

HEIGHTS HOTEL WILDLIFE BREAKS

Friday July 13th – Sunday July 15th 2018



Small Red-eyed Damselfly by Bob Ford

Saturday July 14th

Weather: some light cloud in the morning but otherwise warm sunshine all day

Portland Bill, 0900

Our first stop of the weekend was Portland Bird Observatory where the warden, Martin Cade, had kept the night's moth catch for us to look through. Most were of two species, Dark Arches and Bright Line Brown Eye, but a long list of other interesting species were also present including a rare Fen Wainscot and a very attractive little Rosy Footman. The patio of the Bird Observatory also gave us the first Small Copper and Red Admiral of the day while the field just to the west added Marbled White and Common Blue, as well as an intriguing butterfly that was most likely an early female second-brood Adonis Blue.

Next we walked out to the Westcliffs where we saw a pleasing selection of seabirds including Gannet, Shag, Kittiwake and Guillemot. A single Rock Pipit was seen feeding on the clifftop and behind us over the meadow a young Kestrel pursued one of its parents, begging for food. Walking back to the van we found some very fresh Small Blues, several of which allowed us prolonged and close views.



Small Blue by Liz Taylor



Dusky Sallow and Bright-line Brown-eye by Bob Ford



Eastcliffs, 1100

Parking in the village of Southwell we walked out to the cliffs on the east side of the island where we found a small colony of Lulworth Skippers, one of our

main targets for the day. Further on along the cliff path a juvenile Peregrine was found, later seen over Southwell following an adult bird.

Ferrybridge, 1300

With the tide a very long way out we only managed some distant views of the Little Terns fishing on the Fleet and flying over their colony on Chesil Beach. Searching the mudflats for waders produced just a couple of Ringed Plovers and a single Oystercatcher but we did see a number of very smart Mediterranean Gulls.

Sandsfoot Castle, 1400

A quick stop here to look at the newly-found colony of Small Red-eyed Damselflies.

Perryfields Butterfly Reserve, 1500

One of the most productive sites of the day with several Chalkhill Blues found in an area of outstanding wild-flower meadows. A pair of mating Small Coppers were also very much enjoyed as they posed on the path just in front of us. As well as the butterflies the area was swarming with Six-spot Burnet Moths.



Small Coppers and Lulworth Skipper by Jeremy Aldred



Six-spot Burnets by Bob Ford

Independent Quarries, 1600

A final effort to extend the already impressive butterfly list only added one species, Small Heath, but we did see some very fresh Pyramidal Orchids.

Sunday July 15th

Weather: hot sunshine all day

Kingbarrow Quarry, 0900

The quarry immediately south-east of the hotel is normally a good spot for Little Owl but today it just produced a single Stock Dove.

Church Ope Cove, 1000

Walking down through the wooded grounds of Pennsylvania Castle we added Grey Squirrel to the mammal list and one of the group found not only a Great Spotted Woodpecker but also heard a Nuthatch, both very rare birds for Portland. We were all very pleased to see a Wall Lizard on the way back to van after spending ages looking for them in the ruins of the 12th century St Andrew's Church.

Westcliffs, 1100

We parked near the Georgian monstrosity of St George's Church (built to replace St Andrew's) and walked past Bower's Quarry to the Westcliffs, seeing a very smart Comma and a Clouded Yellow on the way. Reaching the plateau near the cliffs we found that there had been a major emergence of Chalkhill Blues that morning, with enormous numbers of them swarming over the grasses everywhere we looked. Probably even more surprising though was a very fresh male Silver-studded Blue, which as we watched it was joined by a much older female. Looking out over the cliffs we could see a nesting colony of Fulmars and a couple of young Ravens perched together on the vertical rock-face. A Hummingbird Hawkmoth was another delightful find at what was probably the best site of the weekend.



Common Green Grasshopper and Clouded Yellow by Jeremy Aldred



Chalkhill Blues by Bob Ford

Ferrybridge, 1230

With the tide a bit further in today we had much better views of the flock of Mediterranean Gulls and were amazed to count a total of 120 of them. Redshank and Dunlin were new for the list.

Lodmoor RSPB Reserve, 1400

We were expecting to see plenty of Common Terns here but the Great White Egret was a complete surprise. There was a good selection of waders here as well with Lapwing, Common Sandpiper and Black-tailed Godwit all new for the weekend.

Tout Quarry, 1600

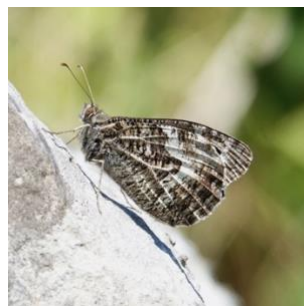
We finished our Butterfly Break with with a last attempt to see Graylings. We chose the best site on the island for them and this afternoon Tout Quarry really lived up to its reputation with at least a dozen of these fascinating butterflies showing themselves to us - and even landing on us once or twice! The cliff-edge viewpoint overlooking Weymouth and Lyme Bay was a beautiful ending to an outstanding weekend.

Looking forward to the next time,

Bob



Wall Lizard and Grayling by Jeremy Aldred



Grayling by Bob Ford (record shot!)

The weekend's list of species:

Gannet	Portland Bill
Cormorant	Portland Bill
Shag	Portland Bill
Fulmar	Westcliffs
Great White Egret	Lodmoor
Grey Heron	Lodmoor
Little Egret	Ferrybridge
Mute Swan	Radipole
Canada Goose	Lodmoor
Shelduck	Lodmoor
Mallard	Lodmoor
Tufted Duck	Lodmoor
Kestrel	Portland, Ferrybridge
Peregrine	Eastcliffs
Buzzard	Portland
Marsh Harrier	Lodmoor
Sparrowhawk	Lodmoor
Coot	Lodmoor
Moorhen	Lodmoor
Oystercatcher	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Common Sandpiper	Lodmoor
Redshank	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Ringed Plover	Ferrybridge
Black-tailed Godwit	Lodmoor
Dunlin	Ferrybridge
Black-headed Gull	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Mediterranean Gull	Ferrybridge, Lodmoor
Herring Gull	Portland etc
Great Black-backed Gull	Portland etc
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Ferrybridge
Kittiwake	Portland Bill
Little Tern	Ferrybridge
Common Tern	Lodmoor
Guillemot	Portland Bill
Wood Pigeon	Portland etc
Collared Dove	Portland etc
Feral Pigeon	Portland etc
Stock Dove	Kingbarrow
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Pennsylvania Castle
Nuthatch (heard)	Pennsylvania Castle
Swift	Portland etc
Sand Martin	Lodmoor
Swallow	Portland etc
House Martin	Lodmoor
Skylark	Portland Bill, Ferrybridge
Meadow Pipit	Ferrybridge
Rock Pipit	Portland Bill
Pied Wagtail	Ferrybridge
Wren	Portland etc
Dunnock	Portland etc

Robin	Pennsylvania Castle
Stonechat	Portland Bill
Song Thrush	Pennsylvania Castle
Blackbird	Portland etc
Whitethroat	Eastcliffs
Blue Tit	Portland etc
Great Tit	Portland etc
Rook	Ferrybridge
Magpie	Portland etc
Jackdaw	Portland etc
Carrion Crow	Portland etc
Raven	Westcliffs
Starling	Portland Bill, Ferrybridge
House Sparrow	Portland Bill
Greenfinch	Lodmoor
Goldfinch	Pennsylvania Castle
Chaffinch	Pennsylvania Castle
Linnet	Portland etc
Bullfinch	Portland
Reed Bunting	Lodmoor

Mammals

Grey Squirrel	Pennsylvania Castle
Brown Rat	Perryfields
Bunny	Independent Quarries

Reptiles/Amphibians

Wall Lizard	Pennsylvania Castle
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Insects

Butterflies:

Small Skipper	Portland
Essex Skipper	Portland, Lodmoor
Large Skipper	Portland
Lulworth Skipper	Portland
Small White	Portland etc
Green-veined White	Portland
Large White	Portland etc
Clouded Yellow	Westcliffs
Small Blue	Portland Bill
Small Copper	Portland
Common Blue	Portland
Silver-studded Blue	Westcliffs
Adonis Blue	Portland Bill
Chalkhill Blue	Portland
Comma	Westcliffs, Lodmoor
Red Admiral	Portland, Lodmoor
Peacock	Portland
Meadow Brown	Portland etc
Gatekeeper	Portland etc
Ringlet	Portland etc
Speckled Wood	Portland etc

Grayling	Tout Quarry
Marbled White	Portland etc
Small Heath	Portland

Moths:

Bright-line Brown-eye	PBO moth trap
Brown-line Bright-eye	PBO moth trap
Brown-tail	PBO moth trap
Brussels Lace	PBO moth trap
Buff Ermine	PBO moth trap
Chalk Carpet	Tout Quarry
Chinese Character	PBO moth trap
Clay	PBO moth trap
Common Footman	PBO moth trap
Dark Arches	PBO moth trap
Drinker	PBO moth trap
Dun Bar	PBO moth trap
Dusky Sallow	PBO moth trap
Fen Wainscot	PBO moth trap
Garden Tiger	PBO moth trap
Heart and Dart	PBO moth trap
Hummingbird Hawk-moth	Westcliffs
Knot Grass	PBO moth trap
Lackey	PBO moth trap
Mint Moth	Portland
<i>Oncocera semirubella</i>	PBO moth trap
Riband Wave	PBO moth trap
Rosy Footman	PBO moth trap
Ruby Tiger	PBO moth trap
Shuttle-shaped Dart	PBO moth trap
Silver Y	various sites
Six-spot Burnet	Portland
Smoky Wainscot	PBO moth trap

Dragonflies:

Small Red-eyed Damselfly	Sandsfoot
Emperor	Portland
Migrant Hawker	Lodmoor

Beetles:

Bloody-nosed Beetle	Tout Quarry
Green Tortoise Beetle	Portland
Rose Chafer	Eastcliffs

Grasshoppers:

Field Grasshopper	Portland
Common Green Grasshopper	Portland
Meadow Grasshopper	Portland

Plants

Bedstraw Family:	Lady's Bedstraw
Bindweed Family:	Bellbine Hedge Bindweed
Borage Family:	Viper's Bugloss
Buddleia Family:	Buddleia
Cabbage Family:	Hoary Cress Sea Radish
Carrot Family:	Burnet Saxifrage Fennel Pepper Saxifrage Rock Samphire Wild Carrot
Chestnut Family:	Horse Chestnut
Daisy Family:	Carline Thistle Black Knapweed Greater Knapweed Hemp Agrimony Lesser Burdock Spear Thistle Stemless Thistle Winter Heliotrope Wormwood Yarrow
Dock Family:	Sorrel
Elm Family:	Elm
Fern Family:	Hart's-tongue Fern Wall-rue
Gentian Family:	Yellow-wort
Grass Family:	False-brome Red Fescue
Honeysuckle Family:	Wayfaring Tree
Mint Family:	Marjoram Wild Thyme Wood Sage
Olive Family:	Ash Wild Privet
Orache Family:	Marsh Samphire Sea Purslane Shrubby Seablite
Orchid Family:	Pyramidal Orchid
Maple Family:	Sycamore
Pea Family:	Kidney Vetch Restharrow
Rose Family:	Agrimony Bramble Whitebeam
Sea-lavender Family:	Portland Rock Sea-lavender
Teasel Family :	Field Scabious Small Scabious Teasel
Valerian Family:	Red Valerian