

Norfolk Coast

AUTUMN MIGRATION

LIMOSA HOLIDAYS | TOUR INFO PACK



Yellow-browed Warbler is a scarce but increasing autumn visitor - all the way from Siberia © Arnoud van den Berg, Limosa

2019 **Friday 11th - Monday 14th October (4 days)**
2020 **Friday 9th - Monday 12th October (4 days)**
Single-centre, small group tour with David Walsh

Autumn on the beautiful North Norfolk coast - and migration is in full flow. Seabirds are passing offshore and numbers of ducks, geese and waders are building daily. With tens of thousands of shorebirds also on the move, plus exciting passerine arrivals to watch for, an October visit brings flocks of winter thrushes, finches and 'crests' - and Siberian Yellow-browed Warblers are often about, too. Join our expert guide for an all-inclusive long weekend break based at a comfortable seaside hotel in Old Hunstanton - within easy distance of all the top birding spots. And treat yourself to the best of British birding!

- Autumn bird migration along the beautiful North Norfolk coast
- Arrivals of Wigeon, Pintail and other winter wildfowl - including big flocks of geese
- Impressive build up of waders on the coastal wetlands and shore
- 'Falls' of warblers, crests, thrushes, finches and other passerines to watch for
- Resident Little Egret, Marsh Harrier, Red Kite, Avocet, Barn Owl, Bearded Tit
- Autumn in North Norfolk - always a chance of something unexpected!
- Small party size - maximum of 8 participants
- Relaxed, friendly and informal, with as much help with bird identification as you need
- Expertly led by Limosa guide David Walsh

What's Included?

- Limosa Tour Leader
- 3 nights at a comfortable seaside hotel in Old Hunstanton, close to the top birding spots
- All main meals - breakfasts and dinners at the hotel, with packed lunches in the field
- Minibus transport
- All excursions, entry fees, tour based tips and taxes
- Free pick-up and drop off at Norwich station for rail travellers

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Outline Itinerary

- Day 1:** Meet for dinner at our seaside hotel on the North Norfolk coast Old Hunstanton (3 nts)
- Days 2-3:** Two full days of guided birdwatching in North Norfolk
- Day 4:** After enjoying some further birdwatching and our picnic lunch today, we return to our hotel around 2.30pm this afternoon for farewells and departure for home. ^{*1}

^{*1} Option to stay an extra night at the hotel before or after the break is available at extra cost for those that want to extend their stay in Norfolk, or to allow time for a more leisurely journey home after breakfast at the hotel next morning. Ask for a quote and availability at time of booking.

Tour Overview

Little Egrets dancing across the saltings... the low grumbling of Brent Geese newly arrived from the Arctic... a ghostly Barn Owl hunting close by... Bearded Tits pinging in the reeds... the vivid flash of a Redstart's tail in the coastal pines... a tiny Yellow-browed Warbler flitting restlessly through the autumnal birch tops...

It's easy to see why the North Norfolk coast has been such a mecca for generations of British birdwatchers! Now you can experience the magic yourself on an all-inclusive long weekend break with Limosa - easy-paced, small group tours that are designed to help you make the most of your birding.

With tens of thousands of wildfowl, waders and passerine migrants to watch for in autumn, an October visit brings falls of Skylarks, winter thrushes, finches and 'crests. We'll check the coastal bushes for newly arrived migrants, scan for winter visitors passing along the shore and visit wader hotspots that can hold twenty or more species at this exciting time of year. We'll help you learn to identify Ringed and Little Ringed Plovers, Curlew and Curlew Sandpiper, Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwits, Redshank

and Spotted Redshank, Dunlin and Little Stint; watch Marsh Harriers sailing effortlessly over the coastal fields and marshes; and listen for the evocative music of Pink-footed Geese arriving overhead.

Each trip will have its own special moments. Our autumn birdwatching tours may witness exciting 'falls' of warblers, chats and winter visitors, seabirds including Gannets, gulls, terns and skuas will be passing offshore and more unusual species - such as Water Rail, Spotted Crake, Jack Snipe and Yellow-browed Warbler - are often about. Being Norfolk, there's every chance of coming across a real rarity, too: in recent years, surprises for our autumn groups have included Great and Cattle Egrets, Northern Harrier, Common Crane, American Golden Plover, Pectoral Sandpiper, Grey Phalarope, Wryneck and Steppe Grey Shrike!

Our autumn tours are based in comfort at one conveniently located hotel - the *Le Strange Arms*, beside the sea in Old Hunstanton - right on the bend of the North Norfolk coast and close to many of the region's top birding sites.

Whether you are new to birdwatching or more experienced, guide David Walsh will be on hand to take you to the best spots and ensure you have as much fun as possible whilst enjoying seeing lots of great birds and wildlife.

Limosa has been operating birding tours in Norfolk for 34 years now... Join us in autumn and treat yourself to the best of British birding!

Daily Itinerary

Our birdwatching tours to the **North Norfolk Coast** commence with arrival at the hotel on the evening of Day 1, where we meet for a welcome drink and informal get-together in the bar around 7.00pm prior to enjoying dinner.

The next two days are spent in the field, with packed lunches and flasks of hot tea and coffee available on demand. We return to the hotel again each evening in time for a delicious dinner, followed by the day's log call over

coffee and the chance to relax and chat informally about the day's events.

After enjoying a full morning of birdwatching and packed lunch in the field on Day 4, the break concludes back at the hotel at around 2.30pm that afternoon to allow good time for farewells and departure for home.

Destinations will be chosen from the following outline programme to ensure your visit is both worthwhile and rewarding. We leave the final choice of places to visit to the discretion of our expert guide, according to the weather, local conditions and what's about at the time.

BIRDS & PLACES

The RSPB's flagship Titchwell reserve lies within a short drive of our hotel and a visit there should get our trip off to a flying start! Marsh Harrier, Water Rail, Avocet, Mediterranean Gull and Bearded Tit are among many exciting resident species to look for here in autumn. Persil-white Little Egrets are well established on the Norfolk scene - and easy to spot as they prance energetically along the tidal creeks.

Given the right winds in autumn, just about anything can - and does - turn up on the North Norfolk coast! Come October, the first big flocks of Pink-footed Geese will already be present and migrants dropping into coastal woods include Redwing, Fieldfare, Brambling and Siskin; Brent Geese graze the marshes and flocks of waders bustle along the tideline. Offshore, Red-throated Divers are generally about and we have good chances of seeing Gannet, auks, Kittiwake, Sandwich Tern, Arctic Skua and other seabirds passing along the coast.

Tides, timing, wind direction and weather on the day will all have a bearing on the number and location of the birds, of course. But we should find plenty of Oystercatchers, Curlews, Ringed and Grey Plovers, Bar-tailed Godwits, Dunlin, Knot and Redshank along the shore, while the adjacent freshwater marshes add the prospect of Little Stint, Curlew Sandpiper, Black-tailed Godwit, Greenshank and Ruff.

Heading east along the coast, the sweeping saltmarshes at Holkham and Wells are backed

by woodlands of birch and pine. They provide a welcome sight for weary passerine migrants and an autumn visit here could produce anything from Redstart and Pied Flycatcher to Ring Ouzel or Red-backed Shrike. This is an excellent time of year to come across windblown waifs such as Firecrest and Yellow-browed Warbler; the latter has become an increasingly regular feature of October tours in recent years.

Further east, we may visit the celebrated coastal marshes at Blakeney, Salthouse or Cley. If conditions are right, few sights are more stirring in autumn than watching fresh arrivals of winter thrushes, finches, larks, Starlings - and even the odd Short-eared Owl - coming in over the sea! Wildfowl can be numerous, with flocks of newly arrived Brent Geese, Teal and Wigeon streaming past just offshore.

As dusk descends over the coast, Barn Owls drift silently back and forth over the marshes, and Marsh Harriers quarter the reedbeds before finally dropping into roost. Red Kite, Peregrine and Common Buzzard have all been recorded with increasing frequency in recent years, too.

The North Norfolk coast has a long history of turning up rarities and chances of stumbling across something unexpected invariably add a little extra spice to our autumn birding. With 34 years of Norfolk birdwatching tours behind us, unexpected surprises for our autumn groups over the years have included everything from Citrine Wagtail and Red-breasted Goose to Radde's Warbler and Red-breasted Nuthatch!

As with all our Norfolk breaks, we may vary the above itinerary to take best advantage of the weather and other local conditions, as well as what birds happen to be about at the time of your visit. And while our guides can't promise to find you a rarity on every trip, one thing's for certain - whenever you come and whatever we choose to do, in Norfolk there will always be plenty to see!

Trip Information

Group Size Max of 8 participants & 1 leader

What To Expect Led by *Limosa's* friendly expert guides, these holidays are suitable for birdwatchers of all levels of ability, interest and experience. Our helpful guides will be on hand to help you with your bird identification skills, too. Just bring your bins and your enthusiasm for birds - we'll do the rest!

Birds: 90-120 species

Accommodation 3 nights accommodation at the comfortable Le Strange Arms Hotel, overlooking the sea in Old Hunstanton - and perfectly situated for easy exploration of the North Norfolk coast. All rooms are en suite.

Meals All main meals are included in the price, commencing with dinner on arrival at the hotel on the evening of Day 1 and concluding with a packed lunch on Day 4. Breakfasts and dinners will be taken at the hotel. Participants regularly tell us that meals at the hotel are excellent. Lunches will be picnics taken in the field.

Walking Easy. Short walks (approx. 1-3 miles) at a gentle pace over good trails and mostly flat terrain. Sturdy waterproof walking shoes or boots recommended. Wellies will be useful in wet weather and can be handy first thing, when the grass can be damp with overnight dew.

Weather The UK's climate is famous for its unpredictability, but extremes are rare. Expect a mix of sunshine and showers in autumn, with daytime temperatures in the range of 7-15C (45-59F). It can sometimes feel chilly at the coast, especially if there's an onshore wind blowing - for migration, we hope for an easterly wind!

Norfolk is one of the driest parts of the UK, but some rainfall is of course possible at any season so come prepared with rainwear and lightweight layers of clothing, just in case - and join us for some of the very best birding in Britain!

Ground Transport Excursions by minibus

How To Get There

Participants arriving in Norfolk **by car** will be sent a map and joining instructions for the hotel. We meet for an informal get-together in the hotel bar at 7.00pm on the first evening.

For those without their own transport, we pick up at **Norwich railway station at approx. 4.45-5.00pm on the first afternoon** (most routes arrive into Norwich just ahead of this time). We are able to drop off there again by about 4.45pm on the last afternoon. *There is no extra cost for pick-up and drop-off as outlined above.*

Please note: if you intend to travel by rail and wish to spend an extra night or two at the hotel before or after the tour, we are unable to offer return transport to/from the station. Instead, it will be necessary for you to arrange a taxi from Norwich to Old Hunstanton or vice versa (a distance of approx. 45 miles) or to the nearest station at Kings Lynn (approx. 17 miles).

What You Say:

"Thrilling to see a Short-eared Owl coming in over the sea. Great break. Leader and all the group amazingly patient with an absolute novice. Daunting amount to learn, wish I had begun at (age) 9 like Tony!"

KB, Norfolk Coast Tour

"Gary made us feel at home and is quite a character. Staff at hotel most welcoming and service of waitress/waiters good. Very clean and tidy in bedrooms, bar, lounge and restaurant. Food excellent."

Anon participant, Norfolk Coast Tour

"Gary was an excellent leader: helpful, cheerful, very knowledgeable and got on well with everybody."

JC, Norfolk Coast tour

Tour Cost ^{*1}

2019 (4 days/3 nights):

£585 from Old Hunstanton (or Norwich) ^{*2}

Deposit: £150

Single Supp: £70

Cost includes

- Limosa Tour Leader
- 3 nights accommodation in Norfolk
- All main meals (from dinner on the evening of Day 1 through to a packed lunch on Day 4)
- Minibus transport
- All excursions, entry fees at the reserves, tour based tips and taxes
- Limosa checklist of birds
- Pick up/drop off in Norwich for rail travellers as outlined above (if required).

Cost excludes

Insurance, drinks & other items of a personal nature.

^{*1} **2019 tour costs shown. Please note costs for our 2020 tour TBA (available summer 2019)**

^{*2} *Optional extra night (B&B basis) at the hotel: Double/twin (2019): £95 per room/night
Single occupancy (2019): £70 per night*

About Your Guide

David Walsh David lives in Suffolk, where he has recently retired from full-time teaching, although he continues to do part-time maths tutoring and sports coaching and enjoys singing in various local choirs. He has been a keen birdwatcher since his primary school days and still has his notebooks from the early 1970s to prove it! David ran bird clubs at his schools and is proud of the fact that several of the boys who he inspired as 11-year-olds are now working in full-time conservation. At home in Suffolk, he puts his love of bird songs and calls to good use, running surveys to monitor breeding birds in the spring and searching out migrant passerines in the autumn. He has been leading tours on and off since 1986 and in the last 10 years has focused on Europe, North Africa, Asia and South America, developing his interest in butterflies

and dragonflies as well as birds. David's boundless energy and enthusiasm, coupled with a determination to ensure that everyone in the group sees the birds, made him very popular with clients on the tours he led for Ornitholidays between 2007 and 2018. He knows Norfolk well and is very excited to become part of the Limosa team from 2019!

Financial Security

Limosa Holidays is a fully bonded Tour Operator and a member of the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO). We hold an ATOL (Air Tour Operators Licence) granted by the CAA, providing for your protection in the event of Limosa Holidays' insolvency. Our ATOL licence number is ATOL 2950.

For tours not including the cost of a flight from the UK or for holidays booked by you as 'Land Only', all payments made to us are fully bonded through the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT). Our ABTOT membership number is 5230. For details please see our brochure or website: <http://www.limosaholidays.co.uk/financial-protection>

Limosa Loyalty Discount

We are proud of the number of loyal customers who travel regularly with us. As our way of saying 'thank you', we offer a **Frequent Travel Discount**. Under the scheme, everyone who takes four trips with us is entitled to claim a 5% discount on their 5th trip. ^{*1}

^{*1} **Conditions:** *This offer applies to the basic tour cost only and excludes certain commission-based trips, extra costs such as additional flights or accommodation, private extensions and cancellations. • Discounts cannot be given in lieu of tour deposits or off the cost of single room supplements. • Please note discount must be requested at time of booking!*

How To Book

Check availability on our website or with our office. We are happy to hold Provisional

Reservations for up to 7 days. After this, we do require a Booking Form and deposit to confirm your place on tour. Any unconfirmed space will be released.

Book Online, by Phone or by Post

You can book and pay the deposit simply and securely **Online** via our website, using the '**Book This Tour**' button on the relevant tour page or the **Booking** tab at the top of the page.

Telephone bookings must be confirmed in writing by completion of a Booking Form (there's one tucked inside every brochure or as a PDF download from our website), which can be mailed to us in the time honoured way.

Please be sure to read our Booking Conditions and General Information prior to booking. These can be found in full in the footer on every page on our website (or available from our office on request); also in an abridged form at the back of our brochure.

When to Book

Early booking is advised since flights and accommodation are much more easily secured well in advance. To encourage early booking, we are pleased to offer an **Early Bird Discount** - see our current brochure or website for details.

All our tours are limited to small group sizes. So they can fill up quickly - sometimes even before our new brochure comes out! Single rooms in particular can often be in short supply and among the first to go, so do try to plan well ahead if you definitely require one of these.

Last-minute Bookings: We inevitably receive a few unexpected cancellations over the course of a season so it is always worth enquiring about vacancies on any tour - even for those departing in just a few weeks!

Payments

Deposit: The amount of **booking deposit** per person is shown alongside every tour. We accept deposit payments by **electronic bank transfer** (please ask for our bank details), **UK debit card** and **cheque** (made payable to *Limosa Holidays* and drawn on a UK bank in GBPounds Sterling).

We also accept Visa and MasterCard credit cards for payment of Booking Deposits only.

Balance: Full payment of the **tour balance** is due not later than 12 weeks prior to departure (20 weeks in the case of certain tours such as cruises or those involving rail travel). We will send you an invoice before the balance is due.

We accept balance payments and any additional payments (e.g. interim flight deposits, flight upgrades, extra hotels etc) by **electronic bank transfer (BACS), UK debit card** or **cheque**.

Payment by overseas customers

These must be in GB Pounds Sterling and may be made by electronic transfer direct to our bank (*please ask for our bank details*).

We do **not** accept cheques on US Banks in US Dollars, or cheques in Euros or Eurocheques.

Credit cards - please note:

(i) *We do NOT accept credit cards or overseas debit cards for balance payments (including any additional or interim payments) from customers living within the UK or European Economic Area (the EEA is the EU countries plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).*

(ii) *For customers living in North America, Australia and all other areas outside of the UK and the European Economic Area we are able to accept payment by Visa and MasterCard credit cards or overseas debit card but with a charge of 2.5% of the transaction amount to help offset card company charges.*

Late Booking Payments: In order for us to guarantee your airline seats, hotels etc., full payment is required at time of booking for all late bookings (*i.e. bookings made within 12 weeks of departure*).

Other Things You Need To Know

Travel Insurance

Good travel insurance is **essential** before setting off on any overseas trip - and is to be much recommended for UK tours as well.

Your travel insurance should cover against cancellation, curtailment, missed departure, delay, personal accident, death, loss of baggage and valuables (see note below ref optics), personal liability and legal expenses.

We recommend that you obtain travel insurance as soon as possible after booking your holiday to ensure you are protected right from the word go in the event of unexpected cancellation prior to departure due to accident or illness. You must inform your insurers of any pre-existing medical conditions (including those of persons not necessarily travelling but upon whom your holiday may depend) that may require treatment during a period of overseas travel or might cause you to cancel the trip.

Once you have arranged your insurance, please be sure to send us the following essential details: name and contact details of your insurance provider, your policy number, expiry date and your insurers 24hr Emergency Assistance number.

Important Things to Note about Insurance

- Travel Insurance does **not** normally provide sufficient cover for valuable optical equipment, which is often best protected under your own household insurance policy. If in doubt ask your insurers for advice prior to travel.

Arranging Your Insurance: due to UK Government legislation, under Financial Services Authority (FSA) regulations, we are not allowed to offer or recommend travel related insurance to customers. Premiums can vary widely according to your age, needs, health, choice of destination and other factors, while many people nowadays have Annual Travel Insurance cover. For these reasons, we leave you free to shop around and pick your own policy, one best suited to your own individual needs.

General Information

www.limosaholidays.co.uk

Our website gives easy access to detailed tour itineraries (Tour Info Packs), trip reports, trip photos and the latest Limosa News.

Special Diets & Other Requests

We pass on all such requests to the airlines, hotels and other suppliers, and do our best to ensure (but of course cannot guarantee) that your needs will be met. Please be sure to tell us about these (in as much detail as possible) at the time of booking, to allow good time to make the necessary arrangements.

Smoking

Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. For the enjoyment and comfort of all, we ask that smokers refrain from smoking in proximity to the group and respect our NO SMOKING policy in the vehicle, at meal times and when watching wildlife.

Any Questions?

If you have any questions at any time, you'll find our office staff friendly, efficient, approachable - and just a phone call away, eager to assist you in every way.

Our office is open 09.00-17.00 hrs Mon-Fri, and can also be reached by fax and email. In the event we are unable to take your call, please leave a message on our answerphone (24 hrs) and our office will contact you as soon as we can.

***Thank you for your interest in our tours.
We do hope that you will be able to join us
- and we look forward to hearing from you
again!***

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