

# Bird Watching locations in Angus, for All Abilities

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**A guide with photos**

[www.angusbirding.com](http://www.angusbirding.com)

*Edited by Alex Shepherd*

## **Angus and Dundee Bird Club.**

### **Accessible Birdwatching sites Angus, a guide.**

A first attempt to collate information intended to help those less able to find information about sites where birdwatching can be undertaken, and without the need to move far from the car or transport. From an idea following a discussion with a birdwatcher, who thought they'd have to give up their hobby when they became less able.

The following pages provide some detail based on site visits with many photos, hoping to show and describe the "lay of the land", parking, path information and any obstacles that would hinder access. None of these are guaranteed to stay the same, let's just hope that differences are improvements to access, and more facilities.

This current version contains 29 sites or places where anyone can see birdlife from accessible bird hides, public places, roadsides, beaches, lochs and moorland.

### **Resources;**

**Where to watch Birds in Scotland**, Birding information and Access information, SOC.

Android, <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.muckypuddle.soc>

Apple, <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/where-to-watch-birds-scotland/id1456351759>

**Angus Map**, <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1KU9GiJ3ycZcbOcgCoHrA3C1WU8c&usp=sharing>

(currently many photos on the map have disappeared, being corrected slowly)

**Angus and Dundee Bird Club**, <http://www.angusbirding.com/html/adbc.html>

**SWT Montrose Access information**, [https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/002\\_433\\_montrosebasinaccessguide\\_1438245590.pdf](https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/002_433_montrosebasinaccessguide_1438245590.pdf)

SWT Montrose Basin Website, <https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/reserve/montrose-basin/>

SWT Montrose Basin, <https://www.facebook.com/MontroseBasin/>

**Murton Trust, Nature Reserve, Farm and Tearoom**, <https://www.murtontrust.org.uk/>

### **Whiting Ness, Arbroath, sea birds and waders.**

Where the long esplanade of Victoria Park meets the cliffs on the Arbroath coastline. From the start of Victoria Park, extending 1.25km to “the ness” is a raised beach which forms the park which is bounded by a rocky shoreline, parking is all along this road. There are toilets at the ness and in summer a coffee/ice cream van. On 7/10/2019 when these photos were taken the disabled toilets were locked! Birds are seen at the ness, preening in the burn 300 metres south, and at the first shelter out from Arbroath. Cars appear to be allowed to park on the pavement and this allows views out to sea. Shelters also allow sea-watching in “some comfort” out of the wind, the shelter at the toilet block is probably best as the passing birds are closer to shore.



UK Grid, NO 65855 41170, toilets and parking



UK Grid, NO 65075 41065, 1<sup>st</sup> shelter

### **Old Brewhouse, Arbroath, sea birds and waders.**

There is some parking behind and near the Old Brewhouse where the Brothock Burn enters the sea, gulls in particular preen in the burn and it’s a good place to look for rarer winter gulls. Dipper, Grey Wagtail and Rock Pipit are often present in winter, Black Redstart also recorded.



UK Grid, NO 64405 40590, view through a safety barrier behind the Brewhouse.

## **Arbroath Harbour.**

Various car parking around the harbour area where gulls predominate. Waders can be seen from the Lifeboat Shed. There are a number of Bars, Chip Shops and many places to buy Smokies around the harbour, and the Signal Tower Museum is free and worth a visit. Open all year 10-5pm, closed Sunday and Mondays, disabled access is described as “difficult” due to the nature of the listed building.



UK Grid, NO 64214 40505

## **Inchcape Park, Arbroath, sea birds, waders and terns.**

Car parking on the beach edge at the sewage pump station between the Signal Tower Museum and Gayfield Park, home of the mighty Arbroath FC! Please note that camper vans do not have any priority when parking, the site has become a popular free space from one night to 9 month stays.

There is a wader roost in winter, Purple Sandpipers rest on the beach when the sea is splashing over the breakwater, their preferred roost. In late summer and early autumn large numbers of terns can be seen on the rocks, and if not disturbed will sit on the concrete pillars in front of the parking. While the terns are there Skuas can be seen offshore harassing them for their fish.



UK Grid, NO 63949 40220

## West Links, Arbroath, sea birds, waders and terns.

Lots of parking around the old outdoor swimming pool building, now "Jumpin Joey's" and Chalmers Cinema, toilets at the mini go-kart circuit. In summer and early autumn, the area of rocky shingle in front of the children's playpark attracts various species of wader, Little and Mediterranean Gulls, and some years six species of tern including Roseate and Black Terns. Wheatears tracking south during migration and the passage of Swallows along the beach can be in large numbers.



UK Grid, NO 63399 40095

## East Haven, [coastal birds and waders.](#)

A small coastal community, all you need is here, <http://www.easthavenangus.com/410664253>

There is a large car park and well-kept toilets just through the railway bridge, this gives easy access to a small grassy area with seating and picnic tables, all adjacent to the beach. Two, (at least) benches look out to sea over the bay where sea birds and waders are often seen. The coastal path which is suitable for wheelchairs leads from the car park north to Elliot and Arbroath.

The website above, mentions over 120 species of birds reported at East Haven.



UK Grid, NO 59138 36245, car park and beach

### **Westhaven, coastal birds and waders.**

At a small car park in East Row just off the main road through Westhaven, Arbroath Road. There are good views over a small natural harbour, along the beach to Craigmill and offshore. There are a number of benches at the car park which look out to sea. The area attracts waders in autumn and through winter, and in late summer hundreds of terns roost and fish offshore, including a few Roseate Terns. Little Gulls are reported offshore throughout the year.



UK Grid, NO 57312 34725, car park

### **Carnoustie Beach, coastal birds and waders.**

A large car park on the edge of the beach is used by commuters and can be busy, but it would be very unusual not to find a space as walkers arrive and depart frequently. There are a number of benches which look out to sea along beach edge. From the car park a tarmac path extends in both directions along the beach, north to Westhaven, south to Carnoustie Golf Links. Wheelchair access north continues to Westhaven but not all with the beach in view, going south access extends to the mouth of the Barry Burn, alternatively the coastal path follows the railway to Monifieth.

### **Monikie Country Park, winter wildfowl.**

The ANGUSalve website provides information here, <https://www.angusalive.scot/countryside-adventure/visit-us/monikie-country-park/>

and for the nearby Crombie Country Park at, <https://www.angusalive.scot/countryside-adventure/visit-us/crombie-country-park/>

Although all of the ponds at Monikie have perimeter paths, only the Bird Hide at Denfind Pond and the strip between the Island and North Ponds have a tarmac base. Other paths can get soft and muddy depending on weather and use, improvements are ongoing. Many species of wildfowl have been recorded in the park, some waders and occasional Ospreys and Ravens. Notable birds have been, Great Northern Diver, Green Sandpiper, Smew, Red-necked Grebe and Slavonian Grebe.

UK Grid, NO 50195 38360, car park at Monikie CP. UK Grid, NO 52850 40175, car park at Crombie CP



## Balgavies Loch, Scottish Wildlife Trust, near Forfar.

Views over the loch from an accessible bird hide only metres from a small car park signposted from the A932 at the west end of the loch. The surface can be wet but not usually muddy and is firm under foot, the path is short, firm and wide enough for wheelchair access. Left to right' car park, short path to hide, hide, and view over the loch and island where Ospreys have nested.

UK Grid, NO 52986 50885. No toilets on site, nearest Murton or Forfar.



Also, a restricted view from a viewpoint car park at the roadside on the A932 roughly central on the south bank of the loch.

There is a perimeter path around the loch, 2.25km, but it is not suitable for wheelchairs. Dogs are allowed but must be kept on a lead or under control at heel. There have been a number of incidents where unleashed dogs have killed wildlife, and a dog and Roe Deer were killed on the road during a chase when in a collision with a car.

During summer, a number of bird species breed on and around the loch, and wintering wildfowl, sometimes in large numbers start to appear in autumn. Close views of birds on the feeders at the hide mostly in winter. When the feeders are filled regularly, Lesser Redpoll, Siskin, Blue, Coal, Great, and Long-tailed Tits visit throughout the day. Depending on water levels, Water Rails may be seen when the water encroaches under the feeders. UK Grid, NO 53446 50715.

## Murton Nature Reserve and Farm, near Forfar.

This site was converted into a nature reserve when sand and gravel extraction ceased, and in winter 2018/2019 work was done to provide wheelchair access to three separate bird hides and a new viewpoint added. There is an extensive car park with designated disabled parking near the popular café and toilets. It's possible to park at the hide over-looking "Wetlands" a shallow scrape in summer which usually floods in winter and attracts wildfowl. Wide surfaced paths lead to the hides, there are some inclines, but these are not steep, and the surface is firm.



UK Grid, NO 49349 51195 on the A932, Forfar. <https://www.murtontrust.org.uk/nature-reserve/>

### The History of Murton Trust

Murton is a Scottish charitable organisation with a dual educational and environmental purpose. We manage a thriving nature reserve, visitor farm and tea room providing a unique environment in which children, young people and adults can learn and develop skills for life. We are particularly focussed on assisting schools, colleges and other organisations, to deliver their academic curriculum; and furthering our partnerships with local schools to offer training in land-based skills training.

Our land is managed by a small team of staff, volunteers and school students. If you would like further information on the Trust, the reserve, or need any assistance then please contact us in the Stabling Office.

Murton Trust was established in 2001 at the conclusion of 12 years of sand and gravel quarrying. The Trust is named after Murton Farm. The farm covered the area that is now the nature reserve and visitor farm. In the late 1960's, the two founding Trustees who lived in an adjoining property bought the farm. The land was then leased and farmed until Aggregate Industries began quarrying in the late 1980s. It was agreed at the end of the sand and gravel extraction that the whole area would be restored to the highest environmental standard. After the completion of extraction the Trust and Aggregate Industries worked in partnership to ensure the land was given the best opportunity to evolve into a reserve where nature not merely survives, but thrives.

### Nature Reserve

Whatever the season, enjoy a stroll or a brisk walk around our trail, passing delightful lochs and wetlands. Access to our nature reserve is free. Our well maintained network of paths provides walks that everyone can enjoy and there are plenty of benches to have a rest, or just to sit and contemplate the sheer beauty and tranquility of the place.

Our lochs and wetlands are home to many varieties of birds and wildfowl, including protected species such as the little ringed plover. Many other species pass through the reserve. There are three hides from where you can watch our resident and visiting birds, so be sure to bring your binoculars. We are proud to have been pioneers in the design of nesting facilities for sand martins and it is always a special time for us in April when these lovely birds arrive back at the Reserve from their winter travels. Be sure to take time to watch them darting around in the sky above the sand martin area.

During the summer months you will find a riot of wildflowers throughout the reserve, including an extensive wildflower meadow which we planted in 2003. As you can imagine, with so many flowers, numerous bumble bees and butterflies are also among our visitors together with a fascinating variety of insects for you to find.

As the seasons change there is always something new to see at Murton Nature Reserve. Many school children come here to learn about the seasons and maybe it is a place for you to really feel in tune with nature's changes.

**Car Park Entrance**

← A932 9833

**Murton Trust For Education and the Environment - SC031554**

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## Forfar Loch, a shallow loch within Forfar.

A car park just off North Loch Road in Forfar gives access to a path in two directions which runs around the perimeter of the loch. Unfortunately, the path doesn't pass in front of the old leisure centre. However, the path leading along the north bank of the loch quickly reaches a viewing platform with a ramp, note there is a small step of a few inches at the start of the ramp. There is a narrow tarmac road which leads along to the sailing club, but parking is restricted, and recently a barrier has been put in place at the sailing club. An alternative would be to park at the car park by the old centre and follow the track to the Lochside. Disappointingly, there are no toilets at the loch since the centre was closed.

UK Grid, NO 44723 50835, North Loch Road car park. Sailing Club access, NO 44217 50720.

Car park at old centre, NO 45048 50640

Many species nest around the loch in summer when dogs should always be kept on a lead Great Crested Grebes nest each year, sometimes in full view. In winter large numbers of wildfowl roost on the loch including large flocks of Goosanders, Mute and Whooper Swans, Teal, Gadwall and Wigeon.

From left, car park, path to platform, ramp to platform and view from in front of centre



### **Rescobie Loch, a managed trout fishery.**

During winter when no angling takes place access is available on the side of the loch at the angler's boathouse, on the roadside at the northwest end of the loch.

The loch can be prone to algae and weed during summer but in winter wildfowl feed and roost on the loch. Large numbers of Coots, ducks and Goosander can be seen from the car and pontoon area.

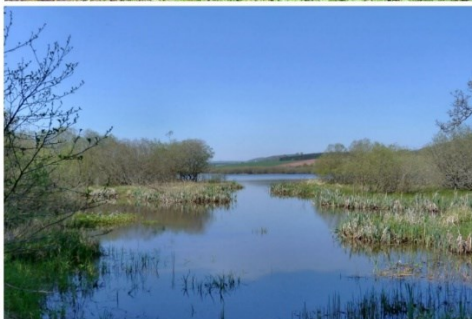
UK Grid, NO 50705 51975, on the B9113. No toilets, nearest Murton or Forfar.

### **Kinnordy Loch, Kirriemuir. RSPB**

A shallow loch with reedbeds, bogbean rafts and open water. The car park is at the roadside, west of Kirriemuir on the B951 and has ample parking and designated disabled spaces. The main bird hide, the Gullery, is immediately behind the car park, around 60 metres from the car. The Swamp Hide is accessed along a flat path with a good surface 290 metres from the car park and is signposted. A further hide, the East Hide does not have a ramp for wheelchairs, a number of steps with a rail rise to the door. No toilets on site, nearest in Kirriemuir.

UK Grid, NO 36049 53920

The top inland birdwatching site in Angus. Birds, Otters, and Beavers (look for their tree-felling).



### **Loch of Lintrathen, a public reservoir.**

There are few access points around this large reservoir, but two bird hides are placed to give views over the areas popular with wintering wildfowl. The old/elevated hide in the northwest corner is down a grassy path and has a stairway to the elevated viewing position. The “New Hide” is due north of the village on the road which runs along the lochside to the rear of the sawmill. There is a small car parking space at the roadside and the hide is only 40 metres down a firm path. Wheelchairs do access this hide but it may not suit everyone.

UK Grid, New Hide, NO 28707 55135. Old Hide, NO 28037 55405. Parking, NO 27626 55515



### **Backwater Dam, Public Reservoir.**

Whilst there is a path and road around this deep loch, essentially for easy access there are two points to view the water, the dam at the car park and a picnic spot near the top of the loch. Many species can be seen in the area from raptors to both grouse species, warblers, ducks, geese and sometimes divers, none are ever guaranteed. There is a large car park at the dam and toilets which appear to be seasonal and are down asset up steps. The picnic spot reached from the road along the north of the dam has no facilities other than a few tables and a waste bin.



UK Grid, NO 25100 58970, Dam car parking

UK Grid, NO 25671 61480, Picnic Spot



**Montrose Basin, The Lurgies.**

This site is one of the most often visited by Birdwatchers. It has a small car park with a hard base but it can be a bit muddy after rain and is not suitable for wheelchairs. The Basin is only metres from the car park where a small burn flows in and a sluice from the adjacent reedbeds empties into the South Esk. It is possible to scan a large area of the mudflats from here and as the tide rises many waders and wildfowl species are forced up this way. A permissive path extends from the car park all the way to Bridge of Dun, it is of variable quality and in summer cattle grazing in the adjoining field sometimes use the path. Safest option is to leave dogs in the car.



UK Grid, NO 67571 57221

**Montrose Basin, Scottish Wildlife Trust Centre.**

The document at the link below, on the SWT website gives extensive details about disabled access and facilities at the wildlife centre and other aspects of the Basin, the staff are very helpful and up to date with local conditions and bird sightings. If you need specific information or help, please phone in advance. 01674 676336. UK Grid, NO 70072 56501

[https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/002\\_433\\_montrosebasinaccessguide\\_1438245590.pdf](https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/002_433_montrosebasinaccessguide_1438245590.pdf)





### Montrose Basin from Esk Road.

Access on to Esk Road is from the roundabout on the A92 between Bridge End Garage and lock-ups, there is access from the other end but only on foot. The narrow road runs along the edge of the Basin with little space to park, but when no sailing is going on the Sailing Club parking is used by local people. It would be possible for a wheelchair to use the road, and with good binoculars or a scope a great deal of birds and wildlife could be viewed, including seals, terns, waders and wildfowl. From immediately behind the garage a scope would give views at high tide of the birds which roost on Rossie Spit, across the bay in the corner.

UK Grid, NO 70777 56691, garage access. UK Grid, NO 70672 56891, Sailing Club



### Montrose Beach.

The Splash on Trail Drive at Montrose Beach has toilets, a café, a small restaurant and play facilities for children. In 2019 complaints were made about the council toilets which were very much of the temporary kind. Best bet would be to combine a bit of birdwatching with a coffee in the café, or something to eat. Birds seen here include, Skuas, Divers, Terns, Scoters, Eider, and Dolphins and Seals are seen occasionally. Keep an eye out for “ringed” Starlings which have been ringed locally in a major study over many years.

UK Grid, NO 72667 57921, Splash car parking



**Angus Glens, places in the glens where birdlife can be viewed from the roadside.**

<https://visitangus.com/explore-towns-villages-and-glens/the-angus-glens/>

Bridges over rivers in all glens attract Dipper, Grey Wagtail, Common Sandpiper, sometimes Spotted Flycatcher, even rare sightings of an Otters.

Glen Clova, Gella Bridge, UK Grid, NO 37325 65235. Parking at picnic site on riverbank.

Glen Clova, Glen Doll, UK Grid, NO 28382 76141. <https://www.angusalive.scot/countryside-adventure/visit-us/glen-doll/>

Glen Lethnot, UK Grid, NO 57832 68921, picnic spot and parking at Purners Brig.

Glen Lethnot, UK Grid, NO 51155 70876, roadside parking with views to hills and wires.

Glen Lethnot, UK, Grid, NO 57832 68921, parking at Waterhead on riverbank.

Glenesk, Waggles, UK Grid, NO 46463 71716, roadside parking, views over fields

Glenesk, Tarfside, UK Grid, NO 49284 79676, parking and toilets, disabled?

**Stobsmuir Ponds, Dundee.** UK Grid, NO 41551 32034

Best information, including access is available on the online resources below.

<https://www.dundee.gov.uk/service-area/neighbourhood-services/environment/stobsmuir-ponds>

<https://www.accessable.co.uk/venues/stobsmuir-park#0350a3a3-736d-4fd4-9bc8-1d8a82089c3b>

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/pages/category/Nonprofit-Organization/Friends-Of-Swannie-Ponds-330040647039075/>

**Clatto Country Park, Dundee.** UK Grid, NO 36835 34389

<https://www.dundee.gov.uk/service-area/neighbourhood-services/environment/clatto-country-park>

**Google Maps, links and directions to sites in the order they appear in the previous pages.**

Whiting Ness, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.5607416,-2.5579444,166m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Old Brewhouse, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.5564537,-2.5796212,161m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Inchcape Park, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.5543951,-2.5864137,160m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

West Links, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.5516881,-2.597307,288m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

East Haven, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.5158878,-2.6662454,287m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Westhaven, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.5025055,-2.696275,161m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Carnoustie Beach, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.4998131,-2.7068428,284m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Monikie CP, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.5340753,-2.8117854,622m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Balgavies Loch, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.6479037,-2.7724985,329m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Murton NR, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.650314,-2.8289849,431m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Forfar Loch, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.6469379,-2.9005207,320m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Rescobie Loch, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.6569048,-2.8065003,318m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Kinnordy Loch, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.672873,-3.0405024,631m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Lintrathen Loch, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.6831261,-3.1664279,627m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Backwater Dam, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.7165163,-3.2229383,383m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

The Lurgies, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.7034748,-2.5188987,2649m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

SWT Montrose, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.700301,-2.4887039,893m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Esk Road, Basin, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.7016162,-2.4823199,516m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Montrose Beach, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.7123162,-2.447354,316m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Clova, Gella Bridge, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.7731951,-3.0226924,14.42z?hl=en>

Glen Doll, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.8689988,-3.177903,15.21z?hl=en>

Purners Brig, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.8088537,-2.6886515,16.79z?hl=en>

Glen Lethnot, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.8220982,-2.796799,701m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Waterhead, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.8324447,-2.8785871,558m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Glenesk Waggles, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.8816054,-2.7061988,453m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Tarfside, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@56.9054206,-2.831743,452m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>



Black Redstart, Inchcape Park, Arbroath