



Saturday May 18th

Weather: fine and calm all day.

Portland Bill, 0630

An unusually calm morning at the Bill so we were surprised to see the gannets passing so close off the rocks. A bit further out were large numbers of guillemots and quite a few razorbills. One of the guillemots was of the northern 'bridled' form. Looking far out to sea Manx shearwaters could be seen feeding in the company of a few terns, presumably common terns. Common scoter were seen passing on two occasions and a lone whimbrel flew east. Back at the car park a raven was being pestered by a pair of crows. Thoughts were more on breakfasts as we drove back but at least one of our party was alert and of course was the only one of us to see the merlin sat on the fence post at the edge of the road!

Ferrybridge, 1000

Several distant little terns and sandwich terns were seen here but the star bird was an immaculate male yellow wagtail which appeared suddenly next to the car park only to disappear even more suddenly before many of us could see it. The subsequent search was fruitless but instead turned up some very smart sanderling in transitional plumage.

Higher Hyde Heath, 1100

An outstanding couple of hours which started quietly but finished with close views of four species of reptile: common lizard, sand lizard, slow-worm and grass snake. Insects were surprisingly rare but we did see some very fine four-spotted chasers. Some good birds were seen as well including tree pipit, spotted flycatcher and a ridiculously close yellowhammer.



male sand lizard © Derek Hatton

Furzebrook, 1500

In beautifully warm conditions we struggled to find many birds apart from a pair of stonechats and a very handsome hobby. A splendid green tiger beetle was running along the path in front of us and overhead a buzzard appeared carrying what looked very like a small snake. Our main target here was to see a Dartford warbler and in the end perseverance paid off when a male warbler gave short but reasonably good views.

Tadnoll Heath, 2130

A late trip to see nightjars which resulted in one or two being heard but none actually seen. A tawny owl was also heard.

Sunday May 19th

Weather: calm again but with intermittent light rain.

Portland Bill, 0630

The light offshore wind seemed to have stopped any visible seabird movement so we walked along the Eastcliffs towards the Bird Observatory. On the way a whimbrel arrived from the south and landed just in front of us. At the Obs there was little or no ringing going on so we returned to the car park. Just as we got there the 2 best birds of the morning appeared in quick succession: a male peregrine chasing its breakfast and a jay migrating northwards.



whimbrel © Derek Hatton

Admiralty Quarries, 1000

Immediately east of the hotel is a large area of quarries that produced the stone for the Portland breakwaters around 150 years ago. Here we found a very large female adder, bringing our reptile list for the weekend up to a very impressive 5 species. A bright male whinchat sat on the perimeter fence of Fancy's Farm was a welcome but not entirely unexpected sight.



adder © Derek Hatton

Ferrybridge, 1130

Today the same collection of birds were closer and more numerous than yesterday, so after 30 minutes or so we had enjoyed excellent views of sanderlings, dunlins and little terns.

Radipole RSPB Reserve, 1200

Here we cleaned up on most of the expected species such as Cetti's warbler, reed warbler and bearded tit but the first year Mediterranean gull was an unexpected bonus. Back at the RSPB's Discovery Centre we added the sixth reptile to the weekend's list with a tiny male captive smooth snake.

Lodmoor RSPB Reserve, 1500

The hope here was for a few waders to complete our weekend and, after quite a search, we were pleased to find singles of black-tailed godwit and redshank.

Bob Ford, 20 May 2013



Birds: 103 species

Great Crested Grebe	Radipole
Little Grebe	Higher Hyde Heath
Fulmar	Portland
Manx Shearwater	Portland Bill
Gannet	Portland Bill
Cormorant	Portland, Radipole
Shag	Portland Bill
Little Egret	Lodmoor
Grey Heron	Lodmoor, Radipole
Mute Swan	Lodmoor, Radipole
Canada Goose	Lodmoor, Radipole
Shelduck	Lodmoor, Radipole
Gadwall	Lodmoor, Radipole
Mallard	Lodmoor, Radipole
Shoveler	Lodmoor
Tufted Duck	Lodmoor, Radipole
Pochard	Lodmoor, Radipole
Common Scoter	Portland Bill
Hooded Merganser	Radipole
Kestrel	Portland
Peregrine	Portland Bill
Merlin	Portland Bill
Hobby	Furzebrook
Buzzard	Portland, Furzebrook
Sparrowhawk	Wool
Pheasant	Wool
Red-legged Partridge	Wool
Moorhen	Lodmoor, Radipole
Coot	Lodmoor, Radipole
Redshank	Lodmoor
Whimbrel	Portland Bill
Oystercatcher	Portland, Lodmoor
Black-tailed Godwit	Lodmoor
Sanderling	Ferrybridge
Dunlin	Ferrybridge
Ringed Plover	Ferrybridge
Black-headed Gull	Lodmoor, Furzebrook
Mediterranean Gull	Radipole
Herring Gull	various sites
Great Black-backed Gull	various sites
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Radipole
Kittiwake	Portland Bill
Sandwich Tern	Ferrybridge, Portland Bill
Little Tern	Ferrybridge
Common Tern	Portland Bill, Lodmoor
Guillemot	Portland Bill
Razorbill	Portland Bill
Feral Pigeon	Radipole
Wood Pigeon	various sites
Collared Dove	Portland
Stock Dove	Portland
Tawny Owl	Tadnoll (heard)
Nightjar	Tadnoll (heard)
Swift	various sites
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Arne
Green Woodpecker	Arne (heard)
Tree Pipit	Higher Hyde Heath
Rock Pipit	Portland Bill
Meadow Pipit	Portland Bill, Furzebrook
Pied Wagtail	Portland Bill
YellowWagtail	Ferrybridge
Skylark	Portland Bill, Ferrybridge
Sand Martin	Wareham
Swallow	various sites
House Martin	Portland
Wren	various sites
Dunnock	various sites
Whinchat	Portland
Stonechat	Portland, Radipole, Furzebrook
Robin	various sites
Blackbird	various sites

Song Thrush	Lodmoor
Mistle Thrush	Arne
Cetti's Warbler	Radipole
Sedge Warbler	Radipole
Reed Warbler	Radipole
Chiffchaff	Higher Hyde Heath
Willow Warbler	Higher Hyde Heath
Dartford Warbler	Furzebrook
Blackcap	Higher Hyde Heath
Garden Warbler	Higher Hyde Heath
Whitethroat	Portland Bill
Spotted Flycatcher	Higher Hyde Heath
Bearded Tit	Radipole
Long-tailed Tit	Radipole
Coal Tit	Higher Hyde Heath
Blue Tit	various sites
Great Tit	various sites
Jay	Portland
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	Arne
Reed Bunting	Radipole
Yellowhammer	Higher Hyde Heath

Mammals:

Sika Deer	Arne
Rabbit	Portland
Grey Squirrel	Arne

Reptiles:

Sand Lizard	Higher Hyde Heath
Common Lizard	Higher Hyde Heath
Slow-worm	Higher Hyde Heath
Grass Snake	Higher Hyde Heath
Adder	Portland

Insects:

Large Red Damselfly	Arne
Four-spot Chaser	Higher Hyde Heath
Brimstone	Arne
Green-veined White	Arne, Lodmoor
Orange-tip	Arne
Speckled Wood	Higher Hyde Heath
Small Heath	Higher Hyde Heath
Oak Eggar	Furzebrook
Green Tiger Beetle	Higher Hyde Heath

Notable Plants:

Heath Milkwort	Furzebrook
Water Dropwort	Radipole
Borage	Radipole



yellowhammer © Bob Ford



female sand lizard © Bob Ford



green-veined white © Bob Ford



four-spotted chaser © Derek Hatton



little egret © Derek Hatton





grey heron © Derek Hatton

