



Barbara's photo of the sunset on Sunday

Saturday April 25th

Weather: mostly overcast with a light westerly breeze

Arne RSPB Reserve, 1230

After a very pleasant lunch in warm sunshine watching siskins on the bird-feeder we walked out onto Coombe Heath to see if we could find some Dartford Warblers. They certainly took a lot of finding but eventually we managed several brief views of a number of these tricky little birds. On the way we found a huge flock of black-tailed godwits on Middlebere Lake along with a whimbrel and one or two curlews. Several buzzards and a kestrel were hunting over the Heath and a single swallow sped past on its way north. The woodlands nearby produced great-spotted and green woodpeckers (we only heard the green though) as well as a nuthatch and a couple of mistle thrushes.

Sunday April 26th

Weather: light rain in morning then drier with some sunny intervals in a cold north-westerly wind

Portland Bill, 0930

A few Gannets were seen here but mostly quite distant. Much closer in were the breeding seabirds namely guillemots and razorbills with a few kittiwakes and fulmars. On land the Bill Quarry had rock pipits and wheatears along with linnets and goldfinches on the perimeter fence of the Admiralty compound.

Topfields, 1100

The ancient field system above the Bill was quiet this morning although we did manage to find a very smart but distant male redstart and some close views of several pairs of linnets.

Suckthumb Quarry, 1200

Starting in Coombefield Quarry near Southwell we walked towards Weston searching for migrants in the bushes of the overgrown parts of the quarries. It was hard work but eventually we struck gold with a flight view of a cuckoo and soon after found a whitethroat. Raven and peregrine were seen overhead and a stock dove was found perched in a tree with some wood pigeons.

Portland Castle, 1300

A quick stop here before lunch produced good views of a garden warbler.

Ferrybridge, 1400

An impressive flock of 50 or more dunlins and ringed plovers were seen here along with 10 little terns and 25 sandwich terns. Out on the waters of the Fleet we saw three distant red-breasted mergansers.

Lodmoor RSPB Reserve, 1500

A long list of new birds was added to the day's list here with a male marsh harrier being the best. We had already seen black-tailed godwit but the group of summer-plumaged birds feeding close to the path here were particularly attractive.

The day finished with one of the best birds of the weekend when a male pied flycatcher was found by one of the group in nearby Tout Quarry.

Monday April 27th

Weather: a cold and sunny morning then a cloudy afternoon

Kingbarrow Quarry, 0900

In very bright but cold conditions we searched in vain for the resident little owl but had to be satisfied with good views of several wheatears and a sun-bathing stock dove.

Ferrybridge, 1100

Our mid-morning coffee break added knot to the weekend's list but was most memorable for the flock of 17 whimbrel that flew high overhead on their easterly migration.

Maiden Castle, 1200

We very soon found our target bird, in the shape of a very obliging corn bunting, in full song. Our search for a yellowhammer was cut short when we had to leave early after a very dodgy-looking character appeared to be about to break into the bus!

Radipole RSPB Reserve, 1300

An outstanding end to the weekend with a beautiful drake garganey in front of the north hide. On the way there we had already seen a close Cetti's warbler and two common sandpipers, with a pair of marsh harriers also at the hide.

Looking forward to the next time,

Bob

Birds: 81 species

Great Crested Grebe	Radipole
Little Grebe	Radipole, Lodmoor
Fulmar	Portland Bill
Gannet	Portland Bill
Cormorant	Portland, Radipole
Shag	Portland Bill
Little Egret	Arne, Lodmoor
Grey Heron	Arne, Radipole, Lodmoor
Mute Swan	Radipole, Lodmoor
Canada Goose	Arne, Radipole, Lodmoor
Shelduck	Arne, Radipole, Lodmoor
Teal	Arne, Radipole, Lodmoor
Mallard	Arne, Radipole, Lodmoor
Gadwall	Radipole, Lodmoor
Garganey	Radipole
Pochard	Radipole, Lodmoor
Tufted Duck	Radipole
Red-breasted Merganser	Ferrybridge
Kestrel	Arne, Portland
Peregrine	Suckthumb Quarry
Buzzard	Arne, Radipole, Portland
Sparrowhawk	Kingbarrow Quarry
Marsh Harrier	Radipole, Lodmoor
Pheasant	Arne
Coot	Radipole, Lodmoor
Moorhen	Radipole, Lodmoor
Curlew	Arne
Whimbrel	Arne, Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Dunlin	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Knot	Ferrybridge
Oystercatcher	Arne, Lodmoor, Portland Bill
Ringed Plover	Ferrybridge
Common Sandpiper	Radipole
Redshank	Arne
Black-tailed Godwit	Radipole, Lodmoor
Sandwich Tern	Ferrybridge
Little Tern	Ferrybridge
Black-headed Gull	various sites
Kittiwake	Portland Bill
Herring Gull	various sites
Great Black-backed Gull	various sites
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Radipole
Guillemot	Portland Bill
Razorbill	Portland Bill
Wood Pigeon	various sites
Feral Pigeon	Radipole
Stock Dove	Suckthumb Quarry, Kingbarrow Quarry
Collared Dove	various sites
Cuckoo	Suckthumb Quarry
Skylark	Ferrybridge, Portland Bill
Rock Pipit	Portland Bill
Swift	Lodmoor
Green Woodpecker (heard)	Arne
Great-spotted Woodpecker	Arne
Swallow	various sites
House Martin	Radipole, Lodmoor
Sand Martin	Radipole
Meadow Pipit	Arne
Pied Wagtail	various sites

Wren	various sites
Dunnock	various sites
Robin	various sites
Redstart	Topfields
Wheatear	Portland Bill
Stonechat	Arne
Blackbird	various sites
Song Thrush	Arne
Mistle Thrush	Arne
Pied Flycatcher	Tout Quarry
Cetti's Warbler	Radipole
Dartford Warbler	Arne
Blackcap	New Ground
Garden Warbler	Portland Castle
Whitethroat	various sites
Chiffchaff	various sites
Willow Warbler (heard)	Arne
Reed Warbler (heard)	Radipole, Lodmoor
Sedge Warbler (heard)	Radipole, Lodmoor
Goldcrest	Arne
Long-tailed Tit	Arne
Coal Tit	Arne
Blue Tit	various sites
Great Tit	various sites
Nuthatch	Arne
Jay	Arne
Raven	various sites
Magpie	various sites
Jackdaw	various sites
Carrion Crow	various sites
Starling	various sites
House Sparrow	various sites
Goldfinch	various sites
Chaffinch	various sites
Greenfinch	Lodmoor
Siskin	Arne
Linnet	various sites
Corn Bunting	Maiden Castle

Mammals:

Rabbit	Portland
Sika Deer	Arne
Otter (spraint)	Radipole

Insects:

Large White	Maiden Castle
Speckled Wood	Lodmoor
Painted Lady	Kingbarrow Quarry
Peacock	Maiden Castle
Small Tortoiseshell	Maiden Castle
Pond Skater	Arne
Water Boatman	Arne
Wood Ant	Arne
Mining Bee	Kingbarrow Quarry
Buff-tailed Bumblebee	Kingbarrow Quarry

Plants:

Thrift	Ferrybridge
Great Horsetail	Lodmoor
Round-leaved Cranesbill	Kingbarrow Quarry
Cut-leaved Cranesbill	Kingbarrow Quarry

Common Field Speedwell
Wood Spurge
Wallflower
Brackish Water Crowfoot
Bulbous Buttercup
Nostoc (blue-green alga)
Red Valerian
Marsh Marigold

Kingbarrow Quarry
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Suckthumb Quarry
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Suckthumb Quarry
Suckthumb Quarry
Radipole