



## BESIDE THE SEASIDE

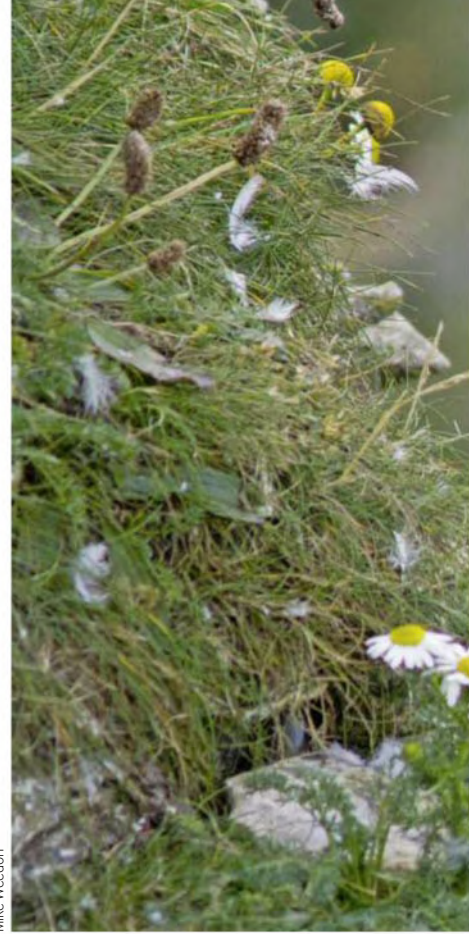
### PEREGRINE

Now they're becoming a familiar sight around our cities and inland quarries, it's easy to forget that high sea cliffs were this raptor's main refuge in the dark days of pesticide poisoning, persecution, and decline (presumably the diet of coastal breeders was less dependent on farmland species). They're still to be found there – watch for them tilting at unwitting Rock Doves, wildfowl, and even gulls.

Thomas Hanahoe / Alamy



Mike Weedon



Calum Dickson / Alamy



### BLACK REDSTART

Another species that is also found in inland cities, but which has its main breeding sites on the coast. Naturally rocky cliff sites like Beachy Head support breeding birds, but so does similar manmade habitat in East Anglian ports such as Lowestoft, Felixstowe and Great Yarmouth, and coastal power stations such as Dungeness, Bradwell and Sizewell. Look for the flash of its rufous tail.

FLPA/Paul Sawyer





### ROCK DOVE

The species from which all our domestic and feral pigeons are descended, pure Rock Doves may now only be found in Britain's most remote coastal reaches, those same feral birds having long since interbred with them. But it's worth looking for all the same. It nests on sea-cliffs, and as it swoops away from them you should be able to pick out its bright white rump.



### ↑ ROCK PIPIT

This might be one of the UK's most overlooked birds, partly because of its understated plumage (with poorly defined breast streaks), partly because, at a glance, the casual observer might dismiss it as a Meadow Pipit (it's larger and has darker legs), and partly because of its preferred habitat – rocky coasts (the similar Water Pipit is a much more inland bird).

### → SHELDUCK

One of our most underrated waterfowl, this handsome species is very much tied to the estuaries and saltmarshes of our coastline, although some pairs do breed inland. At a distance, it appears black-and-white (so can fool you that it's an Avocet), but a closer look reveals that distinctive red, knobbed bill, and the chestnut and green on the plumage.



Chris Gomersall / Alamy