



kestrel

Saturday April 11th

Weather: sunny but with a fresh north-westerly wind

Portland Bill, 0930

Gannets were seen here as soon as we stepped off the bus, distant at first but then much closer in with one bird doing a spectacular dive just offshore. All the breeding seabirds were much in evidence including plenty of guillemots and razorbills with a few kittiwakes and fulmars as well. One puffin was seen briefly by a few of the group. Walking out onto the cliff top slopes we had excellent views of skylark and stonechat with several Ravens and kestrels showing well also.

East Weares, 1100

Enjoying the shelter from the cold wind we walked along the old railway track towards the cliff-edge breeding sites of fulmar, raven and peregrine. All these birds were seen well with positive proof of breeding for raven provided when we confirmed that their nest held at least three well-grown young. A few migrants were seen including wheatear, blackcap and chiffchaff. The warm sunshine had brought out a very confident wall lizard as well as a number of insects of which the clouded yellows were the clear highlight.



wall lizard

Ferrybridge, 1330

Just three ringed plovers here but the unusually close view of a very smart meadow pipit made up for the lack of waders. Out on the Fleet we saw some distant mergansers and a little egret.

Radipole RSPB Reserve, 1430

Once again this brilliant reserve was the day's highlight with the North Hide giving us excellent views of a green sandpiper in its beautiful breeding plumage. Lots of ducks were seen including the long-staying hooded merganser. Cetti's warblers were heard many times and seen briefly once or twice. The reed warblers were well-hidden in the reeds but several willow warblers and chiffchaffs were seen well.



Green sandpiper – video at <https://youtu.be/YwHNegB2FW0>

Sunday April 12th

Weather: sunny for most of the day, wind fresh south-westerly

Portland Bill, 0930

With a change in the wind direction the gannets were passing even closer to the Bill and we had many excellent views of this beautiful species. The star bird, a great skua, was a long way out and not seen by many of us but a series of flocks of manx shearwaters came closer and closer until one bird gave us an outstanding view as it passed close in. Walking out to the breeding ledges on the Westcliffs we saw more guillemots as well as a couple of kittiwakes and another very close gannet. On the opposite side of the island the Eastcliffs produced one or two rock pipits whilst small groups of swallows were continuously flying north overhead.

Grove Point, 1130

From the coastal path overlooking the track of the old Weymouth to Portland railway line that we explored yesterday we had the unique opportunity of watching a buzzard from above. Ravens, peregrines and fulmars were also seen well here but sadly no goats.

Ferrybridge, 1300

A few more ringed plovers turned up while we were eating our lunch along with a couple of dunlin. A sandwich tern flew over the shoreline and a female wheatear was seen feeding on the edge of Chesil Beach.

Lodmoor RSPB Reserve, 1430

Probably the best birds here were the pair of marsh harriers but we also enjoyed a wide variety of waterbirds including little grebes, shovellers and pochard in good numbers.

Looking forward to the next time,

Bob

Birds: 83 species

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Great Crested Grebe | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Little Grebe | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Fulmar | Portland |
| Manx Shearwater | Portland Bill |
| Gannet | Portland |
| Cormorant | Portland, Radipole |
| Shag | Portland Bill |
| Little Egret | Ferrybridge, Lodmoor |
| Grey Heron | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Mute Swan | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Canada Goose | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Shelduck | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Teal | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Mallard | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Gadwall | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Shoveler | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Pochard | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Tufted Duck | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Red-breasted Merganser | Ferrybridge |
| Hooded Merganser | Radipole |
| Kestrel | Portland |
| Peregrine | Portland |
| Buzzard | Lodmoor, Portland |
| Sparrowhawk | Portland |
| Marsh Harrier | Lodmoor |
| Pheasant | Lodmoor (heard) |
| Water Rail | Lodmoor (heard) |
| Coot | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Moorhen | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Curlew | Ferrybridge |
| Dunlin | Ferrybridge |
| Green Sandpiper | Radipole |
| Oystercatcher | Lodmoor, Portland |
| Ringed Plover | Ferrybridge |
| Black-tailed Godwit | Radipole |
| Great Skua | Portland Bill |
| Kittiwake | Portland Bill |
| Common Gull | Portland Bill |
| Black-headed Gull | various sites |
| Mediterranean Gull | Radipole |
| Herring Gull | various sites |
| Great Black-backed Gull | various sites |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Sandwich Tern | Ferrybridge |
| Puffin | Portland Bill |
| Guillemot | Portland Bill |
| Razorbill | Portland Bill |
| Wood Pigeon | various sites |
| Feral Pigeon | Radipole |
| Stock Dove | Portland |
| Collared Dove | Portland |
| Little Owl | Portland Bill |
| Green Woodpecker | Lodmoor (heard) |
| Skylark | Portland Bill |
| Rock Pipit | Portland Bill |
| Meadow Pipit | Ferrybridge, Portland Bill |
| Pied Wagtail | Heights Hotel, Ferrybridge |
| Wren | Portland, Radipole |

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Dunnock | Portland, Radipole |
| Robin | Portland, Radipole |
| Wheatear | Portland, Ferrybridge |
| Stonechat | Portland Bill |
| Blackbird | various sites |
| Song Thrush | Portland |
| Swallow | various sites |
| Cetti's Warbler | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Reed Warbler | Radipole, Lodmoor |
| Blackcap | Portland |
| Chiffchaff | various sites |
| Willow Warbler | various sites |
| Long-tailed Tit | Radipole |
| Blue Tit | Radipole |
| Great Tit | Portland |
| Raven | Portland |
| Magpie | various sites |
| Jackdaw | various sites |
| Rook | Portland Bill |
| Carrion Crow | various sites |
| Starling | various sites |
| House Sparrow | various sites |
| Goldfinch | Portland |
| Chaffinch | Portland |
| Greenfinch | Lodmoor |
| Linnet | Portland |
| Reed Bunting | Lodmoor |

Mammals:

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Common Shrew (dead) | Lodmoor |
| Field Vole | Portland Bill |
| Brown Rat | Radipole |
| Otter (spraint) | Radipole |

Reptiles:

| | |
|-------------|----------|
| Wall Lizard | Portland |
|-------------|----------|

Insects:

| | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Peacock | Portland |
| Clouded Yellow | Portland |
| Brimstone | Portland |
| Speckled Wood | Portland |
| Buff-tailed Bumblebee | Portland |
| Red-tailed Bumblebee | Portland |
| Solitary Bee | Portland |

Plants:

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Great Horsetail | Lodmoor |
| Great Mullein | Lodmoor |
| Marsh Marigold | Radipole |
| Ladies Smock | Radipole |
| Hemlock Water Dropwort | Radipole |
| Spanish Bluebell | Radipole |

Forget-me-not
Ivy-leaved Toadflax
Sea Pink
Red Valerian
Scurvy-grass
Ground Ivy

Radipole
Portland
Portland
Portland
Portland
Portland