



ORIOLE BIRDING



TOUR REPORT NORFOLK SUMMER BREEDERS 1ST – 4TH JUNE 2021

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WEDNESDAY 2ND JUNE - *Sunny day in moderate easterly winds, 20C*

It was one of the warmest days of the year in Norfolk today but as we were on the coast for the whole day, a fresh east wind kept things manageably cool for us. We kicked off the tour down at Burnham Overy Staithe, parking by the A149 and walking down along Whincover to the seawall and on to the dunes. An adult **Spoonbill** took flight from the pools by the track as we walked down, and we started picking up our first summer migrant warblers such as Common Whitethroat, Sedge and Reed Warbler. Red Kite, Marsh Harrier, Avocets and then two lovely **Little Gulls** floated into view, over the broad east of the seawall. We watched them dip feeding over the water – both second calendar year birds with striking dark ‘M’ pattern etched across their upperwings. Reaching the dunes, we checked the sueada and bushes by the old boardwalk before continuing east towards Holkham pines. It was really quiet, apart from lots of newly fledged Linnets and Stonechats. Reaching the pines, we sat and scanned the marsh – seeing at least four **Great White Egrets**, and another feeding **Spoonbill**. The walk back produced a **Little Tern** crossing the dunes carrying a fish, with two more fishing in one of the channels on the grazing marsh by the seawall. As we got back to the stile along Whincover, we stopped to admire two **Green Hairstreak** butterflies and found a male **Grey Partridge** along a field margin. A **Cetti’s Warbler** then burst into song and popped right out in front of us on a metal gate at point blank range! A remarkable view, and we then saw it chase a second bird across the field and into the bushes further up the track. A nice flurry of excitement to end the morning!



Green Hairstreak at Burnham Overy

Wells North Point was our lunch stop, and while the pools are now mainly home to breeding birds (Avocet, Lapwing and Redshank chicks all observed!) rather than migrants, we did see a single Ringed Plover, and then a superb male **Blue-headed Wagtail** which was feeding along the near edge of the east scrape. A beautiful and unexpected bonus – perhaps the same bird that was present earlier in May. Back by the car park, a displaying **Little-ringed Plover** appeared and landed on the

pools west of the track. We also had lovely views of a male Marsh Harrier, looking quite spectacular quartering a bright yellow field of oilseed rape.

Moving east we called in next at Cley – sadly the male Red-backed Shrike from yesterday had not done the decent thing and stayed an extra day, so we headed down East Bank to check Arnold's and the Serpentine. A male **Yellow Wagtail** was in song and gave brilliant views, and Sand Martins were chattering around us as we wandered down. Another **Spoonbill**, a pair of Teal, two Sanderling, Dunlin and Bar-tailed Godwit were all added on the walk down to the sea. Here we admired many Sandwich Terns and **Little Terns**, passing just along the shore ferrying fish back to their colonies on Blakeney Point.



Singing Yellow Wagtail at Cley

Up to the heath for our final stop of today, and a very pleasant amble around in the now very warm sunshine produced four **Crossbills** flying low overhead, and a male **Woodlark** in song flight. It was quite tricky picking him up initially against the clear blue sky, even though we could easily hear his fantastic song! But once we clapped eyes on the bird, we were able to watch it for quite a while. Stonechats, Yellowhammer, a brief churring Nightjar (!), and singing Willow and Garden Warblers rounded off the afternoon and we headed back to base ready for an early dinner in preparation for our evening excursion later on.

Heading to West Norfolk, we stopped first at the Oriole office to catch up with our breeding pair of **Spotted Flycatchers**. We then headed out to the heaths to look for **Nightjars** and a real treat was in store! Arriving at our chosen site around 9.15pm, we heard our first bird churring as we stepped out of the van. What unfolded were the most remarkable views of **Nightjars** any of us had ever had! Two males wing clapping, flight calling and chasing around right in front of us, while it was still basically light! We had them perched, then chasing a female around – amazing! Roding **Woodcocks** were also seen, with one in particular flying close past us. A memorable evening.



Nightjar, 2nd June

THURSDAY 3RD JUNE – *Overcast morning, sunshine later and warm in light winds. 24C*

A great days birding in the Norfolk and Suffolk Brecks today saw us kick off with a meander around some north brecks farmland on our way south, to look for **Stone Curlews**. We pulled up at our first stop and found a pair in a bare stony field, which we were able to get fantastic scope views of. We always like to try and get them early in the day, before the heat haze gets up! Lakenheath Fen would be our destination for the whole morning, and it was a really sultry summers day here, probably the hottest of the year. This meant lots of odonata on the wing, including Hairy Dragonfly and **Scarce Chaser**, the latter mainly bright orange immature males. As we reached New Fen the sound of **Cuckoos** became a constant feature – both the liquid bubbling of females and calling of males. We saw several, with birds flying back and forth between the poplars. From the viewpoint, a **Bittern** did a long flight at the far end of the reedbed, and we had a few Reed Warblers and several brief views of **Bearded Tits**. A rustling in the reeds to our left then alerted us to another **Bittern** which exploded out of the rushes really close to us and flew the full length of the reedbed – absolutely mega views!

Wandering down to West Wood we listened hopefully for the fluting of a Golden Oriole but the earlier May sightings now seem to have moved on. A **Hobby** drifted over and we did some more dragonfly-ing as we wandered slowly down to Joist Fen. **Cetti's Warbler** was also seen well again today, and of course there were mountains or Reed & Sedge Warblers and Common Whitethroat too. At Joist Fen, we could hear the Cranes bugling frequently but sadly for us they remained stubbornly behind the bank out of view. Two more **Hobby** were hawking overhead, and we also saw Marsh Harriers and a brief Kingfisher. Our route back was via the river bank – a long hot walk, but which was rewarded at the end with good views of a pair of **Garganey** on the washland.

After lunch we headed into the forest, starting near Santon Downham. Here we looked unsuccessfully for **Woodlarks**, but did add a Willow Warbler, listen to a beautiful **Garden Warbler** and find a singing **Tree Pipit**. Our next stop along a forest clearing produced a singing **Firecrest** as soon as we got out of the van, and we had some excellent views of the bird – always a firm favourite! The same clearing had singing **Tree Pipit**, with better views for us this time perched in the scope, and a **Woodlark** was song-flighting distantly in the next clearing too. We ended our day with a revisit to the **Stone Curlews**, hoping to also scan for some raptor activity in the process. We had great views of the thick-knees, but Buzzards were our only raptors, plus Curlew and Yellowhammer.

FRIDAY 4TH JUNE – Sunny spells giving way to rain later, low of 12C

Our last day saw us head down to Holkham before the crowds descended, to take a walk through the meals to Joe Jordan hide. We particularly wanted to try and catch up with the semi-resident **Crane** which has been around since March, but also to enjoy some of the antics of the heronry too. The wander through the pines produced a few woodland birds such as Treecreeper, Goldcrest and Willow Warbler, and from Washington Hide we added a lone Pink-footed Goose to the list and saw two **Great White Egrets**, numerous fly-by **Spoonbills** and Red Kites. The next section of the walk was quiet for birds but good for butterflies, with Small Copper, Wall, Holly Blue, Painted Lady and Red Admiral all on the wing. From the hide, we could immediately see the **Crane** on the grazing marsh to the west, and got great scope views. The **Spoonbills** were ace too – we saw five fledglings begging from their parents as they wandered around the scrape. Three more **Great White Egrets** were also seen from this viewpoint, and the whole scene on show was generally great to see.

Our next destination would be on the Wash coast at Ken Hill (or Snettisham Coastal Park). This site has been subject to an impressive rewilding project and the grazing marshes turned into an excellent wetland area. We didn't have a huge amount of time here but saw a flock of several hundred Oystercatcher, about one hundred **Black-tailed Godwit**, lots of Tundra Ringed Plovers, a Turnstone, five first-summer **Little Gulls** and three **Spoonbills**. We had hoped to connect with Turtle Dove in the scrub on the way back, but rain arrived and set in properly, curtailing our hopes of finding them. We lunched, then battled our way through the traffic to King's Lynn before heading back to Ryburgh.

#	Common Name	Scientific Name		2	3	4		Comments
	Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)							
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	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>						
14	Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>		▪				
15	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>		▪		▪		

16	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>					
Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)							
17	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>		▪	▪		
18	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>		▪			
19	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
Procelariidae (Petrels)							
20	Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>		▪			
Podicipedidae (Grebes)							
21	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		▪	▪		
22	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>		▪	▪		
Threskiornithidae and Ardeidae (Spoonbills, Herons, Egrets and Bitterns)							
23	Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>		▪		▪	
24	Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>			▪	▪	
25	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		▪	▪	▪	
26	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		▪		▪	
27	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		▪	▪	▪	
Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)							
28	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		▪	▪	▪	
Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)							
29	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>					
30	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
31	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>					
#	Common Name	Scientific Name	2	3	4		Comments
32	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>		▪		▪	
33	Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		▪	▪	▪	
Rallidae and Gruidae (Rails, Coots and Cranes)							
34	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>		H			
35	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
36	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		▪	▪	▪	
37	Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>			H	▪	
Burhinidae, Recurvirostridae and Charadriidae (Thick-knees, Avocets, Plovers and Allies)							
38	Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>			▪		
39	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>		▪		▪	
40	Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		▪	▪	▪	
41	Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
42	Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>					
43	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>					
44	Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>		▪		▪	
45	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>		▪			
Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)							
46	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>					
47	Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		▪	▪		
48	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>		▪			
49	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>				▪	
50	Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>				▪	

51	Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>					
52	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>					
53	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>					
54	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>					
55	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>		▪			
56	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>		▪			
57	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>					
58	Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</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>				▪	
Laridae (Gulls and Terns)							
66	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
67	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>					
68	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>		▪		▪	
69	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>		▪		▪	
70	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>		▪			
71	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>		▪		▪	
72	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>					
73	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
74	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>		▪		▪	
#	Common Name	Scientific Name	2	3	4		Comments
75	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>		▪			
76	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>			▪	▪	
77	Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>					
Columbidae and Cuculidae (Pigeons, Doves and Cuckoos)							
78	Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)	<i>Columba livia</i>					
79	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>		▪	▪	▪	
80	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
81	Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>					
82	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		▪	▪	▪	
83	Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>		H	▪	H	
Tytonidae and Strigidae (Owls)							
84	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>			▪		
85	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>			▪		
86	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>		▪			1st
Caprimulgidae and Apodidae (Nightjars and Swifts)							
87	Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>		▪			
88	Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
Alcedinidae and Picidae (Kingfishers and Woodpeckers)							
89	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>			▪		

90	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>			▪		
91	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>		▪			
Falconidae (Falcons)							
92	Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
93	Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>			▪		
94	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>					
Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)							
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	Carion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>		▪	▪	▪	
Paridae and Panuridae (Tits and Reedlings)							
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>		▪			
104	Bearded Tit	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>			▪		
Alaudidae (Larks)							
105	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>		▪	▪		
106	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>		▪	▪	▪	
Hirundinidae (Swallows)							
107	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		▪	▪	▪	
108	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>		▪			
109	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>			▪	▪	
Scotocercidae, Aegithalidae and Phylloscopidae (Bush Warblers, Bushtits and Leaf Warblers)							
110	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>		▪	▪	H	
111	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		▪			
#	Common Name	Scientific Name	2	3	4	Comments	
112	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	H	▪	▪		
113	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	H	H	▪		
Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers)							
114	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
115	Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
116	Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>					
117	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		▪	H	H	
118	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>			H		
119	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>		▪		▪	
120	Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>		▪	▪	▪	
121	Dartford Warbler	<i>Sylvia undata</i>					
Regulidae (Kinglets)							
122	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>			▪		
123	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>			H	▪	
Troglodytidae Sittidae and Certhiidae (Wrens, Nuthatches and Treecreepers)							

124	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		▪	▪	▪	
125	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>					
126	Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>				▪	
<i>Turdidae and Sturnidae (Thrushes and Starlings)</i>							
127	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		▪	▪	▪	
128	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		▪	▪	▪	
129	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>			H		
130	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
<i>Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)</i>							
131	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>		▪			
132	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		▪	▪	▪	
133	Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>					
134	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>		▪			
<i>Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)</i>							
135	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		▪	▪	▪	
136	Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>					
<i>Prunellidae (Accentors)</i>							
137	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>		▪	▪	▪	
<i>Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)</i>							
138	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>		▪			Plus <i>flava</i>
139	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>					
140	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		▪	▪	▪	
141	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		▪	▪	▪	
142	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>			▪		
<i>Fringillidae (Finches)</i>							
143	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		▪	▪	▪	
144	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>		▪			
145	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		▪	▪	▪	
146	Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		▪		▪	
147	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		▪	▪	▪	
148	Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>					
#	Common Name	Scientific Name		2	3	4	Comments
<i>Emberizidae (Old World Buntings)</i>							
149	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>					
150	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		▪	▪		
151	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>		▪	▪	▪	