

Yorkshire Coast and Moors

Naturetrek Tour Report

6 - 9 July 2012



Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (*Clossiana selene*)



Bridled Guillemot at Bempton



The 2012 Naturetrek Group at Fen Bog



Red-necked Footman (*Atolmis rubricollis*)

Images and report compiled by Peter Dunn



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Day 1

Friday 6th July

Arrival at Hunmanby in torrential rain!

Most people made their own way to Wrangham House Hotel in horrendous weather. Those who came by train were met at Seamer Railway station and transported to Hunmanby and were also over an hour late. However that night, when we met for dinner, the expectations of a better day on Saturday made us happier and we had high expectations...

After a delicious meal we adjourned to the lounge where Peter introduced the group to the area, its habitat and some of the wildlife we would expect to see in the next few days. We retired to bed ready for the day on the coast.

Day 2

Saturday 7th July

Bempton, Flamborough, Filey Dams and Wykeham Forest

Sun with sea fog blowing in land a times. Warm in the sun

Following a leisurely English breakfast we headed out towards Bempton at around 8 am. As we drove along the road to Bempton a Barn Owl flew up from the verge carrying a rodent. We arrived in the car park at Bempton in bright sunshine to the sound of Tree Sparrows in every bush. Out on the cliffs the sea fog was rolling in as we walked down from the visitor centre and the first view point was obliterated apart from a few close Kittiwakes. We could here Gannets calling which inspired us to walk to Jubilee Point where the non breeding birds hung out on the top of the cliffs. As we arrived a lone bird was peering at us from the top and soon it was joined by one or two others, and they started to call and display - a fascinating insight into the life style of these huge birds. From the same view point the mist started to clear and we saw Razorbills and Guillemot on the cliffs and flying about.

A Fulmar had nested just above the chalk surrounded by white flowers but we found it difficult to locate any Puffin other than glimpses flying in and out of the fog. Having enjoyed the spectacle and smell of the cliffs we headed back to the visitor centre for coffee.

After a coffee we drove down to Flamborough Head, where we walked down to the fog horn to view the sea from one of the famous sea-watch points in Yorkshire. Today it was relatively quiet with just the local breeding birds moving backwards and forwards over the sea. Squadrons of Gannets were heading back towards Bempton after feeding out to sea and gangs of Razorbills loafing on the sea. An Atlantic Grey Seal was feeding close off shore and in the marshy hollows in the bolder clay we saw some Northern Marsh Orchids probably at its most southern limit in the UK. Some walked around the fog horn to view High Stacks and found a number of Puffins sat outside their nest holes. We took the opportunity here to have lunch in the cafe on the headland, then regrouped at 2pm to head back north to Filey.

As the sea fog was well up on the cliffs we decided to stop at Filey Dams, a well known Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve, managed by the local Filey Brigg Ornithological Group & Bird Observatory. We visited both hides and the pond dipping area whilst Peter explained the history of the reserve and how it was conceived and constructed by about 10-12 members of the local birdwatchers group before being adopted by the Trust. During our visit we saw the evidence of successful breeding of Mute Swan, Coot, Moorhen, Little Grebe and Tufted Duck, whilst the adult Barn Owl sat at the entrance of the nest box where it had four young, recently ringed by Peter's team. Chiffchaffs and Reed Bunting were noted with many Tree Sparrows around the nest boxes and a Sedge Warbler fed close to the hide. Normally alive with dragonflies the dipping pool was overflowing after the extreme weather conditions of yesterday and all we could find were frogs and toads newly emerging.

Peter decided to move away from the coast road and head for the North York Moors National Park in search of raptors. We headed down a valley where Honey Buzzard had been seen recently but as we sat scanning the hill top there were many motorcyclists passing along the road. Unfortunately two crashed into each other (resulting in one with a broken arm). The scene was set for us to see how the ambulance and police dealt with a road traffic accident and having witnessed the accident, Peter was enlisted to slow the rest of the traffic. After that we left the area and drove down to Troutdale in search of raptors. We succeeded in seeing Common Buzzard only but the scenery was fantastic.

We made our way back towards the village of Wykeham where we had a nice three course meal in the popular Downe Arms, after which we drove up into Wykeham Forest. Peter took us through the forest to a clearing where we stood on a track to look for Nightjar. The fog had started to reach this area and in the fading light we heard and briefly saw a Woodcock fly past 'croaking and squeaking' a number of times. As the bird sound died away around 9.50pm, we were treated to some close views of a pair European Nightjar, patrolling their territory, 'quipping' and wing clapping above us, followed by some churring in the trees. This was a fitting end to a long, enjoyable, day and Peter drove us back to the hotel where we looked forward to some well-deserved rest.

Day 3

Sunday 8th July

North York Moors National Park

Amazingly dry most of the day despite the forecast!

We met for breakfast at 7:30 am and then packed into the mini bus passing through Cayton Carrs, where a Barn Owl appeared right on cue next to the road, on a fence post. Continuing on towards the moors the misty conditions soon cleared as we headed inland and the road became dry.

Our first stop was to collect our lunch from the Dalby Forest visitors centre and then continued onto Pickering before turning north following the North York Moors Railway. It was dry and overcast when we arrived at Wheeldale Beck and the start of the heather but the Whinchats of the previous week had moved on. We continued onto the heather moorland which was now starting to flower and came across our first Red Grouse, with a pair and some youngsters. We watched these birds from the minibus, using it as a mobile hide and had young Lapwing in the field on the other side of the road. A stop and a walk out on the moor resulted in a Golden Plover flying over and some more distant Red Grouse.

We dropped to the ford crossing Wheeldale Beck and explored the area around the stream, first Reed Bunting and Stonechat were found then John came across some Whinchats and while watching these, a Common Redstart appeared.

Having enjoyed this area of heather moorland we headed to the village of Goathland, the famous 'Aidensfield' of TV's Heartbeat. We ate our lunch, used the facilities and had a quick look around the village and passed Goathland Railway Station used in the Harry Potter films, before heading out to Fylingdales Moor and a stop at Fen Bog, a Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Reserve. Having spoken to a butterfly watcher on site, we headed down to the beck where we found three newly emerged Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries.

Continuing on we briefly stopped at the viewpoint called the Hole of Horcum, legend states it was formed by a giant who was angry and scooped out the ground, but it was the end of a large glacier that 'scooped' out the soil and was then sculpted by underwater streams. Mike found some Chimney Sweeper moths here, and there was time for an ice cream.

Leaving the heather moorland past RAF Fylingdales radar station we turned back onto the forest drive of Dalby Forest and stopped briefly for refreshments at the visitors centre and then checked the well stocked garden near Staindale Lake. Bird life was quiet with only Jay and Chiffchaff being obvious, but Mike's sharp eyes again found a nice moth, this time a Red-necked Footman.

We left the forest and stopped near Troutsdale to view the raptor valley again. This time we immediately saw two Common Buzzards and Siskin buzzed about us. We spent time dismissing distant Wood Pigeons and gulls until Peter spotted a large bird carrying prey. It seemed to circle high and disappeared only to reappear closer to us and proved to be a male Goshawk carrying what looked like a Grey Squirrel. We watched it fly back to Wykeham Forest and disappear. The next few minutes brought more distant pigeons and gulls, and Peter had what may have been a distant Honey Buzzard, but nobody could get onto it before it went from view. We had to drag ourselves away, as we needed to head back to the hotel to prepare for dinner – an amazing day of dry weather

and some special Yorkshire landscapes and wildlife. That evening we met up after dinner to do the checklist for the last two days and discuss the content of the tour.

Day 4

Monday 9th July

Filey and departure

We met a little later after breakfast to allow for room bills to be cleared and bags packed. Nicola was going to leave after breakfast so we bid her goodbye before the rest of the group were taken to Filey Brigg.

The weather appeared overcast as we entered the Country Park and while purchasing the parking ticket a noisy Ring-necked Parakeet flew round the park twice before disappearing into the town - most likely to have escaped its cage!

We walked along the clay topped cliffs of Carr Naze in ever increasing wet sea fog, with Sand Martins whipping around us and the sounds of Sandwich Terns in the bay. The sea was quite rough on the north side of the Brigg with an easterly wind but flat calm on the south in the bay. It was here we watched both Shag and Cormorant, two Eiders and a small group of Oystercatchers. Mid morning tea was the next request at the Country Park stores where bird reports and flower ID guides were bought.

Our last walk was down 'Arndale' to the yacht club, where we found Bee, Pyramidal and Common Spotted Orchids amongst the parked boats and masses of thorned Spiny Restharrow. Five-spotted Burnet moths were just emerging and their pupae cases could be seen on the grass stems. As the mist cleared and we watched a pair of adult Sandwich Terns feeding in the bay followed by two 'spotty' young.

Returning to the hotel, we said our farewells to new friends with a promise to meet up again maybe on another trip, before departing. This trip had been a success despite the weather that preceded it, and the weather conditions were way above our expectations!!!

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Species Lists

Birds (H = heard only ✓ = species seen but not counted individually)

| | Common name | Scientific name | July | | |
|----|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------|----|---|
| | | | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 1 | Red Grouse | <i>Lagopus lagopus scotica</i> | | 15 | |
| 2 | Common Pheasant | <i>Phasianus colchicus</i> | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 3 | Canada Goose | <i>Branta canadensis</i> | 2 | | |
| 4 | Mute Swan | <i>Cygnus olor</i> | 7 | | |
| 5 | Mallard | <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> | ✓ | 1 | |
| 6 | Tufted Duck | <i>Aythya fuligula</i> | 6 | 1 | |
| 7 | Northern Fulmar | <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> | ✓ | | |
| 8 | Little Grebe | <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> | 2 | | |
| 9 | Northern Gannet | <i>Morus bassanus</i> | ✓ | | 3 |
| 10 | European Shag | <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i> | 6 | | 2 |
| 11 | Great Cormorant | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> | | | 8 |
| 12 | Northern Goshawk | <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> | | 1 | |
| 13 | Common Buzzard | <i>Buteo buteo</i> | 1 | 2 | |
| 14 | Common Kestrel | <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| 15 | Peregrine Falcon | <i>Falco peregrinus</i> | 1 | | |
| 16 | Common Moorhen | <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> | ✓ | | 1 |
| 17 | Eurasian Coot | <i>Fulica atra</i> | ✓ | | |
| 18 | Eurasian Oystercatcher | <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> | | 2 | 5 |
| 19 | Northern Lapwing | <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> | | ✓ | |
| 20 | European Golden Plover | <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> | | 1 | |
| 21 | Eurasian Woodcock | <i>Scolopax rusticola</i> | 1 | | |
| 22 | Common Snipe | <i>Gallinago gallinago</i> | | 1 | |
| 23 | Eurasian Curlew | <i>Numenius arquata</i> | | 1 | |
| 24 | Black-legged Kittiwake | <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 25 | Black-headed Gull | <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> | ✓ | | 1 |
| 26 | Common Gull | <i>Larus canus canus</i> | | | 1 |
| 27 | Great Black-backed Gull | <i>Larus marinus</i> | 1 | | 3 |
| 28 | European Herring Gull | <i>Larus argentatus</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 29 | Lesser Black-backed Gull | <i>Larus fuscus</i> | 1 | | |
| 30 | Sandwich Tern | <i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i> | | | 8 |
| 31 | Common Guillemot | <i>Uria aalge</i> | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 32 | Razorbill | <i>Alca torda</i> | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 33 | Atlantic Puffin | <i>Fratercula arctica</i> | 30+ | | |
| 34 | Feral Pigeon | <i>Columba livia 'feral'</i> | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 35 | Common Wood Pigeon | <i>Columba palumbus</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 36 | Eurasian Collared Dove | <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> | ✓ | | ✓ |
| | (Rose-ringed Parakeet [escaped]) | <i>Psittacula krameri</i> | | | 1 |
| 37 | Western Barn Owl | <i>Tyto alba</i> | 3 | 1 | |
| 38 | European Nightjar | <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i> | 2 | | |
| 39 | Common Swift | <i>Apus apus</i> | ✓ | | 6 |
| 40 | Eurasian Jay | <i>Garrulus glandarius</i> | 1 | 4 | |
| 41 | Eurasian Magpie | <i>Pica pica</i> | 5 | ✓ | ✓ |
| 42 | Western Jackdaw | <i>Coloeus monedula</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 43 | Rook | <i>Corvus frugilegus</i> | ✓ | | |
| 44 | Carrion Crow | <i>Corvus corone</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 45 | Coal Tit | <i>Parus ater</i> | | 1 | 1 |
| 46 | Great Tit | <i>Parus major</i> | | 2 | |

| | Common name | Scientific name | July | | |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|------|---|---|
| | | | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 47 | Eurasian Blue Tit | <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i> | | 1 | |
| 48 | Eurasian Skylark | <i>Alauda arvensis</i> | 11 | ✓ | 1 |
| 49 | Sand Martin | <i>Riparia riparia</i> | 11 | | ✓ |
| 50 | Barn Swallow | <i>Hirundo rustica</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 51 | Common House Martin | <i>Delichon urbicum</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 52 | Common Chiffchaff | <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i> | H | H | H |
| 53 | Sedge Warbler | <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i> | 2 | | |
| 54 | Reed Warbler | <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i> | 1 | | |
| 55 | Eurasian Blackcap | <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i> | H | | |
| 56 | Common Whitethroat | <i>Sylvia communis</i> | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| 57 | Goldcrest | <i>Regulus regulus</i> | 1 | 2 | |
| 58 | Eurasian Wren | <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i> | H | 1 | H |
| 59 | Common Starling | <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 60 | Common Blackbird | <i>Turdus merula</i> | 13 | ✓ | ✓ |
| 61 | Song Thrush | <i>Turdus philomelos</i> | 2 | 1 | |
| 62 | Mistle Thrush | <i>Turdus viscivorus</i> | | 1 | |
| 63 | European Robin | <i>Erithacus rubecula</i> | 1 | | 1 |
| 64 | Common Redstart | <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i> | | 1 | |
| 65 | Whinchat | <i>Saxicola rubetra</i> | | 4 | |
| 66 | European Stonechat | <i>Saxicola rubicola</i> | | 2 | |
| 67 | House Sparrow | <i>Passer domesticus</i> | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 68 | Eurasian Tree Sparrow | <i>Passer montanus</i> | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 69 | Dunnock | <i>Prunella modularis</i> | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| 70 | Pied Wagtail | <i>Motacilla alba yarrellii</i> | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 71 | Meadow Pipit | <i>Anthus pratensis</i> | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 72 | Eurasian Rock Pipit | <i>Anthus petrosus</i> | | | 2 |
| 73 | Common Chaffinch | <i>Fringilla coelebs</i> | ✓ | ✓ | 2 |
| 74 | European Greenfinch | <i>Chloris chloris</i> | 1 | 2 | |
| 75 | Eurasian Siskin | <i>Carduelis spinus</i> | 3 | ✓ | |
| 76 | European Goldfinch | <i>Carduelis carduelis</i> | 6 | ✓ | ✓ |
| 77 | Common Linnet | <i>Carduelis cannabina</i> | ✓ | 3 | |
| 78 | Red Crossbill | <i>Loxia curvirostra</i> | H | | |
| 79 | Eurasian Bullfinch | <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i> | 1 | 2 | |
| 80 | Corn Bunting | <i>Emberiza calandra</i> | | 2 | |
| 81 | Yellowhammer | <i>Emberiza citrinella</i> | 1 | ✓ | |

Mammals

Grey Seal (*Halichoerus grypus*)

European Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*)

Roe Deer (*Capreolus capreolus*)

European Hare (*Lepus europaeus*)

Common Weasel (*Mustela nivalis*)

Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*)

Reptiles & Amphibians

Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*)

Common Toad (*Bufo bufo*)

Butterflies & Moths

Small Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*)

Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*)

Meadow Brown (*Maniola jurtina*)

Silver-ground Carpet (*Xanthorhoe montanata*)

Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*)

Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (*Clossiana selene*)

Five-spot Burnet (*Zygaena trifolii*)

Chimney Sweeper (*Odezia atrata*)

Brimstone Moth (*Opisthograptis luteolata*)

Silver Y (*Autographa gamma*)

Red-necked Footman (*Atolmis rubricollis*)

Other invertebrates

Red-tailed Bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*)

Longhorn Beetle sp.

Some Notable plants

Cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*)

Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*)

Spiny Restharrow (*Ononis spinosa*)

Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*)

Common Spotted Orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*)

Pyramidal Orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*)

Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*)

Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*)

Birdsfoot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*)

Water Plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*)

Northern Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza purpurella*)

Bee Orchid (*Ophrys apifera*)



2012 Naturetrek Group at The Hole of Horcum