

# Monthly Newsletter



www.blackburnbirdclub.com

October 2025



## Welcome To The First Edition Of Our Club Newsletter!

We're delighted to introduce this new way of staying connected with you, our valued members. This newsletter is designed to keep you up to date with everything happening in and around the club — from upcoming indoor meetings and field walks to news from the committee and highlights of recent outings. You'll also find contributions from fellow members, handy reminders, and the occasional spotlight on local wildlife sightings or interesting reads. Whether you attend every event or simply like to stay informed, we hope this becomes a welcome addition to your inbox.

Thank you for being part of our community — your support and enthusiasm help make the club what it is. We look forward to sharing many more experiences with you!

### Exciting News – Sponsorship Secured!

We're pleased to share that Mike Maxted, one of our members, recently sought permission to present the Blackburn Bird Club Sponsorship Proposal to Interfloor — and we're delighted to report that the proposal received full approval!

The initiative was judged to align well with Interfloor's Corporate Social Governance (CSG) criteria, and as a result, we've been awarded a £500 sponsorship.

A huge thank you to Mike for his initiative and effort in securing this valuable support for the club.

### Bird Food Now Available at the Club

After a long absence, we're pleased to announce that bird food will once again be available at our indoor meetings and on all walks.

We'll have 2kg bags of premium sunflower hearts for £6, and a high-protein mix (sunflower hearts, peanut granules, calciworms, berry suet pellets, and sweet raisins) for £7.50. This mix contains no seed fillers, meaning no waste, and offers great value — most comparable mixes cost £10. Please support the club by purchasing your garden bird food from us — every purchase helps raise extra income to support the club and benefit our members. The food on offer is a starting point, and we may expand options depending on demand and success.

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## Walks & Talks

Autumn is a fantastic time to be out in the field, and we'd love for you to join us on our next club walk. With winter migrants arriving and plenty of bird activity to enjoy, it's the perfect excuse to wrap up warm, grab your binoculars, and spend a few hours in good company.

If transport is a concern, don't let that put you off — we may be able to arrange lifts for those who need one. Just get in touch beforehand and we'll do our best to help.

Our indoor meetings are an exciting and enriching experience for all members of the Blackburn Bird Club. We are fortunate to have a variety of knowledgeable and engaging guest speakers throughout the year, each offering unique insights into the fascinating world of birds and wildlife. These speakers bring a wealth of expertise, and their presentations are not only informative but also inspiring. Whether sharing their fieldwork experiences, the latest research, or tips on birdwatching, they always manage to captivate and educate. A highlight of these sessions is the incredible photography they showcase, bringing the beauty of the avian world to life in stunning detail. The combination of great talks and visual storytelling creates an enjoyable, interactive atmosphere where members can learn, ask questions, and share their own experiences. These meetings are an excellent opportunity for bird enthusiasts of all levels to connect, expand their knowledge, and fuel their passion for birds. We encourage everyone to join, as the discussions are always thought-provoking, and the friendships formed make for a welcoming and supportive community.

### October Talk Oct 1st

Don't miss our exciting indoor meeting on Wednesday, October 1st, when Dennis Atherton takes us on a journey through Florida's birdlife. With stunning photography and fascinating insights, Dennis will introduce us to iconic species like the Red-bellied Woodpecker, Roseate Spoonbill, and Vermilion Flycatcher. It's always a pleasure to hear from Dennis, and his presentations are both informative and visually captivating. We encourage all members to come along, enjoy the beautiful photography, and learn more about the birds of Florida — it's sure to be an inspiring evening!

### October Walk Oct 9th

Join us for a fantastic birding adventure at Leighton Moss RSPB on Thursday, October 9th, at 9am! This is a great opportunity to spot Bearded Tits along the Causeway, along with waders and other wildfowl at the saltmarsh pools. It's always an exciting trip, and we encourage you to come along and enjoy the beauty of Leighton Moss. Please note, there is an entrance fee unless you're an RSPB member. We'll meet at the Visitor Centre Car Park, postcode LA5 0SW. Don't miss out — we'd love to see you there!

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# Birds to Look Out For in October

## • Coastal & Estuary Birds

- Best places: Morecambe Bay, Ribble Estuary, Rossall Point, Lytham, Marshside (RSPB), Leighton Moss (RSPB)
- Pink-footed Geese – Arriving in large numbers, they roost on estuaries and fly inland to feed. Watch for spectacular skeins over farmland early in the mornings and evenings.
- Teal, Wigeon, Shoveler – Early winter visitors, large flocks are often seen on estuaries and flooded fields.
- Knot, Dunlin, Grey Plover, Curlew, Redshank – Large numbers can be seen massing on mudflats, especially at high tide.
- Eiders – Common off Rossall and Walney; occasionally seen off Morecambe Bay.
- Turnstone and Sanderling – Found along the coast, especially at high tide on sandy beaches and rocky shores.

## • Farmland & Moorland Birds

- Best places: Bowland Fells, Pendle area, Belmont Reservoir, farmland around Cockerham
- Redwing & Fieldfare – These thrush species begin arriving from Scandinavia and Iceland, feeding on berries in hedgerows and stubble fields.
- Brambling – Start to arrive in beech woods and farmland, often mixed with Chaffinches.
- Lapwing – Large flocks can be seen in ploughed fields and wetland areas, often in flight displaying their undulating flight patterns.
- Golden Plover – Watch for flocks on farmland or in flight over moorland and wetlands.
- Merlin – This small falcon can be seen hunting over open moorland and coastal areas.

## • Wetlands and Reserves

- Best places: Leighton Moss, Martin Mere, Brockholes, Mere Sands Wood
- Marsh Harrier – Regularly spotted in reedbeds at Leighton Moss and Martin Mere.
- Bittern – These elusive birds may be seen more frequently as the reeds die back at Leighton Moss.
- Bearded Tit – Listen for their distinctive pinging calls in the reedbeds of Leighton Moss and Martin Mere.
- Water Rail – Often heard squealing near the reed edges at wetland reserves like Leighton Moss and Mere Sands Wood.
- Cetti's Warbler – Becoming more widespread in reedbeds.

## • Woodland & Garden Birds

- Best places: Yarrow Valley, Witton Park, Ribble Valley woods, your own garden!
- Bullfinch – Seen in gardens with fruit trees or along hedgerows, particularly in wooded areas.
- Nuthatch and Treecreeper – Active and vocal in mature deciduous woodlands, often seen climbing tree trunks in search of insects.
- Siskin & Lesser Redpoll – Migrating finches, often seen in gardens or wooded areas feeding on seeds, especially in areas with alder trees.
- Great Spotted Woodpecker – Can be seen in mature woodland.
- Long-tailed Tit – Often found in mixed flocks foraging in woodland edges or hedgerows.

## • Evening & Dusk Watch

- Barn Owl – Dusk hunters, regularly spotted over farmland, particularly around the Fylde, Ribble Valley, and Lytham Moss.
- Short-eared Owl – Hunt low over marshes and rough fields near coastal areas like Rossall, Marshside, and Warton Marsh.
- Starling Murmurations – Watch for impressive murmuration displays at sites like Martin Mere and Leighton Moss as the evenings grow darker.



# 10 Birds Tips For October

**Provide Food for Migrants:** As migratory birds pass through Lancashire in October, make sure your bird feeders are stocked with high-energy foods like sunflower seeds, peanuts, and suet. This will provide essential nourishment to support these birds on their long journeys.

**Create a Bird-Friendly Habitat:** October is a great time to add more bird-friendly features to your garden. Consider planting native shrubs like hawthorn, blackthorn, and holly, which provide berries for birds like Thrushes and Blackbirds. These plants also offer shelter and nesting sites for local wildlife.

**Leave Seedheads for Winter:** Allow seedheads from plants like sunflowers, coneflowers, and thistles to remain in your garden. These will attract finches, sparrows, and other seed-eating birds during the colder months, providing them with an easy food source.

**Install a Birdbath:** Birds need fresh water for drinking and bathing, so consider installing a birdbath in your garden. In October, when natural water sources may start to freeze, having a reliable source of water can be particularly valuable for your garden birds.

**Provide Shelter for Migrants and Residents:** As the temperatures start to drop, many birds will seek shelter. Consider putting up a birdhouse or roosting box to provide them with a safe, warm place to rest during colder nights. Adding dense shrubs or small trees also creates natural shelter for smaller species.

**Clear Fallen Leaves Carefully:** While you might be tempted to rake up all the fallen leaves in your garden, try to leave some in place, especially in corners or under shrubs. Fallen leaves provide valuable cover for insects, which in turn attracts birds that feed on them. This can create a more natural, wildlife-friendly environment.

**Avoid Pesticides:** October is a time when many insects are winding down, but there are still plenty around, including moths, spiders, and beetles. By avoiding pesticides, you can help maintain a healthy insect population, which is a crucial food source for insect-eating birds like Robins and Wrens.

**Compost with Care:** If you're composting leaves and garden waste, make sure to use a compost heap or bin that's easily accessible for small mammals, amphibians, and insects. These creatures provide food for many bird species and are an important part of a balanced garden ecosystem.

**Create a Hedgehog Haven:** October marks the start of hedgehog hibernation, and these creatures can be invaluable in controlling pests in your garden. Make sure you have a quiet, undisturbed space for them to rest, and consider leaving a small gap in your garden fence to allow hedgehogs to pass through.

**Reduce Garden Lighting:** Many birds rely on natural cues to guide their migration, and artificial lighting can confuse them. If you have outdoor lights, try reducing their brightness or turning them off at night to help migrating birds navigate more easily. This simple step can make a big difference for nocturnal migrants.

By taking these simple steps in October, you can support both migratory and resident birds, as well as other wildlife, helping them thrive as the colder months approach.

Creating a welcoming garden environment will benefit birds and contribute to a healthier, more balanced ecosystem.

## More Bird Tips In November

## Help Us Grow Our Membership!

We're always looking to welcome new faces to the Blackburn Bird Club — and who better to help than our current members?

We'd love you to bring along a friend to one of our indoor meetings or guided walks, Whether they're already interested in birds or just curious, it's a relaxed and friendly way to see what we're all about.

If they enjoy the experience, we hope they'll consider becoming a member and joining us more regularly.

Let's share our passion for birdwatching — and grow our club together!

## Help Us Spread the Word!

We've produced some new Blackburn Bird Club flyers to help raise awareness and grow our membership — now we just need your help to get them seen!

There are lots of great places to display them: village and church halls, bird reserves, supermarket notice boards, local gyms, cafes, coffee shops, and anywhere with a community board.

If each member could put up just one or two flyers in their local area, it would make a huge difference in helping us reach new people. Flyers will be available at the next indoor meeting — please take a few and help us spread the word!

## Connect with Us Online!

We have a Facebook group open to all members and the public — it's a great place to post your bird sightings, share stories, or simply chat about birds.

We also have an Instagram account, where we regularly share beautiful bird photos, club updates, and event highlights. And don't forget our club website, where you'll find everything from upcoming meetings and field walks to membership details and general news.

We encourage you to not only browse these platforms but to actively engage by commenting and posting. The more interaction a post gets, the more it's shown to others — helping us reach a wider audience and grow our birding community. So don't just like the pictures — drop a comment, share your thoughts, and get involved!

## Share Your Sightings With Us

If you've spotted something special or have any birding news to share, we'd love to hear from you! Please email us, and we'll include your sightings or updates in the next edition of the newsletter. Enjoy your birdwatching!

*Thank you for reading!*

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