

The Solway Firth, Dumfries & Galloway **NEW**

Early Spring Wildfowl Spectacular

“In Comfort & Style”

March 18-22

Highlights should include: Thousands of Barnacle Geese, trumpeting herds of Whooper Swans, rafts of Scaup & Red-throated Divers, and Red Kites overhead, all amidst dramatic coastal scenery!

The Habitat? A vast, wild and internationally important area for wildfowl, the Solway Firth is a magical place for birding! Each Winter thousands of wildfowl flock to the Caerlaverock NNR which embraces a vast stretch of sea, sand flats & “merse” [saltmarsh]. To the west lies the mostly enclosed sea loch of Loch Ryan, one of the best sites in all Scotland to watch winter sea duck, whilst inland to the north can be found Loch Ken, a magnet for wintering wildfowl, along with the well established gathering of Red Kites.



Goldeneye

The Birds: Caerlaverock WWT, a spectacular reserve, is “home” to 5000+ Barnacle Geese along with Pink-footed Geese and herds of Whooper Swans. On the Inner Solway & River Nith Estuary, thousands of Dunlin, Knot, Curlew & Bar-tailed Godwit can be found, along with Shelduck, Pintail, Wigeon, Teal & Gadwall. Purple Sandpiper favour the rocks at Southernness Point, whilst the RSPB Mersehead Reserve holds further numbers of wintering geese & wildfowl. Black Guillemot & Slavonian Grebe, Red-throated & Black-throated Divers, Scaup, Common Scoter, Red-breasted Merganser & Long-tailed Duck are all to be found at Loch Ryan, whilst the RSPB Ken-Dee Marshes hold Greenland White-fronted Geese.

Nearby we shall visit the Kite feeding station at Bellymack Farm and then explore the wild Laurieston-Creetown area for raptors inc. Hen Harrier, Buzzard, Peregrine & Merlin, along

with Dipper & Goosander. Finally also visiting the lovely Threave Estate, now a National Trust Property for Scotland with 64 acres of beautiful gardens and boasting Spring Daffodils and Red Squirrels!

The Accommodation & Itinerary: Depart Glasgow Airport after b/fast and drive to the Solway Firth, with our base for the 4 nights at the 4-star luxury . Craigadam Country House Hotel. Situated near Castle Douglas and affording easy access to all the birding locations, the accommodation has seven luxury en-suite rooms and serves fine traditional Scottish fare. Return to Glasgow Airport mid afternoon.

Cost: £885 [s/s £95]

Deposit: £200

B/L due: Jan. 18

Included in the cost: 4 nts. dinner, bed & Breakfast at *Craigadam Country House Hotel*, entrance to Caerlaverock WWT, entrance to Threave Estate, Kite Feeding Station at Bellymack Farm, full transportation & guidance throughout.

Not included in the cost: Travel, lunches, drinks, gratuities & items of a personal nature,

PS: Guests wishing to travel up by car may meet up at **The Solway – time & place TBA.**



Barnacle Geese



Red Kite