

My perfect weekend

in Northumberland

A wildlife spotting jaunt across the county

My perfect weekend would start off with a trip to **Hauxley Wildlife Discovery Centre**, a newly built facility that's great to view a wide variety of birdlife, as well as the odd red squirrel or even an otter!

In the afternoon I'd drive up the coast to **Seahouses** and hop onto **Billy Sheil's Farne Island Boat trip**. If you get the right weather it's a fantastic experience. Billy has a wealth of knowledge and keeps everyone well informed. You will see a great range of birdlife and get up close and personal with the local seal population. If you're lucky you may also see a pod of dolphins alongside the boat, and if your very, very lucky, whales! You get to spend about an hour on one of the islands and it's a delight to see the puffins and terns especially when the chicks are around (beware - wear a hat!). I'd have a fish and chip supper in **Seahouses** to round off the day, maybe washed down with the odd beer in one of the many fine pubs in **Alnwick**.

The next morning, I would set off to **Kielder Water** and the **Bird of Prey Centre at Leiplish Waterside Park**. It's an ideal place to see some magnificent birds of prey at close quarters. After lunch at the cafe it's off for a walk at some of the many routes around Kielder water. There is a healthy population of red squirrels as well as deer and birdlife on the water. I would also visit the osprey viewing area and hopefully catch sight of these fabulous birds. The walk gives me a good appetite for a delicious Italian meal on my way home at **Lollo Rossi in Morpeth**.

Peter Matthenson

Founder of Clark's Bog

