



East Yorkshire, 18 – 20 October 2024

Fourteen members enjoyed a weekend's birding in East Yorkshire, our first trip in the autumn for a number of years. We stayed at The Revelstoke Hotel in Bridlington, a new venue for us and we were well looked after by all the friendly staff, with good food and excellent company.

We travelled over to Yorkshire on the Friday morning and met mid-morning at North Cave Wetlands, just off the end of the motorway. This is a fine reserve belonging to Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and we stayed for a while for a coffee and comfort stop and highlights included Little Grebe, Yellowhammer, Reed Bunting and Cetti's Warbler. All the exciting birds were up on the coast, so we got back on the road to go to RSPB Bempton Cliffs. We had our lunch and then started looking for the rarity there, a Red Flanked Bluetail. A few in the group caught up with this bird but the majority didn't, but other birds we saw were Blackcap, Redwing, Tree Sparrow and huge skeins of Pink-footed Goose. We moved on to Flamborough Head where we all had point blank views of a male Black Redstart plus Gannet, late Swallow and House Martin and then a few of us at the end of the afternoon had distant views of the Pallas's Warbler. After checking in at the hotel we all enjoyed a lovely meal there in the evening and a few of us stayed down in the bar to enjoy the star turn, a girl singer – another first for a Mid-Cheshire weekend trip, we try and pull out all the stops.

After an excellent breakfast on the Saturday, the group travelled to South Landing on Flamborough Headland. We were greeted by light rain and waterproofs were the order of the day. On arrival we walked down the hill to the RNLI station and highlights here included Bar-tailed Godwit, Rock Pipit and Peregrine. Part of the group went for a circular walk back to the car park while some of us had a cup of coffee from the RNLI café and walked back up the hill. We moved up to the Head itself and all had point blank views of the Black Redstart again and also the Pallas's Warbler – in fact one of the group (no names) was heard to exclaim that the Pallas's looked just like the picture that they'd seen on somebody's phone. A few of us then saw Woodcock, some fleeting views of the Radde's Warbler that was also present, together with Stonechat and Little Gull. After lunch (including cakes that Joe treated our car to from the RNLI café) we drove back to Bempton, by early afternoon bathed in warm sunshine. One of the first birds we saw was a Water Rail, which flew across the Dell and landed on top of a gorse bush, very bizzare. Other birds we saw were Goldcrest, Yellow-browed Warbler, Sparrowhawk, Barn Owl and by the end of the afternoon all the group had caught up with the Bluetail that had eluded most of us the afternoon before. We ate at the hotel again that evening and were treated to more entertainment, this time a male singer – some wanted to get up and dance but thankfully resisted the urge.

Another hearty cooked breakfast was the order of the day on the Sunday and we said goodbye to all the staff at the hotel and proceeded back to Flamborough where we were greeted by Storm Ashley. Some decided to call it a day, but a few were let in to the sea-watching hide on the headland. Highlights over a couple of hours were Gannet, Common and Velvet Scoter, Arctic Skua, Guillemot and Mediterranean Gull. The rain and wind were relentless and we decided to travel back south-west and inland back to North Cave and hopefully hides and calmer conditions – never mind the coffee and bacon butty from

the van on the car park. Highlights this time included Little Egret, Kestrel, Snipe, Black-tailed Godwit and Marsh Harrier.

We ended up with 88 species over the weekend. The weather was pretty good generally, sunny but with some light rain on the Saturday morning and Storm Ashley's appearance on the Sunday but we travelled back on Sunday afternoon in glorious sunshine. Our accommodation was excellent with good food, both breakfasts and evening meals. Everyone enjoyed their weekend, birding together with lovely company and it was great that all the group had good views of most of the rarities. I'm sure the autumn weekend on the East coast is now firmly back on our calendar after quite a few years.

Ray Evans