

The Nene Valley *Living Landscape*

Woodston Ponds is in the Nene Valley *Living Landscape* where the Wildlife Trust's vision is to create a valley with interlinked wetlands, rich in wildlife, for everybody to enjoy.

Restoring and creating habitat between nature reserves will produce a more natural and diverse riverscape. This project will provide havens for wildlife and people as well as space for plant and animal species to move and adapt to a changing climate.



Banded demoiselle

How to find the reserve

Woodston Ponds is situated on the banks of the River Nene, just west of Peterborough city centre. By bike/ on foot: From the city centre, follow the Woodston Reach cycleway and footpath westwards along the south bank of the River Nene, alongside the Nene Valley Railway. Cycle parking is provided. By bus: City buses stop on Oundle Road close to Wharf Road. By car: From the city centre head south onto the A15 (Bridge Street/London Road). After crossing the river bridge and railway turn right at the roundabout onto A605 Oundle Road. Take the fifth right into Wharf Road and park. From the bus stop or car park, walk to the end of the road to Woodston Reach cycleway, turn left along the path and walk for half a mile to the entrance gate at the west end of the reserve.

Access

The reserve can be accessed off the footpath via pedestrian gates; one to the west and the main central gate. Cycle parking is available by the main entrance. For safety reasons please do not cycle on the boardwalk. Please follow the country code; keep to the paths and keep dogs on leads. Thank you.

We hope you enjoy your visit

More information

Woodston Ponds Local Nature Reserve is a haven for wildlife, so active management is essential to preserve the habitats which make this reserve so valuable.

To contact us about this reserve:

The Wildlife Trust, Eco Innovation Centre
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Tel: 01733 294543

Email: Peterborough@wildlifebcnp.org

Local wildlife needs you

The Wildlife Trust relies on our supporters to continue to protect our beautiful local wildlife and countryside. If you are not already a member and would like to find out how you can get involved in supporting the Trust's vital conservation work in this area, or if you would like more information about other Trust nature reserves close to you, then please contact us.

Visit: www.wildlifebcnp.org

E-mail: membership@wildlifebcnp.org

Tel: 01954 713543

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The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough. Registered charity no: 1000412



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Welcome to Woodston Ponds

Photograph by Chris Rutter. Illustrations by Mike Langman

Protecting wildlife
close to home

History

Woodston Ponds Local Nature Reserve on the southern banks of the River Nene was previously part of the British Sugar Factory. The ponds were used as settling pools in the washing of the sugar beet, but the site was abandoned when production stopped.

The area was left to regenerate naturally, and local wildlife has colonised it. There is a mix of reedbeds, open water, grassland and riverside vegetation.

The site was leased to the Wildlife Trust in 2003. We installed water management systems to feed the reedbeds, and built a circular boardwalk footpath. The newly named Woodston Ponds was declared a Local Nature Reserve in recognition of its wildlife value and importance as a city greenspace for local people to enjoy. It opened to the public in 2004.

What to look for

To the west of the reserve is reedbed with pools and channels, grassland, scrub and Bob's Pond. To the east, a viewing platform overlooks a small lake where you can comfortably watch wildlife. You can also see the river, its wildlife and mature willows on the bank.

The reedbeds and pools are home to many different animals, including water stick insects and some uncommon types of water beetle. Dragonflies and damselflies, such as banded demoiselle, emerge from the water in spring and summer to feed and breed along the water's edge. Great crested newts hibernate in the long vegetation on either side of the boardwalk, and in early spring, they make their way back to the pools to breed. Birds, such as reed buntings and sedge warblers, make their homes among the reed stems.



Great crested newt



Kingfisher

Along the river and lake's edge, you can see grey herons looking for fish, while on the lake you can spot many species of duck including shoveller.

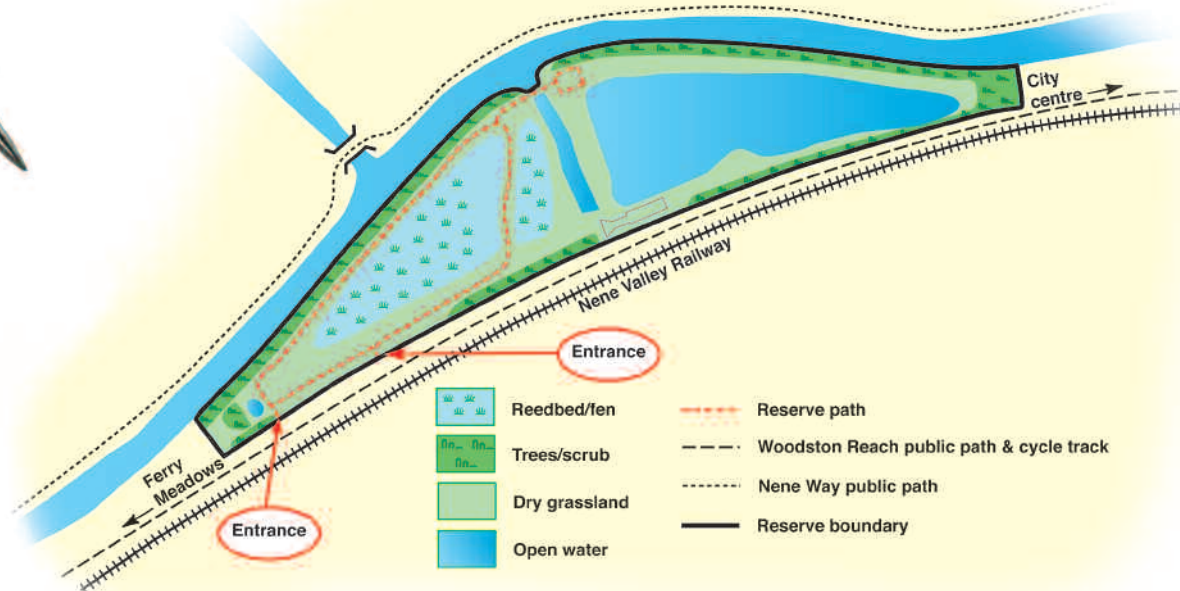
You may be lucky enough to glimpse a kingfisher darting along just above the surface of the water, or perched on a branch over the river's edge.

The trees and shrubs provide shelter for songbirds, such as whitethroats and willow warblers, as well as woodpeckers and several species of bat.

How the Trust cares for this reserve

A network of paths guides you around the different habitats. The circular boardwalk is easily accessible by wheelchairs and pushchairs, and runs part way along the river's edge and surrounds the reedbed.

Leaving the boardwalk to the north-east of the reserve the track leads you up some steps to the viewing platform over the lake. To the south-western corner steps down from the boardwalk onto the grassland area lead you through meadow



and shrubs to Bob's Pond. Created in 2008 and named after the volunteer warden, Bob's Pond is home to water snails, frogs and newts.



Pipistrelle bat

Each year we mow the grasslands to encourage wildflowers as a nectar source for bees, hoverflies and butterflies. We cut the reedbeds to ensure there is fresh growth each year for birds and insects to feed on and nest in.

From time to time major works such as clearing ponds and reedbeds to prevent wetland habitat from drying out are necessary. We also occasionally clear sections of the pond banks. This ensures there is bare mud for insects to bask on.



Wildfowl