



NATURE & TERROIR

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Orchids and other Wildlife of the Chilterns

Prix - **457.00€** Dates - 11/05 au 13/05/22 Guide - *James Harding-Morris*

Declared an Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) 40 years ago and covering 324 square miles, the Chilterns are rated alongside some of our best known national parks. Rare chalk streams meander through the Chilterns towards the River Thames, providing ideal habitat for a diverse flora including several species of orchid. Red Kites were first reintroduced into the Chilterns in England in 1989, and we'll be hoping to get good views of this charismatic bird. During our 3-day break we will also visit a wetland site at Otmoor RSPB Reserve, where we will search for birds not found at higher elevations in the Chilterns. We will also enjoy the wild flowers which are re-colonising the wetland meadows, as well as look for butterflies in hedgerows and birds in the reedbeds here.

Declared an 'area of outstanding natural beauty' (AONB) 40 years ago and covering 324 square miles, the Chilterns are rated alongside some of our best known national parks including the Lake District and New Forest. The centre of the AONB is situated just 35 miles from Trafalgar Square, making it one of the easiest to access from the capital and a top tourist attraction. Although it has an abundance of tranquil villages and imposing buildings to visit, we will be concentrating on the natural wonders of the area, 20% of which is covered by woods and forests that once provided timber to a thriving furniture industry. The AONB stretches from the Thames at Goring, on its southern boundary, to Hitchin in Hertfordshire in the north. Rare chalk streams meander here towards the mighty Thames, and orchids such as Military, Bee, Fly, Monkey and Lady will be sought, together with Clustered Bellflower and many other plants. It was in the Chilterns in 1989 that Red Kites were first reintroduced into England, with resounding success! We will be visiting the release area and will take an in-depth look at this charismatic bird.

Leaving the Chilterns for a short trip to nearby Otmoor RSPB Reserve, we will investigate a recreated wetland situated at the lowest point in Oxfordshire, looking for birds and flowers not found in the higher elevations of the Chilterns. Here Lapwing, Redshank and Curlew breed, together with Cuckoo, Turtle Dove and Grasshopper Warbler; recognising such birds by their song will be a feature of this holiday. Wetland wild flowers are recolonising the wet meadows here and Water Violet and Green-winged Orchids are to be found. The hedges are managed to encourage rare hairstreak butterflies and we will visit reedbeds that once were arable fields looking for Water Rail, Reed Buntings, Hobbies and maybe even a late Marsh Harrier.

Highlights

- Look for orchids such as Military, Bee, Fly, Monkey & Lady
- Water Violet & Green-winged Orchid in wet meadows
- Water Rail, Reed Bunting, Hobby & Marsh Harrier possible in reedbeds
- Visit a Red Kite release centre
- Lapwing, Turtle Dove, Cuckoo, Grasshopper Warbler, Curlew & Redshank among birds
- Led by expert naturalist guide

Responsible destination

Colette

Colette
colette@nature-terroir.com
0032 71 84 54 80
Présente le mardi et vendredi toute la journée





Dates & Prix

457.00€

Wed 11th May - Fri 13th May - 457€

* These tours are operated by Naturetrek (ABTA Y6206) for which Nature et Terroir acts as agent.

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Journalier

Itinerary

NB. Please note that the itinerary below offers our planned programme of excursions. However, adverse weather & other local considerations can necessitate some re-ordering of the programme during the course of the tour, though this will always be done to maximise best use of the time and weather conditions available.

Day 1 - Wednesday

We will meet at 10.30 a.m. in the hotel car park and after discussing the programme for the next 3 days we will board our transport for our first days' exploration.

Today we will visit various nature reserves such as Warburg, Aston Rowant, Hartslock and Homefield Wood, in search of the rare orchids and other flowers of the Chilterns escarpment. Birds, butterflies and trees will also be noted during our forays. The close-cropped grass slopes of the downs are home to a splendid variety of chalkloving flowers and butterflies, whilst the dark and impressive beech woodland, known as hangars, that cap the escarpment have their own specialties such as the mysterious Bird's-nest Orchid (which entirely lacks chlorophyll) and the White Helleborine. Our visit is timed in the hope of seeing some of the special orchids that the area is renowned for such as the Greater Butterfly, Fly, Military, Monkey and even, if we are lucky, Lady. Lunch taken at a local pub.

Day 2 - Thursday

Today we concentrate on the Red Kite release area and will learn all about the remarkably successful reintroduction programme for this iconic species. We will also look for other raptors and visit other wildlife sites to catch up on any species missed yesterday. We will again stop at a local café or pub for lunch.

Day 3 - Friday

We will check out after breakfast but leave our luggage at the hotel to collect later.

Today we will leave the Chilterns to visit the RSPB Otmoor nature reserve, north-east of the city of Oxford, where we hope to see a good selection of birds which are drawn to this oasis of wetland in the centre of England. Birds may include such declining species as Turtle Dove and Grasshopper Warbler along with breeding waders and possibly Hobby. There will also be the chance to see a wetland flora in total contrast to that seen in the dry chalkland hills of the Chilterns.

Lunch will again be at a local pub.

After further exploration we will return to the hotel and leave for home.



Quelques photos...



Envie d'en voir plus ?

Visitez la fiche voyage sur notre site web www.nature-terroir.com



Formalités

Comment s'inscrire ?

- 1° Remplissez notre formulaire en ligne www.nature-terroir.com/inscription
- 2° Attendez votre confirmation d'inscription et versez l'acompte
- Ou remplissez notre formulaire papier (demandez notre formulaire papier par mail ou en nous téléphonant)

Besoin d'infos ?

Contactez la responsable destination par mail ou par téléphone.

Responsable destination

Colette

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Présente le mardi et vendredi toute la journée

