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.
Soaring above the Eden Valley, the North Pennine escarpment is a striking feature above Dufton. This walk circumnavigates Dufton Pike, offering dramatic views of the limestone crags of Great Rundale. Ideal habitat for buzzards, these birds are regularly seen in this area. More elusive, the ring ouzel may also be found, singing from one of the gnarled hawthorn trees that dot the hillside.
**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.
Birdwatching in the North Pennines

Information Point

1:50,000 – Landranger 91
1:25,000 – Explorer OL19

7 km (4.3 miles). Circular route

Medium. Path is rocky and may be muddy in places

Car park in Dufton at NY689249

Public toilets in car park. Pub, local shop and Youth Hostel in Dufton

At Knock (NY680270)

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

Bus stop in Dufton. For information call Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or visit www.travelinenortheast.info

Wheatear (Female)
Walk Directions

Leave the car park and turn right on to the main road through the village (take care!). Follow the road as it bends to the left and then as the road bends to the right continue straight ahead past Old Dufton Hall Farmhouse and along a track between buildings.

Continue along this track for 800m to Pusgill House with the conical peak of Dufton Pike clearly visible ahead. Go through 3 gates and keep on the track as it skirts to the right of Dufton Pike.

After a fairly long, steady climb, you pass some sheep pens on your left. Approximately 60m beyond these, a yellow-topped post in the wall marks the location of a stile. Cross this and head down the hill to a second yellow-topped post and stile. Turn right to join the track that continues around the base of Dufton Pike alongside Great Rundale Beck.

Where the track divides, take the right fork as indicated by the post and marker. Continue over a stile in a wall keeping the beck on your right. Go over a further stone stile in the wall beside an old hawthorn tree. The path then divides. Take the lower, right hand path which continues more or less straight ahead with the wall and beck on your right.

At the bottom of the hill do not turn right. Bear left along the track, joining the Pennine Way. Follow the track up hill and between lines of old trees, through a gate and behind the buildings at Halsteads. Keep on the tree-lined path, over some stiles and through some gates to Coatsike Farm.

Follow the track through Coatsike Farm and continue until the track bends to the right and a footpath continues straight ahead marked Pennine Way. Take this footpath and continue through several gates and across a stream. When the path meets a track, turn right and retrace your steps back to Dufton.

Landscape near Knock
The first view of the wheatear is often its bold white rump as it flies away. These birds may also be seen standing and bobbing on a small mound or boulder.

Watch for buzzards soaring above Dufton Pike.

Ring ouzels feed on very short turf but are more easily located as they sing from a tree or bush. Typically associated with remote, inaccessible crags they are locally known as Fell Throstle or Crag Starling.

The limestone comprising these impressive crags was formed during the Carboniferous Period around 330 million years ago. These rocks are cut by mineral veins and have been mined in the past for lead ore and barytes.

Listen for singing warblers and redstarts on the path above Great Rundale Beck.

Hurning Lane is of medieval origin and is an ancient drove road. The hedgerow trees and hawthorn bushes flanking it are hundreds of years old and are likely to date from the period of enclosure in the 16th or 17th centuries.
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 4.3 mile circular route circumnavigates Dufton Pike on the Eastern Fellside. It’s great habitat for buzzards and you may also see the more elusive ring ouzel, singing from one of the gnarled hawthorns that dot the hillside.