

THE 'HORWICH' MOORS

Part 1: Georges Lane

by Ian Mc Kerchar (including all photos and maps)

Georges Lane is accessed off Chorley Old Road (B6226) at Wallsuches and lies opposite the Jolly Crofters pub. It leads north-west up past the quarries there, through rough horse pastures to Wilderswood where it becomes little more than a bumpy track. Georges Lane (or rather track!) then continues along the edge of Wilderswood and after a further mile or so, into Lancashire. All areas alongside the road can be productive and it is beneficial to park in the Wilderswood car park and explore the entire area from this base. The northern end beyond Wilderswood is particularly productive and can be the arrival/departure point for many migrants.





The southern end of Georges Lane adjacent to the quarries (now closed). The trees on the right especially can be productive and the bare ones are favoured by Spotted Flycatchers. Follow this road until you come to the stone house on the right which conceal the entrance to Mast Road (see below).



The houses along Georges Lane hide the entrance to Mast Road, here on the right (note the green footpath sign on the left as a marker point). In the background is Wilderswood where there is a small car park (suitable for approximately eight or so vehicles) and where Georges Lane continues to the right of the woods.



Taken from Georges Lane just to the north of Wilderswood but looking south back at it. The small 'dell' of deciduous trees mid picture is attractive to warblers, tits, finches and the occasional Redstart though all but the most skeletal of imaginations could surely predict something altogether better sooner or later. Wilderswood itself has resident Coal Tits, Treecreeper, Tawny Owl and almost annually produces Crossbills at some point. This vantage point is also an excellent spot for observing visible migration.



The dell. Largely sheltered as it lies in a small valley it can be surveyed from above along Georges Lane or alternatively within via the footpath that leads through it.



The fields off to the west of Georges Lane, north of Wilderswood. These two grassy fields are both in Greater Manchester but the woodland to their north is in Lancashire. The fields can be very productive and particularly so in good visible migration conditions. Warblers, finches, flycatchers and thrushes (often including Ring Ouzel) are fond of the Hawthorn hedges here (known as the 'big hedge') as are Redstart. Some memorable falls have occurred here and around the pond at the bottom of the big hedge so time spent scanning from Georges Lane or from the path around the pond and back through the field to the kennels is advisable. Beyond the fields in this photograph is Lancashire including of course Lower Rivington Reservoir which can be clearly seen.



At the southern end of the big hedge lies Georges pond. The fence line here is often favoured by Spotted Flycatchers during passage and the bushes around it are particularly productive.



Georges pond.



Looking south down Ormston's Lane.



The fields looking due north from Georges Lane. Rivington Pike can be seen on the right of the image but is well into Lancashire. It is well worth checking just north of the Rivington Pike Dog Hotel (kennels) along Georges Lane as the small valley with stream running through it and stone wall running off to the east of the road can often hide a few birds. This stream and stone wall combination is the county boundary and Lancashire lies beyond. There is a footpath leading up past the kennels which can then take you onto Wildersmoor, well worth a walk through skirting the stone wall back to Georges Lane or even taking you up to Two Lads Hill and beyond.

Ian McKerchar, December 2009 (revised October 2010)

www.manchesterbirding.com