Winter Waterbird Wonderland
18-24 January 2027



Pink-footed Geese by Mark Leitch

Few places can beat Norfolk for winter birding. With such a broad range of habitats, the county offers the chance to see a great range of species that have travelled to spend the winter here. Huge skeins of geese patrol the marshes, raptors and Common Cranes gather to roost, woodlands host scarce and elusive residents, and flocks of Snow Buntings shuffle along the sandy beaches. What's more, the county has a long track record of attracting overwintering rarities, adding further diversity to a tour on which we hope to see some real gems.

Itinerary

Join us for a seven-day winter birding tour across Norfolk, one of the UK's premier destinations for wintering birds. We'll explore a variety of habitats, from coastal beaches and saltmarshes to wetlands and woodlands, in search of wintering wildfowl, raptors, cranes and scarce residents. With a flexible approach and real-time updates from the BirdGuides sightings team, we'll be well placed to respond to changing conditions and any overwintering rarities – maximising our chances of encountering some truly special birds.

Accommodation will be at the boutique 3* Briarfields Hotel, located in Titchwell, for six nights.

Day 1: Arrival
Location: Briarfields Hotel, Titchwell
We'll meet at the hotel at 12 pm, then head out for an afternoon of birding around the nearby area. The location and targets will depend on recent sightings and weather conditions.

We shall then return to the hotel, allowing you time to settle into our base for the week. On the first evening, you will join the group and be greeted by your guide, who will go through the plan for the

week ahead. While we plan to visit a number of key sites, we will be staying in touch with the BirdGuides Sightings team for the latest news of rarities and scarcities, and where possible we will make the effort to see these.

Day 2: Holkham National Nature Reserve
After a hearty breakfast, we will head to our first destination, Holkham NNR. With a wide range of habitats on offer at this legendary birding site, our trip list will get off to a great start. Thousands of geese graze in the pastures, with Pink-footed, Greater White-fronted and Brent Geese usually on offer, with brilliant views of various dabbling duck on the marshes too.

The beach and saltmarsh here offer the chance of the increasingly scarce Shore Lark and Snow Bunting. Gulls and waders patrol the shoreline, while scanning offshore should produce flocks of Common Scoter and possibly scarcer species such as Long-tailed Duck and Slavonian and Red-necked Grebes. Common woodland birds can be found in the famous pines, further bolstering our day list.

If time allows, we will make a late afternoon visit to nearby marshes to search out roosting raptors. Good numbers of Western Marsh Harrier are to be expected, but Hen Harrier, Merlin and Peregrine Falcon are also possible, as is the graceful Short-eared Owl.

Day 3: Titchwell March RSPB
This morning we will explore the renowned Titchwell Marsh RSPB reserve. This is a great place for scanning the sea, with rafts of Common Scoter often joined by Velvet Scoter, Long-tailed Duck and Common Eider. Grebes and divers can also be present. The delightful Bearded Tit should also show itself in the reserve's extensive reedbeds, while the marshes can hold a good selection of waders, including Spotted Redshank. The scrub near the visitor centre has a long history of attracting interesting wintering passerines, with recent examples including Firecrest and Siberian Chiffchaff, while the elusive Eurasian Woodcock can often be found hiding in scrub by the path.

Day 4: Thetford Forest
There will be a change of scenery today as we head to Thetford Forest. This large expanse of forest is home to many speciality species and our targets here may include Hawfinch, Brambling Crossbill, Woodlark and Eurasian Goshawk at the various woodland and wetland sites.

Day 5: Cley Marshes
The famous reserve at Cley Marshes is our focus today. The coastal marshes here support large numbers of wintering wildfowl, with big flocks of Dark-bellied Brent Geese possibly giving us views of the scarcer Black Brant and Pale-bellied Brent Goose. We'll explore the shingle bank for another chance at Snow Bunting and possibly Twite, as well as take in any unusual species that may have been seen in the area.

Day 6: Norfolk Broads
On our penultimate day we will head east to the Norfolk Broads, where we have the chance to visit reserves such as Strumpshaw Fen RSPB and Buckenham Marshes RSPB. The former gives us a good chance of seeing some mammals, with Chinese Water Deer and Eurasian Otter possible. Resident Eurasian Bittern and Bearded Tit can also be found here, while the many wildfowl are often flushed by quartering Western Marsh Harriers. This is also a good place to catch up with one of Britain's most spectacular birds, Common Crane. Should the weather allow, we will make our way to the famous Hickling Broad to witness cranes arriving to roost, as well as various raptors which may include Hen

Harrier. We'll then head back to the hotel for a well-deserved final evening meal and recap on a top week of birding.

Day 7: Local sites and departure
Our final day can be flexible, covering previous sites or targeting any species that may have eluded us. Again, we can keep an eye on BirdGuides for any rarities that may be around; recent winter stars have included Black-winged Kite, Red-flanked Bluetail, Eastern Black Redstart, Pallid Harrier and many more. We say our goodbyes at approximately 2 pm, when the tour concludes.

Pricing

Our Norfolk birding tour offers exceptional value, with the price covering comfortable accommodation, ground transportation, entrance fees to all scheduled sites and reserves, and the expertise of an experienced birding guide.

Priced at £1,749 per person, a single supplement is an additional £250.

A non-refundable deposit of 20% of the total trip price, per person, is required to secure the booking. The final balance is due 60 days before the tour start date.

Included in the price:

- Accommodation throughout the tour at Briarfields Hotel;
- All evening meals from Day 1 to Day 6, and also breakfast from Day 2 through to Day 7;
- Ground transportation during the tour (minibus);
- Services of an experienced birding guide;
- Entrance fees to all scheduled sites and reserves.

Not included:

- International flights to and from the UK;
- Visa fees, if applicable;
- Travel insurance;
- Beverages and lunch;
- Optional activities not specified in the itinerary.

Trip Information

Tour leader
This tour is run exclusively for BirdGuides Travel by WildSpace. Your tour leader will be Ajay Tegala.

Group size
Eight, plus tour leader.

Minimum participants
This tour requires a minimum of five confirmed participants. If we do not have the minimum required number of participants, we reserve the right to cancel this tour. We will notify you not less than 30 days before the start of the tour should this be necessary.

Recommended items

- Binoculars;

- Telescope for scanning geese and wildfowl. Your guide will have a scope that will be shared with the group;
- Camera and waterproof camera cover;
- Water bottle and fridge bag for lunches on the go;
- Walking poles;
- Comfortable walking shoes;
- Warm and waterproof clothing as the weather can be unpredictable.

Is this tour for me?

- Several nature reserves we visit will have adapted walking trails of hard standing and gravel tracks. Other areas can be uneven underfoot;
- We will be walking on average 3 miles per day with plenty of breaks;
- The hotel is adaptable and ground floor rooms can be requested;
- The hotel can adapt to dietary requirements however cannot guarantee the absence of any allergens due to them being prepared in a kitchen containing allergens. The live menu can be found HERE;
- BirdGuides Travel tours are unsuitable for persons under the age of 16 years old. Please talk to us before booking your trip should you require further information.

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