

North Pennine Birdwalks

Walk 14: Blackton Reservoir



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NORTH PENNINES
One of the
AONB family

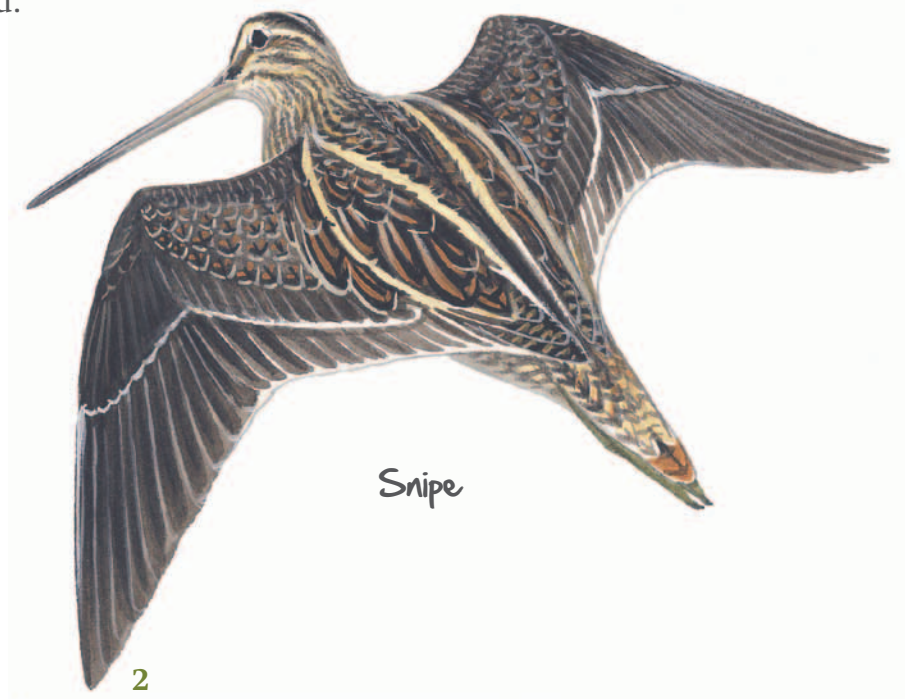
The Birdwatchers Code of Conduct

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.



Walk 14

Blackton Reservoir



Winter reservoir

The meadows, pastures and allotments of Baldersdale support large numbers of breeding waders which make an impressive sight during the spring and summer months. Like all areas of open water in the North Pennines, Blackton Reservoir also provides a refuge for wildfowl during the harsh winter months. This area is therefore worth a visit at any time of year.

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



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.



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Front cover illustration and all bird illustrations are by Mike Langman. Other images are © Natural England/Charlie Hedley or © North Pennines AONB Partnership.



Information is correct at the time of production (Aug 2012). Every effort has been made to ensure that information is accurate. However, the AONB Partnership and its Staff Unit cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions. Please check critical information before travel. Inclusion is not a recommendation by the AONB Partnership and in itself is not necessarily a guarantee of quality.



North Pennines AONB Partnership, Weardale Business Centre, The Old Co-op Building, 1 Martin Street, Stanhope, Bishop Auckland, County Durham DL13 2UY.

Information Point



1:50,000 – Landranger 92
1:25,000 – Explorer OL31



At Briscoe Gate (NY981195)



6 km (3.7 miles). Circular route



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



Medium. Many stiles, some high
and awkward. May be muddy



Small car park at the road end
(NY935176)



Public toilet at Northumbrian
Water car park at Hury dam (5
km at NY966197). Pubs and local
shop in Cotherstone (9 km)



Oystercatcher

Walk Directions

From the car park follow the road down passing the farm on your right. Walk down the hill, keeping the wall on your right. Just after the Pennine Way sign, cross the bridge over a small stream. Continue ahead and cross the stone bridge over the in-flow to Blackton Reservoir.

Turn right and continue following the grassy track alongside Blackton Reservoir. Go through the metal gate next to the Northumbrian Water information board and pass Low Birk Hat on your right. After the bend (and before the cattle grid) turn right and almost immediately left to follow the bridleway leading up the side of a field with a wall on your right.

Follow the path across three further fields to cross a small stream via a footbridge. The route continues ahead, bordered on both sides by walls. Continue ahead crossing three more fields.

On reaching a field corner, turn right and walk to a gate with the wall on your left and a short line of trees on your right. Cross the field diagonally to a small metal gate in the wall. Go through and turn left heading towards the dam.

Cross the dam and footbridge. Follow the track up and to the left. Turn left on to the minor road and after just over 100m go through the gate in a wall on your right. Walk diagonally back across the field to the top right hand corner.

Follow the path across three further fields. After the third field, cross a stile, then a stream and pass through a small area of newly planted trees. Use a new wooden stile to enter a further field.

Walk towards a barn and go through the gateway next to it, then walk diagonally to the left to meet a gate at the corner of the field. Follow the track up to East Friar Farm but before the gateway turn right and walk behind the farm, through a small gate and over a stile to enter another field.

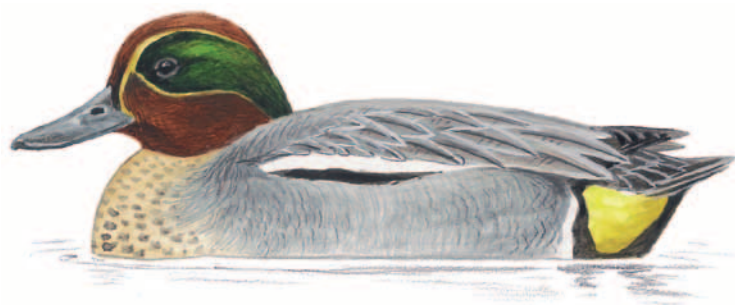
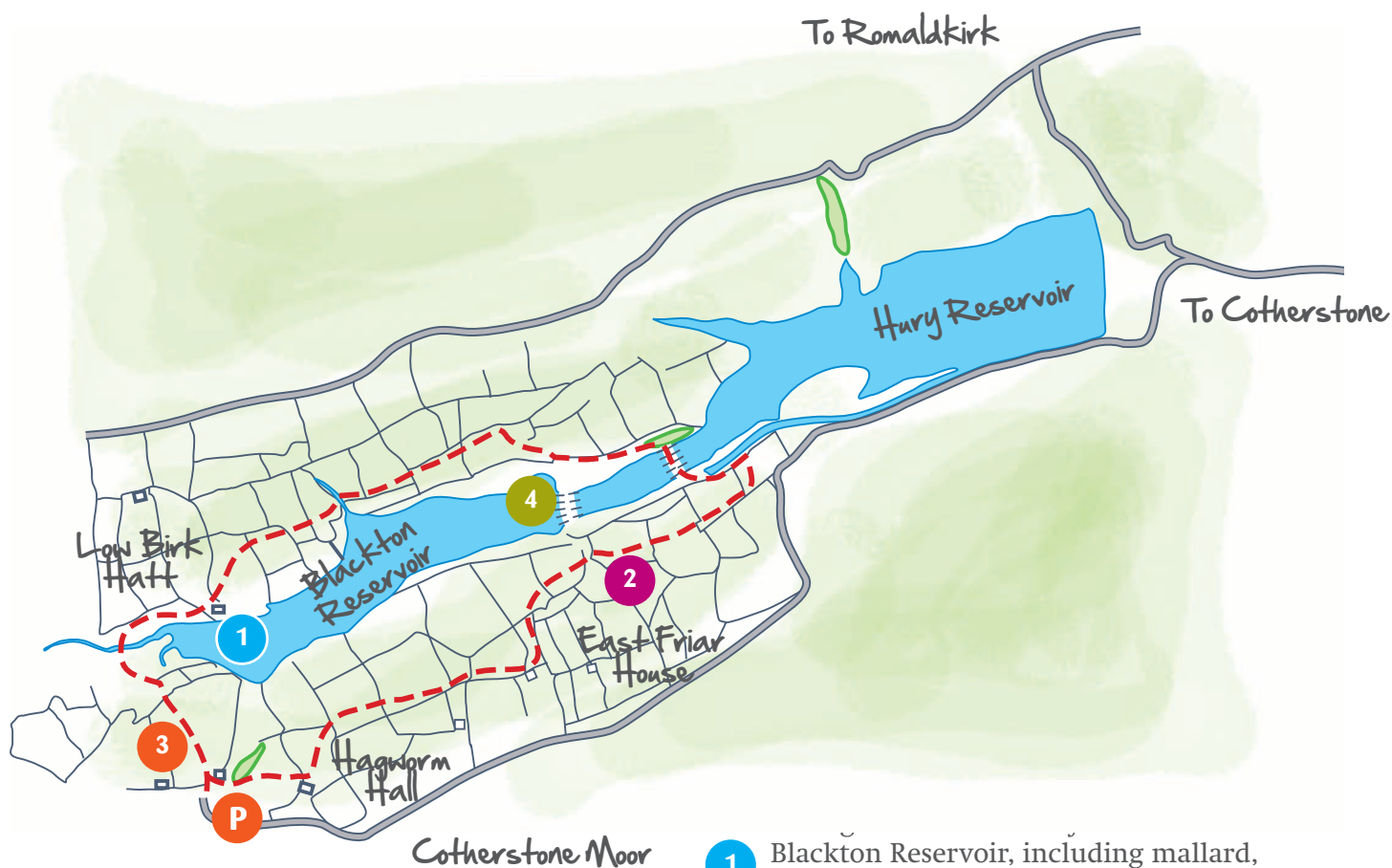
Cross this field and continue ahead to cross the next three fields. Leave the third field by a metal five-bar gate, not the way-marked stile, and walk diagonally left and up towards Hagworm Hall, crossing a small stream in the middle of the field.

Cross the stile behind Hagworm Hall and then continue ahead across a further field towards a small woodland. Cross the stile and a further small field and then skirt round the left edge of the wood.

Cross a stile leading down to a small footbridge across a stream. Turn left and follow the path up to a gate. From the gate, turn left and follow the track back up a short incline to the car park.

Walk 14

Blackton Reservoir



Teal (male)

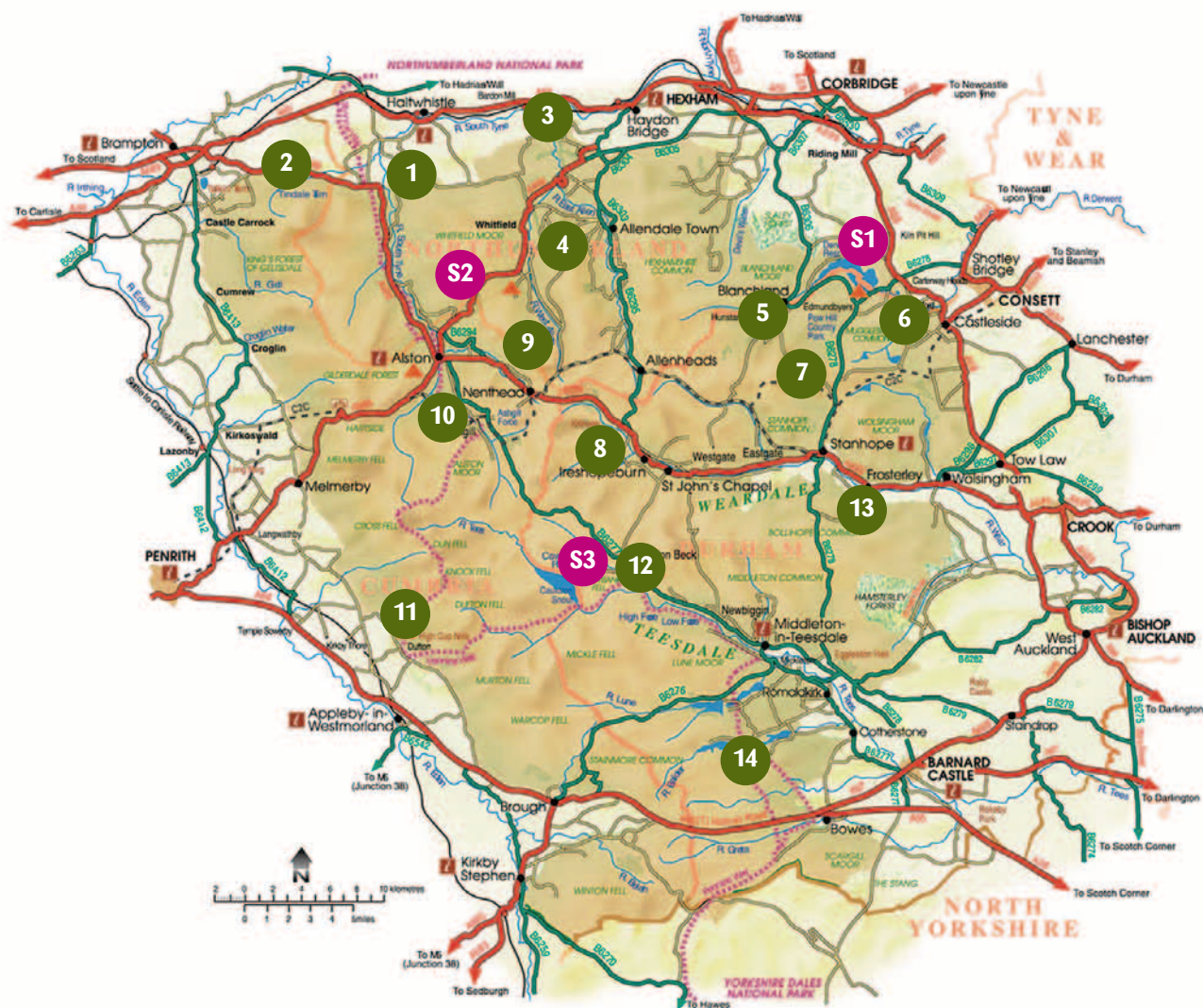
- 1 Blackton Reservoir, including mallard, teal, tufted duck, wigeon and goosander. Look out for moorhen, heron and reed bunting around the margins of the reservoir.
- 2 Listen out for the springtime songs of waders such as curlew, lapwing, redshank and snipe as they display over their territories in surrounding pastures and allotments.
- 3 Keep an eye out for buzzards soaring overhead.
- 4 Areas of open water are good places to watch swallows, martins and swifts as they swoop low over the water to catch insects in summer.

BEST TIME TO VISIT





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



- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Lambley and the South Tyne | 10 Garrigill |
| 2 Tindale Tarn | 11 Dufton Pike |
| 3 Allen Banks and Staward Gorge | 12 Upper Teesdale |
| 4 Chimneys on Dryburn Moor | 13 Howdon Burn |
| 5 Blanchland | 14 Blackton Reservoir |
| 6 Derwent Gorge | S1 Derwent Reservoir |
| 7 Burnhope Head | S2 Ouston Fell |
| 8 Cowshill | S3 Harwood Beck and Widdybank |
| 9 Wellhope Moor | |

NORTH PENNINES



Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



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 3.7 mile circular route goes round Blackton Reservoir, set in the dramatic landscape of Baldersdale. You'll pass through meadows, pastures and allotments which support large numbers of breeding wading birds. The reservoir also provides a refuge for wildfowl during the winter.

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

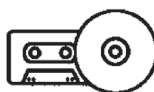


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