



### In this issue:

- **Holiday Groups**  
During 2016 Stride and Stroll has joined two groups offering holidays which we think will interest our walkers. Graham Little describes what they have to offer.
- **Out and About.**  
Jan Meacham describes winter visiting birds to look out for.
- **Notice Board.**  
November attendance figures.  
Stride and Stroll AGM brief report.



## Stride and Stroll holiday groups

During 2016 Stride and Stroll have joined two holiday groups to enhance our holiday opportunities. Both organisations offer holidays, both at home and overseas, and as an affiliated organisation our members qualify for discounted prices. Stride and Stroll also benefits from our members booking holidays.

The first group we joined was **Ramblers Worldwide Holidays**. ([www.ramblersholidays.co.uk](http://www.ramblersholidays.co.uk))



The RWH website states:-

*"We have been specialising in guided small group walking holidays since 1946. We now offer over 250 inspiring guided walking and activity holidays in the UK, Europe, and Worldwide. The nature of our holidays not only gives you an 'up close and personal' experience of your destination, but travelling in a small group also reduces the environmental impact."*

*At Ramblers Walking Holidays our company mission is to generate funds for walking charities. So, unlike most tour operators we have a not-for-profit ethos. All our profits not required for the running of the business are channelled back into charitable causes, both home and away."*



The initial benefit of this group is that if you go on one of their holidays as an individual and you tell them that you wish to nominate Stride and Stroll then our funds benefit by £10 per holiday.

If you go as part of a group, (a group is a minimum of 16 people), you will get 5% discount and, in this case, when you nominate Stride and Stroll our group funds benefit by £10 per night. Additionally private groups of 10 or more will receive a small gift with their final invoice.

More recently we have joined **HF holidays** as group members; this was at a cost £100 paid for from S & S funds. As part of the conditions of our membership we have to display "Affiliated to HF holidays" below our logo in all publications.

The HF website ([www.hfholidays.co.uk](http://www.hfholidays.co.uk)) states:-

"HF Holidays has a proud history spanning over 100 years. Throughout our first century we've had to change with the times. Accommodation in single sex dormitories with the requirement to make one's own bed was acceptable in 1913, but times have changed and our Country Houses have evolved to offer comfortable en-suite bedrooms that our guests expect today."



Around 30 Stride and Stroll friends got together in September for a 5 day walking holiday in the Yorkshire Dales.

They stayed at Newfield Hall which is a grand 19th century country house which was built by Nicholas Alcock in 1856. It is now leased to Holiday Fellowship.



If you require any further information ask your walk leader to speak to Graham Little.





## Out and About

# WINTER VISITING BIRDS



The summer visitors to Britain, like the Swallows, House Martins, Swifts and most Warblers, will have flown south, to countries which are warmer and where they will have enough food. Some birds, which nest further north than Britain, leave their breeding grounds and fly to Britain to spend the winter. These winter migrants, find the British winter milder than further north and mainly feed on seeds and berries.



### THE REDWING

This small member of the Thrush family, breeds in Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, with some birds breeding in the far north of Scotland. Redwings feed in social groups, often mixing with other bird species. They have a reddish underwing, hence the name Redwing and a pale stripe over each eye. Look out for them feeding on farmland, hedgerow fruits and cultivated winter berries.



### FIELDFARE

This larger member of the Thrush family, is about the size of a Mistle Thrush. Fieldfares breed in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe. They feed in social groups, often in the company of Redwings, consuming hedgerow fruits, cultivated winter berries and fallen apples.



### BRAMBLING

Belonging to the Finch family, the Brambling is the northerly cousin of the Chaffinch. They breed in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe and are irregular visitors to Britain. Bramblings forage for seeds on the ground and will search fields for weed seeds. If Britain has a 'mast year', when there is an abundance of Beech mast, then the number of visiting Bramblings increases. Look for them feeding in mixed flocks, with Chaffinches, Greenfinches, Blue and Great Tits.



### WAXWING

Waxwings are colourful birds, belonging to their own small family of birds, the Bombycillidae. The English name 'waxwing', comes from the red wax-like marks, on their wings. They breed in Scandinavia and parts of Russia, being irregular visitors to Britain. They are known for their 'irruptions', when in some years, large numbers of Waxwings visit Britain in winter; this usually coincides with a poor berry crop in their breeding area. Look out for them feeding on Hawthorn and Rowan fruits; they will also eat the fruits of Cotoneaster and Pyracantha.

Supermarket car parks which have planted, cultivated shrubs with winter fruits, sometimes attract feeding Waxwings.

Some of our resident birds add colour to the British winter. Bird colour may be due to pigments reflecting and absorbing light, or from the structure of pigment cells in the feathers.

### EUROPEAN STARLING

The European Starling belongs to the Sturnidae family of birds; the Mynah birds of South-East Asia belong to the same family. Starlings are noisy, quarrelsome and gregarious birds, often forming large flocks in winter, which may contain Starlings from continental Europe. They are also skilled at mimicking the calls of other birds, a skill they share with their Mynah bird cousins.

Their iridescent feathers are the result of 'structural colour', when the basic, rod-shaped pigment cells associate with flatter and hollow pigment cells. These cells form ordered layers, which absorb and reflect light. Some of the reflected light interacts with the different cell types arranged in layers, to produce brighter and richer colours.

Look out for their murmurations, when large flocks of Starlings, perform an aerial display before roosting, often over reed beds or in some urban areas.





## Out and About (continued)



cc by sa 2.0 - Robin in the sun by Barbara Carr - geograph.org.uk/p/3351695

### EUROPEAN ROBIN

The Robin was classified as belonging to the Thrush family, but is now considered a member of the Old World Flycatchers; a family of birds restricted to Europe, Africa and Asia. Both sexes of the European Robin have a Red breast. Male Robins are highly territorial and aggressively defend their patch, particularly in autumn/winter. Fluffing out their Red breast feathers to appear larger, they will threaten and may attack other birds. Not the image we perceive from the Christmas card or the belief, that a Brown Robin gave comfort to Christ on the cross and became stained with Christ's blood; a staining carried by all Robins.

The English name 'Redbreast', comes from the Red uniforms worn by Victorian postmen, earning them the nickname of 'Robins' or 'Redbreasts'.

Although the Robin shows very little good will towards other birds, it is regarded as our national bird and is a welcome visitor to our gardens.

### EUROPEAN JAY

This colourful member of the Crow family [Corvidae], can often be heard delivering a harsh screech from woodland or showing its White rump against Black tail feathers, as it flies away. Its Latin name is *Garrulus glandarius*; Garrulus refers to noisy/chattering and glandarius means 'of acorns', a favourite food of the Jay.

Most Jays will have collected and buried acorns during the autumn, a cached food source available to them, in times of severe winter weather. As Jays share the intelligence of the Crow family, they are able to find a high percentage of the acorns they have stored.

The colourful feathers of the Jay are made of spongy keratin and it has been found, that they can control the size of the holes. The size of the spongy holes, determines how light is scattered and the colour reflected to our eyes. Jays have some control over the size of the holes along their feather branches [barbs] and this enables them to make small changes, to their overall colour. It is the equivalent of us, controlling the production of colour, along a single human hair.



cc by sa 2.0 - First time I've seen a Jay... by Steve Fareham - geograph.org.uk/p/4294625



cc by sa 2.0 - Junior Jay by Peter Trimming - geograph.org.uk/p/4287260

### JUNIOR JAY



## Notice Board

# November Attendances



Saturday walk date	Thursday numbers		November 2016					Saturday Totals	Weekly Totals
			A	AB	B	C	D		
05/11/16	41	Saturday	19	15	11	21	26	92	133
12/11/16	28	Saturday	10	15	11	14	4	54	82
19/11/16	38	Saturday	13	19	9	23	17	81	119
26/11/16	1	Saturday	15	24	7	18	18	82	83
								0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>108</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>417</b>
Average miles per person	1.5		6.5	5.0	4.5	4.0	3.0	Saturday Mileage	1405.5
Mileage per Group	162.0		370.5	365.0	171.0	304.0	195.0	Month's total Mileage	1567.5

### Stride and Stroll AGM - Monday 14th November.

Brian Matthews stood down as Chairman. Brenda Jones gave a vote of thanks to Brian and a detailed account of all the work he had done over very many years. He had been responsible for setting up the website and the database. She wished Brian well in all his future undertakings and presented him with gifts. Graham Little presented Brian with a gift from the Management Committee. There had been no nominations for the position of chairman prior to the meeting and nominations were requested from the floor. Helen Terry proposed **Anne Little** as Chairman, seconded by David Mason with a majority in favour.

Anne chaired the rest of the meeting.

The remainder of the existing management committee were re-elected to their former positions.

Proposed by Barrie Jones, seconded by Anne Rendell



Anne Little  
Chairperson



Jan Meacham  
Deputy Chairperson



Graham Little  
Treasurer



Stephanie Ainsley  
Secretary



Judy Fry  
Training



Anne Little  
Picnics



Sue Humphries  
Entertainments

The persons listed below were voted in en bloc to the stated positions. Proposed by Barrie Jones, seconded by Anne Rendell

Programme Venues Committee Chair – **Jan Meacham**

Web & Data Admin Coordinators – **Roger Bannister/Graham Little**

Website Officers **Graham Little/Roger Bannister**