

### **Saturday May 12th**

**Weather: dry with long sunny intervals; wind light north-easterly.**

#### Portland Bill, 0600

We chose to start the weekend with a spot of sea-watching but it was the number of Wheatears that first grabbed our attention. Reaching the MOD compound we saw that they were not the only migrants about when a couple of Whitethroats and a Blackcap appeared on the perimeter fence. Looking out to sea the most obvious birds were Guillemots, flying around with dozens of Kittiwakes and Razorbills and the occasional Fulmar. However after half an hour of patient watching we saw nothing else so we decided to head off the bird Observatory. On the way we found no less than three Garden Warblers along with lots of other migrants including a single Lesser Whitethroat. Reaching the Observatory the warden, Martin Cade, showed us a superb female Redstart that he had just caught in one of the mist-nets. Walking back to the bus we added Stonechat to the list.

#### Topfields, 0930

Walking round the ancient fields above Portland Bill we found migrants everywhere particularly Redstarts and Spotted Flycatchers. The highlights were the brief view of a Cuckoo and the much more prolonged view of a hunting Peregrine overhead.

#### Broadcroft Quarry, 1100

Here we could only find a few birds but we did add Whinchat to the list and had great views of Small Blue.

#### Ferrybridge, 1300

A disappointing lunch stop, or so it seemed until we were getting ready to leave and a very pale Willow Warbler turned up in the shrubs at the edge of the tide-line. Closer inspection revealed this to be a northern-type bird, perhaps from Finland or Russia.

#### Lodmoor, 1430

At last some waders featured on our list including both species of Godwits, 5 Whimbrels and a splendid Greenshank. A drake Pintail was also much appreciated but my favourites were the beautiful Common Terns that were getting ready to breed on the specially-made islands. A wagtail feeding out on the marsh looked very pale and through the telescopes proved to be a fine adult male White Wagtail.

#### Radipole, 1600

Sadly no Bearded Tits but we did get some very close views of Cetti's Warblers and we enjoyed watching the Great-crested Grebes displaying. On the car park was a colour ringed Great-black backed Gull. I'll update the online version of this report when I receive the details of where this bird was ringed. A check of my records later revealed that I had seen the same bird three times since November 2010 when it first turned up at Portland Bill, having been ringed as a nestling across the Channel near Le Havre.



**Sunday May 13th**

**Weather: dry and sunny all day; wind very light north-westerly, often calm.**

Portland Bill, 0600

More of the same here this morning with plenty of breeding seabirds but very little else. Walking out along the Westcliffs we had excellent views of the Guillemots and Razorbills on their breeding ledges whilst Kittiwakes and Fulmars wheeled around just offshore.



Our route back to the bus took us past the site of Portland's only known specimen of Green-winged Orchid and an impressive patch of Early Purple Orchids.

Looking towards the quarry next to the Bird Observatory a grey lump encouraged us to approach closer for a better look. The Little Owl was a much appreciated sight but even better was the Yellow Wagtail that walked across our view just in front of us.



Creech Heath, 1100

We started our weekend on a search for Dartford Warblers on one of the few Dorset heaths that still holds a reasonable population after the recent run of cold winters. The birds were found, perhaps 3 or 4 in total, but most of us just had brief views as they chased each other from bush to bush.

Arne RSPB Reserve, 1230

A distant blur across the heath at this superb reserve eventually was resolved to be a Woodlark, one of our main target species for the day. A Hobby that appeared overhead was far more instantly recognisable.

After lunch we walked across Coombe Heath to the hide overlooking Middlebere Lake. The area around the car park had already yielded a few woodland birds including both woodpeckers and a Nuthatch and we soon added Goldcrest to the list even though we never actually managed to see the bird. Reaching the shore of Poole Harbour we found lots of Oystercatchers and Shelducks with a few Little Egrets. From the hide we could also see an adult Yellow-legged Gull but the highlight was definitely the pair of Spoonbills that were found sleeping out on the edge of the creek.

*videos of the weekend can be seen at [www.youtube.com/bobthebirder](http://www.youtube.com/bobthebirder)*

**Birds: 99 specie**

Great Crested Grebe	Radipole
Little Grebe	Radipole, Lodmoor
Fulmar	Portland Bill
Gannet	Portland Bill
Cormorant	Radipole
Shag	Portland Bill
Spoonbill	Arne
Little Egret	Lodmoor, Arne
Grey Heron	Lodmoor, Radipole
Mute Swan	Lodmoor, Radipole, Arne
Canada Goose	Lodmoor, Radipole, Arne
Shelduck	Lodmoor, Radipole, Arne
Gadwall	Radipole
Pintail	Lodmoor
Mallard	Lodmoor, Radipole, Arne
Shoveler	Lodmoor
Tufted Duck	Lodmoor, Radipole
Pochard	Lodmoor
Kestrel	Portland
Peregrine	Portland
Hobby	Arne
Buzzard	Portland, Radipole, Creech, Arne
Sparrowhawk	Creech
Pheasant	Morden Bog (Friday)
Red-legged Partridge	Morden Bog (Friday)
Moorhen	Lodmoor, Radipole
Coot	Lodmoor, Radipole
Redshank	Arne
Greenshank	Lodmoor
Whimbrel	Lodmoor
Oystercatcher	Portland, Arne
Black-tailed Godwit	Lodmoor
Bar-tailed Godwit	Lodmoor
Dunlin	Lodmoor
Black-headed Gull	Lodmoor, Arne
CommonGull	Portland Bill
Herring Gull	various sites
Great Black-backed Gull	various sites
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Radipole
Yellow-legged Gull	Arne
Kittiwake	Portland Bill
Sandwich Tern	Ferrybridge
Little Tern	Ferrybridge
Common Tern	Lodmoor
Guillemot	Portland Bill
Razorbill	Portland Bill
Feral Pigeon	Radipole
Wood Pigeon	various sites
Collared Dove	Portland
Stock Dove	Portland Bill
Cuckoo	Portland Bill
Little Owl	Portland Bill
Swift	Radipole
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Arne
Green Woodpecker	Arne
Nuthatch	Arne
Rock Pipit	Portland Bill
Meadow Pipit	Portland Bill, Creech
Pied Wagtail	Portland Bill
<i>White Wagtail</i>	Lodmoor
YellowWagtail	Portland Bill
Skylark	Portland Bill
Woodlark	Arne
Swallow	various sites
House Martin	Portland
Wren	various sites
Duncock	various sites
Whinchat	Broadcroft Quarry, Creech
Stonechat	Portland, Creech, Arne
Redstart	Portland Bill
Wheatear	various sites

Robin	various sites
Blackbird	various sites
Song Thrush	Morden Bog (Friday)
Mistle Thrush	Arne
Cetti's Warbler	Radipole
Sedge Warbler	Portland, Radipole, Lodmoor
Reed Warbler	Radipole
Chiffchaff	Portland, Creech
Willow Warbler	Portland, Creech
<i>northern form</i>	Ferrybridge
Dartford Warbler	Creech
Blackcap	Portland Bill
Garden Warbler	Portland Bill
Whitethroat	Portland Bill
Lesser Whitethroat	Portland Bill
Goldcrest	Arne (heard)
Spotted Flycatcher	Portland
Long-tailed Tit	Radipole
Coal Tit	Morden Bog (Friday)
Blue Tit	various sites
Great Tit	various sites
Nuthatch	Arne
Magpie	various sites
Jackdaw	various sites
Rook	Ferrybridge
Carrion Crow	various sites
Raven	Portland
Starling	various sites
House Sparrow	various sites
Greenfinch	various sites
Goldfinch	various sites
Chaffinch	various sites
Linnet	various sites
Siskin	Creech
Reed Bunting	Radipole (heard)

**Mammals:**

Sika Deer	Creech
Rabbit	Portland
Red Fox	Portland
Grey Seal	Portland

**Insects:**

Common Blue Damselfly	Creech
Large Red Damselfly	Arne
Brimstone	Arne
Large White	Portland
Green-veined White	Portland
Orange-tip	Arne, Lodmoor
Red Admiral	Arne
Speckled Wood	Arne
Small Blue	Broadcroft Quarry
Oak Eggar	Portland
Green Tiger Beetle	Arne

**Notable Plants:**

Heath Milkwort	Creech
Alexanders	Portland
Toothed Medick	Broadcroft Quarry
Horseshoe Vetch	Portland
Kidney Vetch	Portland
Borage	Portland Bill
Green-winged Orchid	Portland Bill
Early Purple Orchid	Portland Bill