

Flevo Birdwatching

birding tours in the Netherlands



Date: 29th of June 2019

Excursion: "Brabantse Biesbosch" afternoon tour

Guide: Pim

Around 10.45 guide Pim met Yvette & Alan from Canada at their Airbnb in the centre of Rotterdam. In about 40 minutes we drove to the National Park "The Biesbosch" near "Werkendam". It was an extreme hot summerday (30-33 degrees celcius) and we start this excursion with a short walk. We saw many Sand martins close to their breeding colony, also some Barn swallows with their long tale.

On some mud in the water we discovered two Little ringed plovers & a Blue headed or Yellow wagtail. The whole excursion we saw lots of White wagtails. Next to the water we also saw Northern lapwing, Eurasian oystercatcher and Black headed gull.

We got a good look at a Reed bunting and some Common linnets flew over. Also a Common kestrel was flying over, a small raptor looking for a tastfull mouse. From the reedfield we also heard a Sedge warbler, but the bird was playing hide and seek.



Greylag goose – Brabantse Biesbosch – Werkendam.

We stopped at some woodland and heard many birds singing like: Common chiffchaff, Eurasian blackcap, Winter wren and even Common nightingale, but due to the hot weather they stay out of sight. An adult male stonechat with two chicks and a family of Common whitethroats was more easy to see. During the afternoon we heard many Cetti's warbler, a bird famous for living in the undergrowth.

Later we stopped at the “Bandyke”. We saw our first Ruffs, Common redshank, Black tailed godwitt and the elegant Pied avocets. Far away also a group of Eurasian spoonbills!

In the water many Greylag geese and also a uncommon sight, a group of Water buffalo. During the last iceage water buffalo lived in Europa and The Netherlands.



Water buffalo & Scottish highlander – Brabantse Biesbosch – Werkendam.

High in the air many Common swifts, a very interesting bird.

Except when nesting, swifts spend their lives in the air, living on the insects caught in flight; they drink, feed, and often mate and sleep on the wing. Some individuals go 10 months without landing.

No other bird spends as much of its life in flight. Their maximum horizontal flying speed is 111.6 km/h. Over a lifetime they can cover millions of kilometers.

Source: Wikipedia.

We drive through the area and stopped at grasland where we heard an uncommon bird: the Common quail, the bird was just metres away. Of course we didn't see the bird, it is really rare to see it.

Today we saw lots of Black headed gulls, but while searching for the Quails we also saw Mediterranean gull!



Mediterranean gull – Brabantse Biesbosch – Werkendam.

We drove to another place and saw about eight Rudy shelducks! A group of Barnacle geese was present. Also good looks at an adult male Blue headed wagtail / Yellow wagtail.

Also a Eurasian tree sparrow was posing for us!



Eurasian tree sparrow – Brabantse Biesbosch – Werkendam.

Our next stop was at the visitor centre, a unique building. We stopped for the restrooms and lunch.





After lunch we stopped at a viewing point, many Ruffs showed up and also singing Sky larks in the air. Also Common shellduck, Pied avocet and Common redshank.

Suddenly an adult White tailed eagle appears, his nickname is "flying door", his wingspan is about 2,30 metres, in the area this large bird has it's nest!



White tailed eagle – Brabantse Biesbosch – Werkendam.



We walked to a birdhide, it was for The Netherlands extremely hot. We heard Reed warblers, Reed buntings and saw Common linnets. From the birdhide we saw the beautiful Great crested grebe, also Tufted ducks, Mallards and Gadwalls.



Great crested grebe – Brabantse Biesbosch – Werkendam.

Close to the hide we saw work of the European beaver. We also saw Blue tit, Common chiffchaff and Garden warbler.

It was time for our last stop. From this place we saw a large group of Black tailed godwits, some Ruff and Common terns flew over. Next to the path we saw European greenfinch. From a distance we saw Lesser black backed gull and Greater black backed gull, also a group of about 70 Eurasian spoonbill.



Black tailed godwit – Brabantse Biesbosch – Werkendam.





Today we managed to “catch” the following birdspecies (H= heard only):

Mute swan, Greylag goose, Barnacle goose, Canada goose, Egyptian goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Rudy shellduck, Common shellduck, Northern shoveler, Common teal, Tufted duck, Common quail (h), Great crested grebe, Eurasian spoonbil, Grey heron, Great egret, Little egret, Great cormorant, Western marsh harrier, Common buzzard, White tailed eagle, Common kestrel, Perigrine falcon, Eurasian coot, Eurasian oystercatcher, Pied avocet, Northern lapwing, Little ringed plover, Black

tailed godwit, Ruff, Common redshank, Black headed gull, Herring gull, Mediterranean gull, Lesser black backed gull, Greater black backed gull, Common tern, Wood pigeon, Feral pigeon, Common swift, Green woodpecker (h), Eurasian magpie, Northern jackdaw, Carrion crow, Blue tit, Sky lark, Barn swallow, House martin, Sand martin, Cetti's warbler (h), Common chiffchaff, Sedge warbler (h), Reed warbler, Eurasian blackcap (h), Garden warbler, Common whitethroat, Winter wren, Common starling, Common blackbird, Common nightingale (h), Stonechat, House sparrow, Tree sparrow, Blue headed / Yellow wagtail, White wagtail, European greenfinch, European goldfinch (h), Common linnet & Reed bunting (70 birdspecies)



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