

Tour Report

United Kingdom - Wildlife of the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley

1-4 May 2022

Yellowhammer- Parkend



Redstart - RSPB Nagshead



Pied flycatcher - RSPB Nagshead



Stonechat - Crabtree Hill



Compiled by Barry Embling

Day 1: Sunday 1 May 2022

Weather: Weather: cool and overcast 10 °C

We met at the Speech House at 2pm as planned and went for a walk to the arboretum and Speech House Lake. We immediately saw a male grey wagtail on the roof of the hotel, with green and goldfinches showing too, before looking in Speech House Oaks, where we heard a redstart, but didn't see it well, then saw a singing garden warbler. Proceeding on to the Cyril Hart Arboretum, we managed to get views of a goldcrest and enjoyed the fresh green spring growth and almost had the arboretum to ourselves. The cricket pitch by the hotel yielded a pied wagtail and Canada and greylag geese. The walk to the Speech House Lake via the Scot's pine avenue gave us all some familiarity with birdsong, mostly common species and once at the lake we saw a pair of greylag geese flying around.

Day 2: Monday 2 May 2022

Weather: Milder and overcast 14 °C

We started our day in the village of Parkend, looking for hawfinch by the cricket pitch. Odd birds flew past, or perched in trees, but were obscured by foliage. However, we had better luck with the dipper, as a pair were clearly feeding young and showed well. We finally made it into RSPB Nagshead and immediately heard a pied flycatcher. This bird was high in the canopy. Later, moving on to the Lower Hide, we encountered both a pair of redstart and a male pied flycatcher, the latter lured by mealworms put out by photographers. The redstarts were nesting in a nearby tree, easily viewed from the hide, thus providing a memorable spectacle with views that couldn't be bettered. Later we heard and later saw garden warbler and saw another grey wagtail in the pond over lunch. A walk around the short trail ended with quite good views for all of a firecrest, which in itself was quite an achievement. Next stop was Cannop Ponds where we saw a variety of water birds, including lots of Mandarins, little grebes and a singing willow warbler. Our last stop of the day was New Fancy viewpoint. This gave us a chance to see the impressive and elevated view of the Forest of Dean, and our last bird of the day was a raven passing close-by, thus ending an enjoyable and productive day that wasn't too busy despite being a bank holiday.

Day 3: Tuesday 3 May 2022

Weather: Mild overcast 17°C

We started our day in the Severn Vale and the RSPB reserve, Highnam Woods. After a walk along the busy road the quiet woods were welcome and we soon heard a nightingale singing that stood out for its superior depth of vocal range and liquid notes, when compared with the other woodland species that could be heard, including blackcap, wren and song thrush. Our next stop was Symond's Yat, where we spent a good length of time ingesting all around us during some of our first fine and sunny weather of the tour. The Canada goose was nesting in the small cave in the right-hand high cliff, shifting the peregrines to another small cave, and those in turn turning out the ravens from their usual nest site, and the previous year's raven nest could be seen. A peregrine was seen circling above the nest. With its characteristic anchor shape, then we were shown another peregrine on the opposite side of the rock, part of a second pair, nesting so close together, but not within sight of each other. After lunching on the Rock, we headed for Crabtree Hill and the large area of open land that is a heathland restoration project. In superb and still viewing conditions, we saw tree pipits, stonechats, linnets, a buzzard and willow warbler. Crossbills were around, flying fast and high past us, though one female did land nearby, but only two of us managed to see it.

After dinner some of us went wild boar viewing on the outskirts of Cinderford. In failing light we walked a large circuit along old railway sidings seeing plenty of signs of activity. Eventually the sound of rustling and breaking sticks led us to a brief view of one, that failed to reappear. Our next encounter was one we stumbled into, and we startled it, though with no light left we could only hear it rustling and heard it sniff the air. Two close encounters, and an exciting end to an enjoyable day.

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Day 4: Wednesday 4 May 2022

Weather: Mixed sun and cloud 16°C

A try again for Hawfinches failed to connect, so we headed for Tidenham Chase and Poor's Allotment. On a south eastern facing slope it was nice and warm and still and full of birdsong. Typical birds of open heathland were encountered, including linnets and stonechats and we later saw and heard a whitethroat. The main bird species on this site in summer is yellowhammer, and we eventually heard one singing and this was located at the top of a flowering crab apple; though this sadly seemed to be the only one on the site. Invertebrates featured, as we saw some Brimstone butterflies, both male and female and a couple of green tiger beetles. Thus concluded our enjoyable and successful tour, with some of our group departing from Tidenham Chase, whilst the rest of us headed back to Speech House.

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Checklist



	Common Name	Scientific Name	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
	BIRDS	AVES				
1	Canada goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	✓		✓	
2	Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	✓	✓	✓	
3	Mute swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>		✓	✓	
4	Mandarin	<i>Aix galericulata</i>		✓		
5	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	
6	Tufted duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>		✓		
7	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>		✓	✓	
8	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>			✓	
9	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>			✓	
10	Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>		✓	✓	
11	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		✓		
12	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>		✓		
13	Lesser black-backed gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	✓	✓	✓	
14	Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	✓	✓	H	
15	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
16	Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	✓	✓	H	
17	Green woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>		H		
18	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>			✓	
19	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>			H	
20	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	✓	✓		
21	Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>		✓	✓	
22	Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
23	Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>		✓		
24	Coal tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>			✓	
25	Marsh tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>			✓	
26	Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓

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27	Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
28	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	
29	House martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	✓	✓	✓	
30	Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	
31	Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>		✓	✓	
32	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
33	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	✓	✓	✓	
34	Garden warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	✓	✓	✓	
35	Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>			✓	
36	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	✓	✓	H	
37	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	✓	✓	✓	
38	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	✓	✓	✓	
39	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	✓	✓	H	
40	Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>		✓	H	
41	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		✓		
42	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
43	Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
44	Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>		✓	✓	
45	Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>			✓	
46	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
47	Pied flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>		✓	✓	
48	Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	✓	✓		
49	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>			✓	
50	House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		✓		
51	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	✓	✓	✓	
52	Grey wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	✓	✓	✓	
53	Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓	✓	✓	
54	Tree pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>			✓	
55	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	✓	✓	✓	
56	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>		✓		
57	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	✓	✓	✓	

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58	Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>			✓	
59	Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>		✓	✓	
60	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	✓	✓	✓	
61	Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	✓	✓	✓	
62	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>				✓
	MAMMALS					
1	Grey squirrel	<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	
2	Fallow deer	<i>Dama dama</i>			✓	
3	Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>		✓		
4	Wild boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>			✓	
	REPTILES					
1	Common frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>		✓		
	INVERTEBRATES					
1	Dor beetle	<i>Geotrupes stercorarias</i>	✓	✓	✓	
2	Green tiger beetle	<i>Cicindela campestris</i>		✓		✓
3	Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>		✓		✓
4	Small white	<i>Pieris rapae</i>		✓		✓

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