Birds are very vulnerable to disturbance, especially during the breeding season. It is all too easy to inadvertently harm a bird or its young while trying to watch them.

For example, if an adult bird is prevented from returning to its nest, eggs or chicks may quickly chill and die. Straying from a footpath towards a nest site may also leave a scent trail that a predator is later able to follow.

To ensure that you enjoy watching birds without harming them or their young, please always follow this code of conduct:

- The welfare of the birds must come first. Disturbance to birds and their habitats should be kept to a minimum.
- Keep to footpaths, especially during the bird breeding season (March – August).
- Avoid disturbing birds or keeping them away from their nests for even short periods especially in wet or cold weather.
- Do not try to find nests. All birds, nests, eggs and young are protected by law and it is illegal to harm them.
- Keep dogs on a short lead.
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Take your litter home with you.
The upland oak woodland of the Derwent Gorge is a dramatic relic of the once extensive forests of the North Pennines. Now a National Nature Reserve managed by Natural England, this woodland contains many interesting and unusual plants such as sweet woodruff, enchanters’ nightshade and wood bitter-cress as well as a great range of resident and migratory birds. Views across the woodland canopy from the gorge sides are impressive and are excellent for birdwatching. The walk begins on the edge of the wood in an area of arable farmland, offering opportunities for you to see both farmland and woodland birds.
Birdwatching in the North Pennines

Keys

**Easy Grade Walk**
Suitable for most people: easy, comfortable walking, may be some stiles.

**Medium Grade Walk**
Typically a country walk with some hills, stiles and muddy paths.
Boots advised.

**Hard Grade Walk**
Hill walk. May have steep or strenuous climbs. Rough moorland.
Boots essential.

A guide is also provided to indicate the best times of year to see key bird species. This can be interpreted as follows:

**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

- Blue shading indicates good months to see wintering birds.
- Orange shading indicates good months to see breeding birds.
- Green shading indicates good months to see birds on autumn or winter migration.

Please be aware that the weather can change rapidly in the North Pennines. Always carry suitable wet weather clothing with you and remember that visibility will be poor at higher altitudes in low cloud conditions.
Information Point

1:50,000 – Landranger 87
1:25,000 – Explorer 307

Linear route
2 km (1.2 miles) each way

Medium. Path steep in places and may be muddy

Limited parking on grassy triangle at junction of the minor roads leading to Crooked Oak and Wallish Walls (NZ057501)

Pub and local shop at Edmundbyers (6 km)

At Muggleswick (NZ042498)

Visit www.northpennines.org.uk for information on green places to stay

Redstart (Female)
Walk Directions

When parking, please take care to leave sufficient room for large farm machinery to pass. Walk down the road towards Crooked Oak past the row of cottages on the right and through the gate beyond the farm. Follow the well-defined track with arable fields on the left and grassland on the right.

The track descends into the woodland and continues to buildings at Lead Mill. From here, follow the footpath around the house and walled garden, keeping them on your right, to a footbridge over the River Derwent.

The path ascends steeply up through the wood to meet a track. Turn left and follow the track to a minor road.

Cross the road (take care!) and re-enter the wood, descending once more to a footbridge across a small tributary of the River Derwent.

Follow the footpath up through the wood again, keeping to the right when the path forks. After 500m the path reaches a minor road. Turn round here and return.
Yellowhammer, linnet, skylark and whitethroat can be seen in and around these fields.

Throughout the year wrens can be seen foraging amongst tangled vegetation and piles of stones, living up to their Latin name *Troglodytes*.

Listen for the songs of redstart, wood warbler, blackcap, willow warbler, chiff chaff and garden warbler during spring and summer.

In spring the woodland floor is carpeted by bluebells and the air heavy with the smell of wild garlic.
Birdwatching in the North Pennines

Map of the North Pennines AONB showing location of Walks and Sites

1. Lambley and the South Tyne
2. Tindale Tarn
3. Allen Banks and Staward Gorge
4. Chimneys on Dryburn Moor
5. Blanchland
6. Derwent Gorge
7. Burnhope Head
8. Cowshill
9. Wellhope Moor
10. Garrigill
11. Dufton Pike
12. Upper Teesdale
13. Howdon Burn
14. Blackton Reservoir
S1. Derwent Reservoir
S2. Ouston Fell
S3. Harwood Beck and Widdybank
The North Pennines is one of England’s most special places – a peaceful, unspoilt landscape with a rich history and vibrant natural beauty. In recognition of this it is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The area is also a Global Geopark – an accolade endorsed by UNESCO.

This 2.4 mile (in total) linear route explores the upland oak woodland found in the dramatic Derwent Gorge National Nature Reserve. The views across the woodland canopy from the gorge sides are impressive and excellent for birdwatching.

North Pennines AONB Partnership
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The AONB Partnership has a Green Tourism award for its corporate office

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another format.

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