

Settle U3A Birdwatching Group

About Us

The aim of the Settle U3A Birdwatching Group is to give members the opportunity to enjoy the experience of looking for birds, both locally and further afield.

Enjoyment is the Group's primary objective but it's hoped that, at the same time members will develop both their understanding of how birds live and their skills in identifying individual species.

The Group meets monthly. Most meetings are outdoors, with visits to prime birding sites. But indoor meetings are held three or four times a year, covering a variety of issues.

If you are interested in birds or just enjoy watching them this is the Group for you.

Male
Common
Crossbill



Latest News

Our December meeting took us to Beacon Fell Country Park in Bowland - on a Crossbill Safari. We set off knowing that this chunky little bird might elude us. Despite its name the Common Crossbill is not common and it spends most of its time at the top of tall conifers, using its crossed bill to prise open cones for the seeds inside. It is easily overlooked. So we set off into the forest more in hope than expectation. But then ... what's that? A strange three-note call and a group of chattering finches fly over our heads. There! At the top of a tall larch: a family group of Crossbills. Yes! We found them. Or more precisely they found us. What a treat. Further on along the trail - after coming down from the beacon from which the Park gets its name - another group of three or four birds came to see us off. A Crossbill double whammy!

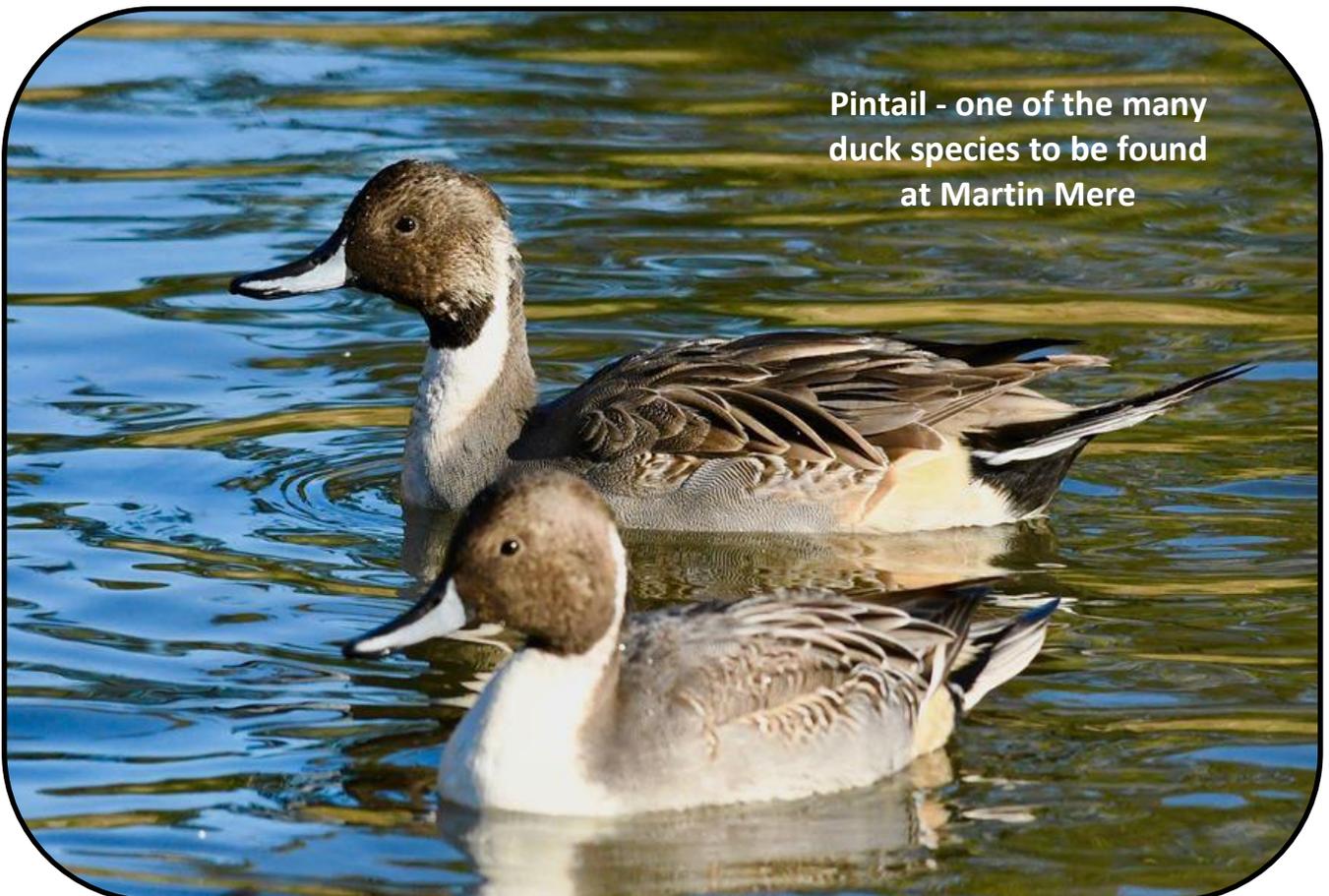
Contact details: for more information about the U3A Birdwatching Group and its activities contact Group Leader Les Chandler on lchandler52@gmail.com.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Programme for the rest of the year can be found on the next page.

We start the New Year with a visit to the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust's reserve at Martin Mere. After a guided tour with one of the Trust's Rangers we'll head off into the reserve to see what we can find. January sightings usually include many thousands of swans, ducks and geese, as well as several wader species. Martin Mere also plays host to raptors including Marsh Harrier, Peregrine and Merlin, and a wide range of smaller birds. These include Stonechat, Brambling, Redpoll, Siskin, Reed Bunting, winter thrushes, and lots of woodland species. There's a lot to look forward to on this trip!

This latest incarnation of Settle U3A's Birdwatching Group is now in its second year and we're finding our feet. If you have a view on how the Group should operate, or ideas for Group activities, please don't hold back. The Group Leader, Les Chandler, won't be offended! If there's a particular species you're keen to see or a place you'd like to go just let Les know and he'll try and build it into a future programme.



Pintail - one of the many duck species to be found at Martin Mere

PROGRAMME: 2019-20

A 50p subscription is payable for all of the Group's activities. There may be additional costs associated with Group travel and entry to nature reserves depending on the event.

Date	Time	'Event'
Tue 7 Jan 2020	9.30 am all day	Outdoor Meeting: WWT Martin Mere
Mon 3 Feb 2020	2.00 pm to 3.30 pm	Indoor Meeting - Victoria Hall: 'Waders'
Mon 2 Mar 2020	10.00 am to lunchtime	Outdoor Meeting: Grass Wood, Grassington
Mon 6 Apr 2020	10.00 am all day	Outdoor meeting: Brockhole, Windermere
Mon 11 May 2020	8.15 am to lunchtime	Outdoor Meeting: Bowland - Ring Ouzel Safari
Mon 1 Jun 2020	9.30 am to lunchtime	Outdoor meeting: St Ives, Bingley
Mon 6 Jul 2020	8.30 am to 6.00 pm	Outdoor Meeting: Coach trip to RSPB Fairburn

NOTE:

For Outdoor Meetings we meet at the Rugby Club car park in Settle at the time shown and arrange car-sharing as necessary. All meetings are risk assessed in advance but Group Members attend meetings at their own risk.

In line with Settle U3A policy drivers should be reimbursed at the rate of £1 per passenger for half hour journeys, £2 for one hour journeys and £3 for 1½ hour journeys.

Where possible outdoor meetings will go ahead whatever the weather but if conditions are so severe that birdwatching would be pointless or travel is ill-advised meetings may have to be cancelled. An e-mail advising cancellation will be sent out up to one hour prior to the scheduled meeting time so check your in-box before setting off.