

Flevo Birdwatching

Tour date:	June 8th, 2015
Name of area visited:	Zeeland, a mix of salt and fresh water, mud, open water, smaller lakes and ditches
Guide(s):	Robert de Groot

Remarkable: Mediterranean Gull, Black-necked Grebe.

Weather: Cool, windy and sunny, good weather behind windows, about 18°C.

Nederlandse naam	English name	Scientific name
Fuut	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Georde fuut	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>
Aalscholver	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Kleine zilverreiger	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Blauwe reiger	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Lepelaar	(Eurasian) Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
Knobbelzwaan	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
Grauwe gans	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
Grote Canadese gans	Greater Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>
Brandgans	Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>
Bergeend	(Common) Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
Nijlgans	Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>
Wilde eend	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Krakeend	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Tafeleend	(Common) Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>
Kuifeend	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
Bruine kiekendief	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
Buizerd	(Common) Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Torenvalk	(Common) Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Fazant	(Common) Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Meerkoet	(Common) Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Scholekster	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
Kluut	Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
Kievit	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Grutto	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Tureluur	(Common) Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Zwartkopmeeuw	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>
Kokmeeuw	Black headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
Stormmeeuw	(Common) Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>
Zilvermeeuw	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
Grote mantelmeeuw	Greater Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>
Kleine mantelmeeuw	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
Grote stern	Sandwich Tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>
Visdief	(Common) Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Dwergstern	Little Tern	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>

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Houtduif	Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Holenduif	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
Turkse tortel	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
(H) Koekoek	(Common) Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
Gierzwaluw	(Common) Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>
Groene specht	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>
Grote bonte specht	Great spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Oeverzwaluw	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
Boerenzwaluw	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Huiszwaluw	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>
Graspieper	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
Witte kwikstaart	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
Gele kwikstaart	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
(H) Nachtegaal	Rufous Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>
Merel	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Rietzanger	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
Grasmus	(Common) Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>
(H) Fluiter	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>
(H) Tjiftjaf	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Pimpelmees	Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>
Koolmees	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Staartmees	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Spreeuw	(Common) Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Gaai	(Eurasian) Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Ekster	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Kauw	(Eurasian) Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
Zwarte kraai	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
Huismus	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Putter	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Kneu	Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
Rietgors	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>
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62	4	66
Soorten waargenomen / Species observed	(H) = Alleen gehoord / Heard only	Total

Locations that were visited in chronological order. Numbers in brackets correspond to numbers on the maps below.

MONDAY June 8th 2015

Hellegatsplein (1) Starting at Katwijk, we have to drive through busy traffic towards the south. We leave the main road at Numansdorp to get onto the smaller parallel roads. We reach the Hellegatsplein area and are able to stop to watch birds. Barnacle Geese with their young, Shelduck, Avocet also with young, the first Great Egret. Common Buzzard and Marsh Harrier are present as well. From there we make a detour through farmland to reach the next point on the map. The results of that recce are not overwhelming. In the villages there are fair numbers of Collared Dove and Blackbird, but that is common knowledge. The fields are quite barren. So it is good to reach:

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Krammersluizen (2) A huge complex of sluices, locks and basins. It is part of the waterway that connects the ports of Antwerp and Rotterdam. Most barges that pass have more cargo and value than an average freight train. To enable the road traffic to continue as much as possible, the bridge over the locks is very high. Next to it is a small hide of artistic design, split level. Plants completely block the view on the lowest level, and the top floor creaks like a Stephen King movie. Pochard, Tufted Duck and Mute Swan. A few Butterflies, a Blue, on the entrance path as well as an Orchid. Common Marsh Orchid, *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*. The latter one at least stays where it is.

Grevelingendam (3) At the dam we see some people gathering Ragworms and Lugworms, to be used as fishing bait. Long rows of blue plastic floats indicate a mussel farming operation. The shells nearer to the dam are clearly Oysters. A Spoonbill is feeding here, as well as several gulls.

Dijkwater (4) This is a deep water lake/pond that owes its existence to a breach in the dike. The water running in and out of the opening scoured out more than one deep hole. After repairing the dike no one bothered to fill the holes. These are now fringed by reeds. The eastern one is a bit more shallow, there are Common Pochards, Egyptian Geese, Greylag and Mallard. The western lake is wider and deeper, three Little Egrets are easy to see, we look straight into a strong wind. It takes a while to find a spot where we can put up the telescope, so that it is out of the wind. The reward is, that we can see five Black-necked Grebes in breeding plumage. In winter one can find them here quite easily, but, frankly I did not really expect them. The book: "Atlas van de Nederlandse Broedvogels, 2002, publ: KNNV" does not report this species as breeding on the former island of Schouwen-Duiveland. At least three Marsh Harriers fly nearby. We continue towards:



Plan Tureluur Flaauwers Inlaag (5) Lunchtime. Soup and sandwiches. Close to Zierikzee, it is a former area of meadows, landscaped to become interesting for birds. Now a wetland, it is attracting many birds. We see Barnacle Geese with their young, Black-tailed Godwit and Redshanks. On an old seawall one looks at both sides. The new nature is on the north, an old Inlaag (unproductive area between dikes) on the southern side. In the latter area lies an island with three kinds of terns breeding on it, Sandwich-, Common- and Little. Avocets and Black-headed Gulls use it for breeding as well. After that we go to Koudekerkse Inlaag, a few kilometres to the west (not indicated on the map). Two Little Egrets battle against the wind. We leave the old church tower to be climbed by others. The remainder of the village that existed here, has been swallowed by the sea. A reminder to all people from Zeeland. From the main dike we can see Zierikzee, the Zeelandbrug (bridge), the island of Noord-Beveland and the Pijlerdam. This latter is a dam that allows the tides to run in and out of the Oosterschelde. Only in times of an expected abnormally high tide the visors will be closed, protecting the area behind it from flooding. A lesson from 1953 has been imprinted into each inhabitant of this province. The advantage of such a dam above a fully closed one, is the benefit to nature. The original state of the environment has been kept intact as much as possible. The Oosterschelde still has Seals, Harbour Porpoise, Lobster, Mussels and Oysters. Some of the shells of the latter are thrown on the asphalt road, gulls learn quickly.

Brouwersdam (8) There are still many kite surfers, and their associated campervans. We do see seals, swimming in front of the culvert that leads through the dam. Sometimes they disappear for a long time, not sure if they are swimming all to the other end. For the remainder the birdlife is not very impressive. A Cormorant, some Gulls and Sandwich Tern. A few Oystercatchers survive on the asphalt of the sea side of the dam. Tourism versus Nature. Out on a sandbar, some kilometres away, the shapes of seals can be seen with binoculars.

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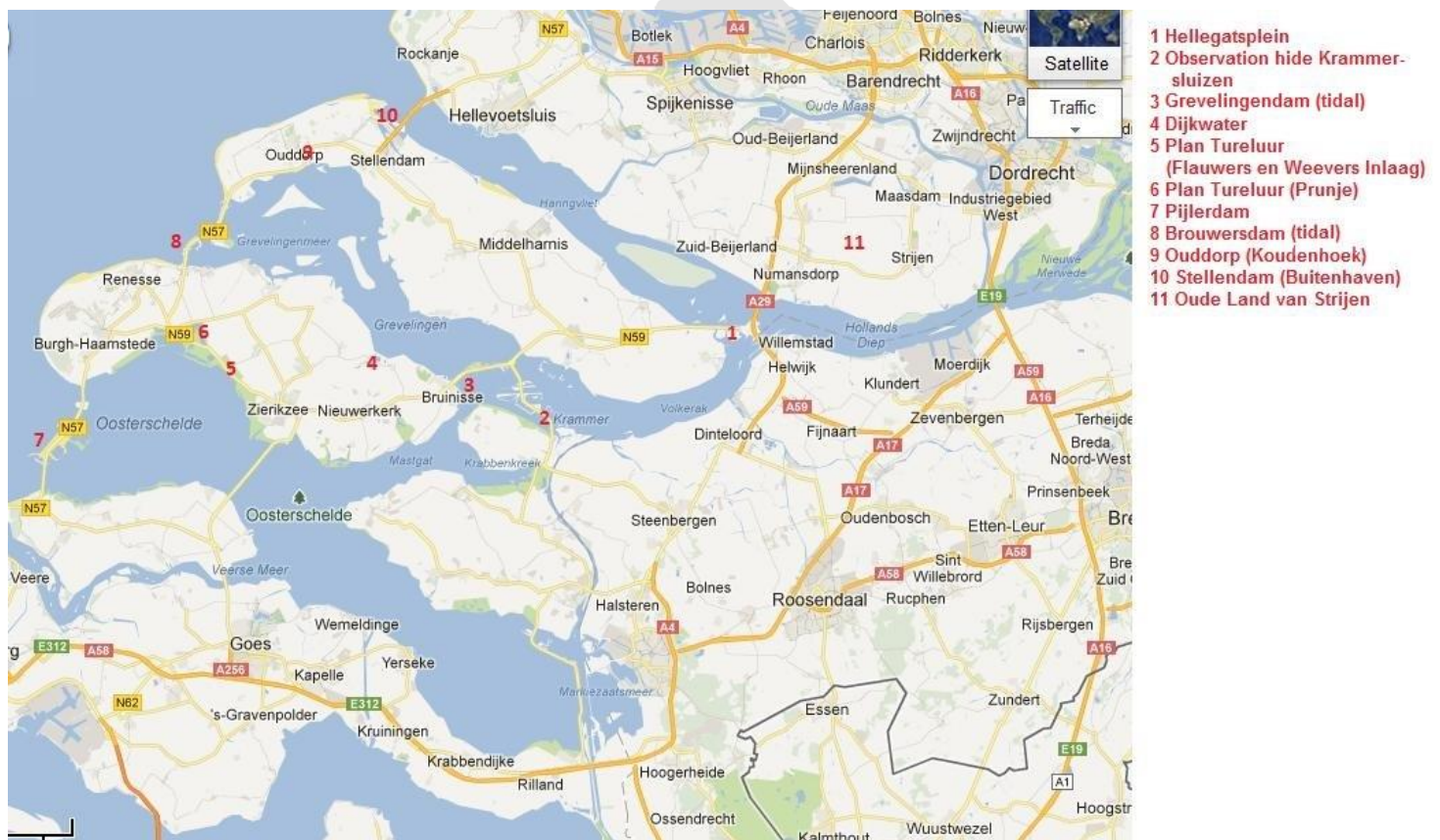
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Stellendam harbour (10) A look over the breakwater that shelters the entrance to the sluice. Redshanks braved the fierce wind, but fly away from us. Several Spoonbills are fishing on the edge of the deeper water. They seem to be very successful, lifting their heads to swallow the catch, almost after each two swipes. Black-headed Gulls on the wet sand, and Common Terns picking prey from that area as well. Cormorants, it is a howling gale by now. Time to go back.

In hindsight, always in hindsight, we might have visited the area in reverse order, to avoid the very dense traffic near Rotterdam on the way back. Although an accident on the A15, as happened that day, might not happen every day, it always is a very busy road at that time.



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