

NATURE RETREAT WITH ED DREWITT



TUDOR FARMHOUSE HOTEL



Welcome

On your first day you will arrive at the Tudor Farmhouse Hotel in the beautiful village of Clearwell nestled between the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley. You will be able to check into one of our twenty boutique bedrooms from 4pm. A group dinner will take place that evening, when you will meet your guide, Ed Drewitt.

DAY TWO



Our nature retreat in the Forest of Dean will begin by heading into tranquil ancient woodland looking and listening for woodland and waterbirds. During March and April birds are busy singing and starting to nest. We hope to encounter a range of common woodland birds, including long-tailed tits, goldcrests, treecreepers, song thrushes and great spotted woodpeckers and less common species such as marsh tit, firecrest and hawfinch. During the April retreat summer warblers will be arriving – garden warblers, willow warblers and wood warblers – alongside pied flycatchers, tree pipits and redstarts. Ed will be helping you read the woodland environment looking for clues that wild boar and deer have been walking close by or nibbling on certain trees. On the water we will be spotting the richly exotic and elaborate coloured mandarin ducks amongst mallards, tufted ducks and little grebes. Watch out for kingfishers which fly past as a flash of blue or orange and the yellow splash of a grey wagtail. Dippers are also likely.

We will visit some of the forest's various naturalised ponds, now important places for wildlife although once built for the thriving industries that relied on water. After lunch we will seek out these watery and woodland locations, maximising our opportunities of seeing a range of wildlife, including perhaps grey wagtail and dipper. As we explore the forest, roe, fallow and muntjac deer are all a possibility alongside the very shy and elusive wild boar.

DAY THREE



This morning we will head off to picturesque Symonds Yat Rock looking out across the Herefordshire countryside and where, from the viewpoint, buzzards, peregrines, goshawks and ravens may be displaying overhead. We will take a short walk into nearby woodland looking for fresh signs of spring and listening to birdsong.

After lunch we will spend time at the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust's Woorgreens nature reserve, which they manage as a heathland habitat for wildlife. The wide, open landscape is ideal for looking for flying birds of prey while amongst the gorse stonechats often pop up and tree pipits perform their flight displays. During sunny spells reptiles such as slow worms and common lizards may also make an appearance.

We may drop into other locations and viewpoints depending on the weather, time and recent wildlife sightings. Please note: locations and their order may change depending on the weather and other reasons that might be out of our control



HELLO



Ed is a naturalist, author, tour leader, birder, photographer, public speaker, bird ringer, zoologist, feather expert and peregrine researcher.

Ed has an energetic passion for nature and enjoys communicating enthusiastically to a wide range of audiences. He specialises in exploring the outdoors and showing others wildlife both in the UK and abroad. During the past three years he has been taking people on wildlife safaris in the Forest of Dean to see wild boar, deer and birdlife. During the spring he takes people out to hear and learn birdsong and experience the dawn chorus. His career has been learning focused, working as learning officers for Bristol Zoo, the RSPB, Bristol Museum and the University of Bristol. He now works independently to develop and produce exciting enquiry-led learning resources for nature-related organisations on specific projects.

He has studied peregrine falcons for the past 24 years researching what they eat and where they disperse. He is currently studying for a PhD based on his Peregrine studies.

Photo Credits: Symonds Yat & Amethyst Deceiver - Ed Drewitt; Hawfinch - Andy Morffew; Kingfisher - Ian Preston; Stonechat - Jo Garbutt