

HEIGHTS HOTEL WILDLIFE BREAKS

Friday September 13th – Sunday September 15th 2019



Lapland Bunting, Wryneck and Sparrowhawk, photos by Mary Hill

Saturday September 14th

Weather: Warm and sunny all day with a light easterly breeze

Ferrybridge, 0900

Our weekend started in glorious weather with unbroken blue skies and almost calm conditions. A quick stop at Ferrybridge initially drew a blank but very soon a Black-tailed Godwit dropped in closely followed by a couple of Knot. We were just about to leave when a second Godwit arrived, this time a Bar-tailed.

Lodmoor RSPB Reserve, 1000

Our main target was quickly achieved here when we found the Long-billed Dowitcher shortly after arriving. The bird soon disappeared though only to be quickly found again fast asleep with some Lapwings. Not happy with these views we waited until a Grey Heron woke it up and it started feeding, almost out in the open. Whilst we were waiting we had excellent views of Ruff along with several glimpses of a Common Sandpiper or two. Sparrowhawk, Buzzard and Marsh Harrier were also seen well as were no less than four Great White Egrets.

Ferrybridge, 1300

After having lunch we checked the mudflats again and found that a large number of Ringed Plovers and Dunlin had arrived. Further out was a flock of eight Black-tailed Godwits and twenty or so Oystercatchers.

Portland Bill, 1400

There were two target birds here, Wryneck and Lapland Bunting and both were found with no trouble at all. The Wryneck sighting was particularly fortuitous as it had not been seen for a while but chose to sit out in the open just minutes before we arrived. The star bird had to be the Lapland Bunting though. Not only was it a new bird for the Birdbreak list but was unusually confiding, often running towards us and literally at our feet on a number of occasions.

Tout and Inmosthay Quarries, 1600

We finished the day with a very relaxing walk through the quarries next to the hotel in gorgeously arm conditions. A number of butterflies were out including two or three Adonis Blues, one of which was in relatively good condition for the time of year. Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were seen well and we even had time to look at a few lichens, notably the Orange Sunburst Lichen, *Caloplaca aurantia*.

Sunday September 15th

Weather: much the same as yesterday

Topfields, 0900

Parking in Southwell, the most southerly village of Dorset, we explored the ancient field system above the Bird Observatory. The horse-fields held plenty of Wheatears, Meadow Pipits and Linnets but we only managed a fly-over view of Yellow Wagtail, a species we had hoped to see well here. A hunting Peregrine was one of the best sightings here, with Kestrel and Buzzard also seen well.

Ferrybridge, 1230

Pretty much a repeat of yesterday here but we did manage to add Sanderling to the list.

Radipole RSPB Reserve, 1400

We spent all afternoon here, adding a good number of new species for the weekend without seeing anything remarkable. Raptors here included at least three Buzzards and a Kestrel. Other birds that showed themselves to us briefly were Cetti's Warbler, Snipe, several Kingfishers and two or three Great White Egrets, one of which gave particularly close views.

Looking forward to the next time,

Bob

The weekend's list of species:

Little Grebe	Radipole
Great Crested Grebe	Radipole
Gannet	Portland Bill
Cormorant	Lodmoor, Radipole, Portland Bill
Shag	Portland Bill
Great White Egret	Lodmoor, Radipole
Grey Heron	Lodmoor, Radipole,
Little Egret	Lodmoor, Radipole
Mute Swan	Lodmoor, Radipole
Canada Goose	Lodmoor, Radipole
Teal	Radipole
Gadwall	Radipole
Shoveler	Radipole
Mallard	Lodmoor, Radipole
Tufted Duck	Radipole
Pochard	Radipole
Marsh Harrier	Lodmoor
Peregrine	Portland
Kestrel	Portland, Ferrybridge, Lodmoor, Radipole
Buzzard	Portland, Lodmoor, Radipole
Sparrowhawk	Portland, Lodmoor, Radipole
Pheasant	Portland
Moorhen	Lodmoor, Radipole
Coot	Lodmoor, Radipole
Oystercatcher	Ferrybridge

Ringed Plover	Ferrybridge
Bar-tailed Godwit	Ferrybridge
Black-tailed Godwit	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor, Radipole
Snipe	Radipole
Lapwing	Lodmoor
Long-billed Dowitcher	Lodmoor
Knot	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Dunlin	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Sanderling	Ferrybridge
Ruff	Lodmoor
Common Sandpiper	Lodmoor
Black-headed Gull	Ferrybridge, Radipole, Lodmoor
Mediterranean Gull	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Herring Gull	Portland etc
Great Black-backed Gull	Portland etc
Sandwich Tern	Lodmoor
Wood Pigeon	Portland etc
Feral Pigeon	Radipole
Stock Dove	Portland
Collared Dove	Portland
Kingfisher	Radipole
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Lodmoor
Wryneck	Portland
Swallow	Portland etc
House Martin	Portland
Sand Martin	Portland
Skylark	Ferrybridge, Portland
Meadow Pipit	Portland
Rock Pipit	Portland, Ferrybridge
Pied Wagtail	Ferrybridge, Portland
Yellow Wagtail	Ferrybridge, Portland
Wren	Portland etc
Dunnock	Portland etc
Robin	Portland etc
Stonechat	Portland, Radipole
Wheatear	Portland, Ferrybridge
Blackbird	Lodmoor, Portland
Cetti's Warbler	Radipole
Blackcap	Lodmoor, Portland
Whitethroat	Portland
Chiffchaff	Lodmoor, Portland
Goldcrest	Lodmoor
Blue Tit	Portland etc
Great Tit	Portland etc
Rook	Portland
Magpie	Portland etc
Jackdaw	Portland etc
Carrion Crow	Portland etc
Raven	Portland
Starling	Portland etc
House Sparrow	Portland
Goldfinch	Portland

Greenfinch	Lodmoor
Linnet	Portland, Ferrybridge
Reed Bunting	Radipole
Lapland Bunting	Portland Bill

Mammals

Brown Rat	Radipole
Rabbit	Portland

Insects

Small White	Portland etc
Large White	Portland etc
Green-veined White	Portland
Red Admiral	Portland etc
Painted Lady	Portland etc
Common Blue	Portland
Adonis Blue	Portland
Small Copper	Portland
Small Heath	Portland
Meadow Brown	Portland
Speckled Wood	Portland, Radipole
Common Darter	Portland, Radipole
Southern Hawker	Radipole
Migrant Hawker	Radipole
Dusky Cockroach	Portland
Dronefly	Portland etc
Marmalade Hoverfly	Portland
Sawfly	Lodmoor
Red-tailed Bumblebee	Portland
Buff-tailed Bumblebee	Portland
Common Carder Bee	Radipole
Honey Bee	Portland
Common Green Grasshopper	Portland