

# The Great British Bird Race – Hampshire

Naturetrek Tour Report

28th – 30th January 2026

---



Nuthatch



Black-tailed Godwit



Treecreeper



Crossbill

Tour report by Mark Edgeller

---



Naturetrek

Mingledown Barn

Wolf's Lane

Chawton

Alton

Hampshire

GU34 3HJ

UK

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

E: [info@naturetrek.co.uk](mailto:info@naturetrek.co.uk)

W: [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk)

Tour participants: Mark Edgeller (leader) with seven Naturetrek clients

## Day 1

Wednesday 28th January

### Beaulieu Road – Denny Wood – Matley Ridge

We convened at the Beaulieu Hotel in the heart of the New Forest on a beautifully calm lunchtime. Evidence of the previous day's storm could be seen in the large amount of standing water, and flooding in the Avon Valley meant that we couldn't visit Blashford Lakes as hoped. This enforced change of plan meant that we had time for a more leisurely lunch, and we took the opportunity to get to know each other and go through the itinerary before heading out.

Just before the allotted start time, we took the very short walk to the Shatterford car park, and waited patiently. The first bird to go on the list was a Great Spotted Woodpecker, followed swiftly by Magpie. We were off! We had one more species to try for here: Crossbill. After a couple of flight views, a cracking adult male showed superbly and was well photographed. With that, we collected the van and headed to Denny Wood a few minutes up the road. Here, the new birds came thick and fast, with four species of tits, Treecreeper and Nuthatch all noted, alongside several other woodland species. The last stop of the day took us to an area of heath and woodland edge. The key species here was Woodlark and, after giving us the runaround, a single bird showed well on the ground and in flight. Success!

The shadows were now lengthening, and we set off to hunt for Dartford Warbler. Alas, we were out of luck, but consolation came in the form of a group of feeding Redwings, and three Fieldfares in flight. A leucistic Fallow Deer was, perhaps, the most noteworthy sighting of the afternoon. We hadn't managed to see a Wren!

Day total = 26

## Day 2

Thursday 29th January

### Normandy Marshes – Keyhaven Marshes

Today was all about coastal and wetland birds, with a full day on the marshes west of Lymington planned. First up was Normandy. Our timing was perfect, as the high tide pushed waders off the saltmarsh and on to the lagoon, alongside a wealth of wildfowl. A pristine drake Goldeneye stole the show early on, and Linnet and Rock Pipit were new to the list. A flock of fourteen Spoonbills and several Eiders out on the saltmarsh showed well. Greenshanks were grilled at close range alongside five Bar-tailed Godwits; the latter are tricky birds to find in the western Solent. We headed to a café overlooking The Needles for lunch, and a chance to get out of the wind and thaw out. Not a single bird was noted on the sea, but as we returned to the van three adult Mediterranean Gulls floated overhead.

We made the short drive to Keyhaven, in a freshening wind and under darkening skies. In contrast to our morning success, the afternoon started slowly. Eventually, we dug out a few new birds, including a group of Golden Plovers roosting on the extensively flooded fields. A Marsh Harrier doubled our raptor tally, and a brief Bullfinch was gratefully received. Towards dusk the Brent Geese, numbering over five hundred, gave us several fantastic flypasts

as they prepared to go to roost. The final new species of the day was White-fronted Goose. A small group had arrived during the cold snap over the Christmas period, and were still present in their favoured field. It had been a thoroughly enjoyable (if tiring) day, but still we had no Wren.

Day total of new species = xx

Running total = yyy species

## Day 3

Friday 30th January

### Bolderwood – Rhinefield Arboretum

The start to our final day was a little delayed, as a trip to a garage was needed to deal with a tyre pressure issue. Unfortunately, the time lost meant we had to miss out visiting Acres Down, but on the upside it allowed us to tick Collared Dove in the centre of Lyndhurst! Undeterred, we headed to Bolderwood in the hope of finches...and maybe a Wren. When we arrived at the car park, there was plenty of activity, but nothing new for our list. It didn't take long to add Goldcrest to our tally, with a bird feeding low down in bracken and bramble. And then it happened: a Wren appeared briefly and was admitted to the list. Phew! Nearby, Siskins called frequently high in the trees, but showed poorly. After a quick coffee break, we headed up the road to check another Dartford Warbler site, but there was no sight or sound of this skulker. We headed back to the van and drove through the ancient beech woods towards our lunch stop and final destination.

It was dry enough to picnic outside at Rhinefield before we crossed the road to the arboretum. Finches and Firecrests were on our minds, but several slow circuits, listening and looking intently, failed to reveal any new birds for our list. At 1.50pm it began to rain, so we headed back to the car park and completed our checklists in record time. We were all in the van ready to go, just as the heavens opened; the twenty minute journey back to the hotel was a blur of windscreen wipers. We all agreed the inaugural Naturetrek Great British Bird Race had been a resounding success, with great birds and great company. Well done Team Hampshire!

Final total = 85 species

## Receive our e-newsletter

Join the Naturetrek email list and be the first to hear about new tours, additional departures and new dates, tour reports and special offers.

[naturetrek.co.uk/e-newsletter-signup](https://naturetrek.co.uk/e-newsletter-signup)

Scan to  
sign up!



## Social Media

We're social! Follow us on Instagram, Facebook, Bluesky and X and be the first to hear about the launch of new tours, offers, exciting sightings and photos from our recently returned holidays.



[instagram.com/naturetrek\\_wildlife\\_holidays](https://www.instagram.com/naturetrek_wildlife_holidays)



[facebook.com/naturetrekwildlifeholidays](https://www.facebook.com/naturetrekwildlifeholidays)



[naturetrek.bsky.social](https://www.bsky.app/profile/naturetrek.social)



[x.com/naturetrektours](https://x.com/naturetrektours) (formerly Twitter)

## Birds

<b>Common name</b>	<b>Scientific name</b>
Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>
Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>
Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyophaga melanocephalus</i>
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>

<b>Common name</b>	<b>Scientific name</b>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Duncock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>
Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>