

Flevo Birdwatching

Tour date:	August 20th, 2016
Name of area visited:	Oostvaardersplassen, 5600 ha wetland between Almere and Lelystad Heathland near Stroe
Guide(s):	Robert de Groot

Remarkable: Hobby, 2 birds, one hunting.

Weather: Although rain was forecasted, it remained dry, but sometimes with threatening clouds. Wind up to 3 Beaufort from SW, temperature inland up to 23°C.

Nederlandse naam	English name	Scientific name
Fuut	Great Crested Grebe	Podiceps cristatus
Aalscholver	Great Cormorant	Phalacrocorax carbo
Grote zilverreiger	Great Egret	Casmerodius albus
Blauwe reiger	Grey Heron	Ardea cinerea
Lepelaar	(Eurasian) Spoonbill	Platalea leucorodia
Knobbelzwaan	Mute Swan	Cygnus olor
Grauwe gans	Greylag Goose	Anser anser
Grote Canadese gans	Greater Canada Goose	Branta canadensis
Brandgans	Barnacle Goose	Branta leucopsis
Casarca	Ruddy shelduck	Tadorna ferruginea
Nijlgans	Egyptian Goose	Alopochen aegyptiacus
Smient	(Eurasian) Wigeon	Anas penelope
Wilde eend	Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos
Krakeend	Gadwall	Anas strepera
Slobeend	(Northern) Shoveler	Anas clypeata
Tafeleend	(Common) Pochard	Aythya ferina
Kuifeend	Tufted Duck	Aythya fuligula
Bruine kiekendief	Marsh Harrier	Circus aeruginosus
Buizerd	(Common) Buzzard	Buteo buteo
Zeearend	White-tailed Eagle	Haliaeetus albicilla
Torenvalk	(Common) Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus
Boomvalk	Hobby	Falco subbuteo
Waterhoen	Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus
Meerkoet	(Common) Coot	Fulica atra
Kluut	Avocet	Recurvirostra avosetta
Kievit	Northern Lapwing	Vanellus vanellus
Tureluur	(Common) Redshank	Tringa totanus
Oeverloper	(Common) Sandpiper	Actitis hypoleucos
Kokmeeuw	Black headed Gull	Chroicocephalus ridibundus
Stormmeeuw	(Common) Gull	Larus canus
Zilvermeeuw	Herring Gull	Larus argentatus
Kleine mantelmeeuw	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Larus fuscus
Visdief	(Common) Tern	Sterna hirundo
Houtduif	Wood Pigeon	Columba palumbus

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	Holenduif	Stock Dove	Columba oenas
	Turkse tortel	Collared Dove	Streptopelia decaocto
	Oeverwaluw	Sand Martin	Riparia riparia
	Boerenwaluw	Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica
	Huiswaluw	House Martin	Delichon urbica
	Witte kwikstaart	White Wagtail	Motacilla alba
	Winterkoning	Wren	Troglodytes troglodytes
	Paapje	Whinchat	Saxicola rubetra
	Roodborsttapuit	(Common) Stonechat	Saxicola torquata
	Merel	Blackbird	Turdus merula
	Tjiftjaf	Chiffchaff	Phylloscopus collybita
	Bonte vliegenvanger	Pied Flycatcher	Ficedula hypoleuca
	Matkop	Willow Tit	Parus montanus
	Pimpelmees	Blue Tit	Parus caeruleus
	Koolmees	Great Tit	Parus major
	Spreeuw	(Common) Starling	Sturnus vulgaris
(H)	Gaai	(Eurasian) Jay	Garrulus glandarius
	Ekster	Magpie	Pica pica
	Kauw	(Eurasian) Jackdaw	Corvus monedula
	Raaf	(Common) Raven	Corvus corax
	Zwarte kraai	Carrion Crow	Corvus corone
	Huismus	House Sparrow	Passer domesticus

	55	1	56
	Soorten waargenomen /	(H) = Alleen gehoord /	Total
	Species observed	Heard only	

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.

Just this weekend the junction between Muiden and Almere was undergoing epic restructuring. So, to reach Oostvaardersplassen from Amsterdam we had to travel via Enkhuizen.

Houtribdijk: The dike between Enkhuizen and Lelystad. This was supposed to be one of the dikes that would encircle the last polder, Markerwaard. Development of this polder was halted, when objections by environmentalists, fishermen, yachtsmen and inhabitants of the fishing villages around the lake were honoured. The dike offers a quick connection between both towns, but, in winter, has been closed several times, due to shifting ice, that piled up over the road. Even the security barriers were then ripped out of their foundations. The road leading over the dike is quite busy and there a few opportunities to stop legally and safely. Halfway a small harbour, Trintelhaven, has been constructed, to have a base from which the dike could be built as well. This has a parking.

The first stop was just past Enkhuizen, on the Houtrib-dijk. A pity in August is that all ducks are in eclipse, and even though Tufted Duck can still be recognised, they are not showing the brilliant contrast that they will have in two months time. The Great Crested Grebes still have a lot of tufts, rufous-brown. Mute Swan, Cormorant and Coot can be seen as well.

Then another stop was made halfway to Lelystad, at Trintelhaven. In the harbour itself we saw more Tufted Duck and several Gadwall. Outside the harbour, north of the dike, there were more Grebes and Cormorant, and we could admire Common Gull and Common Tern in the telescope. On the outside of the dike we found many White Wagtails. To the west, in the elbow between the main dike and the road along the harbour we

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saw more of these Wagtails. Over here we also see the first of many Grey Herons. A Common Sandpiper forages on the sand of a narrow strip of beach. A Great Tit sits in a nearby Willow tree. Walking closer we see other birds as well. A Pied flycatcher, young, greyish, forages in the foliage, very little white and hardly any contrast in its plumage. A Wren visits the same branch as well as more Great Tits. We just cast a few looks to the area south of the main road. There are no protecting breakwaters here, and it is upwind today, so it has quite some waves. Just before we reach the eastern end of the dike, we make a stop close to a small lake, constructed inside a bend of the main road. Many Starling are foraging there (Alderberry fruit is ripening now). Over the water tens of Barn Swallows hawk insects, the observation is that these birds are more steel-black-blue than those in America. With less rufous.

Knardijk with adjacent lakes: Oostvaardersplassen, Keersluisplas and Bovenwater (9): The Keersluisplas is shallow, muddy and frequented 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. Egyptian Goose, Mallard, a number of Common Pochard and some Greylag Geese make use of the Bovenwater lake. Sand Martins fly above the slopes of the Knar dike. Along the forest of Hollandse Hout, north of the dike, several Common Buzzards make use of the updrafts. The southerly wind is forced up by the trees and that makes easy gliding for the birds. .

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 surfaced with concrete, but the entrance to the den has been blocked, at least from the north. We do not go all the way to the hut, but just check on the first 300 meters of the path, while still in a bit of Willow forest. It is eerily quiet, but in the end we manage to see Willow-, Blue- and Great Tit. A Chiffchaff also flits through the foliage, had they only all been singing..... On the way back to the visitors centre, the Carp are again begging for bread. Sorry, we ourselves still need to eat.

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. But first we have coffee. We do watch the birds as well, of course. Wigeon, Gadwall, Great Canada Goose, .

Kleine Praambult (7): Very small observation point, overlooking the wide grasslands. Do check this, but if it seems empty, do not spent a prolonged period here. Also check the trees behind you for songbirds. In September 2015 they did enlarge it a bit, creating more space. . .

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 horse, 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. .Two Hobbies fly past, the first one really intent on catching one out of a flock of small songbirds. The other coming into view when the first made an upward swing in its flight. Later on we see a single bird in a dead tree, a bit confusing, we have to decide it is not a Peregrine. Stock Dove and Wood Pigeon are occupying different trees. At the far horizon some big groups of geese, Barnacle- and Greylag-, suddenly panic, and indeed, we see a White-tailed Eagle. Purposefully, it flies into the wind in the direction of the nest, but we lose sight before it reaches there. The bird must have been an immature, as no white tail was visible. Two female Marsh Harriers have light coloured heads, and the evident dihedral in the wings makes confusion unlikely. Several Raven fly into view, two of them settling on a

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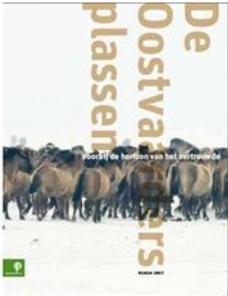


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cadaver, intent on helping to dissect a dead horse. We continue towards Nijkerk, through agriculturally well developed areas. Some farmhouses have Collared Dove, House Sparrows. And again White Wagtail. .

From that point we head towards Stroe. A heathland just north of the Hoge Veluwe. This is a stronghold for Nightjars, but some other species can be seen here as well. We find Stonechat, Whinchat, Kestrel and hear Jay. The farm / horse stables / youth hostel where we have parked the car also holds a lot of White Wagtail, what else? From there it is just a short ride to Otterlo, the village next to the Hoge Veluwe Park, in which can be found the Kröller-Müller Museum, holding quite some modern art.

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



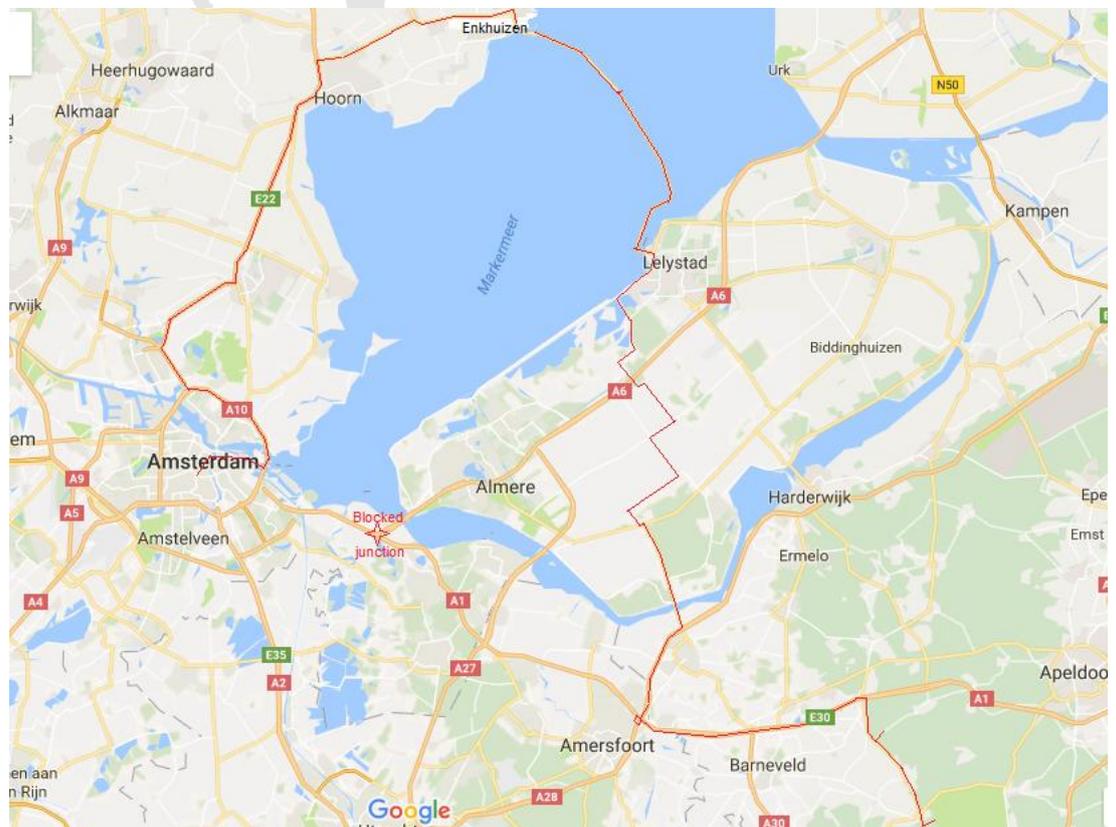
Title: De Oostvaardersplassen, voorbij de grenzen van het vertrouwde. Photography: Ruben Smit.
Text: Rinske Hillen and Jan Daan Hillen, in samenwerking met Frans Vera. ISBN 978-90-816300-1-6.

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. Premiered in september 2013

Our route today, not the straight, shortest connection, but the quickest.



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Observation points in Flevoland, near the Oostvaardersplassen area.



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