

**What is WhatsApp?**

WhatsApp is a free messaging and calling app that allows users to communicate with others around the world. It's available on many devices, including smartphones, tablets, and computers and can be downloaded for free on an iPhone or Android device.

Here are some key features of WhatsApp:

* Messaging: Users can send and receive text messages, photos, videos, documents, and location information.
* Calling: Users can make voice and video calls.
* Group chats: Users can join group chats to message multiple people at once.
* End-to-end encryption: WhatsApp's encryption ensures that only the sender and recipient can read or listen to a message or call.
* Cross-platform: WhatsApp works on many different platforms and uses a Wi-Fi connection to communicate.
* Automatic contact suggestions: WhatsApp checks a user's phone's address book for other users and suggests them as contacts.
* Status updates: Users can share profile updates that disappear after 24 hours.
* Last seen: Users can see when their contacts last used the app.
* Online status: Users can let contacts know if they are currently using the app.
* Read receipts: Users can see if a message has been sent, delivered, and read.

**Important note:**

**With regard to WhatsApp groups, a number of members have asked about the visibility of their phone number when being part of a group, such as the Ogston Bird Club Sightings Group.**

**At the current time when you join a WhatsApp group the phone numbers of all members will be visible to all other members. There is no current ability to ‘hide’ your number although WhatsApp have indicated that this may be possible in the future.**