

The Great British Bird Race – Yorkshire

Naturetrek Wildlife Tour

Outline itinerary

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| Day 1 | Travel to Yorkshire |
| Day 1-3 | Bird Race around Yorkshire |
| Day 3 | Depart |

Departs

January

Focus

See as many bird species as possible in a 48-hour bird race

Grading

B. No long walks but many sites in quick succession. Birding at pace

Dates and Prices

See website (tour code GBR349)

Highlights:

- The thrill of the bird race
- Grouse on the moors
- Tree Sparrows and Corn Buntings in numbers
- Vast wintering wader flocks on the Humber
- Snow Buntings in the dunes
- Search for owls after dark
- Wintering Harriers
- Potentially a big total in a rich and diverse county



(From top: Knot, Red Grouse & Barn Owl (images courtesy of Shutterstock images))



Naturetrek Mingledown Barn Wolf's Lane Chawton Alton Hampshire GU34 3HJ UK

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Introduction

Welcome to Naturetrek's Winter Bird Race – a fun, friendly and fast-paced event designed to celebrate the incredible birdlife of the UK during the colder months. Over 48 hours, from 2pm on Wednesday 28th January to 2pm on Friday 30th January, you'll be part of a team aiming to see or hear as many bird species as possible across your chosen region.

This is not a competition in the traditional sense, but a shared challenge that combines camaraderie, exploration and a touch of strategy. You'll be guided by experienced tour leaders, who will plan efficient routes, navigate key habitats, and ensure everyone stays safe, warm, and energised throughout.

While the pace will be brisk to cover a wide range of habitats—from coastal marshes and ancient woodlands to reservoirs, farmland, mountains and heath—it's equally important that we all enjoy the experience. Birding should be inclusive and accessible, and leaders will always be mindful of the group's needs, offering rest breaks and adapting where necessary.

We encourage you to take in the beautiful landscapes as we go, be respectful of nature and one another and, above all, have fun. Whether your team records 90 species or 140, we hope you come away with memorable encounters, new birding friends, and a reinvigorated love for Britain's winter birds.

Good luck, happy birding – and let the race begin!



Itinerary

Please note that the itinerary below offers an outline of likely sites visited over the bird race. However, your leader will be reactive and will make judgements with the aim of seeing as many species as possible. This will always be done to maximise best use of the time and weather conditions available.

Day 1

Arrive Yorkshire

The bird race commences at 2pm and to facilitate this, we have organised a 12:00 check-in with your hotel. Please arrive in plenty of time to check in, have some lunch and be ready for the start of the Great British Bird Race

Days 1-3

Bird Race Across Yorkshire

Your leader will devise a route visiting a variety of habitats in order to achieve the maximum number of species in the 48 available hours. This will be flexible during the race depending upon many factors. These could be due to rarities being sighted locally or failure to see a target species at a specific site.

Likely sites/habitats to be visited will include:

Spurn & The Humber Estuary:

Spurn Point is legendary in British Birding folklore. It is one of Britain's premier migration hot-spots but is still worthy of attention on a winter's day. The mudflats of the Humber will be alive with Brent Geese, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Avocets, Knot, Bar-tailed Godwit and Curlew. There will be a wealth of wildfowl to be seen with herons and egrets fishing in the margins. Gull numbers can be large and scarce species such as Caspian, Iceland and Glaucous should be looked for. On land the dunes may host a flock of Snow Buntings while hedgerows could hold Reed Buntings and Yellowhammer. Wetlands at Kilnsea might hold species such as Snipe, Water Rail, Black-tailed Godwit and Redshank.

The North Yorkshire Moors:

The wide open upland heather moorland of North Yorkshire is the place to find the endemic Red Grouse. Black Grouse is also present but trickier to find and a Hen Harrier or Short-eared Owl is possible. Goshawks inhabit spruce plantations. Tumbling becks are great for Dipper and Grey Wagtail and these will be sought to maximise the group total.

Flamborough & the Yorkshire Coast:

The cliffs at Flamborough and Bempton are renowned for their breeding seabirds and, in January, a few Fulmars will already have returned to the cliffs. On the rocks below, Shags, Cormorants, Purple Sandpipers and Turnstones might be found. Offshore, there is the chance of a passing Gannet or Kittiwake and a few auks may be on the water. Feeders around the visitor centre are excellent for

Tree Sparrows and other passerines and further north, the Tees estuary is another hotspot that would warrant a visit for waders, gulls and wildfowl.

Wetland Reserves:

Inland, reserves such as North Cave are excellent for wildfowl such as Goldeneye, Wigeon, Teal and Shoveler while gulls may include Mediterranean. The surrounding Alders are excellent for Redpolls and Siskin, while Corn Bunting and Bullfinch are often also seen.

Other Habitats:

Every species will count, so farmland, scrub and urban areas will all be visited to ensure that no common bird is missed.

**Day 3****Bird Race Results & Departure**

The bird race will finish at 2pm at which point, the leaders will present their totals to the event recorder. The group will return to the hotel and the results will be announced. Expected departure for home is 4pm.

Drop-offs to stations can be organised.

Grading & Focus

The absolute focus of this tour is to see as many birds as possible. The pace will be brisk and some sightings may only be brief. Time will be of the essence and as soon as target species have been encountered, expect to move on to the next site immediately.

The tour is graded B, due to the higher than normal intensity. However, walking will be kept to a practical minimum and consideration will be given to all participants in terms of pace. The event is

designed to be fun and manageable and not to be strenuous. Expect to visit many sites with a lot of getting in and out of the minibus.

Food & Accommodation

Breakfast and dinner are included. Expect a 7am breakfast and an 8pm dinner in order to maximise daylight time in the field. Lunch is not included; expect this to be taken in the field. Your leader will stop at a convenient shop/café en route for you to purchase this.

Rooms are double and twin-bedded, all with private bathroom facilities. A limited number of single-person occupancy rooms are available and may be subject to a supplementary cost.

Clothing

The weather may be cold, wet, windy and even snowy so please be prepared. Bring several layers, including a thermal base layer and waterproof coat and trousers are required. Footwear should be sturdy, waterproof walking boots and a hat and gloves will be essential.

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

Equipment

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

- Binoculars (essential)
- Telescope (strongly advised but optional)
- Thermos Flask
- Personal first aid kit
- Small waterproof rucksack/day pack
- Wash kit and medication
- Camera and accessories (optional)
- Field guide and reading material
- Refillable water bottle

Meeting Information

By Train

The closest station is Bridlington. Transfers to the hotel can be arranged in advance through the Naturetrek Office.

By Car

If you come by car, you may drive directly to the hotel near Bridlington. Full address details will be provided in the final joining instructions for the tour. The advised arrival time is 12:00

Tour Transport

For this tour we will be using small 9-seater mini-buses for the day-to-day travel. Please assist our leaders in ensuring that there is a rotation of seats around the vehicle to allow each participant to enjoy approximately equal time in the front. In order to be fair to all, we regret that we are unable to guarantee a perpetual front seat to those who might suffer from motion sickness or other concerns.

Accommodation

If you arrive the night before the trip, or want to stay the night at the end of your trip, then we can arrange this for you at the tour hotel. Please contact the office should you wish to arrange this. Alternatively, there are plenty of accommodation options to be found on Booking.com

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, 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.

Receive our e-newsletter

Join the Naturetrek e-mailing list and be the first to hear about new tours, additional departures and new dates, tour reports and special offers. Visit www.naturetrek.co.uk to sign up.

