

East Yorkshire – Magic of Migration

Naturetrek Tour Report

20th – 23rd September 2021



Black-tailed Godwits



Waders at Kilnsea Wetlands



Garganey



Common Snipe

Report and images by Tim Melling



Naturetrek Mingledown Barn Wolf's Lane Chawton Alton Hampshire GU34 3HJ UK

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour participants: Tim Melling & Alan Miller (leaders), with 12 Naturetrek clients.

Day 1

Monday 20th September

We all met up at 6pm to discuss the programme ahead. In the afternoon Tim and Alan arrived early and took the early arrivals down to Kilnsea wetlands where we saw a variety of waders and gulls.

Day 2

Tuesday 21st September

We set off straight after breakfast for a look at the observatory moth traps and were shown many species of moth including Black Rustic, Canary-shouldered Thorn, Angle Shades and Beaded Chestnut. After this the Spurn Observatory warden Paul showed us a few birds he had just caught; Wren, Dunnock, Tree Sparrow and Reed Bunting. He was a mine of information about ringing and the migration strategies of birds. After this we had a quick look at the sea and saw Great Northern Diver and two Red-throated Divers. We then paid a visit to the Canal Scrape where we saw Sedge Warbler and two or three Water Rails. The tide was just receding, so we watched thousands of waders coming in to feed on the mudflats including huge numbers of Golden and Grey Plovers, Knot and Dunlin. The bushes around the centre added Whitethroat, Redstart and Spotted Flycatcher. We then had lunch at the Visitor Centre and then visited Kilnsea Wetlands but the tide was low so very few birds around apart from plenty of Mediterranean Gulls. Sammy's Point was similarly quiet but the radio mentioned a Pomarine Skua drifting south off Easington, so we headed to the coast at the Blue Bell. Amazingly we managed to see the Pomarine Skua moving south plus many auks and Red-throated Divers. Other birds of interest were Common Scoters, Scaup, Razorbill and two Sanderlings. The tide was now high so we paid another visit to Kilnsea Wetlands which was now full of birds. We saw both Short-eared and Little Owls, both pale and dark-bellied Brent Geese, a juvenile Garganey, Spoonbill, dozens of Little Egrets, Greenshanks, Ruffs, Bar and Black-tailed Godwits, Whimbrel and Snipe. A fantastic day!

Day 3

Wednesday 22nd September

A Goldcrest in the grounds of our hotel provided some interest but we were away by 8am and headed off north to Bempton, stopping en route to pick up lunch from a supermarket in Hornsea. Arriving at Bempton at about 9:30 we immediately spotted five calling Whimbrels flying low south over the car park. We then headed down to the viewpoints and enjoyed stunning views of some of the 11,000 pairs of Gannets and watched the young Gannets preparing to fledge. Many of Bempton's seabirds had left the cliffs but we managed to find Fulmars, Razorbills, Guillemots and Shags, plus the stunning views of 300 foot chalk cliffs. We enjoyed prolonged views of several Harbour Porpoises and a couple of Rock Pipits flew around calling. Very few migrants around but we did see Swallows and a Willow Warbler. The bushes around the centre were full of Tree Sparrows as usual, often giving clear, close views.

There was a report of a Barred Warbler at Flamborough Head so we headed there. After a short time scanning the bay brambles we managed to find the juvenile Barred Warbler though it took a while to really show well. At the head itself there were more than a hundred Grey Seals loafing on rocks, plus a few Oystercatchers and a

single Eider. Offshore there were scores of Razorbills with just a few Guillemots that were diving and feeding just offshore in the company of many juvenile Herring Gulls. We then headed down to Hornsea, arriving at about 3pm. We only had an hour but the westerly wind was really very strong and there were no Little Gulls whatsoever, but scanning round we saw a range of ducks including Gadwall, Pintail, Wigeon and Teal. But best of all, we spotted an Otter causing consternation among the waterfowl. They closed the gate at 4pm so we then headed back to the hotel.

Day 4

Thursday 23rd September

The morning started again at Kilnsea wetlands coinciding with high tide where we saw two Spoonbills and a few Knot among the usual Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwits, Ruff, Dunlin and Redshank. We then headed straight to the coast where we had a sea watch. We saw two Brent Geese arriving across the North Sea, then numerous flocks of waders; Dunlin, Sanderling and Ringed Plovers. These were arriving straight from their arctic breeding grounds and flew past close, offering a few photographic opportunities. Apart from these there were just a few auks, Gannets and Red-throated Divers. The Canal Scrape was quiet apart from Little Egrets and the westerly wind was too strong for songbirds so we went for an early lunch. We then took the Unimog down to Spurn Point where our driver Andy told us all about the history of the headland. A trip up the lighthouse gave us great views of the point and headland from a height. There weren't many migrants around but we still managed to see a flock of pale-bellied Brent Geese and our first flock of Pink-footed Geese of the autumn. After this Alan took half the group back to Kilnsea wetlands to enjoy the waterbird spectacle for one last time while Tim headed back to ensure people were in time to make train connections in Hull.

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Checklist

Birds

	Common name	Scientific name	Date: September 2021		
			21	22	23
1	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	X	X	X
2	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	X	X	X
3	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	X	X	X
4	Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	X		X
5	Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>			X
6	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	X		X
7	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>		X	
8	Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	X	X	X
9	Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	X	X	X
10	Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	X	X	X
11	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	X	X	X
12	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	X	X	X
13	Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>	X		
14	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	X		
15	Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>		X	
16	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	X	X	
17	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	X	X	X
18	Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	X		X
19	Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>	X		
20	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	X		X
21	Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	X	X	
22	Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	X	X	X
23	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	X	X	X
24	European Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>		X	
25	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	X		X
26	Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	X		X
27	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	X	X	X
28	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	X		X
29	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	X	X	X
30	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	X	X	X
31	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	X		
32	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	X	X	X
33	Common Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	X	X	X
34	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	X	X	
35	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	X		X
36	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	X		X
37	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>	X		X

	Common name	Scientific name	Date: September 2021		
			21	22	23
38	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	x		x
39	Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	x		x
40	Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	x		x
41	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	x		x
42	Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>			x
43	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	x		x
44	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	x		
45	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	x		x
46	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	x		x
47	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	x	x	
48	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	x	x	x
49	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	x		x
50	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	x		x
51	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	x		x
52	Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	x		
53	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	x	x	x
54	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	x	x	x
55	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	x	x	x
56	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>	x		x
57	European Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	x	x	x
58	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	x	x	x
59	Sandwich Tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	x		x
60	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	x		x
61	Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	x	x	x
62	Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>	x	x	x
63	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	x	x	
64	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	x		x
65	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	x	x	x
66	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	x	x	x
67	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	x		
68	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	x		
69	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	x		
70	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	x		x
71	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	x	x	x
72	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>		x	
73	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	x	x	x
74	Eurasian Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>		x	
75	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	x	x	x
76	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	x	x	x

	Common name	Scientific name	Date: September 2021		
			21	22	23
77	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	x	x	x
78	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	x	x	x
79	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	x	x	x
80	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>			x
81	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	x		x
82	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	x		
83	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		x	x
84	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	x		
85	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>			x
86	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	x	x	x
87	Barred Warbler	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>		x	
88	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	x		
89	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	x	x	
90	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	x	x	x
91	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>		x	
92	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	x		
93	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	x	x	x
94	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	x	x	x
95	Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>		x	
96	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	x	x	x
97	Western Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	x	x	x
98	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	x	x	x
99	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	x	x	x
100	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	x	x	x
101	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	x	x	x
102	Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	x	x	
103	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	x		
104	European Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	x		
105	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	x	x	x
106	Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	x	x	x
107	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	x		x

Mammals

			Date:		
	Common name	Scientific name			
	Mammals		21	22	23
1	European Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	x		x
2	European Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>			x
3	Grey Seal	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>		x	x
4	European Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	x	x	x
5	Porpoise	<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>		x	
6	Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>		x	



Bar-tailed Godwits