



Plate 368. Spotted Sandpiper, Baron's Haugh, Clyde, July 2014. © Davie Abraham

## Spotted Sandpiper, Baron's Haugh, Clyde, 6–13 July 2014

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On 6 July 2014, late in the afternoon, I was walking along the river in the Easter Braes area of RSPB Baron's Haugh Reserve where I was trying to digi-scope a Common Sandpiper. The bird I was following flew out of view behind a scrub covered island, so I moved further downriver to get to a position where I could partially see behind the island. I hadn't been there long when suddenly two sandpipers flew out from behind the island and landed directly opposite me on a small shingle patch, below the far bank. I quickly got onto them as they landed but could scarcely believe my eyes! I could see quite clearly that one of them was heavily spotted on the underside - a smashing, unmistakable, breeding-plumaged Spotted Sandpiper!

I quickly got the scope onto the birds and managed to fire off four to five photos before they flew out of sight behind the island again. I waited for around 40 minutes with no further sight of either of the birds - I had only viewed the Spotted Sandpiper for three minutes max - so I decided to move further upriver of the island in the hope I could see them from a different vantage point. Almost immediately, I relocated the Spotted Sandpiper, it was settled on a strip of muddy shingle on the far side of the river. Again, I fired off a few digi-scoped shots before yet again it flew behind the island and out of sight.



**Plate 369.** Spotted Sandpiper (with Common Sandpiper), Baron's Haugh, Clyde, July 2014. © *Davie Abraham*

I didn't manage to see it again that evening, but Jimmy Maxwell relocated it further downriver later on, which was a big relief to the selection of local birders who also then managed to see the bird that evening.

It went missing for the next couple of days, but I eventually relocated it on the river near Carbarns Pool on 9 July. It then remained in the Carbarns area early on the next morning, allowing me to photograph and video it for a couple of hours.

### Description

Very similar in shape and plumage to a Common Sandpiper, though it had a shorter tail projection and the white underparts were heavily spotted with blackish-grey spots.

Its upperparts were sandy brown with mottled/marbled darker markings. The edges of its tertials were un-notched. It had a pale eye-ringing with a dark eye-stripe and thin white supercillium from its lores to the rear of its head.

In flight, the wing-bar was shorter than in Common Sandpiper and was restricted to the outer secondaries and inner primaries.

The bill was orangish, darkening near the tip and its legs were patchy orange and pale yellowish in colour.

On the morning of 10 July, it was very vocal and its call sounded like a quieter version of a Green Sandpiper.

This record constitutes the second record of Spotted Sandpiper for the Clyde recording area. The first was a single bird at Balgray Reservoir from 27 September to 2 October 1991.

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