

Les Deux Caps & Marquenterre, France

Birds, Butterflies & Orchids

May 9-12

Highlights: *Singing White-spotted Bluethroat, “displaying” Honey Buzzard & migrant shorebirds.*

The itinerary & Habitat? Early morning ferry from Dover to Calais, firstly visiting the famous scenic headlands of Cap Gris Nez and Cap Blanc Nez, with scattered bushes, fields, woods & cliff tops offering super views across the Channel. Then driving down to the Somme Estuary for 3-night stay, visiting the famous Marquenterre reserve and hides overlooking the various lagoons, with surrounding conifer woods, heathland, sand dunes & extensive mudflats. Nearby excursions to Crecy Forest, Sailly Brais reedbed & Cayeux-Sur-Mer lagoons and coastline add to the extensive variety of habitat.

Birding Highlights? Terns, skuas, waders, ducks, raptors & passerines pass the Headlands, whilst sought after breeding species include Stone-curlew, Hen Harrier, Fan-tailed Warbler, Icterine & Marsh Warblers. At Marquenterre, the car park holds Crested Tit & Short-toed Treecreeper, whilst White Stork, Little & Cattle Egrets, Spoonbill & Night Heron should be nesting. Passage waders may include Wood & Green Sandpiper, Whimbrel, Greenshank, Ruff, Black-tailed Godwit & Spotted Redshank, whilst the surrounding forest, reedbeds & coastal lagoons hold Golden Oriole, Tree Pipit, Honey Buzzard, White-spotted Bluethroat, Savi’s & Grasshopper Warblers, Kentish Plover & Crested Lark. It’s a feast of birds and last year we saw over 120 species! Not forgetting the butterflies, wild flowers & orchids too, a truly excellent short wildlife Tour to Northern France.

The Accommodation? Based at the *Auberge da la Dune*, a delightful, small, friendly hotel situated just 3 km. from the Marquenterre reserve, offering en-suite accommodation with a wide range of local produce to cater for all tastes.



Honey Buzzard

Black-tailed Godwit



Cost: £545

Deposit: £150

B/L due: Mar. 9

Included in the cost: Return ferry Dover/Calais, 3 nts. accommodation & breakfast at *Auberge da la Dune*, full transportation & guidance throughout.

Not included in the cost: Evening dinners [approx. €30-45 per person per night depending on the menu chosen/a la carte], lunches & entrance to Marquenterre reserve [approx. €9.50], drinks, travel insurance & items of a personal nature.

NB: For guests who wish to “overnight” in Dover, we recommend the *Premier Inn* [Marine Parade, Dover CT16 1LW]. Tel: 01304 218260 Situated some 500m from the Ferry terminal.



Ragged Robin