

Photo Essay – Marsh Warbler

The Marsh Warbler is a scarce visitor to Kent and, given that it has an unenviable record of attracting the wrong kind of interest in its nesting attempts, tends not to be widely reported. It is also a fairly difficult bird to identify unless it is singing, for that is the major claim to fame of the species, a remarkable propensity for mimicry. Superficially like a Reed warbler in appearance, it is hard to tell without prolonged clear views or catching for ringing. Still, any unstreaked *Acrocoephalus* warbler singing vigorously from scrubby cover with lots of nettles or willowherb is worth a second opinion. Just be very careful who you ask!

This year a bird arrived and sang for a few days, before apparently moving on again, a typical pattern of occurrence. Some lucky observers managed to take some excellent photographs which have already appeared on the Society's Facebook page, so they are repeated here for any who do not follow the dark arts of social media.



Marsh Warbler by Warren Baker



Marsh Warbler by Ray O'Reilly



Marsh Warbler by Warren Baker

Try to find the key ID features mentioned in your favourite Bird guide; there are also many excellent recordings of the remarkable song on the Xeno-Canto website at: <http://www.xeno-canto.org/species/Acrocephalus-palustris>

Norman McCann