

NORFOLK IN WINTER



"I never tire of doing this trip - there is always so much to see. The sheer number of Marsh Harriers, the large flocks of geese, the number of Lapwings and Golden Plover and in amongst them all, delightful close-up views of Pintail, Avocets and other great birds - Norfolk just seems to be alive with birds."
Roy Atkins

Dates Sat 6 - Sat 13 Feb 2027
Price £2,495
Deposit £450 Single Supp £280

Leader Roy Atkins

Weather Norfolk in winter can be unpredictable. It might be lovely with plenty of sunshine - but can also be very cold indeed, if there is a northerly wind! There is always a chance of rain, so bring waterproofs and warm clothes just in case. Likely temperatures 0° - 12°C

Walking Short walks on easy terrain. Walking boots or strong shoes are recommended however, as some paths may be uneven or muddy

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8

Photos There can be some good incidental photographic opportunities

Insects Biting insects will not be a problem

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 6

Just some of what we hope to see:

Common Crane	Barn Owl
Cattle Egret	Red-throated Diver
Great White Egret	Slavonian Grebe
Short-eared Owl	Long-tailed Duck
White-fronted Goose	Velvet Scoter
Whooper Swan	Shorelark
Bewick's Swan	Cetti's Warbler
Egyptian Goose	Bearded Tit
Brent Goose	Brambling
Avocet	Hawfinch
Spotted Redshank	Water Pipit
Black-tailed Godwit	Snow Bunting
Hen Harrier	Rarities
Marsh Harrier	Chinese Water Deer
Peregrine	Reeve's Muntjac

Norfolk has exceptional birding at any time of year – but winter can be especially good, with thousands of geese, plus swans, waders, raptors, local specialities and the chance of something rare as well!

- Famous sites such as Titchwell, Cley, Holkham and Welney make for a fabulous week
- Large flocks of geese, with chance of scarcer species amongst them
- Chance of Common Cranes, Hawfinch, Avocet and maybe Bearded Tit
- Staying at delightful Briarfields Hotel - a warm welcome with great food close to Titchwell
- Fingers crossed for scarce birds - Shorelark, Bean Goose, Water Pipit and Snow Bunting
- Feeding time at Welney - ducks, geese and swans with chance of Bewick's Swan
- Marsh Harriers galore and chance of Hen Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Peregrine and Merlin

Dinner together on Saturday evening starts the holiday followed by a chat about the coming week.

2-7 Norfolk is rightly acclaimed as one of the best birding areas in the United Kingdom, with fabulous birding all year round. In winter it is simply fantastic, with exciting goose flocks, waders, raptors and specialities such as Common Cranes, Hawfinch, Chinese Water Deer, Shorelark, Egyptian Goose and with luck birds such as Bittern and Bearded Tit.

Most of the north Norfolk coast is either Reserves or great habitat for birds, with Titchwell and Cley two of the best-known sites. Their shallow lagoons host a nice mix of waders and wildfowl, while the surrounding reedbeds hold Bittern, Bearded Tit and Cetti's Warbler - though they can prove

remarkably hard to see! Marsh Harriers winter in good numbers and raptors such as Hen Harrier, Peregrine, Merlin and Short-eared Owl are also possible, while ghost-like Barn Owls are resident and can sometimes be seen from the hotel! Sites may attract wintering Ruff, Spotted Redshank, Snipe and Avocet, with a chance of Jack Snipe or Water Pipit in the margins, or Water Rail lurking in the ditches. Brent Geese can be a lovely feature of these Reserves and we'll hope for a wintering Black Brant or even a Red-breasted Goose amongst them.

The beach at Titchwell may have a small flock of Snow Buntings and if not, Holkham Beach may prove more reliable, with the chance of Shorelark here too. We'll scan the sea for Red-throated Divers, Red-breasted Merganser and





"I love the contrasts of this holiday - one minute enjoying special birds such as Common Crane, Bewick's Swan or Hawfinch, the next watching a gorgeous flock of Brent Geese fly in with their strange buzzy calls, or a mass of Lapwings in flight - then the excitement of chasing some rarity that has been reported - it is all great!" Roy Atkins

scoters, with slimmer chances of Slavonian Grebe, Long-tailed Duck or Eider. Nearby, Holkham may have enormous flocks of Pink-footed Geese and perhaps a few White-fronted Geese as well and we'll watch out for Great White and Cattle Egrets and Grey Partridge - a scarce bird these days!

On one day we shall head south east towards the Broads, where we'll look for Common Cranes. A slow drive through an area they often frequent may turn up trumps and nearby is a spot where Hen Harrier and Short-eared Owl can also be seen. We may visit Hickling Broad, where the raptor roost is remarkable, with up to 40 or more Marsh Harriers and other species such as Hen Harrier or Merlin are possible. The Common Cranes also roost here late in the day.

The woodlands and scattered trees of Lynford Arboretum are famous for their resident Hawfinches and we'll try not to become too distracted by the Nuthatch, Marsh Tit, Bramblings and Yellowhammers that may be around the feeding area. Firecrest are here, but are very elusive, as are Common Crossbill, but Treecreeper, Long-tailed Tit, winter thrushes and Green and Great Spotted Woodpeckers are possible.

Welney WWT Reserve with its heated hide, can be wonderful on a cold winter's day. Masses of Wigeon, Teal, Shoveler and Pintail winter, along with up to a thousand Pochard! Thousands of Whooper Swans feed out on the fields, with much smaller numbers of Bewick's Swans, which we shall look for - if not, there are often a few

Whoopers on the Reserve. Feeding time is a lot of fun, with Pochard and other ducks scrambling for the seed, along with small numbers of swans. Black-tailed Godwit can be numerous, while other likely waders include Ruff, Dunlin, Avocet and flocks of Golden Plover. Cattle Egret and Great White Egret are now regular here, as are distant Common Cranes.

Masses of waders can be on The Wash at Snettisham with Knot, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit and other waders providing quite a show as the tide comes in. We are not here for the big spring tides, but even if the tides are lower, the number and variety of waders make for a fabulous visit - and on the gravel pits there may be Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, grebes and waders.

Depending on recent sightings, there are so many other sites we could visit. In February, Glaucous or Iceland Gulls are possible, there may be rare geese such as Red-breasted or Snow Goose, or perhaps a Great Northern Diver or Rough-legged Buzzard. Over the years we have seen a number of rarities - Pallid Harrier, Eastern Black Redstart, Red-breasted Goose, Short-toed Lark and even a Black-winged Kite - so keep your fingers crossed for something exciting.

8 After breakfast on Saturday morning we say our farewells.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1 Arrive for a 7 night stay at Briarfields Hotel, Titchwell
- Days 2-7 Wildlife and birdwatching exploration of the Norfolk coast, Welney, the Broads and other sites
- Day 8 Depart after breakfast

Roy Atkins: Common Crane, Snettisham, Avocets, Chinese Water Deer, Whooper Swans
Jane Atkins: Pink-footed Geese
James Stevens: Shore Lark

