# Wild East Anglia Spring Birding & Hidden Gems 17-21 May 2027



*Eurasian Bittern*

Join BirdGuides for a five-day spring birding journey through the wild fens, forests, and wetlands of East Anglia. From the song-filled woodlands of Thetford Forest to the reed-fringed pools of Lakenheath and Wicken Fen, this tour is timed to catch the full bloom of the breeding season. Expect encounters with iconic species such as Eurasian Stone-curlew, Common Crane, Eurasian Bittern, Common Nightingale and Eurasian Hobby, along with a supporting cast of scarce migrants and reedbed specialists. With visits to some of the country's most treasured reserves – including Ouse Washes, Woodwalton Fen, and Weeting Heath – each day offers exciting opportunities to experience the rich birdlife and unique habitats of this atmospheric region.

## Itinerary

Join us for five days of rewarding spring birding across the fens, wetlands and Breckland landscapes of East Anglia. With the breeding season in full swing and the last waves of spring migrants moving through, we'll explore a variety of habitats in search of both resident specialities and returning summer visitors. From the distinctive calls of displaying Eurasian Stone-curlews to the evocative song of Common Nightingales and the thrill of spotting a Eurasian Hobby overhead, there will be plenty to look and listen out for. We'll take a flexible approach throughout the tour, making the most of local conditions and real-time updates from the BirdGuides sightings team to maximise our chances of encountering memorable species and any unexpected rarities along the way.

Accommodation will be at the comfortable The Bramley House Hotel in Chatteris for 4 nights.

**Day 1: Arrival and Wicken Fen**

We will meet at The Bramley House Hotel at 12 pm where our tour begins in the scenic surroundings of Wicken Fen, one of the country's oldest nature reserves. Here we'll search for summer migrants and rarer breeders, with Grasshopper Warbler and Common Crane a possibility. There is also the chance of additional sightings of Eurasian Bittern and other wetland species. This relaxed first session

offers a perfect opportunity to get to know the group and enjoy the diversity of this special landscape.

**Day 2: Lakenheath Fen RSPB and Lackford Lakes SWT**
We begin our day at Lakenheath Fen RSPB, where expansive reedbeds offer excellent chances of seeing Garganey, Eurasian Bittern, Marsh Harrier, Common Crane and good numbers of Eurasian Hobbies. Later, we head to Lackford Lakes SWT, a mosaic of lakes, reedbeds and scrub. Here we'll search for Common Kingfisher, breeding wildfowl and other freshwater specialists.

**Day 3: Woodwalton Fen and Castor Hanglands**
Today we venture into some of the last remaining ancient fenland habitats in England. At Woodwalton Fen we'll have the chance to see Eurasian Bittern, Western Marsh Harrier and an array of warblers, including Grasshopper Warbler. Meanwhile, the open grasslands of the Great Fen host singing Corn Buntings, breeding Northern Lapwings and, if we're lucky, we might hear Common Quail. Mammals such as Chinese Water Deer and Water Vole are possible. If time permits, we will head into John Clare Country, to Castor Hanglands, where Common Nightingale will be among the targets.

**Day 4: Thetford Forest and Weeting Heath NWT**
Today we head to Lynford Arboretum in Thetford Forest and then on to nearby Weeting Heath NWT. The day will be spent exploring this important Breckland habitat. Key target species include Eurasian Stone-curlew, Woodlark, Tree Pipit and Spotted Flycatcher. Well also keep a lookout for Crossbill among the conifers.

**Day 5: Ouse Washes RSPB and Departure**
Our final morning will be spent at Ouse Fen RSPB, a young but rapidly developing wetland reserve that has already produced some exciting rarities in recent years. Species such as Great Reed Warbler, Ferruginous Duck, Garganey, Glossy Ibis and Red-footed Falcon have all been recorded, alongside regular sightings of Eurasian Bittern, Bearded Tit and European Turtle Dove. The tour concludes around 2 pm as the group departs on their homeward journeys.

## Pricing

Our East Anglian 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 experienced birding guides.

Priced at £1,449 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 The Bramley House Hotel
- All evening meals from Day 1 to Day 4, and also breakfast from Day 2 through to Day 5
- 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.

**Recommended items**

- Binoculars;
- Telescope;
- 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?**

- Areas can be uneven underfoot;
- We will be walking on average 2-5 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.
- 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.

**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.

## Financial Security

The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT) provides financial protection under The Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018 for Warners Group Publications plc, and in the event of its insolvency, protection is provided for the following: Non-flight packages.

ABTOT cover provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled or repatriation if you are abroad. Please note that bookings made outside the EU are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with Warners Group Publications plc.

In the unlikely event that you require assistance whilst abroad due to our financial failure, please call

our 24/7 helpline on 01702 811397 and advise you are a customer of an ABTOT protected travel company.

More information about the Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018 can be found here: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/634/contents/made