

3 Night Guided Birdwatching in Western Yorkshire Dales

Trip style:

Destination:  Yorkshire Dales

Trip code: SDB03-WBR05



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Join a group of fellow nature enthusiasts and seek out some of the North West England's best birdwatching spots with an experienced ornithologist. Autumn sees thousands of birds flock to these shores and we'll visit some of the area's most popular birding sites, including RSPB Leighton Moss and Morecambe Bay. By day, you'll discover natural beauty spots where birdlife thrives and by night, you'll enjoy expert help identifying what you've spotted.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Daily guided visits to the best birding sites in the area
- Guidance from an expert ornithologist leader
- Visiting RSPB Leighton Moss and Morecambe Bay
- Chances to spot Marsh Harriers, Bittern, Bearded Tit, Hawfinch and more
- Relaxing at our country house in the Western Yorkshire Dales

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Local ornithologist leader
- All transport throughout the itinerary
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information available in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently.

TRIP SUITABILITY

Though these holidays don't cover great distances on foot, they are still active. You'll be hopping on and off the coach and should expect to spend the majority of the day on your feet. Walking to the birdwatching sites may take you across country tracks or footpaths and, at times, off the beaten track so be sure to bring sturdy shoes.

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ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Check-in at the hotel is available from 16:00. If you are a member you can arrive at the house from 14:00 in 2026. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea at 16:30 and meet other guests. After dinner this evening, your ornithologist leader will introduce themselves and the itinerary. They'll also give an introductory talk on the local area's birdlife and what you're likely to see during your holiday.

Day 2: RSPB Leighton Moss

RSPB Leighton Moss Though these holidays don't cover great distances on foot, they are still active. You'll be hopping on and off the coach and should expect to spend the majority of the day on your feet. Walking to the birdwatching sites may take you across country tracks or footpaths and, at times, off the beaten track so be sure to bring sturdy shoes. We make a fantastic start to the holiday with a visit to this popular little RSPB reserve in Silverdale, a charming village that sits on the Lancashire-Cumbria border. In the care of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds since 1964, Leighton Moss is home to a huge volume and variety of wildfowl and waders. It also has breeding Marsh Harriers, Bitterns, and Bearded Tits. We'll spend some time at the outer hides on the edge of Morecambe Bay, before visiting the main reserve and the nearby Kent estuary. If we're lucky, the starlings may treat us to one of their spectacular aerial displays. Please note that the number of starlings and the best locations for murmurations can vary daily, monthly, and yearly. If they're present, we'll do our utmost to ensure you experience this incredible natural spectacle. Please note entrance fees to Leighton Moss RSPB reserve have not been included in the price of the holiday. We know many of you are RSPB members and will be able to access the reserve free – please remember to bring your membership card. Any non-members, please allow approx. £10 per person for entrance fee.

Day 3: Sizergh Castle gardens and beyond

Sizergh Castle We'll begin our second day at Sizergh Castle. The sizeable grounds of this 16th-century stately home in Kendal are one of the best sites in the area to look for the elusive Hawfinch. After exploring the grounds we'll head to Helsington Barrows to see if we hear or even possibly see, Crossbill, and then to Roudsea Wood, with its ancient yews, to see what other wildlife we can spot. Please note entrance fees to Sizergh Castle gardens have not been included in the price of the holiday. We know many of you are National Trust members and will be able to access for free – please remember to bring your membership card. Any non-members, please allow approx. £5 per person for entrance fee.

Day 4: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

Thorns Hall

Delivering on all fronts for countryside lovers, this cosy Grade II-listed manor house is just a skip away from Sedbergh – the Cumbrian market town treasured for its cobbled streets, public school, artisan shops, and bookshops (it's known as England's official book town for good reason). You'll also have the Yorkshire Dales National Park on your doorstep as well as the Howgill Fells - the small group of hills adored by legendary fellwalker, illustrator, and guidebook author Alfred Wainwright. The walking opportunities here are outstanding, but if you fancy travelling further afield there's Kendal (home of the mint cake), Hawes, Wensleydale, Appleby-in-Westmorland, and Lake Windemere all within easy driving distance.

A warm welcome

We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

Evening entertainment

While evening entertainment varies from house to house, HF Holidays Inter-House Quiz night held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Walks talks

Our HF Holidays walk leaders host guided walking information briefings before dinner on guided walking holiday arrival days. This is followed by a group Walks Talk for information on the following day's guided walks (held before dinner every evening). Self-guided walking guests are, of course, welcome.

The walking day

Prior to setting off on guided walks, your HF Holidays Leader will run you through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure you have appropriate clothing and footwear. If you choose to do your own walks or are on a self-guided walking holiday, we ask that you please complete an Independent Walker Card each day. These can be found near the Discovery Point in the house.