

# The Yorkshire Coast & Moors

## Naturetrek Tour Itinerary

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### Outline itinerary

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|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Day 1</b>   | Meet Scarborough                     |
| <b>Day 2/3</b> | Wildlife excursions around Yorkshire |
| <b>Day 4</b>   | Return to Scarborough after lunch    |

### Departs

June

### Focus

Birds and other wildlife

### Grading

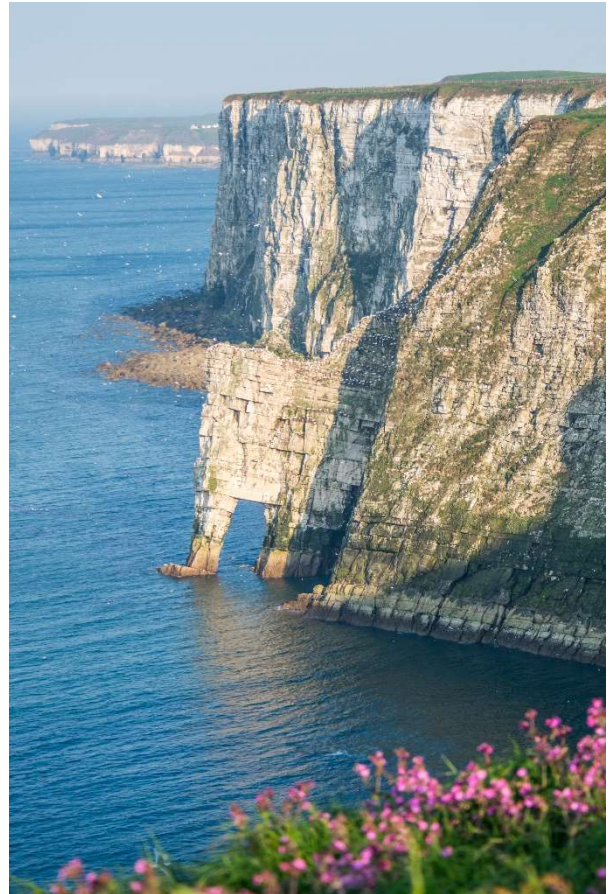
A: Easy day walks and optional evening excursions

### Dates and Prices

See [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk) (tour code GBR28)

### Highlights:

- Based in a comfortable hotel on the edge of the North York Moors
- Impressive seabird colonies at Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs
- Britain's largest mainland Gannet colony
- Search for farmland species such as Skylark, Corn Bunting and Tree Sparrow
- Moorland may species include Red Grouse, Golden Plover and Curlew
- A day in the North York Moors National Park
- A varied selection of insects including butterflies, moths, dragonflies and damselflies



From top: Bempton Cliffs, Atlantic Puffins



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## Introduction

Famous for its seaside towns of Scarborough, Filey, Whitby and Bridlington, the coast of Yorkshire has an amazing variety of wildlife habitat on its doorstep, all within easy reach for a short tour.

We will be spending one day on the Yorkshire coast visiting the towering chalk cliffs of Flamborough and at Bempton where the RSPB safeguard nearly half a million nesting seabirds including Britain's largest mainland Gannet colony, Guillemots, Razorbills, Puffins and Kittiwakes. We will also visit Filey Dams Nature Reserve and the surrounding farmland where Skylark, Corn Bunting and Tree Sparrow still maintain healthy populations.



The second full day will be spent exploring the habitat within the North York Moors National Park, to the north west of Scarborough. Here we will find managed populations of Red Grouse sharing the heather moorlands with breeding Golden Plover, Stonechat and Curlew. If we are lucky, we may catch a Merlin darting by. Also in this area, small boggy streams are home to many interesting insects. Included in the park and close to our hotel is an extensive area of forest where Crossbills are numerous and various scarce birds of prey may be seen.

During one of the evenings we will have the opportunity to visit prime Nightjar habitat where we can listen to their strange churring calls and maybe witness eerie shapes chasing after moths. Roding Woodcock are also likely to appear at dusk adding to the magical experience.

## Itinerary

*NB. Please note that the itinerary below offers our planned programme of excursions. However, adverse weather & other local considerations can necessitate some re-ordering of the programme during the course of the tour, though this will always be done to maximise best use of the time and weather conditions available.*

### Day 1

### Arrive Scarborough

The meeting point for this tour will be the tour hotel, located just outside Scarborough. There is an option to arrive by train at Scarborough Railway Station, where your tour leader will be waiting to greet arriving tour members and transport them to the tour hotel. The timings and exact arrangements will be given in the tour joining instructions, however the pick-up time will be around 1500 hours. Accommodation for the tour will be at the very comfortable East Ayton Lodge Hotel in East Ayton, Scarborough. At 1600 hours there will be opportunity to go out for a short excursion, weather permitting, or your leader will give you some more information on what to expect over the next few days. If the weather is suitable, we may take a dusk drive into a tract of prime forest habitat where Roding Woodcock and churring Nightjars will hopefully provide a spectacular finale to the day.

## Days 2 - 3

## Wildlife Excursions

Following breakfast we will make our way south towards the great chalk cliffs around Flamborough Head, and pay a visit Bempton Cliffs, one of the RSPB's premier reserves in the north of England. Here we will have the opportunity to observe many of Britain's breeding seabirds on these huge chalk cliffs which rise up to 86 metres above the sea. This is one of the great seabird spectacles of mainland England with nearly half a million nesting birds creating a cacophony of sound and constant entertainment as we look down from convenient vantage points. Gannets are the largest of the nesting species, and are also something of a success story having steadily increased numbers since the first few pairs in the 1950's to the present size of the colony which is the largest on the British mainland. As we gaze down on the sea we will probably see the adults diving for fish in spectacular fashion, creating splashes as they arrow into the water. Rows of Guillemots line precipitous ledges on the cliffs whilst neighbouring Kittiwakes prefer the security of rather more substantial seaweed nests in equally precarious locations. These delightful gulls



Northern Gannets



Atlantic Puffin

provide one of the most evocative background sounds of Bempton with their constant cries filling the air with plaintive repetitions of their name. Many thousands of pairs inhabit Bempton Cliffs but like many Kittiwake colonies in Britain they have struggled to raise young in recent years. Fulmars, Razorbills and Shags tend to avoid the high-rise ledges in favour of rocky crevices and less challenging locations nearer the foot of the cliffs whilst the most popular of all the seabirds, the comical Puffins, seek the sanctuary of burrows near the top of the cliffs, either

excavating their own or appropriating an old Rabbit hole. Some 6,000 pairs of Puffins are thought to breed at Bempton and at this late stage in their breeding season the adults will be very busy bringing back fish for their demanding youngsters which will soon exchange the safety of their burrows for the dangers of the North Sea. There are so many birds to watch at Bempton that it seems invidious to pick out one species but it is surely the Puffin that is the star of this vast seabird city.

Away from the cliffs, the patchwork of farmland stretching inland can also provide some productive birdwatching as the jangling song of Corn Bunting and the slight song of



Corn Bunting

Skylark may still be heard from these fields, and Tree Sparrows frequent the hedgerows. We will use the reserve café for our lunch stop.

From Bempton we will travel a few miles south to Flamborough Head. We will walk to the cliffs which are a little lower here. There are normally good numbers of seals in the sea and if the tide is out,



European Nightjar

many use the exposed rocks and inlet near the lighthouse. Corn Buntings and Meadow Pipits breed in the rough areas, and several orchid species may be in flower. Next, we will return north to the seaside town of Filey where we will visit Filey Dams Nature Reserve, one of the few freshwater habitats on the coast. After a full day breathing in the coastal, we will make our way back to our tour hotel for the night.

For our other full day we will depart after breakfast and spend the day exploring the North York Moors National Park. We will drive over Wheeldale Moor making several stops, including one for a picnic lunch. At the streams we may find Grey Wagtail, Mistle Thrush or even a Dipper, whilst travelling over the heather moorland we will keep our eyes open for Red Grouse, Stonechat, Curlew and Golden Plover. After crossing the moor, we will pass through the famous village of Goathland, once home to the 'Heartbeat' TV series, and Goathland Railway Station, made famous by the Harry Potter films as Hogwarts Station.

We will finish the day at Fen Bog Nature Reserve which holds a good selection of insects including the rare Large Heath butterfly. They start to emerge mid-June so we might be lucky enough to spot one.

## Day 4

## Depart Scarborough

After breakfast we will visit Wykeham Raptor Watchpoint and spend most of the morning looking for some of the raptors which occur in the forests, a variety which could include such uncommon species as Honey Buzzard and Goshawk in addition to the more familiar Common Buzzard and Sparrowhawk. We will keep an eye open on the surrounding bushes and trees as the area regularly attracts Crossbill and Siskin. As lunchtime approaches, we will descend to Wykeham for refreshments and a final discussion before returning tour members to their vehicles at the tour hotel, or back to Scarborough Railway Station where we aim to arrive by 1330 hours.

## Tour grading

Grade A – Easy day walks. All walks will be taken at a leisurely pace, and a built-in flexibility will take account of the overall abilities of the group.



## Weather

We hope for pleasant sunny days but like the rest of Britain, Yorkshire is subject to unpredictable weather. It would be prudent to be prepared for the possibility of rain, possibly heavy on occasions, and if the wind blows from the east it could depress temperatures. We can also expect cooler temperatures during our evening excursions. Insect repellent may be useful for forest outings during still weather.

## Food & accommodation included in the price

We will be staying in a comfortable tourist hotel with private facilities in each room, usually East Ayton Lodge Hotel in East Ayton, Scarborough. The holiday cost is calculated on the basis of sharing a twin-room but a limited number of single rooms may be available at a supplementary cost. Breakfasts will be taken at the hotel and evening meals in the village.

Breakfast and evening meals are included in the tour price but lunches are **not** included.

## Inclusions & Exclusions

The following costs are included in the price of the holiday:

- Half board accommodation throughout (i.e. breakfast and dinner)
- All guiding
- Transport from Scarborough
- All wildlife excursions and reserve entry fees

The following costs are **not** included and should be budgeted for:

- Lunches
- Drinks
- Discretionary tipping
- Any other personal spending e.g. souvenirs

## Arrival / departure details

We anticipate that the majority of the group will arrive into Scarborough Railway Station and so this will be our first meeting point. We will then drive to the hotel to meet anyone who has chosen to make their own way there. Exact timings will be confirmed in the tour final joining instructions, but are likely to be as follows:

## By Train

For those people wishing to travel by public transport, we will be providing a pick up from Scarborough Railway Station at approximately 1500 hours on the first afternoon. It's not always possible to wait at the station, so please do not worry if the tour vehicle is a few minutes late in arriving. The tour vehicle will be a 9-seater mini-bus. Unfortunately, because of the afternoon timetable it is regretted that we cannot wait beyond this time.

At the end of the tour we will aim to return to the station for 1330 hours. Those departing by rail from Scarborough should arrange trains to depart after this times. As train timings do vary from year to year, we would ask you to contact the Naturetrek office before booking travel arrangements that are unlikely to fit in with the timings mentioned above. Full details will be given in the final joining instructions for the tour.

## By Car

Anyone wishing to make their own way to the hotel is welcome to do so. We normally base ourselves at a hotel near Scarborough and the address will be supplied with the final joining instructions for the tour. Those who have been picked up from the station will arrive at approximately 1530 hours. The hotel will sometimes allow check-in a little earlier than this, but please do check with the Naturetrek office.

At the end of the tour your leader will let you know whether the drop off at the hotel will be before or after the station drop off.

## Clothing & Equipment

The average temperature in north east England in June is around 12-16°C, although it may feel colder higher up or near the coast due to the wind chill factor. We recommend taking warm, windproof and waterproof clothing with you for your holiday, which can be removed or added in layers as required. A good waterproof jacket and waterproof trousers are essential. It may be useful to have hat, scarf and gloves too. It is recommended to check the weather forecast for the region the week prior to your holiday. Sturdy waterproof footwear such as walking boots or shoes with warm socks are recommended. Gaiters can also be useful.

Comfortable, casual clothing and shoes are suggested for the evenings at the hotel.

The following is our recommendation of general equipment that you should bring with you.

- Binoculars
- Telescope (optional)
- Thermos Flask
- Personal first aid kit (including tweezers in case of ticks)
- Small rucksack/ day pack
- Wash kit and medication
- Camera & accessories (optional)
- Sun protection (if the forecast is for sunny weather)
- Chapstick/ Lip balm
- Insect repellent
- Field guide and reading material
- Refillable water bottle

## How to book your place

In order to book your place on this holiday, please give us a call on 01962 733051 with a credit or debit card, book online at [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk), or alternatively complete and post the booking form at the back of our main Naturetrek brochure, together with a deposit of 20% of the holiday cost plus any room supplements if required. If you do not have a copy of the brochure, please call us on 01962 733051 or request one via our website. Please stipulate any special requirements, for example extension requests, at the time of booking.

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North York Moors National Park