

Portland Heights Birdwatching Breaks
Friday June 17th – Sunday June 19th 2011

Saturday June 18th

Weather: Frequent sunny intervals in a fresh south-westerly breeze

Portland Bill, 0600

We started the weekend with a superb 90 minute seawatch at the Bill. We were still parking the vehicle when the first Gannets could be seen passing just off the coast. Reaching the obelisk we could see that there were also an almost constant stream of Manx Shearwaters going past further out. This continued on and off until we had to leave for breakfast, a total of at least 100 shearwaters including a single Balearic. Other birds seen included Kittiwakes, Razorbills, Guillemots and a Rock Pipit that persisted in singing just over our heads. The real highlight came right at the end of the watch when a dark-phase Arctic Skua suddenly appeared out of nowhere and started chasing the Kittiwakes.

Kingbarrow Quarry, 0900

In very windy conditions it was difficult to find any butterflies at all but we persisted and managed to find a few Common Blues resting in the grasses. Flowers were a bit easier with plenty of Pyramidal Orchids and several of the very rare Early Gentian.

Admiralty Quarries, 1000

Reptiles were much in evidence here with several Slow-worms found and no less than 3 Adders – 2 enormous females and a tiny juvenile under one piece of tin. Butterflies were easier to find as well now that the sun had come out and we soon had Silver-studded and Small Blues on the list. A good number of limestone plants were found including a fine Whitebeam tree.

Ferrybridge, 1300

After lunch here we walked a short way along the shore of the Fleet looking for Scaly Crickets. We didn't find any but we did see a young Hare and several Little Terns. A Raven was seen flying south along Chesil Beach.

Southwell, 1400

With clouds building up over Weymouth we decided to return to Portland where the sun was still shining. Parking near Southwell we walked down to the Eastcliffs at Freshwater Cove. The resident pair of Peregrines here had 3 young that had just left the nest. We saw 2 of the young on the cliffs and both parents hunting pigeons. Some early Lulworth Skippers were nearby as were a few plants of Portland's indigenous Rock Sea Lavender. A small quarry just off the path did not show us the expected Wall Lizards but did see a superb Hummingbird Hawk-moth buzzing around the cliff.

Grove Point, 1600

Another Peregrine was seen here with Fulmars and Sandwich Terns over the sea.

High Angle Battery, 1700

Having failed to find any Adonis Blues here earlier in the day we made a final visit here and managed to locate a resting female in very fresh condition.

Sunday June 19th

Weather: Overcast with brief sunny periods, fresh westerly wind.

Maiden Castle, 1000

The Corn Buntings here put on a great show singing at us from right beside the van. We must have seen 8 or 9 in total, the most any of us had seen for a long time.

Powerstock Common, 1100

Common Spotted Orchids were everywhere here with plenty of other interesting flowers including Beautiful St John's Wort, Dyer's Greenweed and no less than 3 very rare Birdsnest Orchids. Butterflies were hard to find in the dull and cold conditions but we did see and photograph some very fresh Ringlets. A good range of birds were seen the star undoubtedly being the Lesser Whitethroat but it was also very pleasing to see so many Bullfinches. On the way to the next stop a Stoat ran across the road just in front of us.

Abbotsbury Beach, 1400

Walking south along Chesil Beach an enormous range of plants were recorded including Sea Kale and the rare Rough Clover. Sandwich and Common Terns were flying around the Fleet where there were also several Great Crested Grebes.

Radipole Village 1600

A final attempt to find some dragonflies proved fruitless but we did see a family of Reed Warblers and another family of Whitethroats. We thought we were finished as we walked back to the van but then a Green Woodpecker flew into a tree just in front of us only to rush out again closely pursued by a Sparrowhawk. This fine bird proceeded to gain height rapidly attracting the attentions of a male which treated us to a superb roller-coaster courtship display over our heads.

Bob Ford 19/6/11



Lulworth Skipper, Southwell 18 June 2011

Birds: 75 species

Great Crested Grebe
Fulmar
Manx Shearwater
Balearic Shearwater
Gannet
Cormorant
Shag
Mute Swan
Canada Goose
Shelduck
Gadwall
Mallard
Tufted Duck
Common Scoter
Sparrowhawk
Buzzard
Kestrel
Peregrine
Pheasant
Moorhen
Coot
Curlew
Arctic Skua
Herring Gull
Great Black-backed Gull
Kittiwake
Common Tern
Sandwich Tern
Little Tern
Guillemot
Razorbill
Feral Pigeon
Wood Pigeon
Collared Dove
Swift
Green Woodpecker
Great Spotted
Woodpecker
Skylark
Swallow
House Martin
Meadow Pipit
Rock Pipit
Pied Wagtail
Wren
Robin
Blackbird
Song Thrush
Reed Warbler
Sedge Warbler
Lesser Whitethroat
Common Whitethroat
Garden Warbler
Blackcap
Chiffchaff
Willow Warbler
Long-tailed Tit
Blue Tit
Great Tit
Nuthatch
Treetreeper
Magpie
Jackdaw
Rook
Carrion Crow
Raven

Starling
House Sparrow
Chaffinch
Greenfinch
Goldfinch
Linnet
Bullfinch
Yellowhammer
Corn Bunting
Reed Bunting

Butterflies: 14 species

Dingy Skipper
Large Skipper
Lulworth Skipper
Large White
Common Blue
Silver-studded Blue



Adonis Blue

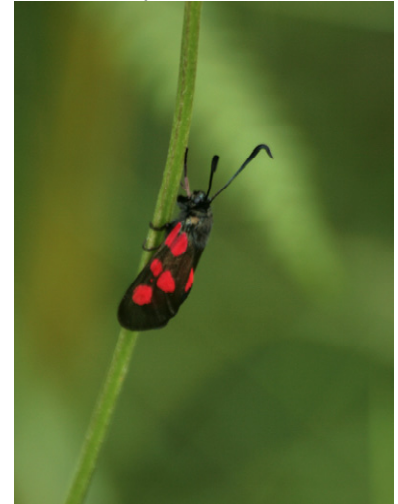
Small Blue
Small Tortoiseshell
Marbled White



Small Heath

Meadow Brown
Speckled Wood
Ringlet

Moths: 7 species



Five-spot Burnet

Six-spot Burnet
Cinnabar
Thistle Ermine
Yellow Shell
The Vapourer
Hummingbird Hawk-moth

Dragonflies: 1 species

Emperor

Other insects: 4 species

Field Grasshopper
Rose Chafer



Longhorn Beetle

Red-and-black Froghopper

Reptiles: 2 species

Slow-worm
Adder

Mammals: 5 species

Rabbit
Hare
Stoat
Grey Squirrel
Vole

Plant list:

Bedstraw Family:

Hedge Bedstraw
Lady's Bedstraw
Marsh Bedstraw
Wild Madder

Beech Family:

Pedunculate Oak

Bogbean Family:

Bogbean

Bindweed Family:

Field Bindweed

Birch Family:

Alder
Silver Birch

Borage Family:

Comfrey
Viper's Bugloss
Water Forgetmenot

Broomrape Family:

Common Broomrape
Ivy Broomrape

Buddleia Family:

Buddleia

Buttercup Family:

Bulbous Buttercup
Clematis
Creeping Buttercup
Lesser Celandine
Lesser Spearwort
Meadow Buttercup

Cabbage Family:

Sea Kale
Wallflower

Carrot Family:

Alexanders
Carrot
Cow Parsley
Fennel
Hemlock
Hogweed
Pignut
Rock Samphire
Wild Parsnip

Daisy Family:

Autumn Hawkbit
Bristly Ox-tongue
Black Knapweed

Lesser Burdock
Common Catsear
Common Ragwort

Creeping Thistle
Daisv

Dandelion
Goatsbeard
Greater Knapweed
Hawkweed Ox-tongue
Hemp Agrimony
Hoary Ragwort
Marsh Thistle
Meadow Thistle
Mouse-ear Hawkweed
Musk Thistle
Nipplewort
Oxeye Daisy
Perennial Sow-thistle
Prickly Sow-thistle
Rough Hawkbit
Sea Aster
Sea Mayweed
Slender Thistle
Spear Thistle
Winter Heliotrope
Yarrow

Dock Family:

Curled Dock
Japanese Knotweed
Sorrel

Dogwood Family:

Dogwood

Fern Family:

Adder's Tongue
Bracken
Hart's Tongue Fern
Wall Rue

Figwort Family:

Broad-leaved Eyebright
Common Figwort
Common Toadflax
Germander Speedwell
Lousewort
Purple Toadflax
Red Bartsia
Yellow Rattle



Foxglove

Flax Family:

Flax

Gentian Family:

Common Centaury
Early Gentian
Yellow-wort

Geranium Family:

Herb Robert

Grass Family:

Cocksfoot
Crested Dogstail

False Brome
Quaking Grass
Reed
Sea Couch
Soft Brome
Tall Fescue
Upright Brome
Yorkshire Fog

Hazel Family:

Hazel
Hornbeam

Heather Family:

Bell Heather (AH, WH)
Cross-leaved Heath (AH, WH)
Dorset Heath (AH)
Ling (AH, WH)

Hemp Family:

Wild Hop (LH)

Honeysuckle Family:

Elder
Honeysuckle
Wayfaring Tree

Horsetail Family:

Field Horsetail

Iris Family:

Stinking Iris
Yellow Flag Iris

Ivy Family:

Ivy

Lily Family:

Crow Garlic
English Bluebell

Mallow Family:

Common Mallow
Tree Mallow

Maple Family:

Sycamore

Mignonette Family:

Weld

Milkwort Family:
Common Milkwort

Mint Family:
Bugle
Hedge Woundwort
Marjoram
Self-heal
Thyme

Nettle Family:
Pellitory-of-the-Wall
Stinging Nettle

Olive Family:
Ash
Wild Privet

Orache Family:
Hastate Orache
Sea Beet
Sea Purslane
Shrubby Seablite

Orchid Family:
Bee Orchid
Common Spotted Orchid
Pyramidal Orchid
Twayblade



Birdsnest Orchid



Heath Spotted Orchid

Pea Family:
Birdsfoot Trefoil
Bush Vetch
Common Vetch
Dyer's Greenweed
European Gorse
Everlasting Pea
Greater Birdsfoot Trefoil
Hairy Tare
Haresfoot Clover
Hop Trefoil
Horseshoe Vetch
Kidney Vetch
Lesser Trefoil
Meadow Vetchling
Red Clover
Restharrow
Rough Clover
Sea Pea
Tall Melilot
Tufted Vetch
White Clover

Pine Family:
Scots Pine
Moterey Pine

Pink Family:
Chickweed
Sea Spurrey
Greater Stitchwort
Lesser Stitchwort
Sea Campion

Plantain Family:
Buck's-horn Plantain
Ribwort Plantain
Sea Plantain

Poppy Family:
Field Poppy
Opium Poppy
Yellow Horned-poppo

Potato Family:
Woody Nightshade

Primrose Family:
Scarlet Pimpernel
Yellow Pimpernel

Rose Family:
Agrimony
Apple
Blackthorn
Bramble
Burnet Rose
Creeping Cinquefoil
Dog Rose
Entire-leaved Cotoneaster
Hawthorn
Herb Bennet
Meadowsweet
Silverweed

Tormentil
Whitebeam
Wild Strawberry

Sea-Lavender Family:
Rock Sea Lavender
Thrift

Sedge Family:
Pendulous Sedge

Spurge Family:
Wood Spurge

St John's Wort Family:
Beautiful St John's Wort
Perforate St John's Wort

Stonecrop Family:
Biting Stonecrop
White Stonecrop

Tamarisk Family:
Tamarisk

Teasel Family:
Teasel

Valerian Family:
Red Valerian

Violet Family:
Dog Violet

Willow Family:
Sallow
White Poplar
White Willow

Willowherb Family:
Enchanter's Nightshade
Great Hairy Willowherb
Purple Loosestrife
Rosebay Willowherb

Wood-sorrel Family:
Pink Oxalis
Wood Sorrel