

Settle U3A Birdwatching Group

The aim of the Settle U3A Birdwatching Group is to give members the opportunity to enjoy the experience of looking for birds, both locally and further afield.

Enjoyment is the Group's primary objective but it's hoped that, at the same time members will develop both their understanding of how birds live and their skills in identifying individual species.

The Group meets monthly. Most meetings are outdoors, with visits to prime birding sites. But indoor meetings are held two or three times a year, covering a variety of issues.

If you are interested in birds or just enjoy watching them this is the Group for you.

Black-tailed Godwits at Hellifield Flash



Latest News

The Group made the short journey to Hellifield Flash for its April meeting. Yet again the weather defied an unfavourable forecast and we were able to study the birds in warm sunshine. After enjoying excellent views of the birds on the main flash, including spectacular flight displays from a large flock of Black-tailed Godwits, we walked down to the smaller flashes and found, amongst other treats, a pair of migrating Wheatears - our first of the year!

The next day some of the Group members went to Ilkley for a presentation on [Operation Owl](#) and the efforts being made by the Police and partner agencies to eradicate raptor persecution in North Yorkshire. Members also learned how to spot and report evidence of persecution.

Contact Details

For more information about the Group and its activities contact Group Leader Les Chandler on lchandler52@gmail.com.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Programme for the rest of the year can be found on the next page.

As you can see from the Programme the Group's next meeting is on Tuesday 7th May at 10.00 am in the Castleberg Room at Victoria Hall. We'll be looking in depth at 'Woodland Birds', focusing on their songs and calls and how they look and behave. We'll discover the incredible roosting habits and engineering prowess of the Long-tailed Tit, reveal why Manx people Hunt the Wren, and find out how the Goldcrest came to be crowned as the King of the Birds. We'll also lift the lid on the amazing sex life of the Dunnock - not for the faint-hearted!

This latest incarnation of Settle U3A's Birdwatching Group is still in its first year but we're finding our feet. If you have a view on how the Group should operate, or ideas for Group activities, please don't hold back. The Group Leader, Les Chandler, won't be offended! If there's a particular species you're keen to see or a place you'd like to go just let Les know and he'll try and build it into a future programme.

Redstart



PROGRAMME: 2018-19

A 50p subscription is payable for all of the Group's activities. There may be additional costs associated with Group travel and entry to nature reserves depending on the event.

Date	Time	'Event'
Tue 7 May 2019	10.00 am to 11.30 am	Indoor Meeting: Castleberg Room, Victoria Hall Woodland Birds
Mon 10 Jun 2019	9.30 am to lunchtime	Outdoor meeting: Bolton Abbey Woods
Tue 2 Jul 2019	10.00 am to lunchtime	Outdoor Meeting: Malham Cove

NOTE:

For Outdoor Meetings we meet at the Rugby Club car park in Settle at the time shown and arrange car-sharing as necessary. All meetings are risk assessed in advance but Group Members attend meetings at their own risk.

In line with Settle U3A policy drivers should be reimbursed at the rate of £1 per passenger for half hour journeys, £2 for one hour journeys and £3 for 1½ hour journeys.

Where possible outdoor meetings will go ahead whatever the weather but if conditions are so severe that birdwatching would be pointless or travel is ill-advised meetings may have to be cancelled. An e-mail advising cancellation will be sent out up to one hour prior to the scheduled meeting time so check your in-box before setting off.

Programme: 2019-20

The draft Programme for 2019-20 is taking shape and before the end of April it will be sent out for members for comment. The draft incorporates the suggestions for talks and site visits put forward by Group members, as well as a bird-ringing session at Leighton Moss where we'll be able to visit parts of the reserve which aren't open to the public. Hopefully the Programme will also include a Ring Ouzel Safari, a chance to see this charismatic and increasingly rare summer migrant.