

# 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 three or four 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.



Harlequin  
Ducks

## Latest News

February's indoor meeting turned the Group's spotlight onto ducks, geese, grebes and divers. The session highlighted the key features that birders need to look for when identifying these species such as the Teal's green speculum, the flying Pochard's very pale wings, the head pattern on winter grebes, and the Great Northern Diver's faint white collar outside the breeding season. Group members were also introduced to some of the stranger aspects of these birds' lives including the bizarre mating behaviour of the Mallard, the amusing 'song' of the Eider, and the incredible migration of the Shelduck. And who would have believed that for 500 years people were convinced that Barnacle Geese were the offspring of .... you've guessed it: barnacles!

## Contact Details

For more information about the Group and its activities contact Group Leader Les Chandler on [lchandler52@gmail.com](mailto: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 5<sup>th</sup> March when we'll be visiting Long Preston Deeps. This section of the River Ribble floodplain is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, notable for a range of duck species and for breeding waders including Snipe, Lapwing, Curlew, Redshank and Oystercatcher. At this time of year the site also plays host to a variety of interesting migrants. In recent years these have included Brambling, Reed Warbler, Marsh Harrier, Great White Egret, Whooper Swan. and Bean Goose.

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.



Long Preston Deeps

## 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 5 Mar 2019	10.00 am to lunchtime	Outdoor Meeting: Long Preston Deeps
Tue 2 Apr 2019	10.00 am to lunchtime	Outdoor meeting: Hellifield Flash
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

If there is a site you would like to visit, a bird species you would like to see, or a subject you would like covered at an indoor meeting contact Group Leader Les Chandler on 07802 543676 or [lchandler52@gmail.com](mailto:lchandler52@gmail.com).