



Saturday October 11th

Weather: a breezy day, mostly sunny but with some heavy thundery showers, wind fresh south-westerly

Portland Bill 0900

What turned out to be an outstanding day started at the Bill with gannets, Mediterranean gulls and shags over the sea. Overhead an impressive amount of migration was going on with flocks of wagtails, linnets and meadow pipits streaming south. Several wheatears were grounded amongst the rocks and the resident rock pipits were much in evidence too. Chasing all these migrants were a number of birds of prey - kestrels, buzzards, sparrowhawks and a peregrine. Walking along the Eastcliffs opposite the bird observatory we saw one of the best sightings of the day when a group of three woodlarks flew over heading south. Nearby in a cliff-top quarry was the very tame kestrel pictured above.

Chesil Cove, 1200

Acting on precise directions via twitter we climbed Chesil Beach and with the help of a local birder soon found what we were looking for - a distant pair of grey phalaropes. We were just about to give up trying for a better view when one appeared on the sea just below us, close enough for excellent views through the 'scopes but still too distant for anything other than this very basic phonescoped image.



Portland Castle, 1230

We were even quicker with the next rarity when we immediately latched on to the black guillemot in the south western corner of Portland Harbour where it has been present for several weeks.

Ferrybridge 1300

A good selection of waders were here with dunlins, ringed plovers, turnstones, oystercatchers, curlews and a bar-tailed godwit feeding on the shores of the Fleet. A hare running along Chesil Beach was, apart from a grey squirrel on Portland, the only mammal seen all day.

Reap Lane 1400

The third rarity of the day was soon found when a local photographer put us on to the immature rose-coloured starling sat in a bramble bush along with a flock of common starlings, a pair of stonechats and a gang of sparrows.

Wakeham - Church Ope Cove, 1500

A search of the trees around the old Weymouth - Easton railway line did find the expected yellow-browed warbler but only as a distant call heard from the sycamores.

Admiralty Quarries, 1600

Our final target of the day was the hooded crow at the Grove area of Portland. It didn't take us long to find this bird either and we were lucky enough to get close views in excellent light, enabling this phonescoped photo to be taken.



Sunday October 12th

Weather: cold and grey, with a fresh easterly wind and rain in the afternoon

Tout Quarry – Kingbarrow Quarry, 0900

The most frustrating moment of the weekend occurred when an osprey appeared gliding towards us over the Westcliffs. Before it could be seen properly and its identification confirmed it had dropped below the skyline never to be seen again. Undeterred we went on to the clifftop path to look for ring ouzels. There were none there but we did see a sparrowhawk and two kestrels. Walking under Wide Street and through the top of Inmosthay Quarry on to Kingbarrow we were delighted to find a little owl sat on a ledge trying very hard to look like just another rock. Not long after this much-appreciated sighting we had another frustrating moment when a large pipit, very probably a tawny, flew in from the north, called once and disappeared off to the south.

Update: the osprey was seen later on at Abbotsbury

Pennsylvania Castle, 1030

Determined to shake off the Sunday jinx we had another attempt at finding the Wakeham yellow-browed warbler, this time amongst the trees above Church Ope Cove. Once again we had to be content with a couple of distant calls, a situation not helped by the knowledge that a different yellow-browed warbler had just been caught at the Bird Observatory!

Portland Castle, 1130

Yet another fruitless search for *Phylloscopus inornatus* turned up just a brief glimpse of a chiffchaff and some very pretty goldfinches.

Ferrybridge, 1200

At high tide the Mediterranean gulls were very close and today were joined by a couple of adult common gulls. One of the many great black-backed gulls present had a yellow ring, number 2AA0, which will enable us to find out exactly where in Europe it was ringed.

Update: it turns out this bird was ringed on a small island off north-east Guernsey

Lodmoor RSPB Reserve, 1400

This brilliant reserve added quite a few new birds to the list including lapwing, shelduck and common sandpiper. Snipe and black-tailed godwit were seen briefly but the highlight was when the resident male marsh harrier appeared over the reedbeds.

Radipole RSPB Reserve, 1500

A excellent finish to an outstanding day with many great birds seen including water rail, snipe, green sandpiper and great crested grebe. The supporting cast of snipe, black-tailed godwit, buzzard and little grebe were also very much appreciated. Cetti's warbler and bearded tit were heard, leaving us some targets to achieve next time!

Bob

Birds: 92 species

Little Grebe

Great Crested Grebe

Gannet

Cormorant

Radipole

Radipole

Portland Bill

Portland Harbour

Shag	Portland Bill
Little Egret	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Grey Heron	Radipole, Lodmoor
Mute Swan	Radipole
Canada Goose	Radipole, Lodmoor
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	Ferrybridge
Shelduck	Lodmoor
Wigeon	Lodmoor
Shoveler	Radipole, Lodmoor
Teal	Radipole, Lodmoor
Mallard	Radipole, Lodmoor
Gadwall	Radipole, Lodmoor
Tufted Duck	Radipole
Pochard	Radipole
Marsh Harrier	Lodmoor, Radipole
Peregrine	Portland
Kestrel	Various sites
Sparrowhawk	Portland
Buzzard	Portland, Radipole
Water Rail	Radipole
Moorhen	Radipole, Lodmoor
Coot	Radipole, Lodmoor
Turnstone	Ferrybridge
Oystercatcher	Portland Bill, Ferrybridge
Grey Phalarope	Chesil Cove
Lapwing	Lodmoor
Ringed Plover	Ferrybridge
Dunlin	Ferrybridge
Redshank	Lodmoor
Common Sandpiper	Lodmoor
Green Sandpiper	Radipole
Black-tailed Godwit	Radipole, Lodmoor
Bar-tailed Godwit	Ferrybridge
Snipe	Radipole, Lodmoor
Curlew	Ferrybridge
Black-headed Gull	various sites
Mediterranean Gull	Ferrybridge, Radipole
Herring Gull	various sites
Yellow-legged Gull	Lodmoor
Great Black-backed Gull	various sites
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Radipole
Common Gull	Portland Bill, Ferrybridge
Guillemot	Portland Bill
Black Guillemot	Portland Harbour
Wood Pigeon	various sites
Feral Pigeon	various sites
Stock Dove	Portland
Collared Dove	Lodmoor
Little Owl	Portland
Wood Lark	Portland Bill
Skylark	Portland Bill
Swallow	various sites

House Martin	Portland Bill
Kingfisher	Lodmoor
Rock Pipit	Portland Bill
Meadow Pipit	various sites
Pied Wagtail	various sites
Yellow Wagtail	Portland Bill (heard)
Grey Wagtail	Portland Bill
Wren	various sites
Duncock	various sites
Robin	various sites
Stonechat	Portland, Lodmoor
Wheatear	Portland
Blackbird	various sites
Bearded Tit	Radipole (heard)
Blue Tit	various sites
Great Tit	Portland (heard)
Long-tailed Tit	Lodmoor
Cetti's Warbler	Radipole (heard)
Blackcap	Portland
Yellow-browed Warbler	Portland (heard)
Chiffchaff	various sites
Goldcrest	Portland Bill (heard)
Raven	Portland
Magpie	various sites
Jackdaw	various sites
Rook	Ferrybridge
Carrion Crow	various sites
Hooded Crow	Portland
Starling	various sites
Rose-coloured Starling	Southwell
House Sparrow	various sites
Goldfinch	Portland
Linnet	Portland
Chaffinch	Portland

Mammals:

Grey Squirrel	Portland
Wood Mouse	Lodmoor
Bunny	Portland
Hare	Ferrybridge

Insects:

Red Admiral	various sites
Crane fly	Portland