

Hampshire - Beaulieu River Cruise and Lymington Marshes

Naturetrek Tour Report

15th December 2025



Black-tailed Godwit



Eurasian Spoonbill



Grey Seal



Great Northern Diver

Tour report by Marcus Ward



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Tour participants: Marcus Ward (leader) with ten Naturetrek clients

The group met at the slipway at Bath Road Car Park, Lymington, at 9.00am. After a short introduction and a discussion of the plan for the day, we headed off along the seawall around Lymington Marshes, taking time to talk about the history of the site as we walked.

The lagoon at Normandy was full of birds. While we were discussing the various wildfowl and waders present, a group of Spoonbills flew in and gracefully landed on the lagoon, giving everyone good views. Along the seawall, we watched a couple of Kingfishers hunting, enjoyed point-blank views of Spotted Redshank, Common Redshank and Greenshank, and were teased by a pair of Dartford Warblers moving through the scrub, alongside a pair of Stonechats. We completed the circular walk with some lovely views of Roe Deer in an adjacent paddock.

We then relocated to Buckler's Hard for the second part of the trip: a cruise along the Beaulieu River out to the Solent and back. Highlights were many and varied. A group of around thirty Cormorants was a constant companion, fishing communally and putting on an impressive display. We also enjoyed fly-over views of Marsh Harrier, and exceptionally close views of a fishing Great Northern Diver; it repeatedly dived to catch and consume crabs from the riverbed. Great views of a pair of Great Black-backed Gulls squabbling over a large dogfish were memorable, but the highlight for many was excellent views of both Grey and Harbour Seals, allowing for direct comparison between the two species.

Overall, it was a thoroughly enjoyable day, taken at a relaxed pace and allowing plenty of time to appreciate both the stunning scenery and the wonderful wildlife.



Brent Geese



Dartford Warbler

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Species lists

Birds

| English name | Scientific name | Normandy Marsh | Beaulieu River |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Brent Goose | <i>Branta bernicla</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Canada Goose | <i>Branta canadensis</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Greylag Goose | <i>Anser anser</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Mute Swan | <i>Cygnus olor</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Egyptian Goose | <i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Common Shelduck | <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Northern Shoveler | <i>Spatula clypeata</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Gadwall | <i>Mareca strepera</i> | ✓ | |
| Eurasian Wigeon | <i>Mareca penelope</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Mallard | <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Northern Pintail | <i>Anas acuta</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Eurasian Teal | <i>Anas crecca</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Tufted Duck | <i>Aythya fuligula</i> | ✓ | |
| Goosander | <i>Mergus merganser</i> | ✓ | |
| Red-breasted Merganser | <i>Mergus serrator</i> | ✓ | |
| Rock Dove | <i>Columba livia</i> | | ✓ |
| Stock Dove | <i>Columba oenas</i> | | ✓ |
| Common Wood Pigeon | <i>Columba palumbus</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Common Moorhen | <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> | ✓ | |
| Little Grebe | <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Great Crested Grebe | <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Eurasian Oystercatcher | <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pied Avocet | <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> | ✓ | |
| Grey Plover | <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> | | ✓ |
| European Golden Plover | <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> | | ✓ |
| Common Ringed Plover | <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> | ✓ | |
| Northern Lapwing | <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Eurasian Curlew | <i>Numenius arquata</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Bar-tailed Godwit | <i>Limosa lapponica</i> | ✓ | |
| Black-tailed Godwit | <i>Limosa limosa</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Common Redshank | <i>Tringa totanus</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Spotted Redshank | <i>Tringa erythropus</i> | ✓ | |
| Common Greenshank | <i>Tringa nebularia</i> | ✓ | |
| Ruddy Turnstone | <i>Arenaria interpres</i> | ✓ | |
| Red Knot | <i>Calidris canutus</i> | | ✓ |
| Dunlin | <i>Calidris alpina</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Black-headed Gull | <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Mediterranean Gull | <i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i> | ✓ | |
| Common Gull | <i>Larus canus</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| European Herring Gull | <i>Larus argentatus</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Great Black-backed Gull | <i>Larus marinus</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Great Northern Diver | <i>Gavia immer</i> | | ✓ |
| Great Cormorant | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Eurasian Spoonbill | <i>Platalea leucorodia</i> | ✓ | |
| Little Egret | <i>Egretta garzetta</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Grey Heron | <i>Ardea cinerea</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Western Marsh Harrier | <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> | | ✓ |
| Common Kingfisher | <i>Alcedo atthis</i> | ✓ | |

| English name | Scientific name | Normandy Marsh | Beaulieu River |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Eurasian Jay | <i>Garrulus glandarius</i> | ✓ | |
| Eurasian Magpie | <i>Pica pica</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Western Jackdaw | <i>Coloeus monedula</i> | | ✓ |
| Rook | <i>Corvus frugilegus</i> | | ✓ |
| Carrion Crow | <i>Corvus corone</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Northern Raven | <i>Corvus corax</i> | ✓ | |
| Eurasian Blue Tit | <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i> | ✓ | |
| Great Tit | <i>Parus major</i> | ✓ | |
| Eurasian Skylark | <i>Alauda arvensis</i> | ✓ | |
| Long-tailed Tit | <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i> | ✓ | |
| Dartford Warbler | <i>Curruca undata</i> | ✓ | |
| Eurasian Wren | <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i> | ✓ | |
| Common Starling | <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Song Thrush | <i>Turdus philomelos</i> | ✓ | |
| Common Blackbird | <i>Turdus merula</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Fieldfare | <i>Turdus pilaris</i> | | ✓ |
| European Robin | <i>Erithacus rubecula</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| European Stonechat | <i>Saxicola rubicola</i> | ✓ | |
| House Sparrow | <i>Passer domesticus</i> | ✓ | |
| Dunnock | <i>Prunella modularis</i> | ✓ | |
| Pied Wagtail | <i>Motacilla alba yarrellii</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Meadow Pipit | <i>Anthus pratensis</i> | ✓ | |
| Eurasian Chaffinch | <i>Fringilla coelebs</i> | ✓ | |
| European Greenfinch | <i>Chloris chloris</i> | ✓ | |
| Common Linnet | <i>Linaria cannabina</i> | ✓ | |
| European Goldfinch | <i>Carduelis carduelis</i> | ✓ | |

Mammals

| English name | Scientific name | Normandy Marsh | Beaulieu River |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Harbour Seal | <i>Phoca vitulina</i> | | ✓ |
| Grey Seal | <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> | | ✓ |
| Western Roe Deer | <i>Capreolus capreolus</i> | ✓ | |
| Eastern Grey Squirrel | <i>Sciurus carolinensis</i> | ✓ | |