

COACH TRIP TO SPURN – SUNDAY 17th OCTOBER 2021

Low cloud and drizzle did not deter 25 happy birdwatchers board the coach at 7.30am. The return of field trips is welcomed by the group.

En route Wood Pigeon, Pheasant, Magpie, Jackdaw, and other Corvids were spotted in the fields. Stopping off at Ferrybridge services the weather brightened. Starlings gathered on the telegraph wires, a Buzzard sat in wait of prey on a telegraph pole, many gulls in the ploughed fields.

Kilnsea Wetlands Nature Reserve, accessible from Easington Road, has been created to compensate for habitat being lost nearby on the eroding Holderness coastline. Freshwater and saline pools with islands and spits and scrapes provide this site with roosting and feeding stations. This was where a few disembarked, to look over the estuary.



Dark-bellied Brent Geese

Oystercatcher probing for molluscs, a welcome sight of Brent Geese, Shelduck, Redshank, Dunlin were noted. Curlew flying over with his evocative call. Onwards then to the Observation Hub. No birds on the feeders but Goldfinch were chattering in the hedge. Walking along the road, Stock Dove and Blackbird seen far off in the field, and House Sparrows were busy in the hedges. Roe deer were grazing in the field. A van stopped and the driver told 3 of us that a Jack Snipe had been seen on the left of the road in dense vegetation in a ditch. We had a good look but no luck to see this secretive bird.



Shelduck

Finally arriving to walk along the unsurfaced footpath of Kilnsea Wetlands Nature Reserve, Kestrel hovered overhead. From the hide Great Crested Grebe, Shoveler, Mallard, Greater and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Herring Gulls, Black-headed Gulls, Grey Heron, Lapwings, Bar-tailed Godwits, a flock of

Brent Geese, Wigeon all added to our growing field list. The drizzle returned.

A short wander brought us to a screen. In a nearby field a huge flock of Soay sheep grazed quietly. Dunlin, Mute Swans, Greylag Geese and the wonderful Grey Plover

from the Arctic Tundra were busy feeding on the scape. Leaving the screen a birdwatcher from another group allowed us to use his 'scope to see a Little Owl perched on a wood pile, tucked away from the increasing rain and wind. Further along the path we looked across the lagoons, then retraced our route back to the road. Tree Sparrows, Chaffinch, House Sparrows, Great Tit, Blue Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Dunnock enjoyed the feeders and fallen apples in a garden. A Wren hurried into the hedgerow. Linnets perched in a row along with a Pied Wagtail on the phone wires. A handsome Jay flew over.

We made our way back to the coach to have lunch. A Two-barred Greenish Warbler had been spotted in the hedges by the coach park, a rare sighting as they are found in Siberia and northern Mongolia. Over 100 twitchers had arrived in the morning, crowding near the hedges, to see this little warbler. On and off during the day some of our group were rewarded with a sighting of this visitor.



Grey Plover

Refreshed from lunch in the coach we headed to Canal scrape hide. From here we watched Mallard, Moorhen, and Little Grebe. Later it was



Kestrel

reported a Sparrowhawk had flown overhead. We now headed for The Warren, so called because it was the site of a 15th Century rabbit warren. Nothing to report from here so we headed for the canal walk looking over the estuary to watch the tide coming in. To our right we spotted more Roe deer and 2 Highland cattle dozing under a tree. A Little Egret flew over and landed in the distance, 4 Turnstones were busy turning over stones foraging for invertebrates. More Grey Plover and a huge count of Shelduck first seen feeding then as the tide came in bobbing on the water. A Kestrel hovered over the bales of hay in the field.

Leaving the canal path, we popped in at the Crown Inn car park, finding a solitary Robin. The churchyard was also devoid of bird life but a Greenfinch was heard wheezing. Time to head back to the coach. Looking over the fields 4 young Roe deer were grazing, they took an interest in watching us watching them. A Kestrel was spotted in the distance sitting on the fence whilst a Pheasant wandered around.

Other reported sightings for the day -

Red-throated Diver, Gannet, Cormorant, Pintail, Merlin, Water Rail, Knot, Sanderling, Ringed Plover, Common Snipe, Black-tailed Godwit, Common Gull, Meadow Pipit, Stonechat, Reed bunting, Chiffchaff and Goldcrest. Greenshank and Skylark were heard.



Curlew (bathing)

A total field count of 68 which is very rewarding. Spurn National Nature Reserve is a constantly moving peninsula, which curves between the North Sea and the Humber estuary managed by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. A truly iconic place.



Twitchers

Photos by Robert D

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