

LAGOONS HIDE

ISLAND ICONS

Set aside by Anglian Water and managed in partnership with the Wildlife Trust, the lagoons are comprised of an assortment of aquatic and shoreline habitats including reed beds, mud flats, sheltered islands and shallow pools. Each unique habitat is home to a myriad of specialist waterfowl, that live, breed and feed within the lagoons. Waders, such as the redshank, snipe and green sandpiper, characterised by their long, probing bills, skulk around the mudflats digging for food in these insect rich feeding grounds. In 2009 and 2010, the iconic avocet, a distinctly charismatic bird, bred here for the first time in the nature reserves history, out on the open mudflats. The calm and shallow waters here at the lagoons also attract a number of diving and dabbling ducks, like the pochard, tufted duck, shoveller and teal, all looking for some respite from the sometimes choppy waters of the open reservoir.



Clockwise: Flock of feeding lapwings, redshank and pair of avocets.



Above: Whitethroat warbler

SUMMER SONG

In the spring and summertime the dry gravelly grasslands and scrubby margins that surround the hide come to life with birds, insects and colourful blooms of wildflowers. Vibrant displays of selfheal, sulphur clover and grass vetchling attract a wealth of nectar feeding insects like the bumblebee and the small tortoiseshell butterfly. These in turn go on to feed the hungry chicks of migrant songbirds, like the willow warbler, chiffchaff and whitethroat, which come here to breed each year.

MUDDY MAINTENANCE

In 2007 the wildlife lagoon was re-profiled in order to maximise the amount of suitable habitat available for a variety of resident and visiting waterfowl. Deep and shallow channels were dug to create several safe, predator free islands, ideal for many ground nesting waders. Without proper management the lagoon islands and their margins would fast become overgrown with reeds and rush, replacing the watery channels and open muddy habitat that many species require to feed and breed successfully. Therefore each year it is necessary to cut and mow the coarse vegetation that encroaches into these delicate habitats, threatening the success of the birds that live here.



Clockwise: Grass vetchling, sulphur clover and the small tortoiseshell butterfly.



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