



## MARTIN GARNER SPURN YOUNG BIRDER 2019

**Thank you for visiting this page – it's great that you're interested in entering the [Martin Garner Spurn Young Birder 2019](#) competition!**

To enter you need to answer some questions so we can find out about you and your birding but first, here's the dull bit about the rules and how the final works:

To be eligible for the award you need to be 16 or under on Saturday 7 September 2019. Entries must be submitted by midnight Sunday 7 July 2019. Previous winners are not eligible to enter for a second time.

Our judges will assess all entries and select up to six finalists. Only the judge organising the applications will know the names of the applicants, so final choices will be made anonymously by the remaining judges. If there are enough applicants under 14, awards and prizes will be given out in two age categories. The final will take place at the Spurn Migration Festival (MigFest) held at Spurn Bird Observatory 6–8 September 2019. Entrants must be available for the final on Saturday 7 September 2019 and for the presentations that evening. Finalists will receive a free ticket for food on Saturday evening (MigFest entry is free for under 18s).

Migration is a fantastic phenomenon! Finalists will visit four locations around the Spurn area where they will be met by a judge and introduced to the site. Each location will provide a different birding setting (farmland, estuary, sea and migrating overhead). At each location, the judge will ask the finalist to identify a number of birds, depending on the species present on the day. They will also be asked some supplementary questions about birds, such as migratory species likely to be found at Spurn in autumn. There will also be an indoor element to the day where a judge will use props to ask additional questions, for example

relating to taxonomy or bird calls etc. The assessors are very friendly and finalists will also get lots of useful tips on bird identification and information on bird migration and Spurn. The whole assessment will be carried out on a one-to-one basis, switching from one judge to the next.

All finalists must be accompanied by a responsible adult to the final assessment briefing at the observatory at 10am on Saturday 7 September. Parents and guardians are encouraged to come along to these but must remain passive throughout. The assessment takes approximately 2–3 hours to complete and a free light buffet lunch is provided afterwards.

There are 25 questions to answer for your opportunity to become a finalist for our Martin Garner Spurn Young Birder 2019 award and win some great prizes too. Please complete this entry form by the 7 July 2019. Good luck!

This document allows you to view the questions and think about your answers **before completing the official online questionnaire.**



*"It was a great experience! It introduced me to the **magic of Spurn.** As well as **thoroughly enjoying the weekend** I also learnt a lot and gained more **experience** as a young birder."*  
**Evie Miller**

*"It gave me **confidence** as a birder and helped me meet **inspirational birdwatchers** and allowed me to **connect with other young birders** that I probably wouldn't have met otherwise"*  
**Joel Tragen**



## ABOUT YOU

*The Survey Monkey form starts with a section to fill out your personal details such as name and address. From here, the following questions are asked:*

Which birding / conservation organisations or individuals do you support/follow? *Tick all that apply*

- Bird Observatory Trust(s)
- Bird Club(s)
- Next Generation Birders (NGB)
- A Focus on Nature (AFON)
- British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT)
- Wildlife Trust(s)
- Other young birders
- Birding 'celebrities' like Chris Packham
- BBC Springwatch / Autumnwatch etc
- Other

Have you ever visited an accredited UK/Irish Bird Observatory, and if so, how many different ones have you visited?

- None
- 1
- 2-3
- 4-5
- 6 or more

*Feel free to tell us more about your visit (s) and any favourite observatory...*

## YOUR BIRDING

How many years have you been birding?

Describe how you got into birding?

How often do you usually go birding?

- Daily
- About 2-3 times a week
- About once a week
- 2-3 times a month
- About once a month
- Less than once a month

Who do you go birding with and why?

What do you enjoy most about birding?

Do you keep bird notes?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, how do you store them?*

Do you share your sightings anywhere (e.g. with your local group, on your blog)?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, where do you share them?*

Tell us about your local patch and/or a favourite place to go birding and why you like it

Describe how your birding knowledge has developed since you started (e.g. spending hours looking at wader roosts to specifically learn wader identification)

Tell us which is your favourite bird ID resource (e.g. field guide, website, etc.) and why you like it

Briefly describe something that made you a better birder learned from another birder *while birding in the field*

Briefly describe something that made you a better birder learned from another birder *through any other means (e.g. at an event)*

What aspect of bird identification do you feel is your strongest, and why?

What aspect of bird identification do you feel is your weakest, and why?

## YOUR BIRDING KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

Please indicate on a scale of 1-4 how confident you are, if you have a good view, of identifying species in the field. Be as honest with yourself as you can; there's a balance between being over-confident and too modest! You could be asked questions about these or other similar-looking species if you reach the final.

1 is equivalent to saying "I wouldn't be confident of identifying either of these birds by sight"

2 is "I'd know it was one or the other, but wouldn't be confident of saying which one"

3 is "I think I know the difference, and I'd be fairly confident I could identify which I'd seen"

4 is "I can explain how I'd separate the two species and I'm confident I'd be able to identify either correctly"

- Woodpigeon and Stock Dove
- Song Thrush and Mistle Thrush
- Whinchat and Stonechat
- Whooper Swan and Bewick's Swan
- Mallard (female) and Gadwall (female)
- Willow Tit and Marsh Tit
- Cormorant and Shag
- Wood Sandpiper and Green Sandpiper
- Mediterranean Gull and Black-headed Gull (both in juvenile / first-winter plumages)
- Rock Pipit and Meadow Pipit
- Red-backed Shrike and Woodchat Shrike (both in juvenile / first-winter plumages)

Please indicate on a scale of 1–4 how confident you are, if you can hear the sound clearly, of distinguishing the following sounds in the field:

1 is equivalent to saying "I wouldn't be confident of identifying either of these birds by sound"

2 is "I'd know it was one or the other, but wouldn't be confident of saying which one"

3 is "I think I know the difference, and I'd be fairly confident I could identify which I'd heard"

4 is "I can explain how I'd separate the two species and I'm confident I'd be able to identify either correctly"

- The songs of Wren and Robin
- The songs of Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler
- The songs of Blackbird and Song Thrush
- The songs of Whitethroat and Lesser Whitethroat
- The flight calls of Yellow Wagtail and Pied Wagtail
- The flight calls of Siskin and Goldfinch

Please identify the species in the following images and tell us how you reached your identification conclusion. *We encourage you to use books and online resources* etc. to do this as this is an important skill to have as a birder, but *please do not ask anyone else for assistance, we want to know how you identified the species, not how someone else did.*

Please state in the comments box below for each image: 1) the species, 2) how you identified it, and 3) any resources you used e.g. website link / books titles etc.

Image 5 is slightly trickier, so here is a clue: it is a rarity photographed within the Spurn Bird Observatory recording area.

**Image 1**, by Edmund Fellowes



**Image 2**, by Dennis Atherton



**Image 3**, by Chris Knights



**Image 4**, by Moss Taylor



**Image 5**, by Gary Thoburn



Describe something unusual that you discovered for yourself while out birding (e.g. a rare species, an out-of-season species, an unusual behaviour, etc.)

Describe a birding experience that you personally found rewarding (e.g. your best birding day, or mentoring another birder, etc.)

What do you think is the biggest challenge facing bird populations in the future?

*There is a comments box here, at the end of the Survey Monkey form, should you have any further comments you would like to make. Go for it and good luck.*

**Link to the online questionnaire:** [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MGSYB19](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MGSYB19)