

Saturday January 11th

Weather: clear skies and light winds (northerly) all day

Portland Bill, 0900

With northerly winds the seabirds had no reason to fly close in today but nevertheless we had very close views of one red-throated diver and reasonable view of another. Further out was a flock of common scoter and even further out were lots of really distant gannets and kittiwakes. All the time there we were watching guillemots and razorbills flying past offshore and rock pipits on the cliffs. A few birds of prey were seen hunting over the fields with buzzard, kestrel and sparrowhawk all seen well. A raven was seen very close a number of times.

Portland Harbour from Portland Castle, 1200

We really struck gold here with the black guillemot being found as soon as we got there and several great northern and black-throated divers being found shortly after.

Ferrybridge, 1300

A few dark-bellied brent geese were seen close inshore but the star bird, the American black brant was only seen from some distance. Even further away was a couple of male goldeneye with several little grebes out on the waters of the Fleet as well. Close in were at least 50 Mediterranean Gulls and a group of skylarks even closer feeding on the marsh just in front of us.

Portland Harbour from Wyke Regis, 1400

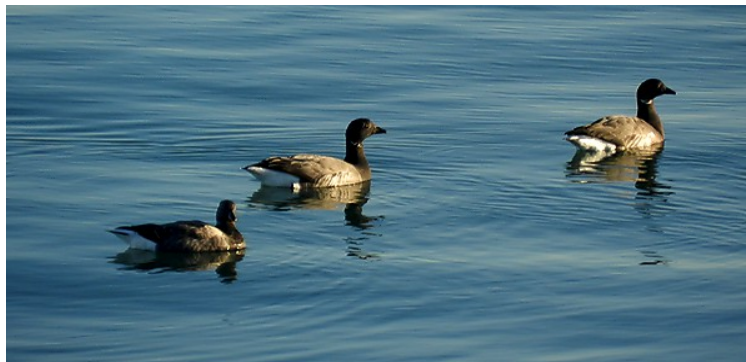
A gloriously calm Portland Harbour produced reasonable views of a flock of 12 black-necked grebes and yet more great northern and black-throated divers.

Portland Harbour from Sandsfoot Castle, 1500

The black-necked grebes were much closer here but more importantly we managed to find the rest of the set with great-crested, slavonian and red-necked all in a very small area.

Radipole Lake RSPB Reserve, 1600

The resident female marsh harrier was the only bird of note seen here, as unfortunately the glossy ibis had chosen to have an early night.



Brent Geese in Portland Harbour

Sunday January 12th

Weather: mostly overcast with brief brighter spells midday

Studland Bay, 1030

We started our day by searching the sea off Studland beach for seabirds and soon found an adult male velvet scoter. Shame it was so far away. Much closer and much less expected was the great skua that flew right over our heads.

Littlesea, 1130

Walking north from the car park we walked through the heathy sand dunes to the freshwater lake that has formed between the Studland ridge and the advancing dunes. The lake was oddly devoid of birds but we did see a pair of stonechats and a smattering of typical woodland species. Various species of fungi were found in the woodland nearby.

Brand's Bay, 1300

A superb hour was spent here surrounded by thousands of waders and ducks. No less than 13 species of waders were seen with the flock of avocets probably the most popular amongst our party. However it was the wintering whimbrel that was the rarest sighting, the first time that any of us had seen this species at this time of year.

Sandbanks Ferry, 1400

A quick walk after lunch produced another unseasonal sighting, this time a sandwich tern, but even more surprising was the bizarre sight of a green woodpecker being chased across the road by a peregrine!

Furzebrook Heath, 1500

Looking for Dartford warblers on a gloomy late afternoon was always going to be a rather optimistic venture and not surprisingly we had no sightings. We did add snipe to the day's list, a bird which brought our list to an outstanding 97 species seen or heard during the weekend.

Looking forward to the next time,

Bob Ford, Jan 12th 2014



Red-throated Diver	Portland Bill
Black-throated Diver	Portland Harbour
Great Northern Diver	Portland Harbour
Slavonian Grebe	Portland Harbour
Great Crested Grebe	Portland Harbour
Red-necked Grebe	Portland Harbour
Black-necked Grebe	Portland Harbour
Little Grebe	Ferrybridge
Fulmar	Portland Bill
Gannet	Portland Bill
Cormorant	Portland, Studland
Shag	Portland Bill
Little Egret	Ferrybridge, Brand's Bay
Grey Heron	Portland Harbour
Mute Swan	Radipole, Wareham
Brent Goose	Ferrybridge
Black Brant	Ferrybridge
Shelduck	Brand's Bay
Pintail	Brand's Bay
Wigeon	Brand's Bay
Teal	Brand's Bay
Mallard	Studland
Tufted Duck	Radipole
Pochard	Radipole
Common Scoter	Portland Bill
Velvet Scoter	Studland
Red-breasted Merganser	Portland Harbour
Goldeneye	Ferrybridge, Brand's Bay
Kestrel	Portland
Peregrine	Sandbanks Ferry
Buzzard	Portland
Sparrowhawk	Studland
Marsh Harrier	Radipole
Pheasant	Corfe
Coot	Radipole
Curlew	Brand's Bay
Whimbrel	Brand's Bay
Oystercatcher	Portland Bill, Brand's Bay
Avocet	Brand's Bay
Grey Plover	Brand's Bay
Lapwing	Brand's Bay
Dunlin	Brand's Bay
Knot	Brand's Bay
Snipe	Furzebrook
Redshank	Brand's Bay
Greenshank	Brand's Bay
Black-tailed Godwit	Brand's Bay
Bar-tailed Godwit	Brand's Bay
Turnstone	Portland Bill
Great Skua	Studland
Common Gull	various sites
Black-headed Gull	various sites
Mediterranean Gull	Ferrybridge, Studland
Herring Gull	various sites
Great Black-backed Gull	various sites
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Brand's Bay
Kittiwake	Portland Harbour
Sandwich Tern	Sandbanks Ferry
Guillemot	Portland Bill
Black Guillemot	Portland Harbour
Razorbill	Portland Bill
Wood Pigeon	various sites
Feral Pigeon	various sites

Collared Dove	Portland
Green Woodpecker	Sandbanks Ferry
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Studland (heard)
Skylark	Portland Bill, Ferrybridge
Rock Pipit	Portland Bill
Meadow Pipit	Portland Bill, Furzebrook
Pied Wagtail	various sites
Wren	various sites
Dunnock	various sites
Robin	various sites
Stonechat	Studland
Blackbird	various sites
Song Thrush	Radipole
Mistle Thrush	Corfe
Fieldfare	Wool
Redwing	Wool
Cetti's Warbler	Radipole (heard)
Chiffchaff	Sandbanks Ferry
Goldcrest	Studland
Long-tailed Tit	Studland
Coal Tit	Studland
Blue Tit	Radipole, Studland
Great Tit	Radipole
Nuthatch	Studland (heard)
Raven	Portland
Magpie	various sites
Jackdaw	various sites
Rook	Ferrybridge
Carrion Crow	various sites
Starling	various sites
House Sparrow	various sites
Goldfinch	Portland
Chaffinch	East Knighton
Redpoll	Studland (heard)

Mammals: 3 species

Rabbit	Studland
Sika Deer	Furzebrook
Grey Squirrel	Studland

Fungi: 6 species

Yellow Curtain-crust	Studland
Turkey-tail	Studland
Scarlet Wax-cap	Studland
Birch Bracket	Studland
Charcoal Pholiota	Studland
Candle Snuff Fungus	Studland