

RSPB Snettisham

2024 Wader Spectacles: Depart
from the car park at these times.

Winter

February 2024

Mon 12th 6.15am

Tues 13th 7.00am

Spring

March 2024

Wed 13th 6.30am

April 2024

Mon 8th 5.00pm

Tue 9th 5.30pm

Thur 11th 7.00am

Summer

July 2024

Thur 25th 8.00am

Fri 26th 8.30am

August 2024

Tues 20th 6.15pm

Thur 22nd 6.15am

Fri 23rd 7.00am

Sat 24th 8.00am

Sun 25th 9.00am

Autumn

September 2024

Thur 5th 6.30am

Tues 17th 5.00pm

Fri 20th 6.00am

Sat 21st 6.30am

October 2024

Sun 20th 6.15am

Mon 21st 7.30am

Please do not expect to see the
Spectacle outside of these times:
You may be disappointed.



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Wader Spectacle FAQs

What is the Wader Spectacle?

The wading bird spectacle at RSPB Snettisham in Norfolk sees clouds of tens of thousands of birds shimmer together as the rising tide pushes them off the vast mudflats. Be there at the right time and witness the commotion of thousands of wingbeats, excited calls and swirling flocks, coming together to create an exhilarating nature spectacle. The tide height needs to be very high to fill the bay of The Wash, pushing these little wading birds off the mudflats.

What are the birds in the Wader Spectacle?

Most of the birds that you see are small wading birds called 'Knot'. The Wash is an incredibly important habitat for these and similar birds. The mudflats contain substantial amounts of their food, mainly shellfish and worms. The area is likely to be hosting at least 90% of the world's population of knot during late summer to early autumn.



I'm keen to witness this, when should I go?

These spectacles can attract large numbers of visitors to the reserve, however they do not occur every day and are entirely dependent on environmental factors. To avoid disappointment, we strongly urge you to use the dates and times we've selected above.



Where should I go?

There are three main viewing points:

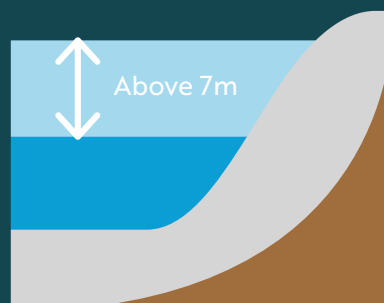
1. **Your first glimpse of The Wash.** Follow the trail from the car park machine, and after a 1.3km walk you'll have climbed steps to the sea wall. Look for the incoming tide pushing the birds together.
2. **The Wader Watch Point** (2.2km from the car park). Continue down this pathway keeping The Wash to your right, and start to enjoy this expansive landscape and wildlife.
3. **Knot's Landing** (3km from the car park). Take a front row seat and witness the birds taking refuge from the high tide.



I went on a 'high' tide and nothing happened. Why not?

The Wader Spectacles do not happen often. In order to see them, you require:

1. A VERY HIGH (7m+) tide so that the entire bay of The Wash fills up with seawater (tide-tables available).
2. Daylight. Remember, this is the period when the days are shorter, so visibility is unlikely to coincide with high tides.
3. Birds. This may sound obvious, but the large numbers only occur during late autumn or early spring.



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The Pink-Footed Goose Spectacles only occur in Winter.

At sunrise, you can witness thousands of geese leaving their roost in extraordinarily large flocks. At dusk, the reverse can happen. During these dates:

21st November 2024 - 10th December 2024

21st December 2024 - 7th January 2025



The tide does not affect the geese, but the moonlight does: Movement of geese can be erratic and unpredictable five days either side of a full moon.



The geese can be easily disturbed by lights, so please do not shine torches onto the mudflats.



They start to leave Norfolk from February to go to their Arctic breeding grounds, returning from October.



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Finding your way to the Spectacles



It is a 2.2km walk from the car park to the Wader Watch point, so allow plenty of time. Follow the trail from the car park machine.

The trail has steps and a variety of terrains underfoot.



This is a wild, remote site and there are no toilet or refreshment facilities.

The car park postcode is PE31 7RA and is signposted from the A149 via a brown sign.



The small car park can only hold around 80 cars and has a height barrier of 2.1m. Parking is pay and display via a machine in the main car park: Free for RSPB members, £3 for non-members.



Please respect our neighbours and other visitors by parking responsibly onsite.



Well behaved dogs on leads are welcome.

Please take your litter home.



Please do not cross fence lines or climb shingle banks as this will cause disturbance to the internationally important wader roost (and spoil everyone else's experience).



No need for telescopes, but a camera is highly recommended! Please share with us @RSPBTitchwell #RSPBSnettisham.

Any other questions? Contact us at snettisham@rspb.org.uk

