

Norfolk in Winter

Naturetrek Tour Report

7 – 9 November 2014



Common Snipe



Who is watching who?



Whooper Swan

Report & images compiled by Simon Tonkin



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Tour Participants: Simon Tonkin (leader) with a group of Naturetrek clients

Day 1

Friday 7th November

Arriving at our hotel in Hunstanton, we discussed the coming days' plans and hopes of the group, and settled in for a hearty evening meal.

Day 2

Saturday 8th November

Setting off, we arrived at the first of our day's stops at the excellent Titchwell RSPB reserve. After a brief look at the visitors centre, we observed the comings and goings at the feeders and, upon hearing the distinctive "shhhmeeze" call of Brambling, we were lucky enough to get a look at least two individuals but we could certainly hear more in the nearby Alders.

As we walked out to the reserve proper, the numbers of wading birds put on an impressive show with Golden Plover, Black-tailed Godwits, Ruff and Dunlin providing quite a spectacle, along with six Avocet. As we scanned through the flocks, we were fortunate enough to find five Spotted Redshank.

The fresh marsh also yielded an impressive number of wildfowl including Gadwall, Teal, Common Pochard, Wigeon and several groups of Dark-bellied Brent Geese. Several groups of Pink-footed Geese also passed overhead, whilst on the brackish marsh, Grey Plover gave great views with several Curlew.

Looking offshore, we delighted in watching a close-in drake Long-tailed Duck, and we all enjoyed really good scope views of this smart-looking chap. We also had great views of Red-breasted Mergansers (three females) and at least two Common Scoter.

Soon enough it was lunch time, so we headed to the nearby Burnham Deepdale cafe for lunch and warmed ourselves up!

From here, we headed to the nearby Holkham beach where we hoped to find more sea duck, given the good results off Titchwell beach. Scanning through the large group of Common Scoter, we found at least six Velvet Scoter and a brilliant male Surf Scoter provided us with a complete set! We also had 3+ Red-throated Diver and a Great Northern Diver.

Time goes quickly and, before too long, the light was beginning to fade so we headed along the coast to Warham Greens where we hoped to see some raptors coming into roost. We were fortunate enough to have fly-by views with excellent views of a male Hen Harrier: a great species to end the day on.

Day 3

Sunday 9th November

This morning we headed out to the west, with a quick detour to Wolverton Triangle in the hope of Golden Pheasant; unfortunately, this yielded nothing more than some nice views of Eurasian Treecreeper. So we headed on to our main stop of the day at Welney WWT reserve.

On the approach road to the reserve, we found a Corn Bunting which enabled us to discuss the identification features along with a group of Linnets. Whilst in the reserve itself, we delighted in making full use of the heated hide and watched the huge numbers of wildfowl and waders. Several Ruff waded in the shallows and, whilst we scanned through the 1,140 Whooper Swans, we counted a single out-of-place Pink-footed Goose which was doing its best to blend in.

A very close female Goldeneye gave us good views, whilst we delighted in the Marsh Harriers which sent everything into turmoil and provide a great aerial display in front of our comfortable hide.

We took lunch and coffee in the Visitors Centre, before heading back for various drop-offs for group members' onward journeys. For those that wished, we then moved on to Lady Anne's Drive and observed the huge numbers of Wigeon and Teal with 1,000 + Pink-footed Geese, some providing very close views. We were also lucky enough to connect with an obliging Barn Owl which perched on a post and provided some good scope views.

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Species Lists

Birds (✓ = recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	November		
			7	8	9
1	Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	✓		
2	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>		✓	✓
3	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>		✓	
4	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	✓	✓	✓
5	Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>		500+	
6	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>		✓	✓
7	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>		✓	✓
8	Dark-bellied Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>		✓	
9	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>		✓	✓
10	Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>			1,140
11	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		✓	✓
12	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>		✓	✓
13	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>		✓	✓
14	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		✓	✓
15	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>		✓	✓
16	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>		10+	
17	Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>		✓	✓
18	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>		✓	✓
19	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>		✓	✓
20	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>		250+	
21	Velvet Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>		6+	
22	Surf Scoter	<i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>		1	
23	Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>		1	
24	Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>			1
25	Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>		3+	
26	Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>		1	
27	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		✓	✓
28	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>		✓	✓
29	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		3+	2
30	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		✓	✓
31	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	✓	✓	✓
32	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>		1	
33	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		3+	2+
34	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>		1	
35	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		c.5	
36	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		2	1
37	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>		1H	
38	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		✓	✓
39	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		✓	✓
40	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>		✓	
41	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>		6+	
42	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		✓	✓
43	European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>		✓	✓
44	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		✓	
45	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>		10+	5
46	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>		400+	✓
47	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>		50+	

	Common name	Scientific name	November		
			7	8	9
48	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		10+	
49	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>		5	
50	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		✓	✓
51	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>		✓	
52	Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>		4+	
53	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>		✓	20+
54	Black-legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	1+		
55	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	✓	✓	✓
56	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	✓	✓	✓
57	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>		✓	✓
58	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus argenteus</i>	✓	✓	✓
59	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>		✓	✓
60	Feral Dove	<i>Columba livia 'feral'</i>	✓	✓	✓
61	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓	✓	✓
62	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓
63	Western Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>			1
64	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>		1	
65	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>		1	
66	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		2+	1+
67	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	✓	✓	✓
68	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	✓	✓	✓
69	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>		3+	1
70	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>		10+	
71	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		✓	✓
72	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		✓	✓
73	Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>			
74	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>		30+	20+
75	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>		2+	
76	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓	✓
77	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		✓	✓
78	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>		✓	✓
79	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>		✓	✓
80	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		✓	✓
81	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>		1	
82	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓
83	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>		✓	✓
84	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba yarrellii</i>		✓	✓
85	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		✓	
86	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		✓	✓
87	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>		2+	
88	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		✓	✓
89	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		✓	✓
90	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		✓	✓
91	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>			1+