

NORTH WALES



"I'm just delighted to be able to show off the amazing wildlife and landscapes of north and Mid-Wales. From Black Grouse to Buzzards and from dolphins to Dippers, this stunning part of the country has so much to offer."
Iolo Williams

Dates Sat 6 - Sat 13 May 2017
Price £1,395
Deposit £250 Single Supp £200

Leaders Iolo Williams and Roy Atkins

Weather The weather will be mixed (10-20C). Expect sun and showers, with gusty wind on exposed headlands

Walking Varied, from wide forest tracks, to clifftop paths. Walking boots are recommended

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

Insects Not anticipated this early in the season

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Yellow Wagtail	Black Grouse
Whinchat	Shoveler
Chough	Ringed Plover
Dotterel	Shelduck
Puffin	Red-breasted Merganser
Razorbill	Ring Ouzel
Guillemot	Dipper
Fulmar	Redstart
Peregrine	Pied Flycatcher
Arctic Tern	Red Kite
Roseate Tern	Osprey
Hen Harrier	Wood Warbler

See the nature of North Wales with Iolo Williams - beautiful Snowdonia and Anglesey with special upland species and seabirds - in some of the UK's most outstanding scenery.

- Beautiful Snowdonia National Park and Anglesey
- South Stack for Choughs, Puffins and seabirds
- Welsh rainforests or 'hanging oaks' at Ynys-hir
- Woodland specialities: Wood Warbler, Redstart and Pied Flycatcher
- Classic upland species: Dipper, Ring Ouzel, Peregrine
- Traditional stronghold of Red Kites
- Black Grouse and Hen Harriers on the Ruabon Moors

We meet at our delightful hotel in the heart of Snowdonia National Park at Betws-y-Coed and if time allows, we shall have a stroll along the banks of the River Conwy.

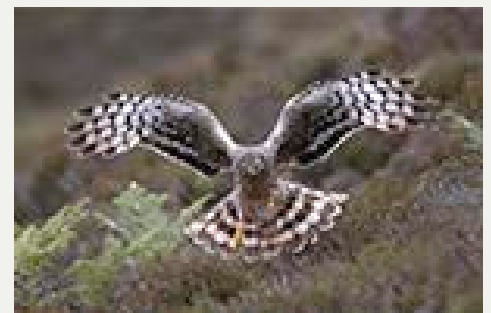
The scenic woodland walks close to the river may yield Tree Pipit, Treecreeper, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Jay, Nuthatch and assorted tits, as well as Dipper and Goosander. Snowdonia is an ancient land of wild mountains and wooded valleys; of rocky cwms and tumbling streams with a bird list that spans woodland and montane species.

2-7 We start our exploration of North Wales on Anglesey. The RSPB's South Stack Reserve offers spectacular cliff scenery and we'll get great views of the seabird colonies, with delightful Puffins, Razorbills and Guillemots, as well as Fulmar, Peregrines, Ravens and Chough.

Adders are also a possibility, as are coastal flowers such as Spring Squill and the nationally rare Spatulate Fleawort.

Elsewhere on Anglesey, at Cemlyn Bay we'll enjoy the comings and goings at the tern colonies, looking carefully through Sandwich, Common and Arctic Terns for rare Roseate Terns and if time allows, will stop in the forest at nearby Newborough to search for delightful Red Squirrels..

Being in one base, we shall be able to keep our itinerary flexible, depending on weather and species that we see, but one day will be spent on the Dee Estuary, one of the UK's premier birding locations for wetland and shorebirds and will spend time exploring its marshes to look for waders such as Lapwing, Redshank, Avocet and Black-tailed Godwit, plus wildfowl such





"From the swirling seabird colonies of South Stack, to the windswept Ruabon Moors, to the gentle 'hanging-oak' woodlands around Ynys-hir, Wales has such a variety of habitats, it's no wonder it has such a wealth of wildlife." Iolo Williams

as Shoveler and Gadwall. May can be a good month for rarities and Stone Curlew, Spoonbill, Golden Oriole, Serin and Nightingale have all been seen in the past. We shall also visit Wales' only Little Tern colony and also make sure we spend time enjoying the exquisite orchids found here.

We'll need an early morning start when we drive to the Ruabon Moors in search of special birds of the moorland. This is the best area in Wales to watch rare Black Grouse and we'll be keen to catch their courtship rituals. These moors also support populations of Red Grouse, Curlew, Skylark and Whinchat. Perhaps our greatest prize though, will be a glimpse of Hen Harriers that have traditionally frequented the area.

Another possibility is Red Kite. The Red Kite's story is a more successful one, with re-introduced birds now seen across the UK, but we'll take time to look for some of the original population that have always called Mid-Wales their home. What better sight than this elegant red-tailed raptor soaring over the 'hanging oaks' of Wales.

We shall follow the river Conwy down to its estuary where more wetland birds can be found, so expect Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Shelduck and Red-breasted Merganser amongst many others. If time allows, we shall continue to Llandudno and walk up on to Great Orme in search of late migrants such as Yellow Wagtail and Whinchat. We'll also hope to see the resident Choughs and there's always the possibility of something scarce – we've seen Dotterel at this time of year!

As we meander down and up this wooded valley system, we shall search for Hawfinch, before going on to one of the world's biggest slate quarries to look for Ring Ouzel.

The RSPB's Ynys-hir Reserve on the Dyfi estuary, home of BBC Springwatch between 2011-2013, has a picturesque mix of woodland and saltmarsh, with birds such as Pied Flycatcher, Wood Warbler and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, as well as waders and wildfowl including Little Egret, Lapwing, Common Redshank and Teal. Ospreys now breed here too, a wonderful addition to the list of birds of prey that includes Buzzard, Sparrowhawk, Kestrel, and Merlin. Nearby in the Dysynni Valley is the dramatic Craig Aderyn (this translates to Bird Rock), an inland cliff with a busy Cormorant colony, as well as Peregrines and Choughs

A further day will be spent east of Snowdonia, in Clocaenog Forest. Clocaenog is part of the greater Hiraethog Forest which covers 15000 acres, with a varied landscape of forest, open moorland, rivers and a beautiful lake. We shall walk the quiet trails to look for woodland birds such as Crossbill, Siskin and possibly Goshawk.

○ After breakfast we bid our fond farewells to this delightful area.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1 Arrive Betws-y-Coed. 7 nights at The Royal Oak Hotel
- Days 2-7 An exploration of North Wales to include South Stack and Newburgh on Anglesey, the Dee Estuary and its marshes, Conwy valley and estuary, moors of north east Wales and the forest of Clocaenog, plus the RSPB's Ynys-hir Reserve
- Day 8 Depart after breakfast

Kathy Sharman: Puffins **Simon Eaves:** Ring Ouzel
Craig Round: Arctic Tern
Pete Cairns: Hen Harrier
Mark Denman: Red Squirrel, Dotterel
John Grierson: Fulmars **Colin Scott:** Osprey

