

Saturday February 20th

Weather: Sunny and mild with a light but cold north westerly breeze.

Portland Bill, 0900

Starting at the Bill we saw plenty of seabirds, the highlights being a Bridled Guillemot on the sea and a Red-throated Diver flying past. Razorbills, Guillemots, Gannets and Fulmars were also seen with Kittiwakes feeding in a huge flock far offshore. Walking north towards the Westcliffs we found a female Stonechat with Skylarks and Meadow Pipits singing overhead. 2 Buzzards and a Kestrel were the first birds of prey of the weekend.

Southwell, 1100

Parking opposite Cheyne House we walked down to the Eastcliffs and soon found the resident pair of Peregrines on the cliffs. The arrival of a third bird, a male, saw the resident male spurred into action to see off the intruder in no uncertain terms.

Portland Castle, 1200

Our first look at Portland Harbour produced just a few Red-breasted Mergansers.

Ferrybridge, 1300

Very quiet here with just a few Ringed Plovers on the shoreline and more Mergansers in the Fleet.

Sandsfoot Castle, 1330

The main target here was the Siberian Chiffchaff which we found without too much difficulty in the company of a dozen or so Common Chiffchaffs. Looking in the other direction to Portland Harbour we found a superb range of seabirds including 9 Black-necked Grebes and a single Slavonian Grebe. Back at the bus we had the unique experience of watching a Firecrest from inside the vehicle!



Lodmoor, 1600

A quick stop here added plenty of new birds to the list including Spoonbill (2), Brent Goose, Sparrowhawk and Wigeon.

Radipole, 1700

Our final stop added 2 gulls, Mediterranean and Lesser Black-backed with a Little Grebe being spotted from the bus.

Sunday February 22nd

Weather: Another largely fine spring day but with more cloud than yesterday

Swanage, 1030

We were here for one reason – to see a Glaucous Gull. We achieved our aim within a few minutes of arriving and then doubled it when a second bird arrived! Both were full adults – a very rare sight indeed anywhere in the English Channel.



Studland, 1130

Apart from the marshmallows the highlight here were the summer plumaged Black-necked Grebes just offshore and the female Common Scoter a bit further out.

Middlebere Farm, 1400

Normally packed with birds this spot at the north-western corner of Poole Harbour was unusually quiet this afternoon. Even so we did get prolonged views of a feeding Avocet and added Curlew and Goldfinch to the weekend list.

Radipole, 1630

We were still driving across the car park when we found both Ruddy Duck and Hooded Merganser. The latter bird received a lot of attention even though we may never know if it is a genuine vagrant or not. Whatever its origin it certainly is a beautiful duck. The gull flock produced several Mediterranean Gulls and a splendid adult Yellow-legged Gull. A flock of Snipe in the reeds gave good views and 2 or 3 Cetti's Warblers were heard singing.

The weekend total of 76 species was hardly record-breaking but had far more scarce birds than usual for a February weekend.

Looking forward to seeing you all again soon,

Bob.

Birds: 76 species + 5 heard

<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-throated Diver	Portland Bill	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mediterranean Gull	Radipole
<input type="checkbox"/>	Little Grebe	Radipole	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black-headed Gull	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Great Crested Grebe	Portland Harbour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Common Gull	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Slavonian Grebe	Portland Harbour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Radipole
<input type="checkbox"/>	Black-necked Grebe	Portland Harbour, Studland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Herring Gull	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fulmar	Portland Bill	<input type="checkbox"/>	Great Black-backed Gull	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gannet	Portland Bill	<input type="checkbox"/>	Razorbill	Portland Bill
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cormorant	various sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guillemot	Portland Bill
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shag	Portland Bill	<input type="checkbox"/>	Green Woodpecker	Middlebere (heard)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Little Egret	Ferrybridge, Middlebere	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wood Pigeon	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grey Heron	Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Collared Dove	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spoonbill	Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Skylark	Portland Bill
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mute Swan	Radipole, Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meadow Pipit	Portland Bill
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dark-bellied Brent Goose	Lodmoor, Studland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rock Pipit	Portland Bill
<input type="checkbox"/>	Canada Goose	Radipole, Lodmoor, Studland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pied Wagtail	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shelduck	Lodmoor, Middlebere	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wren	Middlebere (heard)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wigeon	Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Duncock	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gadwall	Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Robin	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teal	Studland, Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stonechat	Portland Bill
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mallard	Radipole, Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Blackbird	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shoveler	Studland, Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Song Thrush	Winfrith
<input type="checkbox"/>	Common Scoter	Studland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cetti's Warbler	Radipole (heard)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tufted Duck	Radipole	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chiffchaff	Sandsfoot
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ruddy Duck	Radipole	<input type="checkbox"/>	Siberian Chiffchaff	Sandsfoot
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hooded Merganser	Radipole	<input type="checkbox"/>	Goldcrest	Sandsfoot
<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-breasted Merganser	Portland Harbour, Studland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Firecrest	Sandsfoot
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sparrowhawk	Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Blue Tit	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kestrel	various sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	Great Tit	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Peregrine	Portland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Long-tailed Tit	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Buzzard	various sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	Magpie	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pheasant	Winfrith	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jackdaw	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Moorhen	Radipole, Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rook	Portland, Ferrybridge
<input type="checkbox"/>	Coot	Radipole, Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Raven	Portland Heights
<input type="checkbox"/>	Water Rail	Lodmoor (heard)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carrion Crow	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lapwing	Lodmoor, Middlebere	<input type="checkbox"/>	Starling	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ringed Plover	Ferrybridge	<input type="checkbox"/>	House Sparrow	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Snipe	Radipole, Lodmoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chaffinch	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Oystercatcher	Portland Harbour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Greenfinch	various sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Curlew	Middlebere	<input type="checkbox"/>	Goldfinch	Middlebere
<input type="checkbox"/>	Avocet	Middlebere	<input type="checkbox"/>	Linnet	Portland (heard)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Glaucous Gull	Swanage	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yellow-legged Gull	Radipole	<input type="checkbox"/>		