



NORFOLK 12-14th May 2025 SPRING TOUR



© Cuckoo – Lara Knight

Day One – 11th May 2025

The group arrived at Whitehouse Farm, Hindolveston on Sunday 11th May and settled into the accommodation with an evening meal.

Day Two – 12th May 2025

The group were collected at 8.15am on Monday May 12th and we set off coastward bound on another bright, sunny, morning for the North Norfolk coast.

Our first destination was Snettisham and the inner sea wall overlooking the Coastal park and rewilding area of Ken Hill Marshes.

We had brief views of a singing **Lesser Whitethroat** almost immediately as we left the parking area. As we walked down the track, we kicked off very nicely with at least 3 displaying **Turtle Doves**, with 2 eventually perching up on the wires and giving nice scope views.

As we wandered along the track there was plenty of activity with **Common Whitethroat** and **Sedge Warbler**, both song flighting, also **Blackcap** and **Chiff-chaff singing** and the latter showing well. Whilst noisy **Reed warblers & Cetti's Warbler** were vocal but stayed hidden from view as did a distant calling **Cuckoo**. Whilst the **Reed Bunting** and **Skylarks** were happy to show off perched and overhead.

Out on the first pools we were soon watching **Oystercatcher**, **Redshank**, **Avocet**, **Shelduck** and a late **Eurasian Wigeon** also **2 Marsh Harriers** overhead were joined by a single **Buzzard** and **2 Red Kite**.

Our attention was next drawn to a **Grasshopper warbler** reeling from the nearby scrub, and despite searching and patience it refused to reveal itself. The next set of pools offered up nice views of a **Wood Sandpiper** and the more distant pools hosted a good flock of **c200 Black-tailed Godwit**, accompanying them was also **2 Spoonbills**, **6 Bar-tailed Godwits** and small group of **Red Knot**, the shorebirds eventually taking flight and heading back to the shoreline. A nice ghostly pair of white **Mediterranean Gulls** passed overhead, drawing attention with their strange mewling call!

We then walked across to view the sea, the light was superb and a late flock of around **c40 Dark-bellied Brent Geese** were along the shoreline.



© *Dark-bellied Brent* – Lara Knight



© *Barn Swallow* – Lara Knight

We then headed on to Titchwell and took lunch in the picnic area. Lunch was interrupted by trying to get views of a couple of **Spotted Flycatchers** that were in the area. We then headed on to the reserve and were soon watching several **Common Terns** and **Sandwich Terns** from the first hide, along with some very close Avocets. Further searching revealed **2-3 Common Sandpiper, Little Ringed Plover and Redshank**. From Parrinder hide, we had good views of several **Mediterranean Gulls**, better views of the **Sandwich Terns** and both **Linnet** and **Meadow Pipits** came down to drink, close to the hide. A Spoonbill was busily feeding in the back pools, also several **Tufted Duck, Pochard, Shoveler, Gadwall** and another late **Wigeon**.

We then took a walk to the shore, the tide was coming in and we were able to enjoy lots of **Sanderling** in both their winter and summer guise, busily feeding ready for their arctic bound migration. Also, several beautifully marked **Ruddy Turnstone**, acquiring their chestnut, black and white summer plumage, whilst enjoying these birds, **2-3 Little Terns** also moved along the sea.

We then headed back and eventually secured much better views in the picnic area of the **Spotted Flycatcher** and also lovely views of a close **Treecreeper**. The day wasn't quite finished though as Robert spotted a pair of **Grey Partridge** along the roadside verge on the way back to the accommodation.

A good day with 82 species recorded.



Day Three – 13th May 2025

Today dawned dry and bright, again. Our first port of call was Swanton Novers great wood, we started off with a walk into the wood, with lovely views of **Yellowhammer**, followed by a **Garden Warbler** that gave itself up, a less showy **Lesser Whitethroat**, plus **Chiff-chaff**, **Blackcap** and **Goldcrest** before even reaching the wood. The wooded area eventually yielded **Marsh Tit** as well as **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, **Blue and Coal Tit**, **Blackcaps** and **Chiff-chaffs** seemed to be very numerous this year. We then headed back out of the wood to a vantage point, where we set up the scopes and started scanning the skies. Just after 10am the first **2-3 Red Kites Buzzards** were starting to spiral up on the thermals, and were soon joined by, next up a **Sparrowhawk** appeared and fortunately just before we were about to leave an immature male **Goshawk** appeared, never quite so easy in mid-May!

We now headed up to Cley and headed out along the East bank, **Black-tailed Godwit**, **Redshank**, **Avocet**, **Lapwing**, **Teal**, **Gadwall**, **Great Cormorant** and both late **Eurasian Teal** and **Wigeon** all present. Then I noticed a wagtail flit up near one of the grazing cows whilst scoping the waders, with its striking head pattern I quickly realised it wasn't a standard 'Yellow'. Closer scrutiny was required! It showed a dark blue/grey head and slight white border below and limited white to throat contrasting with bright yellow underparts, and an olive green mantle.....a **Grey-headed "thunbergi" Wagtail**, and then I also realised there was an assumed female also accompanying it. We watched on as it busily plucked insects from the feet of the cattle, a really lovely bird.



© Grey-headed Wagtail 'thunbergi' – Lara Knight

We continued our walk and **4 Great Egrets** flew up disturbed by a **Marsh harrier** and then then reached Arnold's marsh, where there was a nice selection of birds, **Ringed Plover, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone**, several Ringed Plover on the opposite side the Brackish lagoon also had a couple of fishing **Little terns**.

We headed back had lunch in the picnic area at the Centre, in glorious sunshine and then headed to the Central hides, we had a good selection but soon relocated around to Bishop's Hide as the better birds were much closer from here.

We enjoyed lovely close views of **4 Wood Sandpiper**, plus good scope views of **3 Temminck's Stints** plus good number of around **16 Tundra type Ringed Plovers, Dunlin, Redshank, 3 Little Ringed Plovers** and a **Greenshank**.

As we were heading back out later for an evening session, and it was approaching 4pm we now headed back for a late afternoon break, with a refreshing cup of tea at the accommodation. We then took Fish and Chips around 6.30pm before heading back up towards the Cley area. Despite a search of the likely areas, we didn't have any look with Barn owl, though this was compensated by lovely views of **2 Whimbrel, Curlew**, great close fly-by of a **Spoonbill** and the amazing sounds coming from the Egret colony!



© *Wood Sandpiper – Lara Knight*

It was now time to head off and look for **Nightjars**, we didn't have to wait too long for the first churring of a male, then a **Tawny owl** called distantly, soon followed by brief flight views of a **Nightjar** passing close by us. There were at least 3 calling males, and they now appeared to have moved, and I relocated us. I soon located one of the closer ones, we were now able to listen to one **Nightjar** at full volume, as it churred away close by, it eventually took flight, and we got more good flight views. Very satisfied, we headed back and dropped everybody back to the accommodation around 10pm.

Day Four – 14th May 2025

Our destination today was South Norfolk and The Brecks, we started off with a search for Woodlark. My favoured spot rarely fails and we soon located a superb singing **Woodlark**, it was in full song high in the sky, incredibly he kept this up solidly for around 20 minutes, we marvelled at its lovely undulating flight and down the scale notes. It eventually descended and fortunately it landed in a nearby oak, and we were then able to scope it perched, whilst it still gave some brief snatches of song.

As we wandered along the track, we also encountered **Garden Warbler**, **Blackcap** and **Chiff-chaffs**, also a smart **Yellowhammer**, plus a couple of **Siskin**. We then moved up the road and checked out another area, I eventually managed to locate a **Firecrest**, which gave brief views alongside **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, **Goldcrest** and **Nuthatch**.



© Yellowhammer – Lara Knight

It was now late morning, and we headed on to look for another Brecks speciality, Stone Curlew, sadly the pair that had been showing had lost their young and there was nothing to do move on, as the adults hadn't been seen all day.

We next headed to a site just over the border in Suffolk, and were soon admiring the amazing song of a **Nightingale**, as it went through its wonderful repertoire, it gave itself up but just a glimpse as it moved from one dense bit of scrub to another! Also in this area, we heard **Bullfinch** and **Garden Warbler** and had nice views of a pair of **Common Whitethroat**.

We now headed on to RSPB Lakenheath, we lunched in the picnic area, lunch was interrupted as a **Hobby** came rocketing overhead, catching insects and then zooming off back towards Hockwold Wash, superb birds!

After lunch we headed for the nearby Hockwold Wash, the lagoon was low with muddy edges and there was a **Common Sandpiper**, **Avocet**, several **Redshank**, also **Shoveler**, **Gadwall** and **Tufted Duck**, but no sign of the Garganey. We headed up the river track hoping for better luck, sure enough the drake **Garganey** was showing briefly before it disappeared back into the reeds.

We then continued to Joist Fen Viewpoint, where we were treated to **10+ Hobby** gracing the skies, **5+ Cuckoo** alongside **Marsh harriers**, a **Great Egret** and a brief **Kingfisher**. A booming **Bittern** wasn't too far away and suddenly the **Bittern** appeared, close flying low over the reeds right past us – a wonderful way to finish the tour.



© Reed Bunting – Lara Knight

A total of 117 species recorded over the 3 days.

Systematic List of Birds

1	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
2	Brent Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
3	Canada Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
4	Mute Swan	<i>Branta bernicla</i>
5	Egyptian Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>
6	Common Shelduck	<i>Branta canadensis</i>
7	Garganey	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
8	Northern Shoveler	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
9	Gadwall	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
10	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>
11	Mallard	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>
12	Eurasian Teal	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
13	Common Pochard	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
14	Tufted Duck	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>
15	Grey Partridge	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>
16	Common Pheasant	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>
17	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>
18	Rock Dove	<i>Mareca strepera</i>
19	Stock Dove	<i>Mareca strepera</i>
20	Common Woodpigeon	<i>Mareca strepera</i>
21	European Turtle Dove	<i>Mareca penelope</i>
22	Common Cuckoo	<i>Mareca penelope</i>
23	Eurasian Nightjar	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
24	Common Swift	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
25	Common Moorhen	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
26	Eurasian Coot	<i>Anas crecca</i>
27	Pied Avocet	<i>Aythya ferina</i>
28	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
29	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
30	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Perdix perdix</i>
31	Northern Lapwing	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
32	Whimbrel	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
33	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
34	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>
35	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Columba livia</i>
36	Common Sandpiper	<i>Columba oenas</i>
37	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Columba oenas</i>

38	Common Redshank	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
39	Common Greenshank	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
40	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
41	Red Knot	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
42	Temminck's Stint	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
43	Sanderling	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
44	Dunlin	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
45	Black-headed Gull	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>
46	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Apus apus</i>
47	Common Gull	<i>Apus apus</i>
48	European Herring Gull	<i>Apus apus</i>
49	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
50	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Fulica atra</i>
51	Little Tern	<i>Fulica atra</i>
52	Common Tern	<i>Fulica atra</i>
53	Sandwich Tern	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
54	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
55	Great Cormorant	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
56	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
57	Eurasian Bittern	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
58	Little Egret	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
59	Western Cattle-Egret	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
60	Great White Egret	<i>Thinornis dubius</i>
61	Grey Heron	<i>Thinornis dubius</i>
62	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
63	Eurasian Goshawk	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
64	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
65	Red Kite	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
66	Common Buzzard	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
67	Tawny Owl	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
68	Common Kingfisher	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
69	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
70	Common Kestrel	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
71	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
72	Common Magpie	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
73	Eurasian Jackdaw	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
74	Rook	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
75	Carrion Crow	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
76	Coal Tit	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
77	Marsh Tit	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
78	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>

79	Woodlark	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
80	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
81	Sedge Warbler	<i>Calidris canutus</i>
82	Common Reed Warbler	<i>Calidris canutus</i>
83	Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>
84	Sand Martin	<i>Calidris alba</i>
85	Barn Swallow	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
86	Western House Martin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
87	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
88	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
89	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
90	Garden Warbler	<i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i>
91	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Larus canus</i>
92	Common Whitethroat	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
93	Goldcrest	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
94	Common Firecrest	<i>Larus marinus</i>
95	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
96	Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>
97	Eurasian Wren	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>
98	Common Starling	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
99	Mistle Thrush	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>
100	Eurasian Blackbird	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>
101	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
102	European Robin	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
103	Common Nightingale	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
104	European Stonechat	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
105	Duncock	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
106	House Sparrow	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
107	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>
108	Pied Wagtail/White Wagtail	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
109	Meadow Pipit	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
110	Common Chaffinch	<i>Ardea ibis</i>
111	Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Ardea alba</i>
112	European Greenfinch	<i>Ardea alba</i>
113	Common Linnet	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
114	European Goldfinch	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
115	Eurasian Siskin	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
116	Yellowhammer	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
117	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>

Other Wildlife Recorded

	Other Wildlife recorded	
1	Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>
2	Brown Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>
3	Chinese Water Deer	<i>Hydropotes inermis</i>
4	Reeves' Muntjac	<i>Muntiacus reevesi</i>
5	Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>
7	Orange-tip	<i>Anthocaris cardamines</i>
8	Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>
9	Peacock	<i>Aglais io</i>
10	Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>
11	Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>
12	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>