



Field Guides Tour Report

Birds of Britain 2019

May 11, 2019 to May 20, 2019
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For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



Endearing European Robins were a regular sighting throughout the tour. Photo by participant Jeanette Shores.

After a long hiatus, we reintroduced the Birds of Britain tour to our schedule this year, with tweaks to the old itinerary to include some new locations and a few cultural highlights. England pulled out all the stops for our visit -- giving us gorgeous azure skies and balmy days for much of our stay, and offering up a raft of surprises among the more expected breeding species. Scotland proved a bit more chilly and temperamental, dumping rain on us on several mornings, but tempering that with some spectacular views and a sunny finale as well as some distinctly "highland" sightings.

We started with a 10-day exploration of East Anglia, venturing from the coastal reserves of RSPB Minsmere and RSPB Titchwell, and the remnant heathlands of Dunwich and Westleton, to the vast, flat Norfolk broads, the farm fields along Chalkpit Lane and the grand estates of Felbrigg, Blickling and Lynford (the latter's arboretum now part of Thetford Forest). We reveled in repeated encounters with many of "the regulars" -- breeding species such as European Robin, Song Thrush, Dunnock, Eurasian Blackbird, Chiffchaff, Sedge Warbler, House Martin, and multiple species of tits. Remember the line of eight just-fledged Long-tailed Tits huddled together on a branch, waiting for their parents to return with tidbits? We also had close encounters with some less common breeders. A Common Nightingale warbled from an open branch in a flowering shrub. A Eurasian Nightjar flashed past, its white wing and tail markings winking against the darkness. A Barn Owl danced over a grassy field, then dipped down to re-emerge with a mouse in its talons. A Corn Bunting sang from a crop field, just across the street from another field where nearly a dozen Eurasian Dotterels pattered back and forth across the plowed ridges. A pair of attentive Eurasian Thick-knees attended their two ball-of-fluff chicks. Dartford Warblers pinwheeled through the gorse scrub while sentinel Eurasian Stonechats kept an eye on things from above. Common Cuckoos shouted from the forests. Two Wood Larks trundled across piles of wood chips. A pair of Common Cranes circled against an achingly blue sky, trumpeting to each other.

Then it was on to the north, where we traded the flat coast and farmlands of England for the windswept moors, myriad lochs, extensive pine forests and stumpy mountains of Scotland. Though we struggled with most of our hoped-for grouse -- darn those Capercaillies and Black Grouse -- we had lovely close views of many "Red Grouse" (the endemic subspecies of Willow Ptarmigan). A pair of Arctic Loons floated on a choppy loch. Horned Grebes in snazzy breeding plumage paddled along a lake edge. Crested Tits ferried mouthfuls to an out-of-sight nest. Ring Ouzels chased each other back and forth over a ski station. A European Shag stood spread-eagled on a piling. Eurasian Curlews piped from moors and pastures. A juvenile White-throated Dipper stretched its little wings on a creekside rock while its parent hunted downstream. A Wood Warbler made repeated circuits on a windswept hillside. Tree Pipits sang from sapling pines. And who will soon forget the drama of our immature White-tailed Eagle, flapping ponderously over the highway with a procession of fired-up gulls in hot pursuit?

During the course of our tour, we notched 22 species of waterfowl, including a roadside pond full of Common Pochards and Tufted Ducks, a pair of spectacularly snazzy Mandarin Ducks, a few lingering Pink-footed Geese, and some unexpected Red-crested Pochards. The intervening years have proved productive for some species of raptors, and we saw Common Buzzards and Red Kites at numerous places in England -- where we didn't record them at all in 2002. Our 21 species of shorebird included a trio of foraging Temminck's Stints, some rusty-bellied Black-tailed Godwits, and a plethora

of seriously sexy Pied Avocets. And it wasn't just the birds that we enjoyed. We had a marvelous guided tour of the barrows at Sutton Hoo (and a up-close-and-personal view of replicas of some of the treasures), and a leisurely rainy-day wander through Blickling Hall, a Jacobean manor house built on the property where Ann Boleyn was born.

Thanks so much for joining Willy and me, and serving as "guinea pigs" for the reboot of our Birds of Britain tour. It was good fun sharing our adopted home with all of you! We hope to see you again soon on another adventure.

Good birding!

Megan

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BAR-HEADED GOOSE (*Anser indicus*) – At least one (and maybe two) at the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds's (RSPB's) Minsmere reserve, along the back edge of one of the ponds on the Scrape was certainly unexpected; this species breeds on alpine lakes in central Asia, and winters in India and Myanmar. They are most likely escapees from a collection somewhere, but... who knows?! This species is famous for being able to migrate OVER the Himalayas at elevations approaching 30,000 feet -- where the low oxygen levels would prove fatal to most animals.

GRAYLAG GOOSE (*Anser anser*) – Plentiful throughout, including dozens and dozens with fluffy goslings in tow. A family high on the chilly moors of Scotland on our last morning were a surprise; they appeared to be miles from the nearest water.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) – Four on the estuary at Scotland's Udale Bay were the last remnants of the thousands that overwinter in the area; most have headed north to Iceland by the time of our tour.

BRANT (*Branta bernicla*) – A few restless flocks grazed on the salt grass fields or floated on the ponds at Norfolk's RSPB Titchwell reserve, gathering strength for their migration north to the high arctic. Again, this is a species that is largely gone by the time of our tour.

BARNACLE GOOSE (*Branta leucopsis*) – Twenty years ago, this was a very rare species in East Anglia. Now it's reasonably common, breeding on lakes and marshes in the Broads, at Minsmere and on the Holkham Estate. These are all descendants of birds introduced to some of the big estates. [I]

CANADA GOOSE (*Branta canadensis*) – Recorded most days in East Anglia, typically in small numbers. This species was introduced from North America from the 17th century onwards, and multiple subspecies are probably involved. [I]

MUTE SWAN (*Cygnus olor*) – Another common species in the wetlands of East Anglia, including a pair with some fairly small cygnets on our second early-morning visit to Felbrigg Hall and a pair doing a low-key version of their well-known threat display (with wings arched over their backs) along the river at Santon Downham.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*) – Introduced to Norfolk in the 18th century and now widespread (though only in small numbers) across the county. We saw pairs at Hickling Broad, Cley Marshes and Holkham Hall, and spotted a single gosling with two parents at Kelling Quag. [I]

COMMON SHELDUCK (*Tadorna tadorna*) – One of the more common ducks of the tour, particularly in East Anglia, where we saw them in flight, on the water, and snoozing on various fields and islets. We had a handful on the estuary at Udale Bay in Scotland as well.

MANDARIN DUCK (*Aix galericulata*) – A few along the river at Santon Downham, including a gorgeous pair resting atop the trunk of a massive downed tree. They posed nicely for photographs before dropping down into the river and paddling away. This species was introduced to the UK early in the 20th century. [I]

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Spatula clypeata*) – Small numbers (mostly males) in East Anglia's coastal wetlands, with a few others in Scotland's Insh Marshes.

GADWALL (*Mareca strepera*) – Also seen on most days in East Anglia, including several pairs floating on the ponds visible from the blinds at Cley Marshes.

EURASIAN WIGEON (*Mareca penelope*) – Far less common than most of the other ducks seen on this tour, with a single male at Minsmere, and a half dozen or so grazing on one of the little islets at Cley marshes. We found others at Insh Marshes and a quartet at Loch Ruthven in Scotland.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – Abundant throughout, missed only on the first day, when we drove from the airport to Suffolk.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (EURASIAN) (*Anas crecca crecca*) – Scattered birds in both East Anglia and Scotland, with the males showing the distinctive white horizontal line on their scapulars that helps to separate them from North America's birds.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD (*Netta rufina*) – Great scope studies of a trio on one of the ponds at Titchwell, where they're now breeding in small numbers. These are undoubtedly the descendants of birds that escaped from wildfowl collections. The RSPB estimates that 10-20 pairs of such escapees (and their descendants) are now breeding in the UK. [I]

COMMON POCHARD (*Aythya ferina*) – Our first were a cluster of birds -- mostly males -- floating on a roadside pond at Walsey Hill NOA. We found others at Cley Marshes the following day. They strongly resemble North America's Redheads, to which they are closely related.

TUFTED DUCK (*Aythya fuligula*) – Quite common in East Anglia, where we saw many pairs, with a single male spotted at Loch Ruthven in Scotland. We had good looks at the male's "ponytail" tuft on several occasions.

COMMON EIDER (*Somateria mollissima*) – Several pairs floated in the surf just off Chanonry Point, seen as we drove along the seafront in the nearby town. The subspecies found in Great Britain is the nominate *mollissima*.

COMMON GOLDENEYE (*Bucephala clangula*) – Small numbers on most days in Scotland, including a few pairs on Loch Insh, and others on Loch Garten. The oval white blotch on the face of the male is distinctive -- and visible from a long way away.

COMMON MERGANSER (*Mergus merganser*) – Ed saw a female floating on Loch an Eilein while some of us were warming up with hot drinks. This species is called "Goosander" in Britain.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER (*Mergus serrator*) – A few floated in the channel at the estuary at RSPB Udale Bay, working their way steadily upstream.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE (*Alectoris rufa*) – Regular in East Anglia, where we saw them on most days. The pair creeping up the newly-plowed hill at Kelling Quag proved particularly obliging for scope views. We had others one day along the road in Scotland. This species was introduced to Britain for hunting purposes. [I]

RING-NECKED PHEASANT (*Phasianus colchicus*) – Common and widespread throughout (and heard even on days we didn't actually see them), with particularly nice looks at some striding across some farm fields visible from Westleton Common, and at Felbrigg. This is another species introduced to Britain for hunting. [I]

GRAY PARTRIDGE (*Perdix perdix*) – Two huddling in the grass at Kelling Quag before breakfast one morning proved a bit of a challenge to get a look at -- great spotting Bob! Eventually, we worked our way around to the other side of them, and could get them in the scopes for more satisfying views.

WILLOW PTARMIGAN (RED GROUSE) (*Lagopus lagopus scotica*) – Remember how frantic some of us were when the first one got away before everybody saw it? Little did we know then how many we'd see -- or how well we'd see them! The moors of Scotland are heavily managed for the benefit of this species, due to their popularity with the hunting crowd. This is an endemic subspecies notable for the fact that it doesn't go white for the winter. [E]

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LITTLE GREBE (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) – A few floated on the ponds at Hickling Broad, Titchwell and Holkham Estate, and we found a pair with a nest -- they even exchanged places -- right below the blind at Loch Ruthven. [N]

HORNED GREBE (*Podiceps auritus*) – A couple of handsome pairs worked their way along the back edge of Loch Ruthven, regularly disappearing under the water's surface. Recent studies have revealed that declining aquatic invertebrate populations -- rather than declining fish populations -- are causing this species to abandon some former nesting spots.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE (*Podiceps cristatus*) – A few of these elegant, long-necked grebes seen at Hickling Broad, Titchwell and Holkham Estate.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Nearly every day in both England and Scotland -- all feral birds in mixed-color flocks.

STOCK DOVE (*Columba oenas*) – A half-dozen or so rested on (and in) a barn visible from Westleton Common, but our best views came at Holkham Estate, where we found some much closer birds. This species has far less black on the wing than feral Rock Doves do, and it lacks the latter's white rump patch.

COMMON WOOD-PIGEON (*Columba palumbus*) – Abundant and ubiquitous throughout the tour. This big resident species is found throughout most of the British Isles, with a population estimated at nearly 5.5 million!

EUROPEAN TURTLE-DOVE (*Streptopelia turtur*) – We heard several purring on Westleton Common during each of our visits, and were rewarded with views of one singing from a telephone pole on our first morning together. This species is in steep decline all across Europe, no thanks to spring hunts in places like Malta.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – Another abundant and widespread species, though we somehow managed to miss it on our first day in Scotland. We must not have been paying attention! This species was first recorded in Britain in the late 1950s.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

COMMON CUCKOO (*Cuculus canorus*) – Heard singing on five different days, but we just couldn't find one to actually lay eyes on. They certainly sound like the clocks though -- or vice versa!

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

EURASIAN NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus europaeus*) – After hearing a few purring away in the distance on Dunwich Heath, we could suddenly hear one coming closer and closer while we looked for a calling Tawny Owl. When it called from right overhead, we flicked on the spotlights in time to see it loop past across the field, the white patches in its wings and tail flashing.

Apodidae (Swifts)

COMMON SWIFT (*Apus apus*) – Seen daily in England -- streaking past overhead, sometimes in little screaming parties -- but only found over Nethybridge in Scotland. Sadly, this is another species in decline across Europe, presumably because of the huge drop in flying insects.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

EURASIAN MOORHEN (*Gallinula chloropus*) – Small numbers on most days in East Anglia, typically poking along the back edges of ponds or strolling along the grassy banks at various nature reserves. This species was recently split from North America's Common Gallinule.

EURASIAN COOT (*Fulica atra*) – Another regular species in England, but missing entirely from Scotland. Like the previous species, they were often chugging across waterways or grazing on the fringes of ponds, but we also spotted a few snoozing on their platform nests along the water's edge. [N]

Gruidae (Cranes)

COMMON CRANE (*Grus grus*) – Two in flight right over our heads at Hickling Broad were quite thrilling, particularly when they started calling to each other. The presence of this species as a breeding bird in Britain is something of a mystery; experts aren't sure whether the small population that has become established in Norfolk got here on its own, or whether they were privately introduced.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

EURASIAN THICK-KNEE (*Burhinus oedicnemus*) – A pair with two small chicks on a field near Minsmere put a nice cap on a lovely day. One adult sat with the chicks while the other made repeated hunting forays into the surrounding weeds. This is a threatened species in Britain, with only an estimated 400 breeding pairs remaining.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

PIED AVOCET (*Recurvirostra avocetta*) – This species, on the other hand, is doing great! It reintroduced itself to Britain during WWII (when coastal areas were flooded to deter German invasions) and has been expanding steadily since then, assisted by habitat restoration at coastal reserves. We saw them well at a number of places, including Minsmere, Titchwell, Cley Marshes and Kelling Quag.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus ostralegus*) – Common and conspicuous, and recorded on most days of the tour. We saw some in flight -- where their black-and-white wings were eye-catching -- and others prodding fields and wetlands in a search for food. Particularly obliging was the one snoozing on its nest in a cone-delimited patch of gravel in the parking lot of our Aviemore hotel! [N]

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings).

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – A few lingering birds at Minsmere, with a bigger group at Titchwell, including some already in their gorgeous breeding plumage. Most have already headed north to the high Arctic by the time of our tour.

NORTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus vanellus*) – Regular throughout, in both England and Scotland, including a few pattering around in one of the dry fields at Minsmere and others on the banks of Udale Bay. The crested topknot of this species is distinctive.

COMMON RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius hiaticula*) – A few pattered along the edge of one of the scrapes at Minsmere, and another trotted on a muddy islet near the big blind at Titchwell -- conveniently, right after we'd seen the next species!

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius dubius*) – Two on a muddy islet just outside the doors to the big blind at Titchwell, with an even closer bird at Cley Marshes the next day. The yellow eye ring of this species, its slimmer, paler yellowish (rather than orange) legs, its longer, more attenuated shape and its all-dark bill help to distinguish it from the Common Ringed Plover.

EURASIAN DOTTEREL (*Charadrius morinellus*) – This was certainly an unexpected bonus for the trip! A little group of these northern breeders had been reported in the days leading up to our trip, so we detoured slightly on our way to Titchwell to have a look. A short walk up a dirt farm track to a gap in the hedge let us scan the plowed field they'd been seen in, and we found at least 8 or 9 distant -- but still identifiable -- birds scuttling up and down along the dirt ridges. And that certainly made us popular with the other birders who'd been looking for them too!

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies).

WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*) – One flew past overhead, calling loudly, while we birded the waterfront at Avoch on our day at Black Isle.

EURASIAN CURLEW (*Numenius arquata*) – One flew past over Dunwich Heath as we searched for Dartford Warblers, but this species really came into its own in Scotland, where they were common. The ones feeding in a field beside Lochindorb on a windy afternoon were particularly obliging.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*) – At least one among the more common Black-tailed Godwits at Titchwell, distinguished by its all-dark bill and more patterned back feathers.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa limosa*) – Seen at Minsmere, Titchwell and Cley Marshes, either in flight (where their flashy black-and-white wings, and black tail with white rump patch were certainly eye-catching) or probing the muddy pond bottoms for tasty morsels.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – A few late migrants in various East Anglian reserves, including two probing the edge of a muddy islet at Minsmere and others at Titchwell and Cley Marshes.

RED KNOT (*Calidris canutus*) – One foraging along the edge of an islet at Minsmere showed some rusty color on its belly. This is another species that is most often far north by the time of our tour.

TEMMINCK'S STINT (*Calidris temminckii*) – A trio feeding on one of the muddy islets at Cley Marshes gave us great views of their crouching posture and pale legs. This is the Old World sister species of our Least Sandpiper.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – A scattering of these small shorebirds chased the waves along the shore at Titchwell. This is another Arctic breeder.

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – A scattering at Minsmere, with others on the Insh Marshes and at Udale Bay -- all showing the black bellies of their breeding plumage. Three subspecies (*alpina*, *arctica* and *schinzii*) all regularly winter in or migrate through Britain, but only *schinzii* breeds in northwestern Scotland.

COMMON SNIBE (*Gallinago gallinago*) – One rummaged along the edge of a wet spot in a valley bottom at Felbrigg one morning, seen as we searched in vain for Water Rails. This species was split from Wilson's Snipe of the Americas about a decade ago, separated in part by the number of modified tail feathers the male uses to make his distinctive winnowing song and the identifiably different sounds they make as a result.

COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – Singles bobbed along pond edges at Titchwell and Cley Marshes in East Anglia, and we spotted others at Lochindorb and Loch Ruthven -- and from a small bridge near Loch Morlich, when we found one that initially had us thinking of dippers! This is the Old World replacement species for the Spotted Sandpiper, and it has the same stiff-winged flight.

COMMON GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*) – Our first was stalking the edge of a marshy spot on Kelling Quag -- good spotting, Ed! We found another at Cley Marshes. This species looks a lot (structurally, anyway) like a pale, greenish-legged Greater Yellowlegs. These were late migrants; most are gone from England by the time of our tour.

COMMON REDSHANK (*Tringa totanus*) – Fairly common in East Anglia, where they were seen striding around the shallower parts of pools and ditches on most days. We saw others at Insh Marshes in Scotland. In flight, they have a distinctive, wide, white wedge on the trailing edge of their wings.

Alcidae (Auks, Murres, and Puffins).

COMMON MURRE (*Uria aalge*) – A single bird, seemingly last year's youngster, based on its plumage, floated just off Chanonry Point on our last full day.

BLACK GUILLEMOT (*Cepphus grylle*) – Another singleton, also in nonbreeding plumage, also off Chanonry Point. This was the one we spotted first, which drifted off to the right.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE (*Rissa tridactyla*) – At least eight birds rested on one of the little islands at Minsmere, or snoozed on a wooden beam, book-ending a Common Gull for nice comparison. This species typically nests on rocky cliffs, but a small number have nested on the Sizewell nuclear power station's outflow rig (offshore near Minsmere) for many years.

BLACK-HEADED GULL (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) – Abundant throughout, seen in good numbers every day but one -- and we undoubtedly just ignored them that day! This is the common smaller gull in Great Britain, and we had great looks at nesting birds in a variety of places, including some on nests at Minsmere.

LITTLE GULL (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) – A youngster paddled across one of the shallow ponds at Minsmere, looking tiny compared to the Black-headed Gulls around it, and an adult floated on one of the ponds at Titchwell.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL (*Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*) – Small numbers at several coastal locations, with particularly nice views of a trio of nesting birds among a colony of Black-headed Gulls at Minsmere. We saw some in flight over Dunwich Heath, looking very frosty pale compared to the nearby Black-headed Gulls.

MEW GULL (EUROPEAN) (*Larus canus canus*) – Particularly common in Scotland, with fewer in East Anglia. We had a nice chance to make comparisons with similarly-sized Black-legged Kittiwakes on a piling at Minsmere. Widely known as "Common Gull" in Europe.

HERRING GULL (*Larus argentatus*) – Regular in small numbers in East Anglia, but far more common in Scotland. This species is increasing as a breeding resident in England, often choosing roof tops and church towers as breeding locations.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus fuscus*) – Regular throughout, with plenty of resting adults at coastal reserves. The yellow legs, proportionally longer wings and paler backs of the adults help to separate them from the next species.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus marinus*) – Surprisingly uncommon -- or at least unnoticed -- this year, with our best views coming at Cley Marshes, where a hulking youngster stood among a gang of Lesser Black-backed Gulls, looking huge and bulky by comparison. We had a number of adults at Scotland's Udale Bay.

LITTLE TERN (*Sternula albifrons*) – A few noisy pairs at Minsmere, with others at Titchwell. This species is closely related (and similar in appearance) to America's Least Tern. Like the Least Tern, this species is declining over its range in Europe; it's now listed as an "amber" species due to its population decline with only 1800 pairs estimated to breed in all of Great Britain.

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – Very common in East Anglia's coastal reserves and along the Scottish coast on Black Isle -- where we struggled to find an Arctic Tern among them. We had plenty of time to study them in the scopes on the breeding platforms that had been installed just offshore at Avoch.

ARCTIC TERN (*Sterna paradisaea*) – Malcolm picked one out for us over the waters of Chanonry Point; most of their breeding area is in northwestern Scotland, so they're pretty scarce on our tour route. In eastern Scotland, food shortages have led to a big drop in numbers.

SANDWICH TERN (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – Fair numbers at Minsmere and Titchwell, with others over Chanonry Point on Scotland's Black Isle. The larger size, frosty-white plumage and pale-tipped black bill help to separate them from the previous two species.

Gaviidae (Loons)

RED-THROATED LOON (*Gavia stellata*) – Our first floated along the edge of Loch Insh, which meant winding our way through a gaggle of rather wet kids carrying inflatable rafts to get closer. We saw others on Loch Garten and Loch Ruthven. It's always nice to see these lovely birds in their breeding plumage. This is the smallest of the world's loons.

ARCTIC LOON (*Gavia arctica*) – We braved a strong and chilly wind to get a view of a pair on the roiling surface of Lochindorb. The heavier bill, black throat patch and white patch along its waterline help to separate it from the more common previous species. This is known as the Black-necked Diver in Britain.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

GREAT CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – Widespread, and seen most days in East Anglia, with a scattering in Scotland as well. Some were in flight above fields and heaths, while others floated on area waterways, or hunted beneath their surfaces.

EUROPEAN SHAG (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*) – One along the sea front on the way to Chanonry Point caught Ed's eye -- nice spotting! We got it in the scopes for a closer look, and found a few others nearby. This is a smaller species than the previous one, with a smaller bill; it lacks the white and facial patches and white flank patches of breeding-plumaged Great Cormorants.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BITTERN (*Botaurus stellaris*) – One in flight over a reed bed at Minsmere a couple of times, showing its distinctive ginger-brown color. This is an uncommon, but steadily increasing resident, aided by the restoration of reed beds being done at many coastal reserves. Numbers jumped from 11 breeding males in the UK in 1997 to 104 in 2011.

GRAY HERON (*Ardea cinerea*) – Regular in East Anglia (including one standing along the edge of the little marsh at Felbrigg each morning), with smaller numbers in Scotland; seen on most days of the tour. This species has increased in Britain over the past 80 years.

GREAT EGRET (EURASIAN) (*Ardea alba alba*) – One hunted along the edge of a reed bed at Hickling Broad. This species was a national rarity in Britain as recently as 2005; now, they're known to be breeding at a number of places along England's southeastern flank.

LITTLE EGRET (*Egretta garzetta*) – Regular in East Anglia, where they are now well-established as a breeding species. As recently as the early 1980s, the species was recorded from only a single 10km square in all of Britain!

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

EURASIAN SPOONBILL (*Platalea leucorodia*) – A pair huddled among the marsh grasses in the gale-force winds at Titchwell, occasionally giving us quick glimpses of their distinctively spoon-shaped beaks. This is a rare breeding species in Britain, and Titchwell has proved to be one of their strongholds. Leg bands on the breeding birds have shown they come from a variety of countries in Europe.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – A single bird flapped steadily away from us at Loch Ruthven with a fish clasped firmly in its talons. Ospreys are slowly recovering in Britain after being driven nearly extinct there by the early 1900s.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

EURASIAN MARSH-HARRIER (*Circus aeruginosus*) – Seen most days in East Anglia, with small numbers recorded from Minsmere, Hickling, Titchwell, Cley Marshes and the farm country along Chalkpit Lane. The southeastern coast is the stronghold of this species on the British Isles.

RED KITE (*Milvus milvus*) – In 2002, when we last ran this tour, the only Red Kites we found were in Scotland. Now, thanks to a spectacularly successful reintroduction program, they're increasingly common in England as well, with some big wintering roosts in western Norfolk and scattered birds seen throughout the year. We had lovely looks at one bird coursing over the sheep fields at Felbrigg, and others circling over the fields on Black Isle.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) – This one was certainly a surprise! As we headed back toward our hotel from Lochindorb, we could see a huge raptor being chased by an agitated mob of gulls. We were assuming it would be a Golden Eagle, but upon piling out of the vans, we were struck by its "odd" plumage, and Jeannette's pictures proved its identification. Wow!

COMMON BUZZARD (*Buteo buteo*) – Common and widespread, recorded nearly every day of the tour. In 2002, we didn't see a single one in England! This species has staged a remarkable comeback, more than doubling its range since the 1960s. Its main prey is rabbit, and a current bad outbreak of the rabbit disease myxomatosis (which has killed hundreds of thousands of rabbits) may significantly impact buzzard numbers.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*) – A few folks saw a distant ghostly shape glide past in the gloom as we waited in vain for a nightjar to make an appearance on our first evening visit to Dunwich Heath. We found a much more cooperative bird hunting actively on the grounds of Blickling Hall after our visit to the house; we even watched it deliver a mouse to a hole in the huge old tree that held its nest.

Strigidae (Owls)

LITTLE OWL (*Athene noctua*) – We found one near the pond at Felbrigg on our second pre-breakfast visit there -- thank goodness it called, or we might never have known it was there! This small owl was introduced to the UK on several occasions during the late 1800s, and spread eastwards. Though its range and population has contracted significantly since the 1960s, East Anglia remains one of its strongholds. [H]

TAWNY OWL (*Strix aluco*) – Those who made a second attempt for the nightjar at Dunwich Heath heard the quavering whistle of several echoing from the moonlit trees edging some of the clear-felled areas. Unfortunately, we never laid eyes on one. [*]

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

COMMON KINGFISHER (*Alcedo atthis*) – Only a few managed to catch a quick view of this glittering gem as it zipped past at Hickling Broad. Its size, long bill and iridescence reminded several people of a hummingbird.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos major*) – Easily the most common of the tour's woodpeckers. Our first was a cooperative bird at Blickling, seen while we waited for the Barn Owl to make a reappearance. We saw others at Santon Downham (while looking in vain for their smaller cousins) and more on most days in Scotland.

EURASIAN GREEN WOODPECKER (*Picus viridis*) – Arg! We heard one calling (and calling and calling) from various fields at Felbrigg, but never spotted it -- even when we could hear that it was calling while in flight. Some of the group saw one flash across the road in front of my van on the drive to Santon Downham. [*]

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

EURASIAN KESTREL (*Falco tinnunculus*) – Regular in England, often hovering over roadside fields or wetland fringes. According to "Bird Atlas 2007-2011", this is one of the most widespread and abundant raptors in Britain.

EURASIAN HOBBY (*Falco subbuteo*) – Two hunting dragonflies over Hickling Broad put on a great show, coursing back and forth over our heads. We saw another over Felbrigg on our second pre-breakfast walk there. The Norfolk Broads hold some of the highest densities of this species in Britain.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

EURASIAN JAY (*Garrulus glandarius*) – Although widespread and common over much of England (and less so in Scotland), this much persecuted species is shy and elusive during the breeding season, so we recorded only a few -- at Minsmere, Lynford Arboretum and Holkham Estate, where one confiding bird spent a long time rummaging through branches of some nearby oaks. The endemic British race "rufitergum" is pinker overall and less gray than the continental "glandarius".

EURASIAN MAGPIE (*Pica pica*) – Common and widespread in England, and not seen at all in Scotland, where they are largely absent from the north and west. This species has been split from North America's Black-billed Magpie due to morphological and behavioral differences.

EURASIAN JACKDAW (*Corvus monedula*) – Another common and widespread species, seen every day of the tour. We had particularly nice views of a few checking out the chimney pots in Westleton one morning as we headed to the Common.

ROOK (*Corvus frugilegus*) – Seen on all but one day (the day we flew to Scotland), often in big numbers trundling around roadside fields. The white base to their large bill is a good field mark for this species.

CARRION CROW (*Corvus corone corone*) – Another common species, seen daily -- including in Scotland, where they are slowly pushing the next species further north and west.

HOODED CROW (*Corvus cornix*) – Most of this species breeds and winters north and west of our tour route, so our chance of intersecting with them is small. We did, however, see single birds at Insh Marshes, Udale Bay and along the road as we drove towards Loch Ruthven.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – At least two played in the air above the Cairngorm ski station, croaking as they went. We saw others on our drive to Lochindorb and back.

Panuridae (Bearded Reedling)

BEARDED REEDLING (*Panurus biarmicus*) – A male with a couple of recently-fledged chicks worked back and forth along the bottom edge of a reed bed at Cley Marshes -- a highlight on a drizzly, windy morning. Expansion of reed beds for bitterns in coastal reserves has helped this species, but saltwater inundations and nutrient loading from agricultural runoff have caused local declines in Norfolk.

Alaudidae (Larks)

WOOD LARK (*Lullula arborea*) – A pair mooched along a track in Santon Downham before flitting off into the weedy growth nearby -- which made getting a good look at them a bit more challenging! We got there in the end. This species is primarily associated with heathland, which is a habitat that is disappearing across much of Europe.

EURASIAN SKYLARK (*Alauda arvensis*) – Fairly common in East Anglia, with others "skylarking" over the agricultural fields of the Black Isle. We heard their lovely burbling songs raining down from the heavens as they hovered overhead in many places -- the inspiration for Ralph Vaughn Williams's orchestral piece "The Lark Ascending".

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*) – Regular in both England and Scotland, primarily around water. At Minsmere, we stood for a while near a sand cliff, watching as the newly-returned birds investigated burrows, occasionally lifting off in great twittering swarms before returning again.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – Seen nearly every day, though missed on a couple of days in Scotland. The subspecies in Britain (*rustica*) is much paler underneath than are North American birds.

COMMON HOUSE-MARTIN (*Delichon urbicum*) – Widespread throughout, recorded on most days -- including some nesting under the eaves of houses in Westleton and a bunch that entertained the group while Willy and I picked up the vehicles in Scotland. Overall, this species is declining as a breeding species in southeastern England, but increasing north and west. [N]

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

COAL TIT (*Pariparus ater*) – Small numbers on scattered days through, including one bouncing through a pine tree at Sutton Hoo, a few with a mixed flock at Minsmere, some at Lynford Arboretum and others daily in Scotland. Britain has an endemic subspecies, *britannicus*, which differs from continental subspecies by having olive rather than bluish on the mantle.

CRESTED TIT (*Lophophanes cristatus*) – After wrestling with an uncooperative bird in the Abernathy Forest (where we could hear one calling from just over a ridge from where we stood), we had great views of a food-gathering pair overhead at Loch an Eilein -- to the bemusement of a group of Dutch ramblers!

MARSH TIT (*Poecile palustris*) – Small numbers on scattered days: at Minsmere, Holkham, Lynford Arboretum and Santon Downham. The very small bib of this species (its "goatee" as someone called it) is distinctive. This species is declining across much of its range, presumably because of habitat degradation; it needs moderately large woodland patches with complex understories in which to breed.

EURASIAN BLUE TIT (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) – A very common and widespread species, seen on all but one day; we missed it on the day we transferred from England to Scotland. We found an impressive number of pairs nesting in hollow trees (some of which were quite small) along the road into Minsmere. [N]

GREAT TIT (*Parus major*) – Another very common species, seen -- and heard -- on all but our airport days. Their loud "teacher teacher" call was a regular part of the tour soundtrack.

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)

LONG-TAILED TIT (*Aegithalos caudatus*) – Regular over much of East Anglia, with a handful in Black Isle's Fairy Glen. A little gang roiling along the edges of the track out to the Kelling Quag gave us some especially nice looks. Britain has its own endemic subspecies: *rosaceus*.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

EURASIAN NUTHATCH (*Sitta europaea*) – Our first was a nesting pair feeding chicks in a crack in a huge tree at Felbrigg, and we found others at Lynford Arboretum and Santon Downham in England, and in the Fairy Glen on Black Isle. Unfortunately, this species has declined as a breeding species over much of East Anglia in the last decade or so. [N]

Certhiidae (Treecreepers)

EURASIAN TREECREEPER (*Certhia familiaris*) – Scattered birds in both England and Scotland, including one with a youngster in the Fairy Glen. This resident species is another one that has declined over much of East Anglia in the past few decades.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

EURASIAN WREN (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) – Very common and widespread, seen on every day of the tour -- from our first, in the cemetery across the road from our Westleton hotel, to our last, near the parking lot at Chanonry Point.

Cinclidae (Dippers)

WHITE-THROATED DIPPER (*Cinclus cinclus*) – It took until the very last possible day, but we finally caught up with this charismatic species in Black Isle's Fairy Glen, when we found an adult and a couple of recently fledged youngsters along the little stream. It was fun watching the adult alternately doing "push-ups" on the rocks and leaping into the water to swim around underneath.

Regulidae (Kinglets)

GOLDCREST (*Regulus regulus*) – Heard more than seen in East Anglia -- though we did get nice looks at one in the pines around the café at Sutton Hoo and comparisons with the next species at Lynford Arboretum. We saw or heard them most days in Scotland as well, including some around the tea shop where we found our Wood Warbler.

COMMON FIRECREST (*Regulus ignicapilla*) – Somewhat surprisingly, we found this little "kinglet" on only a single day -- at Lynford Arboretum, where we found them only a few minutes after seeing some Goldcrests for comparison. They proved a lot more elusive, sticking to the highest, densest part of the trees.

Scotocercidae (Bush Warblers and Allies)

CETTI'S WARBLER (*Cettia cetti*) – A very obliging bird near one of the blinds at Minsmere returned again and again to the same little group of trees, giving us plenty of chance to study it. At one point, it spent a long time investigating the trunk of a big fallen tree, sitting right out in the open for several minutes. We heard their loud, explosive song at Hickling and Titchwell as well.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers)

WOOD WARBLER (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*) – An early morning visit to Loch an Eilein netted us one of these yellow-throated warblers as it worked its way around and around its hillside territory behind the shop. This woodland species lost 65% of its population between 1985 and 2010 and no longer breeds in East Anglia.

WILLOW WARBLER (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) – One near the parking lot at Dunwich Heath proved very accommodating, sitting right up at the top of a tree and singing his heart out, and we saw and heard others there and at Hickling Broad. They were even more common in Scotland. This species appears to be moving north and west with climate change, and has declined fairly precipitously as a breeding species in East Anglia.

COMMON CHIFFCHAFF (*Phylloscopus collybita*) – Certainly one of the most common warblers of the trip, recorded nearly every day. We heard far more than we saw -- their cheery "chiff chaff chiff chaff" was a near-constant background noise in many places -- but got some great views of singing birds on the Westleton Common.

Acrocephalidae (Reed Warblers and Allies)

SEDGE WARBLER (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) – Regular in the coastal reserves of East Anglia, including one along the coast path at Minsmere which provided spectacular point-blank views as he sang from atop the reeds.

EURASIAN REED WARBLER (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) – This one, on the other hand, proved far more elusive. We heard them almost daily in East Anglia, but only saw one (and not for long) as it skulked its way through some dense vegetation along the edge of a pond near the Bank Swallow cliff at Minsmere -- good spotting, Ed!

Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers)

EURASIAN BLACKCAP (*Sylvia atricapilla*) – One of our most common warblers in England, seen or heard daily in East Anglia -- including a male singing his heart out right near the parking lot of our Westleton hotel each morning. Most of the ones we saw were black-headed males rather than brown-headed females (which were presumably on nests).

GARDEN WARBLER (*Sylvia borin*) – Our best views came on the Westleton Common, where a pair flitted through some bushes near the start of the trail. This species is the Orange-crowned Warbler of the Old World -- its best field mark is its nearly complete lack of field marks! We also saw them in scrubby areas of Lynford Arboretum and Santon Downham.

LESSER WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia curruca*) – Arg! This is one that largely got away; a few of us saw one fly away from us at Dunwich Heath, shortly after we started our walk there on our first morning.

GREATER WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia communis*) – Another reasonably common species across East Anglia, recorded on all but a couple of days in England. We saw our first in a scrubby area at Sutton Hoo just before our guided walk, and had nice looks at another doing its short sky-diving

display flights on a pre-breakfast walk at Kelling Quag.

DARTFORD WARBLER (*Sylvia undata*) – Some great looks at this uncommon species on Dunwich Heath, including a very active trio bouncing through the gorse and investigating some nearby birch trees and several singletons poking through gorse and heather further along the same trail. This species is slowly expanding its range in southern England, though severe winters cause big declines in its population.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER (*Muscicapa striata*) – Our first was one hunting from the mid-height branches of some of the big pines at Lynford Arboretum, not far from where we found our siskin flock. They proved far more common in Scotland, where we saw them most days -- including an active pair near the little shop where we got our hot drinks at Loch an Eilein. This species is in serious decline in Britain, having lost nearly 90% of its numbers since 1988.

EUROPEAN ROBIN (*Erithacus rubecula*) – This little charmer was seen daily, often almost at our toes. The birds in the parking lot of our Westleton hotel -- and several in Scotland's Fairy Glen -- were especially obliging.

COMMON NIGHTINGALE (*Luscinia megarhynchos*) – One of the highlights of our first morning's walk at Westleton Common was a very showy bird singing his heart out from the top of some scrubby trees -- though we all agreed its famous song was a bit of a disappointment. We heard others elsewhere on the common, on Dunwich Heath and at Minsmere, but overall, this species has declined quite dramatically in England. Habitat loss and a drop in habitat quality probably plays a part in this, as does the fact that England is on the very northern edge of the bird's range.

COMMON REDSTART (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*) – We spotted one singing from atop a little spruce at Badaguish on our first outing in Scotland, and found another male near the little shop at Loch an Eilein.

EUROPEAN STONECHAT (*Saxicola rubicola rubicola*) – Some lovely views of males perched up on birch trees and gorse bushes at Dunwich Heath, with another showy male at Kelling Quag. Surprisingly, we didn't find a single one in Scotland!

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

MISTLE THRUSH (*Turdus viscivorus*) – Especially nice studies of a number at Felbrigg on each of our visits, with others daily in Scotland. This species is named for one of its favorite foods: mistletoe.

SONG THRUSH (*Turdus philomelos*) – Regular throughout much of the tour, including a very accommodating bird singing in the Westleton hotel parking lot each morning and others at Lynford Arboretum. We saw them daily in Scotland as well, including some in conveniently close comparison with the previous species.

EURASIAN BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*) – Somehow, we managed to miss this one on the day we transferred from England to Scotland; we must not have been paying enough attention, because they were very common throughout!

FIELDFARE (*Turdus pilaris*) – A quartet feeding on the lawn at Felbrigg with a big flock of Mistle Thrushes were a surprise; most are long gone by the time of our tour. Nearly a million birds are estimated to overwinter in low-lying areas of Britain.

RING OUZEL (*Turdus torquatus*) – A handful around the ski resort at Cairngorm led us on a bit of a merry dance initially, but eventually we found some in the open. Unfortunately, it's another species in quite serious decline across Britain. This highland species has the wonderful folk name of "Vicar Thrush", for that white collar around its neck.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Seen on most days, though in far, far fewer numbers than in the past. The population in Britain dropped by more than 50% between 1995 and 2010.

Prunellidae (Accentors)

DUNNOCK (*Prunella modularis*) – Reasonably common throughout, with sightings on most days. The one sitting quietly in a bush right beside the parking lot at the Westleton hotel was particularly obliging.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

WHITE WAGTAIL (BRITISH) (*Motacilla alba yarrellii*) – Another very common and widespread species, seen on all but a couple of days. The subspecies in Britain (*yarrellii*) is often called "Pied Wagtail"; it's much darker-backed than are continental birds.

MEADOW PIPIT (*Anthus pratensis*) – A few demonstrated their parachuting display flights over Kelling Quag (or perched atop some bushes there), but our best looks came in Scotland, where they were common. Above 500m in Scotland, this is the most common passerine.

TREE PIPIT (*Anthus trivialis*) – Our first was singing from a treetop (appropriately) along the river at Santon Downham, occasionally flinging itself skyward. Our best looks, though, came at Badaguish on our first visit, when we found several singing from atop eye-level spruce trees and at Loch an Eilein a few days later. This is a summer visitor to Britain.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

COMMON CHAFFINCH (*Fringilla coelebs*) – Abundant throughout, with some great views of several in a tree over some of the rooms at our Westleton hotel. Their loud descending songs and distinctive "dink" calls were a regular part of the tour soundtrack.

EURASIAN BULLFINCH (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*) – Two bathing in the little stream at Fairy Glen were quite spectacular -- and quite spectacularly cooperative. We had others briefly for some at the Westleton cemetery and Badaguish.

EUROPEAN GREENFINCH (*Chloris chloris*) – Small numbers on most days in England, with some lovely views from the Westleton hotel parking lot. The endemic subspecies found on the British Isles -- *harrisoni* -- is more duller olive and less yellow than are continental birds.

EURASIAN LINNET (*Linaria cannabina*) – Regular in small numbers in England, with a couple of birds in Avoch on the Black Isle. Our best views probably came on our second visit to Westleton Common, when we found a pair feeding quietly among the gorse.

LESSER REDPOLL (*Acanthis cabaret*) – One sitting atop a little spruce tree right beside the Farr road across the moors was a welcome, 11th-hour sighting for those who did our last pre-breakfast outing in Scotland.

SCOTTISH CROSSBILL (*Loxia scotica*) – Some great spotting (and hearing) by Malcolm brought us views of one sitting atop a tall tree in the forest near Badaguish on our first morning in Scotland. And Jeannette's picture aided in the identification! This species was split from the Red Crossbill in 1980. [E]

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH (*Carduelis carduelis*) – Common and widespread in England (including the regulars in the trees around the Westleton hotel's parking lot), with a few sprinkled in various places in Scotland as well. Their tinkling songs were a regular part of the tour soundtrack.

EURASIAN SISKIN (*Spinus spinus*) – Our first were a noisy, active little flock in the taller pines at Lynford Arboretum, but they proved far more common in Scotland, where we saw them daily. The yellow wing patch of this species is a good field mark, visible when they perched and in flight.

Emberizidae (Old World Buntings).

CORN BUNTING (*Emberiza calandra*) – One singing in an agricultural field near where we found our Eurasian Dotterels was a nice bonus, particularly as he sat perched up where we could see him. This species has declined catastrophically in Britain, and is now almost gone from the islands.

YELLOWHAMMER (*Emberiza citrinella*) – Small numbers on most days in England -- including a gorgeous male that sat right out in the open near the edge of the Westleton Common -- with others on the Black Isle in Scotland. This species is closely associated with cereal crop farming, and numbers have dropped by more than 50% since 1970, largely due to the loss of appropriate habitat.

REED BUNTING (*Emberiza schoeniclus*) – Regular in East Anglia's coastal reserves, where their simple, three-note songs were frequently heard. Most of the ones we saw were males; the females must have been sitting on eggs somewhere.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows).

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Seen on most days, often around our hotels. Surprisingly, this is another species in rapid decline across Britain, with the loss of 69% of the population between 1977 and 2010. Only suburban birds seem to be thriving, with both rural and urban birds disappearing.

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (*Passer montanus*) – A single bird among a flock of House Sparrows in Avoch, one of our first stops on the Black Isle.

MAMMALS

OLD WORLD RABBIT (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) – Seen on most days, but only in small numbers. The combination of two diseases -- myxomatosis and rabbit hemorrhagic disease -- are really knocking down rabbit numbers in Britain at the moment. This species was introduced to Britain by the Romans. [I]

EUROPEAN BROWN HARE (*Lepus europaeus*) – A scattering in East Anglia, with others on our first day in Scotland. The large size and long ears of this species quickly separate them from the smaller Old World Rabbits. Like the previous species, this one was introduced by the Romans. [I]

NORTHERN (BLUE) HARE (*Lepus timidus*) – One feeding quietly on the moors along the Farr road was a highlight of our last chilly morning in Scotland.

EUROPEAN RED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus vulgaris*) – One churred from a tree in Badaguish on our first visit there, and we saw others at Loch an Eilein. This native species has been severely impacted by the introduction of Gray Squirrels from North America.

EASTERN GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus carolinensis*) – Daily in East Anglia. The introduction of this larger species has eliminated the Red Squirrel from much of England, thanks to the double whammy of introduced diseases and increased competition. [I]

BANK VOLE (*Clethrionomys glareolus*) – One scuttled around under the feeders at Titchwell, and we saw another -- even closer -- under the feeders right outside the windows of the visitor's center at Loch Garten.

BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN (*Tursiops truncatus*) – A little pod worked offshore at Chanonry Point, delighting the tourists lined up along the shore to watch.

STOAT (SHORT-TAILED WEASEL) (*Mustela erminea*) – Ed was the lucky one who spotted one of these fierce little predators as it scampered along the path towards him at Santon Downham.

GRAY SEAL (*Halichoerus grypus*) – We saw the sleek, long-nosed head of one in the surf off Chanonry Point in Scotland, as it kept a watchful eye on the people standing along the shore.

CHINESE WATER DEER (*Hydropotes inermis*) – One near the start of the trail at Hickling Broad, beyond several goose families, showed the big rounded ears of this small species. As its name suggests, it's a species that spends most of its time in wetter habitats. This is the only deer species where the male never grows antlers -- though he does have 2-inch tusks! [I]

MUNTJAC (BARKING DEER) (*Muntiacus muntjak*) – A few in scattered locations in East Anglia -- particularly at the Westleton Common, where we watched one worm its way through the underbrush. This is another small deer, darker than the previous species and much less tied to water. [I]

FALLOW DEER (*Dama dama*) – A couple of big herds lounged on the grassy lawns at Holkham. [I]

RED DEER (*Cervus elaphus*) – A handful on the moor southeast of Inverness were a highlight of our last morning in Scotland.

ROE DEER (*Capreolus capreolus*) – We saw one in the half-light on Dunwich Heath during our first search there for nightjars, but most of our sightings came in Scotland, where we saw them daily.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 161 bird taxa and 14 mammal taxa