

## La Brenne at Leisure

25th May - 1st June 2025

Led by Emilie Mitchell



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#### Summary

Based at l'Ecrin de la Brenne in Lureuil, we spent a wonderful week exploring the Parc naturel régional (PNR) de la Brenne. Equivalent to an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty', the PNR de la Brenne is home to an extraordinarily diverse range of plants and animals, with a landscape offering a striking contrast between forests, meadows, heaths and the thousand lakes for which the region is famed.

The tour focussed on the general wildlife of La Brenne and being a relatively compact area, we never wasted much time travelling. By the end of the tour, we had compiled an impressive set of species lists comprising 116 birds, 35 butterflies, 23 dragonflies and 19 orchids.

The weather was sunny and very settled for the most part, with just half a day of showers which followed a stormy night. At its hottest, the mercury hit 32°C but most days were pleasantly warm with temperatures in the lower twenties.

#### Day 1

We met in Saint Pierre-des-Corps station, with the TGV (high-speed train) arriving on time. After loading the minibus, we struck a course south for La Brenne. We settled into our rooms and enjoyed our first dinner at l'Auberge Plume-Cane restaurant in Mézières-en-Brenne. Fed and watered, we retired to our accommodation ahead of what promised to be an exciting first day exploring La Brenne.

#### Day 2

After much travelling yesterday, we only drove a short distance to a National Nature Reserve. As we arrived in the car park we were greeted by a singing Blackcap followed by distant Nightingale and Turtle Dove. On arrival in the hide a Purple Heron flew into the reeds. Right in front of the hide, some Reed Warblers were flying in and out and one sang for quite a while as we observed Whiskered Tern flying left and right, manoeuvring to catch insects and small fish, scooping them from the top of water. A beautiful male Red-Crested Pochard showed up nicely.

We walked on to our next site where we heard Hoopoe sing in the car park. We then headed to a lake and on our walk we encountered three fully grown female European Pond Terrapins, their golden yellow eyes helping us to sex them. As we got closer to the hide, we heard Cetti's Warbler, Chiffchaff, Zitting Cisticola and the most enchanting Nightingale songs.

On the lake, the Black-headed Gulls were numerous and noisy. A pair of Gadwall swam past a few sleepy Tufted Duck and we all cooed over a pair of Great-Crested Grebes with one of the adult birds carrying stripy babies on its back.

We then walked into the visitor centre and enjoyed the very nicely done exhibition. Two more Terrapins were quietly sun-bathing on a log and this time their red eyes pointed out to us that they were male.



After hopping back into the minibus, we travelled a short distance to explore a little meadow near a picnic area and found Black-veined White, Meadow Brown, Small Heath, Dingy Skipper and Heath Fritillary butterflies. We also found a few Swallowtail caterpillars feeding on several Fennel plants.

As we looked up for a moment, we were absolutely astonished to spot three Black Storks flying right above our heads! The clock struck midday and invited us to sit down and enjoy our lunch break by the small pond near Maison du Parc. We filled our plates with salad dishes, cheeses and delicious French breads and even sampled a local delicacy: frites de carpe.

In the afternoon, we took a lovely walk going through an ancient orchard, sand dune, heathland and woodland. As we walked through the orchard, we spotted Azure damselfly (sometimes known as Azure Bluet) the "Snooker player" with its pint glass like marking to the top of the abdomen, bowtie to the tip and cue-like marking on the side of the thorax. Nightingales were singing heartily and a Turtle Dove was giving a soft purr. On arrival at the old sand dune, we were greeted by a Stonechat and beautiful views of a male Red-backed Shrike. A Cuckoo sang almost non-stop throughout our walk. A Nightingale showed up really nicely in the woodland showing off its rufous back.

We encountered new dragonflies on a nearby pond: Green-eyed Hawker and Blue-eyed Hawker. Black-tailed Skimmers were dancing over the open water and offering us brief stand still views and an Emperor dragonfly patrolled the marshy area.

We found our first White Admiral of the tour on a hedgerow along the pathway leading to the lake and as we reached the lake we rested for a while watching Whiskered Tern, Purple Heron and a beautiful Marsh Harrier fly by. Two Red-Crested Pochard drakes were found, their red bills reflecting intensely on the water surface.

On our walk back through, we were lucky to observe singing Corn Bunting and Red-Backed Shrike in the local heathland with the ever-present Cuckoo tune in the background.

It was time for us to head back to our base for a well-deserved shower and we drove back to our restaurant for the night for a delicious meal.

After dinner, we sat off for our final outing of the day. We arrived welcomed by Night Heron flying over. A Nightingale sang briefly and was soon replaced by two singing Robin. A Stag Beetle flew noisily across the heath. Two further Black Stork flew above our heads and all of a sudden a distant churring became louder: a Nightjar was singing his incredible song. He then proceeded to fly towards us and met a second Nightjar... and a few minutes later, it all happened again!

We decided to call it a night when another Nightjar flew in front of us and Natterjack toads were singing in unison.

### Day 3

This morning, we headed east to discover the second entity of the NNR we had visited yesterday afternoon, a different lake. As we arrived in the car park a battle was taking place: two Nightingales were singing their hearts out in the bushes a few meters from us. Impossible to see but impossible not to hear! We were tantalisingly close. Golden Oriole was singing in the distance and a Spotted Flycatcher was seen doing what flycatcher's do best... flying and returning to their perch.

In the hide we were alone and we enjoyed watching the usual Pochard and Tufted Duck mingling. Then within a few minutes three Black-necked Grebe appeared. What a sight! Their sleek black plumage and vibrant gold "eyelashes" were striking. A little further towards the reedbed a Purple Heron was playing hide and seek in the vegetation.

It was time to leave the nesting Whiskered Terns to their thousands of white water-lilies and we headed to our next stop. En route, a brief comfort stop found us a beautiful Short-toed Eagle, gliding above the village in search of a snake to feed on.



Adonis Blue © Robin G

Arriving at our next site, this beautiful chalk downland site in the Suin Valley is the home to hundreds of Adonis Blue butterflies which we quickly came across. Pearly Heath butterflies were also plentiful. A stunning Owlfly enchanted us with its sulphurous wings and kindly posed for the photographers. The Bramble bushes were home to Black Hairstreak, Green Hairstreak and two fabulously fresh Marbled Fritillary. During the walk we came across many orchids: Fly Orchid, Narrow-leaved Helleborine, Pyramidal Orchid, Lizard Orchid, Burnt Orchid... all blowing our minds with their colours and shapes. As we walked further, Emilie heard a Garden Warbler and his characteristic "bubbling brook" song.

Meadow Clary, Fern-leaved Dropwort, Globularia and Yellow-wort were a joy for the eye to see. A

very fresh Black-veined White posed on a Pyramidal Orchid for a photo and we heard and saw Tree Pipit sitting on the top of a tree.

Heading back to the minibus, a Great-Spotted Woodpecker flew by and Nick spotted a Purple Hairstreak flying to the top of an oak tree.

Ten minutes later we reached our lunch stop in Lurais which was spot on. In the shade of trees and by the beautiful river Creuse, it gave us the perfect opportunity to relax and enjoy our delicious picnic. From our table we could hear Golden Oriole. Grey Wagtail were dancing by the river and Banded Demoiselle were like jewels in amongst the Water Crowfoot. A Serin landed in the top of the Alder tree nearest to our picnic table singing very loudly and a Hoopoe "hoopoeed" for a while before landing in a dead tree full of holes right in front of us. It may well have been nesting there.

Feeling rested and well replenished after a brief coffee stop we headed onto the road again for a short drive to a spot where hundreds of orchids awaited us. Bee, Monkey and Lady Orchids were in full flower, more Narrow-leaved Helleborine accompanied by Greater Butterfly Orchid were plentiful. We mused over the Nottingham Catchfly and Swallow-wort. And finally Violet Limodore revealed themselves to us in their slightly strange diaphanous violet robe followed by Red Helleborine so fragile and elegant.

All these amazing botanical sightings were accompanied by Golden Oriole singing away and Black Woodpecker calling in the woodland nearby.

We got a brief glimpse of Woodland Brown and a Noble Chafer busy feeding on Privet pollen was sitting still for us all to enjoy its iridescent exoskeleton.

Our eyes full of botanical wonders, we drove a further five minutes down the road to enjoy some impressive limestone cliffs. Robin spotted another White Admiral butterfly which allowed our eyes to fall upon a lovely Blue Chaser dragonfly. Finally, as we headed back to the bus, a Peregrine Falcon gave us the best show; an adult came prey-bearing to feed its chicks in the nest. We had excellent views of this brief family reunion and were able to admire the plumage of a juvenile bird waiting on the ledge.



Juvenile Peregrine Falcon © Simon P

#### Day 4

Clouds threatened us today but... well they certainly didn't spoil it!

We began the day with a short drive to another nature reserve. En route we met a Pine Marten which decided to cross the road a few meters from us! We quickly reached the Local Nature Reserve and decided to pay one of the lakes a visit. We arrived in Black Winged Stilt territory and were not disappointed as lovely views were offered to us of the many stilts resting, feeding and flying showing off their model-like long legs and gorgeous black and white plumage. Little Ringed Plover were also present and very active alongside Common Sandpiper and Lapwing "peewitting" away. The little island to the right of the lake welcomed several Common Tern's nests and a few more Black-Winged Stilt. Two Spoonbill were preening and feeding to the far left of the lake and a Yellow Wagtail showed off its beautiful yellow plumage on a small island right in front of our hide. We then walked to another hide and admired Salers cattle with their Charolais bull grazing over a local sandstone mound used as a quarry to build the local houses.

From the hide we had distant views over a colony of Black-headed Gulls and yet more Black-Winged Stilt.

We then decided to head further south and stopped on a common. The common provided a spectacular floral display with Tongue Orchids stretching as far as the eye could see, there were many thousands of plants in flower, making it almost impossible not to tread on any! Other good finds included a patch of attractive Lax-flowered Orchids, some Green-winged Orchids, Greater Butterfly and a few Lesser Butterfly Orchids – the latter identified by their 'parallel pollinia'. Tree Pipit were numerous and males were parading with their parachuting songs. Nightingale were also plentiful. A Marbled Fritillary was feeding on the bramble blossom and we spotted a large



Black-veined White © Robin G

number of Black-veined White butterfly as well as a gorgeous Dainty Bluet damselfly. Over a couple of shrubs, a Corn Bunting was very obliging and was soon joined by a second one, offering us good views of their conspicuous plumage and strong bills.

We missed the Marsh Fritillary but Nick found us a beautiful Spotted Fritillary. It was a treat as it sat very still for us all to enjoy both its upper and underside. The little female even let us take pictures very closely indeed!

After this busy morning, it was time for lunch. We found a spot where a lake provided a lovely Common Tern show, we watched with them delight

catching small fish as we were eating.

After lunch, a walk around the lake produced White Admiral, Heath Fritillary and a lovely Hairy Dragonfly landed on a grass stem.

After this nice digestive promenade, we decided to drive north. A smaller neighbouring lake was peppered with Whiskered Tern feeding a few meters from us. We carried onto our intended lake and were very excited to find plenty more Whiskered Tern feeding frenetically above the water. Amongst them was a beautiful White-winged Black Tern: a real treat!

It was time to head back to base. On our drive back, we stopped at yet another lake and had a nice Great White Egret and plenty more Whiskered Tern and more beautiful Water-lilies.

In the evening, we headed to the local village restaurant for what was yet another delicious dinner.

## Day 5

This morning, we headed to the south-eastern side of a lake to observe a mixed colony of heron species. On arrival, we heard Turtle Dove, Cuckoo and Nightingale and a Melodious Warbler in the scrubland on our way to the woods. As soon as we reached the first oak tree a Bonelli's Warbler sang for us but was only seen briefly in amongst the foliage. Instead, a Spotted Flycatcher landed in the tree in front of us and we got really good views. As we got closer and closer to the heronry, we could hear the gurgling sound of the many Cattle Egrets in the willows to our left. On arrival in the hide we were amazed by all the activity. Night Heron were coming and going, feeding grown up chicks. Cattle Egret were squabbling with neighbours. A Little Egret was preening and several Purple Heron sat tight on their nest showing off their beautiful purple, orange and blue plumage.

On our way out, Emilie took us to check a newly found Osprey nest and what a treat! One of the adults briefly took off to get a branch and tidy up her nest before sitting tightly on her eggs again.

That was a pretty amazing morning and our day was only going to get better and better.

After a lovely lunch watching and listening to Swifts and Black Redstart, we headed north to a Bee Eater colony. We had the most magnificent views of these amazing rainbow-coloured birds. Corn Bunting and Yellow Wagtail were also present and singing away amongst the many Skylark tunes as a background playlist.

Our next stop was at an old limestone quarry to the very north of the Brenne. "Adonis Blue Land" as Robin called it. Pearly Heath was plentiful and we got to add a few Orchids to our species list: Fragrant, Early Spider and Military Orchid were in full flower alongside Fly and Bee Orchid and many other plant species like Narrow-leaved Flax, Blue Dwarf Thistle, Yellow-wort and so on... Birds were also well present with Corn Bunting and Tree Pipit singing and displaying and all the sudden our guide shouted "Quail"! A lovely male Quail was singing his "Wet my lips" song repeatedly and we all got to hear it very well indeed.

As we headed back south, Emilie wanted to check a site which had been known for hosting good butterfly species. We were not disappointed: Wood White, Sooty Copper and our long awaited Marsh Fritillary!

We went across potential Harrier territory without connecting to any of them on that afternoon but we felt very satisfied by all the lovely wildlife we were able to encounter today.

It was time to go back to base. Our gîte being our palace for the week. A cup of tea and a quick listing time, it was soon time for another sumptuous dinner in the Auberge.

## Day 6

The weather forecast wasn't wrong... We got what we had been waiting for: full sunshine this morning and already 15°C!

Emilie drove us to a different lake this morning. We caught up with the famous Brenne Orchid in the marshes and also found ourselves a few Southern Bluets (Southern Damselfly). As we were arriving near the car park, we saw our first Hobby and getting out of the van once parked up Judy shouted "Turtle Dove", it was a delightful moment to listen to it purring away so close to us. The woodland walk to the lake produced many great dragonflies and damselflies. We saw Downy Emerald patrolling at 50cm from the ground in a marshy area. Very quickly we got Large-Red Damselfly and plenty of Azure Bluets and Common Blue-tailed Damselflies. A Hairy Hawker flew past us. Green-eyed and Blue-eyed Hawkets were patrolling over the grassland ride running parallel to us. Simon also spotted another beautiful insect flying right above our heads: an Orange-Spotted Emerald. Butterflies were also present with Marbled Fritillary and many Black-veined White. We fell upon a couple of male Stag Beetle unfortunately half eaten by birds or bats.



Marbled Fritillary © Simon P

We walked a good mile to the sluice gate and rested overlooking the beautiful lake. There again, dragonflies were everywhere: Four-Spotted Chaser, Blue Chaser, Downy Emerald, Blue-eyed Hawker, Red-eyed Damselfly and the gorgeous Broad Scarlet (also known as Scarlet Darter).

Keith found us a Purple Heron in the reedbed and it was time for us to rejoin our minibus. We drove to Saint Michel-en-Brenne for our lunch. A Short-toed Treecreeper kept on singing above our heads. A Black Redstart family was playing hide and seek in a nearby Oak and Nick shouted "Tortoiseshell!" A Large Tortoiseshell was on the grass near our picnic table.

The heat was hitting us quite hard so we headed for a nearby Café for a brief coffee stop and then drove off to the forest to stay away from the heavy sun rays.

On arrival in the woodland our guide spotted a Lesser Purple Emperor on the track. It subsequently flew into a tree and we all got good views of it through the scope.

A hundred metres later, bramble blossoms were hosts to dozen of Noble and Rose Chafer feeding on the flowers. White Admiral were flying around with many Meadow Brown, a Wall Brown and a Painted Lady. Robin and Emilie found a Purple Emperor which briefly landed on a tree trunk before regaining height.



Woodland Brown  
© Emilie Mitchell

We all jumped back in the minibus to drive a little further into the woodland when Emilie suddenly stopped. She spotted what she briefly thought was a Purple Emperor and turned out to be a Southern White Admiral! The beautifully marked butterfly was very approachable and a White Admiral landed next to him allowing us to make the perfect comparison! After a good stop to observe the two culprits, a brief hop back in the vehicle led us near a clearing where we heard Nightjar churring away and a Short-toed Eagle flew above a pine plantation. This little corner was purely and simply Woodland Brown heaven! They were everywhere, drinking in the little puddles, getting into the minibus and even landing on people's hands! It was magic!

At our final stop of the day we were looking for more Lesser Purple Emperor. We unfortunately didn't see them but we got a beautiful fresh female Black-tailed Skimmer and a nice Oberthür's Grizzled Skipper!

## Day 7

To kick off the day with a good start we decided to check the nearby area one more time for Harrier. Despite the 20°C ambient temperature none of the large grey raptors showed themselves. However, we stopped to look at a Corn Bunting feeding on the road and a beautiful male

Common Redstart stayed in front of us for long minutes of observation. He was superb with his black face and front and white forehead. A stunning little bird! A few minutes away Emilie stopped to check a young maize plantation and shouted out "Stone Curlew!". Two birds were walking along the field and offered excellent views.

Our next stop was to check a known Squacco Heron site which we dipped on, but instead it gave us the opportunity to really admire a Turtle Dove... quietly picking little stones on the track. Once again, we all got very good views of this bird we'd heard right through the week but rarely got the chance to observe so well and for such an extended period of time.

Our next stop of the morning was a botanical one. On the side of a cross roads, we encountered Pyramidal Orchid, Greater Butterfly Orchid, Bee and Lizard Orchid and our very sought after Man Orchid! Judy also spotted a Garden Tiger Moth, Nick a Marbled White and Simon a Marbled Fritillary.



Lizard Orchids © Robin G

It was now time to fill our stomach and Emilie found us, once more, a lovely spot to have our lunch break: the beach near the Creuse, in Ciron. This lovely picnic site overlooking Château Romefort was a real delight, it was cool and calm and the lunch was scrumptious.

We stopped in the village of Ciron for a comfort break and came across a few interesting monuments: the Lanterne des Morts and a monument erected in the memory of three hot air balloon pioneers whose misfortune saw them crash in the village way back in 1875, after having reached a world record 8600m of altitude. Nick found a Hoopoe in the nearby park and we watched two Short-toed Eagles soaring above the village.

In the afternoon, we headed for the lakes again. We were surprised to find dozens of Great-White Egrets, a similar amount of Great-Crested Grebes, almost a hundred Coot and a similar amount of Black-headed Gulls. It seemed as if all the birds congregated here. Purple Heron were fishing in the shallow water and a very loud frog chorus was heard.

A while later, Emilie drove us to another lake which was very productive. We found a lot of ducks including two new and rather unusual species for the week: a drake Scaup and a pair of Pintail (two birds usually observed in the autumn and winter in Brenne). We also observed two Black-necked Grebe and the edge of the water was heaving with insects. Broad Scarlet, Four-Spotted Chaser, Black-tailed and White-tailed Skimmer, a very fresh Southern Darter and a Migrant Spreadwing bringing our dragonfly species count to a nice number.

A little further down the track a beautiful meadow was home to Black-veined White, Small Heath, Heath Fritillary, Small Copper and many Blue Emperor while the woodland nearby was hosting many White Admiral butterflies.

On that colourful note, we closed our Brenne chapter and came back to base in time to pack our luggage and head out for a memorable last dinner together à La Petite Auberge, in Pouligny Saint Pierre.

## Day 8

For our last morning Emilie took us to a very special place on the way back to the train station near Tours. After less than an hour on the road we stopped in a beautiful natural meadow surrounded by a variety of cereal crop mixed with Poppy and Cornflowers. After a quick scan of the fields with her scope our guide said: "I've got one! Next to the roe deer in the scope, look!"

A beautiful male Little Bustard was the star of the morning and very quick Judy found a second much closer individual.

Scanning the horizon, Keith found us a female Hen Harrier and treat of all treat, the Little Bustard took off and was joined by a second bird and we were able to enjoy their glorious white, brown and black plumage in flight. A truly magic moment and really the best way possible to end our trip in Central France!

We arrived back at the station in plenty of time for the return journey to the UK.

## Species Lists

<b>Birds</b>			26th May	27th May	28th May	29th May	30th May	31st May	1st June
Species seen are marked with a ✓, those heard but not seen are marked with 🎵			day 2	day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	day 8
1	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	✓	✓				✓	
3	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>		3				2	
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>	✓	✓	✓			✓	
9	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
11	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	5						
12	Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	✓		2				
13	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
14	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>			✓				
15	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>						✓	
16	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
17	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓	
18	Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>			✓			✓	
19	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>						2	
20	Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>	✓	✓	✓				
21	Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
22	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
23	Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>						1	
24	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
25	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>							✓
26	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	✓	✓			✓	✓	
27	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
28	Short-toed Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>		✓			✓	✓	
29	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
30	Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>					✓		

Birds			26th	27th	28th	29th	30th	31st	1st
			May	May	May	May	May	May	May
Species seen are marked with a ✓, those heard but not seen are marked with 🎵			day	day	day	day	day	day	day
			2	3	4	5	6	7	8
31	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>		3					
32	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	✓						
33	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>				✓			
34	Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>				🎵			
35	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓	
36	Little bustard	<i>Tertax tetrax</i>							3
37	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	✓	✓				✓	
38	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
39	Stone Curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>						2	
40	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>			✓				
41	Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>			✓				
42	Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>			✓				
43	Common Sandpiper	<i>Tringa hypoleucos</i>			✓				
44	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>		✓					
45	Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
46	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>			✓				
47	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
48	White-winged Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>			2				
49	Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
50	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
51	Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
52	Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
53	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>						✓	
54	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>				✓	✓	2	
55	Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	✓				✓		
56	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
57	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	✓	✓					
58	Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>				✓			
59	Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
60	Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>		✓					
61	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>		✓		✓			

Birds			26th	27th	28th	29th	30th	31st	1st
			May	May	May	May	May	May	May
Species seen are marked with a ✓, those heard but not seen are marked with 🎵			day	day	day	day	day	day	day
			2	3	4	5	6	7	8
62	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus major</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
63	Middle Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus medius</i>					✓		
64	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>				✓		✓	✓
65	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>			🎵	✓			
66	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
67	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
68	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		
69	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>			✓				
70	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
71	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	✓	✓				✓	
72	Yellow (Blue-headed) Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava (flava)</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓	
73	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	✓						
74	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	✓			✓			
75	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
76	Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
77	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>						✓	
78	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
79	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
80	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
81	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	
82	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
83	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
84	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
85	Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	✓	✓			✓	✓	
86	Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>	✓	✓		✓			
87	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>		✓			✓		
88	Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
89	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
90	Bonelli's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus bonelli</i>				✓	✓		
91	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>			✓				
92	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Birds			26th	27th	28th	29th	30th	31st	1st
			May	May	May	May	May	May	May
Species seen are marked with a ✓, those heard but not seen are marked with 🎵			day	day	day	day	day	day	day
			2	3	4	5	6	7	8
93	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>				✓	✓		
94	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>		✓		✓			
95	Marsh Tit	<i>Parus palustris</i>		✓					
96	Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
97	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
98	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	✓	✓		✓			
99	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	✓				✓		
100	Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>				✓	✓		
101	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
102	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
103	Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
104	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
105	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
106	Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>			✓				
107	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
108	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
109	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
110	Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>		✓		✓			
111	Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>		✓			✓		
112	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	
113	Linnet	<i>Acanthis cannabina</i>			✓	✓			
114	Corn Bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
115	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	🎵						
116	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	✓	✓					

Butterflies		
Family <b>Papilionidae</b>		
1	Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>
Family <b>Hesperiidae</b>		
2	Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>
3	Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>

## Butterflies

4	Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>
5	Oberthür's Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus armoricanus</i>
<b>Family Pieridae</b>		
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>Pieris rapae</i>
<b>Family Lycaenidae</b>		
10	Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>
11	Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>
12	Purple Hairstreak	<i>Favonius quercus</i>
13	Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>
14	Black Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium pruni</i>
15	Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>
16	Adonis Blue	<i>Lysandra bellargus</i>
17	Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>
<b>Family Nymphalidae</b>		
18	Southern White Admiral	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>
19	White Admiral	<i>Limenitis camilla</i>
20	Marbled Fritillary	<i>Brenthis daphne</i>
21	Purple Emperor	<i>Apatura iris</i>
22	Lesser Purple Emperor	<i>Apatura ilia</i>
23	Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>
24	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>
25	Large Tortoiseshell	<i>Nymphalis polychloros</i>
26	Marsh Fritillary	<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>
27	Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>
28	Heath Fritillary	<i>Melitaea athalia</i>
29	Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>
30	Pearly Heath	<i>Coenonympha arcania</i>
31	Woodland Brown	<i>Lopinga achine</i>
32	Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>
33	Wall	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>
34	Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>
35	Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>

## Moths

1	Garden Tiger Moth	<i>Arctia caja</i>
2	Cream Spot Tiger	<i>Arctia villica</i>
3	Speckled Moth	<i>Biston betularia</i>
4	Yellow Shell	<i>Camptogramma bilineata</i>
5	Goat Moth	<i>Cossus cossus</i>
6	Common Heath	<i>Ematurga atomaria</i>
7	Hummingbird Hawkmoth	<i>Macroglossum stellatarum</i>
8	Brown Silver-line	<i>Petrophora chlorosata</i>
9	Emperor Moth	<i>Saturnia pavonia</i>
10	Cinnabar	<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>
11	Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet	<i>Zygaena lonicerae</i>

## Dragonflies

1	Blue-eyed Hawker	<i>Aeshna affinis</i>
2	Green-eyed (Norfolk) Hawker	<i>Aeshna isosceles</i>
3	Blue Emperor	<i>Anax imperator</i>
4	Hairy Hawker	<i>Brachytron pratense</i>
5	Banded Demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>
6	Southern Damselfly	<i>Coenagrion mercuriale</i>
7	Azure Damselfly	<i>Coenagrion puella</i>
8	Dainty Bluet	<i>Coenagrion scitulum</i>
9	Downy Emerald	<i>Cordulia aenea</i>
10	Scarlet Darter	<i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>
11	Common Blue Damselfly	<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>
12	Large Red-eyed Damselfly	<i>Erythromma najas</i>
13	Common Blue-tailed Damselfly	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>
14	Migrant Spreadwing	<i>Lestes barbarus</i>
15	Broad-bodied Chaser	<i>Libellula depressa</i>
16	Blue Chaser	<i>Libellula fulva</i>
17	Four-spotted Chaser	<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>
18	White-tailed Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum albistylum</i>
19	Black-tailed Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>
20	Orange-spotted Emerald	<i>Oxygastra curtisii</i>
21	Blue Featherleg	<i>Platycnemis pennipes</i>
22	Large Red Damselfly	<i>Pyrrhosoma nymphula</i>

## Dragonflies

23	Southern Darter	<i>Sympetrum meridionale</i>
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## Other Insects

1	Rose Chafer	<i>Cetonia aurata</i>
2	Noble Chafer	<i>Gnorimus nobilis</i>
3	Owlfly	<i>Libelloides sp.</i>
4	Stag Beetle	<i>Lucanus cervus</i>

## Reptiles and Amphibians

1	European Pond Terrapin	<i>Emys orbicularis</i>
2	Natterjack Toad	<i>Epidalea calamita</i>
3	Western Whip Snake	<i>Hierophis viridiflavus</i>
4	Grass Snake	<i>Natrix natrix</i>
5	Pool Frog	<i>Pelophylax lessonae</i>
6	Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis muralis</i>

## Mammals

1	Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>
2	Red Deer	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>
3	Pine Marten	<i>Martes martes</i>
4	European Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>
5	Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>
6	Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>
7	Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>

## Notable Plants

1	Yellow-wort	<i>Blackstonia perfoliata</i>
2	Cornflower	<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>
3	Fern-leaved Dropwort	<i>Filipendula vulgaris</i>
4	Fennel	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>
5	Privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>
6	Narrow-leaved Flax	<i>Linum tenuifolium</i>
7	Common Poppy	<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>

## Notable Plants

8	Meadow Clary	<i>Salvia pratensis</i>
9	Nottingham Catchfly	<i>Silene nutans</i>
10	Swallow-wort	<i>Vincetoxicum hirundinacea</i>
<b>Orchids</b>		
1	Pyramidal Orchid	<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>
2	Sword-leaved Helleborine	<i>Cephalanthera longifolia</i>
3	Red Helleborine	<i>Cephalanthera rubra</i>
4	Brenne Orchid	<i>Dactylorhiza brennensis</i>
5	Fragrant Orchid	<i>Gymnadenia conopsea</i>
6	Lizard Orchid	<i>Himantoglossum hircinum</i>
7	Violet Limodore	<i>Limodorum abortivum</i>
8	Bee Orchid	<i>Ophrys apifera</i>
9	Early Spider Orchid	<i>Ophrys aranifera</i>
10	Fly Orchid	<i>Ophrys insectifera</i>
11	Man Orchid	<i>Orchis anthropophora</i>
12	Loose-flowered Orchid	<i>Orchis laxiflora</i>
13	Military Orchid	<i>Orchis militaris</i>
14	Green-winged Orchid	<i>Orchis morio</i>
15	Monkey Orchid	<i>Orchis simia</i>
16	Burnt Orchid	<i>Orchis ustulata</i>
17	Lesser Butterfly Orchid	<i>Platanthera bifolia</i>
18	Greater Butterfly Orchid	<i>Platanthera chlorantha</i>
19	Tongue Orchid	<i>Serapias lingua</i>

## Photo Gallery



Woodland Brown © Simon P



Wall Lizard © Simon P



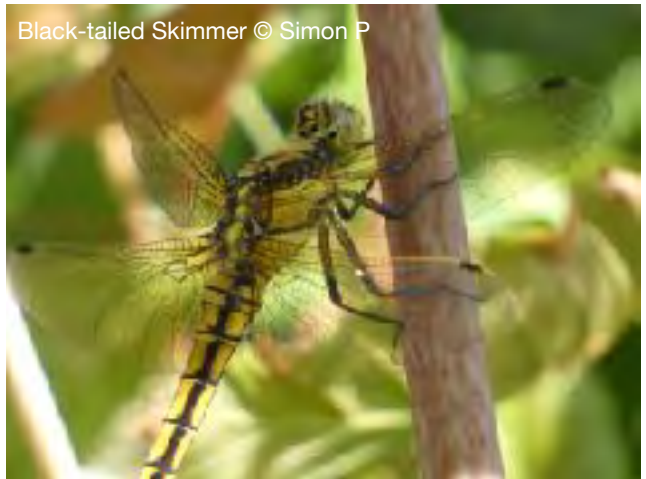
Stag Beetle © Robin G



© Robin G



Southern White Admiral © Simon P



Black-tailed Skimmer © Simon P



Bee-eaters © Robin G



Pool Frog © Simon P



Bee-eaters © Simon P



Scarlet Darter © Simon P

Black-winged Stilt © Simon P



Grass Snake © Simon P

Small Skipper © Robin G



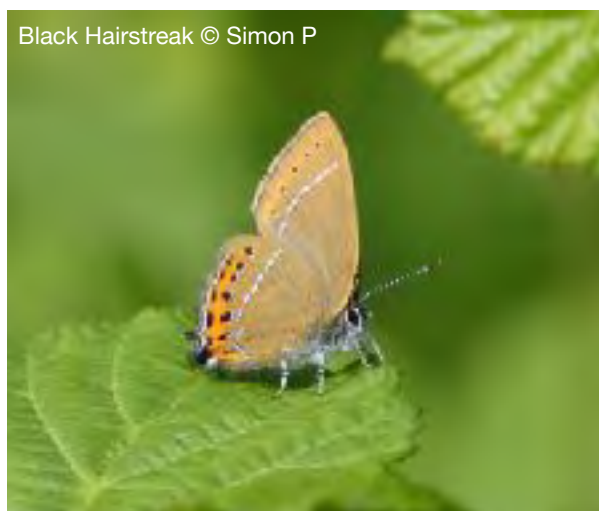
Migrant Spreadwing © Robin G



Pearly Heath © Simon P



Black Hairstreak © Simon P



Black-veined White © Simon P

Southern Damselfly © Simon P



Hairy Hawker © Simon P