

# Flevo Birdwatching

Tour date:	13-4- 2016
Name of area visited:	Oostvaardersplassen, 5600 ha wetland between Almere and Lelystad
Guide(s):	Robert de Groot

Nederlandse naam	English name	Scientific name
Fuut	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Dodaars	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Aalscholver	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Grote zilverreiger	Great Egret	<i>Casmerodius albus</i>
Blauwe reiger	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Ooievaar	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
Knobbelzwaan	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
Grauwe gans	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
Brandgans	Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>
Bergeend	(Common) Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
Nijlgans	Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>
Smient	(Eurasian) Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>
Wilde eend	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Krakeend	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Pijlstaart	(Northern) Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Slobeend	(Northern) Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
Wintertaling	(Common) Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Tafeleend	(Common) Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>
Kuifeend	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
Nonnetje	Smew	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>
Grote zaagbek	(Common) Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>
Bruine kiekendief	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
Sperwer	(Eurasian) Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Buizerd	(Common) Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Torenvalk	(Common) Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Slechtvalk	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Meerkoet	(Common) Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Scholekster	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
Kleine plevier	Little ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
Goudplevier	(European) Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>
Kievit	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Regenwulp	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
(H) Grutto	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Tureluur	(Common) Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Kokmeeuw	Black headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>

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	Stormmeeuw	(Common) Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>
	Zilvermeeuw	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
	Kleine mantelmeeuw	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
	Houtduif	Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
	Holenduif	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
	Ijsvogel	(Common) Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
(H)	Grote bonte specht	Great spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
	Boerenzwaluw	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
	Graspieper	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
	Witte kwikstaart	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
	Winterkoning	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
	Heggemus	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
	Roodborst	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
	Blauwborst	Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>
	Gekraagde roodstaart	(Common) Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>
	Merel	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
	Beflijster	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>
	Zanglijster	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
	Grote lijster	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
(H)	Snor	Savi's Warbler	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>
	Rietzanger	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
(H)	Cetti's zanger	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>
	Braamsluiper	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>
	Zwartkop	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
	Fitis	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
	Tjiftjaf	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
	Baardman	Bearded Tit	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>
	Pimpelmees	Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>
	Koolmees	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
	Staartmees	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
	Gaai	(Eurasian) Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
	Ekster	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
	Kauw	(Eurasian) Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
	Raaf	(Common) Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
	Zwarte kraai	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
	Huismus	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
	Vink	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
	Groenling	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
	Kneu	Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
	Rietgors	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>
	..	..	..
	71	4	75
	Soorten waargenomen /	(H) = Alleen gehoord /	Total
	Species observed	Heard only	

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Remarkable: Ring Ouzel

Weather: Sunny, but with a shower on the way back. Temperatures rising over 15°C, wind 2 Beaufort from south.

Locations that were visited in chronological order. Numbers in brackets correspond to numbers on the map below. In green, a general description, in black the actual observations.

Area Southwest of Almere (not on map): Looking out towards Amsterdam, a first view of land below sealevel. Next to it, a part of the lake with some floating houses, and deciduous forest. We notice Cormorant, Great Crested Grebe and Gadwall out on the water. A Mute Swan swims majestically, with wings held high and bent. On land, in a ploughed field, we find a group of Golden Plover, some 20 birds, close by 2 Whimbrel, a relatively rare bird in the area. A large flock of Meadow Pipit feed at the edge of the same field. A short while later we see a Mistle Thrush, light corners on the tail, telltale.

Natte Graslanden (19): Reclaimed agricultural land. The area is kept open using cattle. But these are just for grazing. The open, treeless, area offers opportunities for waterfowl, waders and herons. The White-tailed Eagle uses this area for hunting, as well as do Goshawk, Marsh Harrier and, in winter, Peregrine. Water level drop slightly during summer, exposing mudflats and freshwater mussels. A number of observation screens is available; one is covered with a roof. The bushes around the area are good for warblers, Cuckoo, finches. Walking towards this area we use the footpath. The birds that we see are Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff, mainly. But Linnet gives us good views as well. Close to the second hide we hear Cetti's Warbler, a visitor more widespread in the Mediterranean. From the hide we see many duck species, Pintail being one of the best, since most of these are already gone to the north. Two Peregrine Falcon cause a panic, but do not make a strike to any of the birds. Lapwing, Redshank and two geese, Barnacle- and Greylag-. Little Grebe yodels just in front of the hide.

Kwelwater (15): One of the better spots for Bearded Reedling and, during spring, Bluethroat. The fresh water lake, at one of the lowest points in the polder, dries up partly in summer. Avocets, Black-tailed Godwits, ducks make good use of it at those times. We have short looks on a Bearded Reedling, a Bluethroat and a Reed Bunting. Short, so not very satisfying. Two Marsh Harriers soar over the reeds, one surely a female, dark with a bit of cream on the head and front wing. Shelducks on the water, and Barn Swallow flies overhead. Driving to the next point we take a small detour on a dead-end dike, with nice views on Smew as a reward, two males and several females.

Trekvogellandje (18): Opposite the oldest building in this polder. The plot is next to the Lepelaarplassen and has been landscaped from agriculture to nature. In spring the area is largely flooded, giving feeding possibilities to waders and ducks. During summer it dries out, but autumn sees it going green again. Geese love it that way. A good stop, with Long-tailed Tit, a very white-headed bird. Greenfinch, and a Lesser Whitethroat. Barnswallows come to the ground, presumably to collect mud. More Linnet, Great Egret, Grey Heron and Coot. Some of the latter have nests, floating above the submerged grassland.

Parking Zuid (16): From this point you can look over large reed beds. A line of bushes growing on a shallow ridge forms a breeding colony for Cormorants and Spoonbills. Recently Great Egret have started nesting in the area, so check for these as well. Listen for booming Bittern, look for Marsh Harriers, Raven and Common Buzzard. The line of trees along the dike going to the north offers good chances for Hobby and Kestrel. A little round island close to the dike, is a leftover of a project that unfortunately started in the Second Worldwar. A Liberator bomber, returning from Germany, had been damaged, and it crashed into what was then still Lake IJssel. Only one of the crew survived. After the polder dried out, the wreckage stuck out above the water. It was recovered, together with the remains of five of the crew. When the dragline returned after having pulled out the wreck, it also took with it all the sand and clay that were used to build a temporary dam to the wreck site. This was all dumped on a single spot, creating a round island. Originally it was covered with shell and pebbles to facilitate breeding for terns and plovers. But plants had it their way, so now

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it is overgrown and probably safely holds other species. This parking we drive past, the next one has a wider reed bed next to it.

Parking Noord (17): Next to a breakwater and jetty at the IJsselmeer side of the road. On that side we normally see many gulls, ducks and terns. The breakwater itself is a resting area for terns and gulls. The sheltered water has some vegetation that is used by Snipe, ducks and geese. On the land side we can cast a distant view towards the nest of the White-tailed Eagle. This point is closest to that nest, if you are not the forester. The wide expanse of shallow open water at that side is normally sparsely occupied by birds. During periods of strong wind however, flocks of ducks and geese congregate here. Lunch, and a long look at a Bluethroat, that uses the fence as a stage. More Sedge Warblers and again we hear a Savi's Warbler. A male Marsh Harrier does a fly-by, the color pattern on the wing can be seen without binoculars. A Reed Bunting shows the black head, white collar and heavily streaked upper parts. A young male bird.

Knardijk with adjacent lakes: Keersluisplas and Bovenwater (9): The Keersluisplas is shallow, muddy and frequented, at times, by Great Egret, Shoveler, and Spoonbill. On the opposite, northern, side of the road lies Bovenwater, far deeper, with a lot of submerged vegetation. Different birds here, Goldeneye, Goosander, Great Crested Grebe, Tufted Duck and Pochard in winter, Black-necked Grebe, Black Terns in summer. It is still very quiet on this northern lake, we do not spend much time here. We use the dike to go to the eastern side of the park. Bypassing many Willow trees, that sprouted from the construction material used to strengthen the foot of the dike.

Zeearend (10): The big hut, named after the White-tailed Eagle. From here, one could see its' nest. The glass windows block the wind, but in summer it can be quite hot inside. The favourite of many, it is hardly ever a quiet place during the weekend. Shallow ponds nearby hold waders, like Godwit, Avocet, Little Ringed- and Golden Plover, Lapwing. A Red Fox has built a den underneath the concrete foundation. In summer 2015 the hut has been made accessible by improving the path, which is now lined with concrete, but the entrance to the den has been blocked, at least from the north. We walk only halfway, as the furthest part is still kept reserved for the grazers only. But even then, we keep finding new species, Wren, singing at full throttle, nesting Chaffinch and Song Thrush, a Common Redstart. Blue and Great Tit. Frog spawn showing that the temperatures are rising, frogs go for love. We try for another Bluethroat, but do not see one. The Terrapin, that we saw on the way in, is still sunning near the visitors centre.

Krakeendhut (5) Combined with the following Poelruiterhut (6): These now are located in the same development area. This is disused agricultural land. By now, the JCB's, Caterpillars and assorted yellow machines have converted it into an area with a bit more differentiation in level. Shallow lakes, reed beds, open grassland and forest represent the landscapes found inside the park. But here one is allowed to enter, using the footpaths. This landscaping has happened during Autumn of 2014, so we do not yet know how attractive this area will be in the future. This is a very rewarding stop. First of all we see Kingfisher, at the nest entrance. The brilliant blue shining as a gem. Then we notice a Stork, stepping thoughtfully over the grasslands. Lesser Ringed Plover show their characteristics; Yellow eye ring, plain white wings without a white streak. Then we notice another two or three Myrtle Thrushes. And suddenly up to three Ring Ouzels. Two more Storks fly over, one of them scares the Barnacle Geese into a panic. Besides that, Teal, Wigeon, Shoveler, Common Pochard and Coot.

Grote Praambult (8): Generally you are looking towards the west, over large expanses of grassland. Check the herds of Heck Cattle. This breed is the result of attempts by the brothers Heck, directors of the Berlin Zoo, to recreate the Aurochs, the primeval species of cattle in these countries. They look similar but are about 2 thirds of the length. Also Konik a horse breed, reminiscent of the Tarpan, the horse of yesteryears. The third big grazer is Red Deer. Their numbers swelled to over 2000 in this area. The big grazers prevent the grassland from becoming a mix of vegetations. The man, sitting next to the driver in a car leaving the parking, is Redmond o'Hanlon. Writer of "Into the heart of Borneo", and books on travelling to the Orinoco and on the Congo. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redmond\\_O%27Hanlon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redmond_O%27Hanlon) One does not have to travel all the way to visit fabulous areas, come to Oostvaardersplassen. OK, it is a bit overgrazed, but still impressive. We do not add many new species to the list, Raven, the numbers seen increase sometimes tenfold. Huge flocks of Barnacle Geese, herds of Red Deer, Heck-cattle and more Konik. The White-tailed Eagle is not on the nest,

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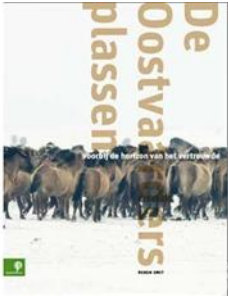
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unfortunately. Time has been running on, so we have to return to Amsterdam. The roads are full, but no jams to speak of.

If you want to read more or see more pictures? Books about the " Oostvaardersplassen":



Title: De Oostvaardersplassen, van het vertrouwde. Photography: Text: Rinske Hillen and Jan Daan met Frans Vera. ISBN 978-90-



voorbij de grenzen Ruben Smit. Hillen, in samenwerking 816300-1-6.

Title: Oostvaardersplassen, nieuwe natuur op oude zeebodem. Samenstelling: Bremer, P., Berg, L van den, Euverman, G., Wigbels, V., Tempel, J. Publisher : Staatsbosbeheer

ISBN: 90-805009-2-5



The movie poster of "De Nieuwe Wildernis", a film by Ruben Smit. Very nice images, but a tear jerking story. Première in september 2013

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Observation points in Flevoland, near the Oostvaardersplassen area.



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