

River Ise

Originally, the River Ise ran through the reserve, however during the last century the river has redirected through a straightened, deeper channel. This affected the hydrology of the site and the resultant drying out caused a reduction in the diversity of plant life. Therefore, in 1994, the Environment Agency reinstated the old channel along the southern boundary of the reserve.

The straightened channel is still in place and most of the flow runs through it, particularly when the river is high, but a weir allows some of the flow through the old channel.

Artificial riffle sections, where the water is shallow and gets churned up over the stone bed, were created. These are very important for freshwater wildlife, as it is in these areas that the water is oxygenated, allowing it to support wildlife that would not survive in the main river.



Lady's bedstraw

How to find the reserve

The reserve is most easily approached from the Desborough to Rushton road. Follow the signs for the leisure centre and park in the Leisure Centre car park, located off the Broadlands.

We hope you enjoy your visit

More Information

Your local Wildlife Trust protects wildlife and countryside for people to enjoy in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough. We are a charity dependent on voluntary contributions.

If you would like more information about this reserve or other reserves in Northamptonshire, please contact:

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Welcome to Tailby Meadow Local Nature Reserve

Photograph by Henry Stanier, illustrations by Mike Langman

Protecting wildlife
close to home

History

This 12 acre traditional hay meadow is situated in the valley of the River Ise. Unlike modern pastures, which are often ploughed and reseeded, the meadow has not been ploughed for hundreds of years and artificial fertilisers have never been applied. This type of grassland is now very rare, not just within the county but also nationally. The ridge and furrow in the north-west corner of the field is indicative of a meadow that has not been ploughed since the Middle Ages. The meadow is named after the previous owners who were keen to see it conserved. It is now owned by Kettering Borough Council and managed by The Wildlife Trust.



Male red-eyed damselfly

Butterflies, Dragonflies and Damselies

During the summer, the reserve is alive with insects. Butterflies and damselflies are the most noticeable, including the orange tip butterfly and the red-eyed damselfly. You will find the orange tip on the reserve between April and early June. The female orange tip is less conspicuous than her male counterpart as she lacks the orange tips on her wings. The red-eyed damselfly emerges from the water around mid-May and the flight season lasts until Mid-August. You may see the adults resting close to the water's surface on floating vegetation.

Management

Hay meadows have a flora and fauna that thrives under a traditional form of management. This begins with the meadow being grazed in early spring, the grass is then allowed to grow up to form a hay crop, which is usually cut in July or August, allowing the flowers to set seed. After the hay dries it is removed and the meadow is grazed again during the autumn. Modern day practice is to cut the grass earlier. The Trust however follows the traditional cutting times using modern machinery.



Black knapweed

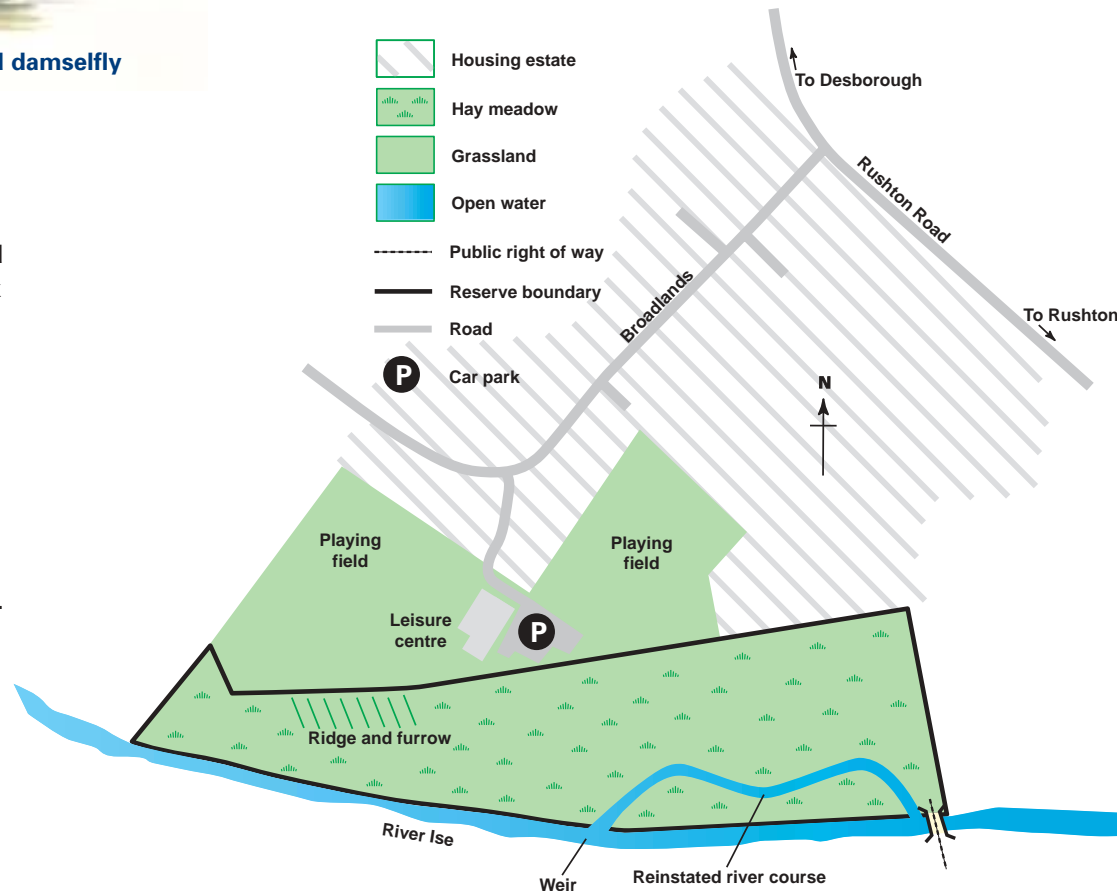
Wildflowers

The grassland is diverse containing 15 species of grass and many types of wild flowers. The flowers include lady's smock, which flowers in the spring and is a food source for the orange tip butterfly and black knapweed, which flowers from June to September; lady's bedstraw

adds a splash of yellow from July to August and was once used for stuffing mattresses due to its fragrant scent. Great pignut can also be seen in this meadow. It is the food plant of the Chimney-sweep moth, a small black moth with white tips to the wings.



Great pignut



Orange tip butterfly