

Pembrokeshire in Early Summer

Naturetrek Tour Report

7th – 11th June 2021



Bee Orchid



Gannet



Report and images by Andrew Bray



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Tour Participants: Andrew Bray & Mat Meehan (Naturetrek tour leaders) and eight clients.

Day 1

Monday 7th June

We went for a walk down the lane. There were plenty of Cow Parsley and Red Campion, and a plant we could not identify but suspect it was a Dog-violet (it was closest in the book). A pair of Siskins was seen, as well as the normal Blackbirds, Robins and Chaffinches. The rooms were nice and comfortable. Dinner was at 7pm and the food was fantastic and filling. We retired about 9pm which was much the same each night.

Day 2

Tuesday 8th June

We had an early morning bird walk to Westfield Pill. Besides the usual suspects of Robin, Blackbird and Chaffinches, there were water birds of Mute Swan, Mallard, Cormorant and Moorhen, as well as Grey Heron. Breakfast was delivered to the rooms at 8am and included a tasty bacon-and-egg bap plus other food. We left at 9am and drove to the car park at Bosherton.

We walked to the left and crossed two bridges before coming across the Grassy Bridge which is a dam. On the approach to West Haven Beach, we heard a Reed Warbler singing and saw Whitethroat. At the beach we crossed over to the dunes where we found Bee and Pyramidal Orchids. There was also Church Rock out to sea from the beach. It was a bit blowy, so we made our way back to car park, picking up Common Spotted Orchid. Our next stop was lunch at the café in Bosherton. It was lovely sitting outside in the sun and quite a few finished today with red faces.

After we had lunch, we headed to Stackpole Quay but there was a sign at the turning that the car park was full. It is a big car park therefore Barafundle Bay must have been heaving; Barafundle Bay is often voted as one of the best beaches in UK. Instead, we went to Stackpole Court, where the house was finally demolished in 1963 after soldiers staying there had stripped the lead from the roof. We visited the boat house, where Swallows were nesting, and the walled gardens, where we saw a Broad-bodied Chaser. The next stop was going to be at Stack Rocks in the MoD range, but the road was closed so we went to Freshwater West Beach. The surfers were in action, and we saw Rock Pipit after exploring the sites for Sand Martins high up on the cliffs. The tide had exposed the rocks and we saw small shrimps in the pools. An ice cream later, we headed back to the hotel.

It was a good day, and we were glad we had left the hotel at 9am to have our pick of parking spaces at the National Trust Car Park at Bosherton Lakes.

Day 3

Wednesday 9th June

We went to St David's and stopped at the RSPB shop for an update on the day's second sailing. The first was cancelled at Johnston where we bought lunch from the Londis Store. We booked two more people onto the second tour while we had a hot drink at St David's. Mat even phoned the warden whom he knew. Unfortunately, the swell was too bad and eventually the second trip was cancelled as well.

We headed to Fishguard for a Dipper which we saw close to the bridge. A walk along the river was productive for other birds, while at the small harbour where the river ran out, we saw gulls and Oystercatchers. We then went to the main harbour where the ferry leaves and saw a Black Guillemot as well as Gannets and Manx Shearwaters. We stopped in a car park next to the harbour and had lunch as well as viewing a Curlew.

We then travelled to Rosebush but were met with thick fog, so we headed south to Minwear Woods where the rain did not stop. We heard at least two Wood Warblers and had fantastic views across the river which was out as it was low tide. We then headed downhill to stop at Blackpool Mill, which once again was still cordoned off. We saw Swift, Swallows and House Martins from the bridge. There were also views of Bullfinch and Spotted Flycatcher.

We then returned in the rain to the hotel and had another excellent meal. A good day was had by all despite the wet weather.

Day 4

Thursday 10th June

We had another early morning bird walk down the lane which as quiet as it was so foggy. Unfortunately, it was another day of wet and inclement weather. We had a boat trip planned for 4.15pm but it was cancelled at 2.50, as it would have taken an hour plus to get to the boat. It was very foggy and whereas we hoped for a ride around Ramsey Island, the fog came in.

In the morning we headed for Martin's Haven but when we got to Marloes it was very thick fog and could hardly see anything, so we went to the Gann Estuary where we saw Dunlin, Ringed Plover and Oystercatchers plus a superb Sedge Warbler. We then went to Marloes Mere, where we found a café and had cake. The only bird seen was a Coot from the hide. We then had lunch in Marloes from the Post Office and village shop; it was nice as we had sandwiches which were freshly made.

We headed to St Anne's Point but that was too foggy, so back through Dale we went and ended up at the Gann Estuary where fishermen were digging up worms for bait. After the boat was cancelled, despite the fog lifting for a while, we went to Martin's Haven where we split into two parties. The smaller group saw two Choughs sheltering from the wind. The fog had rolled in at this point and we could not see the other party. It started to rain when we were back in the minibus, but by the time we reached the hotel it was only drizzling.

It was another good day as we saw plenty of new plants and a Bloody-nosed Beetle, as well as having excellent views of the Sedge Warbler.

Day 5

Friday 11th June

We headed to St David's and the cathedral. We went the back way to Haverfordwest and jumped the queue of traffic. On arrival we were early, so we went across the bridges and saw the ruin of the Bishop's Palace. After the cathedral visit, we went for coffee before heading to Dowrog Common. As there were two vehicles, we went to the main car park. The day was not good for butterflies or dragonflies, so we saw where Dowrog Pool was and headed back. We dropped off one client at St David's and another at the railway station to catch a bus to Broad Haven. They discovered that they were on the same train from Haverfordwest on the Monday.

In total the group saw 67 species of bird and at least 51 plants, as well as a smattering of insects and mammals. Sadly, the weather spoiled our trip to sea, so we could not add to the bird and mammal list. It was however a great adventure and despite the weather, we had a good time. The hotel looked after us and the evening meals were wholesome, expansive, and fresh.

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Checklist

Birds

	Common name	Scientific name	Trip	June				
				7	8	9	10	11
1	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	x	x	x		x	
2	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	x				x	
3	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	x		x	x	x	
4	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	x		x	x		
5	Rock Dove - I	<i>Columba livia</i> var. <i>domestica</i>	x					x
6	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	x				x	
7	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x
8	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	x		x			
9	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	x		x			
10	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	x				x	
11	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	x		x	x	x	
12	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	x				x	
13	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	x			x	x	
14	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	x				x	
15	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	x		x	x	x	
16	European Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	x		x	x	x	x
17	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	x			x	x	
18	Black Guillemot	<i>Cepphus grylle</i>	x			x		
19	Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	x			x		
20	Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	x			x		
21	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	x		x	x	x	
22	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	x		x		x	
23	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	x				x	
24	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	x		x			
25	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	x		x	x	x	
26	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	x		x	x	x	
27	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	x	x		x		

				June				
	Common name	Scientific name	Trip	7	8	9	10	11
28	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x
29	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	x				x	
30	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x
31	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	x		x	x		
32	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	x		x	x	x	x
33	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	x		x		x	
34	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	x		x		x	
35	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	x	x	x	x		x
36	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	x		x		x	
37	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	x		x		x	
38	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	x		x	x	x	
39	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	x		x	x		
40	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	x			x		
41	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	x					x
42	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	x		x	x	x	x
43	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	x				x	
44	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	x		x		x	
45	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	x		x	x	x	x
46	Common Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>	x		x		x	
47	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	x			x		
48	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x
49	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	x		x			
50	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x
51	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	x		x	x	x	
52	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	x		x			
53	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	x			x		x
54	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x
55	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	x			x	x	
56	White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	x			x		
57	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	x		x	x	x	x
58	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	x		x	x	x	
59	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba yarrellii</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x
60	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	x				x	x
61	Eurasian Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>	x		x		x	
62	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	x	x	x	x	x	
63	Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	x			x	x	
64	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	x	x			x	x
65	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	x		x		x	
66	Eurasian Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	x	x		x	x	
67	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	x		x	x		

	Common name	Scientific name	trip
Butterflies			
1	Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	x
2	Orange Tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>	x
3	Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	x
4	Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Agrias urticae</i>	x
5	Speckled Wood	<i>Parare aegeria aegeria</i>	x
Moths			

	Common name	Scientific name	trip
1	Cinnabar		x
2	Yellow Shell		x
3	Processionary Moth sp		x
Dragonflies			
1	Banded Demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>	x
2	Common blue Damselfly	<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>	x
3	Blue-tailed Damselfly	<i>Inchnura elegans</i>	x
4	Broad-bodied Chaser	<i>Libellula depressa</i>	x
Other Invertebrates			
1	Red-tailed Bumblebee		x
2	White-tailed Bumblebee		x
3	Buff-tailed Bumblebee		x
4	Bloody-nosed Beetle		x
5	White-lipped Snail		x
6	Cockchafer		x
Plants			
	Red Campion		x
	Field Buttercup		x
	Meadow Buttercup		x
	Cow Parsley		x
	Wild Garlic		x
	Hoary Mustard		x
	Wild Clematis		x
	Common Rock-rose		x
	Pennywort		x
	Hawkweed spp		x
	Common Dog Rose		x
	Hart's-tongue Fern		x
	Bird's-foot Trefoil		x
	Horseshoe Vetch		x
	Pyramidal Orchid		x
	Bee Orchid		x
	Common Spotted Orchid		x
	A Broomrape		x
	Viper's-bugloss		x
	Alexanders		x
	Black Medick		x
	Germander Speedwell		x
	Chickweed		x
	Common Toadflax		x
	Sea Holly		x
	Goat's-beard		x
	Stickyweed		x
	Geranium		x
	Gorse		x
	Daisy		x
	Flag Iris		x
	Water Starwort		x
	Bluebell		x

	Common name	Scientific name	trip
	Greater Knapweed		x
	Water Lilies		x
	Herb Robert		x
	Columbine		x
	Sea Thrift		x
	Ragged Robin		x
	Red Valerian		x
	White Stonecrop		x
	Deadly Nightshade		x
	Southern Marsh Orchid		x
	Field Scabious		x
	Horse-tail		x
	Ivy-leaved Toadflax		x
	Pellitory-of-the-Wall		x
	Wild Carrot		x
	Ground Elder		x
	Navelwort		x
	Scarlet Pimpernel		x