

Cumbria
Wildlife Trust



Great places to see

Autumn Wildlife

in Cumbria



▲
Red deer. Photo: Jon Hawkins – Surrey Hills Photography

Protecting **Wildlife** for the Future

Great places to see autumn wildlife in Cumbria

The colours of autumn are spectacular in Cumbria, as trees turn from green to red, brown and gold. Against this lovely backdrop we can enjoy the sight of red squirrels foraging for nuts, spot red deer during the rut and marvel at the great numbers of migrating birds arriving on our coast.

From fells and peatbogs to beaches and woods, our guide to **Great places to see autumn wildlife in Cumbria** recommends some special areas to see these stunning seasonal highlights.

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Red deer. Photo: Jon Hawkins – Surrey Hills Photography

① Martindale Lake District National Park

Martindale is one of the best places in Cumbria to see red deer. A herd has been present here for over 300 years. The ancient deer forest is centred on The Nab but the deer range all over the fells into Mardale and Kentmere. October is the rutting season and early morning and dusk are the ideal times to listen for the distinctive bellow of the males. You may be lucky enough to see them locking antlers!

Where is it?

By car: From Penrith take the B5320 towards Pooley Bridge. Just before the village fork left and follow the road to Howtown, then through Howtown to Martindale, from where you can access the valley on foot.

By bicycle: Martindale is 10 miles from National Route 71 (C2C).

By public transport: Bus service 508 links Penrith and Pooley Bridge. The Ullswater steamer stops at Howtown.



Red squirrel. Photo: Peter Trimming

② Whinlatter Forest Forestry Commission

Whinlatter Forest near Bassenthwaite is a red squirrel reserve which protects and supports these endearing mammals. If you walk quietly, you are likely to see reds anywhere in the forest, including at feeding stations. Popular as a family day out, the forest is also home to roe deer, badgers, foxes, crossbill and siskin, whilst the fells are the hunting ground for buzzard and merlin.

Where is it?

By car: From Keswick, head west on the A66 and turn left at Braithwaite onto B5292. Drive for 2.5 miles to reach Whinlatter.

By bicycle: The forest is located 2.5 miles from National Route 71 (C2C).

By public transport: Bus service 77 links Keswick and Whinlatter.

Greenshank. Photo: Derek Moore



③ Campfield Marsh Reserve

RSPB

A good place to see greenshank and other passage waders from the hide. The reserve is made up of a saltmarsh, peatbogs, farmland and wet grassland, providing homes for a great variety of native wildlife. Also look for tree sparrow, linnets, reed bunting and other seed-eating farmland birds. It's also worth visiting the high tide wader roosts on the saltmarsh.

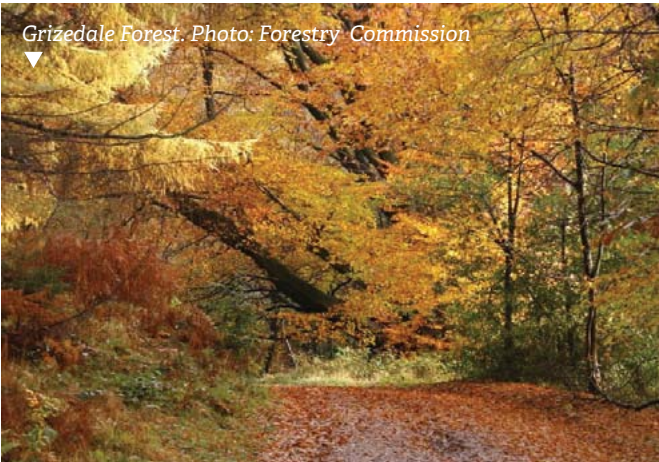
Where is it?

By car: The main entrance is at North Plain Farm 1.5 miles west of Bowness-on-Solway on the unclassified coast road.

By bicycle: The reserve is on National Route 72 (Hadrian's Cycleway).

By public transport: Carlisle train station is 13 miles away; 93 bus from Carlisle terminates at eastern end of Campfield Marsh Reserve. Access to North Plain Farm and Bowness Common is 1.5 miles west along the road by the saltmarsh.

Grizedale Forest. Photo: Forestry Commission



⑤ Grizedale Forest

Forestry Commission

In autumn the larch, oak, elder and beech woods at Grizedale Forest come alive with colour and form a stunning backdrop for the distinctive woodland sculptures that are dotted around the forest. The sculptures are linked by cycle and walking trails. Grizedale is also home to red and roe deer and tawny owl, and there are red kite in the area.

Where is it?

By car: Follow A590 past Newby Bridge to Haverthwaite crossroads, turn right at tourist sign for Grizedale Forest Park, follow signs for Satterthwaite/Grizedale north.

By bicycle: Grizedale is around 5 miles from Regional Route 37.

Grey seals. Photo: Sally Tapp



④ South Walney Nature Reserve

Cumbria Wildlife Trust

Home to Cumbria's only breeding colony of grey seals, a visit between October and December may be rewarded with the sight of a seal pup. The best time to see the seals in the water is at high tide from the hides. At low tide they haul out in large numbers on the spit. *Please note there is no access to the beaches. Only assistance dogs allowed on the nature reserve.*

Where is it?

By car: From Barrow-in-Furness follow signs for Walney Island. Cross Jubilee Bridge onto the island and follow brown signs turning left at the traffic lights. Follow this road for about 0.6 miles then turn left down Carr Lane. Continue past Biggar village. The reserve is 0.6 miles beyond South End caravan site.

By bicycle: The reserve is 3 miles from National Route 70 (W2W).

By public transport: Buses run from Barrow-in-Furness to Biggar.

Fly agaric. Photo: Scott Petrek



⑥ Bowness-on-Solways Nature Reserve

Cumbria Wildlife Trust

As a former quarry pit, this nature reserve is a mixture of pools, woodland and open grassland. At this time of year you might spot some fabulous fungi, including the fungi of fairytales, the fly agaric, with its red cap and white spots. *NB: it's not edible.* You may also see goldfinch feeding on napweed and thistles.

Where is it?

By car: From the B5307 the nature reserve entrance is from the track near Biglands House, approx 1.25km/0.75 miles from Bowness-on-Solway village.

By bicycle: The nature reserve is on National Route 72 (Hadrian's Cycleway).

By public transport: Buses run from Carlisle to Bowness-on-Solway village.



Short-eared owl. Photo: Amy Lewis

7 Drumburgh Moss Nature Reserve
Cumbria Wildlife Trust

Major restoration work has taken place on this nature reserve to preserve the important bog habitat and you'll see the *Sphagnum* moss as a sign of the area's renewal. Autumn is a great time to spot short-eared owl hunting over the moss. Also look out for wintering snipe and the hardy Exmoor ponies which are used for grazing areas around the moss.

Where is it?

By car: From Carlisle head north west on the Burgh Road, passing through Burgh until you reach Drumburgh. Turn left in the village at the post office. Follow the track for 400m and park just beyond Moss Cottage.

By bicycle: The nature reserve is 400m from National Route 72 (Hadrian's Cycleway).

By public transport: Buses run from Carlisle to Drumburgh village.



Pink-footed geese. Photo: Ron Mitchell

9 Solway Coast
AONB

The Solway Coast stretches from Rockcliffe in the north to Maryport in the south and is a great area to see migrant birds arriving. Look out barnacle and pink-footed geese which come to enjoy our mild winters. The entire Svalbard population of around 26,000 barnacle geese travel to the Solway Coast, along with pink-footed geese which leave their breeding grounds in Spitsbergen, Iceland and Greenland to feed on the creatures in the muddy estuary.

Where is it?

For more information about spotting wildlife on the Solway Coast visit the Solway Coast Discovery Centre on Liddell Street, Silloth-on-Solway, Cumbria CA7 4DD.



Haweswater. Photo: Patrick Neaves

8 Haweswater Reserve
RSPB

Haweswater is a dramatic landscape of high fells, rushing rivers, heath, meadow, bog and woodland and home to a host of upland wildlife. In autumn peregrine and buzzard can be seen, along with dipper, raven, goosander, large movements of migrating birds and red squirrels. During the rutting season there are good views of red deer.

Where is it?

By car: Aim for the small village of Bampton, 10 miles south of Penrith and five miles north-west of Shap. From Bampton, head south towards Haweswater reservoir. Drive down the unclassified road alongside the reservoir; the road ends at a car park.

By bicycle: The reserve is 12 miles from National Route 71 (C2C).

By public transport: Penrith is the nearest train (14 miles).



Oystercatcher. Photo: Steve Waterhouse

10 Foulney Island Nature Reserve
Cumbria Wildlife Trust

Foulney Island, formed entirely of pebbles, is a great place to see migrating birds. In autumn, curlew, dunlin, knot and oystercatcher may be seen in their thousands and great-crested grebe, red-breasted merganser, cormorant and common scoter are frequently present offshore. Look out for the vibrant purple and yellow sea aster which flowers in autumn.

Where is it?

By car: From Rampside take the road towards Roa Island. The path from the car park takes you alongside the stone causeway onto Foulney Island.

By bicycle: The reserve is 10km/6 miles from National Route 70 (Walney to Wear).

By public transport: Buses run from Barrow-in-Furness and Ulverston to Roa Island.

Please note that at high tide the island may be cut off for several hours.