

# Geese, Goosanders and Raptors – Trip Itinerary

2025

Operated by Wildlife Tours & Education

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26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025

£899

This is a 3 day tour to the North of England and Southern Scotland to experience the sight and sound of some of the 35,000 Barnacle geese that come from Svalbard each year to winter on our shores, Wintering Goosanders and Raptors.

Departure is from Norfolk early morning of 26<sup>th</sup> February and drop off is in Norfolk on the evening of 28<sup>th</sup> February. Pick up and drop off 'en-route' can be arranged.

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| Day 1 | Arrive Dumfries area                           |
| Day 2 | A visit to Caerlaverock and Mereshead Reserves |
| Day 3 | Leighton Moss Reserve and return to Norfolk    |
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Barnacle Geese by Carl Chapman

**Although we will endeavour to follow our planned programme due to bad weather and other considerations this is not always possible. You can rest assured that any alterations to our planned itinerary will be made to make maximum use of our time and weather conditions.**

## Overview

This is a Winter Tour to the Solway Firth as well as the largest reedbed in the North of England. We will be centred around Dumfries for our two-night hotel stay. We will visit the WWT Caerlaverock reserve and the RSPB Reserves at Mereshead and Leighton Moss to see wintering birds.

### Day 1 - Wednesday

We will leave Norfolk early morning and perhaps stop en route to take in a few overwintering birds during our journey to Dumfries where we will walk the river looking for Goosanders and Grey Wagtails as well as Otters and Dippers. Arriving at our Hotel we will have a hearty meal before retiring.

### Day 2 - Thursday

After a filling breakfast we will make our way to the RSPB Mereshead reserve. The centre of attraction will be the thousands of Barnacle geese that use the reserve during winter. Any small flocks of this goose elsewhere in the UK are usually escapes from collections or at best feral birds so the chance to study wild barnacles in their wintering quarters will be quite special. Other geese species will also be present and the chance of a rarity among them is high. We will then move onto the WWT reserve at Caerlaverock. The reserve is also used as a wintering area by raptors and owls; Peregrine and Goshawk are possible. Whooper Swans also return annually to the area as well as wintering waders and duck including over wintering Scaup and Whimbrel. Green winged Teal and Goosander are also regular visitors during February. The area is a true delight and offers a great wildlife spectacle.



Goosander by Carl Chapman

Day 3 - Friday

All too soon after breakfast we will be heading south. Making our way to Leighton Moss we will be able to explore the area and the birds it has to offer. This is the largest reedbed in Northern England. Bittern, Water Rail and Bearded Tit usually show well in winter within this RSPB reserve. There may also be a chance to visit the nearby saltmarshes where Merlin is possible. After lunch we will make a move towards Norfolk returning late evening.

What is included?

Off road parking if you wish to leave your vehicle in Norfolk.

Photographic Tuition.

All meals and lunches from lunch on day 1 to lunch on day 3 are included within the price.

Transport to and from Norfolk and pick up en route at suitable locations.

Accommodation is in en suite rooms and lunches will be packed to give us more time in the field.

A single room supplement of £45 is payable.

What is not included?

All drinks with meals and items of a personal nature.

Entry into the WWT and RSPB reserves – around £8 and £5 respectively – entry is free to members

Further notes.

This is an easily graded trip with all walking being on level ground. As always our trips are not just about birds but aim to encompass any wildlife we see.

Group Size.

4 Persons

How to Book

Please telephone 07833 463 034 or 01263 837 038 at a time convenient to yourself or email [carl@wildlifetoursandeducation.co.uk](mailto:carl@wildlifetoursandeducation.co.uk)

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