

# The Peak District in Spring

## Naturetrek Tour Itinerary

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### Outline itinerary

- Day 1** Arrive Hathersage; evening excursion
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- Day 2/3** Excursions from Hathersage
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- Day 4** Further explorations; depart late afternoon.
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### Departs

May

### Focus

Birds, other natural history and a little human history too

### Grading

Grade B – easy to moderate day walks, covering around 8km in total each day. Please see grading section below for more information

### Dates and Prices

Visit [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk) (tour code GBR67)

### Highlights:

- Explore the stunning scenery of the UK's oldest national park
- Possible summer migrants include Pied and Spotted Flycatcher, Redstart and Tree Pipit
- Upland species including Northern Wheatear, Whinchat, Ring Ouzel, Stonechat and Red Grouse
- Merlin and Mountain Hare also possible
- Stay at the beautiful George Hotel in Hathersage, in the heart of the Peaks



From top: Peak District National Park, Merlin, Ring Ouzel



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## Itinerary

*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

### Meet in Hathersage; evening excursion

The Peak District is one of England's most scenic and wildlife-rich regions, as well as being the UK's oldest national park. Its rolling hills, wetlands and wooded valleys are home to a fascinating variety of birds, mammals and other natural history and on this exciting short break we will explore these iconic upland landscapes in depth.

We plan to meet today at around 2pm this afternoon, to check into our comfortable hotel in the pretty village of Hathersage – in the valley of the River Derwent – and enjoy an introductory talk, perhaps a short walk and an early dinner. Then this evening (weather dependent!) we will set out in search of Nightjar, and, with luck, perhaps Long-eared Owl.

### Day 2

### Padley Gorge and Upper Derwent Valley

After breakfast this morning we will start our day's excursions by travelling just 10 minutes down the road, to visit the National Trust's Longshaw Estate. This site is a SSSI and the best example of upland oak birch woodland in the area. We will enjoy a circular walk down through Padley Gorge and back up following the Burbage Brook, covering just over 2km in total (the walk is a little rough in places, and quite steep on the return). Spring will be well and truly underway, and we will be on the lookout for Pied and Spotted Flycatchers, Redstarts, Tree Pipits and a host of other summer migrants which will all be busy proclaiming their territories in the oak woodlands.

After a productive morning we'll pause for lunch in the tea room, before returning to our vehicles and driving around half an hour north, to the spectacular Upper Derwent Valley. We will stop several times and get out of our vehicle to have a scan and a short walk, looking for such birds as Siskin, Dipper, Common Crossbill and Red-breasted Merganser. We will also take the opportunity to learn about the area's human history and links to the famous wartime Dambusters' raid, including a stop at the remains of the village of Birchinlee or "Tin Town", where the workers who constructed the Derwent and Howden Dams lived between 1902 and 1916. After a busy day we will return to our hotel to relax, enjoy dinner and discuss the day's sightings.

### Day 3

### Dearne Valley

This morning there will be the opportunity to join an optional dawn chorus walk to Stanage Edge and/or Upper Burbage Bridge, during which we will hope to find Ring Ouzel, Whinchat and Pied Flycatcher. After returning to our hotel for breakfast, we will then spend the rest of the day at a series of RSPB reserves in the Dearne Valley. We will start at Old Moor, where we will walk the well-marked trails and make use of the reserve's numerous hides. Here, we should see Bittern, Avocet and a huge variety of waders and wildfowl breed. In amongst the reedbeds, we also have a chance

of seeing Bearded Tit. Later this afternoon, we may choose to visit one of the other RSPB reserves such as Adwick Washlands, which could offer more wetland birds and breeding waders, and perhaps the chance of spotting Little Owl. Once part of one of Europe's most polluted industrial wastelands, we will hear the remarkable story of how these reserves were transformed into nationally important habitats for wildlife.

## Day 4

## Derwent Edge and Eastern Moors; depart

Our final day will be dedicated to the Peak District's picturesque moors, and the classic upland species that they support. Starting with a walk from Cutthroat Bridge to Derwent Edge and back, covering about 3km in total, we will be looking for Northern Wheatear, Whinchat, Ring Ouzel, Stonechat and Red Grouse, whilst also admiring the stunning views of the Peaks from Derwent Edge. Moving on to Snake Summit, we will walk for around 2km or so along the Pennine Way, where we should see such breeding waders as Dunlin and Golden Plover. We will also hope to see Merlin, and possibly some of England's only Mountain Hares. Then, after lunch back in Hathersage, we will finish our tour with a few hours this afternoon at the jointly managed RSPB / National Trust Eastern Moors, where we will enjoy a series of shorter walks from our vehicle and have a good chance of seeing Red Deer, plenty more summer migrants, and the wonderful views from Froggat Edge.

We will aim to return to Hathersage at around 5pm and from here will go our separate ways. You might like to consider spending another day or two in Hathersage to enjoy some more walks around the Peaks, or your tour leader will be able to drop anyone that wishes at the mainline railway station in Chesterfield on his way home.

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## Tour grading

Grade B – The distances covered are up to around 3km at a time, and approximately 8 kilometres maximum each day, all taken at a steady pace. Please note however, that the terrain on the moorland walks is particularly rocky and uneven and is therefore only suitable for confident walkers. Please contact us to discuss if you are unsure.

## Focus

Birds and a little wider natural history / human history too.

## Food & accommodation

We will be staying at the George Hotel in Hathersage. Our tour price is based on using the hotel's standard rooms, though limited numbers of 'superior' rooms, which are larger and more luxuriously furnished, are available for an additional cost (please enquire on booking if interested).

Breakfast and dinner are included in the tour cost; lunches are not. We will have breakfast at our hotel each morning, and dinner will either be back at the hotel or at a local pub in Hathersage. We will stop at a local tea room most days for lunch, though there should also be the opportunity for anyone that wishes to stop at a shop to pick up a sandwich if preferred.

## Weather

We hope for pleasant sunny days, but should come prepared for anything! It's best to bring a variety of layers, including waterproofs, and check the forecast in the run up to the tour.

## 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 at the time of booking.

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