



ORIOLE BIRDING



NORFOLK SUMMER BREEDERS AND LATE MIGRANTS 24TH – 27TH JUNE 2019

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MONDAY 24TH JUNE – Pick-up from King's Lynn and arrival Great Ryburgh

We picked up 6 of our group at King's Lynn train station at 17:00, heading on towards our base for the week; the Blue Boar in Great Ryburgh. One the way, we paused beside a breeding site for **Peregrine Falcon**, pulling up and watching 2 adult birds and a recently fledged juvenile; a superb gingery individual which did a quick fly-round before landing expertly back on the nest site. A nice start! We then headed to the Boar, sitting down to chat through the plan for the next couple of days, before I headed home. Later on after dinner, many of the group headed out to the bridge over the Wensum nearby, and enjoyed superb views of the local **Little Owl** perched up on rooftops.



Little Owl near Great Ryburgh

TUESDAY 25TH JUNE – Choseley, Titchwell, Snettisham and Holme

Overcast, heavy rain showers am, mist pm, moderate N wind, 17C

A bit of a grey first day of the trip, and with a forecast of rain and thunderstorms, we weren't unprepared for bad weather! We opted to a visit to Titchwell RSPB to start with, as at least we could seek shelter if necessary. Heading across county, the rain held off so we paused on route at some nice farmland locations, picking up views of Yellowhammer and Linnets before stopping near Choseley. Here it was nice to see and listen to **Corn Buntings**, singing in characteristic fashion from overhead wires and flying with dangled legs. Brown Hares were much in evidence all over, and we also saw our first of many Marsh Harriers of the day, Red-legged Partridges, Common Whitethroats and Skylarks in good voice. We then headed down onto Titchwell reserve. Parking up, we had bit of a look for Turtle Dove in the car park, but had no joy (a trend which would continue despite much effort today!). Heading past the visitor centre, we made our way to Patsy's Pool, noting Cetti's Warbler in powerful song, and glimpses of singing Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs along the Meadow Trail. Patsy's pool hosted a single drake **Red-crested Pochard**, several Common Pochard including some family groups, Great Crested and Little Grebes and a few Gadwall, Shoveler and Mallards. Marsh Harriers patrolled the reeds and included 2 of this years fledged juveniles, and Reed Warbler showed well below the viewing screen. Walking the East Trail, Sedge Warbler showed very well and **Bearded Tits** called and were seen briefly over the reedbed. Retracing our steps, we then headed out onto the west bank, with darkening skies and rumbling thunder quickening our pace somewhat! We reached the Island Hide just as the heavens opened, just about staying dry! Out on the Freshmarsh there was

plenty to see. Four **Spotted Redshanks** were resplendent in summer plumage, and a fully plumed **Ruff** was also well appreciated. A flock of Bar-tailed Godwits numbered around 30 birds, and also hosted 4 Black-tailed Godwits and a small number of Knot, while the commonest wader here was Avocet, with perhaps 80 gathered on the marsh. A pair of **Spoonbills** were roosting at the back of the marsh, and moreorless remained there for the duration, while other birds noted included a couple of **Bearded Tits** distantly, Reed Warbler and a wildfowl selection which included small numbers of Teal, many Shoveler in eclipse plumage and a few Shelduck. The gull colony could be seen distantly, but viewing was much better from Parrinder. Here we were able to admire the smart adult **Mediterranean Gulls**, one pair tending a well grown juvenile. Here we also got good views of 3 **Little Ringed Plovers** below the hide. The rain had eased now, so we braved the beach, noting 5 more **Spoonbills** on the saltmarsh, a single Ringed Plover and another Little Ringed Plover on the tidal marsh as we went. The sea hosted several fairly distant Sandwich Terns and a couple of fishing **Little Terns**, as well as a distant flock of Common Scoter, aside from the feeding Black-headed Gulls, but the shore was pretty quiet with the tide being well in. The walk back to the visitor centre was highlighted by a party of 5 superb juvenile **Bearded Tits** which showed well in the reed tops, seeing us back for our lunch in style!

From Titchwell, we headed over to Snettisham Coastal Park, where our main quarry would be Turtle Dove, but also breeding warblers. The wind was fairly stiff here and it was cool and rather dull, which made for a pretty quiet visit. However, we did note a singing **Lesser Whitethroat** along with several Blackcaps and Common Whitethroats, several parties of Bullfinches (including a superbly showy male later on), but despite our efforts, no Turtle Doves were forthcoming at this usually productive site. A Common Tern also flew over here before we headed on (after a cuppa of course) and headed to finish the day at Holme Dunes. Pulling up here, we walked around the scrub behind the houses near the Golf Course, picking up here a vocal **Cuckoo** and a second bird which gave some brief flight views, and also some nice views of Common Whitethroat, before we headed back to the van, and with it having just gone 5pm, we hit the road and headed back to Great Ryburgh.



Juvenile Bearded Tit from Titchwell

WEDNESDAY 26TH JUNE – The Brecks and Lakenheath

Overcast, moderate N wind, 17C

Today's excursion took us south into the Norfolk Breckland, where we enjoyed some great sightings of some of the regions specialist species. Our first stop was a speculative one which came up trumps, checking some likely habitat for **Stone Curlews**. In an area dominated by high cereal fields, a field of low onions was worth a scan, and came up trumps straight away with 3 **Stone Curlews** showing rather well in the short vegetation. The party proved to be an adult pair and a very well-grown youngster; superb to see these so well at this stage, and even witness the youngster engaging in some

wing exercises! A Roe Deer was also sharing the field along with a couple of Brown Hares, while the birds noted included several Common Buzzards, a single Sparrowhawk and a few Lapwings, while singing Skylarks dominated the soundtrack. Happy with our sightings, we moved then into the thick of the Thetford Forest, where after a cuppa, we headed out in search for some forest specialities. The pine belts were quiet, hosting small numbers of singing Goldcrests and Blackcaps, but relatively little action in the dull and cool conditions. Reaching a clear area of forest, we soon picked up distant song of **Tree Pipit**, and could see it distantly in song flight, but the bird was too far for any meaningful views. Meadow Pipit was also amongst the young pines, while Common Whitethroat and Yellowhammer were also noted. Further on, the liquid cadence of a singing **Woodlark** caught our ears, and soon we were enjoying great scope views of this tree-top songster, talking through its finer ID features. It then erupted into full song flight and headed off, only to soon be replaced by a **Tree Pipit** giving its similarly delightful song from the same tree tops! Again, we were able to run through the key ID features of this subtly distinctive bird before it too headed off. Our next target species was less cooperative. Approaching a location which we have known **Common Redstart** to breed, we approached and searched carefully, spending a good 30 minutes before seeing a female bird fly up from low cover and fly off and away into another distant patch of forest. The view was pretty poor, and the lack of obvious activity seems to suggest these birds have not succeeded to rear any young this summer, possibly due to the poor weather we have had. From here we retraced our steps back to the van, enjoying more **Woodlark** and **Tree Pipit** song before nipping round to Santon Downham. Here, after a quick toilet break, we wandered around to the River Little Ouse, where amongst other things we encountered a family group of 7 **Mandarin** ducks; a female and 6 well grown juveniles on the river; a bit of a surprise! We also had nice views of Great Spotted Woodpecker, Siskin and a variety of other nice woodland species, and also an ice cream kindly bought by John! Returning back to the van, we then loaded up and headed to Lakenheath Fen where we would have lunch and finish the day.



Tree Pipit

Walking out onto the main reserve at Lakenheath, things were fairly subdued on the whole, with a cool and fairly brisk wind blowing and keeping a lot of stuff down it seemed. However walking from the centre to Joist Fen and back, we came away with some great sightings. Three **Green Woodpeckers** were picked up near New Fen briefly, and a couple of Marsh Harriers were noted along with some fleeting views of Reed Warblers and Reed Buntings. **Hobby** put on a nice show from the top end of New Fen, hawking dragonflies from the reedbed on 2 occasions and feeding on the wing. A second bird was also seen as we returned to the centre later. Out at the Joist Fen viewpoint our perseverance paid off, as after a 20-minute watch, a **Bittern** came up from the reeds, flew along the channel towards us and passed us to within 10 meters, before dropping into the reeds behind; superb! We saw this bird again as it flew across the track on our way back, while we also noted a couple of Great Crested Grebe families with well grown young and also a Common Tern feeding in the pool in front of us. All in all a good haul, and after the walk back, we enjoyed a well earned hot drink before hitting the road and getting back to Great Ryburgh at about 6pm.

The day wasn't finished, as we arranged to meet at 20:30 to head out 'Nightjarring'. We made our way out to a regular site and enjoyed a superb display again, with the first churring coming soon after we arrived, and we were scoping our first male **Nightjar** on a fence post in no time. We spent our time in two core areas of activity, seeing 5 individuals in both areas and enjoying fantastic flight and perched

views, and also listened to a range of vocalisations; just magical as always. **Woodcock** were on form, with at least 3 roding birds seen, while **Grasshopper Warbler** was heard briefly and we also picked up a single male Stonechat, vocal despite the lateness of the hour. Thoroughly pleased with our sightings and the experience, we headed back to the Blue Boar, arriving tired but happy at just before 23:00.



Roding Woodcock performed superbly tonight

THURSDAY 27TH JUNE – North Norfolk heaths and Cley

Sunny spells, light N wind, 14C

A decidedly chilly (for June at least!) final day of our three-day Norfolk tour started off in stylish fashion, with a quick pop into the Manor House provided not only superb views of the resident **Spotted Flycatchers** over the drive, but culminated in us discovering their long-suspected nest! A great result for the garden, we left Nick thrilled with his first breeding attempt of the species here since he first moved in. From here, we headed out towards the Holt-Cromer ridge, where we went in search for one of our first target species of the day; **Firecrest**. Arriving at a good site for the species, we were soon listening to the competing songs of 3 males from the car park, and with some perseverance, we enjoyed views of one of the males over a prolonged period, singing from a favoured ivy-clad pine, and at one point being joined by a female. The woods here also hosted a party of noisy Marsh Tits and many of the usual suspects in good voice. From here we moved onto an area of nearby heath habitat, where a walk around unfortunately failed to yield any of our hoped-for target; the Dartford Warbler; a species which is having a particularly poor year at its only Norfolk breeding site. After a hot drink, the walk did however yield great views of singing Yellowhammers and Common Whitethroats, as well as many Linnets and a fine spread of **Silver-studded Blue** butterflies on the wing in appropriately managed areas along the path edge; a dazzlingly smart butterfly! Common Buzzards were noted thermalling over the heath as we walked back to the van, and then moved onto our birding destination for the afternoon; NWT Cley Marshes.



Firecrests can be elusive, but this male performed well

Reaching the visitor centre, we took our lunch on the benches after sorting our entry permits. Looking out over the reserve, the view was superb, with the scrapes busy with many waders and

wildfowl; all going up at one point due to the attentions to a patrolling Marsh Harrier; we were looking forward to taking a closer look! Walking the boardwalk, we saw several basking Common Lizards on the wooden pathway, while Reed Warbler was also noted briefly. Entering Daukes Hide, we began scanning Simmonds and Pats Pools carefully, checking through the flocks for anything unusual, with one species in particular in mind. A **GREEN-WINGED TEAL** has been present for a while, and we were keen to see it here. The bird didn't prove too difficult to find, swimming around on Pat's Pool with Eurasian Teal before walking up onto the central islands and promptly going to sleep! A drake in partial eclipse plumage, it still showed the tell-tale feature of a vertical white stripe on the flanks. Aside from this obvious rarity, we also enjoyed watching two male **Ruff** in full breeding finery; both of the black form. Also present was a full summer plumaged Bar-tailed Godwit, around 70 Black-tailed godwits, 13 Knot and a fine assortment of commoner wildfowl and waders out from here, we nipped up the beach road to have a coffee overlooking the sea, noting several Sandwich, Common and Little Terns fishing offshore there, and also picking up a single **Hobby** dashing across the marshes towards Cley village. We had a fairly elaborate drop-off plan for the group today, so we didn't have much more time to play with, though a quick pause at the East Bank gave us a single Pochard, a fly-over **Bearded Tit**, and further views of Reed and Sedge Warbler, before we dropped off each member of the group at the Wiverton Bell, the Blue Boar, Fakenham town centre and then King's Lynn station



Our local Spotted Flycatchers were a joy to watch

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NORFOLK SUMMER BREEDERS AND LATE MIGRANTS

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		25	26	27		Comments
Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)								
1	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>		x				
2	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>		x	x	x		
3	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>		x	x	x		
4	Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		x		x		
5	Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>		x	x	x		
6	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>		x	x	x		
7	Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>				x		
8	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		x	x	x		
9	Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>		x		x		
10	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>		1				
11	Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>		x		x		
12	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>		x	x			
13	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>		x				
Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)								
14	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>		x	x	x		
15	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>				x		
16	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>		x	x	x		
Podicipedidae (Grebes)								
17	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		x				
18	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>		x	x			
Threskiornithidae and Ardeidae (Spoonbills, Herons, Egrets and Bitterns)								
19	Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>		7				
20	Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>			x			
21	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		x	x	x		
22	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		x	x	x		
Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)								
23	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		x	x	x		
Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)								
24	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>			x	x		
25	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		x	x	x		
26	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>			x			
27	Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		x	x	x		
Rallidae (Rails, Coots and allies)								
28	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		x	x	x		
29	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		x	x	x		
Burhinidae, Recurvirostridae and Charadriidae (Thick-knees, Avocets, Plovers and Allies)								
30	Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>			x			
31	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>		x	x	x		
32	Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		80		x		
33	Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		x	x	x		
34	Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>		x				

#	Common Name	Scientific Name		25	26	27		Comments
35	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>		4				
Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)								
36	Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		x	x			
37	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>		x		x		
38	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>		x		x		
39	Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>		x				
40	Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>		4		x		
41	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>		1		x		
42	Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>			x			
43	Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		x		x		
44	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>		4				
Laridae (Gulls and Terns)								
45	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>		x	x	x		
46	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>		x				
47	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>		x	x	x		
48	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>		x	x	x		
49	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>		x		x		
50	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>		x		x		
51	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>		x	x	x		
Columbidae and Cuculidae (Pigeons, Doves and Cuckoos)								
52	Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)	<i>Columba livia</i>		x	x	x		
53	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>		x	x	x		
54	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		x	x	x		
55	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		x	x	x		
56	Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>		2	x			
Tytonidae and Strigidae (Owls)								
57	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>		x	x			
Caprimulgidae and Apodidae (Nightjars and Swifts)								
58	Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>			x			
59	Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>		x	x	x		
Alcedinidae and Picidae (Kingfishers and Woodpeckers)								
60	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>			x			
61	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>			x			
62	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>			x			
Falconidae (Falcons)								
63	Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		x	x	x		
64	Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>			x	x		
65	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>				x		Also on 24th
Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)								
66	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>			x			
67	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>		x	x	x		
68	Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>		x	x	x		
69	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>			x	x		
70	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>		x	x	x		
Paridae and Panuridae (Tits and Reedlings)								
71	Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>			x	x		

#	Common Name	Scientific Name		25	26	27		Comments
72	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>			H	x		
73	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		x	x	x		
74	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		x	x	x		
75	Bearded Tit	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>		5	x	x		
Aldridae (Larks)								
76	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>			x			
77	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>		x	x	x		
Hirundinidae (Swallows)								
78	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		x	x	x		
79	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>				x		
80	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>		x	x	x		
Scotocercidae, Aegithalidae and Phylloscopidae (Bush Warblers, Bushtits and Leaf Warblers)								
81	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>		H	H	H		
82	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		x	x	x		
83	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>			x			
84	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		x	x	x		
Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers)								
85	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>		x	x	x		
86	Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>		x	x	x		
87	Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>			H			
88	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		x	x	x		
89	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>		x				
90	Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>		x	x	x		
Regulidae (Kinglets)								
91	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>				x		
92	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>			x	x		
Troglodytidae and Sittidae (Wrens and Nuthatches)								
93	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		x	x	x		
94	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>			H			
Turdidae and Sturnidae (Thrushes and Starlings)								
95	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		x	x	x		
96	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		x	x	x		
97	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>		H	x	x		
Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)								
98	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>		x				
99	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>				x		
100	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		x	x	x		
101	Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>			x			
102	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>			x			
Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)								
103	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		x	x	x		
Prunellidae (Accentors)								
104	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>		x	x	x		
Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)								
105	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		x	x	x		
106	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		x	x	x		

#	Common Name	Scientific Name		25	26	27		Comments
107	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>			x			
Fringillidae (Finches)								
108	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		x	x	x		
109	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>		x				
110	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		x	x	x		
111	Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		x	x	x		
112	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		x	x	x		
113	Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>			x			
Emberizidae (Old World Buntings)								
114	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>		2				
115	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		x	x	x		
116	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>		x	x	x		
#	Additional Species	Scientific name		25	26	27		Comments
117	Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas carolinensis</i>				x		
#	Other Wildlife			25	26	27		Comments
1	Brown Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>		x	x	x		
2	Grey Squirrel	<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>		x	x	x		
3	Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>			x			
1	Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>		x	x	x		
2	Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>		x	x	x		
3	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>		x	x	x		
4	Sml Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>			x			
5	Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebejus argus</i>				x		
6	Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>				x		
1	Variable Damselfly	<i>Coenagrion pulchellum</i>			x			
2	Azure Damselfly	<i>Coenagrion puella</i>			x			
3	Black-tailed Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>			x			
4	Blue-tailed Damselfly	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>			x			
1	Common Lizard	<i>Lacerta vivipara</i>				x		