	■	
38	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		■		
39	Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>		■		
40	Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>				
41	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	■	■	■	
42	Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	■	■	■	
43	Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	■	■	■	
44	Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	■	■	■	
45	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		■	■	
46	Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	■		■	
47	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>				
#	Common Name	Scientific name	24	25	26	
48	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	■	■		
49	Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	■	■	■	
50	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	■		■	
51	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	■	■	■	
52	Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>			■	
53	Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	■		■	
54	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>	■	■	■	
55	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	■		■	
56	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>			■	
57	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	■		■	
58	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	■		■	
59	Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	■	■		
60	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	■		■	
61	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	■	■		
62	Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	■	■	■	
63	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	■			
64	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	■		■	
65	Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	■	■	■	
66	Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>				
67	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	■	■	■	
68	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>				
69	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	■	■	■	
70	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>	■			
71	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	■	■	■	
72	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	■	■	■	
73	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>				
74	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	■	■	■	
75	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	■		■	
76	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>			■	
77	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>		■	■	
78	Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>				

79	Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	▪		▪	
80	Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)	<i>Columba livia</i>				
81	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	▪	▪	▪	
82	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	▪	▪	▪	
83	Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>				
84	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	▪	▪	▪	
85	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>				
86	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>				
87	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>				
88	Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>			▪	
89	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>				
90	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		▪		
91	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>				
92	Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	▪	▪	▪	
93	Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	▪			
94	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>			▪	
95	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	▪	▪	▪	
96	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	▪	▪	▪	
97	Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	▪	▪	▪	
98	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	▪	▪	▪	
99	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	▪	▪	▪	
100	Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>		▪		
101	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>				
102	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	▪	▪		
103	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	▪	▪		
#	Common Name	Scientific name	24	25	26	
104	Bearded Tit	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>	▪			
105	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>				
106	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	▪	▪	▪	
107	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	▪			
108	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	▪			
109	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>				
110	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		▪		
111	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>		▪		
112	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	H	▪	H	
113	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>				
114	Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	▪	▪		
115	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	▪	▪		
116	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	H			
117	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	▪	▪		
118	Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	▪	▪		
119	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>		▪		
120	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	▪	▪		
121	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>				
122	Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>		▪		
123	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	▪	▪	▪	
124	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	▪	▪	▪	
125	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>				

126	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>					
127	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>					
128	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		▪	▪		
129	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>			▪		
130	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>			▪		
131	Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>			▪		
132	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
133	Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>					
134	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>		▪	▪		
135	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>		▪	▪	▪	
136	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>					
137	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		▪	▪	▪	
138	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		▪	▪	▪	
139	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>			▪		
140	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>			▪		
141	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		▪			
142	Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		▪	▪	▪	
143	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		▪	▪	▪	
144	Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>					
145	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>					
146	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		▪			
147	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>			▪		
	ADDITIONAL SPECIES						
148	Red-backed Shrike			▪			
149							
150							