

La Brenne at Leisure

20th - 27th June 2018 Tour report

Led by Jason Mitchell



Black-necked Grebe © P England



Camberwell Beauty © S & T Fox

Greenwings Wildlife Holidays

Tel : 01473 254658

Web : www.greenwings.co.uk

Email : enquiries@greenwings.co.uk

Introduction. Based in the quiet village of Mézières-en-Brenne, a little more than an hour from Poitiers, we were perfectly placed to spend a glorious week exploring the Parc Naturel Régional (PNR) de la Brenne. The guide for this trip, Jason Mitchell, knows the area extremely well, spending as he does, much of his time in this region. He was therefore in the perfect position to ensure our guests had an enjoyable time on this holiday.

Equivalent to an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the PNR of La Brenne is home to an extraordinarily diverse range of animals, plants and landscapes offering striking contrasts between expansive forests, meadows, heaths and the thousand lakes for which the region is famed. The wetlands in particular, are home to a wealth of wildlife with an especially diverse dragonfly fauna and this, coupled with a rich assemblage of other invertebrates and amphibians forms the basis of a complex food web supporting an impressive nine species of heron, not to mention more than 200 other bird species!

Each day offered new treasures; from the emerald green rides of Lancosme Forest full of butterflies, to the clambering birds of the Bellebouche heronry, to the waterscapes of La Brenne's thousand lakes.

An exceptional week blessed by calm, sunny weather in the mid to high-twenties bursting with the best sights and sounds of La Brenne will live long in our memories. However, wildlife alone does not make for a successful tour, and a friendly and knowledgeable group created a fantastic atmosphere making the sampling of local food, drink and the *Berrichonne* hospitality all the more enjoyable.



Day 1 - 20th June

The group gathered in Poitiers Airport, with the flight arriving on time. Once the minibus and car were loaded, we were soon winging our way to La Brenne.

Our journey was enriched by some early wildlife sightings; Black Kites soared overhead and a Hoopoe was seen flying over the road. After a little over an hour, we arrived at the hotel and were greeted by France and Bernard, our hosts for the week. Our first meal was well received and set the standard for the rest of the tour. Fed and watered, we retired to our rooms ahead of what promised to be an interesting first full day exploring La Brenne.



Day 2 - 21st June

Setting out, we made for a rendezvous with one of La Brenne's most iconic species – the European Pond Tortoise or *Cistude* – at one of the many lakes (known locally as *étangs*) that make the area so rich in wildlife. And true to form, on entering the hide overlooking Etang Ricot we were delighted to find that several of these fascinating creatures were already warming themselves in the early sunshine, basking on a fallen tree just metres from the hide. Looking on, a large warbler was moving stealthily in adjacent reeds, and after a brief wait its identity was revealed as a Great Reed Warbler. Leaving the hide to the song of a Cuckoo, we walked the short distance to the Maison de la Nature along a verge covered in Spreading Bellflowers, where an obliging Field Cricket posed for photos. After a look around the centre, we made our way to the public hide along a narrow path when suddenly one of the group



cried out “Camberwell Beauty”, as a large butterfly glided over our heads. It didn’t hang around, but fortunately two other beauties did, with a White Admiral and Marbled Fritillary nectaring on a bramble thicket nearby. From the hide we saw our first Whiskered Terns, another Brenne icon which breeds here in nationally important numbers, and enjoyed views of the heron colony which holds five species including Purple Heron and dozens of Cattle Egrets. Leaving the hide, we were immediately ‘buzzed’ by a Large Tortoiseshell butterfly, but with little time to catch breath it was joined by a second stunning Camberwell Beauty which perched obligingly on a tree trunk on this occasion.

After a delicious picnic lunch in St Michel-en-Brenne, we made the short walk to the local café spotting a very handsome Night Heron en route which seemed content to pose in the open on a mown area of grass! At the bar, a few sampled the delicious *Licorne Black* beer, while we were all treated to a thrilling match of table football in which Jackie beat Mark 7 goals to 6!



Whiskered Tern © T & S Fox

We then hopped back into the vehicles, stopping at nearby Etang de La Sous where we spotted dozens of Map butterflies along with Meadow Brown and Holly Blue. The étang was “en assec”, meaning left empty for the summer – a management practice occurring approximately every 10 years, aimed at preventing an excessive build-up of silt and ‘alien’ species like the Black Bullhead catfish. But our visit to the hide was not in vain, as a Large Tortoiseshell was trapped inside awaiting our aid.

We then took a short drive, followed by a leisurely walk to the Etang des Essart bird observatory. Along the way we encountered some wonderful insect life including Ruddy Darter and Broad Scarlet dragonflies, Wood White, Small and Essex Skippers, and Marbled White. This great start improved further with amazing views of another Camberwell Beauty which at one point landed on the bird hide! Sandy spotted a very handsome looking Red-backed Shrike perched on a fence post and the hide offered us incredible views of Black-necked Grebes fishing and feeding their young just a few metres away. Returning to the vehicles, we got to our hotel in plenty of time to refresh ahead of our dinner after a warm day exploring the magic of the Great Brenne Lakes.



Camberwell Beauty © P England

Day 3 - 22nd June

The day’s action started with brief stop at a lake often used by nesting Whiskered Terns. Unfortunately, we didn’t find our target species but we did see a Great White Egret, a surprisingly difficult bird to find here in the summer months, and a smart Black Kite made a low fly-by.

Following the previous day's distant views of a heronry, we made a visit to Bellebouche where a tower hide allows amazing eye-level views. With the breeding season well underway, we had the thrilling spectacle of more than a hundred Purple and Night Herons and Little and Cattle Egrets making regular feeding flights in a desperate effort to keep up with their fast-growing chicks. The guttural sounds emanating from the colony was as impressive as the sight of trees full of punk-crested chicks. The woodland ride leading to the hide was a haven for butterflies with many Marbled Fritillaries nectaring on bramble flowers and it gifted us the season's first Silver-washed Fritillary, along with a fine male Blue Emperor dragonfly which perched long enough to find it in the scope.



Cattle Egret © T & S Fox



Blue-eyed Hawker © T & S Fox

Moving on to Etang Mouton, we soon polished off our picnic lunch and set about a walk around the lake but not before rescuing a Common Wall Lizard trapped in the toilet hand basin. Our aim here was finding dragonflies, but there were some good birds around as well; a low-flying Marsh Harrier was nice enough but when a Golden Oriole broke cover from the adjacent canopy to chase it off, now that really attracted our attentions!

As hoped, dragonflies were numerous and active across the site with several species of damselfly on the wing. However, it was a fine duo of Blue-eyed and Green-eyed Hawkers that stole the show, with both perching briefly before resuming their high-speed hawking for insects. Ruddy Darters were plentiful and any prominent spring of vegetation seemed to host one; careful searching turned up a single Southern Darter amongst their ranks; a very common species later in the year, this was a newly emerged individual indicating that within a few days or so they would be everywhere.



Red-crested Pochard © S & T Fox

In increasingly warm conditions, we agreed a refreshment stop was in order and headed to La Gabrière where a small café sits on the lake shore. After drinks, we 'scoped' the lake finding dozens of both Common and Red-crested Pochard but the scope really wasn't needed when it came to the Mute Swans, with at least 150 birds gathered for their annual moult. A tree close to the café seemed to contain a European Hornet's nest and had us admiring this attractive and formidable insect, but it was somewhat outshone by a passing Stag Beetle cruising by in its characteristic 45-degree angled flight.

Returning to the hotel, we stopped to try and locate a Savi's Warbler en route but our luck was out. Instead, another low-flying Black Kite was ample compensation.

Day 4 - 23rd June

We started the day at the Foucault Regional Nature Reserve, with a nice stroll to its hide. We discovered the Hedge Burnet moth and enjoyed lovely views of Marbled White butterflies, White-tailed Skimmer and Southern Darter dragonflies. From the hide we observed more stunning Black-necked Grebes, some young gulls which entertained us with their enthusiastic begging and a basking *Cistude*.

We then drove on to Rosnay Common, a site famed for its Tongue Orchids. Sadly, they had all gone over but we were lucky to catch some Lesser Butterfly Orchids still in flower. Dragonflies were active, particularly Broad-bodied Chasers which perched along the entrance ride but the most unexpected find was a Winter Damselfly, the only species in Europe to over-winter in the adult stage. And this was closely followed by a Dainty Damsel which, after close inspection for identification features, remained posed on a grass stem long enough for the photographers to capture some nice images.

With thoughts turning to lunch, we drove to nearby Ciron on the River Creuse where we admired a couple of unusual historical structures: the Lanterne des Morts and a monument erected in memory of three hot air balloon pioneers whose misfortune saw them crash in the village after having reached a world record 8600m in 1875! We then enjoyed a wonderful picnic by the river with views of a beautiful chateau. We were blessed with dozens of Banded Demoiselles dancing over the pretty Water Crowfoot and found quite a few Small Pincertail dragonflies with their bizarre enlarged claspers.



Our next stop took us to the town of Le Blanc where we enjoyed a quick beer or coffee at the Café de la Place. We then drove a little further south to a woodland where we were bowled over by the variety and quality of butterflies on the wing; kicking off with a beautiful and unexpected female Large Blue egg-laying on marjoram. Followed by a trio of hairstreaks: White-letter, Ilex and dozens of Purple Hairstreaks. Further exploration of the ride led us to several impressive Mueller's and Broad-leaved Helleborines. To end the day, Tony and Sandy spotted a couple of mating Hummingbird Hawkmoths, Mark got good views of a Pearly Heath, Jackie found us a Weaver's Fritillary and a newly emerged Migrant Hawker dragonfly was spotted perched high up in the canopy.



Day 5 - 24th June

The morning started with a session 'emptying' a moth trap which had been left running overnight in Hélène & Gary's garden. Most of the group were new to this method of observing moths and were

amazed by the variety of colour, shape and size of this lesser-studied insect family. The most striking find was a Willowherb Hawk-moth, a species only recorded on two occasions in the UK and one which is not at all common in La Brenne. Other interest came in the form of a lovely Lunar Thorn, Four-spotted Footman and a Birdwing. But the greatest surprise was a Yellow-spotted Emerald dragonfly which perched just long enough to be captured on camera, while birds also put in an appearance with both Middle and Greater Spotted Woodpeckers flying over the garden and a Black Redstart singing from a roof.

At a lesser known lake on the edge of the PNR, we marveled at the sight of thousands of White Water Lilies stretching as far as the eye could see; lilies represent the vital ingredient to the breeding success of Whiskered Terns, as the terns build their nests on top of the leaves giving protection from land predators. Close to our vantage point, a remarkable number of grass snakes were seen basking at the edge of the lake, and a few stealthy photographers managed to capture some images. We then set out on a walk towards our lunch stop at a little bar in Sainte-Gemme and almost immediately came across our first Willow Spreadwing of the tour; this pretty metallic green damselfly has been recorded in the UK over recent years but in Brenne it's widespread and common, particularly later in the summer. While pausing to see if we could locate a singing Bonelli's Warbler, two Honey Buzzards flew directly over our heads allowing us to appreciate their distinctive barred plumage. We never managed to 'clap eyes' on the Bonelli's but a fine Melodious Warbler was ample compensation. Walking the ride, yet more butterflies were on the wing with Brimstone, Large Tortoiseshell and Map making in onto that day's list.



Lunar Thorn © T & S Fox



Yellow-spotted Emerald © T & S Fox



Honey Buzzard © T & S Fox

With our picnic laid out at the bar, we relaxed with a refreshing cold beverage while a Serin and Black Redstart kept us entertained with their vocal charms.

Joining a forest track we arrived at the *Dolmen de la Pierre St Martin*, a Neolithic burial site where Tony spotted a Cirl Bunting in a nearby hedgerow. In the surrounding glade, Heath Fritillaries were numerous and these were joined by a number of 'dragons': Southern Darter, Small and Migrant Spreadwings. But a little further along at a ford crossing, all-things butterfly started to happen with several exciting species imbibing salts on damp ground next to the stream; Large Tortoiseshell, Map, Peacock and Holly Blue were all seen but a Lesser Purple Emperor was the pick of the bunch. From the bridge over the stream, we watched the antics of several glittering Beautiful Demoiselles, while the

piping of a Kingfisher warned us of its approach and we managed brief views as it sped past. Walking on towards a small lake, the sandy path was alive with buzzing insects and with a little patience we were rewarded with the comings and goings of the European Beewolf, a solitary wasp that places its paralyzed prey together with an egg in a small underground chamber which later serves as food for the wasp larvae. On reaching the lake we had great views of a Purple Heron and Whiskered Terns.



Migrant Spreadwing © T & S Fox



Broad scarlet © P English



Map butterfly © J Mitchell

Our next and final visit of the day was to Etang Vieux where reptiles stole the spotlight. First a fine adult Western Green Lizard attracted our attention as it scurried along the edge of the path, and not long after, a Barred Grass Snake was spied coiled-up in vegetation close to the lake; in fact, it wasn't until later that Steve, while studying his photographs, discovered the snake's true identity which had only recently been recognized as a distinct species.

Further along the ride we were joined by several patrolling Yellow-spotted Emerald dragonflies, along with dozens of Broad Scarlets bringing the day to a pleasing end.

Day 6 - 25th June

Having started the week at the excellent Cherine National Nature Reserve, we decide to visit another of its sites: Terre de Renard. Our first bird was a Yellowhammer which gave its "little bit of bread and no cheese" song from the top of a Hawthorn bush. Leaving the carpark, we made our way down a narrow path flanked by tall scrub which harbored at least one singing Whitethroat. We then stopped by a paddock to admire some fine *Salers* cattle and *Konik* ponies; these living lawnmowers help control vegetation in the Nature Reserve as well as charming the visitors. In adjacent scrub, a handsome bright yellow Melodious Warbler perched high in a bush giving its varied and scratchy song, while a distant Cetti's Warbler belted out its short refrain. The butterfly of the week had fast become the Camberwell Beauty (so plentiful, it was referred to as [another] 'CB'), and true to form, one of these magnificent insects landed on a Blackthorn which it graced for a full five minutes, allowing everyone to get the most wonderful images – assuming, correct camera settings had been chosen! Again, Large Tortoiseshell and Map were the best of the rest and a Nightingale wowed us from deep cover. Further on, an impressive Emperor Moth caterpillar munched-away and a confiding Blue Emperor dragonfly perched unaware of the attendant paparazzi!

Emperor Moth larva © J Mitchell



After one of our longer walks, we reached the Luc Hoffman hide ready for a little sit down where we enjoyed a pleasant ten minutes watching the antics at the Whiskered Tern colony. Rested, we headed back to the vehicles and made for our lunch stop in Lurais. From our shaded picnic table next to the river Creuse, we were spoilt with numerous butterflies and dragonflies coming to the beach to refresh themselves; the exciting Small Pincertail was again present but Tony returned with images of a Yellow Clubtail prompting a group search which happily ended in success. Following the mention of a coffee, we gently made our way to Tournon St Martin where we indulged in refreshments and ice creams. From our terrace, we were entertained by a Black Redstart posing on a road sign in the middle of town.

We then made our way to Fonterland and Denis' farm, where an amazing meadow produced dozens of Large Blue butterflies including some which were egg laying on marjoram. Marbled Whites were common, along with several attractive Slender Scotch Burnet moths, in the UK, a species restricted to just five or six sites on the Hebridean islands of Mull and Ulva. Further exploring around the farm produced a

number of delightful owlflies (*Ascalaphids*); a colourful dragonfly-like insect more closely related to antlions and lacewings. We also caught up with dozens of Great Green Bush Crickets including a number of the unusual golden form. As ever, butterflies were numerous, with Heath and Marbled Fritillaries and White-letter Hairstreak all noted.

Woodland Browns courting © M Chown



Our last visit of the day was in the valley of La Boudinière, allowing us to catch up with some top butterflies: Ilex Hairstreak, Large Chequered Skipper (christened the 'bouncy skipper' by Emilie), our first Woodland Grayling, and amazing views of two Woodland Browns performing a stunning courtship dance right in front of our eyes!

Heath Fritillary © M Chown



Slender Scotch Burnet © T & S



Day 7 - 26th June

Leaving the hotel, a Hoopoe 'played chicken' as it shot out from the verge, narrowly missing our bus! Arriving at a private site, we entered a small hide with idyllic views over a peaceful lake and were entertained by our first Four-spotted Chaser and a very active Purple Heron. In the wooded ride a Willow Spreadwing posed nicely for the cameras, while lots of White Admirals and yet another Camberwell Beauty delighted us all. Back at the vehicles, we admired the engineering of a long-since abandoned reed-cutting boat.

At nearby Etang Purais, a raft of twenty or more Red-crested Pochard floated serenely by while three Black-necked Grebes dived actively for their aquatic lunch. And a search along the road verge for orchids produced an impressive large and colourful Swallowtail caterpillar.



Red-backed Shrike © S & T Fox



Large Chequered Skipper © P English



Marbled Fritillary © T & S Fox

With dragonflies in mind, we made a tour of Terres de Picadon where we were amazed by the number of young Tree Frogs, which seemed to be clambering on any available surface. As hoped, dragonflies were well represented, with Small Red and Small Red-eyed Damselflies welcome additions, while the same could not be said of the Hornets gathered on a small bridge which we maneuvered around with great care and respect! A dark-looking 'dragon' alighted next to the bridge proved to be a rather late-season Downy Emerald and was joined by the impressive Blue-eyed Hawker and several Southern Darters. Other interesting flying subjects came in the form of dozens of Gypsy Moths, a smart male Red-backed Shrike, and a typically vocal Zitting Cisticola. Our amazing run of Camberwell Beauties continued, with another perched on an oak tree!

Following lunch at the Maison du Parc, we headed for the Forêt de Lancosme stopping en route for a look around the large and impressive church of Meobeq which was once part of a thriving abbey. Next, we arrived at a woodland clearing surrounding the Chapel of Saint-Sulpice, where legend tells of a young shepherd who discovered the corpse of Saint-Sulpice and following the burial of the holy man, it's said a spring suddenly appeared to which the virtue of healing pain is attributed. Healing powers or not, we enjoyed its cooling water in the company of Beautiful Demoiselles and a Large Chequered Skipper, while in the meadow a fast-flying Silver-washed Fritillary eventually landed and a stunning Black Stork glided silently over the forest canopy.

A continued exploration of the rides produced good numbers of both Marbled and Silver-washed Fritillaries nectaring at bramble flowers, along with the smaller but attractive Comma - known in France by the intriguing name *Robert-*

le-diable, Robert-the-devil, a figure from medieval mythology whose name was given to the Duke of Normandy who was William the Conqueror's father.

To celebrate our last full day in La Brenne we retired to a local bar in Vendœuvres to toast what had been an excellent week exploring the wildlife capital of central France. I suppose we shouldn't have been surprised that even the 'beer garden' was good for nature! As we sat enjoying our chosen beverage, we were besieged by Swifts careering in all direction, over the roof tops,



Silver-washed Fritillary © T & S Fox



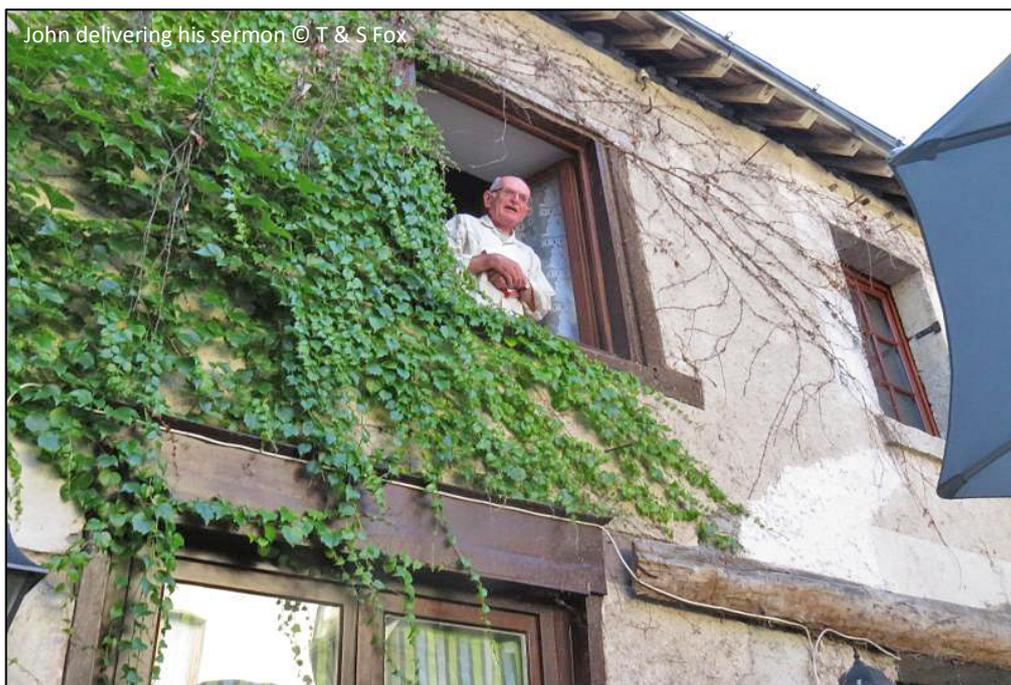
Wall Lizard © M Chown

between buildings, speeding right over our heads; the sight and sound was stirring. Wall Lizards were most active, as were Black Kites, but it was a larger raptor that had us to our feet, as a Short-toed Eagle cruised high overhead.

After a most excellent dinner enlivened by a 'sermon' by our own 'Pope John', we headed out once more, this time in search of Nightjars and we weren't to be disappointed. After a short wait we witnessed this enigmatic crepuscular species as it wheeled in the air just

metres away. The night was warm, but even so, we were most surprised to hear a Garden Warbler belting out its chorus at 22.15!

The short walk back to the bus produced a family of Coypu cavorting close to the shore of a lake, while across the same body of water, a Red Deer grazed undisturbed and the drive back to the hotel supplied a Tawny Owl which sat motionless on a telephone wire.



John delivering his sermon © T & S Fox

Day 8 - 27th June

With breakfast polished off and farewells made, we loaded the vehicles and headed west towards Poitiers. En route we made a brief stop at the beautiful village of Angles-sur-l'Anglin before moving on once more toward our lunch stop at Le Pinail; a National Nature Reserve renowned for its rich dragonfly fauna courtesy of a multitude of ponds which owe their existence to the extraction of millstones. Le Pinail was one of the main quarries of France until the end of the 19th century, supplying many mills on the banks of the Loire, on the French west coast and even across the Atlantic.

Here we spent a marvelous hour or so watching a great number and diversity of dragonflies: firstly the large and impressive Blue Emperor which amazed us by catching the equally imposing Golden-ringed Dragonfly before crash-landing into vegetation where the latter escaped! For some, however, the best find was a male Yellow-spotted Whiteface which landed all too briefly before speeding off once more; this rare and sought-after species has been recorded in the UK on a few rare occasions recently, perhaps another indication of climate change. The best of the rest included Four-spotted Chaser, the now familiar Broad Scarlet and our first Robust Spreadwing of the tour. The site is dominated by gorse and ericaceous plants and supports a healthy population of Dartford Warblers. And it wasn't long before we heard a tell-tale nasal churr, shortly followed by the dark, distinctive long-tailed silhouette of a Dartford Warbler as it dashed across the heath. Returning to the bus for lunch, a Large Chequered Skipper bounced along a path and a Lesser Purple Emperor sunned itself on the track in front of us.

Fortunately, the picnic tables were shaded by trees as the temperature had soared and was now up into the thirties. As we enjoyed our last picnic together, a delicate Wood White flitted around the clearing and a Lesser-spotted Woodpecker gave its 'squeaky toy' call from the top of a Silver Birch.



After a short drive we arrived at the airport, in good time for our smooth flight back to the UK.

Greenwings would like to thank all the guests on this tour for their enthusiasm and friendship and also for the use of their wonderful photos throughout this report. We'd like to thank Jason too, for his expert guiding and helpfulness at all times.

Species lists and gallery overleaf

BIRDS		Day seen (✓) or heard (H)							
	Common name	Scientific name	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	✓			✓			
3	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	✓		✓			✓	
4	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
5	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	✓	✓					
6	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
7	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	✓	✓	□		✓	✓	
8	Great White Egret	<i>Egretta alba</i>		1					
9	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
10	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	□	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
11	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>						1	
12	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
13	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>		✓					
15	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓	
16	Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
17	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	□	✓	
18	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
19	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>		✓		✓			
20	Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>				2			
21	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
22	Short-toed Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>						1	
23	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	✓	✓			✓	✓	
24	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>				✓	✓	✓	
25	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
26	Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>			✓	✓			
27	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	✓						
28	Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
29	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
30	Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
31	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
32	Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
33	Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	H	H	H	H	H	H	
34	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	H						
35	Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>						✓	
36	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
37	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
38	Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>			✓				
39	Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	✓		✓		✓	✓	
40	Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>			H				
41	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	H	H			H		
42	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus major</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

	Birds cont'd		2	3	4	5	6	7	8
43	Middle Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus medius</i>		H	H	✓		H	
44	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus minor</i>							✓
45	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
46	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
47	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
48	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>				✓	✓	✓	
49	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
50	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
51	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	
52	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	✓						
53	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	✓	✓			✓		
54	Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	H				H		
55	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
56	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	□	□	✓	□	□	□	
57	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
58	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
59	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>		✓					
60	Fan-tailed Warbler	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	✓	✓				✓	
61	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	✓		H	H	✓	✓	
62	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	✓						
63	Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
64	Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	□	
65	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>				H		✓	
66	Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
67	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
68	Dartford Warbler	<i>Sylvia undata</i>							✓
69	Bonelli's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus bonelli</i>		H	H	H		H	
70	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
71	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>				H	H		
72	Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
73	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
74	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	✓				✓	✓	
75	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>			H	H	✓	✓	
76	Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
77	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
78	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
79	Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>		2	H	H	H		
80	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
81	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>			✓	✓	✓		
82	Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
83	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
84	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	✓		✓				
85	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
86	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

	Birds cont'd		2	3	4	5	6	7	8
87	Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	✓		✓	✓	H		
88	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>		H					
89	Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	✓		H		✓	✓	
90	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	✓			✓	✓		
91	Linnet	<i>Acanthis cannabina</i>				✓	✓		
92	Corn Bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	✓			✓	✓		
93	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>				H	✓	✓	
94	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirius</i>	2			✓	H		

BUTTERFLIES			
	Common name	Scientific name	
<i>Hesperiidae</i>			
1	Large Chequered Skipper	<i>Heteropterus morpheus</i>	✓
2	Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	✓
3	Essex Skipper	<i>T. lineola</i>	✓
4	Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes venatus</i>	✓
<i>Papilionidae</i>			
5	Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>	✓
<i>Pieridae</i>			
6	Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>	✓
7	Black-veined White	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>	✓
8	Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	✓
9	Small White	<i>P. rapae</i>	✓
10	Green-veined White	<i>P. napi</i>	✓
11	Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>	✓
12	Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	✓
<i>Lycaenidae</i>			
13	Purple Hairstreak	<i>Neozephyrus quercus</i>	✓
14	Ilex Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium ilicis</i>	✓
15	White-letter Hairstreak	<i>S. w-album</i>	✓
16	Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>	✓
17	Holly blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	✓
18	Large Blue	<i>Maculinea arion</i>	✓
19	Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	✓
20	Adonis Blue	<i>Lysandra bellargus</i>	✓
21	Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>	✓
<i>Nymphalidae</i>			
22	Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>	✓
23	Woodland Brown	<i>Lopinga achine</i>	✓
24	Pearly Heath	<i>Coenonympha arcania</i>	✓
25	Small Heath	<i>C. pamphilus</i>	✓
26	Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>	✓

27	Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	✓
	<i>Nymphalidae</i> cont'd		
28	Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	✓
29	Great Banded Grayling	<i>Brintesia circe</i>	✓
30	Woodland Grayling	<i>Hippaarchia fagi</i>	✓
31	Purple Emperor	<i>Apatura iris</i>	✓
32	Lesser Purple Emperor	<i>Apatura ilia</i>	✓
33	Silver-washed Fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>	✓
34	Marbled Fritillary	<i>Brenthis daphne</i>	✓
35	Weaver's fritillary	<i>Clossiana dia</i>	✓
36	White Admiral	<i>Limenitis camilla</i>	✓
37	Camberwell Beauty	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	✓
38	Large Tortoiseshell	<i>Nymphalis polychloros</i>	✓
39	Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>	✓
40	Peacock	<i>Inachis io</i>	✓
41	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	✓
42	Painted Lady	<i>Cynthia cardui</i>	✓
43	Comma	<i>Polygonia c-album</i>	✓
44	Map Butterfly	<i>Araschnia levana</i>	✓
45	Knapweed Fritillary	<i>Melitaea phoebe</i>	✓
46	Heath Fritillary	<i>Melitaea athalia</i>	✓

DRAGONFLIES			
	Common name	Scientific name	
1	Beautiful Demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx virgo</i>	✓
2	Banded Demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>	✓
3	Western Willow Spreadwing	<i>Lestes viridis</i>	✓
4	Migrant Spreadwing	<i>Lestes barbarous</i>	✓
5	Small Spreadwing	<i>Lestes virens</i>	✓
6	Robust Spreadwing	<i>Lestes dryas</i>	✓
7	Common Winter Damselfly	<i>Sympecma fusca</i>	✓
8	Blue Featherleg	<i>Platycnemis pennipes</i>	✓
9	Large Red Damselfly	<i>Pyrrhosoma nymphula</i>	✓
10	Small Red Damselfly	<i>Ceriagrion tenellum</i>	✓
11	Blue-eye	<i>Erythromma lindenii</i>	✓
12	Small Red-eye	<i>Erythromma viridulum</i>	✓
13	Azure Bluet	<i>Coenagrion puella</i>	✓
14	Dainty Bluet	<i>Coenagrion scitulum</i>	✓
15	Common Bluet	<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>	✓
16	Common Bluetail	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>	✓
17	Blue-eyed Hawker	<i>Aeshna affinis</i>	✓
18	Green-eyed Hawker	<i>Aeshna isosceles</i>	✓
19	Blue Emperor	<i>Anax imperator</i>	✓
20	Yellow Clubtail	<i>Gomphus simillimus</i>	✓
21	Small Pincertail	<i>Onychogomphus forcipatus</i>	✓

	Dragonflies cont'd		
22	Downy Emerald	<i>Cordulia aenea</i>	✓
23	Yellow-spotted Emerald	<i>Somatochlora flavomaculata</i>	✓
24	Four-spotted Chaser	<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	✓
25	Broad-bodied Chaser	<i>Libellula depressa</i>	✓
26	Black-tailed Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>	✓
27	White-tailed Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum albistylum</i>	✓
28	Yellow-spotted Whiteface	<i>Leucorrhinia pectoralis</i>	✓
29	Broad Scarlet	<i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>	✓
30	Southern Darter	<i>Sympetrum meridionale</i>	✓
31	Ruddy Darter	<i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	✓

	Moths	
	Common name	
1	Box tree moth	✓
2	Peperred moth	✓
3	Garden carpet	✓
4	Yellow tailed moth	✓
5	Oak marbled brown	✓
6	Lackey	✓
7	Plain wave	✓
8	Willow beauty	✓
9	Ribbon wave	✓
10	Common quaker	✓
11	Vine's rustic	✓
12	Latticed heath	✓
13	White point	✓
14	Whiteline brown eye	✓
15	Blood veined	✓
16	Common wainscott	✓
17	September thorn	✓
18	Heart & Dart	✓
19	Sharp-angled peacock	✓
20	Least carpet	✓
21	Broad bordered yellow underwing	✓
22	Willowherb Hawkmoth	✓
23	Delicate	✓
24	Nut tree tussock	✓
25	Plain wave	✓
26	Waved umber	✓
27	Common footman	✓
28	Light arches	✓
29	Four-spotted footman	✓
30	Birdwing	✓

Photo gallery





Hummingbird Hawkmoth © P England



Small Copper summer form ab. *caeruleopunctata* © P England



European Tree Frog © J Mitchell



Wood White © P England





Woodland Brown © M Chown



Large Tortoiseshell © J Mitchell



White Admiral © T & S Fox



Willowherb Hawkmoth © J Mitchell

Large Tortoiseshell © T & S Fox



Pearly Heath © T & S Fox



Lesser Purple Emperor © T & S Fox



White-letter Hairstreak © T & S Fox



Purple Hairstreak © T & S Fox



Common Blue © T & S Fox



Lesser Purple Emperor *f* *Clytie* © T & S Fox



Knapweed Fritillary © T & S Fox



Brimstone © T & S Fox



Large Blue © T & S Fox



Hedge Burnet © T & S Fox



6-Spot Burnet © T & S Fox



Garden Rose Tortrix © T & S Fox



Billowing Burnet © T & S Fox



Rosy-striped Knot-horn © T & S Fox



Four-spotted Footman © T & S



Least Carpet © T & S Fox



Pearl Grass-Veneer © T & S Fox









Watching through the lens © J Mitchell



All cameras at the ready © J Mitchell