

## SANDWICH BAY BIRD OBSERVATORY HOLIDAYS



# SPRING ON THE ISLES OF SCILLY

**MAY 8TH – 15<sup>TH</sup> 2018**

**(PROVISIONAL DATES)**

### **Chilled - out birding on The Fortunate Isles**

Your chance to visit the most beautiful islands in Britain, full of exotic sub-tropical vegetation, and to see some its' exciting birds, including the chance of real rarities.

Our fourth visit , following the successful trips of 2015 and 2016 and the planned trip for October 2017

**Fourth  
Observatory trip  
to The Scillies**

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**Fine hotel  
accommodation,  
overlooking the  
sea**

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**Expert guide, with  
detailed  
knowledge of the  
islands**

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**Rare birds almost  
guaranteed!**

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**Great all-round  
value!**

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### **SBBOT**

Old Downs Farm,  
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# THE ISLES OF SCILLY, MAY 8<sup>TH</sup>-15<sup>TH</sup> 2018

## (PROVISIONAL DATES)

### OUTLINE OF THE TOUR

Following the recent successful trips for Observatory members to the almost legendary birding hot-spot of The Scilly Isles, I am now forward planning for our fourth consecutive trip in May 2018.

This is the first time that we will be going in the Spring, however, so we expect to have a very different experience to the previous trips, which have all been in October. In May we will be enjoying the breeding birds of the islands, including visits to sea-bird colonies for such species as Manx Shearwater, Puffin and Storm Petrel. Other seabirds are also present such as Guillemot, Fulmar and Kittiwake. May is also the time when rare 'overshooting' summer migrants from southern Europe regularly arrive on the islands. Recent years have seen such species as Woodchat Shrike, Bee-eater, Honey Buzzard, Golden Oriole and Subalpine Warbler. This is also the peak month for the wonderful plant life of the islands with many exotic and rare species out in bloom.

As before, the plan is to travel by luxury coach from the Observatory overnight on Monday May 8th to Penzance, in time for the two-and-a-half-hour ferry crossing to the Scillies on 'The Scillonian' on the 9th. There is a good chance of seabirds on the crossing – Gannets, skuas, terns and possible shearwaters. Arriving at Hugh Town on the main island of St. Mary's, we will transfer to our hotel, Tregarthen's, which overlooks the harbour and has fabulous sea-views towards the off-islands of Tresco and Bryher.

During the week we will explore most of the islands and their different habitats, marvelling at the sub-tropical vegetation which is such a feature of the Scillies; the pure white beaches; granite cliffs and the turquoise seas. The weather on The Scillies is always mild, but it can be wet and windy at times, too. There is no strenuous walking involved but you will need to be reasonably fit and active to tackle some of the coastal walks. The trip would also be suitable for non-birding spouses, partners or friends.

The Scillies have regularly featured in wildlife, historical and other television programmes in recent years. Non-birding highlights include the world-famous Tresco Abbey Gardens and there is much of historical interest to look out for, from Bronze Age burial sites to Second World War fortifications.

We will leave the Scillies on Monday May 14th, travelling back overnight by coach and arriving at the Observatory on the morning of Tuesday May 15th.

### ACCOMMODATION

We will be staying on a half-board basis at the *Tregarthen's Hotel* which overlooks the harbour in Hugh Town, the main town of The Scillies. This will give us easy access to the shops, banks, cafes and restaurants in Hugh Town itself, while also being very close for boarding the launches which will take us to the 'off-islands'.

Tregarthen's looked after us very well in 2015 and 2016 and have made a special provision for us at the Observatory by allowing me to reserve rooms so far in advance for this planned 2018 trip. This is the beginning of the Scillies' high season and the hotels do not normally need to take advance group bookings at this time of the year.

I have about 15 Observatory members already signed-up for this trip, (all of whom have been with me to The Scillies before). There is space for perhaps another 10 or so people, **so first come, first served.**

## **PROVISIONAL COSTS.**

### **These prices are at group-discounted rates;**

**£1100 per person** for persons in single occupancy

**£1200 per person** for persons sharing a twin or double-bedded room

### **Please note:**

- 1. These prices are based on 2016 / 2017 rates and may well go up, depending on any possible increases in transport or hotel costs.*
- 2. A donation to Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory is built in to all SBBO Holiday prices.*
- 3. As is usual practice, the hotel does not charge for accommodation for the tour leader. This does not, of course, affect the group discounted rate that you will benefit from for the ferry and your hotel accommodation.*

### **The cost would cover:**

High quality overnight coach travel from the Observatory to Penzance in Cornwall and return; your ferry trip on 'The Scillonian' and return; buffet lunch at the hotel on arrival; half-board accommodation for 7 nights at the Tregarthen's Hotel; the cost of *three trips* to any of the four main 'off-islands' and gratuities to staff at the Hotel and the coach drivers.

### **It would NOT include:**

Any other boat-trips you choose to make to the 'off-islands'; admittance to Tresco Abbey Gardens or other sites; alcoholic or other drinks at the Hotel or the cost of your lunch-time meals. (There are many nice eating-places to choose from on most of the islands or you can buy food from the shops in Hugh Town).

## **Interested?**

If you are **definitely interested** in joining this trip, I need to know **as soon as possible**.

Please **send an e-mail to me** at the e-mail address below.

I need to know the following at this stage:

- Your name(s), address and telephone numbers
- Whether you would be travelling as a single person or as a couple.
- If travelling as a single, then I also need to know whether you would be prepared to share a room.

Once I have got a final idea of how many people are interested, I will get back to you with further information and a request for your deposit.

**Ken Chapman**

**March 13<sup>th</sup> 2017**

**ken.a.chapman@gmail.com**